

Town Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2023

Greg Joly called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Greg read the warning, "The legal voters of the Town of Jamaica, in the County of Windham and State of Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall in said town of Jamaica, on the first Tuesday of March, March 7th, 2023, to transact the following business and act upon the following articles."

Greg handed the meeting over to Laura Sibilia, our representative for Windham 2 district. Laura Sibilia presented a resolution to Raymond and Joyce Ballentine. The town voted to have a question period with Laura.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator for a term of one year.

Tom Tolbert nominated Greg Joly for moderator, seconded by Jessica Pollack. All in favor.

Article 2: To review the town report.

Ed Dorta-Duque moved to review the town report, seconded by

Mary Parlman asked if the mud season expenses came from the highway fund or somewhere else? They set aside a separate line item last year because the cost was higher than normal but it is not a line item this year.

CJ King asked about page 46, the Planning Commission report talks about the solar field, she asked where it would be? Greg Meulemans said it will be on Tony's Lane. The power will go back into the grid, not to any place specific. Charlie Peck of the Planning Commission said the certificate of public good was issued. The solar panels will not be visible from Route 30.

Mary Parlman asked about the town hall janitor. It is just part of regular duties.

Ed Dorta-Duque said we need 911 numbers on all houses, reflective would be best. In an emergency, you want them to be able to find you!

Ed Dorta-Duque spoke about the sidewalks and how they are not accessible when the winter weather drops. Ed would like the town to purchase a new machine to maintain the sidewalks. This will be discussed during the budget.

Kate Harris asked who will pay for the solar and who will get the kick back? It is privately owned.

Tom Tolbert called the question, seconded by Clara Robinson. Article 2 passed.

Article 3: To elect the following officers as required by law.

a. Selectperson for a term of three years.

Lexa Clark nominated Andy Coyne for Selectperson for three years, seconded by Paul Fraser.

Stephanie Amyot nominated Derek Ahl, seconded by Patrick McQuillan.

Andy-31

Derek-35

Derek removed himself from the vote, he would like to run for a 1-year term.

Ed Dorta-Duque asked the moderator to have the clerk cast 1 vote for Andy Coyne, seconded by Katie Hazelton.

Andy Coyne was elected Selectperson for a term of three years.

b. Selectperson for a term of one year.

Karen Ameden nominated Tom Tolbert for Selectperson for one year, Tom declined.

Tom Tolbert nominated Derek Ahl, seconded by Ed Dorta-Duque. No other nominations.

Derek Ahl was elected Selectperson for a term of one year.

c. Selectperson for a term of one year.

CJ King nominated Greg Meulemans for Selectperson, seconded by Val Pantorno. Ed Dorta-Duque moved to close nominations.

All in favor. Greg Meulemans was elected Selectperson for a term of one year.

d. Lister for a term of three years.

Karen Ameden nominated Pat Meulemans for Lister, seconded by Val Pantorno. No other nominations.

Pat Meulemans was elected Lister for a term of three years.

e. 1st Constable for a term of one year.

Tom Tolbert nominated Rob Willis for 1st Constable, seconded by Greg Meulemans. All in favor. Rob Willis was elected 1st Constable for a term of one year.

f. 2nd Constable for a term of one year.

Rob Willis nominated Ben Williams for 2nd Constable, seconded by CJ King. All in favor. Ben Williams was elected 2nd Constable for a term of one year.

g. Trustee of Public Funds for a term of one year.

Jessica Pollack nominated Rob Willis for Trustee of Public Funds, seconded by Kate Ullman. Ed moved to close nominations. All in favor. Rob Willis was elected Trustee of Public Funds for a term of one year.

h. Agent to deed land for a term of one year.

Stephanie Amyot nominated Rob Willis for Agent to deed land, seconded by CJ King. All in favor. Rob Willis was elected Agent to deed land for a term of one year.

i. Library Trustee for a term of five years.

Sarah Antel nominated Becky Antel for Library Trustee. There were no other nominations. All in favor. Becky Antel was elected Library Trustee for a term of five years.

j. Library Trustee for four years of a five-year term

Jen Dorta-Duque nominated Michael Connor, seconded by CJ King. All in favor. Michael Connor was elected Library Trustee for four years of a five-year term.

k. Library Trustee for a term of two years

Jen Dorta-Duque nominated Janet Hamilton. Katie Hazelton nominated Keighan Eaker.

Janet- 30

Keighan-38

Keighan Eaker elected Library Trustee for a term of two years.

l. Library Trustee for a term of one year

Derek Ahl nominated Karen Lakis, she declined.

Sarah Antel nominated Janet Hamilton, seconded by Jen Dorta-Duque.

Stephanie Amyot nominated Betsy Thomason, seconded by Kate Harris.

Betsy- 33

Janet- 33

Revote:

Betsy- 30

Janet- 37

Betsy withdrew her name; Janet Hamilton was elected Library Trustee for a term of one year.

