

# Town of Lincoln MINUTES

## Annual Town Meeting and Lincoln School District Meeting

Voice recorder folder # 01:07

Meeting called to order by Moderator, Todd Goodyear, at 6:06 p.m. Todd introduced himself and Town Clerk, Sally Ober. He asked non-voters to identify themselves, and welcomed first-time Town Meeting attendees with small gifts of maple syrup made by Chuck Norton. Todd asked who remembered attending Town Meetings for perhaps the longest time, and most of those folks seemed to recall beginning their town meeting attendance in the 1960's and 1970's.

Selectboard Members present: Chair, Bill Finger, Oakley Smith, Bay Jackson, and Alan Schmidt. Absent: Tim McGowan

The legal voters of the Town of Lincoln and the Lincoln School District are hereby warned and notified to meet at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Road on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss and transact business, and on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Road, the polls to open 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for voting by Australian ballot.

### Agenda for Meeting at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Road on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

**Article 1** To elect all town officers as required by law, by Australian ballot, voting to be held at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Road, polls to be open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., Tuesday March 7, 2023.

#### Offices for Election on Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Office	Term Length	Vote for
Selectboard	3 years	1
Selectboard	2 years	1
Selectboard	1 yr. remaining	1
Town Clerk	1 year	1
First Constable	1 year	1
Second Constable	1 year	1
Collector of Delinquent Taxes	1 year	1
Town Meeting Moderator	1 year	1
Lister	3 years	1
Lister	2 yrs. remaining	1
Lincoln Library Trustee	3 years	2

No action needed. None taken.

**Article 2** To act upon the reports of the Town Officers and the Lincoln School District Officers.

**Motion:** Mark Mulqueen; **Second:** Nancy Stevens

**Article 2 discussion:** *It was questioned whether we need to amend this article because the Lincoln School District Annual Meeting has been postponed until April 11, 2023. Unknown, no further action taken about that.*

*Sally Ober thanked the long list of town officials on pages 1-3 in the town report for their service to our town, highlighting those who have recently ended their term of office. These included, Lisa Truchon-Treasurer for 11 years, Paul Forlenza-Selectboard for 10 years, Oakley Smith-Selectboard for 10 years, Tina Scharf-Conservation Commission for 21+ years, Aaron Thomas-Planning Commission for 21+ years, Victor Atkins, Sr.-Planning Commission 20 years, Tommie Thompson-Planning Commission 15 years (also on ZBA), and Will Sipsey-Moderator for 10 years, Selectboard for 12 years (not consecutive), Transportation Advisory Committee, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Zoning Administrator. Will wore many different hats!*

*David Wood called attention to the lists of Births, Deaths, and Marriages on pages 27-28 of the Town Report. We observed a moment of silence for those who have passed, and we began our town's business keeping our new families in mind. **Article 2 passed by voice vote.***

**Article 3** Shall the Town authorize the payment of real property taxes to the Town Treasurer, in two equal installments, with the due dates being the second Wednesday of October [October 11, 2023] and the second Wednesday of March [March 13, 2024], per 32 V.S.A. 4871?

**Motion:** Lisa Truchon; **Second:** Paul Forlenza; **Discussion:** None.  
**Article 3 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 4** Shall the Town collect interest on overdue taxes from the due date of each installment in the amount of .5% (1/2 of 1%) per month or fraction thereof, in accordance with 32 V.S.A 4873?

**Motion:** Lisa Truchon; **Second:** Paul Forlenza; **Discussion:** None  
**Article 4 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 5** Shall the voters authorize a total Highway Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$1,137,604 (which includes FY22 \$12,219 deficit) of which \$950,788 shall be raised by taxes and \$186,816 by non-tax revenues?

**Motion:** Bill Finger; **Second:** Michael Burgess

**Discussion:** *Hearing no objection, the Selectboard gave a slide presentation, showing highlights of both the Highway Fund and General Fund budgets. Oakley Smith thanked Paul Forlenza and Tim McGowan for all their work on preparing the budgets.*

**General Fund highlights:** *legal fees, office labor & benefits, town administrator, professional services (technology), treasurer salary, dog warden kennel for vicious animals, and transfer station. The estimated operating budget tax rate increase is 7%.*

Highway Fund highlights: salaries, contract plowing, other contract labor, health insurance, uniform rental, fuel, tires, chains, plow bites, supplies, heating fuel, winter sand, salt, chloride, culverts, and roadside pruning.

- Discussion about parking on the Lincoln Gap Road for recreational users. The Selectboard is in preliminary stages of addressing the plow turnaround area near the Duckworth property. The U.S. Forest Service is embarking on an extensive parking improvement project at the top of the Gap Road this summer.
- Discussion about transfer to the Bridge Fund and whether \$50,000 is enough. Selectboard responded that the York Hill Bridge is still 6-10 years from being at the top of the State's bridge replacement list, and it is hard to predict what amount of match will be required from the town.
- There was clarification that the budget includes funding for two highway employees but right now we have just one full-time highway worker.
- Discussion about why smaller trucks plow side roads, answer: some of these are contractors using their own trucks for the smaller roads. Large tandem trucks have trouble with tight turnarounds. Another consideration is whether to use contractual services vs. absorbing the cost of wear and tear and maintenance by using our own trucks.

