

TOWN OF EAST MONTPELIER ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

March 6, 2018

The legal voters of the Town of East Montpelier, Vermont are hereby warned to meet at the East Montpelier Elementary School in said Town, on **Tuesday**, the **sixth** (6th) day of **March, 2018 at 9:30 AM** to transact the following business and to vote by Australian Ballot from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM on those Articles so noted:

The meeting was called to order by Michael Duane, Town Moderator, at 9:31 AM.

ARTICLE 1: To elect all necessary officers for the ensuing year. (To be voted by Australian Ballot) Polls are open from 7AM to 7PM

ARTICLE 2: To hear the reports of several Town Officers and to act thereon.

Selectboard Chair Seth Gardner presented various highlights from their report as printed on page 12 of the Annual Report. He included explanations of the reasons for and results of the Charter changes voted last year. Seth spoke of the Fire District and Crystal Springs project. The current plan for the Hudson lot is to sell it to Central Vermont Habitat for Humanity for construction of a new home. There are a number of permits and rights-of-way concerns with this lot that are being addressed over the next year or more.

Infrastructure projects continue. The Park & Ride is open for use, the bridge construction continues, with the temporary bridge opening this spring. The sidewalk project is planned for 2019.

Capitol expenses include a new Mack Truck and a new Komatsu pay loader. There was a question about the roadside mowing. This is currently a contracted service. The town will be purchasing a new mower that will be delivered late in July. We are also participating in a state sponsored study relative to invasive species. There was a note to work at keeping tree branches pruned back out of the road so that they would grow into the canopy. A moment of silence was observed in memory of David Coburn and David Grundy.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$1,726,496** as proposed by the Selectboard, for laying out and repairing highways and for other necessary Town expenses for fiscal year 2019 (July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019). There were no questions regarding the town budget.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$42,022** for Kellogg-Hubbard Library for the support of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Lindy Biggs, East Montpelier Trustee, spoke in support of the library.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town authorize all property taxes for the fiscal year 2019 to be paid to the Treasurer, without discount in two installments and received by the Town Treasurer at the East Montpelier Municipal Building as follows: The first installment will be due on or before 5:00 PM Thursday, November 15, 2018 and the second installment will be due on or before 5:00 PM Wednesday, May 15, 2019. Richard Brock moved and Rubin Bennett seconded. The article passed on voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$3,000** for the Land Conservation Fund. Charles Johnson moved the article and Ed Deegan seconded. There was a question regarding a percentage of land in conservation and how it affects the tax rate. The state determines the appraisal rate of current use property. The State pays the difference between the value the town has it appraised at and what is paid in through land use or land trust. There was a lively discussion relative to land conservation in general. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$3,100** for the Four Corners Schoolhouse Association for operating expenses during fiscal year 2019. Ann Stanton moved and Donald Welch seconded the article. Rachael Grossman spoke in support of the article. Bruce Johnson noted that there is a public notice board now located at the Four Corners Schoolhouse. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$17,250** for the East Montpelier Cemetery Commission for the support and maintenance of Town cemeteries during fiscal year 2019. Elliott Morse moved and Jennifer Zollner seconded the article. Elliott thanked Fred Strong for his many years of service. He noted that the crew works hard to keep the lawns mown and the cemetery kept. Edie Miller asked if the Selectboard is considering taking this into the town budget. What's the model of support for the cemetery? Has pricing increased? The Selectboard needs to study other towns who own cemeteries. The price has increased. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$6,000** for the East Montpelier Signpost to provide for the production and mailing of six issues of the East Montpelier Signpost for each East Montpelier resident household and non-resident property owner during fiscal year 2019. Moved and seconded by Sarah Brock and Scott Hess. Ann Stanton spoke in support of the article. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$4,000** for East Montpelier Trails, Inc. for the enhancement, development, and maintenance of the trail network in East Montpelier during fiscal year 2019. Richard Brock moved and Lindy Biggs seconded. Loring Starr recognized the Ormsbees for granting access to the area that is now the Ormsbee trail. There will be a trail walk at the next Historical Society meeting. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 11: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$8,000** for the Montpelier Senior Activity Center for operating expenses during fiscal year 2019. The article was moved and seconded by Ginny Callan and Alan Rome. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$5,500** for Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice for operating expenses during fiscal year 2019. Joseph Keifer moved and Bob Morey seconded. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$8,333** as its fiscal year 2019 share of the annual ongoing cost of providing the Green Mountain Transit commuter bus service along Route 2 with service into Montpelier. This appropriation funds a portion of the total cost of the service, which will also be supported by appropriations from other towns, State and Federal funds, and rider fares. Rachael Grossman and Kim Watson moved and seconded the motion. Lindy Biggs requested clarification of the two amounts presented. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town raise the amounts listed below as recommended by the Town's Funding Request Study Committee, or what other amounts, for the following organizations for fiscal year 2019. Donald Welch moved and Renée Carpenter seconded. Lindy Johnson, chair of the funding committee, spoke in support of the committee's recommendations. There was a question about the process. Lindy Johnson explained that organizations have an opportunity to meet with the committee to present their cases.

