

Town of Huntington: 2010 Town Meeting Abstract
Tuesday, March 2, 2010 – Brewster-Pierce Memorial School

The legal Voters of the Town of Huntington, Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Brewster Pierce Memorial School in said town on Tuesday, March 2, 2010 at 9:00 am. to transact the following business:

Voting will be conducted on Tuesday, March 2, 2010, between the hours of six-thirty (6:30) in the forenoon (am.), at which time the polls will be open and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (pm.), at which time the polls will close.

Before the meeting was called to order, Moderator Britt Cummings asked permission of the attendees for Representatives Sue Minter and Tom Stevens to address the room. Minter discussed the unique level of participation in the Huntington community. She talked about the tough year and the impact on how the recession is affecting programs on the state level. Minter pointed out that the state budget is now at the 2006 level, with a \$160 million reduction in 2009 and another \$150 million to be reduced in 2010. She said that they were dealing with “real stories about real people” and mentioned the Department of Aging and Independent Living as being especially affected. Stevens discussed the issues around the shutdown of Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant stating that for many Vermonters the issue was about the reliability of the plant. The Vermont Senate vote was the first step. There will be another vote on decommissioning funding with successive votes in the Vermont House. Stevens also discussed a bill that criminalizes texting while driving and the licensing of electricians in Vermont.

Town Clerk Heidi Racht presented the Olga Hallock Award to Helen Phillips, who served as a Town Auditor for 41 years. She began working for the town as a young bride in 1949, when the auditors worked for months reviewing bills, invoices and budget lines and then typed the Town Report on a manual typewriter. Phillips retired in 1990 when the town voted to get a professional audit and the town then moved to desktop production of the Town Report. Her dedication and hard work for the town may be a town record for a holding a single office.

Les Hunton led the room in the Star Spangled Banner and the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 9:34 am by Moderator Britt Cummings, who gave an introduction, made a couple of brief announcements, and reviewed the rules of the meeting noting that Roberts Rules would be followed. Cummings noted a change in statute that now allows for discussion of Australian ballot items at Town Meeting, regardless of whether the polls are in the same room. The exception is that candidates cannot be discussed or politick.

Article 1. To elect all Town Officers as required by law. (Australian ballot).

Article 2. To hear and act upon the reports of Town Officers.

MOTION: Les Hunton moved to approve with corrections; seconded by Mark Smith.

DISCUSSION: Correction on Town Hall Committee (page 5) by Barbara Felitti are as follows: Eliot Lothrop and Aaron Worthley did not resign, but their terms were up in 2009 and they were not reappointed through an oversight; Alison Forrest did resign in 2009.

Heather Pembroke asked about two orphan columns on page 10, which Heidi Racht explained were notes by the treasurer for his own use and should have not gone in and to cross them out.

RESOLUTION: Article 2 passed as corrected on voice vote.

Article 3. Shall the Town pay current taxes to the Treasurer of the Town and School District?

MOTION: Dave Clark moved to approve; seconded by Jim Brent.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESOLUTION: Article 3 passed on voice vote.

Article 4. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington expand the municipal records reserve fund for restoration, preservation, conservation and computerization of municipal records, to be funded by revenues of \$2 per page from recording fees as established by statute? This reserve fund to be retroactive to July 1, 2009.

MOTION: Dave Clark moved to approve; seconded by Jeannette Segale.

DISCUSSION: Town Clerk Heidi Racht referred voters to the fourth paragraph of her report on page 36 where she explained that the town received a fee established by statute for each page of every document recorded in the town's land records. The legislature allowed up to \$1 to be used for restoration and computerization when the fees went from \$6 to \$7; the townspeople were being asked to put an additional \$1 into the fund since the fees have been raised again by the state. The money has been used to preserve old documents and computerize the town's maps and surveys.

Duncan Keir asked if the money was already collected or if it would come out of the town's fund. The money is set aside as it comes in, he was told.

RESOLUTION: Article 4 passed on voice vote.

Article 5. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington establish a reserve fund for expansion of the vault that houses the town's land records, vital records and important papers, to be funded by revenues of \$2 per page from recording fees as established by statute? This reserve fund to be retroactive to July 1, 2009.

