MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN OF WATERBURY

HELD MARCH 4, 2025

Rebecca Ellis called the meeting to order at 9:03am

The inhabitants of the Town of Waterbury who are legal voters in Town Meetings are hereby notified and warned to conduct business to meet in the Brookside Primary School Gym at 47 Stowe Street at 9:00 o'clock in the forenoon on March 4th, 2025 to act on the following matters.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator to preside at the meetings of the Town whose term of office shall be for the ensuing year.

Roger Clapp, I move to elect Rebecca Ellis to preside at the meetings of the Town whose term of office shall be for the ensuing year. John Malter seconded the motion. With no further nominations, the Town Clerk will cast one ballot for Rebecca Ellis.
The Select Board introduced themselves to the audience. Rebecca Ellis gave a brief overview of the timeline for today's meeting including lunch being offered and Robert's Rules of Order.

Article 2: To elect by Australian ballot the following offices: one Select Board member for 3-year term and two Select Board members for 1-year term each; Lister for a 3-year term; Cemetery Commissioner for a 5-year term and one Cemetery Commissioner to fill an unexpired term for 4 years; Library Commissioner for a 5-year term.

Article 3: To elect by Australian ballot for the Harwood Unified Union School District: School Director for a 3-year term; School Director for a 1-year unexpired term and two School Directors for a 2-year unexpired term each.

Article 4: To act upon the reports of the several Town Officers with the exception of claims for fees or compensation during 2024.

Alyssa Johnson made a motion to accept the reports of the several Town Officers as printed in the annual report, with the exception of claims for fees or compensation by Town officers, for services rendered during 2024; the motion was seconded by John Bauer. A. Johnson invited questions for any of the reports in the Annual Report. Bill Shepeluk complemented the Town Report. He stated in Article 10 last year there was a motion for the Town to pay CReW up to $30,000 from FEMA 2023 funding and he would like an update on those funds. Bill Shepeluk also asked about the Town Managers report, page 21 of the Annual Report regarding the Local Options Tax (LOT). There is a statement regarding the 2024 LOT not being proposed to the voters at last year's meeting. Voters were not asked how to appropriate the LOT and the Select Board used the funds for various initiatives in 2024. Bill Shepeluk has issues with the Housing Trust Fund and WATA allocation because they are not appropriated by the voters. Bill Shepeluk stated in his opinion the WATA allocation belonged on the ballot for voter consideration.
John Malter stated the Natural Disaster Preparedness Committee a Town of Waterbury entity is working with the Board to establish volunteers for Natural Disasters. John Malter will be at the meeting all day if anyone would like to sign up as a volunteer.
Kathi Grace asked the Board to define the decision to fund a trail network on Perry Hill which is State land.
Alyssa Johnson stated the funding for CreW was contingent on the volunteer hours being refunded by FEMA. FEMA has denied the claim so there will not be funding to CReW.
In general, when the Board was putting the 2024 LOT allocations together, they had been told Waterbury would not be receiving LOT in 2024 to ask for voter approval at the 2024 Town Meeting.

