

**TOWN OF HYDE PARK
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 2018**

SELECTBOARD: Roger Audet, Susan Bartlett, Roland Boivin, David Gagnier, Lucy Hankinson

TOWN CLERK / TREASURER: Kimberly J. Moulton

MODERTOR: Christine Hallquist

Moderator Hallquist called the meeting to order at 9:00am and lead the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Hallquist advised the meeting that speakers must come up to the microphone to speak and must state their name.

Article 1. To elect Town and School District Officers as required by Australian ballot.

Selectboard Member for a term of two years – Roland Boivin

Selectboard Member for a term of three years – Roger Audet

Lister for a term of three years – Gary Anderson

Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District Director for a term of three years – Chasity Fagnant

Article 2. To elect the following town officers from the floor:

Moderator Hallquist turned the meeting over to D. Gagnier for the election of Moderator. Before D. Gagnier proceeded with nominations for Moderator, he introduced the town officials on the stage. He introduced Roger Audet, Susan Bartlett, Roland Boivin, Lucy Hankinson and himself as Selectboard Members. He introduced Kim Moulton as the Town Clerk, Treasurer and Delinquent Tax Collector. He introduced Kristan Langlois as the Assistant Town Clerk and Assistant Treasurer. He thanked everyone for their hard work throughout the year.

Moderator for a term of one year: D. Gagnier asked for nominations for Moderator. Pixie Loomis nominated Christine Hallquist. Hearing no other nominations, nominations were closed and D. Gagnier directed the Clerk to cast one ballot for Christine Hallquist for Moderator.

D. Gagnier turned the meeting over to Moderator Hallquist. Moderator Hallquist reminded everyone that Robert's Rules require that articles require a motion and a second before there can be discussion. For discussion, people were reminded that they must speak into the microphone and must state their name.

Town Grand Juror for a term of one year: Moderator Hallquist called for nominations for Town Grand Juror. D. Gagnier nominated Ed French. There was a second from Roger Audet. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Town Agent for a term of one year: Moderator Hallquist called for nominations for Town Agent. Gerald Smith nominated Ed French. There was a second from Tom Younkman. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Cemetery Commissioner for a term of five years: Moderator Hallquist called for nominations for Cemetery Commissioner. Judy Lanphear nominated Christine Cooney. There was a second from Pixie Loomis. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Library Trustee for a term of five years: Moderator Hallquist called for nominations for Library Trustee. Emily Dearborn nominated Ken Geiersbach. There was a second from Sigh Searles. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 3. To hear and act upon the reports of the Town Officers and Service Agencies.

Moderator Hallquist asked if there was anyone opposed to Town Administrator Ron Rodjenski speaking during the meeting. There was no one opposed to Ron speaking during the meeting.

D. Gagnier stated that there was an error on page 18. Where it states \$2, it should say \$.50. This error does not affect the budget. D. Gagnier asked if there were any questions on the report. There were none.

Teresa Farquharson spoke on behalf of the Community Circle. She explained that they are a committee with the town who coordinates seasonal activities meant to bring neighbors together without any political or other agenda. She acknowledged Marilyn Zophar, Susan Hayes, Rebecca Dennis, John and Judy Clark, Dan Young, Julie Rohleder, Marilyn May, Susan Moore, Deborah Henderson, Antonia Kontos, and Gail Deuso, as well as Nate Perham, Tim Yarrow, Ted Lambert and many others who have pitched in over the years. She thanked them all for their service. T. Farquharson noted that their Community Circle Report is on page 66-67 of the town report.

T. Farquharson stated they will host the Think Spring Puppets and Plants on March 17, 2018. Due to the renovations at the elementary school, the event will be held at the Green Mountain Technology and Career Center. The event will start at 11:00am.

T. Farquharson stated they will be serving free ice cream and cookies at the Ice Cream Social in July, Home Day will be in September, and the Lighting Ceremony with the return of Frosty the Snowman at the Library, will be held in December.

Jeff Beattie spoke on behalf of the Hyde Park Mentoring Program. His report is on page 82 of the town report. They are always looking for more mentors. He thanked a couple of mentors from Hyde Park, Deanna Judkins and Charlie Aronovici.

Caroline Ballard spoke on behalf of the Lamoille Community Food Shelf. She thanked everyone for all their help and support throughout the years.

