

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
MINUTES OF TOWN MEETING**

FEBRUARY 28, 2011 & MARCH 1st 2011

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Sally Ayrey at 7:30 PM. With approximately 70 people in attendance.

Moderator Sally Ayrey asked Selectboard Chairman John Stuermer to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Sally Ayrey read an invocation originally from the Town of Danville, Vermont and reviewed the procedures for the meeting.

Hearing no objections Moderator Sally Ayrey waived the reading of the warning which is on page six of the Town report.

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 Selectboard 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 Selectboard 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 Selectboard 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?
Joseph Boutin moved to approve article six, seconded by Carl Graves.

Carr Ackermann stated that the first three months should not have an interest charge so people may use that time to get caught up. Rose Stone stated that you would lose the incentive to pay on time and people would wait an additional three months to pay the bill. Carr Ackermann said she understood that but with such hard economic times this would give people that little extra time. Mary Van Vleck stated that she understood that there is some sort of legislation regarding this matter and the law could change. Joseph Boutin asked about the rate of delinquencies this past year. Rose Keough was asked to answer and she stated that on April 16, 2010 the amount was about \$280,000.00. She also stated that Delinquent Tax Collector Kathleen Morse has been more aggressive this past year because the longer taxes remain delinquent the harder it is to catch up. Carl Graves asked how much the Town has to pay on interest when it borrows money. Rose Keough was asked to answer and stated that the Town has not borrowed money in anticipation of taxes for at least the last twenty years. Marilyn Couture stated that a financial planner told her that he advised towns do actually as this article requests. Patrick Monroe stated that someone with a \$2,000.00 tax bill and paying \$20.00 for being a month or less late did not appear to be terribly arduous. Rose Stone stated that if people paid part of the amount due on time it would make the interest charged less because you only pay interest on what is owed. Richard Sargent stated that he understood that there is also an 8% charge. Rose Keough stated that the 8% is the pay for the delinquent tax collector when the taxes owed are collected.

Article six is approved.

Article 7. Shall the Town exempt 4-H Camp Ondawa, Inc. from taxation for three years (to begin with the 2012-2013 fiscal year)?

Gloria Alexander moved to approve article seven, seconded by Carl Graves.

Albert "Bill" Bowen explained that the Camp Ondawa Board is waiting for a letter from the Listers for approval. The Listers are now working on the letter and it will then be up to the State to see if they will become statutory exempt.

Article seven is approved.

Article 8. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 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?

Michael Welther moved to approve article eight, seconded by Jeremy Crumb.

Rose Keough stated that the \$1500.00 amount is a \$300.00 increase compared to last year.

Article eight is approved.

Article 9. Shall the Town 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?

Patrick Monroe moved to approve article nine, seconded by Deborah Cullinan.

Rose Keough stated that the Arlington Park and Rec had originally requested \$4,100.00 and the Selectboard asked for more financial information from that board. When no one responded the Selectboard opted to have the same figure as last year put into the article. Patrick Monroe asked if there was a representative present and there was no response.

Article nine is approved.

Article 10. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00 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?

Michael Welther moved to approve article ten, seconded by Carl Graves.

Robert Alexander asked how much was requested last year. Chairman John Stuermer stated that \$15,000.00 was requested. Jeremy Crumb asked if the \$20,000.00 was the actual amount requested. Chairman John Stuermer stated that it is the amount requested. Chairman John Stuermer stated that the Rescue Squad is a valuable service to our community so the increase is warranted.

Article ten is approved.

Article 11. 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 12. 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 twelve is approved.

Article 13. Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 to help defray the expenses of the Arlington Community Club, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount?

Ellen Adler moved to approve article thirteen, seconded by Marlyn Couture.

