

ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVE  
TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

March 22, 2014

Pursuant to the Warning for the Annual Town and Town School District Meeting recorded in the Town Records Volume 20, page 295, the legal voters qualified to vote, met at the Brattleboro Senior High School Gymnasium on March 22, 2014 at 8:30 A.M.

At 8:35 A.M. Moderator Lawrin Crispe called the meeting to order.

Checklist attendant and Assistant Town Clerk Jane Fletcher reported that 118 Town Meeting Members were present. Moderator Crispe announced that 78 members constitute a quorum. A total of 145 members were present at various times of the day.

The moderator called upon Orion Barber to lead the meeting with an opening convocation.

Boy Scout Troop 405 led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. Scouts present were: Stephen Borst, Michael Olsen, Tony Williams and Jared Price.

Town Clerk Annette Cappy read the opening and closing paragraphs of the Warning for the record.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Moderator announced procedural rules of the meeting; that the meeting was being broadcast by Brattleboro Community Television (BCTV) – Channel 10, with audio coverage by First Choice Communication; and interpretation for the deaf and hard of hearing was being provided by Cory Brunner and Elizabeth Bjerke.

**PRELIMINARY MOTIONS:** Selectboard member Donna Macomber moved: That the following persons be authorized to sit in the reserved section with the Selectboard and School Directors: Interim Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Town Attorney Robert Fisher, School Superintendent Ron Stahley and Business Administrator James Kane.

The motion was seconded and, with no discussion, unanimously carried.

Selectboard member David Schoales moved: That the electronic media be permitted to remain in the reserved section.

The motion was seconded and, with no discussion, unanimously carried.

**ARTICLES:** Prior to any action, the Moderator read each article and asked the pleasure of the meeting.

**AUDITORS' REPORT:** Under **Article 1** Selectboard member Kate O'Connor moved that the auditor's reports be accepted as printed. (Town and Town School District)

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**CAPITAL GRANT REVIEW BOARD:** Under **Article 2**, Selectboard member John Allen moved: That the following people be appointed to serve on the Capital Grant Review Board for a term of one year from March 23, 2014. (Nominees to be appointed from the floor)

Georges Herzog and Lissa Weinmann volunteered to be members. There being no other nominees, Mr. Herzog and Ms. Weinmann were unanimously appointed to the Capital Grant Review Board.

**EMPLOY CPA:** Under **Article 3**, Selectboard Chair David Gartenstein moved: That the Town and Town School District authorize its Selectboard and School Directors to employ a certified public accountant or public accountants.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**TOWN CLERK:** Under **Article 4**, Donna Macomber moved: That the appointment of Annette Cappy as Town and Town School District Clerk for a term of one year from March 23, 2014, be ratified, approved and confirmed.

The motion was seconded. Marshall Wheelock informed the meeting that the clerk had just completed 25 years in service as clerk. On a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**TOWN TREASURER:** Under **Article 5**, David Schoales moved: That the appointment of John O'Connor as Town and Town School District Treasurer for a term of one year from March 23, 2014 be ratified, approved and confirmed.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the appointment was unanimously adopted.

**TOWN ATTORNEY:** Under **Article 6**, Kate O'Connor moved: That the appointment of Fisher and Fisher Law Offices, P. C., as Town Attorney for a term of one year from March 23, 2014 be ratified, approved, and confirmed.

The motion was seconded. Following moderate discussion, on a standing-voice vote, the appointment was unanimously adopted.

**LIBRARY TRUSTEES:** Under **Article 7**, John Allen moved: That the following people be appointed to serve on the Board of Trustees for the Brooks Memorial Library: Elizabeth Wohl, Jerold Goldberg, and Jennifer Lann for three-year terms 2014-2017, and Robert Stack for the unexpired term 2014-2015, and George Howard Burrows for the unexpired term 2014-2016.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the nominees were unanimously elected.

