

Wallingford Selectboard
Annual Informational Meeting Minutes
February 28, 2022

Selectboard Members Present: Bruce Duchesne, Kathy Luzader, Patricia Pranger, Rose Regula, and Nelson Tift.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Julie Sharon, Peg Soule, Mark Noble, Debbie Scranton, Lynn Pilcher, Tammy Heffernan (moderator), Art Peterson, Tom Burditt, Justin Jankus, and Christine Palmer. There were 38 people connected to the meeting via Zoom. Only Town officials and those who addressed the Board were listed as present.

Selectboard Chair Nelson Tift called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the annual Informational Meeting.

N. Tift introduced members of the Selectboard, Town clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon, Town Administrator Sandi Switzer and then turned the meeting over to Moderator Tammy Heffernan.

Ms. Heffernan provided an overview of the guidelines for the Zoom Informational Meeting and detailed how members of the public could ask questions or make comments.

Ms. Heffernan introduced statehouse Representatives Art Peterson and Tom Burditt. She requested they provide legislative updates without campaigning as other individuals seeking office would not be provided the same opportunity. They offered summaries of their work and committee assignments in Montpelier.

Article I. Ms. Heffernan read Article I of the Informational Meeting Agenda. No public input.

Article II. Ms. Heffernan read Article II of the Informational Meeting Agenda. No public input.

Article III. Ms. Heffernan read Article III of the Informational Meeting Agenda. No public input.

Article IV. Ms. Heffernan read Article IV of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said R. Regula would provide an overview of the budget. R. Regula explained the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget of \$1,345,779.05 was up \$53,765 and would require \$992,037.06 to be raised in taxes. She said based on the 2021 Grand List, the municipal tax rate would increase slightly from \$0.3926 to \$0.4059. She indicated it was just an estimate as the tax rate would be calculated using the 2022 Grand List. R. Regula provided a detailed overview of the proposed revenue and expense budget.

Lynn Pilcher asked for more information about the Bridge Reserve Fund. N. Tift replied the fund was set up for the Creek Road Bridge initially and Article VIII was largely for administrative purposes to create the Reserve Fund for municipal bridge repairs.

Article V. Ms. Heffernan read Article V of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said the Board discussed using 2/3 of the Revenue Augmentation Trust for a Capital expense, such as a new grader or salt shed with the remaining 1/3 to be under the custody of the Trustees of Public Funds. He said funds would not be available until the Trust terminated in December of 2023. He noted terms of the Trust required voter input at the 2022 Town Meeting. No public input.

Article VI. Ms. Heffernan read Article VI of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift explained the Building Reserve Fund was set up for the purpose of maintaining municipal buildings and income from the Town Hall cell tower lease went into the fund. No public input.

Article VII. Ms. Heffernan read Article VII of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said this article sought authorization to put cell tower income into the Building Reserve Fund. No public input.

Article VIII. Ms. Heffernan read Article VIII of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said this was largely for administrative purposes to create the Bridge Reserve Fund. No public input.

Article IX. Ms. Heffernan read Article IX of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said this article asked voters to transfer \$30,000 from the FY'22 budget into the Bridge Reserve Fund. No public input.

Article X. Ms. Heffernan read Article X of the Informational Meeting Agenda. N. Tift said 43 Vermont towns opted to give voters a chance to decide on the issue of future sales of cannabis within their respective communities. Christine Palmer asked if a portion of cannabis sales would be used for specific purposes. N. Tift said the ballot item, if approved, would merely allow the possibility of cannabis sales within the community in the future without laying the groundwork as to how that would be implemented.

Peg Soule asked if the Town could opt-in at a later date or was this an “all or nothing” vote. N. Tift said he was unsure whether the Town could opt-in later. It was noted the article was petitioned onto the ballot.

B. Duchesne explained current Town zoning banned the sale of cannabis so the zoning administrator and planning commission would be looking for public input on this matter as zoning regulations were being updated.

Mark Noble said the state may only approve a limited number of permits for the sale of cannabis.

Debbie Scranton said she was concerned about the vagueness of the issue and would support a small-scale operation, but perhaps not a large operation.

Justin Jankus said Town zoning would have to be amended if voters approved the article and new zoning regulations may require full review of applications.

Mark Noble added the Town could regulate cannabis sale operations through zoning.

Other Business. Lynn Pilcher asked for an ARPA update. Peg Soule (chair of the ARPA Committee) said a committee had been formed, met twice and would continue to meet monthly. She said the committee developed a Mission Statement and had been reviewing U.S. Treasury's 400-page Final Rule and Vermont League of Cities and Towns interpretations of the Final Rule. She said the committee would be seeking public input and she noted the municipal website included information pertaining to ARPA funds as well as Committee work with agendas and meeting Minutes. She said VLCT advised the Town to proceed cautiously as the Final Rule took shape. Ms. Soule added the Town had two years to obligate funds and two additional years to spend it.

With no further public input, Tammy Heffernan thanked everyone for participating in the meeting. N. Tift extended his appreciation to Board members, Tammy Heffernan, the town administrator, town clerk and treasurer, and citizens for their participation.

R. Regula made a motion that was seconded by P. Pranger to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. Motion carried (5-0).

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 7th Day of March, 2022