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Strong Maine Annual Town Meeting Minutes 2019

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**MINUTES OF
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR ELECTION OF TOWN OFFICERS
FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2019, 1:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M.**

The meeting was opened at 1:00pm by Town Clerk, Betsy DuBois, with several people present.

ARTICLE 1 was acted upon, with Paul Mills elected and sworn in as Moderator.

Paul Mills inspected and locked the ballot box.

ARTICLE 2 Paul Mills opened the polls for the election of Two Selectmen (3 year terms); One Selectman (two year term); One SAD 58 School Board Member (3 year term); Two Budget Committee Members (6 year terms); and One Fire Chief (3 year term). Deputy Moderator, Christine Richards closed the polls at 6:00 p.m.; at which time the 296 cast ballots were counted with the following results:

James Burrill	186 votes	James Burrill was elected to a three year term as Selectman for the Town of Strong.
Andrew Pratt II	155 votes	Andrew Pratt II was elected to a three year term as Selectman for the Town of Strong. Gerald Pond received 147 votes for the 3 yr. selectman term
Robert Elliott	240 votes	Robert Elliott was elected to a two year term as Selectman for the Town of Strong. (Robert Elliott will serve the remainder of the term vacated by Richard Worthley).
Serena Howard	76 votes	Serena Howard was elected to a three year term as SAD 58 School Board Member. Barbara Worthley received 35 votes for SAD 58 School Board Member.
Thomas Piekart II	152 votes	Thomas Piekart II was elected to a six year term as Budget Committee Member
Susan Pratt	164 votes	Susan Pratt was elected to a six year term as Budget Committee Member Robert Webster received 133 votes for Budget Committee Member 6 yr. term
Duayne Boyd	182 votes	Duayne Boyd was elected to a three year term as Fire Chief Aaron Marden received 85 write-in votes for 3 yr. term as Fire Chief

Meeting will reconvene at 9:30am, March 16, 2019.

**MINUTES OF
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR THE TOWN OF STRONG
SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2019, 9:30 A.M.**

Moderator, Paul Mills, brought the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Pastor Mike Senecal opened the meeting in prayer. Pastor Senecal read a list of the deceased citizens from the town of Strong from the past year.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Moderator Mills.

Moderator Mills reported that 296 ballots were cast, with the following election results; for the office of Selectman 3 year term-James Burrill received 186 votes; Andrew Pratt II received 155 votes; Mike Pond received 147 votes; ***James Burrill and Andrew Pratt II were elected to 3 year terms as selectmen.***

For the office of Selectman 2 year term -***Robert Elliot received 240 votes and was elected to a 2 year term as selectman.***

For School Board SAD 58 3 year term - Serena Howard received 76 votes and Barbara Worthley received 35 votes (both as write-in candidates) ***Serena Howard was elected to a 3 year term as a SAD 58 School Board Director.***

For Budget Committee Member 6 year term - Thomas Piekart II received 152 votes; Susan Pratt received 164 votes; and Robert Webster received 133 votes; ***Thomas Piekart II and Susan Pratt were elected to 6 year term for Budget Committee.***

For the office of Fire Chief 3 year term: Duayne Boyd received 182 votes and Aaron Marden received 85 votes as a write-in; ***Duayne Boyd was elected to a 3 year term as Fire Chief.***

Robert Elliot acknowledged the Town Report was dedicated to Susan Ellsworth this year. Sue was not in attendance, but Rob thanked her for all she has done at the Scott Paul Veterans Memorial Park for the Town of Strong.

ARTICLE 3 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to make appointments to minor offices for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 4 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to procure temporary loans in anticipation of tax payments.

ARTICLE 5 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to spend an amount not to exceed 3/12ths of the amount budgeted in each account of the annual budget for 2019 during the period from January 1, 2020 to the Annual Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 6 was read and a Motion was made to carry over balances for Legion Field, Forster Building Water Damages, Garage Yard Repair, and Fire Department Parking Lot. After discussion, Article 6 was amended to also include in the carry over balances Pond Road Paving Money. Motion to amend was seconded and passed with a written ballot of 47 Yes and 22 No. Motion was made to pass Article 6 as amended to carry over balances as listed below, including Pond Road Paving Money; Motion was seconded and passed.

Legion Field	\$ 249.26
Forster Building Water Damage	\$ 1,288.48
Pond Road Paving Money	\$169,993.00
Garage Yard Repair	\$ 750.00
Fire Department Parking Lot	\$ 6,000.00

ARTICLE 7 was read, moved, seconded and voted (by written ballot as state statute mandates) to increase the property tax limit of \$392,143.36 established for the Town of Strong by State law in the event that the municipal budget approved under the following articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit. Motion passed with a written ballot vote of 16 Yes 1 No.

ARTICLE 8 was read, moved and seconded to use \$250,000.00 from surplus to reduce the 2019 Tax Commitment. Motion was amended and seconded to use \$150,000 from surplus to reduce the 2019 Tax Commitment and passed by a hand vote of 40 Yes 30 No. The amended article was read and voted on as amended to use \$150,000 from surplus to reduce the 2019 Tax Commitment.