**SELECTBOARD SALARIES:** Under **Article 8**, David Gartenstein moved: That the salaries of the Selectboard be set at \$3,000.00 each; that the salary of the Chairperson be set at \$5,000.00, and that the Selectboard be authorized to fix the salaries of all other town officers for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW:** Under **Article 9**, Donna Macomber moved: That the Selectboard be authorized to borrow money on its notes in anticipation of taxes, grants and other revenue.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT:** Under **Article 10**, David Schoales moved: That the Town raise and appropriate the sum of \$78,000.00 through special assessments on properties within the Downtown Improvement District (as approved by Town Meeting March 19, 2005 and as delineated in the town ordinance entitled "Municipal Act to Establish and Regulate the Downtown Improvement District") to be used for capital and operating costs of projects of the Town's duly designated downtown organization.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was overwhelmingly adopted.

**MOUNTAIN HOME PARK SPECIAL BENEFIT ASSESSMENT TAX DISTRICT:** Under **Article 11**, Kate O'Connor moved: That the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$223,276.47 through special assessments on property within the "Mountain Home Park Special Benefit Assessment Tax District" (as approved by Town Meeting, March 24, 2007 and as delineated in the Town Ordinance entitled, "Municipal Act to Establish and Regulate the Mountain Home Park Special Benefit Assessment Tax District") for the purpose of paying debt service on the capital improvements to the water and sewer lines serving the Mountain Home and Deepwood Mobile Home Parks.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**BRATTLEBORO CLIMATE PROTECTION:** Under **Article 12**, John Allen moved: That the Town raise and appropriate a sum not to exceed \$10,000 to assist in funding Brattleboro's Climate Protection for Fiscal Year 2015. (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015).

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion, and on a standing-voice vote, the article was overwhelmingly adopted.

**HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS:** Under **Article 13**, Donna Macomber moved: That the Town raise and appropriate the sum of \$110,000 to support human service programs and facilities for the residents of Brattleboro to be allocated among service providers in the following manner:

- AIDS Project of Southeastern Vermont - \$2,000
- American Red Cross - Green Mountain Chapter - \$4,000
- Boys & Girls Club - \$9,300
- Brattleboro Area Drop-In Center - \$9,600
- Brattleboro Area Hospice - \$1,700
- Brattleboro Senior Meals - \$7,000
- Clark/Canal Neighborhood Association - \$3,000
- Connecticut River Transit - \$3,000
- Family Garden - \$1,000
- Gathering Place - \$2,000
- Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) - \$2,000
- KidsPLAYce - \$3,000
- Morningside House - \$7,500
- Phoenix House RISE - \$1,500
- Prevent Child Abuse Vermont - \$1,000
- RSVP – Green Mountain - \$700
- Senior Solutions - \$2,000
- Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. (SEVCA) - \$9,000
- Summer Lunch Program - Brattleboro Town School District - \$6,000

Turning Point - \$4,500  
Vermont Adult Learning - \$700  
Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - \$1,500  
Vermont Center for Independent Living - \$1,000  
Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT & NH - \$10,000  
Windham Child Care Association - \$5,500  
Windham County Safe Place Child Advocacy Center - \$1,500  
YMCA (Meeting Waters) - \$2,000  
Youth Services - Big Brothers Big Sisters - \$8,000

The motion was seconded and a brief discussion followed. On a standing voice-vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**AGRICULTURAL LAND PROTECTION FUND/ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND:**  
**Under Article 14,** David Schoales moved: That the Town repurpose the funds from the Agricultural Land Protection Fund to establish an Energy Efficiency Fund with the principal amount of \$50,000 and to appropriate the remainder in the fund, being the accrued interest in the Agricultural Protection Fund, to reduce the fiscal year 2015 tax levy.

The motion was seconded.

Mr. Schoales then moved to amend the article as follows: That the Town repurpose a portion of the funds from the Agricultural Land Protection Fund to establish an Energy Efficiency Fund with the principal amount of \$45,000.