Article 4. Shall the voters appropriate \$1,000 to River Arts for FY2019?

There was a motion from Carol Young and a second from Paul Trudell to move the article. Pixie Loomis spoke on behalf of River Arts. She introduced herself as a Hyde Park resident and a member of the River Arts board. She respectfully requests \$1,000 for River Arts. She stated that River Arts is a non-profit community art center with a mission to enrich the community through the arts. Their core operating value is Arts for Everyone, and they are committed to providing multi-disciplinary arts opportunities and making the arts accessible for everyone, no matter their age, ability or financial means.

In 2017, they provided classes, camps, workshops, exhibitions, concerts and other cultural events to over 3,000 community members while providing a place where people can gather together, connect, express themselves and gain confidence through the arts.

Some highlights of the year include:

- Kinder Arts program providing process-based arts to 8 different preschools and over 119 children in Lamoille County
- Scholarships were offered to nearly half of the 173 summer campers, aged 5-17, who participated in singing, dancing, painting, cooking, songwriting, skating and much more
- Three free workshops were offered with professional artists at 2 different locations, continued support with our growing drop-in elder arts group, took a special field trip to Shelburne Farms, served over 135 senior participants in Lamoille County
- Provided free art making activities to hundreds of families at the Wednesday Night Live summer concert series, 4th of July, Rocktoberfest and Festival of Lights.

While they were not able to collect data on all their programs, they do collect information that allows them to look at specific town participation. There were 28 Hyde Park residents participating in classes, camps and events. They awarded \$555 in scholarships to Hyde Park Families and their children to participate in vacation camps. P. Loomis thanked the voters for their consideration.

O. Moore spoke to support the article but wanted to know what other communities contribute. P. Loomis stated that Morrisville has a \$10,000 article on their warning this year and this is what they gave River Arts last year. Next year, she hopes to get to Johnson and Stowe. Voted by voice in the affirmative with 1 opposed.

Article 5. Shall the voters appropriate \$40,000 of the General Fund Balance to the Town Garage Project?

There was a motion from J. Anderson and a second from M. Zophar to move the article. L. Hankinson spoke on this article. She gave an overview that there were four articles (Articles 5, 6 7 & 8) seeking voter approval to designate “unassigned general fund balance funds” to specific projects. These unassigned funds resulted from the new delinquent tax collection policy that resulted increased payments on those delinquent accounts; a one-time increase that could be held by the town, used for one-time reduction in the tax rate or assigned to specific projects. The Selectboard is proposing to use some of the one-time funds for these four projects and maintaining an unassigned fund balance amount of 15% to 20% for future use. The garage project is taking a long-term approach rather than seeking a loan to complete all work at one time. The Town has two estimates for the work one comprehensive project at \$400,000 and a smaller “one new bay” option at \$100,000. The requested \$40,000 from the fund balance will help continue environmental work on floor drains in 2018; other projects are a cold storage area for the grader and roof repairs. Additional funding may be requested in future years after these funds are expended. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 6. Shall the voters appropriate \$25,000 of the General Fund Balance to the Hyde Park Records Maintenance and Restoration Fund?

There was a motion from Z. Cota and a second from D. Roy to move the article. K. Moulton spoke on behalf of this article. She stated that she was seeking \$25,000 from the unassigned fund balance to be used for record preservation and restoration. As previously stated by Lucy Hankinson, this money is available because of the new tax collection policy that resulted in increased delinquent tax collection. K. Moulton stated she would be restoring and preserving 4 land record books, 4 marriage books and 11 burial books with a cost of \$25,000. She stated that the restoration and preservation of the previously mentioned records is needed before the records further deteriorate. The land records to be restored and preserved are

handwritten land records using ink of the time. This ink has its own very corrosive qualities and increases the sensitivity of the paper to light, humidity and pollutants eventually burning through the paper. Acidity is also a major cause of paper deterioration and must be dealt with if the records are to be preserved. From 1850 - 1993, wood pulp paper was used for record keeping. This wood pulp paper is extremely acidic and unstable. The overall restoration process removes the corrosive qualities of the ink and the acidity from the paper. This process halts the inevitable self-destruction of the documents that are meant to be a permanent record in the town records. K. Moulton thanked the voters for their consideration. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 7. Shall the voters create an Economic Development Reserve Fund to be under the control and direction of the Selectboard per 24 V.S.A. 2804, with an initial appropriation of \$10,000 from the General Fund Balance, to be expended to support new business development and other activities intended to create jobs, increases to the town's Grandlist and provide services or housing to town residents; with funding in future years from donations, grants or gifts, and by appropriations approved by voters?

