

Plainfield Town Meeting March 4, 2014

Charlie Barasch called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

The legal voters of the Town of Plainfield are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Town Hall, 18 High Street, on Tuesday the 4th day of March, 2014 at ten o'clock in the forenoon to transact the following business and to vote by Australian ballot from 9:00 a.m. To 7:00 p.m. on Article 1 and 2.

Art. 1. To elect all officers for the ensuing year: Moderator, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Selectboard, Lister, Auditor, Collector of Delinquent Taxes, Town Grand Juror, Town Law Agent, Recreation Committee, Cemetery Commissioner, and School Director.

Art. 2. Shall the Town give the Selectboard authority to appoint Recreation Committee member as per VT Statute Title 31 § 203; Control and Supervision of the System?

Polls are open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Lets us start with a moment of silence to remember those who are no longer with us. We did lose two who served the community, Clyfton Andress and David Lovely; we can remember everyone. Let's take a moment of silence to remember those who are no longer with us.

So we'll begin the meeting, and a reminder that there can be no personal attacks when you're speaking. That means, verbal, physical – hatchets and that kind of thing. And also, my role as moderator is to help you accomplish the business you intend to do. Please raise your hand and ask questions if you don't understand what is happening, if you think what is happening is wrong for some reason, if you want to do something but you don't know how to proceed. Please tell me if you feel I'm doing it improperly. At this time I ask that those who are not registered voters in the Town of Plainfield. If you're not a registered voter, raise your hand. Unless there is a suspension in the rules, you may not vote or speak on Articles. The polls are open until 7:00 p.m. In the back of your Report, there is a list of committees to serve on if you'd like to volunteer for anything. I loved reading through the Town Report this year; it really shows how vibrant a community Plainfield is, and what remarkable work has always been going on in town.

Selectboard Chair Dave Strong spoke: It's a thrill to have everyone here today and it's great to be able to conduct our business here after two and a half years. This sign went up on the door, two and a half years ago: “This building closed to further activities until further notice, do not enter.” [holding up sign]. It was a real challenge for the community to help solve this problem, and there's been an enormous amount of work by a lot of people over the last two and a half years. You can't see most of the work; you can't see the reinforcement work that was done in the attic. You can't see the drainage work around – it's buried – around the perimeter of the building. But we solved the drainage problem, which was a chronic problem which made people discouraged. People didn't want to fix up the building if we couldn't solve the drainage problem and that was a good way to go, and I agreed with that. So we put in a new water service line, we fixed the mold problem, you probably noticed when you came in, no mold smell right now, so that's been taken care of.

We have had a lot of contractors working here. We have a new baseboard heating system in the hall, thanks to Gary Goulette, who is here, and Jason Webster. It's not finished, we're still going to put more radiators under the windows and we're going to see if this little 75,000 BTU boiler is capable of handling the building once it's insulated in the attic and the walls. If it isn't, we've got room to add a little add-on. But this hall's not going to be cold again, or drafty, or noisy the way it was before. So that's a great improvement. So I just want to again welcome everyone, and maybe I'll just ceremoniously rip this. [rips up "Do Not Enter" sign] Everyone applauded.

Charlie Barasch: The Cutler Library is selling flowers; the Fireman's Club is selling chili, coffee and donuts. There's a lot of pie in the back which is to benefit the Town Hall Renovation. Bob Atchinson, the Energy Coordinator, has a display in the back as well. There are handouts from the Social Concerns agencies and Senator Doyle's poll. There are more Town Reports if you happened to have forgotten yours. Food Shelf donations are being collected downstairs along the wall in the front entrance. When you wish to speak, please state your name and use the microphone. The minutes last year are really good. I've enjoyed reading them. Some of the people have come up and told Linda how much they enjoyed reading them. The minutes are great, but you have to state your name, even if you think she or I should know them. You remember faces, but you often forget names. As I've done for the past many years, I'm going to start by reading a poem, and this is by Po Chu, a Chinese poet from the 9th century. And I picked it because it's kind of a municipal poem. I think he was a tax collector. So I thought it would be appropriate at Town Meeting to read this one. It's called "After Collecting the Autumn Taxes."

*In these high walls, I look at the town below
Where the natives of Pa cluster like a swarm of flies
How can I govern these people and lead them aright;
I cannot even understand what they say.
But at least I'm glad now that the taxes are in
to learn in my province there's no discontent
I fear this prosperity is not due to me
It was only caused by the year's abundant crops*

*The papers I have to deal with are simple and few
My arbor by the lake is leisurely and still
In the autumn rain the berries fall from the eaves
In the evening bell the birds return to the woods
from broken sunlight quavers over the Southern porch
where I lie on a couch abandoned to idleness.*

So that's Plainfield in a nutshell.

Before we go on, unless there's an objection, I see our representative is here, Janet Ancel. So if there's no objection, I'll let her talk for a few minutes.

Janet Ancel: Good morning. I actually – as an ex-Tax Commissioner, I love the idea that I just

had to listen to a poem about a tax collector. I think it's the only Town Meeting in the state that's starting with a poem about taxes.

You know we had a really tough time in the recession, and then tropical storm Irene hit the state and that took a toll, the two events together took a real toll on revenues and took a toll on our budgets and took a toll on infrastructure. We've done some pretty amazing rebuilding since then, and when I think about what Vermont really is – it's not so amazing. We're an incredibly resilient state. We're now at a point where our unemployment rate in Vermont is 4 ½ percent, that's one of the lowest in the country. The other states that do as well as we do are states that have big energy reserves, that are doing oil exploration and things like that. We're not doing those things, but we still have a really positive employment picture. We've added back almost all the jobs that we lost during the recession; not all of them, but we're on a track to get them all back. We have managed I think with a lot of bumps, but we've managed to get the Vermont Health Connect operational. If people are still having difficulties with it, I hope you'll let me know. I may be able to put you in touch with somebody who can help out. That's not to say that all the problems are solved, but it's certainly better than what's going on in a lot of the rest of the country.

One of the other things that I think is important to remember when we talk, because education finance and school budgets are certainly an issue for people throughout the state and I know they are here, and they are in Marshfield and Calais as well, but it is important to remember how great our school system is. We have one of the best in the country and I've heard a report not long ago that said that if Vermont was actually a nation, we would be 7th in the world. I read the report, and that is based on that particular measure we do – I think we're sort of in the neighborhood of Finland. That's also not surprising.

You know there's still issues, I think the big challenges that we have, have to do with the federal government and the fact that federal money that used to support things like food stamps and home heating assistance for people with lower incomes, is all disappearing. We still get some money, but we don't get what we used to get, and that puts a lot of pressure on the state. There's also federal education money that's disappearing. That's one of the reasons why people ask why the budget isn't going up, you know just to 3% – why are our taxes going up more than that. A lot of it has to do with the fact that we have to make up those federal education dollars that we're losing. The one thing, just as an issue that I think is important, particularly in this community that I want to mention, because it was a chance for me to use my position in the State House for something that was just I think really positive for the state, is the issue about Green Up Day.

Melinda came up to me about two months ago and said that Green Up was really struggling and the corporate sponsorship was disappearing, and was there anything I can do? And she and I talked about putting an income tax box on the front of the income tax form, and since taxes is one of the things I have jurisdiction over, I thought for a second and then I thought, that's an absolutely perfect idea. So I got a bill drafted, got a lot of sponsors, Melinda came and spoke to our Committee, we got a unanimous vote out of our Committee, and at the end of last week we got a unanimous vote out of the House. So the bill is now on its way to the Senate. It's a really wonderful program, it's very, very Vermont. It relies on volunteers which is a great thing. And this is a way for volunteers, for people to voluntarily contribute to a program that I think is just really essential to who we are. So, that was exciting for me to get passed through the Senate and have the Governor sign it, but I think that was just absolutely good.

I'm happy to answer questions if you have a few minutes, but I know you have a lot of important town work to do.

Alexandra Thayer: Are you planning to stand up to the Governor and impose higher taxes on the rich people this year? I was really disappointed last year that you guys caved. Janet Ancel: The truth is that we probably will not try to do an income tax increase this year. And it has to do a lot with how successful we will be— we need to get the Senate to say yes and we need to get the Governor to say yes, and my feeling is that they're not going to. Janet thanked everyone for letting me represent you in Montpelier; it really is an honor.

Charlie Barasch: lets move on to Article 3. To hear reports of Town Officers and act on same.

Auditor's Certificate on page 2. Steve Pappas made a motion, Dan Marcus seconded. There was no discussion and the report was accepted.

Town Clerk's report is on pages 22-24. Jan Waterman made a motion, Michele Clark seconded. There was no discussion and the report was accepted.

Town Treasurer's Report is on pages 25-28. Dan Marcus made a motion, Bob Atchinson seconded. Jan Waterman expressed thanks to the Treasurer. After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Delinquent Tax Collector's Report is on pages 30, 73 and 80. Dan Marcus made a motion and Tim Phillips seconded. Voters expressed thanks to George for having only a \$26,000 balance. That's very impressive. Good job. After no further discussion the reports were accepted.

Lister's Report is on page 31. Andy Robinson made a motion, Michele Clark seconded. Lister, Sandy Ross spoke: I just to remind everybody, like I wrote in bold so you can see it, file your Homestead Declaration. You have to do it before April 15 or you get a penalty. You have to do it even if you're not filing Vermont taxes. Otherwise, you will pay a higher school rate. You will pay the non-residential school tax rate. If you have trouble, or don't understand, or want some help with it, I'd be glad to help you with it. You can file it on line without doing any of your other taxes, you can just file this one, it takes maybe three minutes. So if anybody needs any help, please let me know, I'd be glad to help.

Sandy clarified that if somebody uses the automatic tax extension, they need to do this by April 15th. Regardless of whether you are filing your taxes ontime, the Homestead Declaration must be filed by April 15th.

The information you need is all on the little box that's up on the top right-hand side of your tax bill. They want the Span Number, which is at the top of that box, and then there are a couple of questions to determine whether you're actually eligible, and it says 'Do you live in your house?' Stuff like that. Say yes, or no. Six simple questions like that. Then the next thing they want is the next piece of information in that box, which is House-site Education Tax. Right in that box, the next one is House-site Municipal Tax. And then you just have to say, what is your ownership of your property. 100%, right? If that's where you live and that's if you own it. That's all you have to say. If you have a business in your house, you may have to answer a couple of questions, or if you rent a portion of your house, you may have to answer a couple of questions regarding that. That's it.

Bob Barasch: I guess I don't understand the school – a non-resident has to pay a higher school tax? Sandy responded: Correct. The reason this Homestead thing started was because if you own more than 25 acres and you choose to put your property, not the house but the remainder of the land, in a program called Current Use, you can get a break on your taxes. This was to try to help residents get a break who had smaller parcels and who lived in their houses. You have to be a resident living in your house. You can't get a homestead for some other property that you own. So the idea, that the School Tax is divided into two different ways – you either pay the Homestead Rate, this is only related to school taxes, not municipal – municipal is the same for everybody. So it's just the School Tax, which in most towns, in our town, is two-thirds or more of our taxes. So you either pay – if you declare a Homestead, you either pay the Homestead Rate, which in Plainfield is considerably lower. If you don't declare a Homestead or if you are not a resident, you pay a higher School Tax rate.

You must be a resident as of April 1st, so this will not count for you until the following year. And you will not have a tax bill in that case, because you wouldn't have gotten one, because you're not a resident April 1st. If you don't have a tax bill, I can make you out what's called a Lister's Certification with that information that you will need for next year.

There was discussion about non-residents having to pay a higher tax rate. The idea was to try to give a little bit of a break to actual homeowners. Non-residential homes are a second home, or sometimes it's complicated issues, but yes, that's how it works. Homesteads can only be claimed on your primary residence.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Planning Commission is on pages 32-33. Paula Emery made a motion, Dan Marcus seconded.

