

**WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING
OF TOWN OF MORETOWN AS A TOWN AND AS A TOWN
SCHOOL DISTRICT TO BE HELD MARCH 4, 2014**

The inhabitants of the Town of Moretown who are legal voters in Town and Town School District meetings are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Moretown Town Hall in Moretown Village on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 9 o'clock in the forenoon to act upon the following matters:

Steve Magill, Moderator, called the meeting to order, reminded everyone that the polls were open, and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked for a moment of silence for those who had passed within the year. There was no discussion.

1. **To elect a moderator to preside at the meeting of the Town and Town School District whose term of office shall be for the ensuing year.** This is a divided question. For the Town meeting, Karen Horn nominated Steve Magill, and Rae Washburn seconded. Tom Martin asked if there were any other nominations and there were none. The ayes have it. For the meeting of the School District, Karen Horn nominated Steve Magill, and Jennifer Tripp-Mead seconded. Tom Martin asked if there were any other nominations and there were none. The ayes have it.
2. **To hear and act upon the reports of the Town and Town School District officers.** Karen Horn moved to accept the town reports. Steve Sharp seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
3. **To cast ballots for Town and Town School District officers. Voting to be by Australian ballot. Polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** No discussion.
4. **To see if the Town will vote to have its current taxes paid to the Town Treasurer in one installment due and payable by midnight on November 1, 2014.** Amy Patenaude so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
5. **To see if the Town will vote to not offer of discount on taxes.** Amy Patenaude so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. Heidi Magill asked whether the Town currently offers a discount on taxes. Tom Martin responded "no", the Town currently does not offer a discount on taxes. Jon Siegel made a point that if voters decide to have a discount on taxes then that lost revenue must be raised by other means, i.e. higher taxes. Kelly Reagan questioned why we even have this matter on the ballot. Jon Siegel responded that it is his understanding that the State requires it. There was no more discussion. The ayes have it.
6. **To see if the Town will vote to set the tax warrant date on real property as November 1, 2014.** Karen Horn so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
7. **Shall the voters of the Moretown Town School District appropriate the sum of \$ 2,130,388.00 necessary for the support of the school, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014, and ending June 30, 2015? Voting to be by Australian ballot. Polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** No discussion. The rules were suspended after discussing article 9 so that discussion could be had as to the school budget. Kate O'Neill spoke on behalf of the school board. Dick Valentinetti asked about how the school board was going to continue to meet the

demands of the State as far as budgeting. Kate O'Neill stated that the school board has limited control over the amount of the actual amount of allocation of school property taxes. The increase in taxes is 3.8%, although the overall burden from the State is much greater. There is very little the board can do to shave of the local budget. The board still however is always looking to cut expenditures where it can. The board is always looking at the state averages of teacher to pupil ratios and making sure they stay within those ratios. Just this year the board did cut one educational aide position and eliminating a school nurse aide. However, the school board must always be cognizant of the state factors. Kate stated that the Vermont School Board Association estimates a 4.8% increase in homestead tax rates before taking into consideration local variables. The education surplus is gone and there is a need to replace \$19.3 million at state level in general fund budget. There is a continued shift from broad-based taxes to property taxes - from 61% to 68% now from property tax. There is a continued reduction in statewide property grand list. And a continued increase in statewide spending. These factors all impact local school budgets. Steve Sharp inquired as to demographics and whether anything was being done at the school level in facing these revenue challenges. Kate stated enrollment is declining statewide. However, when one or two students leave Moretown Elementary there is little that can be done to balance that loss as far as cutting costs on a local level. The school does do its best to balance any decline in enrollment with cost expenditures. Karen Horn reiterated that so much of these burdens on local municipalities arise from decisions made in Montpelier and there is just little that can be done on the local level.

