

## **Minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Town and Town School District of Fairfield, Vermont**

The inhabitants of the Town of Fairfield met at Veteran's Hall, Fairfield Center School, on March 2, 2010. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Gavin Ryan, Selectboard Vice Chair. He led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, and then asked for nominations for Moderator.

1. MODERATOR: Bridget Howrigan Rivet was nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased. The Clerk was asked to cast one ballot for Bridget Howrigan Rivet. Motion passed by voice vote.

Moderator asked for a moment of silence for the beloved townspeople who passed during the year.

Moderator read aloud an outline of Robert's Rules of Order and the 2010 Annual Town Meeting Warning.

2. TO ACT UPON THE VARIOUS REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT AS CONTAINED IN THE CURRENT TOWN FINANCIAL REPORT: Motion made, seconded and passed by voice vote to accept the Town Report as presented. No discussion.
3. TO ELECT FROM THE LEGAL VOTERS OF SAID TOWN THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS:
  - a. ONE SELECTPERSON FOR 3 YEARS: Tom Howrigan nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Tom Howrigan. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - b. ONE SELECTPERSON FOR 2 YEARS: Norman Menard nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Norman Menard. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - c. ONE AUDITOR FOR 3 YEARS: Jean Burnor nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Jean Burnor. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - d. ONE LISTER FOR 3 YEARS: Dan McCoy nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Dan McCoy. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - e. A FIRST CONTABLE AND A SECOND CONSTABLE FOR 1 YEAR: Luke Howrigan nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Luke Howrigan. Motion passed by voice vote. Linda Hodet nominated and seconded for Second Constable. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Linda Hodet. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - f. ONE OR MORE GRAND JURORS FOR 1 YEAR: Todd Merchant nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Todd Merchant. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - g. A TOWN AGENT FOR 1 YEAR: Vanessa Kittell nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Vanessa Kittell. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - h. ONE LIBRARY TRUSTEE FOR 3 YEARS: Terry Hale nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Terry Hale. Motion passed by voice vote.
  - i. ONE LIBRARY TRUSTEE FOR 2 YEARS: Albert Tetreault nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Albert Tetreault. Motion passed by voice vote.
4. SHALL THE VOTERS APPROVE TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES OF \$1,198,974.61 OF WHICH \$752,470.61 SHALL BE RAISED BY TAXES AND \$446,504 BY NON-TAX REVENUES?: Motion made and seconded. Gavin Ryan, Selectboard Vice Chair explained that the Selectboard cut expenditures and used approximately \$46,000 of the 2009 surplus fund balance to level fund the tax amount requested from the taxpayers in 2010. He noted that the Town was in need of a new tandem truck in 2010, which is expected to cost \$150,000-\$160,000 and we currently have \$117,000 in the equipment fund. Motion passed by voice vote.

5. SHALL PROPERTY TAXES BE DUE AND PAYABLE ON THE THIRD FRIDAY IN NOVEMBER, THIS YEAR BEING NOVEMBER 19<sup>th</sup>?: Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
6. SHALL A 4% DISCOUNT BE ALLOWED FOR 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE TAX BILL?: Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
7. SHALL THE NAMES OF DELINQUENT TAXPAYERS BE INCLUDED IN THE TOWN REPORT?: Motion made and seconded. Discussion began and it was questioned whether the public humiliation of these people was a necessary deterrent. Some countered that it was a matter of personal responsibility and public accountability.

The Article was amended by Sally Callopy to:

SHALL THE TAX TOTALS, NOT NAMES, BE INCLUDED IN THE TOWN REPORT ALONG WITH THE STEPS THE TOWN IS TAKING TO COLLECT THIS MONEY? Motion made and seconded. Further discussion included whether the printing of the names is an effective deterrent and Linda Hodet, Delinquent Tax Collector, confirmed that approximately \$17,000 was paid before the Town Report went to print and it was her opinion the majority of that amount was paid to avoid having their names printed.

The motion was called; voice vote was not distinguishable so a division of the house was called and hands were raised. Twenty-six people were counted in favor of the amended motion and those opposed were clearly in the majority. The amendment did not carry.

The original Article was amended again by Bennett Dawson to:

SHALL THE NAMES OF DELINQUENT TAXPAYERS BE INCLUDED IN THE TOWN REPORT, NOT FOR ONE OCCURRENCE BUT ONLY AFTER SUBSEQUENT OCCURRENCES (CARRYING AN OVERDUE BALANCE FOR LONGER THAN ONE YEAR) ALONG WITH THE FULL TOTALS? Motion made and seconded. Voice vote was not distinguishable so a division of the house was called and hands were raised. Sixty-four people were in favor and were clearly in the majority; the amendment passed. The amended article passed by voice vote.

