

CRAFTSBURY TOWN MEETING MINUTES MARCH 5, 2024 AT CRAFTSBURY ACADEMY GYM (DRAFT)

Susan Houston read the Town Report dedication of Linda Wells. She also thanked the Freedom & Unity Group for assisting with Town Meeting this year. Susan announced she was stepping down from the Selectboard. Bruce, expressing the gratitude of the community, then presented her with flowers in recognition of her 18 years of dedicated service.

Meeting started at 11:35am. . Jeannine Young asked veterans to stand in recognition. Joe made motion to suspend reading of the warning, seconded by Doug McCarty. Voice carried, passed.

Article 1: To elect a Town Moderator. Jeannine Young was nominated by Carolyn Ryan, seconded by Bruce Urie. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 1 passed.

Article 2: Auditors' Report was given by Cheryl Bailey and Michael Waterhouse. Cheryl said they have examined January -December 2023 town financials. After the delinquent taxes changed hands, they also examined the 2019-2023 delinquent taxes and adjustments were made for errors in bookkeeping. Cheryl states that the Town financials are accurate and true.

Representative Katherine Sims discussed key issues currently being addressed by the State Legislature.

Article 3: To elect all Town Officers:

- Select Board Member
Jane Marlin nominated Alison Blaney as Selectboard member for a term of 3 years, Molly Sease nominated Lucas Schulz. 201 total voters, Alison Blaney received 88 votes, Lucas Schulz received 68 votes, total votes cast 156. Alison Blaney is voted in as Selectboard member for a term of 3 years.
- Lister
Penelope Doherty nominated Harry Miller as a Lister for a term of 3 years.
Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Harry Miller was voted in as Lister for 3 years.
- Auditor
Cheryl Bailey nominated Craig Taylor as an auditor for a term of 3 years.
Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Craig Taylor was voted in as an Auditor for 3 years.
- Cemetery Commissioner
Bruce Urie nominated James Jones as a Cemetery Commission for a term of 5 years. Voice vote, voice carried, passed. James Jones was voted in as a Cemetery Commissioner for a term of 5 years.
- Trustee of Public Funds
Penelope Doherty nominated Leslie Taylor as a Trustee of Public Funds for a term of 3 years. Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Leslie Taylor was voted in as a Trustee of Public Funds.

- WWII Memorial Fund Trustee

Carolyn Ryan nominated Michael Martin as WWII Memorial Fund Trustee for a term of 3 years. Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Michael Martin was voted in as a WWII Memorial Fund Trustee.

Article 4: Shall the voters authorize total fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$960,863.00 of which \$648,292.17 shall be raised by taxes and \$312,570.83 by non-tax revenues?

Bruce Urie made a motion to move Article 4, Susan Houston seconded. Bruce took a moment to recognize Kent Young, who is retiring this year, for many years of service on the road crew. Bruce also commended the road crew, Selectboard, N2N, town clerk, Fire Department and the many contractors who all came together to help during the flood. 201 Total Voters; 107 yes, 7 no for a total of 114 votes cast. Article 4 passed.

Article 5: Shall the Town appropriate \$65,000 to the Craftsbury Fire Department for payment of necessary expenses from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024?

Wendy Baker made a motion to move Article 5, Tim Fritz seconded.

201 Total Voters; 98 yes, 3 no for a total of 101 votes cast. Article 5 passed.

Article 6: Shall the Town appropriate \$10,000 to the Craftsbury Fire Department for paying stipends to its volunteers? Tim Fritz made a motion to move Article 6, Doug McCarty seconded. Kris Coville encouraged voters to visit their fire department table, looking for volunteers. She questioned if \$10,000 was adequate.

Jeremiah McCann explained the Fire Department doesn't volunteer for the money; it's just nice if it helps partially cover things like lost wages or lost sleep. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 6 passed.

Article 7: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$12,400 for the following appropriations?

\$1,500 Craftsbury Block Party Fund

\$6,400 Craftsbury Cemeteries, for mowing

\$2,500 Craftsbury Recreation Committee, with \$1,500 allocated to swimming lessons in Greensboro

\$ 500 Craftsbury Historical Society

\$1,500 Craftsbury Village Improvement Society, for maintenance on the Common

TOTAL \$12,400

Voice vote, voice carried, Article 7 passed.

Article 8: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$7,000 for the Craftsbury Conservation Fund, money set aside for future conservation projects?

Steve Moffat moved Article 8, seconded, Steve Moffatt explained the potential use of the fund. Michelle Warren stated that in the Town Report the Craftsbury Conservation Fund was incorrectly titled Craftsbury Conservation Commission account. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 8 passed.

Article 9: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$6,000 for Craftsbury Saplings, a community children's center?

Jeff Fellingner moved Article 9, seconded Tim Fritz. Melissa Jacobs spoke on behalf of Craftsbury Saplings noting 80% goes to their staff. They currently serve 28 children, 14 children from Craftsbury. Nicole Jones

wondered by Saplings was asking \$6,000 from Craftsbury when they were only asking \$500 from nearby towns such as Greensboro. Nicole Jones asked to amend the original article by reducing the amount to \$1,400 and also asked for a paper vote, seconded by Jasper Wright. More than 7 people agreed with the paper ballot request. There was much discussion, including salary, cost, wait list, upcoming State changes. The amended article failed with a paper vote of 26 yes/86 no for a total of 112 votes cast. Original article voice vote, voice carried, Article 9 passed.