The motion to amend was seconded and Mr. Schoales explained that the intent of his motion was to create an Energy Efficiency Fund, taking a lesser amount from the Agricultural Fund, and leaving the remaining funds in the Agricultural Fund rather than deplete the Fund to reduce the 2015 tax levy.

A lengthy discussion ensued with regard to the Agricultural Fund's continued usefulness.

Kurt Daims moved to cease debate. On a standing voice vote, the Chair ruled that a two-thirds majority had been met and debate ceased.

On a standing voice vote, Mr. Schoales amendment was overwhelmingly adopted.

Bob Fagelson moved to cease debate. On a standing voice vote, the Chair ruled that a two-thirds majority had been met and debate ceased

On a standing voice vote, the article as amended by Mr. Schoales was overwhelmingly adopted.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE – ELM STREET AND BRIDGE REPAIRS:**  
**Under Article 15,** Kate O'Connor moved: That the Town appropriate up to \$92,371.09 from the Unassigned Fund Balance as of June 30, 2013 to defray the costs associated with repairs to Elm Street and Elm Street Bridge due to the severe thunderstorm of September 11, 2013.

The motion was seconded and very brief discussion followed. On a standing voice-vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE – RADIO COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT RELOCATION:** Under **Article 16,** Donna Macomber moved: That the Town appropriate up to \$57,500 from the Unassigned Fund Balance as of June 30,

2013 to defray the costs associated with relocation of radio communications equipment off of Wantastiquet Mountain.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. On a standing voice-vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL FUND (UNSPENT SKATING RINK REPAIRS):**

Under **Article 17**, Kate O'Connor moved: That the Town transfer \$310,540 from the capital fund to the general fund (being the unspent funds allocated to repairs at the Nelson Withington Skating Rink).

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. On a standing voice-vote, the article was overwhelmingly adopted.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE – TAX LEVY REDUCTION:** Under **Article 18**, John Allen moved: That the Town appropriate the sum of \$200,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance as of June 30, 2013 to reduce the tax levy for FY2015.

The motion was seconded and a lengthy discussion ensued.

Steve Phillips moved that the sum to be appropriated from the Unassigned Fund balance be amended to \$245,000, based on the results of the vote on Article 14. (to not appropriate \$45,000 from the Agricultural Land Protection Fund to reduce the tax levy for FY 2015)

With little discussion, Mr. Phillips motion to amend was overwhelmingly defeated.

Following a brief discussion, David Cadran moved to cease debate. On a standing voice vote, the Chair ruled that a two-thirds majority had been met and debate ceased.

On a standing voice vote, the article as presented by Mr. Allen, was overwhelmingly defeated.

**SUSPENSION OF RULES:** Kurt Daims moved: That the rules of the meeting be suspended and Article 21 be taken up prior to Article 19 in order that discussion of the proposed one percent local option sales tax take place prior to taking action on the town budget.

The motion was seconded and the vote to suspend the rules was overwhelmingly approved.

**ONE PERCENT LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX –** Under **Article 21**, David Gartenstein moved: That the Town assess a one percent (1%) local option sales tax in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Section 138.

A lengthy debate ensued. Paramount to the discussion were concerns for area merchants whose businesses might be adversely affected by the implementation of an additional tax. There was also much concern regarding the extent to which property taxes would rise without implementation of a 1% option sales tax to help defray the Towns expenses and liabilities.

Tom Franks moved to cease debate; however, a two-thirds majority was not reached and debate continued for an extended period of time.

David Cadran moved to cease debate and the motion was once again defeated.

Debate continued.

Arlene Distler moved to amend the motion by adding that if the local options sales tax was approved, the effects of its implementation be reviewed after two years.

The motion was seconded and based on opinion of town counsel, the Moderator ruled that the amendment was out of order as there is no provision in State Statute for the potential repeal of the tax in the same action as the initial approval. He did note, however, that the amendment could be discussed under article 31, other business.

There being no further discussion, the motion was, on a standing voice-vote, overwhelmingly defeated.

**RECESS:** At 1:10 p.m., the Moderator declared a recess.

At 2:09 P.M, after confirming the presence of a quorum, the Moderator reconvened the meeting.

