

# ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

## MARCH 4, 2014

The legal voters of the Town of Townshend are hereby notified and WARNED to meet at the Town Hall in Townshend, Vermont, on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. to act on the following articles, viz:

The Assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance and David Liebow called the meeting to order at 9:06 A.M. Several announcements were made and the location of numerous handouts and surveys was pointed out to the Assembly. The preamble was read and a brief explanation was given of the procedure that would be followed during Town Meeting.

Thanks were given to Michael Charles for his generous donation of desks, chairs, tables and other office supplies.

The moderator introduced the Select Board members.

**ARTICLE I.** To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year:

David Liebow opened nominations for Moderator.

Nominated: David Liebow.

There being no others, nominations were closed and the clerk was instructed to cast one ballot for David Liebow as Moderator for a term of one year. Motion seconded and passed by voice vote.

**David Liebow, 1 year term as Moderator**

Motion was made to suspend the rules to allow Richard Marek to speak which was passed without objection.

He spoke to several issues, took questions and left at 9:20.

**Town Meeting was recessed to reconvene after the Townshend Elementary School District 2014 Annual Meeting:**

**The Moderator reconvened the Town Meeting at 10:49 A.M.**

Mr. Liebow thanked all School Board Members and Teachers.

**ARTICLE II.** To approve the July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013 Auditors' Report:

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Discussion: Date taxes due were not listed in the summary of the minutes for last year. Kris Kuch explained that previous years minutes are only a summary. The complete minutes are available at the Town Clerk's Office and online.

Henry Martin thanked Ms. Kuch for all her hard work on the preparation of Town Report.

There being no further discussion the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article II passed**

**ARTICLE III.** To see if the Town will vote to take advantage of the provisions of V.S.A. Title 24, Chapter 37, and authorize the Select Board to employ a Town Manager?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Discussion: Concerns about where the money would come from. Mr. Martin explained that if a Town Manager was Hired, the Administrative Assistant position would be eliminated.

The Town Manager would possibly take over the bookkeeping duties as well.

The Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper earns \$33,500.00 per year. A Town Manager would require a more substantial Salary.

The possibility of hiring a Town Manager was brought before the town in 1988.

The Town Manager could possibly be a liaison between departments in hopes of avoiding conflicts.

Mr. Martin stated that the town is in dire need of help.

Suggestion was made to formulate a group of citizens to look into the position and duties. Determine how much time would be needed to efficiently do the job. Would it need to be full time or would a part time position suffice?

Motion to amend motion to read “for a period not to exceed one year and for a salary not to exceed 32,500.00” was made by Eugene Kuch and seconded.

Cliff Passino called the question on Motion to Amend.

Motion to Amend the motion failed by voice vote.

Discussion continued – A Town Manager would have more time to apply for grants, tax credits, etc.

**Discussion suspended to allow Senator Peter Galbraith to speak – Objected to by Philip Moriarty – Requesting a time limit of 5 minutes.**

Mr. Galbraith addressed the Assembly regarding Health Care, Taxes, Environment, Division of Townshend, etc.

Discussion on Article 3 resumed.

Possibility of soliciting towns people to volunteer their time to do things such as grant writing, trips to Montpelier, etc.

Do more research – table until next year.

Charlie Marchant called the question. Request for paper ballot.

**Total Votes – 138      Yes – 63      No - 75      Blank – 0      Spoiled – 0**

**Article III failed**

**Motion to recess for lunch at 12:01 p.m. until 1:00 p.m. moved and seconded.**

**Meeting reconvened at 1:01 P.M.**

**ARTICLE IV.** To see if the Town will vote for the elimination of the office of Lister and replace it with a professionally qualified assessor appointed by the Select Board, who shall have the same powers, discharge the same duties, proceed in the discharge thereof in the same manner, and be subject to the same liabilities as are prescribed for Listers or the board of Listers under the provisions of Title 32?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Discussion: Why? Would it be cost efficient to hire an outside firm at the time of a re-appraisal?

