

**WARNING ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
BRISTOL, VERMONT
Monday, March 6, 2023**

The legal voters of the Town of Bristol are hereby WARNED and NOTIFIED to meet at Holley Hall in said Bristol, on Monday, March 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., said meeting to be recessed at the close of all business to be transacted from the floor to the following day, Tuesday, March 7, 2023, for voting by Australian ballot between the hours of 7:00 a.m., at which time the polls will open, and 7:00 p.m., at which time the polls will close, for the election of officers and voting on those articles so noted.

Started at 7:04 pm. Jennifer Wagner new moderator.

ARTICLE 1: To hear the reports of the Town officers.

Robert Bernstein moved the Article. Taylor Welch seconded.

Robert Bernstein - Revolving Loan Fund on page 93 only shows the amount of funds available but not the outstanding amounts and what it's used for. Audit page 36 as reported in Selectboard report on page 53. Police department on page 43 increase. Renting space for Police Department. Overuse of Executive Session. Fitch Avenue drainage doesn't work well and has flooded several buildings. There is much that Town Government could do better and not just what accepted. Giving Board copy of notes.

Robert Sikkema made motion to accept the Town Report. Ted Lylis seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 2: To elect by Australian ballot the following Town Officers as required by law: one Selectboard member for a three-year term; one Selectboard member for a two-year term; one First Constable for a one-year term; one Second Constable for a one-year term; one Lister for a three-year term; one Lister for a one-year term; one Town Moderator for a one-year term; one Library Trustee for a three-year term; one School Board member for a three-year term and one School Board member for a one-year term for Mount Abraham Unified School District.

Election March 7, 2023.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the legal voters of the Town of Bristol, as part of the Mount Abraham Unified School District, approve the withdrawal agreement with the Lincoln School District, which includes the property transfer of the Lincoln Community School building and bond as well as a negotiated portion of the MAUSD Education Reserve Fund in the amount of **\$74,754** by Australian Ballot? The details of the terms can be found in the full withdrawal agreement posted on the MAUSD website, in MAUSD schools, and at the town clerk's office. **Election March 7, 2023**

ARTICLE 4: Will the voters of the Town of Bristol vote that all real property taxes payable in installments shall bear interest at a rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ of one percent per month or fraction thereof for the first three months and thereafter one and one-quarter percent per month or fraction thereof from the due date of each installment with the payment of the real property taxes and interest to the Town Treasurer for the Town's fiscal year period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, real

property taxes being due in two equal installments on November 15, 2023, and April 15, 2024, by physical delivery to the Town Office before midnight on that date?

Anne Wallace moved the Article. Beth Ekroos seconded.

Dave Sharpe – encouraged Selectboard to put a different rate and/or strike the Article.

Greg Allen – p 37 – delinquent tax report. Higher than before? Anthony Delmonaco spoke about agreements and about ARPA program through Housing VT for residents to catch up. Greg - Only three (3) have asterisks for a payment plan. Question wasn't answered.

Robert Bernstein – not interested in changing penalty any lower. If we were to move tonight to strike penalty, there would be an effect on General Fund Budget.

Joel Bouvier – was 8% changed to 4%. Brought in house – used to go to Delinquent Tax Collector. Used to be significant. Delinquent Tax Collector is now Treasurer so not a separate stipend.

Mike LaPlante – what do we usually do to prevent huge debts?

Dave Sharpe – great to bring Delinquent Tax Collector position in-house is moving in right direction. Move to amend Article 4 in 3rd line from One- and one-quarter percent (1 ¼%) to one percent (1%). Richard Butz seconded. Vote on amendment. All in favor – Amendment passes.

Article passes as amended.

ARTICLE 5: Will the Town limit the amount of the penalty charged by the collector of delinquent taxes for payments made after the due date for payment to four percent (4%) of the tax collected pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1674(3)(A)?

Robert Bernstein moved the Article. Carol Price seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 6: Will the voters adopt the proposed 2023-2024 fiscal year General Fund Operating Budget in the amount of **\$1,113,885** subject to modification by actions on the subsequent articles, with **\$923,306** to be raised by taxes through a tax rate set by the Selectboard on the 2023 Grant List sufficient to raise **\$923,306**?

Kenneth Johnson moved the Article. Sarah Stott seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 7: Will the voters set the salaries that shall be paid to the members of the Selectboard at the same as FY2022, being **\$500** plus **\$15** per meeting and **\$25** per meeting for the Chair?

Tom Pollak moved the Article. John Moyers seconded.

