

DRAFT
TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES AND RESULTS
MARCH 6TH & 7TH, 2023

Select Board Chair, Jon French called the Town of Sunderland Annual Meeting to order at 7:00PM with an attendance of 37.

Board Chair French introduced the select board members, Alexander Bresnick, Andrew McKeever, Dixie Zens and Bruce Mattison and town clerk, Susan Whitney.

Article 1. To elect a Town Moderator. Board Chair French asked for nominations. Dixie Zens nominated Andrew McKeever. No other nominations were received. Alex Bresnick seconded the nomination. All in favor, Andrew McKeever was declared Moderator.

Moderator McKeever stated it had been 23 years since he lasted moderated and asked all to bear with him. He welcomed everyone back to the first in-person annual meeting since COVID. Moderator McKeever asked if this was anyone's first town meeting and received a show of hands.

Moderator McKeever asked for a motion to dispense with the reading of the warning. Martin Nadler moved, Becca Herrington seconded, all in favor.

Article 2. Shall the voters of Sunderland authorize the payment of the personal and property taxes to the Town Treasurer in equal installments with the payments to be in the hands of the Treasurer by Monday, October 16th, 2023 and Monday, April 15th, 2024?

Alex Bresnick moved, Martin Nadler seconded. All in favor. Motion passed with no discussion.

Article 3. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$70,000 to be added to the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund?

Melanie Virgilio moved the question. Martin Nadler seconded. Joe Boutin asked Road Foreman, Marc Johnston if there was a particular piece of equipment the money would be used for? Road Foreman Johnston stated a new dump truck would be the next item purchased and noted the current price for a truck is over \$200,000. Board Chair, Jon French stated there was \$127,938.96 in the reserve at this time. With no further discussion, Article 3 was unanimously approved.

Article 4. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$70,000 to be added to the Paving Reserve Fund?

The question was moved by Melanie Virgilio, seconded by Richard Goddard. Joe Boutin asked Road Foreman Marc Johnston which roads were being considered for paving? Road Foreman Johnston stated he was obtaining pricing to do Borough Road. The price would determine how far it could be done. Martin Nadler asked if there was a plan to pave Flynn Hollow Road? Road Foreman Johnston replied in the future. With no further discussion, Article 4 was unanimously approved.

Article 5. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$15,000 to be added to the Road Projects Reserve Fund?

Alex Bresnick moved the question. Seconded by JoAnn Rappahahn. All in favor. Motion passed with no discussion.

Article 6. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$5,000 to be added to the State/Town Bridge Co-Op Reserve Fund?

The question was moved by Melanie Virgilio, seconded by Virginia Dexter. No discussion followed. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 7. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$1,500 to be added to the Guardrail Reserve Fund?

Melanie Virgilio moved the question. Martin Nadler seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 8. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$1,500 to be added to the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund?

Martin Nadler moved the question, seconded by Melanie Virgilio. Joe Boutin asked if it was true that building maintenance spent that amount of money this past year? The select board and treasurer confirmed the building maintenance line is currently over budget. With no further discussion, the motion passed with all in favor.

At 7:12PM with the arrival of State Representatives Kathleen James, Seth Bongartz and David Durfee, Moderator McKeever paused the meeting and turned the microphone over to the State Representatives to address their constituents. The meeting resumed at 7:45PM.

Article 9. Shall the voters 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 residents of the town?

Martin Nadler moved the question, seconded by Melanie Virgilio. No one was present from the organization to answer enrollment questions. Alex Bresnick asked if anyone knew why the request from Arlington Area Childcare was so different from Northshire Day School's request. Lauren McGrath said she could address how Northshire came to their number, but could not address how Arlington Area Childcare did. She stated Northshire is trying to close a deficit and to meet goals to make childcare more affordable and retain staff. Motion passed with all in favor.

Article 10. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$11,000.00 for the support of Northshire Day School to provide services to the residents of the town?

Article was moved by Martin Nadler and seconded by Suzanne Thompson. Irene Nadler read a prepared statement in support of the Northshire Day School and the importance of early childhood programs for the later school success. Suzanne Thompson stated her children are flourishing at Northshire Day School. Richard Goddard asked what age group was served? Lauren McGrath responded that they serve children from 6 weeks to kindergarten. Nick Gault stated the cost, without subsidy, to send his child to Northshire is \$313 per week, over \$16,000 per year. No further discussion, motion approved.

Article 11. Shall the voters 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 the

residents of the town?

Melanie Virgilio moved the question. Martin Nadler seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 12. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$5,000.00 for the support of Recreation Park in Arlington to provide services to the residents of the town?

Virginia Dexter moved the article, Martin Nadler seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 13. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$9,100.00 for the support of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library, Inc. to provide services to the residents of the town?

Martin Nadler moved the question. Jeff Dexter seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 14. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$700.00 for the support of Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging to provide elder services to the residents of the town?

