

TOWN OF PEACHAM
MINUTES OF THE SELECTBOARD INFORMATIONAL HEARING
Saturday, February 27, 2021
APPROVED

Selectboard Members (via phone/video conference): Michael Heath, Beatrice Ring, Peter Craig
Members of the public (via phone/video conference): Town Moderator Tim Mckay, Town Clerk Thomas Galinat, Selectboard Clerk Rebecca Washington, Library Director Susan Smolinsky, many other members of the public

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair of the Selectboard Michael Heath at 10:04am.
2. Town Moderator Tim Mckay reviewed the procedures for the hearing and explained that no decisions would be made.
3. Town Warning articles
 - 1) To elect a Moderator for a term of one year.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 2) Shall the voters deposit \$40,000 from the General Fund into the Capital Equipment Fund to be used for highway capital equipment in 2021? The amount of \$40,000 is a portion of the unexpended funds, totaling \$104,334.81, from 2020.
 - a) Heath explained that the surplus from 2020 was largely Covid-related. The funds being moved into the Capital Equipment Fund would go toward replacing the town's backhoe.
 - 3) Shall the voters deposit \$14,436.01 from the General Fund into the Working Capital Fund? The amount of \$14,436.01 is a portion of the unexpended funds, totaling \$104,334.81, from 2020.
 - a) In response to David Jacobs' question about the large surplus from 2020, Galinat reviewed the Town Treasurer's report in the Town Report. The surplus was mainly due to extra state highway aid, unexpended Peacham Afternoon Childcare funds, a decrease in the salt expense due to a mild winter, lower fuel prices, and reduced Lister hours.
 - 4) Shall the voters approve total highway and general fund expenditures of \$1,620,844, of which \$814,204 shall be raised by taxes and \$806,640 by non-tax revenue?
 - a) Lynne Lawson asked for details on the Cemetery Endowment Fund.
 - i. Galinat explained that the fund was set up for perpetual care of the town's cemeteries. The fund was at about \$97,000 when Galinat started working in the Town Office in 2014 and was at \$140,939 at the close of 2020. Currently, the revenues are strictly from market gains. There are no unexpended funds, in that all money received through the investments stays in the fund for long-term perpetual care.
 - 5) Shall the voters deposit \$22,824 from the General Fund into the Peacham Afternoon Childcare restricted fund to be used for funding and continuing the afternoon childcare program in 2021? The amount of \$22,824 is a portion of the unexpended funds, totaling \$104,334.81, from 2020.
 - a) Heath explained that the first of the two articles addressing Afternoon Childcare would move the unexpended funds from the 2020 Afternoon Childcare program into the restricted Afternoon Childcare fund for the 2021 program. The unexpended funds were primarily due to the school switching to remote learning at the beginning of Covid.
 - 6) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$21,376, to be raised by taxes, and to be held in the Peacham Afternoon Childcare restricted fund, for the sole purpose of funding and continuing the afternoon childcare program?
 - a) Heath explained that the second article addressing Afternoon Childcare would raise in taxes the remainder of the funds needed to run the Afternoon Childcare program in 2021.
 - i. Enrollment in the program is up significantly compared to 2020.
 - b) Lynne Lawson asked if the town would be voting to raise the total amount of \$44,000 in 2022 if there is no surplus from 2021.
 - i. Galinat explained that the Afternoon Childcare program was originally moved from the school budget to the town budget to keep the school out of penalty spending.
 - ii. Craig explained that the program is still being run at the school but the long-term plan is for the program to leave the town's budget and be taken over by Peacham Children's Center, a private entity that plans to run a children's center in the church.
 - 7) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$10,000, to be raised by taxes, for the sole purpose of Peacham Emergency Response salaries?
 - a) Heath explained that the firefighters are currently not paid and that paying for responses to fires will hopefully help retain and recruit members to the Peacham Fire Department.
 - 8) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$2,000 to be raised in taxes to support Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice? Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice provides home health care; hospice; long-term care; maternal/child care; homemaking; nursing visits; home health aides; therapy visits.

