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Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Somerville Maine June, 2016

Somerville, Me.

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SOMERVILLE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Gymnasium at RSU 12 Offices
665 Patricktown Rd
Somerville, Maine
June 14 & 18, 2016

MINUTES

ARTICLE 1: To choose, by written ballot, a moderator to preside at the town meeting.

Chris Johnson was elected on June 14, 2016 as moderator to preside at said meeting.

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m., June 18 by moderator Chris Johnson.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moderator followed the Maine Moderator's Manual to conduct the meeting.

ARTICLE 2: To choose, by secret ballot, in accordance with the vote of the Town, the following officers and officials: Second Selectman, Assessor and Overseer of the Poor (3 year term)

Election results from June 14, 2016 were reviewed:

Second Selectman: Don Chase was re-elected with 53 votes. There were two write-in votes, each with one vote, for Brad Snow and Frank Hample.

ARTICLE 3: Spirit of America Award

Third Selectman Darlene Landry presented the Spirit of America Award jointly to Jim Grenier and to Alice and David Rafuse.

ARTICLE 4: Cause the Road Commissioner to be Appointed

David Greer made a motion to accept the article as written, and Delbert Chase seconded. In response to residents' questions, Susan clarified that there would be a job description and hiring would be done based on qualifications. The position would be salaried, and the new hire would be required to train in up-to-date practices. The road commissioner would report to the select board, and the road budget would be set by the select board. A resident asked who decides what roads are paved, and Susan responded that would be up to the town. They are working with Coffin Engineering to develop a road plan, and then there will be a public hearing to discuss options for road improvement.

A written ballot was taken.

Vote on Article 4: 34 yes, 10 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 5: Contract with Tri-County Waste Management.

Frank Hample made a motion to amend Article 9.1 Duration of the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Organization Interlocal Cooperative Agreement by extending the 25-year term of the original Agreement for another 18 years. Cathy Ladd seconded the motion. David Stanley, TCSWMO director, answered questions from residents. The Interlocal Coop Agreement joins 6 towns from three counties, each with representation and voting rights. He explained that the long duration of the contract was necessary for TCSW to get the best financing, as TCSW itself contracts with outside firms who ultimately use the waste. TCSW is in the process of selecting among three options for their waste. Kathy Jennings asked about the results of the trash survey; Susan replied that 77 respondents (25% of the town) replied, and 2/3 of respondents did use TCSW. Three-quarter of respondents currently recycle.

A written ballot was taken.

Vote on Article 5: 39 yes, 3 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 6: Sand Hill Cemetery Association.

Teresa Powers made a motion for the town to take over ownership of the Sand Hill Cemetery, including assumption of all assets and debts. Pauline Kibbins seconded the motion. Gordon Thebeau spoke on behalf of the association, citing a lack of money to maintain the cemetery and increasingly complex state regulations. Geraldine Kimball asked what debt the cemetery currently carried, and treasurer Bethany Crummett replied there was no debt, but rather money in CDs. There is one existing contract for mowing, which usually costs between \$2-3,000 per year. Darlene Landry said that restoration of the stones, which has never been done, would cost about \$11,200, and should be done every 25 years or so. In years past, family members of the deceased used to put money in a fund for cemetery maintenance, but most of those people have themselves passed away, and there are not enough people to do fundraising. There are numerous other cemeteries in Somerville, but they are all private, and the town is only responsible for veterans' graves in these plots.

A written ballot was taken.

Vote on Article 6: 29 yes, 14 no.

ARTICLE 7: Administration Purposes.

Motion made by Delbert Chase to raise and appropriate from property taxation for the town administration the sum of \$22,620.00, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Ray Kimball seconded. The town treasurer explained that these expenses include things like insurance and office equipment, and are in fact lower than last year's budget, due to cuts in utility costs and lower insurance.

Article 7 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 8: Town Office Operation.

Delbert Chase moved to raise and/or appropriate \$5,600.00 from property taxation for Town Office operation as recommended by the Budget Committee. Mike Dostie seconded. Susan Greer explained that this is higher than last year because insurance requires fixing the entrance to the basement.

Article 8 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 9: Contract Services.

Delbert Chase moved to raise and/or appropriate \$49,300.00 from property taxation for payment of contract services required by the town, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Mike Dostie seconded. The select board clarified that the revaluation payment will complete the payment of that contract.

Vote on Article 9: 29 yes, 3 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 10: Salaries and Stipends of Town Officers and Officials.

Geraldine Kimball moved to raise and/or appropriate \$71,137.00 from property taxation for salaries, stipends, and personnel-related expenses of Town Officers and Officials, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Delbert Chase seconded.

Geraldine Kimball noted that this figure had actually gone down since last year, since animal control is now provided as a county service.

Article 10 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 11: Capital Road Construction.

Geraldine Kimball moved to expend the funds received through the Local Road Improvement Program (projected to be \$23,000 for the state fiscal year 2017), per the Somerville 5-year Long Range Road Plan. Delbert Chase seconded.

The select board clarified that capital road money can only be spent on improvements that last more than 10 years, so there are definitions and limits on what it can be spent on. Frank Hample asked for clarification about the long-range road plan. The select board responded that Coffin Engineering was helping them to develop a plan, that would be ready by mid-July, so they can prioritize expenditures from that document.

Article 11 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 12: Road Construction, Maintenance and Repair.

Don Chase moved to raise and/or appropriate \$191,175.00 from property taxation for maintaining and repairing Somerville's roads, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Mike Dostie seconded.

Lengthy discussion ensued about the road maintenance expenses, which had gone 20% over budget the previous year, and how to ensure this does not happen again. The Select Board replied that their goal is to have expert assistance in the development of a Long Range Road Plan, which will have a fiscal component.