Paula Emery: I'm new to the Planning Commission as of May. So still really, really new. So basically all I was able to do was proofread the Town Plan, but we do have an approved Town Plan now. We only made ten copies for here, but you can access it from the Plainfield town website and print your own – it's about sixty pages, so you can look at it or print it. If you really need a printed copy, we have printed it. We have ten printed copies here. So, they're over there, on the table, kind of under something. And I do want to encourage people to pay attention to the process. The new Town Plan has some things that you will find very interesting about zoning. And where zoning is going. And the new thing coming up is to look at zoning and fluvial erosion. So those are two major things but the zoning density is what we're going to be trying to address as the Planning Commission, and it will impact lots of you and probably in a good way, but you might want to pay attention. We meet the first and third Mondays, in the town offices at 7:00 p.m.

The Town Plan is approved and in force for the next five years.

Betsy Ziegler: I'm interested in learning about the sidewalks and traffic calming studies you were working on last year.

Paula: The Planning Commission was not working on that but there are people in the room who can give you information about that.

Alice Merrill: We had two studies done this year that affect the village. One was the traffic calming study in the lower village, and the other was how do we access the upper village from

the lower village. So a firm called Broadreach has published those studies for us and I believe they are over on that table if you want to take a look at them, they're also available at the municipal building.

Betsy: The new handrail coming up the steps is already broken. Traffic cones put in the road today have been hit already and broken to pieces. The traffic out there is terrible.

Bram: Before I speak as the Road Commissioner, Mr. Cushing is very shy about this poem, so I'm going to read the poem that the Tax Commissioner wrote. It says: *Get your check in the mail on time, or you will get a great big fine.* George wrote that. Very shy. [Laughter in the hall].

Now, to address your question about the intersection. The intersection out front, in addition to the sidewalk study, has had a very long, sordid history in terms of the town pressuring the state to take action and make repairs. The guardrail that you're referring to, was something that – I don't know if people remember the guardrail before that – it was a series of broken pipes. So they finally addressed fixing that. The fix they put in, unfortunately, created a line-of-sight issues. So the challenge is that in order to put regulation rail on that corner, it has to meet certain specifications. The problem is that the specifications are designed for intersections that make sense. Ours don't. So what they did was, they actually did remove a couple of sections to improve line-of-sight. The thing you're talking about – somebody actually – that happened right, I think it was within two days of putting it up, somebody smashed into it. I can't remember if they addressed that issue.

I am in a dialogue presently with the people from the state in terms of possibly putting flashing lights and lowering the speed limit at this particular intersection. Especially since now the Town Hall is back in order.

In addition, the Selectboard and I think Dave really took leadership on this, we had a meeting at VTRANS I think it was, in which there is a long-term corridor plan to build up, to really completely redo this particular intersection. Strangely enough, and this provides some tense conversations between the state and the town, strangely enough, this particular intersection, they claim, statistically, is not unsafe. [More laughter].

The reason it is statistically not unsafe, is everybody is so terrified driving through the intersection, that they – another odd thing is that the stretch from Plainfield to Marshfield, on the road, is actually statistically one of the deadliest in the state. So they're putting all their resources into that. We're trying to get them to address problems in the intersection. This is a very complicated – if you're interested in the minutiae, there are a lot of line-of-sight issues, and you know there's talk about – there used to be a legal crosswalk, which was removed. Not to bore everybody here but a legal crosswalk means that it's striped, and cars must legally stop for pedestrians.

Now, the problem is, because of the line-of-sight issues, people stopping was causing people to get rear-ended. So we have undesignated crossways, which means that cars don't legally have to stop. That doesn't mean they can hit you, they do have to avoid pedestrians, but they don't legally have to stop. So that's where we are right now. So if you have seven more hours, I'd be happy to sit down with you.

Dave Strong: I just want to add my two cents to that. There was a study in 2005 to put a traffic light at the intersection, to lower the grade and eliminate the island. That was put on hold. We've been pressuring VTRANS to re-activate that. They are in the preliminary stages of scoping that out; but that's going to be a lengthy process, we've got to monitor that. The other

thing, we did study was to have pedestrian walkways from the lower village on bridge on the southside of the bridge, wraparound up to the Town Hall parking lot, so there'd be a sidewalk. And that would bring the sidewalk up to a point where there would be a safe VTRANS crossing at that location, roughly opposite to the Town Hall. So that study we've costed out and we've discussed start looking for grant money for that project.

Peter Youngbaer: I was just wondering if we might have some fun with this, and make a statement, if we could hold a day, organized by the Selectboard, where we all stood out here and blocked traffic, called the press photographer to come down and say hey, you know, get off the dime and do something here we've been asking for years.

Charlie Barasch: Let's do it right now. Yes, go ahead.

Steve Farnham: I wanted to say that figures don't lie, but liars do figure. And I was wondering if the statistical evidence that they say this is one of the safer intersections is misguided. Maybe the statistical evidence points to, that Plainfield drivers are safer than any others in the state. I'm glad you brought up that 2005 study. What can the citizens do to bring pressure on the state to get something going on that? [Laughter].

Dave: We are in touch with the person who's trying to start this study and I think what we should do is invite him to a meeting and get as many people to come as possible. We will keep you posted.

Bram: Just to be fair, I think that it's important to note that the state people were responsive and did give a lot of information and it's not that they're not moving. I don't agree with the assessments that they have and it's not like they're ignoring us completely, it's just – I had a long sit-down and they talked about a lot of other things, so it's not – I don't want to take your time up, but I think that they're being a little more cooperative than maybe I represented.

Sandy Ross: It's a tedious process and unfortunately the only statistics that really matter to the state are fatalities.

Bob Atchinson:

Just a correction; you really don't need fatalities. They also rate property damage and they also rate injuries that are reportable. If you have a fender-bender and you don't report it, we don't have any way of gleaning that information. If you got off your bike and have an injury and don't report it or a pedestrian and you have a slip or something – so make sure that you document stuff because that's part of the – we don't have a full-time police officer in this town. Municipalities that have police departments – everything gets reported. And their highways seem to get all the attention because there's a very good log. So make sure you get in touch with George, make sure you report it to the state police. If they know about it, then it rises to concern.

Allan Farnham: If we go ahead and put this new sidewalk in and we expend the money to put the sidewalk in and the state comes in and has that new sidewalk done over again, then why go ahead .

Alice: I pointed out to Jim Donovan from Broadreach that we had this project in the works at the blinking light and to please understand when he did the plans that he should figure out a way that it's flexible enough and that we plan to interface with them.

Dave: When he talked to VTRANS about his plan, he said he told them we will be setting the

sidewalk back so it wouldn't interfere with their plans for the intersection.

Laura Zeisel: Just a question: do you think, looking ahead to other business, that if we ask them to come to a special informational meeting, would they send someone?

Dave: VTRANS has been very responsive. The regional maintenance people – we've been in touch with, Bram's been in touch with them, we've had a lot of exchanges, they're anxious to communicate with us, so. Just getting an opportunity to do it.

Charlie Barasch: If there is no further discussion. Then we'll vote. The Planning Commission Report was accepted.

Development Review Board Report is on page 34. Steve Pappas made motion, Tim Phillips seconded.

Janice Walrafen: The Municipal Procedures Act, when the Development Review Board was formed by the Selectboard four years ago, they – we are an on-the-record town, that means we have to hold hearings, have them swear in, take records, like minutes-like findings and file all that, which we do. But when something is appealed to the Environmental Court as some of the cases have been, one of the appeals was that we were an on-the-record town, which means that we don't legally file on the record, because we haven't adopted a Municipal Procedures Act, which is a state act that tells us what to do what we're already doing.

So we want to have a discussion with the Selectboard about whether that's the best thing to do, and we were already acting in that capacity, but what that means is when somebody appeals our decision as the DRB and it goes to the Environmental Court, then they re-try it new. They do look at our record, but if we were an on-the-record town the judge could only look and say, did they follow the proper procedures? Did they abide by the Town Plan and the Zoning Regs, did they do everything correct? Yes, so then your decision holds. Now, it's a whole retrial by the Environmental Court. We could weigh in on that – do you want the state to have that authority over us? Because maybe sometime somebody might like your decision for something, you know? But we're doing our best.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Zoning Administrator Report is on pages 37-38. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded. After no discussion the report was accepted.

Selectboard Report is on page 39 and 42. Dan Marcus made a motion, Tim Phillips seconded. Voter stated Thank you to the Selectboard; I know how hard they work and I think they're awesome. [Applause followed].

Brenda Lindemann: I just have a quick question. Are we going to see a change in where town employees get their health insurance in the near future?

Linda Wells: Well, it's changed. We tried to enroll through the Vermont Health Connect and didn't have much success with the online process. Through the Vermont League, we were able to enroll through Blue Cross, directly to them. So we have a plan – arguably comparable to what we had last year, though it's more costly. It's kind of sad that we have Vermont Health Connect and it's costing the town more money. So I think that's an issue coming down the road. But for this year, we seem to be satisfied with it. It's just the beginning of the year; it started in January, so we haven't had a lot of experience with it so far, so I guess we'll have to look forward to seeing what's going to happen in the next few years.

Dave Strong: The cost increase is about \$15,000 more.

That includes the town employees, the highway department, and water/wastewater departments.

Brenda Lindemann: Did you explore the option of people enrolling individually? Because that might have been more cost effective.

Dave Strong: I think people have the option to enroll individually, but only if they're getting a plan that's better than the one we're offering. No, they could do one less.

Bram: Just to be clear about this, I believe there are some employees who are actually using their spouse's – they get a better deal through their spouse. Just so everybody knows, we didn't willy-nilly make a decision about what plan to pick. We actually sat down with a consultant and had a number of maybe lengthy meetings to go over – and the employees – to go over all the different options and so forth. And the carrier is still Blue Cross/Blue Shield. After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Plainfield Town Hall/Opera House Revitalization Committee Report is on page 52-57. Andy Robinson made a motion, Jan Waterman seconded.

Steve Farnham: I was just going to put words to the applause, I'm very thankful to have a group of people doing the best they can to keep this project on development and saving a huge burden to the taxpayers to pay for it. Extraordinary, thank you very much.

Andy Robinson: I'm Andy Robinson; I'm one of those people. Thank you for cueing it up, Steve. This is where I make the pitch. When I stood before you last year we had raised about \$16,000 from the community, which was great. Since then we have raised about another \$26,000 from the community, which is great. We still need to raise roughly another \$30,000 to do everything we want to do in the building, above the grant money that we have been able to get. We're continuing to explore those grants and there is at least some town money in this. The point of me saying this is that if you are interested – I know many people in this room have already contributed – thank you, thank you, thank you. Some of you I hope will have the opportunity to give again, if you have not given yet this is a great opportunity to do so, talk to me, talk to Dave. On the table over there where the town reports are you'll see some materials about the Town Hall Project; and I'll probably be flooding your emails at some point as well so please read them and be gracious about it. Thank you for your support, we are getting really close to getting this project done, thanks to everybody in this room, so thanks.

[Applause].

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Social Concerns Committee Report is on pages 58-61. Jan Waterman made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Alexandra Thayer: Hi, I am wondering about the Twinfield Senior Center. It may be that when this request was made they hadn't finalized plans of where to go, but I know the Senior Center is hoping to do a great deal more than it has been able to do in the past and having a very accessible location. They had asked for \$1500 and the group was recommending \$1100 dollars and I don't mean to impugn their work but I do think that we should take note that the Senior Center is interested in really feeling a need to move out from where it is in terms of space and constraints and probably could do with what they asked for.

Charlie Barasch: I think we'll do the money part when we get to that article on the warning.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Water System Report is on page 68. Scott Stewart made a motion, Tim Phillips seconded. After no discussion the report was accepted.

Wastewater Department Report is on pages 74-76. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded. After no discussion the report was accepted.