Deborah Cullinan asked what the Arlington Community Club is. Rose Keough explained that the building at one time housed the Martha Canfield Library and is now used for events such as meetings to baby showers. They provide a place for Sunderland, Arlington and Sandgate communities to use. Dineen Squillante asked if all organizations requesting funding were asked for breakdowns or was it just the Arlington Park and Rec. Chairman John Stuermer stated that if the funding amount increased then questions were asked. Maureen Richman asked if anyone knew what is being requested of each town. Chairman John Stuermer stated that he did not know.

Article 14. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$10,000.00 to be added to the Municipal Building Sinking Fund, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the General Fund Budget by this amount?

Roy Johnson moved to approve article fourteen, seconded by Carl Graves.

Moderator Sally Ayrey then recognized Joseph Boutin the Chairman of the Building Committee. Joseph Boutin then introduced the other members of the committee, Sally Ayrey, Robert Faley, Carl Graves, Peter Luca, Michael Perra, John Williams, Judith Edmunds and Patrick Monroe. On behalf of the committee Joseph Boutin thanked the Selectboard for allowing the committee the freedom to move forward. Joseph Boutin noted that the Building Committee was started in November and he then discussed the number one item from the survey the committee sent to the residents of Sunderland.

Most people wanted to use the School as an office building. The committee discussed the option with Superintendent Daniel French and School Board Chairman Gordon Woodrow. The Town would have to buy the building after all voter approval was granted and then close the School. Once the Town owned the building the review of maintenance would have to be addressed. The teachers control the heat in each room by shutting breakers on and off. The roof has had many repairs with more to come. The committee concluded that it would be too expensive for the Town to bring the building up to code, repair and maintain a building that was too large for our needs. The option of renting out space was addressed and by State law the Town cannot rent out space. The committee decided it was time to move on to other options. The option of constructing a building on the School property was addressed. The back acreage is a wetland and more problems than what the committee is willing to try to address. The front acreage is very small and not very feasible for a new building. The committee moved on to another option of renovating the Basketville building. It is very costly to bring that building up to code and parking would be a very big issue. The property behind the building is too wet for a parking lot. The committee then decided to research using the property that the Town currently owns. The committee researched what was needed for a building with the understanding that it should meet the needs of the Town for at least fifty years. The next step was how to minimize the effect on the taxes. The committee is currently looking into possible grants and financing options. It is now time to start looking at designs. Roy Johnson stated that the property the Town owns was purchased specifically for a Town office. Roy Johnson also stated that the building should not be for only fifty years but for the future of Sunderland.

Article fourteen is approved with no objections.

Article 15. 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?

Hearing no objections article fifteen is approved.

Article 16. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$40,000.00 to be added to the Equipment Sinking Fund, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the Highway Fund Budget by this amount?

Roy Johnson moved to approve article sixteen, seconded by Michael Perra.

Richard Goddard stated that according to the investment account there is \$117,000.00 in the fund and this \$40,000.00 would make it \$157,000.00. Chairman John Stuermer stated yes, that is correct. Richard Goddard asked what equipment the Board was considering to buy. Selectboard Member James "Cubby" Ennis stated that possibly a grader which could cost \$150,000.00 or more. Dineen Squillante asked if it would be possible to rent a grader instead of buying one. Selectboard Member James "Cubby" Ennis stated that when you have twenty-two miles of dirt road and a grader is needed you need to have one available. The current grader is twenty-eight years old and was used when purchased. Jeremy Crumb asked why the Town would not continue on the route of buying used instead of new. Dineen Squillante asked if the Town should be contracting out the job of grading. Selectboard Member James "Cubby" Ennis stated that the Town could but probably will not.

Article sixteen is approved.

Article 17. Shall the Town approve the sum of \$50,000.00 to be added to the Paving Sinking Fund, and if so voted, to authorize an increase to the Highway Fund Budget by this amount?

Hearing no objection article seventeen is approved.

Article 18. 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.