Aylssa Johnson stated neither the WATA nor Housing Task Force have received the funding at this time but consideration of those payments has been made by the Board. Roger Clapp stated the board did seek legal counsel who assured the Board they did have the authority to spend the LOT in the manner they have committed to do. The LOT is a 1% tax on goods and services which is gained in part by mountain bikers who come to Waterbury for the Perry Hill Trails.
Sandy Sabin asked about the funds for the Housing Trust Fund and if they are allocated specifically to a fund for the purpose of Housing.
Tom Leitz was given permission to speak for the duration of the meeting.
Tom Leitz stated the voters of the Town have the authority to move the funds from the allocation to another area of the budget.
Tom Gloor stated, in reference to page 11, there is a reserve fund to be used to pay down debt what is the loss of interest in the investment. Tom Leitz stated there will be a loss of interest if those funds are used to pay down debt. There is a restriction on the Tax Stabilization Fund that does not allow that fund to be reduced to less than $600,000. Fixed rate interest on investments is approximately 5%.
Theresa Wood asked whether the current administration has a Capital Improvement Plan that they can share. To the best of Tom Leitz's knowledge, there is not a formal Capital Improvement Plan.
Chris Viens stated he is concerned about the LOT becoming a "hand in the cookie jar" and believes if the LOT is used appropriately, it can stabilize or reduce the local tax rate in Waterbury.
Mike Bard stated he had similar concerns that the LOT could be used for any group that requests funding, however, he feels the Housing Trust Fund and WATA are keys to development and vitality which is an appropriate for spending LOT funds.
Sue Minter stated she also believes the LOT should be used to buy down property taxes. Sue Minter stated she sees over $600,000 in Payment in leu of Taxes (PILOT) from the State of Vermont and wondered about federal funding cuts, to the degree we are borrowing from the Tax Stabilization Fund, she would consider holding off on that for the time being due to possible dramatic changes that could negatively impact towns as they experience federal funding cuts.
Tom Leitz stated there is a $10 million dollars surplus in the State LOT and Pilot fund with legislation this year to change the percentages to the benefit of Towns that receive LOT and Pilot payments of which Waterbury receives both. He also stated there is no Federal Funding in the Town of Waterbury budget.
Alex Showerman, the Trails Director for WATA, asked to share data regarding the trails on Perry Hill. WATA has data supporting 15-20,000 visitors per year coming to Waterbury and utilizing local services which will impact the LOT in Waterbury from dining and staying. The funding request was directly tied to climate change that caused damages to the trails' network.
Tom Gloor was permitted to ask an additional question to Tom Leitz. The report states there is additional funding from ARPA or FEMA. Tom Gloor complimented the Board and Manager for the work they did to get the budget prepared and encouraged townspeople to engage. Tom Leitz stated there are no additional ARPA funds. FEMA has settled a 2023 claim on the soccer field and there may be a reserve from that claim. The flooding in 2024 was approximately $500,000 in expenses and the Town continues to work to get those claims settled.
Alyssa Johnson invited participation of the Town Plan that is currently being worked on. There is a table in the lobby to better engage in that process.
Madame Moderator reviewed the motion to accept the reports of the several Town Officers as printed in the annual report, with the exception of claims for fees or compensation by Town officers, for services rendered during 2024.
Sandy Sabin was given permission to speak again and restated the WATA allocation was not an urgent matter and could have been placed on the ballot. She would like the Board to explain why they acted opposed to placing the request on the ballot for the voter consideration. Roger Clapp stated he did not feel the board addressed the request as urgent, however, he felt the funding fit into the vitality of the community and they acted based on their authority to conduct business.
Madame Moderator called a vote on the motion to accept the reports of the several Town Officers as

printed in the annual report, with the exception of claims for fees or compensation by Town officers, for services rendered during 2024; the motion passed by floor vote.

Theresa Wood and Tom Stevens spoke regarding Medicaid and DC, there is a lot of concern in Vermont for the loss of Federal Funding to the Medicaid program. Theresa thanked the citizens for being so welcoming to the families taking shelter here in Waterbury. The Town is attempting to take ownership of Randall Meadow (the corn field) but the new State Commissioner is not as receptive as the previous one. Theresa is working to keep that dialogue going and hopes to make headway. Theresa stated the Education reform is being considered but she does not have a substantial update for today. Tom Stevens thanked the citizens on Waterbury for coming to Town Meeting and attending. He spoke about education funding and governance. The change in conversation this year is that the Governor has put a plan together for consideration with difficult conversations ongoing. Tom spoke about funding losses to social services and the impacts on the most vulnerable Vermonters. Work is being done to create a contingency plan to take care of funding on a local level.

Article 5: To act with respect to claims of Town Officers for their services during 2024.

Skip Flanders moved to pay the claims of the Town Officers for their services rendered during 2024, as it appears on Page 8 of the Annual report. Select Board Chair, $1,450, Vice Chair $1,450, other Select Board members, $1,200 each; Listers, $500 each. The motion was seconded by Kathi Grace and John Malter. There was no discussion, the motion passed by floor vote.