Jen Dorta-Duque thanked Alice Abraham for serving on the board.

Clara Robinson thanked Bonnie West for serving on the board.

Greg Joly thanked Tom Tolbert for serving on the Selectboard.

Article 5: Shall the town assess a one percent (1%) tax on sales pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138(b)?

Tom Tolbert made a motion to approve the 1% tax on sales, seconded by Jessica Pollack.

Clara Robinson asked what this means and for an explanation. Greg Meulemans said this is seen as a possibility for some revenue for the town. It was proposed last year as one article but this year it is broken down into the three parts. It would be 70% of the 1% collected would go into the general fund for the town.

Terri Garland gave the board some information on estimated revenue. It would generate around \$37,000 for the sales. The meals and beverage would only generate about \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Rooms would generate around \$10,000 on VRBO and \$13,000 for Air BnB.

Andy Coyne disagrees with the 1% tax.

Jeff Dickson said this money would go to the town and should reduce the local tax.

Jennifer Dorta-Duque said it would be higher with the other inns in town that are not on VRBO or Air BnB. As an inn owner, they support the 1% tax which would help the town and tax those using our town.

Stephanie Amyot asked about ordering online, would we be taxed? Yes, it would. It would apply to anything you buy online.

Chrissy Haskins said anything you buy online; you will have to pay the 1%.

Manchester brings in \$1,555,000 in their local options tax. They reduce they tax by 13 cents. Brattleboro's is lowered by 12 cents.

She said ours will be lowered by less than .01 cents.

Terri Lateille asked to call the question. Article 5 was voted by paper ballot at the request of seven voters.

47- No

23- yes

Article 5 failed.

Article 6: Shall the town assess a one percent (1%) tax on meals and alcoholic beverages, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138(b)?

Article passed by majority floor vote.

Article 7: Shall the town assess a one percent (1%) tax on rooms pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138(b)?

Ed moved the question, seconded by David Marx. Discussion closed by show of hands.

Article 7 passed by voice vote.

Article 8: To see what sum of money the Voters will vote to pay the Town's running expenses, and how it will be collected.

Ed Dorta-Duque made a motion to raise \$1,336,558 by taxation for the running expenses of the town and this along with anticipated revenue \$521,272 equal a budget of \$1,857,830 to be expended. Taxes will be paid on or before October 2nd, 2023 to the treasurer. An 8% penalty by state law, will be added on October 3rd, 2023 plus interest at the rate of 1% will be added monthly starting December 1, 2023 until paid in full. Seconded by Patrick McQuillan.

Jessica called the question, seconded by Erica Bowman.

Budget passed by voice vote.

Article 9: To see if the Voters will authorize the Selectboard to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

Ed moved to authorize the Selectboard to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, seconded by Stephanie Amyot. All in favor.

Article 10: Shall the Voters authorize the Selectboard to spend "unanticipated funds such as grants, gifts and/or interest"?

Sarah Antel moved to authorize the Selectboard to spend unanticipated funds such as grants, gifts and/or interest, seconded Ed Dorta-Duque.

All in favor. Article 10 passed.

Article 11: To set the time for the opening of the next Annual Town Meeting, to be held on the first Tuesday in March 2024.

Ed Dorta-Duque moved to hold town meeting on March 5, 2024, at 10 a.m. Seconded by Sarah Antel. Tom called the question. All in favor. Article 11 passed by voice vote.

Article 12: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

CJ King asked about the 1% and how it can be allocated.

Rob Willis said all dog licenses are due by April 1st every year. Please let those new to the area know it is Vermont law.

Dave Marx- JAMBA formed in 2019 to establish mountain bike trails in the state park. June 2nd is the opening at Bald Mountain Lake. If anyone is interested in learning more or becoming involved, they would love to hear from you.

Kayla Anthony asked if there is still a leash law. Yes, there is, call Rob or the town office.

Chris Healey said she would like something posted about the leash law and to pick up their poo. She would like signs in the town.

Karen Ameden is a lister and they will be driving around every week. They do have signs on the side of the vehicles but may be getting out of their cars to measure.

Karen Ameden said Jamaica Old Home Day will be Saturday September 16th.

Sue Stomski asked about the Town Administrator. Mike Tuller was introduced to the town.

Derek Ahl said that the Army Core will be doing a dam release in the spring, the first weekend of May.

Chrissy Haskins gave an update on wastewater project. They are moving forward, the town was awarded over \$60,000 in grants.

David Plants lives on Pikes Falls, would like people to be aware of phrases like “Air BnB people” or “weekend people”.

Susan Ahl, the librarian, said that the library hours have changed, and the website is under construction.

Ed Dorta-Duque called the question, seconded by Stephanie Amot.

Motion to adjourn at 12:27 p.m.

Submitted by Sara Wiswall