

TOWN OF TOWNSHEND

2009 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES **MARCH 3, 2009**

The Annual Town and Town School District meeting was called to order by Moderator, David Liebow, at 9:05 AM.

David read the preamble.

Irvin Stowell questioned the omission of the preamble in this year's Warning. David explained that it was inadvertently omitted and that a Special Meeting can be warned or it can be ratified at next year's Town Meeting.

ARTICLE I. To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Henry Martin moved to open nominations for moderator.

Berenice Brooks nominated David Liebow.

Carole Melis 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.

Mr. Liebow advised the assembly as to the rules and regulations that would be followed for participation in today's Town Meeting which was followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A Motion was made to suspend the rules to allow Mr. Marek to address the assembly, which was passed without objection.

The Moderator recognized Richard Marek who spoke and took questions from the floor. Representative Richard Marek left at 9:30.

The Moderator asked the Select Board members to introduce themselves.

ARTICLE II. To act upon the June 30, 2007 - July 1, 2008 Auditors' Report:

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Motion to amend the Article to read "To approve the July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008 Auditors' Report; to include the General Fund Comparative Balance Sheet and replace page 10 with corrections" was made by Kim Liebow and seconded by Eleanor Lemire.

There was discussion concerning the omission of the Library Budget, page 10 correction sheet and the possibility of the Select Board receiving 6 month budget figures.

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

ARTICLE II, as amended, was approved by Voice Vote

Motion to suspend the rules and move to Article XVII was made by Elizabeth Garfield; seconded and passed by 2/3 Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XVII. "Shall the Town authorize the Board of Selectmen to remove the appointed position of Bookkeeper and reallocate the funding for the financial office to properly compensate the Town Treasurer as a full-time position, including insurance and benefits?"

So moved by Elizabeth Garfield and seconded.

Joseph Juhasz explained the circumstances of the aforementioned article and briefly explained why there was a bookkeeper/treasurer.

Concerns were raised that with the Bookkeeper doing the duties of a Treasurer but reporting directly to the Board of Selectmen, effectively there is no one responsible directly to the Town.

Henry Martin spoke to the finances and how the Board had been unable to get financial reports. Therefore the Board decided to hire a bookkeeper and elect a treasurer, and to keep the positions separate.

There were questions as to when the positions would start, if the work that has been done would be undone. Joseph Juhasz said the work, including completion of an outside audit, has not been done and in another year he would support the motion to have just an elected treasurer and forego the bookkeeping position.

Further discussion regarding the bookkeeping position not being permanent, time invested, and money involved.

Motion to Call the Question was made by Arthur Monette and seconded by Alejandro Jimenez.

Voice Vote – ayes had it by 2/3 majority. Motion to end debate carried.

Request for paper ballot

Total Ballots Cast: 106 Yes - 27 No - 79

ARTICLE XVII Fails

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

So Moved by Craig Hunt and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article III passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE III was approved by Voice Vote

ARTICLE IV. To elect all Town Officials for the ensuing year(s):

TOWN CLERK

1 - one year term: Nominated: Anita Bean.
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Elizabeth Garfield moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Anita Bean for a one year term as Town Clerk; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Anita Bean, 1 year term as Town Clerk

TOWN TREASURER

1 - one year term: Nominated: Joseph Daigneault
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Elizabeth Garfield moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Joseph Daigneault for a one year term as Town Treasurer; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Joseph Daigneault, 1 year term as Town Treasurer

SELECT BOARD

1 - three year term: Nominated: Steve Ovenden
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 Steve Ovenden for a three year term on Select Board; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Steve Ovenden, 3 year term as Selectperson

(1) 2 years remaining on a 3 year term Nominated: Michalel Charles
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 Michael Charles for a two year term on Select Board; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Michael Charles, 2 year term as Selectperson

1 – one year term Nominated: Charles Murray (respectfully declined)
Hedy Harris
Henry Martin (respectfully declined)
Bruce Bills
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Total Ballots Cast: 104 Bills - 64 Harris – 39 Spoiled - 1

Bruce Bills, 1 year term as Selectperson

1 – one year term Nominated: Robert DeSiervo (respectfully declined)
Hedy Harris
Walter (Bo) Royce
Irvin Stowell (respectfully declined)
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Total Ballots Cast: 108 Harris – 82 Royce - 25 Blank - 1

Hedy Harris, 1 year term as Selectperson

A call was made to ask for a standing ovation for Henry Martin for his many years of service on the Select Board. Also thanked other outgoing officers.

LISTERS

1 – three year term: Nominated: Gaila Gulack
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 Gaila Gulack for a three year term as Lister; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Gaila Gulack, 3 year term as Lister

AUDITORS

1 – three year term: Nominated: Elizabeth (Jones) Harrison
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

Michael Charles moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Elizabeth (Jones) Harrison for a three year term as Lister; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Elizabeth (Jones) Harrison, 3 year term as Auditor

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR

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

David Liebow 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.

