

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
FEBRUARY 29 & MARCH 1, 2016**

Moderator Sally Ayrey called the Town of Sunderland meeting to order at 7:40 PM with approximately 55 people in attendance. Moderator Sally Ayrey introduced Selectboard members Richard Timmerman, Jon French, Mark Hyde, Steven Bendix and John Williams. Moderator Sally Ayrey also introduced Town Clerk/Treasurer Rose Keough. Moderator Ayrey read an invocation from the Town of Danville to remind everyone to think clearly and to be respectful of each other. Moderator Sally Ayrey reminded everyone that the conduct and procedures of the meeting would be under Roberts Rules of Order 11th edition and according to Vermont State law. Moderator Ayrey stated that the Annual Warning is on page 5 of the Town Report and articles 1 – 19 will be addressed tonight and the remaining articles will be voted on by ballot tomorrow.

Selectboard Chairman Mark Hyde had asked to make a few remarks and stated that there will be a town wide reappraisal as ordered by the State of Vermont. Chairman Mark Hyde stated that the Listers, Peter Van Vleck and John Stuermer would be doing the reappraisal and needed access to all properties.

Hearing no objections Moderator Sally Ayrey dispensed with the reading of the warning.

Article 1. Shall the voters authorize the payment of its personal and property taxes to the Town Treasurer in equal installments with the payments to be in the hands of the Treasurer by October 15th and April 15th?

Moved by: James Ayrey

Seconded by: Peter VanVleck

With no discussion article one was approved by voice vote.

Moderator Ayrey stated that the following three articles had to do with the Highway Equipment Reserve and that Richard Timmerman wanted to make a few comments before we voted on the articles.

Richard Timmerman stated that the Selectboard would like to prepay the lease payments on the equipment and would like to purchase a new truck and to build up the reserve fund for future purchases. Richard Timmerman noted that articles 2, 3 and 4 would help accomplish this. Richard Timmerman stated that it would not help us this current year or the next. Carl Graves asked about the maintenance of the leased equipment and Richard Timmerman stated that the highway crew already takes care of that. Jeremy Crumb asked what we are leasing and for how many years. Road Foreman and resident Marc Johnston stated that we have paid for the grader but have four more payments on the excavator which are about \$24,000.00 per year.

Article 2. Shall the voters approve the sum of \$50,000.00 to be added to the Equipment Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Richard Timmerman

Seconded by: Colleen York

With no discussion article two was approved by voice vote.

Article 3. Shall the voters approve the transfer of \$85,000.00 from the National Forest Account to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Moved by Richard Timmerman

Seconded by Philip Ehret

With no discussion article three was approved by voice vote.

Article 4. Shall the voters transfer any Highway Fund surplus on June 30, 2016 to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Moved by Richard Timmerman

Seconded by Sally Stone

With no discussion article four was approved by voice vote.

Moderator Sally Ayrey recessed the meeting at 7:52 PM to give Representative Steven Berry and Representative Cynthia Browning the opportunity to address the assembly. Moderator Sally Ayrey reconvened the meeting at 8:19 PM.

Article 5. Shall the voters approve the sum of **\$50,000.00** to be added to the Paving Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Jeremy Crumb

Seconded by: Rose Stone

Robert Alexander asked about the future plans for paving. Road Foreman and resident Marc Johnston explained that a grant to do from The Manchester town line south is being submitted. If the grant is not received the overlay on South Road could be done. Jeremy asked about doing the North Road and Mark Hyde stated that only if the amount of money was at least doubled.

Article five was approved by voice vote.

Article 6. Shall the voters approve the sum of **\$15,000.00** to be added to the Road Projects Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Marilyn Couture

Seconded by: Carl Graves

Jeremy Crumb asked for the current balance in the fund and Mark Hyde stated that it was a couple thousand dollars. Road Foreman Marc Johnston stated that this fund replaced the individual projects such as the Chiselville Bridge Fund.

Article six was approved by voice vote.

Article 7. Shall the voters approve the sum of **\$5,000.00** to be added to the State/Town Bridge Co-Op? Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Lily Van Haverbeke

Seconded by: Gloria Alexander

With no discussion article seven was approved by voice vote.

Article 8. Shall the voters approve the sum of **\$1,500.00** to be added to the Guard Rail Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Colleen York

Seconded by: Sally Stone

With no discussion article eight was approved by voice vote.

Article 9. Shall the voters establish the Selectboard annual salaries at \$1,500.00 for each of the four members and at \$2,000.00 for the Chairman, beginning with the 2016 – 2017 fiscal year budgets?

Moved by: James Ayrey

Seconded by: Marie Litowsky

Mary Van Vleck asked why the increase was requested. John Williams stated that he did a review of neighboring towns and found that it warranted the increase. Colleen York stated that the town is very fortunate for having the members and we are getting off cheap.