Cost of the last re-appraisal – \$86,000.00 +/-

Tax map updates. Listers are working with Dauchy Creamer in an attempt to get revised Tax Maps.

Warren Beattie moved to call.

There being no further discussion the motion failed by voice vote.

**Article IV failed**

**ARTICLE V.** To see if the Town will vote for the elimination of the office of Auditor and replace it with professionally qualified auditors appointed by the Select Board, who shall have the same powers, discharge the same duties, proceed in the discharge thereof in the same manner, and be subject to the same liabilities as are prescribed for auditors or the board of auditors?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Discussion: Kris Kuch addressed the position of Auditor. She explained the duties and responsibilities.

This year there was a lack of full representation by all auditors. If individuals run for the position and cannot fulfill their obligation they need to resign.

Need qualified people to do the job.

The Select Board would oversee any professional auditor appointed by them.

There being no further discussion the motion failed by voice vote.

**Article V failed**

**ARTICLE VI.** To see what salaries the Town will vote to pay its various officials for the ensuing year:

Town Clerk:	\$ 33,535.00 / yr
Town Treasurer:	\$ 2,215.00 / yr
Select Board: (1) Chair:	\$ 725.00 / yr
(4) Members:	\$ 625.00 / yr
Listers, Auditors, assistants and casual labor:	\$ 13.25 / hr

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

There being no discussion Article VI passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE VII.** To elect all Town Officials for the ensuing year(s):

**TOWN CLERK:** **1 – one year term:** Nominated: Anita Bean

Carole Melis made a motion to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Anita Bean for a one year term as Town Clerk; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Anita Bean, 1 year term as Town Clerk**

**TOWN TREASURER:** **1 – one year term:** Nominated: Joseph Daigneault

Carole Melis made a motion to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Joseph Daigneault for a one year term as Town Treasurer; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Joseph Daigneault, 1 year term as Town Treasurer**

**SELECT BOARD:** **1 – three year term:**

Nominated: Kathy Hege Ryan Hockertlotz Dale West

**Total Votes – 116 Kathy Hege - 53 Ryan Hockertlotz – 20 Dale West - 42 Spoiled - 1 Blank - 0**

No majority – re vote Dale West withdrew his nomination.

**Total Votes - 113 Kathy Hege - 77 Ryan Hockertlotz - 36 Spoiled - 3 Blank**

**Kathy Hege, 3 year term on Select Board**

**1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Robert Lecours Ryan Hockertlotz

**Total Votes – 115 Robert Lecours - 89 Ryan Hockertlotz - 26 Spoiled - 0 Blank - 0**

**Robert Lecours, 1 year term on Select Board**

**1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Annette Leigh Robert Wright Dale West

**Total Votes - 108 Annette Leigh - 23 Robert Wright - 30 Dale West - 55 Blank - 0 Spoiled – 0**

**Dale West, 1 year term on Select Board**

**LISTERS:** **1 – three year term:**

Nominated: Janet Stowell, respectfully declined  
Steve Lott  
Robin O’Neill  
Eugene Kuch  
Steve Lott withdrew

**Total Votes – 111**

**Robin O’Neill - 50**

**Eugene Kuch - 57**

**Spoiled – 2**

**Blank – 2**

**Eugene Kuch, 3 year term as Lister**

**1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Steve Lott  
Robin O’Neill, respectfully declined  
Paula Newton, respectfully declined  
Jan Stowell, respectfully declined

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Steve Lott for a one year term as Lister; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Steve Lott, 1 year term as Lister**

**1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Cory Sleeper, respectfully declined  
Robin O’Neill  
Walter Orgera, respectfully declined

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Robin O’Neill for a one year term as Lister; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Robin O’Neill, 1 year term as Lister**

**AUDITORS: 1 – three year term:**

Nominated: Ryan Hockertlotz Kathy DuGrenier, respectfully declined

Richard Jackson made a motion to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Ryan Hockertlotz for a three year term as Auditor; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Ryan Hockertlotz, 3 year term as Auditor**

