

**Town of Monkton
Minutes of Annual Town Meeting
March 3, 2018**

**ARTICLE 1 AND ARTICLE 7 TO BE VOTED ON BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ON TUESDAY MARCH 6, 2018 AT
THE MONKTON FIRE STATION POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7:00AM AND WILL CLOSE AT 7:00PM**

There were 124 in attendance

Article 1: To Elect all Town Officers by Australian Ballot

Article 1 will be voted on by The Australian Ballot to elect all town officers by Australian Ballot on Tuesday March 6, 2018 at the Monkton Volunteer Fire Department, polls will be open from 7:00am to 7:00pm.

Article 2: To received and act on the Report of the auditors as submitted

John McNerney moved to receive and act on the report of the auditors as submitted, Mark Rickner seconded this motion.

Roger Wallace requested clarification on a potential discrepancy of \$135,600. Bill Joos and Kathy Nolan explained that there is not a \$135,600 discrepancy and the reports are audited monthly. Delinquent taxes go in to general fund and are distributed accordingly and to keep in mind that the delinquent taxes are not just the current years delinquent taxes, but previous years as well. Roger Wallace suggested that the delinquent taxes received be broken down by year.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 3: To set the date for the payment of Real Estate taxes to be paid to the Town Treasurer

John McNerney moved to set the date for the payment of Real Estate Taxes to be paid to the town Treasurer by November 15, 2018 by 5:00pm, Mark Rickner seconded. Tom Steadman clarified payments received after November 15 will be considered late as last years' date was November 16. It was determined that this was correct.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 4: Shall the Town empower the Selectboard to set the Tax Rate when the Grand list is finalized?

Roger Wallace Moved to empower the Selectboard to set the tax rate when the grand list is finalized, Sam Burr seconded. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Jeff Fortin moved to recess for 20 minutes to allow state representatives to speak, John McNerney seconded. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

The Meeting recessed for 20 minutes.

Jeff Fortin moved to allow 20 minutes more for Q&A from the state representatives, Deb Gaynor seconded this motion. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

The meeting recessed for 20 minutes.

Moved by Liz Pecor to return from recess to town meeting, Alan Finkbinder seconded.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 5: Shall the Voters approve the following requests by various social service agencies?

a. Addison County Community Action Group (HOPE)	\$ 1,250.00
b. Addison County Diversion & Community Justice	\$ 550.00
c. Counseling Service of Addison County.	\$ 1,600.00
d. Addison County Home Health & Hospice	\$ 1,946.00
e. Addison County Parent/Child Center	\$ 1,600.00
f. Addison County Readers (Imag'nLibraryLiteracy)	\$ 450.00
g. Addison County Transit Resources	\$ 850.00
h. American Red Cross	\$ 250.00
i. Bristol Family Center	\$ 250.00
j. Bristol Recreation Department	\$ 2,000.00
k. Bristol Rescue Squad	\$ 5,000.00
l. Champlain Valley Agency on Aging	\$ 1,100.00
m. Elderly Services	\$ 800.00
n. Green Up Vermont	\$ 150.00
o. Homeward Bound Humane Society	\$ 250.00
p. Hospice Volunteer Services	\$ 300.00
q. John W. Graham Emergency Shelter	\$ 1,000.00
r. Lewis Creek Association	\$ 550.00
s. Monkton Mentors Program	\$ 500.00
t. Open Door Clinic	\$ 500.00
u. Otter Creek Natural Resources Conservation District	\$ 198.00
v. Retired & Senior Volunteer Program	\$ 460.00
w. Rural Fire Protection Program	\$ 100.00
x. Vergennes Rescue Squad	\$ 600.00
y. Vermont Adult Learning	\$ 700.00
z. Vermont Center for Independent Living	\$ 195.00
aa. Women Safe (Women in Crisis)	\$ 1,250.00
Total:	\$24,399.00

Wendy Sue Harper moved to vote as a block, Deb Gaynor seconded.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Heather Bessette moved that Article 5 c. be corrected to CSAC (Counseling Service of Addison County) as Addison County Counseling Service Inc. is not correct. Mark Rickner seconded.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Heather Bessette noted that the appropriation for CSAC had increased by \$100. This is the first time in 12 years that an increase was requested and that CSAC has logged 420 hours of service to the town of Monkton.

Roger Wallace doesn't support the American Red Cross donation as he feels their fundraising has been misappropriated in recent past.

Mark Ricker noted that the American Red Cross was present at one fire scene and appreciates the support that has been provided.

