

TOWN OF WEST WINDSOR ANNUAL TOWN AND SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

MARCH 5, 2019

The legal voters of the Town of West Windsor, Vermont are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Story Memorial Hall in the Town of West Windsor, Vermont on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 9:00 AM.

Moderator Matt Birmingham announced that we have an Australian Ballot vote today on two issues. One is the bond vote on wastewater and water and the other is the school. If you are going to vote during the meeting would you do it cautiously and quietly. Matt announced that we are opening the ballot boxes now.

The Moderator called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM. The Moderator said we have a Town Meeting, Town School District Meeting and we have Australian Ballot voting on a bond issue and the School budget.

The Moderator then read the introductory passage of the Warning. A motion to waive the reading of the balance of the Warning was made by Phil Arvidson. This motion was seconded by many and passed by a voice vote. The warning for the Town is found on pages 82-84 of your annual report and the very brief School District Annual Meeting Warning is on page 114. Everybody who wishes to speak should have a yellow sticker. When I recognize you would you be so kind as to rise and tell us your name. We have runners. We have two runners for here and one runner up in the balcony. They have microphones. If you have difficulty hearing somebody, ask for the microphone and we'll use it. I doubt that anybody will have difficulty hearing my voice.

I would suggest however, before we get started here a moment of silence for friends and neighbors that passed away this year. Matt read the names of the deceased and then a moment of silence was taken.

Matt said Article 1 as usual is to elect a Moderator for the Town for the ensuing year. I am the Moderator at least for the moment. If I'm here a half an hour from now I'll still be here but I have to sit down.

Town Clerk Cathy Archibald took over the meeting for the election of Moderator.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator for the ensuing year – Phil Arvidson nominated Matt Birmingham to serve as Moderator. This nomination was seconded by Ted Emerson. There were no other nominations for Moderator. Matt Birmingham was elected Moderator by a voice vote.

The meeting was then turned back over to Moderator Birmingham. Matt said now that you have done what you did I'm going to step out a little bit and do something a little bit different. I've been doing this now for 29 years and normally we do some of this at the last article but I thought while the room is full there are some people that I think that we ought to say thank you to. We had quite a year this year in the School merger, Ascutney Outdoors and I shouldn't say the Brownsville General Store anymore but I still do. I want to start in the balcony – Glenn and Shelley stand up would you please. A round of applause was given. You have some other soldiers in the room do you want to tell us who they are. Shelley named Shannon Harrington, Ted Emerson, definitely Win. Matt said

I'm not done yet. The store is amazing and there are people who are responsible for that many people but there are a couple that I want to recognize right away. Lauren and Peter please stand up. A round of applause was given. Where else on the planet can you drop in for a dozen oysters and not open them yourself. Chris and Nancy Nesbitt you're here somewhere. Matt said same thing I said to Glenn and Shelley are there other members of your crew that should get a nod. Chris said yes everybody who buys anything at the store stand up. I'd like to recognize Roger Klene and other board members.

Matt said with that being said let me draw your attention to Article 2.

Article 2: To act on the reports of the Town for the year ending December 31, 2018. Matt said it has been our custom to get a motion and a second to adopt that article and then listen to any corrections, modifications or changes. I will take a motion and a second to adopt Article 2 as read. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson to adopt the town reports and a motion was made by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there were any changes or questions. Tom Kenyon said I have a question on page 55 the Daniel L. Cady Trust Fund. The arrangement that we have with the Brownsville Cemetery Association is that we pay half of new tools – like the lawnmowers – and we have done that in the past. When I was a Select board member I was promised and I didn't follow through that we would pay our share. According to this it's supposed to be \$3,800.00 plus we've put in around \$4,000.00 for a lawnmower. We haven't even paid the past lawnmower and we're going to pay around \$4,000.00 for a new lawnmower soon. I would urge the Select board to perhaps use some of our I think they call it excess funds to not only repay the money that is due the Trust Fund, but also set aside funds for the new lawnmower which will be in a year or two.

Matt said I'm not sure that causes to do anything Tom. That was advice, is that fair?

Tom said yes that's fair.

Matt asked if there were any other comments, suggestions, thoughts or amendments. Hearing none this article passed on a voice vote.

Article 3: To elect all Town Officers and establish compensation as proposed in the Selectboard's budget. Matt read the positions up for election. Those officers start on page 7 so you can see if you look at page 7 what office is going to be open for election. I am reminded that Listers, Auditors, Selectboard members and School Directors require a paper ballot unless there is only one candidate. In the past what we have done, is we have set compensation first, so if you stand for election you understand ahead of time what it is that you're going to be paid. I am advised you will not find it in your report but I am advised that the salary for the Town Clerk is \$36,910.00, the salary for the Town Treasurer is \$36,910.00, Selectboard \$1,000.00 annually, the Listers get paid \$19.00 per hour, Auditors get paid \$19.00 per hour, the Delinquent Tax Collector gets paid \$19.00 an hour, the Town Grand Juror gets paid nothing so we are going to double that this year, the First Constable gets paid \$19.00 an hour, the Second Constable gets paid \$19.00 an hour, the Town Agent gets zero and the Campbell Fund Trustee gets zero. Are there any questions, comments or thoughts on those levels of compensation?

Elizabeth Burrows said her question was about the Listers. I noticed that I think it was \$18,000.00 or \$19,000.00 set aside to pay the Listers this upcoming year but there is also a separate budget for the Listers and I wondered why that is.

Win said the amount set aside is for the reappraisal that we do periodically it's not to pay the Listers. We hire an outside consulting firm to do the reappraisal. We don't know exactly when that's going to occur but when it does it's not inexpensive so rather than have it in the budget in one lump sum we set a reserve aside for it so when it does come it doesn't impact the tax rate.

Matt asked if there were any further questions, thoughts or comments about the level of compensation for our officers for this year. Hearing none, I will accept a motion and a second to adopt those levels of compensation. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson to adopt those levels of compensation and seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none the levels of compensation were passed by a voice vote.

Town Clerk – 1 year – Phil Arvidson nominated Cathy Archibald. The nomination was seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there were any other nominations for Town Clerk. Hearing none, the nominations were closed and this motion passed by a voice vote. Cathy Archibald was elected Town Clerk.

Town Treasurer – 1 year – Phil Arvidson nominated Cathy Archibald. The nomination was seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there were any other nominations for Town Treasurer. Hearing none, the nominations were declared closed and this motion passed by a voice vote. Cathy Archibald was elected Town Treasurer.

Selectboard – 3 years – Matt said Win Johnson is the present incumbent for the office. That's an office for three years and you've already established the compensation. Remember, if there's more than one candidate we have to do a paper ballot. If there is only one candidate, we can ask Cathy to cast a single ballot for the office. I will accept nominations. Ted Siegler nominated Win Johnson. This nomination was seconded by Phil Arvidson. Hearing no other nominations, I will accept a motion and a second that the clerk cast a single ballot for Win Johnson. Phil Arvidson made the motion and it was seconded by Ted Emerson. The motion passed by a voice vote.

Lister – 3 years – Annie Burke nominated Susan Hines. This nomination was seconded by Shirley Ouelette. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, those persons in favor of the clerk casting a single ballot for Susan Hines for the office of Lister signify by saying aye. This motion passed by a voice vote.

Auditor – 3 years – Annie Burke nominated Barbara Gerstner. This nomination was seconded by Susan Hines. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, those persons in favor of the clerk casting a single ballot for Barbara Gerstner for the office of Auditor signify by saying aye. This motion was seconded and passed.

Delinquent Tax Collector – 1 year – Phil Arvidson nominated Cathy Archibald. This nomination was seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, the motion passed by a voice vote.

