

# MINUTES FOR 2012

## PUTNEY TOWN AND PUTNEY SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Virginia Scholl at The Putney Central School in Putney at 10:10 AM on Tuesday, March 6, 2012 to act upon the following Articles. Polls were open from 10 AM to 7 PM at the school.

The Moderator introduced Representatives David Deen, Mike Mrowicki, and Senator Jeanette White. David Deen said he serves as chair on the Fish, Wildlife & Water Resource Committee and is in the House and Rules Committee. He said that Dummerston, Putney & Westminster will continue to have two Representatives and that it has been that way since the 1960's. We passed in the house a bill against Hydro Fracturing for gas and oil in Vermont.

Mike Mrowicki spoke about the ongoing processes with the health care system. He said that he felt that the Federal Government was taking away the states and towns control with the results from the most recent lawsuit concerning Vermont Yankee.

Senator Jeanette White complimented the town on the town report. She spoke about the Senate Redistricting Committee that is done every ten years and is based on population changes. She said that the Judiciary Committee is working on the large amount of people that are incarcerated in Vermont. In the Government Operations Committee they are dealing with public records, open meetings and vital records.

Scott Henry announced that with a great deal of regret the select-board accepted the resignation of the Town Manager, Chris Ryan as of June 30 of this year. He also said that there will be a closing on the Wilson Wetlands. Pamela Cabbage said no tax dollars were used to purchase the property and thanked everyone that helped with special thanks to Pauline Wilson.

Scott Henry introduced the Person of the Year which was not going to an individual but a couple John and Hester (Hep) Caldwell. Josh Laughlin read a statement from Gov. Peter Shumlin saying how John and Hep are the true masters of community.

**Article 1:** To choose all Town Officers required by law to be elected at the Annual Town Meeting. *(voting by Australian ballot)*

Town Officers Elected:	
Moderator	Virginia Scholl
Selectperson for 3 years	R. Scott Henry
Lister for 3 years	Ruby McAdoo
Town Grand Juror	Judy Hannum
Town Grand Juror	Henry Farnum
Town Agent	Carol Westing
Cemetery Commissioner for 3 years	Keith Fletcher
Cemetery Commissioner for 1 year	Joan Bowman

**Article 2:** To choose all Town School District Officers required by law to be elected at the Annual School District Meeting. *(voting by Australian ballot)*

Town School District Officers Elected:	
Union School Director for 3 years	Melanie Fletcher
School Director for 3 years	Sarah Mellowship
School Director for 1 year	Melanie Fletcher
School Director for 1 year	Mark Schlefer

**Article 3:** The Board of School Directors of the Putney Town School District proposes to incur bonded indebtedness for Phase 3 of the Energy Conservation Project which consists of installation of a pellet boiler and back-up oil-fired boiler with new controls, consolidation of three separate boiler rooms by the removal and re-piping of two boiler rooms, and the renovation/expansion of one boiler room. Additional work includes reconfiguration of the boiler room, kitchen and associated spaces; a new airlock vestibule; blown-in insulation; replacement of siding; upgrading of wiring and alarm system as required in areas of renovation, and other work at the elementary school, the estimated total project cost of \$900,000. It is estimated that one hundred percent of the project will not be eligible for state school construction aid. Therefore, the one hundred percent of the project that is estimated to be ineligible under the formula shall be built at 100% school district cost. The cost of the portion of construction for which state construction aid is unavailable is \$900,000. **The vote on the foregoing article will be by Australian ballot as required by law.** The question to be voted upon will be as follows:

“Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Putney Town School District in an amount not to exceed Eight Hundred Forty Thousand Dollars (\$840,000) be issued for the purpose of financing the cost of making certain public improvements, viz; Phase 3 of the Energy Conservation Improvement Project which consists of installation of a pellet boiler and back-up oil-fired boiler with new controls, consolidation of three separate boiler rooms by the removal and re-piping of two boiler rooms, and the renovation/expansion of one boiler room. Additional work includes reconfiguration of the boiler room, kitchen and associated spaces; a new airlock vestibule; blown-in insulation; replacement of siding; upgrading of wiring and alarm system as required in areas of renovation, and other work at the elementary school, the estimated cost of such improvements being Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$900,000), to be paid in part through the application of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) from the District’s capital improvement fund?”

