

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
MINUTES
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2021
AND
TOWN MEETING ELECTION RESULTS
MARCH 2, 2021**

Selectboard Chairman Jon French called the Town of Sunderland Informational Meeting to order at 7:00 PM via Zoom with approximately 23 participants. This meeting is to discuss and answer questions on the articles that will be voted upon on March 2, 2021 by Australian ballot.

State Representative Kathleen James gave an overview of her activities in the House of Representatives. Representative James is on the House Education Committee and they have been working on a literacy bill, school construction bill, yield bill, community schools bill, and on the Select Committee discussing higher education. Representative James also has been involved with H171 which concerns affordable childcare and the fiscal year 2022 budget.

Representative Seth Bongartz is on the Natural Resources Committee and stated that he is working on the bottle bill to include wine bottles, the care of wetlands and changes to the current use system. Representative Bongartz has been attending the pension workshops.

Representative David Durfee stated that he is on the Ways and Means Committee and has been working on the yield bill and at this point of time the State Education tax rate is going up one cent or less. Representative Durfee also has been involved with how we fund schools, there could be a change from property taxation to an income tax basis.

Jon French then opened discussion on questions that were sent in prior to the meeting.

Article 1: Joseph Boutin asked how much money is in the Equipment Reserve Fund and what equipment does the town plan to purchase. Richard Timmerman stated that there is \$70,747.00 in the fund and the town is looking to purchase a loader, probably a used one. Richard Timmerman noted that the piece of equipment that is used as a loader broke down and Woodard Construction let us borrow one until ours was fixed.

Article 2: Joseph Boutin asked how much money is in the Paving Reserve Fund and what projects are anticipated and how much will they cost for the upcoming season. Bruce Mattison stated that there is \$5,735.53 in the Paving Reserve Fund and there are no projects planned because it takes a few years to build up the fund before doing anything. It was explained that last year the North Road was done.

Article 3: Joseph Boutin asked how much money is in the Road Projects Reserve Fund and what are the projected projects for this upcoming season. Bruce Mattison stated that there is \$40,484.18 in the fund and nothing is currently projected.

Article 4: There were no questions.

Article 5: There were no questions.

Article 6: Joseph Boutin asked how much the budget would increase should article six be approved. Richard Timmerman stated that the salt shed has been completed and the money will be transferred into the Highway Fund. Rose Keough stated that whatever is left in the Salt Shed Reserve Fund would go into the Highway Fund and this would help decrease the amount needed

to be raised in taxes. The estimated amount is \$11,825.00 and the Selectboard cannot spend this money and it will be applied against what is needed for the Highway Fund next year.

Articles 7 – 15: There were no questions.

Article 16: Joseph Boutin asked if the Cemetery Commissioners were asking for an increase in their salary. Jon French noted that the Cemetery Budget does show the increase and each member would receive \$750.00 annually up from \$500.00. Joseph Boutin asked how often they meet and what their responsibilities are. Jon French noted that the Cemetery Commissioners meet once a month except in the winter months and they are responsible for the maintenance of the cemeteries such as contracting the mowing, they sell, layout and draw up the deeds for the cemetery lots. Jon French noted that the cemeteries look exceptionally good. Peter Van Haverbeke stated that the statement of receipts and disbursement on page 8 of the annual report states that over \$8,000.00 was spent on miscellaneous which is an exceptionally large amount for miscellaneous. Rose Keough explained that the miscellaneous expense was \$36.87, and the mowing expense was \$8,050.00. Peter and Lily Van Haverbeke stated that it did not appear that way in the online version. Rose Keough stated that it could be considered mislabeling. Stephen Bendix stated that the page numbering on the online version did not match the printed version.

Articles 17-19: Joseph Boutin noted that the pay for the Constables is lowest rate of pay and does this mean we do not need Constables. Jon French stated that at the 2000 annual meeting the voters decided to take away all law enforcement capabilities unless the constable completed the law enforcement training. We now have one Constable, Wayne Godfrey, that has completed the training and he has stated that he does not want to be paid as Constable and he and Kevin Hewes are donating their time to Sunderland.

Steven Bendix asked if the Selectboard had come to a decision as to whether they will hire a professional auditor or go with the three Town Auditors. Jon French stated that a professional will be hired because it has been a few years since there has been an outside audit. Steven Bendix asked why the sublet services went up by \$6,000.00. Richard Timmerman explained that we are going to contract someone to haul gravel to let the Road Crew work on other things and it will help to decrease the cost of maintenance of the trucks. Steven Bendix asked if the town will be doing a reappraisal this year and Jon French noted that the Listers will most likely handle it in house and do a few adjustments on items like land value. Steven Bendix noted that there is \$112,910.87 in the Reappraisal Reserve Fund and the State of Vermont contributes to the reserve each year.

Jon French introduced Jeffrey Dexter as a member of the Energy Committee and asked him to report to the town. Jeffrey Dexter stated that the Energy Committee has been working since 2019 and some of the seminars they hope to have are e-vehicle, e-bike, incentives and rebates, do it yourself projects and heat pumps. The window inserts project will continue in the fall. The Energy Committee is also involved in Green Up which is being held on May 1, 2021. Jeffrey Dexter stated that the committee needs feed back which can be done on Facebook and the committee will beef up the information on the town website: sunderlandvt.org.

