

MINUTES

COVENTRY ANNUAL TOWN & SCHOOL MEETING

2018 Annual Town and School Meeting was held at the Coventry Community Center on Tuesday March 6TH, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. to act on the following articles of business:

Note: The Town of Coventry has a checklist of 738 eligible voters. The highest number of votes cast for Town floor vote elections was registered at 137 votes. This represents an 18.5% participation in Town Meeting.

The Annual Town Meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Moderator Jean Maxwell called a ten-minute recess to allow time for people still arriving.

Town Meeting was called back to order at 10:13 a.m.

Moderator entertained a motion to waive the reading of Annual Town and School Meeting Warning. Motion moved and seconded; voice vote / carried.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a TOWN MODERATOR for the ensuing year.

- Jean Maxwell nominated; voice vote / carried.
- Jean Maxwell - Elected.

ARTICLE 2: To hear and act upon reports of Town Officers.

- Article Moved and seconded.
- Non-voting residents were identified and notices were read.
- Attendees were reminded about general guidelines of the elections and etiquette.
- Coventry School Board recognized Viola Poirier for her twenty years' of dedicated service to the School Board.
- Scott Morley was recognized for his dedication and effort to the Town during his three-year term.
- Voters were notified that Town Reports would not be mailed the following year. They will be notified when available for pick up.
- Officials were notified that they will remain in their position until the end of Town meeting and new officials would not take office until oaths were taken at the end of the meeting.
- Jean Maxwell asked all of the Elected Town Officials at the head table to introduce themselves.
- Scott Morley stated an error on Town Report page 41; there is not an approved Town Plan in place as the Planning Commission stated. This is still a project being worked on.

- Motion to accept the reports of Town Offices and accept the Town Report with the noted correction; seconded. Voice vote / carried.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town of Coventry vote to place its **PUBLIC BURIAL GROUNDS** under the charge of **THREE CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS** who shall be responsible for the care and management of the Town's public burial grounds and exercise all the powers, rights and duties with respect to such care and management?

- Article moved and seconded.
- Trustee of Cemetery Funds, David Barlow stated that the current Association is operating as a Commission, and on the advice of the Town Attorney voters should authorize the change of title. An Association acts as an independent entity where a Commission acts under the Town's jurisdiction.
- To meet current State regulations, it is recommended the Town make the formal distinction to reclassify the duties under the charge of a Cemetery Commission.
- Article moved as written; voice vote / carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town vote to **ELIMINATE** the elected position of **TRUSTEE OF PUBLIC MONEY**; as this position is only for towns that retain possession of a portion of the surplus funds of the United States received under the Deposit Act of 1836; and the Town of Coventry is not in possession of any of these funds?

- Article moved and seconded.
- No discussion.
- Article moved as written; voice vote / carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters, pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2651d(b), **RESCIND** the **AUTHORITY** of the Select Board **TO APPOINT** a **COLLECTOR OF DELINQUENT TAXES**?

- Article moved and seconded.
- Mike Marcotte explained the previous year's request to allow the Board to appoint the position of Delinquent Tax Collector with the promise to bring back to the voters this year. Mike stated that Delinquent Tax Collector Kate Fletcher had done an amazing job; however, there was still a lot of work to do and issues that are still being dealt with and investigated from previous years.
- Mike Marcotte stated that he would like to table this item until the following year to allow the Board to continue its authority to appoint the position of Delinquent Tax Collector and allow Kate Fletcher to continue her work.
- Motion made and seconded to table article 5; voice vote / carried.
- **Article tabled.**

ARTICLE 6: To ELECT the following officers required by law:

a. SELECT PERSON 3 year term

- Scott Briere nominated.
- Jim Cobb nominated.
- Candidates were asked to speak and each gave a statement about their intentions for the position.
- Votes were cast by paper ballot.
- 137 votes cast - Scott Briere 69; Jim Cobb 68
- **Scott Briere - Elected.**

b. TOWN CLERK 1 year term *(to fulfill the remainder of the current three year term)*

- Deb Tanguay nominated.
- No other nominations.
- The Moderator instructed the Clerk to cast one ballot for Deb Tanguay for Town Clerk.
- **Deb Tanguay – Elected.**

c. TOWN TREASURER 1 year term *(to fulfill the remainder of the current three year term)*

- Adam Messier nominated.
- No other nominations.
- The Moderator instructed the Clerk to cast one ballot for Adam Messier for Town Treasurer.
- **Adam Messier – Elected.**

d. LISTER 3 year term

- Kate Fletcher nominated.
- Lyell Reed nominated.
- Candidates were asked to speak and each gave a statement about their intentions for the position.
- Votes were cast by paper ballot.
- 121 votes cast - Kate Fletcher 67; Lyell Reed 54
- **Kate Fletcher - Elected.**

e. LISTER 2 year term *(to fulfill the remainder of the current three year term)*

- David Barlow nominated.
- Lyell Reed nominated.
- Votes were cast by paper ballot.
- 106 votes cast – David Barlow 48; Lyell Reed 58

- **Lyell Reed – Elected**

- f. **COLLECTOR OF DELINQUENT TAXES 1 year term** ***Dependent upon outcome of article # 5*
 - Item tabled due to outcome of Article 5.

