

**TOWN OF
ATHENS, VERMONT**

2024

**TOWN AND SCHOOL
REPORTS**

TOWN OF ATHENS

POPULATION 2020 CENSUS

380

REGISTERED VOTERS

294

Town Garage	802 869-3312
Constable	802 869-3531
Fire and Rescue	911
Ambulance	911
State Police	1-802-722-4600
Windham County Sheriff's Department	1-802-365-4942
Town Clerk Office	802 869-3370
Athens Elementary School	802 869-2633
Grafton School	802 843-2495
Emergency Management Director	802 869-3268
Weather Emergency Committee	
Donald Capponcelli	802 869-2590
Tim Stevenson & Sherry Maher	802 869-2141
Lynn Morgan	802 869-2227
David Burns	802 869-6354
Cheree Alsvig	802 428-3016
Bonnie Hitchcock	
Justin Stearns	802 591-0560

Town Clerk Hours: Monday and Thursday 9-1 or by appointment

Select Board Meetings: 3rd Thursday of the month at 7pm

Town office mailing address

25 Brookline Rd., Athens, VT 05143

Email

townoffice@athensvt.gov

School Board Meeting: 2nd Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm in Grafton /

Westminster alternating between the two. Contact Lynn Morgan or school to find out where for the meeting you may want to attend

Notice

The Brattleboro Reformer is the paper used for official town publishing

Residents in need of emergency shelter or other basic necessities, such as heat, food, or

water due to a weather related emergency can contact a member of the

Athens Volunteer

Emergency Committee

Property Taxes are due on the 10th of September

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**REPORT
OF
THE TOWN AND SCHOOL
FINANCIAL RECORDS
TOWN OF ATHENS
VERMONT**

We the auditors, have examined and verified the financial records of the
Town and School for year ending
Town – December 31, 2024
School – June 30, 2024

Michael Bates James Trimble Amanda Alsvig

WARNING
2025 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ATHENS, VERMONT

The legal voters of the Town of Athens are hereby notified and warned to act on the following articles on the 3rd of March 2025 at 6:00pm at the Athens Community Center (Former Elementary School).

All voting for Town Officers will be by Australian ballot on the 4th of March 2025.
Polls will be open between 10:00am and 7:00pm at the Athens Town Office.

- Article 1: To act on the town report
- Article 2: To see if the Town shall vote to authorize the Selectboard to borrow money, if necessary, for current expenses in anticipation of collection of taxes
- Article 3: To see if the Town shall vote to collect taxes on the 10th of September 2025
- Article 4: To see if the Town shall vote to publish a list of delinquent taxpayers in the Town Report
- Article 5: To see if the Town shall vote to approve a budget of \$754,729.42, with \$580,729.42 to be raised by taxes, and \$75,000 of the 2024 surplus being used to defray Town expenditures
- Article 6: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 to replenish emergency highway material reserves for future environmental events impacting infrastructure.
- Article 7: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,500.00 for the annual maintenance of its cemeteries
- Article 8: Shall the voters of Athens approve the sum of \$2,500.00 for the purpose of maintaining the Athens Brick Meetinghouse
- Article 9: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,140.00 for the support of **Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS)** to provide workforce and economic coordination services to the Windham Region
- Article 10: To see if the Town shall vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of \$500.00 for the support of **Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital**
- Article 11: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 to support the **Womens' Freedom Center** to provide quality advocacy and support to the women of Athens
- Article 12: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$330.00 to support **Youth Services** to serve the needs of youth and families in and around Windham County
- Article 13: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000.00 to **Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)** to assist Athens in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services
- Article 14: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 for the **Bellows Falls Senior Center**

Article 15: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,350.00 to help support the home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patient's homes and in community settings by the **Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of Vermont and New Hampshire**

Article 16: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000.00 to assist **Grafton Cares** in providing a variety of assistance to the people of Athens

Article 17: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$356.00 to help support outpatient, mental health, and substance abuse service by the staff of **Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS)** in accordance with 24 V. S. A. § 2691

Article 18: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to assist **Senior Solutions**

Article 19: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 to **Bull Creek Common Lands** to support local land conservation and public access in the Bull Creek watershed

Article 20: To set the time of future town meetings

Article 21: To transact any further business proper to come before said meeting

Dated this 24th Day of January 2025 at Athens, Vermont



David Bemis

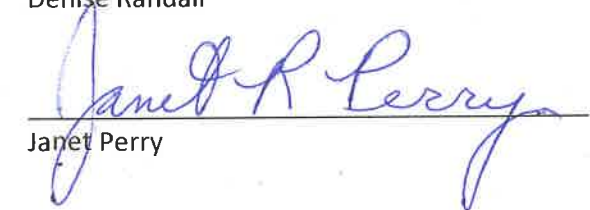


Sandi Capponcelli



Denise Randall

Krista Gay



Janet Perry

ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS

		Term Expires
Moderator	David Bemis	2025
Town Clerk	Hannah Regier	2025
Town Treasurer	Hannah Regier	2025
Selectboard	Sandi Capponcelli	2025
	Krista Gay	2025
	David Bemis	2025
	Denise Randall	2026
	Janet Perry	2027
Listers	Amber Stevens	2025
	<i>Empty seat</i>	[2025] 2026
	Carol Bingham	2027
Auditors	Michael Bates	2025
	Amanda Alsvig	2026
	James Trimble	2027
Campbell Fund Trustees	Krista Gay	2025
	Carol Bingham	2026
	Morgan Wilbur	2027
Meetinghouse Committee	Ginger Maciejowski	2025
	Pamela Russo	2026
	Candace Damon	2027
	Krista Gay	2028
	Sherry Maher	2029
Cemetery Commission	Harold Noyes	2025
	Stephen W. Oakes	2026
	Donald Capponcelli	2027
	David Bemis	2028
	James Neathawk	2029
Constable	Caleb Lemieux	2026
Collector of Delinquent Taxes	Hannah Regier	2025
Town Grand Juror	James Trimble	2025
Town Agent	James Trimble	2025
U.H.S.D #27 Representative	Tanya Noyes	2025
WNUESD Board	Mark Berman (<i>appointed</i>) (2yr term)	2025
WNUESD Board	Krista Gay (2yr term)	2025
WNUESD Board	Lynn Morgan (3yr term)	2027

APPOINTED TOWN OFFICIALS

		<u>Term expires</u>
Fence Viewers	Donald Capponcelli	2025
	Robert Anderson	2025
	Adrian Tenney	2025
Housing Rehabilitation Committee	Hannah Regier	2025
	David Bemis	2025
	Denise Randall	2025
	Janet Perry	2025
	Krista Gay	2025
	Sandi Capponcelli	2025
	Carol Bingham	2025
Planning Commission	Andrew Toepfer	2025
	Mark Berman	2025
	John Oberling	2026
	Ivor Stevens	2026
	Janet Perry	2027
	Selectboard	Ex officio
Sexton, Valley & West Cemetery	Cemetery Commission	
Surveyor of Wood and Coal	Donald Capponcelli	2025
Health Officer	<i>Vacant</i>	2025
Tree Warden	Jay Maciejowski	2025
Town Service Officer	Lynn Morgan	2025
Windham Regional Commission	Andrew Toepfer	2025
	Robert Anderson	2025
State Appointed Forest Fire Warden	David Bemis	
Athens Emergency Mgt Director	David Bemis	2025
Budget Committee	Hannah Regier	2025
	Michael Bates	2026
	Carol Bingham	2026
	Janet Perry	2027
	Amber Stevens	2027
SWWSWMD Representative	David Bemis	2025
Elected Justices of the Peace	David Bemis	2026
	Kate Bova	2026
	Sandra Capponcelli	2026
	April Lyman	2026
	Janet Perry	2026

Town Real Estate (VLCT Insurance Replacement Values) 2021 (do not confuse with market values)

Athens Town Office	\$240,805.00
Athens Town Office Contents	\$48,150.00
Athens Town Garage	\$450,708.00
Athens Town Garage Contents	\$75,000.00
Athens Brick Meetinghouse	\$618,584.00
Community Center	\$442,730.00
Community Center Contents	\$24,494.00
Silk Picture	\$3,000.00
Athens Valley Cemetery	\$0.00
Athens West Cemetery	\$0.00
Total	\$1,903,471.00

Town Garage-Vehicles, Equipment and Tools

2012 Freightliner Dump Truck	\$40,048.00
2019 Ford F 550	\$72,725.00
Sander	\$2,000.00
2017 Catepillar 420 Backhoe/Loader Lease to own	\$139,000.00
2010 Catepillar Grader Lease to own	\$113,131.00
Emergency Trailer & Equipment	\$3,570.00
Plow-Henke 11'	\$7,921.00
Plow-Housatonic 10'	\$4,200.00
Plow-Everest 12'	\$1,300.00
Plow-Vortex 10'	\$7,600.00
Bush Bandit 150XP Chipper	\$7,000.00
York Rake	\$6,000.00
Blower	\$8,200.00
Welder	\$3,500.00
Total	\$416,195.00

Equipment

1K Gallon Fuel Tank	\$1,000.00
Chloride Tank	\$1,800.00
1 Safety Fuel Cans	\$50.00
2 Service Jacks	\$300.00
1 Grease Guns	\$200.00
Battery Charger	\$125.00
Water Pump	\$400.00
Fill Rite Pump	\$300.00
Steam Cleaner	\$2,500.00
Generac	\$951.00
Air Compressor	\$600.00
Husqvarna 1562XP Chainsaw	\$636.00

2 Weed Trimmers	\$300.00
Sweeper	\$275.00
Shop Vacuum Jobsmart	\$60.00
Agent Flammable Storage Cabinet	\$1,173.00
Lawn Mower	\$240.00
Snatch Block	\$63.00
Skill Saw	\$115.00
DEF Pump	\$90.00
Husqvarna Protective Power Kit	\$247.00
Air Tank	\$60.00
2 Oil Containment Units	\$900.00
Grizzly	\$3,800.00
	Total
	\$16,185.00