**TOWN APPROPRIATION:** Under **Article 19**, Selectboard Chair David Gartenstein moved: That the Selectboard be authorized to raise, appropriate and expend the sum not to exceed \$16,069,625.00 (sixteen million, sixty-nine thousand, six hundred twenty-five dollars) in order to defray to that extent all general fund expenses for the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015, including all highway and Windham County taxes, and the Selectboard be authorized to expend, in addition, any sum authorized for special purpose under any article contained in the warning for this or any other special meeting; and interest at a rate of one (1%) percent per month, be charged from the due date of payment on any overdue payment of the town tax, installment, or portion thereof ; and that the Town taxes assessed on the Grand List as April 1, 2014, shall be due and payable in four (4) equal installments payable to the Town Treasurer until overdue, then to the Collector of Taxes; and that such payment of the installments shall be made on or before 5pm August 15, 2014, and November 17, 2014, and February 17, 2015, and May 15, 2015.

The motion was seconded and Mr. Gartenstein briefly stated that the budget before the meeting was a level service budget and a responsible budget that provided services that the town had come to expect.

Spoon Agave moved to amend Article 19 by reducing the amount to be raised, appropriated and expended to \$15,469,625.00, a reduction of \$600,000.00.

The motion was seconded and Mr. Agave explained that while he had no issues with line items within the budget, his motion was a means to address the tax burden of the proposed Fire/Police facility. The intent of the motion, he explained, was to stop the project where it is, and with additional input from the public, reassess and proceed with the project, one piece at a time as affordable.

The Moderator noted that while the body had the authority to reduce the amount proposed, it did not have the authority to demand where cuts might occur. The meeting may make suggestions, however, and the administration may consider them.

Town attorney Bob Fisher explained that the Town had already taken out bonds for the fire/police renovations in the amount of \$5,000,000.00 and even if Mr. Agave's amendment was adopted, the Town would still be committed to making a payment in FY 2015, on the principal and interest in the amount of \$479,093.00.

Judy Davidson moved to amend Mr. Agave's motion by reducing the sum to be raised, appropriated and expended to \$15,808,152.00, a reduction of \$261,473.00 rather than by \$600,000.00.

The motion was seconded and Ms. Davidson explained that the amount of the reduction in her motion represented the amount the Town had budgeted as the tentative amount of the interest payment on the remaining \$9,130,000.00 bonds appropriated but not actually taken out at this time. She was in agreement with Mr. Agave that the project needs to proceed at a slower pace in order to ease the burden on taxpayers.

A lengthy debate followed. Many spoke of the proposed fire/police renovations and the expense to taxpayers. Some expressed remorse for voting in the affirmative on the project at a past meeting. There were also many who stated that the need was still present and now was the time to proceed.

Paul Rounds moved to cease debate. On a standing voice-vote, the Chair declared that a two-thirds majority had been achieved and debate ceased.

On a standing voice-vote, Ms. Davidson's secondary motion to amend was defeated. A brief discussion continued regarding Mr. Agave's motion.

On a standing voice-vote, Mr. Agave's primary motion to amend was overwhelmingly defeated.

David Cadran moved to cease debate. On a standing voice-vote, with 73 in favor and 57 opposed, a two-thirds majority was not achieved and debate continued.

On a standing voice-vote, the main article, as presented, was adopted.

**TAX EXEMPTION – AMERICAN LEGION LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD:** Under **ARTICLE 20**, John Allen moved: That the Town exempt American Legion Little League Field from its municipal portion of taxes on its lands and buildings at 12 Oak Grove Avenue for a period of three years from April 1, 2014.

James Valente, a member of the audience and spokesperson for the American Legion, along with parent Alexander Shriver, informed the meeting that Little League regulations had recently changed and new policies mandated that all youth interested in playing baseball would be accepted to a Little League team and each youth would be guaranteed field time. They stated that this was a major change from the last time a tax exemption had been requested of Town Meeting and that in prior years, it had been cause for concern among some members. They also explained that if it were not for the American Legion's support of this organization, the responsibility of youth baseball in Brattleboro would likely fall to the Brattleboro Recreation and Parks Department and be an added burden to that department.

