

**Town of Monkton**  
**Minutes of Annual Town Meeting**  
**March 2, 2019 10:00am**

Ken Wheeling, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. There were 102 citizens 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 5, 2019 at the Monkton Volunteer Fire Department. Polls will be open from 7:00am to 7:00pm.**

**ARTICLE 2: To receive and act on the Report of the Auditors as submitted.**

**Jerry Schwartz moved Article 2. Seconded by Deb Gaynor.** Discussion ensued.

Steve Pilcher noted that the in the town meeting minutes from 2018 there are 2 pages missing. They belong between pages 12 & 13 in the town report. Sharon Gomez has copies of pages that are missing. The correct version is online.

Laura Farrell noted a type on page 23 in ANAC yearly report last paragraph. It should read 3.5 million instead of 3,500.

The moderator called to vote to receive and act on the Report of the Auditors as submitted. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**ARTICLE 3: To set the time and date for the payment of Real Estate Taxes to be paid to the Town Treasurer.**

**Roger Wallace moved to set date as November 15th. Charlie Huizenga seconded.** Discussion ensued. Roger Wallace asked that when town collects taxes are both town and school district taxes collected at the same time? When town collects school taxes, he wants to make sure they are done correctly under state statute. Kathy Nolan stated that Mount Abe Unified School district sends the town a draft bill. The Town treasurer reviews it and compares the assessed value that we have vs. what they have. Final bill comes in April. Town does not go line by line in state statute. Roger Wallace feels that the school district didn't warn their budget hearing properly.

Mark Rickner was at school meeting. He stated that there was not a full budget in report. People wanted to see the actual budget. The report that was received by the public was not accepted at that

meeting.

**Steve Pilcher offered an amendment to the article to set the time for collection of taxes at 5pm. Mark Rickner seconded.**

Bill Joos stated that on page 27 of the Town Report in a box at bottom points out a new deadline for people who mail in taxes.

Roger Wallace asked how that can be specified if we haven't voted on it yet. Bill Joos noted that it says "subject to approval at town meeting".

The Town Moderator called a vote to set the time deadline for tax collection at 5:00 pm. **Voice voted in affirmative.**

The Moderator called a vote set the date taxes are due to November 15, 2019. More discussion ensued.

Roger Wallace made a request that the Selectboard makes sure that when tax bills are sent out all components of the bill have been properly adhered to by state statute even if it needs to be reviewed by Town Attorney.

Andy Letourneau stated that given Bill Joos' clarification if an amendment is required. Steve Pilcher noted that it does not as there was a change to property tax policy at a Selectboard meeting in the last few months.

The moderator called to vote to set the tax collection deadline to November 15<sup>th</sup>. **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?**

**Mark Rickner moved. Robin Hobbs seconded.** There was no discussion.

**Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**ARTICLE 5: Shall the Voters approve the following requests by various Agencies?**

a) Addison County Community Action Group (Hope)	\$1,250.00
b) Addison County Court Diversion & Community Justice	\$ 550.00
c) AgeWell	\$1,100.00
d) Addison County Home, Health & Hospice, Inc.	\$1,946.00
e) Addison County Parent/Child Center	\$1,600.00
f) Addison County Readers	\$ 450.00
g) Addison County Transit Resources	\$ 850.00
h) American Red Cross	\$ 250.00
i) Bristol Family Center	\$ 250.00
j) Bristol Recreation Dept.	\$2,000.00
k) Bristol Rescue Squad	\$5,000.00
l) Counseling Service of Addison County Inc.	\$1,600.00
m) Elderly Services Inc.	\$ 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 Area Rescue Squad Inc.	\$ 600.00
y) Vermont Adult Learning	\$ 700.00
z) Vermont Center for Independent Living – Addison	\$ 195.00
aa) Women Safe Inc.	\$1,250.00

**Total:** **\$ 24,399.00**

**Roger Wallace moved that the total request be voted on in a block. Mark Rickner seconded.**

**Jeff Fortin moved to make an amendment to line K. Amend to full \$7500 that Bristol Rescue asked for. Deb Mager-Rickner seconded.**

Discussion ensued. Jeff Fortin believes we should give full amount this year. Bristol Rescue is the main rescue for the Town and believes the extra money can go a long way to help.

Roger Wallace asked if we need to amend total amount first.

The Moderator called a vote to raise Bristol Rescue Squad's request to \$7500. **Voice voted in the affirmative.**

**Roger Wallace made a motion amend original motion to vote on to raise it \$2500 for a total of \$26,899.00. Mark Rickner seconded.**

Discussion ensued. Steve Pilcher pointed out that on page 86-87 (thanks to Bailee Layn Gordon) a summary of social service requests.

