

POMFRET
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
March 6, 2018

Moderator Kevin Geiger called the meeting to order at 9:15am. He asked for the assembly's consent for the meeting to be digitally recorded. Student Cooper Jones volunteered to serve as the microphone runner for the meeting. The assembly extends their thanks to ArtisTree for allowing us use of their wireless microphones.

At this time Kevin went over the basics of Robert's Rules, then read the names of the 2017 birth and deaths in town, and called for a moment of silence in memory of those who are no longer with us.

1. Kevin Geiger was elected Moderator for a one-year term.
2. Rebecca (Becky) Fielder was elected Town Clerk for a one-year term.
3. Bill Emmons moved to accept the reports as submitted, seconded by Bob Merrill. The motion to accept the reports as submitted passed by unanimous voice vote.
4. The following officers were elected:

Selectboard	3 year term	Scott Woodward	Unopposed
Selectboard	1 year term	John Peters Jr.	Unopposed
Selectboard	1 year term	Michael Reese	Unopposed
Treasurer	1 year term	Ellen DesMeules	Unopposed
Cemetery Commissioner	3 year term	Ona Chase	Unopposed
Lister	3 year term	Norm Buchanan	Unopposed
Auditor	3 year term	1 nomination – declined	Vacant
Auditor	1 year term (to fill out a 3 year term)	Nancy Matthews	Unopposed
Grand Juror	1 year term	Michael Reese	Unopposed
Town Agent	1 year term	John Putnam	Unopposed
Library Trustee	3 year term	Nancy Merrill	Unopposed
Library Trustee	3 year term	Tessa Westbrook	Unopposed
Trustee of Public Funds	3 year term	Robert Hatfield	Unopposed

Following the election of the Library Trustees, Betsy Rhodes recognized "retiring" trustee Betsy Siebeck for her 15 years of faithful and excellent service as a Library Trustee, and specifically for her diligence in serving as the board's treasurer for the duration of her service.

5. Gennie Lawrence moved that the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect current taxes pursuant to 32 V.S.A § 4791. Ted Matthews seconded the motion, which then passed by unanimous voice vote.
6. Frank Perron moved that the Town appropriate the sums of \$40,547 for the Abbott Memorial Library and \$12,000 for the Cemetery Commission. Bill Emmons seconded the motion, which then passed by unanimous voice vote.
7. Bill Emmons moved and Bob Merrill seconded the motion for the Town to appropriate the sum of \$13,029 to support the following social services: \$3,250 to the Woodstock Area Council on Aging to run The Thompson Center; \$2,500 to the Ottauquechee Community Partnership (OCP) to support the Mentor and Buddy Program; \$400 to WISE (Women's Information Service), Inc.; \$3,950 to the Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT and NH; \$750 to the Spectrum Teen Center; \$300 to the Woodstock Area Job Bank; \$979 to Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS); and \$900 to Pentangle Arts. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
8. Frank Perron moved that the voters deposit a combined amount of \$73,492 from the FY17 Town fund balance (surplus) into the following: \$36,746 into the Town Building Reserve Fund and \$36,746 into the Town General Fund revenues to offset taxes to be raised. Bob Merrill seconded the motion, and after some discussion the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
9. Michael Reese moved and Melanie Williams seconded the motion for the Town to approve the dissolution of the FAST Squad Equipment Reserve Fund and that all remaining funds be deposited to the Town Building Reserve Fund. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

10. Melanie Williams moved that the Town vote to exempt the properties of the Pomfret-Teago Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. from property taxes for a five-year period in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 2804(a). Bill Emmons seconded the motion, which then passed by unanimous voice vote.

11. Frank Perron moved and Bob Merrill seconded that the Town approve the combined budget of \$1,299,088 for town (\$371,188) and highway (\$927,900) expenses shown in the Town Report (not including voted appropriations from Articles 6 and 7). Including all voted appropriations from earlier articles, the total budget for FY19 is \$1,364,664. The motion passed by majority voice vote (with 1 dissent).

12. Frank Perron moved the article to see what the Town will raise in taxes (the sum of \$845,987 as estimated may be altered by actions taken on previous articles), and Sheila Hopkins seconded. It was noted that including the voted appropriations in Articles 6 and 7, the amount to raise in taxes will total \$911,563. The voters passed the article by unanimous voice vote.

