

Town of Plainfield Minutes of Town Meeting March 2, 2010

Town meeting called to order at 10:00am, March 2, 2010 at the Plainfield Town Hall as warned. The polls were open from 9:00am to 7:00pm for Australian ballot voting on Article 1, Article 2, and Article 3.

Article 1: To elect all necessary officers for the ensuing year.

The following officers were elected:

Moderator Charles Barasch

Town Clerk Linda B. Wells

Town Treasurer Linda B. Wells

Selectboard 3 years David Strong

Lister 3 years Frederick Pope

Auditor 3 years not enough write-in votes

Collector of Del Taxes George Cushing

Town Grand Juror 1 year James Jamele

Town Law Agent 1 year James Jamele

Cemetery Commissioner 5 years Robert Dole, Jr

Recreation Committee 1 year Margie Yoder

Recreation Committee 2 years not enough write-in votes

Recreation Committee 3 years not enough write-in votes

Recreation Committee 4 years not enough write-in votes

Recreation Committee 5 years not enough write-in votes

School Director 3 years Judy Cyprian

Article 2: Shall the Town of Plainfield adopt amended Subdivision Regulations as proposed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Selectboard January 25, 2010?

This article was approved. The results were 214 votes yes to 69 votes no.

Article 3: Shall the Town of Plainfield adopt Inundation Hazard Area Regulations to bring Plainfield into conformance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency minimum standards for flood hazard areas as proposed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Selectboard January 25, 2010?

This article was approved. The results were 257 votes yes to 36 votes no.

Charlie welcomed everyone to Town Meeting and made a few announcements; the Cemetery Report was inadvertently left out of the Town Report. A correction to the website printed on page 4 of the report was made, www.plainfieldvt.us. The Fireman's Club is selling food, the Friends of the Library are selling cookbooks and primroses. PACA is selling pie. Jodi Vilardi made soup using Sue Barasch's recipe and is giving it away. Donations of non perishable food are being collected for the food shelf. It was also noted that the banners on display are a few of what will be hung around town. Charlie read a poem called The Blessing by James Wright.

Janet Ancel our State Representative is here to speak. Janet is concerned about the gap between revenue and projected expenditures. She is concerned that proposed cuts will have severe effects on senior citizens and children and other individuals with needs. Janet spoke about Vermont Yankee and that its license would expire in 2012, stopping its continued operation. Janet supported this. Janet also talked about the budget challenges being faced by schools statewide. The state is also facing challenges with the education fund. Janet also spoke about Health Care Reform and that she is disappointed that things are slowing down in the effort to for significant health care reform.

Art. 4 To hear reports of Town Officers and act on same.

Auditors Certificate Motion to accept by John Monahan. Seconded by Peter Youngbaer. The ayes have accepted the report.

Town Clerk's Report Motion to accept by Ben Koenig. Seconded by Greg Light. Ben Koenig wanted to know why he couldn't find a report of the vitals that occurred during the year. Linda Wells answered that because of concerns that the auditors had about identity theft they stopped putting the vitals in the town report. The ayes have accepted the report.

Zoning Administrator Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Bryan Pfeiffer. The ayes have accepted the report.

Town Treasurer's Report Motion to accept by Sandy Ross. Seconded by Kate Harper. The ayes have accepted the report.

Collector of Delinquent Taxes Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by John Monahan. Bryan Pfeiffer wants an update. Keith Terry spoke as George Cushing, Collector of Delinquent Taxes was not here. Keith said that previous balances were being brought down, however the recent tax brought new delinquencies in the amount of approximately \$80,000.00. Donny Osman states that delinquent taxes have been a problem. He wants to know if the town is doing better with the new collector than with the old. Keith says that the opinion of the Selectboard is that the situation is much better. He further stated that past delinquencies were being whittled down and progress is being made. Bryan Pfeiffer wants to know if the \$80,000.00 in new delinquencies are a sign of the economy or the same people that have always been delinquent. Keith answers that there are some new delinquencies and also that some tax payers are on a contract plan to make payments on past due amounts and to pay current amounts when due but have failed to do so. The ayes have accepted the report.

Lister's Report Motion to accept by John Monahan. Seconded by Greg Light. The ayes have accepted the report.

Planning Commission Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Mary Niebling. The ayes have approved the report.

Selectboard's Report Motion to accept by Bob Atchinson. Seconded by Allen Clark. Alice Merrill wants to mention that the town has a new website. Linda Wells confirms that the website is listed on page 4. Diane Tetrault is asking about the Hydro Dam. She wants to know what the status is. Keith Terry answers that because of concerns in the case of a 100 year flood, the project could not go forward as originally designed. The new cost for the new design would have nearly doubled. GMP decided it was not financially feasible. The Selectboard reluctantly gave the grant back so someone else could use it. The time to make a further decision had expired. Claudia Clark spoke about

the figures. She said they still view it as a possible asset but need someone to come forward to back the project. The ayes have accepted the report.

Social Concern's Committee Report Motion to accept by Sandy Ross. Seconded by Mary Niebling. The ayes have accepted the report.

