

TOWN MEETING MARCH 4, 2013 MINUTES - DRAFT

ARTICLE 1: To elect the necessary town and school district officers by Australian Ballot Tuesday, March 5, 2013 (see Officers for Election list in the Town Report). Moderator Joe Fallon called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He pointed out that Articles 1 and 3 would be voted on the following day, March 5, 2013 by Australian ballot.

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

Jon Trefry, Selectboard Chair, gave a report on the many changes that had taken place in Hinesburg during the past year. He highlighted several staffing changes and additions, showed some pictures of new equipment and town projects, and discussed some of the new commercial developments that are either proposed or under construction. Moderator Joe Fallon asked for a motion to approve the Report of the Selectboard; a motion was made and seconded and the motion was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: Shall general obligation bonds of the Town of Hinesburg in an amount not to exceed One Million Fifty-Five Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,055,200), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, and other financial assistance, be issued for the purpose of financing the construction of a public safety building, at an estimated cost of One Million Fifty-Five Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,055,200)? (To be voted on by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 5, 2013)

A motion was made and seconded to postpone discussion of Article 3 until after the budget Articles were discussed and acted upon. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town approve a General Government budget of \$1,277,263, with the estimated sum of \$960,812 appropriated from property taxes to defray the general government expenses of the Town?

Moderator Fallon read the Article and then recognized Town Administrator Joe Colangelo, who proceeded to make a sure presentation with the highlights in the budget. The Moderator then opened the floor to questions. Ken Brown, former Selectboard member, proposed an amendment as follows: *I propose to amend Article 4 by increasing the total General Government Budget by \$3900 to \$1,281,163 with the suggestion that the Selectboard wages be increased to \$8150 (\$1500 per Selectboard member and \$2150 for the Chair).* By way of explanation, Ken stated that the Board hadn't had a raise since 2001 and that he felt it was time to give them one since they work hard and are forbidden by statute to increase their own salaries. The amendment was seconded and passed on a voice vote. We then returned to the main motion which was now to approve a General Government budget of \$1,281,163 with the estimated sum of \$964,712 to be raised from property taxes? There were no further questions. The Moderator asked for a motion which was made and seconded and the motion was approved on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town approve a Highway Department budget of \$921,505, with the estimated sum of \$713,496 appropriated from property taxes to defray the highway expenditures of the Town?

The Moderator asked for a motion. The motion was made and seconded. There were no questions, and the motion was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town approve the Hinesburg Community Police Department budget of \$595,355, with the estimated sum of \$541,400 appropriated from property taxes to defray the police expenditures of the Town?

Moderator Fallon read the article and asked for a motion. The motion was made and seconded. There was a question regarding the increase in the salary line in the budget. Joe stated that because the funding for the Cops grant was ending in August, the town now needed to pay the salary for that officer. Someone else asked a question about the cost of the mobile data terminals and what the expected life span on the on-board computers was? Frank said that they are expected to last about 5-6 years, so they budget a certain amount of funds per year to go into a fund for the replacement. Bill Lippert stated that his experience in the legislature has shown that the video cameras in the cars are a good protection for both the officers and the public and that they reduce the probability of litigation. Another citizen asked about the idea of patrolling Huntington and whether that was going forward. Joe (or was it Frank?) stated that there had been brief discussions about that but that there is no plan at this time to go forward with this idea. There was some discussion about the idea of regional policing and people in the audience were generally supportive of the concept. Moderator Fallon read the motion again and the motion was approved on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town approve the Carpenter- Carse Town allocation of \$194,793, with the estimated sum of \$184,010 appropriated from property taxes to defray the library allocation from the Town? Moved and seconded. Laura Hoopes asked about the Book Mobile and whether the library was planning to revive its use. Dacelene Lewis/Wedge, who is on the library board, said that is needed too much work. The library is doing other kinds of outreach. The motion passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$7,500, with the estimated sum of \$7,085 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? Moved and seconded. Someone asked whether we don't have enough land already preserved and whether we need to take more off the tax rolls. Andrea responded that most of the preserved land still pays property taxes. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$600, with the estimated sum of \$567 appropriated from property taxes, to the Lake Iroquois Recreation District? The Article was moved and seconded and passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 10: Shall the Town vote to allocate the sum of \$28,944, with the estimated sum of \$27,342 appropriated from property taxes, to be distributed as specifically designated to the following agencies/organizations?