Matt said we'll get to the School Directors when we get to the School meeting. Unless anybody objects and we'll weigh that and think about what to do with your objection. I'm proposing to do exactly what we have done every year for at least my past twenty-nine years and that is at the end of this article we will recess the Town and go to the School. This School business is extremely short but it is on page 114. That gives me ample opportunity to make a mistake here because we are doing things differently as you know when I opened the ballot box the budget and the things we use to discuss are now Australian ballot now that we are a unified school district. Things are a little different and I'll try not to make an error as we make that transition.

Town Clerk, Cathy Archibald, took over the meeting for the election of Town Grand Juror.

Town Grand Juror – 1 year – A nomination was made by Phil Arvidson for Matt Birmingham. This nomination was seconded by Dick Beatty. Nominations were declared closed and Matt Birmingham was elected by a voice vote.

First Constable – 1 year – Mike Spackman nominated William Young. This nomination was seconded by John Bertrand. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, William Young was elected First Constable by a voice vote.

Second Constable – 1 year – Mike Spackman nominated Scott Smith. This nomination was seconded by William Young. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Scott Smith was elected Second Constable by a voice vote.

Town Clerk, Cathy Archibald, took over the meeting for the election of Town Agent.

Town Agent – 1 year – Mike Spackman nominated Matt Birmingham. This nomination was seconded by Ted Emerson. Nominations were declared closed and Matt Birmingham was elected by a voice vote.

Campbell Fund Trustee – 3 years – Tom Kenyon nominated Bob French. This nomination was seconded by Ted Emerson. Matt asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Bob French was elected by a voice vote.

Now what I propose to do and I'll see if I can do that without falling off my bike, is we'll take a motion to recess the Town meeting and convene the West Windsor Town School District meeting. The warning is on page 114 and that is a West Windsor tradition that's been alive as least as long as I've been here and Fran Fenn, my predecessor, couldn't tell me where that came from so clearly it predates Fran, which makes it older than most of us in the building. A motion was made by Ted Emerson to recess the Town meeting and convene the West Windsor Town School District meeting. This motion was seconded by Richard Beatty. This motion passed by a voice vote.

Matt then read the introductory passage of the Warning. A motion to waive the reading of the balance of the Warning was made by Ted Emerson. This motion was seconded by Richard Beatty and passed by a voice vote.

Article 1: To act on reports of the School District Officers for the past year – A motion was made by Phil Arvidson to adopt those reports as printed. This motion was seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if anyone had anything they wanted to say about this article. Cathy replied she had one correction to bring up. Cathy said on page 104 second item from the bottom – the 1.4737 should be 1.5712 and the estimated homestead tax rate should be estimated non-homestead tax rate. Matt asked if there were any further discussions, changes, modifications, alterations or comments. To save time, I'll take a motion and a second to adopt this article as amended and corrected. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson. The motion was seconded by Richard Beatty and passed by a voice vote.

Article 2: To elect officers for the School District as provided by law and to establish officers' salaries – Elizabeth Burrows nominated Nancy Pedrick to complete the term that she is currently serving which would end on September 30th. Ted Emerson seconded the motion. Matt said there is a nomination and a second for Nancy Pedrick to be elected as School Director to serve out the balance of the term that ends September 30, 2019. What do we do when that happens? Elizabeth Burrows said the new district comes into effect on July 1st so Nancy will serve out this part of her term just to sign off on the final audit. Matt asked if there were any other nominations, thoughts or suggestions. Hearing none, I would ask for a motion that the clerk to cast a single ballot for Nancy Pedrick to complete the term as School Director. A motion was made by Rita Johnson. This motion was seconded by Phil Arvidson and passed by a voice vote.

Matt said forgive my confusion but the merger has made things decidedly different for me. I moderated the meeting in Windsor on Saturday and did more than my usually fumbling through it because half of the group there was Windsor and we had to do things differently. We have one more officer to elect and that is the School Treasurer. It's Cathy Archibald and she also will serve until September 30, 2019.

School Treasurer – 1 year – Phil Arvidson nominated Cathy Archibald. This nomination was seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt asked if there was any discussion.

Audrey Halpert said I'm not really sure how this transition is working. I thought we were electing a consolidated board of School Directors and School Treasurer under the new consolidation. When would they start?

Elizabeth Burrows said our district doesn't actually exist yet. Our board is currently active as a transition board. Those are the people that you voted for last year by Australian ballot. The new district actually comes into effect on July 1st of this year. The people whom you elected for the transition board last year stays on for one more year.

Audrey Halpert said is that through next town meeting or through till next September and what about the July date.

Elizabeth Burrows said the West Windsor School District sunsets June 30th but this school year also ends on June 30th. We have some reports that we need to be signed off on by the West Windsor School Board members verifying the authenticity of the auditors reports from the end of this school year. Elizabeth said for the year that we are currently in. That is the subtotal of the current West Windsor School Board roll after June 30th to merely sign off on the auditor's report from this school year. Elizabeth said does that answer your question.

Audrey said not really but okay. Are you meeting as a consolidated board as well?

Elizabeth said yes we've been meeting all year since last March or May when we formed as a board we've been meeting as a consolidated board. What we have been doing for the last year has been putting together a budget, trying to work out policies that are all going to sunset on June 30th and all these things that have to be set up for when the new board takes place because we have to have a budget in place by July 1st because that's the start of the next school year. We have to have policies in place because every single policy will sunset on June 30th. There are certain things that had to be set up before the new district could come into effect. That's what we've been doing.

Matt said so we're back at it. We have a nomination and a second for Cathy Archibald for School Treasurer. Those persons in favor please signify by saying aye. This article passed by a voice vote.

Article 3: To do any other School District business that may legally come before the meeting.

Matt said we can't take any steps there, we can't pass anything, we can't accept motions but it's a chance to speak, ask questions, say thank you or do anything that you wish.

Elizabeth Burrows said I would just like to say thank you to everybody who has supported our school and school board over the many years that we have had a district and that includes many people over the years. Some who have had people attending the school and many who have supported the school and school district without having any children in the schools. Thank you ever so much and we'll see you at the merged district.

A round of applause was then given.

Ted Emerson said he'd like to thank the school board for all that they have done.

Another round of applause was given.

Elizabeth Burrows said as it has been mentioned many times so far but if it wasn't clear we're voting on the budget by Australian ballot so please take the two minutes that it takes to vote on it.

Matt said and understand those of you who are saying why can't we talk about that we can't. State law is very clear that if we have an Australian ballot we can't discuss the terms of the ballot in an open meeting like this. Your chance to take a shot at that was Saturday in Windsor at 1:00 PM and I think we've all agreed that Saturdays at 1:00 PM is not the best time.

Matt asked Susan how many people were checked in.

Matt said I'm not being critical I'm just being observant there were 22 people there on Saturday.

Elizabeth said that includes the board and their families.

Matt said that doesn't include the people that had to be there. I counted several times as I always do. That's counting people who didn't necessarily have an ox that was gored.

Matt continued saying the merger took a lot of work and in this Town saved a lot of money but don't let it forfeit your right to be heard because 22 people on a 11-million-dollar budget is not right and you are all here today and Susan is going to tell me how many but I'm betting 80.

Matt said at this moment I will take a motion to adjourn your School District meeting and reconvene your Town meeting. Ted Emerson made this motion and it was seconded by Phil Arvidson. This motion passed by a voice vote.

Matt said we are going back to Article 4. Short comment here I am mindful that there's going to be a request to amend Article 4, Article 5, Article 8 and a request to pass over Article 11.

Susan said there were 113 people in the hall.

Article 4: Shall the Town vote to pay taxes to the Town Treasurer by or on Friday, October 25, 2019 by 4:30 PM with no discount for payment in advance? Payment received after 4:30 PM will incur penalty and interest. – A motion was made by Phil Arvidson to adopt this article. This motion was seconded by Richard Beatty. The article is on the floor for discussion.