Robert Sikkema. Betsy Blair. Don't read again.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 8: Will the voters adopt the proposed 2023-2024 fiscal year Public Works/Highway Fund Operating Budget in the amount of **\$894,658**, with **\$774,486** to be raised by taxes through a tax rate set by the Selectboard on the 2023 Grand List sufficient to raise **\$774,486**?

Kenneth Johnson moved the Article. Ted Lylis seconded.

John Moyers moved. Richard Butz. Don't reread any other Articles. Motion passes.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 9: Will the voters adopt the proposed 2023-2024 fiscal year Arts, Parks, and Recreation Department budget in the amount of **\$349,269**, with **\$250,469** to be raised by taxes through a tax rate set by the Selectboard on the 2023 Grand List sufficient to raise **\$250,469**?

Anne Wallace moved the Article. Ted Lylis seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 10: Will the voters authorize changing the name of the Capital Building Fund to the Capital Building and Maintenance Fund and authorize the transfer of **\$16,000** of the June 30, 2022, General Fund unassigned fund balance to it?

Robert Sikkema moved the Article. Carol Price seconded.

Greg Allen – what is unassigned fund balance?

Ian Albinson - Lack of audit for 2022 so don't have 2022 numbers. Anthony Delmonaco – Using 2021 fund balance - \$46,000 remaining after remaining emergency fund.

Greg Allen – without 2022 audit how do you know you have the money for this Article. Don't have evidence.

Sarah Stott – is this typo? Could we make amendment? No.

Robert Bernstein – these funds carry over – there could be negative fund balance. Do we have the money? Don't know 2022 unassigned balance.

Michelle Perlee – there is about \$135,000 from 2021.

Darla Senecal – we don't have audited number. We know what our financials say.

Beth Ekroos – what is the number? Joel Bouvier and Darla Senecal – 2021 numbers.

Anthony Delmonaco – New audit firm last year; they are looking at everything including reviewing last six years.

Dave Sharpe – language needs to change for next year.

Anne Wallace – call the question. Question passes to respond.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 11: Will the voters authorize the transfer of **\$10,000** from the June 30, 2022, General Fund unassigned fund balance to the Capital Technology Fund?

Richard Butz moved the Article. Sarah Stott seconded.

Greg Allen – in favor of article. Can end up with a loss if audit not complete. Say that we have money from 2021 and assume for 2022.

Valerie Capels – asking to authorize to transfer the money but not a requirement. If there is an issue, then money wouldn't be transferred.

Brendan Gallivan – when is audit going to be done. Ian Albinson – Audit will be on Town website when completed.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 12: Will the voters authorize the transfer of **\$10,000** from the June 30, 2022, General Fund unassigned fund balance to the Cemetery Fund?

Ted Lylis moved the Article. Anne Wallace seconded.

Anne Wallace – What is cemetery fund for? Joel Bouvier – town owns some cemeteries that need upkeep. This doesn't include big cemetery (Catholic cemetery and Greenwood Cemetery). Ken Weston started the fund. Hardscrabble (Varney) needs work.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 13: Will the voters appropriate the following sums to be placed in various Town Reserve Funds accounts as noted?

<u>Reserve Funds:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
Capital Highway Equipment Fund	\$135,000
Capital Sidewalk Fund	\$40,000
Capital Fire Equipment Fund	\$25,000
Capital Fire Vehicle Fund	\$125,000
Capital Technology Fund	\$7,000
Capital Building Fund	\$30,000
Capital Road Fund	\$45,000
Reappraisal Fund	\$15,000
Capital Paving Fund	\$135,000
Conservation Fund	<u>\$10,000</u>

Total: **\$567,000**

Robert Sikkema moved the Article. Deborah Dickerson seconded.

Katie Raycroft-Meyers – question about sidewalk fund. Is there an inventory underway? Valerie Capels - Previous sidewalk inventory was done in 2016-2017. Have asked Bike pedestrian commission for input as well as ACRPC on prioritizing criteria. Fund is for unplanned projects. Fund has also been used as match for grants on sidewalk projects.

David Melichoir – asked about Fire Department appropriation of \$150,000. Joel Bouvier - Two different accounts. The vehicle fund is just for vehicles and the equipment fund is for air packs, radios, etc.

Betsy Blair – nice to have a Town that is saving money to buy items. Town receiving interest rather than someone other business.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 14: Will the voters approve an appropriation of **\$173,410.88** for the Lawrence Memorial Library for its annual operating budget, said sum to be raised by taxes?