8. **Shall the voters authorize the Board of School Directors of Moretown Town School District to borrow money by issuance of notes in anticipation of revenue to pay the expenses of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015?** David Van Deusen so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
9. **Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown vote the sum of \$1,068,802.00 for the support of the Town, for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2014, for any operating expenses and other obligations? Voting to be by Australian ballot. Polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** Tom Martin spoke on behalf of the Select Board. Tom stated that the article in last week's Valley Reporter which read that the Moretown Select Board was seeking a 4.1% increase in the Town budget from last year was incorrect. Rather, the Select Board is seeking a level-funded budget from last year. John Schmeltzer asked about how the tax rate was formulated for the year. Tom stated that the rate is going up \$0.22 for the coming year. \$0.18 is attributable to the school, and \$0.04 to the Town. Tom also stated that the Town will be seeking grant funds to compensate for lost revenue and bring that tax rate down.
10. **Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown authorize its Select Board to borrow money with which to pay its lawful debts and expenses for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2014 in anticipation of the collection of taxes for that purpose?** Dave Van Deusen so moved and Rube Scharges seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
11. **Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown vote to approve the purchase of a new tandem axle dump truck for a sum not to exceed \$160,000.00 after trade-in of the 2004 dump truck, with \$30,000.00 to be used from the Capital Reserve Fund and the remainder to be financed over the next three years with payments beginning in 2015? Voting to be by Australian ballot. Polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** John Lynch inquired as to which truck. Reed

Korrow responded that it was the 2004 truck. Tom added the body of the 2004 truck would have to be replaced next year anyway and that that cost would approximate \$40,000. There was no further discussion.

- 12. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$400.00 to help support the work of Central Vermont Community Action Council, Inc.?** John Lynch so moved and John Schmeltzer seconded. John Lynch stated that he is an employee of the Council and that they do a lot of great things for Vermont – i.e. getting cars at reasonable prices for those who don't have them. There was no more discussion. The ayes have it.
- 13. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to help support the work of Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired?** Steve Sharp so moved and Rube Scharges seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 14. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown vote to use any surplus from FY2013 to reduce the 2014 property tax rate?** John Schmeltzer so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. Karen asked whether this was reflected in the budget. Tom stated that it was. Dave Van Deusen asked whether the Town has used up the capital savings bond yet. Tom stated that there remains a couple hundred thousand in that capital savings bond. Jon Siegel asked whether this wasn't voting for the same thing twice since this is already included in the budget. Michelle Beard stated that this is not in the budget but is included in the tax rate. John Hoogenboom stated that he believes this article is mandated by law to be included as an article. Steve Sharp stated that we should just vote on it. There was no more discussion. The ayes have it.
- 15. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$950.00 to help support the work of Central Vermont Council on Aging, Inc.?** Heidi Magill so moved and Ben Sanders seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 16. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$150.00 to help support the work of Washington County Youth Service Bureau / Boys & Girls Club?** John Hoogenboom so moved and Anne Macmillan seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 17. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$3,500.00 to help support the work of Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice?** Ben Sanders so moved and Mary Larsen seconded. Karen Horn stated that the sum here is out of line in comparison to the other requests and wondered why. Deb Feldman stated that she is trained in hospice and that there is an increased demand. Bill Nowlan stated that he has used its services and those services are very important and the sum is appropriate. Mary Larsen stated it is just not hospice, but also services for infancy and new mothers and services for throughout the whole life cycle. There was no more discussion. The ayes have it.
- 18. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$1,200.00 to help support the work of Central Vermont Adult Basic Education?** Jennifer Tripp-Mead so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. John Lynch has volunteered with the group and stated that this is very valuable work. Jennifer

Tripp-Mead has also volunteered with the group and stated that this is very important. There was no more discussion. The ayes have it.

