

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 6, 2018

The legal voters of the Town of Townshend are hereby notified and WARNED to meet at the Town Hall in Townshend, Vermont, on Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. to act on the following articles, viz:

The Assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance and David Liebow called the meeting to order at 9:06 A.M. Several announcements were made and the location of numerous handouts and surveys was pointed out to the Assembly. The preamble was read and a brief explanation was given of the procedure that would be followed during Town Meeting. He also made mention of the Australian Ballot Vote that was being conducted to elect Directors for the West River Modified Union Education District.

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

David Liebow opened nominations for Moderator.

Nominated: David Liebow.

There being no others, nominations were closed and the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for David Liebow as Moderator for a term of one year. Motion seconded and passed by voice vote.

David Liebow, 1 year term as Moderator

Town Meeting was recessed to reconvene after the Townshend Elementary School District 2018 Annual Meeting:

ARTICLE II. To act upon the July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017 Independent Auditors' Report:

So moved by Craig Hunt to approve the Independent Auditors' Report, seconded by Kris Kuch.

Following brief discussion, Article II passes by voice vote.

Article II Passed

ARTICLE III. To see what salaries the Town will vote to pay its various officials for the ensuing year:

So moved by Kathy Hege, seconded by Irv Stowell.

Brief discussion regarding the combination of Town Treasurer/Tax Collector.

There being no further discussion, Article III passes by voice vote.

Article III Passed

Motion was made to suspend the rules to allow Emily Long to speak which was passed without objection.

Ms. Long spoke to the assembly regarding education and costs and took questions from the audience. She left at 10:10 A.M.

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

Town Clerk: 1 – one year term: Nominated: Anita Bean

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk 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

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk 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: **Will Bissonnette** **Daniel Holt** **Robert Wright**

Total Votes 112 **Will Bissonnette** – 47 **Daniel Holt** – 14 **Robert Wright** – 50
Write-In **Steve Frisk** - 1

No majority – Revote.

(Charlie Marchant made some brief announcements and thanked Doug Winot and Mike Cutts for their service on the Fire Department and welcomed Glen Beattie and Brian Schmidt.)

Total Votes 111 **Will Bissonnette** – 51 **Daniel Holt** – 4 **Robert Wright** – 53
Write-Ins **Steve Frisk** – 1 **Mike Bills** – 1
Blank - 1

No Majority – Revote.

Total Votes 111 **Will Bissonnette** – 51 **Daniel Holt** – 3 **Robert Wright** – 57

Robert Wright, 3 year term on Select Board

1 – one year term remaining on a three year term:

Nominated: **Steve Frisk** **Dan Holt** **Will Bissonnette**

Total Votes 110 **Steve Frisk** – 40 **Will Bissonnette** – 59 **Daniel Holt** – 10
Spoiled Vote – 1

Will Bissonnette, 1 year remaining on a 3 year term on Select Board

1 – one year term:

Nominated: **Steve Frisk** **Dan Holt** **Crystal Mansfield** **Brandon Canevari**

Total Votes – 108 **Steve Frisk** – 43 **Dan Holt** – 10 **Crystal Mansfield** – 41
Brandon Canevari – 14

No Majority – Revote.

Total Votes – 110 **Steve Frisk** – 50 **Dan Holt** – 1 **Crystal Mansfield** - 52
Brandon Canevari – 7

No majority – Revote

Total Votes – 110 **Steve Frisk** – 43 **Dan Holt** – 2 **Crystal Mansfield** – 64
Brandon Canevari – 0
Blank Vote – 1

Crystal Mansfield, 1 year term on Select Board

1 – one year term:

Nominated: **Steve Frisk** **Dan Holt** **Brandon Canevari**

Total Votes – 105 **Steve Frisk** – 64 **Dan Holt** – 18 **Brandon Canevari** – 23

Steve Frisk, 1 year term on Select Board

Listers: 1 - **three year term** **Nominated:** **Mike Bills**

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Mike Bills for a three year term as Lister; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Mike Bills, 3 year term as Lister

Delinquent Tax Collector: 1 – **one year term:** **Nominated:** Becky Reilly

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Becky Reilly for a one year term as Delinquent Tax Collector; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Becky Reilly, 1 year term as Delinquent Tax Collector

First Constable: 1 – **one year term:** **Nominated:** Warren Beattie

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk to cast one ballot for Warren Beattie for a one year term as First Constable; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Warren Beattie, 1 year term as First Constable

