

**Minutes of Annual Town Meeting
Weston, Vermont
March 5, 2019**

Announcements by Moderator, Wayne Granquist and updates from State Representative, Kelly Pajala. Meeting called to order at 9:00 am. Rules and procedures reviewed by Moderator along with introduction of new voters and non-voters. A moment of silence as the list of those who passed away in the prior year was read.

- ARTICLE 1:** To elect a Moderator for a 1-year term. Nomination by Marguerite Mason and 2nd by Carrie Chalmers. Nomination by Marguerite Mason; 2nd by Carrie Chalmers. **Wayne Granquist elected.**
- ARTICLE 2:** To elect a Town Clerk for a 1-year term. Nomination by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Marguerite Mason. **Kim Seymour elected.**
- ARTICLE 3:** To elect a Town Treasurer for a 1-year term. Nomination by Marguerite Mason; 2nd by David Raymond. **Kim Seymour elected.**
- ARTICLE 4:** To elect the following Town Officers as required by law:

One Selectperson to a 3-year term. Nomination by David Raymond; 2nd by Deb Granquist. **Charles "Tim" Goodwin elected.**

One Selectperson to a 2-year term. Nomination by Nicole Pfister; 2nd by David Raymond. **Bruce Downer elected.**

One Lister to a 3-year term. No nominations; position remains vacant

One Library Trustee to a 5-year term. Nomination by Bill Hoyt; 2nd by Carrie Chalmers. **Kiernan McKenna elected.** Resolution of gratitude read by Carrie Chalmers honoring Donna Bonang for her 25 years of service to the library and its patrons especially the children. Donna was made Honorary Trustee by the Wilder Memorial Library Board. Tina Hartell will finish the remaining term of Donna Bonang.

One Trustee of Public Funds to a 3-year term. Nomination by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Bob Brandt. **Mimi Neff elected.**

Town Constable to a 1-year term. Nomination by Barbara Lloyd; 2nd by Fred Probst. **Almon Crandall elected.**

Collector of Delinquent Taxes to a 1-year term. Nomination by Bonnie Rounds; 2nd by Deborah Hennessey. **Sandra Goodwin elected.**

Town Grand Juror to a 1-year term. Nomination by Barbara Lloyd; 2nd by Vicki Linville. **Wayne Granquist elected.**

Town Agent to a 1-year term. Nomination by Deb Granquist; 2nd by David Raymond. **James Young elected.**

One Cemetery Commissioner for a 5-year term. Nomination by Maureen Brandt; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. **Mimi Neff elected.**

Moderator advised voters that reports from the Town Officers were on pages 23-31 and asked for any questions of the officials or about the reports. There were no questions

- ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will appropriate for the Town Annex Paint Reserve Fund the sum of \$4,000 for 2019. (Included in Town General budget) Moved by Barbara Lloyd; 2nd by Deb Granquist. **Article 5 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will appropriate for the Town Annex Building Maintenance Fund the sum of \$4,000 for 2019. (Included in Town General budget). Moved by Christine Falango; 2nd by Mark Falango. **Article 6 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 7:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$85,000 for the Highway Equipment Replacement Reserve Fund. (Included in Town Highway budget). 1st by Mark Refner; 2nd by Malcolm Hamblett. **Article 7 passed by voice vote.**

- ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$25,000 for the Highway Maintenance Fund. (For paving and included in Town Highway Budget). Moved by Linda Saarnijoki; 2nd by Bob Brandt. Question by Duane Hart and discussion on when the paved portion of Lawrence Hill Rd would be repaved. Response from Denis Benson—waiting for matching funds from the State; no indications funds will be given by the State in 2019. Donald Hart stated that the profile of the road indicates the Lawrence Hill Rd needs repaving now. Question raised why not switch the amount from Article 16 with Article 8, but ruled out of order by Moderator. Donald Hart asked to amend article to \$55,000; called out of order by the Moderator. David Raymond made motion to call the question; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. Debate ended by voice vote. **Article 8 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 9:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$35,000 for the Fire Apparatus Fund. (Included in town General Budget). 1st by David Raymond; 2nd by Bob Brandt. Question by Linda Saarnijoki as to when more purchases would be needed and how much this amount represents of that future purchase. Fire Chief, Brian Lundberg responded that the WVFD uses a 30-year replacement schedule and 2004 truck is oldest piece of equipment. It cost \$153,000 in 2004; last engine cost \$365,000 in 2008 so we could be looking at over \$500,000 to replace it now. Tim Goodwin stated that the Fire Department has to replace the air packs in 2019 and part of this fund may be used to cover that cost. Chief Lundberg unsure if the replacement would come from this fund. Denis Benson stated that 1st he'd heard of this fund being used; grant from Thrifty Attic a possibility or fund within the fire department; cost of about \$65,000. Jim Linville advised that only 15 years from replacement and, at \$35,000 before the next truck needs purchasing, that would leave us about \$30,000 short of the estimated cost. Donald Hart advised that per Londonderry Town Report, S. Derry VFD received [\$84,096.00] from Homeland Security [FEMA] for air packs, [bottles and masks]. WVFD Treasurer Christine Falango, stated that the air packs need replacing and funding is not yet complete. WVFD Air pack fund has \$20,000 plus donations from Thrifty Attic go to this fund. **Article 9 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 10:** To see if the town will appropriate \$5,000 to the Space Planning Management and Maintenance Fund. (Included in Town General Budget) 1st by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Mimi Neff. **Article 10 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$90,000 for the bridge repair fund. (Included in Highway Budget). 1st by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Barbara Lloyd. Question from Marguerite Mason on which bridges need to be avoided. Response from Denis Benson this is for future planning; given that Rte 100 bridge cost 1.8 or 9 million to replace, this will help with our own bridges being worked on. **Article 11 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 12:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt from taxation for a period of five (5) years the real estate belonging to the Farrar Park Association. 1st by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Bob Brandt. **Article 12 passed by voice vote.**
- ARTICLE 13:** To see if the Town will appropriate the following sums totaling \$110,288 to the following organizations that included financial information with their request (included in Town General budget). List read by Moderator. Regarding Mountain Valley Health Council, voters gave the floor to Dr. Roger Fox. Money given to MVHC used to cover some of the medical expenses Weston residents are not able to cover themselves. MVHC board keeping distance from issues at Springfield Hospital Marguerite Mason asked to amend the amount to \$10,000 and the Moderator ruled it out of order. **Article 13 passed by voice vote.**

