

MINUTES
Town of Windham, Vermont
Annual Town Meeting
Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 10:00 AM

The legal voters of the Town of Windham met upstairs at the Meeting House to conduct the annual business of the town, as warned. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by Michael McLaine, the 2022 elected moderator, serving in the capacity until Article 1 was voted.

Mike welcomed voters, read instructions regarding Roberts Rules of Order and other proper procedures, reminded voters to show respect for their neighbors, and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Comments were made regarding fire safety.

The following business was conducted.

Article 1: To elect a Town Moderator for the year ensuing.

Carolyn Partridge nominated Mike McLaine, and Phil McDuffie seconded.

- Mike McLaine was unanimously elected as Town Moderator for a one-year term.

Mike interrupted the agenda to ask if the elected state officials who were present might speak. There were no objections from the voters. State Representative Heather Chase spoke of her work on the House Commerce and Economic Development Committee, now focused on privacy laws and artificial intelligence. State Treasurer Mike Pieciak said Vermont is investing 10% of its revenues for economic development, with a focus on social issues, including helping retirees. He urged voters to check the records to see if they have missing property.

The moderator returned to the regular agenda.

Article 2: Shall the voters accept the Town Report prepared by the Auditors?

Colin Blazej so moved, and Steven Fellows seconded.

One correction was noted, and voters were asked to correct their reports. In Article 5 for the School District, the correct financial figure is \$470,869 (not \$478,690).

- With that change, the Auditors' Town Report was unanimously accepted.

Article 3: To elect all Town Officers as required by law:

Selectperson – Walter Woodruff nominated Kord Scott, and Carolyn Partridge seconded.

- Kord Scott was unanimously elected for a three-year term on the Selectboard.

Lister – Russell Cumming nominated Ron Cohn.

- Ron Cohn was unanimously elected for a three-year term as Lister.

Auditor – Maureen Bell nominated Becky Philips.

- Becky Philips was unanimously elected for a three-year term as Auditor.

Delinquent Tax Collector – Carolyn Partridge nominated Paul Wyman.

- Paul Wyman was unanimously elected for a one-year term as Delinquent Tax Collector.

Windham Center Cemetery Commission – Walter Woodruff nominated Margaret Dwyer; Michael Pelton nominated Abigail Pelton. The vote was taken by a show of hands. There were 61 votes for Margaret and 34 for Abby.

- Margaret Dwyer was elected for a five-year term on the Windham Center Cemetery Commission.

West Windham Cemetery Commission – Alison Trowbridge nominated Diane Newton.

- Diane Newton was unanimously elected for a five-year term on the West Windham Cemetery Commission.

North Windham Cemetery Commission – Howie Iris nominated Paul Wyman.

- Paul Wyman was unanimously elected for a five-year term on the North Windham Cemetery Commission.

Library Trustee – John Hoover nominated Cynthia Kehoe.

- Cynthia Kehoe was unanimously elected for a five-year term as a Library Trustee.

Article 4: Shall the voters authorize the Town Treasurer to collect current taxes?

Alison Trowbridge so moved, and Carolyn Partridge seconded.

- The Town Treasurer's collection of current taxes was unanimously authorized.

Article 5: Shall the voters set the due date for property taxes as postmarked on or before October 31, 2023?

Colin Blazej so moved, and Pat McLaine seconded.

- October 31, 2023 was unanimously set as the due date as postmarked for property taxes.

Article 6: Shall the voters authorize \$257,488 for the General Fund?

Alison Trowbridge so moved, and Carolyn Partridge seconded.

- The amount of \$257,488 for the General Fund was unanimously authorized.

Article 7: Shall the voters authorize Roads Budget expenditures of \$506,580 of which \$476,603 shall be raised by taxes and \$30,375 shall be applied from FY 2022 budget surplus?

Carolyn Partridge so moved, and Kathy Scott seconded. Carolyn commented on the excellent state of our roads, and there was a round of applause in agreement.