David Cadran moved to amend the motion by changing the period of exemption from three to ten years. The motion was seconded.

Following a brief discussion, Gary Carrier moved to amend Mr. Cadran's motion to include language as follows: so long as the field continued to be owned by the American Legion and was being used for Little League baseball.

The motion was seconded and following a very brief discussion, Mr. Carrier's motion to amend Mr. Cadran's proposed amendment was overwhelmingly adopted.

Following brief discussion, Mr. Cadran's motion to amend, as amended by Mr. Carrier, was overwhelmingly defeated.

There was no further discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article as presented, was overwhelmingly adopted.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:** Under **ARTICLE 22**, David Schoales moved: That the following people be appointed to serve on the Representative Town Meeting Finance Committee for a term of one year from March 23, 2014.

Nominees were to be appointed from the floor. There were however, no nominees and no volunteers.

Spoon Agave moved to amend the article so that it would revert back to the tradition of the moderator being charged with the responsibility of appointing members rather than town meeting members appointing. The motion was seconded and on a standing-voice vote, overwhelmingly adopted.

The main motion as amended, was unanimously adopted.

**SCHOOL DIRECTORS' SALARIES:** Under **Article 23**, Town School Director David Schoales moved: That the legal voters of the Town of Brattleboro School District authorize its Board of School Directors to pay the following amounts for the ensuing fiscal year: to its school directors the sum of \$2,000.00 each, except that the chairperson shall be paid the sum of \$3,000.00.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and on a standing-voice vote, the article was overwhelmingly adopted.

**AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW:** Under **Article 24**, Town School Director Mark Truhan moved: That the legal voters of the Town of Brattleboro School District authorize its Board of School Directors to borrow money pending the receipt of taxes, and not in excess of anticipated revenue for the school year, by the issuance of its notes or orders payable not later than one year from the date thereof.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS:** Under **Article 25**, Peter Yost moved: That the legal voters of the Town of Brattleboro School District authorize its Board of School Directors to accept and expend categorical grants and aid received from the State of Vermont and the United States Government.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER EVERGREEN FUND – ELECTRICAL EFFICIENCY PROJECTS:** Under **Article 26**, Mark Truhan moved: That the legal voters of the Brattleboro Town School District grant authority to the School Board to incur interest-free debt through the Green Mountain Power Evergreen Fund in an amount not to exceed Fifty-Two Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$52,000.00) to be financed over a period not to exceed five (5) years, for the purpose of financing the following electrical efficiency project(s):

Academy, Green Street, and Oak Grove Schools – Lighting Efficiency Projects

The financing mechanism that the District will use is the Green Mountain Power Evergreen Fund, which allows school districts to borrow money at 0% interest over as much as five (5) years for the purpose of financing energy efficiency projects. The estimated savings from the lighting efficiency projects are projected to save the school approximately Five Thousand, Five Hundred and 00/100 Dollars (\$5,500.00) in annual electrical costs at the current utility rates. The projected savings amount is less than the debt service payments will be on the loan. The lighting efficiency measures have a life expectancy of at least fifteen (15) years.

The motion was seconded. Following a very brief discussion, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**ACADEMY SCHOOL HEATING SYSTEM:** Under **Article 27**, Peter Yost moved: That the Town of Brattleboro School District authorize capital expenses for improvements to the heating system at the Academy School in an amount not to exceed Three Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$375,000.00), to be financed over a period not to exceed five (5) years [24 V.S.A. §1786(b)]

The motion was seconded. Following a brief discussion, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**EDUCATION RESERVE FUND TO DEFRAY FY 2015 EXPENSES:** Under **Article 28**, David Schoales moved: That the Town of Brattleboro School District, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §2804, will appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty-Six Thousand, Two Hundred Seventy-Two and 00/100 Dollars (\$256,272.00) from the Education Reserve Fund to defray expenses for FY 2015.

