

Town of Brookline
Annual Town Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Moderator David Parker Jr. David proceeds to read the preamble to the warning

TOWN MEETING:

Article 1. To Elect A Moderator

Dan Seiden nominates David Parker, Jr.; David informs the public that to second a nomination is not required for nominations. No other nominations submitted. David Parker Jr. elected Moderator.

David acknowledges the presence of State Representatives Partridge and Trieber and their desire to address the public.

Doug Wellman motions to suspend the meeting for a presentation from local Legislator Representatives Carolyn Partridge and Matt Trieber. The motion is seconded by Cynthia Nau – All in favor.

TOWN MEETING SUSPENDED:

Carolyn Partridge speaks: Carolyn calls attention to the fact there are handouts available in the back of the room which contain the latest Legislative news along with all contact information. Carolyn comments on the state budget for FY15 and the fact there is a current \$70 million budget gap, but stresses that they have always been able to balance their budget (although not required by Vermont's constitution) by sessions end. On the bright side of things Carolyn, who serves as Chair of the Agriculture and Forest Products Committee points out that continued use of locally produced foods (Farm to Plate Plan) and products has outpaced their predictions and has helped Vermont's job growth and economy substantially. She goes on to state that the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative, which stimulates agricultural and forest based industries with land use grants has also been successful by transitioning more people off of public assistance into employment. Carolyn turns the presentation over to Representative Matt Trieber. Matt, who serves on the Human Services Committee explains that in difficult and challenging times budget cuts seem to be initiated in Human Services. To ameliorate this "benefits cliff" the House Human Services Committee is pursuing legislation that will allow individuals to keep more of their earned money and to pursue savings without negatively affecting their benefit level. They are seeking to create these changes in ways that do not cost additional state tax dollars by making minor benefit level adjustments. Both Carolyn and Matt now ask for questions from the public. Stan Noga Jr. inquires about tax appeals and their associated cost when they reach court levels. Tom Staats mentions there is pending legislation and suggest everyone pay attention to those bills. Carolyn states she will check into the bills status. Tom also asked why Carolyn and Matt did not support a ban on cell phone use. Matt explains that the bill in question does not go far enough in explaining what devices could be considered by definitions. Doug Wellman poses the question as to what budget cuts and tax increases will they support to balance this year's shortfall. Carolyn states she has not heard of any proposed increases other than a hike in property taxes. Tom Staats inquires as to what the state is doing to create better paying jobs in order to keep our youth that we have so heavily invested with education monies from seeking other states for employment. Carolyn says she sees a trend of youth gravitating back to Vermont for its beauty and lifestyle but it is an

ongoing struggle. Margaret Carusona reflects on the still lack of broadband in some locales. Certainly these problems need to be addressed. Next question is from Frank Rucker who points out frustration in regard to the town's possible purchase of the Brookline school. He seeks the support from both Representatives in regard to getting answers to inquiries as to what the town's liabilities might be. Carolyn stated she will look into the matter upon her return to Montpelier. Last question is from Kerry Bourne, in regards to a lack of town zoning, what support does the state offer in regard to development. Carolyn asked if the town has a town plan. Kerry replies yes- Carolyn says the town plan should address those concerns. Concerns of this nature should be handled locally. One quick last question from Stan Noga Jr. in regard to broadband coverage or the lack of it. Both Representatives say Montpelier is aware and trying their best to fulfil the Governor's promise of total state coverage. One very last question from Dan Sieden in regard to cell service, maybe more competition would create a more favorable attempt at solving these ongoing issues. Again the Representatives reiterate, Montpelier is aware and working toward total state coverage. At this point the Representatives thank their audience for the opportunity to have been able to share progress in Montpelier and head off to Athens, VT.

Town Meeting Resumed-

Moderator Parker spends some time reviewing housekeeping items and refers to Roberts Rules of meetings. He thanks Joyce Meehl who upon last minute notification was able arrange for the food during meeting break. He also notes a signup sheet is being circulated and request those in attendance to please sign.

Article II: To Elect A Town Clerk

Cynthia Nau nominates Guy Tanza. There are no other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Guy Tanza elected Town Clerk

Article III: To Elect A Town Treasurer

Julie Lavorgna nominates Somara Zwick. There are no other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Somara Zwick is elected Town Treasurer.

Article IV: To Elect A Collector of Delinquent Taxes

Marsha Omand nominates Guy Tanza. There are no other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Guy Tanza elected Collector of Delinquent Taxes.

