

2023 Combined Town of Fletcher Annual Meeting & Fletcher Town School District Annual Meeting

The legal voters of the Town of Fletcher and the Fletcher School District, Franklin County, State of Vermont, were hereby notified and warned to meet in the Fletcher Elementary School in said Fletcher on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 9:30am to act on the following articles.

Barry Doolan introduced himself as moderator and called the meeting to order at 9:30am. As people were continuing to file into the school, Barry asked to go into recess for a short period to allow them to check in and get settled. Hearing no objections, the meeting went into recess, reconvening at 9:38am. Fletcher Elementary 6th graders Allora Lawton & Maya Gabaree led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Barry read the names of Fletcher residents who passed away in 2022 and the audience observed a moment of silence in their memory.

Barry asked that all non-voters rise and be welcomed by the audience. He explained that as non-voters, they would only be allowed to speak if they had the unanimous consent of the assembled electorate. He then went on to explain the format for this annual meeting. He welcomed everyone back after being remote for the past two years. Barry gave a brief overview of Robert's Rules, reminding everyone to clearly state their name after being recognized to speak so it could be properly recorded in the minutes.

Article 1 To adopt Robert's Rules of Order.

Melanie Meilleur moved to bring the article to the floor. Tara Sweet seconded. There was no discussion. Melanie Meilleur moved to cease debate. Sue Williams seconded. Article passed by voice vote.

Article 2 To elect a Moderator for the Town Meeting.

Melanie Meilleur moved to bring the article to the floor. Tara Sweet seconded. Sue Williams nominated Barry Doolan. Paul Meilleur seconded. Wes Graff moved to cease debate and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Barry Doolan. Melanie Meilleur seconded. Barry Doolan was elected by voice vote.

Article 3 To act on the reports of the various officers of the Town contained in the current Town Report covering the 12-month Town Budget from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Melanie Meilleur moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded.

Discussion:

Barry explained this is the point during the meeting when we can ask questions about any reports within the Town Report - not other articles, but anything else contained in the Town Report.

Wes Graff asked for clarification on NWSWD bond vote. Barry asked if David Clark could speak about this, as he is our district representative. David shared that he's been with the district since 1988 and is ready to retire! If anyone was interested in this appointed position, they should speak with him afterwards. He said he would like to amend his report in the Town

Report, noting that the Bond Vote will begin at 10:00am in the back corner of the gym. He is not able to discuss any information for or against the bond as this is the polling place, but he can point everyone to the correct page in the Town Report where it states where people can get more information. Normally the NWSWD newsletter would be available at the check-in table, but due to the bond vote it is considered campaign material and cannot be present in the polling place. David stated that the NWSWD has reserve funds and also some grant funds, but this is insufficient for the project, therefore requiring the bond vote for additional funds. NWSWD will not be increasing fees and there will not be an increase in member town dues. NWSWD is governed by a charter and therefore they must hold a balloted vote in all member towns for the bond.

*** Slide presentation by Select Board ***

Website

Jon Bondy shared that the Town website (www.fletcher.vt.net) is where people can find much information including agendas and minutes for boards and commissions, land records portal, pay property taxes, and more.

Matt Gillilan directed people to the Road Commissioner's report on page 41 in their Town Report. The last box culvert replacement from the 2019 Halloween storm is slated to be completed this year and additional FEMA money is anticipated soon. Matt spoke about the recent purchase of a green 2020 International (ARPA funds) and directed people to the equipment replacement schedule also on page 41 in the Town Report. He pointed out that the starting balance for FY23 is an incorrect number – it should be \$52,900 which will then adjust all other numbers accordingly. The chart in this slideshow is correct. Though the chart refers to a 2023 International, we do not have an ETA on that truck. According to the dealer, it's still being built, and they hope to have it available by June.