There was a motion from Pixie Loomis and a second from A. Beaupre to move the article. S. Bartlett spoke on behalf of this article. S. Bartlett stated that everyone is concerned about property taxes that are creeping up. One way to help offset that is to attract businesses to Hyde Park. S. Bartlett stated that this \$10,000 from the unassigned fund balance will assist startup businesses, commercial projects that will increase the Grandlist and provide local jobs and to leverage state and federal grants. Capital projects identified in the upcoming Better Connections Grant work (a \$70,000 project) could be accelerated with these funds, as well as address smaller revitalization and improvement projects across the town. The Town and the Village of Hyde Park worked together to bring McMahan's to town and this will help taxes in future years. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 8. Shall the voters create a Stormwater Capital Reserve Fund to be under the control and direction of the Selectboard, with an initial appropriation of \$30,000 from the General Fund Balance per 24 V.S.A. 2804, to be expended to support erosion control and roadway improvement projects and repairs, including permitting and engineering cost; with funding in future years from grants, loans, bonds, fees, and by appropriations approved by voters?

There was a motion from J. Anderson and a second from Ruth Roy to move the article. L. Hankinson spoke on behalf of this article. L. Hankinson stated that they are requesting \$30,000 from the fund balance to plan and implement stormwater improvement projects to comply with the new Municipal Roads General Permit (or MRGP). The roadway and property improvements required by the Clean Water Act and to allow best management practices for stormwater treatment to protect water ways and improve the resiliency of the town during storm events.

O. Moore asked about the \$435,825 Federal grant related to stormwater on page 33 and asked if it was related to this article. S. Bartlett stated that \$435,825 State and Federal grant is related to the "sink hole" project on Johnson Street Extension in the Village. This grant will cover 80% of the project. The Town is responsible for 20% of the cost. Funds from this proposed fund could be used for project like this. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 9. Shall the voters authorize an amount not to exceed \$165,000 to be borrowed for not more than five (5) years for the purchase of a fire truck for the North Hyde Park / Eden Fire Department per 24 V.S.A. 1786, a? The estimated cost of the fire truck is \$330,000. Both Hyde Park and Eden need to approve their respective articles before the authorization is granted.

There was a motion from J. Anderson and a second from Z. Cota to move the article. D. Gagnier stated that Brent Lanpher will speak on behalf of this article. B. Lanpher stated that the truck they currently have is a 1996 with 21,500 miles on it. It has 1,460 hours on it. When last looked at, the frame was well rotted and to fix it would require a new chassis. T. Yarrow asked if there was a 50/50 cost share with Eden. Moderator Hallquist stated that the article says it would be shared with Eden.

Z. Cota asked what kind of truck they would be getting. B. Lanpher stated it would be a frontline attack engine. It would be the most important truck and go to all calls.

P. Trudell asked if the current truck was usable now. B. Lanpher stated it is and goes out to all calls now.

Someone asked if it could be used for another 2-3 years. B. Lanpher didn't think it could. It would come down to someone telling the department just how bad the frame is.

Z. Cota asked if the current truck will continue to be used. B. Lanpher stated it will be sold before they take purchase of the new one.

T. Koch stated that with a rusty frame, it sounds like this truck is needed now. B. Lanpher stated that he wasn't sure if the current fire truck will pass its next inspection.

M. Zophar asked why the article says "for not more than 5 years". R. Rodjenski stated that is the maximum for the state loan.

T. Yarrow asked if the truck is paid off at the end of the five years. B. Lanpher stated the loan would be paid in five years.

K. Moulton stated that the loan would be through the Vermont Municipal Equipment Loan Fund. Their maximum term is five years. Since this is a joint venture between Hyde Park and Eden, the loan interest rate is zero percent. If we wanted a longer term, we would have to go out to bond.

T. Farquharson asked where the money from the sale of current truck would go. B. Lanpher stated that the department would ask both Hyde Park and Eden Selectboard where they would prefer to see the money go.

