

TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN

2022 TOWN MEETING

MARCH 1, 2022

The legal voters of the Town of Williamstown, in the County of Orange, in the State of Vermont, are hereby warned and notified to meet at Williamstown Middle High School on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning (A.M.) to act upon the following articles, viz:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Matthew Powell, Moderator, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Matthew stated that if there was no objection, he would allow school and town officials to speak as some of them are not town residents.

Town Clerk, Barbara Graham read the warning:

ART 1: To elect all necessary Town and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year by Australian Ballot. For the purpose of Article 1, the polls will open at 10:00 A.M. to act upon the following article, viz:

The total votes cast were 410. The results were as follows:

Moderator, 1 year

Matthew B. Powell.....	374
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	2
Blank.....	34
Total.....	410

Town Clerk, 3 years

Barbara C. Graham.....	372
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	7
Blank.....	31
Total.....	410

Selectman, 3 years

Christopher Dessureau.....	167
Christopher Wade.....	201
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	9
Defective.....	1
Blank.....	32
Total.....	410

Selectman, 2 years

Christopher Peloquin.....	195
Jessica Worn.....	192
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	2
Blank.....	21
Total.....	410

School Director, 3 year

Joshua A. Dobrovich.....	125
Horace H. Duke, Jr.....	249
Write In: Miscellaneous.....	1
Blank.....	35
Total.....	410

School Director, 1 year remaining of a 3 year term

Danielle Moffatt.....	333
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	6
Blank.....	71
Total.....	410

Lister, 3 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	25
Blank.....	385
Total.....	410

Trustee of Public Funds, 3 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	28
Blank.....	382
Total.....	410

Cemetery Commissioner, 5 years

Daphne Herwig.....	350
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	2
Blank.....	58
Total.....	410

Library Trustee, 5 years

Tabitha McGlynn.....	366
Write In: Miscellaneous.....	2
Blank.....	42
Total.....	410

Library Trustee, 2 years remaining of a 5 year term

Kathryn A. Retchless.....	341
Write In: Miscellaneous.....	3
Blank.....	66
Total.....	410

Trustee for the Henry S. Baker Fund, 3 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	35
Blank.....	375
Total.....	410

ART 2:

To hear and act upon the reports of the Town Officers.

The motion was made by Winston Chambers and seconded by Sarah Launderville to approve the reports of the Town Officers. Winston Chambers wanted to know why the Ainsworth Public Library was taken out of the General Fund. Rodney Graham replied that the library this year will have their own line item, as well as the cemetery having theirs. Each one of these Boards have their own trustees and commissioners. The select board is responsible for the General Fund and the library trustees were elected and they need to their job. With there being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 3:

To see if the Town will pay it's Real and Personal Property taxes to the Treasurer on or before November 15, 2022, with delinquent taxes and assessments having charged against them an eight percent (8%) penalty and interest charges of one percent (1%) per month, or fraction thereof, from the due date, as provided for in 32 V.S.A. § 4773 and 5136.

The motion was made by Winston Chambers and seconded by John Perkins to approve the article as written. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 4:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to take advantage of any State or Federal monies available.

The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by Rodney Graham. Rodney Graham stated if we didn't have this authority, we wouldn't of been able to accept this ARPA money. There is a survey up back that the Town put together for the use of the ARPA money. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 5:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to borrow money to pay the current expenses of the Town in anticipation of money to be received from taxes and the State of Vermont.

The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by Richard Powell to approve the article as written. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 6:

To see if the voters authorize the Town to pay its Selectboard members \$750.00 and Chairman \$1000.00. and all other Elected Officers \$12.55 per hour and Chairman \$12.75 per hour, except the Town Clerk.

The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by John Taylor to approve the article as written. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 7:

To see if the voters authorize to have the names of all delinquent taxpayers, including water and sewer users, with total amount of delinquencies printed in the Town Report as of December 31, 2022.