Tools

Air Hose Reel	\$100.00
Grinder-4"	\$50.00
Grinder-3"	\$50.00
Power Drill	\$60.00
Wrenches-Gear 1/4" to 1"	\$75.00
Wrenches-Neiko 1 3/8" to 2"	\$150.00
Wrenches-Chine 1 1/4" to 2"	\$175.00
2 air ratchets 1/2" and 3/4"	\$300.00
Impact-Chrome Vanadium 3/4"	\$49.00
Impact-Wisdom 1/2"	\$60.00
Impact-Job Smart 1/2"	\$50.00
Impact-Crowfoot 1/2" to 3/8"	\$99.00
Impact-Crowfoot 3/8" to 3/4"	\$99.00
Pipe (2)	\$100.00
Metric 7 to 20mm	\$150.00
Adjustable 8" to 15"	\$100.00
Screwdriver Set	\$22.00
Tool Chest	\$1,200.00
Tools	\$3,000.00
Hand Truck	\$60.00
Chains 1-20' and 3-8'	\$300.00
Chain Binders 4	\$400.00
Traffic Cones 30	\$1,200.00
Road Signs	\$2,400.00
100 Bungee Cords	\$400.00
Drop Lights 2	\$80.00
Radio System-2 Mobile	\$1,750.00
Radio System-4 Handheld	\$1,300.00
Torch Set & Cart	\$600.00
Ratchet Extensions 1/2"	\$40.00
Air Chisel	\$60.00

Air Ratchet	\$60.00
Air Disc Grinder	\$40.00
Air Lift Bottle Jack 20 Ton	\$220.00
Leaf Blower	\$599.00
Computer	\$630.00
Printer	\$89.00
Total	\$16,117.00

Town Office

Listers Laptop	\$1,800.00
Clerk Laptop	\$1,300.00
Fire Proof file cabinets	\$16,000.00
Network equipment	\$5,000.00
Furniture	\$6,250.00
Ipad	\$880.00
Safes	\$12,500.00
Office supplies/Books	\$1,500.00
Oil Tank	\$1,000.00
Generator	\$7,500.00
Total	\$53,730.00

2024 Statement of Taxes Raised

RATE NAME	RATE	X GRAND LIST	BILLED AMOUNT
Nonhomestead ed.	1.6752	161774.52	270,988.49
Homestead ed.	1.4676	215,364.00	316,068.25
Municipal	1.5550	372,563.00	579,336.16
Late homestead penalties			1,347.38
TOTAL TAX BILLED			\$1,167,740.28

COLLECTED

By Treasurer	Taxes Collected by 9/11/2024	943,364.58
	Total State Payments	147,727.91
	Credits Applied	4,719.40
	Net adjustments	(69.02)
	Available Credits	(791.08)
By Delinquent Tax Collector	Principal Collected after 9/11/2024	31,829.78

UNCOLLECTED

40,958.71

TOTAL TAX ACCOUNTED

\$1,167,740.28

TAXES PAID OUT TO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bellows Falls UHS	\$197,649.07
Athens Grafton	\$294,137.64
Total	\$491,786.71

Comparative Budget Report and 2025 Proposed Town Budget

AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TOWN TAXES IN 2025: \$580,729.42

	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025
REVENUES					
Tax Related					
Current Taxes	\$460,881.95	\$321,440.29	\$577,985.30	\$456,289.27	\$580,729.42
Delinquent Taxes	\$0.00	\$111,080.91	\$0.00	\$67,175.08	\$0.00
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$4,000.00	\$9,143.67	\$5,000.00	\$5,201.45	\$5,000.00
Tax Collector Fee	\$0.00	\$8,625.09	\$0.00	\$5,440.45	\$0.00
Cash Basis Adjustment	\$0.00	-\$33,605.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tax Sale Fees	\$0.00	\$1,265.87	\$0.00	\$906.64	\$0.00
Property redemptions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Municipal Tax Adjustment	\$0.00	\$34,869.05	\$0.00	\$34,195.34	\$0.00
PILOT State Payment	\$4,075.00	\$4,072.47	\$4,075.00	\$4,072.47	\$4,075.00
Current Use State Payment	\$27,332.00	\$26,587.50	\$26,500.00	\$27,933.00	\$28,000.00
School Tax Refund	\$0.00	\$2,024.83	\$0.00	\$12,079.71	\$0.00
Budget adjustment for Previous Year Surplus	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,710.00	\$0.00	\$75,000.00
Total Tax Related Revenue	\$496,288.95	\$485,503.99	\$616,270.30	\$613,293.41	\$692,804.42
Grants/Other Governments					
State Aid to Highways	\$45,000.00	\$73,114.25	\$47,750.00	\$50,692.37	\$50,000.00
Vt State Civil Fines	\$1,500.00	\$2,186.50	\$2,000.00	\$1,767.00	\$2,000.00
State Grants	\$26,700.00	\$165,673.00	\$0.00	\$47,924.71	\$0.00
Federal Grants	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114,054.86	\$0.00
Misc. State Payments	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Grants	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Grant/Governmental Revenue	\$73,200.00	\$246,973.75	\$49,750.00	\$214,438.94	\$52,000.00
Clerks Office					
Clerk Fees	\$0.00	\$4,929.00	\$0.00	\$3,631.25	\$0.00
Animal License	\$200.00	\$227.40	\$200.00	\$230.97	\$200.00
Copies	\$400.00	\$529.50	\$500.00	\$433.00	\$500.00
Clerk Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Clerks Office Revenue	\$600.00	\$5,685.90	\$700.00	\$4,295.22	\$700.00
Service Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Service Fee (Trash Bags)	\$10,000.00	\$7,274.50	\$8,000.00	\$8,574.00	\$8,500.00
Public Works/Highway	\$100.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$110.00	\$125.00
Interest on Investments	\$100.00	\$712.09	\$600.00	\$673.87	\$600.00
Elementary School Building	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Micellaneous	\$0.00	\$55.00	\$0.00	\$9,415.34	\$0.00
Transfer In	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$125,064.65	\$0.00
TOTAL REVENUES	\$580,288.95	\$746,330.23	\$675,445.30	\$975,865.43	\$754,729.42

	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries & Benefits					
Selectboard	\$2,350.00	\$2,050.00	\$2,850.00	\$2,490.00	\$2,850.00
Clerk	\$3,000.00	\$3,440.00	\$10,400.00	\$10,400.00	\$10,400.00
Assistant Clerk	\$1,000.00	\$2,012.60	\$1,500.00	\$1,713.34	\$1,500.00
Treasurer	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$10,400.00	\$10,400.00	\$10,400.00
Assistant Treasurer	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,076.51	\$1,000.00
Constable	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$289.96	\$500.00
Health Officer	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$487.66	\$0.00
Moderator	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$15.00	\$30.00
Elections	\$275.00	\$289.52	\$1,250.00	\$970.59	\$500.00
BCA/BOA	\$100.00	\$84.00	\$100.00	\$20.00	\$50.00
Listers	\$4,000.00	\$5,565.90	\$5,000.00	\$3,854.96	\$5,000.00
Auditors	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Del Tax Collector	\$0.00	\$8,407.48	\$0.00	\$5,442.83	\$0.00
Clerk Fees	\$0.00	\$4,927.00	\$0.00	\$3,627.25	\$0.00
Clerk / Treasurer Hourly	\$5,500.00	\$6,448.40	\$0.00	\$223.72	\$0.00
Cleaning Staff	\$360.00	\$290.00	\$350.00	\$320.00	\$350.00
Social Security	\$2,140.00	\$3,062.04	\$3,395.07	\$3,447.62	\$3,400.00
VT Childcare Contribution				\$101.78	\$200.00
Retirement			\$2,062.50	\$2,231.68	\$2,195.00
Health Stipend			\$2,400.00	\$2,300.00	\$2,400.00
Disability & Life Ins			\$238.00	\$252.75	\$297.00
Workers Comp Ins	\$100.00	\$59.50	\$4,500.00	\$1,064.54	\$1,440.00
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$22,705.00	\$39,166.44	\$46,975.57	\$50,730.19	\$42,512.00
Town Office Expenditures					
Office Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$1,656.59	\$1,500.00	\$933.31	\$1,000.00
Postage	\$750.00	\$868.87	\$1,000.00	\$523.72	\$750.00
Training	\$250.00	\$128.00	\$250.00	\$75.00	\$250.00
Office Equipment Purchase	\$1,300.00	\$1,116.79	\$1,000.00	\$880.54	\$1,750.00
Office Equipment Service	\$325.00	\$0.00	\$325.00	\$650.00	\$325.00
Printing /Advertizing	\$500.00	\$265.50	\$250.00	\$1,298.10	\$500.00
Town Report	\$350.00	\$443.75	\$450.00	\$453.00	\$450.00
Computer Related	\$14,500.00	\$14,157.47	\$13,585.00	\$14,461.34	\$14,000.00
Electricity	\$650.00	\$658.93	\$725.00	\$686.77	\$800.00
Telephone	\$600.00	\$570.43	\$575.00	\$602.97	\$650.00
Heating Oil	\$1,350.00	\$1,038.08	\$1,830.00	\$832.20	\$1,830.00
Propane	\$500.00	\$310.56	\$500.00	\$152.22	\$250.00
Building Maintenance	\$250.00	\$37.65	\$1,000.00	\$1,008.76	\$11,000.00
Generator Maintenance	\$375.00	\$1,389.00	\$375.00	\$399.00	\$400.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	-\$5.00	\$0.00	\$2.50	\$0.00
Total Town Office Expenses	\$23,200.00	\$22,636.62	\$23,365.00	\$22,959.43	\$33,955.00
General Expenses					
Trash/Recycling Removal	\$33,000.00	\$31,443.00	\$32,885.94	\$33,858.93	\$39,000.00
Supplies (Trash Bags)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
VLCT Dues	\$1,600.00	\$1,597.00	\$1,647.00	\$1,647.00	\$1,683.00
Windham Regional Dues	\$1,100.00	\$973.20	\$1,000.00	\$1,013.46	\$1,100.00
County Tax	\$4,250.00	\$4,249.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,100.00	\$4,500.00
Legal Services	\$5,000.00	\$5,175.00	\$7,500.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Tax Sale Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,265.87	\$0.00	\$906.64	\$0.00
Property redemptions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Professional Svcs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$750.00
VLCT Insurance	\$4,000.00	\$4,258.50	\$4,734.00	\$4,703.05	\$4,610.20
Tax Abatements	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Micellaneous	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$0.00
Total General Expenses	\$48,950.00	\$49,011.57	\$52,266.94	\$46,329.08	\$56,643.20