Tom Kenyon said he attended the school board meeting last Saturday and since then and before, he became very aware that some people are struggling to pay their taxes. I would amend to say Friday, November 1, 2019 by one week. This will allow people who get their social security by that date or those that get their retirement on the first of the month, this will allow them not to be billed the 8% penalty. There are a few people who get wacked by 8% and by delaying it until November 1st theoretically you're get all your money. It ends up that some people don't have to pay that 8% penalty plus interest. We have a number of people who date their checks at the end of the month not realizing that it is not the end of the month and in some cases it's been the 25th or whatever. I ask you to support this little bit of understanding for those people who are struggling to pay their taxes to amend it to be Friday, November 1, 2019.

Matt said we want to be careful here, the motion is to amend the Article to read shall the Town vote to pay taxes to the Town Treasurer by or on Friday, November 1, 2019 by 4:30 PM with no discount for payment in advance? Payment received after 4:30 PM will incur penalty and interest.

Tom asked if he could add one thing.

Matt said yes.

Tom said the School District has already voted to follow the policy that we set at this meeting today so both the Town and School would be due on November 1, 2019.

Matt said we have a motion to amend. To discuss this, I need a second. Shirley Ouelette seconded the motion.

Rita Johnson asked if November 1st was a Friday this year.

Cathy Archibald replied November 1, 2019 is a Friday.

Heather Hoyns asked if this would affect any payments that the Town has to make to the State or anybody else.

Cathy Archibald replied no.

Win Johnson said this sounds benign but there are certain procedures that are in place that the Town Clerk can describe that makes this change a little awkward in terms of coordinating with other entities so if Cathy wouldn't mind saying a few words.

Cathy spoke saying I just say if it's not broke don't fix it. I've got all the mortgage companies and everybody knows it's due the last Friday of October now we're going to change it to November 1st. Talk about confusion. I would suggest leave it alone. That's my input.

Lauri Bessey spoke saying I'm the Assistant Town Clerk and I just want to support Cathy on that because Cathy has systems in place, as she says, with mortgage companies that pay from people's escrow accounts her whole system would be upset by this change. It's really not that many days. People get their tax bills in July and they have plenty of notice before hand. I just wanted to back her up on that statement it's not broke, I think it's working fine.

Katharine Wood spoke saying this is a question for you Tom. Is this to address when the social security checks come in?

Tom said some people get their checks on their anniversary date of the month. That's my understanding whatever day of the month you are that's the day you get your social security. That's how mine is.

Katharine said my understanding is it issues on the first of the month but it doesn't show up in my account until the 13th of the month.

Tom said I don't know about your account.

Katharine no I'm just saying it's distributed on the first of the month but doesn't necessarily show up for two weeks so if you ask for this to be November 1st they are still not going to get their checks for another two weeks, so to accommodate that, you would need to push it back even more. My point is I don't think this is the answer to what you are talking about.

Tom said when I checked with the Clerk she was okay with this.

Cathy replied subject to change, you do it all the time.

Matt asked if there were any other questions, thoughts or comments. This is a challenge because we are going to do a voice vote and you are voting on the amendment. I have to make a determination as to who has the loudest voices and let me remind you that if you are not happy with what I think happened, it takes any two people to stand up and challenge the Moderator in which case if you do, and you certainly can. we go to a paper ballot and that way we will let the Board of Civil Authority decide whether or not I need hearing aids. So what you are voting on is the amendment. You are not voting on the article itself. Your voting on whether you should amend it to November 1st at 4:30 PM. Matt said those persons who are in favor of that amendment signify by saying aye and those opposed. Matt said I'm going to declare that you have defeated the amendment. Any two people can stand up and say Matthew we don't think so, let's vote it. Mary Anne Boyce stood up and Tom Kenyon raised his hand and said I'm the second one.

Matt asked if we had paper and Cathy replied yes it's up back. Matt said you need to get a slip of paper from up back if you haven't already and the paper is yellow. Matt said you are voting yes or no. If you voting yes, you are voting in favor of the amendment.

Matt said let me read you the results. The Board of Civil Authority tells me that this amendment as offered had 25 yes votes and 77 no votes so you have defeated that amendment which means you are back to the original article which I read to you.

Matt said there is a motion and a second to adopt that article. Is there any further discussion on this article? Hearing none this article passed by a voice vote.

Article 5: Shall the Town approve the expenditure of \$640,262.00 for General, \$726,168.00 for Highway (Combined \$1,366,430.00) for the year 2019, of which \$1,044,603.00 shall be raised by taxes, \$256,827.00 by non-tax revenues, \$15,000.00 from a Highway Fund surplus from prior years, and \$50,000.00 from a General Fund Surplus from prior years? A motion was made by Phil Arvidson to adopt this article as read and seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt said it's on the floor to discuss but I believe Win Johnson has some misdemeanor amendments here. Win spoke and said after we proposed this article we made a small tweak to the general fund report on page 25. The report on page 25 is correct but to align this article with that report you have to make the following modest changes. The \$640,262.00 for the general drops to \$637,862.00. It's a change of \$2,400.00 down. If you make that change the total which is in parenthesis two lines down \$1,366,430.00 changes to \$1,364,030.00 a drop of \$2,400.00 on the expenses. On line 3 the \$256,827.00 also changes down by \$2,400.00 so they offset one another. Expenses down and revenue down. So the \$256,827.00 drops to \$254,427.00. The amount to be raised by taxes stays the same. All the other numbers are the same so this is just a modest change to offset these two numbers. I would propose that as an amendment to Article 5.

Matt said I will tell you what I'm going to do with the consent of the crowd rather than go through the amendment procedure we'll treat this as we do it for town reports and we'll vote ultimately on Article 5 as corrected and that will save us a long trip through the amendment process.

Matt continued asking if there were questions, thoughts or comments on this Article for the Select Board.

Win said he would like to make a few comments on the budgets themselves. If you turn to page 13 there is a report on the first bullet half way down the page it describes the process, we went through to arrive at these budgets and the increases. I'm going to ask Mike to just say a few words about the one thing we struggled with most, which drove the largest increase, which is in Winter Maintenance but before I do that I just want to address one issue which I continue to hear as a point of confusion about the general fund budget. I still hear from time to time people saying that the utilities that the Town undertook responsibility for some years back are affecting our taxes. Now there is some truth to that and the truth stems from an action that the Town took in 2014. Now if you recall in 2014 we took a vote as a Town when we were contemplating putting the sewer line into the village. When we voted to assume the debt service for that bond issue on the general fund tax rate and we pointed that out last year because while it was voted in 2014 the project had to be done and it was only last year 2018 that we first had to pay debt service on those bonds and that debt service did affect the general fund tax rate. That is the only utility cost that affects the general fund tax rate. It doesn't affect the highway budget at all. It was the utility cost that the Town voted to assume. The debt service on the bond issue to put in the village system. The village system probably saved the school because it was shortly after we installed it that we found the school had serious sewage disposal problems. It benefitted a number of people in the village and we decided in 2014 that the project was for the good long term benefit of this community. All the other utility cost is borne by the rate payers through their rates. Now if there is anybody that needs clarification on that I will try to answer your questions. The other thing that I mentioned is that both the highway and general fund budgets are pretty much status quo budgets. The one thing that is not status quo is winter maintenance and I'd like to just ask Mike to speak to the problems that he is facing since last year which shows an over budget result for the highway fund if you look at the reports and who knows this year but winter maintenance cost – look at the sand pile. Winter maintenance cost are not any lower this year so Mike would you just say a few words.

Mike Spackman spoke saying putting together the budget is like any budget that you would put together at home. The home one is easier I guess because it affects your own pocket where this one is a lot harder for me because it affects everybody's pocket. When we put the budget together we are trying to predict the weather and what we should use and not only what we had left this year but what it's going to do in November and December, as we know what happened this last November. Winter came that quick and that affects the budget when we have to start removing snow and working long hours to keep the roads safe it affects us all. So when you look into the crystal ball and say it's going to be this much and when we get to the end of December and we're saying oh oh. We tried to modify it as best we could even to the last minute of trying to keep the cost down as well as trying to predict the weather. I guess you can blame the weather on me. I think the winters are getting harder to predict.

