

**2015 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015
CHANDLER MUSIC HALL**

The Annual Town Meeting was called to order immediately following the Randolph School District Annual School District Meeting at 10:20 a.m. by Moderator Kelly Green. Moderator Green introduced the Selectboard to the audience: Dennis Brown, Larry Richburg, Marjorie Ryerson and Tom Schersten. She also recognized Melvin Adams, Town Manager and Michael DeCubellis, Finance Director. She called the audience's attention to pages 22-24 which listed the many people who serve town government in some capacity. She asked anyone whose name appeared on the list to stand and she thanked and recognized them for their service to the town. Moderator Green informed the audience that the Warning for this meeting could be found beginning on page 5 of the Town Report. She told the audience that **Articles 1-30** are being voted on by Australian ballot at the Town Hall until 7:00 p.m., and **Articles 31-38** are for consideration from the floor of the meeting.

Moderator Green recognized Janet Watton. Ms. Watton spoke on behalf of the Chandler Center for the Arts and welcomed the audience to Chandler Music Hall. She told the audience that once again, Chandler was giving away a number of free tickets to people seated in certain number seats. She read off the number for the seats that were winners and the tickets were given to the winners.

Moderator Green then recognized Town Clerk and Treasurer Joyce Mazzucco. Ms. Mazzucco made a few announcements to the audience. She reminded everyone that the second installment of the FY 2015 property taxes was due on March 31st and told the audience her office would be open additional hours for property tax collection. She also reminded the audience to file the HS-122 Homestead Declaration form with the Vermont Department of Taxes and the HI-144 form to qualify for a reduction in the education portion of their property taxes. Ms. Mazzucco told the audience that the Homestead tax rate in the Town of Randolph is lower than the Non-Residential tax rate and encouraged homeowners to file their Homestead Declaration form in a timely manner to avoid penalty charges. Ms. Mazzucco also announced that there would be two rabies vaccination clinics where she would be present to license dogs.

Article 1. Election of Officers. Moderator Green told the audience there would be no discussion of this article. The election of officers is voted by Australian ballot.

GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS BUDGET AND TAXATION

Article 2. Shall the town voters authorize the total expenditure of \$2,672,538 for Town General Fund expenses of which \$1,384,968 shall be raised by taxes; \$1,287,570 shall be from non-tax revenues?

Article 3. Shall the town voters authorize the total expenditure of \$1,789,865 for Town Highway Fund expenses of which \$1,424,015 shall be raised by taxes; \$365,850 shall be from non-tax revenues?

Article 4. Shall the town voters authorize the total expenditure of \$263,161 for Kimball Library expenses of which \$205,611 shall be raised by taxes; \$57,550 shall be from non-tax revenues?

Moderator Green pointed out to the audience that the budget information for the General Fund, the Highway Fund and the Kimball Library could be found in the Town Report on pages 37-47, 48-51 and 47-48, respectively. She opened the floor for discussion. The following individuals participated in the discussion: Don Maynard, Rick Holbrook, Patrick French, Nan Gwin, Melvin Adams, Chris Recchia, Russell Heyl, and Jerry Ward. Since Mr. Adams is not a registered voter in the Town of Randolph, Moderator Green asked the audience if there was any objection to allowing Mr. Adams to speak at the meeting. There was none. The discussion centered on the use of surplus funds from the closure of the landfill to fund various projects, the amount of funds required for monitoring the closed landfill, the solar array at the landfill, use of methane from the landfill and to make any transfers dependent on the earnings from the landfill fund.

CAPITAL BUDGET, GENERAL BONDING AND TAXATION

Article 5. Shall the town voters authorize the total expenditure of \$90,000 for Capital Fund Expenses, which shall be raised by taxes?

Moderator Green told the audience that information on the Capital Budget could be found on page 51 of the Town Report. She opened the floor for discussion of Article 5. Town Manager Melvin Adams pointed out that more detail on the Capital Budget could be found beginning on page 59 of the Town Report. There was no further discussion of Article 5.

