

MINUTES OF THE WESTON TOWN MEETING

APRIL 5, 2022

At 10:04 am Moderator, Wayne Granquist called for the attention of the audience. He announced that this was the 222nd Town Meeting, the first having been held on March 3, 1803. Mr. Granquist reviewed the rules and procedures guiding the meeting along with a few announcements. He asked for the audience to stand in silence as he read the names of those in our community who passed away in 2021 [see bottom of page 26] and announced that when we reach Article 22, the Bike and Pedestrian Study Committee would ask for a straw vote on how they should proceed. The Moderator asked non-voters to rise and introduce themselves and they were then welcomed to the meeting.

At 10:14 am Moderator called the meeting to order and read the beginning of the Warning: Having been warned of the meeting, the legal voters of the Town of Weston, in the County of Windsor and State of Vermont, met at the Weston Playhouse in Weston, Vermont on Tuesday, the 5th day of April, 2022 at ten o'clock in the forenoon (10:00 AM) to act on the following Articles:

ARTICLE 1: To elect a Moderator for a 1-year term **Wayne Granquist** was nominated by Bill Hoyt and with no further nominations, he was elected by voice vote.

ARTICLE 2: To elect a Town Clerk for a 1-year term **Kim Seymour** was nominated by Marguerite Mason and with no further nominations, she was elected by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To elect a Town Treasurer for a 1-year term **Kim Seymour** was nominated by Bill Hoyt and with no further nominations, she was elected by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To elect the following Town Officers as required by law:

- One Selectboard member to a 3-year term **Charles “Tim” Goodwin** was nominated by Geoff Brown to a 3-year term. No further nominations. Mr. Goodwin spoke briefly about it being a privilege to serve and the need for some of the new people in town to take over for the “older ones”. A motion was made by Bill Hoyt to close the nominations and direct the Clerk to cast one paper ballot for Mr. Goodwin; 2nd by David Raymond. All in favor. Moderator directed Town Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot for **Charles “Tim” Goodwin who was elected to 3-year term.**
- One Selectboard member to a 2-year term **Ann Fuji’i** nominated to a 2-year by Kim Price. No further nominations. Ms. Fuji’i spoke briefly also about it being a honor to serve and the numerous volunteer opportunities in the town. A motion was made by Bill Hoyt to close the nominations and direct the Clerk to cast one paper ballot for Ms. Fuji’i; 2nd by David Raymond. All in favor. Moderator directed Town Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot for **Ann Fuji’i who was elected to 2-year term.**
- One Selectboard member to a 1-year term **Lisa Yrsha** was nominated by Shirley Knowlton. No further nominations. Ms. Yrsha spoke briefly that with her long-term participation in the town activities, raising a family here and operating a business, it was time to step up for a board position. A motion was made by Bill Hoyt to close the nominations and direct the Clerk to cast one paper ballot for Ms. Yrsha; 2nd by Kim Price.

All in favor. Moderator directed Town Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot for **Lisa Yrsha who was elected to 1-year term. Jim Linville offered the thanks of the entire Selectboard to Bruce Downer and welcomed Lisa Yrsha to the Selectboard.**