Leone Bushkin spoke saying she wishes to thank the highway department and I think I'm probably saying thank you to everyone in this room. I drive back and forth to Woodstock often at night and on

snowy and rainy nights and I travel Morgan Hill Road and it's not plowed but when I hit the sign that says West Windsor and Rush Meadow Road and you and your guys have been there I smile and in the dark I say thank you Mike.

A round of applause was then given.

Matt asked if there were any other questions, thoughts or comments on this article as corrected. Hearing none, this article passed by a voice vote.

Matt said I'm going to take a little out of turn here just because I don't want to wait until the last article. Elvin Kaplan I think has some words he would like to pass on to you.

Elvin Kaplan spoke saying for you folks who like me hope to spend all your days living in Brownsville in your home I just want point out on page 77 of your town report it talks about Aging in Place. That article presents some of the information on the organization and I have several copies of the pamphlets for resources for seniors. If you would like to pick one up, I'll be glad to supply you with one.

A round of applause was given.

Matt said before we get to Article 6 we have three elected officials here who guard our interests in Montpelier and they have asked to address you briefly.

John Bartholomew spoke saying as always I want to really express my appreciation for re-electing me. I'm back for my fifth term and a day never goes by when I don't recognize what an honor and privilege it is to represent West Windsor and this district in Montpelier. Zack and I have put together a Town Meeting Report and I've left some of those in the foyer on the table. It goes over some of the stuff that we are working on and I'll mention some of the stuff now. As always, it's difficult to figure out what to talk about at Town Meeting because, as you know, any bill that we pass has to be passed by both the House and Senate and reviewed by the Governor before it becomes a law, so we really don't know what is going to actually pass. We have over 500 hundred bills introduced in the House already this year and I think we're on track for a record there. There are about 140 bills in the Senate. First, I want to mention the Senate. The Senate is putting forth six Constitutional amendments. I've never seen this process before and it's really interesting. I don't know if you know what that process is. It's actually very difficult to amend our Constitution, as I believe it should be, and the way the process works is by the Constitution the Senate must propose any amendment and it requires a two-thirds vote of the members of the Senate and it has to be also adopted by the House. Then, the next legislature, both bodies again have to approve the same amendments as they were passed this year. After that, it goes to the voters so all of you would get to vote and if that passes that's what's required so it's really quite a process. You will be hearing a lot more about that.

The House has 15 committees and I serve on Agriculture and Forestry and I was also elected by my caucus to serve on the House Rules Committee which is keeping me really busy. We're working on many issues in all of our committees and my committee in Agriculture we're really focusing a lot on pollinators honeybees and our native pollinators and as I think you know these are critically important

to our food agriculture and it's been estimated that one out of three bites we take is because of the efforts pollinators to get those crops where we can eat them. We're seeing a dramatic loss of pollinator uses and all insects and one of the probably culprits is the prolific use of chemical pesticides. We're working on a bill that would require regulation of the sale and application of specifically neonicotinoid pesticides. We've also had a lot of testimony in the cultivation of hemp. Growing hemp has been illegal for many years. Hemp is a cultivar of marijuana but it has essentially no psychotropic affects and our Federal government has finally figured out that hemp is not marijuana and it really is quite an amazing plant. Its fibers used for paper, clothing and even building materials. The seed is an eatable seed, the oil is an eatable oil as well as a possible fuel oil and a lot of the interest now is on production of CBD from hemp which many are touting as a wonder drug to cure many ills. We are looking at ways to help farmers who want to get into growing hemp and the entrepreneurs who are working to create facilities to dry, process and test hemp. A few other bills that I think are important and I hesitate to bring up the issue of abortion but the House Human Services Committee and the Judiciary Committee passing this bill out in the House overwhelming passed it basically to protect a women's right to abortion. Obviously this is a very controversy subject. Almost everyone has an opinion and I rarely bring it up for two reasons. One, is there seems to be a lot of information out there on social media. The bill that we passed that has gone onto the Senate recognizes the freedom of reproductive choice for women and it codifies abortion in statute as it has existed in Vermont for 46 years. It doesn't do anything to change current medical practice relative to abortion. The other reason that I wanted to bring this up is I'm not quite sure what I expected when it came to the House floor but I've got to say the debate on the subject was very civilized, a very emotionally charged issue and the members made their points for both amendments and we got on with our business and I was really proud of the way our legislatures conducted its business and I hope you'd be proud to. One other subject I want to mention is we passed a bill also from Human Services about cigarettes and vaping. The Surgeon General declared an epidemic regarding e-cigarette use among teens. The data show a 78% increase in e-cigarette use in high school and in over the same time period Middle School increased by 48%. These kids are getting addicted to nicotine while their brains are still developing. Someone who starts vaping at a young age is four times more likely to start using cigarettes when they become older and that's the whole point of what these companies are trying to do. They prey on teens on social media, they market an enormous assortment of flavors, use cool design in packaging and they sell to minors over the internet. We passed a bill that places an excise tax on the liquids and delivery devices for e-cigarettes just as we do other tobacco products. I could go through every committee as every committee has a lot of stuff and it would take the rest of the day so I'll refrain from doing that but again thank you sending me to Montpelier and I really enjoy what I'm doing there. Make sure you contact me or any of us if you have any questions or concerns. We need to hear from you.

A round of applause was given.

Zachariah Ralph spoke saying thank you everybody for having me here today. This is my first opportunity in an official capacity speaking before you so thank you again and also thanks to everyone who has sent emails to me and calling with opinions and commentary about legislature we've been dealing with I can't tell you how helpful that is and helps me vote with confidence that what we are doing is actually representing our community. I know there are some folks that I have been in touch with that I did not vote in the same way as your opinion, this is only natural, as I can't vote everyone's opinions at the same time. But I do hope that despite how I have voted in the past will continue to

reach out to us and talk to us about your concerns so that we can continue to vote with confidence. I also want to say that as a Freshman, I have had so much good help from our district and John Bartholomew and always a pleasure to see Alison Clarkson in the hallways and to hear from her today, as we don't get to interact with the Senate as much as we'd like, so I am learning about the Legislature today. I am on the Commerce and Economic Development Committee and on these issues we look at policies surrounding our economy. I heard a lot about our difference agencies and how we are doing. Good news and bad news. Our economy continues to grow. We are doing really well in the State with new innovative ideas and technologies and small businesses. During the recession, because of our fiscal prudence and good government, we were able to withstand some of those turbulences that other States experienced. As a result of that, we have a slow growth pattern. We are just now catching up to where we were before the great recession. We continue to grow. We have our challenges and some of those are housing and workforce development to fill jobs. This is what we are looking at in Ecommerce and Development. How do we create the workforce we need to plug in those workers so that small businesses have those resources available so that we can continue to drive our economy? We are focusing on career and technical education, apprenticeship programs and internships which will train those workers, adults and students to have good paying jobs right out of high school and also for adults who are transitioning can have new opportunities. We want to plug in those under employed sectors of our State to include our recovering addicts and former prisoners. Trying to get them jobs as well so that we can reconnect them back in to our communities. The other issue is that we have an aging demographic. Not so much that we have an older population, but that we don't have enough young people coming in to the State to support our great programs and fill those jobs that we really need. This affects so many industries such as early childhood education, nursing, CDL drivers, weatherization programs and aerospace manufacturing. So we are focused on not only creating skills we need to fill these positions but also in attracting new people to the State. So many people are familiar with all the press we got for the remote worker campaign. It was enormously successful as an advertising campaign, we had over 1 billion clicks from around the world, people wanting to move to Vermont. There was some follow through with that. The average payment was around \$3600. We know we are not going to replicate that but we are going to continue with that momentum to continue to bring people to the State. One new program coming out of the Department of Labor is called Relocate 802. It's a concierge service that connects our communities and our employers to potential employees that want to come in to the State. It will guide people through that process so that it is as easy as pie to come to Vermont. These are just some of the ways that we are continuing to support our community and drive economic growth in our State. The last thing I want to talk about is the environment as it is extremely important to me and I'm sure many people here as well and we have a Legislature which is overwhelmed with a number of bills for this session. I believe record setting as John may have mentioned. We are working on a lot of issues. We have the will to continue to promote a strong, safe and healthy environment with over 80 Senators and House of Representatives members on our climate caucus that are looking at solutions for plastic things to electric vehicle infrastructure. This is not enough. We can do more and where that pressure comes from is from you. There is a lot of things that we are working but this is where we need your help so I'm encourage everybody that if environment is important to you to write to the chairs of our Natural Resources and government operations committees in both the House and Senate and ask them that they take up strong measures on climate change so that we can continue to have this great State now and for our future. By the way, Commerce and Economic Development and sustainable go hand in hand. I see it on a daily basis and job creation and renewable energy and all these things that help reduce the overhead

