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Press Release - For Immediate Release

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January 21, 2010

Moultonborough Releases 1st Web Survey on Change of Fiscal Year

Using the web to distribute information is pretty commonplace these days and the Town of Moultonborough is now turning to it to collect citizen thoughts on various matters under consideration. On February 1st the Town will post a survey on its web site, www.moultonboroughnh.gov, asking what people think of the idea of changing from a traditional fiscal year, which starts on January 1 and runs through December 31, to one which runs from July 1, to June 30th.

While the vast majority of communities in the state budget on the traditional calendar year, about 30 have converted to the alternate of starting their fiscal year on July 1. If the voters approve of a "Sense of the Meeting" warrant article at the March Town Meeting, Moultonborough would join a growing number of communities looking at this idea. Locally Holderness is the most recent community to join the 30 others throughout the state who have made the conversion.

Proponents of the change cite the opportunity to have a budget in place before the fiscal year expenditures begin and the advantage of being on the same fiscal year as the Schools. Some also believe the ability to have the Annual Town Meeting in May increases attendance. Ms. Karel Crawford, Chairman of the SelectBoard said, "There is quite a bit of work to investigating and presenting all of the issues to the voters for their consideration. Before we ask staff and the Advisory Budget Committee to expend that energy we thought it best to see if this was something the community is interested in."

This first web survey, and a second to be conducted within the next month on services for seniors, is being provided to the Town at no charge by its web site provider, Virtual Town Hall. If the surveys prove popular and useful then the Town will make a permanent commitment to the added annual cost estimated to be about \$500.

While an online survey is not recognized as being statistically valid Ms. Crawford noted that "It is another means for residents and taxpayers to provide their thoughts for use in the decision making process."

A final report of the survey findings will be available at the March Town Meeting and posted on the Town web site shortly thereafter. The warrant article calls for the results of the study to be presented no later than the 2012 Town Meeting. Any change would most likely not take effect until the Town Meeting of 2013.

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