

TOWN OF STRATTON  
MINUTES OF THE  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF  
MARCH 3, 2020

The legal voters of the Town of Stratton met as warned at the Town Hall in said Town on Tuesday, March 3, 2020. Moderator, Diana Stugger, called the meeting to order at 10:00am. She stated that the Presidential Primary is being held simultaneously, with the polling place on the stage. Although those who wish to vote may do so at any time, she asked that those attending the meeting wait until the meetings have recessed or ended before voting. At this time, Selectman, Al Dupell, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Town Clerk took the roll. Initially, 45 voters were present; therefore, 23 votes constitute a majority. The Moderator read the names of Stratton Residents, whom we had learned had passed away in the last year – Avis Pickering, Ruth Romano and Barbara Pepper, then she asked for the assembly to pause for a moment of silence in their honor.

The Moderator read the following Articles and conducted the meeting as follows:

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

Laura Hawksley nominated Diana Stugger. D.R. Holton seconded. Chris Liller moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Larry Bills seconded. All concurred. Diana Stugger was elected Moderator for the ensuing year.

***ARTICLE 2: To act on the Town Report.***

Chris Liller moved to approve the Town Report. Allison Young seconded. No discussion. The Moderator asked for a voice vote on the article. The ayes were unanimous and the Town Report was approved.

***ARTICLE 3: Shall the town authorize the elimination of the office of Town Auditor, with future audits to be provided by a public accountant licensed in this State in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2651b(a)? (This must be voted by paper ballot.)*** Kent Young so moved. Chris Liller seconded. Discussion: Alyson Peterson explained that the Town and School District now has outside Audits performed yearly, and that the Outside Auditors said that 90% of towns they service had eliminated the Auditor positions. With no further discussion, the Moderator stated that a paper ballot must be taken. The paper ballot was unanimous with 44 ballots cast to approve the Article; therefore, Article 3 passed.

***ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to set the term period for Planning Commission members to three three-year terms and two one-year terms, to be implemented as current terms expire, so that each year, one three-year term will be up for re-election.*** Kent Young so moved. DR Holton seconded. No discussion. The Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 4 was approved.

***ARTICLE 5: To elect Town officers as required by law:***

***Town Clerk (one three-year term):*** Lorraine Weeks-Newell nominated Kent Young. Al Dupell seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Laura Hawksley seconded. All concurred. Kent Young was elected Town Clerk for a three-year term.

***Treasurer (one three-year term):*** Chris Liller nominated Alyson Peterson. Larry Bills seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. All concurred. Alyson Peterson was elected Treasurer for a three-year term.

***Selectman (one three-year term):*** Kent Young nominated Greg Marcucci. Laura Hawksley seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Chris Liller seconded. All concurred. Greg Marcucci was elected Selectman for a three-year term.

**Selectman (one one-year term):** Kent Young nominated Al Dupell. Larry Bills seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. DR Holton seconded. All concurred. Al Dupell was elected Selectman for a one-year term.

**Selectman (one one-year term):** Laura Hawksley nominated Kevin Robinson. Al Dupell seconded. Chris Liller moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Al Dupell seconded. All concurred. Kevin Robinson was elected Selectman for a one-year term.

**Planning Commissioner (one three-year term):** Laura Hawksley nominated Kent Young. DR Holton seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Al Dupell seconded. All concurred. Kent Young was elected Planning Commissioner for a three-year term.

**Planning Commissioner (one one-year term):** DR Holton nominated Ray Hawksley. Larry Bills seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Al Dupell seconded. All concurred. Ray Hawksley was elected Planning Commissioner for a one-year term.

**Lister (one three-year term):** Kent Young nominated Elizabeth Liller. Larry Bills seconded. Al Dupell moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Larry Bills seconded. All concurred. Elizabeth Liller was elected Lister for a three-year term.

**Cemetery Commissioner (one three-year term):** Chris Liller nominated Kent Young. Al Dupell seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Al Dupell seconded. All concurred. Kent Young was elected Cemetery Commissioner for a three-year term.