Article 10: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$ 12,000 for Craftsbury Community Care Center, a residential care home providing support to elders?

Geoffrey Bok moved Article 10, Doug McCarty seconded. Geoffrey explained that this helps bridge the gap between payment and services. Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Article 10 passed.

Article 11: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$ 13,700 for the following appropriations?

\$ 4,500 Greensboro Nursing Home

\$ 4,200 Orleans Essex V.N.A. & Hospice for providing services to the elderly, homebound and chronically ill

\$ 5,000 Hardwick Area Food Pantry and the expanded Craftsbury Food Share

TOTAL \$13,700

Gina Campoli moved Article 11, seconded by Bruce Urie. Voice vote, voice carried, passed. Article 11 passed.

Article 12: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$ 14,098 for the following appropriations?

\$ 1,000 Aware for preventing and healing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence

\$ 1,200 Green Mountain Farm to School, Inc. for providing fresh, local food and nutrition education to students in Northern Vermont

\$ 1,500 Lamoille County Mental Health Services

\$ 1,000 Lamoille Family Center for parent and child programming services designed to promote health, safe and resilient families

\$ 500 North Country Animal League

\$ 650 N.E. Kingdom Council on Aging

\$ 1,266 Northeast Kingdom Human Services, for supporting community members with mental health, addiction and developmental disabilities

\$ 300 Northeast Kingdom Learning Services

\$ 1,142 Northeastern Vermont Development Assoc. (NVDA) for planning, developing, promoting and publicizing resources

\$ 500 Northwoods Stewardship Center, for widespread conservation and educational services

\$ 700 Old Stone House Museum, for maintaining the Old Stone House Museum and its programs

\$ 500 Orleans County Fair

\$ 500 Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter

- \$ 1,500 Rural Arts, for supporting programs, activities and projects for Craftsbury families
- \$ 600 Rural Community Transportation for providing public transportation services in Northern Vermont
- \$ 500 Salvation Farms for distributing produce from local farms to the region's residents
- \$ 140 VT Center for Independent Living
- \$ 500 VT Assoc. for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- \$ 100 VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force

TOTAL \$ 14,098

Bruce made amotion to move Article 12, Joe Young seconded. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 12 passed.

Article 13: Shall the Town appropriate a sum of \$25,880 to the Hardwick Rescue Squad, Inc.?

Bruce made motion to move Article 13, seconded Tim Fritz. Total of 203 voters, 92 yes, 1 no for a total of 93 votes cast. Article 13 passed.

Article 14: Shall the Town appropriate a sum of \$47,700 for the operation of the Craftsbury Public Library for the ensuing year? Tim Fritz to move Article 14, seconded by Jeff Fellingner. Steve Moffatt, Library representative remarked that the increase was due to payroll increases. Total of 203 voters; 72 yes, 9 no for a total of 81 votes cast. Article 14 passed.

Article 15: Shall the Town appropriate a sum \$800 Orleans County Citizens Advocacy (ConnectABILITIES) for creating and supporting relationships between community volunteers and individuals with developmental disabilities? Seth Bond moved Article 15, seconded Joe Young. There was discussion about what ConnectABILITIES was, who it served. Cheryl Bailey read their request to the Town. Although it is a new article this year, they have been on the warning previously Cheryl remarked. David Rodgers explained it's a good program that helps those socially isolated get to events, etc. Robert Linck called the question, Tim Fritz seconded. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 15 passed.

Article 16: Shall the Town elect its town officers by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(b)? Seth Bond moved Article 16, Bruce Urie seconded. Tim Fritz made a motion to amend the article, excluding the moderator from the Australian ballot, Wendy Baker seconded. Amended article voice carried. There was much discussion on the pros and cons of Australian Ballot, some wanted to wait another year for more research, some wanted to know if the Australian ballot was plurality or majority. When asked if the Freedom & Unity had researched Australian ballot voting as mentioned in the 2023 Town Meeting, Wendy Turnbull said the Freedom & Unity task force has not make a recommendation to the Select Board. When David Rowell asked the opinion of the Board, Susan Houston said the Board is divided, she was against it. Jim Jones said he was for it. Harry Miller asked for a ballot vote, more than 7 people agreed. 203 voters, 60 yes, 29 no for a total of 89 votes cast. Amended Article 16 passed.

Article 17: Shall the town vote that taxes be payable in installments, with due dates being July 15th, September 15th and November 15th (§32 V.S.A.4871), will bear interest at a rate of 1% percent per month or fraction

thereof for the first three months and thereafter 1½% percent per month or fraction thereof, from November 15th, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 4873?

Jane Marlin made a motion to move Article 17, Tim Fritz seconded. Voice vote, voice carried, Article 17 passed.

Article 18: Discussion nonbinding business.

Lois Charron asked the Recreation Committee to hold Craftsbury's Old Home Day the 2nd Saturday in August. David Rowell said the Barn Dance is May 18th. Michelle Warren said Antiques & Uniques is July 13th. Bru Mille said Farmers' Market starting May 15th.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Warren
Craftsbury Town Clerk

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