

Town of Bridgewater
Annual Town Meeting
March 3, 2020

The 2020 Annual Town Meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Bill Berry. First order of business under Article 1, is to elect a Moderator. Bill Berry was nominated by Ed Earle. Being no other nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Bill Berry.

Bill made the following announcements:

- * Location of exits and bathroom facilities. Complimentary refreshments provided by the Community Center.
 - * Town Meeting procedure and reminded the audience that in order to vote, they must be checked off the checklist and stamped at the entrance. Will be following Roberts Rules of Order.
 - * Australian Ballot vote at the Town Office for the Presidential Primary, Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District Budget and the Fire Station bond. Polls are open from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm.
- A rabies clinic will be held at the Bridgewater Mill on March 21st from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm. \$12.00 per shot. The pledge of allegiance was said and a moment of silence was held for those that have passed.

Representative Jim Harrison, spoke to the assembly regarding current happenings in the legislature: including the paid family leave bill, minimum wage increase, global warming solutions act, tax and regulations plan for cannabis. Fielded questions regarding car inspection costs, composing law which will take effect as of July 1st., speed enforcement revenues in the 50-mph zone.

Hank Smith asked for 15 minutes to give a presentation /update on the Community Center building. Bill explained that it would be up to the votes whether or not to allow this action, and that it could be approved or disapproved by a 2/3 vote. Raymond Kennedy Jr. moved to allow the presentation. Beth Fish asked to amend the motion to 10 minutes. Ellen Quinn moved to do the presentation at the end of the meeting. This motion failed by division of the house. Motion to approve the presentation passed by voice vote. Hank showed a slide show of the actions taken of the building since the school closed, committee then non-profit organization formed, grants and donations to improve building. Goal to open daycare in July of this year and for art, yoga, music and other program use by end of year.

Town meeting resumed and Bill mentioned that this year's town report was dedicated to Mary Oldenburg who was given a round of applause and standing ovation.

Article 2: Owen Astbury moved and Gerry Hawkes 2nd to see if the town will vote the sum of \$21,750.00 to the following social service agencies:

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| a. Visiting Nurse and Hospice of VT & NH | \$4,900.00 |
| b. Spectrum Teen Center | 750.00 |
| c. Woodstock Area Council on Aging | 6,600.00 |
| d. Southeastern VT Community Action (SEVCA) | 1,000.00 |
| e. Norman Williams Library | 3,500.00 |
| f. Woodstock Recreation Dept. | 3,000.00 |
| g. Senior Solutions | 500.00 |
| h. Ottauquechee Health Foundation | 1,500.00 |

Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 3: Hank Smith moved and Owen Astbury 2nd to vote to authorize the Selectboard to borrow up to \$190,000.00 to purchase a new truck for the Highway Department to replace the 2014 Freightliner, to be paid from the equipment reserve fund. Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 4: Hank Smith moved to see if the town will vote a budget of \$1,267,766.00 of which \$763,546.94 shall be raised by taxes. Discussion of Sheriff's Department revenue and expenses. Account has been in a deficit for the past couple of years.

Collen Doyle moved to amend the budget down by \$35,000 to \$1,232,766.94 with the amount to be raised in taxes of \$728,546.94. Discussion of where cuts could be made which are up to the Selectboard. Vote on amendment was taken by voice vote, too close to call, then went to paper ballot. Amendment defeated (no-52 yes-41) back to main motion of budget of \$1,267,766.00 with amount to be raised in taxes of \$763,546.94. Motion carried by voice vote. Selectboard will take concerns into consideration and will schedule meeting with Sheriff Chamberlain this spring.

Article 5: Hank Smith moved and Greg Jenne 2nd to see if the Town will vote to place its taxes or any part thereof in the hands of the Collector of Current Taxes for collection on August 5, 2020 to be paid on or before November 4, 2020 (1st. Wednesday). Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 6: The following Town Officers were elected as required by law.

- a. Selectboard (3 yrs.) Nominations: George Spear was nominated by Sheryl Phelps. Lynne Bertram was nominated by Hank Smith. George Spear declined. No other nominations. Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Lynne Bertram.
- b. Lister (3 yrs.) Melissa Spear was nominated. Being no other nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Melissa Spear. Motion carried.
- c. Cemetery Commissioner (3 yrs.) Paul Hutt was nominated. Being no other nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Paul Hutt. Motion carried.
- d. Town Constable (1 yr.) David Adams was nominated. Being no other nominations, the Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for David Adams. Motion carried
- e. Town Agent (1 yr.) Greg Robinson was nominated. Being no other nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Greg Robinson. Motion carried.
- f. Trustee of Public Funds (1 yr.) Henry (Hank) Smith was nominated. Being no other nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Hank Smith. Motion carried.

Article 7: Other business – Discussion of vacancy on the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District board, Nicola Smith is interested and will contact the Selectboard.

William Young – moved to put a motion on the floor (non-binding) for Bridgewater to become a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary City. Motion was 2nd by John Atwood and then withdrawn after discussion of what this motion was about. Motion was then 2nd by John Blanchard. There was discussion and clarification of the motion with regards to gun removal. Motion defeated by voice vote.

Beth Robinson – Spoke about the Ottawaquechee Health Foundation program and its services for the residents of Bridgewater.

Deanna Jones- Thompson Senior Center services for Bridgewater. Will be hosting a composting workshop on March 24th.

Brenda Metzler-Norman Williams Library Representative, thank you to votes for supporting appropriation.

Melissa Walker Spear – Director of the Community Center thanked the fire department for the use of their chairs for town meeting.

Greg Jenne- asked the Selectboard to get information regarding flashing lights at each end of town, camera to take photos of speeding cars and negotiate for less expensive services with the Sheriff's Dept and to bring this information to the votes next year.

Raymond Kennedy Jr. suggested that the thank you was due to the previous road foreman that left last summer. Lynne mentioned the ambulance service increase of 24/7 paid coverage. Allison Wade, Ambulance Service Member noted that all members have been re-certified.

Bruce Seely – New Fire Station committee members will remain after the meeting to answer any questions regarding the new building and bond vote.

Being no further discussion, the motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Town Meeting at 11:20 pm.
Motion carried.

Approved by:

William Berry, Moderator

Jerry Oppenheimer, Justice of Peace

105 legal voters were in attendance

Results of Australian ballot Questions:

Fire Station Bond: 330 ballots cast. Yes-225 No-93 Spoiled-12

WCUUMSD 330 Ballots cast.

Article 2: Barnard Merger

Yes-243 No-64

Article 3: Appropriation of funds is merger is approved

Yes-173 No-131

Article 4: Appropriation of funds if merger is not approved

Yes-146 No-149