

**Town of Lincoln
Minutes
Annual Town Meeting and Lincoln School District Meeting**

*Meeting called to order by Moderator, Paul Forlenza, at: 6:02 p.m. Recording folder A01/07.
[At about 6:30 p.m. there were approximately 180 people attending this meeting. It was a warm spring night and the windows and doors of Burnham Hall were open throughout the meeting.]*

The legal voters of the Town of Lincoln and the Lincoln School District are hereby warned and notified to meet at Burnham Hall on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss and transact business, and on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at Burnham Hall, the polls to open 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for voting by Australian ballot.

Announcement: *Please sign up on sheets at the table by the door for committees which need members.*

Pastor, Co'Relous Bryant, spoke and asked for a moment of silence for the people in our community who have passed away this last year. He also celebrated the new babies and married couples listed on pages 57 & 58 of our town report.

Moderator, Paul Forlenza, reviewed Roberts Rules for conducting our meeting.

Agenda for Meeting at Burnham Hall on Monday, March 4, 2024, 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, polls to be open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., Tuesday March 5, 2024.**

Offices for Election on Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Office	Term Length
Selectboard	<i>3 years</i>
Selectboard	<i>2 years</i>
Selectboard	<i>1 year remaining of a 3-year term</i>
Town Clerk	<i>1 year</i>
First Constable	<i>1 year</i>
Second Constable	<i>1 year</i>
Collector of Delinquent Taxes	<i>1 year</i>
Town Meeting Moderator	<i>1 year</i>
Lister	<i>3 years</i>
Lister	<i>1 year remaining of a 3-year term</i>
Lincoln Library Trustee	<i>3 years</i>
Lincoln Library Trustee	<i>1 year remaining of a 3-year term</i>

No action needed for Article 1. None taken.

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

Motion: Sarah McClain, **Second:** Bill Finger, **Discussion:** none. *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 9, 2024] and the second Wednesday of March [March 12, 2025], per 32 V.S.A. 4871?

Motion: Bay Jackson, **Second:** Christie Sumner, **Discussion:** none. *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: Nancy Stevens, **Second:** Lisa Truchon, **Discussion:** none. *Passed by voice vote.*

Article 5 Shall the voters authorize a total Highway Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$1,087,680 of which \$855,663 shall be raised by taxes and \$163,200 by non-tax revenues and \$68,817 is surplus revenue?

Motion: Jan Buker, **Second:** Tim McGowan, **Discussion:** *The Selectboard asked to be able to present a slide show about both Article 5 and Article 6 at the same time. Hearing no objections, the presentation included budget increase items, equipment, a summary of highway projects, and more.*

Questions:

- *What is a traffic calming study for \$35,000? Ans: It is a grant we applied for and got more than we asked for, to evaluate how to slow down traffic without law enforcement.*
- *Is there any effort being made to hire more people? Yes, the budget reflects this. The goal is to have two full-time and one part-time employee.*
- *Why do we have all this equipment and just one full-time employee? Ans: see above.*
- *When was the York Hill Bridge last inspected? Ans: Bridges are inspected regularly and the weight limit on that one has been lowered. The State has it on their planning list, which is 6-8 years out. Normally we are eligible for State funding of up to 90% of the cost to replace a bridge.*
- *Will the Lincoln Gap Parking grant include parking at the base? Ans: This is a federal grant and it is aimed mostly at the top parking area. The Selectboard has been working on a separate plan to improve the plow turn around area, and that will have to continue with the new Selectboard.*
- *Suggestion to make a Bridge Replacement Fund in addition to a Bridge Repair Fund. Ans: We already have a Bridge Fund and much of it will be used for the Sugarbush Hill Bridge.*
- *Suggestions, please make the railing on Garland Bridge higher, and start the traffic calming study beyond Garland's Bridge too. Also pave Lincoln Gap Road more than just a skim coat.*
- *What are the plowing hours, and how is road grading prioritized? Ans: Plowing hours are generally 4:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., depending on the storm. The Selectboard is working to establish a winter maintenance policy.*
- *Question about water that floods from above Weathervane down to the General Store area every 6-7 years. Ans: This is on the Selectboard's radar to improve stormwater drainage in the village center.*

- *Question regarding budget for signage, does this include any signs against littering? Ans: This is mostly for regulatory signs such as new speed limits and stop signs.*

The Moderator asked any non-Lincoln residents to identify themselves by a show of hands. They were reminded that they may not vote at this meeting.

