

Town of Panton
Draft of Town Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 7, 2017
10:00 A.M.

J. Douglas Dows called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

First addressed were housekeeping items. H. Hall pointed out where the bathroom upstairs was. He then told all present that the side door was not an exit anymore because the ramp was not safe and if there was an emergency please use the front or back door.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a Moderator for the year ensuing: D. Dows open the nominations for moderator. J. Viskup nominated D. Dows. It was 2nd. Seeing there were no other nominations; D. Dows closed the nominations and asked the clerk to cast one vote for D. Dows as moderator.

The Pledge of Alliance to the Flag was the next order of business.

D. Dows informed all present that you could only speak at Town Meeting if you were a registered voter of Panton. He asked that whoever spoke to state their name so it would be available for the records. If a non-resident wanted to speak he would need to ask permission from the residents at the meeting. D. Dows state that during the budget section of the meeting he was going to step down as moderator because there were some things that he wanted to address in the budget. P. Bogan would at that time take over as the moderator until the budget items were done.

ARTICLE 2: To elect the following officers:

Select Board Member 3 year: P. Moore nominated Zachary Weaver. H. Hall 2nd. There were no other nominations so D. Dows closed the nominations and asked the clerk to cast on vote for Z. Weaver the 3 year term to the Selectboard.

Select Board Member 1 year, to fill remaining 1 year of 3 year term: D. Raphael nominated Teresa Smith. P. Moore 2nd. A second nomination, A. Bowen nominated Ashlee Morris. T. Bowen 2nd. There were no other nominations so the moderator closed the nominations and proceeded to a vote. He asked for a hand count and Teresa Smith was elected.

Lister 3 year: There were no nominations.

Lister 1 year, to fill remaining 1 year of 3 year term: There were no nominations.

Auditor 3 year: J. Viskup nominated Doug Dows. B. Groff 2nd. There were no other nominations so the clerk was asked to cast one ballot for D. Dows for the 3 year auditor position.

Auditor 2 year, to fill remaining 2 year of 3 year term: P. Moore nominated Bob Groff. H. Hall 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for Bob Groff for audit for the 2 year position.

Auditor 1 year: There were no nominations.

Constable 1 year: P. Moore nominated David Palmatier. J. Viskup 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for David Palmatier for constable for the following year.

Dog Warden 1 year: There were no nominations.

Town Grand Juror 1 year: P. Moore nominated Louise Giovanella. E. Markowski 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for L. Giovanella for Town Grand Juror for the ensuing year.

Town Agent 1 year: T. Bolens nominated himself. A. Morris 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for Ted Bolens for town agent for the term of one year.

Water Commissioner 3 year: D. Palmatier nominated Meddie Perry. J. Viskup 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for Meddie Perry for the position of water commissioner for a 3 year term.

VUES Board 3/2017 thru 12/2017: D. Raphael nominated Jason Fearon. P. Moore 2nd. There were no other nominations. The clerk was asked to cast one ballot for J. Fearon for the position on VUES Board for the term of 3/2017 thru 12/2017.

ARTICLE 3: To hear the reports of the Town Officers: The moderator asked if the residents minded if items were taken out of order and they would allow J. Viskup and D. Raphael to give a presentation on the revitalization of Town Hall. There were no objections. J. Viskup gave a brief introduction stating that he was stepping down from the Selectboard after 9 years of service. H. Hall presented J. Viskup with a Thank You for your service and a small gift from the Town. D. Raphael gave out a hand out regarding the Town Hall project.

