

Minutes

FOR THE MARCH 2012 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Town of Cooper, Maine

28 Citizens of the Town of Cooper in the County of Washington, State of Maine who are qualified to vote, did assemble at the Cathance Grange Hall/Cooper Community Center in said town on Monday the 26th of March, 2012, at 7 P.M., to vote on the following articles:

Election of Officers

- ART. 1. To choose a Moderator to preside at said meeting.
(To be sworn in by Town Clerk.)
MOTION: To nominate Neal Hallee
MADE BY: John Viselli SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 5 votes cast, Neal Hallee won and was sworn in by Sandra Lyon
- ART. 2. To choose a Town Clerk.
(To be sworn in by Moderator.)
MOTION: To nominate Sandra Lyon
MADE BY: Ann Marie Flood SECONDED: Peggy Hallee
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 7 votes cast, Sandra Lyon won and was sworn in by Neal Hallee
- ART. 3. To hear bills and reports.
MOTION: none
MADE BY: n/a SECONDED: n/a
DISCUSSION: Dan Ackley spoke for the planning board.
- ART. 4. To choose three Selectmen.
MOTION: To nominate Donna Timpe
MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Ann Marie Flood
MOTION: To nominate Micah Perkins
MADE: yes SECONDED: yes
MOTION: John Viselli
MADE BY: Ann Marie Flood SECONDED: yes
- VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: for 1st Select man
20 votes cast, Micah Perkins won
- VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: for another Select Board position
21 votes cast, John Viselli won
- VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: for another Select Board position
14 votes cast, Donna Timpe won
- Moderator: asked if the visitors present will be allowed to speak on pertinent issues; vote by show of hands, will the Town allow Brenda Gove to speak? Unanimous approval.
- ART. 5. To see if the Town will hire Brenda Gove to be an Assessor's Agent for the ensuing year at a cost of \$5,200 plus a licensing fee of \$1,123. Total reflects \$200 increase from the previous year.
MOTION: Accept as read
MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Stuart Shotwell
DISCUSSION: None

VOTE BY show of hands: Unanimous, the article passed.

ART. 6. To choose three Assessors of Taxes.

MOTION: To nominate Norm Howe

MADE: yes SECONDED: yes

DISCUSSION: We will vote for each position, but one at a time.

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 16 votes were cast, Norm Howe Won.

MOTION: to nominate Dave Timpe

MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Norm Howe

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 12 votes were cast, Dave Timpe won.

MOTION: To nominate Scott Jamieson

MADE: yes SECONDED: yes

MOTION: To nominate Dan Ackley: declined by Dan Ackley

MOTION: To nominate Brenda Gove

MADE BY: John Viselli SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: Do you need to be a resident of Cooper to be an Assessor? No, you don't, was the reply.

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 22 votes were cast, Scott Jamieson won the position.

ART. 7. To choose a Town Treasurer.

MOTION: To nominate Ann Marie Flood

MADE: yes SECONDED: yes

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 12 votes were cast, Ann Marie Flood won.

ART. 8. To choose one or more of the Superintending School Committee.

Select Board note: This is a three year term.

MOTION: To nominate Erica Perkins

MADE BY: Ann Marie Flood SECONDED: Norm Howe

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 13 votes were cast, Erica Perkins won.

ART. 9. To choose a Collector of Taxes for the ensuing year.

MOTION: To nominate Ann Marie Flood

MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Scott Jamieson

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 10 votes were cast, Ann Marie Flood won.

ART. 10. To choose a Constable for the ensuing year.

MOTION: To nominate Scott Jamieson

MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Ann Marie Flood

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 6 votes were cast, Scott Jamieson won.

ART. 11. To choose a Road Commissioner for the ensuing year.

MOTION: To nominate Ronnie Flood

MADE BY: Dave Timpe SECONDED: Jessie Timpe

VOTE BY SECRET BALLOT: 13 votes were cast, Ronnie Flood won.

NOTE: Town officers will be sworn in at the end of open Town meeting.