8. SHALL THE VOTERS APPROVE EXPENDITURES OF \$69,450 FOR THE BENT NORTHROP MEMORIAL LIBRARY, \$9,000 OF WHICH SHALL BE RAISED BY TAXES AND \$60,450 BY NON-TAX REVENUES? Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
9. SHALL THE TOWN EXEMPT FROM TAXATION REAL ESTATE OWNED BY THE FAIRFIELD CENTER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE EAST FAIRFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS IN ACCORDANCE WITH 32 V.S.A. § 3840?: Motion made and seconded. The article was discussed and James Gregoire, Lister, explained that this is a State required procedural issue and the Town has fallen out of compliance. This has to be voted on every five years and it officially exempts the Town from assessing taxes against the fire stations and then having the fire stations asking for more money from the Town to raise and pay those taxes. Motion passed by voice vote.
10. SHALL THE VOTERS ESTABLISH A MUNICIPAL RECORDS RESERVE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH 24 V.S.A. § 2804 FOR RESTORATION, PRESERVATION, CONSERVATION AND COMPUTERIZATION OF MUNICIPAL RECORDS, TO BE FUNDED BY REVENUES OF NOT LESS THAN \$3.00 PER PAGE NOR MORE THAN \$4.00 PER PAGE RECEIVED FROM RECORDING FEES ESTABLISHED UNDER 32 V.S.A § 1671 (A) (1) AND (6) OF THIS SECTION? THE EXACT AMOUNT SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE BODY: Motion made and seconded. A question was posed regarding the details of the article and Amanda Forbes, Town Clerk and Treasurer, responded that the State Legislature increased the cost of recording per page from \$8 to \$10. This article will allow the Town to set aside \$3 per page in a separate fund to pay for the computerization and restoration of the land records. The computerization will not replace the paper records. Motion passed by voice vote.

11. TO ADJOURN TEMPORARILY THE BUSINESS OF THE TOWN UNTIL AFTER COMPLETION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING: Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
12. ORGANIZE THE ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING: Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
13. TO ELECT A MODERATOR FOR THE SCHOOL MEETING: Bridget Howrigan Rivet nominated and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
14. SHALL THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROPRIATE \$5,226,757 WHICH IS NECESSARY FOR THE SUPPORT OF ITS SCHOOL FOR THE YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2010? [AUSTRALIAN BALLOT]: Moderator explained that the school budget was now something that could be discussed at the meeting if the voters chose to. No discussion. (Results counted at 7:00 p.m. showed the budget passed 132 to 87)
15. SHALL THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZE THE SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTORS TO BORROW MONEY IN ANTICIPATION OF TAXES AS NECESSARY, FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
16. TO APPROVE THE USE OF \$3,000 OF THE CURRENT (June 30, 2008) FUND BALANCE RESERVED FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUNDING OF THE TOWN GRANTWRITER POSITION: Motion made and seconded. Mike Malone, School Board Chair explained that there was \$362,000 total in the Capital Improvements Fund and this was money budgeted, but not spent, in previous years. This is primarily due to high school or special education situations changing unexpectedly. The School Board supports paying for the new grant writer, Denise Smith, and has already benefitted from her grant writing by receiving a grant to help pay for a generator. Motion passed by voice vote.
17. SHALL THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZE THE USE OF UP TO \$10,000 OF THE CURRENT (JUNE 30, 2009) CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR THE FUNDING OF A PORTION OF THE MATCHING FUNDS NEEDED TO PURCHASE AN EMERGENCY GENERATOR? (THE APPROVAL OF THIS ITEM WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE TAX RATE. THE FUNDS ARE PRESENTLY SET ASIDE FOR THIS TYPE OF USE.): Motion made and seconded. It was asked whether this was in connection with the generator previously discussed in Article 16 and it was confirmed that it was. Motion passed by voice vote.
18. SHALL THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT VOTE BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ON WHETHER TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF \$165,000 OF THE CURRENT (JUNE 30, 2009) CAPITAL RESERVE FUND BY THE FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO PURCHASE PROPERTY INTERESTS FROM THE BENT NORTHROP MEMORIAL LIBRARY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES PURSUANT TO A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT? (THE APPROVAL OF THIS ITEM WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE TAX RATE. THE FUNDS ARE PRESENTLY SET ASIDE FOR THIS TYPE OF USE.): Motion made and seconded. Much discussion centered around the details of the transaction, including, but not limited to, possible pre-school utilization of the space, school benefits of having the space, long term cost savings, etc. The moderator stated that the question here was whether or not the public desired to have an Australian ballot to decide the issue. It was asked if it was possible to decide from the floor today and the Moderator explained that the wording in the article does not allow for that option. It was further explained that there would be informational meetings to discuss the details so that people could make an informed decision and would have a full day from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to vote the question. The vote would occur 30-40 days after notice was posted. Call the question. Motion passed by voice vote.
19. SHALL THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVE THE USE OF ANY AVAILABLE CURRENT (JUNE 30, 2009) FUND BALANCE RESERVED FOR CAPITAL

IMPROVEMENTS FOR VARIOUS BUILDING AND GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ROOF REPAIR, VENTILATION, GYM FLOOR REPLACEMENT, ETC.? (THE APPROVAL OF THIS ITEM WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE TAX RATE. THE FUNDS ARE PRESENTLY SET ASIDE FOR THIS TYPE OF USE.): Motion made and seconded. It was asked if any of the capital improvements fund was going to be saved for emergency issues that may come up and Michael Malone, School Board Chair explained that the money would be used to fix priorities first but that there is no plan to set it aside for unexpected issues. He noted that the approval of this article will allow the school to avoid asking for a bond. Motion passed by voice vote.