Article 6. Shall the town voters authorize the sum of \$25,000 from repayment of sewer debt to the General Fund to be transferred to the Capital Budget for the purpose of offsetting capital expenditures?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion on Article 6. Mr. Adams explained the background about the repayment from the Sewer Department to the General Fund. The General Fund had made the bond payments on a bond that funded both a sewer project as well as a General Fund project. The Sewer Department needed to repay the General Fund for its portion of the bond payment over a period of time. This article seeks to apply that repayment to the Capital Budget. There was no further discussion of Article 6.

Article 7. Shall the town voters authorize transfer of \$100,000 from the CSO Bond Debt Service Fund to the Storm Water Reserve Fund?

Article 8. Shall the town voters authorize transfer of \$50,000 from the CSO Bond Debt Service Fund to the Facilities Reserve Fund?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of Articles 7 and 8. Mr. Adams told the audience that in 1996 there was a combined sewer overflow project that was bonded and has a balloon payment of \$249,000 due in 2015 (see page 59). The voters set aside some funds which were invested and have grown. The money in excessive of what is needed for the balloon payment is available to be used for other projects. There was no further discussion of Articles 7 and 8.

Article 9. Shall the town voters authorize the transfer of \$100,000 from the Landfill Closure Fund to the Highway Paving Reserve Fund?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of Article 9. Mr. Adams commented that the Town has made a similar transfer for a number of years. There was no further discussion of Article 9.

POLICE DISTRICT

Article 10. Shall the town voters residing in the Police District authorize the total expenditure of \$552,105 for Police District Operations and Capital Expenses of which \$539,005 shall be raised by taxes; \$13,100 shall be from non-tax revenue?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of the Police District budget. Guy Waldo asked about the Police Chief's salary and his current status. Mr. Adams said that Chief Krakowiecki has been on Workman's Comp leave and will be back sometime in March. Loretta Stalnaker has been Acting Chief and part of her salary has been paid from the Police Chief's salary. There was no further discussion of Article 10.

WATER DISTRICT

Article 11. Shall the town voters residing in the Water District authorize the sum of \$486,847 to be expended for Water District expenses in FY2016?

SEWER DISTRICT

Article 12. Shall the town voters residing in the Sewer District authorize the sum of \$650,900 to be expended for Sewer District expenses in FY2016?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of Articles 11 and 12. She told the audience the budgets for the Water District could be found in the Town Report on pages 53-55, and pages 55-57, respectively. There was no discussion of Articles 11 and 12.

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS BY TAXATION

Article 13. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$4,000 to be raised by taxes in support of the Arts Bus?

Article 14. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$6,000 to be raised by taxes in support of the Central Vermont Adult Basic Education?

Article 15. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,300 to be raised by taxes in support of Capstone Community Action?

Article 16. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,500 to be raised by taxes in support of Central Vermont Council on Aging?

Article 17. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$8,000 to be raised by taxes in support of Clara Martin Center?

Article 18. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$14,000 to be raised by taxes in support of Greater Randolph Senior Center?

Article 19. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 to be raised by taxes in support of Home Share Now?

Article 20. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$600 to be raised by taxes in support of Orange County Court Diversion Program?

Article 21. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 to be raised by taxes in support of Orange County Parent Child Center?

Article 22. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 to be raised by taxes in support of the Randolph Area Food Shelf?

Article 23. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 to be raised by taxes in support of Safeline?

Article 24. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$7,500 to be raised by taxes in support of Stagecoach Transportation, Inc.?

Article 25. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 to be raised by taxes in support of Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired?

Article 26. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 to be raised by taxes in support of the Vermont Center for Independent Living?

Article 27. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$16,220 to be raised by taxes in support of the Visiting Nurse & Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire?

Article 28. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 to be raised by taxes in support of the White River Valley Chamber of Commerce to help cover expenses of the 4th of July parade?