The motion was made by Matthew Rouleau and seconded by Larry Hebert to approve the article as written. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 8: To see if the Town will vote to approve the sum of \$1,269,423.71, to support the General Budget of which includes Fire Department and Ambulance.

The motion was made by Richard Powell and seconded by Larry Hebert to approve the article as written. Rodney Graham, Board Chair, explained the increase in the General Fund. An increase in the BCA elections, Town Manager's contract, Town Clerk and Town employees are now up to competitive wages. Ambulance is up \$20,000, proposed to hire 2 part time positions as it is hard to find volunteers. Fire Department has upgraded the air system, a one-time expense at \$72,000. Proposed to purchase a pick-up specifically for use on I-89 calls. Charles Kunkle said he needed the ambulance service this past year and believes they are worth every penny. With there being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 9: To see if the Town will vote to approve the sum of \$1,063,518.52 to support the Highway Budget.

The motion was made by Larry Hebert and seconded by Marion Powell to approve the article as written. Rodney Graham explained the highway budget increase. Needed to replace several road signs \$8,000, cost of diesel and tires \$30,000. Employee's salaries are now up to a competitive rate. Mark Martin was upset with the road conditions and wanted to know when some of them would be paved. Rodney Graham replied that the Graniteville Road and Chelsea Road will be re-paved this spring and Adams Road will not be paved. John Taylor mentioned that there is a lot of gravel material loss on Weir Road, berms left on side of the road and culverts are plugged. Rodney Graham replied that the work will be done in the spring and summer. Falls Bridge Road, drainage work needs to be re-done and done properly and it will not be paved this year. Town will be renting a second grader in the spring. With there being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 10: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$21,780.71 from the FY-2021 General Fund Surplus to reduce the 2022-2023 taxes.

The motion was made by Rama Schneider and seconded by Chris Dessureau to amend article 10 to read \$16,780.71 from the FY-2021 General Fund Surplus to reduce the tax rate and take the balance of \$5000.00 from the surplus and appropriate to the Historical Society. Rama Schneider stated that he had forgotten to request this appropriation in a timely manner. Matthew Powell stated that it was not a germane question and Rama Schneider challenged the moderator. Rodney Graham stated that Rama had plenty of time to make the request on time and that this surplus money is to keep the tax rate down. Rodney mentioned that there would be an August Primary and could request it then. Monique Hayden felt it wasn't a huge amount and to make the change today. Winston Chambers and Phil Winters both felt that it was not warned, and this decision should not be up to the few voters that are here today. After much discussion it was called for a paper ballot to vote to override the moderator. Results of paper ballot vote: YES 31, NO 30 the Town moved to override the Moderator. Rodney Graham said this would be setting a precedent to ask for money and it was best to wait until the August primary. Again, after much discussion, a call for a paper ballot on amending the motion. Results of paper ballot vote: YES 36, NO 23. Motion passed.

ART 11: **To see if the voters will appropriate the sum of \$44,500.00 or some other amount to support Williamstown Cemeteries.**
The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by Marion Powell to approve the article as written. John Perkins, chairman of the cemetery commission spoke on the work that the Board has done in all 3 cemeteries and how they have kept their budget down for the past several years. Rama Schneider mentioned how nicely taken care of the East Hill Cemetery is. With there being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 12: **To see if the voters will appropriate the sum of \$105,556.50 or some other amount to support the Ainsworth Public Library.**
The motion was made by Rodney Graham and seconded by Jill Plastridge to approve the article as written. Helen Duke, Chairman of the Library Trustees and Jill Plastridge, Library Trustee spoke of the importance of keeping the library budget in the General Fund and would like to see it remain there. Rodney Graham stated that it was not the Chairman of the Selectboard's decision to take it out of the General Fund but the Board's decision. The Board has no intentions of doing away with the library. The library had asked for a 4% increase and requested a special article, which both amounts are included in the \$105,556.50. The Treasurer will still cut the checks for the library they would have their own separate checkbook. With there being no further discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

Karla Perkins made the motion and seconded by Barbara Graham to recess 1 hour for lunch, 1:00 PM. The motion passed by voice vote.

