

ABSTRACT OF THE 2018 TOWN MEETING

The 2018 Annual Town District Meeting was called to order at the Elementary Auditorium at Bellows Free Academy, Fairfax, Vermont by Moderator Roberta (Robby) Rodimer at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Robby welcomed everyone and read Robert's Rules as modified by VT State Law.

ARTICLES 1 through ARTICLE 5 were voted upon by the use of the official Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at the Middle School Gymnasium of Bellows Free Academy, Fairfax, Vermont. The polls opened at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 7:00 p.m.

Barbara Murphy, State Representative, spoke about the unclaimed property list and the Doyle Poll survey that was in the lobby. The Doyle Poll survey was at the polls on Tuesday's Election also.

Thomas Fontaine, Select Board Chair introduced the Select Board and our new Town Manager, Brad Docheff. Brad told us a little bit about himself. He was the former Operations Manager of the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. He moved to Fairfax in the summer of 2016. He thanked the Select Board and plans on bringing Fairfax to the next level. He has fallen in love with our community and wants to get to know us better and for us to know him better. He will bring energy and passion along with goals and vision in this growing community, building and bringing it together. Tom thanked everyone for coming out today. He wishes DJay Leach and his family the best. Due to the highway accident, the Town of Fairfax has added a new safety line item into our budget to better and improve the safety of our Town. Dave Raymond has been hired as our new Safety Officer.

Colin Santee, Recreation Department spoke about our new Community Center, formerly the Baptist Building that was donated to the Town of Fairfax. He spoke about the improvements that have and are being done including the drainage, adding heat to the building, plans to work on the electricity and plumbing and restoration to the stain glass windows. The 100 Acre Woods has a grant application in process. He is working to put in a driveway, a parking area, and signage of where the trails are so that people are finally able to use them. Colin also informed us of upcoming events such as the Egg Hunt on March 31, 2018 and Green Up Day on May 5, 2018.

Tom spoke about the need to hire a part time Assessor to work with Pat McNall before she retires. He stated that Article 2 budget has an increase of 2% from last year and everyone worked hard to keep it low. Phase 1 of Sidewalks will go to bid this Summer and are hoping that Phase 2 will not be far behind. Tim Germaine has stepped up as interim Highway Department Foreman. The summer 2018 paving projects on existing roads include Fletcher Road, Goose Pond, Buck Hollow, Carrol Hill, Cherriville, and River Road. Much work is needed to repair our dirt roads. Tom is ending his term on the Select Board and thanked everyone who has worked on moving this Town ahead.

ARTICLE 1 To following officials were elected by the legal voters of the Town:

Town Moderator	One Year Term	Roberta Rodimer	830 votes
Selectperson	Three Year Term	Sheri Rainville	874 votes
Selectperson	Two Year Term	Duane Leach	848 votes
Town Agent	One Year Term	Steve Cormier	835 votes
Town Grand Juror	One Year Term	Steve Cormier	822 votes
Community Library Trustee	Three Year Term	Patricia Gallant	748 votes
Community Library Trustee	Three Year Term	Ellen F Homes-Henry	676 votes
First Constable	One Year Term		

Cemetery Commissioner
Delinquent Tax Collector

Five Year Term
Three Year Term

Dale Bellows
Johanna Blake

875 votes
839 votes

ARTICLE 2 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax approve the **twelve (12) month Fiscal Budget** covering the period from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, as recommended by the Select Board, of \$2,878,293.00 of which \$1,888,079.00 is to be raised by taxes and \$652,454.00 to be raised by the previously approved trash fee (Article 3, 2016)?

The floor was opened to discussion. Barbara Murphy asked what makes up the revenue on page 17 for \$337,760.00 Deborah Woodward stated that it consist of the proposed budget revenue that starts on page 18 in the last column through page 20 (close to the end of the page) labeled Total Revenues.

In Favor: 641

Opposed: 337

ARTICLE 3 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax approve the sum of \$10,000.00 for the sidewalk improvement fund which will accumulate to a substantial amount for a sidewalk project approved by the Select Board?

The floor was opened to discussion. Valerie Ugro wanted an explanation for accumulate to a substantial amount for a sidewalk. She was informed about the special fund account that has been established through the years. In the past we had yearly Articles requesting \$3000 per year. Another question was how these sidewalks will be maintained. The Select Board has had discussion on that. It has not been put together yet. It was asked why the Auditor Report was not in the Town Report. It is because our Auditors have not done one. They want to do this after the 18 month transitional year is complete.

In Favor: 634

Opposed: 337

ARTICLE 4 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax approve the **twelve (12) month Fiscal Budget** of \$84,134.00 covering the period from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 in support of the Fairfax Rescue toward operation expense?

