

Minutes for the Town Meeting 2013

The legal voters of the Town of Peacham met at the Peacham Congregational Church in Peacham on Tuesday March 5, 2013 at 10:00 AM.

Rob Ide, Moderator, was absent. Dick Browne, Chairman of the Selectboard, called the meeting to order.

On behalf of the Peacham Congregational Church, Reverend Potter welcomed the community and thanked them for their support of the church as a community meeting house.

The Pledge of Allegiance led by Ron Craig was recited at the beginning of the meeting.

There was a moment of silence for those who passed on in 2012.

Article 1 To elect a Moderator to conduct and govern the meeting and to continue to serve as Moderator for a term of one year or until his or her successor is elected.

Barry Lawson nominated Tim McKay. George Kempton nominated John Marshall. Marshall respectfully declined the nomination. Dave Edwards moved to close nominations. Diana Senturia seconded. There being no other nominations a voice vote was taken. McKay elected.

Dick Browne thanked Rob Ide for his years of service as Town Moderator, indicating that Ide was a clear, fair, and helpful Moderator for all of us. Ide received a standing ovation.

Tim McKay reminded everyone of the following meeting guidelines:

1. Respect is the order of the day
2. Town Meeting for the Town and School are for the registered voters of the Town. Visitors are welcomed to attend but if they wish to speak it must be by the permission of the assembled voters.
3. When recognized to speak, please state your name. On a particular article a person may speak once but must wait until all others have an opportunity to participate.
4. If a paper ballot is called for an orderly traffic pattern is for voters to approach the ballot boxes from the center aisle and exit up the side aisles.
5. Julia Fickes and Emily Collins will provide wireless microphone coverage for people who choose to speak. Speakers are asked to wait for a microphone prior to proceeding.
6. Polls are now open at the front of the room for the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District. The polls will be moved to the Town Clerk's office at the conclusion of the School District meeting and will be open until 7:00 PM.
7. The Town Clerk has requested that newly elected officials remain for a few minutes after the meeting to take their oaths of office.

Article 2 To receive the report of the Town Auditors.

Rick Scholes moved the report be received. Diana Senturia seconded.

Town Auditor, Jan Eastman, spoke on the Auditors' behalf. She referred to the Auditors' report on page 12 of the Town Report. Jan indicated that the outside professional audit of the 2011 Town's finances has been started. Jan and Charlie Byron reported that the Town Auditors did discover a shortage in the Transfer Station receipts. The Auditors report and minutes of their meetings are available from the Auditors today and are available at the Town Clerk's office and at Peacham.net.

Paul Evans discussed specifics of the report. Paul wanted to know if there was no doubt that this incident was a theft. Dick Browne replied that the Selectboard has used the word shortfall because it was virtually impossible to arrive at exactly what had happened. Browne said it is likely that a theft was involved but is not something that can be proven based upon the controls in place and the way it occurred over time. Browne said the Selectboard has turned the matter over to the Vermont State Police. Evans stated that the incident has been kept very quiet and that few people in town from his recent survey knew anything about the scope of the incident. Evans asked who is responsible for the money while it is in the Town safe. He asked if it was the Town Treasurer. Town Treasurer, Bruce Lafferty said yes and stated that he has taken responsibility for the loss and had previously indicated as such. Lafferty said that security measures have been set up to prevent this from happening again. He went on to say that we know what we did wrong and know what to do right so that it never happens again, but that the responsibility is his. Evans asked if the Town Treasurer also holds the position of Town Clerk. Lafferty said yes.

Kathy Schauer asked what measures have been taken to secure the situation. Jan Eastman responded that after counting transfer station receipts they are secured in a sealed deposit bag and locked in a newly installed safe within the vault. The deposit is done and taken to the bank every Monday. Browne added that physical access to both the office and vault is now limited with the installation of a new counter and service window, allowing the office to remain locked. A sign in sheet for those using the vault is also in place.

Matt Kiley asked what the police report said. Browne responded that the police stated that the Town Auditors had done an excellent investigation and that more than likely it was a theft. The police responded positively to the new security measures and said the missing funds case is still considered an open investigation.