MOTION: Dave Clark moved to approve; seconded by Mark Smith.

DISCUSSION: Town Clerk Heidi Racht said that the \$10 per page recording fee added \$2 per page to the town's income on July 1, 2009 and that she would like to start putting money aside to offset the major cost of additional town vault space. In answer to a question, she explained there were no plans yet. Andrea Ogilvie asked for clarification on whether the town was setting aside \$2 or \$4 for restoration and vault. It is \$4; \$2 for each reserve fund. Mark Smith suggested that the town could reproduce old maps and make them available for purchase by the public as a fundraiser.

In answer to a question about whether the fund would be ongoing, Racht replied that it would be re-voted after the money was spent on a vault.

RESOLUTION: Article 5 passed on voice vote.

Article 6. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington authorize the Selectboard to decrease the 2010-2011 Conservation Reserve Fund appropriation from \$16,000 to \$15,200 (5%) as recommended by the Conservation Commission members?

MOTION: Jim Brent moved to approve; seconded by Abbott Rachampbell.

DISCUSSION: Selectboard chair Ed Booth gave an introduction to the article by noting that last year the Board was asked to take 5% from the town budget. The Boards and Committee took the money from their budgets and the Conservation Commission decided to recommend the same cut in the spirit of the tight economy [the Conservation Fund was established as a Reserve Fund with an annual contribution of \$16,000 that cannot be reduced without going before the voters].

Conservation Commission chair Wally Jenkins explained that the fund was set up to preserve important natural resources and agricultural lands. "Development pressure is not going away," he said. "Once prime ag land is lost, they don't come back." He said that the fund is less than .5% of taxes and said the decrease isn't much because the \$16,000 isn't high. But the HCC thought 5% was fair.

Don Sheldon asked if this was "symbolic." Would programs be altered? Jenkins replied, "We're trying to do our share. Conservation is as important as other items in the budget."

In answer to a question from Teddie Brace about the actual dollar figure for the fund, Jenkins said the \$16,000 was now about \$160,000. "Some are opposed that the money is growing, but it takes money to conserve."

Amy Stark asked what the money will be used for and then, on a related topic, noted that some of the money had been spent and asked why it hasn't come to a town vote. Jenkins replied that two projects had been funded: purchase of the Bradley property in Huntington Center (\$5000 matched by \$50,000 from the Vermont Land Trust) which now had a walking trail along the river and funds contributed toward the restoration of the historic Henry curtains. Stark said she still had concerns about how the money was spent without voter approval. Jenkins then said that the Conservation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Selectboard and makes recommendations. The Selectboard warns and holds a

meeting before taking a vote. Stark pressed on, "Does the Selectboard make the decision? It was supposed to be the town that decides." She talked about the decision to have the vote by paper ballot when the fund was first set up.

Aaron Worthley spoke as the Conservation Commission chair for eight years, noting that he had guided the fund "through infancy." The article, as approved in 2001, laid out the process. He said he had lobbied hard to keep the fund active and fully funded, but had decided the Selectboard had a difficult job to corral in all expenses. It was stated that it seems like a lot of money. Worthley replied, "\$156,000 doesn't get you much these days. We need to pay a fair price for land that we as townspeople might want to preserve."

Kevin Wiberg added that it seemed like a small amount of money when the fund first started and it would take time for the fund to grow. Other communities have larger funds. He said he wanted to start planning and that the Conservation Commission should have a fund plan that would answer residents' concerns. He also said that he thought it had a "relatively modest impact" on the tax rate and finished by thanking the volunteers who work for the people who don't have time. Jim Fecteau had a question about the Selectboard not being able to answer questions about the two expenditures from the Conservation Fund and asked them to clarify the process. Ed Booth replied that none of the Selectboard had been on the Board when any of this had been done.

Laura Hill Bermingham said it was important for people to know that the Conservation Commission is seeking proposals.

In other discussion on the topic, issues were raised by Mark Smith about planning and the economic impact of conserved land and Teddie Brace who asked whether the HCC would help someone hold on to land and not take away the rights of land owners. He noted, "It's good as long as it's being purchased and that someone wants to sell."