Val Mullin mentioned that Twice as Nice in Hinesburg is not requesting money but is accepting donations for the food shelf as well as volunteers.

Boy Scout Troop Leader noted they also were not seeking monetary donation, but to remind people that the Have a Heart food shelf in Bristol and the Boy Scout troop were having a food drive and had handed out donation bags to be turned in next week.

The total amount of \$24,399.00 was voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 6: Shall the voters approve the following sums of money for the listed purposes:

a. Salaries and General Expenses	\$ 345,979.00
b. Highway Expenses	\$ 832,758.74
c. Monkton Volunteer Fire Department	\$ 36,000.00
d. Russell Memorial Library	\$ 30,800.00
e. Monkton Museum and Historical Society	\$ 1,000.00
f. Recreation Fund	\$ 4,500.00
g. Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund	\$ 35,000.00
h. Highway Capital Equipment Fund	\$ 30,000.00
i. Municipal Building Fund	\$ 40,000.00

Total: \$1,356,037.74

John Phillips moved to vote as a block, Mark Rickner seconded this motion.

Chelsea Smiley asked about the services received by the library. Melanie Cote clarified that information can be found in the Town report.

Nate Palmer asked if the Energy committee was in the general expense report or if they were missed. Stephen Pilcher clarified that they were not missed and were in the standard budget.

George Roy asked if the highway expenses contained any grant totals. Logan LeCompte noted that there were 3 grants totaling approximately \$50,000.00. George Roy asked if there was a certain way

these funds were divided. Stephen Pilcher directed Mr. Roy to page 54 and 55 of the town report for clarification.

Voted by voice in the Affirmative

Article 7: Shall the voters adopt the Unified Planning Document for the Town of Monkton, in its entirety, as amended and adopted by the Town of Monkton Selectboard on January 26, 2018.

Article 7 will be voted on by The Australian Ballot to elect all town officers by Australian Ballot on Tuesday March 6, 2018 at the Monkton Volunteer Fire Department, polls will be open from 7:00am to 7:00pm.

Article 8: Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to borrow money from time to time and pledge the credit of the town from the past and present indebtedness as may be necessary for them.

Roger Wallace moved to authorize, Tim Earle seconded.

Tom Steadman asked whether the amount to be borrowed should be capped. Stephen Pilcher indicated that the town normally needs to request a tax anticipation note, usually requested in August to hold the town over to November. Mr. Pilcher asked Bill Joos how much, when requested, are the notes for. Mr. Joos indicated that the notes vary between \$200,000.00 and \$400,000.00 but one has not been need for a "couple of years". Ralph Fitzgerald asked what the percentage rate was when the town needs to request a note. Mr. Joos indicated that the rate does vary depending how much and when the note is requested, but the last note that was taken was to the best of his knowledge \$1.95%.

Voted by voice in the Affirmative

Article 9: WHEREAS extreme and erratic temperatures, increasingly severe storms, a rise in tick-borne disease, and threats to farmers and maple sugar makers clearly demonstrate that climate change is one of the most urgent problems facing our state, nation, and world, and

WHEREAS the State of Vermont has goal in the Comprehensive Energy Plan to achieve 90% of it's energy from renewable sources by 2050, yet is making insufficient progress towards achieving that goal;

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

- 1. That the town urges the State of Vermont to:**
 - a. Halt any new or expanded fossil fuel infrastructure, including but not limited to energy pipelines;**
 - b. Firmly commit to at least 90% renewable energy for all people in Vermont, with firm interim deadlines; and,**
 - c. Ensure that the transition to renewable energy is fair and equitable for all residents, with no harm to the marginalized groups or rural communities.**
- 2. That the Town will do our part to meet these demands by committing to efforts such as:**

- a. **Protecting town lands from fossil fuel infrastructure denying easements or agreements for any pipelines crossing town lands;**
- b. **Weatherizing town buildings and schools.;**
- c. **Enlisting state support to install rooftop solar on town and school buildings;**
- d. **Other initiatives to improve residents' quality of life while helping to reduce overall energy use.**

S.Mahony moved Article 9 seconded by J. Kelliher.

Melanie Peyser read a letter on behalf of Rebecca Gould. (See attached)

Mark Rickner moved to amend article 9 by adding "2e" to say "in order to maintain character of the town, the town must limit industrial scale solar and wind projects." Seconded by Deb Mager Rickner

Melanie Peyser feels it is important that the town and Selectboard aid in meeting that goal.

