



Town of Hinesburg

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Town Meeting Minutes - March 2, 2015 Champlain Valley Union High School Auditorium – 7 PM *- Draft -*

The 2015 Town Meeting was held on March 2, 2015 at the Champlain Valley Union High School auditorium. The meeting was called to order by Moderator Joe Fallon at 7 p.m. Fallon reviewed the Roberts Rules of Order and the expectations for conduct of those participating in the meeting before proceeding to Article 1.

ARTICLE 1: To elect the necessary town and school district officers by Australian ballot Tuesday, March 3, 2015 (see "Officers for Election" list in the Annual Report). Article 1 was moved and seconded and approved unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 2: To hear the reports of the officers of the Town of Hinesburg and take action thereon.

The Moderator introduced the Chair of the Selectboard, Jon Trefry. Trefry pointed out that the current Moderator, Joe Fallon, was not running again for the office and that this was his last year in the position. He received a round of applause for his years of service. Trefry then proceeded to review happenings in the Town over the past year, including changes in staffing by introducing new staff who had been hired during the year. They included new town administrator Trevor Lashua, Sam Hines in the highway department, Jeremy Hulshof in the police department, and Erik Bailey and Art Garrison in the water and wastewater department. He also gave special recognition to Renae Marshall and Rocky Martin for their outstanding efforts in the past year while the Town was short staffed. There were several important projects during the last year that Trefry mentioned, including the Bissonette Recreation Fields, the new sidewalks along the West side of Route 116 in the village, and the new Rain Garden near the intersection of Silver Street and Route 116 to help reduce hazardous runoff from those surfaces. After Trefry's presentation, the Article passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town approve a General Government budget of \$1,624,127, with the estimated sum of \$1,263,827 appropriated from property taxes to defray the general government expenses of the Town? The Article was moved and seconded. Jon Trefry, Selectboard Chair, then did a quick overview of the budget and what the anticipated property tax implications might be. He pointed out that the budget was only increasing by \$66,000, but because no fund balance is available to allocate to offset the tax rate, the impact is more than other years. The Municipal portion of the property tax rate is anticipated to rise by 2.99 cents. Fallon asked if there were any questions on the article and there were none. The Article passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town approve a Highway Department budget of \$840,744, with the estimated sum of \$703,594 appropriated from property taxes to defray the highway expenditures of the Town? The Article was moved and seconded. Selectboard member Andrea Morgante gave a brief overview of the proposed highway budget. She first thanked Highway Foreman Mike Anthony and the rest of the highway department for all of their hard work and dedication during this winter which has seen more than its fair share of snow, wind and cold. She then pointed out that one of the main increases in the budget comes from the increase in the cost of sand and salt. Paul Lamberson then asked a question about leasing of the new dump truck and that he noticed the first payment is delayed a year. He wanted to know if that meant we could anticipate larger increases later on. The answer was no. With no further questions, the Article passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town approve the Hinesburg Community Police Department budget of \$517,662 with the estimated sum of \$493,662 appropriated from property taxes to defray the police expenditures of the Town? The Article was moved and seconded. Bob Thiefels then asked why we have 9 police officers and whether we really

needed that many and who makes the decisions about how many we should have? Chief of Police Frank Koss stated that it isn't the numbers that matter, it is how many FTEs we have and that is 6. This is based on the number of hours of coverage the town voted for and that is 16 hours per day, 7 days per week. Six officers is the minimum we can have to include vacation time, court time, and having 2 people on duty most of the time. Ken Brown then asked if we are getting the best bang for our buck with our current dispatch service. Chief Koss responded that he is trying to find a better opportunity for the town to make the cost more predictable and affordable. After there were no further questions, the budget was passed on a voice vote with a few voices of dissent.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town approve the Carpenter-Carse Library allocation from the Town of Hinesburg of \$204,905, with the estimated sum of \$204,905 appropriated from property taxes to defray the library allocation from the Town? The Article was moved and seconded, and as there were no questions, it was approved by voice vote with no dissent.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$28,650, with the estimated sum of \$28,650 appropriated from property taxes, to be distributed as specifically designated to the following agencies and organizations?

Women Helping Battered Women	\$2,350
VT Center for Independent Living	\$200
Community Resource Center	\$11,000
Visiting Nurses Association	\$6,500
COTS	\$1,000
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging	\$2,000
Howard Center	\$800
Chittenden County Community Action	\$1,500
Hinesburg Rides	\$1,750
Hope Works	\$200
Vermont Red Cross	\$200
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	\$500
Hinesburg Senior Meal Site	\$650

The article was moved and seconded. Ellen Fallon then asked who decides which agencies to fund and which to deny or reduce? Jon Trefry said that the Agency Request Review Committee makes those decisions. Kate Dodge, a member of that committee, stated that the decision is based directly on how many citizens of Hinesburg are served during the prior year. The Committee only reduced two requests; one from the American Red Cross and one from VCIL as they served few residents. The Article then passed on a voice vote with no dissent.

(If voters approved Articles 3 through 7 as presented, total general fund expenditures of \$3,216,088 will be required, with the estimated amount of \$2,694,638 to come from property tax revenue).

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to furnish the Town of St. George fire protection and first response coverage for an amount equivalent to 15% of the Town of Hinesburg's total FY15 operating and capital budget for fire and first response, estimated at the sum of \$30,000? Article 8 was moved, seconded, and approved with no discussion.

ARTICLE 9: Shall voters authorize the Selectboard to borrow money when needed to meet current expenses and indebtedness of the Town of Hinesburg? Article 9 was moved, seconded and approved with no discussion.

ARTICLE 10: Shall voters authorize the payment of real and personal property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, payable in full to the Town of Hinesburg in one (1) installment, with the due date being November 16, 2015? Any and all payments received in the Town Treasurer's Office later than midnight on November 16, 2015 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 1.5% per month or fraction thereof. Article 10 was moved, seconded and approved with no discussion.

ARTICLE 11: Shall the voters provide notice of the availability of the town report to the residents of the Town of Hinesburg in lieu of mailing or otherwise distributing the report pursuant 24 V.S.A. § 1682? The notice of availability shall be provided by postcards mailed to residents, specifying that the town report is available to be picked up at the town clerk’s office, and via public notices posted at the Town Hall, post office, and library. The Article was moved and seconded. Roger Kohn said that he felt every household should continue to receive a town report in the mail as people should read it. He then made a motion to amend the article to read that everyone should continue to receive a town report in the mail. Moderator Fallon, in the meeting’s one moment of levity, ruled Kohn out of order and said if you want people to continue to receive it, you should simply vote no. This brought some laughter from the crowd and Kohn saying that he would indeed vote no. Ken Brown then asked how much this change would save the town? Selectboard member Mike Bissonette said it had more to do with reducing waste than saving money and that many, many reports end up in the recycling bin right away at the post office. A member of the audience asked how many they would print the first year that this goes into effect, and the Selectboard stated that initially they would probably print almost the same number until they figured out how many were actually needed. Kohn asked if he could be guaranteed that he could get one, and Selectboard member Phil Pouech said that yes, he would personally guarantee that Mr. Kohn would get a copy. The article then passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 12: To transact any other business, as proper, to be brought before said meeting? John Kiedaisch made a motion to update the maps on the town website as they didn’t show the Laplatte Headwaters Town Forest. The motion was seconded and passed and the map will be updated.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. and the meeting was so adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa B. Ross
Clerk & Treasurer

Jonathan Trefry, Chair

Michael Bissonette, Vice-Chair

Tom Ayer

Phil Pouech

Andrea Morgante