At this point Diane Lanpher, State Representative was present at the meeting and she was allowed to speak. She has been in the house for the last 9 years. 6 years she has served on the house transportation committee. The last 3 years she has served on the house Appropriations Committee. She said with the new Governor there is a lot of changes going on. The house appropriation committee gets the budget that the Governor produces. All money originates out of the house. She was shocked to see that the proposal that was brought forward was to balance the general fund by moving 135 million dollars that was normally general fund obligations into the education fund which means property taxes. After school board had already done their hard work asking them to go back and open up their budget to level fund that would save them no money, the Governor's proposal was to spend that money that was saved by school boards work (9 million dollars for early childcare education, 6 million dollars for higher education, 1.6 million dollars for new education initiatives and to move over the teachers retirement and healthcare into the education fund). The Appropriations Committee moved forward stating that they felt the voters were not going to like putting this on property taxes and have started their own budgets. There was a gap in the budget of 72 million dollars and the gap has been lower to 17.9 million. During Town Meeting week the committee will need to find 17.9 million before it passes the budget out to the Senate by the end of March. There may need to be compromises because the Governor will still want this to go on to property taxes. What is not in the budget is the money for the Lake. What is being seen is that the Federal money is not going to be coming for the Lake. We do not have the capacity at the State level or local level or neighborhood levels to shore up what is not going to be there from Federal dollars. As the budget is right now there will be 800 . 900 that will not have services in Vocational Rehab next year. She expressed that each line item on the budget was people's lives and she was greatly concerned about that.

D. Lanpher expressed that Warren Van Wyck, the other State Representative was not able to attend because there was a family emergency in Boston and he expressed his apologies.

Moderator stated that he had been remiss. There is a tradition in Town for remembrance of the people that have passed on in Town. He read the names of the people who were deceased and asked that all observe a moment of silence.

ARTICLE 3 Continued: Addison North West School District Board Report/Diana Raphael - The ANWSD Board will officially taking over the 5 districts this coming July 1st. They had two jobs this year. One was to handle teacher's negotiations which are in process and the other was to come up with a budget for the 4 schools and the central office.

Howard Hall, Select Board Chair gave the Delinquent Tax Report. Delinquent taxes were at \$52,847. They have been reduced to \$5,028 by December 31, 2016 thanks to the work of Barbara Fleming, Delinquent Tax Collector.

The Town Budget was the next report H. Hall spoke of. The proposed budget is an increase of 1.83% which would increase taxes on a \$250,000 home of approximately \$25 a year. H. Hall was starting to present parts of the budget when Doug Dows interrupted and ask him to report everything but the budget for there was an article for the budget.

H. Hall gave an overview of the Town equipment. Some of the work that has been done on equipment is sanding, painting, replacing hydraulic hose on the backhoe which will increase the lifetime of it. He applauded the Road Crew for their care of the Town equipment.

The five year paving plan will begin with Pease Road next year or this spring which will be from Lake Road to just around the corner on Jersey Street. Last year the Town paved more than has ever been done in one year due to the price of asphalt being the lowest in has been in a long time. Roughly 3 ½ miles of road were paved. In 2021 the plan is to pave Lake Street from Addison town line to Pease Road. The continued availability of Federal Grants will come into view regarding the paving schedule. Some patching will be done on Jersey Street this year.

The Town received a \$40,000 grant for the Park n Ride. The Park n Ride is almost complete. There is a little bit of money left and some planting will be done to improve aesthetics. A \$27,000 grant was received to replace the Jackson Road culvert which will be done this year. The Selectboard is also exploring transmission line taxes. Telling & Associates were hired to do the Town Audit. The Town also has a memo of understanding/or partial agreement with Green Mountain Power regarding upgrades to the Town Hall and Garage. Further discussion with Green Mountain Power will take place after the new Selectboard is in place. The Town has also implemented a Solar Restriction. If a proposed solar site is 5 acres or more it will need to go before the Development Review Board and approval of the Selectboard. There is a list of things that will need to be complied with for these large solar sites. The DRB is working on the new Town Plan and this restriction will be written into the new plan. H. Hall and D. Palmatier have been working on enforcement of the Junk Ordinance. There were 16 out of compliance letters mailed and at present there are only 2 which still need a bit of work. The encroachment on Jersey Street was settled. The DRB has a new fees schedule for building permits/construction etc. which will bring the Town charges more in line with the surrounding municipalities. If any construction deals with Town roads, approval by the Road Foreman is required so if any damage is done by heavy equipment it can be assessed and the party will have to pay for the repair. Katie Werthmann has volunteered to be the project manager that will deal with the upgrades to the Town Hall and Garage to coordinate all activities with Green Mountain Power regarding the building improvements.

