

Town Meeting Minutes – Monday, February 29, 2016

The legal voters of the Town of Cornwall met at the Anna Stowell Sunderland Bingham Memorial School on Monday evening, February 29, 2016 with approximately 100 people in attendance and transacted the following business:

The meeting was called to order at 8:11 PM by Moderator, Cy Tall. Cy indicated that the meeting would be run using Robert's Rules of Order. She also indicated that non registered voters were welcome to attend the meeting, but could not speak at the meeting. Ben Wood took a few minutes to give an overview of the last year and covered some of the issues related to this year's town meeting warning. Ben Marks recognized the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department, and mentioned that the department is looking for volunteers for both fire and medical positions.

ARTICLE 1: To elect all town officials as required by law. Voting for officials will be by Australian ballot. Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at the Cornwall Town Hall. Officials to be elected are:

5 years: Cemetery Commissioner
3 years: Two (2) Planning Commissioners; Selectboard; Lister; School Director; Auditor; Trustee of Public Funds; Road Commissioner
2 years: Selectboard; School Director; Three (3) Library Trustees; Cemetery Commission (to fill an unexpired term)
1 year: Selectboard (to fill an unexpired term); Moderator; First Constable; Second Constable; Collector of Delinquent Taxes; Town Agent; Two (2) Grand Jurors

No action was taken on this article as voting will take place on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM at the Cornwall Town Hall.

ARTICLE 2: To see what action the voters will take regarding the town's financial surplus or deficit.

The town's financial deficit for the FY ending June 30, 2015 is \$14,889.27. Sue Johnson explained why the town ended with a deficit, which has to do with many factors. Some of which are the basic income is less than expenditures, liabilities are created by having one General Fund checking account, but paying for highway expenditures out of that account, the GASB 34 rules for Governmental accounting also require various procedures at the end of the fiscal year related to delinquent taxes, purchasing materials, etc. It was also explained that the town does not have to mitigate a deficit or surplus. If the voters are comfortable with the current fund balance, which is \$333,508.47, they can let the fund balance absorb the deficit, which will leave a fund balance of \$318,619.20. Likewise, if we have a surplus, the voters can also choose to let that amount be added to the fund balance for future years. Andrew Munkres/Benj Deppman moved that the deficit of \$14,889.27 for FY June 2015 be absorbed by the fund balance leaving a fund balance of \$318,619.20. The motion carried on voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the voters will approve a General Fund budget of \$460,946.

T Tall/Joan Donahue moved to approve the General Fund budget of \$460,946. T Tall asked why the office expense for the Planning Commission increased from \$500 to \$4000. It was explained that with the creation of the Development Review Board, it was expected that there would be additional expenses for training, etc. The Planning Commission will also be rewriting the Zoning Regulations and the Sub-division regulations and will be hiring outside help for that process, as well as applying for grant money which requires matching funds. The motion to approve the General Fund budget passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the voters will approve a Highway budget of \$403,050. State Aid is expected to be approximately \$60,000, leaving \$343,050 to be raised by taxes.

Benj Deppman/Denny Rheaume moved to approve the Highway budget of \$343,050 after state aid. There was no discussion. The motion to approve the Highway budget passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the voters will appropriate \$63,900 to be transferred to the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department to pay its expenses from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Dave Donahue/Laura Fetterolf moved to approve the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department budget of \$63,900 for the 2016 FY. There was no discussion. The motion to approve the CVFD budget passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the voters will appropriate \$4,000 to be transferred to the Cornwall Free Public Library to pay its expenses from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Lisa Roberts/Liz Marino moved to appropriate \$4,000 to the Cornwall Free Public Library. Andrew Munkres asked if there would be any additional space for the library with the Town Hall renovation. Sue Johnson indicated that there would be no less space, and they will have new space for a reading room. The motion to appropriate \$4,000 to the Cornwall Free Public Library passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the voters will approve borrowing up to \$250,000 to be used in the renovation of the Town Hall; repayment of any borrowed amount will be made from future years' Capital Building funds.

Bill Johnson/Lisa Roberts moved to approve borrowing up to \$250,000 to be used in the renovation of the Town Hall with repayment of the loan coming from future Capital Building fund appropriations. Dave Donahue asked if we are spending all of the Capital Fund appropriation each year. Ben Wood explained that we are not spending all of the appropriation, that any balance is being carried in a separate checking account for use in future years. Bobbie Carnwath mentioned solar collector's for the south facing roof on the town hall and wondered if that was part of the current plan. Ben Wood had done some

research on installing solar panels, but it is not part of the plan at this point. There is a breakdown of structural, weatherization and access costs available in the Vermont Integrated Architecture total project proposal. Bobbie wondered if the voters should have more information before the vote. Raph Worrick reminded that voters that the vote was related to the ability to borrow money, not the specific plan itself. Benj Deppman asked if the Listers would remain in the building. The Town Clerk's and Lister's offices will be opened up to one larger room for all to work in. The motion to approve borrowing up to \$250,000 to be used for the renovation of the Town Hall was passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the voters will appropriate the following amounts to be transferred to the listed organizations:

a.	Addison Central Teens, Inc.	\$ 2,000.00
b.	Addison County Court Diversion and Community Justice Projects, Inc.	350.00
c.	Addison County Home Health and Hospice, Inc.	1,440.00
d.	Addison County Parent/Child Center, Inc.	1,600.00
e.	Addison County Readers, Inc.	250.00
f.	Addison County Riverwatch Collaborative	500.00
g.	Addison County Transit Resources, Inc.	1,274.00
h.	Champlain Valley Agency on Aging, Inc.	950.00
i.	Counseling Service of Addison County, Inc.	2,300.00
j.	Elderly Services, Inc.	800.00
k.	Green Up Vermont, Inc.	100.00
l.	Homeward Bound, Animal Welfare Center	500.00
m.	H O P E (Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects)	4,000.00
n.	Hospice Volunteer Services, Inc.	450.00
o.	John W. Graham Emergency Shelter Service, Inc.	1,925.00
p.	Mary Johnson Children's Center, Inc.	700.00
q.	Open Door Clinic/Community Health Services, Inc.	750.00
r.	Otter Creek Child Care Center	1,000.00
s.	The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, Inc.	540.00
t.	Vermont Adult Learning, Inc.	500.00
u.	WomenSafe, Inc.	\$ <u>1,000.00</u>
	TOTAL:	\$22,929.00

Patricia McCormick/David Anderson moved to appropriate the listed amounts to the listed charitable organizations. There was not discussion. The motion to appropriate the listed amounts to the listed charitable organizations passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the voters will approve the billing date of September 9, 2016 for property taxes, payment of half that amount due November 1, 2016, and payment of the second half due May 1, 2017. Taxes are to be paid to the Cornwall Town Treasurer. Any taxes that are due, but unpaid after November 1, 2016, are considered late. Interest will be charged at the rate of one percent (1%) per month. Any taxes unpaid after May 1, 2017 will be considered delinquent. Interest will be charged on delinquent taxes at the rate of one percent (1%) per month, plus a collector's fee of eight percent (8%).

Michael Sheridan/Lisa Roberts moved to approve the article as printed with the billing date being September 9, 2016 and installments being due on November 1 and May 1 with the specific interest and collector's fees applied. There was no discussion. The motion carried on voice vote.

ARTICLE 10: Any other business proper to come before this meeting.

Cy Tall reminded the voters that no binding business could take place during the "other business" discussion.

Marc Lapin asked how the Capital Fund program was working. Ben Wood explained that the program is working well, the town has been able to purchase needed equipment within the planned schedule and has not needed to borrow any money in anticipation of taxes since the first full year of the program. Whether or not the amounts appropriated for the funds can be lowered is unknown at this time according to Ben Wood.

Andrew Munkres asked how the new town pick-up truck was working out. Stu Johnson indicated that it is working well, and has been useful in many ways.

Alicia Romero asked what is happening with the collection of delinquent taxes. Sue Johnson explained that the Delinquent Tax Collector does monthly billings, and that the town will periodically hold tax sales to collect taxes. Cornwall's delinquent tax list is quite low compared to other towns in the area.

Mary Dodge of the Cornwall Conservation Commission introduced the other members of the commission who spoke to various projects. Michael Sheridan talked about a project with the school involving wildlife tracking. Brian Howlett talked about wildlife sightings, and that any sightings can be entered into the I Naturalist software. On the recent Swamp Walk, the group saw a Ruff Legged Hawk, which is quite unusual for this area. Rene Langis indicated that one of the wildlife tracking stations will be in Foote Farm, and that the Foote Farm Homeowner's Association made a donation to the project. Rene thanked the town for the creation of a Conservation Fund, and thanks to Mary Dodge, David Anderson and Rene Langis for their work toward creating the fund. Bethany Barry indicated that the Commission had sponsored several walks along the Limestone Ledges on Route 125. They did a walk for the school children and a separate walk for adults. They had 30 adults attend the event. On Saturday, April 9 there will be a springtime paddle on the Lemon Fair River at 1:25 PM. Folks will meet at the Lemon Fair Bridge.

There will also be an organic farm tour of Marc & Cheryl Cesario's farm illustrating farming & riparian conservation in the future.

Abi Sessions asked about the status of the salt contamination at the Town Garage. When the water is being pumped the numbers are remaining consistent and below the State minimum. If the water freezes or is not being pumped for whatever reason, there are large spikes in the Sodium and Calcium numbers. The next door neighbor's well is being monitored in addition to the Town Garage. Ben Marks gave an explanation of the contamination issue for those who were not aware. Raph Worrick suggested looking into the heat pump option again if the town will indeed have to pump water forever.

There was a motion to adjourn at 8:51 PM. The motion carried on voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Johnson,
Town Clerk

I hereby certify that this is a true copy of the approved Town Meeting Minutes. Minutes approved by the Selectboard and Town Moderator on March 15, 2016.

Attest:

Susan Johnson, Cornwall Town Clerk