Article 19. To transact any other non-binding business.
Moderator Sally Ayrey recognized Gordon Woodrow. Gordon Woodrow explained a grant that Sunderland received called the E Vermont Grant. Because of the grant Sunderland will be getting a website that will have up to date information about our Town. There will also be a leaning center at the Martha Canfield Library, the Front Porch Forum which is a type of bulletin board for all Sunderland people.

Gloria Alexander asked for support of the CDC budget that will be voted on tomorrow.

Moderator Sally Ayrey stated that after adjournment and prior to the School District Annual Meeting State Representative Cynthia Browning will be addressing the people.

Moderator Sally Ayrey adjourned the meeting at 8:48pm. until Tuesday March 1, 2011 when the polls will open at 10:00 AM until 7:00 PM.

The ballot boxes were declared open, on March 1, 2011, at 10:00 AM by Town Clerk Rose Keough and declared closed at 7:00 PM. The results follow:

Article 20. 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 132
NO 24
BLANK 1
SPOILED 0
TOTAL 157

Article 21. Shall the Town approve the General Fund Budget of \$170,915.00? (Anticipated income estimated at \$18,680.00; Taxes estimated at \$152,235.00)

YES 132
NO 24
BLANK 1
SPOILED 0
TOTAL 157

Article 22. Shall the Town approve the Highway Fund Budget of \$285,460.00? (Anticipated income estimated at \$137,235.00; Taxes estimated at \$148,225.00)

YES 129
NO 27
BLANK 1
SPOILED 0
TOTAL 157

Article 23. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by Law:

FOR AUDITOR, for 3 years

Write-In	Richard Ashley	2
Write-In	Alan Eliason	2
Write-In	Others	6
BLANK		147
TOTAL		157

FOR AUDITOR, for 2 years of 3 year term

Write-In	Alan Eliason	6
Write-In	Others	2
BLANK		149
TOTAL		157

FOR CEMETERY COMMISSIONER, for 3 years

Write-In	Jon French	3
Write-In	Others	7
BLANK		147
TOTAL		157

FOR DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR, for 1 year

KATHLEEN C. MORSE	128*
Write-In	2
BLANK	27
TOTAL	157

FOR FIRST CONSTABLE, for 1 year

DAWN KELLEY	42
JESSE STONE	82*
Write-In Others	2
BLANK	30
SPOILED	1
TOTAL	157

FOR SECOND CONSTABLE, for 1 year

DAWN KELLEY	49
JOHN STUERMER	82*
Write-In Others	1
BLANK	25
SPOILED	0
TOTAL	157

FOR LISTER, for 3 years

Write-In	Robert Montgomery	10*
Write-In	Others	2
BLANK		145
TOTAL		157

FOR SELECTMAN, for 3 years

JOSEPH BOUTIN	106*
JAMES ENNIS	44
BLANK	7
TOTAL	157

FOR SELECTMAN, for 2 years

GARY E. WELLER	92*
Write-In Others	7
BLANK	58
TOTAL	157

FOR SELECTMAN, for 1 year

CARLYNANN "CARR" ACKERMANN	94*
STEVEN BENDIX	103*
BRUCE WHITAKER	85*
Write-In Others	4
BLANK	185
TOTAL	471

FOR TOWN AGENT, for 1 year

Write-In	Martin Arons	1
Write-In	Bill Bowen	1
BLANK		155
SPOILED		0
TOTAL		157

FOR TOWN GRAND JUROR, for 1 year

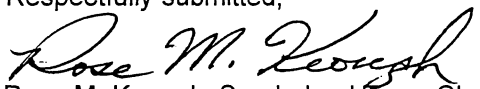
Write-In	Martin Arons	1
Write-In	James Ayrey	1
Write-In	Mike DiMonda	1
BLANK		154
TOTAL		157

FOR TOWN MODERATOR, for 1 year

SALLY AYREY	133*
BLANK	24
TOTAL	157

The meeting was adjourned after announcing the results. (*denotes elected)

Respectfully submitted,



Rose M. Keough, Sunderland Town Clerk