Reappraisal/Listers

Jon spoke about our Listers, the ongoing Reappraisal, and the plan to contract with an outside assessor to assist the Listers going forward. Currently we only have 2 listers when we should have 3, though the empty position is to be filled at this meeting. The Select Board sent out an RFP for an outside assessor and one has been selected. It will be for a one-year contract. The Reappraisal should be complete in a month or so and the new assessments will be released in booklet form for all properties in town. It is expected that most properties will increase in value, but that doesn't necessarily mean taxes will go up. As the Grand List grows, taxes are spread out over more property value. There will be a period for grievances as we usually do. Jon asked Alex Sargent (current Lister) if he had anything else to add. He said no.

Terry Riggs asked if the delay in the Reappraisal affected our state aid for education, wondering if we would be penalized for not completing the Reappraisal in one year. Jon said he couldn't speak to school financials. Terry restated his question, asking if the State cut us any slack due to the delay in Reappraisal. Did the drop in our CLA affect the school taxes? Jon again said he couldn't speak to this and suggested this question be posed to the school board during the school portion of the meeting.

Melanie Meilleur asked if tax bills would still be mailed in July and first payment due in August. Jon said yes, depending on grievances, but that is the plan. The usual first quarter due date of August 15 can be pushed out accordingly if necessary.

Sara Villeneuve asked what the annual cost is for a contracted outside assessor. Jon said about \$19,000 and the current budget for Listers is \$28,000 so we are within the budgeted amount. The contract has not yet been fully created or signed, so details are still being fleshed out.

Pam Jedlicka feels we are certainly overdue on a reappraisal. She wants to know if there is a plan in place to not have this happen again, hopefully reassessing at more regular intervals. Jon said the goal is, and always has been, to reassess 1/3 of all properties each year.

Broadband

Jon Bondy began by reading from a prepared document, pausing to reference the map which divides the Town into two portions, he noted that most of "Fletcher 1" is done and "Fletcher 2" hasn't yet been started. The actual mileage in these portions was explained in another slide.

He said that attempts to reach out to Consolidated Communications were proving problematic as they were not responding to him at all. Jon has since reached out to State officials for assistance and guidance. He spoke about the history of project, including delays in getting the initial federal grant, modifying the budget, VEDA bond vote, etc. When MCF did the engineering, the miles of fiber needed turned out to be more than they originally estimated, which in turn changed the budget. "Fletcher 2" has not had any engineering done. This means the project will take all that much longer. The project is currently at a standstill while we all try to figure out a plan to go forward.

Diane Dayvie asked if the residents need to approve how the ARPA money is spent. Jon said no, the Select Board has jurisdiction over this, but they welcome and value the input of the residents.

Bob Dayvie asked the number of households which have signed up for MCF service at this point in time. Jon did not know, but suggested perhaps MCF would be able to find out.

Michelle Frennier asked if she heard correctly that the project was on hold. Jon said yes. Michelle said that a roll of cable is currently sitting outside of her house. She has already spent money to have conduit installed and is ready to be lit. She said that other providers are ready to install in the same area and her family will pick whichever can get there first. She feels it's been a sham and the Town should pause and not spend more money until things are clear. At this point she worries it may never happen. Jon says you should never say never – it will happen. Michelle said if additional pole licenses were still needed, that was a result of poor planning and those all should've been in place before any installation of fiber began. She feels we could've had a better plan and there were lots of missteps. Jon said the Select Board is also frustrated. They are trying to solve the problem with the shortest path and being angry doesn't help.

Michael Burke said he understands the frustration that others are feeling. He asked what the estimated take-up rate was at the start of the project. He currently has MCF internet and has had great customer service. Brian Davison said he is a resident and also an MCF employee. He

believes the take-up rate is 50% for the portions of Fletcher that are currently lit. He expects it to be about 60-70% once the project is completed.

Amy Doolittle asked if the project included private roads. Jon said yes, if the infrastructure on the private road is owned by the landowners, then installation is inexpensive. If owned by the phone company, it can be expensive.

Tessa Anderson asked if it would be helpful to the Board if residents tried to reach out to Consolidated Communications. Jon said it might.

