

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
MINUTES OF TOWN MEETING**

MARCH 1st & 2nd 2010

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Sally Ayrey at 8:57 PM. With approximately 83 people in attendance.

Moderator Ayrey stated that the Doyle Poll Survey is available and copies are on the table in the main hallway of the school.

Moderator Ayrey reviewed the procedures for the meeting.

Moderator Ayrey stated that the Warning for this meeting is on page 6 of the Town Report. Hearing no objections the reading of the Warning is dispensed with.

Article 1. To hear the reports of the Town Officers and take appropriate action thereon. Hearing no objections article one is approved.

Article 2. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board to establish the salaries, wages and other compensation of the employees and other officers of the Town? Hearing no objections article two is approved.

Article 3. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board to borrow in anticipation of taxes, such sum or sums of money as may be necessary to properly finance the affairs of the Town? Hearing no objections article three is approved.

Article 4. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board to spend unanticipated funds such as grants and gifts? Hearing no objections article four is approved.

Article 5. Shall the Town pay its personal and property taxes to the Town Treasurer in equal installments with the payments to be in the hands of the Treasurer by October 15 and April 15? Hearing no objections article five is approved.

Article 6. Shall the Town levy an interest charge on all delinquent taxes of One Percent (1%) per month or fraction thereof, for the first three months, and thereafter One and One Half Percent (1.5%) per month or fraction thereof from the due date of each installment as provided by T32 VSA Sec. 5136 as amended? Hearing no objections article six is approved.

Article 7. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,200.00 to help defray the expenses of the Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc., and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount? Hearing no objections article seven is approved.

Article 8. Shall the Town will appropriate the sum of \$3,525.00 to be used for the general operating expenses for the Arlington Recreational and Park Committee, Inc., and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount? Hearing no objections article eight is approved.

Article 9. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$15,000.00 to help defray the expenses of the Arlington Rescue Squad, Inc and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount? Hearing no objections article nine is approved.

Article 10. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 to help defray the expenses of Burdett Commons, Inc., and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount?
Hearing no objections article ten is approved.

Article 11. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$5,300.00 to help defray the expenses of the Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library, Inc., and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount?
Hearing no objections article eleven is approved.

Article 12. To see if the Town of Sunderland will appropriate the sum of \$250.00 to help defray the expenses of Arlington Area Childcare, DBA Happy Days.
Hearing no objections article twelve is approved.

Article 13. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$5,000.00 to be added to the State/Town Bridge Co-Op Sinking Fund, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the Highway Fund Budget by this amount? Jeremy Crumb asked what bridge would be considered the worst and serviced first. James Ennis stated that the bridge on Hill Farm Road would be the next bridge to be considered. It is estimated that it will cost about \$100,000.00. Judy Edmonds asked if there is any assurance that the money would be used for bridges and not the office building. Chairman Bahan stated that the money would have to be used for the purpose of the sinking fund, only the voters could change that. Carl Graves asked how much money is currently in the fund. Treasurer Keough stated that the fund currently has \$52,568.23 but at the end of this fiscal year there will be a little over \$67,000.00 in the fund.
Hearing no objections article thirteen is approved.

Article 14. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$1,500.00 to be added to the Guard Rail Sinking Fund, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the Highway Fund Budget by this amount?
Hearing no objections article fourteen is approved.

Moderator Ayrey asked if anyone had any other non-binding business.

