Town of Hinesburg Vermont

TOWN MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2014
CVU AUDITORIUM
7 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. Moderator Joe Fallon opened the meeting by reading the warning, followed by a review of Robert's Rules of Order and town meeting etiquette.

ARTICLE 1: *To elect the necessary town and school district officers by Australian Ballot Tuesday, March 4, 2014 (see Officers for Election list in the Town Report).*

ARTICLE 2: *To hear the reports of Town of Hinesburg officers and take action thereon.*
Jon Trefry, Selectboard chair, opened the meeting with his annual report on town happenings and changes over the past year. He reviewed many changes to various Boards and Commissions, recognizing those people who had served for many years. He also mentioned several staff comings and goings, using the opportunity to introduce new members of the town team. He showed several slides of new undertakings by the town, highlighting the completion of the new police department building and the planning for the expansion of the fire station and construction of a proposed new highway garage. The Moderator then asked for a motion to approve the report as given; moved, seconded and approved by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: *Shall the Town approve a General Government budget of $1,391,612, with the estimated sum of $1,098,454 appropriated from property taxes to defray the general government expenses of the Town?*
The question was moved and seconded. Joe Colangelo, town administrator, took the stage to give a brief overview of each department's budget. The floor was then opened for questions. Karla Munson asked about impact fees and where they showed up in the budget and whether or not they could be used for other things. Colangelo answered that they don't show up in the operating budget but are listed in the town report, and then Selectboard Chair Jonathan Trefry said that they can only be used for the specific Capital project that they were collected for and cannot be diverted to other uses. There was some suggestion that perhaps we need to expand the collection of impact fees to other areas like recreation or schools. The Board may look into this in the future.

Ruth Ayer then asked about the money being spent on CCTA and wondered what the ridership numbers were and whether or not it made sense to be spending that much money on bus service, and whether it was going to keep increasing over time. Karla answered that there were 49 people using the bus service per day, but not all of them were from Hinesburg. Ruth said that she thought that $38,000 was an awful lot for the Town to be spending to subsidize bus service.

When there were no further questions, the Moderator moved the question and Article 3 was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: *Shall the Town approve a Highway Department budget of $874,880, with the estimated sum of $678,539 appropriated from property taxes to defray the highway expenditures of the Town?*
The article was moved and seconded. The Moderator then asked if there were any questions. Kim Coates, a resident of Texas Hill Road, asked a question about why the dust control budget had been cut by $10,000? SB member Phil Pouech responded that dust control is a difficult thing as the weather conditions need to be right in order for it to work and not just waste the calcium chloride. He also said that they had reduced it because the actual expenditures from the year before were only $38,000 so the budget was lowered from $50,000 to $40,000. Gill Coates then said that the dust had been getting worse over the years because of the increase in traffic and speed. He considers it a safety issue as you can't see well as a driver if you are behind someone, and that it may be unsafe for pedestrians as well since visibility is reduced. Ray Mainer then made a motion to amend Article 4 to increase the dust control budget by $10,000, which was seconded. He further stated that it is a health issue as well to be breathing dust all the time. Tom Ayer elaborated on the decision to lower the budget and said that they had been assured by Mike Anthony that the $40,000 was probably adequate and that the dust had been bad last year due to weather conditions. After some continued

discussion, the amendment was defeated on a voice vote. The Moderator then asked if there were any further questions, and as no hands were raised, he called for a vote on Article 4 and it was passed as originally presented on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: *Shall the Town approve the Hinesburg Community Police Department budget of $595,355 with the estimated sum of $516,791 appropriated from property taxes to defray the police expenditures of the Town?*
The Article was moved and seconded and passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: *Shall the Town approve the Carpenter-Carse Library Town allocation of $200,318, with the estimated sum of $187,626 appropriated from property taxes to defray the library allocation from the Town?*
The motion was moved and seconded and approved on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: *Shall the Town appropriate the sum of $2,500, with the estimated sum of $2,342 appropriated from property taxes, for the purpose of obtaining options and/or the acquisition of lands, or those rights in land, which would preserve open space and natural resources, any unexpended portions of such sum be placed in the Land Preservation Fund?*
The article was moved and seconded and passed on a voice vote with no dissent.

ARTICLE 8: *Shall the Town appropriate the sum of $600, with an estimated sum of $562 appropriated from property taxes, to the Lake Iroquois Recreation District?*
The article was moved and seconded and passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: *Shall the Town appropriate the sum of $29,400, with the estimated sum of $27,537 appropriated from property taxes, to be distributed as specifically designated to the following agencies and organizations?*

Women Helping Battered Women	$1,800
VT Center for Independent Living	$200
Community Resource Center	$11,000
Visiting Nurses Association	$6,000
COTS	$750
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging	$2,000

Vermont Cares	$200
Howard Center	$800
Chittenden County Emergency Food Shelf	$500
Chittenden County Community Action	$1,500
Hinesburg Rides	$1,750
Maple Leaf Farm	$1,500
Hope Works	$200
Vermont Red Cross	$200
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	$500
Hinesburg Senor Meal Site	$500
	$29,400

Article 9 was moved and seconded. Audience member Jessica Redmond asked why we donate money to charitable groups? She said she ha never been to town meeting before and wasn't aware that we did this. Selectboard chair Jon Trefry responded that we have a committee wh decides who should receive funds based on how many citizens are served by the agency. Hinesburg has a long-standing tradition of assistin charitable organizations. The motion was approved on a voice vote with no dissent.

