

## TOWN OF TOWNSHEND

### 2007 ANNUAL TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES MARCH 6, 2007

The legal voters of the Town and Town School District are hereby notified and **WARNED** to meet at the Town Hall in Townshend, Vermont on Tuesday, March 6, 2007 at 9:00 AM to act on the following articles, viz:

Henry Martin, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He asked that rules be amended and that the whole warning not be read but rather go one by one to save time, to which the assembly agreed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ARTICLE 1.** To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Henry Martin moved to open nominations for moderator.

David Dezendorf nominated David Liebow.

Henry Martin moved that the nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for David Liebow as Moderator for one year, which was seconded and so voted

**David Liebow was elected Moderator for a term of one year.**

David Liebow took the podium and announced that there were two speakers who wished to address the assembly; students from the Townshend Elementary School and Richard Marek, D-Windham, Townshend's Representative in Montpelier.

A Motion was made to suspend the rules to allow both parties to address the assembly, which was passed by voice vote.

The Moderator first recognized Richard Marek who took questions on and discussed Federal and State mandates on education, the problems resulting from the change in prebate funding to pay directly to the towns, wind power and energy conservation issues, roads, school construction and funding of projects, consolidation of Supervisory Unions and global warming. Representative Richard Marek left at 10:00

The 2nd and 5th grade students from Townshend Elementary School spoke about forested property within the Town. They requested that voters complete a survey which was prepared by Barbara Bedortha and Julie Dolan, and said they will be looking at the Town Plan to see what they can do to help foster the continued health of the forested lands.

**ARTICLE 2.** To act on the 2006 Auditor's Report.

A motion was made by Carole Melis and seconded.

A motion was made to amend the Article to read "To act on the 2005 Auditor's Report", which motion was carried by voice vote. A Motion to adopt the report as corrected was made by Carole Melis and seconded.

**The motion to accept the 2005 Auditors Report, as amended, was approved by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 3.** To act on the 2007 Auditor's Report.

A motion was made by Carole Melis and seconded. Henry Martin moved to amend the Article to read "To act on the 2006 Auditor's Report" which was seconded.

Henry Martin said that the Auditor's report includes only a 6 month period due to the Town's switch to a July 1 fiscal year. There are some errors in the Auditor's Report in that it includes figures to the end of the calendar year which should not have been there, since with the change of the fiscal year, the period reported ended on June 30, 2006. Martin went on to say that this did not constitute a criticism against the Auditors, who did a tremendous job and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude.

**The motion to accept the 2006 Auditors Report, as amended, was carried by voice vote.**

#### ARTICLE 4.

To see what salaries the Town will vote to pay its various Town and School District Officers for the ensuing year?

Town and School Officers:

Town Clerk and Town Treasurer: salary for the fiscal year 2007-08  
Town Clerk \$26,303.00;  
Town Treasurer \$25,292.00;  
Selectboard (1) \$675.00 per year-chair (4) \$600.00 per year;  
Listers, Auditors, assistants and casual labor: \$11.74 per hour;  
School Board: (5) \$300.00;  
School District Treasurer: \$1,575.00

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded. A motion to amend the Town Clerk's salary to \$29,142.04 was made by Carole Melis and seconded.

Melis explained that the additional amount being requested was to cover the 20% employee's contribution toward health care premiums which is being required this year for the first time. If the salary is not increased as proposed, this co-payment will reduce her net pay to below 2004 rates. Following discussion, a motion to call the question passed by a 2/3 voice vote.

The Moderator clarified that the motion to be voted on was to Amend Article 4 to increase the Town Clerk's salary from \$26,303.00 to \$29,142.04. More than seven voters requested a paper ballot.

Total ballots cast 118. Total in favor of the motion 68. Total opposed 50.

**The motion to amend the Town Clerk's salary and increase the amount from \$26,303.00 to \$29,142.04 was approved.**

A motion to reconsider to allow the Select Board to speak was made by Cynthia Davis and seconded.

Following discussion regarding the suspension of rules and when was the appropriate time for the Board to speak to an issue, a vote was taken on the motion to reconsider.

**The motion to reconsider to allow the Select Board to speak failed by voice vote.**

A motion to increase the Town Treasurer's salary from \$25,292.00 to \$31,850.00 was made by Michalina Wasung and seconded.

A motion to amend the amendment for the Treasurer to receive a salary equal to the Town Clerk's in the amount of \$29,142.04 was made by Ken Hoffman and seconded.