Article 6: Shall the tax warrant on real property be dated July 1, 2025, and the taxes be due in two installments, with the first installment due and payable on August 15th, 2025 and the second installment due and payable on November 7th, 2025?

Kane Sweeney moved the tax warrant on real property be dated July 1, 2025, and the taxes be due in two installments, with the first installment due and payable on August 15th, 2025 and the second installment due and payable on November 7th, 2025. The motion was seconded by John Malter and MK Monley. There was no discussion, the motion passed by floor vote.

Article 7: Shall each tax installment be paid in hand at the Municipal Office by 5:30 p.m. on the due date without discount and interest be charged at the maximum allowed by statute, not to exceed one and one-half percent per month or portion thereof on each installment and a late penalty of eight percent by charged as allowed by statute on taxes not paid when due?

Michael Bard moved that each tax installment shall be paid in hand at the Municipal Office by 5:30pm on the due date without discount and that interest be charged at the maximum allowed by statute, not to exceed one and one-half percent per month or portion thereof on each installment and a late penalty of eight percent be charged as allowed by statute on taxes not paid when due. The motion was seconded by John Bauer. There was no discussion, the motion passed by floor vote.

Bill Shepeluk moved to suspend the rules to take up Articles 10-14 before returning to Article 8 & 9. Jeff Kilgore seconded the motion. This motion would require 2/3 vote from the floor. Bill Shepeluk stated he felt this was important for townspeople to see an in-person town meeting before discussing a change to the format of town meeting. A hand count was conducted and yielded a result of 56 in favor and 87 opposed for a total of 143 votes to suspend the rules. The meeting will proceed with Article 8.

The 30th Anniversary of the Keith Wallace Award was presented to Randy Guyette from Bill Woodruff and P.H. Flanders.

Article 8: Shall the Town of Waterbury adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(c), as opposed to a traditional floor vote?

Roger Clapp moved the Town of Waterbury shall adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(c). The motion was seconded by Victoria Taravella. Roger Clapp stated he is aware this is a controversial discussion and acknowledges the tradition and conversation. He also acknowledged the Keith Wallace Award could not be presented without an in-person meeting. Lastly there was a time in history when a female Moderator and Board Chair would not have been possible acknowledging change is important. Roger spoke of many of the conveniences of changing the format of Town Meeting.
Christa Bowdish stated she has historically had to work and was not able to attend Town Meeting and sees the value of public discourse. She was also not able to attend Have Your Say Day because she had to work. She appreciated being able to read the Annual Report and ask questions but does not feel the tradition is worth preserving for a select few.
Angela Wells is in favor of in person Town meeting. She has learned so much from elders. She feels people must make tough decisions and effort to attend. It is an investment in time to learn new things and she does not want to lose that.
Kathi Grace stated Harwood previously voted on a floor vote. She is concerned about voter education and being informed when voting. She supports keeping Town Meeting Day unchanged.
Michelle Downing had to take a vacation day to be here today and supports a hybrid Town Meeting.
Alexia Venafra supports this article for accessibility, privacy, and representation.
Tori Taravella thanked Alexia for her points of view and mentioned disenfranchising people who cannot be here today. There is a possibility the Town could be in violation of the Disability Rights Act for not providing a way for all individuals to vote.
Dani Kehlmann stated she has many friends who cannot be here and it is a privilege to come to Town Meeting. The opportunity to ask questions and discuss matters will still be available with Have Your Say Day.
Alex Showerman loves Town Meeting Day but looking at the data with 5% of eligible voters in the room today is not true democracy.
Lisa Walton agrees with the points made with valid arguments; however, Town Meeting is a 200-year-old tradition. Traditions are created when something works and continues to occur. Town Meeting Day is a direct democracy.
Linda Gravell asked for a point of order. Are we voting for a ballot or Town Meeting? Is there no option to do both? Madame Moderator restated the article for clarity.
Michael Frank stated there are magical things that happen on this floor. Michael spoke about issues that have come before the voters before such as police and mergers. Michael stated Waterbury has a hybrid process now with the Australian ballot for elected officials and floor voting for budget items.
Ariel Mondalk thanked the Board and JP's. Ariel loves Town meeting but states she had to decide to come here and not work today which is a financial burden. Town Meeting Day feels a little exclusive.
Harrison Stark stated the arguments have been very persuasive and valid but he does not believe he has heard why Australian ballots is bad. We can have Australian Ballot while retaining the incredibly important dilatative discussion. His belief is to move to Australian Ballot so there will be even more opportunity for accessibility.
Duncan McDougall stated there is no doubt Australian Ballot will bring more votes but worries those decisions will not be informed. There are many walks of life here today so even though it is a small number of the whole those here are diverse in representing our community.
Alex Cawley stated some communities have Town Meeting in the evenings and wonders if that is a solution that might work.
Dana Allen said we must evolve from farmers. He has been attending Town Meeting since he was 12 however, he does not love there are only 5% of the people of Waterbury here. What is being proposed is evolution.
Monica Callan thanked the Board for all their work but wonders if townspeople just need more time to discuss other options opposed to all Australian Ballot.
Eliza Novak-Smith feels she is lucky to be here today but is reflecting on debate and discussion and how tiring it can be at the end of the day. She reflected on the COVID election ballots that were