ARTICLE 9 was read, moved, seconded and voted to allow taxes to be made payable and collected according to law and to authorize the Tax Collector to accept early payments.

ARTICLE 10 was read, moved, seconded and voted to allow a discount of 2% (to be taken out of overlay) when all real estate and personal property taxes are paid within 30 days of the date of commitment by the Assessors and to charge interest at the rate of 8% per annum from November 1, 2019 on all real and personal taxes unpaid at that date.

ARTICLE 11 was read, moved, seconded and voted to appropriate from the overlay account, tax abatements, and applicable interest granted during the 2019 fiscal year.

ARTICLE 12 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen, on behalf of the Town, to sell and dispose of any real estate acquired by the Town for nonpayment of taxes thereon, on such terms as they deem advisable and execute quit claim deeds for such properties, and to sell all interest in tax liens whether completely foreclosed or not, said sale to be public and by bid process; except that the Selectmen shall use the special sale process required by 36 M.R.S. § 943C for qualifying homestead property if they choose to sell it to anyone other than the former owners.

ARTICLE 13 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to accept gifts of money and equipment and dispose of surplus equipment to support the needs of the Town that they deem advisable, the reason being for insurance purposes. Said sale to be public and by bid process at least once for anything over \$500.

ARTICLE 14 was read, moved, seconded and voted to appropriate all of the money received from the State of Maine for snowmobile registrations to the Narrow Gauge Snowmobile Club for the purpose of maintaining their snowmobile trails and to authorize the Municipal Officers to enter into an agreement with the Club under such terms as the Municipal Officers deem advisable, for that purpose.

ARTICLE 15 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to accept and/or apply for any and all funds that may become available to them and to expend such funds for their intended purpose.

ARTICLE 16 was read, moved, seconded and voted to authorize the Selectmen to utilize income generated to operating accounts to reduce the 2019 tax commitment.

ARTICLE 17 was read; a motion was made and seconded to authorize the Selectmen to appropriate from Surplus an amount not to exceed \$3,500 *as recommended by Budget Committee* to meet unanticipated overages and emergencies that occur during fiscal year 2019. After discussion, Motion was made, seconded, and voted to move the question. Article 17 passed by a hand vote of 37 Yes to 32 No to not exceed \$3,500 to meet unanticipated overages and emergencies that occur during the fiscal year 2019.

ARTICLE 18 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$111,000.00 and allow the Selectmen to utilize revenues from the agent fees and town charges for General Government Accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Administration	\$ 70,000.00
Town Charges	\$ 28,000.00
Assessing	\$ 7,000.00
Legal Fees	\$ 2,500.00
Code Enforcement	<u>\$ 3,500.00</u>
Total	\$111,000.00

ARTICLE 19 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$3,500 for the Town Office Dedicated Technology Account, and to allow the selectmen to use any Cable Franchise Fees for the Dedicated Technology Account.

ARTICLE 20 was read, moved, seconded and voted to transfer \$10,500 from County funds and up to \$9,000 from Avon Funds for the accounts listed below and to see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Protection Accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Fire Department Equipment	\$ 4,500.00
Fire Department Operating	\$15,000.00
Fire Department Payroll	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
	\$29,500.00

Transfer of Funds	<u>Avon</u>	<u>County</u>
Fire Department Equipment	\$3,000.00	\$ 6,500.00
Fire Department Operating	\$1,500.00	
Fire Department Payroll	<u>\$4,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 4,000.00</u>
	\$9,000.00	\$10,500.00

ARTICLE 21 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$6,390.00 for the final phase of paving the Fire Department parking lot.

ARTICLE 22 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$20,000.00 for the Fire Department Truck Reserve Account for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 23 was read, moved, seconded and voted to allow any leftover balances in the protection accounts to be placed in the Fire Truck Reserve account at the end of the fiscal year 2019.

ARTICLE 24 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$130,565.00 for Public Safety Accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Ambulance	\$ 14,288.00
Hydrants	\$ 32,027.00
Street lights	\$ 9,000.00
Animal Control	\$ 4,250.00
Insurance	<u>\$ 71,000.00</u>
Total	\$130,565.00

ARTICLE 25 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$9,000 for Health and Sanitation Accounts for the ensuing year

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Landfill and Solid Waste	
Management Account	\$ 8,500.00
General Assistance	<u>\$ 500.00</u>
Total	\$ 9,000.00

ARTICLE 26 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$154,305.00 for the Highway Accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Winter Roads	\$ 81,750.00
Roads and Bridges	<u>\$ 72,555.00</u>
Total	\$154,305.00

ARTICLE 27 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$68,500.00 for the Public Works Accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Town Garage	\$14,500.00
Equipment Operating	\$50,000.00
Equipment Fund	\$ 1,500.00
Pole Barn	<u>\$ 2,500.00</u>
Total	\$68,500.00

ARTICLE 28 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$5,500.00 for the Town Garage Yard Repair.

ARTICLE 29 was read, and a motion made and seconded to raise and appropriate \$0 for the second payment on the Case 590SN Loader Backhoe.