	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025
Public Safety					
Fire Protection	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00
SWNH Fire Mutual Aid	\$8,500.00	\$8,378.00	\$8,671.00	\$8,671.00	\$9,191.00
Rescue Contract	\$9,305.80	\$6,982.50	\$5,300.00	\$322.50	\$5,375.00
Windham County Sheriff	\$5,750.00	\$5,645.00	\$5,750.00	\$6,194.32	\$6,750.00
Golden Cross Ambulance	\$4,600.00	\$4,644.00	\$4,600.00	\$4,644.00	\$4,600.00
Animal Quarantine	\$500.00	\$385.00	\$500.00	\$385.00	\$500.00
Total Public Safety Expenses	\$38,055.80	\$35,434.50	\$34,221.00	\$29,616.82	\$35,816.00
Athens Elementary Sch. Building					
School Bldg. Electricity	\$900.00	\$829.49	\$900.00	\$839.61	\$1,000.00
School Bldg. Telephone	\$1,700.00	\$1,763.30	\$1,760.00	\$1,455.18	\$1,800.00
School Bldg. Heating Oil	\$2,500.00	\$2,545.84	\$2,440.00	\$1,740.31	\$2,440.00
School Bldg. Insurance	\$1,800.00	\$1,868.25	\$2,043.00	\$2,014.27	\$1,928.08
School Building Maintenance	\$1,250.00	\$1,335.30	\$2,500.00	\$3,512.07	\$2,500.00
School Grounds Maintenance	\$800.00	\$1,150.00	\$800.00	\$1,175.00	\$1,200.00
Total Elementary Sch. Building	\$8,950.00	\$9,492.18	\$10,443.00	\$10,736.44	\$10,868.08
Highway Payroll					
Highway Foremen	\$55,987.20	\$55,185.86	\$62,272.80	\$62,040.12	\$66,960.00
Highway Labor	\$47,930.40	\$38,580.44	\$54,410.40	\$41,113.22	\$60,480.00
Highway Flagger	\$1,500.00	\$783.00	\$1,500.00	\$621.00	\$1,500.00
Social Security	\$7,950.00	\$6,655.39	\$9,385.27	\$8,424.91	\$9,750.00
VT Childcare Contribution				\$207.30	\$560.00
Retirement	\$6,884.55	\$5,965.26	\$8,434.48	\$7,387.71	\$9,080.00
Health Insurance	\$36,380.00	\$34,586.62	\$34,371.84	\$34,371.84	\$69,472.62
Health Stipend			\$6,000.00	\$4,750.00	\$0.00
Unemployment	\$280.00	\$218.00	\$280.00	\$221.00	\$251.00
Workers Comp Insurance	\$6,490.00	\$8,374.75	\$6,620.00	\$7,183.00	\$6,956.00
Total Highway Payroll Expenses	\$163,402.15	\$150,349.32	\$183,274.79	\$166,320.10	\$225,009.62
Highway Garage					
General Supplies	\$3,000.00	\$758.45	\$4,000.00	\$3,710.80	\$4,000.00
Electricity	\$900.00	\$758.27	\$900.00	\$779.76	\$1,000.00
Telephone	\$1,700.00	\$1,757.26	\$1,800.00	\$1,802.38	\$1,800.00
Heating Oil	\$7,000.00	\$7,105.64	\$5,490.00	\$3,862.95	\$5,490.00
Trash Removal	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
Building Maintenance	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,677.48	\$2,000.00
New Construction*	\$0.00	\$7,290.00	\$3,250.00	\$3,135.00	\$500.00
Highway Dept. Training	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Highway Garage Expenses	\$15,500.00	\$17,669.62	\$18,340.00	\$14,968.37	\$15,190.00
Highway Equipment					
VLCT Insurance	\$4,000.00	\$4,203.75	\$4,392.00	\$4,610.88	\$5,267.52
Special Tools/Equip	\$5,000.00	\$2,850.00	\$5,000.00	\$2,025.39	\$5,000.00
Radio Maintenance	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
General Repair Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$2,927.91	\$3,000.00	\$1,008.26	\$2,000.00
R&M 2012 Freightliner	\$8,500.00	\$14,866.38	\$8,500.00	\$7,771.86	\$8,500.00
R&M Ford 550	\$2,000.00	\$1,798.75	\$7,000.00	\$16,548.49	\$15,000.00
R&M Grader	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,222.89	\$2,000.00
R&M Backhoe	\$1,500.00	\$547.02	\$1,500.00	\$4,380.57	\$1,500.00
R&M Small Equipment				\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Gasoline	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$217.41	\$250.00
Diesel Fuel	\$15,000.00	\$11,530.29	\$12,240.00	\$12,697.91	\$13,000.00
Total Highway Equipment Expenses	\$40,250.00	\$38,724.10	\$44,382.00	\$51,483.66	\$55,517.52

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	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025
Road Maintenance					
Highway Equip Rental	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Gravel	\$18,000.00	\$19,525.00	\$27,000.00	\$27,118.00	\$27,000.00
Salt	\$25,000.00	\$25,676.95	\$25,000.00	\$15,986.23	\$25,000.00
Stone	\$25,000.00	\$24,635.00	\$25,000.00	\$23,074.35	\$25,000.00
Sand	\$19,000.00	\$19,040.00	\$25,000.00	\$24,470.80	\$25,000.00
Chloride	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,700.00	\$4,396.36	\$3,700.00
Cold Patch	\$350.00	\$153.99	\$350.00	\$328.00	\$350.00
Contracted Services	\$8,200.00	\$14,244.00	\$10,000.00	\$13,950.00	\$15,000.00
Road Resealing	\$4,400.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00
Bridge Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Small culverts	\$3,000.00	\$64.10	\$3,000.00	\$6,537.60	\$3,000.00
Stormwater permit / program	\$740.00	\$17,394.15	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Underdrains	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.14	\$0.00
Emergency Road Work*	\$0.00	\$123,685.30	\$10,000.00	\$15,944.84	\$0.00
Grant Reimbursable Expenses*	\$0.00	\$134,973.00	\$0.00	\$69,022.28	\$0.00
Miscellaneous Highway	\$1,000.00	\$1,285.04	\$1,000.00	\$1,020.65	\$1,200.00
Total Highway Maintenance	\$106,690.00	\$380,676.53	\$138,800.00	\$202,463.25	\$133,750.00
Voted Appropriations					
SEVCA	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
Bellows Falls Senior Ctr	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	
Visiting Nurses	\$1,350.00	\$1,350.00	\$1,350.00	\$1,350.00	
Women's Freedom Ctr	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	
Senior Solutions	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	
Youth Services	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$330.00	
Grafton Cares	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
HCRS	\$356.00	\$356.00	\$356.00	\$356.00	
SeVEDS	\$650.00	\$650.00	\$1,140.00	\$1,140.00	
Grace Cottage	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Bull Creek Common Lands			\$250.00	\$250.00	
Total Voted Appropriations	\$5,986.00	\$5,986.00	\$6,726.00	\$6,726.00	
Transfers to Other Funds					
Building Renovation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$125,064.65	\$0.00
Athens Brick Mtg House	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
Athens Cemetery Comm.	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00	\$2,500.00
Long Term Highway Projects	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$5,301.00	\$4,500.00
Paving Fund	\$53,550.00	\$53,550.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Equipment Fund	\$31,700.00	\$31,700.00	\$32,651.00	\$32,651.00	\$33,468.00
Emergency Preparedness	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Planning Commission	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equip Fund (Cat 420F2ST)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Emergency Reserve Fund	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Grant Matching Fund	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$40,000.00
Record Preservation Fund	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Transfers to Other Funds	\$106,600.00	\$106,600.00	\$116,651.00	\$247,016.65	\$145,468.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$580,288.95	\$855,746.88	\$675,445.30	\$849,349.99	\$754,729.42
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ -	\$ (109,416.65)	\$0.00	\$126,515.44	\$0.00

Budget Addendum: Detailed Reimbursements and Reimbursable Expenses

This page shows a breakdown of reimbursable grant and emergency expenses that were not budgeted for.

Line Item	Project	Expenses	Reimbursement Received 2024	Reimbursement Expected in 2025
2023				
Stormwater program	Stone lining ditches		\$12,500.00	
Emergency Road Work	Reed Rd. Landslide repair		\$114,054.86	
TOTAL			\$126,554.86	
2024				
Emergency Road Work	Jan 10th Brookline Rd. Undermining	\$13,290.00		\$13,290.00
	Aug Schoolbus accident	\$2,654.84	\$2,654.84	
Grant Reimbursable Expenses	Ober Rd. Scoping	\$20,194.85	\$13,461.13	\$6,733.72
	Stormwater Program (GIA)	\$10,763.43	\$10,000.00	
	Beaver Pond Culverts (BBR)	\$26,964.00		\$26,964.00
	Jan 10th Undermining - Paving	\$8,500.00		\$8,500.00
	2023 Floods FEMA Admin	\$2,600.00		\$2,600.00
TOTAL			\$26,115.97	\$58,087.72

2024 Surplus Calculation

2024 surplus	\$126,515.44
2023 surplus in 2024 budget	\$2,710.00 (placeholder for funds that didn't need to be raised in 2024)
2023 deficit	-\$109,416.65 (this is mostly from emergency work on Reed Rd.)
<u>Outstanding 2024 reimbursements</u>	<u>\$58,087.72</u>
2024 surplus for 2025 budget	\$77,896.51 (placeholder for funds that don't need to be raised in 2025)

2024 Delinquent Tax Report

	Principal Charged to Collector 2024	Principal Collected 2024	Abated / Adjusted	Interest Collected	Principal Remaining 12/31/2024
2020	1,435.84	1,435.84		554.55	0
2021	2,044.54	2,044.54		620.22	0
2022	4,348.76	3,818.79	529.97	748.86	0
2023	30,709.55	28,906.61		2,746.60	1,802.94
2024	73,610.07	31,829.78	821.58	531.22	40,958.71
Totals	\$112,148.76	\$68,035.56	\$1,351.55	\$5,201.45	\$42,761.65

Delinquent Taxpayers as of December 31, 2024

2023

Emily E Garrow
Elaine & Carrie Kies

2024

Kasey Silver
Benjamin Lentz
Paul and Judy Bemis
Travis Allen
Jayne and Don Elliott
Diane Shepard
Ronald Corliss
Elizabeth DeYoung
James Mabe
Edward Todd
Bruce Tenney Jr.
Scott and Sabrina Gibbs
Jonathan Thomas
William Raymond
Paul Stoddard
Stephen Oakes
Richard Leary
Emily Garrow
David Covey
Elaine and Carrie Kies

Dog Licenses Due April 1, 2025

Must have a current rabies certificate. New license fees for 2025:

- Spayed or neutered dog: \$11.00 / Intact dog: \$15.00.
- After April 1st, fees increase to \$13.00 and \$19.00.