**Delinquent Tax Collector (one one-year term):** Laura Hawksley nominated Candie Bernard. Al Dupell seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Laura Hawksley seconded. All concurred. Candie Bernard was elected Delinquent Tax Collector for a one-year term.

**Trustee of Public Funds (one one-year term):** Laura Hawksley nominated Alyson Marcucci. DR Holton seconded. Chris Liller moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Al Dupell seconded. All concurred. Alyson Marcucci was elected Trustee of Public Funds for a one-year term.

**Constable (one one-year term):** Siobhan Eddy Young nominated Boomer Walker. George Rigoulot seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Alyson Peterson seconded. All concurred. Boomer Walker was elected Constable for a one-year term.

**Grand Juror (one one-year term):** Kent Young nominated John Waite. Chris Liller seconded. Larry Bills moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Laura Hawksley seconded. All concurred. John Waite was elected Grand Juror for a one-year term.

**Town Agent (one one-year term):** Kent Young nominated John Waite. Al Dupell seconded. Al Dupell moved to close nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Laura Hawksley seconded. All concurred. John Waite was elected Town Agent for a one-year term.

**ARTICLE 6:** *To see if the Town will furnish bonds where bonds are required.* Kent Young so moved. Al Dupell seconded. No discussion. The Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 6 was approved.

**ARTICLE 7:** *To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to borrow money on notes of the Town or otherwise in anticipation of taxes and/or current expenses.* Kent Young so moved. Kevin Robinson seconded. No discussion. The Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 7 was approved.

**ARTICLE 8:** *To see if the Town will vote to approve the following appropriation requests:*

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| American Red Cross        | 500.00   |
| Community Food Pantry     | 500.00   |
| Deerfield Valley Rescue   | 1500.00  |
| Grace Cottage Foundation  | 7,000.00 |
| Green Up Vermont          | 50.00    |
| Groundworks Collaborative | 500.00   |

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|--|--------------------|
| <i>Health Care and Rehabilitation Services</i> | 500.00             |
| <i>Historical Society of Windham County</i>    | 250.00             |
| <i>Joann Liller Scholarship Fund</i>           | 5,000.00           |
| <i>Londonderry Volunteer Rescue</i>            | 2,500.00           |
| <i>Senior Solutions</i>                        | 500.00             |
| <i>SeVEDS.</i>                                 | 648.00             |
| <i>Southern VT Therapeutic Riding Center</i>   | 750.00             |
| <i>Valley Cares, Inc.</i>                      | 335.00             |
| <i>VT Center for Independent Living</i>        | 500.00             |
| <i>VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force</i>     | 100.00             |
| <i>Visiting Nurse Association</i>              | 800.00             |
| <i>Wardsboro Public Library</i>                | 5,429.39           |
| <i>Wardsboro Volunteer Fire Association</i>    | 5,000.00           |
| <i>Wardsboro Volunteer Rescue</i>              | 5,000.00           |
| <i>Windham County Humane Society</i>           | 400.00             |
| <i>Winhall Library</i>                         | 2,500.00           |
| <i>Women's Freedom Center</i>                  | 750.00             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                   | <b>\$41,012.39</b> |

Kent Young so moved. Chris Liller seconded. Discussion: Robert Lahue asked for an explanation of the difference in the appropriation amounts for the two libraries. Kent Young said that those amounts were what each organization had requested. Mr. Lahue then asked for an explanation of the Joann Liller Scholarship. Laura Hawksley stated that it had been brought up last year, but could not be added then, as it was not on the Warning. This year she requested it in Joann's memory. It is organized by the Windham Central Supervisory Union, which will coordinate awards to eligible students. The family is currently working out the details to stipulate eligibility. The intent is to make it available for local high school graduates who attend a Technical or Trade School and will likely be distributed in increments of \$500.00. The LaMarche Scholarship, which was not included in this Warning, was too limited regarding the eligible schools. Lorraine Weeks-Newell asked what happens to the funds we had provided in past years to the LaMarche fund. The Clerk said that the Town has no control over the fund after it is appropriated. Apparently the stipulations were strict and not much was distributed. Most of the LaMarche family members who were previously administering those funds are no longer living, so the Supervisory Union will have to determine how they can be distributed. Laura Hawksley asked about the Green Up Appropriation amount. That amount request is determined by the population of the Town. After the discussion, the Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 8 passed.