Second Constable: 1 – **one year term:** **Nominated:** Michael Cutts

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk to cast one ballot for Mike Cutts for a one year term as Second Constable; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Michael Cutts, 1 year term as Second Constable

Town Grand Juror: 1 – **one year term:** **Nominated:** Margaret Bills

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk 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:** Carole Melis

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk to cast one ballot for Carole Melis for a one year term as Town Agent; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Carole Melis, 1 year term as Town Agent

Library Trustees: 1 – **five year term:** **Nominated:** Patricia Lassoff

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk to cast one ballot for Patricia Lassoff for a five year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Patricia Lassoff, 5 year term as Library Trustee

Cemetery Commissioner: 1 – **five year term:** **Nominated:** Carly Sanderson

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk to cast one ballot for Carly Sanderson for a five year term as Cemetery Commissioner; seconded and carried by voice vote.

Carly Sanderson, 5 year term as Cemetery Commissioner

ARTICLE V. 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, 2018 through June 30, 2019, and to borrow money in anticipation of taxes?

So moved by Craig Hunt and seconded by Will Bissonnette.

There being no discussion, Article V passes by voice vote.

Article V. Passed

ARTICLE VI. To see if the Town will authorize its Property Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 31, 2018; November 30, 2018; February 27, 2019; and May 31, 2019? 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 July 1, 2019.

Motion made by Kathy Hege and seconded by Will Bissonnette "To see if the Town will authorize its Treasurer/Property Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 31, 2018; November 30, 2018; February 27, 2019; and May 31, 2019? 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 **June 1, 2019.**"

Following brief discussion, Article VI passes by voice vote.

Article VI. Passed

Motion to recess for lunch made by Kathy Hege, seconded by Will Bissonnette. Hand vote – ayes have it.

Town Meeting Reconvened at 1:00 P.M.

ARTICLE VII. Will the town vote to take advantage of the provisions of chapter 37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and authorize the Select Board to employ a town manager, and, if so, at what level of compensation to be raised by taxation?

Joanna Snelling made a motion to have the town take advantage of the provisions of chapter 37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and authorize the Select Board to employ a town manager at a pay rate of \$75,000.00 per year plus benefits to be raised by taxation and to instruct the Select Board to utilize the Vermont League of Cities and towns to help in the job search for Town Manager; seconded by Phil Moriarty.

Discussion: Town Manager position would probably be for 3 years. The cost of firing a Town Manager if there unresolvable conflict would be expensive. Would certain positions be eliminated. Administrative Assistant would be retained for a period of time.

Motion to Amend was made by Bob DeSiervo and seconded by Hedy Harris to have a range not to exceed \$80,000.00 plus benefits as compensation for a Town Manager and in addition have the Select Board appoint a group of citizens to aide in the search.

Continued discussion as to what positions a Town Manager could take over.

No further discussion on the Amendment. Motion to Amend passed by voice vote.

Motion to have the town take advantage of the provisions of chapter 37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and authorize the Select Board to employ a town manager at a compensation Level not to exceed \$80,000.00 per year plus benefits to be raised by taxation and to instruct the SB to utilize the Vermont League of Cities and towns to help in the job search for Town Manager as well as appoint a group of citizens to assist the SB in the search for a Town Manager.

Motion to call the question made by Dale Davis and seconded.

Request for paper ballot.

Total Votes - 87 Yes - 69 No - 18

Request to call the question passed.

Main Motion: "To have the town take advantage of the provisions of chapter 37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and authorize the Select Board to employ a town manager at a compensation Level not to exceed \$80,000.00 per year plus benefits to be raised by taxation and to instruct the Select Board to utilize the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to help in the job search for Town Manager as well as appointing a group of citizens to assist the Select Board in the search for a Town Manager.

Request for Paper Ballot

Total Votes - 87 Yes - 26 No - 61

Article VII. Fails

ARTICLE VIII. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$537,482.00, to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the Town of which \$411,928.00 to be raised in taxes?

Motion made by Kathy Hege and seconded by Craig "To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$537,482.00, to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the Town of which \$412,227.00 to be raised in taxes?

Following brief discussion, Article VIII passes by voice vote.

Article VIII. Passed

ARTICLE IX. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$555,090.00, for the running expenses and liabilities of maintaining the Town's roads of which \$401,546.00 to be raised in taxes?

