

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 29, 2016 AND MARCH 1, 2016

ANNUAL TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

The legal voters of the Town of Springfield and Town of Springfield School District met at the Springfield High School Cafeteria in said Town on Monday, February 29, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. (7:30 o'clock in the afternoon) to act upon all matters which may be voted upon by acclamation and not otherwise to be voted by ballot, following which all articles to be voted by Australian Ballot on March 1, 2016, will be discussed, and then to adjourn to the Riverside Middle School Gymnasium at 8:00 a.m. (8:00 o'clock in the forenoon) on March 1, 2016, to vote by ballot for Town and Town School District Officers, for all appropriations to be voted by ballot, and all other items of business to be voted by ballot.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Opening ceremony was performed by Boy Scouts of America Troup 252 from Springfield who led the audience in Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was held for members of our community who had passed during the year. A round of applause was given for those new members who have joined our community. Appreciation was given to Town Officials, Board of Civil Authority, Town Constable and the Budget Advisory Committee. Moderator Patrick Ankuda then explained the rules of order and procedure for the meeting.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda stated that the 27 Articles and would not proceed in order as set out in the Warrant. The order of articles would be 2, 6 and 9 then proceed to Articles 1, 3- 5, 7&8 and 10-26. In Article 27 he would open the floor to other business and concerns. Moderator Patrick Ankuda further explained the Articles 2, 6 and 9 each must be moved, seconded and restated before any discussion would begin.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda then proceeded to the warned Articles:

ARTICLE 2: To receive and act on reports of the Town Officers, Town School District Officers and Committees.

Motion was made by Deborah Ankuda (Bridge Street) and seconded by Charles B. Gulick, III (Parker Hill Road). Discussion began when Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace) asked that consideration be given in the Town Report regarding demographics about voters and taxpayers regarding income and ability to pay tax obligations.

No further discussion; motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town authorize the Board of Selectmen to expend such grant monies, gifts, or bequests which may be received by the Town of Springfield in accordance with the terms of said grants, gifts, or bequests?

Motion was made by Deborah Ankuda (Bridge Street) and seconded by Charles B. Gulick, III (Parker Hill Road).

No discussion; motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 9: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District authorize the Town Treasurer, subject to the direction and approval of the Board of School Directors, to borrow money to meet the requirements of the Town School District for the ensuing year, and also authorize the Town Treasurer, subject to the approval of the Board of School Directors, to borrow money in anticipation of taxes rated to meet the requirements of the Town School District for the ensuing year?

Motion was made by Deborah Ankuda (Bridge Street) and seconded by Steve Osterlund (Summer Street).

Discussion began with Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace) questioning why the school district needs this article and the town does not. Steven Hier (nonvoter School Business Manager) explained that different statutes apply to town and school differently. Large bond payment of over 1.5 million due so school borrows from November to middle December pending state aid payment. Town Manager Tom Yennerell stated a vast majority of borrowing town does is for enterprise fund for the sewer and water and the statutes do not require a similar article for those funds.

No further discussion; motion passed.

ARTICLE 1: To elect the following Town Officers and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year:

Cemetery Commissioner	Town Agent
First Constable	Town Moderator
Library Trustees	Town School District Moderator
School Directors	Trustee of Public Funds
Selectman	

No discussion

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town vote a salary of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$50.00) per meeting for the Town Moderator for the ensuing year?

No discussion.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town vote to pay each Selectman the sum of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving the Town in that office?

No discussion

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of ELEVEN MILLION, NINETEEN THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED TWENTY ONE and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$11,019,221.00) for the budget of the Town for salaries, incidental and necessary Town expenses, including highways, and for the purposes for which the law requires appropriations, and for which a Town may legally vote?

Discussion began with a slide presentation by Town Manager Tom Yennerell regarding how taxpayer's money was spent during 15/16 year and anticipated expenses for the proposed 16/17 tax year.

Regarding the proposed budget article of \$11,019,221.00 of that budget \$9,006,371.00 is the amount of taxes required to be raised which is an increase of \$225,440.00. The estimated tax rate increase is 1.59% and includes all special appropriations if approved with the exception of Article 7 for paving maintenance of \$400,000.00. Proposed increase is much lower than recent 4 year average of 3.7%. Original request to department heads was for flat budget which was found to not be possible without cutting services. Unavoidable large expenses driving increases are; regular pay, retirement payouts for long time employees and fixed costs such as worker's compensation and health care, retirement contributions and annual audit. Increase made to capital fund by \$63,510.00 to continue to replace equipment and vehicles and stay ahead of repairs. These items increased budget by 3.4%. Scrutinizing each line item and taking advantage of low petroleum prices cut \$150,279.00 for net increase of \$225,440.00. New items and improvements added to the budget in the amount of \$17,500.00 for constable, energy conservation, community development/grant match and retirement cost

reserve fund. Many of these items have short-term 5-year investment return. Impact to taxpayer, for the 1.59% increase on \$100,000.00 of assessed value would equate to \$22.40 for the year.