Wes Graff said when the bond vote passed in 2020, it was understood there would be no financial impact to the Town. He asked if this was still the case. Would committing ARPA money go against this? Jon reiterated what was said at the time of the bond vote – it is illegal to use tax revenue to fund a broadband project. The Town can use loans, grants, and ARPA funds. The Board feels the best use of ARPA money is to reduce the residents' tax burden wherever possible. For this reason, the Board would like to spend as little ARPA money on broadband.

Wes Graff said he doesn't have MCF and he may not ever, as he can't afford it. He would welcome the competition of CC or another provider. He wouldn't want ARPA money to be used on something he and others cannot afford.

Brandon Cardinal said he is a recent homeowner who just signed up for CC internet. He said CC wants to install Fidium fiber which is 100mb/sec in Fletcher within the next year or so and that competition is good for the customers.

Jon Bondy said that MCF needs customers in Fletcher to create revenue to pay off the VEDA loan.

Jeremy Ayotte thinks it's bad business practice how MCF "estimated" the mileage of fiber needed at beginning of contract rather than completing the engineering first. Jon said it would have been too much effort to measure out the distance of all mileage in town, so the engineering was not done that early on. It's not uncommon for projects to be completely engineered until after a contract is awarded to the vendor.

Michelle Frennier asked about the possibility of MCF not being able to fulfill their contract with the Town, wondering if this would create a loan risk for the Town. She also asked if it could potentially affect the school's borrowing ability as well. Jon said he doesn't know the answer to that. The Town signed an MOU with MCF wherein they agreed to pay off the loan no matter what.

Alan Cary asked what would happen if MCF defaults on the loan. Could this affect the Town's bond rating? That would not be good! Jon said yes, you can't argue with that.

ARPA Options

Rich Bidwell spoke about ARPA spending. The Town needs to encumber all of the funds by the end of 2024 and actually spend it by the end of 2026. He spoke about what we've spent thus far (digitizing additional land records and purchase of a used 2020 International dump truck). He listed other potential options for spending ARPA money, such as Broadband, bathroom upgrades at Fletcher Historical Society, a new park, upgrades to Town emergency communications and more.

Diane Dayvie asked for a straw poll on how to best spend the money. Barry Doolan said this could happen at end of meeting under "other business".

Tessa Anderson said that when the Broadband project began, there was discussion of using some revenue to assist people who have high installation costs. She asked if this was still the case. Jon said MCF did intend to contribute funds to the project for this purpose, but the project needs to be completed first. The Board feels it's important to use ARPA funds to benefit the greater community as a whole rather than just to help a few people.

Terry Riggs said he had previously asked the Board to use some ARPA funds to buy a scarifier attachment for the grader. He feels it would be very beneficial to the town as a whole and should be considered. Matt Gillilan said the Road Foreman has been seeking quotes for this purchase. It is being explored, but no numbers were available at this time to be part of today's presentation.

David Clark said the School Board had a suggestion to use some ARPA funds to expand parking lot at school.

Melanie Meilleur asked who makes the decision on how ARPA money gets spent. Jon said the Select Board has jurisdiction, but they welcome all residents' opinions. He asked that people please attend meetings and share their ideas.

Annette Kalinoski called the question and made a motion to cease debate. Melanie Meilleur seconded and the article passed by voice vote.

Article 4 Shall the Town instruct the Town Auditors to have the Town Report printed as usual?

Tara Sweet moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded. Barry Doolan reread the article and explained this is the time when the audience can speak to the format and organization of the report itself. There was no discussion. Sue Williams moved to cease debate and the article passed by voice vote.

Article 5 Shall the Town vote a sum of money to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town for the FY24 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)?

Barry Doolan read the article and said it was added to the Warning in error. He asked to pass over this article as the budget article is actually later on in Article 7. There was no discussion and the motion passed by voice vote.

Article 6 Shall the voters approve replacing Cambridge Rescue Squad with Fairfax Rescue Squad for emergency medical rescue service for the east side of Fletcher?