- g. **CEMETERY COMMISSIONER 3 year term** ***Dependent upon Article # 3 (Jeanne Desrochers, Association incumbent)*
 - Jeanne Desrochers nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Jeanne Desrochers – Elected.**

- h. **CEMETERY COMMISSIONER 2 year term** ***Dependent upon Article # 3 (Lester Carbonneau, Association incumbent)*
 - Lester Carbonneau nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Lester Carbonneau – Elected.**

- i. **CEMETERY COMMISSIONER 1 year term** ***Dependent upon Article # 3 (Gerard St Sauveur, Association incumbent)*
 - Gerard St Sauveur nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Gerard St Sauveur – Elected.**

- j. **1ST CONSTABLE 1 year term**
 - Donald Grondin nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Donald Grondin - Elected.**

- k. **2nd CONSTABLE 1 year term**
 - Lincoln Brooks nominated; declined.
 - Jesse Testut nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Jesse Testut – Elected.**

- l. **TRUSTEE OF CEMETERY FUNDS 1 year term**
 - David Barlow nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **David Barlow – Elected.**

- m. **TRUSTEE OF PUBLIC MONEY 1 year term** ***Dependent upon outcome of article # 4*
 - Item tabled due to outcome of Article 4.

- n. **TOWN AGENT 1 year term**

- Pat Sloan nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **Pat Sloan – Elected.**

- o. **GRAND JUROR 1 year term**
 - Owen Ballinger nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Owen Ballinger – Elected.**

- p. **PLANNING COMMISSION 1 year term** *(To fulfill the remainder of the current three year term)*
 - Carol Simmons nominated; voice vote / carried.
 - **Carol Simmons – Elected.**

ARTICLE 7: To recess Town Meeting.

- Article moved and seconded.
- Town Meeting recessed at 11:54 a.m.

ARTICLE 8: School Board Moderator to OPEN SCHOOL MEETING.

- Article moved and seconded.
- School Board Moderator Jean Maxwell opened School Meeting at 11:55 a.m.

ARTICLE 9: To elect a SCHOOL TREASURER for a 1 year term.

- Deb Tanguay nominated; voice vote / carried.
- **Deb Tanguay – Elected.**

ARTICLE 10: To elect a SCHOOL DIRECTOR for a 3 year term.

- Phil Marquette nominated.
- Dan Prue nominated.
- Candidates were asked to speak and each gave a statement about their intentions for the position.
- Votes were cast by paper ballot.
- 99 votes cast - Phil Marquette 48; Dan Prue 51.
- **Dan Prue - Elected.**

ARTICLE 11: To elect a SCHOOL DIRECTOR for a 2 year term.

- Amy Hilliker nominated.
- Kathleen Ahearn nominated.
- Phil Marquette nominated.
- Randi Morse nominated.
- Candidates were asked to speak and each gave a statement about their intentions for the position.

- Moderator Jean Maxwell stated that with four nominations the position would only be filled by majority vote. Therefore, if a majority was not received, voters would be required to re-vote. After the second vote, the person with the lowest number of votes would be eliminated.
- Three paper ballot votes were cast with the following results;

VOTE 1		VOTE 2		VOTE 3	
Amy Hilliker	11	Amy Hilliker	7		
Kathleen Ahearn	41	Kathleen Ahearn	45	Kathleen Ahearn	51
Phil Marquette	24	Phil Marquette	24	Phil Marquette	24
Randi Morse	22	Randi Morse	18	Randi Morse	16
TOTAL VOTES	98	TOTAL VOTES	94	TOTAL VOTES	91

- On the third vote a majority was received for Kathleen Ahearn.
- **Kathleen Ahearn – Elected.**

ARTICLE 12: To transact any other business that may legally come before the School Board.

- Article moved and seconded.
- School Board Director Amanda Jensen asked residents to submit project ideas for the school children to volunteer and get involved in the community.
- School Board Director Viola Poirier thanked Frank Carbonneau for his seventeen years of service to the School Board.
- No further discussion.

ARTICLE 13: To adjourn School Meeting.

- Article Moved and seconded.
- School meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.
- Motion made and seconded to break until 1:45 p.m.

ARTICLE 14: Open Town Meeting.