Michalina Wasung, the Treasurer, explained that going to a four times per year tax payment schedule, as well as her work with the Listers and Auditors, had increased her work load far beyond 30 hours a week.

Martin countered that the Select Board decided not to increase the Treasurer's salary at all due to her lack of cooperation in providing financial statements with which the Board could prepare its annual budget. Following prolonged discussion, a motion to call the question was made by Mark Morse which was seconded and passed by voice vote.

The Moderator pointed out that we cannot have two amendments on the floor at the same time, so first needed to vote on the first amendment to increase Treasurer's salary from \$25,292.00 to \$31,850.00. A call for a paper ballot was made.

Total ballots cast: 121      Yes - 49      No - 72

**The motion to amend the Treasurer's salary from \$25,292.00 to \$31,850.00 failed.**

After minimal further discussion a motion to amend the amendment to increase the Treasurer's salary from \$25,292.00 to \$29,142.04 was voted on by paper ballot.

Total ballots cast: 120      Yes - 31      No - 87      Blank - 2

**The motion to amend the Treasurer's salary from \$25,292.00 to \$29,142.04 failed.**

Alice Gausch suggested that it might be a good idea to have a neutral committee appointed to work with the Treasurer so people will know what the job involves to be prepared next year to have more educated discussion. Henry Martin said that the Select Board has engaged the personnel director of Vermont League of Cities and

Towns, Dominic Cloud, to meet with all town departments and interested residents. Cloud is a mediator and it is hoped he can assist in opening the doors of communication to allow the Town to run more smoothly.

A motion to call the question was made by Elizabeth Garfield and seconded.

The Moderator read Article 4., as amended:

To see what salaries the Town will vote to pay its various Town and School District Officers for the ensuing year?

Town and School Officers:

Town Clerk and Town Treasurer: Salary for the fiscal year 2007-08

Town Clerk \$29,142.04;

Town Treasurer \$25,292.00

Selectboard (1) \$675.00 per year-chair (4) \$600.00 per year

Listers, Auditors, assistants and casual labor: \$11.74 per hour

School Board: (5) \$300.00

School District Treasurer: \$1,575.00

Total ballots cast: 117      Yes - 90      No - 24      Spoiled - 3

#### **ARTICLE 4, as amended, was approved**

The meeting was recessed for lunch for one hour, to reconvene at 1:00 PM. Henry Martin thanked Grace Cottage Hospital and its CEO, Shana Jones, for providing lunch.

**The Moderator recalled the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.**

**ARTICLE 5.**      Shall the Town of Townshend reduce the Board of Listers from 5 (five) to 3 (three) members?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

When asked the reason for this motion, the Board of Selectmen explained that, given the wages offered and the hours involved in holding this office, which make it difficult to fill the positions, it would be more viable and beneficial to the Town if there were three Listers, a data entry person and outside professionals to help do the job, rather than five Listers. With the State looking for mandatory reappraisals at least every 5 years, the wages saved on the two additional Listers could be used to pay for the professional assistance.

#### **ARTICLE 5 was approved by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 6.**      To elect all Town and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year:

**SELECT BOARD**      One - 3 year term  
                            Two - 1 year term

**1 - three year term:**      Nominated:      Scott Chase (not present) and Alene Evans.  
                                    There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Results of ballots cast:      Total - 101      Evans - 63      Chase - 36      Spoiled - 2

Alene Evans, 3 year term as Selectperson

**1 - one year term:**      Nominated:      Michael Donahue, Forrest Jacobs and Corey Sleeper (not present)  
                                    There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Moderator, David Liebow, stated that a majority of votes needed to be collected to determine a winner.

Results of ballots cast:      Total - 103      Donahue - 55      Jacobs - 40      Sleeper - 6      Spoiled - 2

Michael Donahue, 1 year term as Selectperson

**1 - one year term:**      Nominated:      Forrest Jacobs, Scott Chase (not present) and Carole Melis  
                                    There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Art Monette explained that Scott Chase was not here because he was injured. Mr. Chase had been on the Board before.

Carole Melis said she would run and, if elected, would do her best to do a good job.

Forrest Jacobs – gave a brief description of his life in Townshend for the past 50 years.

Results of ballots cast:      Total – 102      Jacobs – 33      Chase – 24      Melis - 45

The first vote resulted in no one getting a clear majority. Votes needed 52.

Moderator, David Liebow, requested a revote.

Results of ballots cast:      Total – 103      Jacobs – 30      Chase – 20      Melis – 52      Spoiled - 1  
Carole Melis, 1 year term as Selectperson

Motion made and seconded to suspend the rules to make a short announcement.

