

WARNING: NOTICE OF GROTON, VERMONT ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018

The Citizens of the Town of Groton, who are legal voters in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Groton Community Building in Groton Village on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 10 o'clock in the morning, to act on the following articles along with casting their ballots for the Blue Mountain Union School District # 21 budget and the NEK waste Management District Budget.

The Town Clerk, Linda Nunn opened the polls for voting on the Blue Mountain Union School District # 21 budget and the NEK waste Management District Budget at 10:00 AM.

Moderator Brent Abare stated the floor was open for anyone wishing to offer prayer or words of inspiration or encouragement.

Peter Lyon offered a short prayer.

Words of inspiration were offered by Alissa Smith.

The Flag Salute was given.

Representative Chip Conquest touched on Income taxes, Education, roadside drug testing, waste water and high speed internet. Representative Conquest also spoke on the school shooting and the Governor's decision concerning gun control.

Moderator Brent Abare announced the Junior Class from Blue Mountain Union School were selling refreshments, there is information and signup sheets on the back tables for the recreation Committee and the Chicken pie supper on the back table.

Moderator Brent Abare announced Town Meeting was called to order the first action of business was to elect a Moderator for the ensuing year. Mary Grant, Selectboard Chair asked if there were any nominations for moderator for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a moderator for the ensuing year. Roberta Dana nominated Brent Abare. Amy Alexander seconded the motion. Hearing no other nominations Brent Abare was elected moderator by voice vote.

ARTICLE 2: To act on the Town Report of the Town Officers as printed for the year ending December 31, 2017. Gary Lamberton made the motion to accept the Town Report as written. Dan Webster seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To see if, as provided in 17 V.S.A. Section 2646 (16), the Town will vote to elect a Road Commissioner or authorize the Selectboard to appoint a Road Commissioner. Jim Downing made the motion to elect a Road Commissioner. Roberta Dana seconded the motion. Hearing no objections the motion passed to elect a Road Commissioner. Amy Alexander stated she thought the Selectboard should appoint the Road Commissioner. Brent Smith explained as long as he had been coming to Town Meeting the Road Commissioner had been elected for whatever reason. Bill Payton made the motion to elect a Road Commissioner. Amy Alexander seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To elect the following Town Officers as provided for by the Public Laws of Vermont, and Citizens to serve on the other committees as herein specified, and to fix their compensations:
Amy Alexander nominated Brent Smith for Road Commissioner for One year. Roberta Dana seconded The motion. Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Brent Smith. Brent Smith was elected Road Commissioner. Passed by voice vote.

Taylor Lamberton nominated Lisa Hart for Town Treasurer for three years. Dan Webster seconded the motion. Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Lisa Hart. Lisa Hart was elected Town Treasurer. Passed by voice vote.

Stan Pierce nominated Amy Alexander for Selectboard for Three years. Seconded by Jean Denson. Mary Grant nominated Aaron Smith for Selectboard for Three years. Seconded by Roberta Dana. Barbara Johns nominated Mary Ellen Boyce for Selectboard for Three years. Seconded by Dave Boyce. Hearing no other nominations a paper ballot vote was done with a ballot count result of Amy Alexander 17 votes, Mary Ellen Boyce 14 votes. Aaron Smith 79 votes. Total number of votes 110. The Moderator stated that someone needs to have a majority of the votes. Aaron Smith was elected to the Selectboard for three years.

Dorothy Knott nominated Caroline Diggings for Lister for Three years. Janet Puffer seconded the motion. Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot. Caroline Diggings was elected Lister. Passed by voice vote.

There was much discussion concerning Article 5, the elimination of the Office of Lister and replace it with a professionally qualified assessor appointed by the Selectboard along with an appointed assistant for the assessor. This would be taken up when we got to Article 5.

Jim Burke was nominated as Library Trustee for One Year. Jean Denson motion to have the clerk cast One ballot for Jim Burke for Library Trustee for one year. Tom Huyler seconded. The clerk cast one ballot.

Peggy Burgin was nominated as Library Trustee for Three Years. Jean Denson motion to have the clerk cast one ballot for Peggy Burgin for Library Trustee for three years. Stan Pierce seconded. The clerk cast one ballot.

A Library Trustee for Three Years will be appointed by the Selectboard as there were no nominations Hearing no objections. Passed by voice vote.

Aaron Smith nominated Shaun Stetson as Cemetery Commissioner for three years. Jo Lourenco seconded the motion. . Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Shaun Stetson.

Stan Pierce nominated James Downing Jr. as first Constable for two years. Jean Denson seconded the motion. Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for James Downing Jr.

There was a short discussion as to why we needed a second constable and what their duties would be and if we would need to increase the budget? Roberta Dana explained the two positions used to be elected on alternating years.

The Selectboard stated the Constables would need to work things out between them and the budget would be shared. Amy Alexander recommended having a second Constable.