- One Lister to a 3-year term **Daniel Hanenberg** was nominated by _____. No further nominations. A motion was made by Bill Hoyt to close the nominations and direct the Clerk to cast one paper ballot for Mr. Hanenberg; 2nd by David Raymond. All in favor. Moderator directed Town Clerk to cast 1 paper ballot **for Daniel Hanenberg who was elected to 3-year term.**
- One Library Trustee to a 5-year term **Deborah Granquist** was nominated by Carrie Chalmers; elected by voice vote.
- One Library Trustee to a 5-year term **Joanne Prouty** was nominated by Carrie Chalmers; elected by voice vote.
- One Library Trustee to a 4-year term **Nicole Pfister** was nominated by Carrie Chalmers; elected by voice vote.
- One Library Trustee to a 2-year term **Richard “Dick” Lechthaler** was nominated Carrie Chalmers; elected by voice vote.
- One Trustee of Public Funds to a 3-year term **Andrew Clapp** was nominated by Ron Prouty; elected by voice vote.
- One Town Constable to a 1-year term **Susan “Syd Straw” Harris** was nominated by Bill Hoyt; elected by voice vote.
- One Collector of Delinquent Taxes 1-year term **Morgan Hart** was nominated by Nicki Pfister; elected by voice vote.
- One Cemetery Commissioner for a 5-year term **Patrick Walsh** was nominated Bill Hoyt; elected by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will appropriate \$4,000 for the Town Annex Paint Reserve Fund. (Included in Town General budget) Moved by Dave Raymond; 2nd by Christine Falango **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) Moved by Christine Falango; 2nd by Isabella Bolognese **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) Moved by Marguerite Mason; 2nd by Mark Falango. Denis Benson spoke briefly about the purpose of the fund. He addressed the question on plans to replace equipment; Ford 550 is on order and will be replaced in 2022 based on replacement schedule and needs. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will appropriate \$50,000 for the Highway Maintenance Fund. (Included in Town Highway Budget) Moved by Marguerite Mason; 2nd by Bob Johnston. Denis Benson addressed the question whether any Federal funds for the road maintenance: ARPA funds not intended for regular budgeted items. Negative balance of the fund addressed by Jim Linville; it will rebuild to a positive balance as additional appropriations made to the fund for future expenses. Question from Marguerite Mason on what is difference about this fund vs. the Contingency Fund. Denis Benson

stated that the Maintenance fund is used for repaving projects and the Contingency Fund holds the remaining funds from FEMA payments from Tropical Storm Irene. Christine Falango asked if it would be possible to increase the appropriation for the Maintenance Fund; Moderator stated he would be reluctant to allow that increase. Question from Marguerite Mason regarding the opening staffing for Road Crew. Denis Benson stated we have someone helping and discussions about hiring a replacement in process. **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) Moved by Marguerite Mason; 2nd by Geoff Brown. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 10: To see if the town will appropriate \$3,000 to the Space Planning Management and Maintenance Fund. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by Bob Johnston; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. Moderator reviewed the purpose of the fund which is maintenance of the town office. Question by Donald Hart about disbursement not stated correctly in the town report. Kim Seymour addressed and apologized for oversight. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will appropriate \$90,000 for the Bridge Repair Fund. (Included in Highway Budget) Moved by ; 2nd by Isabella Bolognese. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$70,000 for the Wilder Memorial Library Capital Fund. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by Isabella Bolognese; 2nd by Shirley Knowlton. Deborah Granquist, Library Board Chair spoke about the appropriation. \$20,000 was the amount normally appropriated; \$50,000 was the amount needed to replenish the Fund back for the Town's contribution to the purchase of the Riverside property (Coughlin family) by the Friends of the Weston Community (FOWC). The intent of the purchase was to give the Library (owned by the Town) access to needed water, space for a septic system and a bathroom, additional ADA access, parking, and possibly a park. The Town's contribution to the FOWC was about 20% of the purchase price. Owner wanted to complete the sale in 2021 necessitating the \$50,000 being paid in 2021 and the FOWC intends to the turn entire property over to the Town [once improvements are made]. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will appropriate the following sums totaling \$117,463 to the following organizations that included financial information with their request (Included in Town General Budget) Deborah Granquist moved the article; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. Moderator read through the list of appropriations giving voters an opportunity to ask questions about each. No amendments were made. Dan Hanenberg asked why the Fire Department and Cemetery requests so much lower. Christine Falango addressed the Fire Department and Bill Hoyt addressed the Cemetery request due to large repair project being completed in 2021. **Article passed by voice vote.**