Jenkins responded that this was strictly voluntary and also confirmed that the HCC meets on the second Thursday, 7 pm, in the Town Office.

Heather Pembroke commented on conservation transactions where there were two willing owners, citing the Brace Farm. She then called the question, which was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION: Article 6 passed on voice vote.

POINT OF ORDER: Megs Keir asked that people ask to call the question rather than say they had a comment and then call the question.

Article 7. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington authorize the Selectboard to borrow money when needed to meet current expenses and indebtedness of the Town and in anticipation of taxes?

MOTION: Jim Brent moved to approve; seconded by Les Hunton.

DISCUSSION: None

RESOLUTION: Article 7 passed on voice vote.

Article 8. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington authorize the Selectboard to place \$78,315, remaining in the budget as of July 1, 2009, and \$60,032, remaining from the East Street Bridge bond, for the purpose of repairing Carse Bridge, replacing Moody Bridge, and repairing Beane Bridge of Main Road?

MOTION: Jim Brent moved to approve; seconded by Bonnie Gordon.

DISCUSSION: Selectboard member Wayne Curley explained that the first consideration after cutting the budget was being sensitive to people not being able to pay property taxes or keep jobs. The Selectboard considered all the infrastructure challenges. There is a mandate from Vermont AOT (Agency of Transportation) to keep Beane Bridge open; the cost is \$1 million-plus to replace. Repairs will keep it open. Currently, there is a contract on two bridges. The Carse Bridge should have a deck and underlayment replacement and the Selectboard would like it widened by two feet to accommodate farm equipment and trucks. The Moody Bridge is currently closed; it is easier and cheaper to replace the bridge than to do a temporary bridge. By asking the contractor to bid on three bridges instead of two, the cost for the Moody Bridge dropped from \$90,000 to \$55,000. The Selectboard is expecting that there would be no more costs incurred by using the money from the two funds to pay the town's portion. He added, the repairs on three bridges "are only the beginning of repairs on bridges for the next two to ten years."

In answer to Terry Ryan's question about the \$78,000 overage from the budget, Joe Segale explained it was from the tax rate set in 2007-2008 and noted "the rather uncomfortable discussion on over-taxation" last year.

Helen Keith asked about Camels Hump Road and whether the bridge was in the two-to-ten-year plan. She also asked about federal stimulus money. Curley replied that the town had not yet received any, but that grant requests had been submitted to Senator Leahy's Office.

Jim Fecteau asked about the East Street bridge: how much money was spent, who was the contractor and was it under budget. Town Administrator Ed Wildman replied the Parent Construction had done the work, there was \$50,000 in a reserve fund established by VTrans and the budgeted \$3,100,000 came in at \$3,600,000. [Note: The town's bond was for 10% of total, which was \$310,000. The actual bid was \$3.6 million and it came in under budget, so the town had \$60,000 left from the bond.]

Gail Conley noted that a year ago, at Town Meeting, it was revealed that \$115,000 was over collected in taxes; now it's \$78,000. Where did the other \$38,000 go and on what authority was this spent? Joe Segale explained that the money was "absorbed and got spent on a variety of things. [Note: Money was spent on Hinesburg Hollow Road paving per professional auditors. See further discussion under Article 9.]"

RESOLUTION: Article 8 passed on voice vote.

Article 9. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington authorize a total general fund expenditure for operating expenses of \$1,331,231, of which \$1,098,781 shall be raised by taxes, and \$232,450 by non-tax revenues?

MOTION: Article moved and seconded to approve.

DISCUSSION: Ed booth gave an introduction on the budget, stating that the Selectboard had a productive year. Other Board members gave overviews of specific areas of the budget.

Jim Christiansen addressed health care benefits. The town has switched to a higher deductible from the co-pay to try to curb costs. The savings is \$5500, which is a premium savings and a slightly better insurance plan. The Selectboard wants to see how the high-deductible works out. There is no compensation increase to town employees, although the town is picking up \$2500 of the \$2800 deductible as starting in July, the town's employees made a small contribution to the benefits premium. He concluded by saying that the Board will be revisiting the idea and see if it needs to be adjusted.

