

Town of Thetford  
Town Meeting Minutes  
March 2, 2024

The 2024 Thetford Town Meeting was called to order at 10:40am by Selectboard Chair, Sharon Harkay. Deecie Denison, Town Moderator, was unable to moderate today; Sarah Martel, a former Thetford Town Moderator, was requested to moderate the meeting. Sharon Harkay moved to appoint Sarah Martel Moderator Pro Tem for today's meeting and the motion was seconded. This motion passed unanimously.

Our meeting opened with the National Anthem, sung by siblings Saylor and Hugo Billiau. The Selectboard members were introduced, and various announcements were made regarding community tables, snack bar, luncheon and childcare.

Sarah Martel, Town Moderator Pro Tem read the warning - "The legal voters of the Town of Thetford, in Orange County in the State of Vermont, are hereby warned to meet in the gymnasium of Thetford Academy, in the Town of Thetford, on Saturday, March 2, 2024, at 10:00 am to transact the following business".

Sarah called to briefly suspend the rules for the presentation of the Civic Pride Award. Sharon Harkay, Selectboard Chair, presented to the 2024 Civic Pride Recipients Dale Gephart and Barbara DeFelice.

Article 1 To hear the reports of the Town. The article was moved and seconded. Tracy Borst, Town Clerk, offered brief thanks and referenced the information provided within. The motion passed by voice vote.

Article 2 Shall the Town authorize payment of real and personal property taxes by physical delivery to the tax collector before 5 pm on Tuesday, October 15th, 2024? The article was moved and seconded. Tracy Borst, Town Treasurer, offered details on tax due date, late penalty and interest charges. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 3 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$2,420,946 (two million four hundred twenty thousand and nine hundred forty-six dollars) of which \$1,462,907 (one million four hundred sixty-two thousand and nine hundred seven dollars) shall be raised by taxes and \$958,039 (nine hundred fifty-eight thousand and thirty-nine dollars) by non-tax revenues for the budgeted expenditures of the Town General Fund? Article 3 was moved and seconded.

Sharon Harkay presented an amendment so the article would now read: Shall the Town raise the sum of \$2,420,946 (two million four hundred twenty thousand and nine hundred forty-six dollars) of which \$1,412,907 (one million four hundred twelve thousand and nine hundred seven dollars) shall be raised by taxes with \$50,000 (fifty thousand dollars) from surplus fund and \$958,039 (nine hundred fifty-eight thousand and thirty-nine dollars) by non-tax revenues for the budgeted expenditures of the Town General Fund? The amendment was moved and seconded; and passed unanimously. Sharon explained the amendment sought to use \$50,000 in surplus funds towards the 2024 budget; this was originally expected to be within the Department of Public Works (see next article) and it will be proposed to remove that from the next article.

After presentation and some discussion, Article 3 as amended passed by voice vote.

Article 4 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$1,568,486 (one million five hundred sixty-eight thousand and four hundred eighty-six dollars) of which \$1,330,586 (one million three hundred thirty thousand and five hundred eighty-six dollars) shall be raised by taxes with \$50,000 (fifty thousand dollars) from surplus funds, and \$237,900 (two hundred thirty-seven thousand and nine hundred dollars) by non-tax revenues for the budgeted expenditures of the Department of Public Works Fund? The article was moved and seconded.

Sharon Harkay offered an amendment, which was seconded. Shall the Town raise the sum of \$1,568,486 (one million five hundred sixty-eight thousand and four hundred eighty-six dollars) of which \$1,380,586 (one million three hundred eighty thousand and five hundred eighty-six dollars) shall be raised by taxes and \$237,900 (two hundred thirty-seven thousand and nine hundred dollars) by non-tax revenues for the budgeted expenditures of the Department of Public Works Fund? The amendment passed by voice vote. Sharon again explained after the warning was signed, it was clear the surplus funds were not available in the Department of Public Works fund balance.

After comments by Brian Story, Town Manager, there were no questions. Article 4 passed unanimously.

Article 5 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$337,260 (three hundred thirty-seven thousand and two hundred sixty dollars) as an appropriation to the Thetford Volunteer Fire Dept., Inc.? The article was moved and seconded. Article 5 passed by voice vote.

Article 6 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$130,000 (one hundred thirty thousand dollars) as an appropriation to the Thetford Library Federation? Article 6 was moved and seconded.