- a) David Edwards explained that the Appropriations Committee reviewed the appropriation applications to ensure that they conformed as non-profits, but that the committee does not make any recommendations.
 - b) Because there is not a live Town Meeting this year, each non-profit submitted a 250-word summary outlining its mission, how the funds would be used, and how many Peacham residents would be served. The summaries are available on the town website, in the lobby outside of the Town Office, and from David Edwards.
 - c) In response to a question from Bruce Westcott about voting on each appropriation request individually instead of all together in one article, Heath explained that the Selectboard decided that it was a good time to suss out which organizations the town truly wanted to support.
- 9) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Catamount Arts? Catamount Arts provides arts education, live performances, films, festivals, gallery exhibits, First Night.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 10) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$650 to be raised in taxes to support Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium? Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium provides free unlimited general admission for all Peacham residents; offers science education, exhibits, and weather/information services. Based on 2000 census at \$1 per resident.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 11) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Kingdom Animal Shelter? Kingdom Animal Shelter provides placement of stray and unwanted animals and pets (cats); to establish and maintain an animal shelter; and to prevent overpopulation and cruelty to animals.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 12) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$660 to be raised in taxes to support Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging? Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging provides services to seniors: senior meals programs; wellness and fitness programs; health insurance counseling; family caregiver support; elder justice advocacy; benefits advocacy; problem-solving for Social Security and insurance; budgeting assistance.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 13) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$769 to be raised in taxes to support Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.? Northeast Kingdom Human Services Inc. provides mental health services (request based on \$1.05 per resident from 2010 census).
 - a) No discussion.
 - 14) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Northeast Kingdom Youth Services? Northeast Kingdom Youth Services provides services to teens; parent education program; Living Room day shelter for teens; court diversion program; school outreach/mentoring programs; transitional living assistance.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 15) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1,000 to be raised in taxes to support Peacham Community Housing? Peacham Community Housing provides affordable housing for Peacham residents; historic preservation; support for community development projects including Café, Guild, and Acoustic Music Fest.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 16) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to be raised in taxes to support Peacham Fire District #1? Peacham Fire District #1 maintains the water supply for Peacham Village, including public facilities.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 17) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$1,500 to be raised in taxes to support Peacham Historical Association? Peacham Historical Association provides community programs, exhibits, preservation of historic archives and collections, Peacham research, and publications.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 18) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$26,000 to be raised in taxes to support Peacham Library? Peacham Library provides library services, including books, periodicals, films, audio books, internet access, community programs and gatherings, technology training, used book sale, and municipal meeting space.
 - a) Johanna Branson thanked the town for the vote of confidence and support that the library received in 2019 and described some of the programs that the library offered over the past year. The library board is very grateful of the library staff's response to the events of the past year.
 - 19) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Rural Community Transportation, Inc.? Rural Community Transportation, Inc. provides regional public transportation services with scheduled services to Peacham.
 - a) No discussion.
 - 20) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$2,000 to be raised in taxes to support SASH? SASH provides free support and services at home for elderly and disabled people who are Medicare

eligible, including wellness visits, medication reviews, blood pressure screening, and healthy living planning.