Article nine was approved by voice vote.

Article 10. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to exempt 4-H Camp Ondawa, Inc. from taxation for three years (to begin with the 2016 – 2017 fiscal year)?

Moved by: Marilyn Couture

Seconded by: Carl Graves

John Cullinan asked about what the board received in preparation of this request. Mark Hyde stated that a petition was presented to the town clerk to be included in the warning. Rose Keough explained that 4-H Camp Ondawa has tried to become state tax exempt as the Boy Scouts are but have not been successful. Dineen Squillante stated that they offer camps to our children at a lower cost than childcare. Jeremy Crumb asked is this was a normal request or not. Rose Keough stated that every three years they have put this before the voters. Harriet Welther noted that the town provides no services to the property and that 4-H Camp Ondawa provides services to the community so this is a reasonable request.

Article ten was approved by voice vote.

Article 11. Shall the voters authorize the establishment of a Building Maintenance Reserve Fund and to authorize \$1,500.00 to be added to the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund?

Moved by: Gloria Alexander

Seconded by: Sally Stone

Mark Hyde stated that this reserve was needed for repairs and unanticipated expenses. Carl Graves asked if the building was insured. Mark Hyde stated that there is insurance in case any major damage occurs.

Article eleven was approved by voice vote.

Moderator Sally Ayrey explained that articles twelve through seventeen are all appropriation request from social service agencies. John Williams explained that the Selectboard decided to have anyone requesting funding to go through the petition process. John William stated that thirteen agencies requested funds and six did complete the petition process.

Article 12. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$700.00 for the support of Arlington Area Childcare, Inc. (Happy Days Playschool) to provide services to the Town?

Moved by: John Williams

Seconded by: Daniel Reilly

Allison Gryzb noted that it was such a small amount it should be raised to \$1,000.00 and there should be a separate procedure for the Selectboard to handle the smaller request. Kevin Keough stated that the process needed to be explained better so the organizations know what is expected. Mark Hyde stated that typically the board would receive a request and anything less than \$1,000.00 would be decided whether or not to put it in the budget, anything \$1,000.00 or more would be added to the warning. Mark Hyde stated that the board changed this because they felt it was better to have the voters decide if they wanted to appropriate funds or not. John Williams stated that he sent a letter to each organization with a petition and an explanation of the new process. Marie Litowinsky asked where the petitions were located and how the voters knew they were out there. John Williams stated that an organization should go around and get the required signatures. Jon French noted that getting the signatures gives the organization the opportunity to explain what it does and how it serves our community. James Ayrey requested to have the debate stopped. With more than two thirds of the voters agreeing the debate did stop.

Article twelve was approved by a showing of hands.

Article 13. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$7,000.00 for the support of Martha Canfield Memorial Library, Inc. to provide services to the residents of the Town?

Moved by: John Williams

Seconded by: Colleen York

Joseph Zimmerman stated that the petition actually stated \$7,300.00. Alyson Gryzb agreed with the statement. Rose Keough stated that the \$7,000.00 was a typographical error on her part. Jeremy Crumb moved to amend the article to \$7,300.00 and Colleen York seconded his motion. The motion to amend was approved.

Article thirteen as amended was approved by voice vote.

Article 14. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,000.00 for the support of Burdett Commons, Inc. to provide services to residents of the Town?

Moved by: John Williams

Seconded by: Marie Litowinsky

With no discussion article fourteen was approved by voice vote.

Article 15. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$5,000.00 for the support of Recreation Park of Arlington to provide services to residents of the Town?

Moved by: John Williams

Seconded by: Scott York

With no discussion article fifteen was approved by voice vote.

Article 16. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,500.00 for the support of Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc. to provide services to residents of the Town?

Moved by: John Williams
Seconded by: Gloria Alexander
With no discussion article sixteen was approved by voice vote.

Article 17. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,200.00 for the support of Arlington Community House to provide services to the residents of the Town?

Moved by: John Williams

Seconded by: Daniel Reilly

Moderator Sally Ayrey explained that this was on last year's warning for \$850.00 and it failed to be approved.

With no discussion article seventeen failed by a showing of hands.

Moderator Sally Ayrey recognized that Representative Alice Miller had arrived and recessed the meeting at 8:53 PM. in order to let Representative Miller address the assembly. Moderator Sally Ayrey reconvened the meeting at 9:00PM.

Article 18. Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$2,000.00 for the support of the Manchester Chamber Partnership?

Moved by: James Ayrey

Seconded by: Melanie Virgilio

Moderator Sally Ayrey explained that this is a new request.