Steve Tofel, Selectboard member, proposed an amendment: Shall the Town raise the sum of \$137,000 (one hundred thirty-seven thousand dollars) as an appropriation to the Thetford Library Federation? The amendment was seconded. Steve described this amendment as due to a simple typo, that the budgeted amount was \$137,000, but the article as warned was a misprint. The amendment as presented passed by voice vote unanimously. Article 6 passed by voice vote.

Article 7 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$5,250 (five thousand and two hundred fifty dollars) as an appropriation to the Lake Fairlee Association whose mission is to protect the health of the lake and its environs? The article was moved and seconded. No discussion. Article 7 passed by voice vote, unanimously.

Article 8 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$8,000 (eight thousand dollars) as an appropriation to the Community Nurse of Thetford? Article 8 was moved and seconded. Cindy Grigel and Sunny Martinson (Board member of and present Community Nurse) spoke briefly to the funding mechanisms for the Community Nurse. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 9 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$13,000 (thirteen thousand dollars) as an appropriation to the VNA/VNH to provide visiting nurse and hospice care? Article was moved and seconded. No discussion. Article 9 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 10 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$10,000 (ten thousand dollars) as an appropriation to the White River Council on Aging for the purpose of providing services through the Bugbee Senior Center including Meals on Wheels? Article 10 was moved and seconded. Article 10 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 11 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$4,800 (four thousand eight hundred dollars) as an appropriation to the Tri-Valley Transit (formerly Stagecoach) for the purpose of providing scheduled bus runs as well as door-to-door transportation services? The article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 11 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 12 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$4,266 (four thousand two hundred and sixty-six dollars) as an appropriation to the Clara Martin Center for the purpose of providing behavioral health care services? The Article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 12 passed unanimously.

Article 13 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$1,400 (one thousand four hundred dollars) as an appropriation to Senior Solutions for the purpose of providing services and resources for aging in Southeastern Vermont? The Article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 13 passed unanimously.

Article 14 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$1,388 (one thousand three hundred and eighty-eight dollars) as an appropriation to the Public Health Council of the Upper Valley for the purpose of providing shared public health initiatives and services within a variety of health networks? The Article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 14 passed by voice vote.

Article 15 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$1,300 (one thousand three hundred dollars) as an appropriation to Safeline for the purpose of providing services to women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence? The article was moved and seconded. Discussion to clarify services expand beyond women and children. Article 15 was passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 16 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$750 (seven hundred fifty dollars) as an appropriation to the Orange County Parent Child Center for the purpose of providing family support and outreach programming? Article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 16 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 17 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$500 (five hundred dollars) as an appropriation to the Orange County Restorative Justice Center for the purpose of addressing legal and conflict issues as well as the needs of harmed parties? Article 17 was moved and seconded. Sharon Harkay, Selectboard Chair, presented details of restorative justice program that they may help us develop in Thetford. With no further discussion Article 17 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 18 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$400 (four hundred dollars) as an appropriation to WISE for the purpose of ending gender-based violence through advocacy, prevention, education, and related services? Article was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 18 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 19 Shall the Town raise the sum of \$300 (three hundred dollars) as an appropriation to The Family Place for the purpose of supporting families with children through a variety of programs? Article 19 was moved and seconded. With no discussion Article 19 passed unanimously by voice vote.

Article 20 To transact any other business of the Town.

Duncan Nichols, Thetford, presented a non-binding resolution which he read: Be it resolved that our Town calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the West Bank, and be it further resolved that in order to stop an ongoing genocide of the Palestinians our Town calls for an immediate end to US arms sales to Israel and recommend sending this message to the White House. The motion was seconded. After many comments, mostly in support of the resolution, Greg Kasten, Thetford, requested the Moderator Call the Question, this motion was seconded and passed. The offered resolution passed by voice vote.

Sarah Martel, Moderator, read the final warned article: The following Article shall be voted on by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 5, 2024. The Australian balloting will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Thetford Town Hall, 3910 VT Route 113, Thetford Center, Vermont. Article 21 To elect Town officers.

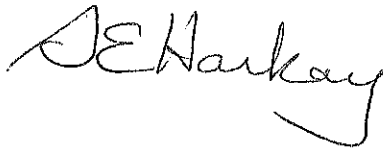
With a motion to adjourn, seconded, the 2024 Thetford Town meeting ended at 12:30pm

Respectfully submitted:

Tracy Borst  
Thetford Town Clerk

A true record, attest:

Sharon Harkay, Selectboard Chair



Sarah Martel, Moderator