Jock Gill asked about the insurance claim status. Browne said that the Town has not received any money from the insurance company as yet. Eastman said that the claims adjuster that she spoke to indicated that the \$9,300 loss minus our \$500 deductible would be covered.

There being no further discussion, the Moderator asked that a voice vote be taken and the Auditors' Report was received.

Article 3 To elect a Town Clerk for a term of one year.

Paul Evan nominated Scott Blanchard.

Mike Bruton nominated Bruce Lafferty

Charlie Browne moved that the nominations be closed. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations.

The Moderator asked for a paper ballot on this election.

Scott Blanchard gave a brief background of his experience and qualifications for the Town Clerk's position.

The Moderator presented the voting results. 157 votes were cast. 79 votes were required for election. Lafferty received 115 votes, Blanchard received 42 votes. Lafferty was elected as Town Clerk.

Article 4 To elect a Town Treasurer and Tax Collector for a term of one year.

Mike Bruton nominated Bruce Lafferty. There being no other nominations, Scholes moved to close nominations. Charlie Browne seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations. The Moderator called for a voice vote on this election. Bruce Lafferty was elected Town Treasurer and Tax Collector for one year.

Article 5 To elect a Selectboard member for a term of three years.

Ron Craig nominated Nathan Giroux.
Barry Lawson nominated David Stauffer. Stauffer declined.
Betsy McKay nominated Rob Ide. The Moderator asked if this was a serious nomination. McKay responded that she had not talked with Ide and has no idea how he feels.
Diana Senturia moved to close nominations. Rick Scholes seconded.
Nathan Giroux's wife, Ashton Giroux, said that Nathan had to work today and could not be present.
The Moderator informed the voters that the Selectboard position requires a paper ballot. The Moderator announced the voting results. Total votes cast 154. Votes needed for election 78. Nathan Giroux received 82 votes. Rob Ide received 72 votes. Nathan Giroux was elected to the Selectboard for a term of three years.

The Moderator allowed Andy Cochran to thank Dick Browne for his service to the Town as Selectboard member for nine years. At the conclusion of Cochran's remarks, Browne received a standing ovation.

Article 6 To elect a Lister for a term of three years.

Jeff Lamphere nominated Rusty Barber.
Wynne Browne moved that nominations be closed and that the Clerk cast one ballot. Diana Senturia seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations and the Town Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot. Barber was elected.

Article 7 To elect an Auditor for a term of three years.

David Magnus nominated Julie Kempton.
Rick Scholes moved that the nominations be closed. Diana Senturia seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations. Dick Browne moved that the Clerk cast one ballot. Diana Senturia seconded. The Town Clerk was instructed to cast one ballot. Kempton was elected

Article 8 To elect a Grand Juror for the ensuing year.

Becky Lafferty nominated Charlie Browne. Liza Browne seconded. Diana Senturia moved that the nominations be closed. Rick Scholes seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations. Charlie Browne was elected by voice vote.

Article 9 To elect a Town Agent for the ensuing year.

Becky Lafferty nominated Bob Fuerher. Charles Browne seconded and moved that nominations be closed. Diana Senturia seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations. Fuerher was elected by a voice vote.

Article 10 To elect a First Constable for the ensuing year.

Ron Craig nominated John Sheehan.
Kathy Schauer nominated Dawn Wright.
Rick Scholes moved to close nominations. Diana Senturia seconded. Nominations closed by voice vote.
The Moderator allowed Dawn Wright and John Sheehan to give a brief background of their qualifications.
Moderator called for a hand vote. Moderator announced that John Sheehan appeared to have a majority of votes. Judy Chypra moved to hold a paper ballot for First Constable. At least seven people were in favor of a paper ballot. A paper ballot was called for by the Moderator. Moderator announced voting results. Total votes cast 159. Total votes needed for election 80. John Sheehan received 90 votes. Dawn Wright received 69 votes. John Sheehan elected as First Constable.

Article 11 To elect a Second constable for the ensuing year.

Jeff Berwick nominated Bill Thresher.
Kathy Schauer nominated Dawn Wright.
Diana Senturia moved to close nominations. Rick Scholes seconded. A voice vote closed nominations.
The Moderator called for a hand count. Moderator in doubt and called for a standing vote. Moderator announced voting results. Total votes cast 144. Total votes needed for election 73. Bill Thresher received 83 votes. Dawn Wright received 61 votes. Bill Thresher elected Second Constable.