Organizations	<u>2018 Actual Request</u>	<u>2018 Voter Approved</u>	<u>2019 Actual Request</u>	<u>2019 Actual Budget</u>
Cold Spring Park – WCA	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
Farrar Park Association	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500
Flood Brook Athletic Association	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
GNAT- TV	\$2,000	\$500	\$2,000	\$2,000
Green Up Vermont				

	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS)	\$630	\$630	\$630	\$630
Londonderry Rescue Squad	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Mountain Valley Medical Clinic Health Council	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Neighborhood Connections	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Senior Solutions	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600
SEVCA-Southeastern Vermont Community Association, Inc.	\$630	\$630	\$630	\$630
SEVEDS	\$1,698	\$1,698	\$1,698	\$1,698
The Collaborative	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750
The Current Connecticut River Transit, Inc.	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Vermont Center for Independent Living	\$230	\$230	\$230	\$230
Visiting Nurse Hospice for VT & NH	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350
Weston Cemetery Commission	\$10,005	\$10,005	\$10,600	\$10,600
Weston Recreation Club	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
Weston Volunteer Fire Department	\$27,850	\$27,850	\$32,800	\$32,800
Wilder Memorial Library	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$16,500	\$16,500
Windsor County Youth Services	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600
Women's Freedom Center	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Total of all Organizations	\$106,743	\$105,243	\$110,288	\$110,288

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will establish a Special Reserve Fund for the Wilder Memorial Library for a Capital Fund. Moved by Linda Saarnijoki; 2nd by Barbara Lloyd. **Article 14 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will fund the Wilder Memorial Library Special Reserve Fund in an amount of \$20,000. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by Mark Reffner; 2nd by Carrie Chalmers. Deb Granquist spoke regarding the status of the library building and the issues facing the nearly 200-year old building. Building has been library since 1909 when it was deeded to the town to be a library into perpetuity. Grant in 2018 paid for architectural assessment and report indicates in good shape for 200-year old building. Report highlighted 3 areas lacking: ADA accessibility; running water/bathroom; and parking. Library engaged a local architect to see how to make ADA compliant. Reserve Fund will start savings to address issues in the future. Community input would be requested before major changes are made. Several other questions were raised: can the existing building be enlarged; is there a resolution to the lack of water; what is long-term cost of improvements. Questions addressed by Deb Granquist: many answers unknown; further research of options needed; and decisions are a long way off. **Article 15 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will appropriate an amount not to exceed \$55,000 to the Weston Community Association for the purpose of the removal of the breached lower dam and stream restoration of Cold Spring Brook to match funds to be raised through grants and private contributions. (Not included in General Budget)

Moved by Barbara Lloyd; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. Barbara Lloyd asked for a Paper Ballot and more than the required 7 people stood in support of it.

Cold Spring Park was gifted to the town by Lewis & Emma Parkhurst in 1950 and dedicated to the 50+ veterans of World Wars I and II. In August, 2011

Compromised structure, eyesore for the village. State listed it as breached and out of service. Immediately following WCA stabilized dam, learned state promotes dam removal and not dam repair. Conservation Commission and WCA established joint task force to determine options for the dam. Full removal of dam most effective plan determined. Engineering design conceived plan with input from the State and bids from 6 companies received; Ameden Construction from Jamaica chosen to do the work. Total cost expected at \$110,000. Grants being pursued to offset the costs totaling \$90,000. Any grant money received will leave the WCA and the town to split the remaining costs—possibly as little as \$10,000 for each. WCA doesn't consider this an esthetic project; engineering report indicated that it is a safety issue. If another major storm, could collapse the remaining portion of the dam and cause damage downstream. Mark reviewed the design as to how it would slow and control the water to avoid damage downstream. Steppes in the stream strategically placed to slow the water; the landscaping designed to stabilize the banks/prevent further damage. Deborah Hennessy spoke in support of Ameden Construction having worked with Ameden on projects at the Trout Club and read resolution from the Conservation Commission. Mark Refner stated that should the article pass – potential tax bill increase of \$28 per \$100,000 per value of assessment. Work would begin summer 2019 if funding in place. Lengthy discussion and numerous questions/comments from the voters.