Bengie Cragin told about the work that had been completed and what Phase 3 was going to do to help make the school more efficient. **PASSED** (Results 214 Yes, 79 No)

**Article 4:** To see if the Town will accept the report of the last Town Meeting. Tom Ehrenberg moved the motion and it was seconded by Jacquie Walker. Ellen Kaye made a friendly amendment to change the word firm to affirm on page 57, in the fourth paragraph. The original mover accepted and the Article was amended. **ACCEPTED**

**Article 5:** To see if the Town will accept the Auditors’ report. Brad King moved the motion and it was seconded by Scott Henry. **ACCEPTED**

**Article 6:** To elect Trustees of the Putney Public Library. Paul LeVasseur first thanked Nita Harrison and Mary Lou Treat for their service on the board. He made a motion to elect Rebecca Nixon and Abijah Reed and it was seconded by Nancy Storrow.

Elected:  
Rebecca Nixon  
Abijah Reed

**Article 7:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt the East Putney Community Club (Pierce’s Hall) from municipal and educational taxation, on the land and all improvements and appurtenances at Lot 08-02-15, 121 East Putney Falls Road, for a period of five years, beginning April 1, 2012, as authorized by 32 VSA, Section. 3832 (7). Josh Laughlin moved the motion and it was seconded by Ann Kerrey. Ann Kerrey said that Pierce’s Hall continues to be actively used for dances and pot luck dinners. **APPROVED**

**Article 8:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt the Windham Housing Trust (landowner) and Putney Cares (owner of buildings) from municipal and educational taxation, on the land and all improvements and appurtenances at Lot 07-04-18, 52 Kimball Hill, for a period of five years, beginning April 1, 2012, as authorized by 32 VSA, Section. 3832 (7). Brad King moved the motion and it was seconded by Elizabeth Stead. Susan Kochinkas made an amendment to change the Article to read Windham & Windsor Housing Trust. It was seconded by Stuart Strothman and the amendment was passed. **APPROVED**

**Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to exempt the Putney Historical Society from municipal and educational taxation, on the land and all improvements and appurtenances at Lot 30-50-26, improvements, 15 Kimball Hill Road, (former United Church of Christ, now also called Next Stage) for a period of five years, beginning April 1, 2012, as authorized by 32 VSA, Section 3832 (7). Scott Henry moved the motion and it was seconded by Stuart Strothman. Nancy Olson made an amendment to the Article to read United Church of Putney and it was seconded by Beth Muskat. The amendment was passed. **APPROVED**

**Article 10:** To see if the Town will vote to approve the 2012-2013 Sewer Fund budget as outlined in the 2011 Town Report. Josh Laughlin moved the motion and it was seconded by Scott Henry. **APPROVED**

**Article 11:** To see if the Town will authorize the Selectboard, acting as Sewer Commissioners, to borrow an amount not to exceed \$100,000, for improvements to the headworks and chemical feed building at the Putney Wastewater System, to be repaid over a period of not more than five years. Brad King moved the motion and it was seconded by Scott Henry. Chris Ryan said that the improvements were necessary because after the last inspection we almost ended up with a major fine for the poor conditions. **APPROVED**

**Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to approve the 2012 Capital Plan, as presented in the 2011 Town Report. Scott Henry moved the motion and it was seconded by Josh Laughlin. Josh Laughlin said that the sidewalk project was out to bid and they will be reviewing them on the Friday and they hope to start the project this spring. Tom Ehrenberg wanted to know if they could hold off on the replacement of one of the Mack trucks. Josh Laughlin said that Mack offers a buy back program which guarantees us a set price and waiting will decrease the amount that is received. Eva Mondon called the question and it passed. **APPROVED**

**Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Se-

lectboard to borrow an amount not to exceed \$125,000, for the purchase of a replacement for a 2002 Mack Truck, to be repaid over a period of not more than five years. Josh Laughlin moved the motion and it was seconded by Brad King. **APPROVED**

**Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate an amount of money necessary to defray its expenses and liabilities for the ensuing fiscal year (July 1, 2012- June 30, 2013), and if so how much. Brad King moved the motion in the amount of \$1,738,357 and it was seconded by Scott Henry. Pamela Cabbage asked how they reduced the health care expense. Chris Ryan said they switched from Health Savings Accounts to a Health Reimbursement Account, so the money stays with the town rather than the employee. Kate Dodge said she wants to make her annual motion to increase the budget for the non-profit donations by \$1000 proportionally over all of the agencies and it was seconded by Jean Giddings. The amendment was passed. (\$1,739,357) **APPROVED**

**Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to clarify the terms and conditions of individual funds administered by the Town, as follows:

Fund Name	Source of Funding	Fund use	Spending Authorization
Capital Reserve Fund	Town Meeting appropriations	Projects and equipment on approved capital plan	Direct voter approval, or Selectboard approval for public works, as allowed by VT statute
Public Safety Reimbursement Fund	Fire Service Ordinance billings and non-profit gifts	Fire Station debt service: balances in excess of debt service for approved public safety expenses	Direct voter approval, or Selectboard approval for public safety expenses

Scott Henry moved the motion and it was seconded by Josh Laughlin. Jacquie Walker made an amendment to the Public Safety, Source of Funding to designated non-profit and it was seconded by Steven Anderson. Arthur Westing made a friendly amendment to so designated non-profit and it was accepted. It will now read Fire Service, Ordinance billings and so designated non-profit gifts. Tom Ehrenberg said he believes that both raised and appropriated money should appear in the budget and be voted on at town meeting. Lyssa Papazian said she thinks that the Article puts more restriction on these funds to be used to defray Public Safety. Eva Mondon called the question. **PASSED**

**Article 16:** Whereas the people of the Town of Putney understand that indefinite detention without charges or access to an attorney is illegal and signifies abandonment of basic constitutional values, we, the people of Putney, abhor and reject this breach of law. Greenhoe Nowakoski moved the motion and it was seconded by Arthur Westing. Arthur Westing made an amendment to include at the end of this Article more over we instruct the town selectboard to inform the President as well as our two

senators and one representative of congress of this action. It was seconded by Chris Irion and the amendment was passed.

Whereas the people of the Town of Putney understand that indefinite detention without charges or access to an attorney is illegal and signifies abandonment of basic constitutional values, we, the people of Putney, abhor and reject this breach of law. Moreover, we instruct the Town Selectboard to inform the President as well as our two Senators and one Representative of Congress of this action. **PASSED**

**Article 17:** Whereas within the borders of the Town of Putney, Vermont, the people of Putney declare that Corporations are not people and shall not now or ever enjoy the rights of personhood. Mike Mrowicki moved the Article and it was seconded by Tiffin Mabry. Arthur Westing amended the Article to add more over we instruct the Town Selectboard to inform the President as well as our two Senators and one Representative in Congress of this action. It was seconded by Laura Campbell and it was passed. Meg Mott said the word corporation is in itself not problematic nor is the word person necessarily innocent. Corporations have had recognition of rights under the constitution since 1886 and person is used in slavery agreements. Jeanette White said do we want corporations spending large amounts of money to influence elections. The issue of personhood that would come out of the State would be two resolutions. One might be something like; the rights of corporations and how they are protected or not protected, and the other is how corporations are held accountable for the money they spend on an election. Emily Peyton believes that just because things were enacted 100's of years ago we should not let them slide. Ellen Kaye made a friendly amendment to change the wording to a natural person and it was accepted. Kate Dodge made an amendment to remove "within the borders of the Town of Putney, Vermont", it was seconded by Abijah Reed and it was passed. Maggie Cassidy said she doesn't like the wording of this Article and that it implies that the supreme courts decision doesn't apply to us. We should have our legislature look for ways to hold both individuals and corporations accountable for their contributions. Steve Fitch thinks that this complex issue will not be solved with a simplistic resolution; he likes the idea of limiting the funds on elections. Eva Mondon called the question. Whereas the people of Putney, VT declare that Corporations are not people and shall not now or ever enjoy the rights of a natural person, more over we instruct the town selectboard to inform the President, as well as our two Senators and one Representative of Congress of this action. **PASSED** (47 yes, 39 no)

**Article 18:** To transact any other town business that may legally come before the Annual Town Meeting. Steve Anderson moved a resolution, In light of the United State Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision that equates money with speech and gives corporations rights constitutionally intended for natural persons, the citizens of Putney, Vermont vote to urge the Vermont General Assembly and the U.S. Congress to propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which affirms that money is not speech and which places strict limits on the use of corporate funds in state and national elections, it was seconded by Laura Campbell. Tom Ehrenberg made an amendment to include personal funds and it was seconded by Maggie Cassidy. The amendment and the resolution both **PASSED**.