- Town meeting re-opened at 1:45 p.m.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry vote to appropriate the sum of \$439,259.02 for support of the TOWN LIABILITIES & GENERAL FUND EXPENSES?

- Article moved and seconded.
- No further discussion; voice vote / carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 16: Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry vote to appropriate the sum of **\$216,965.97** plus Vermont State Aid funding, for support of the **TOWN HIGHWAY FUND** expenses for summer and winter road maintenance?

- Article moved and seconded.
- Scott Morley stated that the Highway Fund budget was level funded this year and the Town has the best roads in the county at a lower cost than most Towns. Scott thanked the Road Commissioner David Gallup and Road Crew Edmond Maxwell.
- No further discussion; voice vote; carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 17: Shall all **EXCESS REVENUES** received in the **2016-2017** audited fiscal year **REMAINING** after payment of all General Fund Liabilities and Expenses be applied to the **RESTRICTED FUND** accounts as follows;

Solid Waste Reserve Fund	5,000.00
Grader Reserve Fund	20,000.00
Reappraisal Reserve Fund	150,000.00
Roads & Bridges Reserve Fund	400,000.00
Building & Maintenance Reserve Fund	163,243.99
Gravel Pit Reserve Fund	15,000.00
TOTAL REMAINING FUNDS	\$753,243.99

- Article moved and seconded.
- No further discussion; voice vote / carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 18: Shall the legal voters of the Town of Coventry vote to establish a deadline to pay all property and real estate **TAXES DUE** to the Town Treasurer on or before **NOVEMBER 1st, 2018?**

- Article moved and seconded.
- No further discussion; voice vote / carried.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 19: Shall the legal voters appropriate the following sums:

- a) **\$ 250** to FELINES & FRIENDS FOUNDATION
- b) **\$ 3,000** to GOODRICH MEMORIAL LIBRARY
- c) **\$ 450*** to GREEN MOUNTAIN FARM-to-SCHOOL, INC (2017 request:\$300)
- d) **\$ 100** to GREEN UP VERMONT
- e) **\$ 2,000** to JONES MEMORIAL LIBRARY
- f) **\$ 100** to NORTH COUNTRY FRIENDS OF THE VERMONT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

- g) \$ 300 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.
- h) \$ 330 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM COUNCIL ON AGING
- i) \$ 1,140 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM HUMAN SERVICE, INC.
- j) \$ 200 to NORTHEAST KINGDOM LEARNING SERVICES INC
- k) \$ 815 to NORTHEASTERN VT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
- l) \$ 500 to ORLEANS COUNTY CITIZEN ADVOCACY
- m) \$ 650* to ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (2017 request:\$600)
- n) \$ 3,000 to ORLEANS ESSEX VNA & HOSPICE INC.
- o) \$ 750 to POPE MEMORIAL FRONTIER ANIMAL SHELTER
- p) \$ 850 to RURAL COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION
- q) \$ 1,125 to UMBRELLA
- r) \$ 100 to VACD - VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION TASK FORCE
- s) \$ 130 to VT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Total for above appropriations = \$ 15,790

- Article moved and seconded.
- Maurice Jacobs questioned Town representation on the Goodrich Memorial Library Board of Directors. Select Board Chairman Mike Marcotte stated that the Board would consider volunteers and anyone interested could contact the office.
- No further discussion; voice vote / carried to approve all appropriations amounts as listed for a total of \$15,790.00.
- **Article passed as written.**

ARTICLE 20: To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

- The Select Board was questioned on the status of the Town's investments and plans moving forward. Scott Morley stated that an independent investment advisor was being sought out and updates would be seen in upcoming Select Board meetings. Mike Marcotte stated that the State Treasurers Office and Vermont Office of Financial Regulation had also been consulted and are advising on the ongoing process.
- Richard Lussier thanked all of the Town Officials and complimented the new set up of Town Meeting.
- Mike Marcotte thanked all Officials serving as well as everyone who accepted nominations for positions applauding their willingness to get involved.

ARTICLE 21: TO ADJOURN.

- Article moved and seconded.
- Town Meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Results of Coventry Town School District Australian Ballot Vote:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
COVENTRY TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARCH 6, 2018**

ARTICLE III:

Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$2,966,261.94 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 \$14,592.00, per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 2.48% higher than spending in the current year.

IN FAVOR: 101
OPPOSED: 63

- Total votes cast: 164
- Article passed as written.

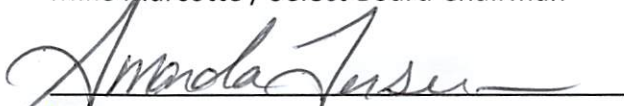
Approved By:



Jean Maxwell / Moderator



Mike Marcotte / Select Board Chairman



School Board Director



Justice of the Peace

ATTEST:



Debra Tanguay, Town Clerk