1)American Red Cross	\$ 250
2)Capstone Community Action	\$ 500
3)Central Vermont Adult Basic Education	\$ 750
4)Central Vermont Council on Aging	\$ 1,875
5)Central Vermont Habitat for Humanity	\$ 250
6)Central Vermont Memorial Civic Center	\$ 1,000
7)Circle	\$ 675
8)Downstreet Housing & Community Development	\$ 150
9)East Montpelier Community Connections	\$ 2,500
10)Family Center of Washington County	\$ 500
11)Friends of the Winooski River	\$ 200
12)Girls/Boyz First Mentoring	\$ 300
13)Good Beginnings of Central VT	\$ 300
14)Good Samaritan Haven	\$ 750
15)Green Mountain Transit	\$ 1,366
16)Green Up Vermont	\$ 150
17)Home Share Now	\$ 800
18)North Branch Nature Center	\$ 750
19)Onion River Food Shelf	\$ 1,000
20)OUR House of Central VT	\$ 250
21)People's Health and Wellness Clinic	\$ 1,250
22)Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	\$ 300
23)Project Independence	\$ 125
24)Sexual Assault Crisis Team	\$ 250
25)Twin Valley Senior Center	\$ 3,500
26)T. W. Wood Gallery	\$ 500
27)Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired	\$ 150
28)Vermont CARES	\$ 150
29)Vermont Center for Independent Living	\$ 250
30)Vermont Family Network	\$ 100
31)Washington County Diversion Program	\$ 600

32)Washington County Mental Health Services	\$ 800
33)Washington County Youth Service Bureau	\$ 400

TOTAL \$22,691

The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town of East Montpelier enter into a communications union district to be known as Central Vermont Internet, under the provisions of 30 V.S.A. Chapter 82. The article was moved and seconded by Scott Hess and Rubin Bennett. Carl Etnier gave a brief overview of the initiative and responded to questions. The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16: Other non-binding business.

Shall the Town of East Montpelier adopt the following resolution:

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

WHEREAS the State of Vermont has a goal in the Comprehensive Energy Plan to achieve 90% of its 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 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 low-income people, people of color, 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 solar as appropriate on Town and school buildings;
 - d. Promoting the siting of renewable energy in appropriate sections of Town;
 - e. Promoting higher density development with access to public transportation;
 - f. Other initiatives to improve residents' quality of life while helping us reduce overall energy use.

The article was moved and seconded by Richard Brock and Ginny Callan. Brian Tokar spoke to the article. Charles Johnson moved to amend as follows:

1d. would read: "Ensure that commercial-scale renewable energy developments comply with both the Regional and Town Plans and that renewable energy credits (RECs) from them remain within the town region or state."

Proposed wording for 2d.: "Protect important natural cultural and scenic resources as identified in the Town Plan, considering possible siting of industrial scale renewable energy developments."

Proposed wording for 2f. after a suggested edit: "Other initiatives to help residents reduce overall energy use."

Motion to add section 1d. as proposed: made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Richard Brock. There was a question about what "the region" means. Andy Shapiro asked for clarification of the definition of "industrial". Sarah Waring asked about the process of approval and its compliance with the Town Plan; Lindy Biggs responded. Alice Angney asked why the resolution is before the community if we have a Planning Commission already doing this work. Betsy Barstow reads this action as being taken by towns all over Vermont, not specifically East Montpelier. Kim Watson agrees with the amendment and spoke of being in compliance with the Paris Agreement. Carl Etnier noted that public utilities will give the town substantial deference as soon as the energy plan is in place. There was a suggestion to insert the words "Central Vermont" before the word "regional". This was accepted as a friendly amendment. Another suggestion was to use the words "commercial scale" rather than "industrial scale". This friendly amendment was also agreed to. The question was called and the motion to amend passed by voice vote. The amendment on the first section was then also passed by voice vote.