**Article 5 Passed by voice vote.**

**Article 6** Shall the voters authorize a total General Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$450,732 of which \$ 276,559 shall be raised by taxes, \$155,864 by non-tax revenues and \$18,310 which is surplus revenue?

**Motion:** Mike Fisher; **Second:** Fred Danforth

**Discussion:**

- Question: would a town administrator be appointed or elected? Oakley Smith indicated that the position would be hired, and would probably be a full-time job. That money is under the category of Selectboard Assistant for a combined \$75,007.
- Question: are ARPA funds in this budget? Bay Jackson said she would give an ARPA presentation in a few minutes. ("ARPA" = American Rescue Plan Act, which is a federal Covid-19 Pandemic recovery plan.)
- Question: care of cemeteries, what is this for? Bill Finger clarified that this is to maintain our other small cemeteries in town. The more prominent Maple and Lee Cemeteries are maintained by the Lincoln Cemetery Association [via funds from another article].

**Article 6 passed by voice vote.**

Selectboard Chair, Bill Finger, thanked the voters for their positive endorsement of the budgets. It has been a difficult winter and your patience is appreciated as we work to maintain 52 miles of roads. Bill gave a shout of gratitude to Dave Cavorotto, our Highway Supervisor, who works hard every day 24/7 keeping it all together. We are not the only town short-staffed; the State of Vermont is also having difficulty hiring plow drivers. Workers' wages are increasing as a result of employee shortages.

**RECESS TOWN MEETING; OPEN LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING**

*We did not recess. Mary Gemignani announced that the Annual Lincoln School District Meeting has been postponed until April 11, 2023. More information about that will be posted soon.*

*Bay Jackson, Selectboard Member, gave a slide presentation about ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) funds for Lincoln. Highlights were some of our ARPA funds have already been allocated to the Lincoln Cooperative Preschool for building a 14 x 16 ft. addition, including an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant bathroom and a custom-built loft. This allowed the Preschool to expand their services and the students are having an amazing first learning experience in this creative environment. 29 families are enrolled, of which 22 are Lincoln kids.*

*Lincoln's total ARPA allocation is \$370,967. These funds must be obligated by Dec. 31, 2024 and spent by Dec. 31, 2026. The Selectboard had announced a request for proposals and received several specific ideas from area organizations:*

- 1. Burnham Hall-for building improvements and accessibility.*
- 2. Lincoln Preschool-already received \$10,000 for the addition, but also wants to improve their energy efficiency.*
- 3. Lincoln Volunteer Fire Company-for a new generator.*
- 4. Lincoln Sports, Inc.-for accessibility improvements to their property off Gove Hill Rd., including trail design and installation.*
- 5. Maple Broadband-for expanding our rural fiber internet network.*

*All these projects would add up to \$268,000, leaving \$102,967 remaining. Other ideas are to complete the sidewalk from the center to the school, housing, transportation, a connected trail around Lincoln, and a more comprehensive emergency plan for Lincoln. Send your feedback to the Selectboard.*

**Article 7** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to authorize a sum of \$175,000 for further restoration and improvement of existing Class 2 asphalt surface town highways, to be deposited in the paving reserve fund?

**Motion:** Bill Finger; **Second:** Roger Rood

**Discussion:** Bill Finger explained that this fund allows us to carry over money to the next fiscal year, and it has enabled us to keep going with paving, even if we do not receive a grant. Upcoming locations of focus include the Lincoln Gap Rd., West River Rd., and Downingsville Rd. Voting this as a separate article, gives the townspeople the opportunity to direct the Selectboard more specifically. How the funding works: we develop a project and we pay the costs. Paving grants usually require a 20% match from the Town. When we get reimbursed by a grant, the money goes back into the paving fund. This keeps the fund with some money to rely on each year. The amount requested is the same we have put into the fund for the past three years. Someone suggested that these big items should be voted by Australian ballot.

**Article 7 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 8** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to authorize a sum of \$10,000 for contracted law enforcement services?

**Motion:** Roger Rood; **Second:** Bill Finger

**Article 8 discussion:** *Why do we want this? The Selectboard is aware of speeding and a periodic law enforcement presence reminds people to obey speed limits. There are concerns for the safety of children and adults who walk and bike our roadways. The board met with our new Sheriff and we can request for them to give warnings and not always tickets. Discussion opposed to this included, the problem may be overstated, Sheriffs in the past have treated women poorly, getting stopped ruins one's day, tickets are costly, flashing signs are better, other traffic calming is preferred, poor return on investment, bike/pedestrian painted lines have helped slow people down, interactions with cops can be dangerous. Roger Rood asked for the vote to be by paper ballot, but not enough people seconded this request, so we voted by voice.*  
**Article 8 failed by voice vote.**

**Article 9** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$5,500 to help support the Lincoln Cooperative Preschool?