Chairman Kristi Morris read Select Board Chairman's Report (see attached).

Chairman Everett Hammond, Budget Advisory Committee, recognized and thanked each member by name and stated that the Budget Advisory Committee unanimously supports the 2016/2017 proposed budget and that it was well put together by the Town Manager and Select Board.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$400,000.00) for repaving, road construction, gravel road improvements, and ancillary professional services for the projects specified in the Road Surface Management System Report dated March 2015?

Discussion began with Town Manager Tom Yennerell's slide presentation. Article mentions Road Surface Management Systems (RSMS) report which was done by local engineer who along with highway personnel analyzed all 123 miles of our roads and came up with a work plan for next 15 years and corresponding costs for the plan. This year's cost is \$700,000.00; there is \$300,000.00 in highway budget, there has always been an amount comparable to that in the highway budget, and asking voters to approve additional \$400,000.00 with this Article. If approved will pave 6.73 miles of streets. The planned streets to be paved are Carley Road, and a number of streets in that area, and South Street from the top of the hill to High School and a number of streets in that area. South Street may not have a finish coat on it this year because of planned sidewalk construction next year. A finish coat will follow. RSMS strategy calls to do a lot of pavement preservation. After that we will see some more highway rebuilding and base work done that will be more costly. Hope to pave additional 3.23 miles coming from different sources such as \$175,000.00 grant from VTrans and money left over from last year's budget to pave Valley and Brook from Main Street up to Crown Point County Club.

Charles B. Gulick, III (Parker Hill Road): Has anything been done on Pleasant Valley Road or Spencer Hollow Road? Town Manager, Tom Yennerell stated that Pleasant Valley Road had its bad part paved year before last. Spencer Hollow hasn't been done and not sure when scheduled according to plan.

Cynthia Berg (Parker Hill): How is it determined that a road gets paved. Parker Hill has so many potholes and rough condition. Town Manager Tom Yennerell stated RSMS created priorities for re-pavement and reconstruction based on upon current condition to either preserve now or spend money later on those that need reconditioning.

Alan Lockwood (Spencer Hollow Road): Spencer Hollow Road hasn't been done in over 20 years, not even a culvert.

Hugh Putnam (Meadow Drive): His property looks down on Carley Road and he sees enormous logging trucks going in and out of Carley Road which causes damage in the spring. Make sure logging operation is done before we put money into the road.

Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): In Comptroller's Report in Town Report in 15/16 budget prior to the completion of RSMS there is \$310,000.00 for paving and reconstruction. Is this in addition to \$400,000.00 being asked? Town Manager Tom Yennerell, replied yes that is the amount mentioned to pave Valley Street and Brook Street. Potentially 1Million gets us 10 miles of road and we have 90 miles of paved roads. That means it will take us another 9 years to get it all done.

Select Board Chairman Kristi Morris: Stated that paving Article is Select Board and Town Manager referendum to see if there is interest in the community to put extra money into paving budget vs bonding. A \$4Million bond divided by 10 year period (life of a road) is \$400,000.00 principal plus interest. Recommendations of RSMS

show we should be upwards of \$700,000.00 this year and will increase to a level of \$1Million in about 4 to 5 years.

Everett Hammond (Lincoln Street): He is the engineer that prepared the RSMS report. In setting priorities a large number of criteria in the report is looked at such as road roughness, condition, drainage, traffic volume. Looking outside the box there may be an approach to Spencer Hollow for next year possibly using some of leftover grindings from Main Street. Springfield road average condition is between fair and poor. Preserving vs rebuilding. Currently under where we should be.

Richard Andrews (Center Street): Suggest that it makes a lot of sense to follow engineers plan because if we don't keep up with what we've got then we fall behind. Fixed roads are easier to clean. Salt mixed with snow is refrigerant that drives the frost deeper into road.

Stephen Geller (Summer Street): Is this an addition to tax rate? Town Manager Tom Yennerell referred to slide showing assessed value of \$100,000.00 will see annual increase of \$61.60.