mailed to all voters. She was afforded the time for a deliberative decision.
Chris Viens stated in 1761, the first year of Town Meeting in Vermont, was in Bennington. This conversation is a discussion to change culture of Vermont. The Have Your Say Day was not successful when attempted in January. Points were made that townspeople are not attending Select Board meetings where decisions are being made but they will be voting on these issues on a ballot. The opportunity to create a hybrid form will be lost of this article passes.
Liz Schlegel asked if the Select Board considered a Representative Form of Government. Roger Clapp stated "no." The Board cannot comment because those were not considered or discussed. Madame Moderator invited Liz Schlegel to inform the public on these opportunities.
Sue Minter would like the Select Board to describe their vision going forward if this article passed. Roger Clapp stated the Board's vision is to have a meeting that still influences decisions but all questions would be answered on Australian Ballot.
Mary Koen echoes Sue Minter's thoughts that we are not ready for this; she agrees to make everything more accessible and supports seniors but feels it is disrespectful to believe that folks cannot get to Town Meeting based on mobility issues.
Tori Taravella called a point of order as Kathi Grace has spoken once before so must wait for others to speak.
Maureen McCracken stated in the Australian ballot there is no explanation of the outcome such as why a motion is voted down; information that is very useful to have for informed warnings.
Karen Yacos made a point of calling attention to all the young people in the room and highlighting what democracy is. If we move away from what we have now we will never get it back.
Linda Gravell, a Justice of the Peace believes in Democracy. She would like to know if we can keep both and work on a plan. Point of Order – what if people vote to abstain? Abstentions are not counted. Brief recess so Linda can form her motion. Linda would like to Board to answer if there would be a Town Meeting next year if this article passed? Roger Clapp stated his commitment would be to have a meeting like this even if we have an Australian Ballot voting.
Maryanne Neighbor would like to know what is the difference in Article 8 & 9. On our warned agenda. There are items such as elected officials that are already voted on by Australian ballot. The difference with Articles 8 & 9 is public question. An example of public questions are Articles 4 – 8 as well as many examples such as merging with EFUD.
Steve Martin stated he only recently became active in local Government meetings but appreciates having the elders to look to for guidance. Harwood is on a ballot and there are 2-6 people in attendance for the informational meetings he has attended.
Cheryl Casey called the question. The motion to call the question is a motion to end the discussion. A Point of Order was called to determine who in the room was not a Waterbury resident. After a show of hands, a vote was held 107 in favor and 52 opposed to end discussion on Article 8.

Shall the Town of Waterbury shall adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(c). Kathi Grace requested a paper ballot with a show of more than 7 hands. The vote was conducted by paper ballot.
Point of Order - can articles 8 & 9 be voted on simultaneously and the answer is no.

A paper ballot was conducted. Madame Moderator asked to suspend the rules and take up Article 16 while paper ballots were counted.

