

**Town of Tinmouth
Select Board – Special
Thursday, January 25, 2024
Meeting & Special Pre-Town Meeting Minutes
Held at the Old Fire House**

Members present (in-person): Judy Gilmore, Meadow Squier, and Kevin Eaton

Others present:

In-person: Michael Fallar, Eric Buffum-Road Commissioner, David Birdsall, Greg Cox (Vermont Framer's Food Center), Marshall and Melody Squier, Larry and Cris Carabeau, Cathy Reynolds and Doug Fontein, Jan & Ken Krantz, and Gail Fallar-Select Board Assistant (SBA)

Via Zoom: Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Tracy Byford, Colleen Balch, Nancy Gucker Birdsall, David Levant, Joe Faucher, and Rick Fallar

Meadow called the meeting to order at 7:04, welcomed everyone. She explained the meeting was to discuss proposed budgets; when to hold the formal Informational Town Meeting; separating out service agency requests for money from the budget to be voted individually; and to hear from the Vermont Farmers Food Center regarding their request for town funding.

Voters expressed concern about the housing crisis, past affordable housing projects attempted in town, and what can be done as there is no municipal water or sewer in this rural community. The PC Chair invited those interested to attend a planning commission meeting to discuss further.

Questions were asked about the increase in taxes due to the CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) determined by the State, dropping again. Gail explained the reappraisal will take care of the CLA, but the state education tax rate is expected to increase 18% unless the legislature can find other funding.

Gregg Cox, from the Vermont Farmers Food Center, spoke to the VFFC's request for Town Meeting funding, explaining the multiple programs they support. 'Everyone Eats' during Covid, now 'Rutland County Eats', food for people - not drugs, helping farmers, better food for food cupboards, expanding opportunities for young farmers, etc. What started as a small non-profit has grown tremendously. They are asking all towns in the county for support for their efforts, amounts vary by size of the town.

Voters discussed the highway budget. After discussion, Judy moved and Kevin 2nded to approve the proposed draft highway budget of \$634,800, all voted in favor.

Voters discussed the general budget (SB has already approved) of \$221,850. SBA advised that the warning has separate articles for service agencies which had been included in the budget (\$46,000+) , as well as a separate article asking for an additional \$25,000 for paving, none of which is not included in the budgets.

There was much discussion about separating the service agency requests – how to notify them of the change, voters wanted a chance to have input, how often it might happen that way (every 3-5 years?), concern about the time to count, etc.

Timing of the formal Informational Town Meeting was discussed. It has to be within 10 days of town meeting (March 5th). After discussing options – the night before (Monday the 4th) - the Saturday before – the 2nd), or the Saturday before that (the 24th); it was decided to hold it on the 24th. There were several fire department members present who advised they were going to hold a free Game Supper for the community – so they decided to hold it following the Town's meeting – which was set to begin at 3:00 at the Community Center.

The Select Board reviewed the draft town meeting warning. Meadow moved and Kevin 2nded to approve the warning for February 24th and March 5th Town Meeting. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 pm. The Owl speaker system had trouble transmitting sound to those on Zoom – SBA will try to address before the meeting on the 24th. The room was too large, people speaking were not close enough to the Owl.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Fallar, Select Board Assistant