

# MINUTES OF THE LOWELL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING 2016

---

The legal voters of the Town of Lowell, Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Lowell Graded School on **TUESDAY MARCH 1, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.** to act on the following articles of business:

**Note:** The Town of Lowell has a checklist of 585 eligible voters. The highest number of votes cast for Town Elections was registered at 207 votes. This represents a 35% participation in Town Meeting.

- The School District Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Moderator Alden Warner asked voters to take a moment to honor our American Flag and led voters in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Alden announced several upcoming events along with Amanda Carlson, Town Administrator.
- Alden reviewed some Roberts Rules of conduct to be adhered to throughout the meeting.
- Using unanimous consent Alden asked the Town to suspend the rules, and allow Amanda Carlson, a non-registered voter, be allowed to speak and answer questions when needed throughout the meeting. There were no objections, permission granted.
- Alden Warner announced the hours of the Australian ballot voting for North Country Supervisory Union Budget and the Presidential Primary Elections. Voters were then given time to cast their ballots for these two elections.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING:

**ARTICLE 1:** *To ELECT SCHOOL MODERATOR for the ensuing year.*

- Alden Warner nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **ALDEN WARNER – ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 2:** *To ELECT an ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIRECTOR for a three year term*

- Gilles Bathalon nominated.
- There were no other nominations, so using unanimous consent from the voters, the moderator instructed the clerk to cast one paper ballot for Gilles Bathalon.
- **GILLES BATHALON - ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 3:** *To ELECT an UNION SCHOOL DIRECTOR for a three year term*

- George Swanson nominated.
- There were no other nominations, so using unanimous consent from the voters, the moderator instructed the clerk to cast one paper ballot for George Swanson.
- **GEORGE SWANSON - ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 4:** *Shall the voters of the LOWELL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT approve the school board to expend **\$1,880,310.00**, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year 2017. It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$11,676.65 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 2.62% higher than spending for the current year?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Request was made to hear from the School Board on reasons for increase.
- Steve Mason, School Board Chair explained that in past years they have only requested a 1% or less increase and with new Act 46 restrictions there were requirements the Lowell School had not yet met. The School is still below the State average of \$14,000 per student.

- Anita Gagner, School Principal was asked to answer questions on budget items and school spending. Moderator asked for unanimous consent to allow Anita to speak as a non-registered voter. No objections were made and Anita spoke to the concerns.
- Steve Mason continued to answer questions and explained how the Board creates the budget and the approval process.
- Motion made and seconded to call to question. Motion passed by voice vote.
- Motion made and seconded to level fund with last year's budget amount of \$1,754,498.71. Voice vote / defeated. **MOTION TO AMEND – DEFEATED.**
- Main motion to accept proposed budget amount as written at \$1,880,310.00 carried by voice vote. **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 5:** *Shall the voters of the **LOWELL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT** authorize the Board of School Directors to use **\$39,000.00** of the unallocated, unaudited general fund balance from the 2014-2015 school year, to **reduce taxes** in the 2016-2017 school budget?*

- Article moved and seconded; voice vote / carried.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 6:** *Shall the voters of the **LOWELL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT** authorize the Board of School Directors to establish a **tax stabilization fund** and transfer **\$38,240.00** of unallocated, unaudited general fund balance from the 2014-2015 school year to said fund?*

- Article moved and seconded; voice vote / carried.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 7:** *To transact any other non-binding business which may legally come before this meeting.*

- No other business brought before the voters.

**ARTICLE 8:** *To adjourn.*

- Motion made and seconded to adjourn School Meeting.

**OUTCOME OF AUSTRALIAN BALLOTING FOR NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL:**

Polls were open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**ARTICLE III:** NCUHS BUDGET- TOTAL VOTES CAST: 234  
IN FAVOR- 132 OPPOSED- 99 BLANK- 3  
**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE V:** NCUHS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE FUND  
TOTAL VOTES CAST: 234  
IN FAVOR- 139 OPPOSED- 87 BLANK- 8  
**ARTICLE PASSED**

**Attest:**

MODERATOR: Alden Warner *Alden Warner*

SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR: Steve Mason *Steve J Mason*