Licensing identifies your dog and is proof the dog is vaccinated in the event it is bitten by a wild animal. Vaccinations and licensing also protect them if they bite another animal or person, which could otherwise result in quarantine or euthanasia.

Rabies Vaccination Clinic at the Town Office

Saturday March 8, 2025 1:30 – 3:00 PM | \$15 / per animal

Reduced cost Spay and Neuter Information

VSNIIP helps income eligible Vermonters have dogs and cats spayed/neutered and vaccinated at a very reduced cost to them. For an application, call 802-672-5302. Push #2 for instructions, or visit: VSNIIP.VERMONT.GOV

Windham County Humane Society Pet Care Assistance Program

The Pet Care Assistance Program (PCA) aims to help people care for their pets by providing discounts at WCHS' Vet Center on the cost of wellness and spay/neuter surgeries and access to the Pet Food Pantry.

More information at <https://www.windhamcountyhumane.org/pet-care-assistance>. Please contact the WCHS at (802) 254-2232 or petwellness@windhamcountyhumane.org with any questions.

2024 Dog License Report

Receipts

#	Dogs	Cost	Total
51	Spayed and neutered dogs	\$9.00	\$459.00
16	Unspayed and unneutered	\$13.00	\$208.00
25	Spayed and neutered	\$11.00	\$275.00
3	Unspayed and unneutered	\$17.00	\$51.00
95	Dogs total		\$993.00
3	Working dog surcharges	\$5.00	\$15.00
			\$1,008.00

Expenditures

Recipient	Total
State of Vermont	\$475.00
Clerk	\$190.00
Town of Athens	\$343.00
	\$1,008.00

2024 Fund Balances

General / Highway Fund

Jan 1, 2024 Starting Balances	
Checking Account	\$483.36
Savings Account	\$731,276.94
Due to Other Funds	-\$675,921.19
Total Assets	\$55,839.11

Jan 1, 2024 Liabilities (Outstanding bills, advance payments on taxes)	
Total Liabilities	\$6,368.97

Jan 1, 2024 Assets minus Liabilities	\$49,470.14
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2024 Annual Revenues (See budget page for revenue breakdowns)	
Total Revenues	\$975,865.43

2024 Annual Expenses (See budget page for expense breakdowns)	
Total Expenses	\$849,349.99

Dec 31, 2024 Ending Balances	
Checking Account	\$6,416.79
Savings Account	\$879,054.36
Due to Other Funds	-\$705,071.94
Total Assets	\$180,399.21

Dec 31, 2024 Liabilities (Outstanding bills & advance payments on taxes)	
Total Liabilities	\$4,413.63

Dec 31, 2024 Assets minus Liabilities	\$175,985.58
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Building Renovation Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Town Office Renovation Fund	\$24,253.73
Total Assets	\$24,253.73

2024 Revenues	
Transfer In From GF	\$125,064.65
Total Revenues	\$125,064.65

2024 Expenses	
Building Maintenance	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Earmarked for Town Garage	\$125,064.65
Unrestricted Building Renovation Fund	\$24,253.73
Total Assets	\$149,318.38

Athens Brick Meetinghouse Fund

2024 Starting Balance	
Meetinghouse Fund	\$7,385.28
Total Assets	\$7,385.28

2024 Revenues	
Grants	\$20,000.00
Transfer from GF	\$2,500.00
Donations	\$0.00
From Athens Historic Society	-\$2,432.70
Total Revenues	\$20,067.30

2024 Expenses	
Contracted Svcs	\$24,776.30
Total Expenses	\$24,776.30

2024 Ending Balance	
Meetinghouse Fund	\$2,676.28
Total Assets	\$2,676.28

Campbell Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
12 Mo. Cert of Deposit	\$10,130.62
36 Mo. Cert of Deposit	\$21,433.42
Checking account	\$2,792.03
Savings	\$5,003.16
Total Assets	\$39,359.23

2024 Revenues	
Donations	\$0.00
Loan Repayments	\$0.00
Interest	\$564.71
Total Revenues	\$564.71

2024 Expenses	
Campbell distribution	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
6 Mo. Cert of Deposit	\$10,606.85
36 Mo. Cert of Deposit	\$21,519.39
Checking account	\$2,792.03
Savings	\$5,005.67
Total Assets	\$39,923.94

Restricted Balance	\$4,000.00
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Cemetery Commission Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
12 Month CD	\$15,000.00
Cemetery Fund	\$7,934.76
Total Assets	\$22,934.76

2024 Revenues	
Service fee	\$0.00
Donations	\$0.00
Plot sales	\$0.00
Grant revenue	\$0.00
Interest Income	\$601.31
Transfer In from GF	\$3,500.00
Total Revenues	\$4,101.31

2024 Expenses	
Materials	\$257.48
Contracted Services	\$3,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$3,257.48

2024 Ending Balances	
12 Month CD	\$15,600.00
Cemetery Fund	\$8,178.59
Total Assets	\$23,778.59

Equipment Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Unreserved	-\$6,436.55
Reserved for Small Truck Replacement	\$26,090.00
Reserved for Large Truck Replacement	\$58,304.75
Reserved for Backhoe Replacement	\$33,676.00
Reserved for Grader Replacement	\$35,000.00
Reserved for Small Equipment Purchase	\$55.67
Reserved for Plow for Small Truck	\$1,986.55
Reserved for Cat 420F25ST Payment	-\$244.97
Total Assets	\$148,431.45

2024 Revenues	
Transfer In From GF	\$32,651.00
Total Revenues	\$32,651.00

2024 Expenses	
Capital Equipment	\$51,931.19
Total Expenses	\$51,931.19

2024 Ending Balances	
Unreserved	-\$6,436.55
Reserved for Small Truck Replacement	\$38,862.00
Reserved for Large Truck Replacement	\$67,059.75
Reserved for Backhoe Replacement	\$28,164.00
Reserved for Grader Replacement	-\$481.00
Reserved for Small Equipment Purchase	-\$582.52
Reserved for Plow for Small Truck	\$2,810.55
Reserved for Cat 420F25ST Payment	-\$244.97
Total Assets	\$129,151.26

Cemetery Trust Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Stella Holden CD	\$504.43
Charles Colton CD	\$504.43
Total Assets	\$1,008.86

2024 Revenues	
Interest Income	\$0.30
Total Revenues	\$0.30

2024 Expenses	
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Stella Holden CD	\$504.58
Charles Colton CD	\$504.58
Total Assets	\$1,009.16

Paving Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Paving Fund	\$205,780.60
Total Assets	\$205,780.60

2024 Revenues	
Transfer In From GF	\$60,000.00
Grants	\$0.00
Total Revenues	\$60,000.00

2024 Expenses	
Contracted Services	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Paving Fund	\$265,780.60
Total Assets	\$265,780.60

Housing Rehabilitation Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Housing Rehabilitation Fund	\$23,823.66
Total Assets	\$23,823.66

2024 Revenues	
Loan repayments	\$2,515.95
Total Revenues	\$2,515.95

2024 Expenses	
Loan disbursement	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Housing Rehabilitation Fund	\$26,339.61
Total Assets	\$26,339.61

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Reappraisal Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Reappraisal Fund	\$29,692.84
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$29,692.84</u>

2024 Revenues	
Grant Revenue Per Parcel	\$2,235.50
Grant Listers Education	\$263.00
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$2,498.50</u>

2024 Expenses	
Office Supplies	\$0.00
Training	\$198.00
Contracted Services	\$235.00
Memberships	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$433.00</u>

2024 Ending Balances	
Reappraisal Fund	\$31,758.34
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$31,758.34</u>

Weather Emergency Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Checking Account	\$2,072.17
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$2,072.17</u>

2024 Revenues	
Transfer in from GF	\$0.00
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>

2024 Expenses	
Miscellaneous	\$68.14
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$68.14</u>

2024 Ending Balances	
Weather Emergency Fund	\$2,004.03
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$2,004.03</u>

Emergency Reserve Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Emergency Reserve Fund	\$30,000.00
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$30,000.00</u>

2024 Revenues	
Transfer in from GF	\$5,000.00
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$5,000.00</u>

2024 Expenses	
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Emergency Reserve Fund	\$35,000.00
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>

Long Term Highway Projects Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Reserved for Guardrails	\$18,449.00
Reserved for Culverts	\$37,736.20
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$56,185.20</u>

2024 Revenues	
Insurance Payment	\$5,301.00 (School bus accide
Transfer In From GF	\$0.00
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$5,301.00</u>

2024 Expenses	
Guardrails	\$28,140.33
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$28,140.33</u>

2024 Ending Balances	
Reserved for Guardrails	-\$4,390.33
Reserved for Culverts	\$37,736.20
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$33,345.87</u>

Planning Commission Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Planning Commission Fund	\$1,227.59
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$1,227.59</u>

2024 Revenues	
Total Revenues	\$0.00

2024 Expenses	
Total Expenses	\$0.00

2024 Ending Balances	
Planning Commission Fund	\$1,227.59
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$1,227.59</u>

Grant Matching Fund

2024 Starting Balances	
Total Assets	\$5,003.00

2024 Revenues	
Transfer in from GF	\$13,000.00
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$13,000.00</u>

2024 Expenses	
Grant Match	\$5,048.71
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$5,048.71</u>

2024 Ending Balances	
Grant Matching Fund	\$12,954.29
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$12,954.29</u>

