

**Cabot Town Meeting  
Cabot School Gymnasium  
March 1, 2016**

**Article 1 – To elect a Moderator for the ensuing year.** The Meeting was called to order by Selectboard member Jeff Gabrielson. The first order of business was to elect a Moderator. Ed Smith was nominated and seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Smith then assumed the role of the Moderator and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Kitty Toll, Cabot's Legislative Representative, provided an update of the activities and significant discussions taking place in the State Legislature.

Moderator Ed Smith noted that there was a revised Town Warning which would be followed during the meeting. The Moderator announced that copies of the Revised Warning were available in the back of the gym.

The Moderator reminded those assembled that the meeting would follow Robert's Rules of Order and that all comments must be addressed to the Moderator. The Moderator also emphasized that when an individual speaks, comments must only pertain to the subject that is being discussed.

**Article 2 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot vote to approve the Minutes of the previous Annual Town Meeting of March 3, 2015?** The Moderator asked if there were any changes or corrections to the Minutes of the March 3, 2015 Town Meeting. There were no comments. A motion was made and seconded to approve the March 3, 2015 Minutes as written. **The Motion was approved unanimously.**

**Article 3 – To elect a Selectperson for a term of two years. [Australian Ballot]** No discussion. **Michael J. Hogan – 261 votes, Martin Donald Mitchell – 188 votes; write in 10; spoiled 1, blank 91 – Total 551**

**Article 4 – To elect a Selectperson for a term of three years. [Australian Ballot]** No discussion. **John C. "Jack" Daniels – 272 votes, David Pike 215; write in – 5; spoiled 0; blank 59.**

**Article 5 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot hear and act upon the reports of the Town Officers?** Jack Daniels, Chair of the Selectboard, recognized David Pike upon his retirement after 31 years as a member of the road crew, Ed Smith for his 23 years of service as Cabot Town Moderator, and Jeff Gabrielson for serving on the Cabot Selectboard from 2013-2016. Each individual was presented with a plaque which identified their years of service to the Town of Cabot.

Conservation Committee Chair, Gary Gulka, announced that Green-up Day would take place on Saturday, May 7. Gary reported that the Conservation Fund has a \$1,000 budget available for conservation projects. Gary also announced the State's newest state park, "Molly's Falls State Park", which the State recently purchased from Green Mountain Power. Gary announced that the State would be scheduling a Public Information meeting in April or May to seek public input on their proposed plans for their newest State Park.

Jessica Miller asked why the handouts and changes to the budget were different from the information contained in the Town Report. Selectboard Chair, Jack Daniels, stated that the Town Report had to be sent to the printer in late January, soon after the fiscal year closed, and since that time some errors in the publication were identified which needed to be corrected. He stated that the revised Warning contains the most accurate information available.

R. D. Eno asked why some commercial UDAG loans have never been repaid. Since no one from the UDAG Committee rose to answer the question, the Moderator moved on to the next question.

Amy Hornblas inquired about the culvert project on Porter Road. Karen Deasy, Road Commissioner, responded that the large culvert damaged during the 2011 flood located on Porter Road is very undersized and needs to be replaced. Karen also reported that the Town will be receiving a significant F.E.M.A. grant to cover a large portion of this work and that Green Mountain Power would help to cover the Town's portion of the financial match required by the grant.

R. D. Eno asked why the UDAG Balance Sheet was significantly different from the previous year. Since no one from the UDAG Committee rose to answer this question the Moderator proceeded to the next item.

Rich Aronson asked why the Library expenses are increasing significantly this budget year. Beth Wade explained that the increase resulted from providing health insurance for the full-time Librarian. Rich questioned why we couldn't go back to a co-director library where this expense would not be required. Beth responded by saying that it is highly unusual to have co-directors for a library of our size.

Jeremiah Greer asked for a more detailed explanation about the UDAG Balance Sheet. As no one from the UDAG committee rose to respond to this question the Moderator moved on to the next item.

Sue Carpenter, Collector of Delinquent Taxes, provided an update on the status of the delinquent taxes, identifying those individuals who have paid their taxes in full and those individuals making payments on their delinquent taxes.

