

ABSTRACTS OF MINUTES

TOWN OF WHITINGHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

March 7, 2023

The Annual Town Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. e.s.t at the Twin Valley Middle High School in the Town of Whitingham, Vermont agreeable to the warning.

At 10:00 a.m. Leon Corse, Moderator led the Pledge of Allegiance. Town Clerk, Almira Aekus declared the polls open.

The moderator asked for and received permission from the electorate for State Representative Tristan Roberts to address them. Mr. Roberts gave a brief update on his participation in the legislature and asked the electorate if they had any comments or concerns for him to address. Several voters expressed their opposition with reasons to the proposed affordable energy bill.

Leon Corse, Moderator reviewed the rules of procedure and went through the following announcements:

The Twin Valley Spanish travel group were selling refreshments in the lobby.

The Ladies Benevolent Society "LBS" would be serving a lasagna dinner in the cafeteria. The cost would be \$8 for adults and \$3 for children.

The Moderator asked if there were any objections dispensing with the reading of the warning. There were none. He asked the Board of Civil Authority to introduce themselves: Scott Reed, James Weber, Craig Hammer, Robin Kingsley, Gregory Brown, Elizabeth McKinley, Susan Cooke Johnson, Abigail Corse, Seth Boyd, Terry Morse, Mary LeMaire, and Almira Aekus. At 10:37 a.m. the moderator declared the meeting open for business.

Article 1

Voted to authorize general fund expenditures for operating expenses for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, of **\$740,771.00** of which **\$323,476.00** to be raised in taxes, the balance to be offset by **\$260,332.00** in anticipated revenues and **\$156,963.00** appropriated from prior year's fund balance.

Article 2

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$126,826.00** for the operation of the Town Fire Department for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Article 3

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$40,000.00** to the Fire Department Equipment Fund for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 4

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$15,000.00** for the Parks Committee for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 5

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$20,000.00** to the Reappraisal Fund for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 6

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$15,000.00** for the continuing support of ambulance operations by Deerfield Valley Rescue for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 7

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,000.00** for Deerfield Valley Community Cares, an organization that provides fuel assistance for those not on state aid.

Article 8

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,500.00** for Deerfield Valley Community Partnership, an organization that provides programming and activities for youth and families that promote healthy behaviors and prevent youth drug and alcohol use.

Article 9

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$500.00** for Deerfield Valley Food Pantry for the purpose of providing supplemental food assistance to area families in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691.

Article 10

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$305.00** for Green Mountain RSVP for support of senior volunteer program with training and support for the volunteers who teach Bone Builder classes and who deliver meals in Whitingham in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691.

Article 11

To raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,203.00** for Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Inc. to help support outpatient mental health and substance abuse services, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691. **ARTICLE DIED DUE TO LACK OF MOTION**

Article 12

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$46,000.00** of which **\$500.00** to be appropriated from the General Fund (donation received) and **\$45,500.00** to be raised in taxes, to expand and remodel the picnic pavilion at Town Hill Common.

Article 13

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,500.00** to offset the cost of providing Senior Meals, to Terrie Dumaine, who provides the meals to the senior citizens in the valley.

Article 14

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$750.00** for Senior Solutions-The Council on Aging for Southeastern VT, Inc. to serve elders and assist with funding the community meal, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691.

Article 15

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,200.00** for Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. (SEVCA) to assist Whitingham in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services, including crisis intervention, housing, fuel assistance, weatherization, tax preparation, financial coaching, Head Start services, thrift stores, and micro business development, to families and individuals in need in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691.

Article 16

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$4,071.00** to Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) to provide workforce and economic coordination services to the Windham Region.

Article 17

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$6,000.00** for Twin Valley Youth Sports, an organization that provides all students in Whitingham, grades pre-k through 6th, the opportunity to play the organized sports of soccer, basketball, baseball, and softball.

Article 18

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$250.00** for the Windham County Disaster Animal Response Team (“WinDART”) in order to assist in the care and sheltering of pets in the event of a local emergency.