Conservation Commission Report is on pages 82-83. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Jan Waterman: I serve on the Conservation Commission. A couple of things. We've been working hard on getting a lovely new trail system designed and built in the new town forest. On the wall over there, just above the plant sale brochures – plant sale time! – there's a map of the town forest with prospective trails laid out. We've been working hard on getting grants and getting the trails designed and getting the town forest for people to use and enjoy. Second thing, with our new Town Plan, if you haven't seen it please look at it – one of the features is this year, think for the first time in the Goals and Strategies sections, at the end of each chapter priorities have been assigned to the tasks and responsibilities for carrying out those tasks has been assigned, which is a really good thing. Conservation Commission now has really a lot of stuff to do, which is a good thing, and we really do need help. You don't have to join the Conservation Commission, but please, if you're interested in helping on any of these very worthwhile good things, contact any of us. All of our phone numbers and names are in the Town Report at the end of this report. You could help with disseminating public information, with doing research for funding, for a variety of good projects. You could help us work making contact with making relationships with local schools to involve youth in conservation-related issues. Education, on a number of fronts. We're hoping to be able to soon, in the coming year, inventory and map existing conservation easements, current use and deed restrictions, so planners and people interested in building and development know what's where. We want to create a database to help with the same thing, all of the conservation easements. There are also the decisions about remodeling, or the historic value of a house that you may own. Where is information to help you when you plan to make changes? We want to encourage and support our farmers. We need farmer boosters, farm tours, let's get creative. Encouraging agricultural ventures, support people who are continuing to work the land, keep it a working landscape as much as we can. Support the village street treat program. Buy things at the plant sale. All of those things are in the Town Plan. So if you want to read that, that's great. If you just want to talk to me or anyone else on the Conservation Commission because you'd like to help contribute that would be so wonderful. Thank you.

After no discussion the report was accepted

E911 Report is on page 86. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Sandy Ross: The Selectboard decided last year to finally get those nice green reflective 911 house signs. Please make sure that yours is visible from the road. That's the whole point. If you don't know what I'm talking about and therefore didn't get one, we still have some down at the town offices that haven't been claimed yet. And if your number's not there, let me know and we'll order one for you.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Fire and Rescue Report is on page 87. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Loona Brogan: [After permission granted to speak as a non-resident].

I'd like us all to send our best thoughts, prayers, love and healing energy to the Light family today. Greg is down in Boston, Mass, he had an accident, and they've reattached one of his fingers, and one of them couldn't be saved. And he's suffered an accident. He's done a lot in this community, I know we all think highly of him and his family, so I thought we'd take a moment to send our prayers and thoughts to them.

After no further discussion, the report was accepted.

Emergency Management Director's Report is on page 90. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Dave Strong: Robert Bridges, the emergency coordinator, asked us to announce that we're looking for volunteers to attend the Red Cross Shelter Training at Goddard College Haybarn, Saturday March 8th between 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The Red Cross has entered into a contract with Goddard to provide emergency services for the town. And we need to have a certain number of certified volunteers in order to get that up and running. So if you're interested you can contact Bob. That's Saturday March 8th between 9:00 and 11:30 a.m. I have the information up here.

After no further discussion, the report was accepted.

Recreation Committee Report is on page 93-94. Tim Phillips made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

George Springston: I'd just like to thank the committee for their hard work on maintaining the ice rink which looks wonderful this year. So that's a great thing to have in the town.

After a question about the recreation committee ballot was raised, Dave explained the ballot calls for whether they should be appointed by the Selectboard. Bram added that there aren't names on there because we're proposing to change the recreation committee from elected positions to people appointed by the Selectboard. So we just want to – the reason you're voting on it is that we – you – want to give us the power to appoint people. The way it works now, we have a very solid group of people who are on the committee and they each are sort of working on their own individual projects, whether its softball, the ice rink, whatever. And it worked fairly well, but we want to have the power to just appoint them and not have people vote.

After no further discussion, the report was accepted.

Cemetery Commission Report is on page 97 and 98. Melinda Vieux made a motion, Scott Stewart seconded.

Bram: I'd just like to thank the people who are doing a great job on that. It takes a lot of time to do this work.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

Plainfield Energy Coordinator Report is on page 99-104. Alexandra Thayer made a motion, Jan Waterman seconded.

Alexandra Thayer: I just want to thank Bob and my husband, they've put a lot of time into this, and I know they've visited various people's homes. Those of you who know us know that we

have solar power and wind power. I so appreciate them spending the time that it takes to see what they can do to help other people in town. I know they've also worked on the Town Hall and they've looked at Twinfield and worked with Twinfield to see what can be done to help make Twinfield more energy efficient. So, I – you know I am partial, because Ed's my husband, and he's a wonderful guy, you all know he walks on water, but Bob, also, the two of them have just put in such an amount of work and I think it's just a real benefit to all of us so thank you both. [Applause]

Michele Clark: Since there's been so many thanks I wanted to say, because I missed my opportunity, I've had a sick friend on Lower Road, David Palmer, I know many of you know him, he died on April 30th, and the Fire and Rescue people, who I think we didn't get to thank, were just fabulous. The EMTs and all of them, because they came several times, over the months that he was failing. They were just wonderful. So, I just wanted to say. [Applause]

Bob Atchinson: I just wanted to tell you that anybody whom we've done a home energy visit for I wish you'd stand up and acknowledge the fact that you tolerated us being in your home; you decided to move forward with some energy improvements, and these are your friends and neighbors folks, so talk to them, see how it's worked out for them, and we still have some opportunities, but only until the 15th of March to make a reservation and get a home energy visit. And we still have \$100 audits. If you thought maybe you were paying a little bit for oil this year, it's because – or for propane or for whatever it is that you use to heat your house – it's true. The degree days are rampant. And it looks like some of the traffic through town is a lot of oil trucks lately going through. And fuel trucks of all sorts. So let us give you a hand, let us help you out, we've got a table back there with a lot of information for you, we're also having a raffle. Free things. You need to sign a card, stick it in the box back there, and you can get anything from a smart strip for one of your appliances or your computer or low shower heads, to LED light bulbs, you name it. But there's a wealth of knowledge; Ed and I are both certified. We're working on new projects this year. One of them is going to be to use some grant money that was for the park n' ride to install solar panels on the roof of the Wastewater plant. That will put in 5 kilowatts of electricity there, and we're trying to look for a little funding in the neighborhood through a town lease or your upfront costs to fill the whole roof. This works in two ways, not only does it take some of the load off the Wastewater plant, it might just take some off the demand charges, which is the fee that you pay just to have the extra capacity there.

Another project going on is at Twinfield, we have a solar subcommittee. The two energy committees in Marshfield and Plainfield meet together and collaborate on projects. We've done recently a Twinfield Lighting Project, which is still working its way to fruition; and we also visited Crossett Brook Middle School last Friday to look at their solar array. And if you haven't seen that, pictures of that are out back, 157 kilowatts of electricity, doing 40% of the load at the school. We want to do that at Twinfield. This involves no upfront costs. The contractor who hoisted the array uses the school van to put it up there, and they get the energy credits, the school gets the kilowatt hours. 40% of the load that's at Twinfield I believe is becoming 50,000 kilowatt hours per year. The Lighting Project will take it down to somewhere like 109 or 200,000 slightly but we're still working at it. Talk to us, tell us what your thoughts are, if you need some help, coaching, whatever, Becky and Alex will graciously loan us out for a little bit of time. But our cards are on the back table with information. Go for it, thanks. [Applause]

Sandy Ross: Bob came to our house in November and I thought that the inspection was extremely thorough and really, really helpful, but we've not yet been able to get one of the approved contractors to even schedule or even talk to us about going any further. So that's a real problem. There are only a very limited number of people who are permitted to do this work if you want to get any kind of rebate from Energy Vermont or Efficiency Vermont. So we've done a lot of it ourselves and just spent the money and weather stripped and stuff and it's made a huge difference. But I'm finding it frustrating because we wanted to go further with this and we have not been able to.

Bob: I feel your frustration, and we have three certified contractors in the area, we have some in Montpelier, some in Plainfield, but they can't believe the work they have in front of them, and I would still strongly encourage you to get in ahold of Will Fitzpatrick, Chris Miksic, make a reservation.

The Plainfield Hardware Store the other day and they have the LED bulbs that normally cost \$25 or something dollars, and they're five dollars. I got one, just to see what its light and it's beautiful, the lighting is really nice. So everybody go right down there.

After no further discussion the report was accepted.

The Tree Warden report is not in the Town Reports, Nicholas (Nicko) Rubin, the Tree Warden, would like to introduce himself to the community.

Nicko Rubin: I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm responsible for care, maintenance of the trees. If people have questions about their own trees or town trees, please feel free to ask me. The Conservation Commission also does a tremendous amount and really has added a lot to our town, especially in recent years with respect to the street trees and I'm happy to be helping take care of them. We pruned the tree out front here this year as well as other trees in Plainfield, and I just wanted to make myself known and available as a resource. Thank you.

Steve Farnham: Along the subject of trees, I just wanted to make an announcement; there is three species of invasive pests, either at the edge of our state or about to enter it. Emerald Ash Borer is pretty much all the way around us; the Hemlock is something that I think has entered one of the southern counties, and then there's the Asian Longhorn Beetle which is in the country but it's a little slower mover. And all of these insects have no known predators or no known biological check if you will, on their spread. So if you're old enough to remember back when we used to have Elm trees and you know what Dutch Elm disease is, each of these predators poses a risk to – in the case of the Emerald Ash Borer, of course Ash trees, Hemlock the Hemlocks, and the Asian Longhorn Beetle apparently isn't particularly fussy so long as it's a deciduous tree with sweet sap, which of course that means that would imperil our Maples. There is a statewide program to get people's awareness of these up and what to do and not do in order to not exacerbate the problem. If you've ever seen one of those bumper stickers that says, "Don't move firewood; it bugs me." That's what that's about. If you are in the firewood business, you should sell it locally, don't truck it in and out of the state, that's how pests move from one place to another. And the state has a – UVM Extension is working on this, and the State Foresters are working on it and I wanted to make that known.

Charlie Barasch: Let's move on to Article 4.

Voter: Asked about the Historical Society Report? The report is not a Town Officer report. There are other reports in your Town Report, but that's all the reports of the Town Officers. So let's move on to Article 4.

Art. 4 Should the town appropriate the sum of \$8,333.00 as its share of the fifth year cost of the 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, State and Federal Funds, and rider fares. Paula Emery made a motion, Nicko Rubin seconded.

Bob Atchinson: I'd like to – a little bit about the US 2 Commuter Bus, I'd just like to let you know that for fiscal year '13 the total ridership has increased to 22,791. That's up 19.6% from the previous year and presently, FY '14, the trend July through November of 2013, 25% increase in overall ridership, including 1,100 people ons and offs in one month ridership. Plainfield is really a heavy user of this service, they really take advantage of it, and most of the – I think its 25-30% of the ridership on/offs are from Plainfield. It also shows that the only other stop that's more populous is the one at State Street because people ride the bus down from National Life down to State Street for a local commuter. That has slacked off a little bit because of the new City Commuter in Montpelier. But I urge you to support this bus, this is – ridership has moved from small bus to large bus as you see, just remember that when you've got 20 people in the bus, that's twenty cars that aren't going to be coming through our intersection. And they're bright, taller and easier to see. So, if for no other reason to do that, the red bus, if you happen to ride it, is the RTC out of St. Johnsbury, they somehow, every time I ask them why they don't charge, they say well, its because it's too administratively expensive. So it's a free bus. Get on the red one and you don't have to pay anything to ride it. There's a new time route, they removed the one-way trip that was at the end of the day, because it wasn't showing much ridership, so there's a new time route, you can go into Montpelier, spend half a day, ride back at the end of the day, or ride in the morning and come back at noontime. So, take advantage. Leave your car at home, don't pay all money for gasoline, just get on and ride.

Loona Brogan: If you want a paper copy of the schedule, we have it at the library.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. All in favor of appropriating the sum of \$8,333.00 dollars, Plainfield's share of the fifth year cost of the commuter bus service along Route 2, with service to Montpelier, which appropriation funds the proportion of the total cost of the service, which will also be supported by appropriations from other towns, State and Federal funds, and rider fares. All in favor say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Motion is approved.

Art. 5 Shall the Town establish a Town Hall Building Reserve Fund for long-term maintenance and capital improvements? Bob Atchinson made a motion, Brenda Lindemann seconded.