**PROPERTY TAX COLLECTOR: 1 – one year term: Nominated: Joseph Daigneault**

Motion made to close nominations and have the clerk cast one ballot for Joseph Daigneault for a one year term as Town Treasurer; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Joseph Daigneault, 1 year term as Property Tax Collector**

**DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR: 1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Becky Nystrom Meredith Roberts

**Total Votes - 116 Becky Nystrom – 99 Meredith Roberts - 17 Spoiled – 0 Blank - 0**

**Becky Nystrom, 1 year term as Delinquent Tax Collector**

**FIRST CONSTABLE: 1 – one year term: Nominated: Warren Beattie**

There being no other nominations, the Moderator declared the nominations closed and instructed the clerk to cast one ballot for Warren Beattie for a one year term as First Constable; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Warren Beattie, 1 year term as First Constable**

**SECOND CONSTABLE: 1 – one year term:**

Nominated: Michael Cutts Jamis Lott

**Total Votes - 102 Michael Cutts - 71 Jamis Lott- 31 Spoiled - 0 Blank – 0**

**Michael Cutts, 1 year term as Second Constable**

**TOWN GRAND JUROR:**      **1 – one year term:**      Nominated: Margaret Bills

There being no other nominations, the Moderator declared the nominations closed and instructed the clerk to cast one ballot for Margaret Bills for a one year term as Town Grand Juror; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Margaret Bills, 1 year term as Town Grand Juror**

**TOWN AGENT:**      **1 – one year term:**      Nominated: Carole Melis

There being no other nominations, the Moderator declared the nominations closed and instructed the clerk to cast one ballot for Carole Melis for a one year term as Town Agent; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Carole Melis, 1 year term as Town Agent**

**LIBRARY TRUSTEES:** **1 – five year term:**      Nominated: Ann Allbee

There being no other nominations, the Moderator declared the nominations closed and instructed the clerk to cast one ballot for Margaret Bills for a five year term as Library Trustee; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Ann Allbee, 5 year term as Library Trustee**

**CEMETERY COMMISSIONER:** **1 – five year term:**

Nominated:              David Liebow, respectively declined              Bruce Bills

There being no other nominations, the Moderator declared the nominations closed and instructed the clerk to cast one ballot for Bruce Bills for a five year term as Cemetery Commissioner; seconded and carried by voice vote.

**Bruce Bills, 5 year term as Cemetery Commissioner**

**ARTICLE VIII.**              To see if the Town will authorize its Property Tax Collector to receive its Real Property Taxes quarterly, August 29, 2014; December 1, 2014; February 27, 2015; and May 29, 2015? Monthly interest will be charged at the rate of one-half percent (1/2%) or fraction thereof; interest of one percent (1%) or fraction thereof plus penalties will commence on June 1, 2015.

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article VIII passed**

**ARTICLE IX.**              To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$ 428,309.00 to pay for the running expenses and liabilities of the Town, of which \$ 191,649.00 to be raised by taxation?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Discussion: Questioning custodial wages and repair and maintenance. Cleaning woman who cleans the Town Hall also cleans the Town Garage for less money.

Routine maintenance on building; doors, well, generator, electrical, etc.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article IX passed**

**ARTICLE X.**              To see if the Town will vote to raise \$ 95,000.00, by taxation, to be used toward the purchase of a new Highway Department truck?

So moved by David Dezendorf and seconded.

Discussion: Replacing truck T8 same truck as in last year's warning.  
Due to increase in tax rate the SB decided to put off purchasing the truck until the next fiscal year

Would leasing vehicles be more cost productive? It is more beneficial to purchase and trade in

Jeff Russ moved to call the question.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article X passed**

**ARTICLE XI.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$ 1,007,455.15 for the running expenses and liabilities of maintaining the Town's roads, of which \$ 759,455.15 to be raised by taxation?

