

Minutes  
Town of Coventry  
Wednesday February 28, 2022

**Order**

Matt Maxwell started the meeting and outlined the voting procedure.

**School Articles for Discussion**

**Article 1:** To elect a **Moderator** for the year ensuing.

There is no name on the ballot but Matt M would act as moderator for the informational meetings.

**Article 2:** To elect a **School Treasurer** for a 1 year term.

**Deb Tanguay-** on ballot. Deb is the only name on the ballot and yielded her time to speak.

**Article 3:** To elect a **School Director** for a 2 year term.

**Kathleen Ahearn-** on ballot. Kathleen has been active on the school board for 4 years and is seeking another 2 years to help the school and the community grow. Helping each child grow to their full potential.

**Robert Walls-Thumma-** on ballot. Not present for comment.

**Article 4:** To elect a **School Director** for a 3 year term.

**Praneet Menon-** on ballot. Praneet spoke of his work for the last 15 years with the defense department running large engineering projects for the Armed Forces As well as his experience leading public meetings with large attendance. He would look forward to closely overseeing the expansion project and helping the school expand the literacy programs and utilize Edmund Douglas Price Funding. He has a child in the school and believes higher education is important.

**Article 5:** Shall voters of the school district approve the school board to expend **\$3,881,536** which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$18,513, per equalized pupil. This projected per equalized pupil is 16.33% higher than spending in the current year.

Matt Maxwell explained that the increase in the budget is due to the inclusion of Covid-19 funding as well as an increase in High school tuition and a 3% increase to the Teachers Union Salaries.

**Article 6:** Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to borrow up to **\$3,200,000.00** over a period of 30 years for the proposed building addition at Coventry Village School.

Matt Maxwell explained that the Coventry Taxpayers will only be responsible for 20% of this spending, 80% will be received from the State Education Fund.

School population growth was asked about.

Jamie Stenger explained that the school was originally built for a lower number of grades and the Town has been increasing in population. The school has been adapting by utilizing all spaces including storage closets to serve as education and office spaces.

As more homes are being built in Town the need for more space in the school should only increase.

### **Town District Business**

**Article 7:** To elect a **Town Moderator** for the ensuing year.

No name is on the ballot but Matt Maxwell would serve as Moderator for informational meetings.

**Article 8:** To **ELECT** the following officers required by law:

**A. Select Person** for a 3 year term

**David Gallup**-on ballot. Not available for comment.

**Amanda Jensen**-on ballot. Amanda has served on the school board for 8 years and believes that she is ready to work with the Town to help move the Town forward in a meaningful and transparent manner.

**Praneet Menon**-on ballot. Praneet believes that he can help build a Town that will remain prosperous even after the Landfill agreement is concluded. He would like to work with the Planning Commission to complete the goals of our Town plan. Praneet would like to bring better resources for people to live in Town. As a new resident and a member of the Coventry Town Foundation and the Fall festival committee he would bring a forward thinking view without any personal bias.

**Martha Sylvester**-on ballot. Not available for comment.

**B. Town Clerk** for a 3 year term

**Deb Tanguay**- on ballot. Deb has enjoyed working as the Town Clerk since 2017. She has been vigilant in organization and digitizing records. Deb will continue to pursue her State and National certifications in the coming years.

**C. Town Treasurer** for a 3 year term

**David Barlow**- on Ballot. David has been Town Treasurer for 3 years and has worked hard to correct records as well as working closely with auditors to ensure the Town's financial system is running properly.

**D. Collector of Delinquent Taxes** for a 1 year term

**Kate Fletcher**- on Ballot. Kate asked for the residents support in maintaining the position. She has worked hard to bring information up-to-date. Kate has worked closely with residents and the Town treasurer to help residents with their property tax payment plans.

**Kerry Keement**- on Ballot. Kerry would like to be considered for the position as she has been a longtime resident. Currently holding an accounts receivable position she feels that she would be helpful to the Town and would like to be more involved in the workings of the Town.

**E. Cemetery Commissioner** for a 3 year term

**Jerry St. Sauveur**- on Ballot. Jerry was unavailable for comment.

**F. Cemetery Commissioner** for a 2 year term

No names are listed on the ballot.

No comments were offered.

**G. 1<sup>st</sup> Constable** for a 1 year term

No name is on the ballot.

**Pedro Grondon** fills the position currently and was said to be willing to serve as a write in but was unavailable for comment.

**H. 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable** for a 1 year term

No name is on the Ballot.

**I. Trustee of Cemetery Funds** for a 1 year term.

**David Barlow-** on Ballot. David currently serves in this position, is knowledgeable of the finances and is happy to continue to serve in this position.

**J. Planning Commission Member** for a 2 year term.  
No name is on the ballot.

**Amanda Hussey-** Write-in. Matt Maxwell mentioned that Amanda would continue to serve as a write in.

**K. Planning Commission Member** for a 2 year term.  
No name is on the ballot.

**Zach Patridge-** Write-in. Matt Maxwell mentioned that Zach would continue to serve as a write in.

**L. Planning Commission Member** for a 1 year term.  
No name is on the ballot.

**M. Planning Commission Member** for a 1 year term.  
No name is on the ballot

**Article 9:** Shall the legal voters of the a town of Coventry vote to appropriate the sum of **\$836,294** for the support of the fiscal year **2023 Town Liabilities & General Fund Expenses** of which all shall be raised by non-tax revenues received through the Landfill Host Agreement?

