

# MINUTES OF THE LOWELL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2024

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The legal voters of the Town of Lowell, Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Lowell Graded School on **Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.** to act on the following articles of business:

- The Lowell Town Meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m.

## TOWN MEETING:

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

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

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

### Questions and Comments:

- **Motion made and seconded to accept the report as written**
- The first question was asked by Troy Adams, he has asked if we would amend his statement that was made in bullet line # 2 on page 117 in the previous year's Town meeting minutes of article # 11 to actuate his actual statement and words.
- Becky, Town Treasurer, read the list of corrections that need to be made before excepting the book. **The corrections are as follows: 1. Page 4, total appropriations should be \$9,127. 2. Page 7, Archie Powers fund should say 2023 actual and where it says available funds, that includes the funds held to keep this trust perpetual as long as there is a Town of Lowell. 3. Pages 10-16 should say "2024 proposed budget". 4. The Appraisal Dept. on page 24, 2023 actual should say \$76,094 for funds carried over from prior year and available funds should say \$49,462. 5. Page 27, the fire truck balance due is \$65,249.77. Paving loan balance due \$205,086.63. Kempton Bridge loan balance due \$156,429.21**
- Motion made and seconded to accept the report with the above corrections
- **Voice vote/ carried**

**ARTICLE 3:** To ELECT the following **OFFICERS** required by law:

- SELECT PERSON** 3-year term
    - Wayne Richardson- nominated.
    - Christina Adams- Nominated
    - Request made to vote by paper ballot; voice vote, ayes have it
    - Request made to here from the candidates; voice vote, ayes have it
    - Christina spoke first, then Wayne.
    - Paper ballot count was Christina Adams- 13, Wayne Richardson- 102, Total Votes-115
    - **Wayne Richardson-ELECTED**
  - LISTER** 3-year term
    - Chris Hager- nominated.
    - **Chris Hager – ELECTED**
- Mark Higley, Town Representative, asked to speak for a brief moment.

- Moderator asked if there was no objection, he would suspend the rules, and deviate from the warning to have Mark speak. There was no objection.

MARK HIGLEY-TOWN REPRESENTATIVE

- Mark Higley spoke to the Town’s people for a brief moment about the new laws that are being discussed and new laws that are being discussed.

c. **1<sup>st</sup> CONSTABLE** 1-year term

- Ashley Callahan- nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **ASHLEY CALLAHAN – ELECTED**

d. **2<sup>nd</sup> CONSTABLE** 1-year term

- Christopher Pion-nominated; voice vote/carried.
- **CHRISTOPHER PION-ELECTED**

e. **LIBRARY TRUSTEE** 2-year term

- Debbie Manning-nominated; voice vote/ carried.
- **DEBBIE MANNING -ELECTED**

f. **AUDITOR** 3-year term

- Dorothy Spoerl-nominated; voice vote/ carried
- **DOROTHY SPOERL-ELECTED**

g. **AUDITOR** 2-year term

- Arlon Warner-nominated; voice vote/ carried
- **ARLON WARNER-ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 4:** Shall the legal voters appropriate the sum of \$ **360,175.00** for **TOWN EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES** (Select Board’s Account)?

- Article moved and seconded.
- **Article passed by Voice Vote**

**ARTICLE 5:** Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ **140,000.00** plus Vermont State Aid funding for **WINTER ROADS?**

- Article moved and seconded.
- **ARTICLE PASSED By Voice Vote.**

**ARTICLE 6:** Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ **140,000.00** plus Vermont State Aid funding for **SUMMER ROADS?**

- Article moved and seconded.
- Question was asked, how much of this money is being used for black top roads? Road Commissioner answered the question with “ none of it, it all goes towards road maintenance.” He also stated that the town puts \$50,000.00 a year into a special fund to help pay the cost for paving roads, and we apply for a grant every five years that also helps with the cost of paving the roads.
- **ARTICLE PASSED By Voice Vote.**

**ARTICLE 7:** Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ **33,000.00** for the **FIRE DEPARTMENT?**

- Article moved and seconded

- **ARTICLE PASSED By Voice Vote**

**ARTICLE 8:** Shall the legal voters appropriate \$ 6,500.00 for the **COMMUNITY LIBRARY?**

- Article moved and seconded.
- **ARTICLE PASSED By Voice Vote.**

**ARTICLE 9:** 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
- **ARTICLE PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.**

**ARTICLE 10:** Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$12,688.00 for contract services to the **ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT** for law enforcement services and to direct the Select persons to assess a tax over and above the budget to sufficient to meet the same? This will be used for approximately 192 hours of routine patrols, answering complaints, and investigating incidents. It will also cover administrative expenses, including salaries, vehicle, benefits, liability Insurance, maintenance, gasoline, supplies, telephone costs, and crime prevention programs.