Henry Martin recognized and thanked Irvin Stowell for his 31 years of service to the town in many capacities. He also thanked Berenice Brooks for the 5 years she served on the Select Board.

The meeting then proceeded to School Board elections.

**SCHOOL BOARD**      One - 3 year term  
                            Two - 1 year term

Clarification Hege elected to finish 2 years on a 3 year

**1 – three year term:**      Nominated – Kathy Hege  
                            There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

David Dezendorf moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Kathy Hege for a three year term on School Board; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Kathy Hege, 3 year term on School Board

**1 – one year term:**      Nominated – Al Claussen  
                            There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Kathy Hege moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Al Claussen for a one year term on School Board; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Al Claussen, 1 year term on School Board

**1 – one year term:**      Nominated - Glen Beattie  
                            There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carole Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Glen Beattie for a one year term on School Board; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Glen Beattie, 1 year term on School Board

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT TREASURER**

**1 – one year term:**      Nominated – Andrea Royce  
                            There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carole Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Andrea Royce for a one year term as School District Treasurer; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Andrea Royce, 1 year term as School District Treasurer

**LISTERS**      One – 1 year remaining on a 3 year term  
                            One – 3 year term  
                            Two – 1 year term

**1 – three year term:** Nominated – Howard Lott  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Howard Lott for a three year term as Lister; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Howard Lott, 3 year term as Lister

**1 – one year remaining on a 3 year term:** Nominated – Richard Lucier and Jean Butler  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Results of ballots cast: Total – 96 Lucier – 80 Butler – 14 Spoiled - 2

Richard Lucier, 1 year term as Lister

## AUDITOR

**1 – three year term** Nominated – Carolyn Laning  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Carolyn Laning for a three year term as Auditor; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Carolyn Laning, 3 year term as Auditor

## DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR

**1 – one year term** Nominated – Megan Richardson  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Megan Richardson for a one year term as Delinquent Tax Collector; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Megan Richardson, 1 year term as Delinquent Tax Collector

## FIRST CONSTABLE

**1 – one year term** Nominated – Mitchell Putnam  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Mitchell Putnam for a one year term as First Constable; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Mitchell Putnam, 1 year term as First Constable

## SECOND CONSTABLE

**1 – one year term** Nominated – Mark Morse  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Mark Morse for a one year term as Second Constable; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Mark Morse, 1 year term as Second Constable

## TOWN GRAND JUROR

**1 – one year term** Nominated – Christine Dyke.  
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Christine Dyke for a one year term as Town Grand Juror; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Christine Dyke, 1 year term as Town Grand Juror

## TOWN AGENT

**1 – one year term**

Nominated – Judy Tietz

There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Judy Tietz for a one year term as Town Agent; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Judy Tietz, 1 year term as Town Agent

**LIBRARY TRUSTEE**

One – 4 years remaining on a 5 year term

Correction made - should be 2 years remaining on a 5 year term

**1 – two years remaining on a 5 year term** Nominated – Ann Allbee

There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Ann Albee for a two year term remaining on a 5 year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Ann Allbee, two years remaining on a 5 year term as Library Trustee

**1 – five year term**

Nominated – Marge Holt

There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carol Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Marge Holt for a five year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Marge Holt, 5 year term as Library Trustee

**CEMETERY COMMISSION****1 – five year term**

Nominated – Charles Marchant

There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Carole Melis moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Charles Marchant for a five year term as Cemetery Commissioner; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Charles Marchant, 5 year term as Cemetery Commissioner

**ARTICLE 7.**

To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, for the running expenses and liabilities of the Town. If so, how much?

Henry Martin moved to appropriate \$353,678.00, of which \$262,809.00 will be raised by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of the town; seconded from the floor.

There being no discussion, Article 7 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 7 was approved**

**ARTICLE 8.**

To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, for the running expenses and liabilities for summer and winter roads. If so, how much?

Henry Martin moved to appropriate \$589,450.00, of which \$505,892.00 will be raised by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of the town; seconded from the floor.

Following discussion regarding special projects anticipated for the coming year, which included culverts on Windham Hill Road and roads in Townshend Acres, as well as paving another one- mile stretch of road, Article 8 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 8 was approved**

**ARTICLE 9.**

To see if the Town will vote to raise \$50,000.00 by taxation for the Town Equipment Fund to offset capital expenditures?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Henry Martin explained that this was one time request to offset the unexpected purchase of equipment in the past year, and not a recurring expense.

