

**Minutes
FOR
2015 Town of Dover Annual Town Meeting
And
Town School District Meeting**

The legal voters of the Town of Dover, Vermont, and the Town School District of Dover, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned that, pursuant to Title 17, V.S.A., Section 2655, they are to meet at the Dover Town Hall on Dover Common in said Dover, Vermont on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. to act upon the following articles to wit:

ARTICLE TO BE VOTED BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT (Include Article 1 only)

The polls will open for Australian ballot voting at 10:00 a.m. and remain open until 7:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 1: To choose all Dover town officers and Dover school district officers for the following positions required by law to be elected at the annual meeting:

Auditor	3-year term
Auditor	3-year term (1 year remaining)
Auditor	3-year term (2 year remaining)
First Constable	1-year term
Grand Juror	1-year term
Library Trustee	5-year term
Lister	3-year term
Moderator - School	1-year term
Moderator - Town	1-year term
School Director	3-year term
School Director	2-year term
Second Constable	1-year term
Select Board Member	3-year term
Select Board Member	2-year term
Town Agent	1-year term
Trustee of Public Funds	1-year term

Chuck Gentilin and local Boy Scouts lead the assembly in the pledge of allegiance.

Police Chief, Randy Johnson, goes over the plan for the filming of a BMW commercial on Holland Rd., Cooper Hill Rd. & Rice Hill Rd. tomorrow (March 4, 2015).

Town Moderator, Larry Feldstein, introduces our State Senator, Jeanette White.

Jeanette White addresses the assembly: Thank you for granting me the time to address you. Priorities this year include education, cleaning up our water ways and a \$120 million hole in the budget that needs to be filled through increased revenue and cuts in spending. Cuts should cause the least pain to those with the least voice. I serve on two committees: Judiciary and Government Operations. Child protections bill important. Two child deaths last year involving children in the State system. The new bill would create a new crime, failure to protect a child. New firearms bill would parallel existing Federal Law. Gov. Ops committee is looking at the issues with the new open meeting law. Also, the legalization of Marijuana: if it is legalized, how do we make that work?

Larry Feldstein, why is the legislature contemplating a \$3 additional tax on rooms? On top of 10%?

Jeanette, there has been no testimony on this so, it is hard for me to comment.

Adam Levine, so we get another tax but you're not creating new jobs. How about tax breaks for businesses so they can create new jobs?

Jeanette, Economic Development is important that committee is working hard on that.

Randy Johnson, the legislature should pay attention to law enforcement regarding the legalization of marijuana. It leads to other drugs. It creates more problems.

Jeanette, the Risk Behavior Health Survey by the Dept. of Health says that for minors pot is easier to get than alcohol. We will listen to law enforcement.

Randy Terk, regarding education, how much are we spending on supervisory unions?

Jeanette, I'm not on education committee, but I'm not sure there is a big savings in combining supervisory unions.

Senator White is thanked for her time.

Larry Feldstein, moderator goes over the rules. "We're all neighbors."

Heidi Taylor speaks for the Deerfield Valley Rescue and local Fire Depts. We are seeking volunteers for rescue and fire.

TOWN MEETING

ARTICLE 2: Shall the voters accept the annual report of the auditors and other town officers?

M: Sue Rand

2nd: Patty Westlake

V: aye

ARTICLE 3: Shall the voters compensate town officers as follows: Town Clerk \$49,516.71 annual salary, Town Treasurer \$23.74/hr., Select Board Chairman \$2,500 annual stipend, Select Board members \$2,000 annual stipend, Lister Chairman \$18.89/hr., Listers \$15.85-17.86/hr., and Town Auditors \$15.96/hr., all others - chairmen \$10.00/hr., members \$9.15/hr., and mileage based on the Federal reimbursement rate for the month in which the mileage occurred?

M: Randy Terk

2nd: Linda Holland

D: Randy Terk, amendment: replace "\$9.15? /hr." with "minimum wage"

2nd amend: Andy McLean

V ayes have it, one "no"

Joe Mahon, amend Chairmen pay to "\$11/hr."

2nd: Tom Baltrus

D: Not a good idea.

Joe, withdraw amendment, Tom concurs.

Joe, restate amendment, replace "chairmen \$10.00/hr." with "chairmen \$1.50 more than minimum wage"

2nd: Tom Baltrus

D Judy Edberg, how much money are we talking per year? Roughly \$200.

Sue Rand, calls question.

