

2020 TOWN MEETING MINUTES
March 2, 2020

The March 2, 2020 Annual Town Meeting was opened by Moderator A. Morgan Wade at 6:00 P.M.

Moderator A. Morgan Wade introduced herself and said she was elected as Town and School Moderator.

Moderator A. Morgan Wade stated that the meetings are governed by State Laws and the Robert Rules of Order and will modify if needed.

The meeting opened with a performance by the school choir "The Star-Spangled Banner". Everyone applauded.

Moderator Wade said voters should stand up and give their names so the clerk can take notes.

"My goal is to help conduct the meeting and you can always ask for a point of clarification. You can question and challenge me. Articles must be moved, seconded and restated and articles can be reconsidered up to the point where they can be moved, seconded and restated. Nonvoters that want to speak should identify yourself and will be able to speak once we suspend the rules. Paper ballot can be requested and approved by just seven voters."

Moderator Wade asked if no objections she will waive the rule for Selectboard to answer more than once. No objections.

Moderator Wade informed everyone about corrections to the error on page 9 in the Town Report. Under appropriation of taxes, the tax rates are from last year but the dollar amounts should be correct. Jonah Cote distributed some copies of corrections.

Moderator Wade read Article by Article.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the provisions of V.S.A. T.32 §4791 in regard to the collection of taxes by the Treasurer?

Motion was made by Benjamin Champagne to open discussion on Article 1 and seconded by Bill Johnson.

No discussion took place.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 1 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 2. Shall the Town of Canaan vote to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year?

Motion was made by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 2 and seconded by Andre Dionne.

No discussion took place.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 2 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 3. Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000.00 for deposit into the Building Capital Reserve Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2804(a)?

Motion was made by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 3 and seconded by Noreen Labrecque.

Robert Baum questioned what the appropriation will be used for and Greg Noyes commented it will allow us to make repairs to the Town buildings, and it is the same as last year.

No other discussion took place.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 3 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 4. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan raise and appropriate the sum of \$13,004.00 with revisions, if any, for the following agencies?

a.	Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice, Inc.	\$4,400.00	pg 58
b.	Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.	\$1,944.00	pg 57
c.	Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging	\$1,500.00	pg 59
d.	Rural Community Transportation	\$1,210.00	pg 56
e.	Northeast Kingdom Learning Services	\$1,250.00	pg 65
f.	Umbrella, Inc.	\$ 700.00	pg 64
g.	Canaan Naturally Connected, Inc.	\$2,000.00	pg 53
	AGENCY APPROPRIATION REQUEST TOTALS	\$13,004.00	

Motion was made by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 4 and seconded by Noreen Labrecque.

Frank Sawicki commented that the Northeast Kingdom Learning Services increased their appropriation to \$1,250.00. This goes towards teenagers for alternate learning.

Odette Crawford questioned letter d – Rural Community Transportation on page 56 they are asking for \$1,100.00 and the petition showed \$1,210.00. “I’m assuming we have to go with the petition amount.” No one was present from the Organization to explain.

Moderator Wade asked if no objections the CEO from the Northeast Kingdom Human Services would like to speak.

No objections. Tomasz Jankowski, CEO thanked for the support in the past and continued support. He commented that their organization is also asking for an increase in their appropriation which equals \$2.00 per person and would be happy to answer any questions. No questions. He extended his appreciation for the ongoing support.

No further discussion took place.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 4 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 5. To determine if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,000.00 for the UPPER CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL to help defray the costs of providing emergency and critical care clinic services. (pg. 56)

Motion was made by Julie Giroux to open discussion on Article 5 and seconded by Kim Sweatt.

Odette Crawford commented that she is the Chair for the hospital board and they are very much appreciative for the continued support from the Town of Canaan. They provide 24 hour care and it is not a money maker. “We appreciate your support and asking for the same amount this year.”

No further discussion took place.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 5 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed Library budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? (pg 32)

Motion was made by Julie Giroux and seconded by Michael Daley to open discussion on Article 6.

Odette Crawford commented that she thinks the total expenditures on page 22 should be \$87,400 instead of \$87,650. She is impressed with the increased activity and varied age groups and it seems encouraging and likes the free Wi-Fi idea on the library report.

No further discussion, Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 6 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 7. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed General budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? (Includes Transfer Station & Police) pg 15, 16, 17, 18

Motion was made by Terrie Herr and seconded by Julie Giroux to open discussion on Article 7.

Robert Baum questioned on page 15 under Prop Tax Reimb over paid increase of \$17,130.43. Noreen commented that each year residents that don't file their homestead declarations they don't get the right tax rate and we have to pay back.

Julie Giroux questioned on page 16 under police department, the actual 2019 was \$47,798.55 and the budget is \$56,215.00. Frank Sawicki commented that a new cruiser is necessary, and this vehicle will be designated for use within the town only.