Melanie Meilleur moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded.

*** Slide show presentation by Select Board ***

Bruce Douglas introduced Kathy Jochim (Fletcher resident and member of Fairfax Rescue), Rob Holden (Chief of Cambridge Rescue), and Martha Manning (member of Cambridge Rescue). He also acknowledged Alan Cary (Fletcher resident and retired Chief of Cambridge Fire Department). There was a round of applause to recognize and thank these individuals for their service to our community.

Bruce referred to the map, showing 2/3 of Fletcher's population in grey zone (west side) and 1/3 in white zone (east side). He then gave a history of how we got here, noting that during FY23, Cambridge Rescue Squad (CRS) saw a need to increase their budget request of Fletcher. They based their new amount on the amount that was requested by Fairfax Rescue Squad (FRS). He went through the next few slides, pointing out the overall emergency services costs for Fletcher as well as the per-person costs. The map slide showed where the CRS, FRS, and Bakersfield Rescue Service (BRS) stations are in relation to Fletcher boundaries. Bruce noted that all stations are far apart, and it's not easy to serve Fletcher based on this geography.

Bruce said that Google maps was used to estimate mileage (travel times) from rescue stations to residences, but it was important to remember that this does not account for additional response time of emergency personnel from their homes to the station. It also does not account for any missed calls or situations of unavailable squads and dispatch needing to call out a second time. Bruce discussed the comparison between squads regarding their equipment and staff levels. He also went over the implications of a change in EMS providers.

Jon Bondy wanted to mention that the Select Board did not need to have this as an article as it falls under their purview, but they felt it was important to discuss it with the residents at Town Meeting.

Jeremy Ayotte asked if the members from the rescue services could share the training levels of their staff and members. In order for this to happen, Barry Doolan asked for the assembled electorate to allow non-voters to speak. There was no objection, so he opened the floor to members of the rescue services.

Kathy Jochim said FRS has staff trained in advanced life support. Rob Holden said CRS has advanced EMT's but no certified paramedics until later this month. They also hope to have another certified paramedic by the end of summer.

Jeremy Ayotte asked about a topic which was previously discussed at a recent Select Board meeting— no radio service in certain parts of Fletcher. He asked if the Board followed up on this. Bruce Douglas said not specifically, but there is an Emergency Management grant in the works which may address this issue.

Allison Crowson said the slides mentioned fire and rescue, and asked which services were addressed in this vote. Bruce Douglas said this article is specifically about rescue services, as fire departments are separate line items in the budget. The only exception in regard to this discussion is that Bakersfield's services are provided by a combined fire and rescue crew.

Melanie Meilleur asked about the staffing of the various providers – full time, part time, volunteers. Kathy Jochim said FRS has one FT paid staff, four per-diem positions, and all others (including her) are volunteers. Rob Holden said CRS has one FT paid staff and they are looking for three more. They also have one per-diem position and the rest are volunteers.

Annette Kalinoski asked what hospitals the service providers utilized. Kathy Jochim said that FRS typically transports to the closest hospital, but all patients have the right to be taken to hospital of their choice. Rob Holden said the same goes for CRS.

Eva Gillilan asked for the number of calls each provider has responded to on the East side of Fletcher. Rob Holden said CRS received 21 calls for Fletcher: 9 times they had no crew available and needed to request mutual aid. Kathy Jochim said FRS received 48 calls and responded every time.

Pam Jedlicka asked if either provider had an EMT who could respond immediately. She also inquired as to the average response time for each call. Kathy Jochim said all FRS members have radios, pagers and medical bags but only the truck has a defibrillator. Their average response time is approximately 4 minutes, but that varies with staffing and distance from the responder to the station or emergency scene. Rob Holden said it's the same for CRS and added it can also depend on weather. They are actively advertising for more staff, but they are hard to find. All rescue and fire crews are looking for more community involvement.