Richard Hunter (Baker Road): If this is not passed at this point I take it there will be a future bond vote. Is this part of the idea? Town Manager Tom Yennerell stated we haven't discussed a bond because it's not the best solution regarding interest and if it doesn't pass we will be talking about alternatives.

Charles Gregory (Mineral Street): Springfield has a C- to D- rating on infrastructure and we deserve better than that.

Kenneth Vandenburg (Elm Street): Does this include infrastructure? Town Manager Tom Yennerell confirmed that it does not.

Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): This is the year to do it with low price of macadam perhaps because of lower price of petroleum. Town Manager, Tom Yennerell stated he is hoping that price will go down.

Richard Hunter (Baker Road): Sounds like bottom line is we need to do this, and if we decline to we are likely to see roads of Springfield deteriorate over next few years.

ARTICLE 8: Shall it be resolved pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §3206 that: (1) One or more slum or blighted areas exist in the Town of Springfield; and (2) The rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the Town of Springfield?

Discussion began with Town Manager Tom Yennerell's presentation: Language in this article is out of state statutes regarding urban renewal. Purpose is to give town the option to exercise authority provided in the urban renewal statute. Positive vote will demonstrate that the voters recognize that there are blight related problems. Article creates no obligation financially or otherwise. If positive vote occurs and town wants to pursue authority available, the next step is to create plan how to attack blighted areas. The plan cannot be acted upon unless approved by voters. This is a two-year process. First step is to recognize blighted problems and then we will work on a possible plan to bring back to voters for approval by statute. We are at this time working on alternative more streamlined methods to improve the blighted areas and if successful, it is conceivable that town may never exercise its authority in the urban renewal statute.

Selectman George McNaughton: Basically simple referendum asking two questions. If you don't think there is any blight in town, then vote against it. If you come to the conclusion that we do have buildings with windows smashed and buildings with graffiti, etc. and that we do have blight, then it asks you the next question. Do we want to do anything about it? If you are happy with the condition, then vote against it. If you want to move the Town forward and give us the opportunity to set up some plans for the worst areas and be able to get grant

funds, then we ask you to consider a vote for it. Language is set by statute and some of the words sound harsh, we didn't have any choice over that. This is the necessary first step and does not obligate us to do anything but does give the Select Board an indication that you think there is a problem in town and that you want us to do something about it.

Selectman Walter Martone: This declaration does not identify a specific property or properties. It just states somewhere in Springfield there is a problem with blight. When we start developing a plan, that's when we will know areas to focus efforts on and where to raise money for. If we want to access the statute, develop a plan and access state funds, we need to start now and open the door and not wait and lose full year in the process.

Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): The select board has spent a lot of time on Park Street property. Did the town ever own this? Town Manager Tom Yennerell: 69 Park Street, not to my knowledge. Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): A new owner comes to town looks at tax rate and blight, maybe he can withstand the blight but the high tax rate will turn off any prospect.

Lorraine Claffee (Union Street): Speaking on behalf of Union Street Neighborhood Association which supports the Article because of what blighted buildings do to real estate values. Real estate people state blight in town is in fact what is keeping us from rebounding and keeping from selling at a decent rate. It puts us in a better position in town to access grant money to deal with blight.

Stephen Geller (Summer Street); Executive Director of Southeastern Vermont Community Action. Not opposed to the Article, however, concerned that the things that are often the most simple are also the most difficult in that the devil is in the details. My organization represents people who have no choice other than to live in these areas and I ask that you look for ways to minimize the impact. Need due diligence regarding the consequences of all of us in the community. Urban renewal can badly tear up communities. Urged town officials to think about how to proceed with that authority in a way that is commensurate with the wellbeing of all the people in our community.

ARTICLE 10: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve a salary of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$50.00) per meeting for the Town School District Moderator for the ensuing year, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 11: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the payment to each School Board member of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving in that office, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 12: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the school board to spend TWENTY SEVEN MILLION, NINE HUNDRED EIGHTY NINE THOUSAND, SIX HUNDRED EIGHTY FIVE and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$27,989,685.00), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$16,230.00 per pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is .22 % lower than spending for the current year.

Discussion began with the reading of a written statement by Chairman Jeanice Garfield of the Springfield School Board (see attached).

Springfield School Board Vice-Chairman Edward Caron: Presentation with slides regarding school budget. Proposed \$28,909,582.00 which is down \$73,637.00. Two separate votes: Operating budget \$27,989,685.00

and River Valley Technical contribution. Reduction of 13.67 positions for total of 38 positions reduced over last 3 years. Education tax rate down 0.6¢ based on numbers available to us when the budget was set, however, will be affected by legislative changes that occur after budget was set.

