

**TOWN OF WILMINGTON**  
**2017 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**  
**MINTUES**  
**March 7, 2017**

At 11:35 the Moderator declared the town meeting open. In attendance were Moderator Robert Fisher; Selectboard members Tom Fitzgerald, John Gannon, Sarah Fisher, Vince Rice; Town Manager Scott Murphy; Police Chief Joe Szarejko; Fire Chief Ken March; Road Supervisor Bill Hunt; Town Treasurer and Finance Officer Christine Richter; Assistant Town Clerk Pat Johnson; members the Wilmington Board of Civil Authority; official poll workers and approximately 70 voters and members of the public. The Moderator made a few announcements and went over the requirements for participating and voting at Town Meeting and asked those who are not registered voters to identify themselves. He then read the following warning:

Article 1: To elect all Town and Town School District Officers required by law and the vote of the Town. (Australian Ballot Polls open 7:00 A.M. until 7:00 P.M.)

Article 2: To see if the Town will vote to accept the Town Report.

Article 3: To see what date or dates will be set for the payment of taxes (8/18/17 and 2/23/18).

Article 4: "Shall the voters authorize the replacement of Look Road bridge in an amount not to exceed \$444,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five years." pursuant to 17 VSA §1786a(c).

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$18,000 to fund recycling at the former town garage site.

Article 6: "Shall the Town of Wilmington adopt its ballot system for any article relating to the following question; "Shall the Town of Wilmington adopt its budget articles and vote all public questions by Australian ballot?" consistent with 17 VSA §2680.

Article 7: To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$2,000 to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Wilmington in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,081,905 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the General Fund for fiscal year 2018 (7/1/17 to 6/30/18).

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,337,735 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the Town Road Budget for fiscal year 2018 (7/1/17 to 6/30/18).

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$200,000 to fund the Highway Town Road Equipment Capital Fund.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$125,000 to fund the Fire Department Equipment Capital Fund.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$20,000 to fund the Memorial Hall Capital Fund.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$12,000 to fund the Library Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000 to fund the Playground Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$5,000 to fund the Town Hall Capital Fund.

Article 16: To transact any non-binding business.

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 2:** made by Doug Wheeler, seconded by Elizabeth McEwen to accept the Town Report.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it - **MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 3:** made by Cliff Duncan, seconded by Doug Wheeler to set dates for the payment of taxes on 8/18/17 and 2/23/18.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it - **MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 4:** made by Doug Wheeler, seconded by Tom Consolino to authorize the replacement of Look Road bridge in an amount not to exceed \$444,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five years, pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 1786a(c).

**AMENDMENT ON ARTICLE 4:** made by Meg Streeter, seconded by Jim Burke to authorize the replacement of Look Road Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$44,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five years.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): borrowing this amount of money is typically determined by a bond vote; it would be better fiscal management to borrow much less and use one percent funds for the bulk of the bridge replacement; the additional money to be raised is due to unanticipated costs; one percent money is for economic and community development not bridge repairs

**SPEAKERS:** Meg Streeter, Carol DeBarba, Tom Fitzgerald, Jim Burke, Tom Consolino, Ralph Staib, John Gannon, Adam Grinold, Joseph Cincotta, Cliff Duncan

**VOICE VOTE ON AMENDMENT** – too close to call – **MODERATOR CALLED FOR STANDING VOTE**

**RESULTS OF STANDING VOTE:** Yes 23/No 44 **AMENDMENT DEFEATED – SO VOTED.**

**MAIN MOTION ON ARTICLE 4:** to authorize the replacement of Look Road Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$444,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five year, pursuant to 17 VSA § 1786a(c).

**FURTHER DISCUSSION** (including but not limited to): the five year loan period is the maximum payback period authorized by statute without requiring a bond vote; prioritize and cut budget in other places instead of having our taxes raised

**SPEAKERS:** Nicki Steel, Doug Wheeler, Joseph Cincotta, Scott Murphy, Janet Boyd

**AMENDMENT:** made by Janet Boyd, seconded by Marc Lipson to borrow \$444,000 from the one percent fund for the replacement of Look Road Bridge and to finance that for a period not to exceed five years at a reduced interest rate.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): should be interest free instead of a reduced interest rate

**SPEAKERS:** Steve Butler

**AMENDMENT:** made by Steve Butler, seconded by Barker Willard to borrow \$444,000 from the one percent fund for the replacement of Look Road Bridge and to finance that for a period not to exceed five years at a zero percent interest rate.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): the funding source for a loan can't be identified in the warned article or amendments

**SPEAKERS:** Meg Streeter, Tom Fitzgerald

### **AMENDMENTS RULED OUT OF ORDER**

**AMENDMENT:** made by Doug Wheeler to fund the Bridge replacement in an amount not to exceed \$444,000 for the replacement of Look Road Bridge using another avenue other than raising taxes to be discussed at the next available Selectboard meeting.