Elizabeth Garfield 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.

Andrea Royce 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: Margaret Bills
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 Margaret Bills for a one year term as Town Grand Juror; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Margaret Bills, 1 year term as Town Grand Juror

TOWN AGENT

1 - one year term: Nominated: Judy Tietz (respectfully declined) Henry Martin
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 Henry Martin for a one year term as Town Agent; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Henry Martin, 1 year term as Town Agent

LIBRARY TRUSTEE

1 - five year term: Nominated: Ann Allbee
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

David Liebow moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Ann Allbee for a five year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Ann Allbee, 5 year term as Library Trustee

(1) 1 year remaining on a 5 year term Nominated: Barbara Bedortha
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

David Liebow moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Barbara Bedortha for a one year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Barbara Bedortha, 1 year term as Library Trustee

CEMETERY COMMISSION

1 – five year term: Nominated – David Liebow
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 David Liebow for a five year term as Cemetery Commissioner; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

David Liebow, 5 year term as Cemetery Commissioner

ARTICLE V. To see if the Town will vote to raise any money, by taxation, to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the Town, and if so, how much?
Motion made by Henry Martin and seconded by Elizabeth Garfield to appropriate \$348,226.00 of which \$191,272.00 will be raised by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of the town.

After brief discussion Article V passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE V was approved

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

Motion made by Henry Martin and seconded by Stanley Holt appropriate \$627,491.00 of which \$525,174.00 will be raised by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of summer and winter roads.

Discussion followed

Motion to Call the Question was made by Jeffrey Russ and seconded.

Voice Vote – ayes had it by 2/3 majority. Motion to end debate carried.

Article VI passed by hand vote.

ARTICLE VI was approved

ARTICLE VII. -- ARTICLE DELETED --

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

Motion was made by Margaret Bills and seconded to raise \$40,924.00, by taxation for the running expenses and liabilities of the Library.

There being no discussion Article VIII passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE VIII was approved

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

Motion to pass over Article IX was made by Janet Stowell and seconded.

Discussion followed.

Motion to pass over Article IX failed by Voice Vote.

Motion made by Henry Martin and seconded to appropriate \$34,500.00 of which \$20,000.00 will be raised by taxation for law enforcement services.

After brief discussion, Article IX passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE IX was approved

ARTICLE X. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$10,000.00, by taxation, to be placed in the "Act 60: Reappraisal Planning Fund" for payment in preparation of the next, State required, Town-wide reappraisal?

Motion made by Craig Hunt and seconded to raise to raise \$10,000.00, by taxation, to be placed in the "Act 60: Reappraisal Planning Fund" for payment in preparation of the next, State required, Town-wide reappraisal.

After minimal discussion Article X passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE X was approved

ARTICLE XI. 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 Christine Dyke and seconded.

Brief discussion regarding how much a new pumper will cost and when the town will need to purchase one.

There being no further discussion, Article XI, passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XI was approved

ARTICLE XII. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$ 1,000.00, by taxation, for the Old Cemetery Fund?

So moved by Charles Marchant and seconded.

There being no discussion Article XII passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XII was approved

The meeting was recessed for lunch at 12:00 noon, to reconvene at 1:00 p.m. for the Townshend School District Meeting at which time the Town Clerk will swear in all new elected individuals.

A heartfelt thanks goes out to Grace Cottage Hospital for providing such a delicious lunch. It is greatly appreciated.

Rick Hege spoke about the Town's website and took questions.

The Town Clerk took the oaths of all newly elected officers who were present.

The Moderator reconvened the Town Meeting at 2:06 p.m.

ARTICLE XIII. To see if the Town will raise any money, by taxation, for the repair and/or replacement of the Town's sidewalks, and if so, how much?

Motion made by Henry Martin and seconded to appropriate \$64,585.00 of which \$55,585.00 will be raised by taxation for the repair and/or replacement of the Town's sidewalks.

Discussion followed regarding repairing the sidewalk and putting in 8 parallel parking spaces.

There is currently \$8,000.00.00 in a sidewalk reserve fund. The town may qualify for financial aide/stimulus money.

Motion to amend the Article was made by Peter Galbraith and seconded to read "to appropriate \$64,585.00 for the repair and/or replacement of the Town's sidewalks provided not less than \$23,000.00 comes from non-tax

revenue.”

There was brief discussion.

Motion to move the Motion to Amend was made by Arthur Monette and seconded.

Voice Vote – ayes had it by 2/3 majority. Motion to end debate carried.

Request for paper ballot

Total Ballots Cast: 85 Yes - 25 No – 60 Blank 2

Motion to Amend Article XIII fails.