cost of living every day. Help us to we can keep money here in our community, here in our State it's so important. I appreciate your time and I have a monthly newsletter if you are interested in receiving updates. Come and talk to me and I'll be happy to put your name and e-mail on it. Also we meet on the first Monday of every month at Windsor Public Library from 5:00 to 7:00 and the last Monday of every month in Hartland from 5:00 to 7:00 and unfortunately this is not a good excuse but have not found a good location to host one in West Windsor. I will keep you posted.

A round of applause was then given.

Alison Clarkson spoke saying I have the pleasure of serving you in the Senate and I would just say that Dick and Alice would love to be here but Alice is sick today sadly and Dick is trying to meet in many of our northern towns. I just have to say it was really wonderful sitting there watching Zack and watching Cindy. Cindy taught Zack in 3rd grade. What a joy in this community. We can teach our young people and then watch them grow and flourish and become a State Representative. Pretty fabulous. I serve you in the morning on Senate Economic Development Housing and General Affairs and in the afternoon on Government Operations. It's really exciting work and very stimulating. I urge you to come up and have a field day in the State House. Take a field trip and come up to the State House and see us in action. I just want to follow up on something John talked about which is it is a biennium to do Constitutional Amendments. Because I work on the Government Operations, we have two of those proposals in our committee. I will touch on these briefly. Article 1, which we all treasure. It made us the first State in the Nation to prohibit slavery. I always assumed that's all it did, but there is a second half to that Article, which alludes to and is misconstrued by many people to think that actually we allow slavery for people under 21. We are hoping to clarify that and have it much simpler to remind us that slavery in any form is prohibited in this State. You would think that's an old thing, but with human trafficking and some domestic violence situations, it's an on-going situation for us to deal with.

The second proposal in Government Operations is to lengthen the term of office for the Governor and for Senators. I will remind us that we are supposed to have three equal branches of government and the legislature is at distinct disadvantage only serving four months of the year, when the executive are all year round and the judiciary is all year round. It's a very robust conversation, but I'm not sure I'm very enthusiastic about the Governor's term of office.

We in Economic Development have passed out the minimum wage bill which will take the minimum wage up to \$15.00 per hour by 2024, it will give us 5 years to get there. I would remind us that even in 2024 that is below the local wage NOW. I guess the lens I see it through is that the two biggest issues we deal with everywhere from education to mental health are poverty and climate change. As much as we can, we need to move low income families out of poverty, out of working three jobs, having families together for meals. I would also remind us that Windsor County has the second highest cost of housing in the State and for a family to have a two-bedroom apartment, you would need a wage of \$22 per hour. It's an ongoing challenge and as Zach now knows, Vermont uniformly underpays about 20% for comparable jobs around the country.

We are doing two big housing bills another major need in addition to workforce development. We need more affordable and workforce housing in the State. The first bill, we are considering another

bond of \$50,000,000.00, we have a dearth of about 6,000 housing units around the State. Even at \$50,000,000.00 this would only bring on another 1000 units, but at least it would be another 1000 units. Another issue is short term rentals. It tries to create a level playing field on the Air B&B front, not only in collect tax and tax compliance, but also issues of safety, especially with non-owner occupied Air B&Bs.

We are also working on data privacy, which in particularly effects our young people whose data is compromised left, right and center.

The last thing I would talk about is that we really face, in this State and around the country, a crisis in recruiting fire, ems and safety volunteers. We have asked for study back on this and looking at how can we address this with thoughtful regionalization, extending mutual aid agreements and other incentives that might work to bring more people in to that service, which is so rewarding.

The Senate has passed minimum wage on to the House, we've also passed on to the House the tax and regulation of cannabis and a testing of schools, not every school, but the pilot showed up turned up too much lead, so the State is going to pay for testing and remediation of lead in our school water. We have also passed up to the House to raise the purchase of all tobacco products to 21.

It's wonderful work and I encourage you all to come to Montpelier and see what we are up to. Thank you.

A round of applause was given to Alison.

Matt said John, Alison and Zack I would hope that you could stay a little while maybe in the back and if anybody had any questions, comments or thoughts for you.

Alison said as you know we are only a phone call away or e-mail away. We're very accessible.

Matt said let me draw your attention to Article 6.

Article 6: Shall the Town approve the purchase of the Mary L. Blood Library for \$1.00?

A motion was made by Tom Kenyon to adopt this article and seconded by Richard Beatty. Matt said it's open for discussion.

Win spoke saying the Selectboard and the Trustees have been talking for six months or more about the issues that the Library has been facing and the need for some modest change in terms of insuring the Library long term stability. The Trustees of the Library separated constituted, in talking to the Selectboard decided that we would reach a memorandum of understanding as a future operation of the Library which we include the transfer of the assets of the Library to the Town and then the Selectboard henceforth appointing the Trustees. That memorandum of understanding was signed about two weeks ago. The conditions which involve just appointments and operations are contingent upon the vote today of the Town of accept the property. On page 14 there is a short discussion of all of this. I'd like the Library Trustees to speak on behalf of this proposal so you have an understanding as to how this came about from their point of view.

Christine Rovinski-Wagner spoke saying first of all I'd like to thank the Selectboard for working with us the Trustees in trying to hammer out this memorandum of understanding, Matt and Dick Beatty. They really did the work on this thing. I'd also like to thank my fellow Trustees – Tom Kenyon, Edson Pierce, Mary Anne Boyce who had to resign and Mary Jane Wentworth who had to resign due to health reasons as well which kind of did a lot of prompting as to how to keep the Library going. If you think about Edson being in this Library since literally he was a baby because his mother was one of our first Librarians. If you think of all the work he has done over eighty some on years and Tom has been a lot of the work himself, as a Trustee and as the Chair. I've only been a Trustee for five years. If the Town really wants to have a vibrant Town center which is all throughout the Planning Board stuff I truly believe it needs to be a Library. There has been more activity over there thanks to – we have a new Librarian, she has satisfactory the requests that we made of her when she was hired, there a CLIF (Children's Literacy Foundation) grant so there's collaboration with the school and we're looking at that to happen again. There's some other things that she has got into the works. I really encourage you without this yea vote to pass this article I don't know if any one of the Trustees would be able to stand in front of you and say you're going to have a Library in the next couple of years because that's the reality of it. Relativity there needs more blood in there, turning over from the Trustees so new eyes can come in and new ideas can be put forth. We're trying to structure ourselves so that as you can see in the report we have suggested deliverables for the Library. In the 10 years that I've been living here there's never been deliverables for the Library. You're paying for it; you may as well know what you're expected to get and you should have a say on it. I really do encourage you to vote yes on this. It's a dollar investment now but you're already paying the insurance. There will be a few more costs I'm sure along the way but we'll be working in collaboration with the Selectboard on anything and everything in terms of major decisions. We're looking to the Selectboard to maintain the historical integrity of the Library, to make it a vibrant community building offering so if there's people who want meetings we do have a Library that has room. We want something for children to actually come to. We want it to be a vibrant thing. We want your ideas. Tom, Dick or Edson do you have anything to say.

