

**TOWN OF EAST MONTPELIER ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**  
**March 5, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Michael Duane at 9:40 AM

ARTICLE 1: To elect all necessary officers for the ensuing year. **(To be voted by Australian Ballot)**

Town Moderator, 1-year term  
Selectboard Member, remaining 2 years of 3-year term  
Selectboard Member, 3-year term  
Selectboard Member, 2-year term  
Lister, 3-year term  
Auditor, 3-year term  
Planning Commissioner, 3-year term

Planning Commissioner, 3-year term  
    Planning Commissioner, 3-year term  
    Planning Commissioner, remaining 2 years of 3-year term

The Moderator introduced all who were running for office

ARTICLE 2: Motion to discuss the report of the Selectboard was made by Michael Thompson and seconded by Ellen Knoedler. Selectboard Chair, Seth Gardner, asked for volunteers to serve on the Planning Commission since there are two empty seats. The term is for three years for each seat.

Mr. Gardner noted that the Selectboard report is on page 14 of the Annual Report.

- Moving through the report, he noted that the office transitions are due to life changes. The road crew staffing has been stable.
- Questions were asked regarding roads still needing post-flooding work. Questions were posed by Ms. Nona Estrin, Mr. Rick Barstow and Colin Blackwell. Responses were given by Mr. Gardner and Town Administrator, Gina Jenkins.
- Ms. Knoedler announced that she found a five-dollar bill on the floor. If you've lost it, please see her.
- ARPA funding: The town set aside \$50,000 of ARPA funds for non-profit use. The funds were disbursed to Twin Valley in the amount of \$25,000 for paving; East Montpelier Trails received \$10,000 to replace a damaged bridge; All Together Now \$10,000 for boiler replacement; and the East Montpelier Historical Society was given \$5,000 for cabinetry. Other items funded included a \$100,000 donation for CV Fiber, some funding was used to defray the tax burden, and some was allocated to the Capital Reserve Fund. The Selectboard also authorized \$40,000 of ARPA funding for the preliminary sketched plan for a new town garage facility.
- Informational meetings will be held with a possible bond vote. We have also hired an Owner's Representative to protect our interests. Mr. Shapiro, who is very invested in green energy, has been heavily involved in the process
- Albert Petrella is the new Fire Chief and can be reached if you have questions about ambulance and fire.

ARTICLE 3: Town Garage Discussion : Hillary Farrington moved, and Ellen Knoedler seconded discussion of Article 3. Mr. Gardner reported on the several reasons why a new town garage is needed. Questions about the process and comments were posed by Ms. Edie Miller, Ms. Betsy Barstow, Mr. Steven Miracle, Mr. Chris Pratt, Ms. Carol Dickson, Ms. Kim Watson, Mr. Ed Deegan and Mr. Gene Troia.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$2,261,263** as proposed by the Selectboard, for laying out and repairing highways and for other necessary Town expenses for fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025). The Article PASSED: 844 YES 134 NO.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town authorize all property taxes for the fiscal year 2025 to be paid to the Town Treasurer, without discount in two installments and received by

the Treasurer at the East Montpelier Municipal Building as follows: The first installment will be due and postmarked on or before Friday, November 15, 2024 and the second installment will be due and postmarked on or before Thursday, May 15, 2025. Moved by Ms. Starr seconded by Mr. Morey. The Article PASSED by voice vote.

- ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$51,960** for Kellogg-Hubbard Library for the support of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Sarah Swift noted that the higher ask is due to increase in benefits for staff and due to flooding. The basement is being rebuilt in a way that mitigates further flood damage. The Article PASSED: 719 YES 265 NO
- ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$4,500** for the Four Corners Schoolhouse Association for operating expenses during fiscal year 2025. Moved by Ms. Farrington, seconded by Ms. Knoedler. Rachael Grossman thanked the town for the funding to match the grant they received. The mold mitigation is scheduled to occur this spring and summer. The Article PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$12,000** 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 2025. Mr. Morey moved and Ms. Grossman seconded the motion. Questions and comments were made by Ms. Knoedler, Ms. Charlotte Staples, Ms. Rachael Grossman and Ms. Ann Stanton. The motion PASSED by voice vote .
- ARTICLE 9: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$4,000** for East Montpelier Trails, Inc. for the enhancement, development, administration and maintenance of the trail network in East Montpelier during fiscal year 2025. Moved by Rebecca Reed, seconded by Ed Deegan. Mr. Deegan, Ms. Loring Starr and Ms. Estrin provided comments in support of this Article. The motion PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 10: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$9,700** for the Montpelier Senior Activity Center for operating expenses during fiscal year 2025. Moved by Doug Kievit Kifer and seconded by Flor Diaz Smith. The motion PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 11: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$6,000** for Twin Valley Seniors, Inc. for operating expenses during fiscal year 2025. Moved by Celina Moore seconded by Ginny Callan. The motion PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$6,500** for Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice for operating expenses during fiscal year 2025. Moved by Lindy Biggs, seconded by Thomas Brazier. The motion PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$7,834** for the support of Rural Community Transportation, Inc. (RCT) to provide services to residents of the Town of East Montpelier, including \$6,834 as its RCT portion of the fiscal year 2025 share of the annual ongoing cost of providing the commuter bus service along Route 2 with service into East Montpelier and \$1,000 as its fiscal year 2025 share of the annual ongoing cost of providing the commuter bus service along Routes 14 & 15 with service into East 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. Moved by Rachael Grossman seconded by Ms. Reed. Discussion ensued, including Ms. Margaret Grant, Mr. Carl Etnier, Ms. Starr, an Ms. Callan. The motion PASSED by voice vote.
- ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town raise the sum of **\$1,499** as its Green Mountain Transit portion of the fiscal year 2025 share of the annual ongoing cost of providing the commuter bus service along Route 2 with service into East 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. Moved by Ms. Carpenter, seconded by Ms. Reed. Mr. Thompson proposed to add \$1 to this article for \$1,500. The amendment PASSED by voice vote. The AMENDED motion PASSED by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town raise the amounts listed below as recommended by the Town's Funding Request Study Committee for the following organizations for fiscal year 2025.

