

## Annual Town Meeting Minutes March 5<sup>th</sup> 2024

Meeting called to order at 9:05

Moderator introduced Kirk White, Stockbridge State representative. Kirk reported that the legislature is still working on ways to incentivize people to come to live and work in Vermont. The legislature is working hard with the Governor on housing and on increasing capacity for MTAP, Vermont Municipal Technical Assistance Program. Data Privacy is also important, Vermont would be the first state in the US to institute a bill to protect citizens. Kirk reference Vermont housing data which can be accessed at <https://www.housingdata.org/profile>. Kirk let the Town know about some free classes at Bethel University. On March 6, Why Vermont needs more people, and March 18, Insiders look at Vermont Government.

Lou Chap wanted to clarify “term through” on page 8 of the Town Report. Lous terms on Planning commission and board of adjustments are incorrect and should be through 2026.

### **Article 1**

1. Moderator 1 year term-Mike Ketchum asked for nominations. Lou Chap nominated Kent Butterfield, Sylvan Groth moved to close nominations and was seconded from the floor. Nominations Closed and Kent Butterfield will remain moderator for 1 more year.
2. Selectperson for 3 year term-Lee Ann Isaacson nominated Bill Edgerton and was seconded form the floor. Donna Bryan nominated Carol Burke and was seconded from the floor. Bruce Griffith motioned to close nominations and was seconded from the floor. Lou Chap said he would like to hear from the nominees. Both nominees made a short presentation. A floor motion was made to end discussions and seconded. Sylvan Groth moved for a paper ballot and was seconded from the floor. A paper ballot was completed with 139 votes were cast, Carol Burke received 94 votes and Bill Edgerton received 45 votes.
3. Lister for 3 year term- Sylvan Groth nominated Rich Furman for another term and was seconded from the floor. Julie Groppe motioned to close nominations and was seconded from the floor. The moderator instructed the clerk to cast one vote for Rich Furman.

4. Agent to Defend and Prosecute Suites for a 1 year term-Lou Chap nominated Joanne Mills and was seconded from the floor. The moderator instructed the clerk to cast one vote for Joanne Mills.
5. Grand Juror for 1 year term- Suzanne Butterfield nominated Lou Chap and was seconded from the floor. The moderator instructed the clerk to cast one vote for Lou Chap.
6. Collector of Delinquent taxes for 3 year term- Kevin Travis moved to table to vote until Article 5 (to change the term to 3 years) was voted on. The motion was seconded from the floor. Article 1 # 6 was tabled.
7. Trustee of public funds 3 year term- Debra Aldrich nominated Julie Groppe and was seconded from the floor. Kathy Burns stated that Trustee and Auditor is on the incompatible office chart. Julie replied that she had resigned as an Auditor. Leslie Rogers moved to close discussion and was seconded from the floor. Moderator instructed clerk to cast one vote for Julie Groppe. Kim Marsh let the voters know that there is a second position available and nominated Teresa Newton, the nomination was seconded from the floor. Moderator instructed clerk to cast one vote for Teresa Newton.
8. Cemetery Commissioner for 3 year term-Joanne Mills nominated Suzanne Butterfield and was seconded from the floor. Moderator instructed clerk to cast one vote for Suzanne Butterfield.
9. Memorial day Chair for 1 year- Kathy Burns nominated Suzanne Butterfield and was seconded from the floor. Moderator instructed clerk to cast one vote for Suzanne Butterfield.

**Article 2:** To hear the auditor's report and take all necessary actions thereon. Julie Groppe nominated Jenny Austin to fulfill the now vacant Auditors position, Sylvan seconded. The moderator instructed the clerk to cast one vote for Jenny Austin. Sylvan Groth read the auditor's report. The report was accepted as written.

**Article 3:** Will the Town vote to pay real estate taxes in two equal installments due on August 15 and November 15? Sylvan motioned to accept and was seconded from the floor. Approved

**Article 4:** Will the Town vote to elect a Collector of Taxes or to authorize the Town Treasurer to collect current taxes? Sylvan moved for treasure to collect taxes. Approved

**Article 5:** Will the Town vote to change the Delinquent Tax collector from a 1 year term to a 3 year term? Bruce Griffith asked why change to 3 years? Susan Pelletier said as the collector for the past 8 years, having a 3 year term make sense. With all there is to learn and new ways to help people, it takes a while to get to know the systems. Suzanne

Butterfield nominated Donna Bryan, Craig Cota moved to close nominations and it was seconded from the floor. The moderator instructed the clerk to cast one vote for Donna Bryan.

**Article 6:** Will the town vote to accept the proposed Budget? Recommended \$1096651 Kathy Burns voted to accept article as written and was seconded. Lee Ann Issacson moved to raise the selectboard salary. It was suggested from the floor to raise to \$2000 per year per board member. Mark Pelletier moved to amend the budget to increase Selectboard salary to \$2000 per year, and was seconded from the floor. The floor moved to close the discussion. Julie Groppe moved to amend the budget to \$1098451 and a second came from the floor. Debra Goodwin motioned for the budget to be increased to accommodate increase. Approved

**Article 7:** Will the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes? The floor moved to accept and was seconded. Approved.

**Article 8:** Will the Town vote to Contract with the Windsor County Sheriff for a 1 year contract for 12 hours per week at \$38,000? Ryan Palmer from the Sheffifs department addressed the Town briefly on what the Sheriff's department would provide for support. Jan Stratton moved to approve a 1 year contract and was seconded from the floor. Approved.

**Article \_:** To do any other necessary and proper business brought before said annual Town Meeting. Bruce Griffith asked for an update on Blackmer Boulevard. The board asked Kevin Bagley town road foreman to update the town. Kevin let everyone know that Geotechnical study's were just completed at two locations on Blackmer Boulevard and that the reports will be in soon. Deborah Goodwin asked about Stony Brook Road, we are also waiting on engineering study's for Stony, Laury and River Road. A question on the Gaysville bridge was brought forth, Will adding a sidewalk to the Gaysville bridge cost more? The construction of the bridge will be 100% federally funded. The Town will be required to pay 10% of the engineering and permitting.

Jim Munyon asked for Volunteers to join the fire department. Jim also recognized Dave Brown for serving 25 years as Fire Warden.