T. Yarrow asked how two towns use the same fire truck. B. Lanpher stated that NHP/Eden Fire Department covers from the North Hyde Park line going north to the Town of Eden. The Town of Hyde Park Fire Department covers the rest of the Town of Hyde Park. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

Article 10. Shall the voters approve, in addition to any other appropriations approved in prior articles, a total general fund expenditures amount for the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 of \$2,413,400 of which \$2,011,950 shall be raised by property taxes and \$401,450 by non-property tax revenue?

There was a motion from M. Zophar and a second from T. Farquharson to move the article. There was no discussion. Voted by voice in the affirmative with 1 opposed.

Article 11. Shall the voters approve the payment of property taxes to the Town Treasurer in four equal installments (32 V.S.A. 4792), as listed below; with delinquent taxes and assessments have charged against them an eight percent (8%) commission after the fourth installment (32 V.S.A. 1674) and interest

charges of one percent (1%) per month or fraction thereof, for the first three months; and thereafter, one and one-half percent (1 ½%) per month of fraction thereof from the due date of such tax? Such interest shall be imposed on a fraction of a month as if it were an entire month (32 V.S.A § 5136). Payments are due in the hands of the Treasurer by 4:00 P.M. on the below due dates. Only official U.S.P.S. cancellation marks will be accepted if postmarked on or before the due date (32 V.S.A. 4773).

- First installment to be paid on or before Friday, August 31, 2018
- Second installment to be paid on or before Thursday, November 15, 2018
- Third installment to be paid on or before Friday, February 15, 2019
- Fourth installment to be paid on or before Wednesday, May 15, 2019

There was a motion from R. Roy and a second from Z. Cota to move the article. P. Trudell made a motion to amend the article to allow a one-day grace period. There was a second by J. Anderson. D. Gagnier asked K. Moulton to speak on how this affects them in the office. K. Moulton stated that a one-day grace period would really become a new due date to tax payers. People who wait until the last moment to bring their checks into the office will wait until the end of the grace period day to bring their checks in. K. Moulton stated that there is a lot of advertisement done to remind voters of the approaching due date. There are ads in the News & Citizen, notices placed on Front Porch Forum, a sandwich board placed at the end of the driveway except for the February due date because of snow banks and potential damage to the board by snowplows and advertising on the local radio station. One tax bill goes out 30-45 days prior to the first installment. That bill has four coupons on the bottom with the four due dates for the year. It was noted that there are a lot of towns in Vermont that do not accept postmarks as on-time payments. Hyde Park is not one of those towns. If taxpayers can not make it to the office by the time the office closes at 4:00pm on the due date, they can take their payment to the post office and have their envelope hand cancelled and that payment will be considered on time when received at the Town Clerk's office. Allowing a grace period means that the tax quarter can not be closed out on the due date which would create extra work for the staff. She stated that although it would create a lot of extra work in the office, allowing a one-day grace period is up to the voters and not the office staff.

T. Koch asked if we should move the due date back to accommodate the due date and allow for a grace period. There was no discussion on this question.

T. Farquharson stated we should leave it the way it is. Someone called the question. The motion to amend failed by a voice vote. The original motion was voted by voice in the affirmative.

Moderator Hallquist recognized the State Representatives, Rich Westman, Dan Noyes and Matt Hill, who had just arrived.

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

Moderator Hallquist reminded people that action taken in other business is not legally binding.

Sheriff Roger Marcoux spoke about the budget process. The towns of Wolcott, Johnson and Hyde Park work on the budget along with Ron Rodjenski. This process has been working well. Sheriff Marcoux stated that the opioid crisis continues to be an issue. The cycle needs to be stopped somewhere. He spoke about a huge drug case that culminated after two years. They worked with Morristown Police and Stowe Police on this case. Sheriff Marcoux spoke of meeting with different religious inter-faith community in Lamoille County to deal with homelessness. Sheriff Marcoux has made the former Ring Property, or yellow house as he calls it, available to these groups on weekends if someone from the

church was available to stay with the individuals who don't have a place to live. There are families with children who are living in cars. Maybe if these kids can sleep in a house instead of a car, maybe this will help them do better in school and will help to not continue the cycle. He feels that they have the situation well under control and hopes that the voters trust him with what he is trying to accomplish with this process.