Dick Beatty spoke saying it was discovered that when Mr. Blood gave the Town or the transferred title to the Town Library and grounds back in the early 1900's even though the minutes of the Town Meeting going way back to then indicated that it was to be a gift to the Town. The title was transferred to then the Trustees and their successors in interest. One of the things that this Article does clear up forever is a Quit Claim Deed from the current Trustees conveying all of their rights and interest to the building, grounds and contents of the Library to the Town and the Trustees have agreed to do that. We've retained an Attorney to prepare a Quit Claim Deed and should this Article pass that will be carried out forthwith. This will also clear up some items as to whether the Librarian is a Town employee or hired by the Trustees and independent of the Town. Transferring will make it clear in the memorandum of understanding with the Selectboard would mean that the Town employees although recommended by the Trustees and approved by the Selectboard would be Town employees entitled to the same compensation and benefits. That clears up another issue that was leering in the leaves so to speak. I think that the Board of Trustees has a good relationship with the Selectboard. I've worked along with Win Johnson trying to fashion a mutual memorandum of understanding which I think works for both the Selectboard as well as the Trustees. The Trustees would be a statutory provision that they elect five Trustees which actually run the Library and manage it but all the funding will come

from the Town and be subject to the approval of the Selectboard as well as Town Meeting on an annual basis. I would urge everybody to vote positive on this Article so that we can keep the Library functioning and maybe increase the appeal to the rest of the townspeople.

Tom Kenyon spoke saying I'm a Trustee of the Library and I've only been doing it for 40 years but I woke up one day when Edson announced that he had been doing it for longer than I have lived. He is responsible, he alone, for maintaining of the exterior and the interior of the building and it's a lot of work. He has put his whole life into that Library and we appreciate it.

A round of applause was given.

Edson Pierce spoke saying I first came to the Library when I was an infant. My mother was the second Librarian and she continued it for 45 years. I spent, as long as I didn't grow too much, I was put in something like a shoe box and put on the window sill then after that on the desk that my mother used. I've been around.

Another round of applause was given.

Win spoke saying we've already done this a little piecemeal and so this is redundant but I think it's worthwhile just acknowledging as a group and hope you'll give them your vote of appreciation. Win announced the names of the Trustees – Edson Pierce, Tom Kenyon, Christine Rovinski-Wagner, Mary Jane Wentworth, Dick Beatty and Mary Anne Boyce who has worked so diligently in the past as Trustees. You're see many of them the plan of the Board I think is to re-appoint the newly constituted Board of Trustees at its meeting this coming Monday. Some of those faces I'm sure will reappear on the Board but for their past service I just hope you'll show them your appreciation.

A round of applause was given.

Ted Emerson said he would like to move the Article.

Matt said you do that to me every year.

Dick Beatty said he will second that if it's appropriate.

Matt said the Article is before you and read the Article again to the assembly. This Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 7: Shall the Town approve the expenditure of \$16,507.00 for the Mary L. Blood Library, of which \$16,000.00 shall be raised by taxes and \$507.00 by non-tax revenue? A motion was made by Christine Rovinski-Wagner to adopt this article as read. The motion was seconded by Mary Anne Boyce. Win spoke saying I will refer you to page 58 which is a new report of the past performance and proposed budget for the Library. The first line taxes raised for operations \$16,000.00 is analogous as to what we would have done as a special appropriation so from a tax point of view this is the same thing. Now we are not appropriating to an external organization we're just raising taxes to support an internal operation – the Library. Whether or not we continue to present the Library budget

as a separate budget or consideration in the future or wrap it in as a third part of Article 5 with the General fund, Highway fund and the Library fund remains to be seen. There's some benefit in having the Library set up as a separate item for consideration because it's such an important asset but that remains to be seen. In the meantime, this is the budget the Selectboard is proposing with the endorsement of the Trustees for the coming year.

Matt asked if there were any questions or comments on this Article. Hearing none this Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 8: Shall the Town approve the expenditure of \$91,000.00 for the purchase of the Burke property (Corner of Route 44 and Bible Hill Road) with such funds to be raised by taxes? Matt said I need to get a motion and a second on this and then I am mindful that there is going to be an amendment request. A motion was made by Ted Siegler. This motion was seconded by Ann Matthews. Matt said this Article is now before you for discussion. Win said he would like to propose that the last phrase of Article 8 that reads with such funds to be raised by taxes changed to with such funds coming from a prior year General fund surplus. I can explain that if the motion passes to amend this Article.

Matt said you have a motion to amend Article 8 in short with such funds to be raised from prior years' surplus striking the words by taxes. I have motion I need a second. This motion was seconded by Art Keating.

Matt said the amendment is now on the floor for discussion.

Win said I've been expecting a question about this for about two or three years because we've been voting to use prior years' surplus every year for the last two or three years in the case of our General fund budget and Highway fund budget. No one has ever asked the question where is that money coming from so I see a few quizzical faces about its application in this context so I hope you will give me the liberty of just talking and doing a little accounting 101 here. What happens is if you turn to page 28 or again on the bottom of page 30. If you look at the column of 2018 actual for example on page 28 we ended up with a surplus of \$36,214.60. We budgeted for a deficit. If you went back and read the warning and you voted it this year we voted a deficit of \$50,000.00 to come from prior years surplus and the same in the case of the next page, page 30 we ended up largely because of winter maintenance with a deficit of \$43,667.55 versus a budgeted deficit of \$25,000.00 for last year and we are reducing that to \$15,000.00 for this year which you would have already voted. If you turn to page 4 what we just looked at in general terms is the income statement. The income statement is just the results of the year but every year those results get recorded in a balance sheet. If you look at the balance sheet on page 4 this is for the general fund and go down towards the bottom of the page, you'll see that number that I about a moment ago \$36,214.60 being added to a total fund surplus in the general fund of \$734,251.78. If you go over to page 6 the highway funds the deficit that I mentioned. That deficit has to come from someplace. It gets closed out to a surplus in the highway fund after the close of this year of \$61,750.42. Now you probably want a surplus of some kind to absorb variances like what happened in the highway department. We had a surplus to absorb the lost. The \$61,750.42 is getting down to a level of where we probably don't want it to go a lot lower so over time we're going to have to probably eliminate the subsidy coming from this to hold out highway taxes down. In

the case of the general fund \$734,251.78 in my view is probably too much. Where does that come from – it's come from annual amounts, year after year after year, I don't know how many years. Some of those annual years are positive and get added to the surplus and some of them are negative and get deducted from the surplus. It accumulates to a pretty large number. There are some advances here. We don't have to borrow in anticipation of taxes. That's an advantage to having a surplus. It's a advantage if we have a untoward event we can absorb it unless it's disastrous in a surplus. We can also do some things from time to time with that surplus that provides us an opportunity to benefit the Town and the Town's future and that's the case of the proposal the Selectboard is putting on the table for your consideration. If we choose to do it and we can talk about it and Matt. Mike and possibly some others can talk about why it could be advantageous to the Town to buy this property. We can do it from a prior year's surplus it doesn't affect taxes for the current year except the loss of the modest amount of the annual tax revenue that comes from that property. The \$91,000.00 will come out of this \$734,251.78 which is money in the bank that we have an opportunity to use to do something that we think that we hope you consider strategic so with that mind that's where when I proposed this amendment there's where the \$91,000.00 will come from. Now again in the Selectboard memo on page 13 we have a brief discussion of why we think the Town might want to consider this purchase. So with that I'm going to ask Matt to take over the discussion with Mike to talk about what the reasons are behind this.

Matt Kantola spoke saying he had just completed his first year on the Selectboard. I'm here to talk about the Burke property. Does anyone not know where the Burke property is? It's right across from the town garage and it's 4 plus acres. There is a 3,000 square foot building on the property which also gives quite a bit of space out back for the relocation of the sand pile which most of you know approaches on the road. I wouldn't call it a hazard but the State has been after us for years to do something with that. This is something that we put a lot of thought into and we negotiated a price with the owner and we feel this is a good long term move for the Town. It does give us some addition space. Matt asked Mike if he had anything he wanted to add.