Article V: To Elect All Other Officers Required By Law

Moderator Parker refers the public to page 4 in the Annual Report for listings of selectboard members. At this point Selectman Staats announces he has submitted a letter of resignation to the Selectboard . This now creates 5 seats to be voted on.

Selectboard:

1 year term to finish out the remaining 2 year seat just vacated by Tom Staats. This term will expire 2015. Doug Wellman nominated, respectfully declines. Stan Noga Jr. nominates Jim Rogers. No other nominations. Because there are no other nominees for this position a voice vote can be called for. All in favor. James Rogers elected Selectman.

Next is a two year seat currently held by Stan Noga Jr. This term will expire 2016. Frank Rucker nominates Stan Noga Jr. Stan takes this time to thank everyone for having the opportunity to have served and relates to the necessary time needed to fulfil the obligations of being a Selectman.He feels at this time he does not

have that time and declines the nomination for re-election to this term. Lyndall Boal wonders if Archie Clark might consider this term. Archie replies that at this time he will not seek this term and in fact at the conclusion of his current appointment will not have the time to serve any longer. After a number of nominations and declines Jim Rogers nominates Michael O'Donnell who accepts. No other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Michael O'Donnell elected to 2 year term.

By now it is 11:15 a.m. and normally time to suspend the Town portion of the meeting and go to the school portion of the meeting. Doug Wellman makes a motion to continue with the town portion to enable Selectboard elections to be completed. Gary Lavorgna seconds the motion. There is no discussions therefore the motion to continue town portion is voted upon. All in favor- Town meeting continues.

The next is a vacant 3 year seat (with 2 years left due to the resignation of Jason Butterfield) which expires 2016. Sherry Greene nominates Dorothy Maggio. No other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Dorothy Maggio elected to finish out 3 year term.

The following is a 3 year seat to which Bernardine Hoard was appointed to last year. This term expires 2015. State statutes allow an appointee to serve the current year and then run for election for the remainder of the term if they wish to continue to serve. Bernardine is nominated. There are no other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Bernardine Hoard is elected to finish out 3 year term.

The last seat available is currently held by Archie Clark who was appointed last year due to the resignation of David Parker Jr. This is a 3 year term which expires 2017. Archie states he will not be available for nomination. Moderator Parker on behalf of the town thanks Mr. Clark for all his continuous years of service to Brookline. Nominations are opened. Kendra Brooks nominated, but declines. Stan Noga Jr. nominates Bruce Mello. No other nominations. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Bruce Mello elected to 3 year term. Selectboard elections are completed. Moderator Parker suspends town meeting in order to go to the school board portion of the meeting. The time is 11:25 a.m.

Brookline School District 2014 Annual Meeting

David Parker Jr. reads the preamble to the School Board Portion of Town Meeting.

Article I: To elect a Moderator and Treasurer as required by law

David Parker Jr. nominated for Moderator- no other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. David Parker Jr. elected Brookline School District Moderator.

Dan Seiden nominates Lisa Rucker for School District Treasurer- no other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Lisa Rucker elected Brookline School District Treasurer.

Article II: To elect all Brookline School District Officers as required by law

Alecia O'Donnell makes a brief statement in regard to meeting dates and director duties. Moderator Parker points out that Brookline has approximately 50 students attending NewBrook School and needs representation from Brookline.

Dorothy Maggio is nominated. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Dorothy Maggio elected Brookline School District Director for a 3 year term ending 2017.

The next position is to fill a vacant 3 year term having one year left. Dorothy Maggio nominates Sherry Greene. There are no other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Sherry Greene elected Brookline School District Director. Term to end 2015.

Article III: To compensate the Directors and Treasurer of the Brookline School District \$200 each

It is moved to compensate the Directors and Treasurer \$200 each. The motion is seconded. Compensation approved.

Article IV: To authorize the School Directors to accept any donations of land, gifts, or monies for school use.

No discussions. Motion moved by Gary Lavorgna and seconded by Cynthia Nau. Approved by voice vote.