- 19. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$200.00 to help support the work of RSVP (Retired Senior and Volunteer Program)?** Ben Sanders so moved and Heidi Magill seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 20. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to help support the work of Good Beginnings of Central Vermont?** Heidi Magill so moved and Amy Padenaude seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 21. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to help support the work of Family Center of Washington County?** Heidi Magill so moved and Anne MacMillan seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 22. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to help support the work of People's Health & Wellness Clinic?** Dave Van Deusen so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. Dave Van Deusen stated this is a great program and very important to some people in Moretown, and that the appropriated sum should be increased. Dave Van Deusen then moved to amend the article and increase the appropriated sum to \$700. Mary Larsen seconded. Steve Magill stated that the article as amended reads "Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$700 to help support the work of People's Health & Wellness Clinic?" Sasha Bianchi who works for health department stated that this important program has good partnerships with other providers as well, including one which now offers oral health. There was no further discussion as to whether to amend. The ayes have it. The article was amended to appropriate the sum of \$700 instead of \$500. There was no further discussion on that article as amended. The ayes have it.
- 23. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$200.00 to help support the work of Circle (formerly Battered Women's Services and Shelter)?** Ben Sanders so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.
- 24. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$415.00 to help support the work of Home Share Now, Inc.?** John Hoogenboom so moved and Johanne Gray seconded. Dick Valentinetti asked what is Home Share Now? Kara Casey stated that she is the program manager at Home Share Now and that the organization works to match individuals who have space in their home and who are in need of either some services or in need of income. These individuals are usually the elderly. They are matched with other individuals who are need of lower income housing. Jonathan Siegel asked how the organization came up with a request of \$415.00? Kara Casey responded that the director has some sort of algorithm used that is based upon the number of Moretown residents who utilize the program. Amy Patenaude knows someone who has used this program and stated that this program is good for building community relationships. Mary Larsen inquired as to how many people use this program's services. Kara Casey stated that approximately 567 people, and currently have people placed in the program from Moretown. There was no further discussion. The ayes have it.

25. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$400.00 to help support the work of Prevent Child Abuse Vermont? Mary Larsen so moved and Steve Sharp seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.

26. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$150.00 to help support the work of Sexual Assault Crisis Team of Washington County? Anne Macmillan so moved and Jennifer Tripp-Mead seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.

27. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 to help support the work of the Mad River Valley Senior Citizens Center? Dara Torre so moved and Rube Scharges seconded. There was no discussion. The ayes have it.

28. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 to help support the work of the Waterbury Area Senior Citizens Center? Cheryl Brown so moved and John Hoogenboom seconded. Rube Scharges stated that last year they only asked for \$2500 and quite a big discussion ensued. Rube stated that the MRV Senior Center does a lot of great work for Moretown residents. Rube stated that he thought doubling the request from last year was excessive and asked whether anyone was present from the Waterbury Senior Center to justify doubling the request. No one was. Rube then moved to amend the request back to last year's sum of \$2500. John Hoogenboom seconded. With the amendment, the article now reads "Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$2500.00 to help support the work of the Waterbury Area Senior Citizens Center?" Dave Van Deusen added that he supports the amendment if no one is present from the Waterbury Senior Center to explain why the request has doubled. Michelle Beard stated that she had the letter from the Center in hand and that the stated reason was that the Town of Waterbury had asked the Center to have other towns pick up more of the costs. Arlis Fuglie stated that the Senior Center does so much including providing up to six hot meals a week. Arlis added they work very hard trying to make money to support the services they provide. Sasha Bianchi stated there appears to be no justification for why the Waterbury Senior Center is requesting five times as much money as the MR Senior Center. Dara Casey found the Waterbury Senior Center's report. She stated that Waterbury's is just a bigger operation than the Valley, operating 5 days a week. The report says that they have served 11 clients in Moretown with an additional 25 residents over the past year. Mary Duke stated that based on all the discussion we should just keep the amount at \$2500. There was no further discussion as to the amendment reducing the appropriated sum to \$2500. The ayes have it and the article was so amended. The motion now read "Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown appropriate the sum of \$2500.00 to help support the work of the Waterbury Area Senior Citizens Center?" There was no further discussion. The ayes have it and the motion passes as amended.

Dick Valentinetti asked to suspend the rules to discuss how all these requests come in. Discussion was had as to the process involving receipt of requests. It was agreed that it would be better in future if someone from these organizations/programs would come in to Town Meeting to discuss the requests.