ARPA Grant Fund

2024 Starting Balances	<u>\$129,211.85</u>
Total Assets	\$129,211.85
2024 Revenues	
Grant Revenue	
Total Revenues	\$0.00
2024 Expenses	
Payroll Bonus	\$4,147.20
Transfer to General Fund	<u>\$125,064.65</u>
Total Expenses	\$129,211.85
2024 Ending Balances	
ARPA Grant Fund	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total Assets	\$0.00

Community Center Fund

2024 Starting Balances	<u>\$501.00</u>
Total Assets	\$501.00
2024 Revenues	
Fundraising	\$935.15
Donations	\$318.00
Building Rental	<u>\$350.00</u>
Total Revenues	\$1,603.15
2024 Expenses	
Security Deposit Return	\$175.00
Supplies	\$82.23
Miscellaneous	<u>175</u>
Total Expenses	\$432.23
2024 Ending Balances	
Community Center Fund	<u>\$1,671.92</u>
Total Assets	\$1,671.92

Record Preservation Fund

2024 Starting Balances	<u>\$5,045.65</u>
Total Assets	\$5,045.65
2024 Revenues	
Recording surcharges	<u>\$1,271.00</u>
Total Revenues	\$1,271.00
2024 Expenses	
Archival Supplies	\$23.88
Contracted Services	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$23.88
2024 Ending Balances	
Record Preservation Fund	<u>\$6,292.77</u>
Total Assets	\$6,292.77

Balance All Funds**\$903,218.21**

Town Clerk and Treasurer Report

Another eventful year has gone by. Many of you have commented that you appreciate having the Town Office open a second day (Thursdays). With the additional hours, I have been able to tackle some overdue projects such as going through and reorganizing the file cabinets and safes. I've also been working with the selectboard and Windham Regional Commission on several grants to improve town infrastructure.

With the help of a grant and technical assistance from the Vermont Municipal Assistance Program, Athens has completed a scoping phase for the project to turn the former Elementary School building into a Community Center and new Town Office. Perhaps you attended one of the public meetings we had in 2024. The plans for this project are available to look at in the Town Office. As you can imagine, the cost estimate is quite expensive, so I am continuing to reach out to various partners for help in creating a funding stack to actually do the renovation work.

In 2024, Athens applied for and was awarded a significant grant from the Vermont Municipal Energy Resilience Program to do needed upgrades on the Town Garage. Combined with the former ARPA funds, the town is well funded to take on major garage renovations in 2025 which will include a new roof, insulation, heating and a bathroom.

Lastly, the town is in the planning stages of some grant-funded work on Ober Road that will mitigate flood impacts during heavy rainstorms.

As always, please call or stop by if you have any questions on town finances, land records, or anything else. I will do my best to help or direct you to someone who can.

~Hannah

Town Office Information and Services:

The Town Office is open Mondays and Thursdays 9:00 – 1:00 or by appointment.

Please visit the town website at www.athensvt.com for all meeting times, minutes, trash and recycling schedule, and other important information.

Athens Trash Bags are available to purchase at the Town Office and the Saxtons River Market. Bags are \$3.50 each or \$35.00 for a roll of 10.

Vermont State Parks Green Mountain Passports

If you are a Vermont resident 62 or older, or a Veteran, you can get a Green Mountain Passport at the Town Office for \$2.00. These cards grant you free admission to Vermont State Parks, Vermont State Historic Sites, and state sponsored events.

Notary Public Service

If you need a document notarized, this is a free service.

Road Foreman Report

2024 was a busy year for the Road Crew. Mud season was January to May, we had to put in a lot of stone and gravel. In May/June we started on projects such as putting in culverts and stone line ditches, the costs of these were covered by grants that I applied for. In between those grant projects we did ditching on Walker Road, Mckusker Road, Reed Road, and Ernsts Road as well as other normal maintenance for the roads. Last summer we work four ten-hour days which helped with getting projects done more efficiently because it allowed less starting and stopping, those two hours made a big difference.

Over the past five years I been able to secure grants for the Town that ranged from six thousand to two hundred thousand, this was done with assistance from Windham Regionals. With a total of over four hundred and fifty thousand. I am continuing to apply for other grants as well, all in the effort to try to improve our infrastructure. With grant funding the improvements will cost less out of the tax payers pockets, also helping to decrease the cost of maintenance in the future. These grants are not part of the additional FEMA disaster grants that our town received which covered the flood of 2021 and road slide on Reed road in 2022. My thanks go to Sandi Capponcelli and Amber Stevens for efforts working on those disaster grants to get the town the funds from FEMA and the state.

I would like to thank Duane Snide for all his help this past year it was very much appreciated. I also want to thank all the others that helped us to succeed. Most of all I would like to thank the residents of Athens for putting their trust in me to do the best for the Town's roads.

Matt Perry
Road Foreman

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Athens Brick Meetinghouse Town Report 2024

Shortly after the start of 2024, we saw the completion of work begun in 2023. The installation of 25 columns fully supported and leveled the floor in the sanctuary space of the Meetinghouse, and the crawl space floor was then covered with a vapor barrier, the last piece of eliminating moisture issues inside the building. This work was funded in part in 2023 by a \$20,000 grant from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, along with charitable donations to the Athens Historic Preservation Society that had been designated for preservation work on the building.

Spring brought the 7th Annual Plant sale and a well-attended ice cream social in July. Open house events were held in both June and October, but the two highlights for the season were a very enjoyable concert in August by UVM music professor, David Feurzeig, with his Play Every Town project, and the return of the Meetinghouse Quilt Show in September. The Play Every Town project, calls attention to the climate crisis, while celebrating Vermont's community life through music. Joining David was Matt Shea from Athens along with Will Danforth from Grafton. Proceeds from the concert were donated to the Pavillion project at The Nature Museum, in support of environmental education. Music selected for the concert was written and popular in 1817, when the Meetinghouse was built, or related in some other way to our town. In September, our second Quilt Show brought area quilters and 64 of their beautiful quilts for display in the sanctuary for the enjoyment of the many visitors who attended. If you missed it, we are already planning the 2025 Quilt Show.

October began our focus on the next goals for the building - interior work such as plaster repair and refinishing the floors and accessibility. The same Architect who has advised on the Town Garage and Community Center, met with the committee and will be drawing up plans for practical options to provide improved accessibility to the building. The hope is that it will include plans to create parking and a composting toilet. While the stone steps to the main entrance are beautiful, they are a challenge to many of our visitors.

We capped off the year on December 1st 2024 with a delightful gathering of friends and family for hot cider and the 5th Annual Tree Lighting on the Meetinghouse lawn.

The committee is thankful for the support of the Meetinghouse by the town and all those who attend our events. We will continue to work to improve this historical beauty for the next generations to enjoy. We invite residents, friends and family to think about the Meetinghouse as a potential venue to rent for concerts, ceremonies, etc. Although there is no heat, plumbing, or electricity, the acoustics in the building are fabulous!

Respectfully submitted by the Athens Meetinghouse Committee

Candace Damon
Krista Gay
Sherry Maher

Ginger Macijowski
Pam Russo

Cemetery Commission Report

As in recent years, there was no volunteer work scheduled in the cemeteries in 2023. There remains a need for tablet repairs and monument levelling in both cemeteries as well as the need for the installation of row markers in the new section of the West Cemetery. Following an incident in 2024 where a section of the east wall of the Valley Cemetery was damaged by an uninsured motorist, the Selectboard has asked the Commission to pursue the installation of gates to the cemetery's three entrances- This project will rely on volunteer labor as well. Those wishing to help, including teens in need of community service hours, should contact chairman Don Capponcelli at 802-869-2590.

The Commission wishes to thank the Ivor Stevens Grounds Maintenance crew for their 15'th season caring for the cemeteries in 2024. The Commission also wishes to thank Matt Perry for his work in maintaining the area around Memorial Rock.

In May, 2023, \$15,000.00 of the reserve funds for cemetery major maintenance was invested in a 12-month CD. By May, 2024, earnings on the CD totaled \$601.31, of which \$600.00, plus the original investment of \$15,000.00 was re-invested into another 12-month CD.

The year 2024 ended with a town ledger fund balance of \$8,178.59. The Commission allots this fund balance into the following categories:

Operating budget balance	\$ 875.18	
Valley Cemetery major repairs	\$ 2,233.39	
Valley Cemetery ground levelling	\$ 216.76	
West Cemetery major repairs	\$ 2,150.00	
West Cemetery construction	<u>\$ 2,703.26</u>	
TOTAL fund balance	\$ 8,178.59	town ledger fund balance
-plus-		
12-month CD investment	\$15,600.00	(May, 2024)
Loan to the Colton Trust fund	\$ 31.53	
Loan to the Holden Trust fund	<u>\$ 162.58</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$23,972.70	

. The intent of the CD investments is to build reserves for major maintenance in the Valley Cemetery back to and beyond the approximately \$20,000.00 in liquid assets (checking account balance, stocks & CDs) transferred from the Athens Valley Cemetery Association to the Town of Athens in 2006. A portion of the CD investments will also build up reserves for major maintenance in the West Cemetery.

. The loans to the Colton and Holden Trust funds were needed in 2020 in order to bring those funds to a balance of \$500.00 each, thereby avoiding monthly bank fees applied to smaller account balances.

Regular meeting times for the Athens Cemetery Commission are on the first Wednesdays of the months of April, June, September and December at the Athens Town Office (or other locations as warned). The Commission continues to face a backlog of work at the two cemetery sites as well as with map & records updating. Volunteer help is always needed and deeply appreciated, as are private donations in any amount. For more information please contact Don Capponcelli.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Capponcelli

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Athens Tree Warden Report, 2024

Last spring, homeowners in Athens received a letter from Green Mountain Power about their plans for vegetation management activities along their power line right-of-way. The company contracted TTS Tree Service to perform the work and many folks witnessed the thorough clearing job that these crews did last summer and early fall. I met with some of the clearing and climbing crews working for TTS Tree Service to inform them about the presence of Emerald Ash Borer and to make sure that they removed as many dead or infected white ash trees as possible while clearing growth in proximity to the wires. The crews were operating under strict guidelines to clear encroaching vegetation within 10 feet around and below the wires. For the most part, ash trees outside of that corridor were not cut. Green Mountain Power realizes that they will have to focus on cutting more dead ash trees that threaten the lines. Since many of the power lines are located along town roads in Athens, most of the cost of cutting dead and infected ash trees should be paid by Green Mountain Power and not by the town.