Tara Sweet said she and her family reside on the east side of town. She feels the \$13K we are discussing may be the difference between life and death for members of her family and others on that side of town.

Pat Saylor said she also lives on the east side of Fletcher. If the Town opted to contract with FRS only, what percentage of calls on the east side would be referred to BRS. Kathy Jochim said 100%.

Alan Cary said he served on the Cambridge Fire Department (CFD) for 40 years, 20 of those years as Chief. In looking at a map of town, it appears the current set up for rescue service providers was the easiest way to divide the town based on geography. He said that CRS accompanies CFD on every call and that does stretch resources a bit. It all comes down to volunteers. All service providers have struggles with staffing. The dispatcher will call for another crew if one cannot respond right off and this should not affect response time. He feels that the amount of money being discussed here is peanuts and we should all get over it.

Bruce Douglas echoed the sentiment of the need for volunteers and welcomed interested people to reach out to the local providers.

Suzanne Stritzler feels that trying to save money is not the best idea when it comes to the standard of care being the focus.

Diane Dayvie agrees with Suzanne and feels that the additional \$13K is worth it if it saves even one life.

Ken Hunt agrees that the focus should be safety first, but he inquired why the increase was so large (4 times more) and asked if it could be done in a more incremental fashion. Rob Holden said this has been discussed at CRS for years, but prior management never initiated the increase. He's the new chief and is addressing it now.

Martha Manning said the Cambridge Select Board told CRS that they should increase costs to Fletcher for fairness to the other towns they serve.

Paul Meilleur said he is an east side resident. He wanted to clarify that we were voting on whether or not we should keep CRS and not choose between the two for everything. Barry Doolan said that was correct.

Sue Williams moved to cease debate. Melanie Meilleur seconded. Motion passed by voice vote. Tara Sweet made a motion to vote by paper ballots. Melanie Meilleur seconded. Seven people stood up in agreement with the motion and voting was conducted by paper ballots. There were 102 votes cast: 91 No, 11 Yes. The article did not pass.

Article 7 Shall the voters of the Town of Fletcher authorize total fund expenditures for operating expenses for FY24 of \$1,481,932.00, of which \$1,125,242.00 shall be raised by

taxes, \$356,690.00 shall be raised by non-tax revenues and \$40,000.00 is surplus from FY22?

Barry Doolan read the article and added a friendly amendment to rephrase the last portion to say: "...of which \$40,000 is surplus from FY22".

Melanie Meilleur moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded.

*** Budget presentation by Select Board ***

Matt Swartz directed the audience to the Select Board budget notes, found on page 24 of the Town Report. He reviewed the different budgets: last FY has closed; current FY we are halfway through; next FY is what we are voting on today. He noted that budget lines for road crew's and Clerk/Assistant Clerk's wages have increased. The budget (and resulting tax rate) has remained somewhat steady for the past few years, as the Select Board has tried to be conscious of residents' finances during the pandemic. Since we are in midst of the Town-wide reappraisal which will result in a change to the Grand List, it is hard to estimate what the tax rate will be if this budget passes. He stated that we also need to acknowledge that costs are increasing everywhere.

Shana Kane asked if the earlier vote on rescue services would result in a change to the budget. Jon Bondy said no, as the budget was drafted with the current arrangement for rescue services which was just reinstated by the denial of Article 6.

Wes Graff asked why we needed Article 5 if we are now discussing the budget in Article 7. Jon Bondy said that it was added to the Warning in error which is why we passed over it earlier.

Michael Burke asked if this budget takes into account the updated property values from the reappraisal. Jon Bondy said no, as the reappraisal is not finished. We can only provide our best guess based on last year's Grand List values. Bruce Douglas echoed that statement, saying this is the best information the Board could provide at this time.

Tom Kalinoski asked what the percentage increase was for the wage increases for the Road Crew, Town Clerk/Treasurer and Assistant Clerk/Treasurer. Jon Bondy said the final column in the budget spreadsheets shows the percent change for each line: Road Foreman is on page 32, line 214, increase of 24%; Road Crew is also on page 32, line 223, increase of 20%; Town Clerk is on page 28 line 39, increase of 10%; Assistant Town Clerk is also on page 28, line 54, increase of 9%.