Article 16: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,000 for support of the American Red Cross? David Luce made a motion the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,000 for support of the American Red Cross? The motion was duly seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Madame Moderator asked to suspend the rules and take up Article 17 while paper ballots are being counted.

Article 17: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,000 for support of Central Vermont Adult Basic Education? Brian Kravitz made a motion the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,000 for support of Central Vermont Adult Basic Education. The motion was seconded Alex Cawley. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Madame Moderator asked to suspend the rules and took up Article 18 while paper ballots were being counted.

Article 18: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,250 for the support of Central Vermont Council on Aging and AmeriCorps Senior RSVP? Pauline Nolte moved to appropriate $2,250 for the support of Central Vermont Council on Aging and AmeriCorps Senior RSVP. The motion was seconded by many. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Madame Moderator asked to suspend the rules and took up Article 19 while paper ballots were counted.

Article 19: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $4,000 for support of the Early Education Resource Center of Waterbury ("Children's Room")? MK Monley made a motion to appropriate $4,000 for support of the Early Education Resource Center of Waterbury ("Children's Room"). The motion was seconded by John Malter. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Madame Moderator asked to suspend the rules and took up Article 20 while paper ballots were counted.

Article 20: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,383 for support of the Green Mountain Transit Agency? Michael Frank made a to appropriate $2,383 for support of the Green Mountain Transit Agency. MK Monley seconded the motion. Discussion followed about rural routes and changes to routes. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

The results from Article 8 were delivered to Madame Moderator and announced. Shall the Town of Waterbury shall adopt all budget articles by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(c)? The results are as follows Yes 64; No 144. The motion did not pass.

Article 9: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote on all public questions by Australian ballot pursuant 17 V.S.A. §2680(d), as opposed to a traditional floor vote?

Ian Shea, I move that the Town of Waterbury shall adopt all public questions by Australian ballot pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(d). The motion was seconded by Dana Allen. Discussion followed about the difference of Articles 8 & 9.
MK Monley asked if articles 16-26 would be considered on an Australian Ballot. The answer is that the Board could, if they wish, embed those items in the budget and not have them as separate line items on a ballot.
Kathi Grace asked for clarification that the Town could pass article 9 and number 8 could end up on an Australian ballot next year. The answer was yes, in theory that is a plausible outcome.
Tom Leitz stated there is a specific statue related to Australian ballot voting that it could only be changed by floor vote.
Angela Wells stated a lot of time was just spend discussing Article 8 and she is in favor of voting Article 9 down now to allow for additional time for consideration.
Chris Viens asked if Articles 16-26 are embedded in the budget, what are the voters' abilities to amend or alter the change them? Alyssa Johnson stated that currently there is a floor vote which could be altered by a voter if deemed germane. If Articles 16-26 were embedded in the budget, under current rules, it could be discussed in open Town meeting.
Madame Moderator called the question. The motion failed by floor vote.

Article 10: Shall the voters approve a total of $3,683,570 in general expenses, $1,401,708 in highway expenses, $631,572 in library expenses, and $72,401 in cemetery expenses, of which $4,460,945 will be raised from property taxes and $1,328,306 from other non-property-tax

revenues?