Superintendent Zach McLaughlin (non-resident): About the 0.6¢ it is important to never over sell. At moment we are anticipating 0.6¢. Depending on what happens with the yield which is under discussion with legislature and its possible the tax rate might actually be 0.3¢. This is not unique, each year at town meeting we are making a decision based on final figures from the legislature that happen after we vote. However, this is a different type of year, there will be a reduction, we anticipate 0.6¢ but it could be 0.3¢

Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): In past three years watched school district make creative and painful reductions in staff. Hopes town administration is thinking about reducing cost and increasing performance. Special education is more expensive and questions costs, number of students who attend, cost per student, who evaluates and measures whether there is education and if improvements are actually being made or are we being babysitters. Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin responded that a disadvantage of having an expense budget is that you don't see the corresponding revenue offset. If you take each of department in schools and look at just expenditures then special education is more than what we spend the most on and is number 1 in our costs. We get a lot of money from the state to cover special education expenses and when you net it out it moves to number 5 in our costs. Whether its federal dollars or local dollars, we do spend a lot in special education. In terms of evaluating students it's a team of people including parents, teachers, specialists serving certain fields of speech who come together and decide based on various groups of federal guidelines whether or not a student qualifies as being disabled in some way and at that time a plan is developed to measure achievements at that student's learning rate. School district believes that every student has right to education and in some instances we have to bridge those disabilities. We are doing our best to become more efficient on how we spend our funds. It's a complicated process, difficult and takes a lot of time to effect the changes you want, that are in line with the law, which parents want and that are progressing for the student. Steven Hier, (nonvoter School Business Manager) stated 296 children involved in special education spending, per pupil is around \$20,000.00. Dipping into state funds eliminates approximate average of \$4,000.00. There are some cases of attendance at Brattleboro retreat.

Nancy Wiese (Baker Road): Employee of Springfield school district. Was identified as one of first students with special needs. I am the face of special education and I hold a master's degree. Our district needs very little support compared to some others. It's always our goal for special education to leave special education as quickly as possible and the only way to do this is to build skills in class room situations. This must be done faster than other kids, these kids work harder than their peers, once they have strategies they can work to overcome. When a child comes to school our goal is to maximize the life achievement of that student and special education pays for some of that. When Mr. Bickford went to school these kids never got out of 8th grade, they just stayed home. Special education is an unbelievable expense but cheaper than if they never learn to work.

Richard Hunter (Baker Street): Honors Nancy Wiese and what she does. The goal is to maximize the life achievements of the student. This means they become members of the community and become contributors to community life and to the community budget and become citizens who are able to vote and be constructive part of our community. Sees dedication of educators and students and celebrate achievements that are great to them but seem small to us. Special education is worth what it costs.

Michael Griffin (Douglas Street) Chairman of the School Budget Committee: Committee is in favor of budget. Administration has worked hard, however, there is more to be done. Personally did a lot of work to cut somethings out to fine tune district and education success.

ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of TWO THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$2,000.00) to the Springfield Community Band for eight (8) concerts?

No representative present.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,000.00) to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Springfield in responding to the emergency needs of the community and to provide all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need?

Agency Representative Amanda Rundle (Summer Street): President of the Southeastern Vermont Community Action Board. Thank you for continuing support. Mission to enable people to cope with the hardship of poverty. Refer to page 53 of Annual Report for list of services we provide. We provide \$775,000.00 worth of services to the area and of that amount we receive, 1.2% of funding comes from Town and appreciate every penny to support the important work SEVCA does for the community.

Agency Representative Stephen Geller (Summer Street): We have larger budget \$9,000.00 that you and other towns give us, this community funding is less restricted and allows to meet individual needs directly with the residents we serve. Allows us to meet specific needs of those individuals in Springfield.

Discussion began with Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): Legally the town has no responsibility for human services that responsibility was taken away by state nearly 60 years ago. These organizations of Springfield perform a safety net and potential for matching state contributions. They save the town a great deal of money if town had to do this on their own. If you feel requests are excessive and suggests that more fundraising to be done. Does select board have authority to limit requests? Town Manager, Tom Yennerell responded he knows of no statutory limit on special requests. Selectman George McNaughton stated there are two approaches to these forms of special appropriations, this one is statutory and the select board has very little, if any control over it.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of SIXTY THREE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$63,500.00) to help support the high-quality home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patients' homes and in community settings by the Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT and NH?