**Motion:** Rob Backlund; **Second:** Nancy Stevens

**Discussion:** none. **Article 9 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 10** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$44,000 in support of the Lincoln Library?

**Motion:** Mark Mulqueen; **Second:** Ann Kensek

**Discussion:** **Mark Mulqueen and Coco Mosely spoke in favor of supporting our Library which is an incredible resource and they felt this amount is a good use of town funds. Article 10 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 11** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to help support Lincoln Sports, Inc.?

**Motion:** Fred Danforth; **Second:** Suzanne Germain

**Discussion:** Fred Danforth made a motion to amend Article 11 to add \$10,000 for a total of \$13,000. Lonny Edwards seconded. Fred figured that we saved \$10,000 by voting down Article 8, and he wanted to shift that money to another use. It was pointed out that the \$10,000 does not actually exist. We would have to raise that amount by taxes. After some discussion, Fred and Lonny both withdrew their motion and no vote was taken on the amendment. **The main motion, as warned, passed by voice vote.**

**Article 12** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$55,896 to the Lincoln Volunteer Fire Company?

**Motion:** Bill Finger; **Second:** Ann Kensek

**Discussion:** Question, why this strange amount? Dan Ober, Fire Chief, indicated that one year, someone made a big fancy budget spreadsheet and this was the number that came out. The spreadsheet included a plan to increase the amount incrementally each year, but the Fire Company has been able to maintain itself with this amount for a long time now without increasing the request. The number has been continued as a tradition. **Article 12 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 13** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$7,500 to Bristol Rescue?

**Motion:** Nancy Stevens; **Second:** Ann Kensek

**Discussion:** Question: what does this provide to Lincoln? Dan Ober said that it goes toward the operating budget for a volunteer ambulance service for our town. **Article 13 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 14** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to the Lincoln Cemetery Association?

**Motion:** Mark Mulqueen; **Second:** David Wood

**Discussion:** none. **Article 14 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 15** Shall the town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,000 to help support the Lincoln Community School Mentor Program?

**Motion:** Judi Danforth; **Second:** Tiffany Dennison

**Discussion:** none. **Article 15 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 16** Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to approve the following agency requests?

\$ 1,250	Addison County Home Health and Hospice, Inc
200	Addison County Court Diversion Program
1,300	Addison County Parent/Child Center
600	Addison County Readers
400	Addison County River Watch
1,170	Tri-Valley Transit (formerly ACTR)
500	Addison County Economic Development Corporation
2,500	Bristol Recreation Department
1,100	Age Well (formerly CVAAA)
750	Comm. Health Svcs of Addison Cty – Open Door Clinic
1,600	Counseling Service of Addison County, Inc.
700	Elderly Services, Inc
2,000	HOPE (ACCAG)
250	Homeward Bound
1,000	John W Graham Emergency Shelter
1,000	Turning Point Center of Addison County
490	Retired Senior Volunteer Program( RSVP)
500	Vermont Adult Learning
1,250	WomenSafe
1,000	Charter House Coalition
300	Addison Allies Network
\$19,860.00	Total

**Motion:** Tiffany Dennison; **Second:** Ann Kensek

**Article 16 discussion:** Question, how do these amounts compare to other area towns' contributions? Are the amounts proportional by population? Answer: yes, the requests are made proportionally based on the services provided. **Article 16 passed by voice vote.**

**Article 17** To transact any other legal and proper business when met.

- Selectboard candidates introduced themselves.
- There was a suggestion to make the time for town meeting be 7 p.m. or hold the meeting on Saturday instead of Monday.
- Thank you:
  1. Microphone runners, Conor McDonough and Mark Mulqueen
  2. Mark Mulqueen for sound system set up
  3. Burnham Committee for Burnham Hall
  4. New people in town who are taking on projects and positions
- Library bake sale announcement for Tuesday during polling hours.
- A request for the Selectboard to encourage AT&T to restore better cell service in Lincoln.
- Recognized Brian Behrens, a senior film student from UVM, who was filming our meeting. He will make it available in the NEAT TV archives for anyone who wants to view it.
- Please encourage more people to attend our town meeting next year.

[Note from the Town Clerk (not announced, just written down): I did quick counts of people in attendance at Town Meeting. At 6:00 p.m. there were about 60 people, and at 6:30 there were about 90 in attendance.]

**Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Town Clerk, Sally Ober \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Moderator, Todd Goodyear \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Selectboard Chair, Bill Finger \_\_\_\_\_