**TOWN MEETING:**

**Moderator call Annual Town meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.**

**ARTICLE 1:** *To ELECT TOWN MODERATOR for the ensuing year.*

- Alden Warner nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **ALDEN WARNER – ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 2:** *To HEAR and ACT upon reports of TOWN OFFICERS.*

- Moderator asked for any errors or omissions in the town reports.
- Comment was made that the voters were happy with the larger format Town Report.
- No other comments or questions were brought to the floor.
- Motion made and seconded to accept the Town Report as written; voice vote / carried.
- **TOWN REPORT ACCEPTED AS WRITTEN WITH NO NOTED CORRECTIONS**

**ARTICLE 3:** *Shall the voters of the Town of Lowell authorize the Town of Lowell Select Board to APPOINT a COLLECTOR OF DELINQUENT TAXES pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2651d?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Richard Pion was asked to comment on the Select Boards decision to include article. Richard explained that the information for delinquent taxes were computer based and only required 2-3 hours per month so the Board felt this should be inclusive for the Town Treasurer and that appointing the position would allow the Select Board to include the duties in the hourly wages given to the Treasurer and the 8% penalty charged would go back to the Town.
- Motion carried by voice vote
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 4:** *To ELECT the following OFFICERS required by law:*

**a. SELECT PERSON**                      3 year term

- Alden Warner nominated.
- Jim Callahan nominated and declined.
- There were no additional nominations, so using unanimous consent from the voters, the moderator instructed the clerk to cast one paper ballot for Alden Warner.
- **ALDEN WARNER - ELECTED**

**b. TOWN CLERK**                         3 year term

- Sandy LaDeau nominated.
- Carrie Holmes nominated.
- Candidates were asked to speak. Short speeches were given by each candidate.
- Moderator announced that voting would be by paper ballot.
- Total votes cast: 192                      *Sandy LaDeau: 146    Carrie Holmes: 46*
- **SANDY LADEAU – ELECTED**

**c. TOWN TREASURER**                      3 year term

- Sandy LaDeau nominated.
- Carrie Holmes nominated.
- Moderator announced that voting would be by paper ballot.
- Total votes cast: 159                      *Sandy LaDeau: 123    Carrie Holmes: 36*
- **SANDY LADEAU – ELECTED**

**d. DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR** 1 year term *\*Dependent upon outcome of Article 3 vote*

- Article 4 (d) passed over due to outcome of Article 3 allowing the Select Board to appoint the position of Delinquent Tax Collector.



**m. LIBRARY TRUSTEE**                      5 year term

- Faye Starr nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **FAYE STARR – ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 5:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate the sum of \$ 275,000.00 for TOWN EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES (Select Board's Account)?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Question was made as to the job description of the newly added Town Administrator position.
- Amanda Carlson, Town Administrator was allowed to speak and explained her function in the office.
- Motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 6:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 125,000.00 plus Vermont State Aid funding for WINTER ROADS?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 7:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 125,000.00 plus Vermont State Aid funding for SUMMER ROADS?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Motion carried by voice vote
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 8:**    *Shall the Town of Lowell elect to have the Newport City Police provide DISPATCH SERVICES for Lowell if they can provide this service for less than \$16,000 per year?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Alden Warner explained the situation with the dispatch services and referred voters to page 33 of the Town Report which included a more detailed description.
- Voters commented on the article that they thought setting a dollar amount, or making any decisions at this time was premature.
- Motion made and seconded to pass over this article; voice vote / carried.
- **ARTICLE DEFEATED**

**ARTICLE 9:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 25,000.00 for the FIRE DEPARTMENT?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Fire Chief Calvin Allen was asked to explain the budget and expenditures of the Fire Department.
- Motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 10:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 6,000.00 for the COMMUNITY LIBRARY?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 11:**    *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 3,000.00 for the LITTLE LEAGUE & T-BALL teams?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Jennifer Blay was asked to explain the increase and needs of the Little League Teams.
- Motion made and seconded to call to question. Motion carried by voice vote.
- Main motion carried by voice vote
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 12:** *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 4,000.00 for the building and maintenance of the Town **BASEBALL DIAMONDS**, including the building of a backstop, bleachers and field?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Jennifer Blay spoke about the needs of a second field as well as upgrading the existing field.
- Main motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 13:** *Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 1,000.00 for the **JR. HOOP BASKETBALL** teams?*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Jill Legacy, Jr. Hoop Coach was asked to comment on budget and anticipated costs of the program.
- Motion made and seconded to call to question. Motion passed by voice vote.
- Main motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 14:** *Shall the legal voters appropriate the sum of \$ 3,500.00 to the **ORLEANS ESSEX VNA & HOSPICE, INC.** for the services of Skilled Nursing, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Medical Social Work, Licensed Nurse's Aide, Homemaker, Personal Care Attendant, Hospice, and Maternal Child Health Programs, and other community health programs provided by the Agency?*