Article 29. Shall the town voters authorize the expenditure of \$5,000 to be raised by taxes in support of the White River Craft Center?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of the Special Appropriations Articles 12 through 29. Dick Drysdale told the audience there was an error in an article that appeared in the *Herald* last week regarding the Randolph Senior Center. The paper erroneously reported that the Senior Center was seeking an increase in their appropriation request. The Senior Center is seeking the same appropriation as last year, \$14,000. Marybeth Tevis spoke in support of the Randolph Area Food Shelf and thanked the voters for their past support. Sarah Crosby spoke in support of the Clara Martin Center and thanked the voters for their past support. Ramsey Papp spoke in support of Capstone Community Action, formerly known as Central Vermont Community Action and thanked the voters for their past support. Julie Iffland spoke in support of the Stagecoach and about a survey the Stagecoach is conducting on ridership and route planning. Kevin Harty spoke in support of the White River Craft Center, about the community lunch and classes offered by the Center, and thanked the voters for their past support. Kevin McGinty spoke as a user of the Stagecoach and thanked the organization for their outstanding service. Emma Schumann spoke in support of the White River Valley Chamber of Commerce and thanked the voters for their past support. There was no further discussion of Articles 13 through 29.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

Article 30. Shall the Town enter into a telecommunications union district to be known as the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District, under the provisions of Subchapter 3, Chapter 121 of Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated?

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of Article 30. Jerry Ward spoke in support of this article. He told the audience that creating the telecommunications district would make it easier for EC Fiber to secure financing for expanding their service. No municipal tax dollars can be used for the district. He did not see a downside to creating the district. The following individuals participated in the discussion: Chris Recchia, Michael Penrod, Jerry Ward, Julie Iffland, John Lutz, and Patrick French. The discussion touched on how EC Fiber prioritizes projects, when the district would go into effect, the types of service EC Fiber will provide—TV/phone/internet, and what other liabilities the Town might take on by passing this article. The way the district is to be structure, no taxpayer revenue will be used. Revenues would come from the sale of services and future revenues and assets. There was no further discussion of Article 30.

Moderator Green told the audience that Articles 31-38 are to be acted on from the floor of the meeting.

Article 31. To hear and act upon any reports of Town Officers and Committees.

Moderator Green asked if there was any supplemental information to the reports as presented in the Town Report. Melvin Adams, Town Manager, talked about the Delinquent Property Tax Collection policy and the time frame in which taxpayers must act to avoid having their property go up for tax sale. Larry Richburg provided some additional information on the Energy Committee report regarding the Solarize Program. There were no additional supplementary reports. Russell Heyl made a motion to accept the reports of the Town Officers and Committees. Jessamyn West seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion was adopted by majority vote. The reports were accepted as presented.

Article 32. To elect one Budget Committee member for a term of three (3) years.

Moderator Green opened the floor for nominations. The audience wanted to know who previously held the position and if that person was present at the meeting. Sam Lincoln held the post previously and was not interested in serving in the position again. Dennis Brown nominated Michael Penrod to serve as a member of the Budget Committee. Chris Recchia seconded the nomination. Mr. Penrod was asked if he is elected would he serve. He said he would serve if elected. There were no further nominations. Moderator Green took a voice vote, and Mr. Penrod was elected by majority vote, with one nay vote. Mr. Penrod's term will expire in 2018.

Article 33. To fill any vacancy.

Moderator Green explained to the audience that last year the legislature removed the provision to elect a collector of current taxes. Effective July 1, 2014, a town must vote to have either the municipal treasurer or the town manager (if there is one), assume the duties of collector of current taxes. If a town fails to vote either the town treasurer or the town manager as the collector of current taxes, then the constable automatically becomes the collector of current taxes. Moderator Green asked for a motion to vote. Julie Iffland made a motion to vote on the question to have the town treasurer or the town manager assume the duties of collector of current taxes. There was a second to the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion was adopted to vote on the question to have the town treasurer or the town manager assume the duties of collector of current taxes. A discussion followed and there was a motion by Hugo Liepmann to have the town treasurer assume the duties of collector of current taxes, which was seconded by Stephen Webster. Participating in the discussion were the following individuals: John Lutz, Patsy French, Joyce Mazzucco, Michael Penrod and Charles Russell. There was no further discussion. Moderator Green called for a standing vote. She asked all those in favor of electing the town treasurer to assume the duties of collector of current taxes to stand. She then asked for all those opposed to electing the town treasurer to assume the duties of collector of current taxes to stand. Moderator Green declared

the town treasurer was elected to assume the duties of collector of current taxes by majority vote.