Frank Doe questioned the fuel under 00-001-1512 and Frank Sawicki commented due to the purchase of the new vehicle, we anticipate an increase. Frank Doe also asked why the town's cruiser had been used for trips to Island Pond for policemen to get to his part-time job. Haven Haynes commented it will be discussed at the Selectboard meeting. Mike Daley asked if the board had considered contracting services from the State Police or Essex County Sheriff's department, and Greg Noyes commented we tried that and it didn't work out. Frank Sawicki added, it's our feeling that the town gets a more timely, personal response from our police department. Scott Leigh commented we have the Border Station here with approximately 50 officers, when we call they show up also. Does the sheriff department work 40 hours a week or 45? Greg commented they do appreciate the help they get from the Border Station. Terrie Herr commented there is a difference between federal and state laws; they can't do what Jeff can do. She also commented she had a few instances at the apartment house and both Jeff and Casey were very helpful, they not only showed up but helped with counseling. She also commented sometimes quality is better than dollars. Jeff said he could answer the question, they had 20 hours per week and was \$23,000 and it was 23 years ago.?

Shelley Forkey asked if the salaries are all included in the general budget. How is the increased determined, is it determined by the state? Every year the Federal government sets the living allowance and this year it is 1.6 %. Looking over the salaries it looks like most of them are doubled. Who determines the salaries? Frank commented, we do look at the Federal guidelines and some were 2% and some were up because of education. Benjamin Champagne questioned why some employees received more than others. Frank commented more education.

Chris Masson asked about the miscellaneous fees on page 15, we budgeted \$300 but we spent \$5,378.40 and Frank read the breakdown of the IRS penalty. Don't anticipate that again.

Odette Crawford page 17 #1801 under street lights we spent \$7,725 and didn't budget anything this year. Is this just a one time and did something happen? Greg commented we had to pay for materials and it is a one time. Haven Haynes commented it was to change everything over to the LED lighting and it is saving on the electricity as you can see was dropped over \$3,000.

Daniel Lepine asked if we still share the cost with Norton and Island Pond and the board said no.

Shelley Forkey asked if any revenues were generated by giving tickets. Haven Haynes commented under 1302 Page 19, traffic fines it shows \$964.62.

No further discussion, Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 7 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 8. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed Highway budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? pg 28, 29

Motion was made by Odette Crawford and seconded by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 8.

Odette Crawford commented the suggested tax rate is less and her question is on page 29 line 1512 signs \$2,000 and Haven Haynes commented our insurance company wanted us to get 6 pack signs for road work.

No further discussion took place. Moderator Wade asked for a vote.

Article 8 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 9. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan authorize the legislative body to appoint the municipal clerk as provided by 17 V.S.A. §2651 (e)

Motion was made by Julie Giroux and seconded by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 9.

Robert Baum asked where is this coming from and why change now? Frank Sawicki explained the board's concern that an occasion could arise where a newly elected clerk might not be fully qualified. If the positions are appointed we can establish a job description and be assured the appointee is qualified. Frank read the statute.

Benjamin Champagne asked if the change of procedure came from the fact that someone is running against a long serving incumbent. Frank Sawicki commented, hopefully the townspeople will trust them to appoint the best person. Vernon Crawford expressed his appreciation for anyone willing to run for office and said that someone running or being appointed for the first time should learn about the job before running for office.

Several commented that the issue is not who is running but about whether the voters would be willing to give the Selectboard authority to appoint someone for the positions rather than having them elected and training for any positions are available from a variety of sources.

Dan Johnson made a motion to combine Article 9 and Article 10 and to also vote by paper ballot.

Odette Crawford moved the question and asked for the articles to be combined so the public would only vote once and vote by paper ballot. After a show of hands, they supported combining the articles and voting by paper ballot. Articles 9 & 10 were refused, 85-25.

ARTICLE 10. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan authorize the legislative body to appoint the municipal clerk as provided by 17 V.S.A. §2651 (f)
See comments above

No further discussion took place. Moderator Wade asked for a vote.

Article 9 & 10 did not pass.

ARTICLE 11. To transact any business that may legally come before the meeting.

Selectboard asked how to deal with a 2015 International truck used for plowing and sanding. Haven Haynes commented it has cost us over \$41,000 in repairs and we have a quote for a new Ford F-550 for about \$100,000 that could be financed for five years and this does not appear in the budget and we'd like some opinions about how to move forward. Odette asked about the reserve fund for such issues and learned that there is a \$47,392 balance in the highway fund and commented this means we should only have to borrow about \$50,000 and there will be more in the reserve fund after tonight. Scott Leigh commented that we need to buy a bigger truck; other towns use 2.5 ton trucks. Other suggestions included purchase of extended warranties, purchasing used vehicles or leasing.

Judith Masson wanted to take the opportunity to thank everyone for coming, great turnout.

No other business to transact.

Motion was made by Odette Crawford to adjourn meeting and seconded by Noreen Labrecque,

The 2020 Annual Town Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by:

Diana Rancourt 3/11/2020

Approved by:

A. MORRIS WADZ 3/11/2020