

TOWN OF BETHEL ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 6, 2018

Pursuant to the warning recorded on the previous pages, the Town of Bethel Annual Meeting was held on March 6, 2018 at the Whitcomb High School Gym. The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Eric Benson at 10:15 am. Members of the Girl Scout Troop 40126 carried flags forward and posted. 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.

Announcements were then made and our District Representative, Sandra Haas, spoke recognizing Jean Burnham with a Concurrent House Resolution by the State of Vermont House of Representatives for her 48 years of service.

Eric Benson also recognized Jean Burnham and thanked her for her years of service to the Town of Bethel.

- Art. 1 **Eric Benson** was elected **Moderator** for the ensuing year. Vv unan.
Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt
- Art. 2 **Pam Brown** was elected **Town Clerk** for the year ensuing. Vv unan.
Nominated by Jean Burnham
- Art. 3 Report of the Town Officers accepted as printed. Motion made by Yaroslav Stanchak and seconded by David Eddy . Pass by a voice vote.
- Art. 4 **Pam Brown** was elected **Town Treasurer** for the year ensuing.
Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. VV unan.
- Art. 5 **Maurice Brigham** was elected **Selectboard Member** for a **3 year** term.
Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. The Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Louise Ferris-Burt and seconded by David Eddy. VV unan.
- Art. 6 **Lindley Brainard** was elected **Selectboard Member** for a **2 year** term.
Nominated by Mary Floyd . Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Louise Ferris-Burt and seconded by Gene Kraus. VV unan.
- Art. 7 **Jim Gray** was elected **Lister** for a **3 year** term. Nominated by Louise Ferris-Burt. Clerk was Instructed to cast one ballot on a motion by Louise Ferris-Burt and seconded by Penny Griffin. VV unan.
- Art. 8 **Debra Leahy** was elected **Grand Juror**. Nominated by David Eddy. Vv unan.
- Art. 9 **Debra Leahy** was elected **Agent** to prosecute and defend suits in which the Town is interested.
Nominated by David Eddy. Vv unan.
- Art. 10 **Penny Griffin** was elected **Trustee of Public Funds** under Section 24, V.S.A. for a term of **3 years**. Nominated by Carroll Ketchum. Vv unan.
- Art. 11 Voted the sum of \$1,943,517.00 to defray Highway and General expenses for the 12 month interval commencing July 1, 2018. Motion made by Yaroslav Stanchak and seconded by Kirk White.

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, higher than expected legal fees, a decrease in the grand list, the balance due on the line of credit.

Discussion was held about the amount of money owed regarding the utilities and delinquent taxes. Carl spoke that the new Finance Manager, Therese Kirby, has contacted many of the people on those lists and is working with them on payment plans. After print, many people have paid on their accounts.

People thanked selectboard for openness of knowing issues and now having plans in place to deal with them.

Other discussions held about water meters being installed for more equitable usage information and the town hall steeple. Town Manager, Greg Maggard, spoke and answered questions and concerns about both matters. Noted that steeple should be painted this summer.

Discussion was held as to why budget vote was before the articles following asking to appropriate funds for various organizations. Chris Jarvis answered that the numbers were already in the total being asked for but that they warn them as separate articles, as it has been done this way in the past. Louise Ferris-Burt made the motion to suspend the rules for Article 11 and vote on it after Articles 12-15 were discussed and voted on. Carla Hodgdon seconded the motion. Voice vote failed in 2/3 majority per Moderator.

Eric Benson restated the article, passed by a voice vote.

Art. 12 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$10,000 update the heating system and replace some exterior trim and siding at the Bethel Fire Department, as part of building maintenance. Fire department Chief David Aldrighetti addressed the assembly to explain the reason for the request, including the need to replace an aging exterior fuel tank and defective exterior trim originally applied on the 20 year old building. Some discussion about possible update of heating system to make more energy efficient and not rely on fossil fuels.

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

Art. 13 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$5,500 to upgrade fire hydrants as part of a long range plan.

Motion made by Kirk White and seconded by Yaroslav Stanchak. Passed by a voice vote.

Before article voted, Utilities Director, Tim Mills, spoke about the water system and how many hydrants are in need of replacement as well as water lines. There is a long range plan to upgrade and replace necessary items.

Art. 14 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$23,250 for the support of the Human Services Agencies as listed on the warning.

Before article vote, Tom Burgos, Bethel 's representative to The Stagecoach, made the motion to increase the amount appropriated, from \$3,500 to \$4,000. He gave usage numbers by members of the Bethel community using the Stagecoach services. Karen Bixler seconded the motion. Article 14 was amended to \$23,750. Passed by voice vote.

Art. 15 Voted to appropriate the sum of \$127,890.00 to continue service provided by the White River Valley Ambulance Inc.

Motion made by Paul Feeney and seconded by Susan Reed. Passed by a voice vote.

Art. 16 Voted to collect Town Taxes and Town School District Taxes in 4 equal installments being due on Aug. 15, 2018, Nov. 15, 2018, Feb. 15, 2019 and May 15, 2019.

Motion made by Louise Ferris-Burt and seconded by Jim Gray. Passed by a voice vote.

Motion made to amend original warned article to change date from May 5, 2019 to May 15, 2019 was made by Louse Ferris-Burt and seconded by Tim Brennan. Passed by voice vote.

Art. 17 Other business:

Carl Russell introduced town officers: Town Manager, Greg Maggard; Road Commissioner, Allen Patten; Finance Manager, Therese Kirby, and wanted to recognize all members of the office. He also recognized the two people this year's town report was dedicated to, Jean Burnham and Carla Hodgdon. He thanked the ladies for their many years of service to the Bethel community.

John Fago spoke about an initiative that is happening in a number of Vermont towns today about asking towns to reduce their greenhouse emissions by 2050. He asked that Bethel join the other communities in the State of Vermont to look into these aspects. A "straw-pole" non-binding vote was taken which passed by voice vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Town Clerk