### **NO SECOND – ADMENDMENT WITHDRAWN**

**FURTHER DISCUSSION** (including but not limited to): not sure what the purpose of this amendment; the way this article is written allows the board to only spend the \$444,000 on the bridge replacement but the actual cost is over \$700,000; would be better to have a bond vote on this instead of a vote on the floor

**SPEAKERS:** Adam Grinold, Fred Skwirut, Ralph Staib, Nicki Steel, Ann Manwaring, Patti Burke, Meg Streeter

**AMENDMENT:** made by John Gannon, seconded by Jim Burke to authorize the replacement of Look Road Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$721,043 with \$444,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five years, pursuant to 17 VSA §1786a.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): citation incorrect in the warning, should be 24 VSA §1786a but the intent remains, the motion maker noted that he misspoke when making the amendment and meant to say 24 VSA not 17 VSA.

**SPEAKERS:** Meg Streeter, John Gannon

**POINT OF ORDER** by Merrill Mundell regarding statute and moderator clarified correct citation.

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Laura Stevenson, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – MOTION TO END DEBATE CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

### **MODERATOR THEN CALLED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE AMENDMENT**

**FURTHER DISCUSSION** (including but not limited to): this has been a huge inconvenience for those who live on Look Road; bridge is not safe and would like it to get done; if voted down the objection is regarding financing and not using one percent funds; by not having a bond vote or a special meeting allows the town to meet its obligations quicker

**SPEAKERS:** Carol DeBarba, Fred Skwirut, Tom Fitzgerald, Stephanie Zumbuski, Linda Brophy, Lisa Sullivan, Joseph Cincotta, John Gannon

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Lenny Chapman, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – MOTION TO END DEBATE CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**VOICE VOTE ON AMENDMENT – too close to call – MODERATOR CALLED FOR STANDING VOTE**

**RESULTS OF STANDING VOTE: Yes 53/No 24 AMENDMENT CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION TO RECESS** for lunch made by Jim Burke, seconded by Patti Burke.

**RECESS for lunch at 1:00 pm**

**RECONVENED at 1:45 pm** - Moderator turned the floor over at 1:45 pm to hear from Rep. John Gannon.

Thanks for Diane Chapman and Susie Haughwout for their time and service on the Selectboard;  
Thanks to Scott Murphy for his time as Town Manager; It's only been eight weeks since serving as legislator; is on the government operations committee and the house ethics panel; encourage people to contact him with any thoughts or issues; thanked school board members for their efforts; concerns regarding education, budgeting and equity in distribution of education funds; will look into paving on Route 100; will actively let people know what's going on in Montpelier

**MEETING RECONVENED AT 2:10 pm**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 5:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Carol DeBarba to raise and appropriate up to \$18,000 to fund recycling at the former town garage site

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): Windham Solid Waste Management District will no longer provide recycling services as of June 30, 2017 leaving individual towns responsible; concerns that the closure of the Beaver Street site will lead to problems with illegal dumping; paying someone to clean up trash would be costly

**SPEAKERS:** Merrill Mundell; Shelia Osler, Kathy Larsen, Carol DeBarba, Tom Fitzgerald, Cliff Duncan, Ralph Staib, Jim Burke, Jerry Osler

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 6:** made by Steve Butler, seconded by Patti Burke - Shall the Town of Wilmington adopt its ballot system for any article relating to the following question; "Shall the Town of Wilmington adopt its budget articles and vote all public questions by Australian ballot?" consistent with 17 VSA §2680.

**MOTION TO PASS OVER ARTICLE 6:** made by Steve Butler, seconded by Tom Consolino.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): wording in the town meeting warning is different than the petition that was submitted and a special meeting should be held on this Article; is wording error significant enough to warrant a special meeting; resolve the matter now instead of passing over

**SPEAKERS:** Steve Butler, Fred Skwirut, Adam Grinold

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Lenny Chapman, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – MOTION TO END DEBATE CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**VOICE VOTE ON MOTION TO PASS OVER – too close to call – MODERATOR CALLED FOR STANDING VOTE**

**RESULTS OF STANDING VOTE: Yes 25/No 44 MOTION TO PASS OVER ARTICLE 6 FAILED.**

**AMENDMENT ON ARTICLE 6:** made by John Gannon, seconded by Fred Skwirut – Shall the town of Wilmington adopt budget articles and vote on public questions by Australian ballot?

**FURTHER DISCUSSION** (including but not limited to): turnout at town meeting does not represent the majority of voters; consider moving meeting to evening to make the process more available for voters who can't attend due to work obligations; articles cannot be amended if voted by Australian ballot; discussion at town meeting and citizen participation is valuable; support for holding a special meeting to decide this question so that a majority can be present

**SPEAKERS:** Cliff Duncan, Steve Butler, John Gannon, Tom Consolino, Meg Streeter, Joseph Cincotta, Barker Willard, Carol DeBarba, Adam Grinold, Stephanie Zumbruski, Lisa Sullivan

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Jerry Osler, seconded by Barker Willard.