Jeff Fortin reminded that there will be future meetings where this will be discussed.

Deb Rickner asked if the wording of the amendment be discussed, it was determined that it cannot be changed once moved and seconded and can only be changed once the motion has been voted down.

Amendment by M.Rickner voted by voice in the negative.

Jennifer Stanley Moved to strike from Article 9 after 'Now, therefore, be it resolved', and striking 1 a., b., and c. as well as 2 a., b., c., and d. Motion was seconded.

Mark Rickner moved to further amend Article 9, section 1 to say "The town urges the state of Vermont to meet that goal" and strike the remaining. Seconded by Bill Martin.

Amendment by M.Rickner to amendment by J. Stanley being considered voted by voice in the negative.

Jerry Urban mentioned the lobbying pressures.

Roger Wallace moved to table this motion to recess to lunch and resume after lunch. Seconded by Mark Rickner.

Voted by voice in the affirmative. Jeff Fortin called for a count.

Motion passed with a vote of 53 to 36, recessed for lunch at 12:20pm

John McNerney suggested that the meeting recess for 30 minutes, to resume at 12:50.

Roger Wallace moved and Robyn Stanley seconded to return from recess. The meeting resumed at 12:50pm.

It was requested that amendments be submitted in writing.

Jerry Schwartz called the question on the amendment by J. Stanley.

Calling the Question on the amendment by J. Stanley was voted by voice in the affirmative.

Amendment by J.Stanley voted by voice in the negative.

Sue Mahoney as this article written this is an advisory and pressed the state to move toward renewable energy and asked the state take it seriously. This is Non-binding, and it slows down the process. Mrs. Mahoney referenced the Town Plan on page 31 work toward phasing out fossil fuels and work toward renewable resources.

Roger Wallace works in renewable energy and feels this is a poorly worded article and even though it's non-binding, it could still have a negative impact and hurt the town.

Mark Rickner moved to Strike 1.a and 2.a., Eugenie Doyle seconded

Jerry Urban asked about the effects of fracking.

Roger Wallace spoke in regards to fracking.

Melanie Peyser noted that VT Gas is not receiving gas just from Canada and it is also coming from PA, western NY and Michigan and there is gas coming from other effected areas of the US.

Amendment by M. Rickner to strike 1.a and 2.a voted by voice in the affirmative.

A hand count was requested.

Voted by hand in affirmative 46 - 30.

Jeff Fortin called the question for the article and ending the discussion.

Calling the Questions on the article was voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 9 was passed as amended by voice vote.

Article 9 as passed:

WHEREAS extreme and erratic temperatures, increasingly severe storms, a rise in tick-borne disease, and threats to farmers and maple sugar makers clearly demonstrate that climate change is one of the most urgent problems facing our state, nation, and world, and

WHEREAS the State of Vermont has goal in the Comprehensive Energy Plan to achieve 90% of it's energy from renewable sources by 2050, yet is making insufficient progress towards achieving that goal;

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

- 1. That the town urges the State of Vermont to:**
 - a. Firmly commit to at least 90% renewable energy for all people in Vermont, with firm interim deadlines; and,**
 - b. Ensure that the transition to renewable energy is fair and equitable for all residents, with no harm to the marginalized groups or rural communities.**
- 2. That the Town will do our part to meet these demands by committing to efforts such as:**
 - a. Weatherizing town buildings and schools.;**
 - b. Enlisting state support to install rooftop solar on town and school buildings;**
 - c. Other initiatives to improve residents' quality of life while helping to reduce overall energy use.**

Jane Palmer asked for a response from the Selectboard regarding the VT Gas contract, the rates, financial cost for hook ups, and that no survey will happen until after the pipe is in the ground.

Article 10: To transact any other business proper to come before this meeting.

- a. Eugenie Doyle say to the Selectboard that energy and the discussion is incomplete and the town has things to say regarding this matter. She would like the school to not pursue fossil fuel conversion.
- b. Jeff Fortin asked that the 2 Selectboard candidates rise and identify themselves. Bill Martin and Tim Earle both spoke of their desire to serve the Town on the Selectboard.
- c. **Nina Badger made a motion to move town meeting back to Tuesdays. John Phillips seconded this motion.** Stephen Pilcher clarified that this is a non-binding vote and it could be warned and voted at the next annual town meeting. John Phillip asked Stephen Pilcher if there could be voted at a time other than Town Meeting. It was determined that by statute it has to be held at a Town Meeting.