20. TO ELECT ONE (1) SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR BY BALLOT FOR A THREE (3) YEAR TERM: Kenderlyn Phelps nominated and seconded. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Kenderlyn Phelps. Motion passed by voice vote.

21. TO ELECT ONE (1) SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR BY BALLOT FOR A TWO (2) YEAR TERM: David Howe nominated and seconded. Susan Magnan nominated and seconded; nomination respectfully declined. Lisa Howrigan nominated and seconded; nomination respectfully declined. Toby Fulwiler nominated and seconded; nomination respectfully declined. Bennett Dawson nominated and seconded. David Howe respectfully withdrew his earlier nomination. Nominations ceased, moved to cast one ballot for Bennett Dawson. Motion passed by voice vote. Bennett Dawson took a moment to introduce himself.

22. TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THIS MEETING. No discussion.

Moderator adjourned the meeting temporarily for lunch at 11:35 a.m.

Moderator reconvened the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

23. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE \$85,323 TO HELP SUPPORT THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$76,623): Motion made and seconded. Eric Schoembs, Secretary of the Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department explained that the budget includes money to help the purchase of a new fire truck to replace a 1972 truck that is failing. They intend on putting \$60,000 down and have it paid off in 5 years. Motion passed by voice vote.

Lyndon Corey, retired Fire Chief, received a standing ovation for his 50 years of service to the Town.

24. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$2500 FOR THE FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER ASSOCIATION. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$2500): Motion made and seconded. Faith Cassidy, Community Center Volunteer, explained the Community Center benefits to the Town including the food shelf, senior meals and summer school. Motion passed by voice vote.

25. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$2940 FOR THE FRANKLIN COUNTY HOME HEALTH AGENCY, INC. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$2940): Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

26. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$500 FOR THE FRANKLIN COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$500): Motion made and seconded. Marilyn Savoy explained the FCIDC's purpose which includes the ownership and development of the industrial parks in Franklin County. It is a non-profit corporation that promotes jobs in the area. Motion passed by voice vote.

27. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$1500 FOR THE CHAMPLAIN VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$1500): Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

28. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$350 FOR THE TRI-COUNTY FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$350): Motion made and seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.
29. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$5000 FOR THE FAIRFIELD POND RECREATION ASSOCIATION. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$0): Motion made and seconded. Bruce Collopy, Fairfield Pond Recreation Association President, described the importance of preserving the lake. The Association has spent 20 years and countless hours pulling milfoil and putting in bottom barriers. This year it is going to cost \$3,200 to move the bottom barrier and the remaining money will be used to purchase weevils, a natural predator of milfoil. John Baxter made an amendment to the Article: TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$3000 FOR THE FAIRFIELD POND RECREATION ASSOCIATION. Motion made and seconded. Discussion continued regarding the amount of tax money the pond owners provide the Town. It was asked if the amendment could be defeated and the Moderator explained that it must be voted upon. Amendment defeated by voice vote.

Original article passed by voice vote.

30. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$1800 FOR THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$0): Motion made and seconded. Julie Wolcott spoke to the agricultural activities and programs of the outdoor classroom including the sugar house, gardening, Chester Arthur site and the River Unit. It is entirely grant funded. John Baxter made an amendment to the Article: TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$2500 FOR THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM. Motion made and seconded. Amendment carried by voice vote. Amended article passed by voice vote.
31. TO SEE IF THE VOTERS WILL APPROVE A DONATION OF \$500 FOR THE FRANKLIN COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY. (PREVIOUS YEAR-\$0): Motion made and seconded. Gail Williams explained the Humane Society contract with the Town regarding the spaying and neutering of cats. This does not include feral cats. If interested in the program contact Luke Howrigan, Animal Control Officer or Amanda Forbes, Town Clerk to approve and schedule. Motion passed by voice vote.

32. TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THIS MEETING.

Bridget Howrigan Rivet was applauded for a job well done as moderator.


33. TO ADJOURN. The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda L. Forbes, Clerk

To the best of my recollection, I attest that these minutes are a true and accurate reflection of the events of Town Meeting Day, March 2, 2010.

  
Bridget Howrigan Rivet, Moderator

  
Gavin Ryan, Selectboard Vice Chair