- a) No discussion.
- 21) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Umbrella? Umbrella provides counseling, support, and safety for women, children, and families in crisis; safe house network; childcare assistance.
 - a) No discussion.
- 22) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired? Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides training, services, and support for visually impaired Vermonters.
 - a) No discussion.
- 23) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$50 to be raised in taxes to support Vermont Green-Up? Vermont Green-Up provides Green-Up Day activities and supplies in Peacham provided by Vermont Green-Up.
 - a) No discussion.
- 24) Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$500 to be raised in taxes to support West Danville Community Club? West Danville Community Club provides maintenance of the free public beach at Joe's Pond.
 - a) No discussion.
- 25) Shall the Town pay its real property taxes to the Town Treasurer on or before November 1, 2021, with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent per month and with an eight percent penalty charged against them from the due date?
 - a) No discussion.
- 26) To elect a Town Clerk for a term of one year.
 - a) Thomas Galinat said that he has been in the office since 2014 and has done a lot to make it a very efficient office. He would be happy to do it again for another year.
- 27) To elect a Town Treasurer and Tax Collector for a term of one year.
 - a) Galinat said that he has done an enormous amount of work with the Auditors and the Selectboard and that all of the financial policies are up-to-date with best practices. He continues every year to make it a better and more efficient office.
- 28) To elect a Selectboard member for a term of three years.
 - a) Richard Browne introduced himself as a candidate for the open Selectboard position.
- 29) To elect a Lister for a term of three years.
 - a) No discussion.
- 30) To elect an Auditor for a term of three years.
 - a) No discussion.
- 31) To elect a First Constable for a term of one year.
 - a) No discussion.
- 32) To elect a Second Constable for a term of one year.
 - a) No discussion.
- 33) To elect a Delinquent Tax Collector for a term of one year.
 - a) No discussion.
- 34) To elect a Trustee of the Peacham Library (to represent the Town) for a term of three years.
 - a) No discussion.
- 35) Shall the voters authorize cannabis retailers and integrated licensees in town pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 863?
 - a) Ring explained that the Vermont legislature has not passed this yet but, should it be passed, residents of Peacham would not be deterred from growing or selling cannabis.
 - b) Geoffrey Fried commented that there was information recently published detailing reasons to delay the decision until the legislature made clearer issues such as zoning.
 - c) Bruce Westcott conveyed that VPR reported only about 20 towns in Vermont have this on the ballot.
 - d) Jock Gill was in favor of well-regulated, properly-zoned new economic activity in Peacham.
- 36) Shall the voters adopt the names chosen by the students of Peacham School for the 5 town plow trucks: Sparkles, Day Blaze, Fearless Frosty, Ice Cream, and Got Snow?
 - a) Heath explained that the article is part of an ongoing effort to get students at the school involved in local government. For future years, the plan is for the students to have to petition to get names on the ballot for new town trucks.
 - b) Jock Gill would like to have a public christening of the trucks with the kids smashing water balloons on the trucks.
 - c) Dart Thalman wondered if the names would be permanent or if the trucks would be renamed in future years.
 - i. Heath explained that the town is on a lease program for town trucks and that there should be an opportunity to name a new truck each year.
 - d) Jonathan Kaplan commented that the naming should be tied into adult education as well because the lack of how the system works is not age-specific.
4. Other information
 - 1) Patrice McDonough brought up the concept of Summer Sundays in Peacham. There will be community engagement established around the farmers market, historical buildings, and various

activities. People can speak with McDonough, Ellie Blachly, or Jean Dedam with ideas or questions.

- 2) Wendy Morgan reminded everyone that property tax relief is available for people who make up to \$138,500. There is up to \$8,000 available in state payments that are paid directly to the town.
 - 3) Jock Gill encouraged anyone interested in the future of zoning in Peacham to participate in Planning Commission meetings held on the second Tuesday of every month. He also encouraged anyone interested in saving money and being warmer to participate in an energy audit and attend Energy Committee meetings held on the second Monday of every month.
 - 4) Jonathan Kaplan said that the Fire District meetings are now on the second Tuesday of every month at 11:00am via Zoom.
 - 5) Frank Miller said that he is planning to have PAMFest resume this year on August 13-14 and will watch the evolution of the Covid situation closely to make the final decision.
 - 6) Dart Thalman said that Peacham Community Housing postponed its annual meeting from last November until March 6th. The meeting will include a celebration of Olive Cheney's contributions as well as a celebration of the 2020 Harry Barnes Award recipients, Betsy and Tim McKay. Contact Thalman or Liza Browne for more information.
 - 7) Ring thanked Galinat, Washington, Smolinsky, and McKay for helping run such smooth elections over the past year.
5. Adjourn
- 1) **P. Craig moved to adjourn. Heath seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:12am.**

These minutes were approved by the Peacham Selectboard at its regular meeting on 4/7/21.

Rebecca Washington, Selectboard Clerk

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Washington', is written over a horizontal line.