Robert Alexander noted that Manchester was asked for an appropriation of \$25,000.00 so the \$2,000.00 Sunderland has been asked for is small. Tammy Reilly stated that the Chamber did a study for eight months and from that study the Partnership was formed to become in effect July 1, 2016. Tammy Reilly explained that the funding was needed to help to keep the visitors center open seven days a week, to hire an economic development professional and an outreach person. Tammy Reilly stated that she is in favor of article eighteen and hoped that everyone else would be. Mark Hyde stated that most of the funding was coming from the businesses and that the economic development issue is a very important factor and he was also in favor of the article. Randy Schmidt stated that this request is for one year and more money would be requested year after year. Randy Schmidt stated that he was not sure there was any benefit to Sunderland. and felt that the biggest issue is that there is not enough affordable housing. Randy Schmidt also stated that three times more people work here but not live here. Peter Luca stated that eighteen towns were asked to join the Partnership and the required funding would just keep going up. Peter Luca also asked if appropriating this money would mean Sunderland is joining the Partnership. Mark Hyde stated that this article is about the money only and not a commitment to join anything. Peter Luca also noted that Shaftsbury has asked the board for \$1,000.00 for the same type of organization. John Williams noted that any funds would have to be requested each year. Jeremy Crumb stated that article eighteen is asking for money for marketing Manchester and Dorset and he is not in favor. John Cullinan shared that the Arlington Chamber joined with Manchester and Arlington had a surplus of \$14,000.00, the only service Arlington received was one ad showing August sales. John Cullinan stated that the Manchester Chamber did not have a good track record. Jeremy Crumb stated that the real issue is housing which has more to do with zoning laws. Jeremy Crumb stated that allowing apartment complexes in Manchester would help but Manchester does not allow it. Jeremy Crumb stated that Manchester is just looking to spend our money but not interested in the governmental problems in their own town. Carl Graves stated that more information is need on what the money would be spent on and not to get ourselves in turmoil. Article eighteen failed by hand vote of 17 yes and 20 no.

Article 19. To transact any other non-binding business.

John Williams explained a few of the changes in the General Fund budget.

1. Act 148 recycling laws caused a \$5,000.00 increase to the budget.
2. Social Services appropriations are down \$3,200.00 from last year.
3. Last year the rescue squad appropriation was not part of the budget and it is this year.
4. Communications such as GNAT and Front Porch Forum is also included in the budget in the amount of \$2,050.00
5. Payroll has increased by \$15,775.00 after reviewing other towns the Town Clerk/Treasurer salaries and the Selectboard salaries were increased.

6. Audit was added to the budget for \$12,000.00 because there has not been an outside audit done in many years and there are no local auditors.
7. Law Enforcement has been increased by \$8,000.00 to allow for more patrolling time.
8. Legal has been increased because of the tax sales and zoning violations that need to be pursued.
9. Tabulator programming increased because of the State and Federal upcoming elections.

Dineen Squillante asked how something can go from a floor vote to part of the budget. John Williams stated that after consulting with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns as long as it is clear to the voters what the money is being used for it can be in the budget or a separate article. Jeremy Crumb asked who audited for this past year. Mark Hyde stated that no one has audited for two or more years because no one comes forward to be an auditor. Eric Henzie offered to step up to be an auditor. Colleen York of the Safe Roads Committee stated that a scoping study has been completed and the consulting engineer gave the final report. The options for the town are to do nothing which will cost nothing, to do a four foot bike lane which would cost about 1.5 million dollars or to do incremental improvements each year for about \$985,000.00.

Colleen York noted that things such as signs and line painting on the edge of the road could be fairly easily done with widening and graveling could be accomplished over several years. Colleen York stated that the Safe Roads Committee needed a sense of whether the town wanted them to continue by seeking out grants or to stop everything. Mark Hyde stated that he felt the committee should look into funding for the project and noted that the Selectboard decided that the Highway Department would not be able to assist with the project because of their workload. Michael DiMonda stated that the town should paint the lines as a start and see how that works. James Ennis stated that he was not in favor of the "share the road" program which the State of Vermont is pushing. James Ennis also stated that he could not believe just a handful of people got this going and one million dollars is a lot of money. James Ennis also noted that the bicycle racers are not going to use a path; they will use the entire road. James Ennis also stated that in his lifetime just one person died from a bicycle accident and the cyclist pulled out in front of a vehicle so safety is not the issue. Marie Litowinsky stated that as the chairperson for the committee she was offended by the comments from James Ennis. Marie Litowinsky stated that the Selectboard asked for volunteers and the members of the committee are the ones that stepped forward. Marie Litowinsky also noted that this is not just a bicycle path, it is for the safety of anyone using the road such as walking or riding bicycles. Jeremy Crumb asked why the power lines could not be used as a bike path. Colleen York stated that certain connections had to be met for the grant. Lucille Morse stated that she could not believe no one has asked about the tax increase. Lucille Morse stated that people moved here because they liked the area and then they want to change everything. Melanie Virgilio stated that she felt the graveling was not a good option and the town should go all the way with the project. Daniel Reilly asked how much this project would increase the taxes and Mark Hyde stated that with a grant 90% would be covered. Mark Hyde also stated that it would take three to four years for the construction to begin and if the town gives approval we could budget money each year in advance. Dan Reilly asked what would happen if we were not awarded a grant. Mark Hyde stated that the project would not be done. Moderator Sally Ayrey reminded everyone that this is a non-binding portion of the meeting. Moderator Sally Ayrey stated that from the assembly's consensus the decision would be made by the Selectboard. Jon French stated that the Selectboard has not agreed to do anything. Mark Hyde asked for the voter's direction and stated that if any money is required it would be put on the warning as an article next year. Lily Van Haverbeke stated that with the actual project not starting for three or four years then the price will increase. Joseph Zimmerman stated that there would be no harm in allowing the committee to go forward and get a grant because they are not spending a dime and that would give the people time to research the project. Moderator Sally Ayrey stated that people needed to start attending meetings in order to be prepared for these types of items. Steven Bendix encouraged everyone to complete the survey that the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance has on line and in the Town Clerk's office.

