

Town Meeting Minutes

Town Meeting February 29, 2016

The duly warned meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by moderator John Burke at the Jeffords Center for Science & Mathematics at Castleton University. The assembly stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Article 1. Shall the Town accept the Town Report as printed? Motion made by Ken Flowers with one exception pages 26 and 27 are duplicates of pages 24 and 25. David Hassebroek seconded. John Burke also pointed out on the back page, dates to remember, August 9 is the Vermont Gubernatorial Primary, not Election. No other discussion. All voted in favor, Motion Passed.

Article 2. Shall the Town authorize payment of real and personal property taxes to the Town Treasurer in four (4) Installments, with the postmarked dates for payment being August 31, November 30, February 28 (29 in leap Year) and May 31? Motion made by Ray Ladd, seconded by Ken Flowers. No Discussion, Motion Passed.

Article 3. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board to borrow money in anticipation of taxes? Motion made by Julie Finnegan, seconded by Susan DeCarolis. No discussion. All in favor. Motion passed.

Article 4. Shall the Town at this meeting discuss the proposed Select Board's budget for the expenses for the ensuing year? Motion made by Julie Finnegan, seconded by Raymond Ladd. No Discussion, All in favor. Motion Passed

John Burke introduced Representatives Robert Helm and William Canfield. They both spoke in regard to what is happening in the legislature. Mr. Burke thanked both Representatives for taking the time to come and speak to us and take our questions.

Article 6 (ELECT OFFICERS) to be voted on March 1, 2016 by Australian Ballot

Article 7 & 8 (School Directors for Castleton/Hubbardton and Fair Haven Union High School) to be voted on March 1, 2016 by Australian Ballot.

Article 9. Shall the Town discontinue the practice of voting line-item budget and to warn the budget for the 2017 annual meeting in five articles that represent municipal services of operation? Discussion followed, the votes can be used as a report card for departments, it was voted down last year. Less time and confusion when voting; surplus cannot be moved from one department to another.

Article 10. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$26,807 for Legislating? It was asked what is legislating? It is Dues for VLTC, Insurance, Board Stipends, etc.

Article 11. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,565 for Ordinances & Proceedings? No discussion.

Article 12. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$158,470 for Managing Municipalities? It was asked why it no longer states Less Anticipated Revenues on some articles. It was explained it shows the revenues in the town report. Why is there an increase of \$10,000.00 for salary and is it expected on an annual basis? It was explained that Mark does not except Insurance so he did receive a raise. Also Insurance went up and the Administrative secretary and insurance are in there.

Article 13. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$11,535 for Conducting Elections? It was asked if this included the April school vote. No, this is for three elections, the supervisory union is paying for the April 12th election.

Article 14. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$41,117 for Collection, Custody & Disbursement of Funds? No discussion.

- Article 15. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$82,970 for Accounting? No discussion.
- Article 16. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$12,000 for Auditing? It was discussed that this is \$6,000.00 less than last year, Thanks to Mark Shea for shopping around.
- Article 17. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$19,934 for Tax Listing? It was asked if article 17 & 53 are the same and what is the difference between listers and assessor? If 53 passes we would hire a professional assessor and have a part time clerk. Listers would still be in the office until June. We have had many vacancies in the listers office where someone had to be appointed.
- Article 18. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$39,705 for Tax Collecting? No discussion.
- Article 19. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$68,694 for Document Recording/Issue? No discussion
- Article 20. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for Legal Services? No discussion
- Article 21. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$40,898 for Municipal Planning & Zoning? No discussion
- Article 22. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$70,283 for General Government Buildings? It was asked if the Fire and Police building were included in this figure. No, this is for the town office.
- Article 23. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$17,200 for General Government Equipment? No discussion
- Article 24. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$459,570 for Police Department? It was discussed this is almost \$11,000.00 more than last year. There was a 2% increase, a part time officer salary was increased and the insurance cost went up.
- Article 25. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$36,218 for Emergency Medical Services? No discussion
- Article 26. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$213,999 for Fire Department? A Thank you to the Fire Department, Police Department and Emergency Medical Department for putting your lives on the line.
- Article 27. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$10,100 for Emergency Management? This increased from \$850.00 to \$10,100, this is due to the purchase of an emergency generator, and it is a 50/50 matching grant.
- Article 28. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,087,638 for Highway Department? This is the year we crush gravel at \$54,000, there was an increase in chloride and crack sealing to maintain blacktop roads.
- Article 29. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$3,500 for Town Lands? No discussion
- Article 30. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$2,000 for Historical Cemeteries? No discussion
- Article 31. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$25,000 for Hillside Cemetery? No discussion
- Article 32. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,704 for Health Regulating & Inspecting? Thank you to Jim Leamy and his assistant for their service all these years.
- Article 33. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,060 for Animal Control? No discussion

Article 34. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$34,721 for Constables? No discussion

Article 35. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$299,600 for Transfer Station? No discussion

Article 36. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$86,137 for Recreation? No discussion

Article 37. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,200 for Memorial Day? No discussion

Article 38. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$111,500 for Library Administration? Discussion in regards to handicap accessibility at the Library, the basement (children's area) is accessible however there are stairs to the adult section, upstairs. Discussion followed regarding grants to help with funding this project.