Mike Spackman spoke saying this has been a little bit of a dream of mine after Irene and the devastation that was done to the fire station. We all know about climate change and what is happening. We need to think about long range planning in my eyes about what's the future of that building down there where the station is now. Back in 1958 that was a beautiful idea and I'm not saying that it's still not a good idea to be where we are but if these events keep happening to the station we need to find property somewhere that we can relocate. I saw this as an opportunity to do an Emergency Services Building whatever we need in the future – Fire, EMS, Police who knows. Who knows where this Town is going to be in 20 years. The space that has become available a third of it we can't even use or maybe it's more than that because of the flood plain so it limits us to the space available to put a building in and have the overrun of the highway department which is limited on space to expand a little bit of their stock pile on the other side of the road. It's close proximity to the town garage and it makes sense. I'm being selfish thinking about the availability of this property for a future Emergency Services Building. Other advantages as I said the town garage is limited space wise. We utilize every bit of space that's on our property and we have no room for expansion. Our stock piles are limited because of the area that we have so that would be a positive where we would have available space to put additional storage. I said when we built the new town garage 21 years ago I said that would be a 50-year building. It would last 50 years and in the scope we wouldn't fill it in 50 years. That's not

true. The town garage is getting filled up. We are utilizing some property on the mountain to store some stuff now which sadly we would much rather have it where we can keep a closer eye on it right across the road. I just think this would be a good investment for the Town for the price to advance to our future.

Win said I'd like to just add one point. When we bought the property at the mountain we also purchased what was called Ski Services Building the old garage that was down below the original old base lodge and that was all going to be space for storage of highway department equipment. Not ideal because of the separation but it was space. We had it. Little did we know that this fly by night organization that we never heard of called Ascutney Outdoors would end up building an empire with groomers, snowmobiles and all kinds of equipment which they seem to feel they can use this Ski Services Building so they started taking over. I'm being factitious. It's extraordinary and it's wonderful what has happened to Ascutney Outdoors but they are squeezing the highway department out of this space that we had planned on using for storage of trailers and so forth so this ends up with a win win proposition and the building that exist could be used by the highway department without really any immediate renovation cost for storage. I don't know if Ascutney Outdoors wants to add anything about the advantages from their point of view.

Glenn Seward said thanks to the huge amount of community support Ascutney Outdoors has received over the last few years we have grown quickly just as the Town has grown. By the end of this year we will essentially be at our five to seven year build out of our master plan. It's only taken a couple of years to get there so we find ourselves in need of workshop space or find ourselves in need of outside storage area for equipment and supplies that's out of sight so we can maintain some reasonable aesthetic of the property. We need to remain compliance with the conservation easement that the Town holds over the property so there are distinctive advantages for us in the Town purchase of the Burke property. I just want to reiterate what we're looking at is a potential solution or start of a solution to a decades old problem that the Town has the Fire Department flooding and relocation of the sand pile. We talked about those things when I was on the Selectboard back in the 90's. This is a real opportunity for the Town to address a solution to this problem. The Town has always been forward thinking and I hope the voters will continue to take that approach and get this.

Ted Siegler spoke saying I just want to reiterate what Glenn said. I was on the Selectboard when we built the highway garage back 21 years ago. We have had two problems all along. One of them is the sand pile. This is an ideal solution for that and as we said before I'm the chair of the Conservation Commission and we had four one hundred year floods in the last 50 or 60 years and it's going to happen again. The next one is going to be worst and the last thing we need is to have the Emergency Services Building in the flood way every time we have a flood. It's just not a sustainable solution so as Glenn said and I'm sure Win and everyone else is saying anyone who has been on the Selectboard over time would recommend that this is a really excellent idea moving forward with this purchase.

Ted Emerson said I have a question for Mike. When I look at the sand pile over in Hartland they have an advantage for loading it from a whole new level. Would that also be an advantage that you will have in relocating the sand pile.

Mike said it would be somewhat of an advantage. Potentially right now the thought was that we would put our sand pile in the same area where the contractor used to dig and have his gravel pile. It's not ideal because we have a south facing sand pile now which helps us and this would be a north facing or easterly facing area that we would be digging from. Not ideal but looking back at Hartland's ours would be facing the same way as there's. They have issues with frozen sand and we would have to deal with that situation the best we can.

Heather Hoyns said just a quick question for the Conservation Commission and to Mike. They said some of the land is wet. Mike replied correct. Heather said so how big is the property and how much of that land is actually useable that wouldn't end up being a problem for Conservation or underwater flooding.

Mike said it will never be a problem in a flood because I hope the brook doesn't get that high. The size of the parcel is 4.64 acres and I want to say it's about a little over a third of it is unusable because of the wetland.

Matt said it's about 3 acres. There is a very narrow strip along the highway that's not really useable but the majority of it is useable.

Elizabeth Burrows asked if there has been any sort of environment impact study done on the moving of the sand pile because know you're saying that it's going to be near a wetland near the brook. What happens when it is on this side of the highway and has no chance really of washing into the brook but on that side of the highway is there any impact on the brook or on that wetland.

Mike said no because the property is higher in elevation than where the wetland is. We did have a feasible study done I believe and the people that did the study said that all these spots fit in the area that we are talking about.

Elizabeth Burrows said the other question I have is in envisioning this move have you been able to think about anyways that the two departments can work together better because of their proximity.

Mike said what two departments?

Elizabeth said the Highway Department and the Emergency Services Department. If they are closer together they might be able to address some of the emergencies.

Mike said right now you're probably talking to the wrong person because I'm wearing both hats. I think I work together pretty well.

Edson Pierce said my question is how much of a potential is this for a fire being a wooden building?

Mike said the only thing I can respond to that is the same thing the potential is as of right now. The potential is not going to change because we take over the building. We're not going to do our main work in there. It's going to be a storage building, a cold storage type of a building. I don't think it's heated now and I have no intentions of heating it.

David Jaacks said one thing we should remember is that after Irene the fire station had about 3 feet of water in it. A lot of people in Town volunteered service for that but we also received a tremendous amount of support from the prison who came in and did all the clean out of that building that option is no longer available as well so when we see budgets being applied across the whole spectrum where we had a labor force that was available to help out in time of need potentially isn't there anymore as a result of other expenditures.

Meg Clough said I keep seeing the Town buying and buying and buying. We are not supposed to be in the real estate business. I understand we need it, I understand all that, but we keep buying stuff which means we have less to spread the tax base on.

Matt said we are looking at the Amendment. Are there any other comments?

Nancy Duffy asked if as part of the feasibility study, was there an environmental study done on the property? Win answered that the assessment was not and in depth environmental study. We will, before any future construction for a safety building, which could be 20 years away, we would need to do an environmental study. In terms of the sand pile, we need to check with the State about the need for what is called a multi-sector permit which will address issues relating to outside storage and materials. Then we will have to go before the local development review board for local permit. We are not aware of any other umbrella environmental assessment that will be needed immediately. The State will be looking at it in terms of the sand pile, possibly and the DRB will definitely be looking at any issues with the sand pile and those would be the permits.

Ted Emerson said should the Article be amended to include permission to the Selectboard to spend the money to get the additional permits, because failure to be able to use it for the sand pile or emergency services makes it of no function to the town.

Win answered that we have not have not asked the seller that. We believe that moving the sand pile is fairly straight forward. We don't see an immediate problem of infiltration in to the wetland and we can take protective measures to prevent that. So we haven't anticipated any major environmental impact from that.

Ted Seigler asked isn't it the case you had the wetlands delineated as part of the assessment of how much of the property you could use? Wasn't that a key issue?