No representative present.

Discussion began with Richard Hunter (Baker Street): I do not represent VNA. My wife worked for years, seeing what she did for low pay, I believe that this organization deserves and does very important work. Will support all special appropriations.

ARTICLE 16: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of EIGHT THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$8,500.00) for the support of Senior Solutions (formerly Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont) for help to support seniors and their families who are trying to remain at home and not be placed in a nursing home?

Agency Representative Janice Hall (nonvoter allowed to speak after Moderator asked for objections): Springfield does not currently have an advisory council representative appointed. Formerly Council on Aging of Southeastern Vermont and appear on page 51 of Annual Report. Facts not shown in report: Seniors are growing but funding is not growing. Seniors are us. In Springfield's population of 9,500, about 2,000 are over 62 years of age, about 1/5 of your population. Of those 2,000 seniors about 500 are living alone. If you appropriate \$8,500.00 that will be about \$17 per senior in your town for us to be there for them. There are 32 towns that include Senior Solutions in their special appropriations. We offer services that no other organization

offers like Senior Help Line and State health insurance program "Understanding Medicare". Look on website and read our report.

Discussion began with Ellen Laflam (Pine Brook Lane): Husband has Alzheimer's, Senior Solutions helps with respite and helped with a lot other things. Please vote yes on this article.

ARTICLE 17: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$4,000.00) to help support the Valley Health Connections (formerly Precision Valley Free Clinic) to help the uninsured access health care?

No representative present.
No discussion

ARTICLE 18: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TWELVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$12,500.00) for the support of the Current operated by Southeast Vermont Transit, Inc., to provide transit services to the residents of the Town of Springfield?

No representative present.
No discussion.

ARTICLE 19: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$3,300.00) to Green Mountain RSVP & Volunteer Center of Windsor County to develop opportunities for people age 55 and older to positively impact the quality of life in the community of Springfield through volunteer service?

Agency Representative Coren Mitchell (Hartness Avenue): Volunteer coordinator for Windsor. Summary on page 50 of Annual Report of what RSVP does. In Windsor County there are 96 volunteers over 55 years of age sharing time with nonprofits. In Springfield 36 give time and talent to nonprofits such as: Meals on Wheels, Springfield Hospital, Santa Claus Club, Springfield Housing Authority, Elm Hill School, Union Street School, State Correctional Facility, Warming Shelter and Parent Child Center. Funding goes to costs of recruitment and training.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 20: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) to assist with the cost of operating the Meals on Wheels Program of Greater Springfield that provides daily hot & cold congregate and home delivered meals and other nutritional needs to the qualified residents of Springfield?

Agency Representative Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace). Thank you for \$10,000.00 contribution last year. Has fundraising besides the appropriation given by the Town. Elderly people are nutritionally challenged. Many forget whether or not they have eaten last meal and may go day or two without eating. We serve those nutritionally dependent and challenged and we delivered 39,000 to seniors at home. At Union and South Street sites congregate meals are served and if you are over 60, no charge and by donation only. For those we deliver to homebound, we often act as EMT because for many of those people we are the only ones they see. Important function that we have in Town.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 21: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$3,000.00) to Windsor County Partners, for youth mentoring services provided to the children of Windsor County?

Agency Representative John Bastille (Dean Street): Mentoring programs teach children new skills, improve children's educational experience. Mentoring partnerships meet 2 hours a week. Collectively partners spent over 2000 hours together. Let's Do Lunch (LDL) partnerships collectively spent over 500 hours together. Town funding is critical to staying viable.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 22: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$5,000.00) to the Springfield Supported Housing to assist families and individuals find permanent housing and provide in home case management services for 6 months to two years after placement?

Agency Representative Christine Chapman (Main Street, North Springfield): Explanation on page 47 of Annual Report. Updated stats are that 74 cases handled to maintain current housing with payment of back rent, or helping with first month's rent to get into permanent housing and help with utility bills. Has a Housing Opportunity Program for those who are new to housing.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 23: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$55,000.00) to the Springfield Family Center to assist with the cost of providing a free meal daily, a free food shelf, and other services related to hunger, homelessness and related social-service needs in the community?