Sue Williams moved to cease debate. Melanie Meilleur seconded. Motion passed by voice vote. Barry Doolan re-read article. Article passed by voice vote.

Article 8 To elect a Moderator for the School District Annual Meeting.

Article 9 To elect a Clerk for the School District Annual Meeting.

Article 10 To hear and act on reports of School Directors from the previous year.

Article 11 To elect by ballot a School Director for a two-year term (Aimee Cardinal).

Article 12 To elect by ballot a School Director for a three-year term (David Clark).

Article 13 Shall the voters of said School District approve the School Directors to expend \$4,138,083.00 which is the amount the School Directors have determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$18,454.38 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 4.39% higher than spending for the current year.

Article 14 Shall the voters of said School District authorize the School Directors to borrow money for school expenses in anticipation of revenue for the ensuing year?

Article 15 To conduct any other business that may come before the School Directors.

Article 16 To elect by ballot a Town Clerk & Town Treasurer for a three-year term. (Karrie Sweet)

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Annette Kalinoski seconded. Janet nominated Karrie Sweet. There were no other nominations. Janet moved to case nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Karrie Sweet. Article passed by voice vote and Karrie Sweet was elected.

Article 17 To elect by ballot a Select Board member for a three-year term. (Rich Bidwell)

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Gloria Brunette seconded. Jon Bondy nominated Rich Bidwell. There were no other nominations. Janet Young moved to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Rich Bidwell. Article passed by voice vote and Rich Bidwell was elected.

Article 18 To elect by ballot a Select Board member for a three-year term. (Jon Bondy)

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Janet Young seconded. Annette Kalinoski nominated Jon Bondy. There were no other nominations. Annette Kalinoski moved to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Jon Bondy. Article passed by voice vote and Jon Bondy was elected.

Article 19 To elect by ballot a Lister for a three-year term. (Charles Tinker)

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Janet Young seconded. Gloria Brunette nominated Charles Tinker. There were no other nominations. Janet Young moved to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot. Article passed by voice vote and Charles Tinker was elected.

Article 20 To elect by ballot a Lister for one year remaining of a three-year term. (vacant seat)

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded. Charles Tinker nominated Sharon Tinker. There were no other nominations. Wes Graff moved to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Sharon Tinker. Article passed by voice vote and Sharon Tinker was elected.

Article 21 To elect by ballot an Auditor for a three-year term. (Kathryn Towle)

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Janet Young seconded. Diane Dayvie nominated Tara Sweet. Sara Villeneuve nominated Katie Towle. Barry asked to have candidates speak if they so choose and the vote must be done by paper ballot.

Tara Sweet said that she has assisted with the Annual Reports for the past few years. She is an accountant by trade, so this is her area of expertise. She has researched State Statute and learned she can hold both elected positions of School Director and Town Auditor as the school's financials are audited by an outside firm.

Katie Towle said she has held this position for 6 years. She is also an accountant by trade and is familiar with audits.

Voting was conducted by paper ballots. There were 70 total votes: Tara received 32, Katie received 38. Katie Towle was elected.

Article 22 To elect by ballot a 1st Constable for a two-year term. (Bill Stygles)

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Annette Kalinoski seconded.

Gloria Brunette called a Point of Order and asked what the Constable position entails. Jon Bondy said that Bill is a man of few words and doesn't give reports to the board so as far as they know, he is fulfilling his duties. Bruce Douglas said there are two levels of Constable, one with and one without police certification - Bill is the latter.

Wes Graff nominated Bill Stygles. There were no other nominations. Wes Graff made a motion to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Bill Stygles. Article passed by voice vote and Bill Stygles was elected.

