

Isle La Motte Annual Town Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2016
Isle La Motte Elementary School

Present: Rustam Spaulding-Town Moderator and Selectman, Stephen Stata-Selectman Chair, Selby Turner-Selectman, Michele Murray-Town Clerk, Betty Lockerby-Justice of the Peace, Cathy Tudhope-Justice of the Peace, Sylvia Jensen-Justice of the Peace, Debbie Spaulding-Lister, Louise Koss-Lister & School Board Director, Mary LaBrecque-Delinquent Tax Collector, Barbara Callahan-School Board Director & Trustee of Public Funds, Jennifer Rafferty-School Board Director, Peter Murray, Joyce Tuck, Marjorie Bertram, Carol Stata, Allen Hall, Lucinda Virga, Robert Varga, Barbara Larvey, Arthur Larvey, Dale Patnode, John Yarat, Ann McKay, Jane Zera, Paul Zera, Charles Gurney, William Fish, Jackie Jarvis, Maureen Turner, William Howland and three (3) unknown people.

Non-voters: Brenda Delude, Isle La Motte School Principal Thomas Tregan, Barbara Burrington-Superintendent of Schools, Mike Deweese-Consultant for Vermont School Board Association, Andrew Julow-Chairman of Act 46 Grand Isle County Study Committee, Mitz Johnson-Representative, Bob Kreps-Representative, Phyllis Firth

The meeting was called to order by Town Moderator Rustam Spaulding at 10:00 AM on February 27, 2016. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Spaulding. Non-voters in the room were asked to identify themselves.

Debbie Spaulding made a motion to allow non-voters to speak, 2nd by Betty Lockery, all in favor.

Steve Stata thanked Betsy Howland for her years of service to the town as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer. Betsy helped with and maintained the Town with accountability and helped the Select Board with advice and consultancy. Stata asked Bill Howland to pass along the many, many thanks to Betsy.

NOTE: all articles were moved to the floor by Debbie Spaulding and 2nd by Betty Lockerby. All articles were passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 1: Will the legal voters of the Town vote to apply any general surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Debbie Spaulding, all in favor.

ARTICLE 2: Will the voters of the Town approve the sum of \$43,000.00 to the Isle La Motte Volunteer Fire Co., Inc. to provide fire and emergency medical services to the Town?

Motion moved by Debbie Spaulding, 2nd by Betty Lockerby, all in favor.

ARTICLE 3: Will the legal voters of the Town approve the sum of \$2,020.00 to the Visiting Nurses Association?

Motion moved by Maureen Turner, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

ARTICLE 4: Will the legal voters of the Town approve the sum of \$700.00 to the Northwestern Counseling & Support Services?

Motion moved by Carol Stata, 2nd by Debbie Spaulding, all in favor.

ARTICLE 5: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$700.00 to the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging?

Motion moved by Debbie Spaulding, 2nd by Betty Lockerby, all in favor.

ARTICLE 6: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$479.00 to the Northwest Regional Planning Commission?

Motion moved by Sylvia Jensen, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

ARTICLE 7: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$350.00 to the American Red Cross?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Carol Stata, all in favor.

ARTICLE 8: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$400.00 to the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corp.?

Motion moved by Debbie Spaulding, 2nd by Carol Stata, all in favor.

ARTICLE 9: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$50.00 for Green Up Vermont?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Charles Gurney, all in favor.

ARTICLE 10: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$100.00 to Vermont Adult Learning?

Motion moved by Maureen Turner, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

ARTICLE 11: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$14,500.00 to the Isle La Motte School for community use of the school building?

Motion moved by Paul Zera, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

ARTICLE 12: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$1,000.00 to Friends of Northern Lake Champlain?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Paul Zera, all in favor.

ARTICLE 13: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$250.00 to the Franklin Grand Isle Court Diversion program?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Paul Zera, all in favor.

ARTICLE 14: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$100.00 to Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force?

Motion moved by Louise Koss, 2nd by Paul Zera, all in favor.

ARTICLE 15: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$5,000.00 to the Cemetery Commission for restoration of graves?

Motion moved by Paul Zera, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

ARTICLE 16: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$1,000.00 to Island Arts?

Motion moved by Maureen Turner, 2nd by Louise Koss, all in favor.

There was discussion on the services that Island Arts provides for children of Isle La Motte and also the children in the rest of the county.

ARTICLE 17: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$500.00 to Franklin-Grand Isle United Way?

Motion moved by Debbie Spaulding, 2nd by Barbara Callahan, all in favor.

ARTICLE 18: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$1000.00 to Champlain Island Food Shelf?

Motion moved by Maureen Turner, 2nd by Barbara Callahan, all in favor.

ARTICLE 19: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$1,000.00 to Voices Against Violence-Laurie's House?