Caroline Hartshorn moved the question, Richard Goddard seconded. No discussion followed. Motion was approved with all in favor.

Article 15. Shall the voters of Sunderland vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$150.00 for the support of Project Against Violent Encounters (P.A.V.E.) to provide victim services to the residents of the town?

Virginia Dexter moved the article, Melanie Virgilio seconded. No discussion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Article 16. Discussion of other non-binding business that may come before this meeting.

Moderator McKeever introduced Jeff Dexter, Chair of the Sunderland Energy Committee. Jeff stated the committee has been reviewing energy efficiency at the town municipal buildings in conjunction with Act 172 Municipal Resiliency. The committee is also doing the Windows Dresser project for the third year. Window inserts are built to mitigate drafts and help residents save on their fuel bills. Costs for residents is very reasonable and residents may qualify for free inserts.

Jeff also spoke regarding the progress of the installation of a State of Vermont historical marker honoring Lucy Prince. The area where Lucy Prince lived was near Ondawa Road. Jeff acknowledged Avis and Jim Hayden for their research into Lucy's history and family, as well as Avis's contribution in the making of a quilt to honor Lucy.

Jeff noted Green Up day will be May 7th.

Jeff thanked the select board and town staff.

Dixie Zens, select board Solid Waste Representative, shared that a permanent hazardous waste facility is being built in Bennington and should be operational this summer.

Joe Boutin asked if zoning was being changed to encourage more housing? Board Chair Jon French said that would be through the Planning Board, but did not think they were addressing that yet. Joe Boutin asked if there was any Air BnB regulations being addressed. Board Chair French replied the Planning

Board was currently working on it.

Moderator McKeever reminded everyone that Articles 17 through 20 would be voted by Australian ballot on Tuesday from 10 AM until 7 PM and asked if there were any questions or discussion.

David Traver Adolphus asked Road Foreman Johnston how the costs of maintaining a dirt road, such as Flynn Hollow, compares to the cost of paving? Road Foreman Johnston would have to research and go back through the worksheets for those costs.

Joe Boutin asked if the town was going to have a reappraisal? Dixie Zens replied we are having a state mandated reappraisal. Melanie Virgilio asked about the reappraisal process. Does everyone's change once the reappraisal is finished, not as each one is done? Chairman French confirmed that is correct.

Jeff Dexter asked about the ARPA funds. Board Chair French said the select board had held a few meetings to discuss possible uses for the funds, but the meetings were not well attended. They will be scheduling additional meetings to receive more input.

Moderator McKeever asked if there were any more questions or discussion. With no further discussion, Jeff Dexter made the motion to adjourn this portion of the meeting. Seconded by Alyson Grzyb. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.

Polls were declared open on Tuesday, March 7th, 2023 at 10:00AM by Town Clerk Susan Whitney and closed at 7:00PM. Balloting Results as follows:

Article 17. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$16,000.00 for the Cemetery Maintenance Budget?

YES - 147

NO - 11

BLANK – 8

Total - 166

Article 18. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$383,633.00 for the General Fund Budget?

YES - 147

NO - 11

BLANK – 7

OVERVOTE- 1

Total – 166

Article 19. Shall the voters of Sunderland approve the sum of \$537,600.00 for the Highway Fund Budget?

YES - 142

NO - 20

BLANK – 4

Total – 166

Article 20. To elect by Australian Ballot the following officers, as required by law:

(* Denotes elected)

Auditor, Remaining 1 year of 3 year term

Write in	1
Blank	165
TOTAL	166

Cemetery Commissioner, 3 year term

Kathleen Johnston	142*
Blank	24
TOTAL	166

Auditor, 3 year term

Catherine Comar	138*
Blank	28
TOTAL	166

Cemetery Commissioner, Remaining 1 year of 3 year term

Avis C. Hayden	142*
Blank	24
TOTAL	166

Delinquent Tax Collector, 1 year term

Write in: Richard Davis II	18*
Write in: Others	2
Blank	146
TOTAL	166

First Constable, 1 year term

Wayne Godfrey	130*
Write in	3
Blank	33
TOTAL	166

Second Constable, 1 year term

Kevin R. Hewes	132*
Write in	1
Blank	33
TOTAL	166

Lister, 3 year term

Robert Goodfellow	131*
Blank	35
TOTAL	166

Lister, Remaining 2 years of 3 year term

Neil Humphrey	140*
Blank	26
TOTAL	166

Select Board, 3 year term

Bruce Mattison	141*
Blank	25
TOTAL	166

Select Board, 1 year term- 2 positions

Alexander Bresnick	119*
Richard "Dixie" Zens	120*
Write in	1
Blank	92
TOTAL	332

Town Moderator, 1 year term

Write in: Others	9
Blank	157
TOTAL	166

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Whitney, Town Clerk