

**MINUTES of
MARCH 2008 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Town of Cooper, Maine**

7:00 pm: The Cooper Annual Town Meeting comes to order with Teresa Viselli, Town Clerk, presiding. The Officer's Return is read.

Election of Officers

- ART. 1. Neal Hallee is nominated and elected unanimously as Moderator for the meeting. The town Clerk swears in Neal Hallee.
- ART. 2. Ann Marie Flood is nominated and elected unopposed as Town Clerk. Neal Hallee, Moderator, swears in Ann Marie Flood.
- ART. 3. Town is referred to Selectmen's report in the Annual Report.
- ART. 4. Betty Tibbetts, Teresa Viselli, and Jeff Crowe are nominated and elected unopposed as 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Selectmen for the Town.
- ART. 5. The town votes to hire Brenda Gove as an Assessor's Agent at a cost of \$4,000 and purchase the necessary software program license at a cost of \$1,000, with both amounts to be drawn from the Administration budget. In discussion, it was noted that Ms. Gove has been recommended and has experience with other local towns.
- ART. 6. Chris McCormick, Dan Ackley, & Lynn Brown are nominated and elected unopposed as 1st, 2nd & 3rd Assessors for the Town.
- ART. 7. Ann Marie Flood is nominated and elected unopposed as Treasurer for the ensuing year.
- ART. 8. Angie Boisvert was nominated and elected unopposed to serve on the Superintending School Committee.
- ART. 9. Ann Marie Flood is nominated and elected unopposed as Tax Collector for the ensuing year.
- ART. 10. John Viselli is nominated and elected unopposed as Constable for the ensuing year.

Various Budget Articles

- ART. 11. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$6800 for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), including the Marion Transfer Station and the maintenance of the closed Town dump.
- ART. 12. The Town voted to reduce taxes by dedicating State Road Assistance funds to general capital upgrades of Town roads.
- ART. 13. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$84,400 for Highways and Bridges for the ensuing year.
- ART. 14. The Town voted to raise and appropriate excise taxes plus the balance from the General Fund for Administrative and Contingent Expenses for the ensuing year.
- ART. 15. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$6,000 plus balance from General Fund for Liability and Workmen's Compensation Insurance for all Town employees and Town officers.
- ART. 16. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$2500 for maintenance for the Cooper Volunteer Fire Department for the ensuing year.
- ART. 17. The Town voted to raise and appropriate a sum of \$624.54 per year to insure all Cooper volunteer firefighter through April 2009, with

any balance for new firefighters to be drawn from the General Fund.

- ART. 18. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$500 for the Town Recreation, including maintenance and sanitary services for the Town Beach area.
- ART. 19. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 Town Welfare for the ensuing year, plus emergency payment if necessary from the General Fund.
- ART. 20. The Town authorized the Selectmen to continue membership in the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG) at their discretion, drawing the \$250 membership fee from Administration funds. In discussion, the question was raised as to what the benefit is to the Town for continuing this membership. Stuart Shotwell indicated that membership in the WCCOG allowed access to help with grants as well as help in developing a comprehensive plan. Stuart also noted that membership allows an avenue to network with other local Towns. Jon Reisman indicated that he did not believe that the WCCOG is interested in helping Towns lower taxes. Stuart took issue with this. Article was approved as written with 1 opposition.
- ART. 21. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$2,500 and reallocate \$10,000 reserved in 2004 in a fund for Legal and Advocacy Representation to Lower the Tax Burden, in order to hire the Washington County Council of Governments to prepare a comprehensive plan for the Town. In discussion, the suggestion was made to have a ballot vote on this Article. Joyce Mykleby spoke of the pros of having WCCOG develop the comprehensive plan. The Planning Board gave recommendation for this to be approved. Jon Reisman indicated that this originally was the money that was passed when considering de-organization. Ronnie Flood indicated that his recollection was that this was the money originally set aside for the salt and sand shed. Dave Timpe indicated he thought the money was for legal fees regarding de-organization. A total of 39 votes were cast with 24 Yes and 15 No, and therefore the Article was approved as written.

Payment of Officers and Employees

- ART. 22. The Town voted to pay the Selectmen the usual \$1500, \$750, and \$750, for first, second, and third Selectmen, respectively, for the ensuing year.
- ART. 23. The Town voted to pay the Assessors half of the usual payment, that is, a final amount of \$750, \$375, and \$375 for first, second, and third Assessors, respectively, for the ensuing year. In discussion, the Town Assessors volunteered to forego any payment for the ensuing year to help with the cost of the audit program needed by Brenda Gove. It was noted that some compensation for the positions was advisable, if only because the Assessors are technically agents of the State. A motion was made from the floor to pay \$200 per Assessor for the ensuing year—this was defeated