Agency Representative, Mike Wiese (Baker Road), Director of Family Center: Thank you to those who volunteer time or donate money. We really rely on our volunteers. The need for food is ever increasing, every week we have two or 3 more families. Food shelf is serving on average about 300 families per month. Serving between 30 and 50 meals a day M-F, which increases steadily. We see folks who are working in or near minimum wage, employment has been tough due to industry weather related layoffs. Now gearing up for summer lunch program which includes delivery about 200 lunches a day during summer vacation months. First stop for people experiencing hardship for first time and agency goes beyond providing shower and laundry. Agency works with Springfield Supported Housing and other organizations. Don't give food and say bye, on your way; agency tries to help further and connect to other resources.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 24: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$4,000.00) to the Women's Freedom Center for general budget support to provide services to women and their children who are experiencing emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and are residents of the Town?

Agency Representative Vicky Sterling (nonvoter allowed to speak after Moderator asked for objections): Agency offers 24 hour hotline, shelter, safety planning, all services are free and confidential. Agency fills the gap created by closure of New Beginnings.

No discussion.

ARTICLE 25: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,500.00) to the Springfield Art and Historical Society to assist in preserving, maintaining, and displaying, for the public, the history and art of the Town of Springfield?

Agency Representative Roseanne Putnam (Meadow Road), President of Springfield Art & Historical Society. We sold Miller House because we ran out of money to support it. Relocated now in Cota & Cota building and now have to pay rent. Handicapped accessible, school children from Riverside Middle School have visited and done art projects. Miller house wasn't open regularly, therefore, children never got to see their history. In new location, we are open more and people can visit and see the historical artifacts. We now pay all-inclusive rent and don't have unexpected expenses. Artifacts are in a safe, good location but budget is \$20,000.00 plus. We do fundraising, work for grants and donations are coming in amazingly. A donation of a Fellows Quilt is on its way here from Washington State. Second display up now and will change in April. History is more than machine tool industry. Over 200 paintings that couldn't be displayed at Miller. Every three months displays will change.

Discussion began with Hugh Putnam: Open every Saturday from 1-4PM. At Miller house was only open one afternoon months in June, July, and August. A lot going on. Research is easier. School buses can come in that couldn't go to Miller house. Working with Chamber for 100th Anniversary and with the Cotillion. Working on putting history back in the forefront. Miller House is now back on the tax rolls.

ARTICLE 26: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,000.00) to Turning Point Recovery Center Drop-In Center and Transition House to help with the everyday cost of providing recovery services and housing for men and that are in recovery from alcohol, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders?

Agency Representative Michael Johnson, Executive Director (South Street): Haven't been on ballot for a while but provides a lot of services. Numbers have increased, doors are open more. Only three paid staff and one part time person helping with books. Trying to reach out to schools and increase programs. Want to reach young people before things get worse in their lives. Rely on volunteers. The opioid problem takes partnership, having more recovery buildings. Center has 15 to 16 meetings a week and transition house has 7 people working way back into community. Center does fundraisers to supplement budget, awareness programs and offers free meals occasionally. Problems can get better with working people in our town with those who are affected with addictions of all kinds. Provide connection services to other agencies. We do a lot more than people realize.

Discussion began with Kristi Morris (Coolidge Road): Comments not representing select board. Project Action is collaboration of many regional and local agencies including law enforcement from all levels. One of the committees is treatment and rehabilitation. Mike is doing a phenomenal job at Turning Point Recovery Center and has offered some stability that wasn't there previously. Personally want to go on record in support of this endeavor.

Agency Recovery Coach and Youth Advocate Brandi Cheney (nonvoter allowed by Moderator to speak): Turning Point saved her life. Born and raised in this community and struggled with addiction. Turning Point is important and works with children age 10 to older adults. Every day there is someone new at her desk asking for help for the first time. Speaks at and serves about 10 high schools in the area.

School Board Chairman Jeanice Garfield: Springfield School District partners with Turning Point. Stepped out of role as board member and spoke in support of Turning Point.

ARTICLE 27: To do any other business that can legally be done under this Warning.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda reminded that action is nonbinding under this article.

Discussion began with Elwood Bickford (Sunrise Terrace): Thank you to school and town administrations for keeping Springfield on the map. Acknowledgement and thanks given to Russell Moore, Library Director who is retiring this year, also to Kenneth Vandenburg who has completed two terms on the School Board and to Jeff Strong for keeping roads open.

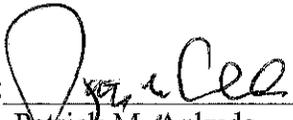
Everett Hammond (Lincoln Street): Prefers mailing of town report. Town Clerk, Barbara Courchesne stated that savings will start increasing and that about 200 reports were picked up at the three available locations. It's possible to tell from Facebook that there has been a lot of viewing, however, the Town's website doesn't calculate the views. Last year's vote was 3 to 1.

