

**WESTON, VERMONT  
TOWN MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 3, 2020**

**Moderator Wayne Granquist** spoke prior to the beginning of the meeting regarding reminder about voting (Presidential Primary and School Vote), lunch by Little School, Weston 8<sup>th</sup> Graders for Rudolph Johnson Awards, reviewed the rules about the meeting, introduction of non-voters, and reading of those who passed away in the past year.

**Other speakers:**

- **Deb Granquist** – overview of Weston Pop-Up University in month of March and Weston Memorial Library with new Director and Assistant Director. Weston U to bring community together in March 2020 while learning something new and having fun.
- **Dr. Roger Fox and Elsie Smith, Co-President of MVHC Board.** Thanked voters for their support; annual appropriation will pay for unreimbursed expenses of patients from Weston. Question about the impact of the impending bankruptcy of Springfield Hospital. Elsie Smith indicated it would have no impact; MVHC will receive the same reimbursements rates and Springfield Hospital will separate from all the clinics. Question about readiness for Coronavirus and how to handle it. Dr. Fox advised that if someone has symptoms (cough, fever, traveled to affected areas) call 1<sup>st</sup> since isolation is important and do not come to clinics. The clinic is ready in that regard though it changes daily. With the funds requested the Board has done well in protecting the endowment at the Clinic and using it for unreimbursed costs, its own laboratory, and uncompensated staff and building expenses. Board has managed to keep Clinic running well and intact
- **Susan Meyers** – Liaison to Senior Solutions for Weston
- **Birgit Sutter-Davis** – EMD for Weston reviewed C.A.R.E. program and how it can be used in an emergency

**At 9:25 am the meeting** called to order by **Moderator Wayne Granquist** read the beginning of the warning. "The legal voters of the Town of Weston, in the County of Windsor and State of Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet in the Weston Playhouse in Weston, Vermont on Tuesday, the 3rd day of March 2020, at nine o'clock in the forenoon (9:00 AM) to act on the following Articles:"

- ARTICLE 1:** To elect a Moderator for a 1-year term: Barbara Lloyd nominated Wayne Granquist. No further nominations. Town Clerk cast one paper ballot for **Wayne Granquist, Moderator for a 1-year term.**
- ARTICLE 2:** To elect a Town Clerk for a 1-year term: Maureen Brandt nominated Kim Seymour. No further nominations. **Kim Seymour elected to a 1-year term.**
- ARTICLE 3:** To elect a Town Treasurer for a 1-year term: Mark Reffner nominated Kim Seymour. No further nominations. **Kim Seymour elected to a 1-year term.**
- ARTICLE 4:** To elect the following Town Officers as required by law:
- One Selectboard member to a 3-year term: Denis Benson nominated by Tom Platt. Denis spoke briefly. Motion to close 1<sup>st</sup> by Malcolm Hamblet; 2<sup>nd</sup> Derek Lundberg; All in favor and Moderator directed Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot for **Denis Benson for a 3-year term.**
  - One Selectboard member to a 2-year term: Shirley Knowlton nominated Ann Fuji'i; Ann spoke briefly. Motion to close by Bill Hoyt, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bob Brandt. All in favor and Moderator directed Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot for **Ann Fuji'i for a 2-year term.**

- One Lister to a 3-year term: No nominations; position to remain vacant
- One Lister to a 2-year term (vacant in 2019): No nominations; position to remain vacant
- One Library Trustee to a 5-year term: Bill Hoyt nominated Malcolm Hamblett. No further nominations and **Malcolm Hamblett elected to a 5-year term.**
- One Trustee of Public Funds to a 3-year term: Mimi Neff nominated Ron Prouty. No further nominations and **Ron Prouty elected to a 3-year term.**
- One Town Constable to a 1-year term: Nomination by Denis Benson of Almon Crandall. No further nominations and **Almon Crandall elected to a 1-year term.**
- One Collector of Delinquent Taxes to a 1-year term: Nomination by Bonnie Rounds of Sandra Goodwin. No further nominations and **Sandra Goodwin elected to a 1-year term.**
- One Town Grand Juror to a 1-year term: Nomination by Jim Linville of Wayne Granquist. No further nominations and **Wayne Granquist elected to a 1-year term.**
- One Town Agent to a 1-year term: Nomination by Jim Linville of James Young. No further nominations and **James Young elected to a 1-year term.**
- One Cemetery Commissioner for a 5-year term: Nomination by Bill Hoyt of Judy Poissant. No further nominations and **Judy Poissant elected to a 5-year term.**