Dave Strong: The Town has a lot of different reserve funds established for different buildings, the municipal building has a reserve fund, highway equipment has a reserve fund, and what creating a reserve fund allows the Selectboard to do is to use surplus funds that are available at the end of the year, to endow that out of that fund. You can't do that, unless you have a fund established already. So this proposal is for the Town to set up a reserve fund for the Town Hall. And I guess that speaks for itself.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. All in favor of establishing a Town Hall Reserve Fund for the long-term maintenance and capital improvements say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is approved.

Art. 6. Shall the Town Authorize the Selectboard to appropriate up to \$10,000 annually for the

Town Hall Building Reserve Fund from the unreserved funds? Jan Waterman made a motion, Dan Marcus seconded.

Dave Strong: Well the Selectboard has been doing a lot of thinking about the Town Hall since we had the crisis a few years ago and we've come up with a management plan for the Town Hall. Actually one of the grant agencies required that we address long-term maintenance of the building. And we have a report which we've adopted policy, it's going to be effective July 1st if everything goes according to plan. And we've identified that over the course of ten years, \$100,000 in maintenance is needed to keep this building going. The problem that it's had in the past is that there was no plan to maintain long-term maintenance. So every time there was a problem, it had to impact the budget. So we've got a schedule for future capital improvements, which includes sanding and refinishing the floors every five years, that's \$5,000. Repainting the interior every five years, \$15,000, interior repairs and improvements – \$10,000 every five years. Painting and repairing the exterior of the building, \$25,000 every ten years, and then major systems repair and replacement, \$15,000 every ten years. And so if you add all that up it came to \$100,000 long-term maintenance cost over the course of ten years. So that's how the figure of \$10,000 was arrived at. We think that it's necessary for the Town to put aside \$10,000 for the long-term maintenance of the building so that it's available there to keep the building in shape so that we don't get into the kind of crisis where we had to raise \$300,000 in order to bring it back to life. And the proposal is to take – to use surplus, unrestricted surplus funds, to put in this coming year. And we can do that because the Town enjoys a surplus of about \$200,000 now. And we don't always have a surplus at the end of the year. Most of the time in the last several years what we've been doing with surplus's is using it to pay down the tax. Let's say the cost of the Town government goes up \$25,000 this year, over last year. But if we increase the amount of surplus we apply against that, you can zero out the taxes. And that's what we've been doing for the last couple of years. And so when you have as surplus at the end of the year – that's one of the Articles warned today, Article 14, every year, shall we use the surplus to pay down the taxes?

So, all we're saying is that if there is a surplus, this Article will allow the Selectboard to appropriate up to \$10,000 and no more to go into a reserve fund for the Town Hall. And so I think at the end of the year the Selectboard could decide how much we want to set aside to reduce taxes, is there enough to put money into the Town reserve fund, and they will have that ability to do that at the end of the year. And that's one of the ways we see endowing the Town Hall Fund.

Bram: I'd just like to touch on a couple of things. There is somebody who I had a lengthy discussion about this and I don't see them here so I just want to speak in general about the Town Hall and your tax dollars. This is a sensitive issue. And I think that there are many people who question, hey – this is getting expensive. We on the Selectboard are very concerned about things turning into a money pit, and keeping a lid on things. Therefore, we're trying to hire somebody who will promote – having this space used and actually pay for itself or actually bring in income. So, we'd like to give that a shot. And we have a person – we went through a process of looking at different people to manage the space and we selected a team of three people who are new to Plainfield, actually. They're very interested. And actually one of them is here. I don't know if this is the time for it to be appropriate for her to introduce herself.

We'll get to the budget. But I want everybody to know and I'm sorry that the person I had a long talk with isn't here to ask the questions and voice concerns, but I want everybody to know that

we're very cognitive about what the past issue was. I think the Town has really gotten a bargain in terms of my fellow Selectboard member Dave Strong, who has been tirelessly acting as a general contractor; he's been on site here every day for the last six months, and been on top of the work. And we've had a lot of other input from people overseeing the work. So you know, we'd like to try to give this a shot and see if we can get money coming in and see if the building can pay for itself and try to be responsible and we're going to be very careful about stuff and if anybody has any complaints, or concerns, please approach us and we will look at what's going on.

Dave: Bram pointed out that another potential source of funds for the Reserve Fund is the net revenue from the operation of the Hall. And maybe when we get to that budget item – we've allocated \$5,000 for Town Hall management services, and the idea, and part of the plan is to generate revenue that could then endow the fund and not have to draw on surplus if it's not necessary.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. All in favor of authorizing the Selectboard to appropriate up to \$10,000 annually for the Town Hall Building Reserve Fund from any Unreserved funds, say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is approved.

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

American Red Cross	\$	100.00
Central VT Adult Basic Education	\$	400.00
Central VT Comm. Action Council	\$	500.00
Circle/BWSS	\$	500.00
Family Center of Washington County	\$	450.00
Friends of the Winooski River	\$	250.00
Good Beginnings of Central Vermont	\$	300.00
Green Mountain Transit Agency	\$	786.00
Home Share Now	\$	250.00
Onion River Foodshelf	\$	1,000.00
People's Health and Wellness	\$	750.00
RSVP	\$	150.00
Sexual Assault Crisis Team	\$	50.00
Twinfield Learning Center	\$	400.00
Twinfield Together Mentoring	\$	250.00
Twin Valley Senior Center	\$	1,100.00
VT Association of the Blind	\$	200.00
Washington Cty Court Diversion	\$	200.00
Washington Cty Youth Service Bureau	\$	300.00
Total	\$	7,936.00

Mary Niebling made a motion, Andy Robinson seconded.

Mary Niebling: Good morning. I'm on the Social Concerns Committee, along with Gail Falk

who is not here today. Each year for the last five years maybe – well five years ago the Town decided to have a process that organizations could go through to apply for funds, and the Social Concerns Committee volunteers to review those requests and make recommendations. You'll see on page 61 our report of what people have requested over the years, and what the Town has approved for that, for each organization. Every year there seems to be some organizations that don't get the application and don't put in a request and you'll see a couple of organizations have no request listed. We'd love to have more people join the committee, as I said it's just myself and Gail Falk right now. So I urge your consideration and vote on the recommendations.

Sue Remington: I see that Twin Valley Senior Center of which I'm now a very proud member, was reduced from their original request of \$1500 dollars to \$1100 dollars but then on Art. 10 where we can appropriate \$1600 to Montpelier Senior Activities Center, I want to report that we have been fundraising with Twin Valley to move from Marshfield Town Offices/Town Hall or whatever the municipal building which is very cramped quarters for the Senior Center and have now gotten the appropriations needed to get together to move up to Blueberry Hill, where the church was. And we hope to be moving – thought we'd be moved by now but things just don't fall the way you want them to. We're going to be moving now by the end of March. I think it will happen, and part of it is having a complete kitchen, as in a restaurant type kitchen and expanding. Right now, we have a very small dining room space and we'll be able to do a lot more. And one of the changes is for us to be open five days a week. We are currently open three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I'd rather see first of all most of our people are trying to get a line of accounts, Cabot, Marshfield, Plainfield, East Montpelier, East Calais and Woodbury. And we don't have very many people. We serve senior meals-on-wheels but we don't have very many people commuting down and it'll put us in more of a U-shape centered area and I got to make a request or amendment I guess it is, to put the Twin Valley Senior Center from the \$1,100 dollars back up to the \$1,500 dollars and later request to either negate or reduce the amount for the Montpelier Senior Center, because I think we need to sponsor local. Thank you.

Charlie Barasch: We'll get to the Montpelier Senior Activities Center later. So I think you're amendment will just be to change the Twin Valley Senior Center appropriation from \$1,100 to \$1,500 dollars? Is there a second? Anyone second? Brenda Lindemann seconded the motion.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion?

Bram Towbin: Yes, I very much support the activities of all the groups that are named, speaking as a Selectboard member; it's incredibly difficult to get volunteers to serve on committees. And they spend a lot of time when you get them; they spend a lot of time on the committee. The purpose of the Social Concerns Committee, the reason why it was founded, was to avoid the exact lengthy discussions we're going to be having regarding the up and down of these things, \$100 or \$200 dollars or whether people get things in late. Unfortunately, you know my position, just FYI, is in support of the Social Concerns Committee. I just want to accept the recommendations. That's not to say that the groups that do this work aren't valid, I think they are. I think there are opportunities for people to make private donations. But as the Selectboard and a Town matter, I have to back up the Social Concerns Committee.

Alice: I just want to reiterate what Bram said, I think we have to go through a year of kind of tough love, to teach these agencies how our system works. Because I think we've been doing this for maybe five years, and it's time people catch on as to how the process works.

Alexandra Thayer: We did make a private donation. I'm a little concerned about saying,

“Teaching these agencies.” Twinfield Senior Center asked for \$1,500 dollars. They don’t need to get taught. They got level-funded from last year. They have applied for a grant to help them build a kitchen, they need money to match that grant in order to get it, and they serve – my father-in-law who died when he was 100, got the most wonderful birthday party from there because the people there really care about people. So it may well be that when this was put together people didn't realize that they were going to be able to move to Blueberry Hill and what the considerations were. I just think that Susie's comment about the Montpelier Senior Center getting more than the Twinfield Senior Center is well-noted. They put in an article in the warning, so they're not part of the Social Concerns. They did it separately, and I support Susie's amendment and ask that we vote that out.

Michele Clark: I'm newly participating in the Senior Center and I find it, I would support Susie and back to what they've accepted. I don't know if people realize how many meals they distribute. It's over 135-140 meals-on-wheels. This kitchen and this move, is going to allow them to reach more seniors in their homes and to allow more programs for those of us who now are participating and I am one. I happen to participate just in the Thai Chi class on Monday; it's wonderful. The seniors there are wonderful and well-cared for and I think it's something that we should be supporting because for many community members that is the only social activities they have. Some of us are still mobile enough to get out and do other things, but for those folks who rely on that for their social interactions, and if they ask for \$1,500 dollars I believe we should be supporting them.

Charlie Barasch: Any further discussion?

Laura Zeisel: Yes, I used to be a member of the Social Concerns Committee and I know how very difficult it is to make recommendations for organizations which we probably all support. So I don't want to put Mary on the spot, but I want to know, at the time that you got the request from the Senior Center, was it known that they were going to move, and can you explain why their request for \$1,500 dollars was reduced. Is that sort of a pattern?

Mary Niebling: We did not know at the time, as you may recall the notice came out on Front Porch Forum at the end of the year. We had made our recommendations before that time. However, if you look at the history of funding for the Senior Center, there was a big jump several years ago, up. And now it is the highest amount that we are supporting. So I would – I think a capital campaign is great, but these are for operating costs for the non-profits and so I would not confuse the two.

Joyce Fowler: Just to know there's interest, we do have a website now up and running. It's Twinvalleyseniors.org. Thank you for your support. I'm a volunteer there and been there for many years and I'm a member of the Board.

Charlie Barasch: Thank you. Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote on the Amendment. All in favor of changing the amount appropriated for the Twin Valley Senior Center from \$1,100 to \$1,500 say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay. Nay. The ayes appear to have it. The ayes have it and the Amendment is approved but we'll continue the discussion of the motion with either change the \$1,100 to \$1,500 dollars included. Is there any further discussion?

Peter Youngbaer: I'm the Executive Director of the People's Health and Wellness Clinic in Barre. And I noted when I got my Town Report that somehow our statistics did not get in there. We do send those out to all 23 towns in Washington County, and Washington Leagues town's right after the first of the year, who vote us money at Town Meeting and there's a full report.