Article 5 passed by voice vote.

State Representative, Caleb Elder, spoke mostly about how the Legislature is working on addressing challenges with school and property taxes. He announced that he will not be running for State Representative again in 2024.

Article 6 **Shall the voters authorize a total General Fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$484,797 of which \$241,448 shall be raised by taxes, \$168,220 by non-tax revenues and \$75,129 by surplus revenue?**

Motion: *Kathleen Kolb, Second: Bill Finger, Discussion: Tim McGowan expressed gratitude toward all town employees and recognized that full-time staff have been asked to contribute more toward their health insurance premiums in the coming fiscal year. The Selectboard presented a slide show with highlights from the General Fund Budget, including office labor & benefits, county tax, consultants and auditors, Listers, planning and bylaw updates, and town office expenses.*

Question: *If Article 7 passes, would we still also have a half-time Selectboard Administrative Assistant? Ans: Yes, we would still fill both positions.*

Passed by voice vote.

Article 7 **Shall the town of Lincoln vote to establish a position of Full-time Town Administrator and to appropriate a sum not to exceed \$130,000, (which may be offset by the application of grant funds that may be available) to support the position?**

Motion: *Bay Jackson, Second: Ken Stockman, Discussion: Selectboard presented another slide show to explain this article. This may or may not be the full amount we need to find the right person to fill this position, but it is the amount the Selectboard is asking to work with.*

Questions:

- *What would the ideal candidate look like? Ans: Municipal experience is a big piece, managerial skills, willing to work collaboratively, and to learn. This role is becoming more common in Vermont towns. We will have a very new Selectboard this year.*
- *Comment: That amount seems way too high.*
- *In terms of working with the Selectboard, what would be the dynamic? Ans: Administrator would run the office and the Selectboard would make the decisions vs. building the decisions. The Administrator would do research and preparation for meetings.*
- *If we do not find the right person, what would be the impact on the town? Grant reporting would be impacted. It would be like running a business without a general manager, leaning on other employees to do the work when they already have other jobs to do. Some is to ensure that legally binding reports are filed, some is to ensure efficiency. The Selectboard meets two times per month for about two hours. An*

administrator would help manage projects, keep things moving forward, also provide expertise.

- *Could the position be paid for in part by grant funding? There is a small amount of ARPA money which could help seed the first year, other grant income could help.*
- *Suggestions: develop criteria for performance evaluation, recruit from outside of town, hold Representatives in Montpelier accountable for regulations that cost us money.*
- *Has this job been compared to other towns of our size? Ans: Yes, this is an amount not to exceed, but we may not need the whole amount. Monkton, Huntington, Starksboro, all have town administrators. Just because we are a smaller town, doesn't mean we have less work to do.*
- *How does this fit into our total budget? Ans: Look at page 25 of the Town Report. Lines 27 through 33 show the impact of some of the separately warned articles on the estimated tax rates. This is not included in the amount we passed in Article 6.*
- *Comment that Bill Finger has been acting as our Town Administrator for a long time without being paid to do that work. If we don't support this, the Selectboard won't be able to function as well as it has been.*
- *Do towns share administrators? Ans: We haven't seen this.*
- *How much money through the years has Bill Finger brought in through grants? Ans: Rough estimate: \$750,000+*
- *Would this position synergize with other positions? Yes, efficiency, cost savings, budget control, IT management.*

Article 7 passed by voice vote.