Joe Segale talked about the bond projects started in November 2008 after the bond vote. He said the sand shed was not done. Currently, \$260,000 has been set aside for the project (\$77,000 bond, \$13,000 grant, \$16,000 reserve). Former Selectboard member Rob Zimmerman worked on the project and the cost range is \$380,000 to \$600,000-plus, depending on the scope of the project. Segale said that the Board is considering a design/build and will be asking contractors this spring to submit proposals. He said the Board criteria is "does this meet the goals of what we want this to be?"

Ed Booth discussed two grant projects. An energy grant for the Library, written by Harvey Schugar with two other towns, has passed the first approval stage; the paperwork has been sent on to the US Department of Energy (DOE). He thanked volunteer Mary Jane Poynter for her expertise. The second energy efficiency grant was written by Town Administrator Ed Wildman to the DOE for the fire department and highway buildings.

Wayne Curley summarized the presentation by explaining the budget process. Starting in early October, the Board wrapped up the budget at the end of January. There was a significant increase in interest and principal on purchases the townspeople have chosen to fund. In order to try to keep the tax rate down, the Board took out \$60,000 for fabric for Sherman Hollow Road and \$10,000 from Class III roads, in addition to asking all departments to level fund. Curley thanked Town Treasurer Dan Stoddard for working weekly with the Selectboard.

MORE DISCUSSION:

Heather Pembroke asked about a working Capital Budget and if there was a list of projects and years for completion. Ed Booth replied that the Board will look at it again and revise it. Pembroke suggested that this be laid out in the Town Report. Jim Christiansen said that the Board needed to implement a process of 15-20 years down the road and also discuss buildings, equipment; he talked briefly about the Town Office. "We need to see what our targets are and what we need to do it."

Barb Winters asked about the sand shed and whether it was still required by federal regulations. Joe Segale referred the question to Heather Pembroke who said it was no longer a requirement. She said that the town had received the grant because of documentation that salt and sand were going into the river. She advocated building the shed, "It's best for the river." Ken Pillsbury said that he had gone to two Selectboard meetings and suggested that the Conservation Fund be used to make up the shortfall. "It seems reasonable. The Conservation Commission has spent a lot of time monitoring the river and maintaining quality." He asked for support for his proposal. Teddie Brace noted that hemlock 2x4s were a lot cheaper than steel. He recommended looking at hemlock, plus using local carpenters.

Don Sheldon talked about the Elder Housing Reserve Fund and suggested that the Selectboard give the money back to the town.

Debbie Worthley asked about health care. Jim Christiansen explained that the town employees had made a small co-pay; the town had also contributed \$500 to a flex plan. The current plan has \$3000 deductible and the town is putting in \$2700, which is still less than the cost of the flex plan and doesn't cost the employees any more money.

Dori Barton asked about line 235 (highway equipment repairs) and the high amount budgeted when nothing had been used. Wayne Curley replied that the Selectboard had zeroed out all the other lines and are just using this one. Money was left in as a safety valve.

Mark Smith commended the Board on its presentation and noted that the members "had been doing their homework." Ed booth responded by noting that the Board had decided to do this format after last Town Meeting.

Rich Lachapelle asked that the Conservation Fund be changed to Land Conservation Fund.

Margaret Taft asked about the line item for legal – were these current cases or future cases? Ed Booth responded the cases are existing.

Terry Ryan asked about the Fire Department's Reserve Fund. Fire Chief Tate Jeffrey explained that this income was from an inheritance the HFD received two years ago. Some of it was used for the new fire truck to offset the costs that were higher than the town budget. Also, air packs were replaced. He explained, "This will improve our capabilities."

Back to insurance, Don Sheldon talked about the high deductible, noting that this was consumer directed; the motive was to try to get people to have an incentive to think about the services. Jim Christiansen confirmed that the premium was now 100%. Don Sheldon said that the FSA had a "use it or lose it" approach and the \$2700 per employee health savings plan meant that the money was gone from the town. He asked for a reconsideration of the HRA for next year. Christiansen said, "We looked at HRA. We are looking at employee contribution. The net change resulted in a positive to the town." He added, "Health insurance is a guessing game."