Following discussion, Article 9 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 9 was approved**

Kathy Hege made a point of order that the newly elected officers needed to be sworn in before some of them had to leave. During a brief recess, the Town Clerk took the oaths of all newly elected officers who were present, and the School Board moved into position to discuss school Articles.

**ARTICLE 10.** To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the school. If so, how much?

A Motion was made by Kathy Hege to raise \$1,160,334.00, by taxation to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the school and seconded.

Kathy Hege, the Chairman of the School Board, explained that \$5,000.00 was added to the budget request in order to pay interest on short term debt incurred to operate the school until tax monies were received.

Following questions about guidance services, special education services and physical education,

Art Monette thanked the board for taking a cut in pay to offset expenses.

There being no further discussion, Article 10 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 10 was approved**

**ARTICLE 11.** Shall the Town of Townshend authorize the Townshend School District to raise \$5,000.00 by taxation for deposit into the **School Capital Expenditures Fund?**

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

When asked what the money would be used for, Kathy Hege said that there was no specific project designated at this time. This budget item in the past has been used for the bus, and it might be used for boilers this year. Before the money could be used the voters would have to be asked.

There being no further discussion, Article 11 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 11 was approved**

**ARTICLE 12.** To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, for the running expenses and liabilities of the **Library**. If so, how much?

Ann Allbee made the motion to raise \$39,839.00, by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of the Library, which was seconded.

Ann Albee stated that the amount requested was higher because they had only been able to paint  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the building last year, and there are electrical problems as well as serious fire safety problems at doorways, all of which need to be addressed. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the cost of craft supplies as well as other programs given at the Library. At this time one of the Trustees has been using their own money to fund these things.

There being no further discussion, Article 12 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 12 was approved**

**ARTICLE 13.** To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, for law enforcement services. If so, how much?

A motion to pass over Article 13 was made by Henry Martin and seconded.

When asked why, Mr. Martin stated that according to the Treasurer's report, there appears to be approximately \$50,000.00 in this budget item which is enough to cover fiscal year 2007-2008.

There being no further discussion, Motion to pass over Article 13 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 13 was passed over**

**ARTICLE 14.** To see if the Town will vote to raise an additional \$10,000 by taxation, to be placed in the existing “**Act 60: Reappraisal Planning Fund**” for payment in preparation for the next, State required, town wide reappraisal?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

A motion to amend the amount to be raised to \$20,000.00 was made by Howard Lott and seconded.

Michalina Wasung said that the Town can allow an amendment to change the Article from \$10,000.00 to 20,000.00; \$10,000.00 for Act 60 Reappraisal and \$10,000.00, reserved, for retaining professional services.

**Motion to amend ARTICLE 14 was approved by voice vote.**

Henry Martin restated that the Article would read “\$10,000.00 for reappraisal fund and \$10,000.00 for professional services, reserved”; which means that any money not used in the coming year for professional services would stay in reserve to be applied to the costs of future professional services. Excess funds would not go into the general fund.

There being no further discussion, Article 14, as Amended, passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 14, as amended, was approved**

**ARTICLE 15.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$10,000.00, by taxation, to be placed in the **Capital Expenditure Fund Fire Department Reserve**, for payment toward a future pumper?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Motion to amend the Article was made by Irvin Stowell and seconded. Henry Martin read as follows: “To see if the Town will vote to raise \$10,000.00, by taxation, to be placed in the Capital Expenditure Fund Fire Department Reserve, and interest from this fund to be retained for payment toward a future pumper?”

Irvin said the reason for the amendment is that the interest is un-earmarked. Discussion followed whether there needs to be three 3 separate funds for any reserves, or a single fund containing multiple accounts.

Following discussion, Article 15, as Amended, passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 15, as amended, was approved**

**ARTICLE 16.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$750.00, by taxation, for the **Old Cemetery Fund**?

So moved by Charlie Marchant and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article 16 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 16 was approved**

**ARTICLE 17.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$260.00, by taxation, for the support of **West River Watershed Alliance**?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Henry Martin corrected the Town Report to report that the West River Watershed Alliance was a petition article which was to have been listed individually. In error, it was also included in the total for Social Services. There being no further discussion, Article 17 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 17 was approved**

**ARTICLE 18.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$250.00, by taxation, for the support of **Historical Society of Windham County**?

So moved by Charlie Marchant and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article 18 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 18 was approved**

**ARTICLE 19.** To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, for the support of the **Windham County Humane Society**. If so, how much?

A motion to raise \$100.00, by taxation, for the support of the Windham County Humane Society was made by Carole Melis and seconded.