T. Yarrow thanked Sheriff Marcoux for his efforts with offering the house for these families. T. Yarrow asked if there would be any economic incentive for the Sheriff's Department to offer the house and what are the plans of the Sheriff's Department to acquire further property in the Village, specifically referring to the St. Theresa's Catholic Church. Sheriff Marcoux stated that there is only economic disincentive but is trying to get state funds to try to renovate and configure it. Right now, they have funds to do that. State money will help with the fuel bills and the sustainability of the project for the future. Sheriff Marcoux stated that during recent power outages with temperatures below zero, the Lamoille Union High School and Johnson State College each opened their campus as an emergency shelter. Lamoille Union High School ended up having just one person at their shelter. Johnson State College ended up only having one person at their emergency shelter. Although that is in Johnson, Sheriff Marcoux stated he is a County Sheriff. The yellow house could help in these situations, too. He is also looking at it as a community resource for meetings, too. Sheriff Marcoux stated that the St. Theresa facility has not had heat for two years and is falling into disrepair. He will be making presentations to the Police Academy and Criminal Justice Training Council to use this facility for classroom space in Northern Vermont. He is open to ideas as to what to use that property for and it is looking favorable that the Sheriff's Department will be purchasing this property. T. Yarrow asked if the Sheriff's Department owns the property now. Sheriff Marcoux stated that they do not yet own the property.

Z. Cota asked why Barre doesn't contribute based on grand list and population like the rest of the towns as they are the biggest user of the communication budget. Sheriff Marcoux stated that Barre Town is a revenue generator. They dispatch about 3,000 calls for them but they are transport calls vs. rescue calls. The revenue from Barre Town goes to reduce the cost to the towns.

N. Tingle asked if the Parish Hall is part of the sale. Sheriff Marcoux stated that it was.

There were no other questions for Sheriff Marcoux and he thanked everyone for their support.

T. Yarrow spoke of the Better Connection grant that was recently awarded. Tim wants people to be aware of all the hard work that went into obtaining this grant. Ron Rodjenski, Seth Jenson from Lamoille Planning Commission, the Village Working Group all helped. This really was a huge effort with so many people. This is really the beginning of this project. They now need to hear ideas from the community how we want to move forward.

R. Roy stated that she would like to suggest that we consider moving the town meeting back to the elementary school.

J. Clark stated that he has been managing the pop-up shelter at the Congregational Church this winter and would like to thank the community and volunteers at the shelter. He thanked the Sheriff for opening up the former Ring property for another place for people to go.

D. Gagnier apologized for not introducing him earlier and then he introduced Ron Rodjenski as Town Administrator.

D. Gagnier recognized Greg Paus who has resigned his position on the Planning Commission after 29 years. He thanked Greg for his service to the Town.

D. Gagnier thanked the voters for their support and he thanked the rest of the board for all their hard work throughout the year.

T. Koch asked if people would be interested in a diner in Hyde Park. This idea was well received.

K. Moulton asked voters about keeping the polls at the town office on town meeting. She asked for a show of hands to see who would be opposed. There were approximately six people who were opposed. Only the Board of Civil Authority can make these changes but wanted to see how the meeting attendees felt about this.

K. Moulton stated that they are considering putting together a town report committee. She stated that it takes probably a full month of gathering reports from the community, editing reports, and working with the publisher to get the report finalized. If this is something you are interested in, please call her or email her.

K. Moulton stated that we are licensing dogs out in the lobby today. Feel free to stop by and get your dog licensed before you leave. The deadline to register your dogs is April 1st. Also, there will be a rabies clinic at the Town Clerk's office in the lower level. This will happen on March 24, 2018 from 11am to 1pm. You will be able to get your dogs and cats vaccinated.

J. Anderson made the motion to adjourn at 10:28am. There was a second from P. Trudell. Voted by voice in the affirmative.

I certify that the above minutes are a true and accurate report of the votes taken at the Town of Hyde Park Annual Meeting held on Tuesday, March 6, 2018.

Kimberly J. Moulton, Town Clerk

These minutes have been reviewed and approved by the following two town officials:

Christine Hallquist, Moderator

David Gagnier, Selectboard Chair