Lucille Morse stated that there are items in the Cemetery Budget like cleaning stones, cutting brush, garbage removal and none of these things are being done. Carl Graves noted that someone is throwing trash in our covered bridge. He suggested that a trash can be placed near the bridge. Richard Goddard stated that the municipal office building is a line item of the General Fund Budget and should be a separate article. John Stuermer stated in past years it was a separate article because the board requested borrowing money to build the office. This year to avoid putting the Town into debt the Board eliminated the requests for the paving fund, equipment fund, municipal office building fund and decreased the amount of the request for the bridge co-op fund. The total amount deferred is \$110,000.00 which is the amount added to the General Fund Budget for building construction. The amount in the office building fund plus the \$110,000.00 will allow us to build the office building this spring. John Stuermer also stated that the reason the \$110,000.00 was not a separate article was because if that article was not approved there would be the loss of the monies for the other funds. Chairman Bahan stated that is was the consensus of the Board that with the times as they are now it is probably the most advantageous to us and we would get more bang for our buck. Donald Fisher stated that he had attended a previous meeting and the people were told that the municipal office building would come to a vote like it has in the past. John Stuermer stated that if you object to a town office you would have to vote down the General Fund Budget. Donald Fisher stated that information has been requested about maintenance cost and the Board could not answer that question. John Stuermer stated that the money currently being paid for rent would more than cover the maintenance expense. Mary Van Vleck stated that at a previous meeting both John Stuermer and Weiland Ross had stated that it would be a separate vote and now she feels like she is being forced to vote against a budget. Joe Boutin stated that the Board needed to give the people the right to vote on this issue and that vote should come through the front door. The people want to vote on the municipal office building. John Stuermer stated that the topic of the office building has been on several agendas and no-one has come to a Select Board meeting. Helen Weller asked which of the three possible designs will the Board build and John Stuermer stated that probably the middle design. Helen Weller stated that the probably was the problem because the people should probably have a vote.

Maureen Richman stated that she has a problem with someone saying that if she does not come to a Board meeting they are going to slip something under the door. Michael Welther stated that he is going to vote against the budget. Leslie Perra asked if the Board had added the \$110,000.00 as a separate article what would it have done to the tax rate. It was stated that on a two hundred thousand dollar home it would add about \$100.00 to the tax bill. Leslie stated that would be a one time increase and the following year it would go away. Leslie Perra asked what the plan would be if the budget goes down. Chairman Bahan stated that the paving would go behind one year. Chairman Bahan stated that a separate committee worked on this project and the Board felt that this would be a good time to go ahead with the project. John Cullinan asked if last years planned paving projects were completed. James Ennis stated that the paving projects were done. Donald Fisher stated that the Board said that the people wanted the office building however it was voted down twice by a two to one margin. Chairman Bahan stated it was voted down because the money would have been borrowed. Judy Edmonds said she could not believe that the Board would take away necessary items in order to have something that would be nice to have. She also stated that the Board should let the people vote on the municipal office building separately. Marie Litowinsky inquired about the occupancy number allowed for the proposed building. Chairman Bahan explained that there would be small meetings held in the municipal building but large town meetings would still be held at the school. Roy Johnson stated that we need the Town Hall and the Select Board has been fiscally responsible and the people need to support them. Roy Johnson stated that the majority of the people want an office building. Marilyn Couture asked if she wanted to vote no for the Town Hall she would have to vote against the General Fund Budget. Moderator Ayrey stated that was correct. James Ayrey asked if the project would receive bids. The Board stated that it would. Richard Goddard stated that we do need a Town Office but does not like the way it is being voted on. Richard Goddard also stated that the Board has downsized the building to fit the budget instead of what should be built. Kathryn Samuelson wanted to know what the urgency is for the building right now. Chairman Bahan answered by telling the people that the Board felt now was the right time. Dineen Squillante discussed the possibility of have records electronically instead of paper in a safe or vault. Town Clerk Keough did explain that the State of Vermont has considered the electronic option but with technology changing so quickly is would be very costly just to try to keep up with the changes. Town Clerk Keough also assured the people that their records are kept in what is called fifteen hour safes which would limit any possible damage should there be a fire.

With no other business Moderator Ayrey explained that Articles 16, 17, 18 and 19 will be voted on by ballot and adjourned the meeting at 10:23 PM until Tuesday March 2, 2010 when the polls will open at 10:00 AM until 7:00 PM.

The ballot boxes were declared open, on March 2, 2010, at 10:00 AM by Town Clerk Rose Keough and declared closed at 7:00 PM. The results follow:

Article 16. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$11,055.00 to defray the expenses of the Cemetery Maintenance Fund? (Budget amount \$11,055.00)

YES 189 NO 53 BLANK 3 SPOILED 0
TOTAL 245

Article 17. Shall the Town approve the General Fund Budget of \$287,290.00? (Anticipated income estimated at \$13,471.00; Taxes estimated at \$273,819.00)

YES 94 NO 148 BLANK 2 SPOILED 1
TOTAL 245

Article 18. Shall the Town approve the Highway Fund Budget of \$270,960.00? (Anticipated income estimated at \$135,971.00; Taxes estimated at \$134,989.00)

YES 154 NO 88 BLANK 3 SPOILED 0
TOTAL 245