Henry Martin said this request was included in the Social Services amount and it did not belong there.

Ellie Lemire moved to amend the motion to raise \$1,000.00, by taxation, which was seconded.

Indra Tracy moved to amend the amended motion, to raise \$2,500.00, by taxation, which was also seconded.

Henry Martin explained that there was an incident in town in which the Windham Humane Society had taken in many dogs from a resident. The Town of Townshend feels some obligation in this regard.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator read the amendment to the amended motion, as follows: "To see if the Town will vote to raise \$2,500.00 by taxation for the support of the Windham County Humane Society", which failed by voice vote.

The Moderator then read the original amendment as follows: "To see if the Town will vote to raise \$1,000.00, by taxation, for the support of the Windham County Humane Society" which passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 19, as amended, was approved**

**ARTICLE 20.** To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation for the support of **Social Services** as recommended by the Screening Committee?

The Moderator pointed out that totals on social service page were incorrect and should show a total of \$14,141.00

A motion to raise \$14,141.00 by taxation for Social Services was made by Carole Melis and seconded.

Ellie Lemire moved to amend the Article to add the Brattleboro Drop-in-Center to the list which would increase this request to \$14,401.00, which motion was seconded.

A motion to suspend the rules to allow Carol Stone from Connecticut River Transit to speak was passed by voice vote.

Ms. Stone explained how Connecticut River Valley Transit worked and the services they provide which include assistance for individuals who have transportation problems. A public commuter run is a possibility in the future.

After Ms. Stone finished, there being no further discussion, Article 20, as amended, passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 20, as amended, was approved**

**ARTICLE 21.** To see if the Town of Townshend will vote to **exempt from taxation**, the real estate owned by Grace Cottage Hospital (Carlos G. Otis Health Care Center, Inc.) and known as the **Heins Home** property, so-called, as long as it is used for the purpose as a charitable non-profit residential home for the aged. If so voted Heins Home will be removed from the Municipal Grand List and the Education Grand List, and that no taxes will be imposed for 5 (five) years (VT Statutes Annotated Title 32, Section 3840) commencing with the 2007 tax year.

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Charlie Marchant asked if Valley Cares opens in 2007 or shortly thereafter and Heins Home is closed, is the town bound by this for five years? Can it be done in one-year intervals?

Henry Martin stated that a waiver from taxation can be done for just one year, which was confirmed by the Town Treasurer.

A motion was made by Effie Chamberlain and seconded by Michalina Wasung to amend the Article to read:

"To see if the Town of Townshend will vote to **exempt from taxation**, the real estate owned by Grace Cottage Hospital (Carlos G. Otis Health Care Center, Inc.) and known as the **Heins Home**, so-called, for

a period ending March 31, 2008 or until the use of the property changes such that it no longer qualifies for exemption from taxation under Title 32, §§3802(4) and 3832(7) V.S.A. If so voted, Heins Home will be removed from the 2007 Municipal Grand List but not the 2007 Education Grand List. An additional Municipal tax will be assessed at a sufficient amount to raise the foregone Education Property Tax".

Henry Martin explained if voters vote to exempt Heins Home the taxpayers are still responsible for the education tax.

Following extensive discussion, a motion to call the question was made and seconded.

There being no further discussion Article 21, as amended, passed by voice vote.

### **ARTICLE 21, as amended, was approved**

**ARTICLE 22.** To see if the Town will assume responsibility and expenses for the maintenance and repairs to the **gazebo**, and, if so, how those expenses will be funded?

Jan Stowell moved to pass over Article 22, seconded from the floor.

When asked why the Article should be passed over, Michalina said the Townshend Business Association had promised at a prior town meeting that the town would never be asked to pay any money toward the maintenance and repairs of gazebo.

David Liebow, Moderator, ruled that the Motion to pass over was out of order.

Elizabeth Jones, the President of the Townshend Business Association, explained what the financial needs were. She also stated that they have been maintaining the structure for years, but now they need help.

Mr. Liebow stated that there must be a majority voice vote to pass over an Article.

### **The vote on the motion to pass over Article 22 failed by voice vote.**

A motion was made by Stephen McConnell and seconded by Carole Melis to amend the Article to read: "To see if the Town will vote to raise \$3,000.00, by taxation, to replace the roof on the gazebo and to donate \$250.00 per year for the maintenance and repairs of the **gazebo**".