Article 12 To elect a Delinquent Tax Collector for the ensuing year.

Ron Craig nominated John Sheehan. Charlie Browne seconded and moved that nominations be closed. Diana Senturia seconded. An affirmative voice vote closed nominations. John Sheehan was elected Delinquent Tax Collector by a voice vote.

Article 13 Will the Voters of Peacham adopt a policy, to allow snowmobiles to use up to 1,000 feet of class 3 roads in order to connect trails.

Jerry Senturia moved the article as written. Diana Senturia seconded.
Article is by petition. Ross Page, Trail master for Bayley Hazen Snow Machine Club, spoke on their behalf. Page mentioned that a number of trails on private property have been closed and trail connections are needed. He understood that the Selectboard must authorize snow machine use on Class 2 and 3 roads and that landowners must give permission for snow machines to cross their land. Page mentioned that other towns allow snow machines on town roads. All insurance coverage by VAST is in place and the

additional crossings and Class 3 road use will assist the snow machine club and area businesses financially. Town Attorney, John Marshall, stated that under Vermont law roads are under the supervision of the Selectboard and any travel on town roads is at their discretion. Further discussion and questions ensued, including what particular roads are being considered, 3rd Class road designation, examples of nearby towns with Class 3 roads open to snow machines, liability insurance coverage, actual safety of Class 3 roads we currently have, and statistics on accidents in other towns involving snow machines. Charlie Byron moved that the petition be amended to mention that snow machine travel be subject to homeowner or landowner approval. Robert Van Vranken seconded. Further discussion ensued. Les Morrison moved to vote on the amendment to Article 13. Jeff Berwick seconded. The Moderator called for a voice vote to end the discussion of the amendment. An affirmative voice vote closed the discussion. Before voting, the Moderator read Article 13 with the amendment added. Will the Voters of Peacham adopt a policy, to allow snowmobiles to use up to 1,000 feet of class 3 roads in order to connect trails subject to the approval of affected homeowners? Moderator called for a voice vote on the amended article. Moderator in doubt and called for a standing vote. Confusion expressed over the meaning of a yes or no vote. John Marshall reiterated the illegality of the petition and stated that those people that want the Selectboard to consider the petition should vote affirmatively and those that do not should vote no, but the Selectboard has the ultimate authority over roads. Moderator asked for the voice vote to be repeated and declared that the amendment was approved by an affirmative voice vote. Discussion of motion as amended by Matt Kiley. Rick Scholes moved to amend the amended article to include that the speed limit for snow machines be 10 miles per hour on all roads and that the snowmobile club be required to post trail speed limit signs at the beginning and end of each trail. The Moderator declared Scholes' motion out of order as not germane to the article and offered Scholes the chance to challenge his ruling and put it to the assembly. No challenge to the ruling made. Les Morrison moved to vote on the article as amended. Charlie Byron seconded. An affirmative voice vote ended the discussion. The Moderator called for a voice vote on the article as amended. The Moderator was in doubt and called for a standing vote. The Moderator announced the results. 98 in favor of the article and 43 opposed.

Article 14 Shall the voters appropriate **\$400,504** to be raised in taxes to defray the Highway expenses of the Town?

Diana Senturia moved to approve the article. Wynne Browne seconded. Dick Browne explained the two separate portions of the Town budget, highway and municipal. Browne stated that the combined budget is up \$6,000 due to a decrease in road revenues caused by less State aid. Taxes for the Town have gone down five years in a row but Browne does not expect that to continue. Matt Kiley asked if there was extra sanding done on roads used by the school bus. Andy Cochran answered no. Issues involving Federal or State budget cuts to the Town were discussed. The Moderator called for a voice vote on the article. The voice vote was in the affirmative and Article 14 passed.

Article 15 Shall the voters appropriate **\$81,924** to be raised in taxes to defray the General expenses of the Town?

Rick Scholes moved to approve the article. Diana Senturia seconded. There being no discussion the Moderator called for a voice vote. Article 15 passed.