Jon French introduced Mark Hyde who is a representative from Sunderland on the Southern Vermont Communications Union District (CUD). Mark Hyde stated that CUD was formed about a year ago and they are in the final stages of the business plan. The plan has shown that we are not viable as a stand-alone entity and we should join with another partner. Mark Hyde stated that there are significant funding opportunities at the state level which could allow for the CUD to start working on the high level of design of a network.

Jon French thanked Richard Timmerman, who is stepping down, for his years of service on the Selectboard and he is welcome back anytime. Richard Timmerman urged people to get involved. Jon French stated that the polls are open at the Sunderland Municipal Offices at 104 Mountain View Road on March 2, 2021 from 10:00am until 7:00pm for Sunderland residents to cast their ballots if they decided not to mail them.

Richard Zens moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Richard Timmerman. Jon French declared the meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

The ballot boxes were declared open on March 2, 2021 at 10:00am by Town Clerk Rose Keough and closed at 7:00pm. The results follow:

Article 1. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$65,000.00 to be added to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Yes 191 No 31 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 2. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$65,000.00 to be added to the Paving Reserve Fund?

Yes 193 No 29 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 3. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$15,000.00 to be added to the Road Projects Reserve Fund?

Yes 198 No 23 Blank 4 **TOTAL 225**

Article 4. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 to be added to the State/Town Bridge Co-Op Reserve Fund?

Yes 202 No 20 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 5. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 to be added to the Guardrail Reserve Fund?

Yes 191 No 31 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 6. Shall the voters of Sunderland authorize the transfer of any remaining funds in the Salt Shed Reserve Fund to the Highway Fund?

Yes 202 No 18 Blank 4 Overvote 1 **TOTAL 225**

Article 7. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$2,000.00 to be added to the Technology Reserve Fund?

Yes 192 No 30 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 8. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 to be added to the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund?

Yes 203 No 19 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 9. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$700.00 for the support of **Arlington Area Childcare, Inc.** (Happy Days Playschool) to provide services to the residents of the town?

Yes 174 No 47 Blank 4 **TOTAL 225**

Article 10. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 for the support of **Arlington Community Public Health Nursing Service, Inc.** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Yes 203 No 21 Blank 1 **TOTAL 225**

Article 11. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 for the support of the **Recreation Park in Arlington** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Yes 191 No 31 Blank 3 **TOTAL 225**

Article 12. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$9,100.00 for the support of the **Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library, Inc.** to provide services to the residents of the town?

Yes 172 No 51 Blank 2 **TOTAL 225**

Article 13. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$150.00 for the support of **Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE)** to provide victim services to the residents of the town?

Yes 194 No 26 Blank 4 Overvotes 1 **TOTAL 225**

Article 14. Shall the Town of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$300.00 for the support of **Shire Kids** to provide books and reading programs for young children and families in Sunderland?

Yes 198 No 26 Blank 1 **TOTAL 225**

Article 15. Shall the voters of Sunderland appropriate the sum of \$700.00 for the support of **Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging** to provide elder services to the residents of the town?

Yes 199 No 24 Blank 2 **TOTAL 225**

Article 16. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$18,850.00 for the Cemetery Maintenance Budget?

Yes 180 No 41 Blank 4 **TOTAL 225**

Article 17. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$355,680.00 for the General Fund Budget?

Yes 194 No 24 Blank 5 Overvotes 2 **TOTAL 225**

Article 18. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$395,300.00 for the Highway Fund Budget?

Yes 193 No 26 Blank 5 Overvotes 1 **TOTAL 225**

ARTICLE 19. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by law:

Auditor, 3-yr term

Write in Others	8
Blank	217
TOTAL	225

Cemetery Commissioner, 3-yr term

Write-in Others	13
Blank	212
TOTAL	225

Auditor, 2 years of a 3-yr term

ADAM ANNUNIZIATA	171*
Other	1
Blank	53
TOTAL	225

Delinquent Tax Collector, 1-yr term

RICHARD A. DAVIS, II	187*
Others	1
Blank	37
TOTAL	225

First Constable, 1-yr term

WAYNE M. GODFREY	175*
Write in Others	7
Blank	43
TOTAL	225

Second Constable, 1-yr term

KEVIN HEWES	229*
Write in Others	5
Blank	52
TOTAL	225

Lister, 3-yr term

PETER VAN VLECK, JR	185*
Other	1
Blank	39
TOTAL	225

Lister, 2 years of a 3-yr term

ROBERT GOODFELLOW	182*
Write in Others	1
Blank	42
TOTAL	225

Lister, 1-year of a 3-yr term
 MICHAEL de ZAYAS 175*
 Write in Others 1
 Blank 49
TOTAL 225

Selectboard Member, 3-yr term
 JON FRENCH 192*
 Write in Others 2
 Blank 29
 Defective 2
TOTAL 225

Selectboard Member, 1-yr term(Vote for 2)

RICHARD ZENS (DIXIE) 181*
 Write in Others 10
 Blank 259
TOTAL 450

Town Agent, 1-yr term

JAMES S. AYREY 188*
 Blank 36
 Defective 1
TOTAL 225

Town Grand Juror, 1-yr term

JAMES S. AYREY 189*
 Write in Others 1
 Blank 35
TOTAL 225

Town Moderator, 1-year term

Write-in Others 14
 Blank 211
TOTAL 225

*denotes elected.

Respectfully submitted,
 ROSE M. KEOUGH
 Sunderland Town Clerk