

**Minutes of Town Meeting
February 28, 2022
Mendon Town Garage**

Moderator Chris Corsones called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, Chris thanked Bill Ellis and the road crew for preparing the garage for town meeting.

With permission from the audience, State Representative Jim Harrison updated the voters on what is being discussed in Montpelier. Jim first asked voters to take a moment to think and remember the people of Ukraine during this difficult time. Jim thanked the BCA for its work on reapportionment and explained that currently Mendon is paired with Chittenden, Killington, and Pittsfield in one legislative district. While this could still change, it is fairly certain at this point. Jim discussed the two Constitutional amendments currently being discussed in the Statehouse which will be on the ballot in November. Among other items reviewed, Jim updated voters on the underfunded pension liability fund, ARPA funding received at the State level, surplus taxes, and the political backdrop in Montpelier with several high ranking officials looking to replace the retiring Congressman Leahy. Jim encouraged voters to contact them if they had any questions or issues that he might be able to help with.

Rich Carlson thanked Jim for sending out newsletters on a regular basis. Upon a question from Tom Soriano, Jim reviewed the regulation of short-term rentals,

Larry Courcelle thanked Dick Wilcox for his service to the Town as a Selectboard member for the past seven years and presented him with a gift certificate as a thank you from the Town.

Larry Courcelle thanked Phil Douglas for his service to the Town as Constable and Director of Public Safety for the past eight years and presented him with a gift certificate as a thank you from the Town.

Larry Courcelle spoke of the passing of Zoning Administrator Steve Cosgrove this past fall. He will be missed.

Larry Courcelle recognized the BCA for its hard work during BCA appeals as a result of the town-wide reappraisal and stated that the town is always in need of volunteers. There are many positions available with a wide range of time commitment, with as little as a few hours to serving on boards with lengthier commitments and encouraged interested residents to contact Town Administrator Sara Tully.

Larry Courcelle thanked all town employees and stated that the Town would not be able to operate without all of them.

Larry Courcelle spoke of the tribute to Doug Casella for his efforts following Tropical Storm Irene. A monument and park area has been placed near Sugar & Spice as a tribute to Doug.

Article 1 – Shall the Town authorize the Selectboard to set the rate of compensation for non-salaried employees and Town Officers appointed mid-term? Cort Jones made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Gary Sihler. With no discussion, the motion **passed unanimously**.

Article 2 – Shall the Town vote to approve the 2022-2023 Municipal Budget at \$1,253,186? Larry Courcelle gave a presentation regarding the timeline of the budgeting process, as well as the highlights of the budget presented. Phil Douglas made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Jennifer

Bagley. Rich Carlson questioned insurance cost increases, which were explained by Sara Tully. The motion **passed unanimously**.

Article 3 – Shall the Town transfer \$50,000 in surplus funds from the 2020-2021 budget to the Highway Improvement Fund. Larry Courcelle reviewed the need for additional funds in the Highway Improvement Fund. Tom Soriano made a motion to approve, which was seconded by John Rizk. The motion **passed unanimously**.

Article 4 – Shall the Town vote to close the Irene Fund and transfer the balance of the funds to the Highway Improvement Fund? Tom Soriano made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Michael Tully. Rich Carlson asked for clarification of what the funds would be used for. Sara Tully referred him to Highway Improvement Fund timeline on page 35 of the town report. The motion **passed unanimously**.

Cort Corsones made a motion to consider articles five through eleven as one question. Chris Corsones explained that this would mean all of those articles would be voted at one time and either pass or fail as one article. Steve Singiser seconded the motion. Tom Soriano asked if someone was sent from each organization to explain why they need the funds. Sara Tully explained how articles get on the ballot. **The motion carried.**

Article 5 through 11 – Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$1,500 for the support of ARC Rutland Area Serving Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, \$1,200 for the support of Marble Valley Regional Transit District (The Bus), \$700 for the support of RSVP Retired Senior Volunteer Program, \$1,242 for the support of Rutland Mental Health Services, \$2,600 for the support of VNA and Hospice of the Southwest Region, \$600 for the support of Southwest Council on Aging, and \$2,500 for the support of Wonderfeet Kids' Museum? Betsy Reddy made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Rich Carlson. Danielle Monroe from Wonderfeet Museum discussed what the museum does and the usefulness of the funds. Wanda Courcelle from RSVP discussed the many programs RSVP has and the usefulness of the funds. **The motion carried.**

Article 12 – Shall the Town adopt all budget article and public questions by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A § 2680 (c) (d)? Fred Bagley asked how this article got on the ballot. Larry Courcelle explained the Selectboard was not taking a position one way or the other, just presenting the article for voter consideration, since the voters voted by Australian Ballot last year. Gary Sihler, Jennifer Bagley, Tom Soriano, Justin Lindholm, Liam Fracht-Monroe, Lacey Ramage, Ann Singiser, and Sigrid Sihler spoke against the article. Sara Tully spoke in favor of the article. Mike Tully made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Steve Singiser. **The motion failed.**

Article 13 – Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to appoint a First Constable and if needed, a Second Constable, in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2651 (a)? This article will be voted on by Australian ballot on March 01, 2022 at the Town Office.

Article 14 – To Elect the following town officers: Constable – 2 year term, Delinquent Tax Collector – 3 year term, Town Moderator – 1 year term, and Selectboard Member – 3 year term. This article will be voted on by Australian ballot on March 01, 2022 at the Town Office. Candidates running for these positions introduced themselves.

Other Business - Megan Smith, Fred Bagley, and Bryan Sell gave updates from the committees they are serving on as a result of the Community Visit last spring.

Jennifer Bagley asked for a round of applause for those running for town positions.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk _____

Dick Wilcox, Selectboard Chair _____

Chris Corsones, Moderator _____

DRAFT