Tim Wasilewski, President and Bambi Dame, Director of Operations, spoke about the volunteer's hours for 2017 insisting of 21,330 hours, with the per diem hours of 2869. Changes in EMS are the moving away from volunteer organizations. There are new protocols and expectations for on scene care. The increased requirements are more in line with career cased EMS. The costs are just over 18% where those around us are looking at the same or higher. Yearly expense of \$84,134.00 to Fairfax out of a \$385,815.00 budget equals 21.8% of the operating cost. What is billed to the towns does not cover operating cost. We offset this with ambulance billing, subscription plans, grant, and donations.

The floor was opened to discussion. Some question consisted of the opioid epidemic and also adding a summary of the Rescue Squad budget into the town report along with a list of calls in a format similar to what the Fire Department uses.

In Favor: 796

Opposed: 176

ARTICLE 5 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$25,477.00 for the support of social contributions to provide services to the residents of the Town?

- A. Age Well (CVAA)----- \$ 1,500.00
- B. American Red Cross----- \$ 500.00
- C. Fairfax Historical Society----- \$ 2,000.00
- D. Fairfax Success by Six----- \$ 2,500.00
- E. Franklin County Animal Rescue----- \$ 1,000.00
- F. Franklin County Home Health Agency----- \$ 8,998.00
- G. Franklin County Industrial Development----- \$ 500.00
- H. Franklin Grand Isle Restorative Justice Center----- \$ 300.00
- I. Friends of Northern Lake Champlain----- \$ 500.00
- J. Green Mountain Transit/CCTA----- \$ 2,229.00
- K. Green Up Vermont----- \$ 300.00
- L. Northwestern Counseling----- \$ 1,800.00
- M. Vermont Adult Learning----- \$ 300.00
- N. Vermont Association of Conservation District----- \$ 100.00
- O. Vermont Center for Independent Living----- \$ 500.00
- P. Voices Against Violence Laurie’s House----- \$ 1,500.00
- Q. Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired----- \$ 300.00
- R. Vermont Council on Rural Development----- \$ 150.00
- S. Vermont Family Network----- \$ 500.00

TOTAL:----- \$25,477.00

The floor was opened to discussion. Some of these agencies really need our support. Franklin County Home Health is suffering from the Medicaid tax. The Fairfax Historical Society has done tremendous work to the building; these monies are part of a matching fund with grants. They had flood and mold in the basement that has been removed and are going to be painting the building.

In Favor: 725

Opposed: 248

ARTICLE 6 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax act on the reports of the town Officers?

A motion was made by Jeff Schukei and seconded by Josiah Raiche. The floor was opened to discussion and there was none. The motion was passed by a show of cards.

ARTICLE 7 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax authorize the Select Board to place the tax bills in the hands of the Town Treasurer as heretofore?

A motion was made by Cathy Carlson and seconded by Mike Cain. The floor was opened to discussion and there was none. The motion was passed by a show of cards.

ARTICLE 8 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax act on any other business?

A motion was made by Barb Murphy and seconded by Bruce Alvarez. The floor was opened to discussion. There was discussion about the crosswalk that is planned in the center of the village on the 104 State Highway by Foothills Bakery. Cell phone coverage is greatly needed in North Fairfax. This will be on the radar to explore and will see what we as a Town can do. Jesse Fleming was introduced as our new Fire Chief and Tom Snyder with thanked for his years of service as Chief. Tom Fontaine was thanked for the job well done as Select Person. The motion was passed by a show of cards.

ARTICLE 9 Shall the registered voters of the Town of Fairfax recess Town Meeting until March 6, 2018 at 7:00 A.M.?

A motion was made Jeff Schukei and seconded by Tom Traber. The floor was opened to discussion and there was none. The motion was passed by a show of cards at 11:27 a.m. to recess the Town until March 7, 2017 at 7 a.m.

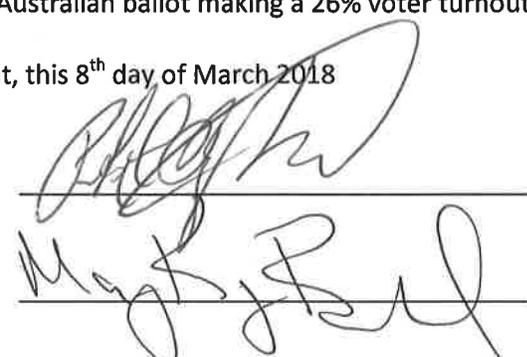
There are 3810 registered voters with 983 voting by Australian ballot making a 26% voter turnout.