Various Budget Articles

- ART. 12. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), including the Marion Transfer Station and the maintenance of the closed Town dump.
 (Selectmen recommend \$10,000 plus balance from General Fund.)
 MOTION: as stated above
 MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
 DISCUSSION: None
 VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 21 in favor, none opposed
 Passed as written
- ART. 13. To see if the Town will reduce taxes by dedicating State Road Assistance funds to general capital upgrades of Town roads.
Explanation of Article 13: State Road Assistance funds *must* be used for capital upgrades to Town roads; this article empowers the Selectmen to apply those funds as necessary. Road Assistance funds received in FY 2011 totaled \$12,984.
 MOTION: as read
 MADE BY: Scott Jamieson SECONDED: Dan Ackley
 DISCUSSION: None
 VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 21 in favor, none opposed
 Passed as written
- ART. 14. To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for Highways and Bridges for the ensuing year. (Selectmen recommend \$88,600)
Explanation of Article 14: The Town receives \$12,984 from State U.R.I.P. for summer maintenance. This amount should be adequate. The recommended winter maintenance is an estimated amount.
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Winter Maintenance</u> | |
| Carried-over 2011 plowing costs | \$15,300 |
| Plowing..... | \$43,300 |
| Salt..... | \$15,000 |
| Sand..... | \$15,000 |
|
Total Winter Maintenance |
\$88,600 |
- MOTION: To raise and appropriate the \$88, 600
 MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
 DISCUSSION: None
 VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 23 in favor, none opposed
 Passed as written
- ART. 15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$6,000 for Administrative and Contingent Expenses for the ensuing year. Explanation of Article 15: Selectmen recommend excise taxes (estimate \$25,000) plus the balance from the General Fund.
 MOTION: To raise and appropriate the recommendation, that we dedicate excise and balance from general fund.
 MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Norm Howe
 DISCUSSION: Micah said we are good with the motion.
 VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 19 in favor
 The motion passed.
- ART. 16. To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for Liability and Workmen's Compensation Insurance for all Town employees and Town officers.
 (Selectmen recommend \$6,000 plus balance from General Fund.)
 MOTION: That we raise and appropriate the \$6,000 plus balance from the general fund.
 MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
 DISCUSSION: None
 VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 23 in favor, none opposed
 Passed as written

- ART. 17. To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for maintenance for the Cooper Volunteer Fire Department for the ensuing year.
(Selectmen recommend \$3,000.)
(Fire Chief Note: this is for equipment improvements, maintenance, and firefighter trainings.)
MOTION: To adopt as read
MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: none
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 23 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.
- ART. 18. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate a sum of \$500 to insure all Cooper volunteer firefighters per year through April 2013, with any balance for new firefighters to be drawn from the General Fund.
MOTION: To raise & appropriate \$500, and draw the balance from the general fund
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 22 in favor, none opposed
Passed as written
- ART. 19. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$500 for the Town Recreation, including maintenance and sanitary services for the Town Beach area.
MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: none
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 23 in favor, none opposed
Passed as written
- ART. 20. To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for Town Welfare for the ensuing year. (Selectmen recommend \$50, plus emergency payment if necessary from the General Fund.)
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: Is this a separate fund or does it go into the general fund? Ann Marie answered: we have separate categories, and we receive 50% of what we spend on Town welfare back from the State.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 20 in favor, none opposed
The article passes.
- ART. 21. To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to continue membership in the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG) at their discretion, drawing the \$250 membership fee from Administration funds.
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: Can't this be part of the administrative expenses? It was listed separately when it was controversial, but the usefulness has been proved this year.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 21 in favor, none opposed
Passed as written
- ART. 22. To see if the Town will vote to exceed the property tax levy limit established for Cooper by State law, due to extraordinary circumstances outside the control of the municipal legislative body; namely reconstruction of Town roads washed out by flooding.
Tax Assessors Note: This article is recommended by Brenda Gove as a standard article consistent with State law.
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Karen Holmes SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: Stuart protests the language of the article. He thinks it could be challenged in court, in future years it could be left out.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 20 in favor, none opposed
Passed as written

ART. 23. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$1,200 to pay for maintenance, heating, plowing, and electric bills at the Cathance Grange Hall/Cooper Community Center. Any remainder will go into a building & maintenance fund.
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Scott Jamieson SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 22 in favor
The article passes.

