

Town Meeting Committee Minutes of January 17, 2017

Attending: Jean Burnham, Rick Benson, Davis Dimock, Rebecca Sanborn Stone, Victoria Weber.
Rick called the meeting to order at 3:35. We approved the minutes of our last meeting, 9-26-16.

We approved the content of our *Summary of 2016 activities* for the 2016 Bethel Annual Report.

We had also updated our **page of information** about town meeting that appears at the front of the *Annual Report*.

Bethel Operator's Manual

The Bethel Information Group reported that a rough draft of the *Manual* has been produced and that it is being reviewed for content and design, and fundraising is proceeding.

Town Meeting Preparation:

- 1- We have **childcare** coverage for kids K-6 for Town Meeting (via One Planet program), and all ages for the school meeting (via PTO), but lack childcare for infants-to-kindergarten age in the morning. Rick will put out a request for licensed child care providers via Front Porch Forum.
- 2- **Pie.** Laura Rubenis will again organize donations of pie. Victoria and Davis will supply a platter of cheese/fruit/crackers and Jean Burnham will provide coffee.
- 3- **Microphones.** Rick will check with the Selectboard that they are again hiring Seth Stoddard to provide portable mics, and he will also check with Principal Bradley to see if there are a handful of students who could deliver the mics to people who do not want to walk up to the main microphone. We also suggest that the main microphone be placed in the front corner of the gym so that a person can address both the selectboard and the audience, rather than having their back to the audience.
- 4- **Job descriptions for elected offices.** After a citizen asked "Just what does a lister do?" last year, we realized that many citizens do not know what the various elected positions are responsible for. Rather than the Moderator trying to explain each one during the meeting, Jean will draft a handout with short explanations of each of the elected positions. Rebecca will proof it and work with Jean to finalize this handout, which we will distribute before town meeting (via Front Porch Forum on Feb. 16th), and have available along with the Robert's Rules of Order handout that we used the past few years.
- 5- **Exhibits.** We will have an exhibit of the *Bethel Operator's Manual*, including several copies of the draft document and pens for folks to make suggestions on it. We will also solicit exhibits from other town committees. Any nonprofit group can have a free exhibit, and we encourage this as a means to share what is happening in town. People planning an exhibit should check with Jean Burnham.
- 6- **Promoting town meeting.** We will put out a weekly series of short Front Porch Forum posts on:
 - a. Available childcare, our desire to also cover younger kids in the morning, and soliciting exhibits. – Rick – post now

- b. Availability of a fund-raising spaghetti dinner before the school meeting by the local Girl Scouts, and a request for people to donate pies or other easily handled desserts for the social hour before town meeting. – Rick - Feb 2nd
- c. How to request a day off from your Vermont job to attend town meeting – Victoria -- Feb.9th
- d. Robert's Rules handout and a handout listing of job descriptions for positions elected at town meeting. – Rebecca - Feb. 16th

Victoria will also ask one of the town reporters to write an article for the March, 2nd issue of *The Herald* about enhancements to Bethel town meeting.

- 7- **Local Heroes clothes line.** Rebecca will create a space at the back of the gym where people can attach post-it notes with useful thoughts for troubled times, names of people they think have been especially helpful this year, and other positive experiences in Bethel.

Our next Town Meeting Committee meeting will be Tuesday, February 21st at 3:30 in the Town Clerk's office.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Victoria Weber, Secretary, January 18, 2017.