ARTICLE 10: *Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to furnish the Town of St. George fire protection and first response coverage for the amount equivalent to 15% of the Town of Hinesburg's total FY2013-FY2014 operating budget for fire and first response, estimated at the sum of $30,000?*

The article was moved and seconded. An audience member asked the question how the percentage was calculated. Fire Department member Eric Spivack responded that it is based on the percentage of the calls that occur in St. George and that the percentage is fairly accurate from year to year. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

(If Articles 3 – 10 are approved as presented, total general fund expenditures of $3,072,060 will be required with the estimated amount of$2,511,851 to come from property tax revenue)

ARTICLE 11: *Shall voters authorize the Selectboard to borrow money when needed to meet current expenses and indebtedness of the Town of Hinesburg?* Moved and seconded and approved on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 12: *Shall voters authorize the payment of real and personal property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 payable in full to the Town of Hinesburg in one (1) installment, with the due date being November 15, 2014? Any and all payments received in the Town Treasurer's Office later than midnight on November 15, 2014 will be considered delinquent and will be subject to the collection of interest at the rate of 1% per month or fraction thereof for the first three (3) months and thereafter at the rate of 1 1/2 % per month or fraction thereof.* Moved and seconded and approved on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 13: *Shall voters authorize the elimination of the Office of Lister and replace it with a professionally qualified assessor appointed by the Selectboard who shall have the same powers, discharge the same duties, proceed in the discharge thereof in the same manner, and be subject to the same liabilities as are prescribed for listers or the Board of Listers under the provisions of Title 32? (Article 13 requires a ballot vote from the floor at Town Meeting.*

The article was moved and seconded. Ruth Ayer asked the question about how much more this was going to cost us. Missy Ross, town clerk, stated that this is the system we have been using for the last 15 or 20 years and that the legislature had just enacted legislation last year that enabled towns to do this. Approving this article would not affect Marie Gardner's position with the Town and it has been difficult to find qualified people to do appraising. She also stated that Gardner, the only current lister for the town, is in favor of the article. Since the Town was required to use a paper ballot for this article, town clerk Missy Ross gave directions to the audience about which ballot to use for the vote and the procedure for filing out and depositing the ballots in the appropriate box. After all people who wished to vote had done so, the ballots were counted and the Article was carried by a vote of 132 in favor and 3 opposed.

ARTICLE 14: *Shall the voters authorize the exemption of municipal taxes on net-metered systems under V.S.A §3845(b)?* Moved and seconded. There was some discussion on alternative energy and the fact that we should support these efforts when we had the opportunity. The Selectboard said that they had decided to put this on the warning because they felt in order to be consistent that we shouldn't tax these since we no longer tax other personal property. An audience member wondered how much this would cost the town? Joe Colangelo, town administrator, answered that it would cost around $5,000. An audience member wondered whether it might be better to use that $5000 to assist people in need rather than subsidizing people who could afford alternative energy systems? Missy Ross, town clerk, spoke in order to clarify that we don't currently tax these systems but that we would be required to do so beginning this year if we didn't pass this article. Moderator Joe Fallon then moved the question and the Article was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 15: *To transact any other business proper to be brought before said meeting.*
Paul Lamberson said that he noticed that the attendance at the school meeting before the town meeting was well attended but that he felt the discussion had been cut short because town meeting was scheduled to start at 7 p.m. Jon Trefry said that he thought the same thing and that they might consider starting town meeting at 7:30 p.m. next year.

Roger Kohn asked Police Chief Frank Koss how the on-call 24 hour coverage was working out for the department since we had now completed one year of that program. Koss responded that they had stayed within budget and that he was very pleased with the results.

Ruth Ayer asked that the Fire Department budget be voted on as a separate article next year. She thought it might serve to increase discussion and that it was ridiculous that we vote $600 for Lake Iroquois as a separate article and $2500 for the land conservation fund but not the fire department. Moderator Fallon asked Ruth is she would like to make a motion, and she said no, she just wanted the Selectboard to consider it for next year.

Sue Barden wanted to recognize the volunteer work of the library trustees; Vicki Matthews wanted to thank Tom Ayer for plowing the sidewalks; and Aaron Kimball wanted to recognize Joe Colangelo for his service to the town. All three of these suggestions drew applause from the audience.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa B. Ross, Town Clerk

/s/ Jonathan S. Trefry, Selectboard Chair

/s/ Thomas Ayer, Selectboard

/s/ Michael Bissonette, Selectboard

/s/ Andrea Morgante, Selectboard

/s/ Phil Pouech, Selectboard

/s/ Melissa B. Ross, Town Clerk