- Roads Budget expenditures of \$506,580, of which \$476,603 will be raised by taxes and \$30,375 will be applied from FY 2022 budget surplus, was unanimously authorized.

Article 8: Shall the voters appropriate \$35,000 for the New Road Machinery Fund?

Howie Ires so moved, and Bob Kehoe seconded.

- The amount of \$35,000 for the New Road Machinery Fund was unanimously appropriated.

Article 9: Shall the voters appropriate \$30,000 for Repaving and no new funds for Bridges and Large Structures?

Howie Ires so moved, and Alison Trowbridge seconded.

Al McLaine asked when work on the culvert on Rt. 121 will begin, and Kord said next summer (2024).

- The amount of \$30,000 for Repaving and no new funds for Bridges and Large Structures was unanimously appropriated.

Note: The Annual Town Meeting was interrupted after the vote on Article 9, so that the School District Meeting could take place. Immediately after the School District Meeting ended, the Annual Town Meeting was continued with Article 10.

Article 10: Shall the voters contribute \$10,000 to the Meeting House Maintenance & Improvement Fund?

Alison Trowbridge so moved, and John Hoover seconded.

- The amount of \$10,000 for the Meeting House Maintenance and Improvement Fund was unanimously appropriated.

Article 11: Shall the voters appropriate \$10,000 for the Town Garage Maintenance and Improvement Fund?

Abby Pelton so moved, and Antje Ruppert seconded.

- The amount of \$10,000 for the Town Garage Maintenance and Improvement Fund was unanimously appropriated.

Article 12: Shall the voters appropriate \$10,000 for the Town-wide Reappraisal of Properties?

Carolyn Partridge so moved, and Alison Trowbridge seconded.

Lister Russell Cumming said there is now \$32,614 in the fund for the reappraisal, and the total cost is expected to be \$35,000 to \$40,000. Antje Ruppert asked who sets for rules about the Listers going on people's properties, and Kord said the Selectboard has no oversight of the Listers or other elected officials.

- The amount of \$10,000 for the Town-wide Reappraisal of Properties was approved. The voice vote was mostly yeas with some nays.

Article 13: Shall the voters establish a NEMRC Fund for accounting software and services and appropriate \$5,000 for this fund?

Carolyn partridge so moved, and Abby Pelton seconded.

Treasurer Kathy Scott explained that the previous Quickbooks system was not a good program for the town's needs. NEMRC is designed for municipalities and will give the auditors and selectboard clearer information. The NEMRC system has already been purchased and would have been paid for with funds from the Discretionary Fund if it were not approved today.

- A NEMRC Fund for accounting software and services was established and \$5,000 was appropriated for it with a voice vote of all yeas and one nay.

Article 14: To transact any other nonbinding business that may legally come before this meeting?

- Pat McLaine asked for something to be done about invasive knotweed, and Kord said the selectboard would take it up. Leigh Merinoff said knotweed provides a good antidote for Lyme's disease.
- Al McLaine expressed concern about trees were being cut down without concern for bats. He asked why the town's new regulations about timber harvesting did not address destruction of bat habitat. Bill Dunkel, head of the Planning Commission, explained that the new regulations are specifically about protecting our roads from overweight logging trucks.

- Kermit Woods said he had been harassed on FaceBook based on misinformation from the Town Office. He spoke to the Vermont Secretary of State, and he sent a letter to the Selectboard. He would like to know if the Listers are responsible for the misinformation and harassment.
- Phil McDuffie asked if the Town Constable can issue tickets. The Sheriff's Officer at the meeting stated that a constable can enforce town regulations, including issuing traffic tickets. Fines must be defined in ordinances. The Sheriff's Department can still provide services, working with the constable.
- Jan Wyman thanked Mike McLaine for his leadership as Moderator, and there was a round of applause in agreement.

There being no further business, Carolyn Partridge moved to adjourn the meeting, and Dawn Bower seconded it. Adjournment was unanimously approved.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mary McCoy, Selectboard Clerk
Approved 6-5-2023