David Raphael thanked the Selectboard members, Howard Hall, Chair, John Viskup and Zachary Weaver for their roles in Town Government.

D. Raphael wanted the residents to know that Green Mountain Power will be screening the Panton Road solar site this spring. The Planning Commission/Development Review Board is working on rewriting the Town Plan which administers the zoning ordinances which is dealing with the solar sites, screening and the potential for wind energy. A Municipal Planning Grant was received from the State to help in this process. Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. there will be a workshop/meeting to discuss and give input regarding the new Town Plan. Thanks to Louise Giovanella as clerk to the DRB/PC for 30 plus years. She has resigned. There are positions open on the DRB/PC, a regular board member, an alternate and the clerk position. If interested please contact the Town Clerk's office at 475-2333.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the following sums which shall be raised by taxes, to be place in the Town Reserve Fund account as noted:

Reserve Fund	Amount
Highway Capital Equipment Fund	\$20,000
Highway Capital Project Fund	\$20,000
Tire Fund	\$2,000
Town Hall Restoration Fund	\$15,000
Reappraisal Fund	\$2,000
Digital/IT Fund	\$2,000
Total	\$61,000

T. Bolens moved to open the article. H. Mahoney 2nd. C. Bitler asked what the Digital/IT Fund was. H. Hall explained that the land records, vital records and all other documentation that relates to the Town business deteriorate over time and needed to put on microfilm to help preserve them for future use. The IT is for upgrades that may be needed to the computer system from time to time and to the purchase of new equipment as needed. David Raphael moved to amend Article 4, Town Hall Restoration Fund by adding the anticipate \$23,775 to be generated from tax revenue from the large solar site on Panton Road to move the Town forward on the Town Hall Committee project. Deb Hartenstein 2nd. Discussion ensued. D. Dows asked for a vote on the amendment to article 4. The ayes have it so the amendment carries. D. Dows now asked for a vote on the amended Article 4. The Ayes have it and the article passes.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters authorize the transfer of \$10,856 from the June 30, 2016 undesignated fund balance of the General Fund to the Rainy Day Fund? D. Dows passes the position of moderator on to Paulette Bogan for this article. Sean Willerford moved the article. James Dayton 2nd. D. Dows spoke in opposition to this article. 7% of the budget has already been set up at previous meetings to be allocated to the Rainy Day Fund. The \$10,856 would be 9% of the budget and D. Dows fills this is excessive. When the auditors completed their audit this year there was a \$107,000 undesignated surplus. The question of how were unexpected expenses paid for before the Rainy Day Fund existed. R. Cloutier, Road Foreman said that things had to wait or the Town had to borrow money to pay for the expenses. A question of are the voters involved before money is spent from the Rainy Day Fund. No, it has already been voted that the Selectboard has the discretion of how the Funds are spent. If the \$10,000 is put in the Rainy Day Fund it is not available to reduce taxes. Approximately \$47,000 is in the Fund. It was pointed out that the Rainy Day Fund is not a tax stabilization fund. It is for cash flow problems. The question has been called. P. Bogan called for a vote. A hand count was taken 16 in favor. A hand count of 18 opposed. The Article does not pass.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town vote to adopt the proposed 2017-2018 fiscal year General Fund Operating Budget in the amount of \$647,400 Of which \$509,662 shall be raised by taxes and \$137,738 by non-tax revenues? H. Hall moved the article. S. Willerford 2nd. D. Dows asked to amend this article. He proposed to add a line item to the revenue section of the budget called carried forward balance and to put \$10,404 on that line. T. Bolens moved the amendment. A. Bolens 2nd. D. Dows amended his amendment to the Article, to move the \$10,404 over to FY 2018 under prior surplus. It was moved to rescind the original amendment and start with a new amendment. The Ayes have it. A. Bolens proposed that the current surplus from the 2016 fiscal year in the amount of \$10,856 be put on the budget of the upcoming year on the carry forward surplus year. H. Hall stated