- Article moved and seconded; voice vote / carried
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 15:** *Shall the legal voters appropriate the following sums:*

- a) \$ 500 to AMERICAN RED CROSS
- b) \$ 250 to GREEN MOUNTAIN FARM-to-SCHOOL, INC
- c) \$ 50 to GREEN UP VERMONT
- d) \$ 450 to HAZEN'S NOTCH ASSOC. CAMPSHIP FUND
- e) \$ 250 to JAY AREA LOCAL FOOD SHELF
- f) \$ 200 to JAY PEAK POST NO. 28, INC. - AMERICAN LEGION
- g) \$ 200 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM COMMUNITY ACTION, INC. – ORLEANS COUNTY COURT DIVERSION
- h) \$ 300 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM COUNCIL ON AGING
- i) \$ 923 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM HUMAN SERVICE, INC.
- j) \$ 200 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM LEARNING SERVICES INC
- k) \$ 659 to NORTHEASTERN VT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
- l) \$ 500 to ORLEANS COUNTY CITIZEN ADVOCACY
- m) \$ 300 to ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- n) \$ 500 to POPE MEMORIAL FRONTIER ANIMAL SHELTER
- o) \$ 200 to PREVENT CHILD ABUSE- VERMONT
- p) \$ 700 to RURAL COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION
- q) \$ 825 to UMBRELLA
- r) \$ 100 to VACD - VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION
- s) \$ 200 to VT ASSOC for the BLIND and VISUALLY IMPAIRED
- t) \$ 90 to VT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

**Total for above appropriations = \$7397.00**

- Article moved and seconded.
- Article 15 (n) – Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter was questioned as to the services they provided. Residents spoke up about their experiences with the shelter.
- The Select Board was questioned as to the growing list of appropriations and if they were scrutinized. The Select Board responded that all appropriations were included as requested as they felt it was the voter's right to accept or reject and not the Boards decision.
- Motion made and seconded to call to question. Motion carried by voice vote.
- Main motion carried by voice vote.
- **ARTICLE PASSED AS WRITTEN**

**ARTICLE 17:** To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

- Mark Higley was asked to speak a few words about the activity in Montpelier.
- Mark explained some of the pending Bills currently in legislature and was questioned on his view of some of the issues.

**ARTICLE 18: TO ADJOURN**

- The motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Town Meeting; voice vote / carried.
- **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:27 P.M.**

**OUTCOME OF PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY BALLOTING:**

Polls were open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Total registered voters on checklist:	585
Total number of ballots cast:	254
Total number of Democratic Ballots counted:	139
Total number of Republican Ballots counted:	115

**DEMOCRAT**

HILLARY CLINTON	10
ROQUE "ROCKY" DE LA FUENTE	1
MARTIN J O'MALLEY	2
BERNIE SANDERS	124
TOTAL WRITE IN	0
TOTAL BLANK	2

**REPUBLICAN**

JEB BUSH	0
BEN CARSON	7
CHRIS CHRISTIE	2
TED CRUZ	9
CARLY FIORINA	0
JOHN R KASICH	20
RAND PAUL	1
MARCO RUBIO	19
RICK SANTORUM	1
DONALD TRUMP	55
TOTAL WRITE IN	1
TOTAL BLANK	0

**Attest:**

MODERATOR: Alden Warner 

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE: Steve Mason 

PRESIDING OFFICER: Sandy LaDeau 

Received for recording in Town Proceeding Book

Attest: Sandy LaDeau- Town Clerk