

**Town of Benson
Town Meeting
March 3, 2009
Unapproved Minutes ***

John Hill, Moderator, called Town Meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

John Hill introduced the members of the Select Board—Lynn Bowen, Daniel Britton, Guy Charlton, Sue Janssen, and Ed Peltier. John Hill made announcements and asked for consent for Will Stevens, Town Rep., to speak.

Will Stevens spoke about what is currently happening with the budget especially in the Ag Committee. He spoke about the only bill passed so far this year. He spoke about East Road and the 3rd and 4th quarter payments for Highway. Will asked the Town how they felt and if they supported either raising revenues or just budget cutting or both. Sue told him the concerns of the Town with the stimulus funds and how it was not being evenly distributed.

Article 1: to elect all Town Officers and fill vacancies except those required by law to be appointed by the Select Board. The vote under Article 1 will be by Australian ballot.

Results to be added.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 2: to hear and act upon the reports of Town Officials. Daniel Britton seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Daniel Britton made a motion on Article 3: shall the Town confirm and ratify the outstanding notes and orders that have been given by the Select Board or its proper officials as may appear by the report of the town officials. Lynn Bowen seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Margaret Heibler made a motion on Article 4: shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$730.00 for the support of Rutland Mental Health Services (formerly Rutland Area Community Services) so that these services can be maintained. Lois Trenn seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Rachel Collett made a motion on Article 5: shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,400.00 to support the Rutland Area Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice in fiscal year 2009 (\$250.00 to support Rutland Area Hospice and \$1,150.00 to support RAVNAH Home and Community Health Services). Margaret Heibler seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Lillian Phillips Smith made a motion on Article 6: shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$900.00 requested by the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging to help support the Senior Meals Program Meals on Wheels and other services provided by the agency to elder residents of Benson. Margaret Heibler seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Karen Barber made a motion on Article 7: shall the Town of Benson vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 to support the programs and services of BROCC—Community Action in Southwestern Vermont in 2009-2010. Alica Dodd seconded the motion. The rep from BROCC spoke to the voters. The Article was so voted.

Rachel Collett made a motion on Article 8: shall the Town vote to appropriate, for the fiscal year 2009-2010, the sum of \$1,000.00 to support Fair Haven Concerned, INC. a program which organizes and coordinates services necessary to meet the needs of the citizens of the Town of Benson. Fran Bowen seconded the motion. The rep from Fair Haven Concerned spoke. The Article was so voted.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 9: shall the Town appropriate \$3,000.00 for the Benson First Response for the fiscal year 2009-2010 to help defray the cost of major expenses. Wayne Kenney seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 10: to appropriate the sum of \$10,390.00 as its share of the FY 2009-2010 Fair Haven Rescue Squad operating budget. Lynn Bowen seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Rachel Collett made a motion on Article 11: shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$4,500.00 for the maintenance, care and increase of books for the Town Library. Wayne Kenney seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 12: shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$5,500.00 for the maintenance and care of the Town cemeteries. Wayne Kenney seconded the motion.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 13: shall the Town vote to cover the cost of equipment, training, truck repairs, gas etc. for fire protection (\$38,378.92 requested). Alica Dodd seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor concerning the amount and where it was going.

Tom Bartholomew moved to call the question. Jake Brown seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Town voted and passed Article 13 as stated.

Daniel Britton made a motion on Article 14: shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 for the Benson Youth League for the support of their program. Jim Pritchard seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 15: what sum shall the Town vote for the Select Board's budget? (\$130,276.00 requested). Jamie Van Orten seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor concerning the decrease from last year requested amount. Board explained and answered questions.

Wayne Kenney moved to call the question. Tim Boyd seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Town voted and passed Article 15 as stated.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 16: What sum shall the Town vote for layout, repair and maintenance of Town highways? (\$331,639.20 requested). Lynn Bowen seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor about this Article.

Joe Trenn made a motion to call the question. Jeanne Kenney seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Town voted and passed Article 16 as stated.

John Hill asked for a motion to either continue the meeting or recess for lunch. Peter Flynn moved to continue the meeting. Sue Janssen seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Sue Janssen made a motion on Article 17: shall the Town of Benson decide all budget and money articles by Australian ballot beginning at the 2010 Town Meeting? Marcel Cyr seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor about this Article with many in favor and many against.

Gary Perkins made a motion to call the question. Sue Janssen seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Melvin Corey made a point of order to have all discussion on Article 17 saved till end of meeting.

Town voted and defeated Article 17.

Guy Charlton made a motion on Article 18: shall the Town of Benson vote to appropriate \$3,294.53 to cover the deficit for the 2007-2008 fiscal year? Lynn Bowen seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor about this Article. Joe Trenn asked to be appointed an Auditor. The Board agreed by consensus to appoint him.

Sue Janssen moved to call the question. Lynn Bowen seconded the motion and it was so voted.

Town voted and passed Article 18 as stated.

Rachel Collett moved to recess for 5 minutes to allow the Select Board to add up their figures. Joe Trenn seconded the motion and it was so voted.

John Hill called the meeting back to order at 12:52pm.

Jan Ladd made a motion on Article 19: what sum shall the Town vote to pay appropriations, its portion of county tax, State highway taxes, and to pay its indebtedness, current and incidental expenses, for the year 2009-2010 and fix a time and how the same shall be collected. The amount to be raised by taxes \$533,508.65 with half due 9/15/09 and half due 3/15/10. Guy Charlton seconded the motion.

There was discussion on the floor about this Article.

Town voted and passed Article 19 as stated.

In reference to Article 20: to transact any other business proper to be done at the annual Town Meeting the following motions were made.

Peter Jensen made a motion to have the Select Board do a study/survey on how to increase voter participation in Town Meeting. Joe Trenn seconded the motion.

Motion was discussed and voted on. Motion was passed.

Sue Janssen gave an update on the money set aside for the Salt Shed last year. She stated that currently the project was under consideration for funding from the State with money from the stimulus.

Melissa Twitchell asked about getting more volunteers in Town. Daniel spoke about his plan for getting volunteers to do work in Town. He stated that he is currently still working on the details.

Jean Kinney thanked the Board for all of their hard work.

Rachel Collett moved to adjourn Town Meeting at 1:13pm. Marcel Cyr seconded the motion and it was so voted.

_____ Select Board Member

_____ Select Board Member

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel S. Collett

*Minutes posted on the web are abridged. Complete copies of all referenced documents are on file with the Minutes in the Town Office.