that the \$856 has to be in the budget to keep the Rainy Day Fund at 7%. A. Bolens proposal withdrawn. D. Dows restated his amendment to the Article, to add \$10,404 to the budget on the line item prior surplus, the purpose being to eliminate the need to raise taxes for the 2018 budget. T. Bolens 2nd. A vote was taken the ayes have approved the amendment to article. Moderator called for a vote on Article 6 as amended. A voice vote was taken of ayes and nays but it was not clear on the ayes or nays, so a hand count was taken, a count of 19 for approving and 12 against. The amended article passed.

D. Dows took back over as moderator, thanking P. Bogan for her help.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the voters authorize the transfer of \$55,000 from the June 30, 2016 undesignated fund balance of the General Fund to the Highway Capital Fund? H. Hall moved the article. D. Brace 2nd. There was a short discussion and the article was called. Moderator asked for a vote of Article 7, those in favors aye, those opposed nay. The ayes have it, the article passes.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters approve the transfer of \$15,000, received from Green Mountain Power in 2016, from the general fund to the Town Hall Restoration Fund to be used for renovations and restoration of the Panton Town Hall? K. Werthmann moved the article. S. Willerford 2nd. D. Raphael told the residents that this money was received from GMP from the Memo of Understanding and it was to be used for something like this. There was no further discussion. Moderator proceeded to a vote, those if favor say aye, those opposed nay. The ayes have it the article passes.

ARTICLE 9 . 23: These articles are voted on by Australian ballot.

ARTICLE 24: To transact any other non-binding business.

The crosswalk lights were brought up, saying that it was felt they were a bit excessive and the LED lights too much. H. Hall explained that they were aware of the situation and that the timer for the lights was going to be adjusted so that it would go off earlier and that the signs would be turned toward the field. S. Willerford made a motion that the Selectboard find a better solution for the lights. G. Norton 2nd. A vote was called for by the moderator regarding the motion, those for aye, those opposed nay. The ayes have it and the non-binding motion carries.

P. Bogan asked about the flags on Panton Road. H. Hall informed her that one was a United States flag and other was a Dutch flag put up by the Vorstevelds and that they were not high on the Selectboards agenda.

B. Groff who is one of the Town's internal audits wanted to thank all the people who work and represent the Town for the hard work they all do to keep things running smoothly.

D. Dows gave Brian Otley from Green Mountain Power the opportunity to speak. B. Otley gave a quick update. The evolve Panton project was launched last summer in partnership with the Town. The project was to help residents get access to upgrades for the efficiencies of their homes and upgrades to heating and cooling systems. To do it in a way that they could take their existing budget on fuel oil, cord wood, propane and electricity and use that as a method for paying the upgrades without having to increase their out of pocket expense. Since that time approximately 75 homes have been visited and got baseline information about what their homes look like and what their historical energy costs have been. About 21 full audits have been done to find out what kind of retrofits and upgrades would be needed to save them the most money. This project is a pilot program and has taken longer than anticipated. It has been an experiment with learning curves, bumpy roads and the need to trouble shoot as they go along. It is hoped that they will be sending out their first proposals to home owners by the end of March. Their first target is to get 20 residents involved in the program,

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what they call an early adoptive program. Their hope is to get these 20 residents signed up by the end of April. They have had some challenges and hope to get a good set up proposals out shortly. David Raphael thanked everyone who had attended.

D. Dows, moderator asked for a motion to adjourn. T Bolens moved to adjourn. S. Willerford 2nd. The moderator asked all in favor of adjourning say aye, those opposed nay. The ayes have it and the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Jean Miller, Clerk