29. Shall the voters of the Town of Moretown authorize the Selectboard to use the revenue in the Recreation Fund for the maintenance or improvement of the Town's recreation fields and related events, at the discretion of the Selectboard upon the recommendation of the Recreation Committee, or at the direction of the voters of the Town at a duly warned annual or special meeting? Dave Van Deusen so moved and Rube Scharges seconded. Steve

Sharp asked whether the town has a recreation committee. Tom Martin stated that it does but it is very small. There was no further discussion. The ayes have it.

30. To do any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

Jonathan Siegel stated that he thinks moving to the Australian ballot system has ruined the essence of town meeting and has compromised the direction the town is going. He believes the change has done a real disservice to the town. We should have a bigger discussion as to whether the Australian system is the right way. It was proposed and Tom Martin agreed that the Select Board set up a committee to propose options to the voting system and the day of the week to hold town meeting. Dave Van Deusen would like to make a motion to have changing the system on the ballot next year. Dave moved that on town meeting day 2015 the question of whether or not to do away with Australian ballot for everything be discussed. Randy Dow seconded. This is advisory only. This is not a vote today on whether to have Australian ballot but whether to discuss next year whether it should be done away with. This is a calling question. There needs to be a 2/3 vote to end discussion on the proposed article in 2015 to do away with the Australian ballot voting. All in favor to end discussion had to stand, and that number was 69. No one opposed. The motion is to have an article for the 2015 Town Meeting to do away with the Australian ballot system. The ayes have it.

Cheryl Brown added that there is garbage being dumped along some roads in Moretown in the wake of the landfill closing. If you see such garbage, please call the town office.

Harold Austin wanted to add recognition for Mary Reagan. Ben Sanders wanted to thank all the volunteers in Moretown. Rube Scharges stated that the Planning Commission is in the process of updating the Town Plan. A town survey was issued but only 153 people replied. Forums have been held for input but very little showed up. This is important for the town's future. More people need to give input and show up at the planning forums.

Harold Austin stated that we are spending too much money on schools here, suggesting getting rid of the NEA. Steve Sharp added the Town Plan has many sections including one dealing with education. That would be a place to discuss the issues with schooling and taxes. So people should show up to the forums to discuss budgeting and the schools.

Deb Hunter discussed Harwood Union's budget. The school board has done all that is possible to cut expenditures in order to keep the budget down. Nonetheless, the budget for the upcoming year is a 4.1% increase over last year. The school did eliminate 3.5 full time staff positions this year, adding to the 2.5 eliminated from last year. This when only 15 students total have left the school. Behind the 4.1% increase are factors such as the maintenance and upkeep of an aging building, another car for drivers ed, meeting demands of the State and federal government, such as more computers to meet modern testing demands, increasing wifi capacity, bussing especially. Bussing costs are based upon mileage, and with the odd geography of the town this means increased costs. Only 1.5% is for salary increases. The average class size at the high school is 17, and 18 at the middle school. Don LaRocca stated that the school budget is out of control, especially when these children are getting a supposed good education and leaving the State of Vermont. Harold Austin again questioned all these expenses when he is not seeing positive results with the graduates. Deb then stated that the bond for \$425,000 for the wells is necessary. The wells keep

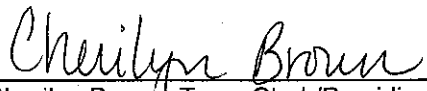
going dry and costs over \$20,000 a year. The \$425,000 is only for two wells, but is high because of the distance of piping to get across the way to the school. The route minimizes disturbance to the land, parking area and the like. Otter Creek Engineering is doing the project.

Clark Amadon as the chair of the Town office Committee provided an update on the town office progress.

Jordan Champney, a volunteer at the Moretown Fire Department, thought there was going to be an article on getting a lump sum for purchasing of tools. Tom Martin stated that he has never received such a request, nor has anyone from the fire department come to the Select Board for such a request.

John Schmeltzer moved to adjourn and Rube Scharges seconded. The ayes have it. The meeting adjourned at 12:04p.m.

Dated at Moretown, Vermont the 11th day of March, 2014.


Cheryl Brown, Town Clerk/Presiding Officer


Steve Magill, Town Moderator