Motion moved by Debbie Spaulding, 2nd by Maureen Turner, all in favor.

ARTICLE 20: Will the legal voters of the Town approve a sum of \$23,393.00 from past General fund surplus to reduce taxes?

Motion moved by Maureen Turner, 2nd by Paul Zera, all in favor.

Stata had discussion; there has been a surplus in the general fund since approx., 2007. Prior to 2007 surplus monies were not fully identified. The professional auditors cannot tell the Town how much this amount is exactly because some records are missing. Last year it was determined (the best it could) that the Town has a surplus of approx., \$70,000.00. The Town decided to reduce taxes over the next 2-3 years by approx., a third or until it is realized that borrowing in anticipation of taxes is recognized.

Louise Koss had discussion; voting on VEMERS escrow monies.

Spaulding had discussion; the VEMERS escrow monies were put back into the general fund and will not be voted on, on March 1st.

Art Larvey had discussion; if the VEMERS escrow monies were not put back into the general fund then the budget would be close to \$300,000? Spaulding had discussion; yes, it would be up another \$23,000.

Louise Koss had discussion; has the board considered using past surplus money to move toward a fiscal year of 18 months. Stata had discussion; this was not a discussion.

Charles Gurney had discussion; if the article is not approved, what happens to the money, does it stay in the fund? Stata had discussion; yes it stays there.

Sylvia Jensen had discussion; salt shed had an overage on spending, could this surplus of been used to cover some of this and why was this not applied to pay down the loan for the salt shed? Stata had discussion; the money was used to reduce taxes.

Barbara Callahan; what is the percentage to reduce taxes on this? Spaulding answered; approx., 10%.

Maureen Turner; given last year the unexpected tax rate for the school, this would be a good year to reduce taxes with this money.

ARTICLE 21: To transact any other business proper to come before this meeting and to discuss any article to be voted upon by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 1, 2016.

Moderator Spaulding read the warning for Australian ballot voting on March 1, 2016.

Louise Koss had discussion; what was done with the money that was returned to us? Spaulding had discussion; there were three articles; one was to save in a rainy day fund, \$30,000 for some sort of fund and the third was to reduce taxes, the money was used to reduce taxes, this was voted on.

Barbara Callahan had discussion; on Article 2 (install siding and windows) it was my understanding that this meant putting new clapboard siding. Turner had discussion; Scott Newman had discussion with Turner, the town hall is not registered as a historical site. Newman was contacted prior to installing the porch on the town hall. The porch was installed for three reasons; needed a ramp for proper access, a place for the children to have shelter while waiting for the bus, and a place for posting. The red bench that is on the porch is an original bench that was in the St. Joseph's Church. The intention is to put vinyl siding on the building to help with lead paint issues, insulation to help with frozen water pipes and new windows. We need to preserve the building at least at this time. Vinyl siding could be removed at a later date if perhaps someone wanted to take the paint off and return the building to what it was. Spaulding had discussion; to have the lead paint removed would be approx., \$37,000.

Barbara Callahan had discussion; what would the cost be after the removal of the lead paint? Carol Bohannon gave a cost to insulate years ago. Turner had discussion; a small amount of insulating was done.

Sylvia Jensen had discussion; there are Historical grants available. Grants will help pay to rebuild a historical building. Turner had discussion; there is an immediate problem and it needs to be addressed.

Maureen Turner had discussion; how old is the building? Turner had discussion; possibly 1920's.

Barbara Callahan had discussion; there are other grants available and would hate to see vinyl siding on the building.

Marjorie Bertram had discussion; Albert Bertram was Justice of the Peace before he passed away and was paid from the town for Justice of the Peace services. Is there an ordinance in the town for people working for the town and being paid while the person has not paid their taxes for years? If there is not an ordinance for this sort of thing, perhaps there ought to be.

John Yartz had discussion; I would like to thank Michele for her services to the town for the last year.

Sylvia Jensen had discussion; is there a future plan for doors installed on the new salt shed. Turner had discussion; not at this time. A gate may be considered in the future. Doors may perhaps cost as much as the shed itself.

Maureen Turner would like to thank Selby for designing the salt shed.

Louise Koss had discussion; would like to thank the Library for helping with Surf Global and thank you for having a room painted in the school and also for special programs for the students.

Sylvia Jensen would like to say thank you for the lights around the town hall.

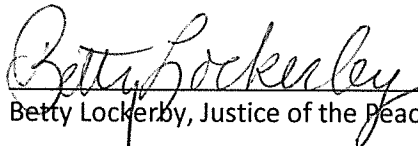
No other business to discuss,

Moderator made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted: Michele Murray-Town Clerk

These minutes are approved by:


_____ Date: 3/5/16
Selby Turner, Selectman


_____ Date: 3/5/16
Betty Lockerby, Justice of the Peace