Article 8 **Shall the Town of Lincoln vote on all public questions involving law enforcement, including funding therefor, by Australian Ballot beginning with the 2025 Annual Town Meeting, or special town meeting? (17 V.S.A § 2680(d)(1))**

Motion: Roger Rood, **Second:** Nancy Stevens, **Discussion:** **Questions:**

- *If Article 8 passes then Article 9 is still on? Ans: Yes, this would not take effect until next Town Meeting.*
- *What is the significance of this, why are we considering it? Ans: For several years we have had an article about law enforcement and this would change the procedure for voting to allow a more private vote.*
- *Why picking topics this way? Ans: we vote our officers by Australian ballot and this was brought to the Selectboard as a request.*
- *Comment: open discussion is appreciated and hearing the context of articles makes voting more meaningful.*
- *Constable Matt Collins hosted a law enforcement discussion a couple of weeks ago about the possibility of contracted law enforcement with the Sheriff or Bristol Police.*
- *The topic of "all public questions involving law enforcement" seems quite broad.*
- ***Tory Riley made a motion to change the wording of this article to read: Shall the Town of Lincoln vote on questions involving contracting of law enforcement, including funding therefor, by Australian Ballot beginning with the 2025 Annual Town Meeting, or special town meeting? (17 V.S.A § 2680(d)(1)) Second: Will Sipsey, Discussion on the amendment: Some in favor, some opposed. Dan Ober called the question on the amendment. Vote on calling the question passed by voice vote. The amendment passed***

by voice vote. Back to the main motion as amended. Discussion: Dan Ober wants to keep the authority with this legislative body at town meeting, where we have the ability to amend articles. **Article 8 failed by voice (and brief visual estimate-division of the house) There were very many NO votes and few YES votes.**

Sally Ober thanked these outgoing town officials:

1. Todd Goodyear has been our Town Meeting and School Meeting Moderator and has moved out of town.
2. Oakley Smith served for ten years on our Selectboard, and his term ended last March.
3. Alan Schmidt served for a short time and left the Selectboard in August.
4. Bay Jackson, our current Selectboard Chair has served since 2020, and will not be running again.
5. Erika French served on our Library Board.
6. Lea Calderon-Guthe filled a vacancy on our School Board last year and will not be running again.
7. Abby Reynolds has served on our School Board and will not be running again.
8. Jen Oldham served on our School Board since the beginning and we thank her.
9. Mark Truax was our Constable for 20 years; he has sadly passed away.
10. Ann Kensek wore many, many hats, and retired in August 2023 from being Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard.
11. Bill Finger will be retiring from the Selectboard after today.
 - a. He was our Town Moderator from 1981-1984.
 - b. Selectboard 1978-1984
 - c. Selectboard again from 2013-2024
12. We are having a retirement party for Bill Finger on Thursday, March 21 from 5:30-7:00 at Burnham Hall.
13. Welcome Kristyn Brady, Administrative Asst. to Selectboard.

RECESS TOWN MEETING & OPEN LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

Time: 8:17 p.m.

ADJOURN LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING & RE-OPEN TOWN MEETING

Time: 9:47 p.m.

Article 9 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to authorize a sum of \$10,000 for contracted law enforcement services?

Motion: Marilyn Ganahl, **Second:** Sarah Farr, **Discussion:**

- Marilyn Ganahl commends Matt Collins for the work he does for our community and implored us to step up and provide him some backup with this starting amount.
- Kudd Rood felt this won't make a difference and it is throwing money away. We cannot tell our contracted Sheriff what to do.

- *Selectboard indicated there is a different Sheriff now who vowed not to pocket the proceeds from speeding tickets and said he would be responsive to Selectboard suggestions for how, when, and where to patrol.*
- *When would the contract begin and would the town get any ticket money? Ans: Contract would begin at the start of the fiscal year and some ticket money would come to us.*
- *How many hours would \$10,000 get? Ans: It would depend on the contract, but just part-time. We would negotiate how often they would come here, when, and which areas to cover.*
- *How are we to address squatters, addiction problems, littering health hazards? Selectboard says a dialogue needs to happen about this and it will be on their agenda going forward.*
- *Maybe \$10,000 would be better spent on traffic calming measures than a sheriff.*
- *How much do the solar speed signs cost? Ans: about \$5,000 each, plus upkeep.*
- *Joe Martell said he got passed in his school bus with the lights on, what is a child's life worth?*
- *Bill Finger said a speeding car went airborne and ended up in the living room of his house on River Road a few years ago. There was \$80,000 worth of damage done.*
- *Comment: not everyone feels safer when law enforcement shows up.*

Article 9 failed by division of the house. YES 25, NO 47.