Jennifer Stanley noted that there is a concern that having town meeting while school is in session.

Stephen Pilcher also noted that parking is an issue when school is in session when meetings are held on Tuesdays.

Jeff Fortin noted that employees can not be denied attending town meeting, but employers do not need to pay them.

Jane Palmer suggested a Tuesday evening as Hinesburg holds their meetings then.

It was asked if there was a significant difference with number of voter between Town Meeting in that were held on Tuesdays and the current meetings held on Saturdays. J. McNerney responded that attendance this year was down at 124. Previous meetings' attendance was generally in the 140-150 range whether on Saturday or Tuesday. With the exception of this year's drop, the total headcount was basically the same between the two days: some different faces, but similar totals.

Voted by voice in the negative.

- d. Deb Rickner made a pitch for volunteers for Bristol Rescue.
- e. Deb Gaynor, ACSWMD Representative, commented that there are discussion of creating a regional drop off in the county to supplement or replace the town drop off. She has directed residents to the paper or online Survey.
- f. Deb Gaynor wanted to thank and recognize Henry Boisse for his service to the Selectboard and the Town.

- g. Susan Mahoney talked about Meals on Wheels, and they are in need of more drivers, and she has handouts for those who are interested.
- h. Laura Farrell directed to map for wildlife sightings and she wanted to recognize all those who serve on the town.
- i. Lee Kauppila thanked those who have donated and volunteered to the Monkton wood bank and for the help from HOPE. This is the second season of operation, the firewood has pretty much been exhausted, the wood is stored on Willowell. The signs were made by the Methodist church. John McNerney mentioned that we were talking with neighboring towns about moving to a 5 town regional wood bank system. He clarified that we still do have some seasoned wood remaining and available to families in need, and asked for those interested in volunteering or donating to get in touch with him or Lee.
- j. It was asked if there is spring water that can be piped to the road.
- k. Jennifer Stanley wanted to point out that unified budget can be found in the “yellow” book and the budget is for the 5 town area and the numbers will look different from previous votes.
- l. Stephen Pilcher noted that Henry Boisse will be missed and he also talked about the municipal building committee and he is excited about reviewing the ideas that have been submitted.
- m. Jessica Demeritt – recycling center is located on States Prison Hollow Road on second and fourth Saturdays. This has been traditionally run by 4H students and now the town is in need of volunteers for at least 5 Saturdays. Thanks to Steve Pilcher, Amy Moody, and John McNerney for their help. She also encouraged people to review what can and cannot be recycled.
- n. Peter Close asked what the position of the Town is regarding distribution of natural gas in Monkton and if there is any fiscal benefit to the town if accepted or declined. Stephen Pilcher explained that an MOU was negotiated between VT Gas and the town of Monkton. The details of the MOU were reiterated. Within 2 years the town of Monkton would have natural gas distribution. If VT Gas was coming through Monkton, the town would have the service, and to his understanding the thought of getting paid by VT Gas to host the transmission pipeline was not what the Town wanted when the MOU was negotiated. The Selectboard has provided written notice that they support natural gas distribution in Monkton.

Peter Closed asked if the distribution line is taxed. Stephen Pilcher answered that yes, it was taxed, and he provided rough numbers.

Eugenie Doyle wanted clarification on VT Gas as to who the service could be made available to. Roger Wallace provided some clarification
- o. Ryan Adams from Boy Scout Troop 525 for his Eagle Project wanted to replace current town announcement sign with electric LED sign. He wanted to make sure there is support from the

town, since an Eagle Scout in Bristol received initial approval from their Select Board, but the project was canceled at the last minute in the face of opposition from some in the town. He asked how the town residents felt about such a sign here. His proposal was met with applause and expressions of support.

- p. Lee Mahoney noted that the Planning Commission is in the process of rewriting the Town Plan and urged people to get in touch with the Planning Commission if they had concerns or suggestions.
- q. Ken Wheeling suggested the town or the school invest in a better sound system.

Stephen Pilcher moved to adjourn at 1:52pm, Susan DeSimone seconded.

Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Monkton Town Clerk

Received and Recorded

on 10 April, 2018 at 12:30 AM/PM



Stephen Pilcher, Chair Selectboard



Anne Layn, Vice Chair Selectboard



William Martin, Member Selectboard

Attest: 

Sharon Gomez, Town Clerk

Monkton Town Clerk received



John McNerney, Member Selectboard



Roger Parker, Member Selectboard