- 17/18. John Viselli moved to pay half of last year's salary to Assessors. This motion was approved with 2 opposed.
- ART. 24. The Town voted to pay the Treasurer \$1600 for the ensuing year.
- ART. 25. The Town voted to pay the Town Clerk \$750 for the ensuing year.
- ART. 26. The Town voted to pay \$4500 for the Collection of Taxes for the ensuing year. There was discussion on raising the salary of the Tax Collector. It was noted that all salaries of Town employees have been the same for years. It was determined that one salary increase should not be considered without reviewing all salaries. The suggestion was that Selectmen should review the salaries and if appropriate place an Article on the June town meeting.
- ART. 27. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$1950 for the mowing of cemeteries for the ensuing year, which includes \$1800 per their original bid, plus a \$75 fuel increase in 2008, plus a retroactive \$75 increase for 2007.
- ART. 28. The Town voted to pay Town Labor for the ensuing year according to the Selectmen's recommendation: for laborers, \$15 per hour; for laborers using their own powered equipment (for example, trucks, chainsaws) an additional \$5 per hour in addition to fuel costs; for election workers and other non-physical labor, minimum wage; and other rates where applicable shall be as given by the Maine Department of Labor Wage Rates for Construction in Washington County. Dave Timpe raised a question as to how people are hired to perform town work. Selectmen indicated that anyone interested can contact a Selectman; it is actually difficult to find laborers. It was also noted that minimum wage has increased or will soon increase from \$7.00 per hour to \$7.25 per hour.

Proposed Ordinance

- ART. 29. The Town enacted an ordinance entitled "Moratorium Ordinance Regarding Subdivision Development" with 2 opposed.

Marion Transfer Station (MTS) Bylaws

- ART. 30. The Town voted to approved updated bylaws for the operation of Marion Transfer Station, Inc. In discussion, John Viselli asked if by approving proposed bylaws we are in any way supporting the proposed landfill. Stuart Shotwell indicated he did not believe that by passing this the town was signing on to the new demo dump.

Various Standard and Administrative Articles

- ART. 31. The Town voted to have all taxes due and payable at a certain date, and interest charged on all taxes paid thereafter.
- ART. 32. The Town voted to fix the date and interest mentioned in Article 31 at December 1 and 10 percent, respectively.
- ART. 33. Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to sell any real estate on which the Town holds tax liens and on which the liens have foreclosed.
- ART. 34. The Town voted to authorize and direct the Tax Collector and Treasurer, pursuant to Title 36, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated,

section 906, to apply any tax payment received from an individual as payment for any property tax against outstanding or delinquent taxes due on said property in chronological order beginning with the oldest unpaid tax bill; provided, however, that no such payment may be applied to any tax for which an abatement or appeal is pending unless approved in writing by the taxpayer.

ART. 35. The Town voted to pass the following resolution: Resolved that the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen or a majority thereof, is hereby authorized to borrow from time to time in anticipation of taxes for the taxable year commencing April 1, 2008, a total sum not to exceed \$30,000.00 and for such purpose to issue and sell the Promissory Note or Notes of the Town, Note or Notes to be in such form to bear interest at such Note, and to be payable at such date, within the taxable year in which they are issued as the Selectmen or a majority thereof may approve and be paid out of money raised by taxation during the year, the money from the notes to be used for the purposes for which the Town may legally incur debt.

ART. 36. The Town authorized the Selectmen serving in FY 2008–2009 to contract for winter maintenance for a period of one, two, or three years, at their discretion.

ART. 37. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to spend an amount not to exceed 1 / 12th of the budgeted amount in each budget category of the Town of Cooper during the period from March 1, 2009, to the Cooper Annual Town Meeting.

ART. 38. The Town voted to accept the categories of funds listed below as provided by the Maine State Legislature. (Amounts shown are estimates only.)

Education Subsidies	\$128,297
Municipal Revenue Sharing	\$12,900
Local Road Assistance	\$12,900
Snowmobile Registration Fund	\$50
Gasoline Tax Refund	\$325
Tree Growth Reimbursement	\$10,000
Veterans Reimbursement	\$100
Property Tax Relief	\$313
Homestead Reimbursement	\$4,600
General Assistance Reimbursement	

(50 percent of Town cost)

ART. 39. The Town voted to authorize the Tax Collector to accept advance taxes for FY 2008.

Payments to Third Parties

ART. 40. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$2,250 as its yearly stipend for emergency ambulance (rescue) services from Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority.

ART. 41. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$300 for Septic Services in 2008 and \$300 for its overdue bill for 2007. In discussion, it was

suggested that the Town should perhaps hire Preston's to perform this service. The issue of price and whether Preston's had a dumping location was raised. It was suggested that this be investigated for next year.

- ART. 42. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$315 as sustaining dues for the Washington County Soil and Conservation District.
- ART. 43. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to transfer money reimbursed by the State of Maine from Snowmobile Registration to the Breakneck Mountain Snow Riders Snowmobile Club for the purpose of maintaining local trails.
- ART. 44. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for prevention of domestic violence (Next Step). Article was approved as read with 1 opposed.
- ART. 45. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 to support the services of the Washington County Children's Program for children with disabilities. Article approved as read with 1 opposed.
- ART. 46. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 to support the Washington County Association for Retarded Citizens for adults with disabilities.
- ART. 47. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for the Dennys River Watershed Council.
- ART. 48. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for the Cathance Lake Association.
- ART. 49. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$302 for the Washington-Hancock Community Agency (WHCA).
- ART. 50. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$105 for the Calais Free Library.
- ART. 51. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$231 for Community Health and Counseling Services (CHCS). Article approved as read with 1 opposed.
- ART. 52. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$120 for Downeast Health Services' Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC).
- ART. 53. The Town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for Literacy Volunteers of Washington County (LVWC). Article approved as read with 2 opposed.

At approximately 9:10 pm the Officers are sworn in and the meeting is adjourned.

I certify that the above minutes are a correct copy of the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town of Cooper, March 24, 2008.

Ann Marie Flood, Town Clerk