

TOWN OF BETHEL ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 7, 2017

Pursuant to the warning recorded on the previous pages, the Town of Bethel Annual Meeting was held on March 7, 2017 at the Whitcomb High School Gym. The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Eric Benson at 10:05 am. The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Before the meeting started coffee, pies and other baked goodies were enjoyed by all under the direction of Laura Rubenis.

Todd Sears, School Board member spoke on Act 46 or the school consolidation vote to be coming up on April 11 and hoped as many voters as possible would try to get out for the school meeting, to learn more about this very important vote.

Announcements were then made and our District Representative, Sandra Haas was asked to speak on what was happening in Montpelier.

Selectboard Chairman, Carl Russell thanked Lisa Hill for her roll as Selectboard, as she was stepping down. He also stated that there were changes going on in the town office with Town Manager, Keith Arlund retiring, Asst. Town Manager Abbie Sherman leaving and an opening in the highway department and that there are also openings on several committees, including the Planning Commission.

- Art. 1 **Eric Benson** was elected **Moderator** for the ensuing year. Vv unan.
Nominated by Jim Gray
- Art. 2 **Jean Burnham** was elected **Town Clerk** for the year ensuing. Vv unan.
Nominated by Jim Gray
- Art. 3 Report of the Town Officers accepted as printed. Motion made by Yaroslav Stanchak and seconded by Leroy Jackson. Pass by a voice vote.
- Art. 4 **Jean Burnham** was elected **Town Treasurer** for the year ensuing.
Nominated by Jim Gray. VV unan.
- Art. 5 **Paul Vallee** was elected **Selectboard Member** for a **3 year** term.
Nominated by Stan Capron. The Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Gene Kraus and seconded by Jim Gray.
- Art. 6 **Chris Jarvis** was elected **Selectboard Member** for a **2 year** term.
Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Louise Ferris-Burt and seconded by Gene Kraus.
- Art. 7 **Maurice Brigham** was elected **Selectboard Member** to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term ending in **2018**. Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Louise and seconded by Gene Kraus.
- Art. 8 **Louise Ferris-Burt** was elected **Lister** for a **3 year** term. Nominated by Jim Gray. Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by David Eddy and seconded by Jim Gray.
- Art. 9 **Laura Rubenis** was elected **Grand Juror**. Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. Vv unan.
- Art. 10 **Debra Leahy** was elected **Agent** to prosecute and defend suits in which the Town is interested.
Nominated by Jim Gray. Vv unan.
- Art. 11 **Carroll Ketchum** was elected **Trustee of Public Funds** under Section 24, V.S.A. for a term of **3 years**. Nominated by Bill Brainard. Vv unan.
- Art. 12 Voted the sum of \$1,537,354.00 to defray Highway and General expenses for the 12 month interval commencing July 1, 2017. Motion made by Marc Dimarzio and seconded by Yaroslav Stanchak.

Before the article was voted, Selectboard member, Chris Jarvis explained what some of the increases in the budget were for this year. Some of these are increases in insurance, different cruiser for constable and more time, cost of highway materials and interest on loans due to Irene.

Leroy Jackson expressed concerns about where the highway work was being done and if it was necessary. After some discussion a motion was made by Tim Mills to call the question.

Article was passed by a voice vote.

Art. 13 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$30,000 to the Recreation Facility Improvement Fund.
Motion made by Yaroslav Stanchak and seconded by Stanley Capron.

This passed by a paper ballot. YES – 145 NO - 26

Recreation committee member, Corey Stearns explained that the committee had made a 5 year plan for improvements. The first stage, a new pool house was completed this year. The second stage is the building of a skate park, with the first phase costing \$81,000. He went over the proposed plan. With money they already have, this appropriation, fund raisers and grants, they hope to come up with what they need to complete this stage of construction.

When asked if they didn't raise enough funds, what would happen to the project. Corey said it is designed so it could be downsized if needed.

Many felt that this would bring more people into Bethel and be good for our children , but there were also some concerns about liability if someone was hurt.

Art. 14 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to create a Fund to be administered by the Selectboard for the purposes of Capital Improvements.

Motion made by Paul Feeney and seconded by Kirk White. Passed by a voice vote.

Before article voted, Town Manager, Keith Arlund explained the board felt that it would be less of a burden on tax payers if we had money available when the need arose, such as new equipment or grant matches. He also said the town has been talking for years about a Town Office and improvements to the town garage.

Art. 15 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$19,204 for the support of the Human Services Agencies as listed on the warning.

Motion made by Jim Gray and seconded by Lisa Floyd. Passed by a voice vote.

Art. 16 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$121,841.00 to continue service provided by the White River Valley Ambulance Inc.

Motion made by Paul Feeney and seconded by Louise Ferris-Burt. Passed by a voice vote.

Art. 17 Voted to collect Town Taxes and Town School District Taxes in 4 equal installments being due on Aug. 15, 2017, Nov. 15, 2017, Feb. 15, 2018 and May 15, 2018.

Motion made by Harold White and seconded by Jim Gray. Passed by a voice vote.

Art. 18 Other business:

Kirk White did a presentation to find out how Bethel residents felt about a mural that someone would like to paint for the retaining wall at the intersection of Rt. 12 & 107. This would be an animal, bird or fish and at no cost to the town. It would be painted on plywood, so it could be removed or moved at any time.

A non-binding show of hands showed approval of the mural.

Jose Lazo gave a presentation about free energy audits available to local residents to help make their homes more energy efficient.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean Brunham". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Town Clerk