In addition to trees dying from Emerald Ash Borer, a new disease is now infecting beech trees in Athens called Beech Leaf Disease (BLD). It has now been detected in the four southern counties of Vermont and throughout the northeast. The causal agent of BLD is an invasive nematode that affects all ornamental and native beech trees and causes leaf deformation, dieback and mortality of beech in a relatively short time frame. Experts are still uncertain about how the disease spreads as well as possible control methods. Beech trees of all ages are susceptible to the disease, younger understory beech trees are thought to be more vulnerable and will probably start to show signs of decline this summer.

Earlier in the season I observed symptoms of White Pine needle damage (WPND) affecting white pine trees around town. WPND is caused by a complex of four fungal species that infect newly emerged needles. Although the infected needles remained asymptomatic in the first year, they turned yellow then brown and eventually fell off the trees prematurely. This was linked to the relatively high level of moisture from the previous spring. WPND rarely kills trees outright and most of the White Pines started to green up by the end of the summer.

We plan to begin a roadside inventory of trees along town roads in Athens this year and have contacted volunteers to help with the survey. There will be a training session sponsored by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's Urban and Community Forestry program this spring.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Maciejowski, Athens Tree Warden

Telephone number: 802-869-2405

Email; jginge@vermontel.net

WINDHAM NORTHEAST UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Athens Grafton Elementary School started the 2024-25 school year with some long-awaited repairs. Students were welcomed by a newly painted school building, a resurfaced driveway and play area, and new playground equipment. These were made available through Esser Funds. Raised beds were later built for gardening for the spring, summer and fall projects. Many helping hands and volunteer time made this possible.

Unfortunately, Esser and Covid funds are no longer available and Vermont school districts like ours are facing some unknown territory as we move forward to year 2026 and 2027 with future school funding. It's unclear how the state of Vermont will govern these ever-changing formulas on how schools will be funded and the impact it will have on small schools. Vermont has a school funding crisis that the Commission on the Future of Public Education has the mission to solve. Sustainability of our schools and reducing the tax burden for Vermonters is the goal, but to achieve this, hard and difficult choices may be necessary if we are to meet the needs of all students.

We have been fortunate in using our surplus funding wisely to help bring down the budget for Athens Grafton, but this too will be short lived. I employ community members, parents and family members voice your concerns as it relates to the future of our school's viability.

Grafton is unique in many ways and our school is the heart of our community, without this Grafton would be a pretty dim place.

You may ask what can we do about this. Well, get involved, be informed as to what is happening in our school. Attend school board meetings and community forums. Your voice is important and it makes a difference when decisions are

made that affect your child's future. We have dedicated teachers and staff who put their heart and soul to see that each child is learning and improving each day. It is a happy place where kids smile and our staff works its hardest to see that every child's needs are met.

I thank our school board members and welcome new board member from Athens, Mark Berman and Grafton's Mary Howard Feder in representing BFUHS on the SU board. We are still in need of an Athens representative to this board. Remember that each board member has a vote when important decisions are made on these boards that impact the future of our school and student's success.

Athens Grafton's board meets the second Thursday of each month at the school at 6pm. Hope to see you attending either in person or virtually.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Siano-Goodwin. Chair

Hardy Merrill

Rachel Plummer

Lynn Morgan

Mark Berman

Krista Gay

Bull Creek Common Lands / 2024 Annual Report



Bull Creek Headwaters "Tourtellot" pond, Townshend

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for supporting this local land trust. We know most of you deeply appreciate our rural expanses of forests, ponds, streams, wetlands, and the wildlife that shares this landscape with us. As development pressure and the impacts of climate change increase in southern Vermont, Bull Creek Common Lands is here to conserve important local wildlands for current and future generations. As our name suggests, we really want the land we conserve to be for the benefit of the community: for the outdoor activities you enjoy, for the forest's ability to slow flood waters, for the beauty of the landscape we know as home. We also know there are many different ideas about how land should be used and cared for, and we very much want to hear from you, have constructive conversations, and work together to steward these common lands.

2024 Highlights:

- Purchased 110 acres in Townshend containing the headwaters pond of the Bull Creek watershed
- Secured funding to purchase and conserve 230 acres in Athens, north of Sam Farr Rd.
- Hosted monthly free programs in the Raymond Bemis Community Forest
- Collaborated with other area land trusts to build conservation capacity in Southern Vermont

If you haven't already, please share your thoughts via our online survey by scanning the QR code or going to our website. You can always reach out directly to a board member with any ideas, concerns or input.

<https://www.bullcreekcommonlands.org>



SCAN TO
TAKE
SURVEY



~ Andy Toepfer, Debra Clarke & Hannah Regier
BCCL board of directors



Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) is a non-profit organization founded in 1987, serving the residents of Windham and southern Windsor County. We provide housing for residents with low and moderate incomes, provide supportive services, preserve and revitalize neighborhoods, help residents acquire their own homes, and support homeowners with critical repairs to homes in Windham and southern Windsor County.

WWHT's mission is *to strengthen the communities of Southeast Vermont through the development and stewardship of permanently affordable housing and through ongoing support and advocacy for its residents.*

The organization applies mission to practice through three branches: Homeownership, Housing Development, and Property Management. The **Homeownership's** Home Repair Program assisted *17 homeowners* by providing low-cost loans to make critical repairs. *95 participants completed the Homebuyer Educational Workshop.* The one-to-one counseling assisted *19 new homeowners* in 2024 by navigating them through the purchase process to closing on their new home. The *Shared Equity program has 141 homes* currently and provides grants to income-eligible homebuyers to subsidize the purchase of single-family homes which lowers the cost to the homebuyer. The VHIP (Vermont Housing Improvement Program) works with private landowners to rehab and/or create new units. There are 91 units under construction spread across the whole of Windham and Windsor Counties this year with a healthy pipeline for 2025 with VHIP 2.0 funds.

Housing Development: WWHT develops affordable rental housing opportunities which meet the diverse housing needs within a community. This takes the form of both the rehabilitation of existing housing and the construction of new apartments. In 2022, *the Bellows Falls Garage opened creating 27 new, affordable apartments* to downtown Bellows Falls. The *Central & Main 25-apartment development in downtown Windsor* will be opening spring of 2025, leasing information will be available through Stewart Property Management. *Alice Holway Drive in Putney is slated to create 25 new homes* within the village and is planned to break ground in 2025. We are also in the funding phase for the innovative redevelopment plan of the Chalet property, a multi-phase development that will cumulate in a new neighborhood of rental townhomes, multifamily apartments for general occupancy, single family shared equity homeownership properties, and the restoration of the iconic original Chalet building. Information and updates on all these can be found under the FAQ tab on our website. www.homemattershere.org

Property Management: WWHT owns 83 residential properties housing 16 commercial spaces with 929 rental apartments and 3 mobile home parks, home to over 1,500 residents. We manage the rental properties in southern Windham County and contract with Stewart Property Management for the properties in northern Windham and Windsor Counties. WWHT takes pride in the appearance of our multi-family housing and is committed to providing the staff and financial resources necessary to ensure the long-term health and safety of our residents as well as the preservation of property values. For resident support, between Windsor's SASH program and Brattleboro-area's SASH For All, we had over *137 participants connected to health and wellness resources.*

Although WWHT is a non-profit, we pay local property taxes on our rental properties and our shared-equity homeowners pay property taxes to the Towns and Villages.

Grafton Cares 2024

Grafton Cares was established in 1993 by a group of townspeople concerned with providing help and support to their neighbors.

Meals Program

The Wednesday Lunch Program is twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 12 noon at the Grafton Chapel. There are two Community Suppers, the first and third Friday of each month held at the Grafton Chapel. All are welcome.

Financial Assistance Committee

This committee, often working in collaboration with other organizations, offers a helping hand to those with a variety of temporary or long-term needs, ranging from transportation to medical appointments, to financial assistance for families or individuals with urgent needs. Grafton Cares also offers, for temporary or long-term use, a variety of medical equipment for special health needs. A Fuel Assistance Program. This program has filled an important niche by providing emergency fuel aid for those with a temporary need or who are awaiting more long-term support from other agencies.

Gas Card Program

The gas card program began many years ago with the generous contribution of gas cards from Old Tavern guests, via the Windham Foundation. Grafton Cares now funds this program. We distribute these cards to community members to meet emergency needs involving medical transportation issues or financial hardship.

Meals On Wheels

Meals On Wheels are delivered by Grafton Cares' volunteer drivers. Meals On Wheels, is available through Senior Solutions (formerly the Council On Aging). Call Bill Toomey at 802-843-2397 for more information.

Sunshine Baskets

Sunshine Baskets, filled with fresh fruit, are given to our older neighbors and to those who have had surgery just to give a boost to all. Board members enjoy visiting with these people as much as delivering the baskets.

Strong Living

Strong Living is a popular program where participants ages 40 and up attend two, one hour sessions per week. Led by trained folks through a series of stretching and weightlifting exercises, this program has become a fixed date on many participants' calendars and a great way to catch up on the local news. A donation is suggested to cover the cost of equipment and facilities.

Welcome Bags

The Welcome Bag Program has been greatly appreciated by recipients who are new to

Grafton and Athens. It contains a variety of "goodies" and all kinds of information to welcome new folks to town.

Grafton Cares Knitters

A group of local knitters keeps busy with various projects such as beautiful shawls for those in need of comfort and baby blankets, which are combined with board books and a book bag from the Grafton Library, to welcome little ones born to area families.

Rides Coordinator

To facilitate the coordination of transportation needs, a rides coordinator can help with rides for medical appointments. If you or a family member requires transportation to medical appointments, you can give this program a try.

For more information about Grafton Cares or any of its programs, contact, Kate Bova, President of Grafton Cares at 869-1527.