Linda was nice to make copies and put it over there. I'll just give you some brief statistics. We are a free clinic. We serve people who need primary care and wellness education who cannot otherwise afford the services from all of Washington County and beyond. Last year we served people from 49 Vermont towns. We have 2,551 patient interactions; 1,464 medical visits, 654 unduplicated patients, which even with all the healthcare reform going on, was a 19% increase over the prior year. In terms of Plainfield residents, we had 27 medical visits, 13 unduplicated individuals, 12 case management visits, 53 diagnostic tests that we arranged to pay for, labs, X-rays, MRI's, etc. Prescriptions and pharmaceutical samples, seven times. One of our biggest activities this year has been something we've done for many years which is assisting people in applying for and enroll in the various health insurance programs and those could be from pharmaceutical companies, hospital patients, financial assistance programs, Medicaid, what used to be VHAP and Catamount and what is now Vermont Health Connect. And I'm one of the six navigators that we have currently working to help people with Vermont Health Connect. Gail Falk and Brenda Lindemann are too.

I also want to take the opportunity to say that there is a very important deadline coming up, March 15, just a few days from now, anyone who has extended their health insurance through commercial plans, sole proprietorships, or any of the state plans, those all expire at the end of March, and in order to ensure coverage for April 1st, continuous coverage, you need to complete your application by the 15th of the month.

We're not the only navigators in Washington County. The Health Center is doing that; the Chamber of Commerce Business's for Social Responsibility, Central Vermont Community Action, and the Campaign for Healthcare Security. There are many navigators and assisters around who can help you. If you have any questions about the Healthcare Exchange or the plans, I'm around all day so please ask me about that. I would say on an upbeat note, we are celebrating our 20th anniversary this year as a free clinic. I'm sad to say there are still a need for free clinics in Vermont and in the United States. But the sad fact is that even with all of the healthcare reform there are many people who are not eligible for the plans, cannot afford the plans, and have things that aren't covered by the plans. So our need for existence continues. Thank you for the opportunity to give you information. [Applause]

Charlie: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. Does the town authorize the expenditures for the following not-for-profit service agencies as recommended by the appointed Social Concerns Committee? If it's all right with you, I won't read down the whole list again. And the total is now \$8,336.00 with the Twin Valley Senior Center at \$1,500 dollars. All in favor say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is approved.

Michele Clark: Can we take up Article 10 now?

Charlie: OK, you want to suspend the rules –

Michele: I make a motion to suspend the rules to take up Article 10 now? As I have to leave the meeting.

Charlie: Well – the motion is to suspend the rules so that Article 10 can be taken up now, is that correct? **Michele:** Yes.

Charlie: Wait, wait, wait. That will require a two-thirds vote.

Charlie: Michele has to leave, and she wanted to talk about Article 10. And that requires a

suspension of the rules, which will require a two-thirds vote, and it will also require a second. Laura Zeisel seconded the motion.

Charlie: So we'll vote. All in favor of suspending the rules allowing us to bring up Article 10 now, say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The ayes appear to have it by a two-thirds vote. And as there is a two-thirds vote allowing Article 10.

Art 10. Shall the Town voters appropriate the sum of \$1,600.00 to the Montpelier Senior Activity Center, to be user for operating expenses? Michele Clark made a motion, Laura Zeisel seconded.

Michele: I had no idea this was going to be controversial or I wouldn't have agreed to do it if I had known. But anyway, it was before I knew about the Blueberry Hill thing that I agreed to do this. So anyway I've been going to the Montpelier Senior Center for a year and a half. And it's a very good deal and a very beautiful new building and a very nice place. And there is room for more than one senior center in the area. They charge membership dues, they charge a certain amount for classes, but each fee is modest and it's mainly funded by Montpelier. And then the surrounding towns around Montpelier give some money and then Plainfield is in the "Other-other" category, but I think up to now Plainfield has given no money. So when you become a member or you sign up for a class, you the participant, pay more than those other people. It's not an extreme amount; I don't remember how much more, maybe its \$25 more per thing, or something. So this year there were 16 people from Plainfield used the Montpelier Senior Activities Center, basically here, I'll leave these out. They're asking \$100 per person to each of the surrounding towns based on the amount of members who used it in the previous year, in 2013. So Worcester was 19, so they're asking \$1,900. Montpelier has 583 members, so Montpelier pays the most. So, that's the question, and I guess it's been discussed and it can be discussed a little more. I'll leave this information on the table if anyone's interested.

Voters questioned why they did not go through the Social Concerns committee.

Steve Farnham: I want to know what the procedure is that would fix it, so they would know there is a Social Services Committee and that they would – pursue their efforts through that venue. Also, I'd like to know, how does something get on the warning? And now do the people in charge here, not know that, and say wait a minute, there's a process involved.

Linda Wells: As I recall, they contacted the Town, but it was after the deadline. There is a deadline for submitting applications to the Social Concerns Committee. It takes time; they have to review all the paperwork. So I believe, they contacted us after the deadline, and I advised them that they can petition. They have a right to petition the Town for funds. And if they submit the petitions with the required signatures, then it goes to the Selectboard. And the decision is made then to be put on the warning.

Bob Barasch: I'm going to try to explain why these things happen. And I'm doing it because in a few minutes I'm going to be speaking on behalf of Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice, which also, did not get in on time. And Mary Stack Sullivan said, "We're all more human than otherwise." Which means we're as likely as any other species to make mistakes? And tough love is a good concept, but its long because people who did love too toughly that they hurt too badly. So the reason this happened Steve, is that people just didn't get it in on time, or they didn't know.

Sarah Albert: I'm also a member of the Montpelier Senior Center and they offer a lot of activities that you don't even have to be a member to attend. I used to be on the Twin Valley

Senior Board, and I completely support them. But I think the Montpelier Senior Center serves another group of seniors, they have dozens of classes there, every day of the week. And it's a more active group of seniors that it brings and I think there's a place where support for both Senior Centers.

Nancy Read: I'm also a member of the Montpelier Senior Center. They asked me to speak today but I won't – because we've heard enough now. But I have the answer to the question about the budget for the Senior Center for Montpelier for FY '15. The total budget is \$353,000. I should also mention that one of the advantages of having Plainfield as a contributing member is that the classes at the Senior Center in Montpelier fill up really quickly and if you are not a contributing town, you get to sign up third. First the Montpelier people, then the contributing towns, and then the non-contributing towns. And that means that those of us who are members of the Montpelier Center get closed out of a high degree of the classes because we're not members of a contributing town. So that's all I have to say.

Steve Farnham: I'm wondering if you have to contribute \$100 a pop to be considered a contributing town, and I wanted to point out that just as for comparison, the Twinfield Learning Center, we're appropriating like \$400 or \$500 dollars and they serve 100 people. And this organization wants \$100 each to serve 16. You know apples and oranges. I don't know what the facilities involve or what the expenses are involved, but it's a rather large amount of money compared to what all the other organizations are asking for. And I wanted to point out, that let the word get out that if you request it on time then you have to navigate the Social Concerns Committee, but if you're late, you can put it in an article and ask for any amount you want. There's something wrong with that. We need to have a system that redirects them and says, 'No, you can't do it this way, go through the committee.'

Donny Osman: Yes, \$1,600 seems very high in comparison to the other grants that we've given. And also, I'm going to speak in favor of the Social Concerns Committee and the process. To say that – I understand that we make mistakes. You'd be surprised to learn that I've made quite a few myself. And I have paid for those mistakes. So I'm going to rise in support of the Social Concerns Committee and I'm going to vote against this. Because we really made an effort to avoid these discussions of any of the individual organizations, many of which I support and I do not contest their value, but I do think that we have established a process, we have people that have volunteered that have worked hard to go through the process and I think it's important that that process be the one that drives the charitable givings of our town.

Yvonne Byrd: I actually work for the City of Montpelier and am a resident here, and as a City Department Head of Community Justice and I haven't been asked by anyone at the Senior Center to speak. I've sat through lots of City Council meetings and department head meetings and so on and am pretty familiar with the reasons that the Senior Center is seeking money from all the other towns, as you've brought up the budget is three-hundred and something thousand dollars. Membership covers little of the cost of operating the Senior Center. The Senior Center is – they see themselves and whether or not it's true I don't know – but as serving a regional population and that most of the operating costs comes from taxpayers in Montpelier. There is a lot of pressure from Montpelier leaders and taxpayers that if you're going to have members from towns where people aren't contributing, taxpayer funds aren't contributing, then that's going to be a problem with Montpelier. So that's just a little background.

Amy Lester moved to call a question? Dave Spence seconded.

Charlie Barasch: There's a motion to call the question and stop debate.

Charlie Barasch: This requires a two-thirds vote. If you vote yes, then the aye's have a two-thirds vote, then we'll go to the motion. If you vote no, then we'll continue discussing. All in favor of calling the question and stopping debate say, 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay! The ayes appear to have about a two-thirds vote. So we're now voting on the motion.

Voter: I would like to make it a motion for the voters of Plainfield to appropriate the sum of \$600 dollars.

Charlie Barasch: You can't do that right now because we have to vote on the motion. The motions reads: shall the Town voters appropriate the sum of \$1,600 for the Montpelier Senior Activities Center, to be used for operating expenses? All in favor say, 'aye.' Aye. All opposed say 'nay.' Nay. The nays appear to have it, the nays have it and the motion is defeated.

Voter: Can I just ask a process question. So if we were going to make an amendment, when is the appropriate time? Other business now?

Charlie Barasch: Actually it's done.

Voter: Charlie, I want to back up here and talk about the process. I thought an amendment was being offered.

Charlie Barasch: We'd already called the question. That was on the main motion. There's no amendment.

Art. 8. Shall the Town voters authorize an expenditure to the Central VT Council on Aging, Inc., the amount of \$1,800.00? Is there a motion on Article 8?

Tim Phillips made a motion, seconded by Bob Atchinson.

Becky Buchanan: I believe this was a case of not getting the application in on time, I was told that the person in charge of doing this at CVCOA broke her hip and wasn't able to comply. That's all I know.

Amos Meacham: I guess I would say that both Article 8 and Article 9 are longstanding things that we've supported, I'm definitely sympathetic and in support of the Social Concerns, but wondering, a compromise would be to continue to support at a reduced amount, so I would, I don't know why I would propose an amendment, but maybe someone would like to propose one now. I think they only get – what'd they get last year? \$1,500? Maybe we can do that like half that or something. We'll both send a message but continue to say that we'd like to support.

Charlie Barasch: So are you making an amendment?

Amos: I'm not.

Voter: From going through the application process that part of that process is if you don't get the amount you requested, you get a letter from the Social Concerns Committee saying you can go and ask for the higher amount, and that is part of the process. I'm just wondering what happened here.

Mary Niebling: The Committee's job is to report to the Selectboard. The Committee does not of course sponsor organizations unless there's a specific request. So I would ask Linda, did a letter go out to them. So a letter did not go out to them.

Linda Wells: a letter did not go out to the agencies.

Steve: Since the person who suggested making an amendment elected not to do so, I would like to make a motion to amend the amount so that they are level-funded from last year and then we send a letter explaining that in the future if they ask for an increase that they send their request through the proper channels, meaning the Social Services Committee.

Last year's amount according to the Report, \$1,500 and they're asking for \$1,800. I move we level-fund them to last year.

Charlie Barasch: There's a motion to amend the motion lowering the amount from \$1,800 to \$1,500 dollars. George Cushing seconded. Is there any further discussion on the motion?

After discussion we'll vote. All in favor of changing the expenditure that we send to the Central VT Council on Aging, Inc. from \$1,800 to \$1,500 say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? And the motion is approved.

We'll now continue discussing the main motion, which is now another \$1,500. Leon Marasco moved to call a question and stop debate, David Montgomery seconded the motion.

All in favor of stopping debate say, 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. The ayes appear to have it by a two-thirds vote. The aye's appear to have it by a two-thirds vote and now we'll vote on them motion.

Shall the Town voters authorize an expenditure to the Central VT Council on Aging, Inc., the amount of \$1,500.00? All in favor say, 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. The ayes appear to have it, the ayes have it and the motion is approved.