Skeeter Lawyer-Sanders asked about Lines 163 and 164 and the actual to budgeted expenses. "Is the town considering budget overrun, given the current conditions of the roads?" Ed Booth replied that in 2008-2009, the town finished

paving Hinesburg Hollow Road. After more discussion, Dan Stoddard clarified that the overrun was an accounting issue due to the fact that the work was done in June, but billed in July [fiscal year ends June 30] and the professional auditors determined which year the expense was shown, resulting in the overrun. Lawyer-Sanders suggested that the three towns on Hinesburg Hollow get together and do a joint project for the entire road and the town consider approaching Richmond for the Main Road. "Pooling resources could reduce costs."

Gail Conley asked about the \$20,000 in the budget for air quality. Wayne Curley explained that the town office has bad air quality. There are grading problems around the building. The town has also looked inside parts of the building for mold growth. The money in the budget is to have someone do a complete air study as this is a problem for the people who work in the building.

Ken Pillsbury said he thought the frost heaves helped calm traffic and \$12,000 for guard rails could be taken out of the budget. Also, the culvert replacement was too aggressive and they should be dealt with on "as needed" basis.

A few other topics that had been covered previously were discussed again.

Pam Hart called the question; seconded by George Mincar.

Vote to call the question passed on a voice vote.

RESOLUTION: Article 9 passed on voice vote.

Article 10. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington disapprove the proposed Noise Ordinance?

MOTION: Terry Ryan moved to approve; seconded by Les Hunton.

DISCUSSION: Ed booth gave an introduction. He stated that part of the community had come to the Selectboard over a period of time regarding noise issues. The town's attorney suggested a noise ordinance as a means to address this problem. After the first attempt at an ordinance, the community made suggestions and the Selectboard responded with a modified ordinance.

Dave Clark said he was opposed to the article. The current ordinance has a lot of provisions for exceptions, "a lot of latitude. We need something in place where there is an avenue to address without confrontation." He said that people would know it's there and would be less likely to escalate a situation. Wayne Curley clarified that even though people reference one specific event, more than one event [location] has come before the Selectboard.

Jim Fecteau asked if the specific incident had been taken care of despite there being no ordinance. Ed Booth said it had been. Fecteau asked who would administer the ordinance. Curley responded that it would first go through the town Administrator; then the Selectboard. He added that the ordinance wasn't written as a punishment. Fecteau then complained about the permit process for building, saying his experience was "painful." Curley responded that the Selectboard would be highly involved with the Noise Ordinance enforcement.

Joanne Flemings said that for years, her neighborhood has dealt with a certain noise. They have dealt with the Selectboard and "their hands are tied." The police have been involved. People who live there need sleep and the person causing the

noise is vindictive and not approachable. The noise occurs between 1 am and 6 am. "It takes this to help us get what we need."

Helen Keith then said that tension around noise does not only come from this area. "There's no process to help mediate this" and she expressed fear that this "can lead to violence" and "someone's going to get hurt." She went on, "This is not big government. This makes sense. It's a great revision."

Rich Lachapelle said he thought it was a "specific case about an individual and added, "I see the noise ordinance as a dangerous precedent and a Pandora's Box."

MORE DISCUSSION: Other discussion centered on who would be enforcing the ordinance and the loss of freedoms. There were a couple of suggestions for mediators. A few people said they had not seen the ordinance and to this, Kevin Wiberg recommended getting on the town's email list as this had been sent out both times. He added that it is "disheartening to live in a community like Huntington and have this experience." Dave Clark added, "Your rights end where someone else's rights begin." He said the town needed something so people could sleep at night.

Barbara Felitti said that the Selectboard had looked at all options. The ordinance was a "fall back option if other steps don't work and people with problems have no recourse."

Megs Keir added that the Selectboard was responsive after the first ordinance and this version keeps the opportunity to "do the things we normally do."

David Worthley called the question; seconded by Dave Clark. Passed on a hand vote 101-31.

RESOLUTION: Article 10 defeated on a hand vote 37 to 103.

MOTION TO RECESS FOR LUNCH: Motion by Dave Clark; seconded by Heather Pembroke. The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:09 pm.

Town Meeting resumed at 2:15 pm.