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – **MOTION TO END DEBATE CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MODERATOR THEN CALLED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE AMENDMENT**

**FURTHER DISCUSSION** (including but not limited to): keep the tradition of town meeting; participation at town meeting is as important as voting on the articles;

**SPEAKERS:** Merrill Mundell, Peter Park, Ann Manwaring, Laura Stevenson

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Lenny Chapman, seconded by Tom Consolino.

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – **MOTION TO END DEBATE CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**VOICE VOTE** – Nays had it – **AMENDMENT FAILED.**

**MODERATOR DID NOT RETURN TO THE MAIN MOTION, AND RULED THAT ARTICLE 6 AS AMENDED WAS DEFEATED.** “The nays have it and you have defeated article 6 as amended.”

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 7:** made by Elizabeth McEwen, seconded by Marc Lipson to see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$2,000 to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Wilmington in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): SEVCA addresses peoples’ immediate needs for fuel, housing, food, weatherization and resources to help in the short term and provides further tools and support to help them the long term

**SPEAKERS:** Elizabeth McEwen, Tom Consolino, Cliff Duncan, Pat Burke of SEVCA

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it – **MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 8:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Tom Consolino to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,081,905 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the General Fund for fiscal year 2018 (7/1/17 to 6/30/18).

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): slight increase in budget to accommodate requests from Pettee Memorial Library otherwise the budget is level funded; delinquent taxes will be discussed at the next Selectboard meeting; can make cuts by eliminating full time fire chief and taking away Murphy’s severance package; taxes are too high

**SPEAKERS:** Tom Fitzgerald, Carol DeBarba, Cliff Duncan, John Gannon, Nicki Steel, Ralph Staib, Jim Burke, Christine Richter, Lisa Sullivan, Adam Grinold, Cliff Duncan

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Cliff Duncan, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE** – Ayes had it by 2/3 majority – **MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 9:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Tom Consolino to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,337,735 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the Town Road Budget for fiscal year 2017 (7/1/17 to 6/30/18).

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): the bridge capital account is for bridge maintenance/matching grants; spending should be prioritized instead of continuing to borrow and raise taxes; concerns regarding future bridge repairs

**SPEAKERS:** Joseph Cincotta, Bill Hunt, John Gannon, Peter Park, Carol DeBarba, Scott Murphy

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION:** made by Crista Gannon, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 10:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Andrea Berg to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$200,000 to fund the Highway Town Road Equipment Capital Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): does the town have equipment for sidewalk snow removal; snow removal downtown has been inefficient; town uses an outside contractor; the current contractor has been used for the last two seasons at \$50,000 per year

**SPEAKERS:** Andrea Berg, Scott Murphy, Barker Willard, Travis Wheeler, Lenny Chapman

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 11:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Marc Lipson to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$125,000 to fund the Fire Department Equipment Capital Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 12:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Crista Gannon to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$20,000 to fund the Memorial Hall Capital Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 13:** made by Crista Gannon, seconded by Jim Burke to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$12,000 to fund the Library Capital Reserve Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE – ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 14:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Crista Gannon to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000 to fund the Playground Capital Reserve Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MOTION ON ARTICLE 15:** made by Jim Burke, seconded by Crista Gannon to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$5,000 to fund the Town Hall Capital Fund.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to): None

**SPEAKERS:** None

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**ARTICLE 16:** To transact any non-binding business.

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** (including but not limited to):

**SPEAKERS:** Nicki Steel, Meg Streeter, Therese Lounsbury, Lynne Matthews, Tom Fitzgerald

Articles need to be looked over better to avoid errors and confusion; thanks to the police department, fire department, highway crew and to all the town employees for their dedication; Friends of the Library raffle drawing was held; thanks to the members of the Selectboard; thank you to Susie and Diane for their service; welcome to Sarah Fisher; feel free to contact the Selectboard with any concerns; there is an Act 46 informational meeting tomorrow night; thank you all for coming to town meeting

**MOTION TO ADJOURN FLOOR MEETING:** made by Fred Skwirut, seconded by Jim Burke.

**VOICE VOTE – Ayes had it – MOTION CARRIED – SO VOTED.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:55PM – Australian Ballot voting continues until 7pm.**

TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF, THESE MINUTES ARE A TRUE AND OFFICIAL RECORD OF ALL ACTION TAKEN AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD, MARCH 7, 2017.

Prepared on: March 10, 2017

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia Johnson, Wilmington Assistant Town Clerk

DATE: 3/10/2017

TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF, THESE MINUTES ARE A TRUE INDICATION OF THE BUSINESS OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD, MARCH 7, 2017.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_