Worcester Telegram & Gazette

Wednesday, January 28, 2004   
  
**Templeton recall petition fails to pass town's muster**

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| **Shirley Barnes CORRESPONDENT** |

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**TEMPLETON-** The Board of Registrars ruled that a petition to recall the Board of Health is not valid, but the petition calling for a special town meeting meets requirements.   
  
The petition to hold a special town election to recall members of the Board of Health had enough signatures to pass muster.   
  
The recall petition is based on a contract signed with New England Waste Systems to construct and operate a lined landfill in town. However, the petition was challenged on the grounds that it does not meet the requirements of the town recall legislation voted at a special town meeting on October 23, 1989.   
  
That legislation requires that recall petitions be initiated through a notarized affidavit presented to the town clerk. The petition submitted to the town clerk in this instance was not notarized.   
  
Other recall petitions since the legislation have never reached the point where the validity of the affidavits were questioned. This left town officials unaware of the need for a notarized petition.   
  
The petition for a special town meeting comes under a different set of guidelines and that meeting will be held.   
  
Selectmen voted Monday night to hold the special town meeting at 7 p.m. Feb. 19 in the Narragansett Regional Middle-High School.   
  
The two articles requested on the special town meeting petition are:

 To revoke legislation that created the Board of Health Sanitary Landfill Enterprise Fund.

 To delete recently amended language in the town sanitary landfill bylaw that would allow material from the town and surrounding communities to be brought to the landfill.   
  
The deletion would return the landfill bylaw to the bylaw passed in 1975 and amended in 1982, which allows only garbage and refuse generated within the geographical limits of the Town of Templeton and excludes bringing in garbage or refuse from outside town.   
  
The decision by the Board of Registrars to uphold the town meeting petition and deny the recall petition was made last week.   
  
"No matter how anyone feels about the issues, I believe the registrars made the proper decision, according to law," Registrar Mayme Sweeney said.   
  
When setting the date for the special town meeting, selectmen opened the warrant Monday night and will close it at 4 p.m. Friday. They will meet at 4:30 p.m. Friday to approve the warrant and continue the process.   
  
Selectmen were warned that Town Moderator Rob Hubbard will be out of the country from Feb. 7 through 28. Because the meeting must be held within that time frame, selectmen said they will ask the town meeting to approve a substitute moderator.   
  
During Monday's meeting, Fire Chief Richard Kirby asked the board to place an article on the special town meeting warrant that funds from the sale of fire stations be placed into an account for use by the Fire Department to purchase a new engine or ladder. That issue will be discussed again during the Friday meeting to approve the warrant.   
  
Selectman Paul Quattrociocchi said he prefers to leave the Fire Department request off the warrant. Selectman Randy Brown said he would like to see the article on the warrant.   
  
Selectmen will also discuss the two applications they received for police chief. Acting Police Chief David Whitaker and acting Sgt. John Dale have submitted applications for the post. A public hearing to interview the candidates will be set during the Friday meeting.   
  
In other business, selectmen called a halt to an economy measure to cut the cost of town street lighting.   
  
The light department was told last fall to cut 48 percent of the cost of street lighting for the town. Manager Gerald Skelton said 326 lights have been taken out of service, leaving 477 lights to illuminate the town.   
  
If the additional 120 lights required to meet the requested reduction are removed, Mr. Skelton said, "It will be devastating to the neighborhoods in town."   
  
He said the department has received many complaints about the lost lights. Selectmen have also received calls from elderly and disabled citizens who say they feel in danger because of the darkened areas.   
  
Mr. Quattrociocchi said, "I want those lights left on. We'll find the money somewhere."   
  
A motion to stop shutting off lights was approved unanimously.