Motion made by Gene Kuch and seconded to amend the article to read \$56,585.00 in taxes

Motion to Amend passed by Voice Vote.

Further discussion followed.

Motion to call the question was made by Jeffrey Russ and seconded.

Voice Vote – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority. Motion to end debate carried.

Vote on Main Motion – Request for Paper Ballot.

Total Ballots Cast: 80 Yes - 61 No – 29

Article XIII, as amended, passes.

ARTICLE XIII, as amended, was approved

ARTICLE XIV. 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?

Motion to raise \$13,910.00 by taxation for the support of Social Services as recommended by the Screening Committee was made by Henry Martin and seconded.

There being no discussion, Article XIV passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XIV was approved

ARTICLE XV. To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to set a tax rate sufficient to cover all monies raised for municipal entities for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, and to borrow money in anticipation of taxes?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded .

There being no discussion, Article XV passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XV was approved

ARTICLE XVI. To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to appoint a Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 21, 2009; November 13, 2009; February 12, 2010; and May 14, 2010? Monthly interest will be charged at the rate of one percent (1%) or fraction thereof; interest of one-and-a-half percent (1 1/2%) or fraction thereof plus penalties will commence on May 15, 2010.

So moved by Charles Marchant and seconded.

Motion to amend Article 16 to read “To see if the Town will elect a Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 21, 2009; November 13, 2009; February 12, 2010; and May 14, 2010? Monthly interest will be charged at the rate of one percent (1%) or fraction thereof; interest of one-and-a-half percent (1 1/2%) or fraction thereof plus penalties will commence on May 15, 2010” was made by Henry Martin and

seconded.

There being no discussion Motion to amend Article XVI passed by Voice Vote.
Discussion followed.

Motion to Amend Article 16 to read "To see if the Town will elect a Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 21, 2009; November 13, 2009; February 12, 2010; and May 14, 2010? Monthly interest will be charged at the rate of one half percent (1/2%) or fraction thereof; interest of one percent (1%) or fraction thereof plus penalties will commence on May 15, 2010" was made by Peter Galbraith and seconded.

After brief discussion, second Motion to Amend Article XVI passed by Voice Vote.

There being no further discussion, Article XVI, as amended, passed Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XVI, as amended, was approved

The meeting proceeded to the election of a Tax Collector.

1 - one year term: Nominated: Joseph Daigneault
There being no others, Moderator declared nominations closed.

David Liebow moved that nominations be closed and the clerk be instructed to cast one ballot for Joseph Daigneault for a one year term as Tax Collector; seconded and carried by Voice Vote.

Joseph Daigneault, 1 year term as Tax Collector

ARTICLE XVIII. "Shall the voters of the town of Townshend request the Vermont legislature to:

1. Recognize that the 2% of our New England region's power grid supply that is provided by Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant can be replaced with a combination of local, renewable electricity and efficiency measures, along with the purchase of hydro generated electricity, and excess power already in the New England electricity market;
2. Given that viable alternatives and the risks posed by continued operation, ensure that Vermont Yankee will cease operation in March 2012, after having completed its 40 year design life by not granting approval for operation of the plant after that date and by not determining that further operation will promote the general welfare;
3. Hold the Entergy Corporation, which purchased Vermont Yankee in 2002, responsible to fully fund the plant's clean-up and decommissioning when the reactor closes, as the corporation pledged to do when it purchased Vermont Yankee."

So moved by Sally Newton and seconded.

Discussion followed.

Motion to call the question was made by Irvin Stowell and seconded.

Voice Vote – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority. Motion to end debate carried.

Request for Paper Ballot

Total Ballots Cast: 70 Yes - 49 No - 21 Blank - 1

ARTICLE XVIII was approved

Motion to Suspend the Rules to allow Peter Shumlin to speak was made by David Liebow and seconded.
Motion passed without objection.

Mr. Shumlin spoke to the assembly and took questions for ten minutes.

ARTICLE XIX. To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen 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 interest of the Town?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

There being no discussion Article XIX passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XIX was approved

ARTICLE XX. To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen 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 XX passed by Voice Vote.

ARTICLE XX was approved

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

Issues/topics discussed:

1. Thanks to Taffy Morgan for her years of service as a Justice of the Peace.
2. Auditors to have numbers to the Select Board by the beginning of October in order to prepare for budget.
3. Increase Veterans tax exemption.
4. Report on Town Garage process.
5. Volunteer committee to review Town Warning.

There being no further discussion, motion to adjourn at 4:02 P.M., to the next annual meeting on the first Tuesday in March 2010, was made by David Liebow; seconded and unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Bean, Town Clerk

David Liebow, Moderator

Joseph Daigneault, Justice of the Peace