Michael Bard, I move that the Town of Waterbury shall be authorized to expend up to $3,683,570 for general expenses $1,401,708 for highway expenses $631,572 for library expenses $72,401 for cemetery expenses; plus, any additional amounts approved in Articles 15 through 26, of which up to $4,460,945 will be raised from property taxes, resulting in a property tax rate in calendar year 2025 of approximately $.555/$100 of property valuation. The motion was seconded by John Malter. Mike Bard asked to refer to page 23 of the Town Report. The State of Vermont 2024 Pilot payment was down slightly. There is legislation now that could be favorable to the Town regarding Pilot payments in 2025. Mike Bard highlighted several changes such as State Police Contract, a full time Lister, changes in Health Care, increase with Ambulance Services and many other changes. The Pool generally costs $50,000 to operate but with planned repairs and the closure of the State Park in the coming years costs hopefully will reduce and income go up. There are no operational changes to Planning and Zoning in 2025. Debt in the middle of page 30 with a schedule available to be reviewed. Without the LOT the budget would likely be very different. Previous heating problems in the Municipal Building have improved impacting the budget positively.
Sandy Sabin requested the Article be changed to state "up to." The motion was made with the words "up to" so that is what will be considered when voting takes place.
John Malter gave a brief update on "talking trash" as the Mad River Resource Alliance is embedded in the budget. May 18th and October 12th will be collection days in 2025.
Kathi Grace asked about page 32 of the report asking about Randall Meadow (Corn field); is this the time to discuss taking gravel out of the river, has that been explored in Waterbury? Tom Leitz stated there have been numerous conversations with the State and was told it is just not possible at this time. Bill Shepeluk asked about page 23, line interest earnings, 2023 actual $43,000 2024 budgeted and obtained. And 2025 anticipated.
Bill Shepeluk made a motion to appropriate $15,000 to CReW to support its efforts to build flood resiliency in Waterbury, using that amount of the Towns undesignated fund balance to fund the appropriation. Linda Gravell seconded the motion. A year ago, the Town appropriated up to $30K to CReW that was not realized because FEMA did not settle the claim. On page 78 CReW report is still serving a large population in the community that are still suffering from flood related disasters. Bill pointed out there are over $200,000 in undesignated fund balance that could be used for this and not impact the tax rate.
Madame Moderator invited discussion to the motion to amend.
Mike Bard stated he is in favor of appropriating money to CReW and wondered if the neighboring communities have also been asked for appropriations. CReW did not ask for appropriations to any community however, seeing an undesignated fund balance puts Waterbury in a position to use those funds for this purpose without an impact on the tax rate. Tom Leitz stated those funds were created because the Town ran a surplus. In 2026 the budget will look very difference thanks to the LOT.
There being no further discussion, a vote was held on the amendment. The motion passed by floor vote.
Restating the motion, the Town of Waterbury shall be authorized to expend up to $3,683,570 for general expenses $1,401,708 for highway expenses $631,572 for library expenses $72,401 for cemetery expenses; plus, any additional amounts approved in Articles 15 through 26, of which up to $4,460,945 will be raised from property taxes, resulting in a property tax rate in calendar year 2025 of approximately $.555/$100 of property valuation and to appropriate $15,000 to CReW to support its efforts to build flood resiliency in Waterbury, using that amount of the Towns undesignated fund balance to fund the appropriation. A vote was held and passed unanimously from the floor.

Article 11: To see if the voters will authorize the selectboard to transfer up to $380,000 from the Town's tax stabilization fund for the purchase of a fire vehicle, with the funds repaid from Local Option Tax revenues, over a period not to exceed 3-years.

Kane Sweeney moved to authorize the Select Board to transfer up to $380,000 from the

Town's Tax Stabilization Fund for the purchase of a fire vehicle, with the funds repaid from Local Option Tax revenues, over a period not to exceed 3-years. The motion was seconded by John Malter. Gary Dillon stated the vehicle being discussed is a Mini Pumper replacing the current one that is 20 years old having been obtained using a Federal Grant. After 8 months at a dealer for needed repairs, parts are no longer available. The truck has been fixed at this time using fabricated parts but if the truck should fail again there are no parts available. A demo truck is available to purchase to replace the current outdated and unrepairable option.
Karen Miller asked for clarification of the transfer from the Tax Stabilization Fund. The fund is limited to use that it cannot be reduced to less than $640,000. For this reason, the borrowing ask is up to $380,000.
Theresa Wood asked about a Capital plan and equipment replacement plan. We are voting blind without the knowledge about what is coming down the road. Why are not we using reserve funds. The reason for not using reserve funds is because of the belief that LOT is enough. It is the option of the voters to charge interest but you are borrowing from yourself by moving money from one bucket of money to another. Next year's Annual Report will include detailed Capital Plans as it has been a theme in questions today and is available to be reviewed.
A vote was held and passed unanimously from the floor.