Mike Pond wanted a recess to discuss the legality of a motion. A motion was made, seconded and voted to have a 10 minute recess.

Paul Mills brought the meeting back to order.

Mike Pond took a few minutes to explain why Article 29 should be raised and appropriated vs taken from special equipment. He handed out a multi-year plan which would require using money raised from special equipment this year and future years to fund the Highway vehicle replacement fund. (Included with these minutes).

The moderator stated if there was no further discussion we needed to vote on the motion to raise \$0 for the backhoe payment. The motion was defeated.

A motion was made, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$27,635.26 for the second payment on the Case 590SN Loader Backhoe.

ARTICLE 30 was read, moved, seconded to raise and appropriate \$25,000.00 for the Special Equipment Fund for the ensuing year. After some discussion a motion was made, seconded and voted to move the question. Article 30 was voted to appropriate \$25,000.00 for the Special Equipment Fund for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 31 was read, moved, seconded and voted to transfer \$20,000.00 from the Surplus account to the Tarvia account for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 32 was read, moved, and seconded to transfer \$40,000.00 from the Surplus account to pay the first payment on the Pond Road paving loan. Motion was made, seconded and voted to move the question. Motion was voted to transfer \$40,000 from the Surplus account to pay the first payment on the Pond Road paving loan.

ARTICLE 33 was read, moved, seconded and voted to transfer carry-over of \$9,318 from the L.R.A.P. Account and \$9,238 from the deferred L.R.A.P. Account to the Tarvia Account for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 34 was read, moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$5,950 for the Recreation Accounts for the ensuing year. Motion was made and seconded to amend the article back to \$6,950. Motion was made, seconded, and voted to move the question. The Motion to amend the article was voted. Motion was made, seconded, and voted to raise and appropriate \$6,950 for the Recreation accounts for the ensuing year.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Town Park	\$ 3,000.00
Recreation	<u>\$ 3,950.00</u>
Total	\$ 6,950.00

ARTICLE 35 was read, moved, and seconded to allow the selectmen to trade the 2004 Volvo and enter into a lease purchase agreement for a new wheeler truck and plow equipment. The lease would be for 6 years not to exceed \$158,000 with trade in plus interest; payments not to exceed \$31,000 per year. The first payment would be taken from the Special Equipment Fund. After some discussion, it was moved, seconded, and voted to move the question. Article 35 was voted on and approved as written.

Statement of Fact: Current rate of interest 4.45%

Moderator Paul Mills acknowledged State Senator Russell Black and Representative Randy Hall. Each spoke for a few minutes, encouraging citizens to call with any questions they might have.

Loretta Deming noted that Ralph Copeland created the logo for the Town Report.

Motion was made, seconded, and voted to recess until 12:30pm for lunch.

Paul Mills reconvened the meeting for the afternoon session and thanked the Methodist Church group for the wonderful lunch.

ARTICLE 36 was read, moved, and seconded to allow the Selectmen to utilize interest and dividends from accounts at the Portland Trust Company and to raise and appropriate \$8,000 for the Library Account for the ensuing year. Motion was made, seconded, and voted to amend the motion to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Library Account for the ensuing year. Article 36 was voted on as amended and passed.

ARTICLE 37 was read. A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate \$0 for the Tennis Court. There was discussion regarding the amount of use, sealing cracks only, and possibly using funds to turn it into a multi-functional basketball court and tennis court. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to move the question. Article 37 was voted by hand count of 29 Yes 15 No to raise \$0 for the tennis court.

ARTICLE 38 was read, moved, seconded and voted to raise and appropriate \$20,668.60 for the Unclassified Accounts.

Statement of Fact	<u>Appropriated 2019</u>
Franklin County Animal Shelter	\$ 2,668.60
Cemeteries	\$ 500.00
Payroll Taxes	<u>\$17,500.00</u>
Total	\$ 20,668.60

ARTICLE 39 was read. A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,000 for Strong Community Events Account (*formerly the Parade account*). A motion was made and seconded to amend the amount to be raised and appropriated to \$1,500. Motion was defeated. Article 39 was voted to raise and appropriate \$2,000 for Strong Community Events Account.

ARTICLE 40 was read. A motion was moved and seconded to allow the Selectmen to utilize \$4,800 in growth of funds invested in Linsco Private Ledger Accounts and any other revenues, and vote to raise and appropriate \$20,000.00 for the Forster Building Account. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to amend the amount to be raised and appropriated to \$25,500. Article 40 was voted on and passed as amended.

ARTICLE 41 was read. A motion was made and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,700 for the Economic Ministry. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to amend the amount to be raised and appropriated to the request of \$5,000. A point of procedure was made that we couldn't change that to \$5,000 even though it was supported and voted on, because it is considered a capped article. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to restore the amount back to the \$2,700 to be raised and appropriated for the Economic Ministry. A suggestion was made that a more careful review of capped and non-capped articles be done for next year.

ARTICLE 42 was read, moved, seconded and voted to accept the following cemetery trust fund: David Luce \$200.00

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy DuBois
Town Clerk

Attested

Strong Town Clerk

Betsy DuBois