Article 10 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: Jan Buker, Discussion: none. Passed by voice vote.

Article 11 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$5,500 to help support the Lincoln Cooperative Preschool?

Motion: Fred Danforth, Second: Ken Stockman, Discussion: Rebecca Ford, President of the Lincoln Cooperative Preschool, thanked the Town for their past support. Passed by voice vote.

Article 12 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$44,000 in support of the Lincoln Library?

Motion: Jan Buker, Second: Bill Finger, Discussion: Sally Baldwin, President of the Lincoln Library Board indicated this is their 8th year of a level funding request. This year they installed a solar array and heat pump. All are welcome at the Library, and Sally thanked everyone for the past support. Passed by voice vote.

Article 13 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to help support Lincoln Sports, Inc.?

Motion: Conor McDonough, Second: Ken Stockman, Discussion: Conor McDonough made a motion to amend the amount to \$4,000, due to a Selectboard error. Jan Buker seconded. The amendment passed by voice vote. Christie Sumner thanked Elise Brokaw, who recently left the Lincoln Sports Board and also Bill Finger who served for many years in the beginning of the organization. Jo Jackson said Lincoln Sports has a full board now, summer camp is back, and they are working on expanding trail offerings. Nancy Stevens remarked that she loved the Jack Jumper race event at Hill Country Holiday this winter. **Article 13 as amended, reads: Shall**

the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$4,000 to help support Lincoln Sports, Inc.? Article 13, as amended, passed by voice vote.

Article 14 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$56,000 to the Lincoln Volunteer Fire Company?

Motion: Ari Kirshenbaum, **Second:** Reed Prescott, **Discussion:** It was pointed out that this is a \$104 increase over last year, see page 94 of your town report. **Passed by voice vote.**

Article 15 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$7,938 to Bristol Rescue?

Motion: Bill Finger, **Second:** Bern Terry, **Discussion:** George Dunne said that Bristol Rescue has revamped their system for requesting funds. It is now on a per capita basis. They have a full squad, a good group of people and a new business of doing patient transports to help keep their financial status healthy. All of this allows them to better serve us. **Passed by voice vote.**

Article 16 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to the Lincoln Cemetery Association?

Motion: Bill Finger, **Second:** Kathleen Kolb, **Discussion:** Kathleen pointed out that this amount is about half of what it costs each year to maintain the cemetery. **Passed by voice vote.**

Article 17 Shall the Town of Lincoln vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,000 to help support the Lincoln Community School Mentor Program?

Motion: Christie Sumner, **Second:** Lea Calderon-Guthe, **Discussion:** Question: What is the Mentor Program amount of \$16,000+ in wages and benefits on page 43 of the Town Report for? Andy Soares-White explained that there is a program director and this is run from revenues provided by the Town and Friends of LCS. **Passed by voice vote.**

Article 18 Shall the town of Lincoln vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$800 for the support the Have-A-Heart Food Shelf to provide services to residents of the town?

Motion: Ken Stockman, **Second:** Jodi Gale, **Discussion:** Jodi Gale said this is an important service to our community and it has been operating since 1990. This is the first time they have asked the Town for money. It helps a lot of families. **Passed by voice vote.**

Article 19 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	Atria Collective (formerly WomenSafe)
1,000	Charter House Coalition
300	Addison Allies Network
\$19,860.00	Total

Motion: Jan Buker, Second: Judi Danforth, Discussion: none. Passed by voice vote.

Article 20 To transact any other legal and proper business when met.

Motion: Bern Terry, Second: Judi Danforth, Discussion:

Microphone runners Nola Jackson and Scout Heyns were thanked for helping to run our meeting efficiently.

Thanks was given to Shawn Kimball for setting up our sound system in the absence of Mark Mulqueen who usually does this for us.

Bill Finger made a motion to adjourn. Jeanne Albert seconded. Passed by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lincoln Town Clerk, Sally Ober _____

Minutes approved by Selectboard Chair, Bay Jackson _____

Minutes approved by Town Meeting Moderator, Paul Forlenza _____