Following extensive discussion about the way the Town has used the gazebo, for marriages, the Pumpkin Festival, band concerts and other events, it was reported that significant repairs must be done. The roof needs to be replaced, spindles must be repaired, and the structure needs to be painted, all of which exceed the organization's ability to cover.

A motion to call the question was made and seconded.

Henry Martin stated that the Townshend Business Association cannot ask for \$250.00 to be raised by taxes for ensuing years without the request having been warned as an Article.

The Moderator read the Amended Article "To see if the Town will vote to raise \$3,000.00, by taxation, to replace the roof on the gazebo and to donate \$250.00 per year for the maintenance and repairs of the gazebo."

There being no further discussion, Article 22, as amended, failed by voice vote.

### **ARTICLE 22, as amended, failed**

**ARTICLE 23.** To see if the voters will authorize the Selectmen to **set a tax rate** sufficient to cover all monies raised for the period July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2008 and to borrow money in anticipation of taxes?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Henry Martin stated that this Article relates to the Municipal and Highway budgets only and not the educational budget.

There being no further discussion, Article 23 passed by voice vote.

### **ARTICLE 23 was approved**

**ARTICLE 24.** To see if the Town will vote to have the Treasurer receive its **Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 15, 2007, November 15, 2007, February 15, 2008 and May 15, 2008?** Monthly interest will be charged at the rate of one percent (1%) or fraction thereof; interest of one and one half percent (1 ½% per month) or fraction thereof plus penalties will commence on the last date of the 2008 fiscal year.

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Carole Melis moved to amend the dates of collection to October 22, 2007 and February 29, 2008, which was seconded.

Henry Martin stated that the quarterly tax payment schedule was established to help low and fixed income families. The Town owes it to these people to keep the payments as they are.

Moderator read “Can we allow an amendment to change from quarterly tax payment to bi-annual tax payments?

The Moderator took a straw poll and ruled that the amendment to change from a quarterly tax payment schedule to a bi- annual tax payment scheduled would not be allowed.

The Moderator re-read the original Article, and there being no further discussion, Article 24 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 24 was approved**

**ARTICLE 25.** To see if the Town will raise any money, by taxation, to continue developing the Town’s infrastructure? If so, how much?

A motion to pass over this Article was made by Henry Martin and seconded. His explanation, when asked why, was that there is excess money in the fund at this time. He stated that they would be looking at the town and its needs in the future and they will address this question at that time.

Motion to pass over Article 25 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 25 was passed over**

**ARTICLE 26.** To see if the Town will authorize the Selectboard to sell or convey properties acquired by the Town through tax sales and to execute, acknowledge and deliver deed and other transfer documents upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen may deem to be in the best interest of the Town?

So moved by Cynthia Davis and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article 26 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 26 was approved**

**ARTICLE 27.** To see if the Town will authorize the Selectboard to acquire, by gift or purchase land for municipal forest, to promote reforestation, water conservation and good forestry practices?

So moved by Irvin Stowell and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article 27 passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE 27 was approved**

**ARTICLE 28.** To transact any other non-binding business to properly come before said Meeting.

Sally Newton moved that the Town adopt the following resolution; seconded by Clay Turnbull.

*“Whereas George W. Bush and Richard B. Cheney have: 1. deliberately misled the nation about the threat from Iraq in order to justify a war; 2. condoned the torture of prisoners in violation of the Geneva Convention and US law; and 3. approved illegal electronic surveillance of American citizens without a warrant; and, Whereas these actions have undermined our Constitutional system of government, damaged the reputation of America, and threatened our national security; Therefore, the voters of the*

*town of Townshend call upon the U.S. House of Representatives to investigate these charges, and if the investigation supports the charges, vote to impeach George W. Bush and Richard B. Cheney as provided in the Constitution of the United States of America. This resolution shall be signed by the Town Clerk and forwarded to both the Speaker and the Clerk of the US House of Representatives, and Representative John Conyers of the House Judiciary Committee."*

It was reported that this resolution needed to be sent earlier to be put in as an Article and voted upon, and comment was made that the relevance of this resolution not understood. Mr. Turnbull spoke to the relevance. Others spoke of the soldiers from Vermont who have been killed in the Iraq war and that it is necessary for us to take a stand.

Following further discussion, voters requested paper ballot by a show of 7 hands.

Total ballots cast 47      Total in favor of the motion 27      Opposed 20

Mr. Martin thanked David Liebow for a job well done and announced that the next Town Meeting would be held on March 4, 2008 at 9:00 AM.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Bean, Town Clerk

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Selectperson

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Joseph Daigneault, Justice of the Peace