Article 11. Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington request the Vermont legislature to:

- 1. Deny approval for the operation of Vermont Yankee after March of 2012, which marks the end of its 40 year design life?**
- 2. Require that the Entergy Corporation of Louisiana fulfill its pledge to fully fund the cleanup and decommissioning costs of closing Vermont Yankee?**
- 3. Seek safe, renewable, regional sources of electricity combined with efficiency and conservation measures to replace the power presently provided by Vermont Yankee?**

MOTION: Duncan Keir moved to approve; seconded Dave Clark.

DISCUSSION: Laura Hill Bermingham gave an introduction to Article 11. This vote would be a contact to representative only. She said that Vermont Yankee is 38 years old. "We, as taxpayers, are going to get stuck with the bill. Entergy needs to foot the bill."

Teddie Brace asked where the other power was coming from. He said he didn't see where getting power from another country is going to help. "We need good solutions. He also noted that half of what people put into recycling gets thrown away.

Skeeter Lawyer-Sanders made a point regarding Canada. The New England governors have hydro-Quebec, which is labeled a renewable resource coming up. He also instructed the Selectboard to send a letter to the Vermont Senate Pro Tem congratulating them on the recent Vermont Yankee vote.

AMENDMENT: Terry Ryan, who identified himself as having worked in the US Navy as engineering inspector including nuclear power ships, offered this amendment; seconded by Dana Cummings: "4. Ensure alternative to best utilize existing infrastructure present at Vermont Yankee is best utilized and not abandoned."

AMENDMENT: Dave Clark offered a change in wording; seconded by Heather Pembrook to read: 4. Ensure distribution alternative to best utilize existing infrastructure present at Vermont Yankee is best utilized and not abandoned.

Alan Campbell asked if the decommissioning costs would go down if the infrastructure is kept. Terry Ryan responded, that someone has to be there anyway. There will be a cost benefit as trained people will be onsite. In other discussion around the amendment, Don Dresser said he was against the amendment as he was afraid that it would "get in the way of decommissioning;" Heather Pembrook expressed concern about pieces of the plant being used for another nuclear power plant; Skeeter Lawyer-Sanders suggested converting Vermont Yankee into a renewable energy operation.

Megs Keir called the question on the amendment to the amendment; seconded by Teddie Brace. Vote on question passed on a voice vote.

Vote on amendment to the amendment passed on a voice vote.

MORE DISCUSSION ON THE AMENDMENT: Duncan Keir said he agreed with Don Dresser and wanted to stick with the original article, while Pam Hart said she had a problem with the whole article. Dresser then said that a third of the power generated in Vermont is from Vermont Yankee. Dana Cummings said he liked Terry Ryan's idea and "where we are on the overall idea and we can go home and enjoy the afternoon."

Dan Birmingham called the question; seconded by Dana Cummings. Question passed on a voice vote.

Amendment passed on a hand vote 36-21.

AMENDMENT: Article 11 with 4 items. Jennifer Esser made an amendment to item 4; seconded by Heather Pembrook to read: "4. Consider alternatives to best utilize existing distribution infrastructure present at Vermont Yankee, especially for renewable energy generation, but excluding nuclear power."

Amendment passed on a voice vote.

Dave Clark called the question; seconded by Skeeter Lawyer-Sanders. Passed on voice vote.

RESOLUTION: Article 11 as amended passed on a voice vote.

Article 12. To transact any other Town business thought proper when met.

1. Ed Booth recognized volunteers Mary Jane Poynter (energy grants support), Harvey Schugar (grant writing), Jim Hildebran (outgoing Selectboard member), Liz Greenberg (Times Ink reporter) and Barbara Elliott (Selectboard clerk).
2. Heather Pembroke recognized the Huntington road crew.
3. Debbie Worthley talked about the HERO Rides program.
4. Larry Brace thanked the armed forces.
5. Dana Cummings suggested using lumber from the town forest for the town salt shed.

ADJOURNMENT: Dave Clark moved to adjourn; seconded by Debbie Worthley.
Meeting adjourned at 3:54 pm.