**ARTICLE 9:** *To see if the Town will vote to approve the sum of \$53,800.00 for the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company operating budget.* Al Dupell so moved. Greg Marcucci seconded. Discussion: Robert Lahue thanked the Dept. for responding rapidly to a brush fire at the resort back in the summer. Laura Hawksley explained that funding was used to operate the department and also to maintain compliance with the equipment it must have. With no further discussion, the Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 9 passed.

**ARTICLE 10:** *To see if the Town will vote to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year.* Al Dupell so moved. Kent Young seconded. No Discussion. The Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 10 passed.

**ARTICLE 11:** *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$901,683.68 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the General Fund for fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021).* Kent Young so moved. Larry Bills seconded. Discussion: Laura Hawksley asked about the Recreation Area budget and the Town's intentions for improvement. Alyson Peterson stated that there is about \$70,000.00 in the fund and that the Selectmen had agreed to set aside another \$5000.00. Rob Wadsworth explained that the Pavilion fund is there to provide funds for the construction of a new pavilion, as there is no covered area for gatherings at the Rec. Area and that we are getting close to an

amount that will be necessary for the construction of one, but nothing has been decided at this time. Jessica Marullo said that the basketball court and playground need repairs as well. Al Dupell said that the Selectmen will look into these issues. Laura Hawksley questioned how the Fire Warden salary was set and one of the Selectmen responded that it was set by the State. With no further discussion, the Moderator asked for a voice vote – all were in favor and Article 11 passed.

**ARTICLE 12:** *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$868,500.00 to care for the expenses and liabilities of the Highway Fund for fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021).*

John Waite so moved. Laura Hawksley seconded. Discussion: Chris Liller responded to a question about paving by stating that Pike Hollow Rd. is to be paved this year. Allison Young asked about the possibility of paving the top portion of Penny Ave.. The Selectmen responded that that will have to be discussed at a later time. There was also discussion about the replacement of Little Kidder Brook culvert on Mountain Rd.. The road will be closed for about two or three weeks this summer. The project is scheduled to occur between July 4 and the end of August, before school starts. The contractor will face penalties if the road closure extends beyond the deadline. George Rigoulot thanked the Road Crew for their exceptional job of maintaining Willis Cemetery Rd.. All concurred regarding their work on all the roads this year. With no further discussion, the Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 12 passed.


**ARTICLE 13:** *Shall the Town of Stratton enter into a communications union district to be known as "Deerfield Valley Communication Union District" under the provisions of 30 V.S.A. chapter 82?.*

Laura Hawksley so moved. Betsy Wadsworth seconded. Discussion: Betsy Wadsworth explained the need for better internet service especially in the southern portion of Town and the failures of previous efforts by the State to provide it. By joining this district, the Town will have the opportunity to work with other area town to coordinate efforts to raise funds for installation of services. All property owners in Town will be getting post cards informing them of a survey for a feasibility study the district needs to have completed. She also said that whatever comes of this effort, it will still be about three or four years before we might see any new services. She gave an overview of the "CUD" and various people described their frustrations with the lack of service available here. John Nault added that he has a line of site service that is available from Stratton Mountain and can provide that information to those interested. With no further discussion, the Moderator asked for a voice vote and Article 13 passed.

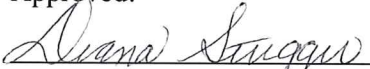
**ARTICLE 14:** *To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.* The Moderator thanked various people for volunteering for Town events as addressed in the Selectmen's Report. And, Laura Hawksley thanked all the Town Officers for their services.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, the Moderator asked for a motion to Adjourn. Chris Liller so moved. Al Dupell seconded - all concurred and the meeting adjourned at 11:00AM.

Minutes by:


  
Town Clerk – David Kent Young

Approved:


  
Moderator – Diana Stugger

Approved by the Selectmen:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Albert Dupell

  
Chris Liller

\_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Bills

  
Greg Marcucci

  
Kevin Robinson