The moderator called for a vote. **Voice voted in the affirmative.**

Jeff Fortin made a request of Selectboard to give Bristol Rescue exactly what they ask for.

**Kathleen Bushey moved to accept \$26,899 for the block of expenses. Andy Letourneau seconded.**

Anne Layn noted that the Selectboard asked for letters from social service agencies noting why they are asking for the dollars they are asking for.

Roger Wallace asked if we have an identical motion on the floor.

Ken called for a vote to approve \$26,899.00. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**The Moderator entertained a motion to recess to hear from our local state legislators. Deb Gaynor motion to recess to hear legislators. Mark Rickner seconded. Voted by voice in the affirmative.** Meeting went into recess at 10:30.

Chris Bray, Caleb Elder, Ruth Hardy and Mari Cordes all spoke to the attendees.

The Moderator gave permission to school board members to speak for 5 minutes.

Dawn Griswold & Jen Stanley spoke to attendees.

Meeting reconvened at 11:10.

Ken Wheeling read State Statute regarding amending motions.

**ARTICLE 6: Shall the voters approve the following sums of money for the listed Purposes?**

**Mark Rickner made a motion to move as total. Bernie Wisnowski seconded.**

Discussion followed.

Jeff Fortin asked if the budget allocated extra funds for salt. Highway Foreman, Ben Hollwedel said it's hard to anticipate how much salt need, but it is bumped up 5%.

Eugenie Doyle suggested not moving as a block. She recommends voting down the motion so the budget can be discussed piece by piece.

John Phillips asked about motion we are voting on.

Mark Rickner noted that people could still discuss individual requests.

Anne Layn asked if we vote as block and discuss individual lines, can amendments be made to individual lines.

Steve Pilcher's preference would be in agreement with Eugenie Doyle and would rather the motion be divided.

The Moderator called a vote to vote on Article 6 as a block – **Voted by voice in the negative.**

**Steve Pilcher made a motion to divide the question. Scott Gordon seconded.** Discussion followed.

The Moderator called a vote to vote to divide the question. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**6a) Salaries and General Expenses \$357,430.70**

**Jeff Fortin made a motion to accept the line as noted. John Brace seconded.**

Discussion followed.

Mark Rickner asked what was the primary reason for the increase.

Steve Pilcher noted the following increases in spending - \$20,000 in the building committee line to hire

architect, an extra \$4,600 for property maintenance since Town Hall is going to need new furnace and \$4,500 in additional computer equipment and software for IT support. The Treasurer salary was also increased. All other increases were less than \$1,000.

Amy Driscoll asked if we are voting on individual items or just hearing about them. She also asked about the \$20,000 to hire an architect on something that has not been voted on by voters. Steve Pilcher explained it was for this year's expenses to develop a plan.

Peter Straub, member of Town Hall Building Committee, noted that last year the Town approved \$40,000 to go to municipal building fund. This year the Committee is asking for \$20,000 for an architect which is shown in this year's budget. There is an additional \$20,000 request for the Municipal Building Fund (line I of this article).

Mark Driscoll asked about why there are two \$20,000 requests. Bill Joos referred people to page 41 of the Town Report. Municipal building fund as of 2018 had \$80,000 and change.

Brett Griswold asked why we are adding \$20,000 to general expenses if we have \$80,000 in buildings fund. Steve Pilcher said the municipal building committee is asking for a total of \$40,000; \$20,000 to go into fund to sit and save until such time it is needed. The other \$20,000 is for design work/architect to be spent now.

Mark Rickner noted that if the house wants to, it can make a recommendation that in future that if money to be spent already has a fund, it should be spent out of that existing fund and be listed as an expense. Mark makes that recommendation.

Kristin Blanchette noted that if we had built a new Town Hall we wouldn't need a new furnace. Kristin noted that town hall is not set up well for the work that is being done there and is going to need maintenance over time that will cost taxpayers money.

Sam Burr as vice chair of ANAC hopes that this recommendation is only for the building fund because ANAC works on different process and Mark's recommendation would be difficult to work with for that committee.

Moderator called for vote to expend \$357,430.70 for Salaries & General Expenses. **Vote passed by voice in affirmative.**

#### **b) Highway Expenses \$906,171.94**

Charlie Huizenga moved. Bailee Layn-Gordon seconded. Discussion followed.