PACA Committee Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Mary Niebling. The ayes have accepted the Report.

Water System Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Alice Merrill. The ayes have accepted the report.

Wastewater System Report Motion to accept by Alice Merrill. Seconded by Rose Paul. The ayes have accepted the report.

Cemetery Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Sandy Ross. The ayes have accepted the report.

Conservation Commission Report Motion to accept by Bob Atchinson. Seconded by Laura Zeisel. The ayes have accepted the report.

E-911 Report Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Janice Walrafen. The ayes have accepted the report.

Fire and Rescue Report Motion to accept by Monica Light. Seconded by Daniel Marcus. The ayes have accepted the report.

Fire Warden Report Motion to accept by Monica Light. Seconded by Allen Clark. The ayes have accepted the report.

Energy Coordinator Report Motion to accept by Allen Clark. Seconded by Debra Stoleroff. The ayes have accepted the report.

Art. 5 Shall the Town voters authorize an appropriation of \$2,500.00 to the Conservation Fund? Motion to accept by Mary Niebling. Seconded by Brian Hurlbert. Peter Youngbaer wants to know why this budget amount is listed here and in the budget. Linda Wells answers that it is because it is a Town fund. Rose Paul speaks in favor of the fund and that she thinks it is being put to good use. The ayes have approved the motion.

Art. 6 Shall the Town of Plainfield appropriate the sum of \$8,333 as its share of the first year cost of commuter bus service along Route 2 with service into Montpelier. This appropriation funds a portion of the total cost of the service, which will also be supported by appropriations from other towns, a state grant, and rider fares? Motion to accept by Sandy Ross. Seconded by Andrea Gould. Bob Atchinson spoke in favor of the project, he felt it was very important for people who can't afford to pay for gas, and it is also good for the environment. Keith Terry said that Meredith is here from Green Mountain Transit and the selectboard has some questions. He further states that the Selectboard opposes the pick up point at Goddard. They feel that the pick up should be at the Park and Ride. Meredith is given permission by the voters to speak. She says that the hill in the village is a concern for the bus. Keith mentions that the buses already use the hill and that the Park and Ride was built for this purpose. Keith also states that the route seems to have changed without the Selectboard knowing, to now be going to ST. J. He wants to know if they will be contributing. Meredith answers that the other towns are in a different region and that they will be responsible for their local match. Keith wants to know what will happen after the 1st year. Meredith says that it is a 3 year grant and they

will go from there. Leda Schubert wants to know if any surveys about rider ship were done. Meredith answers that surveys were not done in the individual towns. Brenda Lindemann wants to know if there will be additional stops, Diana Tetrault support it, Steve Farnham supports it but worries about parking in the village. Greg Light thinks \$8000 dollars is a lot of money. Nobody uses the park and ride that we built. People are having trouble paying taxes. Kim Pierce thinks it's a good idea. Gary Graves, Selectboard has reservations. The bus will only hold 33 people. Gary thinks the users of the bus should pay and not everyone else, the project keeps changing without the Selectboard being notified. Gary wants the voters to give the Selectboard some leeway in the decision. Donny mentions that the voters don't have to give them money every year. He thinks we should start the service. Debra Stoleroff feels that when the voters make a decision the Selectboard should follow it, she wants to know what Gary means by leeway. Gary is not saying don't do it, but he's concerned about all the changes. Bryan Pfeiffer thinks that Social Concerns committee should address it. Kim Pierce motions to call the question and stop debate. Seconded by Brian Hurlbert. The ayes have approved calling the question by 2/3 vote. The ayes have approved the motion.

Art. 7 Shall the Town voters authorize the expenditures for the following not- for-profit service agencies as was recommended by the appointed Social Services Committee?

Battered Women's Services	\$ 525.00
Central VT Comm. Action Council	\$ 500.00
Central VT Council on Aging	\$ 1750.00
Central VT Home Health & Hospice	\$ 2,500.00
Family Center of Wash Cty	\$ 300.00
Good Beginnings of Central VT	\$ 300.00
Green Mountain Transit Agency	\$ 786.00
People's Health & Wellness	\$ 750.00
Retired Senior Volunteer Program	\$ 150.00
Sexual Assault Crisis Team	\$ 200.00
Onion River Foodshelf	\$ 700.00
Twinfield Together Mentoring	\$ 250.00
Twin Valley Senior Center	\$ 700.00
VT Association of the Blind	\$ 300.00
Washington Cty Court Diversion	\$ 150.00
Washington Youth Service Bureau	\$ 100.00
Total	\$ 9,961.00

Motion to accept by Janice Walrafen. Seconded by Meg Parker. Greg Light wants to know why Marshfield is only paying \$200.00 for the Twinfield mentoring while we pay \$250.00. (There is no one here to answer.) The ayes have approved the motion.

