

**Town of Charleston**  
**Annual Town Meeting – March 7, 2017**  
**Charleston Elementary School**

**MINUTES**

The Annual Town & School District Meeting was called to order at 10:00am by Moderator Jean Wilson, with School Business concluding at 10:50am. With Moderator Jean Wilson having been re-elected during School Business, business began with Article 2.

**Article 2. To elect all officers as required by law.**

**Selectperson: Larry Young** nominated by Tom Jensen, second by Dean Bennett. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 3 years.

**Lister: Bob Wilson** nominated by Steve Wilson, second by Tom Jensen. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 3 years.

**Town Auditor: Janice Bowen** nominated by Pat Austin, second by Sherman Allen. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 3 years.

**Delinquent Tax Collector: Grace Frizzell** nominated by Jeannine Bennett, second by Tom Jensen. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 1 year.

**First Constable: Jonathan Bruce** nominated by Dean Bennett; second by Larry Young. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 2 years.

**Second Constable: Ed Brown** by Jon Bruce; second by Tom Jensen. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 1 year.

**Cemetery Commissioner: Dexter Bennett** nominated by Sherman Allen, second by Wayne Bowen. **Martin Davis** nominated by Richard Colburn Sr., second by Robert Frizzell. Robert Frizzell and 7 others called for paper ballot. Vote: 51 for Martin Davis; 21 for Dexter Bennett. Davis elected for 5 years.

**Town Agent: Julianne Woolard** nominated by Jeannine Bennett, second by Tom Jensen. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 1 year.

**Town Grand Juror: Meghann Carter** nominated by Nancy Engels, second by Jeannine Bennett. Unopposed. Ayes have it; elected for 1 year.

**Article 3. To see if the town will vote to have its taxes collected by the treasurer with a final due date of Friday, October 20, 2017, with the policy of turning over to the delinquent tax collector taxes not received by the treasurer in the town clerk's office by October 20, 2017 at 5:00 pm, with postmarks not accepted as timely payment.** Moved by Dan Whipple, second by Jonathan Bruce. No discussion. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.

**Article 4. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$943,686.19 less anticipated revenue and separately voted articles, for a net assessment of \$603,256.50, necessary to support the town's general, highway, and cemetery expenses for the year beginning Jan. 1, 2017. Moved by Nancy Engels, second by Tom Jensen. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.**  
Discussion: Selectboard Chair Dean Bennett said that state mandates continue to drive up the budget, and the town's match on grant-funded highway projects have increased expenses for 2017. Tom Jensen congratulated the Selectboard on a lower tax assessment than last year. Colleen Kellogg noted that an equipment loan had been paid off in 2016 thanks to voter approval at Town Meeting 2016 to apply the road surplus to that purpose.

**Article 5. To see if the town will vote to apply the 2016 Road Surplus of \$23,772.14 to pave the apron of Dane Hill Rd where it meets VT Route 105, with any remaining funds to be used to purchase additional chloride for town roads. Moved by Tom Jensen, second by Diana Marckwardt. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.** Discussion: Medora Jensen asked how far up Dane Hill Rd would be paved. Dean Bennett said the town would go with the state's recommendation, probably 30 or 40 feet to where the road narrows to 22 feet.

**Article 6. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00 to be added to the Road Equipment Fund, and direct the Selectboard to assess a tax [over and above the budget] sufficient to meet the same. Moved by Tom Jensen, second by Maurice Cerutti. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT Passed.** Discussion: Dean Bennett explained that the Town highway department owns all of its equipment, including two old bucket loaders that will need replacing. The board hopes to build the equipment fund to reduce the amount borrowed.

**Article 7. To see if the town will vote to renew a property tax exemption for the fire station parcel in East Charleston owned by the Charleston Volunteer Fire Department for a period of five years (through 2020)** Moderator noted the article had been placed on the warning in error; it had been voted in 2016. With no objection, the motion was passed over.

**Article 8. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$38,245 to support the Charleston Volunteer Fire Department. Moved by Peggy Stevens, second by Sue Dwelle. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.** Discussion: When asked about anticipated expenses and a \$100,000 fund balance, Dan Whipple said equipment is purchased on an ongoing basis—recently costing \$30,000. The department also added a snow machine for trail rescue—because ambulance services aren't equipped for this—as well as low-angle water rescue capacity, important in the Clyde River area. Major future expenses are: repair or rebuilding the firehouse, and replacement of two aging trucks.

**Article 9. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$12,449 to support the following and direct the Selectboard to assess a tax over and above the budget to meet the same: a. \$500 to Charleston Historical Society; b. \$1,000 to Echo Lake Protective Association Milfoil Prevention Project; c. \$800 to NorthWoods Stewardship Center; d. \$900 to Dailey Memorial Library; e. \$700 to Island Pond Library; f. \$1,650 to Rural Community Transportation; g. \$475 to Orleans County Historical Society; h. \$500 to the Orleans County Citizen Advocacy; i. \$400 to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging; j. \$1,074 to Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.; k. \$500 to assist the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter; l. \$3,000 to the Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice; m. \$50 to support GreenUp Vermont; n. \$100 to VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force Dry Hydrant Program; o. \$100 to Vermont Symphony Orchestra Symphony Kids; p. \$700 to Umbrella. Moved by Nancy Engels; second by Peggy Stevens. No discussion. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.**

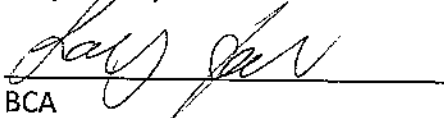
**Article 10. To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.**


Discussion: Penelope Newcomb said it was difficult to contact everyone in town quickly regarding local issues. Voters suggested a town Facebook page or email list. Town Clerk Teri Gray said landowner emails had been collected a few years back but not maintained. Colleen Kellogg invited interested residents to supply their email by emailing townofcharlestonvt@comcast.net. Dean Bennett said the town was looking to organize the school as an emergency shelter and welcomes volunteers, especially people familiar with the school building, to contact the Town Clerk. Duane Moulton said that the fire department has a keyholder. Rust Brown suggested holding town meeting at a time other than 10am on a workday.


Seeing no other business, the Annual Town Meeting was adjourned at 11:28am.

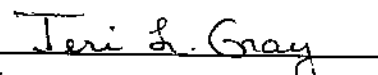
DATED AT CHARLESTON, VERMONT THIS 7th DAY OF MARCH 2017.

Respectfully submitted:

  
BCA

  
Selectboard

  
Moderator

  
Town Clerk