

**Town of Westmore
Annual Town Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2014**

The legal voters of the Town of Westmore met at the Fellowship Hall in said town on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 10 o'clock a.m. to transact the following business:
Greg Gallagher called the meeting to order at 10:00.
The citizens of the town stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator Vince Dotoli asked for a moment of silence for those in the community that had passed away in the last year: Margaret Ann Cassidy, Norman Homer LaCross, Ann Marie Cummings, Priwan Parenteau, Arthur P. French, Daniel Patrick Sanderson, Robert VanZile and Robert Decker.

Article 1. To elect a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Greg asked for nominations for Moderator.

Gerald Saindon nominated Vince Dotoli, seconded by Erik Swanson. There being no other nominations, Gerald moved that nominations cease and the Clerk to cast one ballot for Vince seconded by Faye Perkins. Passed.

Article 2. Shall the Town accept the Town report as printed?

Louisa moved to pass over, seconded by Gerald. Passed.

Article 3. To elect the following officers:

A. Selectman for three years – Steve Davenport Sr. nominated Burton Hinton, seconded by Kristen Olbrys. Tony Strange asked Burton about the Long Pond lawsuit. He also asked if there was any consideration to expand the Disorderly Conduct Ordinance to the South Beach. Burton answered that the State had certain standards for Class 3 Roads which had not been maintained for many years. The work had to be done or the town could face having to refund State Highway Aid payments. Louisa stated she did not want to belabor the point because it was over but she felt she needed to respond to what Burton had said because the State said that nothing further had to be done that year to Long Pond Road and the State also said that the Town was not in danger of losing any State funding. She stated that there was an agreement with the town that no further tree cutting would be done that year and they would get together with the town over the winter to discuss what would be done the following year. When they were out of town the Selectboard decided to cut a fifty foot wide swath the entire length of Long Pond Road, which no one would have wanted. She also said that prior the filing of the lawsuit they sent papers to the town in an attempt to resolve the matter and the town had no response.

Ann Dugan nominated Tony Strange. Tony declined the nomination.

There being no other nominations, Gerald moved and Kathy Holmes seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Burton Hinton. Passed.

Representative Bill Johnson:

The Moderator then recognized Representative Bill Johnson who spoke about current events in Montpelier. Randi said there were sixteen "non-community" children attending LRUHS with no money "following" them. With State education expenses predicted to go up 10-15%, what could be done to end this ever increasing expense, she asked. Rep. Johnson said that H.164 would replace Acts 60 & 68, but that would be expensive to implement as well. Robert Kennedy asked what action was happening with a State Bank. Sharon Strange said there were funds for increased addiction recovery. How could the addiction rate be reduced? Rep. Johnson said that government is trying to reduce the addiction cycle. Pam Kennedy urged people to see "The Hungry Heart" being shown in Newport Thursday at 7. Robert Fitzpatrick asked "How many addicts are in Vermont?"

Randi replied that if you are an addict, you get free education. Randi also commented that Vermont should address the "Tar Sands" issue and communicate that to the Feds.

B. Lister for three years - Gerald nominated Chris Evans, seconded by Randi. There being no other nominations, Louisa moved and Tony seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Chris Evans. Passed.

C. Lister for two years - Florence Collins nominated Glenn Harter. Glenn respectfully declined. Louisa nominated and Gerald seconded Kristen Olbrys. There being no other nominations, Gerald moved and Linda Schneck seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Kristen Olbrys. Passed.

D. Lister for one year - Glenn nominated Gerald Saindon seconded by Robert Fitzpatrick. There being no other nominations, Evelina Busby moved and Faye Perkins seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Gerald Saindon. Passed.

E. Auditor for three years - Randi nominated Mary Lou Cummings, seconded by Mary Smith. There being no other nominations, Kathy moved and Louisa seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Mary Lou Cummings. Passed.

F. Cemetery Commissioner for three years - Bill Perkins nominated Richard Boucher, seconded by Peter Berteletti. There being no other nominations, Gerald moved and Erik Swanson seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Richard Boucher. Passed.

G. Cemetery Commissioner for one year - Richard Boucher nominated Steve Davenport, seconded by Erik Swanson. Randi asked how Steve could work for the town and still be able to be Cemetery Commissioner. Bill said it is not a hard job and he could do both without it interfering with his highway duties. There being no other nominations, Trish Geoffroy moved and Gerald seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Steve Davenport. Passed.

H. Current Yr Tax Collector for one year - Gerald nominated Greg Gallagher, seconded by Richard Boucher. There being no other nominations, Robert Fitzpatrick moved and Tony Strange seconded for the nominations to cease and the Moderator cast one ballot for Greg Gallagher. Passed.