Voter: To the Social Concerns Committee, for next year I'd suggest that letters go out so that we don't have to have all these discussions right here. Please do not drop the ball on this. The bottom line is the organizations got the ball, and if you choose to support them, I will give donations to various organizations, you know just because they missed the deadline or something. But I don't think it's the Town policy to bring things to level-fund somebody who missed sending in an application, I'm sorry. I don't mean to be crude or whatever, but I would point out that the Social Concerns Committee spent many hours, many hours going through all the paperwork and all this other stuff and essentially what this does is completely undermines their work. And we also, the reason we had the Social Concerns Committee is to avoid debating the merits of who many dollars per each, no organization, I'm not against any of these organizations it's a matter of process.

Art. 9. Shall the Town voters authorize an appropriation to the Central VT Home Health and Hospice in the amount of \$2,700.00? Bob Barasch made a motion, David Montgomery seconded.

Bob Barasch: At one time I was a Little League coach, and sometimes kids dropped the ball. We try to explain to them it's important not to drop the ball but just being on the team. Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice appeared to have dropped the ball. And the person who was supposed to get the request in on time didn't do it and is quite chagrined about it. But, let me tell you what Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice has done for Plainfield in the last year. There were 856 home healthcare visits. I don't know if any of you have ever needed a home healthcare visit, or witnessed one, but without home health you wouldn't have any visits. There

were 213 hospice visits in Plainfield. And I don't know if any of you have ever needed or witnessed a hospice visit, but they are very professional group; they're not recreational. There are 113 people in Plainfield in the long-term care business. There were 1216 visits to Plainfield last year. It's a wonderful organization and I hope we live long enough to need them, because they will certainly ease the pain of invalided. So I would like to encourage that we grant them what they requested and slap them on the wrist for missing the deadline.

Sue Remington: I'd also add to the list of things they've done. Toe nail clipping clip clinics at the Twin Valley Senior Center and everybody's welcome to call them and sign up for an appointment, especially if you're a senior citizen. I'm a baby there. We've got them up to a hundred and something years old; we've got a competition going with that. But anyway, quite a few 90-year olds. They also do flu shots and things like that, and that's open to the John Q. Public. And I just want to remind you that they do more than just home visits and stuff. But they helped on me, well they didn't need to after my heart surgery, but also I had an elderly citizen living at my house and they were great help with that, and provided 24-help as I was working on the road different weird hours and not available to take of her and stuff like that. Hands-on things that isn't easy for me to do anyway. Great organization.

Voter: I'd like to say that I think they're an extraordinary organization and it's not like things are recreational and artistic and stuff, these people are about health and safety for most of the old people. People who really need the service. And I'm sorry they didn't make their plan and didn't get their stuff in on time and but I'd be delighted to forgive them for that behavior and grant them the money.

Amos Meacham: This is not really the forum to discuss the plus and minus's of the 20-plus organizations that we fund; I think the Social Services Concerns, didn't have the opportunity. I'd like to make an amendment that we reduce it to last year's appropriation; since I think it's only fair.

Amos made a motion to amend the original motion and change the appropriation from \$2,700.00 to \$2,500.00 dollars, Jim Jamele seconded.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote on the amendment. All in favor of changing the amount from \$2,700.00 to \$2,500.00 say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. I think we'll need a show of hands. We need a stand-up and have a stretch. So, all in favor of the amendment to lower the amount for the \$2,700.00 to \$2,500.00 stand. And raise your hand also because some people are standing already. All opposed to the amendment, opposed to lowering the amount from \$2,700.00 to \$2,500.00 stand and raise your hand. There were 35 in favor and 36 opposed. The amendment is defeated, so we will continue to discuss the motion. We can continue discussing the motion. Is there any further discussion. Then we'll vote.

All in favor of authorizing an appropriation to the Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice in the amount of \$2,700.00? Say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. The ayes appear to have it. The ayes have it and the motion is approved.

Art. 11. Shall the Town voters authorize an expenditure – oh wait, an appropriation, of \$33,000.00 to the Cutler Memorial Library to pay for the librarian and the purchase of books and materials to support the mission of the library? Alexandra Thayer made a motion, Bob

Atchinson seconded.

Steve Pappas: Good afternoon, I'm chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Cutler Memorial Library. Thank you all for your continued support of the library. You will see from the report on pages 65-66 I think we have had a chart uptick in circulation of 20% over previous years, which is wonderful, it means that more people are using the library. Loona's doing an amazing job of weeding the library and making sure what is needed is there. Which is exactly what we've been striving for in our strategic plan and our ongoing mission? So, we appreciate your support. I'll also point out that the library in December is officially wired, fiber optic. So if you need a wifi connection anywhere in Plainfield, just go over there. You can park outside, which Loona doesn't necessarily like.

The wifi connection is very strong; it's a state-of-the-art connection. And we have three stations in there that are seeing significant use. And I would say that anecdotally that we have seen some young people's lives change as a result of having the library – the hours shifted and the technology being available to them. And it's a great resource. If you haven't been in lately, go check it out, we've really made some significant changes and there are some really positive things happening, so thank you.

Loona Brogan: Thanks to the Friends.

Steve Pappas: Thanks very much to the Friends, and the primroses are for sale.

[Applause]

Charlie Barasch: All in favor of authorizing an appropriation of \$33,000.00 to the Cutler Memorial Library to pay for the librarian and the purchase of books and materials to support the mission of the library say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? And the motion is approved.

Art. 12. To see what amount of money the Town will vote to pay for water and wastewater departments for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. Is there a motion on article 12?

Jim Jamele: Good afternoon. I'm on the Water and Wastewater Commission. And I'm going to do this in two motions, which is the way we've been doing it in the past.

Jim made a motion the Town approve the expenditure of \$149,615 for the 2014-2015 fiscal year, for the operation of the water system, to be paid for by the users of the system. Scott Stewart seconded the motion.

As recommended by the Moderator, Jim made a second motion to approve the expenditure of \$214,808 for the 2014-2015 operation of the wastewater system. Bob Atchinson seconded the motion.

Becky Buchanan: I'd like to ask the question, I was told that the water meters and we're doing improvements to the system, but the water meters are not accurate? Need upgrading? And I for one, being a landlord with five units, I'm charged a flat-rate per unit, even though I've taken a lot of time to go through and put in low-flow fixtures, low-flow toilets, low-flow showerheads. over the past five years, could be using less than a single unit we had in the old technology. So I would like the billing to reflect the actual usage. And this is not included in the upgrade of the meters in town, and I'd like to be sure that it is. Thanks

Jim Jamele: I'd like to just speak to that. We are studying that at this time. The problem with the town is that we have many meters that are not working. And we are in the process of replacing all the meters at this time; it's going to take a number of years, because those meters are very, very expensive to replace. But we are in the process of doing that, once we get

to that point, then we are looking at going to a metering system.

Jim Jamele: It is going up; no I don't believe it is significant this year. I will tell you though that we do have a big project that we're doing along High Street, Towne Avenue, Martin Meadow, Great Wood. And that is a \$1.2 million project. Approximately 40% of that will probably be paid for by grants and the other 60% from a bond approval that we've already passed. When we start paying for that, the bills will be going up significantly. There's no question about it. Right now, we have one of the lower rates in towns and cities in the State of Vermont. Once we do that, we will be comparable with the rates for anywhere else in the State of Vermont; we can no longer make that claim. But these are old waterlines that are springing leaks all the time and costing us time and money to fix them. Some of them are 80 years old; some of them are 60. They're in the process of being redone and I'm hoping that we'll have that done this summer, which will save us in costs along the way, but it will not save us when we're building. And yes, you will be looking at a significant amount at that time.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? We'll vote. All in favor of voting to pay \$149,615 for the water department, to be paid by the users, say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The ayes have it and the motion is approved.

Jim Jamele: I want to restate the motion, that the Town approve the expenditure of \$214,808 dollars for the 2014-2015 fiscal year operation of the wastewater system to be paid by the users of the system.

Charlie Barasch: All in favor of paying \$214,808 for the wastewater department for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 to be paid by the users of the system say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is carried.

Art. 13. 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, 2014 to June 30, 2015. Is there a motion under article 13?

Dave Strong: I would make a motion that the Town vote to pay \$903,147.60 for highways, bridges, fire department and administrative operations. David Montgomery seconded the motion. After discussing with the Treasurer the correct amount to be considered is \$901,247.60.

Dave: the motion is to pay \$901,247.60 for highways, bridges, fire department, administrative operations of the Town of Plainfield from the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. David Montgomery seconded the motion.

Dave: I just want to give a little summary, if you have your books; I want to talk about some of the changes in the budget this year, just for a few minutes. On page 44, we have a new position, a part-time contract position that we're proposing, of a building maintenance manager, and we've allocated \$4800 dollars for that position. That person would be available to the Town Clerk's call in the event that there's a maintenance problem with one of the buildings, and that person would either fix the problem or would find someone to fix it.

I have it on page 44 under 'Building Maintenance Manager,' it's about 8 or 9 lines down, \$4,800.00. It's a new item. And you'll see, by the way, I've added together the actual increases in health insurance for Selectboard, highway, water and wastewater, and it actually comes to

\$14,500.00. It's a net increase in health insurance costs. The overall increase, by the way, is roughly \$34,000.00 from the previous year. So of that, \$14,500 is increased health insurance costs. The overall budget increase is about 3.7% over last year. There are other changes or new things that you might want to ask us about, are – we put in the Town Hall Management Services position on page 47, third line down from the top. We've allocated \$5,000 for someone to be the events coordinator here at the Town Hall, and be proactive about programming, so that all the management of the Town Hall doesn't fall on the Town Clerk's shoulder, but in fact, this person would go out and help to book activities at the Town Hall to make it a viable thing. And I think Jade is here, maybe she could just introduce herself. Bram mentioned, we went through a process where we interviewed four different candidates for this position, we advertised it and we have identified Jade and her partner Sarah Lowry as the best qualified to be the people to enter into a contract with the Town to manage the Town Hall for one year. So I don't know if you guys want to say hi.

Bram: Well, I think you'd have to wave the rule because you technically – in any case, I just want to say, the idea here is to have the building start paying for itself, and in order to do that, we would have to establish it as a venue. And Sarah and Jade have great ideas; we've spent a lot of time interviewing lots of different people.

Charlie: It's up to the meeting to allow her to address the voters, unless there's an objection. Come say hello to the town.

Jade: Hi, we just moved up on Maple Hill in the fall and we decided to live here in Plainfield and to meet you all and host events here, this is a really beautiful building and a beautiful space to work and for it to have real diversity of events here, historical events and we'll do plays, and we have lots of ideas and we would love to hear your ideas, we have a survey that people have if they have suggestions or ideas, or themselves want to host something here, we're actually officially going to be started in July when the next fiscal year starts, but start thinking of ideas. And I'm going to be doing this position with my good friend and long-time colleague Sarah Lowry who is actually right now directing a play in Providence, Rhode Island so she couldn't be here, but. She and I will be working on it together.
Thanks so much, Jade.

Karl Bissex: In the interest of helping pay for this building, I want to announce that we're going to have a concert here, kind of a kick-off concert, on the 28th of March and you're all invited. Brother Sun is a nationally recognized trio –

Dave: Just to follow to what Karl said, we have a lot of talent in the community, if anybody wants to do a fundraiser here, we're able to accommodate crowds, no larger than a gathering like this, no sophisticated scenery on the stage, our fire code has so we can do productions as long as their members so be in touch with them.

Allan Farnham: One question I'd like to ask is you mentioned having a person for the maintenance – is that one person you're involved in or are you going to hire whoever you think to do it, or what's the facts on it.

Dave: I'm thinking right now it'd be one person that would maybe work up to 20 hours a month, or be available. And that they – the description we have is that they're going to be the person

directly responsible for performance of a variety of skilled tasks, repairing, maintaining, servicing town facilities and buildings, they're going to be supervised by the Town Clerk. But we have to get the budget passed. And if it's passed, we would probably ask for people to apply and then interview people and make a decision.

Steve Farnham: I think putting a line item in the budget and paying someone to provide these services might make some of the people in the town who are already providing services without pay, ah, a little, I don't know, disgruntled. I'm not trying to speak against it, but I would like to ask that people who are in this position keep detailed information of what we do, and get a report into the Town Report next year about what they've been doing.