**Town of Huntington
2010 Annual School District Meeting Abstract
Tuesday, March 2, 2010 – Brewster-Pierce Memorial School**

The legal voters of the Town School District of the Town of Huntington, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Brewster-Pierce Memorial School in Huntington Center, Vermont, on Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at one o'clock (1:00) in the afternoon (pm), to transact the following business:

Voting for Australian Ballot questions on Tuesday, March 2, 2010, between the hours of six-thirty o'clock (6:30) in the forenoon (am.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (pm.) at which time the polls will close.

CALL TO ORDER: Huntington School Moderator Britt Cummings called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm.

ARTICLE 1: To hear and act upon the reports of the Officers.

MOTION: Gail Conley moved to approve; seconded by Dana Cummings.

DISCUSSION: Joanne Machia handed out a correction to the report. On page 98, the Budget Summary and Report is missing (Tax Summary Estimates printed twice).

RESOLUTION: The article passed on a voice vote with no further discussion.

ARTICLE 2: Shall the voters of the Huntington Town School District authorize the school board under 16 V.S.A. 562 (9) to borrow money by issuance of bonds or notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the school year?

MOTION: Tom Bailey moved to approve; seconded by Dave Clark.

DISCUSSION: None

RESOLUTION: The article passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To vote a budget of \$1,820,828 to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town School District.

MOTION: Heidi Racht moved to approve; seconded by Dana Cummings.

DISCUSSION: School board chair Becca Golden said that the Board had worked hard to keep the budget low. The budget represents a .29% increase. She then stated that there was nothing of note in the budget that the Board wished to present and the floor was opened for questions.

Tom Bailey asked about the number in students in the school. Andrea Ogilvie replied that the school had 135 students in pre-K to grade 4. She added that it was a “stable population.”

Bailey then asked about the number IEPs including 504s in the school. Principal Gail Webb replied that she didn’t know, but would get the information.

Bailey continued by stating that 30% plus or minus students don’t perform to grade level on testing, referring to the NECAP scores in the Town Report (page 91). The critical thing to know is that indicates that the school is failing. Andrea Ogilvie responded, that this needs to be discussed in absolute numbers. In a class of eleven children, the percentage will be off because of single child. There is no rate of 100% passing. Mike Dooling clarified that only the kids in grades 3 and 4 take the NECAPS.

Bailey asked about other “meaningful ways” of evaluating, to which Becca Golden replied, “assessments.” Gail Webb said, “We share your concern.” She then talked about benchmark assessment, monthly meetings and compiling a data base. “We are addressing it very hard,” she said.

Bailey said he was concerned about the number of students not testing at grade level. There is a nexus between IEPs and those not performing at grade level. Webb agreed.

Bailey then went on to say he was “amazed at the school budget. Special Ed is one third of the teaching budget. It’s one thing if it’s spending and succeeding.”

Liz Greenberg asked about the salary increase percentages being different for the principal and custodian. It was explained that the music teacher is no longer shared and differences have to do with teacher experience. Currently, there is a step salary with no additional increases. Some salary lines are assessed. For example, the district has an “over-nurse” who is assessed in addition to the school nurse. Joanne Machia said that the support staff increase were due to a change in staff.

RESOLUTION: The article passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To transact any other school business thought proper when met.

1. Becca Golden thanked outgoing Board members Andrea Ogilvie for her nine years on the BPMS Board over the years and Lisanne Hegman, who was not at the meeting.
2. David Worthley told the Board that the town employees had no salary increases and “accepted it.” He asked the Board to ask the teachers if they would be