I. Delinquent Tax Collector for one year - Chris McCarthy nominated Erik Swanson, seconded by Faye Perkins. Roy Perkins nominated Ann Parenteau, seconded by Robert Fitzpatrick. Gerald asked why this position is not with the Town Clerk. Vince explained that VLCT's attorney said for that to happen, the town would need to amend its charter. Robert Fitzpatrick nominated Randi Rosenstein, seconded by Evelina Busby. Erik and Ann each stood up and said why they wanted to be Delinquent Tax Collector. Randi stated that there were two well qualified candidates for the position and she declined her nomination.

Gerald asked to have a vote by written ballot. The moderator asked for a show of hands in support of having a written ballot. He declared there were in excess of seven votes to have a written ballot. Greg and Kathy checked voters through the voter line as Vince handed out ballots. The result was Erik Swanson-31, Ann Parenteau-25. Erik was elected Delinquent Tax Collector for one year.

J. Town Grand Juror for one year - Kathy nominated Chris Evans, seconded by Mary Smith. There being no other nominations, Kathy moved and Louisa seconded for the nominations to cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Chris Evans. Passed.

K. Town Agent for one year - Louisa nominated Greg Gallagher, seconded by Gerald. There being no other nominations, Kathy moved and Louisa seconded for the nominations to cease and the Moderator cast one ballot for Greg Gallagher. Passed.

Article 4. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Current Year Tax Collector to collect current year property taxes due on or before October 20, 2014 at 4:00 pm?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Louisa. Randi said there should be more time between when the tax bills go out and when they are due. When asked about the discount the town used to offer for paying early, Greg said that stopped when the State Education tax system started because the State would not allow a discount on their portion. Greg said some residents pay portions in advance. Wayne French said he always knows when taxes are due and he saves up for them.

Being twelve noon, the Moderator recessed the meeting for lunch.

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The Moderator re-opened the meeting at 1:00 pm. He thanked all of the Ladies Aid and others who provided a delicious meal.

Robert Kennedy moved to amend the motion to allow for 50% when due and the balance in 60 days with no penalty charged at that time, but the regular interest rate on the balance due. The amendment was seconded by Randi. Cindy Rice said this would be too complicated. Ruth said that would bring the payments close to the Holidays which would make it all the more difficult to pay when everybody is short of money anyway. There were several other questions on how this would work. Erik called the question, seconded by Cindy Rice. On a voice vote, the Moderator determined the amendment failed. Article 4 as stated was voted on and passed.

Article 5. Shall the Town vote to set the delinquent tax date for property taxes on October 20, 2014 at 4:01 pm, with an 8% collector's fee charged and subject to interest charged against them from the due date?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye Perkins. Randi objected to the 8% penalty for payments not too late. Faye compared that to someone just a little over the speed limit. Gerald said everyone knows when it is due. Cindy said that Charleston has a 1% penalty. Peter Berteletti called the question. Article 5 passed on a voice vote.

Article 6. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to set the Municipal Tax Rate after the Grand List has been completed?

Gerald so moved and Faye and Erik seconded. Motion passed.

Article 7. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to use a portion of unspent general fund surpluses, as needed, to help offset the 2014 Municipal Tax Rate?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Richard Boucher. Randi wanted to know exactly how much Surplus would be applied to offset taxes. Several unknowns would affect that amount. The town is going through a re-appraisal, so we do not know what the Grand List is. Greg said we do not know what the Common Level of Appraisal is yet. This is a factor used by the state when determining the education tax rate. Article 7 passed on a voice vote.

Article 8. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to use a portion of

unspent general fund surpluses, as needed, to cover any deficit amounts?

Louisa so moved, seconded by Gerald. David explained. Motion passed on a voice vote.

Article 9. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to borrow, if needed, for current expenses?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Passed.

Article 10. Shall the Town vote to accept the proposed 2014 budget of \$357,954.08 for General Fund?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Peter. Randi asked why Trash & Recycling took such a big increase. Burton explained that Jim Morin came to the Selectboard and explained that he had not raised his rates for a while and showed that he was not making any money. Bill explained that this Article is where Police and Security is if anyone wanted to discuss the new ordinances. Chief Deputy Phil Brooks explained the problems faced by law enforcement. Opiate addiction causes a lot of problems throughout the state. When asked, he said that 80% of fines go back to the town. Gerald asked who will determine how/when the Sheriff will come to Westmore. Vince asked for 2/3 of the assembly to approve David Timson, a non-resident, to speak. Approved. David said he is on the Human Resource Board and sees a lot of problems with addiction. Louisa and Peter called the question. Article 10 passed on a voice vote.