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$4,000 for the Town Annex Paint Reserve Fund. (Included in Town General budget):. Article moved by Jim Linville; 2<sup>nd</sup> Barbara Lloyd. **Article 5 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$4,000 for the Town Annex Building Maintenance Fund. (Included in Town General budget):. Article moved by Christine Falango; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mimi Neff. Linda Saarnijoki asked why there are 2 separate funds. Denis Benson responded that due to major expense for painting vs maintenance, heating, etc. it keeps the funds separate for the specific, but different uses. **Article 6 passed with 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): Article moved by Deb Granquist; 2<sup>nd</sup> David Raymond. Question by David Raymond asking what will be bought by this fund. Jim Linville stated it was for a possible new grader. Selectboard trying to anticipate new costs and keep the fund from going negative too much. Tim Goodwin spoke regarding Almon Crandall and how he thinks of the town's best interest and his hesitation to buy new equipment. When asked "when is it good time to buy or refurbish equipment?" Almon Crandall answered "never". **Article 7 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will appropriate \$50,000 for the Highway Maintenance Fund (road paving) (Included in Town Highway Budget): Article moved by Deb Granquist; 2<sup>nd</sup> by David Raymond. Mark Reffner asked why amount is double from last year. Jim Linville responded that State funding for repaving is limited if available at all. We are covering more of the expense ourselves for work that needs to be done. Mark Reffner said roads are great. **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): Article moved by Bob Brandt; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mimi Neff. Ryan Hart spoke regarding depreciation evaluation of the trucks and requested an additional \$10,000 to replace smallest

truck by 2029. Moderator called it in order though it was close to being considered above the threshold for an additional funding. Mark Falango stated as a point of order the request should be made by a Weston resident and Moderator then called the request out of order. No further discussion and **Article 9 passed by voice vote, unamended.**

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the town will appropriate \$3,000 to the Space Planning Management and Maintenance Fund (Included in Town General Budget): Article moved by Jim Linville; 2<sup>nd</sup> Denis Benson. Wayne Granquist asked what that funds are used for and Denis Benson responded it is used for the upkeep of the town office: painting front drip edge, wood floors refinished, front door sill repair, etc. No further discussion and **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): Article moved by Shirley Knowlton; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob Brandt. Charma Bonanno asked if there was a specific project on the horizon. Denis Benson stated no project specifically, but looking at the various bridges in town and they will need work. **Article 11 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 12:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$20,000 reserve fund for the Wilder Memorial Library Capital Fund (Included in Town General Budget): Article moved by Mimi Neff and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb Granquist. **Article 12 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 13:** To see if the Town will appropriate an amount not to exceed ~~\$7,975~~ for the headstone repairs in the Maple Grove Cemetery (Not included in the Town General Budget): Article moved by Deb Granquist and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob Brandt. Bill Hoyt stated that the Fall plea for donations netted \$17,134 out of \$25,000 needed to do the repair work in Maple Grove Cemetery. Work will be done by Mark Shea of Brewster and Shea. Bill Hoyt asked to amend to \$7,866 and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shirley Knowlton. Amendment passed by voice vote. **Article 13, as amended, passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the Town will appropriate the following sums totaling \$118,388 to the following organizations that included financial information with their request (included in Town General budget): Article moved by Deb Granquist and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Malcolm Hamblett. Moderator read the list one at a time.