Article 23 To elect by ballot a Delinquent Tax Collector for a three-year term. (Fred Fletcher)

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Annette Kalinoski seconded. Wes Graff nominated Fred Fletcher. There were no other nominations. Annette Kalinoski moved to cease nominations and have the Clerk cast one ballot for Fred Fletcher. Article passed by voice vote and Fred Fletcher was elected.

Article 24 To elect any other Town Officers to fill any Town Office that may be vacant at this time.

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Tara Sweet seconded. Karrie Sweet said there were no open offices at this time. Barry Doolan moved to pass over this article. Motion passed by voice vote.

Article 25 Shall the Town authorize the Town Treasurer to receive all Real Estate taxes?

Annette Kalinoski moved to bring the article to the floor. Janet Young seconded. There was no discussion. Article passed by voice vote.

Article 26 Shall the Town instruct the Select Board to borrow money to pay current expenses in anticipation of taxes?

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Annette Kalinoski seconded. Barry Doolan explained this gives the Select Board authority to borrow funds if the Town needs money before property taxes come in. There was no discussion. Article passed by voice vote.

Article 27 To discuss any other business that may properly come before the Town Meeting.

Janet Young moved to bring the article to the floor. Annette Kalinoski seconded.

Pam Jedlicka asked for a round of applause in appreciation of the service of the Select Board as well as Karrie and Aimee at the Town Office. The audience obliged.

Jess Graff asked to extend the applause for the Road Crew in appreciation of their hard work and long hours, even though they are not present at the meeting today. The audience obliged.

Terry Riggs wished to comment on the ARPA money. He questioned the purchase of a used pick-up truck during the recent COVID years and doesn't feel the Town needs to have a separate pick-up truck for what Road Crew does and they could use their own vehicles.

Matt Gillilan responded that the Road Crew uses it a lot for many projects, such as checking roads, installing signs, and transporting culverts among other tasks. It was a fairly inexpensive purchase at the time, and it has been a very effective tool for the Road Crew since then.

Alan Cary suggested that some of the ARPA money be used on brush cutting. He feels the Town is way behind on this task and that opening up roads would add sunlight and improve them overall. He also suggested resurfacing some of the gravel roads in town that are in the worst shape. He would prefer the ARPA money be put toward Town items/projects which support all residents and that it should not be given to private enterprises.

Joe Doolittle wished to comment on ARPA money being used for Broadband. He feels that broadband buildout in the community is good way to reach everyone. He feels providing adequate internet service is what will draw new people to town, and this would be for the greater good of the community.

Janet Young suggested giving some of the ARPA money to the Historical Society for the needed upgrades to their bathrooms.

Deb Tilton agreed with Janet's idea and also added an "off the wall request" to install broadband at Historical Society, as this would also make it more of a draw for community use.

Sara Villeneuve asked for an update on the Zoning Administrator position. Karrie Sweet said the current ZA (Maurice Rathbun) would still like to retire, but there were no applicants as of yet. If a suitable candidate was found, the Planning Commission would refer them to the Select Board who would appoint them.

Janet Young said the Planning Commission was looking for new members to fill vacancies. She said this is a very important group as they are responsible for drafting the Zoning regulations for the town.

David Clark reminded voters the NWSWD vote is being held until 7:00pm.
There was no more discussion. Wes Graff moved to cease debate and the article passed by voice vote.

Article 28 To Adjourn

Aimee Cardinal moved to bring the article to the floor. Wes Graff seconded. There was no discussion. Article passed by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 1:35pm.

Town Meeting minutes recorded by Aimee Tinker, Assistant Town Clerk & Assistant Treasurer.


Dated at Fletcher this 7th day of March, 2023.



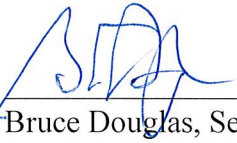
Karrie Sweet, Town Clerk & Treasurer



Jon Bondy, Select Board Chair



Rich Bidwell, Select Board



Bruce Douglas, Select Board

Matt Gillilan, Select Board

Matt Swartz, Select Board