Southern Windsor/Windham Counties Solid Waste Management District

Andover • Athens • Baltimore • Cavendish • Chester • Grafton • Ludlow • Plymouth • Reading
Rockingham • Springfield • Weathersfield • West Windsor • Windsor

www.vtsolidwastedistrict.org



The District was chartered in 1981 and currently serves fourteen Vermont towns. Each member municipality appoints a representative and an alternate to serve on the Board of Supervisors. Athens's representative is David Bemis; Denise Randall is the alternate.



Food scraps are banned from the landfill because they cause methane which degrades the ozone layer. The Rockingham Transfer Station accepts food scraps (including meat and bones) from people with an access permit. To facilitate backyard composting, the District sells food scrap pails throughout the year (order form is on District website). Educational resources about composting are available on the District's website.



The District's household hazardous waste (HHW) depot in Springfield was popular with District residents. It was open, by appointment, for up to six hours a week for five months last summer. The Depot will re-open in May 2025. We accept a long list of products, which can be read on our website, vtsolidwastedistrict.org. When the Depot is closed, the Rutland County Solid Waste District will take HHW from non-residents; make an appointment at rcswd.org.



Bring paint to Bibens Ace Hardware or Sherwin-Williams in Springfield during regular business hours and dispose of it for free (cans must be labeled, not leaky, not rusty – bring others to the HHW Depot).



All household batteries are accepted at the Rockingham Transfer Station. Batteries are "special recycling" and do NOT go in with other recycling (fire hazard). There is also a convenient battery bucket outside of the Town Office for 24/7 recycling.



This is the "reuse" symbol - that is what happens with glass bottles and jars that are brought to the Ludlow, Rockingham, Springfield, and Weathersfield transfer stations. A company will take it away for free as long as it is free of contamination.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Kennedy Mary T. O'Brien Ham Gillett
District Manager Recycling Coordinator Outreach Coordinator



GREEN UP VERMONT
www.greenupvermont.org

**Success on
Green Up Day
May 4, 2024**



Green Up Day, saw a 30% growth in volunteers over 2023, picked up over four tons of litter and 15,813 tires. In flood clean-up projects we took care of an additional 10,000 tires. We also attempted a Guinness World Records® title and succeeded! The record is: “The Most Pledges Received to Pick Up Trash in 24 Hours.” Vermont is the only State in the nation that can boast this achievement and the only State that offers a program like Green Up Day. As one of Vermont’s favorite traditions, it is imperative for today and for future generations to keep building pride, awareness, and stewardship for a clean Vermont, and keep residents civically engaged.

Green Up initiatives are year-round and further our environmental impact with waste reduction programs, additional clean-up efforts, and educational initiatives. We received a special flood recovery donation from Subaru of New England and have been able to rally volunteers and pay for many flood clean-up projects across the State.

Support from your municipality is essential to our program. Funds help pay for Green Up Day supplies, promotional outreach, and educational resources, contests for kids, and a \$1,000 scholarship. We are requesting level funding for 2025.

Thank you for supporting this crucial program that takes care of where we all get to live, work and play.

Be an Environmental Hero – Donate on **Line 23 of the Vermont State Income Tax Form** or at www.greenupvermont.org.

2025 Green Up Day is May 3rd.

Green Up Vermont is a 501c3 nonprofit.

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)

Southeastern Vermont Community Action is an anti-poverty, community-based, nonprofit organization serving Windham and Windsor counties since 1965. Our mission is to *empower and partner with individuals and communities to alleviate the hardships of poverty; provide opportunities to thrive; and eliminate the root causes of poverty.*

SEVCA has a variety of programs and services to meet this end. They include Head Start, Weatherization, Emergency Home Repair, Family Services (crisis resolution, fuel, utility, housing, and food assistance), Micro-Business Development, Financial Coaching (asset building & financial literacy), Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, a Community Solar program, and a Thrift Store Voucher Program.

SEVCA has served a total of 20 unduplicated households comprised of 41 people in Athens between Oct 2023 and the end of September 2024. Unduplicated means that some of these households may have received services from more than one of our program areas.

In Athens, SEVCA's impact in FY2024 included:

- No-cost weatherization services that reduce a household's energy costs and make homes healthier and safer valued at least \$5,476.
- Emergency heating system repairs and replacements to keep homes heated valued at least \$289.
- Fuel & utility assistance to keep people's homes heated and their power on valued at least \$9,250.
- Housing assistance to help people avoid eviction or get into safe and affordable housing valued at least \$700.
- 2 Households received assistance preparing their income taxes to take advantage of tax credits, refunds and rebates.
- **The combined value of services provided to residents in the Town of Athens exceeded \$15,715. The figures reported here are for direct client assistance only and do not include the cost of SEVCA providing these services through staffing and operating costs.**

Community support, through town funding, helps to build a strong partnership. The combination of federal, state, private and town funds allow us to not only maintain, but increase and improve service. We thank the residents of Athens for their support.

Josh Davis, Executive Director
Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. (SEVCA)
91 Buck Drive
Westminster, VT 05158
(800) 464-9951 or (802) 722-4575
sevca@sevca.org
www.sevca.org

VITAL RECORDS
FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2024

DEATHS

July 04, 2024 Ethan Edward Whitten

BIRTHS

None

MARRIAGES

June 20, 2024 Garrett Kilgore Skelton and Kathryn Ernst Maciejowski

BURIAL PERMITS

September 13, 2024 Helen R. Hureau

2024 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ATHENS, VERMONT

March 4, 2024 at 6:00pm at the Athens Community Center

82 voters attending

Called to order at 6:00 pm

The moderator reads the warning and reviews the rules of order for the meeting.

Article 1: To act on the town report

Dennis Mirante says the budget is \$10,000 higher than the proposed budget from last year and the budget was rejected twice last year.

Ellen Mirante says that she did a comparison of highway department employees and benefits from other local towns according to population and miles of road. She says Athens is a "Farm Team" not a Major League and can't be expected to compete with bigger towns. She thinks the selectboard needs to take fiduciary responsibility for taxpayers' benefit. She recommends the town switch from BCBS to MVP for health insurance.

Article 2: To see if the Town shall vote to authorize the Selectboard to borrow money, if necessary, for current expenses in anticipation of collection of taxes

Motion made by Don Capponcelli; seconded by Mike Perry.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 3: To see if the Town shall vote to collect taxes on the 10th of September 2024

Motion by Carol Bingham; seconded by Denise Randall.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 4: To see if the Town shall vote to publish a list of delinquent taxpayers in the Town Report

Motion by Denise Randall; seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 5: To see if the Town shall vote to approve \$643,357.36, with \$545,897.36 to be raised by taxes, to defray Town expenditures

Motion by Sandi Capponcelli, seconded by Carol Bingham.

Discussion:

Dennis Mirante asks if the total budget includes the voted appropriations of \$6,700. It does not.

Linda Taylor asks if there is a figure for the annual payment on the new grader. Hannah says it's ~\$10,600. Linda asks why the selectboard wanted to get rid of the old grader at this time. Janet answers that there was a lot wrong with the old grader. An equipment mechanic looked it over and gave a ballpark figure on what it would cost to fix it.

Danny Taylor says the budget is up \$60,000, plus the rubbish removal if it's approved.

Sherry Maher asks if there's a way to tease out how the town adhered to the budget last year. Hannah goes over the budget and actual columns in the budget pages in the town report. Both revenues and expenses are higher than budgeted, mostly due to highway grants that are applied for during the year.

Tom Taylor asks about the age and hours on the new grader. He wants to know how the equipment fund can cover unexpected costs on that and other pieces of equipment. Janet answers that the new grader was a good deal and held its value for trade in.

Dennis Mirante says Athens will spend the same amount on a new truck than any other town will. He says they have to find a less expensive way to do what needs to be done in the town. He points out 6 items that increased in the salaries and benefits section. He wants to know what the town is getting for that. Denise says the clerk was increased to two days a week plus additional work. The selectboard has also looked into offering disability insurance, something that was lacking for Eugene when he needed it. Krista details some of the work that Hannah has been doing in her positions.

Tom Taylor asks a question on the unreserved balance in the equipment fund. Hannah says it was money spent that wasn't in one of the earmarked categories.

Put to a vote by paper ballot: 52 YES; 30 NO. The budget is approved.

Article 6: Shall the voters authorize the selectboard to expend the funds in the Town Office Renovation Fund on projects including the Athens Community Center, Town Garage and Town Office

Motion by Sandi Capponcelli, seconded by Krista Gay.

Discussion:

Linda Linblad asks if the money for renovations might include outside lighting for the driveway up to the Community Center. Sandi Capponcelli says that is a good suggestion to take into consideration.

Dennis Mirante says that 14 years ago, a town office renovation committee was formed. He says that it was an idea then to move the town office to the community center. He thinks that money from the restoration fund should come to the community center, not anywhere else.

Don Capponcelli says that the amount in the reserve fund won't get very far with the community center, but the intent was to use the funds as grant matching. David says that the vote is needed to change how dedicated funds can be used and there are various building projects happening.

Ellen Mirante also thinks the town should focus on the community center building.

Tim Stevenson asks if what Dennis said could be made into an amendment. David says someone could amend the article.

Dennis Mirante amends the article to take the town office renovation funds and make them available only to the community center; Ellen Mirante seconds.

Discussion on the amendment:

Krista asks if the money is tied up to the community center, if it will affect getting grants for the town garage. Sandi says it might, and it's not enough to do very much in the community center. Sandi thinks it should be available for multiple situations.

There is additional discussion about the community center renovation and town office relocation project.

Sherry says the town owns four buildings, including the Meetinghouse, which isn't on this list.

Kate Bova asks how much is left in the fund and who would be determining where it would be allocated. There is \$24,253 in the fund. David says the selectboard is responsible for all expenditures.

Mike Bates says the roof on the current town office has a very old roof and may need some funds soon to replace it. Mike points out that is where the town records are now.

Danny Taylor asks why the town doesn't budget for building or equipment maintenance. Janet says they cut the budget hard last year and that was kept in mind when preparing this year's budget, knowing townspeople can't afford repairs. Sandi says it's the way the town has been run for ever — to wait until something breaks and then fix it with a band aid.

Tina White says that she doesn't like the suggestion that the money will only be used if the town gets grants. She says there are immediate issues in all the buildings that need attention. Sandi says the town has been scoping the larger projects to apply for grants. She doesn't want money to be spent on things that will just be torn out as part of a bigger renovation. There is a necessary process to go through.