Article V: To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

Dan Seiden asks the question of whether Australian ballot can become the way to vote on the Brookline-Newfane Joint Budget. Doug Wellman replies that the Town of Brookline had approved that method in 2009 and it would require the Town of Newfane to agree to that way of voting. Alecia O'Donnell, Brookline School District Director and Lyndall Boal, Leland & Gray School Director reflect back on the Leland & Gray budget vote and possible issues with the Australian ballot form of voting. Kerry Bourne asked the question as to repairs on the Brookline School fence. There appear to be 2 poles broken. This problem will be addressed after the snow melts replies Alecia. Tom Staats thanks the School Board for all their hard work. Doug Wellman makes a motion to adjourn the School Board portion of town meeting and recess for lunch. The motion is seconded and approved by voice vote to recess for lunch and return to the town portion of the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

TOWN MEETING RESUMED-Town Portion

Before the meeting gets underway Moderator Parker takes this opportunity to remind everyone of Julie Lavorgna's sign-up sheet for town e-mail service. David also thanks the Selectboard for their services this past term.

COMPLETION OF ARTICLE V: ELECTION OF ALL OTHER TOWN OFFICERS

LISTERS:

A 3 year term for Town Lister, currently held by Marsha Omand is available.

Cynthia Nau nominates Marsha Omand. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Marsha Omand elected for 3 year term ending 2017.

AUDITORS:

One of three seats is available. Joyce Meehl nominates Kendra Brooks. No other nominations. All in favor. Kendra Brooks elected to 3 year term ending 2017.

CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS:

There is one three year seat open. Cynthia Nau nominates Doug Wellman. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Doug Wellman elected Cemetery Commissioner for a three year term ending 2017.

FIRST & SECOND CONSTABLES:

Doug Wellman makes a motion to have the Selectboard responsible for making appointments to fill these two positions. Tom Staats seconds the motion- There is no discussion- Call for a voice vote. All in favor. The motion is passed.

TRUSTEE OF PUBLIC FUNDS:

Jim Rogers nominates Guy Tanza. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Guy Tanza elected Trustee of Public Funds.

TOWN AGENT:

Stanley Noga Jr. nominated. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. Stanley Noga Jr. elected Town Agent.

TOWN GRAND JUROR:

David Parker Jr. nominated by Guy Tanza. No other nominations. Call for a voice vote. All in favor. David Parker Jr. elected Town Grand Juror

ARTICLE VI: Shall the town accept the Auditors Report?

Jim Rogers makes a motion to accept the Auditors Report. David Allbee seconds the motion. Discussion- Frank Rucker takes this time to thank the town officials for their work and points out their report on page 6 of the 2013 town annual report. Archie Clark thanks Dan Meehl and John Reinhardt for their continuous work at getting the Town Annual Report prepared and submitted to the printer in time for circulation to the townspeople. Hearing no further discussions, a voice vote is called for. All in favor. The Town accepts the Auditors Report.

Article VII: SHALL THE TOWN VOTE TO APPROVE GENERAL AND HIGHWAY FUND EXPENDITURES FOR OPERATING EXPENDITURES OF \$236,156.57 OF WHICH \$186,572.23 BE RAISED BY TAXES AND \$49,584.34 BY PRIOR YEAR SURPLUS?

Selectboard member Archie Clark moves to change the figures due to adjustments. The revised article shall be read: SHALL THE TOWN VOTE TO APPROVE GENERAL AND HIGHWAY FUND EXPENDITURES FOR OPERATING EXPENDITURES OF \$235,552.00 OF WHICH \$185,967.66 SHALL BE RAISED BY TAXES AND 49,584.34 BY PRIOR YEAR SURPLUS? Dan Seiden moves to approve revised figures, Cynthia Nau seconds. Discussion- Doug Wellman voices concerns of increased budget. Both Selectboard member Stanley Noga Jr. and town treasurer Somara Zwick address these concerns. Selectboard member Tom Staats points out the town has the opportunity to apply for available highway grants this spring. No further discussion. Call for voice vote. All in favor. Revised Article VII approved.

ARTICLE VIII: TO SEE WHAT DATES THE TOWN WILL VOTE TO COLLECT TAXES.

Jim Rogers makes a motion to continue existing dates: Aug. 15th, Nov. 15th, Feb. 15th and May 15th. Bruce Mello seconds. Some discussion on collection date policy. Discussions ended. Call for a voice vote. All in favor to continue existing dates.

ARTICLE IX: SHALL THE TOWN VOTERS APPROPRIATE \$6,131.00 TO BE RAISED BY TAXES IN CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS?(SEE LIST PAGE 2 OF 2013 ANNUAL REPORT)

After a brief discussion a voice vote was called. Majority approved appropriation of \$6,131.00.