Article 12: To see if the voters will authorize the Select Board to transfer up to $310,000 from the Town's tax stabilization fund for the purchased of a public works vehicle, with the funds repaid from Local Option Tax revenues, over a period not to exceed 3-years.

Alyssa Johnson moved to authorize the Select Board to transfer up to $310,000 from the Town's tax stabilization fund for the purchase of a public works vehicle, with the funds repaid from Local Option Tax revenues, over a period not to exceed 3-years. The motion was seconded by MK Monley. The vehicle in consideration is a tandem dump truck primarily for hauling materials.
Karen Miller asked for further clarification regarding the limitation on the Tax Stabilization Fund for $640,000. There is often a long time between obtaining voter approval and when the truck must be paid for.
Bill Shepeluk stated this has been a practice for many years. This is a borrowing practice that saves the Town money by not having to borrow from the bank.
Chris Viens stated the tandem being proposed is capable of hauling twice as much product and does use more fuel, however, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.
A vote was held and passed unanimously from the floor.

Article 13: Shall the voters authorize $520,000 in expenditures for capital improvements?

Ian Shea moved to authorize the expenditure of $520,000 in expenditures for capital improvements. Note this $520,000 is not all Capital Expenditures but is funds that would be moved from the General Fund with a large amount of these funds being used for paving. On page 35 of the Annual Report, $450,000 is for paving Kneeland Flats Road and a culvert. There is $25,000 for the Stowe Street bridge that is no longer required so those funds will be reallocated elsewhere. Kyle Guyette, EFUD staff member, saves the Fire Department considerable money with vehicle repairs. The Town is spending more on Recreation expenses this year than previous years.
A vote was held and passed unanimously from the floor.

Article 14: To see if the voters of the Town will, during 2025, appropriate from Local Option Tax revenues:

- $150,000 for gravel road materials and repairs
- $25,000 towards highway capital fund needs
- $17,500 towards development of conceptual plans and cost estimates for a new recreational

facility

- $75,000 to capitalize the Town's housing trust fund
- $25,000 towards a security system for the municipal building
- $55,000 towards resurfacing the shallow end of the pool
- $50,000 towards consulting services to assist the Planning and Conservation Commissions with Town Plan updates.

Roger Clapp moved the Town, during 2025, appropriate from Local Option Tax revenues in the amount of $150,000 for gravel road materials and repairs, $25,000 towards highway capital fund needs, $17,500 towards development of conceptual plans and cost estimates for a new recreational facility, $75,000 to capitalize the Town's housing trust fund, $25,000 towards a security system for the municipal building, $55,000 towards resurfacing the shallow end of the pool and $50,000 towards consulting services to assist the Planning and Conservation Commissions with Town Plan updates. John Malter seconded the motion. Roger spoke of the items individually detailing the Town's need for each. Gravel Road Material is being hauled longer distances now that local gravel pits have closed.

Sandy Sabin moved to amend the motion to add to the end of the list $100,000 toward Pubic Safety expenses. Karen Dean seconded the motion. These are expenses that are currently being included in the tax rate paid with Property Taxes and still leaves a fund balance of LOT.
Alyssa Johnson stated the list presented in October 2023 for local Options Tax revenue is based on public hearings. Alyssa Johnson feels Public Safety is an Operational Expense and not meant to be included using LOT. Clarifying question to use the 2024 LOT to buy down the tax rate. In general, it is not great practice to use one time allocation to buy down the tax rate because next year you must buy it back up.
Theresa Wood suggested that using one time revenue for ongoing expenses is not wise.
Chris Viens asked if there plans to use those funds next year and how will it impact the Town. Tom Leitz stated he feels the gravel costs using the LOT is very impactful because they can build supply thereby reducing costs in the future. The pool has traditionally cost a lot to operate and with the proposed repair will see a cost reduction.
Roger Clapp stated he would like to save $35 on his taxes but warned the Board worked hard in the last year to keep the tax rate level. He is concerned if they use $100,000 to buy down the tax rate this year, they will be faced with tougher budget questions next year.
Sandy Sabin requested to remove her request for an amendment.
MK Monley called the question a motion to limit debate and was passed unanimously.
The motion to amend was called and failed unanimously.