The motion was seconded. There was no discussion, and, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO DEFRAY FY 2015 EXPENSES:** Under **Article 29**, Margaret Atkinson moved: That the legal voters of the Town of Brattleboro School District will appropriate out of the audited Unassigned Fund Balance of June 30, 2013 the sum of One Hundred Ninety-Three Thousand, Seven Hundred Twenty-Eight and 00/100 Dollars (\$193,728.00) for the purpose of reducing the tax rate and defraying FY 2015 expenses.

The motion was seconded. Following a very brief discussion, on a standing-voice vote, the article was unanimously adopted.

**TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROPRIATION:** Under **Article 30**, Margaret Atkinson moved: That the legal voters of the Town of Brattleboro School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Million, Six Hundred Six Thousand, One Hundred Seventy-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$3,606,175.00) as its share of salaries and expenses of the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union; the sum of Two Hundred Forty Thousand, One Hundred Fifty-Five and 00/100 Dollars (\$240,155.00) as its share of bonded indebtedness; and Eleven Million, Five Hundred Forty-Six Thousand, Three Hundred Ninety-Six and 00/100 Dollars (\$11,546,396.00) for current and other expenses for the support of the schools within the district, making in all the sum of Fifteen Million, Three Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred Twenty-Six and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,392,726.00). If adopted, the portion of this total sum to be raised by taxes to be only that portion not received from revenues from other sources; and that interest at the rate of one (1%) per centum per month be charged on overdue taxes from the due date of payment of town tax, school tax, installment portion thereof; and the town and town school district taxes assessed on the Grand List as of April 1, 2014 shall be due and payable in four (4) equal installments,

payable to the Town Treasurer, until overdue, then the Collector of Taxes; and that such payment of installments shall be made on or before 5:00 o'clock on the afternoons of August 15 and November 17, 2014, and February 17 and May 15, 2015.

The motion was seconded and Ms. Atkinson noted that this year's proposed budget showed a minor increase of \$76,076.00 or .49%. Primary changes were in negotiated salaries and benefits, fixed costs and special education expenses.

Following a brief discussion, the article was overwhelmingly adopted.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Under **Article 31**, the following items were brought before the assembly:

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Ron Stahley acknowledged Margaret Atkinson for her 9 years of service as a member and chairperson of the Brattleboro Town School Board. The meeting honored Ms. Atkinson with a standing ovation.

Margaret Atkinson acknowledged James Kane upon his retirement following 35 years as Town School Business Administrator. Mr. Kane was honored with a standing ovation.

### **Tim (Arsenault) Johnson Resolution**

Brattleboro State Representative Mollie Burke offered the following resolution in honor of radio news broadcaster Tim (Arsenault) Johnson's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his radio broadcasting career:

*State of Vermont  
House of Representatives  
Montpelier, Vermont  
Concurrent House Resolution  
H.C.R. 264  
House concurrent resolution congratulating Tim Johnson on  
the 40th anniversary of his radio broadcasting career  
Offered by: Representatives Burke of Brattleboro, Stuart of  
Brattleboro, and Toleno of Brattleboro*

*Whereas, Tim Johnson's voice was first heard on Brattleboro's  
radio airwaves in 1973, and*

*Whereas, since 1997, Tim Johnson has served as news director at  
radio station WISA AM-FM, and*

*Whereas, in this role, Tim Johnson covers scheduled activities,  
including selectboard meetings, and unexpected occurrences,  
most prominently the arrival in 2011 of Tropical Storm Irene  
in Windham County and its resulting devastation, and*

*Whereas, Tim Johnson is not a news director who merely remains  
at the radio studio compiling information from news services  
for presentation on the air, and*

*Whereas, he is regularly on the scene as news stories are unfolding, either reporting live or gathering the facts and voices for later broadcast, and*