Win replied that the consultant took a fairly high level look at this property and one across the street. They felt that this property on the basis of the high level of evaluation would be suitable for the sand pile being moved. Are there other road blocks we could run in to? We don't know yet. We didn't go that deep in to it. We haven't applied for a permit to move the sand pile.

Ted said the point is the only real issue I can see would be if the wetlands were delineated correctly, and I assume that the firm that you hired, did some delineation. Yes, Win replied that the firm did do some delineation and identified specific spots where possible future development could go.

Ted said he can't imagine that there are any other significant environmental permitting issues that could prohibit us from using it for the sand pile. Matt Kantola said the report is on the Town website and it does the location of the sand pile and good space for it.

Chris Nesbitt asked if there were any Act 250 considerations, Win stated we do not believe so, until such time as the Town might decide to put an emergency services building on the property, but just for the sand pile, no. It would be the multi-sector permit which has to do with outside sources which is not Act 250.

Glenn Seward asked "hasn't the Burke property been used for aggregate storage such as sand for decades?" So, this particular use of moving the sand pile from one side of the road to the other would not be a change of use of the property.

Win, said, Yes, but regulations surprise me, so I hate to promise anything. The fact that we are just continuing the prior outside storage kind of use that has gone on out behind the building, indicates that we should be able to continue that. There is a precedent for that.

Shirley Ouelette said I've driven by that building quite a bit and I am quite certain you will need to do some repairs to it, unless you like the way it bulges on that one side? I wondered if anyone has looked at the cost of just bringing it up to a safe standard so that you can use it for what you are talking about?

Matt Kantola said that he and Mike have been through and around the building several times and believe that any repairs that need to be done can be done by the highway crew and they can pick away at it over a few years. There is a bulge in the wall Shirley, but we feel we can fix it easy with the people we have and town equipment. Other than cutting brush back and shoring up the wall, there aren't any plans to do a lot of work to the building. Mainly just to maintain the integrity of the shell, and just use it for dry storage. We aren't planning to spend a half million dollars on the building.

Shirley with a follow up question. I am quite certain that you will want to tear that building down because with the winters around here, you are obviously not going to want to be up on the roof shoveling it off all the time. It's pretty flat and I wanted to know what your thoughts were about how long you think that building is going to be there before we are going to be having to put a good amount of money in to either removing it or the maintain also of just keeping that snow off the roof. I know they will have to get up there and keep it shoveled off, I'm sure the supports are not that great for that amount of weight to be on that building. So something is going to have to be done to kind of nurse it along until something permanent can be done.

Matt Kantola replied that he doesn't have an answer for that. I'm sure snow has been shoveled off. He asked if Mike knows anything about it. Mike said that he has seen it be shoveled off over the years.

Matt Birmingham asked if there were any other comments or questions of the proposed amendment? Let me read it to you: You are voting on an amendment Shall the Town approve the expenditure of \$91,000.00 for purchase of the Burke Property (corner of Rt. 44 and Bible Hill Road) with such funds to be raised from a prior year surplus? Those persons who are in favor of the amendment signify by said aye. And those opposed by nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment is approved.

Now we go back and vote on the Article as Amended. Shall the Town approve the expenditure of \$91,000.00 for purchase of the Burke Property (corner of Rt. 44 and Bible Hill Road) with such funds to be raised from a prior year surplus? Those persons who are in favor of the Article as Amended signify by saying aye. Those opposed by saying nay. The ayes have it and Article 8 as amended was passed by a voice vote.

Article 9: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$53,200.00 as a donation for the support and maintenance of the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department with such funds to be raised by taxes? Matt said he needed a motion and a second to discuss this Article. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson and seconded by Dick Beattie.

Matt asked for any comments, questions or discussion on this Article? Seeing none this Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 10: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$6,000.00 as a donation for the support and maintenance of the West Windsor Fast Squad with such funds to be raised by taxes? Matt said I need a motion and a second. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson and seconded by Dick Beattie.

Matt asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none this Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 11: Matt said he was not going to read the Article because and Win said I'm making the motion to pass over this Article and let me explain why. If you look at page 26 the far right hand column 2019 budget under the Town Listers there are three numbers. We budgeted \$18,000.00 for wages, \$2,000.00 for travel and expenses and \$2,000.00 for the reappraisal reserve. The \$2,000.00 that you would be voting on in Article 11 has already been approved when you approved the town budget. There is no need to vote on Article 11. It was an error in preparing the warning for which I apologize. It's totally redundant.

Matt said there is a motion to pass over is a Vermont tradition. It's actually to postpone indefinitely. It's a subsidiary motion. It does request a motion and a second and a majority vote to pass over as we say in Vermont but nowhere else. Ted Emerson made a motion to pass over Article 11 and this motion was seconded by Phil Arvidson. Matt asked if there was any discussion on this motion. Hearing none this Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 12: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$6,350.00 as a donation for the support of the West Windsor Historical Society such funds to be raised by taxes? Matt said he needed a motion and second. Tom Kenyon made the motion and it was second by Phil Arvidson.

Any discussion or comments? Hearing none this Article passed by a voice vote.

Article 13: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$2,000.00 as a donation to the West Windsor Independence Day Celebrations such funds to be raised by taxes? I need a motion and a second. A motion was made by Phil Arvidson and second by Linda Ley.

Linda Ley spoke as the facilitator for the Independence Day Celebration here in West Windsor. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department for all of the work that they do for these two days so that we may enjoy them. I would also like to thank the many volunteers who make these two days possible and I would also like to thank you all for your support of these celebrations. I direct you to page 49 where you will see an account of what happened in 2018 written by Leona Bushkin. The Independence Day Celebration here is brought to you and made possible by your neighbors. If you get a chance to see anyone on our committee, please give them a high five. If you would like to join this dynamic team you can contact Karen Diop for the 4th of July activities, Bill Ley for the 3rd of July, Leona Buskin or Sherry Barbour for the parade. You could also sign up on your way out today there is a sign-up sheet in the back. We look forward to a great 2019 celebration. Applause were had.

Matt asked for any other discussion. Hearing none, the Article passed on a voice vote.

Article 14: Shall the Town vote the sum of \$13,807.00 to be raised by taxes for the following organizations?

Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont	\$1,067.00
Windsor County Partners	1,000.00
Volunteers in Action	400.00
Vt. Center for Independent Living	140.00
Green Up Vermont	100.00
Visiting Nurse Assoc. & Hospice of VT/NH	3,475.00
SEVCA	1,050.00
Reading/West Windsor Food Shelf	1,000.00
Sheddsville Cemetery	4,000.00
Vermont Association of Conservation Districts	100.00
The Current	125.00
Windsor County Youth Services	600.00
Windsor On Air	750.00

Matt indicated that you can speak for or against any of these individually.

Phil Arvidson made the motion to adopt this Article. The motion was seconded by Dick Beatty.

Matt asked if anyone from any of these agencies would like to speak, let me know. There were none.

Matt asked for any discussion. Seeing none, the Article passed on a voice vote.

Article 15: To do any other business that can be legally done at this meeting.

Matt says this gives anybody a chance to say anything you wish to discuss.

Al Keiller, Chair of the Planning Commission, spoke regarding the handout that has been passed around this morning. The Town Plan needs to be updated by February of 2020. The Commission has started the process and have summarized on the first page of the plan, where we stand, why we need a town plan, what we have accomplished since the last town plan, a proposed vision statement and goals going forward. Second page is a questionnaire, please complete it and return to Town Hall.

Linda Ley would like to leak the theme of the Independence Day Celebration. This year's theme will be Volunteerism. You've heard from many people today on many different topics and almost all of those things utilize and depend heavily on volunteers and we are celebrating them this year.

Matt asked for any other comments. Hearing none, a motion to adjourn was made by Phil Arvidson at 11:45 AM. The motion was seconded by Dick Beatty and passed by a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Archibald

Attest:

Cathy Archibald
Town Clerk

Matthew T. Birmingham, III
Moderator

Edwin Johnson
Selectboard

