**Meeting Minutes**

**Town Meeting Informational Zoom Meeting February 28, 2022**

**Meeting called to order at 7:05pm**

Jon welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the other selectboard member present, Chuck Black.

**Zoom Logistics**

Jon informed all present on the process for communicating via the Zoom meeting as well as the options for asking questions and/or contributing.

Due to the extension of last year’s law, allowing remote Town Meetings, the selectboard felt that it was prudent to hold this year’s meeting once again via Zoom. Everyone is hopeful that next year’s meeting will be held in person as has been the long-standing tradition.

Polls are open for in person voting March 2, 2022, from 9am – 7pm

This is an informational meeting to respond to questions and comments about the articles on the ballot this year. General Business will be discussed at the end. This meeting is considered a meeting of the selectboard. No motions can be made, and Articles cannot be modified as they are at an in person meetings.

Selectboard meetings happen twice a month. The public is always welcome. Please attend if you have anything you would like to discuss or share. Agendas are posted inside and outside at the town office, at the post office, at Bromley Market and on the town website.

We do have a critical situation concerning positions that are open in Peru. We would appreciate hearing from anyone who would be able to take on the opportunity to serve their community in one of these positions. Please contact the town office (802-824-3065) for more information.

Questions about town business are welcome after the Article 8 discussion.

**Review and discuss Article 1**: To elect a Town Moderator

Public comment **–** None

Questions - None

Gary Ameden is the only candidate for Town Moderator. No questions.

**Review and discuss Article 2:** To elect all Town Officers as the law directs

Town Clerk for a term of one year.

1. Town Clerk for a term of one year.
2. Town treasurer for a term of one year.
3. Selectboard member for a term of three years.
4. Lister for a term of two years.
5. Auditor for a term of three years.
6. 1 Cemetery Commissioner for a term of five years.
7. 1 Cemetery Commissioner for a term of one year.
8. 1 Cemetery Commissioner for a term of four years.
9. First Constable for a term of one year.
10. Second Constable for a term of one year.
11. Collector of Delinquent Taxes for a term of one year.
12. Grand Juror for a term of one year.
13. Trustee of Public Funds for a term of one year.

Public Comment: None

Questions: None

There are candidates on the ballot for all these positions except for an Auditor and for a Lister

**Review and discuss Article 3:**

1. Shall the voters authorize total fund expenditures for operating expenses for the 2022-2023 fiscal year of $927,125, of which $545,000 shall be raised by taxes and $382,125 by non-tax revenues.
2. Shall the voters establish the date of payment of such taxes as July 1st, 2022, through

September 30th, 2022?

Public Comment: None

Questions: None

**Review and Discuss Article 4:** Shall the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect current taxes?

Public Comment – None

Questions – None

**Review and discuss Article 5:** Shall the voters vote a sum of money to the following organizations which serve the community?

Bennington County Conservation District **$300**

BROC Community Action **$200**

Cemetery Commission **$5,000**

The Collaborative  **$750**

Center for Restorative Justice  **$300**

Flood Brook Athletic Association **$1,000**

Green Up Vermont **$50**

Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad **$5000**

Mountain Valley Health Council **$3000**

Neighborhood Connection **$1000**

Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE) **$150**

Rural Fire Protection Task Force **$100**

Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging  **$200**

VT Center for Independent Living  **$140**

Bennington County Coalition for Homeless  **$500**

Visiting Nurse and Hospice **$2,700**

Bennington County Child Advisory Ctr. **$500**

South Londonderry Free Library **$1,000**

**Total $21,890**

Public Comment – None

Questions – None

**Review and Discuss Article 6:** Shall the voters approve a veteran’s exemption to include an amount up to $30,000? The State of Vermont currently provides a maximum exemption of $40,000 with the first $10,000 provided by the state. The total exemption is deducted from the appraised value of the parcel.

Public Comment – None

Questions – None

**Review and Discuss Article 7:** Shall the voters approve closing the Sewer and Land Reserve Fund with a balance of $19,215 plus any accrued interest, and moving the money into the General Fund?

Public Comment – Discussion on the status of Peru’s Sewer and Land Reserve. Jon advised that Peru does not have a need for a Sewer and Land Reserve, hence the request to put that monies into the General Fund

Questions: None

**Review and discuss Article 8:** Shall the voters indicate support for the concept of a Regional Field House at the Dana Thompson Memorial Recreation Park in Manchester, with the understanding that towns would participate in its construction costs under a formula based on a combination of grand List, population, and distance, in exchange for a special use status for those who live or own a second home in the Town of Peru. This article is advisory in nature and does not bind the town to further action.

Public comment – None

Questions – Ivanna Reed asked if there would be an inside pool at the facility. Cindy Gubb,

Representative for the Northshire Community Field House advised there would not be at

this point in the project. Much research went into this decision, and it is just not financially feasible at this time. Ivanna Reed also asked if the $325,500 going to the Capitol Construction Fund will be raised by taxes. She was advised that “Yes” the funds would ultimately be raised by taxes. Tucker Murphy inquired as to what will happen if not all towns vote to go ahead. Cindy Gubb advised the powers that be would revise plans and come at it from a different perspective. Ivanna Reed asked about the timeline for beginning construction, Cindy Gubb stated that construction could start as early as this fall.

**Discuss other non-binding business:**

Jon Mowry spoke to the fact that theTown of Peru needs numerous people to fill vacant positions in our town government. Most importantly Listers, Auditors & Planning Commission members. Ivanna Reed asked if there are job descriptions on the town web page. Jon Mowry states that anyone who is already serving in any of these positions would be willing to discuss what the job entails, or the State of Vermont website would be another resource.

**ARPA**

Jon Mowry advised that the restrictions regarding how our ARPA money ($120,000) can be spent have been eased significantly. Suggestions are welcome as to the spending of these monies. Tucker Murphy suggests we put a form online at the town website to gather input from residents.

**Comcast**

Jon Mowry is looking for someone to be a point person for the acquisition of Internet for those in Town who don’t have service and would like it. John Murphy states he will check in with John Stichter as he was the point person for the North Road group last fall. Ivanna Reed inquired about the Southern Vermont Communication District. Jon states we do belong to this group but have not been well represented. Jon asked Ivanna if she would consider being our representative. Ivanna replied she would investigate this further and get some more information about the SVCD.

**Traffic**

Ivanna Reed expressed great concern about the speed of trucks as well as people not stopping at the stop signs in the village of Peru. Jon Mowry let Ivanna know that if she should write a letter that the selectboard could review, approve & sign, he would send it to the powers that be.

Jon Mowry made a motion to adjourn, Chuck Black seconded it. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda M. Beebe

Town Clerk

Town of Peru