Dated at Fairfax, County of Franklin, State of Vermont, this 8th day of March 2018

Peter Fitzgerald, Justice of the Peace

May Kay Raymond, Justice of the Peace

Attest:


Deborah Woodward, Town Clerk/Treasurer
March 8, 2018

FAIRFAX TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Annual Meeting 2018

The 2018 Annual Town School District Meeting was called to order at the Elementary Auditorium at Bellows Free Academy, Fairfax, Vermont by Moderator Roberta (Robby) Rodimer at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Robby read Robert's Rules as modified by VT State Law.

ARTICLES 1 through ARTICLE 4 were voted upon by the use of the official Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at the Middle School Gymnasium of Bellows Free Academy, Fairfax, Vermont. The polls opened at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 7:00 p.m.

Elaine Carpenter, School Board Chair introduced our Principals, and the School Board. A slide show was presented. Elaine Carpenter, Chair spoke about the safety of our children and school. She spoke about the Fairfax School Budget FY19 Proposal consisting of:

Our Mission: *Committed to ensuring all students become **informed, literate, critical thinkers** who demonstrate **responsible social and civic behaviors**.*

Budget Reallocation Summary

- Reduce High School Science Teacher by 0.2 FTE** (-\$11k) to match current configuration of science department.
- Add Elementary Classroom Teacher, 1.0 FTE** (+\$66k) to meet the growing enrollment numbers in grade K-2.
- Additional Elementary Classroom Curriculum/Supplies** (+\$5k) to purchase classroom curriculum and supplies for additional classroom teacher.
- Invest in Capital Improvement** (\$155k) to make facility improvements to our school buildings and grounds.
- Increase Teacher Stipends** (+\$11.5k) for curriculum and professional development outside of regularly contracted hours.
- Adjust Technology Budget** (+\$10.4k) to provide an inventory system for tracking equipment; purchase science software; invest in cloud backup system.

Budget Reallocation Summary

- Install Extra Security Cameras** (+\$14k) to cover the exterior perimeter of the entire school building.
- Purchase Portable Speaker System** (+\$3k) for outdoor events.
- Complete Fitness Room Bathroom Renovation** (+\$8k) and provide showering facilities adjoining the fitness room in final phase of plan.
- Purchase Van for Co-curricular/Small Field Trips** (+\$35k) to extend flexibility for transportation to work-based learning sites, small group field trips and additional co-curricular opportunities.
- Upgrade Ultimate Frisbee Program to Varsity Level** (+\$12k) to maintain athletic opportunities.
- Increase Band Budget** (+6k) to maintain thriving music program.

- **Teacher Sabbatical Leave** (+\$45k) to support advanced teacher training.

An enrollment summary of BFA K-12 was shown.

The Education funding update consisted of:

- Last year, the state education fund utilized \$38M in revenue sources that were one-time funds and are no longer available. Because of this, the tax commissioner recommended a statewide decrease in the property tax yield from \$10,160 to \$9,842 for this budget season.

- In December 2017, the commissioner's estimate was that the yield decrease would result in a property tax increase for all Vermonters of 9.4 cents - regardless of where they live or how their local budget is constructed.

- As of February preliminary statewide school budget increases, which were projected to rise 3.29%, are now reporting a much lower statewide increase than anticipated (1%). This potential decrease may reduce the anticipated state tax impact from 9.4 cents to a 2.82 cent tax rate increase.

The pending Legislation 2018 consisted of:

- The Vermont State Legislature is currently considering a bill that would completely overhaul the education funding system – moving away from total reliance on property taxes toward a combination of income and property taxes.

- The proposal would reduce average statewide homestead education property tax rate from \$1.55 to \$0.82 by lowering the base homestead rate to 25 cents.

- The new proposed education income tax would begin after income of \$47K and be structured as follows:

- AGI of \$0-47K = exempt

- AGI of \$47-125K = 1.2% tax

- AGI of \$125K-4M = 1.65% tax

Currently, the Legislature is considering an implementation date of 7/1/2019.

Scott Mitchell informed us of the impact of the budget on the tax rate, which will require an increase of 4.3 cents. The tax rates remain low in Fairfax as compared to other towns in the area. Estimated School tax bill with and without Article 3 approval was reviewed. Article 2 and 3 were addressed including the capital improvement plan project. To name a few: upgrading and replacing roofs; replace tile; repaving parking lot; and replacing the gym floor.