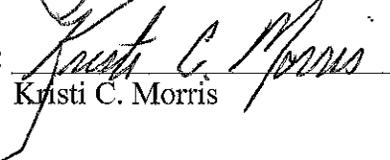
Hearing no further discussion, Moderator Patrick Ankuda adjourned the meeting at 10:01 P.M. to Riverside Middle School at 8:00 A.M. on March 1, 2016 to vote by ballot for Town and Town School District Officers and for all appropriations and all other articles to be voted by ballot.

Respectfully Submitted:



Barbara A. Courchesne
Town Clerk/Treasurer

Attest:  _____, Moderator
Patrick M. Ankuda

Attest:  _____, Chairman of Springfield Select Board
Kristi C. Morris

Town Meeting February 29, 2016

Selectboard Chairman's Report

2015 saw a shift in the Springfield Selectboard from remaining status quo, with regards to our budgets, to taking a more proactive approach toward community development. Past budgets were scrutinized, amended or reduced in an attempt to keep them from increasing. The overall goal has been to hold a zero increase operating budget. Even with that approach, budgets typically increased approximately 2.5 - 3% because of fixed costs or the contributions applied to paving and other capital equipment. This year the approach has shifted to focus on Town improvements. However, the zero increase for the operating budget remains on our minds and the proposed budget does represent a 1.59% increase over last year.

For helping to control past budget increases, I would like to extend a special thank you to the various Town departments, unions and personnel for recognizing the poor economic climate of Springfield. Their past compensatory packages were negotiated at near zero or miniscule stipends. Our grand list continues to flat line with minor fluctuations of increases and decreases, as evident with the devaluation of many of our residential properties. The Town Manager and Selectboard acknowledge that any increase places a burden on our taxpayers. However, the emphasis this year is for improvements to attract new business by focusing on the Downtown revitalization, residential structure improvements, State legislation change and Charter review.

Last year we added a warrant item to the ballot for addressing dilapidated buildings, to which, the voters acknowledged and approved. The Selectboard would like to thank the voters for that approval. The Board continues to identify dilapidated buildings and has issued repair or demolition orders to more than a dozen structures. Several property owners self-removed those structures or are attempting to repair them at their own expense. Our goal has been, and continues to be, for these structures to be fixed and repaired and added back onto the grand list. For those property owners unwilling to repair, we have contracted to have some of the unsightly structures removed. Still others are tied up in the court system, as they progress through the appeal process.

It is true that Springfield has one of the highest property tax rates, in the State, if not **the** highest. Our Town continues to experience problems associated with a stagnant grand list, slow economic development, availability of low rent housing and issues surrounding substance abuse. The Selectboard and Town Manager are taking a proactive approach to addressing several of these issues and are focusing on improving our Town's appearance.

In addition, the State has scheduled Main St. for paving this year from Chester Rd near Park St. to Clinton St by Seavers Brook Rd. Also, they are designing the South St sidewalk project for construction from the top of the hill to the High School. In conjunction with the paving of Clinton St. we anticipate the replacement of the water line

from Bridge St. to the wastewater plant. This project will enhance water flow to the Charlestown Rd. area.

We acknowledge and thank our business partners such as; VTEL, Black River Produce, Jeld Wen, IVEK, Springfield GMC, 100 River St., HB Plumping, Winstanley Enterprises to name a few and there are others. The Bryant and Jones & Lamson buildings on Clinton St., owned by SRDC, continue to have preliminary development action. Part of the Bryant building is rented for storage, which enabled some minor repairs and introduced electricity to the west end of the building. The Jones & Lamson building continues to have hazardous material abatement activity, which precludes any demolition. Thanks to SRDC for their continued activity for improving Springfield and your economic development efforts.

Several downtown buildings have also experienced appearance improvements and discussion has started for the improvement to others. SOM also advocates on behalf of the Downtown and the building owners to increase commercial occupancy. We anticipate other negotiations and improvements to this vital part of our Town. Thanks to SOM for all that you have accomplished and we look forward to partnering for future developments.

Our Neighborhood Associations also continue to meet regularly and are very active in advocating for local improvements. The Selectboard is initiating Legislative changes and ordinance updates to enable future improvements. Thanks to Selectboard members Stephanie Thompson, George McNaughton, Walter Martone and Peter MacGillivray for helping to coordinate these efforts. They act as liaisons to various groups and are committee members of others that focus on improvements to Springfield.