Rob Bridges: I'd like to ask the assembly to hear from our Fire Chief, Pat Martin, resident of Marshfield. Is there any objection?

Charlie Barasch: Unless there's any objection, that's fine.

Pat Martin: First and foremost I'd like to thank everybody for the continued support for the Fire and Rescue Service. In our budget, a few things have changed this year in the way the budget reads, so it may actually look like the budget for the Fire Department increased substantially when in fact what the Selectboard has chosen to do is add the ambulance costs annually to the emergency fire department/budget. So that appropriation of funds is something that's been there has changed slightly – I can't remember how much, but slightly, but it's not something that the Fire Department truly has a say in. It's a contract with the responding ambulance service to our community; however, it is now reflected within our budget. So it might look much larger than any increase really is.

One increase area that we had said we would talk to at Town Meeting just quickly is a \$1,500 increase to the budget for a stipend. This stipend is for our first response or emergency medical personnel only. It does not relate to all members of the fire department. We've also asked the Town of Marshfield to appropriate funds to go into this stipend area for the members, and the total amount that we've asked for between the two towns is \$3,000. Fifteen hundred from each. This stipend is expected to be around \$300 per active member, and qualifications for somebody to receive this stipend would be that they are a certified emergency medical person through the State of Vermont, meaning they hold a current certification, they have to have been with our service for at least six months, so it's not just somebody coming in and receiving a \$300 money in their pocket. And they also have to respond to 15% of the call volume, as well as 75% of our training and they have to maintain their status with the state for their certification, which involves approximately 60 hours of training per year. Really, what we're trying to do is give a small gesture of appreciation to these members, being that the call volume is now up to around 260 calls per year; it's a large call volume for a volunteer person to put their time into. We have most of our members that make probably – say 50% -- 60% of the calls and our response time in the community for the emergency service has been one of the lowest in the state, for us, after we're dispatched, for us to get to someone's house to help them out. The money – if you broke it all down for the people who actually responding, it probably comes down to pennies per hour. And it certainly probably falls continually into the negative for that person for their gas and time and whatnot overall. So it's more of a slight gesture to say thanks for being willing to take on that massive responsibility. So I'd be happy to be around and answer any questions on that, it's

not much money and again, we're talking about up to ten people at this time, because it's not for the whole – thanks. [Applause]

Dan Marcus: I see \$2,000 for Old Home Days, can someone speak about that?

Dave: Believe it or not, we've never had a budget item for Old Home Day. It's always been a volunteer thing. And the last Old Home Day was so successful, last year we budgeted \$6,000 because it was a big deal, our 100th Anniversary of the Fire Department. But instead of backing it down to zero, we thought we should keep money in there so we could continue to build and have one not as good as last year, but maybe at least a fun time. So we budgeted \$2,000. That's what that is. That's a new line item for that.

Kate Harper: I just located EMT stipend in the report and it's listed at \$3,000 and you talk about \$1,500 per town.

Dave: Kate, I had a question about that too. It says in the budget \$3,000 and Pat mentioned \$1500. But that's because if we're going to spend \$3,000 dollars, \$1,500 is going to come from Plainfield, and \$1,500 from Marshfield. So there's an income side of \$1,500 in this budget.

Allan Farnham: On the equipment for the highway, how do we arrive at what we buy for equipment?

Bram: Dave volunteered me for the Road Commissioner. I just want everybody to note. I basically sit down with Mike – Mike Nolan is the Road Foreman, and we go over what his, what trucks are worn down, and what's – where we're at for the upcoming next two years, what we're going to need. And we come up with that figure. There's some in reserve. We have had issues with some equipment which was purchased recently. And we're going to learn from our mistakes as far as that go. We bought a Dodge Truck that unfortunately has a service contract on the other side of the state, basically, in Middebury. So that's not going to happen again. And then we're going to purchase equipment and look at the servicing contracts and try to do a better job.

Allan: One of the things that brought this to mind of expenditures for the wood chipper. I can't justify how we had spent \$28,500 for a new chipper and I looked on the altimeter of that chipper since we bought that machine and reviewed the 22 hours and that seems to me like that's a pretty steep price to be paying for the use of a machine for 22 hours.

Bram: Right. OK the Town purchased an expensive wood chipper that device is something that goes in the back of your truck trailer, you tow it around and you throw pieces of debris from the road into the side of the device. And it shreds it up into mulch, which I think is actually piled and some of the townspeople can use the mulch. And Allan's question is why we bought this for – \$28,600.

We bought the chipper for \$28,600 and he looked at the number of hours used, and it's about 22 hours used, therefore the question is, isn't that a lot to pay for what does it come to an hour a thing? But he's making the point that maybe that was an unnecessary expense. I think I will bring this up with Mike. I think that the underuse of the chipper this year might have to do with personnel stuff and that we were focusing our energies on other projects and other things. If, you know, and I will talk to him in terms of how long that chipper will be in use, I know that they're planning on using it to do a lot of clean-up on the roads. I don't have a lot of specific answers to

why it went 22 hours, but I'll follow up and I'll get back to you, and if indeed it seems like an exorbitant price thing, we'll review that. But I think we do, and I'm pretty sure we are planning on using that quite a bit come spring.

Steve: On page 49 there's three line items near the top, OT, is that overtime?

Charlie: Yes.

Steve: I looked at that, we have something like 1100 hours of overtime this year, the last year, so that works out to a little over six months. I've made this suggestion once before, I don't know how we pay for overtime, but in most cases overtime is paid time and a half for expenses, labor, and it puts additional pressure on a crew that already I think has quite a lot of work to deal with. So I made the suggestion that we hire a part-time person so that we don't have to rely so heavily on people we already have and also fix it so that if any one of those individuals is sick we wouldn't be without out a very important member of the team. I'd like to know if the Selectboard is going to give any consideration to hiring a part-time person so that we don't have to buy so much overtime.

Bram: I did actually have a discussion with Mike; I think it was a while ago, regarding this issue. We do have occasionally I think we've had I think one person coming and pinch-hit, so to speak, for us. One of the challenges is that it's equipment that you really have to be a seasoned person to know how to use. In other words, the kind of thing you're talking about is a person who really knows how to use the plow, how to use the backhoe and so forth. And it's not easy to identify individuals who can come in and pinch-hit. But I will bring it up with him again. Certainly we're all concerned about overtime. Note when a storm happens on a holiday, or a Saturday or a Sunday, that's going to be overtime. I would also note that the way things are now, if you don't put in a full week, let's say you call in on Tuesday. You don't get overtime if you're called in on Saturday until you make up the time that you missed. So, you know, we're not as generous with our overtime as maybe some places. I've gotten complaints about that. You're punishing us for being sick. No, that's the way the rule is now. Yes?

Steve: I agree with what you say, you don't want to put people who are inexperienced to using expensive equipment that could run you a lot of money in a hurry. My point is, if you have a part-time person who is trained to run the equipment that would be a big help in the event that somebody's out sick.

Bram will discuss with Mike. With Clyf's passing, we did interview a number of candidates. This is something I'll be happy to speak with Mike about.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? We'll vote. All in favor of paying \$901,247.60 for highways, bridges, fire department, and administrative operations of the Town of Plainfield for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 say 'aye.' Aye. Those opposed, say nay. The motion is approved.

Art. 14. Shall the Town of Plainfield authorize the Selectboard to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year? George Springston made a motion, Bob Atchinson seconded.

Bob Atchinson: Does this mean that the entire surplus to be applied against the taxes?

Dave: No, it's open-ended. Just any amount. Shall we be able to use any amount, not everything would go.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. All in favor of authorizing the Selectboard to apply any current surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes for the next fiscal year say 'aye.' Aye. Oppose, nay? The motion is approved.

Art. 15. Shall the Town vote to accept the provisions of public statutes relating to the collection of taxes by the Town Treasurer, (VSA 32 § 4791) and vote to collect municipal taxes thirty days from mailing and not prior to August 1, 2014, and collect school taxes on November 12, 2014 and February 11, 2015, collecting half of the total school taxes on each of those dates? Motion was made by David Montgomery, Amos Meacham seconded the motion. Is there any discussion? Then we'll vote. If it's all right, I won't read the whole motion again, since I just read it. But it is 2014, we've corrected the typo. All in favor say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is approved.

Art. 16. To transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting. Is there any motion under Article 16?

Bob Atchinson: I would like to ask the voters of the Town to approve the Selectboard using part of the surplus in the amount not to exceed \$14,000 to complete the solar work on the roof of the wastewater plant. We have a \$78,000 grant from the Park n' Ride, leftover, which was to provide solar lighting and we decided against some hybrid lights that are going to be not effective up there, so we put in the LED lighting at the Park n' Ride and we're selecting the roof of the wastewater plant because it has an excellent orientation. It's protected by chain link fence against any mishaps and for economy of scale and not having to mobilize a solar contractor a second time, you can put a whole set of matched panels on the roof down there and make it be a really, nice complete system. The Town is, being on Green Mountain Power, is able to net meter all its electricity, so that any power generated down there can not only reduce the demand charges of the wastewater plant, but it also will be reimbursed by six cents per kilowatt hour for anything we produce down there. And we'll also be able to supply most of the electricity for – if you take out the wastewater plant – most of the electricity for the Town, particularly the street lighting that we're putting up as well. So that's my motion.

Brenda Lindemann seconded the motion.

Charlie Barasch: So the motion is to allow the Selectboard to use a surplus of up to \$14,000 to fund the remaining money needed for the solar project on the wastewater plant. And it's moved and seconded. Is there any discussion?

What's the amount that the Town would get per year?

Dave Strong: How much do you think the savings are going to be, how much do you think we're going to generate on the net meter and roughly ballpark?

Bob: I have not sat down, but our best guess is that we could put up somewhere between an 8-10 kilowatt system, which would result in probably 12,000 or 8% of the – about 9600 kilowatt hours per year. And with a 10 kilowatt system, probably 12,000 kilowatt hours per year. And I don't know what the town pays for it, but your commercial rate for it is about \$0.18 per kilowatt

hour. I can't do the math that quickly, but –

Dave Strong: Let me just talk about the unreserved surplus. It's estimated roughly around \$200,000 at this point. Last year we applied \$65,000 to reduce the taxes, to keep the taxes to zero or no increase. In order to get the zero increase this year, we would probably have to allocate \$100,000. The Town Treasurer likes to have money that she can use to pay prior to taxes coming in. I think you've said \$80,000.

She doesn't need to do that, we could borrow money. But that's just what we're used to doing in Plainfield, using the surplus to prepay expenses before the tax money comes in. So, and then we have \$10,000 that we just allocated to the Town Hall Reserve Fund. So this is the first I've heard of this proposal, it's certainly worth discussing, but I just wanted to share that information with you.

Charlie: This would be non-binding, of course. anything under 'Other Business' is non-binding.

Peter Youngbaer: I have enough solar insulation, having gone solar up at our place, but I am wondering about whether this is an appropriate use of the Town's surplus, for the wastewater project, which has its own separate fund, funded by users, and that the benefit of offset by solar would offset the electric usage of a fund supported only by some people of the town and not the others. I think we're mixing functions here. And if you're looking at it I think it might have something to do with the surplus and the wastewater if there is such a thing.

Bob: I'd like to add that because its community net metering for the Town at large, it's not like it goes into one big pot and this building taps of some and this building taps off some there. It's because for one, this is the only location in town that we thought we had a good solar location. And we went to wastewater and asked for permission to use their roof. This was granted. And the fact that its there, doesn't mean necessarily that it goes through their meter true, but it goes into the Town's kitty, so it's not really earmarked specifically for that one point.

Jim Jamele: Well, Charlie has asked me to clarify Peter's comment and that's a good question you raised, that if it's for our water and wastewater district, whether the town as a whole should be paying for it. But I guess the motion as Charlie said, is non-binding, so we would have time to look into it if people thought that it was a good idea.

Voter: Just for the record, it doesn't affect the town. A lot of them who live in the town are not on the town water system. I'm sure you know that. There are people who are part of the town but not part of the wastewater.