Chittenden Community Action	\$1,500
Chittenden Emer. Food Shelf	\$400
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging	\$2,200
Hinesburg Community Resource Center	\$10,500
Hinesburg Rides	\$1,750
Hinesburg Senior Meal Site	\$500
HOPE Works	\$200
Howard Center	\$800
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	\$500
Red Cross	\$200
Vermont Ctr. For Ind. Living	\$300
Vermont Cares	\$500
Visiting Nurse Association	\$7,344
Women Helping Battered Women	\$2,250
TOTAL AGENCY	\$28,944

The motion was moved and seconded. Carl Bohlen wondered why there was no funding for COTS, which has been funded in the past. Kate Dodge, a member of the Agency Request Review Committee, said that they hadn't received a letter requesting funds. Rolf Kielman made a motion to amend Article 10 by adding \$1056.00 for COTS, so that the new total for Article 10 would be \$30,000. Moderator Fallon ruled that the motion was out of order, but that the voters could overrule him. Carl Bohlen made a motion to overrule the Moderator. There was a second and the motion carried. We then went back to the original motion to amend Article 10 by adding \$1056. Several people felt that we shouldn't override the committee's recommendations, while others voiced support. The amendment was defeated, and then the original motion was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 11: 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 FY2012-2013 operating budget for fire and first response, estimated at the sum of \$24,448? The motion was moved and seconded. Len Duffy asked why we ask them to cover 15 percent of the fire dept. budget? Al Barber said it was based on the number of calls to St. George. The motion passed on a voice vote.

(If all Articles 4 – 11 are approved as printed, total General Fund expenditures of \$3,025,960 will be needed with the estimated amount of \$2,434,712 to come from property tax revenue)

The floor was opened up to discussion on Article 3, the bond vote for the police station. Someone asked why the cost appeared to be around \$300 per square foot when the national average is closer to \$200/sq. foot. Joe said that when you take out the architectural costs and site improvements, ours is around \$204/sq. ft. Someone else asked what will happen to the existing building. Andrea said that she felt we were better off keeping the house and corner lot for future use rather than selling the lot to offset the cost of the police station construction. Len Duffy reiterated that he thought we should sell it. Someone else said that it was a good time to borrow money as interest rates were so low. Ruth Ayer and Vicki Matthews both wondered about the need for a holding cell and how much it would be used. Someone else wondered if the costs of operating the building would increase significantly. Chief Koss said he didn't think so since the existing building is so energy inefficient. There was another question about whether or not there might be solar panels on the new station. At this time there are no plans to install solar panels.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to borrow money when needed to meet

current expenses and indebtedness of the Town of Hinesburg? The motion was made, seconded and passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 13: Shall the voters authorize the payment of real and personal property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 payable in full to the Town of Hinesburg in one (1) installment, with the due date being November 15, 2013? Any and all payments received in the Town Treasurer's Office later than midnight on November 15, 2013 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.

The motion was moved and seconded. Bruce Cunningham made a motion to amend Article 13 to read:

“.....subject to interest at the rate of one thirtieth of one percent (1/30%) for each fraction of a month, with each day of delinquency considered as a one thirtieth (1/30) fraction of a month for up to 30 days for each month.” Missy Ross, Delinquent Tax Collector, said that she was opposed to the amendment. It would be too complicated, VLCT had issued an opinion that the current Statute says that it isn't legal, and people have their tax bills for 3 months ahead of time. They can pay anytime during that 3 months. The amendment was defeated on a voice vote. The Article then passed as originally written on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 14: Shall the voters of the Town of Hinesburg designate the Town of Hinesburg as a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) District to enable participating property owners to access funding for eligible energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and then pay back the cost as a regular municipal assessment on that property owner's property tax or other municipal bill as provided for by 24 V.S.A. Chapter 87 (Section 3261 et seq.)?

The Article was moved and seconded. Chuck Reiss got up and gave a brief presentation in favor of the Article. He said that the program would be administered by Efficiency Vermont and wouldn't cost the Town anything to implement. He gave a brief overview of how the program works. The Moderator then repeated the motion and it was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the voters of the Town of Hinesburg instruct the Selectboard to enact a resolution, as presented at Town Meeting, to protect citizen health and safety, water bodies and other natural resources, in relation to tar sands oil transport through Vermont? Moderator Fallon prefaced his reading of this Article by saying it was the weirdest thing he had seen on a Town Meeting warning given that the Resolution being voted on wasn't included in the warning. The Article was then moved and seconded. Several people voiced their support of the Article as being important to help combat global warming, and to question whether we wanted this environmentally destructive fuel going through Vermont with no benefit to our State. Someone questioned whether or not this is germane to town meeting. The moderator ruled that it is, but again suggested that the people could overrule his ruling. Len Duffy made a motion to overrule the moderator, meaning that it would be found to be not germane and therefore there would be no discussion and no vote. The motion failed. Lynn Gardner then made a motion to postpone consideration of the Article. This motion also failed. Phil Pouech made a motion to amend the wording of section 2 in the full resolution to read that the Town “may” rather than “shall” etc....(full resolution will be attached). The amendment was passed on a voice vote, and then Article 15 was passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 16: To transact any other business proper to be brought before said meeting. Heather Rice made a motion (Waiting for a copy of the motion to include in the minutes), seconded, and was passed on a voice vote.