V on amendment: Aye

Discuss article as amended: Adam Levine: Treasurer retiring? Position broken into book keeper and treasurer positions? Would the new position qualify for benefits?

Randy Terk, we have broken Patty's position as treasurer into two positions: treasurer and book keeper. Could be the same person. Benefits would depend on the discretion of the Select Board for the Treasurer and on the Personnel policy for the book keeper

V on article as amended: aye

ARTICLE 4: Shall the voters authorize general fund expenditure for operational expenses of \$2,205,718.36 for the coming year?

M: Sarah Shippee

2nd: Randy Johnson

V: aye

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters authorize highway fund expenditure for operational expenses of \$1,312,075.10 for the coming year?

M: Randy Johnson

2nd: Sarah Shippee

D: Vicki Capitani, road salt increase. Salt is expensive.

V: aye

ARTICLE 6: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$450,000.00 for the Capital Paving Fund?

M: Patty Westlake

2nd: Sue Rand

D: Adam Levine, page 39 shows a deficit in this fund almost immediately. Should we increase?

Randy Terk, this does not include grants that we may get from the State. We are good for next year but this funding level won't let us build this fund.

Adam, the idea is to accumulate money in a capital fund to spread out the tax burden over the years.

Adam moves amendment of amount to \$650,000

2nd: Randy Johnson

V: moderator divides the house:

Ayes: 50

No's: 11

Abstentions: 6

Amendment passes

V on article as amended: Ayes have it.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$200,000.00 for the Capital Equipment Fund?

M: Patty Westlake

2nd: Linda Holland

V: aye

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$75,000.00 for the Capital Building Improvement Fund?

M: Sarah Shippee

2nd: Tom Baltrus

V: aye

ARTICLE 9: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$65,000.00 for the Town of Dover Legal Defense Fund?

M: Tom Baltrus

2nd: Linda Holland

D: Sue Rand, what is this for? Still relevant?

Randy Terk, after this year, if we pass this, we'll have \$172,000 in the fund. There is much going on at the State level with education. This might be the year that we need this money.

Vicki Capitani, voters could move this into another fund if we don't use it but we may need this war chest.

Much discussion regarding the new education bill in the State legislature and how it will affect us.

V: ayes have it

ARTICLE 10: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$3,372.00 for the purpose of supporting Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) activities?

M: Linda Holland

2nd: Sarah Shippee

V: aye

ARTICLE 11: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$5,156.28 for the purpose of supporting MHCA (Memorial Hall Center for the Arts)?

M: Sue Rand

2nd: Linda Holland

D: Ian Schrauf, why are we calling it memorial hall center for the arts?

Dan Facilla, explains "MHCA/Dover" will be the eventual name on the sign. Lots of details in the history and on internet that dictate this name remain. Please, don't make us change this. Our plans include a "Center for the Arts".

V: ayes have it

ARTICLE 12: Shall the voters raise and appropriate \$400.00 for the purpose of supporting Windham Child Care Association?

M: Randy Terk

2nd: Sue Rand

D: Phil Bowen, who are they? Sue Rand, association of child care providers who work to improve childcare in Windham County. They help people with subsidies for child care.

Randy Terk, we don't necessarily support these articles as the Select Board. We put them in front of the voters.

V: aye

ARTICLE 13: Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes or add to the reserve fund in the next fiscal year?

M: Vicki Capitani

2nd: Linda Holland

V: aye

ARTICLE 14: Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to sell properties, which the Town has acquired by gift or through tax sales?

M: Sarah Shippee

2nd: Patty Westlake

V: aye

ARTICLE 15: Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to set the tax rate sufficient to cover the approved expenses of the Town of Dover and the Town of Dover Highway for taxes due on August 15, 2015 and February 15, 2016?

M: Randy Terk

2nd: Vicki Capitani

V: Aye

ARTICLE 16: Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to borrow money in anticipation of taxes?

M: Joe Mahon

2nd: Linda Holland

V: Aye

ARTICLE 17: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Adam Levine, is the board talking about cutting medical benefits for employees? We have a fair amount of turnover in these jobs, why are we not doing our best to attract and keep great employees?

Randy Terk, medical benefits are the same as last year. Not sure about what discussions you're talking about.

Adam, we're not doing enough to attract and retain people. There's been turn over and any discussion of cutting benefits is not going to save us money, you're spending a lot of money training people and we need to retain them.

Sue Rand, town report should be available at the library and an advertisement regarding its availability be placed in the paper.