13. Bob Merrill moved and Bill Emmons seconded that the voters require that taxes be paid in U.S. funds in two installments (the first by 2:30pm August 17, 2018 and the balance by 2:30pm on February 8, 2019), with interest on overdue taxes to be charged at 1% per month, and all delinquent taxes will be subject to an 8% penalty after February 9, 2019 in accordance with Vermont Statutes. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

14. Frank Perron moved and Bill Emmons seconded the motion for the Town to sell the two properties that were purchased at the Pomfret tax sale on March 1, 2017. After a brief discussion, the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

15. Michael Reese moved that the Selectboard and the Pomfret-Teago Volunteer Fire Department work together to pursue additional avenues of fire coverage for the entire Town, including automatic mutual aid with surrounding fire departments to respond to emergency situations. The motion was seconded by Sheila Hopkins, and after some explanation of how call-outs and mutual aid work, passed by unanimous voice vote.

16. Other proper and necessary business:

John Peters Jr. put out a plea for volunteers to join or assist the Fire Department, as their numbers have been in decline for some time. Gerry Fields thanked the current members for their dedication and the time they spend training. Emily Grube noted that it's not that the volunteers aren't doing their job, it's that there are fewer people to do it, not just here but around the region and state.

Bill Emmons spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission, noting that they have been working hard on updating the zoning ordinance. He thanked the Commission members, the Selectboard, the Zoning Administrator, and the Treasurer for their work, as well as the Road Crew.

Bob Merrill updated everyone about the ECFiber network build that is nearly complete in town. The remaining unserved roads will be completed in 2018.

Nancy Matthews reflected on the work that Laura Kent and JoAnn Webb did last year on the Town Report, and how it shaped the creation of this year's report. She thanked them for their insights and for laying the foundations of excellent reporting.

Kevin Rice, the Pomfret-Teago Fire Chief, thanked the town for the continued financial support, and noted that the 1984 mini-pumper is due for replacement.

Holly Strahan from the FAST Squad spoke to the need for new members as there are currently only 5 of them serving the whole town, and thanked Frank Perron for responding to nearly every call. She noted that training is paid for by the Squad, and encouraged young people to join. The FAST Squad depends on Woodstock Ambulance for mutual aid, but as time is of the essence in these calls, it is better to have people in town who can respond quickly.

Michael Reese thanked the road crew and the road commissioner for their hard work in keeping Pomfret's roads safe and clear.

Betsy Rhodes spoke about the work of the Invasive Plant Committee, and she and Alan Graham both thanked the road crew for their roadside mowing work. Betsy encouraged people to check their own land for invasive plant species.

Gennie Lawrence thanked Becky Fielder and Ellen DesMeules for their patience and humor during the creation of the Town Report by the auditors. She encouraged anyone interested in being an auditor to step up.

Gaal Crowl asked Alan Graham (retired State Entomologist) if there is anything landowners can do about the invasive ash bore (beetle) that has been spotted in Vermont. He replied that there are pesticides, but

that large timber stands are particularly vulnerable. He predicts there will be a lot of ash harvesting this year, and that lumber prices will be low due to an oversupply.

Bob Coates noted the recent emergence of a new invasive – litter! He encouraged everyone to clean up roadside trash as it emerges from the snowbanks, and put in a plug for Green-Up Day, which is coming up the first Saturday of May.

Norwood Long spoke about upcoming weatherization workshops being sponsored by Sustainable Woodstock, and encouraged people to attend to learn what resources are available.

Bill Emmons moved to adjourn, Orson St. John seconded, and the Moderator declared the meeting closed at 11:00am. The new officers were sworn to their duties by Becky Fielder.

Lunch was served by the Thompson Senior Center to benefit their Meals on Wheels program.

Respectfully submitted,

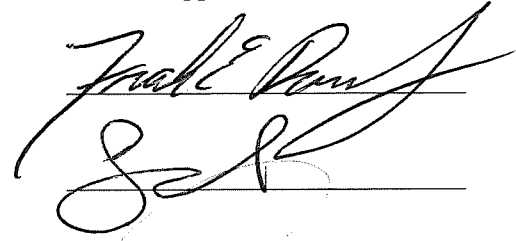


9 MARCH 2018

Rebecca Fielder, Town Clerk

Minutes approved by:

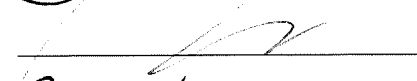
Date:



2 May 2018



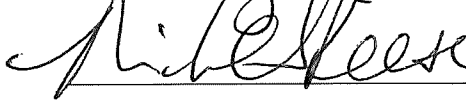
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May 2, 2018