Roberta Dana made the motion to amend the second Constable potion from two years to one year so as to get it back on schedule for this time only. Kelly Lesieur seconded the motion.

Erich Crum nominated Shaun Stetson as second Constable for one year. Tonya Palmer seconded the motion. . Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Shaun Stetson.

Linda Nunn made the motion to have the Selectboard appoint the Town Grand Juror. Jean Denson seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the Selectboard are authorized to appoint a Town Grand Juror for one year. Hearing no objections it was passed by voice vote.

Peggy Burgin questioned what the Town Agent does? Wade Johnson gave the definition of a Town Agent. The Town Agent is a go between for the Selectboard and lawyers when needed.

Mary Ellen Boyce nominated Amy Alexander.

Deborah Jurist nominated Wade Johnson. Wade Johnson didn't except the nomination.

Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Amy Alexander for Town Agent.

Roberta Dana made the motion to have the Selectboard appoint the Town Agent to Convey Real Estate for one year. Janet Guy seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the Selectboard are authorized to appoint the Town Agent to Convey Real Estate. Passed by voice vote.

The Selectboard stated that the meeting needed to go back to the second part of, ARTICLE 4: To elect The following Town Officers as provided for by the Public Laws of Vermont, and citizens to serve on the other committees as herein specified, and **to fix their compensations:**

Brent Smith made the motion to authorize the Selectboard to fix the compensations.

Stan Pierce seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters authorize the elimination of the Office of Lister and replace it with a professionally qualified assessor appointed by the Selectboard who shall have the same powers, discharge the same duties, proceed in the discharge thereof in the same manner, and be subject to the same liabilities as are prescribed for Listers or the board of Listers under the provisions of Title 32, to take effect in the year 2019 with a Selectboard appointed assistant for the assessor?

There was a short discussion regarding the elimination of the Listers as it was worded wrong and under the law the terms of the current Listers shall expire on the 45th day after town meeting vote to eliminate the office of Listers and that we cannot have it take effect in 2019.

Stan Pierce made the motion to table article 5.

Amy Alexander seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the select board have authority to acquire the real property of the Estate of Ernest J. Cilley located at 1494 Scott Highway in Groton, Vermont adjacent to and behind the Community Building and Emergency Service Building when it becomes available for sale for a price of up to the Town's assessed value (presently \$86,600) when the purchase and sale agreement is signed?

Stacey Slaton read a letter giving the reasons as to why they want to sell the property. There was much discussion concerning the purchase of the property with both pros and cons.

Renee Curtis made the motion to cease discussion and put to a vote. Derek Curtis seconded. Passed by voice vote.

Stan Pierce made the motion to authorize the purchase with the condition a private/independent appraisal be done. Jean Denson seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7: To elect by ballot one School Director to serve on the Board of Unified Union School District #21, for a three (3) year term.

Aaron Smith nominated Sarah Dennis. Gary Lamberton seconded the motion. Hearing no other nominations or objections the clerk cast one ballot for Sarah Dennis.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town of Groton set the due date of Friday, November 9, 2018, by 5:00 PM as the deadline for the payment of taxes? (Postmarks are not accepted as a timely payment)

Stan Pierce moved the question. Jean Denson seconded the motion. Hearing no objections to the due date it was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: What sum of money shall the voters approve to raise by taxation, to be reduced by receipts, State aid and other income, to meet the current expenses and liabilities of the Town General Fund and Highway budget, including any other warned articles so voted at this town meeting, and authorize the Selectboard to set a tax rate sufficient to provide the same?

Roberta Dana questioned the figures for the Recreation and the figures concerning the Library. Mary Grant answered the question concerning the Recreation and Eric Volk answered the questions Concerning the Library. Tirone Dyer questioned if the Town had Auditors. Roberta Dana questioned about having an Audit. This was answered by Lisa Hart and Carrie Peters.

Lisa Hart, Town Treasurer made the motion to set the amount at \$983,565.00. Jean Denson seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10: To transact any other business proper to come before this meeting, this does not include The expenditure of town funds or other business acted upon in the preceding articles.

Tonya Palmer spoke for her father and asked when the Community Club was going to purchase an AED and have it installed in the Gym? The Food Shelf purchased an AED for the Office Area and the Community Club was going to purchase an AED for the Gym area.

Peter Lyon explained the Community Club had gotten grants for a scoreboard, new curtains for the Stage and were working on purchasing retractable basketball backboards. Tonya Palmer asked if these things were going to help save someone's life?

Roberta Dana stated that the Community Club use to put their financials in the Town Report and she feels that people that help with the chicken pie supper would like to see the report. The Select Board responded that the Community Club was asked for their financial but only sent the written report as seen in the Town Report.

Aaron Smith Thanked Mary Grant for all the time she has given to the Town.

Jean Denson made the motion to adjourn. Timothy Dailey Sr. seconded the motion. Passed by voice vote. Town Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM

Linda L. Nunn, Town Clerk

Brent Abare, Moderator

Election Official