Meeting called back to order at 2:00 P.M.

ART 13: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$750.00 in support of Orange County Parent Child Center?**

ART 14: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500.00 in support of Orange County Restorative Justice?**

ART 15: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$250.00 in support of Washington County Youth?**

ART 16: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$6700.00 in support of Central VT Home Health and Hospice?**

ART 17: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1750.00 in support of Central VT Council on Aging?**

ART 18: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1000.00 in support of Central VT Adult Basic Education?**

ART 19: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1000.00 in support of the Peoples Health and Wellness?**

ART 20: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$2004.00 in support of the Green Mountain Transit?**

ART 21: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$300.00 in support of Good Beginnings?**

ART 22: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$400.00 in support of Center for Independent Living?**

ART 23: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1200.00 in support of Safe Line?**

ART 24: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$4968.00 in support of the Clara Martin Center?**

ART 25: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1500.00 to support Williamstown Beautification?**

ART 26: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to support the American Red Cross?**

ART 27: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to support the Arts Bus?**

ART 28: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$100.00 to support Central VT State Police Advisory Board?**

ART 29: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$9300.00 to support the Williamstown Youth Sports?**

ART 30: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1500.00 to support the Barre Area Senior Center?**

The motion was made by Matthew Rouleau and seconded by Charles Kunkle to combine articles 13 to 30, the total requested appropriations, \$34,222.00. Lisa St. Lawrence stated that these children who participate in Youth Sports should show responsibility and do fund raising. Rodney Graham asked if someone from Youth Sports would explain why they are requesting \$9300.00. Cody Griggs who is Chairman of Williamstown Youth Sports, spoke that the main increase is the lawn care. The do receive money from registrations, concessions, and admissions. He is hoping for next year to have an excel spread sheet in place. Lisa St. Lawrence made the motion and seconded by Barbara Graham to amend the requested amount in half, from \$9300.00 to \$4650.00 which would bring the total of appropriations total to read \$29,572.00. The amendment failed by voice vote. Heather King stated how important all of these programs are. With there being no further discussion, the original motion to combined articles 13 to 30 and appropriate the sum of \$34,222.00 passed by voice vote.

ART 31: **Shall the Town vote to exempt from taxation, that portion of the property owned by Williamstown Fish and Game Club, for period of 5 years, as provided for in 32 V.S.A. Section 3840? This vote shall first affect the April 1, 2022 Grand List?**

The motion was made by Barbara Graham and seconded by Lisa St. Lawrence to approve the article as written. Mark McCarthy spoke on behalf of the Williamstown Fish and Game Club, that the club burned down in July of 2021 and plans are underway to rebuild the building. The Club holds a hunter's safety course, host the Joey Gingras memorial fishing derby, shooting range. With there being no further discussion motion passed by voice vote.

ART 32:

To transact any other business deemed necessary and proper.

Becky Watson wanted to know when the next Town Plan would be completed. Jasmin Couillard responded that one is done every 5 years. Rama Schneider thanked everyone for the support in the Historical Society and that there was no money requested this year for the Food Shelf as there were several donations this past year. Rodney Graham thanked outgoing board member, Matthew Rouleau for his several years of service to the Town. Town Clerk, Barbara Graham thanked her long-time ballot clerks for their several years of dedicated service, Kathy Moran, Marvyn Lasell, Bev Ouimet, Cec Miller, Barbara Smith, Brenda Townsend, and Carolyn Werneke. If she had known that the last time working together would be Town Meeting, March 2020, she would have thanked them all then.

Motion was made by Jasmin Couillard and seconded by Charles Kunkle to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by voice vote and adjourned at 2:30 P.M.

/s/Matthew Powell, Moderator

/s/Barbara Graham, Town Clerk

/s/Rodney Graham, Chair

/s/Matthew Rouleau

/s/Jasmin Couillard

/s/Jessica Worn

/s/Clayton Woodworth