ARTICLE X: SHALL THE TOWN APPROVE THE SUM OF \$100,000 TO IMPROVE GREER ROAD AND BRIDGE TO MINIMUM STATE STANDARDS FOR CLASS 3 TOWN HIGHWAYS?

Lee Anne Parker requests to move the motion, Pat Ballou seconds. Discussion begins. Selectboard member Stanley Noga Jr. gives background statement of Greer Road and selectboard decisions back in the 1970s. Tom Staats adds some addition comments in regard to conversations he has had with the agency of transportation (AOT). Many scenarios are presented and questioned in a lengthy discussion. A motion is made to lay the article on the table for another year. That motion was seconded. A voice vote was taken. The voice vote was close and it was requested a paper ballot vote be taken. The results were 16 in favor of laying it on the table for next year and 53 opposed. The motion has been defeated and now we return to Article X for further discussion. After further discussion is closed, a voice vote is called. Article X is defeated unanimously.

ARTICLE XI: SHALL THE TOWN VOTE TO PURCHASE THE BROOKLINE CHURCH BUILDING AND LAND FOR THE SUM OF ONE DOLLAR?

A motion is made to reverse Article XI with Article XII. The motion is seconded by Gary Lavorgna. A voice vote is called. Motion approved.

ARTICLE XII: SHALL THE TOWN VOTE TO PURCHASE THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL BUILDING AND LAND FOR THE SUM OF ONE DOLLAR?

A handout was available to all interested. The motion to move was made by Jim Rogers and seconded by Cynthia Nau. Discussion is opened. Frank Rucker alludes to the fact that the town may be responsible for repayment of a construction state aid loan from 1989. There appear to be conflicting reports from the Town Attorney and the Agency of Education in regard to possible liability. Frank offers an amendment for consideration: Shall the town purchase the school for one dollar, contingent upon Agency of Education waiver of liability due to the state associated with repayment of construction aid. Tina Bills suggest the town add a date to the amendment. After much debate Frank amends his amendment to read: Shall the Town vote to purchase the Brookline school building and land for the sum of one dollar, contingent upon the Agency of Education waiver of liability due to the state, associated with repayment of construction aid. Contingency must be addressed by April 15, 2014. A vote for the amendment is taken by voice. All in favor. A voice vote for article XII is taken with the amendment added. All in favor. Article XII approved with the new amendment.

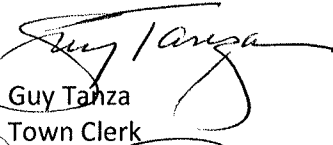
ARTICLE XI: SHALL THE TOWN PURCHASE THE BROOKLINE CHURCH BUILDING AND LAND FOR THE SUM OF ONE DOLLAR?

Gary Lavorgna moves the motion, Jim Rogers seconds. Discussion begins. Judy Acampora, a member of the church committee expounds on the importance of the town to take ownership of this historical building. Town residents Pat Ballou, Helen Sammuels, Stan Noga Jr. and Gary Lavorgna express opinions of support for the church. Some question as to shared water supply and septic system surface and are addressed by Gary Lavorgna and Stanley Noga Jr. A voice vote is called for. All in favor. Article XI is voted yes and approved.

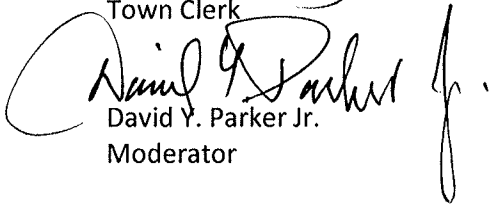
ARTICLE XIII: TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY LEGALLY COME BEFORE THIS MEETING.

Judy Acampora request that next year a poster be placed in front of the school directing residents to use other entrance for town meeting. Marsha Omand salutes Archie Clark for a job well done this winter season keeping our roads opened and sanded. Barbara Bourne ask for status of the fencing around Riverside cemetery. Cynthia Nau (member of the cemetery commission) explains the removal was due to the deterioration of the old fence and it being unsafe. They are open for suggestions in regard to a new fence and its appearance. Moderator Parker thanks the Sheriffs' Dept. for their appearance and attendance at Selectboard meetings throughout the year. The Vermont Dept. of Taxes has requested Town Clerks to remind residents to file their VT Homestead Declaration each year. There is a motion to adjourn and quickly seconded. 2014 Town Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Guy Tanza
Town Clerk



David Y. Parker Jr.
Moderator