Art. 8 Shall the Town voters authorize an appropriation of \$25,000.00 to the Cutler Memorial Library to pay for the librarian and the purchase of books and materials to support the mission of the library? Motion to accept by Mary Niebling. Seconded by Melissa Neilson. Alex Thayer spoke about the importance of the local library and in

favor of it. Leda Schubert wants to know who uses the local library and also who pays to belong to another library. A show of hands showed that people use the local library and other libraries. The ayes have approved the motion.

Art. 9 Shall the Town vote to increase the veteran's exemption amount from \$20,000.00 of appraisal value in accordance with 32 VSA Section 3802 (11) to be effective April 1, 2010 tax year? Motion to accept by Gary Graves. Seconded by Bob Atchinson. Diane Tetrault wants to know what about people that are unemployed, shouldn't they get a break too? Gary states that this is only available to disabled veterans. Sandy Ross explains the state pays the difference in the taxes at the \$10,000.00 level, after that the town pays the difference. Meg Parker wants to know how much it will cost the taxpayers. Sandy says that there are only 4 people in the program and it adds about \$1.30 per \$100,000.00 of value per home. Greg Light motions to amend the amount to \$30,000.00. Seconded by Debra Stoleroff. Rose Paul says she would feel better making a decision if she knew what the impact on taxes would be if we went with the \$30,000.00 instead of \$40,000.00. \$40,000.00 would be \$1.30 per thousand and \$30,000.00 would be .65 per thousand. Donny Osman resents that the government puts yet another thing onto the town. Donny is not sure if we should go with \$30,000.00 or \$40,000.00. Bob Barasch feels that the government is already helping disabled vets. Steve Pappas wants to know who put it on the warning. Keith answers that it was a veteran's group that lobbied all the towns. He further answered that the Selectboard does have the right to put an article on the warning without a petition. Jeremy Matt motions to call the question and stop debate. Seconded by Debra Stoleroff. The ayes have approved calling the question by 2/3 vote. The voters will now vote on the motion to amend to \$30,000.00. The nays have defeated the motion. Mary Niebling wants to know how disabled does a veteran need to be. Sandy Ross answers that the Veteran's Administration makes the decision. Steve Pappas wants to know what will happen if we vote it down. Linda Wells answers that it will stay at the current amount of \$20,000.00. Sarah Albert wants to know why the Selectboard would put this on the warning when they don't even put the Conservation Commission request on without a petition. Keith Terry stated that the veteran's request had been done this way before and they are sorry if they have erred. Greg Light motions to call the question and stop debate. Seconded by Jeremy Matt. The ayes have approved calling the question by 2/3 vote. The voters will now vote on the original motion. The nays have defeated the motion.

Art. 10 To see what amount of money the Town will vote to pay for highways, bridges, fire department, and administrative operations of the Town of Plainfield for the period of July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. Keith Terry motions to approve \$855,608.44. Seconded by Gary Graves. Keith speaks for the Selectboard. He wished that the budget could have been level funded, however it was only increased 4.5% over last year. He notes that there are 5 things that have not appeared before; an audit, Agency of Transportation enhancement grant match, a new heater for the town garage, which is required by law. Also, the first payment for the grader that was voted to be purchased last year and a culvert project. He would like to note that the employees were not given a cost of living increase. Steve Farnham wants to know what kind of furnace will be at the town garage. Keith answers that the new furnace will be a combination of wood and something else.

Karl Bissex introduced himself, he is helping the town organize this project. Jesse Shapiro, a neighbor of the town garage is concerned about what comes out of the chimney. Karl answers that it should be improved. The ayes have approved the motion.

Linda Wells and Keith Terry would like to speak. They would like to recognize Claudia Clark who has served for 3 years as Selctboard and will not be continuing on for another term. Keith spoke highly of Claudia and said that she gives 150% of herself. He went on to say that she has agreed to still help write grants. Linda presented Claudia with a certificate. Judy Cyprian was also recognized for serving 6 years on the school board.

Art. 11 Shall the Town vote to accept the provisions of public statutes relating to the collection of taxes by the Town Treasurer, (VSA 32 Section 4791) and vote to collect municipal taxes thirty days from mailing and not prior to August 1, 2010 and collect school taxes on November 10, 2010 and February 9, 2011, collecting half of the total school taxes on each of those dates?

Motion to accept by Greg Light. Seconded by Gary Graves. The ayes have approved the motion.

Art. 12 To transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting. Glenda Bissex wants to thank all the volunteers for all the work they do. Steve Farnham wants to know why the library cannot be included in the final budget figure in the town report. George Springston asks if there is a statutory requirement that says we can't include everything in the budget figure. Keith Terry answers that our town auditor's recommend that we do it this way. Bob Atchinson invites everyone to get an energy audit of their home. Mary Niebling would like to invite everyone to buy some pie from PACA. Claudia Clark invites everyone to take part in the Plainfield Community Conversations on March 12th and 13th. Allen Clark reminds everyone about the annual shrub and tree sale. Christine Farren spoke about the banners hanging below the stage. They will be hung up as part of a traffic claming effort.

Motion to adjourn at 12:20 by Bob Barasch. Seconded by David Diamantis. The ayes have approved the motion and the meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Smith, Asst Town Clerk