Larry introduces Laura Sibia Dover's new State Representative. Laura provides a "Legislative update" handout. Encourages people to contact her with concerns: laurasibiliavt.com, Facebook etc. Priorities at the Statehouse include the \$112 million budget gap. Looking at cuts and new taxes, sugary beverage tax etc. The new education bill is a "Frankenstein bill". There is a will in Montpelier to do something this year because the current situation is not equitable and Towns are starting to talk about law suits. Regarding the new fee bill which would increase revenue by \$600,000 largely with hospitality fees, Laura could not vote for this knowing she would be here answering to Adam Levine and the rest of Dover's local business people. So, she got a \$400,000 decrease in the tax burden of this bill on the hospitality industry. This is considered a victory in Montpelier but, requires a nuanced appreciation.

Laura is thanked for her time and hard work.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rich Werner, School Board Chair, thanks the parents club, Lori O'Hern, Bodil Morse & Co. Draws attention to the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) program display and pamphlets. Also, recognizes Dover School Principal, Bill Anton, who was honored in the Town Report for his commitment to excellence. Bill was recognized, as well, by the National Assoc. of Elementary School Principals in Washington DC. Daniella Hall, PhD student at Penn State, will be here later to answer questions regarding the 5 page report she presented to the legislature questioning the advisability of school consolidation in some cases which triggered an immediate 45 page rebuttal from Vermont's Dept of Education.

Laura Sibilia, presents Rich Werner with a Concurrent House Resolution honoring his 20 years of service on the School Board. The assembly reacts with a standing ovation. Thank you, Rich!

ARTICLE 18: Shall the Town School District authorize the expenditure of \$16,617.58 to be used to pay the overage for the playground equipment with such funds coming from the Capital Reserve Fund?

M: Randy Johnson

2nd: Sarah Shippee

D: Rich, the new playground included nice stuff but needed a little more equipment

V: aye

ARTICLE 19: Shall the Town School District set the annual tuition rate to approved independent school as required by TITLE 16, section 824(C), for students in grades seven through twelve, up to \$15,950 for the 2015/2016 school year?

M: Vicki Capitani

2nd: Randy Terk

D: Christine Fayette reads a letter of appreciation from The Mountain School.

V: aye

ARTICLE 20: Shall the Town School District compensate the Officers as follows-Chairperson-\$2500 per year; Member-\$2000 per year, and mileage reimbursement at the federal reimbursement rate for the month in which the mileage occurred?

M: Patty Westlake

2nd: Ted murphy

V: aye

ARTICLE 21: Shall the Town School District authorize any surplus from the 2014/2015 budget to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund?

M: Ted Murphy

2nd: Sarah Shippee

V: aye

ARTICLE 22: Shall the Town School District authorize funding of the Capital Vehicle Fund in the amount of \$10,550, with such funds coming from the Capital Reserve Fund?

M: Sue Rand

2nd: Randy Terk

V: aye

ARTICLE 23: Shall the Town School District authorize funding of the Capital Building Fund in the amount of \$12,000, with such funds coming from the Capital Reserve Fund?

M: Sue Rand

2nd: Ted Murphy

V: aye

ARTICLE 24: Shall the Town School District authorize Operational Expenses in the amount of \$2,989,722 for the operational budget for the 2015/2016 School Year?

M: Vicki Capitani

2nd: Randy Terk

D: Rich, see purple handout. New information always comes too late to make it into the Town Report. So, we are asking for an amendment of the amount in the article to \$2,965,393.

MA: Sue, moves the amendment.

2A: Ted Murphy seconds.

V: Aye, article amended.

V: Aye, article passes as amended.

ARTICLE 25: Shall the Town School District authorize the School Directors to withdraw money from the Capital Reserve Fund to offset the Homestead Tax Rate, but not more than \$330,000?

M: Linda Holland

2nd: Ted Murphy

D: Rich, page 103 of Town Report shows the reserve fund at \$865,000. This article would level the tax rate by adding to income from reserve fund. We do this every year. Some discussion about what might happen to our reserve fund in the event of forced consolidation. We may need to revisit this.

V: aye

ARTICLE 26: To discuss any other items that the voters would like to discuss, and to conduct any other business that may legally come before the voters

Kevin Stine, \$20,000 appropriated last year for consultants and building committee. Did we spend this? No, just sitting there waiting on consolidation questions.

Randy Johnson, motion to adjourn

2nd Sarah Shippee

V: Aye.