Organizations	2021 Actual Request	2021 Voter Approved	2022 Actual Request	2022 Budget Request
Weston - Cemetery Commission	\$24,450	\$24,450	\$10,000	\$10,000
Weston - Cold Spring Park (WCA)	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
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	\$33,075	\$33,075	\$25,075	\$25,075
Weston - Wilder Memorial Library	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$25,000	\$25,000
TOTAL WESTON ORGANIZATIONS	\$103,525	\$103,525	\$89,575	\$89,575
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 Council	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
My Community Nurse Project	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Neighborhood Connections	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Senior Solutions	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600
SEVCA-Southeastern VT Community Assoc.	\$630	\$630	\$630	\$630
SEVEDS	\$1,698	\$1,698	\$1,698	\$1,698
Southeast VT Transit (formerly The Current)	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
The Collaborative	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750
VT Assoc. 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
TOTAL NON-WESTON	\$27,888	\$27,888	\$27,888	\$27,888
TOTAL ALL ORGANIZATIONS	\$131,413	\$131,525	\$117,463	\$117,463

ARTICLE 14: 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 Volunteer Fire Department Moved by David Raymond; 2nd Marguerite Mason. **Passed by voice vote.**

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 Weston Community Association Moved by Howard Brosseau; 2nd by Marguerite

Mason. Moderator asked Mr. Raymond to review which properties this would cover. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will set the annual salary for the Town Treasurer at \$26,525 for the calendar year January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by David Raymond; 2nd by Bob Johnston. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will set the annual salary for the Town Clerk at \$20,301 for the calendar year January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by David Raymond; 2nd by Kim Price. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will set the annual compensation for the Selectboard at \$2,500 each for the calendar year January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. (Included in Town General Budget) Moved by David Raymond; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 19: 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 4, 2022. Moved by Isabella Bolognese; 2nd by Bill Hoyt. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will authorize a total General Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$620,159 of which \$446,416 shall be raised by taxes, \$132,535 by non-tax revenues and offset by a surplus of \$41,208 Moved by David Raymond; 2nd by Marguerite Mason. Question by _____ what are non-tax revenues? Addressed by Denis Benson – State Aid, etc. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will authorize a total Highway Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$819,331 of which \$708,150 shall be raised by taxes, \$105,290 by non-tax revenues, and offset by a prior year surplus of \$5,891 Moved by Charma Bonano; 2nd by Isabella Bolognese. Question by Andrew Harper; addressed by Denis Benson. **Passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 22: To transact any other non-binding business proper to come before said meeting, not acted upon in the preceding articles.

Prior to opening the floor for non-binding discussions, the **Rudolph Johnson 8th Grade Awards were presented** by Debra Lyneis and Carrie Chalmers to Lexi Doane, Logan Fedele, Cooper Reece, and Wyatt Williams who were not able to attend the meeting. Highlights from the letters received from each award recipient were read by Debra or Carrie which included the intended use for the award. There was some discussion on giving a larger award to the recipients which the trustees indicated they would review for the future. Someone asked how did the Rudolph Johnson Fund come to be which Debra Lyneis addressed.

Discussion on non-binding items:

- **Tim Goodwin** advised the voters that the town has received a one-time award of approximately \$163,000 in ARPA funds; there will be hearings soon soliciting input on the potential uses of the funds.
- **Deborah Granquist** announced that the Library Trustees will be holding community input meetings as the Board members work on the strategic planning for the Library.
- **Marguerite Mason** raised the question of a straw vote on having the town pursue paving more roads. The moderator asked for a voice vote on whether the voters wanted to have a straw vote on this topic. The motion to have a straw vote did not pass by voice vote. Deborah Granquist suggested that Marguerite

Mason bring the issue to the Planning Commission which is in the process of updating the Town Plan; gravel roads would be part of that Plan.