Just for clarification, Bob. So if its net metering it's coming back into it's actually would be 6%, you can get a \$0.6 cent per kilowatt hour and you said about 10,000 kwh somewhere in that range?

To ease the taxes at 10,000 kwh it would be like \$600 a year.

Steve: Not to put too fine a point on it, but does the Town of Plainfield have an account with the water and wastewater people and pay for the use of that system? Because to get back to what was being said earlier, if you use the bathroom here before you leave, and you use the one in the municipal building, you're using that system and if the Town isn't paying into it, then there's

something that could be said in the other direction because in fact it is a community building, so it's just on the roof of the treatment plant.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? The Town will vote. All in favor of – Non-binding. Well, non-binding means that the Selectboard can follow the recommendations or not. All in favor of authorizing the Selectboard to use surplus money up to \$14,000 to fund the remainder needed for the solar project at the wastewater plant say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. The ayes have it and the motion is approved.

Is there any further business to come up?

Robert Bridges: Good morning, my name is Robert Bridges. I'm the Emergency Management Director. I'm the only one that will probably say this, but I don't want your money. I would like some of our time. Some of you are aware that we were arranged an agreement for the benefit of the local area and between the American Red Cross and Goddard College to stand up an emergency shelter. We're doing an initial training, this coming Saturday morning, to start at 9:00 a.m. To run to 9:00 to 11:30, indoors, so it's not dirty work. So when the banner goes up and we need a place to go, we will have a shelter. You can contact me by phone or email, you can just show up, Red Cross told me, don't be afraid of recruiting too many volunteers, on a great day, half of them will show up. So please step forward, this is something easy you can do for your community, I will be in the back of the room. Sorry?

It is being held up at Goddard, it's in the Haybarn Theater, please park in the upper lot and walk down. We plan to start at 9:00 this coming Saturday.

Rob: The question is, if I'm not going to be here this weekend. There is no substitute training planned immediately. But this is an exercise that will run each year, understanding that a lot of people simply aren't available. We don't get to schedule disasters. So it's a come as you are party for the training or for the event. Thank you.

There is no specific number of volunteers. I can tell you that we have recruited enough that Red Cross is pleased with the direction we're taking. I don't think they will tell us we have too many.

Steve: Is this part of other than it just being 911 training? Did they approach us or did we approach them? And I guess the broader question is, is this leading up to more cooperation with Goddard since they seem to be reaching out a little more than they have in the past.

Rob: I'm not sure how to answer the question about the Goddard portion of it, this is a voluntary agreement, the Red Cross, shortly after Irene, said we need to have towns better equipped. And they're providing us with cots and blankets and some of the things that will be stationed up at the school. And that location was targeted for some reason. There's several highways up in there, there's high ground, there's no bridges, there's a bridge here in town that was of concern, Twinfield was on the other side of the water, so we approached Goddard and they agreed. Yes?

Rob: The question is what does this entail? We'll find out on Saturday!
[Laughter]

Rob: I'm told this will probably have to do with – we don't have any restrictions on people

coming and going at the shelter but to keep them generally in the area, make sure that people are safe, there is no outdoor component on this. One very large reason that this happened, Pat Martin asked me to become involved with this, is that during the flooding a few years ago, people go to the Fire Station. That is the Emergency Operation Center. This will give folks a location where they can assemble so that our Emergency responder can do what they need to do. So what I'm told is it's very light duty, we don't ask a great deal, we don't pay you to do it, nor do we charge you to attend. So let's go find out on Saturday what it means. Thank you.

Ben Graham: I don't want your money either, but I know somebody who does. Ben made a motion to approve a non-binding resolution to create a state bank in Vermont. This is part of a Town Meeting campaign all across Vermont, and the wording that goes with this resolution is the following;

Whereas the establishment of establishing a State Bank in Vermont will reduce the tax burden on local taxpayers by offering low-cost bonds for infrastructure and a depository for their accounts with competitive interest and will help create jobs, income and economic security for all Vermonters, by making investment and loans to all Vermont's people and economy. We call on the State Legislature to create a public bank for Vermont which enhances the work of the Vermont Economic Development Agency, the Vermont Human Assistance Corporation, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency and the municipal bond bank and license them to become the State Bank that accepts deposits from the State and municipal government and makes partnership loans with Vermont chartered community banks and credit unions to students, homeowners, municipalities and enterprises to make Vermont economically stable, self-reliant and successful.

Charlie Barasch: Do you have a printout of that? Ben stated he can provide that.

Alexandra Thayer seconded the motion.

Alexandra Thayer: If anybody listens to WGDR over time has learned about State Banks. And what's become apparent to me, I am a programmer, but I listen a lot too, is that the State of North Dakota has had a State Bank for I think about 100 years, it's very economically viable and what it does it helps to take state and municipal funds out of the big banking systems, not sending interest off to New York or Chicago, or Hong Kong and allowing it to keep money in state. I think it's something that really, really merits our support. It would help to help lower taxes, it would help to make more money available to more entrepreneurs as well and it's just a really great idea to say to the Banksters, we Vermonters have another opportunity.

Ben: The other thing that people should know is that there is a lot of discussion happening at the state level around this. Obviously there are a lot of things that need to be worked out in terms of the structure, it's a big change. But there is apparently a bill put out by Pollina that is looking at creating a process that Vermont slowly changes from relying on banks to hold our money, which we actually pay for them to do that, for us to slowly start investing directly in Vermont and the current bill proposes that 10% of the daily average amount that is held by the banks, which is about \$35 million, to be directly deposited into Vermont programs such as the Student Assistance Corporation that is already using money for loans and such. So this could also be leveraged for road building is something that often comes up as something that we've invested a lot in, and we can save – there's actually a State Bank – I forget the website but the website and organization that is focusing on this issue in Vermont and if you're interested in finding out more about that, I can get that information to you.

Steve: What I've heard about state banks it sounds like a good idea to me, but I was wondering if somebody could clarify how this plays into the general economy? Does the state bank just enter the market and compete with other banks that are already here? Or does it effectively say, OK, you other guys shut down, we've got a state bank now. How does that work?

Ben: I can speak a little bit to that. Ultimately this is not what a lot of sustainable economy folks see as the perfect end-result. It's still a bank that has a window at the Federal Reserve. And people who study economies might see that as the biggest problem with the whole issue. But at least this saves us money that otherwise we would be just paying out to other people doing the work, when Vermont could be doing the work itself. So, essentially a very simplistic way to look at it, is that we're investing in ourselves rather than paying other companies and other corporations to manage our money.

Voter: Now, my understanding is that it's not a bank where individuals can have checking accounts? That type of bank is more a loan program?

Voter: It wouldn't be like a retail bank. A state bank.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. And I'll just simplify the motion because I don't have it right here now. All in favor of supporting the establishment of a State Bank say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? Nay. They aye's have it and the motion is approved.
[Applause]

Alexandra Thayer: This is a resolution I was going to say for a decade now. I love living in Plainfield. We have such great people elected to various offices and I can't tell you how often I tell people on other places what a great town I live in and how much I love Central Vermont. Maybe we can just thank everybody who's worked so hard for us for the year; we just really, really appreciate you guys.
[Applause]

Steve: I just wanted to say that I also enjoyed reading the Town Report this year, there's a lot of stuff in it. But some of it is a little hard to follow, even though I did go through that school system that is sending the best in the world out into our country – on page 25, and 26, we have the Treasurer's Report, and I notice there's an item on the top of page 26 for \$43,994 and you can find that same item on page 48 with all the details. But most of the other subtotals that I find in the highway department and Selectboard, I wasn't able to find those, they were actually in the Treasurer's Report. And it's kind of bewildering to try to follow where the details are and the subtotals where they go into the final report. And I was wondering if there was something to refer this particular line item in the Treasurer's Report is detailed on such and such a page so you can cross-reference and understand better to total all those together.

Linda Wells: Maybe you can come in and see me or see the Selectboard 'cause I'm not really sure what you mean, so maybe, to make it clear to you or make it clearer to me what you're looking for. Just stop by.

Charlie Barasch: Any further business?

Charlie Barasch: OK, let's move to adjourn. There's a motion to adjourn. Is there a second. Rob Bridges moved to adjourn,

Willis Pratt: one more thing

Charlie Barasch: Wait you can put this down. Is there a second? If you don't get a second, maybe. Leon Marasco seconded.

Charlie Barasch: Second. There's a motion to adjourn. All in favor say, 'aye.' Aye. Opposed, nay? Nay! The nays have it and the motion is defeated. Go ahead.

Willis Pratt: My little space I'm hoping that somebody has a Laundromat back there and it's really needed and that's more important than some of the things they have put in. It's a drag to have to go to Montpelier. I hope that somebody's looking, we used to have one so I still can't understand why we can't have a Laundromat.

Bram: Well, Willis, just so you know one of the barriers is that water hookups are very expensive.

Willis: Well, there's got to be something because we had it for years. It sucks to have to go to Montpelier.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any other business?

Joyce Fowler: Just a note to everyone, thanks to everyone who has bought a primrose to benefit the Cutler Memorial Library, but we do have one here, so if there's anyone here who needs to buy one, there's one, right over here.

Mary Niebling: I would like to announce that we still have more pie, so I will be selling them until everybody leaves, but I will sell lots of pieces at once, too. It's for the Town Hall benefit.

Bob Atchinson: And while you're buying your pies, don't forget to sign up for the raffle right next door.

Charlie Barasch: Is there any other business?

Peter Youngbaer: We were going to do something under other business about the sense of the meeting about the intersection out here? I don't know if they were calling for a Flash mob for any particular time or something.

Charlie Barasch: Do you want to bring up a motion?

Peter: I'd like to have ask for the town for the rest of the sense of the meeting that we would like the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation and the other necessary parties to address the intersection here at the blinking light safety issues with all due haste. Sandy Ross seconded.

Charlie Barasch: Bob made a motion is to have the Selectboard invite the Department of Transportation and other interested parties to address the intersection at the blinking light. With all due haste. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion.

Bram: I would like if you approach the Department of Transportation to remind them when there was an issue in front of the post office about the sight angles it was the fastest action to take care of it. And that was the intersection that also had very low safety issues involved with it. So for the sake of the two trees that were lost, I would suggest that the Department of Transportation act with the same rapidity.

[Applause]

Charlie Barasch: Is there any further discussion? Then we'll vote. All in favor of having the Selectboard invite the Department of Transportation and other interested parties investigate the issue of the intersection at the blinking light with due haste – say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The

motion is approved. Is there any other business?

Brenda Lindemann: The Historical Society's building is halfway in the brook and is not usable for displaying of our lovely items. I'm wondering if something could be generated to finding another location for the Historical Society contents. I'd like to move it.

Dave Strong: Well the Selectboard – actually Dan Gadd climbed up on the roof and put a temporary tarp over the back of the roof of that little building, so it wouldn't suffer any more damage. We are hoping to do an appraisal of the building and an assessment of it and see what needs to be done. And we're also looking into working with them to find maybe a better place for the Historical Society's collection.

Voter: That building – talk about mold and whatnot? It's really treacherous to leave anything valuable in there. The Town should have a place to display our historical materials. I'd like to move that you move on that.

Charlie Barasch: There's a motion to have the Selectboard move on the site.

Dave Strong: Maybe finding a better home for the Historical Society's collection.

Charlie Barasch: Finding a better home for the Historical Society's collection. Is there a second? You've seconded it. Is there any discussion? We'll vote. All in favor say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? The motion is approved. Is there any other business?

There is a motion to adjourn by George Springston, seconded by Leon Marasco.

Charlie Barasch: All in favor of adjourning say 'aye.' Aye. Those nay? And the motion is approved and we are adjourned. Thank you all for coming; it's been a nice meeting.

TOWN MEETING ADJOURNED 1:36pm

Subscribed and sworn to under the pains and penalties of perjury this 14th day of March, 2014, and attested to as the work of my true hand and a true and honest transcription of the audio document provided herewith.

Margaret R. Gourley

Edited by Linda B. Wells and submitted to Selectboard for review 3/21/2014.

Approved April 14, 2014