Article 11. Shall the Town vote to accept the proposed 2014 budget of \$370,448.00 for all Town Highway purposes?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Article 11 passed on a voice vote.

Article 12. Shall the Town vote to add \$42,411.67 to the Town Equipment Reserve Fund?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Greg explained the line items for existing financing as well as the \$10,000. Kathy asked if this fund was not just for Highway equipment. The Selectboard said it was for any town equipment. Article 12 passed on a voice vote with one nay from Steve Tanner who wanted to show that in Westmore it was safe to disagree.

Article 13. Shall the Town vote to add \$13,371.00 to the Lister Reappraisal & Mapping Reserve Fund for the town-wide reappraisal?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Chris Evans, Lister explained the re-appraisal time table. Motion passed.

Article 14. Shall the Town vote to add \$6,298.99 to the Cemetery Reserve Fund?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Bill Perkins explained the use of funds. Kathy asked what "Perpetual Care" is used for. Bill explained that only the interest could be used for maintenance. Carol Davis asked what would the Special Projects funds be used for. Bill said paving at some point. Mary Smith asked if any work had been done this year. Bill said brush and tree trimming had been done. Motion passed.

Article 15. Shall the Town vote to add \$4,697.04 to the Deed/Vault Restoration Fund?

Gerald so moved seconded by Faye. Greg explained that the land records, which need to last Forever, were being digitalized. Motion passed.

Article 16. Shall the Town vote to set up a new reserve fund for Audit Expense, move \$5,000 from the unspent general fund balance and appropriate \$5,000 to start the fund at \$10,000?

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Greg explained that last year's \$5,000 was not spent, but there would be an audit this year which would cost upward toward \$10,000. Anything remaining would be saved for the next audit. Motion passed.

At this time, Peter Berteletti, on behalf of Bruce Wheeler, thanked all of the North Beach Safety and Security Committee for all of their work to make Westmore a safer community to live in.

Millie thanked Michele and Greg for all of their work on the Annual Report.

Article 17. Shall the Town vote to add \$25,000 to the Milfoil Program Reserve Fund?

So moved by Gerald, seconded by Faye. Gerald stated that he has offered to take Selectboard members out to inspect the milfoil beds. No one has taken him up on it. He did not think the invoices should always be paid without checking on the work.

Susan Blackstone did not think the milfoil program was working. She sees milfoil washing up on the shores. She added that manure run off fuels milfoil growth.

Bruce Tanner said that he talks with the milfoil pickers. Nancy Tanner said that when you see the divers on the lake, go out and talk to them. Jeremy LeBlanc said that he did his thesis at Johnson State College on Willoughby's milfoil problem. His thesis concludes that the current harvesting method, suction, causes more fragments than his method, hand pulling.

David Stevens said the Board has talked with Ann Bove of the Agency of Natural Resources, who said that suction harvesting is the best method for Willoughby Lake. David Timson said he has seen milfoil fragments along the South Beach. Jeremy called the question, saying whomever gets the contract, the appropriation needs to be made in order to keep the lake clean, seconded by Bruce Tanner. Article 17 passed.

Article 18. Shall the Town vote to accept the proposed amount of \$33,498 for Community Appropriations?

The list of individual appropriations are as follows:

- a. \$ 25,000 Westmore Firemans Assoc.
- b. 100 OC Court Diversion
- c. 80 VT Ctr for Ind Living
- d. 100 VT Rural Fire Protection
- e. 50 Green Up
- f. 350 Rural Comm Transportation
- g. 600 OC Citizen Advocacy
- h. 300 NEK Learning Services
- i. 368 NEK Human Services
- j. 900 O-E VNA & Hospice
- k. 500 Pope Mem. Frontier Animal Shelter
- l. 350 Old Stonehouse Museum
- m. 200 NVDA
- n. 700 Barton Senior Ctr
- o. 250 Umbrella
- p. 1,000 Jones Memorial Library
- q. 400 Agency on Aging, NE VT
- r. 500 Lake Region Senior Ctr
- s. 1,000 Barton Library
- t. 250 American Red Cross
- u. 500 NorthWoods Stewardship

Gerald so moved, seconded by Faye. Westmore Fire & Rescue was asked what they will do with the \$25,000. Jason responded that it helps with the maintenance on three vehicles. Simon Murray said that a lot of their work is responding to car wrecks and accidents. Pam Kennedy said to look on pages 42 and 43. Kathy Holmes said that WF&R is a 501C3, tax exempt corporation. Florence Collins asked if they had purchased a television for Robins