So moved by David Dezendorf and seconded.

Discussion: The highway budget includes the \$95,000.00 for the purchase of a new truck.

What does the town currently owe for equipment? \$120,570.00

There being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XI passed**

**ARTICLE XII.** To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to spend up to \$125,000.00 for the modernization, expansion and/or relocation of Townshend's Transfer Station and recycling facility?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Discussion: Two motions in one. Not a lot of detail. Need a conceptual design and options.

Money requested to do a conceptual design was defeated last year.

Either buy a new compactor or build a new transfer station with composting capabilities.

New transfer station would be gated to prevent non-residents from depositing their trash when transfer is not manned. If a new Transfer Station is built it would most probably be built on Taft Meadows.

Was there any research done on possibly purchasing a second hand compactor?

Motion to amend Article made by Carole Melis and seconded to modify motion article to read; " To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to spend up to \$125,000.00 for a new compactor to remain at the same location?

Discussion continued regarding looking into a box truck and the permitting needed. Take time to develop a composting plan for the future.

Dick Jackson called the question.

Vote on Amendment – Passed

There being no further discussion the motion, as amended, as amended passed by hand vote.

**Article XII, As Amended, passed**

**ARTICLE XIII.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$ 44,832.00, by taxation, for the running expenses and liabilities of the Library?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

Discussion: Motion to amend made by Ryan Hockertlotz to add language to authorize the Library to spend any monies brought in by grants and donations.

Amendment failed by voice vote.

There being no further discussion, main motion, as presented, passed by voice vote.

**Article XIII passed**

**ARTICLE XIV.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$10,000.00, by taxation, to be placed in the Capital Expenditure Fund Fire Department Reserve toward a future pumper?

So moved by Carol Melis and seconded.

Discussion: Anticipated date for replacement of pumper – 2020

There being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XIV passed**

**ARTICLE XV.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$ 1,500.00, by taxation, for the Old Cemetery Fund?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XV passed**

**ARTICLE XVI.** To see if the Town will vote to raise \$ 14,410.00, by taxation, for the support of Social Services, as recommended by the Screening Committee?

So moved by Carole Melis and seconded.

Discussion: Why was no money allocated for Green Up day? No request was made.

The committee was thanked for a job well done.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XVI passed**

**ARTICLE XVII.** To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to set a tax rate sufficient to cover all monies raised for municipal entities for the period July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015, and to borrow money in anticipation of taxes?

So moved by Henry Martin and seconded.

There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XVII passed**

**ARTICLE XVIII.** To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or convey properties acquired by the Town through tax sales and to execute, acknowledge and deliver deed and other transfer documents upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen may deem to be in the interest of the Town?

So moved by Charlie Marchant and seconded.

Discussion: What would happen if the town is given land?

There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XVIII passed**

**ARTICLE XIX.** To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire, by gift or purchase, land for municipal forest, to promote reforestation, water conservation and good forestry practices?

So moved by Irvin Stowell and seconded.

There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

**Article XIX passed**

**ARTICLE XX.** To see if the Town will vote to set the first Tuesday in March 2015, as the date for the 2015 Town of Townshend Annual Meeting?

So moved by Eugene Kuch and seconded.

Motion to amend Article made by David Liebow and seconded to add 9:00 A.M. to the motion.

Motion to Amend passed by voice vote.

There being no further discussion, motion, as amended, passed by voice vote.

**ARTICLE XXI.** To transact any other non-binding business to properly come before said Meeting?

1. Request the Select Board form a committee of citizens and board members to study town government and how it should be run.
2. Town Reports should be mailed out to all tax payers and voters.
3. Form a Recycling Committee.
4. Thank you to all appointed town officers.
5. Newly elected officials were sworn in.

Motion to adjourn at 4:50 P.M. made by Ryan Hockertlotz and seconded. Passed by Voice vote

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Anita Bean, Town Clerk

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David Liebow, Moderator

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Joseph Daigneault, Justice of the Peace