Article 34. Shall the town voters authorize eliminating the Fire Air Pack Reserve Fund?

Moderator Green asked for a motion on this article. Larry Richburg made a motion to eliminate the Fire Air Pack Reserve Fund. Ron Schoolcraft seconded the motion. The floor was opened for discussion. Nan Gwin and Melvin Adams participated in the discussion. There was no further discussion. Moderator Green called for a voice vote and the motion was adopted by majority vote.

Article 35. Shall the town voters authorize eliminating the Tennis Court Reserve Fund, the Playground Restrictive Fund, and the Ice Rink/Skate Park Restricted Fund, and consolidate all recreational facilities maintenance and repair into a single Recreation Facilities and Equipment Reserve Fund?

Moderator Green asked for a motion on this article. Janet Watton made a motion to eliminate the Tennis Court Reserve Fund, the Playground Restrictive Fund and the Ice Rink/Skate Park Restricted Fund and consolidate all recreational facilities maintenance and repair into a single Recreation Facilities and Equipment Reserve Fund. The motion was seconded by Tamara Morgan. There was no discussion on the motion. Moderator Green called for a voice vote and the motion was adopted by majority vote.

Article 36. Shall the town voters authorize the collection of taxes in two (2) installments for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, one half (1/2) of the total twelve month tax to be due on October 30, 2015, and the remaining one half (1/2) to be due on March 31, 2016; interest shall be due after each installment date but penalty shall not be assessed until after the final payment due date; payments must be received in the Town Treasurer's Office by 6:00 p.m. on the due date to avoid late charges; postmarked mail shall not be accepted as payment on time; and post-dated checks shall not be accepted?

Moderator Green asked for a motion on this article. Harvey Porter made a motion to set the tax due dates as stipulated in the article. Dennis Brown and Janet Watton both seconded the motion. The floor was opened for discussion of this motion. Tamara Morgan and Joyce Mazzucco participated in the discussion. There was no further discussion. Moderator Green called for a voice vote on the motion to authorize the collection of taxes in two (2) installments for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, one half (1/2) of the total twelve month tax to be due on October 30, 2015, and the remaining one half (1/2) to be due on March 31, 2016; interest shall be due after each installment date but penalty shall not be assessed until after the final payment due date; payments must be received in the Town Treasurer's Office by 6:00 p.m. on the due date to avoid late charges; postmarked mail shall not be accepted as payment on time; and post-dated checks shall not be accepted. The motion was adopted by majority vote.

Article 37. Shall the town voters authorize an exemption to the East Randolph Prudential District, Inc. from real estate taxes for a period of five (5) years? (T.32 Sec 3840)

Moderator Green asked for a motion on this article. Nan Gwin made a motion to authorize an exemption to the East Randolph Prudential District, Inc. from real estate taxes for a period of five (5) years. Michael Penrod seconded the motion. The floor was opened for discussion of this article. Participating in the discussion were the following individuals: Don Maynard, Janet Watton, Melvin Adams, John Lutz, Patrick French, Stephen Webster, Nan Gwin, Hugo Liepmann, Chris Recchia, Russell Heyl and Ken Preston. The East Randolph Prudential District is a separate fire district that owns the property that houses the East Randolph Fire Department. All the equipment used by the East Randolph Fire Department is purchased and owned by the Town of Randolph. The East Randolph Fire Department serves more than just East Randolph. The first time the Town voted an exemption for the East Randolph Prudential District the exemption was for 10 years as allowed by state statute. Subsequent voted

exemptions have been for 5 years as allowed by state statute. Any change to eliminate the prudential district must be initiated by the prudential district. Ken Preston made a motion to call the question. The motion was seconded. Moderator Green took a voice vote on the motion to cease debate. The motion carried by a two-third majority vote. Moderator Green then took a voice vote on the motion to authorize an exemption to the East Randolph Prudential District, Inc. from real estate taxes for a period of 5 years, and the motion was adopted by majority vote.

Article 38. Shall the town voters authorize allocation of any General Fund Surplus not necessary to level taxes, or which is not applied towards any Emergency Reserve Fund short fall, and any Highway Surplus not need to level fund taxes to the Highway Paving Reserve Fund?