**Article 6 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot pay its Real and Personal Property taxes to the Town Treasurer on or before November 17, 2016, with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent per month for the first three months and one and one-half percent per month thereafter and an eight percent penalty charged from the due date?**

A discussion followed about the interest rate for delinquent taxes. A suggestion was made that the Town reduce the interest rate to 1% for the first 3 months and substitute 3% for the subsequent months. Sue Carpenter responded that she believes that the interest rate is set by the Legislature. After discussion, a motion was made and seconded that we accept the November 17, 2016 due date for taxes and approve the interest and penalties rates as contained in the Article. **Motion passed.**

**Article 7 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot elect all Town Officers required by law, according to law?**

The Moderator proceeded to identify the positions to be filled and entertained nominations to fill the positions required by law:

Listers: Jeanne Johnson was nominated for a one year term as Lister. It was moved that the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Jeanne Johnson as a Town Lister. **Motion was seconded and passed.** Robyn Hall was nominated for a one year term as a Town Lister. It was moved that the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Robyn Hall as a Town Lister. **Motion was seconded and passed.** Jeff Gabrielson was nominated for a two year term as a Town Lister. It was moved that the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Jeff Gabrielson as Lister. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

Auditor: Cecelia Gulka was nominated for a three year term as Town Auditor. It was moved that the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Cecelia Gulka for a three year term as a Town Auditor. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

Collector of Delinquent Taxes: Sue Carpenter was nominated for the position of Collector of Delinquent Taxes. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

Grand Juror: David Pike was nominated for the position of Grand Juror. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

Law Agent: Chip Taylor was nominated for the position of Law Agent. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

Cemetery Commission: Deb Bothfeld was nominated for the position of Cemetery Commissioner. **Motion was seconded and passed.** Deb then publicly thanked Marvie Domey for all the work she has done over many many years on behalf of the Town of Cabot to maintain the Town's beautiful cemeteries.

Library Trustee: Jeannie McCallum was nominated for a three year term as Library Trustee; Linda Gabrielson for a two year term as Library Trustee; and Stephanie Burtt to finish out a two-year term of Library Trustee formally held by Amber Bothfeld. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

UDAG Committee: Chuck Talbert and Roman Kokodyniak were nominated for two year terms as members of the UDAG Committee. **The motion was seconded and passed.**

Willey Building: Fred Ducharme was nominated for a one year term to serve on the Willey Building Committee. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

**Article 8 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot authorize the Library Trustees to apply for and receive grants and gifts and to spend any grants and gifts received?** A motion was made to authorize the Library Trustees to apply for and receive grants and gifts and to spend any grants and gifts received. **Motion was seconded and passed.**

**Article 9 Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the Zoning Regulations adopted by the Selectboard on January 19, 2016? [Australian Ballot]** Because this was to be voted on by Australian Ballot, the Moderator reported that no amendments could be made and no floor vote could take place. Selectboard Chair, Jack Daniels, thanked the members of the Planning Commission for the many hours of hard work they had put into writing new zoning regulations. Someone asked why the proposed Zoning Regulations could not have been completed separately instead of being issued in one very large document. The response given was that since the existing Zoning Regulations were written in the 1970s, and significant regulatory changes have taken place since then both at the national and state level, it was felt that a comprehensive rewrite of them made the most sense. It was reported that the Town hired a consultant to assist in this project. The cost of the consultant was paid for in large part by a grant. **Not approved – 302 no; 212 yes; Blank – 37; Total 551.**

**Article 10 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the Subdivision Regulations adopted by the Selectboard on January 19, 2016? [Australian Ballot]** Because this Article was to be voted on by Australian Ballot, no amendments and no floor vote could take place. **Not approved – 289 no; 206 yes; 56 Blank; Total 551.**

**Article 11 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot issue bonds or authorize a Tax Reduction loan in an amount not to exceed one hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000) for the purpose of reducing the 2016 Property Taxes to be raised, with a bond or loan to be paid off in 2017 and 2018? [Australian Ballot].** Selectboard Chair, Jack Daniels, gave a slide presentation pertaining to this Article. Jack stated that the need for these funds resulted from an accounting error for the prior fiscal year whereby the Beginning Fund Balance had been incorrectly over-stated thus resulting in a budget shortfall in the 2015 budget year. Discussion centered in part on whether the borrowed funds could be repaid by a bond or a loan. Jack stated that the Selectboard choose the current wording—bond or loan—to provide maximum flexibility so that the least expensive cost to the taxpayers

could be chosen at the time the repayment option was executed. A motion was made to Call the Question. A voice vote was taken and two-thirds of the voters voted to end the debate. Motion passed. **Approved – 335 yes; 168 no; 47 Blank; Total 551**

**Article 12 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot issue bonds or authorize a loan in an amount not to exceed ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000) for the purpose of constructing an enclosed and lockable storage unit at the new town garage? [Australian Ballot]** Selectboard member Jeff Gabrielson spoke about the need for this Article. **Not approved – 350 no; 170 yes; 31 Blank; Total 551.**

**Article 13 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of thirteen thousand dollars (\$13,000) to support the Cabot Community Association (CCA) in 2016 for the purpose of supporting economic and community development efforts such as providing educational and marketing programs for local producers and crafters, and attracting consumers and visitors to patronize Cabot businesses, activities and attractions? [Australian Ballot]** No discussion. **Approved – 311 yes; 212 no; 28 Blank; Total 551.**

The Moderator asked that the rules be suspended so that the next three Articles could be discussed at one time. There was no objection.