Dan Foster spoke about the Putney Recreation League needing more members. They ran the K-6 grade sports programs and the

sports clinic.

Jacquie Walker moved a resolution, Whereas the people of the Town of Putney appreciate the importance of a vibrant downtown, we extend our gratitude to the proprietors of the Front Porch Café for their many contributions to the community, and express the hope that their shoes will soon be filled by someone equally committed to the spirit of our town it was seconded by Jean Giddings. **PASSED**

Eva Mondon moved a resolution in the support of Bob Nassau and Kurt Wagenbach on their bike ride for the Boys and Girls Club, it was seconded. **PASSED**

Emily Peyton moved a resolution; Whereas The people of Putney Vermont express their unified support for Vermont's elected Government to continue their work on Vermont's movement towards systematic monetary improvements to benefit the economic stability of Vermont. Therefore we the people of Putney Vermont, express our full support of H0542, a bill in the VT senate to study the feasibility of a Vermont Public bank, and as well our support for H.0361

An act relating to Vermont dollars which seeks to create a state-wide currency. S.0204 An act relating to creating an expert panel on the creating an expert panel on the creation of a state bank, S.247 Title: AN ACT RELATING TO ESTABLISHING THE VERMONT GREEN TRUST, it was seconded by Alice Maes. **DEFEATED**

**Article 19:** To determine what salaries the Putney Town School District will pay its officers and directors. Anne Fines moved the motion to pay its officers and directors \$800, and it was seconded by Mary Lou Treat. **APPROVED**

**Article 20:** To see if the Putney Town School District will authorize its School Board to accept and expend categorical grants and aid received from the State of Vermont or the United States government. Zoe Parker moved the motion and it was seconded by Laura Campbell. Arthur Westing made an amendment to include, or other sources public and private, it was seconded by Elizabeth Christie. The amendment was passed. **PASSED**

**Article 21:** To see if the Putney Town School District, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §2804 will deposit a portion of the unreserved and undesignated fund balance for the year ended June 30, 2011 to be deposited into the District's Education Reserve Fund in the amount of Twelve Thousand Six Hundred Fourteen Dollars (\$12,614) for the purpose of operating the school. (24 V.S.A. §2804). Bengie Cragin moved the motion and it was seconded by Jacquie Walker. **APPROVED**

**Article 22:** To determine whether the Putney Town School District will vote to raise and appropriate an amount of money necessary to defray its expenses and liabilities for the ensuing fiscal year (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013) and if so, in what amount. Bengie Cragin moved the motion to raise and appropriate the amount of \$3,466,333 and it was seconded by J.G. McAllister.

Bengie Cragin explained some of the big changes in the budget. Maggie Cassidy wanted to applaud the school board and the community for supporting the pre-school program. Kate Dodge noted that on pages 42 through 47 the third column should be

2011-2012. Jeanette White said the tax rate is only an estimate, they are not done yet.

**APPROVED**

**Article 23:** To determine whether the Putney Town School District will authorize the School Board to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. Melanie Fletcher moved the motion and it was seconded by Tom Howe.

**APPROVED**

**Article 24:** To transact any other school business that may legally come before the Annual School District Meeting. Benjie Cragin moved the motion and he thanked Anne Fines for her 13 years on the school board. Eva Mondon asked that people give a hand in cleaning up after the meeting. Jacquie Walker thanked and congratulated Virginia Scholl as our new moderator. Tom Ehrenberg thanked Tony Coven; he will be retiring this year and will be missed. Maggie Cassidy made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Nancy Olson.

Adjourned @ 3:00PM, March 6, 2012, at Putney, Windham County, Vermont

**PUTNEY SELECTBOARD**

R. Scott Henry, Chair; Joshua D. Laughlin, Bradley M. King

**PUTNEY SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTORS**

Benjamin Cragin, Chair; Anne Fines, Mark Schlefer, Zoe Parker, Melanie Fletcher



*New Main Street Sidewalk Constructed Summer 2012*