Denis Benson made a motion to call the question; 2nd by Will Goodwin. Paper ballot results were 109 YES and 23 NO. **Article 16 passed by paper ballot.**

Meeting paused at 11:10 am for the Rudolph Johnson awards to graduating 8th graders. Presented by Carrie Chalmers, Deb Lyneis, and Nicole Pfister. Students wrote to the trustees of the Rudolph Johnson fund expressing how they would use the award; the letters were recapped by Nicole Pfister. The awards were given to Knight Okie, Kylee Prins, Cal Lavallee, Maxwell Borhek, Emmett LaRue, Isabella Lindgren (not present), and Rorie Mara (not present).

Town meeting continued at 11:30 am.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will set the Annual Salary for the Town Treasurer at \$23,911 for the calendar year January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. (Included in Town General Budget). Motion by David Raymond; 2nd by Deb Granquist. **Article 17 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will set the Annual Salary for the Town Clerk at \$18,319 for the calendar year January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. (Included in Town General Budget). Motion by Deb Granquist; 2nd by David Raymond. **Article 18 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will set the Annual Compensation for the Selectboard at \$2,500 each for the calendar year January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. (Included in Town General Budget). Motion by Barbara Lloyd; 2nd by David Raymond. **Article 19 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will pay its taxes to the Town Treasurer as provided by law, due date to be on or before Tuesday, October 8, 2019. Motion by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Bob Brandt. **Article 20 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will authorize a total General Fund expenditure for operating expenses of ~~\$535,342~~ \$590,342 of which ~~\$306,252~~ \$361,252 shall be raised by taxes, \$156,390 by non-tax revenues, and offset by prior year surplus of \$72,700. Motion by Bill Hoyt; 2nd by Mimi Neff. Amendment offered by Town Clerk due to addition of \$55,000 from Article 16; 2nd by Loretta Murphy. Amendment approved by voice vote. **Amended Article 21 passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will authorize a total Highway Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$816,722 of which \$699,251 shall be raised by taxes, \$70,270 by non-tax revenues, and offset by a prior year surplus of \$47,201. Moved by Deb Granquist; 2nd by Marguerite Mason. **Article 22 passed by voice vote.**

Moderator asked selectboard for the tax rates based on these budgets. Jim Linville offered the rate at 2.164 . . . tax per \$100,000 (\$2,164) for 2019; up from 2.0607 in 2018.

ARTICLE 23: To transact any other non-binding business proper to come before said meeting, not acted upon in the preceding articles.

Carol Lecthaler concerned by poor attendance of town meeting; asked if an evening meeting had been considered. Denis Benson advised perhaps it's a lack of interest, but all organizations are in need of volunteers. Tim Goodwin asked for a vehicle to reach out to the voters and get their input. Wayne Granquist suggest it may be time for another town-wide survey; the last was circulated in 2009 and had a 50% return rate. Christine Falango stated that the school meeting was held on an evening and it was very poorly attended.

Deb Lyneis asked for suggestions on how the Taconic & Green School Board could better communicate with the voters. The whole budget no longer mailed; postcard sent to advise people that the budget booklet is available at town office, etc. Donald Hart spoke and said it's hard to be excited about government when so much of it is not local; recent proposed legislation to bring self-governance going forward? Denis Benson advised it hasn't been finalized.

Andrew Harper spoke about the rebuilding of the fire tower on Bromley; old one was torn down several years ago. Request to town of \$1,000 not approved, but other towns have donated. Donations still being accepted; the goal of \$250,000 nearly met.

Tim Goodwin stated that Weston has made it through Act 46 without loss of school choice. Congratulations due to town and school board. Jim Linville spoke and referenced Kelly Pajala's comments about the proposed changes to telecommunication oversight. He suggested if you have something you are interested in seeing pass, write her a letter.

Will Freeman offered appreciation for the maintenance of the roads throughout the year. Thanks, also to everyone serving on the various boards and committees; a lot of time goes into serving.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon, Tuesday, March 5, 2019.

Dated at Weston, Vermont:
_____, 2019

Kim Seymour, Town Clerk/Treasurer

Wayne Granquist, Moderator

Accepted by WESTON SELECTBOARD:

Date

Denis Benson, Chair

Jim Linville, Vice Chairman

Ann Fuji'i, Secretary

Charles Goodwin

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