

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE, GRAFTON, VERMONT
Received for record 3/17 20 23
at 9 o'clock 30 minutes A M.
and recorded in Book Town Page _____
Attest Kim Reardon
Town Clerk

Grafton, Vermont
Results of Town Meeting
March 7, 2023

Pursuant to a warning duly posted and recorded, the legal voters of the Town met at the Grafton Elementary School in Grafton, Vermont on March 7, 2023 and took action on the following articles with these results (polls open from 9 am to 7 pm). Moderator David Ross called the 240th recorded Grafton Town Meeting to order at 10:02 am and invited the meeting to join GES students Abby Mack Dyer, Jayden Smith, and Parker Webster in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked for a moment of silence to remember those no longer with us. He noted that Sam Battaglino and Stephen Nolan would be passing portable microphones to those who wished to speak. He announced that the Grafton Grange would not be serving lunch but the Grafton PTG had food for sale in the lobby.

There being no objection, he asked Grafton's Legislative Representative Heather Chase to address voters and discuss what was happening in Montpelier. He recessed the meeting at 10:04 am. Chase discussed these topics: paid family leave; child care initiatives; school meals; housing; and, short-term rentals. She said that a statewide registration system was being discussed on the latter topic. She had planned to visit constituents the previous Saturday and had been snowed out, but would plan another date soon.

The Moderator reconvened the meeting at 10:09 am.

The Moderator said that although school articles are no longer taken up at this meeting, and business may seem like it will take a relatively short amount of time, he noted the importance of what voters are doing and said that a great deal of research, organization and preparation preceded the meeting. He said that various items and reports were located in the back of the room. The Moderator announced that the meeting would be conducted in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont and Robert's Rules of Order. He noted that voters may vote to overrule Robert's Rules and the Moderator, but not state law. He said that his role was to help voters accomplish the business they intend; he said that if anyone wished to speak, they should raise their hand, and be recognized. The Moderator asked non-voters to stand and be recognized.

There were no suggestions or questions. There being no objection, the Moderator dispensed with the reading of the entire Warning.

ART. 1 It was moved by Joe Pollio, seconded by Bill Kearns, to choose all Town Officers and to vote on each and every Article proposed at this Town Meeting; voting shall be by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 7, 2023; polls open from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

It was then moved by Joe Pollio, seconded by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, to substitute this article with the following: to choose all Town Officers; voting to be by Australian Ballot with polls open from 9 am to 7 pm.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the substitution and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

It was moved by Terry Pollio, seconded by Kim Record, to choose all Town Officers; voting to be by Australian Ballot with polls open from 9 am to 7 pm.

The Moderator reread the new Article 1 and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

Results of Australian Ballot:

David Ross, elected Moderator, one year

Kimberly Record, elected Town Clerk, three years

Kimberly Record, elected Town Treasurer, three years

Michelle Dolloph, elected Collector of Delinquent Taxes, three years

Joseph Pollio, elected Selectboard member, two years

Seth Pajcic, elected Selectboard member, three years

Debe Plummer, elected Auditor, three years

Hardy Merrill, elected Lister, three years

Wendy Martin, elected Trust of Public Funds, three years

Wendy Martin, elected Trustee of Campbell, Woolson Funds, three years

Mary Beth Culver, elected Trustee of Public Library, three years

Lucia Corwin, elected Trust of Public Library, three years

Jay Maciejowski, elected Trust of Public Library, three years

Darcie Sprague, elected Union High School District No. 27 Director, three years

ART. 2 It was moved by Kim Record, seconded by Joe Pollio, that the Town of Grafton receive and accept the Auditor's Report.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 3 It was moved by Hardy Merrill, seconded by Suzanne Welch, that the Town of Grafton authorize the Selectboard to borrow money, respectively, if necessary, for current expenses in anticipation of collection of taxes.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 4 It was moved by Joe Pollio, seconded by Kim Record, that the Town of Grafton raise six hundred seven thousand eighty dollars (\$607,080.00) for the maintenance of highways and bridges.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion. Cynthia Gibbs asked if there were plans to repave any roads this summer. Selectboard chair Joe Pollio said that repaving was budgeted at just over \$100,000, but no firm plans had been made. The wish, he said, was to repave Route 35 to Chester but that it would be an expensive project.

There was no further discussion. The Moderator reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 5 It was moved by Bill Kearns, seconded by Joe Pollio, that the Town of Grafton raise two hundred thirty-three thousand eight hundred ninety-four dollars (\$233,894.00) for the Selectboard's Budget.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 6 It was moved by Bill Kearns, seconded by Sam Battaglino, that the Town of Grafton raise nine thousand dollars (\$9,000.00) for ambulance service.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 7 It was moved by Bill Brown, seconded by Liisa Kissel, that the Town of Grafton raise twenty-nine thousand nine hundred fifty dollars (\$29,950.00) for the Grafton Firefighters Association operating expenses.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion. Fire chief Robbie Sprague thanked the town for its continuing support and that the proposed budget represented an operating budget and that it was level funded.