*Whereas, live Tim Johnson weekend broadcasts, emanating from local area businesses, are aired regularly on WTSA, and*

*Whereas, for many listeners, their most memorable association with Tim Johnson and WTSA is the station's comprehensive coverage of Tropical Storm Irene which started with interviews of emergency and public safety officials recorded in advance of the storm's arrival, and*

*Whereas, during the storm's height, Tim Johnson offered a marathon broadcast originating from his home, featuring updates and using the latest Internet technology to gather information and respond to many listener inquiries, and*

*Whereas, in the days and weeks following Tropical Storm Irene, Tim Johnson and WTSA provided a much-appreciated public service, relaying vital post-storm information, and*

*Whereas, Tim Johnson has marked 40 years as a Brattleboro area broadcaster who remains a mainstay and trusted local radio news and information source, now therefore be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives: That the General Assembly congratulates Tim Johnson on the 40th anniversary of his radio broadcasting career, and be it further*

*Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to radio station WTSA AM-FM News Director Tim Johnson.*

On a lengthy standing ovation, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

### **Education Resolution - Don Webster**

Don Webster offered the following:

*To the Vermont House Education Committee, House Ways and Means, House Appropriations and Speaker of the House:*

*As Passed by your House Education Committee, H. 883 represents the most profound change in the governance of Vermont public schools in decades. The changes proposed are of such magnitude that much care needs to be taken before approval, and therefore we make this resolution.*

*Whereas, Representative Town Meeting is unique in Vermont and plays a vital role, along with our strong school boards, parents, and community members, in support of our elementary schools;*

*And whereas, the bill eliminates the role of Representative Town Meeting in the governance of our elementary schools;*

*And whereas strong civic participation is invaluable to student and school success, and whereas the changes required in this bill will seriously weaken that connection in the decision-making process;*

*And whereas citizens can only seriously debate and consider the merits of the proposed major restructuring if the bill includes all the details about how these new districts will operate.*

*And whereas the success of any restructuring of school governance will depend on the support of parents and citizens in their communities.*

*Be it Resolved*

*That the House table H. 883 until such time as it is able to provide more specificity on the working of the proposed governance system and incorporate them into the bill, and*

*That it then conduct a robust public conversation with local school boards and the public around the State to see if the public will support the proposed governance system.*

Following a brisk discussion, the resolution was, on a standing voice-vote, overwhelmingly adopted.

**Gun Safety Resolution – Walter Slowinski** offered the following:

*We applaud the voters of Burlington for their recent creative and determined effort to deal with gun violence.*

*We request that the Vermont State Legislature pass effective legislation to address the problem of gun violence in Vermont.*

*Be it further resolved, that the Brattleboro town clerk forward a copy of this resolution to all Vermont State legislators.*

Following a brief discussion, the resolution, on a standing voice-vote, was adopted.

**Power and/or Heat Generating Facility Resolution – George Harvey** offered the following:

*I move that a committee be started to investigate and prepare for a power and/or heat generating facility for Brattleboro with a view to the following:*

- 1. Reducing costs and increasing income for the town, thus cutting taxes.*

2. *Renewable power should be used and if there is fuel, it should be produced locally.*
3. *The facilities used should be capable of running without grid power, supplying local power via micro-grids.*
4. *The micro-grids should be capable of being connected to neighboring micro-grids, including those in town and any that might be formed in neighboring communities.*
5. *The committee should make what recommendations it feels necessary as to micro-grid design and business model (whether a utility, B-corp., co-op, etc.)*

It was noted that many members were no longer present and the moderator instructed the check-in attendants to count members. It was determined that a quorum was no longer present and no action was taken on Mr. Harvey's resolution.

Ben Underhill offered thanks to town meeting members, administrators and especially to Recreation and Parks Director Carol Lolatte for her leadership and guidance in the planning, construction and operation of the newly completed West River Park.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Attest:

Annette L. Cappy  
Town Clerk

David Gartenstein  
Selectboard Chair

Lawrin Crispe  
Moderator