The ballot boxes were declared open on March 1, 2016 at 10:00AM by Town Clerk Rose Keough and closed at 7:00 PM. The results follow:

Article 20. Shall the voters approve the total sum of \$12,500.00 for the Cemetery Maintenance Budget?

YES	233
NO	34
BLANK	18

TOTAL 285

Article 21. Shall the voters approve the total sum of \$310,736.00 for the General Fund Budget?

YES 225

NO 42

BLANK 18

TOTAL 285

Article 22. Shall the voters approve the total sum of \$340,250.00 for the Highway Fund Budget?

YES 222

NO 46

BLANK 17

TOTAL 285

Article 23. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by law:

Auditor -3 year term

WRITE-IN Eric Henzie 17 *

WRITE-IN OTHERS 1

SPOILED 2

BLANK 265

TOTAL 285

Auditor- 1 year term

WRITE-IN 5

BLANK 280

TOTAL 285

Auditor -2 year term

WRITE-IN 1

BLANK 284

TOTAL 285

Cemetery Commissioner -3 year term

WRITE-IN Lucille Morse 28*

WRITE- IN James Ennis 24

WRITE-IN OTHERS 3

SPOILED 7

BLANK 223

TOTAL 285

Cemetery Commissioner -2 year term

WRITE-IN James Ennis 32*

WRITE-IN Lucille Morse 10

WRITE-IN OTHERS 1

SPOILED 2

BLANK 240

TOTAL 285

Cemetery Commissioner - 1 year term

WRITE-IN James Ennis 5

WRITE-IN Emily Robinson 4

WRITE-IN OTHERS 2

SPOILED 1

BLANK 273

TOTAL 285

Delinquent Tax Collector -1 year term

KATHLEEN C. MORSE 218*

WRITE IN 1

BLANK 66

TOTAL 285

First Constable -1 year term

JESSE STONE 209*

WRITE-IN 2

BLANK 74

TOTAL 285

Second Constable -1 year term

RENEE STONE 189*

WRITE-IN 1

BLANK 95

TOTAL 285

Lister - 3 year term

WRITE-IN 2

BLANK 283

TOTAL 285

Selectboard Member -3 year term

MARK HYDE 184*

WRITE-IN 1

BLANK 100

TOTAL 285

Selectboard Member -1 year term(vote for 2)

RICHARD TIMMERMAN 175*

JOHN WILLIAMS 182*

WRITE-IN 1

BLANK 212

TOTAL 570

Town Agent -1 year term

WRITE-IN 1

Town Grand Juror -1 year term

WRITE-IN 2

BLANK	284
TOTAL	285

Town Moderator- 1 year term

SALLY AYREY	206*
WRITE-IN	1
BLANK	78
TOTAL	285

Town Treasurer- 3 year term

ROSE M. KEOUGH	245*
WRITE-IN	2
BLANK	38
TOTAL	285

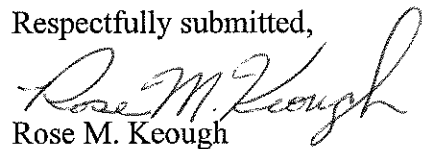
SPOILED	1
BLANK	282
TOTAL	285

Town Clerk- 3 year term

ROSE M. KEOUGH	257*
WRITE-IN	2
BLANK	26
TOTAL	285

The meeting was adjourned after announcing the results at 7:30 PM. *(denotes elected)

Respectfully submitted,



Rose M. Keough
Sunderland Town Clerk