Bill Shepeluk moved to divide the motion into two questions, one of $75,000 into the Housing Trust Fund and the second all over items. The motion was moved and seconded. A floor vote was held and the motion to divide but did not pass.
The motion for consideration should the Town, during 2025 appropriate from Local Option Tax revenues in the amount of $150,000 for gravel road materials and repairs, $25,000 towards highway capital fund needs, $17,500 towards development of conceptual plans and cost estimates for a new recreational facility, $75,000 to capitalize the Town's housing trust fund, $25,000 towards a security system for the municipal building, $55,000 towards resurfacing the shallow end of the pool and $50,000 towards consulting services to assist the Planning and Conservation Commissions with Town Plan updates. There being no further discussion, a vote was held and passed unanimously from the floor.

Article 15: To see if the voters of the Town will, during 2025, appropriate:

- $1,000 for support of Capstone Community Action
- $1,375 for support of Circle

- $500 for support of Community Harvest of Central Vermont
- $1,500 for support of Downstreet Housing and Community Development
- $1,500 for support of Elevate Youth Services
- $500 for support of Everybody Wins! Vermont
- $1,000 for the support of the Family Center of Washington County
- $1,000 for support of Friends of Waterbury Reservoir
- $500 for support of Good Beginnings of Central Vermont
- $250 for support of OUR House of Central Vermont
- $1,000 for support of the People's Health and Wellness Clinic
- $500 for support of the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- $600 for support of the Vermont Center for Independent Living
- $800 for the support of the Waterbury Community Band

John Malter made a motion that the Town, during 2025, appropriate the set amount to those many institutions that contribute to the fabric of the Community. Kathi Grace seconded the motion. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 21: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,500 for the support of the Harry N. Cutting American Legion? Wayne Goulet moved to appropriate $2,500 for the support of the Harry N. Cutting American Legion. The motion was duly seconded. Money will be placed in the Capital Improvement Fund for things such as the heating system that has been acting up recently. They anticipate needing $40,000 to replace the aging system. The Organization has already saved $15,000 towards the project. Mike Bard thanked the Legion for hosting Community events. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 22: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $975 for support of Mosaic Vermont? Margaret Luce made a motion to appropriate $975 for support of Mosaic Vermont. David Luce seconded the motion. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 23: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,500 for the support of the Waterbury Area MakerSphere Cooperative? MK Monley made a motion to appropriate $2,500 for the support of the Waterbury Area MakerSphere Cooperative. John Malter seconded the motion. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 24: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $6,500 for the Waterbury Area Senior Citizens Association in addition to the amount included in the General Fund Budget for such purpose? Robert Seymour made a motion to appropriate $6,500 for the Waterbury Area Senior Citizens Association in addition to the amount included in the General Fund Budget for such purpose. The motion was seconded by John Malter. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 25: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $2,500 for support of Waterbury Local Energy Action Partnership (LEAP)? Duncan McDougall made a motion to appropriate $2,500 for support of Waterbury Local Energy Action Partnership (LEAP). The motion was seconded by Mary Koen. The LEAP Energy Fair is April 5th at Crossett Brook Middle School. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Article 26: Shall the Town of Waterbury vote to appropriate $3,000 for the support of Washington County Mental Health Services? Theresa Wood made a motion to appropriate $3,000 for the support of Washington County Mental Health Services. The motion was seconded by Mary Koen. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Mike Bard thanked the public for hanging on until 3:30 for what was a long meeting. Thanked Public

Works and Road Department during this challenging winter. Thanked all the Board volunteers. Lastly Mike thanked his fellow Select Board members for what was a challenging year with lots of meetings. Thanked the Town Manager. He is very proud to live in Waterbury.
Alyssa Johnson thanked the school for preparing the set up and mics, the National Honor Society for childcare and Senior Center for lunch as well as the Town Clerk and JPs for their hard work.

Mary Koen made a motion to adjourn which was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Karen Petrovic