**Article 14 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of nineteen hundred dollars (\$1,900) from UDAG funds to the Cabot Community Association (CCA) in 2016 for the purpose of supporting the Faith In Action program in Cabot? [Australian Ballot]** **Approved 317; 203 no; 1 spoiled; 30 Blank; Total 551.**

**Article. 15 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) from UDAG funds in 2016 for the Cabot Community Association (CCA) for the purpose of repairing the steeple, stairwell and other interior sections in urgent need of repair at the United Church of Cabot? [Australian Ballot]** **Approved - 378 yes; 142 no; 31 Blank; Total 551.**

**Article 16 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) from UDAG funds in 2016 for the Cabot Community Association (CCA) for the purpose of retiring part of the debt for the Cabot School Performing Arts Center (CSPAC)? [Australian Ballot]** R.D. Eno stated that he didn't like the wording of these Articles, saying that CCA should not be involved between UDAG and other groups in town. The Town has the authority to appropriate these funds. Selectboard Chair, Jack Daniels, responded that he incorrectly included CCA when drafting these Articles. Jack stated that CCA did not request these funds and if approved by the voters the funds would only pass through CCA to the appropriate parties at no additional cost. R. D. asked who requested the funds and Jack responded that these funds were requested by the Chair of UDAG. Jack stated that regrettably we cannot amend these Articles as UDAG Articles have to be voted on by Australian Ballot, restating that it was not meant for the funding to pass through CCA. R.D. then stated that he has no objection to the way it is being done. **Approved – 304; 218 no; Blank 29; Total 551.**

A question was asked about CCA staff and payroll which CCA President Frank Kampf responded to.

A question was asked about approving UDAG funds for the Cabot Church. It was noted that the Cabot Church is open to the public for various functions outside of church functions. It was additionally reported that the Church has been used for kindergarten, harvest suppers, and multiple other activities that take place in Cabot, and that the Town maintains the clock located in the steeple.

The question was called to end of the discussion and the motion passed.

**Article 17 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$46,000 to support the Cabot Fire Department?** A motion was moved and seconded to approve Article 17. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**Article 18 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$74,000 to support the Cabot Library?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 18. Library Committee member Beth Wade reported that the reason for the increase in the library budget resulted from providing the full-time library director health care benefits as the Town provides for all other full-time employees. **Motion passed.**

**Article 19 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$20,000 to support the maintenance of the Cabot cemeteries?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 19. **Motion passed.**

**Article 20 Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$15,000 to support the Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 20. **Motion passed.**

**Article 21 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$500 to support the Cabot Senior Citizens group?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 21. **Motion passed.**

**Article 22 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$8,000 to support The Cabot Chronicle?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 22. **Motion passed.**

**Article 23 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$13,000 to support the Cabot Recreation Committee?** Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to amend Article 23 by reducing the amount from \$13,000 to \$11,000. The amendment was seconded and approved. **A motion was then made to approve the amended Article which was seconded and passed.**

**Article 24 - Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$350 to purchase flags for Memorial Day?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 24. **Motion passed.**

**Article 25 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the sum of \$1,000 to support the Cabot Conservation Fund?** It was moved and seconded to approve Article 25. **Motion passed.**

**Article 26 – Art. 26. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the following sums for the following purposes?**

A.	American Red Cross	\$ 500.00
B.	Aquatic Nuisance Control Project at Joe's Pond	1000.00
C.	A.W.A.R.E.	750.00
D.	Capstone Community Action Council	300.00
E.	Central Vermont Adult Basic Education	1,200.00
F.	Central Vermont Council on Aging	1,600.00
G.	Central Vermont Economic Development Corp	300.00
H.	Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice	2,900.00
I.	CIRCLE	600.00
J.	Family Center of Washington County	500.00
K.	Friends of the Winooski River	300.00
L.	Good Beginnings of Central Vermont	300.00
M.	Green Up Vermont	100.00
N.	Home Share Now	150.00
O.	Kingdom Animal Shelter	500.00
P.	Onion River Food Shelf	1,000.00