Moderator Green asked for a motion on this article. Forrest MacGregor made a motion to authorize allocation of any General Fund Surplus not necessary to level taxes, or which is not applied towards any Emergency Reserve Fund short fall, and any Highway Surplus not needed to level fund taxes to the Highway Paving Reserve Fund. Gay Gaston seconded the motion. The floor was opened for discussion of the motion. Participating in the discussion were the following individuals: Chris Recchia, Russell Heyl, Melvin Adams, and Kevin McGinty. There was no further discussion on the motion. Moderator Green called for a voice vote and the motion was adopted by majority vote.

To do any other business proper to come before this meeting.

Moderator Green opened the floor for discussion of other business. Marjorie Ryerson, one of the members of the Selectboard read a resolution acknowledging Dennis Brown and the many years he has served the Town of Randolph. There was a standing ovation for Mr. Brown. Below is a copy of the resolution:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, DENNIS BROWN served as a member of the Town of Randolph Selectboard for a cumulative period of ten years, during which he was Chair or Co-Chair for five years, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Brown has also been a member of the Town's Budget Committee, Police Committee, Municipal Building Review Committee, and served as Justice of the Peace, and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, in all of the duties he fulfilled and the challenges he encountered, Mr. Brown maintained the utmost in decorum, preserved the dignity of the Committee and/or Board, and countenanced civility in every phase of the Board and community process, and

WHEREAS, the result of his leadership, perseverance, intellect, and dedication to the best interests of all residents and programs he has ensured sound fiscal and governance policy, and has enhanced the long-term credibility and confidence of public process and participation and the Board's work on behalf of the community,

NOW THEREFORE, the Randolph Selectboard publically recognizes

DENNIS BROWN

for his exemplary commitment to the Town of Randolph and for his extended public service.

Signed this third day of March, 2015.

Dennis Brown thanked the audience for the applause and recognition of his service to the Town. He then asked if Senior Sargent John Helfant of the Vermont State Police from the Royalton Barracks could address the audience. Sr. Sgt. Helfant addressed the audience and talked about the increasing opiate problem in the area and asked the audience for their assistance in trying to fight the increasing criminal activities which stem from opiate use and abuse. The following individuals participated in the discussion: Sarah Crosby, Sr. Sgt. Helfant, Martha Hafner, Russell Heyl, Michael Penrod, Ruth Lutz, David Gaston, Louise Sjobeck, Don Maynard, Janet Watton and Melvin Adams. The discussion touched on drugs and

schools, the role and effectiveness of the local police, what kind of penalties a person convicted might serve, probable cause, and a suggestion that the local police walk the streets and talk to the store merchants and teenagers on the street to get a better understanding of the community and its needs and concerns. Sr. Sgt. Helfant left his business card and asked the audience to contact him if they wished for more information or to report any suspicious activity.

Discussion continued. The following individuals participated: Don Maynard, Michael Penrod, Chris Recchia, Martha Haftner, David Crosby and Melvin Adams. The discussion centered on the property owned by the Town at the corner of Elm, Forest and Central Streets, and about the Branchwood property.

Melvin Adams thanked the town employees who may have been present at the meeting for all their hard work. He also thanked and recognized Kate Sigurdson, the Town's Recreation Director for the work she has done putting together recreational activities for the community. Because Ms. Sigurdson is not a registered voter in the Town of Randolph, Moderator Green asked if there was any objection to allowing Ms. Sigurdson to address the audience. There was none. Ms. Sigurdson told the audience she is trying to meet as many people as she can and would like to meet with anyone with suggestions for recreational opportunities for the community.

Nancy Rice spoke about a bill in the legislature seeking to have some state oversight over the transfer of military equipment and weapons to local law enforcement. There are grants from the Department of Homeland Security that gives such equipment and weapons for free to local law enforcement.

There was no further discussion. Moderator Green adjourned the meeting at 12:44 p.m.

A True Record.

Attest: _____, Town Clerk
Joyce L. Mazzucco

Approved by: _____, Moderator
Kelly Green
_____, Selectboard Chair
Larry Richburg