Motion to rewrite section 2d. as proposed: made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Richard Brock. Andy Shapiro offered the word "commercial" rather than "industrial" as a friendly amendment, which was accepted. Carol Dickson suggested adding the word "agricultural" to the list. The sponsors accepted the friendly amendment. Carl Etnier asked if the current language could be kept in order to continue to promote renewable energy by the town, with the new language added afterward. A motion to call the question was made and passed. The amendment passed by voice vote.

Motion to rewrite section 2f. as proposed: made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Richard Brock. Edie Miller called the question. The motion to call the question carried. The amendment was approved by voice vote.

Edie Miller asked why there was no mention of greenhouse gasses, when that is clearly the intent. She also did not support the elimination of infrastructure of more efficient transitional fossil fuels. Steve Looke noted that under 2d. and 2c. that Town Meeting is not the forum which could determine what the schools do. The Moderator noted that statutory duty of the school boards would take precedence over this non-binding resolution in regard to school buildings and structures. Alex Brown suggested that the Town should consider this resolution as a way to give a message to the state about its concerns. There was some discussion relative to current research in renewable energy and what forms of energy are clean.

Article 16 as amended in three instances passed by voice vote. The final resolution reads as follows:

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

WHEREAS the State of Vermont has a goal in the Comprehensive Energy Plan to achieve 90% of its 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 pipelines;**
 - b. Firmly commit to at least 90% renewable energy for all people in Vermont, with firm interim deadlines;**
 - c. Ensure that the transition to renewable energy is fair and equitable for all residents, with no harm to low-income people, people of color, or rural communities; and,**
 - d. Ensure that commercial-scale renewable energy developments comply with both the Regional and Town Plans and that renewable energy credits (RECs) from them remain within the town, Central Vermont region, and/or the state.**

- 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 solar as appropriate on Town and school buildings;**
 - d. Promoting the siting of renewable energy in appropriate sections of Town, while protecting important natural, cultural, scenic and agricultural resources, as identified in the Town Plan, when considering possible siting of commercial-scale renewable energy developments;**
 - e. Promoting higher density development with access to public transportation;**
 - f. Other initiatives to help residents reduce overall energy use.**

ARTICLE 17: To transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

- Renée Carpenter, for The Friends of Coburn Pond, spoke of the work done to mitigate invasive species and provide public access. Ms. Carpenter spoke of a need to preserve public access in perpetuity. Those in attendance were reminded that the pond needs to stay in public hands in order to continue to be accessible to the public.
- Kim Jessup, State Representative, spoke of new gun control laws, changes in income tax, sales tax and education finance. An equal pay bill has passed. Laws regulating data brokers will be enacted, requiring registration with the Secretary of State, annual report, and the ability of Vermonters to place and lift freezes on credit reporting at no cost. Kim also reported on the progress of the parenting bill, which helps to define families.
- Carl Etnier noted that since another town, (Berlin) has approved the communications district, that district will be formed. People should contact the Town Administrator or the Selectboard if interested in serving on the newly-formed board.
- Carolyn Shapiro noted that a nationwide school walk out has been scheduled on March 14 for 17 minutes in memory of the students killed in Parkland, FL. While the Vermont Commissioner of Education is not in support of this action, she feels that students should be encouraged to use this

opportunity to learn self-advocacy, active citizenship and to assist in their grieving process.

- Seth Gardner thanked all who help with the governance of the town.

A motion to adjourn the Town Meeting and reconvene in one hour for the School District meeting was made by Flor Diaz Smith. The meeting adjourned by consensus at 12:31 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rosie Laquerre, Town Clerk

Town Meeting minutes of March 6, 2018 approved by:

East Montpelier Selectboard Board Members

East Montpelier Town Moderator

Seth Gardner

Michael O Duane

Gene Troia

Amy Willis

East Montpelier Town Clerk

Carl Etnier

Rosie Laquerre

Kimberly Swasey

Received for Recording:

East Montpelier Town Clerk's Office this ____ day of _____, 20__ AD at ____ : ____ AM

Attest: Rosie Laquerre - Town Clerk