- **Moderator, Wayne Granquist** asked the voters if they would allow the Scoping Study Committee to conduct a straw vote on the Bike and Pedestrian Study. The voice vote passed to allow it. **Denis Benson** stated that he felt any discussion was out of order since a decision on sidewalks should have been a warned article. **Jim Linville** clarified that the discussion was regarding what the Committee has worked on so far and not a vote on sidewalks. The Scoping Study was funded by a grant of \$27,000 from the State and \$3,000 from the town *[donations received from various businesses and residents]*. The results of the study provided various options to improve the safety in the village for pedestrians and bicyclists. At this point the Committee would be looking for additional input from the public. **Geoff Brown**, committee member, reviewed the number of respondents to the survey sent out in 2021 – 67 respondents representing about 10% of the town population. What was clear from the survey returns was that the work of the committee was important and options should continue to be pursued. Additional comments from audience on the State Right-of-Way, the required width of sidewalks, current parking issues in town, maintenance of the sidewalks, removal of snow from sidewalks, and a suggestion to start small first before tackling the big issues. **Nicole Pfister** spoke about how the Scoping Study Committee came about; she was concerned that the village should be safer for people to walk from one end of town to the other with her biggest concern being “Bunker Hill” having witnessed a near accident there several years ago. The study wasn’t about sidewalks as much as safety for the increased pedestrian traffic in town. **Ann Fuji’i** advised that part of the Town Plan, updated in 2016 was a recommendation of looking into the improved safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic; this did not come out of the blue. **Will Freeman** spoke and offered his thanks to the Selectboard for the time they put into the town business; he supports the continuance of the study to find viable solutions for pedestrians and for speeding issues in the village. **Will Freeman** asked to call the question.
- **The Moderator** asked for a vote to end the discussion on the propriety of the presentation; **passed by voice vote** to end the discussion on the propriety of the matter being discuss at town meeting.
- **Nicole Pfister** asked for a yes or no vote on if the committee should continue exploring options for pedestrian safety. Second by Bill Hoyt. **Passed by voice vote**. **Bruce Downer** spoke and stated that our concern should be for making the town safe of our citizens in “any way possible” and that exploration should continue. **Deborah Granquist** spoke regarding the focus had been on sidewalks, but the larger issue pertains to safety. In the letter from the committee, there is a leap from a straw vote at town meeting to ask the committee to continue to getting options to then getting grant funding. **Geoff Brown** clarified that pursuing grant funding would allow the committee to continue exploration. **Denis Benson** suggested *[perhaps tongue-in-cheek?]* that we build a by-pass around the town to improve safety to which the audience responded with the expected chuckles. **Jim Linville** indicated that there is grant funding for exploration or actual construction if a plan was approved in the future. Linda Saarnijoki then restated the issue as a vote on the Committee continuing to investigate safety in the town.
- **Andrew Harper** called the question and it was seconded by **Bill Hoyt**. **Passed by voice vote** to end discussion.

- **Nicole Pfister** made a motion: do you support town's effort to proceed with exploring the alternatives presented in the Scoping Study? **Passed by voice vote.**
- Ann Fuji'i stated that at the upcoming Selectboard meeting appointments would be made for the various committees. She encouraged voters to review the list of Appointed Officials and volunteer for anything of interest as "new blood" is always welcome.

With no further business to discuss, the Moderator adjourned the meeting at 12:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted this 10th day of May, 2022,

ss:// *Kim Seymour*

ss:// *Wayne Granquist*

Kim Seymour

Wayne Granquist

Town Clerk

Moderator

Acknowledged by Town of Weston Selectboard:

Dated at Weston, Vermont this 24th day of May, 2022

ss:// *Denis Benson*

ss:// *Jim Linville*

Denis Benson

Jim Linville

Chair

Vice Chair

ss:// *Ann Fuji'i*

ss:// *Charles "Tim" Goodwin*

Ann Fuji'i

Charles (Tim) Goodwin

Secretary

ss:// *Lisa Yrsha*

Lisa Yrsha