The present energy, as evident by our strategic planning, in cooperation with our Town Manager, the economic development partners, downtown revitalization groups, State Legislators, department heads, local and regional agencies and the community at large, is encouraging. I would advocate for our citizens to recognize these efforts and become involved with your community. Tom Yennerell, our Town Manager, has also initiated a 5-year strategic plan, in cooperation with our department heads, for capital equipment and infrastructure projects. This is for keeping an eye on our future and identifying specific goals and the plan for funding them.

There is plenty to do and many various ways anyone and everyone can become part of the implementation process. Some will not agree with my opinion. I recognize that we don't always have to agree and that is healthy for our community and the democratic process. With all this effort, and with the efforts to come, I would ask that you support the Town and School budgets, particularly this year, as we strive to focus on several areas for improving Springfield.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank the Budget Advisory committee for their efforts to review and evaluate the proposed budget.

Finally, if you have any questions regarding either budget, please ask them tonight before you vote tomorrow. Thank you for your time and interest in attending and listening to the various presentations.

Respectfully,

Kristi C. Morris

Town Meeting Day ~ February 29, 2016

Town Meeting Day is an important day for Vermonters, who make critical decisions regarding support for school and municipal budgets, as well as issues of national importance such as the presidential primary. Slightly less than half of school budgets in the state are voted on from the floor at a traditional town meeting, with the rest, such as Springfield, voting by Australian Ballot at the polls.

Vermonters tend to show **strong support for local district budgets.**

This year, school boards across the state are taking the opportunity that Town Meeting Day presents to highlight the successes of the past year, to inform communities about their response to and progress regarding Act 46, and to ask for their **support for the budget and direction of the educational program.**

In Springfield, we have a multitude of successes in process.

- We have the **pending sale** of East School
- The Joint committee, School Board and Selectboard recommendation of **sale of Park Street School**
- There is a new system of **Principal evaluation** that includes staff members
- **Agreement with the Turning Point** to work with students who need help with potential substance issue
- We have been implementing a **district-wide, consistent approach to instruction.** We're beginning to see the impact of our robust professional development program.
- We've seen **improved scores at the high school,** where for the first time in school history the students eclipsed the state averages in NECAP testing.
- Last year Elm Hill sent to Union St. School, a **very prepared third grade class.** 81% of students were reading at or above grade level and all of the other 19% were on state or federal education support plans.
- Through a student led initiative with **Springfield High School students at Elm will be exposed to Spanish lessons in a pilot program this spring.** We know early exposure to other languages not only helps children learn foreign languages but also help them understand better the rules of their own language.

- This year Union Street teachers continue working with the Vermont Institute of Natural Science collaborating to design engaging science lessons for our students. There is an outdoor classroom that is used on a regular basis by teachers to get our students outside to learn about nature.
- Mini-Course Days at Riverside Middle School is the beginning of what will hopefully become an annual two-day event as a way to **connect students with teachers and start to transform learning** through application of the reading, writing and speaking standards.
- The high school has recently begun a series of "Town Hall Meetings" **with students** around a series of topics chosen by the students that impact them.
- SHS recently started a Parent Advisory Group at the high school. There have been discussions on such topics as AP classes, Dual Enrollment classes, and the athletics program.

Although there is so much more going on in the District which has not been included, there is a partially complete list available in the lobby of the high school.

- ≈ In closing and on behalf of the Board, I would like to **thank the Budget Advisory Committee:** Mike Griffin, chair; Hugh Putnam; Bill Sheldon; Brenda Richardson, and Pam Young. They committed to hours of meetings with District administrators, subcommittee discussions as well as attending most Board meetings. This allowed them to become better equipped to understand the complexities of school finance and tax implications for Springfield.
- ≈ Thanks to Select Board members Walt Martone and Kristi Morris together with School Board members Ed Caron and Steve Karaffa, for the collaboration in meeting together to make a decision on selling Park Street School.
- ≈ Thanks to all our teachers, paraprofessionals and support staff who work with our children and keep our buildings and grounds clean and attractive.
- ≈ Thanks to the two wonderful high school students, Ryan Cooney and Erika Schoff, who have sat on the School Board as high school representatives.
- ≈ Thank you to the administrators and teachers who put in significant time creating the budget from the ground up beginning in September.
- ≈ And thanks to Zach McLaughlin and Steve Hier for presenting and explaining the budget process in such a way that it provides better a understanding for all.