Jeff Fortin asked the Road Commissioner for update. Commissioner is a non-resident. House gave him permission to speak.

Ben Hollwedel addressed the questions at hand.

The moderator called for a vote to spend \$906,171.94 for highway expenses. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**c) Monkton Volunteer Fire Department \$45,000.00**

Mark Rickner made motion to accept. John McNerney seconded. Discussion ensued.

Steve Pilcher would like to hear from MVFD to explain the additional \$9,000 over last year. Curtis Layn addressed the question. Curtis mentioned that they historically overspend what they ask. Big donations have been diminishing. Going to need a new fire truck in the future and would like to not have to borrow too much.

Steve Pilcher noted on page 65 of Town Report, the MVFD budget, that revenues were \$45,000 from the Town, \$12,000 donations to cover \$57,000 in expenses. He asked if this would result in \$6,000 added to the truck fund next year? Curtis explained that fundraisers/donations have been lower than in the past. Money voted on today the Fire Department won't see until December of 2019.

Roger Wallace also noted page 65 asked about the doubling of budget for cleaning supplies, heating etc. Curtis Layn noted that cleaning went up is because they hired a cleaner vs doing it themselves. Bill Joos as town treasurer, formerly FD treasurer, thought heating fuel increased because in Fall 2017 MVFD did pre-buy for fuel and this does not appear in 2018 numbers. Does not believe there was a pre-buy and was purchased at delivery. Roger Wallace asked where do the truck replacement funds appear in the budget. Curtis Layn responded. Roger Wallace said he would support seeing and funding a line.

Jeff Fortin also would like to see a FD truck fund. Anne Layn noted that FD has their own budget. She noted the extra money asked for would go to start/fund a truck fund.

Jeff Fortin made recommendation to Selectboard for a separate line item for a few thousand to put toward new truck.

Matt Dupont, member of MVFD spoke. He stated that the Fire Department is incorporation not owned by Town, but is partially funded by Town. Fire Department owns trucks, not town.

Jeff Fortin would like to see a separate line.

**Jen Stanley would like to call the question.**

Moderator noted question has been called. Vote needs to be called.

Moderator called a vote to end questions and proceed to vote. **Voted by voice in the affirmative**

Moderator called to vote for MVFD \$45,000. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**d) Russell Memorial Library \$21,683.47**

Roger Wallace moved, Jane Low seconded. Discussion followed.

Jane Low spoke as Board member of the library and explained the budget request. She referred people to page 80 of the Town Report.

Moderator called to vote for \$21,683.47 for the Russell Memorial Library. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**e) Monkton Museum and Historical Society \$1,000.00**

Robin Hopps moved. Deb Gaynor seconded. There was no discussion  
**Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**f) Recreation Fund \$4,500.00**

Pete Aube moved. Charlie Huizengea seconded.

Kristin Blanchette noted that many Monkton students are on the Mt. Abe girls' basketball team who are in the State semi-finals Monday and greatly benefited from the Monkton Recreation Dept.

Moderator called to vote \$4500 for the Recreation Fund. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**g) Agricultural and Natural Areas Fund \$50,000.00**

Deb Gaynor moved. Sue Mahoney seconded. Discussion ensued.

John Phillips proposed an amendment to lower the amount by \$20,000 to make amount \$30,000. Jen Stanley seconded.

John noted this has been very good program. As of now the fund has balance of \$122,000. Asked if

the group ever going to need \$150,000 in the course of one year. He also stated that he thinks it's time to go back and review whole program.

Laure Farrell asked to speak and is not a resident. John McNerney moved to allow her to speak. Jaime Schulze seconded. Laura gave overview over the fund.

Peter Dufault spoke in favor of ANAC.

John Phillips wants to emphasize that he is not talking about not supporting ANAC. Just isn't sure they need the dollars asked for.

Roger Wallace said that of the few funds we spend money on that leverages other funds, and takes property out of development; that this is one rare fund that in the long run saves money.

Moderator called to vote to amend to lower the amount to \$30,000. **Voted by voice in the negative.** Motion is lost.

Moderator called to vote \$50,000 for ANAC fund. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

#### **h) Highway Capital Equipment Fund \$30,000.00**

Deb Gaynor moved. John McNerney seconded. Discussion followed.

Andy Letourneau asked where in report this is. Steve Pilcher stated page 39. Kathy Nolan noted that operations of capital projects is summarized on page 39. For details on balances as of end of 2018 look at page 42.