Long Range Facilities Planning Committee (LRFPC) Update

- A \$16M bond proposed was not approved by voters in October 2017. This proposal included:

- Renovation of Restrooms
- ADA Compliance Upgrades
- Conversion of the Middle School Gymnasium to two floors
- School Entrance in the Front on the School with New Admin Offices
- Addition of a new Gymnasium in current White House location
- 400-Seat Auditorium
- Cafeteria with attached small events kitchen
- LED Light Conversion
- Sprinkler System

- New LRFPC committee to start work later this month
- Article 3 addresses immediate needs of the school for renovation

Act 46 Section 9 Alternative Governance Structure

- BFA Act 46 committee began work in March 2017
- Explored merger with Maple Run, Milton, Essex-Westford, Cambridge
- Looked at efficiencies that can be made within our current structure
- The committee recommended to the Board in June to petition the state for a section 9, Alternative Structure. The recommendation was to petition with the School Districts of Fletcher and Georgia to remain as a Supervisory Union.
- The Fairfax School Board approved the recommendation of the Act 46 committee. It was urged to please support our schools!

Article 1 Shall the legal voters of said school district elect the following officers?

School Moderator 1 year term Roberta Rodimer 804 votes

School Director 3 year term Scott Mitchell 791 votes

School Director 2 year term Sandra-Lee Alexander 443 votes

Article 2 Shall the voters of said school district approve the school board to expend \$12,282,123 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$13,056.89 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 1.47% lower than spending for the current year.
BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT

The floor was open for discussion. Some discussion consisted of whether or not the roof repair comes out of the Capital Improvement Fund. The School Resource Officer position was the subject of many questions, from why the position has not been filled, to whom would be responsible for their duties, and whether the officer would be armed. Staff said that the School Resource Officer would be a deputy sheriff and armed as any deputy would be. There was a concern if the roof was currently leaking, which it is not. An explanation of what would be repaired first, the bleachers, bathrooms, or the roof. The Community meetings informed the School Board to start working on necessary repairs before things get worse at their best judgment, making the decision to start with the bleachers and bathrooms. There was clarification that only three School Board members need to sign the Warning to meet the quorum. There was much concern of the building access with just having a school lock down. The school is working hard to insure the safety for our children.

In Favor: 602

Opposed: 378

Article 3

Shall the voters of said school district approve the school board to expend up to \$300,000 for bathroom renovations at BFA Fairfax Middle/High School and to replace the bleachers in the Richard A. Brown Gymnasium? It is estimated that this expenditure, if approved, will result in education spending of \$371.79 per equalized pupil. This spending per equalized pupil is not higher than spending for the current fiscal year. It is also estimated that if this proposed expenditure and the proposed budget (Article 2) are both approved, education spending per equalized pupil will increase by \$177.23, or 1.34% over such spending for the current fiscal year.

The floor was open to discussion. Some discussion consisted of why it is important to fix the bleachers. Safety and wellbeing for the people is a concern to protect the people that use them.

In Favor: 579

Opposed: 398

Article 4

Shall the voters of said school district authorize the School Directors to borrow money for school expenses in anticipation of revenue for the ensuing year? BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT

The floor was open to discussion. There was none.

In Favor: 580

Opposed: 396

Article 5

To approve reports of School Directors from the previous year.

A motion was made by Mike Cain and seconded by Mary Kay Raymond. The floor was opened to discussion. Barbara Murphy thanks Jason Boyd for his time on the School Board. Motion passed by a show of cards.

Article 6

To conduct any other legal business to come before said meeting.

A motion was made by Tom Traber and seconded by Cathy Carlson. The floor was opened to discussion and there was a question and answer session. Some floor discussion consisted of the secured entrances into the school. When the school is under lock down no one is able to enter. The security of the school comes first. They are working on changing procedures to improve security in an emergency. The motion was passed by a show of cards.

Article 7

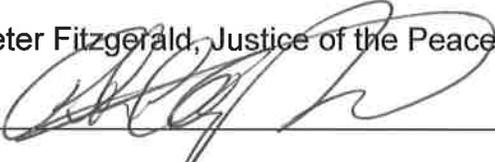
To adjourn.

A motion was made and passed by a show of cards at 1:19 p.m. The school meeting recessed until March 6, 2018 at 7:00 a.m.

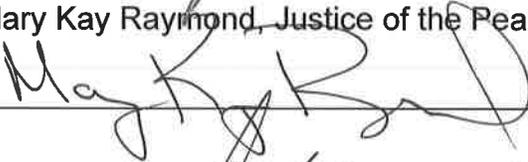
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Dated at Fairfax, County of Franklin, State of Vermont,
this 8th day of March 2018

Peter Fitzgerald, Justice of the Peace



Mary Kay Raymond, Justice of the Peace



Attest: _____
Deborah Woodward
Town Clerk/Treasurer



Dated: March 8, 2018