

**TOWN OF WOODFORD
ANNUAL MEETING WARNING
TOWN BUSINESS MEETING FEBRUARY 28, 2022
TOWN MEETING BALLOTING MARCH 1, 2022
Unapproved**

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Dick Frantz at 7:43 p.m. To start the meeting The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance. Dick expressed thanks to the selectmen and the town clerk for their work in keeping the Town operating. They are responsible for the smooth operations of the Town.

Dick commented that no politicians or representatives were in attendance at this meeting as they have been in the past and therefore moved forward with the reading of the warning as written.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF WOODFORD, VERMONT, QUALIFIED TO VOTE IN THE TOWN MEETING, ARE HEREBY WARNED AND NOTIFIED TO MEET AT THE WOODFORD TOWN BUILDING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2022 AT 7:30 PM TO TRANSACT THE BUSINESS SPECIFIED BELOW TO BE DONE FROM THE FLOOR:

FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF SUCH BUSINESS, THE MEETING WILL STAND ADJOURNED TO TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022 AT THE WOODFORD TOWN BUILDING FROM 7AM TO 7PM FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS BY BALLOT AND VOTE AS TO WHETHER THEY WISH TO APPROPRIATE \$154,320.00 NECESSARY FOR SUPPORT OF THE TOWN, \$30,000.00 NECESSARY FOR SUPPORT OF THE HIGHWAY AND WHETHER TO REPLACE THE ELECTED LISTER POSITIONS WITH A PROFESSIONAL ASSESSOR.

ARTICLE 1: TO HEAR THE REPORTS OF THE AUDITORS.

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 1, 2nd by Kate Balassie. Susan explained that the Town hires an outside professional auditing firm and the audits have been favorable. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 2: TO DETERMINE IF THE TAXES SHALL BE PAID TO THE TREASURER OR A NON DEFINED COLLECTOR OF TAXES.

Motion made by Chuck Suss to have the taxes paid to the treasurer, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 3: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$100 FOR THE SUPPORT OF PROJECT AGAINST VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS (PAVE)?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 3, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 4: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$3000 FOR THE BENNINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION DUES?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 4, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 5: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$250 FOR THE TUTORIAL CENTER?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 5, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 6: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$100 FOR THE SUPPORT OF VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION TASK FORCE?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 6, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. The question was asked as to what the Town receives for such a small amount. Ryan responded that other municipalities also contribute to this organization. Through this program Woodford has received two dry fire hydrants. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 7: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$650 FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION AND HOSPICE OF THE SOUTHWEST REGION?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 7, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 8: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$300 FOR THE SUPPORT OF BENNINGTON RUTLAND OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (BROC)?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 8, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 9: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$2500 FOR THE SUPPORT OF BENNINGTON FREE LIBRARY?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 9, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 10: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$250 FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 10, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 11: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$300 FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (CRJ)?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 11, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 12: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$250 FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE SOUTHWESTERN VERMONT COUNCIL ON AGING?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 12, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 13: SHALL THE TOWN APPROPRIATE \$250 FOR THE SUPPORT OF AMERICAN RED CROSS?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 13, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 14: SHALL THE VOTERS APPROVE PART TIME SHERIFF DEPARTMENT COVERAGE WITH A SPENDING CAP OF \$11,000 PER YEAR? (NET AMOUNT IS COMPUTED BY: 12 MONTHS PAID TO SHERIFF'S DEPT. LESS 12 MONTHS OF FINES COLLECTED BY THE STATE AND GIVEN TO THE TOWN).

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 14, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. Clarification was asked about the dollar amount. Ryan explained that this amount is what the tax payers are responsible for. In the past coverage was based on the amount of fines that was received.

However, this amount varied every year and started showing a reduction in fines which also reduced coverage. This plan was developed so that the amount was clear and not random. The goal of this spending is to provide protection for residents and property owners. The State Police is the primary law enforcement but this allows additional coverage at unknown places and times, particularly now when there is a shortage of State Police Officer. There being no further discussion All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 15: SHALL THE TOWN VOTE THE SALARIES FOR THE SELECT BOARD MEMBERS TO BE \$1270 EACH?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 15, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 16: SHALL THE TOWN SET THE DUE DATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF TAXES AS THE LAST SATURDAY IN SEPTEMBER (THIS YEAR IT WILL BE SEPTEMBER 24, 2022)?

Motion made by Chuck Suss to accept article 16, 2nd by Joseph Rutkowski. There being no further discussion; All in favor, Motion Carries.

ARTICLE 17: TO CONDUCT ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOUND PROPER WHEN MET (NO BINDING ACTION CAN BE TAKEN UNDER OTHER BUSINESS).

Dick explained that no binding action can be taken under other business but discussions may occur on any subject.

Ryan stated that the Woodford's reserve fund balance is now back to \$500,000 plus more prior to Tropical Storm Irene. Last year the board had approved to spend an amount of this fund for capital improvements, particularly Dunville Hollow Rd. However, National Forest is claiming ownership of Woodford's roads and trying to control their usage. Woodford and National Forest have been butting heads for years concerning road usage and the town receives little cooperation from them. Chuck commented that he had called National Forest to request them to allow track ATV's on the trails but they were not agreeable to it. Ryan responded that this is allowed on all town trails. Dick also commented that he is a part of a group of retired foresters that supplies Christmas trees to the US capital but runs into a lot of red tape and obstacles with National Forest. Wayne commented that he works with search and rescue and National Forest will not allow them to use any vehicles on their roads. If someone needs rescuing they have to go in by foot and bring them out the same way. All agreed that if Woodford had local jurisdiction then it would be easier to have discussions as to the best use of the roads.

No other business.

Dick announced that the meeting will be adjourned and will reconvene tomorrow morning at 7:00am for elections by ballot.

Motion by Ryan Thurber to adjourn, 2nd by Chuck Suss. There being no further discussion; All in favor. Motion Carries.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Wright
Woodford Town Clerk*