Motion made by Kathy Hege and seconded by Will Bissonnette "To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$555,090.00, for the running expenses and liabilities of maintaining the Town's roads of which \$401,351.00 to be raised in taxes?

Following brief discussion, Article IX passes by voice vote.

Article IX. Passed

ARTICLE X. To see if the Town will vote to raise funds, by taxation, for the purchase of a new Highway Department pick-up truck, and, if so, how much?

Motion made by Kurt Bostrom to purchase an F550 or equivalent truck, with equipment, for a price of \$75,000.00 to \$80,000.00; seconded by Kris Kuch.

Moderator stated that the motion is not germane.

Dale Davis challenged the Moderator.

Mr. Bostrom explained what the main intent was in this Article.

A vote to sustain the Moderator's decision fails by voice vote.

Discussion ensued.

An Amendment was made by Craig Hunt and seconded by Gene Kuch to change the language to "not to exceed \$80,000.00" passed by voice vote.

There being no further discussion. Article X, as amended, passes by voice vote.

Article X. Passed

ARTICLE XI. To see if the Town will vote to raise funds by taxation to contract for law enforcement services, and, if so, how much?

Motion made by Craig Hunt and seconded by Gene Kuch To see if the Town will vote to raise funds by taxation to contract for law enforcement services in the amount of \$20,000.00?

Discussion: Hours of patrol - Sheriff 32 hours per month - State Police 25 hours per month.

Select Board would make the decision as to which provider the town would contract with.

Sheriff's department covers basic traffic stops. Does not get involved with domestic problems, thefts, drug issues, etc...

What would a contract include?

Motion made to suspend the rules to allow the sheriff to speak. Passes by hand vote.

The sheriff answered questions regarding services they provide. He stated that it depends on how much the town wants to spend.

Other issues: Are we safe? Do we have enough protection? Does it meet the town's needs? Do we need more coverage to keep our town safe?

The cost for a full-time deputy would be \$70,000.00; a single part time deputy \$47,000.00 per year.

Motion made to suspend the rules to allow the new CEO, Douglas DiVello, of Grace Cottage Hospital to speak.

Spoke to the hospital's capability to obtain their own law enforcement coverage. Explained that it would be costly for the hospital. Having law enforcement would benefit the town and the whole community including the hospital and schools.

Motion to Amend made by Dale West and seconded by Crystal Mansfield to authorize the Select Board to contract for Law Enforcement not to exceed \$50,000.00.

Craig Hunt moved to call the question.

Vote on Amendment to authorize the Select Board to contract for Law Enforcement not to exceed \$50,000.00 failed by voice vote.

No further discussion. Request for Paper Ballot on Main Motion.

Total Votes - 65 Yes - 48 No - 17

Article XI. Passed

ARTICLE XII. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$51,050.00, by taxation, for the running expenses and liabilities of the Library?

So moved by Craig Hunt and seconded by Gene Kuch.

There being no discussion, Article XII passes by voice vote.

Article XII. Passed

ARTICLE XIII. 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 toward a future pumper?

So moved by Irv Stowell and seconded by Will Bissonnette.

There being no discussion, Article XIII passes by voice vote.

Article XIII. Passed

ARTICLE XIV. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$1,750.00, by taxation for the Old Cemetery Fund?

So moved by Irv Stowell and seconded by Will Bissonnette.

There being no discussion, Article XIV passes by voice vote.

Article XIV. Passed

ARTICLE XV. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$17,106.00, by taxation, for the support of Social Services, as recommended by the Screening Committee?

So moved by Craig Hunt and seconded by Kris Kuch.

Following brief discussion, Article XV passes by voice vote.

Article XV. Passed

ARTICLE XVI. 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 Irv Stowell and seconded by Will Bissonnette.

Following brief discussion, Article XVI passes by voice vote.

Article XVI. Passed

ARTICLE XVII. To see if the Town will vote to set the first Tuesday in March 2019, as the date for the 2019 Town of Townshend Annual Meeting?

So moved by Irv Stowell and seconded by Will Bissonnette.

There being no discussion, Article XVII passes by voice vote.

Article XVII. Passed

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

Thanked the Select Board for all their hard work.

Thanked Irv Stowell for his many years of service on the Select Board.

Thanked the moderator for a job well done.

There being no further discussion, Irv Stowell made a motion to adjourn at 3:45 P.M. Seconded by Will Bissonnette and unanimously carried.

Anita Bean, Town Clerk

Kathleen Hege, Select Board Chair

David Liebow, Moderator