Krista says she agrees it's important to hold the selectboard accountable for how money is spent, and she reminds people that the article is simply for voters to authorize the selectboard to spend the funds, not to decide exactly how they are spent. She asks the voters to focus on the amended article.

Dennis Mirante says that he doesn't want to neglect the old town office, but he does want to see projects happen.

Phil Morgan moves to end debate. Sandi Capponcelli seconds.

Voice vote to end debate: Approved

The amendment is put to a voice vote: Defeated

The original article is put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 7: Shall licenses for the sale of malt beverages, vinous beverages, and ready-to-drink spirits beverages be granted in this town

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Krista Gay.

Discussion:

Dennis Mirante asks what is meant by sale. He says he understands people want wine to be delivered to their house but doesn't understand why the wording is about selling alcohol.

David says that alcohol sales would be regulated by the Vermont Department of Liquor Control and a local Alcohol Control Board. Krista Gay says it also covers events with catering and cash bars.

David says that some time ago Athens was one of seven towns that were dry. Now it is one of three.

Kate Bova says that Athens was not always a dry town. She heard that sometime in the 80s, someone in town had a bed and breakfast and wanted a little pub in it. The townspeople didn't want that and voted to not allow liquor sales, just for that one case.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 8: Shall spirits and fortified wines be sold in this town

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Krista Gay.

Discussion:

Lynn asks how this is different from the previous article. Krista says there is a difference between wines and hard liquor.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 9: To see if the town shall vote to have trash and recycling pickup, starting in June 2024, as a weekly service with every other week being trash and alternating weeks being recycling, for a total amount of \$32,885.94

Motion by Carol Bingham, seconded by Krista Gay.

Discussion:

Treah Pichette asks why the cost is just a tiny bit higher than the current year with every other week service. It's because the service changes in May each year, so there was a half year of full service before it was cut with the budget in 2023. Comparison of a whole year of the two different levels of service is about \$5,000.

Elmer Davis asks if anyone looked into doing trash the same way Brookline does with dumpsters. Krista answers that the problem is that people wouldn't be responsible with making sure the trash got to the collection location. David says last time it was looked into, the cost was about the same as pickup.

Ellen Mirante says that there are options in Westminster three days a week and costs \$2.00 a bag. David corrects Ellen that it is the town of Rockingham, not Westminster and the cost is \$4.00/bag plus \$35/year for a sticker.

John Oberling says it makes more sense to have one truck come to town than to have 100 cars go to Bellows Falls.

Matt Shea asks to clarify if the decision is to add service for ~\$5,000 or stay with the current level of service. Hannah says that if the article is voted down, there would not be trash collection at all after May.

David says there is no money for trash pickup in the budget. It has been put in as a separate article for voters to decide. Mark Berman asks what the \$13,524 in the budget is for. It is to complete the current contract through May. Mark asks if the revenue for trash bags might increase slightly if the trash service increased. Krista points out that trash bags can be purchased another day at the town office and at the Saxtons River Market now.

Mike Bates asks for clarification on the actual budget figure for the trash if the article is passed. Hannah says the \$32,885 figure will replace the \$13,524 that is in the budget currently. The net increase would be ~\$19,000.

Elmer Davis amends the motion to have trash pickup once a month and recycling pickup once a month for a figure of \$27,452.72;

Kate Bova asks if an amendment can be made so that if the article is voted down, the trash service stays the same as it is now.

Danny Taylor seconds the amendment.

Put to a voice vote: Defeated

Sherry Maher asks to clarify the article. A yes vote adds ~\$19,000 to the current budget and increases trash service. A no vote means there wouldn't be any trash service after May.

Krista says that other options have been looked at, and there are serious accessibility and health concerns for leaving trash disposal up to individual citizens.

Phil Morgan moves to end debate. Krista seconds. Put to a voice vote: approved

Original article put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 10: Shall the Town of Athens discontinue use of the Australian ballot system to elect officers, and instead elect its town officers from the floor at all future annual and special town meetings, pursuant to 17 VSA § 2680(b)

Motion by Tim Stevenson, seconded by Denise Randall.

A paper ballot is requested.

Discussion:

Sandi reads a statement opposed to the article because the town's voting numbers are up with the use of Australian ballots and participation is accessible for more people.

Tim Stevenson says Town Meeting is the essence of democracy and he doesn't want to erode it further by having officers elected by Australian ballot. He thinks there is value in having people stand up and declare their interest in running for office and it's important to return to that method.

Kate Bova says that she thought campaigning from the floor isn't allowed. Krista clarifies that if someone is nominated from the floor, they can address the body.

Zech Wicker says he agrees with Sandi. He thinks a democracy is government by as many people as can be involved, so if the engagement has gone up with Australian ballots, that would be a more democratic method.

Dennis says it's hypocritical to look out for people who can't get out to take care of their trash, but not people who can't get out to vote.

John says it's optional and a privilege to come to town meeting, but it's a *right* to vote. Australian balloting from 10-7 gives people a chance to vote. He doesn't feel good about disenfranchising fellow citizens of their right to vote. He says the town can do both Town Meeting and have Australian ballot voting.

Lynn Morgan asks if this article was a petition or from the selectboard. David says there was a petition which had some incorrect wording in it, so the selectboard rejected the petition and put this article on the warning.

Sherry Maher says she's been struggling with this and has looked at past data. In 2021 everything happened by Australian ballot, so this is the third year. She says that two of the current Meetinghouse committee members were nominated from the floor. She reads the voter turnout for the last several years. Athens' town meeting participation is always higher than the state average. She says she is going to vote no on this article.

Debbie Wicker says she couldn't be here tonight if she couldn't get someone to cover her shift at work. She will vote against it.

Linda Linblad says not all eligible voters in town can even fit in the Community Center. She also says not everyone can make Town Meeting.

Tim Stevenson reviews the surveys that were done to find a time for town meeting. He says that the main reason was because people don't think their voices matter. He wants the committee to be resurrected to determine what can be done to encourage and bring out more people.

Matt Perry moves to end debate. Seconded. Put to a voice vote: Approved

The article is put to a vote by paper ballot: 21 YES; 60 NO. The Article has been defeated.

Article 11: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,500.00 for the annual maintenance of its cemeteries

Motion by Don Capponcelli, seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Don answers a question about what type of maintenance is done on the cemeteries.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 12: Shall the voters of Athens approve the sum of \$2,500.00 for the purpose of maintaining the Athens Brick Meetinghouse

Motion by Sherry Maher, seconded by Tim Stevenson.

Discussion:

Sherry points out that this amount is the same as what has been part of the general budget in the past. It was cut to \$600 last year as part of the budget cuts. She says that this amount will be important to maintain the building. Recent projects include leveling the floor and doing moisture mitigation. She thanks the voters for all the support in the past and hopes people will approve the motion.

Ellen Mirante says Sherry does a great job. Ellen would like to see the one window in the town office replaced.

Dennis thanks the selectboard.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 13: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,140.00 for the support of Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) to provide workforce and economic coordination services to the Windham Region

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Don Capponcelli.

Discussion:

Kate Bova says she would like to know what SeVEDS is.

Don Capponcelli says SeVEDS helped the town and asks Rachel Shields Ebersole to share more. Rachel says they supported the town with grants for the garage and community center scoping work; they have assisted a local business; they work with high school students to graduate, stay in Vermont and work. They also help new Americans and refugees to find housing and employment. SeVEDS asks town to support them at \$3.00 per resident.

Krista Gay thanks Rachel for coming to long meetings and being a trooper on behalf of the town.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 14: To see if the Town shall vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of \$500.00 (\$1.31 per Athens resident) for the support of Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Discussion:

Don Capponcelli points out that the \$1.31 isn't a correct figure per resident.

Krista Gay amends the motion to say "approximately \$1.31 per resident"

Amendment put to a voice vote: Approved

Amended article put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 15: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 to support the Womens' Freedom Center to provide quality advocacy and support to the women of Athens

Motion by Tim Stevenson, seconded by Krista Gay.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 16: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$330.00 to support Youth Services to serve the needs of youth and families in and around Windham County

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 17: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000.00 to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Athens in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sherry Maher.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 18: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 for the Bellows Falls Senior Center

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sandi.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 19: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,350.00 to help support the home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patient's homes and in community settings by the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of Vermont and New Hampshire

Motion by Sherry Maher, seconded by Tim Stevenson.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 20: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000.00 to assist Grafton Cares in providing a variety of assistance to the people of Athens

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Krista Gay.

Krista Gay thanks Kate and the other volunteers for doing everything they do to bring the community together.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 21: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$356.00 to help support outpatient, mental health, and substance abuse service by the staff of Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) in accordance with 24 V. S. A. § 2691

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 22: To see if the Town shall vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to assist Senior Solutions

Motion by Don Capponcelli, seconded by Amanda Alsvig.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 23: To see if the Town shall vote to appropriate the sum of \$250.00 to Bull Creek Common Lands to support local land conservation and public access in the Bull Creek watershed

Motion by Denise Randall, seconded by Sandi Capponcelli.

Discussion:

Kate Bova says that if people haven't gone yet and investigated the lovely trails that the Bull Creek board and volunteers have made in the community forest, they should go check it out and take a walk.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 24: To set the time of future town meetings

Don Capponcelli moves to have Town Meeting on the Monday night before the first Tuesday in March, at 6:00pm. Seconded by Sherry Maher.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Article 25: To transact any further business proper to come before said meeting

Hannah says the rabies clinic will be at the Town Office on Saturday from 1:30-3:00pm.

Lynn Morgan says there is a Green Up Day sign-up sheet in the back of the room.

Tina White encourages people to get goodies and make donations for the community center. The Easter egg hunt is on March 30 from 1:00-3:00.

Motion to adjourn by Sandi Capponcelli, seconded by Denise Randall.

Put to a voice vote: Approved

Adjourned at: 8:08

4/5

Respectfully submitted

Hannah Regier

Hannah Regier, Town Clerk

3/11/2024

Date

Approved by:

Stapponecchi

Signature

Vice Chair Select Board

Office

3-11-24

Date

Janet R Perry

Signature

Select Board

Office

3/12/24

Date

H/C