Article 39. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$750 for Prevention/Control of Forest Fires? No discussion

Article 40. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$3,596 for Tree Warden? No discussion

Article 41. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$34,000 for Rutland County Tax? No discussion

Article 42. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$25,000 for the support of Castleton Community Seniors, Inc., determining that the program serves residents of the Town with the operation of the Castleton Community Center (The Old Homestead)? (Not included in the budget) Extensive discussion, there are about 550 members and approximately 300 are from Fair Haven, Fair Haven contributes \$3,500. Different organizations use the space, very popular, we are fortunate to have this center.

Article 43. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$3,500 for the support of ARC - Rutland Area determining that the program serves the residents of the Town with advocacy, resources and community for citizens with developmental disabilities and their families? (Not included in the budget) No discussion

Article 44. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$3,600 for administrative support of Castleton Cares, Inc., determining that the program serves the residents of the Town with emergency assistance to local people in need. (Not included in the budget) No discussion

Article 45. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$900 for the support of RSVP and the Volunteer Center, determining that the program serves residents of the Town with volunteering opportunities and community services? (Not included in the budget) *No discussion*

Article 46. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$6,720 to support the Rutland Area Visiting Nurses & Hospice (\$550 to support Rutland Area Hospice & \$6,170 to support RAVNAH Home and Community Health Services)? (Not included in the budget) *No discussion*

Article 47. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$4,088 for the support of Rutland Mental Health Services, determining that the program serves residents of the Town with counseling, substance abuse and emergency services? (Not included in the budget) *No discussion*

Article 48. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$2,000 for the support of Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, determining that the program serves residents of the Town with elder services? (Not included in the budget) No discussion

Article 49. Shall the Town deem necessary and appropriate \$1,000 for the support of Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired, determining that the program serves residents of the Town with services to enable the blind and visually impaired to achieve and maintain independence? (Not included in the budget) Jeff Schroeder thanked everyone for their support and also thanked the select board for passing the Social Services Appropriation policy.

Article 50. Shall the Town of Castleton vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$3,500 for the support of the partial funding of Marble Valley Regional Transit District (The Bus) public transit service to the residents of the Town? (Not included in the budget) No discussion

Article 51. Shall the Town exempt all real and personal property owned and used by the Castleton Community Seniors from taxation for a period of five years pursuant to 32VSA§3832(7)? (Not included in the budget) Discussion in regards to how much the taxes are, are the rentals included in the exemption. The taxes are approximately \$11,000, the rental portion is not exempt.

Article 52. Shall the Town retroactively exempt the real and personal property of the Castleton Community seniors from property taxes for the year 2015-2016? (Not included in the budget) Extensive discussion, how much will this cost, will this set a precedent, did the Senior Center get a bill. They did get a bill, no tax has been collected.

Article 53. Shall the Town eliminate the office of Lister pursuant to 17 VSA §2651c, and allow the Select Board to employ a professionally qualified assessor? Extensive discussion on the pros and cons of hiring an assessor, there will be a part time clerk position. There have been many appointments for vacancies and it takes time for training/experience.

Article 54. Shall the \$56,691 surplus (unreserved/undesignated accumulated General Fund balance) as of June 30, 2015, be applied to cost of a new Town Office and to reducing the cost of borrowing funds for that purpose? Fire District #1 made a sizable payment to the town, is this still set aside and will the paving be done. Yes, the money is set aside and it will be repaved.

Article 55. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board to borrow an amount not to exceed \$650,000 and to use the \$255,341 from current reserve funds and any funds received from additional Reserve funds for this purpose, and from the sale of town owned property currently for sale, for the purpose of purchasing land and building a new town office located on Rte. 30N directly south and adjacent to the Castleton Fire Station on Rte. 30 North (parcel #445000010)? Extensive discussion followed, what is the cost of the land and is it included in this cost, (Yes, \$100,000) has the old fire department been sold, (No) what is the size of the building compared to the old office, (approximately 3,700 sq. ft. compared to the old office at 4520sq ft.) Thank you to the Select Board, Town Clerk and Town Manager for all of their hard work.

John Burke publicly thanked MaryAnn Jakubowski for her many years of service to the Town and acknowledged all of the citizens shown, Valerie Poremski, Martha Towers, Patrick Eagan, Linda Splatt and Robert Harris.

Article 5. (OTHER BUSINESS) John stated next year will be his last year as Moderator.

Moderator John Burke called for a Motion to Adjourn to the Australian Ballot to be held Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 8:00am. Motion made by Kenneth Flowers, seconded by Susan Day. All in favor, Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 10:12pm.

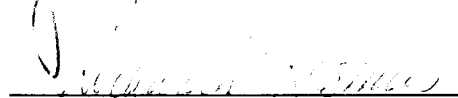
Audio tapes of this meeting are available at the Town Clerks office.

Respectfully submitted,



Nedra Boutwell
Castleton Town Clerk

Approved:


John Burke, Moderator
Deborah Rosmus, BCA