Article 16 Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to apply any general funds carried over from the previous fiscal year to help defray the General expenses of the Town in the current fiscal year?

Jerry Senturia moved to approve the article. Diana Senturia seconded. Dick Browne explained the importance of this article in that it allows the Selectboard to carry over funds it may need, and it is an article that should be on the warrant every year. There being no discussion, the Moderator called for a voice vote. Article 16 passed.

Article 17 Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$22,079 to be raised in taxes to support the following organizations?

Appropriations	FY 2013
Area Agency On Aging	\$660.00
Caledonia Home Health & Hospice	\$2,000.00
Catamount Arts	\$500.00
Danville Rescue	\$5,000.00
Fairbanks Museum	\$650.00
NEK Human Services	\$250.00
NEK Learning Services	\$769.00
NEK Youth Services	\$500.00
Peacham Fire District 1	\$1,500.00
Peacham Library	\$7,500.00
Peacham Community Housing	\$1,000.00
RCT	\$250.00
Umbrella	\$500.00
VT Association For The Blind	\$500.00
West Danville Community Club	\$500.00
Total	\$22,079.00

Dick Browne moved to approve Article 17. Rick Scholes seconded.

Charlie Browne spoke to the article. He explained that some organizations have increased their appropriation amount requests over last year. Jan Eastman pointed out the transposition of NEK Human Services which should be \$769 and NEK Learning Services which should be \$250. Diana Senturia moved to amend the list and add \$800 for the Danville/Peacham Mealsite appropriation. Dick Browne seconded. Amendment passed by voice vote. Kathy Corcoran spoke about the important changes taking place at Danville Rescue. The changes involve purchasing expensive but necessary telecommunication equipment that will enable the use of the new 911 system. Budget increases in the future are also anticipated. Jeff Berwick moved to amend Article 17 and that \$500 be appropriated for the Cabot Ambulance for emergency coverage. Kathy Corcoran seconded. Amendment passed by voice vote. Ross Macdonald, chairman of Peacham Community Housing, explained the need for the PCH appropriation. Issues dealing with projects

such as the science building, Peacham Farmer's Market, the Peacham Café group, and the Kinerson Building are all factors for the request. The Moderator called for a voice vote on the new total appropriation figure of \$23,379.00. Article 17 passed as amended.

Article 18. Shall the Town pay its real property taxes on or before October 31, 2013, with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent per month and with an eight percent penalty charged against them from the due date?

Wynne Browne moved to approve Article 18. Diana Senturia seconded. The Moderator called for a voice vote. An affirmative voice vote passed Article 18.

Article 19. To transact any other non-binding business that may legally come before the meeting.

1. Ron Miller explained the Peacham Farm Support Fund Grant. Applications for the grant are available at the Town Clerk's office and on the Peacham website. Please contact Ron Miller about the Farm Support Board vacancy next year.
2. Dr. Josh Kantrowitz, Town Health Officer, reviewed some important health topics that he would be able to discuss with Peacham residents in a health forum format. Please contact him if interested.
3. Cathy Browne thanked everyone for their vote to increase the Town's appropriation to the Peacham Library. She spoke about an upcoming community forum focusing on the library's new strategic plan and how that plan can best serve the needs of the Peacham community.
4. Julie Hansen discussed the importance of Peacham's Memorial Day event and urged residents and their children to assist her in organizing this important historical occasion.
5. Tim McKay thanked all of those who provided potluck dishes for lunch, and for the organization and set up by the Peacham Fellowship and Cher Monteith. Tim also thanked the Collaborators and Peacham Café group for providing the delicious desserts.
6. Paul Evans urged more people to attend Selectboard meetings.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Moderator recognized Ray Morton who moved to adjourn. Kathy Corcoran seconded. A voice vote in the affirmative adjourned the meeting.

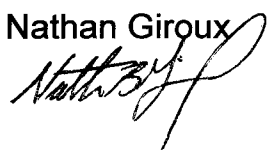
Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.

The foregoing is approved and attested by:

Peacham Selectboard


Annette Lorraine


Andy Cochran

Nathan Giroux


Moderator


Timothy McKay

Town Clerk


Bruce Lafferty