- Article moved and seconded
- Motion was made to pass over article and seconded.
- A request was made to vote by paper ballot. The Moderator asked for a show of at least 7 hands to vote by paper ballot on whether to pass over the article. 7 Hands were raised.
- **Results by paper ballot: Yes- 28 No-47, Motion defeated.**
- Moderator returned to original Article.
- Request was made to hear from the Sheriff. Motion made and seconded to suspend rules and allow sheriff being a non-voter to speak. Ayes have it.
- Sheriff Jennifer Harlow asked the Towns people if they had any questions they would like to ask her.
- Question was asked what the Sheriff’s department was doing about the drug houses? She said that she would need certain details of who, where and traffic in and out to be able to determine if it is a drug house, and then would have to follow certain procedures and rules to handle this.
- Question was asked how many of the traffic stops were town citizens? The Sheriff answered that she didn’t have that number.
- Question was asked where do the calls get directed when you call 911? The Sheriff answered that the calls will be directed to the State Police first and the Sheriff department will help cover if they are in the area.
- A motion was made to call the Question and seconded. Ayes have it
- Request was made to vote on main motion by paper ballot. Request was granted by a show of at least 7 hands. Paper Ballot Results were: Yes-33 and No-41
- Article failed.

**ARTICLE 11:** Shall the legal voters appropriate the following sums:

2024

- a) \$300 to **AMERICAN LEGION JAYPEAK POST #28, INC.**
- b) \$1000 to **GREEN MOUNTAIN FARM-to-SCHOOL, INC.**
- c) \$50 to **GREEN UP VERMONT**
- d) \$1000 to **LAMOILLE COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH**
- e) \$200 to **MISSISQUOI RIVER BASIN ASSOC.**
- f) \$300 to **NORTHEAST KINGDOM COUNCIL ON AGING**
- g) \$1,758 to **NORTHEAST KINGDOM HUMAN SERVICE, INC.**

- h) \$250 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM LEARNING SERVICES, INC.
- i) \$754 to NORTHEASTERN VT. DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
- j) \$200 to ORLEANS COUNTY CITIZEN ADVOCACY
- k) \$500 to ORLEANS COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION-(OCFA)
- l) \$550 to ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- m) \$700 to RURAL COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION
- n) \$825 to UMBRELLA
- o) \$100 to VACD – VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION
- p) \$200 to VT ASSOC for the BLIND and VISUALLY IMPAIRED
- q) \$90 to VT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
- r) \$250 to VERMONT FAMILY NETWORK
- s) \$100 to VERMONT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**\$9,127.00 Totals for above appropriations**

**PLEASE NOTE: Individual service reports printed towards the back of the town report.**

- Motion made and seconded.
- Motion was made to reduce appropriations to 50% and seconded.
- Motion of 50% reduction was withdrawn.
- Motion made to reduce Letter M by \$500.00 no second
- Questions was asked “how many people actually use some of the appropriations requested?” Over have the room raised their hands and spoke on behalf of most of them and experiences.
- Question was asked what does the Article K even do for our Town? Many people spoke on behalf of Article K.
- Motion made to call the questions and seconded.
- **ARTICLE PASSEDAS WRITTEN BY VOICE VOTE.**

**ARTICLE 12:** To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

- Cheryl Clarke Spoke on behalf of the Pope Memorial Animal Society and requested a donation of \$500.00 from the town, as they didn’t get their request in on time before the deadline.
- Erin Josey touched on the subject of possible grants the Town may be eligible for. She also stated that she would be speaking at the next regular Selectboard meeting this month.
- Jennifer Higgins reminded people to have seniors apply for the Wellman Grant from the Lowell Historical Society.

**ARTICLE 13:** TO ADJOURN

- The motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Town Meeting; voice vote / carried.
- **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 2:42 P.M.**

**Attest:**

MODERATOR: Alden Warner \_\_\_\_\_

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE: Jeff Parsons \_\_\_\_\_

PRESIDING OFFICER: Christy M. Pion \_\_\_\_\_

Received for recording in Town Proceeding Book

Attest: Christy M. Pion- Town Clerk