There was no further discussion. The Moderator reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 8 It was moved by Terry Pollio, seconded by Margo Matt, that the Town of Grafton raise four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500.00) for Grafton Rescue Squad operating expenses.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion. Rescue Squad president Keith Hermiz said that expenses had increased by \$750 because of the purchase of software needed for communication with dispatch services. Hermiz also talked about the Rescue Squad's new proposed contract with the Town of Athens. He explained that Athens had come to the squad and asked for a contract and there was discussion within the squad about the impact of these additional calls. Given where the squad was in its budget cycle, the matter was resolved in December with the amount of \$9,300 requested from the Town of Athens. However, Hermiz noted, the Town of Athens had voted its Town Meeting budget down the night before so the situation hadn't yet been resolved. He said that towns are not required to provide rescue services; it may be the case that the contracted ambulance service (such as Golden Cross) would provide the service if there were no rescue squad. Hermiz said that the Rescue Squad would keep its

donors and the town apprised of the situation. Going forward, if there were an ongoing relationship with Athens, Grafton's share could go down, he said, but there were still uncertainties. The squad would like to leave the situation where it was for the next 12 months.

There was no further discussion. The Moderator reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 9 It was moved by Hardy Merrill, seconded by Bill Kearns, that the Town of Grafton approve expenditures of any grant monies awarded for purposes named in such grant or grants for fiscal year 2023/2024.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 10 It was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by Jack Bryar, that the Town of Grafton raise nine thousand one hundred eighty-one dollars (\$9,181.00) for Humanitarian expenses? (Bellows Falls Senior Center - \$674; Grafton Cares - \$1,000; Grafton Church (Food Pantry) - \$1000; HCRS - \$600; Parks Place - \$100; VT Rural Fire Protection - \$100; Senior Solutions - \$650; SEVCA - \$650; The Current - \$250; Valley Cares - \$1,052; Visiting Nurse Association - \$2,300; VCIL - \$105; Women's Freedom Center - \$600; Youth Services - \$100).

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 11 It was moved by Joe Pollio, seconded by John Gregory, that the Town of Grafton raise two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) for the Capital Budget? (\$52,934.00 for Highway Structures Program, \$17,000 for Fire Truck Fund, \$130,066.00 for Highway Equipment).

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 12 It was moved by Liisa Kissel, seconded by Terry Pollio, that the Town of Grafton vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of five-hundred dollars (\$500.00) to support The Gathering Place Adult Day Program to provide safe and supportive day services for Grafton residents who are elderly and/or disabled.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion. Cynthia Gibbs asked if this organization provided transportation as part of its service. Chris Wallace said he thought transportation was provided by The Current (bus service).

There was no further discussion. The Moderator reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 13 It was moved by Bob Donald, seconded by Suzanne Welch, that the Town of Grafton vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of two thousand five-hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the support of Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 14 Shall the Town of Grafton raise two thousand thirty-seven dollars (\$2,037.00) for the support of the community programs of the Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS)?

No motion was made; the article was not considered.

ART. 15 It was moved by Hardy Merrill, seconded by Joe Pollio, that the Town of Grafton pay its property taxes to the Treasurer in Quarterly installments, with the due dates being August 15, November 16, February 15, and May 15.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

ART. 16 It was moved by Suzanne Welch, seconded by Maryanne Donald, that the Town of Grafton levy an interest charge on all delinquent taxes on real and personal property of one (1) percent per month or fraction thereof from the due date of each installment for the first three months, and one and one-half (1½) percent per month or fraction thereof for every month thereafter, as provided for in 32 VSA 5136.

The Moderator offered the opportunity for discussion and there was none. He reread the article and called for a vote. Motion passed by voice vote.

There was no objection, so at 10:43 am the Moderator called for discussion of non-binding business.

- Joe Pollio thanked Suzanne Welch for her service on the Selectboard. He also thanked Road Foreman Mike Faulkner and the road crew. He also thanked Bill Kearns for his service as Town Administrator and thanked Morgan Wilbur for her work as the new Town Administrator.

- Al Sands gave an update on the work happening at the Village Park. The committee (consisting of Margo Matt, Mike Field, and Sands) is looking for funding to provide an easy-access trail and a lean-to to be used as an outdoor classroom. The total funding needed is approximately \$32,000, and Sands said that Town Administrator Morgan Wilbur is helping the committee with grant proposals. Sands noted that 2023 is the park's 100th anniversary.

- Lucia Corwin asked the town to revisit the 25 mph speed limit before the cheese company and heading into town. Her driveway enters the road on a blind curve and it is dangerous, she said. She suggested adding an "Entering Village" sign at the cheese company, which would hopefully slow traffic.
- Bill Kearns said that the Town had been reimbursed by FEMA for the July 2021 flooding in the amount of approximately \$500,000; the 5% contribution from the State of Vermont should arrive shortly.
- Jack Bryar thanked the two write-in candidates for the BFUHS Board.
- Robbie Sprague said that he had expected questions about the fire department's contract with Athens and there hadn't been any. He said that in late 2022 the department had been asked to come up with a price to Athens, based on the call log. He said that three members of the department were from Athens (two are officers) as is the Auxiliary President, calling voters' attention to the links between the two communities. He is hoping there will be more members joining from Athens. Joe Pollio asked what would happen with the Athens budget being voted down the night before; Sprague said the contract request would stay the same, regardless.
- Dottie Cannon thanked all of the boards and organizations that keep the town running smoothly.
- Chris Wallace reminded the audience that there was still food available in the lobby with proceeds to the PTG.
- Kim Record thanked retiring school director Jack Bryar for his many years of service to the local and high school boards.
- Joe Pollio thanked Kim Record for all the work she does for the town.

At 11:04 am, a motion was made by Cynthia Gibbs, seconded by Bill Kearns, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Martin, Assistant Town Clerk

David Ross, Town Moderator

Selectboard member