1) American Red Cross	\$	250
2) Big Heavy World	\$	250
3) Capstone Community Action (formerly CVCAC)	\$	500
4) Central VT Adult Basic Education	\$	750
5) Central VT Council on Aging	\$	1,875
6) Central VT Disaster Animal Response Team (CVDART)	\$	200
7) Central VT Habitat for Humanity	\$	350
8) Central VT Memorial Civic Center	\$	1,000
9) Circle (formerly Battered Women's Services & Shelter)	\$	675
10) Community Connections	\$	2,500
11) Community Harvest of Central VT	\$	400
12) Downstreet Housing & Community Development	\$	150
13) Elevate Youth Services	\$	500
14) Family Center of Washington County	\$	500
15) Friends of the Winooski River	\$	300
16) Good Beginnings of Central VT	\$	300
17) Good Samaritan Haven	\$	2,000
18) Green Mountain Transit (GMT)	\$	1,366
19) Green Up Vermont	\$	150
20) HomeShare Vermont	\$	800
21) North Branch Nature Center	\$	1,000
22) Onion River Food Shelf, Inc.	\$	1,000
23) OUR House of Central VT	\$	250
24) People's Health & Wellness Clinic	\$	1,250
25) Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	\$	300
26) T W Wood Gallery	\$	750
27) VT Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired	\$	150
28) Vermont Bar Foundation	\$	2,000
29) VT Center for Independent Living	\$	400
30) VT Family Network	\$	500
31) Washington County Diversion Program	\$	600
32) Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District	\$	600
33) Youth First Mentoring (formerly Girls/Boyz First Mentori	\$	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>23,916</b>

Moved by Julie Potter seconded by Ms. Watson. Comments were given by Ms. Ashley, Ms. Renee Carpenter, Mr. Charles Johnson, Mr. Morey, Mr. Paul Erlbaum., Ms. Diane Fielder, Mr. Donald Welch, Ms. Liz Benjamin, Carol Dickson, and Mr. David Connor. The motion PASSED by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16: To transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

- Ms. Carpenter gave an update, representing the Friends of Coburn Pond.
- Steven Miracle gave an update on the work of the Energy Committee,
- An Emergency Preparedness Committee report was given by Patty Giavara,
- Ms. Miller requested that the town and school informational meetings be held on different evenings.
- Ms. Grossman noted that some towns hire community nurses. The State may be funding those positions in the future. She would like the Selectboard to investigate that.
- Special thanks and a round of applause were given to Sue Racanelli for organizing the lunch potluck for the last many years.
- Mr. Zachary Sullivan reported that The Planning Commission is conducting a survey for the Town Plan.
- Mr. Deegan thanked the town's volunteers, staff and selectboard for their work. He suggested that the town increase the Selectboard stipend next year.
- Abby Jenne, of the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation requested permission to speak. She reviewed the free resources and support for businesses and entrepreneurs available through her organization. Go to [www.centralvermont.org](http://www.centralvermont.org) or email her at [abby@centralvermont.org](mailto:abby@centralvermont.org) for more information specific to individual business' needs.

Mr. Morey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reed. The motion PASSED by voice vote.

Minutes approved this \_\_\_\_ day of March, 2024.

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**Seth Gardner**

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**Carl Etnier**

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**Zoe Christiansen**

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**Scott Hess**

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**Tom Brazier**

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**Michael Duane, Moderator**

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**Rosie Laquerre, Town Clerk**