MINUTES

ANNUAL TOWN OF ATHENS TOWN MEETING

MARCH 1, 2022

The Town Meeting was held at the former Athens Elementary School in Athens, Vermont. Moderator David Bemis called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

The moderator read the warning and asked that all issues be directed to the moderator. He stated the meeting would follow Robert’s Rule of Order where they’re not in conflict with Vermont law. He also asked that everyone wear a mask and if not, to practice social distancing.

The clerk took a roll call of the checklist. A total of 53 registered voters answered the roll call of 293 on the checklist.

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town shall eliminate the position of elected Road Commissioner and

that the Select Board perform all the duties now conferred by law upon the Road Commissioner of the town as of the first Tuesday in March of 2023.

Harold Noyes made the motion the Road Commissioner not be eliminated. Denise Randall seconded. Discussion followed as to whether a road commissioner was necessary. The motion was put to a voice vote. The townspeople voted to eliminate the road commissioner position.

David stated if there was no objection the meeting could suspend the regular order the town report could be acted upon. It was noted that Article 13 was not included due to a clerical error in numbering. There was discussion about the loan of $15,000.00 the Meetinghouse owes the town. It was discussed whether anyone with delinquent taxes should be allowed to hold an office. Tom Taylor inquired about why the road commissioner report and the select board report were not included. Sherry asked about the status of the equipment fund.

ARTICLE 2: Shall the Town of Athens expand the Select Board from 3 to 5 members.

Sherry Maher made the motion to expand the Select Board from 3 to 5 members. Discussion followed. Put to a paper ballot. The results of the voting were 26 yes, 23 no. The motion carried. The Select Board will expand to 5 members.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town shall vote to authorize the Select Board to borrow money,

respectively, if necessary, for current expenses in anticipation of collection of taxes.

Denise Randall made the motion to authorize the Select Board to borrow money, respectively, if necessary, for current expenses in anticipation of collection of taxes. Harold Noyes seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town shall vote to collect taxes on the 10th of September, 2022.

Denise Randall made the motion the Town shall vote to collect taxes on the 10th of September, 2022. Harold Noyes seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Taxes will be collected on September 10, 2022.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town shall vote to publish a list of Delinquent tax payers in the

 Town Report.

Denise Randall made the motion to publish a list of Delinquent tax payers in the Town Report. V Steve Oakes seconded. Discussion followed. Don Capponcelli moved for a paper ballot. The results of the paper ballot were 26 yes, 23 no. The list of Delinquent taxpayers will be published in the Town Report.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will approve $578,489.20 with $374,232.31 to be raised by

 taxes to defray Town expenditures.

Denise Randall made the motion the Town approve $578,489.20 with $374,232.31 to be raised by taxes to defray Town expenditures. Janet Perry seconded. There was discussion on the budget. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The article was approved.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town of Athens vote to start a matching grant fund using $15,000.00

 of surplus from the 2021 budget year to be used for highway and Town of Athens

 projects approved by the Select Board.

Denise made the motion the Town of Athens vote to start a matching grant fund using $15,000.00 of surplus from the 2021 budget year to be used for highway and Town of Athens projects approved by the Select Board. Discussion followed. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The article was approved.

ARTICLE 8: To see of the Town of Athens will vote to appropriate the sum of $250.00 to

 support Women’s Freedom Center to provide quality advocacy and support to

 the women and children of Athens.

Harold Noyes made the motion to see of the Town of Athens will vote to appropriate the sum of $250.00 to support Women’s Freedom Center to provide quality advocacy and support to the women and children of Athens. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town of Athens will 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.

Denise Randall made the motion to see if the Town of Athens will 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. Sherry Maher seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town of Athens will 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.

Denise Randall made the motion to see if the Town of Athens will 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. Sherry Maher seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of $250.00 for the Bellows

 Falls Senior Center.

Denise Randall made the motion to see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of $250.00 for the Bellows Falls Senior Center. Seconded by Sherry Maher. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town 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 VT

 and NH.

Denise Randall made the motion the Town 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 VT and NH. Seconded by Sherry Maher. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town of Athens will raise and appropriate $1,000.00 to assist

 Grafton Cares in providing a variety of assistance to the people of Athens.

Denise Randall made the motion to see if the Town of Athens will raise and appropriate $1,000.00 to assist Grafton Cares in providing a variety of assistance to the people of Athens. Harold Noyes seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town shall raise and appropriate the sum of $300.00 to assist Senior

 Solutions.

Denise Randall made the motion to see if the Town shall raise and appropriate the sum of $300.00 to assist Senior Solutions. Harold Noyes seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 16: To set the time of future Town meetings.

Stephen Oakes made the motion to set the future Town Meetings for the 1st Tuesday in March at 10:00 am. Denise seconded. Discussion followed. Krista Gay made the motion to amend the motion to the 1st Monday night prior to the 1st Tuesday of March at 6:00 pm for an in person Town Meeting. Zach Wicker seconded. A standing vote was called. The results of the vote was 29 yes, 7 no. The amendment passed. The Town Meeting will be held on the 1st Monday night prior the 1st Tuesday in March at 6:00 pm.

ARTICLE 17: To transact any further business proper to come before said meeting.

Dennis Hunt asked for a round of applause for Darlene who is retiring. Sandi Capponcelli pointed out that on page 28 of the Town Report is a report to better define what the Campbell Fund is used for. Dennis Mirante asked for a follow up on the $15,000.00 loaned to the Meetinghouse Committee. This will be taken up at the Select Board meeting. Hannah Regier presented Darlene a card and a gift certificate from the Select Board and town officials on her retirement. Darlene was pleasantly surprised and wished to thank everyone. Phil Morgan commented that Darlene had done a magnificent job. Wichie Artu asked about the new positions for the Select Board. This will be discussed at the next Select Board meeting. There being no further business, Harold Noyes made the motion to adjourn. Steve Oakes seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Approved this day of March, 2022 at Athens, Vermont.

Athens Board of Selectmen

David Bemis

Denise Randall

Janet Perry