Q.	Peoples.Health and Wellness Clinic	100.00
R.	Sexual Assault Crisis Team	350.00
S.	Twin Valley Senior Center	2,000.00
T.	Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired	300.00
U.	Vermont Center for Independent Living	165.00
V.	Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force	100.00
W.	Washington County Youth Service Bureau	250.00
X.	Washington County Mental Health	1,600.00
Y.	West Danville Community Club	500.00
Z.	Woodbury-Calais Food Shelf	235.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$ 17,600.00</u></b>

The Moderator asked the rules be suspended to not read each requested appropriation. This was approved by voice vote. The Moderator then asked if there were any items the voters wished to omit or change on the list? A question was asked about eliminating item O---Kingdom Animal Shelter---because this organization already receives a lot of help from Cabot residents and it was suggested that we delete this item. A motion was made to keep item O. on the list. **The motion was seconded and passed.**

Referencing item Z, the question was asked why Cabot supports food shelves in other towns? It was explained that some people feel more comfortable going to a food shelf in another town rather than being seen in Cabot and that many people rely on these other food shelves for support.

A motion was made and seconded to accept these appropriations in the amount of \$17,600.00. **Motion passed.**

**Article 27 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the sum of \$1,133,300.00 to repair and maintain the highways of the Town including summer, winter and special treatment, of which an estimated \$564,000.00 is to come from income and \$569,300.00 from local taxes?** A motion was made and seconded to approve Article 27. Following discussion an Amendment was made and seconded to remove \$25,000 from the budget. Selectboard Chair, Jack Daniels, stated that per our agreement with Mike Cookson, we are under a contractual obligation to pave the area between garage and road which is a fire lane between the Willey building and his garage. Jack stated that the Town does not own the fire lane and should this motion pass there would be no funds available for other paving projects this year. A vote taken on the Amendment to reduce the budget by \$25,000 was defeated 17 to 33. The Moderator then asked if there was any further discussion. A question was asked why the Selectboard chose to go for a UDAG loan instead of a bond? The Selectboard Chair responded that this financial route was selected because the Town would be able to save cost on interest by executing a loan instead of a bond. The Selectboard Chair stated that Interest from UDAG investments would be used to pay the loan off each year, thereby preserving UDAG funds for future use. **The Question was called and the motion to approve Article 27 was passed.**

**Article 28 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the sum of \$594,800.00 to defray the general expenses of the Town, with an estimated \$263,400.00 to come from income and \$331,400.00 from local taxes?** A motion was made and seconded to approve Article 28. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to amend the budget from \$594,800 to \$592,800 resulting from the Recreation Committee budget being reduced by \$2,000. The amendment was seconded and approved. **It was then moved to approve the amended Article which passed.**

**Article 29 – Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot authorize the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District to appropriate and expend a budget of \$716,673.00, at no expense to the Town of Cabot? [Australian Ballot] It**

was noted by the Moderator that according to the Article this budget is completely financed by NKWMD at no cost to the Town. **The motion was made, seconded, and passed.**

**Article 30 - To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.** The Moderator opened the meeting for further discussion, noting that no further actions can be approved by those assembled as they have not been Warned.

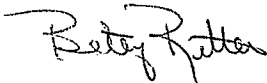
It was suggested that the Town's Internal Auditors should audit the Town's financial accounts. Internal Auditor Cecilia Gulka explained that there are many challenges to doing this, primarily resulting from the Town's financial year being on a calendar year ending December 31<sup>st</sup>. Cecelia also noted that a financial audit is completed annually by an external auditing firm.

A suggestion was made to have all future Willey Building expenditures approved by Australian Ballot. The Moderator noted that a petition would be required to initiate this change. It was reported by the Town Clerk that no petitions were received last year.

The Moderator recognized and thanked the Cabot Fire Department and the Cabot Ambulance Service for the great work they do serving and protecting all of us. The Moderator closed by thanking everyone for attending the 2016 Cabot Town Meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the 2016 Cabot Town Meeting. It was seconded. Motion carried and the 2016 Town Meeting was adjourned.

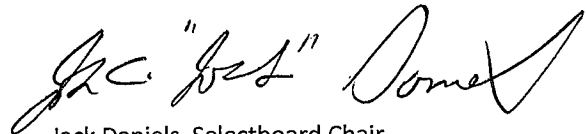
Respectfully submitted, Betty Ritter, Town Clerk/Treasurer



Approved by:



Ed Smith, Moderator



Jack Daniels, Selectboard Chair