

Town of Bridgewater
Annual Town Meeting
March 5, 2024

The 2024 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. Greg Jenne was nominated by Mary Oldenburg. Greg was elected by voice vote. Thank you, Bill Berry, for your many years of serving as Moderator.

Greg made the following announcements:

* Location of exits and bathroom facilities. Refreshments provided by the Women's Auxiliary.

* Town Meeting procedure and reminded the audience that in order to vote, they must be checked off the checklist and stamped at the entrance. Greg reviewed rules and regulations that he would be following.

* Australian Ballot vote at the Town Office for Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District and Presidential Primary. Polls are open from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm.

A pledge of allegiance was said, and a moment of silence was held for those that have passed. Thank you to the Fire Department for use of new fire station building for today's meeting and assisting with set up. Also, to Auxiliary for providing refreshments.

Representative Heather Surprenant was present and spoke of a 6-page report that she will send to the town office for posting on the town's website.

Article 2: Bill Berry moved and William Young, 2nd to appropriate the sum of **\$25,550.00** to the following social service agencies pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 2691.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| a. Visiting Nurse and Hospice of VT & NH | \$4,900.00 |
| b. Spectrum Teen Center | 750.00 |
| c. Woodstock Area Council on Aging | 7,000.00 |
| d. Southeastern VT Community Action (SEVCA) | 1,000.00 |
| e. Norman Williams Library | 5,000.00 |
| f. Woodstock Recreation Dept. | 3,000.00 |
| g. Senior Solutions | 1,400.00 |
| h. Ottauquechee Health Foundation | 2,500.00 |

Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 3 Bill Berry moved and William Young 2nd to grant tax exempt status to the Bridgewater Grange #284 for a period of 5 years pursuant to 32 V.S.A. 3840. Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 4: Bill Berry moved and Steve Tarleton Sr. 2nd to authorize total fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$1,793,624.78 of which \$248,164.14 shall be raised by non-tax revenue and the amount of \$1,545,460.64 be raised by taxes. Board fielded questions regarding deficit, sheriff revenue and non-tax revenue. Motion carried by voice vote.

Article 5: Steve Tarleton Sr. moved and William Young 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 1, 2024 to be paid on or before November 6, 2024 (1st. Wednesday). Motion carried by voice vote.

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

a. Selectboard (3 yrs.)

Nominations: Phillip Winsor

Nope (Norman) Martin (declined)

Owen Astbury

David Adams

Vote was taken by paper ballot. 129 votes were cast. Winsor-40, Astbury-85, Adams-4
Owen Astbury was declared the winner.

b. Lister (3 yrs.) Kaleb McIntire was nominated. Being no other nominations, the clerk
was instructed to cast one ballot for Kaleb McIntire. Motion carried.

c. Lister (1yr unexpired term) Marsha Fraser was nominated. Being no other
nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Marsha Fraser. Motion
carried.

d. Cemetery Commissioner (3 yrs.) Owen Astbury was nominated. Being no other
nominations, the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for Owen Astbury. Motion
carried.

e. Delinquent Tax Collector (3 yrs.)

Nominations: Mary Oldenburg

Victoria Young

Vote was taken by paper ballot. 114 votes were cast. Oldenburg-82, Young-32
Mary Oldenburg was declared the winner.

f. Town Constable (1 yr.)

Nominations: Kaleb McIntire

David Adams

Warren (John) Blanchard

Vote was taken by paper ballot. 96 votes were cast. McIntire-15, Adams-34, and
Blanchard-47. No majority votes cast. Second vote was taken by paper ballot. 111
votes were cast. McIntire-8, Adams-31, Blanchard-72. Warren (John) Blanchard
was declared the winner.

Article 7: Other business (Advisory only)

Robert Kancir asked for a status update on the FEMA loans. Melissa explained that the town has
spent to date \$4.1 million on flood expenses and town has borrowed \$4.5 million from Mascoma
Bank to cover these expenses. Interest on these loans are due in July. Is applying for other
funding sources to help pay back bank loans. Has a meeting with FEMA and State
Representatives tomorrow morning.

Discussion of cuts to last year's budget – mostly in the highway department, then added previous
year deficit to tax bills. Del. Tax Collector is working on tax sales.

Deanna Jones, Director of the Thompson Senior Center, Thanked the voters for passing the
appropriation for the Senior Center and local volunteers for their service.

Charles Shackleton, Director of the Bridgewater Area Community Foundation thanked the
community, staff at the center and fire department for their continued support.

George Spear, outgoing Selectboard member thanked fellow selectboard members, wife, and
community for their support.

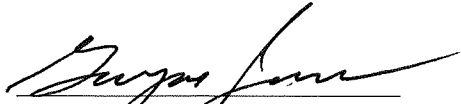
Ed Earle, Fire Chief reported that the Fire Department is having a Spaghetti supper on April 20th.
Thanked community for supporting the Fire Department.

Wendy Jenne – Green Up Day is May 4th. Bags are available at the Town Office if anyone
wants to pick them up now.

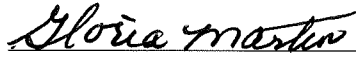
Being no further discussion, the motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Town Meeting at 10:39am. Motion carried.

Thank you to Collen Doyle for the use of the sound system.

Approved by:



Gregory Jenne, Moderator
145 legal voters were in attendance.



Gloria Martin, Justice of Peace