- **Malcolm Hamblett** asked why the allocation for the Cold Spring Park has increased over the prior year. David Raymond responded since the dam was removed, the park is twice as large along with the 118 trees added to the park and now needs to be mowed with a hand mower. A huge Weeping Willow tree was removed at \$1,500. Expenses have increased and there are still more projects along with owning more property off Lawrence Hill that now needs attention.
- **Peter Areson** asked whether the allocation for the Wilder Memorial Library was for installation of bathrooms at the Library. Deb Granquist stated it was not; it is for Capital Fund. Deb reviewed the research that has been done and difficulties involved with input from Trustees, Barbara Lloyd and Malcolm Hamblett. With additional comments from Bruce Downer, direction was given for the bathroom to be a priority sooner rather than later. **Article 14 passed by voice vote.**

Organizations	2019 Actual Request	2019 Voter Approved	2020 Actual Request	2020 Budgeted Request
Weston - Cemetery Commission	\$10,600	\$10,600	\$10,600	\$10,600
Weston - Cold Spring Park (WCA)	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$9,500	\$9,500
Weston - Farrar Park Association	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500
Weston - Recreation Club	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
Weston - Volunteer Fire Department	\$32,800	\$32,800	\$33,900	\$33,900

Weston - Wilder Memorial Library	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,500
<b>TOTAL WESTON ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>\$85,400</b>	<b>\$85,400</b>	<b>\$93,000</b>	<b>\$93,000</b>
Flood Brook Athletic Association	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
GNAT-TV	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Green Up Vermont	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS)	\$630	\$630	\$630	\$630
Londonderry Rescue Squad	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Mountain Valley Health Clinic	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Neighborhood Connections	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$4,500
Senior Solutions	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600
SEVCA-Southeastern Vermont Community Assoc.	\$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
VT Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
VT Center for Independent Living	\$230	\$230	\$230	\$230
Visiting Nurse Hospice for VT & NH	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350
Windsor County Youth Services	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600
Women's Freedom Center	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
<b>TOTAL NON-WESTON</b>	<b>\$24,888</b>	<b>\$24,888</b>	<b>\$25,388</b>	<b>\$25,388</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>\$110,288</b>	<b>\$110,288</b>	<b>\$118,388</b>	<b>\$118,388</b>

**At 10:15 AM Moderator paused the meeting for 8<sup>th</sup> grade Rudolph Johnson awards presented by Deb Lyneis and Nicki Pfister.** Awards given to Trey Proctor, Koa Gonet, Ronnie Murphy, Julia Decker, Gabe Lindgren in attendance. Awards also given to Shay Doane, Sumner Orr, and Carter Via who were absent. **As FYI, Debra Lyneis provided the number of Weston students as 79 students: 9 in Pre-K, 27 in K-8 (mostly at Flood Brook), 43 High School (mostly at Burr and Burton Academy).**

**Moderator reconvened the meeting at 10:30 AM.**

**ARTICLE 15:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt from taxation for a period of five (5) years the real estate belonging to the Weston Recreation Club: Article moved by David Raymond; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bill Hoyt. **Article 15 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 16:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt from taxation for a period of five (5) years the real estate belonging to the Weston Rod & Gun Club: Article moved by David Raymond and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob

Brandt. Peter Areson asked if this property was private. Denis Benson responded it was not and is open to the public, Tim Goodwin advised it is a 501(c). **Article 16 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 17:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt from taxation for a period of five (5) years the real estate belonging to the Old Parish Church (The Parsonage): Article moved by Mimi Neff; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shirley Knowlton. **Article 17 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 18:** To see if the Town will appropriate up to \$250,000 for the replacement of the culvert on Trout Club Road (Included in Highway Budget): Article moved by Deborah Hennessy; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mark Reffner. Question regarding the location of this culvert which Denis Benson described as just before the Trout Club, Question about why paid by this year out of the budget and not from a fund. Denis Benson stated we hope we will get funding from the State to offset some of the expense, but cannot count on that happening so it was added to the Highway Budget. **Article 18 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 19:** To see if the Town will set the Annual Salary for the Town Treasurer at \$24,294 for the calendar year January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 (Included in Town General Budget): Article moved by David Raymond; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob Brandt. **Article 19 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 20:** To see if the Town will set the Annual Salary for the Town Clerk at \$18,612 for the calendar year January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 (Included in Town General Budget): Article moved by Regina Downer; 2<sup>nd</sup> by David Raymond. **Article 20 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 21:** To see if the Town will set the Annual Compensation for the Selectboard at \$2,500 each for the calendar year January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 (Included in Town General Budget): Article moved by Shirley Knowlton; 2<sup>nd</sup> by David Raymond. **Article 21 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 22:** 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 6, 2020: Article moved by Bill Hoyt; 2<sup>nd</sup> by David Raymond. **Article 22 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 23:** To see if the Town will authorize a total General Fund expenditure for operating expenses of ~~\$545,986~~ **\$553,852** of which ~~\$406,945~~ **\$414,781** shall be raised by taxes, \$148,340 by non-tax revenues: Town Clerk offered amended numbers due to change in Article 13. Moved by Jim Linville for amended article; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Denis Benson. Linda Saarnijoki asked what that does to the tax rate. Tim Goodwin and Jim Linville stated [the town portion] essentially stays the same or changes by about one cent. **Article 24, as amended, passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 24:** To see if the Town will authorize a total Highway Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$1,041,962 of which \$719,232 shall be raised by taxes, \$320,290 by non-tax revenues, and offset by a prior year surplus of \$2,440: Moved by Malcolm Hamblett, 2<sup>nd</sup> Deb Granquist. **Article 24 passed by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 25:** To transact any other non-binding business proper to come before said meeting, not acted upon in the preceding articles: Moderator opened up the meeting for comments and discussion:

- **Denis Benson** stated we have no candidates for Listers and he wishes someone would consider the position. Work involves visiting new construction and additions; parcel adjustments. Classes available as well as support from the State. **Tim Goodwin** [former lister] said it is computer work, quantitative work and a lot of more fun than being a selectboard member.
- **Deb Granquist** thanked everyone for their input on the needs of the Library building and asked for volunteers for task force members needed to plan the improvements for the Library building
- **Jim Linville** stated that there is the table in the lobby with Broadband information. Survey is a result of State of VT's inability to get broadband to the entire mountain, rural towns. This is an alternative without State oversight. New initiative through Windham Regional Commission (WRC) to do the survey and yes/no answer to getting broadband installed, to see if it makes sense. Online survey or paper. Rusty

Davis [Weston liaison on Broadband project] or Kim Seymour will take completed surveys. Broadband will run 10x faster than standard DSL. Consumer Union District (CUD) allows a private entity to get tax-free bond money to install fiber optic cable. **Linda Saarnijoki** advised the information will also be available at the Library after town meeting.

- **Jim Linville** reminded the attendees of the job opening for Administrative Assistant to Selectboard.
- **Deb Granquist** stated that the Library currently has broadband so come in and use it
- **Ann Fuji'i** spoke about the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) being in our area. The Selectboard in communication with Green Mountain Power (GMP). As most of our Ash trees [along the roads] are in GMP Right-of-Way they will be removed by GMP. Maybe in +/- 10 years the town may need to put money aside to remove trees. **Denis Benson** advised of training on EAB March 10<sup>th</sup> in Ludlow.
- **Bill Hoyt** advised that the Town Report incorrectly lists Ray Heberts for Cemetery Commission. Pat Walsh replaced Ray Heberts in 2019 and the list needs updated.
- **Peter Miller** spoke regarding the opening of New Thought Vermont in the former Todd Gallery [southern end of town] and the various programs that will be held there.

**With no further business, Town Meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM by Moderator Wayne Granquist.**

**Dated at Weston, Vermont this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Seymour, Town Clerk/Treasurer

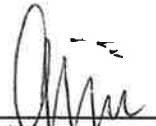
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Granquist, Moderator

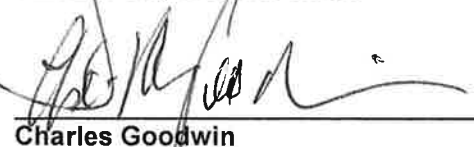
**WESTON SELECTBOARD:**

**Dated at Weston, Vermont this 24<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Denis Benson, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Linville, Vice Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ann Fuji'i, Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Goodwin

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Downer