Geraldine Kimball made a motion to call the vote. With 31 votes in favor, this met the two-thirds requirement, and the vote was called.

Vote on Article 12: 31 yes, 2 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 13: Revenue Collection.

Delbert Chase moved to raise and/or appropriate \$11,800.00 from property taxation for the Collection of Revenue, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Mike Dostie seconded.

Article 13 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 14: Health and Safety.

Geraldine Kimball moved to raise and/or appropriate \$3,975.00 from property taxation for Health and Safety, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Darlene Landry seconded.

Article 14 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 15: Grants to Not-For-Profit Community Organizations.

Frank Hample moved to raise and/or appropriate \$2,851.00 from property taxation for grants to not-for-profit community organizations, as recommended by the Budget Committee. Kathy Ladd seconded. Mike Dostie made a motion to amend the amount to \$2,946, an increase of \$95 to increase the grant to the Washington Fire Department to \$250, noting that Washington Fire Department recharges the fire department's air packs. Ray Kimball seconded.

Article 15, with the amended amount of \$2,946.00 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 16: Inter-Governmental Transfer

Mike Dostie moved to raise and/or appropriate \$74,100.00 from property taxation for inter-governmental transfers. Geraldine Kimball seconded.

Vote on Article 16: 31 yes, 2 no. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 17: Transfer of Funds from Asset Review to Comprehensive Plan.

Jim Grenier moved to accept the article as written, to transfer the funds from the Asset Review Account to the Comprehensive Plan Reserve Account. Geraldine Kimball seconded. The select board clarified that the asset review function will pass, with the funds, to the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Article 17 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 18: Fund balances to be carried forward.

Jim Grenier moved to accept the article as written, allowing the Selectmen to carry balances forward to the coming year on certain accounts. Geraldine Kimball seconded. Article 18 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 19: Unanticipated Expenses and Emergencies.

Mike Dostie moved to appropriate \$20,000.00 from surplus to meet unanticipated expenses and emergencies as they deem advisable. Don Chase seconded.

Article 19 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 20: Surplus and overdraft accounts.

Sharon Reishus moved to authorize that the surplus and overdraft accounts be lapsed to the General Fund. Mike Dostie seconded. The select board noted that the surplus at the end of last June was \$302,270.

Article 20 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 21: Disposal of real estate acquired by the Town.

Mike Dostie moved to sell and dispose of any real estate acquired by the Town for the non-payment of taxes thereon, and to execute quit claim deeds for such property.

Elaine Porter seconded.

Article 21 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 22: Waiver of Foreclosure.

Charlotte Coopersmith moved to authorize the Treasurer to waive the foreclosure of tax lien mortgages pursuant to 36 MRSA § 944 upon finding by the Selectmen that ownership of the property subject to lien would be contrary to the Town's best interest. Kathy Ladd seconded.

Article 22 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 23: Funds to pay for sale of Town -acquired property.

Charlotte Coopersmith moved to appropriate money from the sale of any Town acquired property to pay the costs of said sale. Sharon Reishus seconded.

Article 23 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 24: Transfer of funds received from the sale of tax-acquired property.

Frank Hample moved to transfer up to \$10,000 of funds received from the sale of tax-acquired property to the revaluation reserve account and up to \$50,000 to the capital roads construction reserve account. Don Witmer-Kean seconded.

Article 24 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 25: Prepayment of Taxes.

Mike Dostie moved to accept prepayments of taxes not yet committed, pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. 506. Sharon Reishus seconded.

Article 25 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 26: Discount on Taxes.

Mike Dostie moved to allow taxpayers a discount on taxes paid within 30 days after the postmark date on the bill and to set the rate thereof at 2%. Frank Hample seconded.

Article 26 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 27: Set the interest rate charged for late payment of taxes.

Geraldine Kimball moved to charge an interest rate of 0.583% per month (7% per annum) on all taxes paid after November 15, 2016 and May 15, 2017. Don Witmer-Kean seconded.

The select board clarified that the state has a maximum interest rate ratio, which the town follows. If people are having difficulty paying, they can do monthly payments or set up a payment plan.

Claudia Fujinaga made a motion to amend the amount charged, and Kathy Ladd seconded the motion. Kathy inquired about the impact on the town of changing the article, and the treasurer, Geraldine Kimball, replied that they would need to reprogram the town's tax software (TRIO) which would be expensive. In light of this information, Claudia asked to withdraw her motion, and the residents proceeded to vote down the amendment.

Returning to the original Article 27, it was passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 28: Use of surplus funds for reduction of taxes.

Mike Dostie made a motion to authorize the expenditure of up to \$10,000 from the General Fund, for the purpose of reduction of taxes. Valarie Johnson seconded. Article 28 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 29: Authorize receipt and expenditures of grants and other receipts.

Frank Hample made a motion to accept the article as written, to authorize the selectmen to receive and expend such sums as may be received from federal, state or local grants or programs during the period July 2016 through June 2017 for town purpose, provided that such grants require less than \$15,000.00 expenditures from other funds and matching funds which would be taken from surplus.

ARTICLE 30: Allow distribution of funds from snowmobile registrations.

Mike Dostie moved to appropriate the funds received from the State of Maine from snowmobile registrations, to the Backwoods Bouncers Snowmobile Club for the purpose of maintaining their snowmobile trails. David Greer seconded.

Vote on Article 30: 31 yes, 1 no. Motion carried.

Jim Grenier motioned to adjourn at 12:55 p.m. and David Greer seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Payson-Roopchand
Town Clerk

Approved by Board of Selectmen:

Susan Greer

Don Chase

Darlene Landry