- willing to not have an increase. Michael Dooling replied that they were currently negotiating and acknowledged the comment.
3. Helen Keith asked the Board to address in its narrative report how to treat NECAPS. She suggested that she would like to see what is being done for ongoing assessment.
 4. Joanne Machia mentioned that she had the annual fuel savings report.
 5. Lisa Bisbee asked why there were no second grade test score. Gail Webb replied that the state no longer assesses second grade students.
 6. Bruce Hennessey said, as a former teacher, that a test is one snapshot in time and to never make a judgment on this. Work is "allowing them to succeed in comparison with themselves."
 7. Ken Pillsbury said that he was "a big fan of assessment." It shows how well the teachers are doing. He then said that Gail Webb had had three meetings to explain assessments and no one showed up. She then asked Webb about the assessment program and "what this word 'proficient' means." He went on, "Education in this country is not doing a good job. Proficient equals 50% of questions correctly. When I scored 50%, I failed." He then asked why "we never hear about National Assessment." Webb said that she is "a student of assessment" and "would love more discussion." After a bit more discussion between Pillsbury and Webb, she said "what's important is what are students able to do on their own." Superintendent John Alberghini addressed where the test scores come from and said, "NECAP is one snapshot. BPMS is one small sample." He then referred to the Vermont Department of Education website where they release the test questions and "they are rigorous." He added, "Vermont does very well nationally."
 8. Teddie Brace said that he wished he had had "someone is my corner" going through the school system.
 9. Rahul Kushwaha said that he had been involved in education systems in four countries and "our education system fails these children." After noting that the education budget is two-thirds of our local tax, he said, "We spend a lot of money trying to give a good start to our children. We spend too much money on education." He cautioned people not to blame the system, but to take responsibility. He talked about the global world. "As taxpayers, we expect a certain level of service," and the family needs to take responsibility. He suggested the Board remind parents that they are responsible for their children. Skeeter Lawyer-Sanders-said, "I echo the comments." He pointed out that there were economic factors where both parents need to work full time. He then talked about education at the college level where far much attention is paid by boys for leisurely pursuits. Success at colleges is a widening gender gap. Economics can affect kids ability to learn. He also felt there was too much pressure brought to bear on teachers to be judged by test scores.
 10. Heidi Racht spoke to the quality of education in the three Chittenden East schools that her three boys had attended. Her family is in its final year in the school system and, for the most part, they have received an excellent education, getting into the colleges that they wanted and receiving well-rounded opportunities. She said that education wasn't just about NECAP scores and that

people had to only look around the school to see how much creative learning was going on. She also spoke about the family at the school and how much her boys loved coming back to this school and that this was their community.

11. Ken Pillsbury said that the school had good points and he had to respond to the "touchy feely" comments from the front of the room. "Too much emphasis is placed on "feel good." He spoke to structure and to addressing the task at hand. He commented, "It's a wonderful thing to be able to go to school for 12 years." Racht then said that she felt that the annual meeting should not have so much discussion about NECAPS and testing.

ADJOURNMENT: Heather Pembroke moved to adjourn, seconded by Dave Clark. The annual school meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Australian Ballot Questions

- Article 5** To elect a Moderator for a period of one year.
- Article 6** To elect a School Director for a period of three years.
- Article 7** To elect a School Director for a period of two years.
- Article 8** To elect a School Director for a period of three years for Mt. Mansfield Union School District #17, term to begin day of election.

Minutes prepared by Heidi Racht

Submitted this 29 day of March 2010


Heidi Racht, Town Clerk, CVC
Huntington, Vermont

Approved this 29 day of March 2010


Justice of the Peace


Justice of the Peace

March 2, 2010 Town Election Results

430 people voted

1405 people are on the Huntington checklist

Selectboard 1 yr

245 Dori Barton

152 Alan Brace (write-in)

Selectboard 2 yrs – all write-ins

88 Edmund Booth

78 Alan Brace

19 Roman Livak

5 Matt Melendy

Selectboard 3 yrs

317 Jim Christiansen

Auditor 3 yrs

363 Pamela Hart

Cemetery Trustee 5 yrs

331 Terry Boyle

Library Trustee 3 yrs (2 positions)

344 Liz Greenberg

360 Heidi Racht

Lister 3 yrs

364 Carol Wildman

Town Moderator 1 yr

251 Britt Cummings (write-in)

Town Grand Juror 1 yr

OPEN

Planning Commission 3 yrs

(3 positions)

339 Everett Marshall

313 Gordon Miller

OPEN

Planning Commission 2 yrs

OPEN

Planning Commission 1 yr

334 Heidi Weston

Lister 1 yr

OPEN

Town Agent 1 yr

379 Mary Taft

March 2, 2010 School Election Results

BPMS Board 3 yrs

338 Stacey Symanowicz

BPMS Board 2 yrs

74 Breck Knauft (write-in)

School Moderator 1 yr

156 Britt Cummings (write-in)

MMU School Director 1 yr

324 Ken Wyman