Anne Wallace moved the Article. Porter Knight seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 15: Will the voters renew the exemption of the Bristol Rescue Squad for its property located at 45 Monkton Road from real estate taxes for a period of five (5) years pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3840?

Ed Hilbert moved. Carol Price second. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 16: Will the voters appropriate the following sums in support of the Bristol-based organizations listed below, with said amounts level funded or lowered from the prior year, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2691?

<u>Organization:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
Bristol Cemetery Association, Inc.	\$29,000
Bristol CORE	\$10,000
Bristol Family Center	\$4,000
Bristol Historical Society	\$2,500
Bristol Little League Baseball & Softball	\$2,000
Bristol Recreation Club	\$15,000
Bristol Rescue Squad	\$13,500
Bristol Town Band	\$1,200
NEAT (Northeast Addison Television)	<u>\$3,500</u>
Total:	\$80,700

Russ Ruger moved. Robert Sikkema seconded.

Dave Sharpe – why are these separated from other ones. Ian Albinson – Separated Bristol based organizations from other organizations.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 17: Will the voters appropriate **\$8,500** to the Bristol Fourth of July Committee to organize the parade and events at the Town Green?

Robert Sikkema. Doug Corkins. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 18: Will the voters appropriate **\$6,000** to the Have-a-Heart Food Shelf for providing food and essential items, free of charge, to any person living in the Five-Town Area of Addison County (Bristol, Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven, and Starksboro).

Tom Pollak moved the Article. Anne Wallace seconded.

Dave Sharpe asked if Article 17-23 are increases or new organizations? Michelle Perlee – Yes they are.

Dave Sharpe – Did the other 5 towns have this on their ballot? Allison Pouliot – No, it was an oversight. We are tracking where everyone is coming from. Currently 62% are from Bristol. Beginning (Jan- Mar 2021) the following were served: 53 families and 114 individuals; 78 families and 185 individuals; 93 families and 294 individuals).

Krista Siringo – Seeing changes in participation over the last year.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 19: Will the voters appropriate **\$750** to the Addison Allies Network, Inc. for migrant farmworkers living in Addison County?

Robert Sikkema moved the Article. Russ Rueger seconded.

Robert Sikkema – why such a tiny amount for such a large presence?

Carol Price – There are 26 Towns that we are getting money from. I've been volunteering for about 5 years. Teaching English, providing rides, and even spending \$13,000 to buy muck boots for workers throughout area.

Article passes.

ARTICLE 20: Will the voters appropriate **\$1,500** to the Addison County Restorative Justice Services, Inc? To provide restorative projects for offenders who have the potential to learn from their mistakes?

Richard Butz moved the Article. Betsy Blair seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 21: Will the voters appropriate **\$1,500** to Habitat for Humanity Addison County to build affordable, energy-efficient, and sustainable homes for eligible families?

Anne Wallace moved the Article. Sarah Stott seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 22: Will the voters appropriate **\$3,000** to Turning Point Center of Addison County to support its mission to assist persons, their families, and their friends in recovery from substance use disorder and addictive behaviors?

Bob Donnis moved the Article. Linda Andrews seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 23: Will the voters appropriate the following sums in support of the organizations listed below, with said amounts level funded or lowered from the prior year, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2691?

<u>Organization:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
Addison County Home Health & Hospice	\$4,700
Addison County Parent/Child Center	\$4,800
Addison County Readers, Inc.	\$2,000
Addison County River Watch Collaborative	\$300
Age Well	\$2,700
Counseling Service of Addison County	\$3,875
Elderly Services	\$2,200
Homeward Bound	\$1,000
HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects)	\$3,250
John W. Graham Housing and Services	\$1,400
Open Door Clinic	\$1,000
RSVP and Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program	\$750
Tri-Valley Transit	\$11,306
Vermont Adult Learning	\$1,650
WomenSafe	<u>\$3,500</u>
Total:	\$44,431

Anne Wallace moved the Article. Ted Lylis seconded. **Article passes.**

ARTICLE 24: To transact any other non-binding business that may legally come before this meeting.

Katie Raycroft-Meyer of ACRPC (planning commission for the region). Every town can have delegates. Bristol has three (3) delegates and three (3) alternate slots but currently only has one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate. Would like to see more people participate.

Robert Bernstein to Joel Bouvier – welcome back and good to see you doing well.

William Turner (zoom chat)– Would like to see Town Office open on Fridays again.

Town Meeting ended at 9:10 p.m.



Sharon Lucia, Town Clerk