Showing an increase of 10% from the prior year.

A question was asked about the miscellaneous revenues. David B. stated that the majority of this spending was a insurance settlement that was received into the account and then moved to the Town's investment account. Another item was reimbursement for road salt purchased from the Town and paid by the City of Newport.

SWIP funds were discussed and additional educational outreach ideas were presented.

**Article 10:** Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry vote to appropriate the sum of **\$274,000 plus** the Vermont State aid funding for the support of the fiscal year **2023 Highway Fund** expenses for the summer and winter road maintenance, of which all shall be raised by non-tax revenues received through the Landfill Host Agreement?

No further comment was offered.

**Article 11:** Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry vote to split the **Roads Infrastructure and Equipment Reserve Fund** into two reserve funds to be called the Roads Infrastructure Reserve Fund and the Roads Capital Investment Reserve Fund to enable better allocation and management of funding by placing \$100,000 of the existing fund balance into the **Roads Capital Equipment Reserve Fund** and the balance of the existing fund, approximately \$272,000, into the **Roads Infrastructure Reserve Fund** in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2804?

Further information was given on division of reserve fund accounts.

**Article 12:** Shall **Excess Revenues** received in fiscal year 2021 into the Highway Fund of \$70,000 and into the General Fund of \$762,000, totaling **\$832,000**, be **Transferred** to the **Roads Infrastructure Reserve Fund**, if said reserve fund described in Article 11 is approved by voters, or if not, into the existing Roads Infrastructure and Equipment Reserve Fund to fund future road infrastructure projects?

No further explanation was needed.

**Article 13:** Shall **Excess Revenues** received in Fiscal Year 2021 into the General Fund of **\$100,000** be transferred to the **Roads Capital Equipment Reserve Fund** if said reserve fund described in Article 11 is approved by voters, or if not, into the existing Roads Infrastructure and Equipment Reserve Fund to fund future roads capital equipment requirements?

No further explanation was needed.

**Article 14:** Shall **Excess Revenues** received in Fiscal Year 2021 into the General Fund of **\$35,000** be **Transferred** to the **Reappraisal Reserve Fund** to fund future reappraisal requirements?

No further explanation was needed.

**Article 15:** Shall **Excess Revenues** received in Fiscal Year 2021 into the General Fund of **\$4,800** be **Transferred** to the **Edmund Douglas Price (EDP) Fund** to make up for Microsoft Dividends paid to the Town for the EDP Fund from 2003 through 2013 but not entered into the Towns financial accounting system?

David Barlow explained how the fund was started with a donation of Microsoft shares from the Price family. Funds have been used to help provide school library materials. Approval of

this article would make the account whole, correcting dividend records.

Kathleen Ahearn stressed the need for the fund and asked the residents for their support approving the article.

**Article 16:** Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry authorize the Select Board to appoint the Town Treasurer as provided in V.S.A. § 2651f whose elected term will expire in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2651f(c) if this article is approved?

The passing of this article would allow the Select Board to appoint the Town Treasurer as this position should be skills-based and not politically driven.

This article would not affect the budget or time required for the position.

**Article 17:** Shall the voters of the Town of Coventry vote to appropriate the below expenditures for the **Services Agencies** in the amount of **\$16,507**? (Service agencies reports are printed in the back of this Town report under the Services Agencies section.)

- \$500.00 to American Red Cross
  - \$300.00 to Felines & Friends Foundation
  - \$3,000.00 to Goodrich Memorial Library
  - \$600.00 to Green Mountain Farm to School
  - \$2,000 to Jones Memorial Library
  - \$330.00 to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging
  - \$2,172.00 to Northeast Kingdom Human Service, Inc.
  - \$500.00 to Orleans County Children's Advocacy Center/  
Special Investigations unit (new)
  - \$500.00 to Orleans County Fair Association
  - \$550.00 to Orleans Historical Society
  - \$3,000.00 to Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice Inc.
  - \$750.00 to Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter, Inc.
  - \$850.00 to rural Community Transportation Inc.
  - \$1,125.00 to Umbrella
  - \$130.00 to Vermont Center for Independent Living
  - \$100.00 to Vermont Green Up, Inc.
  - \$100.00 to Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Symphonykids Program
- Total for above appropriations- \$16,507.00

Casting separate votes for each appropriation was discussed for future years.

Kathleen observed a difference in the total requested and the appropriations list.

- Ned Connell stated that any program that made a request, but failed to provide the necessary information would not have been included on the ballot.

- A discrepancy was found between the requested amount and the amount proposed on the ballot. This will be addressed accordingly.

- The Town and School Board thanked Matt Maxwell for his dedication and service to the Town as a School Director for nine years. Matt stated that he enjoyed being a part of the process but believes it is important to have many voices heard so he is stepping down to allow a new perspective.

Moderator Matt Maxwell adjourned the meeting.