Article 19

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,795.00** for Wings Community Program’s summer programming providing four weeks of academic, enrichment, and physical activity for students entering grades K-8 in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691.

Article 20

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** for Wings Community Programs that provide after school programs for Whitingham students Kindergarten through 12th grade. **Discussion:**

Article 21

Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$850.00** for the Women’s Freedom Center for general operating support to provide services to survivors and their children who are experiencing emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and are residents of Whitingham, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691.

Article 22

Voted to authorize **\$92,294.00** for the operation of the Whitingham Free Public Library for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, with **\$76,266.00** to be raised in taxes, and the balance to be offset by **\$13,925.00** in anticipated grants and donations and **\$2,103.00** appropriated from prior year fund balance.

Article 23

Voted to allow the Whitingham Free Public Library to spend grant monies and donations at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and Library Director.

Article 24

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$23,450.00** for the operation of town cemeteries for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, with **\$22,250.00** to be raised in taxes, and the balance to be offset by **\$1,200.00** in anticipated revenue.

Article 25

Voted to authorize **\$1,563,829.00** for the maintenance and repair of town highways for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, of which **\$1,162,380.00** to be raised in taxes, the balance to be offset by **\$134,411.00** in anticipated revenues and **\$267,038.00** appropriated from prior year’s fund balance.

Article 26

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$6,000.00** to support economic development in Whitingham for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 27

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$25,000.00** to the Hazard Mitigation Fund for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 28

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$100,000.00** to the Highway Equipment Fund for fiscal year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.

Article 29

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$50,000.00** to fund the Town Highway Garage Renovation and/or Replacement Fund for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Article 30

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$10,000.00** to the Municipal Facilities Fund for fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 for continued maintenance.

Article 31

Voted to raise and appropriate **\$5,000.00** for support of Old Home Week activities for 2026.

Article 32

Voted to establish a reserve fund to be called the Grant Match Fund to be used to pay required local match on grant awards in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2804.

Article 33

Voted to appropriate **\$320,164.57** as a result of funds received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to the Grant Match Fund.

Article 34

Voted against establishing a reserve fund to be called the Cell Tower Fund in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2804.

Article 35

Voted to appropriate **\$252,000.00** as a result of the cell tower lease buyout, to the Town Highway Garage Renovation and/or Replacement Fund.

Article 36

Voted to authorize payment of real estate taxes on or before November 1, 2023, with ninety-days' notice; to be made by physical delivery to the tax collector before 2pm on that date or with a first-class postmark on or before that date.

Article 37

Voted to make overdue taxes bear interest at a rate of one percent (1%) per month or fraction thereof for the first three (3) months and thereafter one and one-half percent (1 ½%) per month or fraction thereof from the due date of such tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5136.

Added an article to discuss any business that may come before the meeting. Moderator ruled the article was non-binding and allowed it. Linda Farrington spoke in honor of Dana Dix who had served the town in many ways during his lifetime. He will be greatly missed.

Article 38

Elected all Town Officers required by law. Polls were open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Twin Valley Middle High School Auditorium, 4299 Vermont Route 100, Whitingham, Vermont with the following results:

Moderator, 1 year

Leon L. Corse

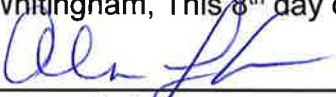
Treasurer, 1 year

Almira L. Aekus

Selectboard, 2 years	Scott Reed
Selectboard, 3 years	Robin Kingsley
Collector of Delinquent Taxes, 1 year	Almira L. Aekus
Road Commissioner, 3 years	Stanley A. Janovsky, Jr.
Library Trustee, 3 years	Wendy Sergeant
Cemetery Commissioner, 3 years	Bradford S. Lackey
School Director (TVUUSD)	Kristen A. Breeden

The floor meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Dated at Whitingham, This 8th day of March 2023

Attest: 
Almira L. Aekus, Town Clerk

NUMBER OF VOTERS ON THE CHECKLIST – 997
NUMBER WHO VOTED BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT – 115
HIGHEST NUMBER VOTED FROM THE FLOOR – 90 Estimate