Moderator called vote for 30K to Highway Capital Fund. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

#### **i) Municipal Building Fund \$20,000.00**

Deb Gaynor moved, Mark Rickner seconded. There was no discussion.

Moderator called vote for \$20,000 for the Municipal Building Fund. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**Total: \$1,435,786.11 voted on.**

Jeff Fortin made motion to recess for 30 minutes for lunch. Eugenie Doyle seconded. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

Meeting recessed at 12:20pm.

Jerry Schwarz moved to reconvene Town Meeting. Tim Earle seconded. Voted by voice in the affirmative. Meeting reconvened at 12:53pm.

**ARTICLE 7: Shall the voters approve a sum not to exceed \$146,000 for the purchase of a tandem dump truck equipped for winter road maintenance for the Highway Department?**

Jerry Schwarz moved. Tim Earle seconded. Discussion followed.

Mark Rickner asked if this 146K is in addition to the fund or separate from reserve fund. Steve Pilcher addressed the question.

Jerry Fortin asked question regarding why asking for full amount and not out of the fund. Steve Pilcher replied. Bill Joos mentioned pages 33 & 34 regarding long term debt and items related to equipment. Steve Pilcher explained the Selectboard's process regarding deciding whether or not to take loan. Ben Hollwedel. noted that amount includes trade in value.

Kathy Nolan asked to clarify total cost of truck. Ben Hollwedel said total cost of truck is approximately \$200,000 and got approximately \$52,000 as a trade-in.

Moderator called vote to approve not to exceed \$146,000. **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

**ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters of the Town of Monkton recommend to the Selectboard that they consider the viability of a Town Energy Fund.**

Tim Earle moved. Ivor Hughes seconded. Discussion followed.

Jeff Fortin asked what fund is and what it is use for.

Nate Palmer, chair of Energy committee explained roll of the committee and the fund.

Ivor Hughes spoke in favor of article.

Jen Stanley is confused by structure of article. Not clear why we need to take action as there is no monies being requested.

Roger Wallace supports that the Selectboard consider the viability of a fund.

Steve Pilcher noted that the Selectboard would like to see mission statement and a procedure for spending. The ANAC Committee could be used as a model.

Jane Palmer stated that the Energy Committee could use some new members. She noted that VPR did a recent program about a similar program in Maine.

Moderator called for vote. **Voted by voice in the affirmative**

**ARTICLE 9: 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.**

Tim Earle moved. Mark Rickner seconded. Discussion followed.

Ian Shultze asked if this has a cap. Wording seems open ended. Bill Martin stated that the Selectboard can't spend money that hasn't been voted on.

Moderator called for a vote: **Voted by voice in the affirmative.**

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

Anne Layn introduced the new Highway Foreman, Ben Hollwedel

Jeff Fortin stated that he has had recent communication with our legislators regarding young people not getting involved with community government. He wants to encourage young people to get involved in the Town.

Steve Pilcher noted that there are 2 towns in Addison County that are increasing in population - Middlebury and Monkton.

Deb Gaynor asked for a show of hands of how many people here on Saturday could not make it on a Tuesday. She stated that she misses having the school children come to observe meeting.

Kristen Farrell stated how proud she is of our community and what it does. Stated that she values Town Meeting Day and thanked everyone who makes it happen as well as the voting on Tuesday.

Ivor Hughes would like to see a synopsis of Monkton Central School in the Town Report next year. Steve Pilcher noted that it is the auditors that put together the town report.

Steve Pilcher thanked the Girl Scouts for lunch.

John McNerney gave some information about the Monkton Wood Bank. He also noted that there will be a quick informational discussion about the possibility of a town forest in Monkton following Town Meeting.

Mark Rickner noted that as of head of service of Monkton First Response, they are always looking for people to join.

Eric Adams with Boy Scouts noted that Ryan Adams, Eagle Candidate, is going to replace the flag pole at the fire station.

Bailee Layn-Gordon gave information about a 4-H Group for the 5 Towns that meets in Bristol.

Pete Aube made a motion to adjourn. Mark Rickner seconded.

**Voted by voice in the affirmative.** Meeting adjourned at 1:25pm.

**Monkton Town Clerk**  
**Received and Recorded**  
on \_\_\_\_\_ March, 2019 at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Stephen Pilcher, Chair Selectboard**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Anne Layn , Vice Chair Selectboard**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Marikate Kelley, Member Selectboard**

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sharon Gomez, Town Clerk**  
**Monkton Town Clerk received**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**William Martin, Member Selectboard**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**John McNerney, Member Selectboard**