ART. 24. To see if the Town would agree to obtaining a low interest municipal loan for the purpose of constructing an addition for the Town Office.
(Select Board recommends \$75,000) **Select Board note:** Machias Savings Bank interest rate would be approximately 3%
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Dan Sullivan SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: Jessie asked for clarification. Micah said yes, if the article is approved, the Select Board is authorized to pursue the loan. This is what we would be the voting on. Micah spoke about the need to remove the town business out of our homes, and mentioned the Maine town that was sued. Also a consideration is that we now own this building (the Cathance Grange Hall), and we need to become compliant with the Americans with disabilities act. We also could use the facility as an emergency location if we had an ice storm, prolonged power outage, etc. The building's current condition was surveyed, and it is structurally sound.

Then we looked at grants. That idea did not pan out. When we do get an addition, it will allow us to have plumbing and heating in it. The addition will be modest in size, keeping the cost to us inexpensive. We have estimates, John has been gathering them, and feels comfortable with the price. We will try to come in under the number, but can't promise that. Micah plans to volunteer, and hopes others will too, but we will of course expect to pay those who make a living with construction.

Compared to the Town's expenditures over the last couple of years, this is about in line with that. Long term we are looking to change the kitchen downstairs, enlarging the room, and after that we will hold future meetings down there. This will also allow the Grange the historical use of the upstairs. The Select Board has basically made this the focus of the last year. Micah asked if there were any questions.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 24 in favor, 1 opposed,
The article passes.

Payment of Town Officers and Employees

ART. 25. To see what the Town will vote to pay the Selectmen for the ensuing year.
(Selectmen recommend \$1,500 per Selectman)
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 18 in favor, no opposed
The article passes.

ART. 26. To see what sum the Town will vote to pay the Assessors for the ensuing year.
(Selectmen recommend \$1,000 per Assessor)
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Stuart Shotwell

DISCUSSION: Norm said it is a lot of money for the Town to spend when there is not much to do unless you are the 1st Tax Assessor. But there is not a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, but Dan did do a lot of the work. Norm thinks it would be appropriate to have ½ the money. One person will do the majority of the work.

Donna suggested that we should see how it works out this year and adjust it next year. Jessie wondered if we could amend the motion. Norm said he thinks we should go back to having a 1st, 2nd and 3rd Tax Assessor, and give the person in first the most money. Micah said the Select Board decided to just have one of them be a Chair, and this past year he was the chair. Micah suggested we talk about it for next year. Ronnie said he thinks the process works well this way. We seem to be getting more done this way. Ann Marie said she thinks Norm is worth the \$1000. Several nodded in agreement.

VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 21 in favor, 1 opposed

The article passes.

ART. 27. To see what sum the Town will vote to pay the Treasurer for the ensuing year.

(Selectmen recommend \$3,000)

MOTION: as written

MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 19 in favor, none opposed

The article passes.

ART. 28. To see what sum the Town will vote to pay the Town Clerk for the ensuing year.

(Selectmen recommend \$3,000.)

MOTION: That we pay the Town Clerk \$3,500 for ensueing year.

MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: Jessie Timpe asked if we could increase the amount to \$4,000? Sandy said if it is in the article, we can lower an amount, but not raise it. Stuart said it was not actually part of the article, it was the recommendation.

MOTION: to end discussion

VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 20 in favor, none opposed

Approved at \$3,500 annual salary for the Town clerk.

ART. 29. To see what sum the Town will pay for the Collection of Taxes for the ensuing year.

(Selectmen recommend \$6,500.)

MOTION: \$6,500

MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: none

VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 21 in favor

The article passes.

ART. 30. To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for the mowing of cemeteries for the ensuing year.

(Selectmen recommend \$3,000.)

MOTION: to raise and appropriate the \$3,000

MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 20 in favor

The article passes.

ART. 31. To see what the Town will vote to pay the Town Labor for the ensuing year.

(The table of Maine Department of Labor Wage Rates for Construction in Washington County indicates \$15 per hour for labor. Selectmen recommend \$12 per hour for election workers and other non-physical labor at \$7.50 per hour. Other rates where applicable shall be as given by the Maine Department of Labor Wage Rates for Construction in Washington County.)

MOTION: To accept the Select Board recommendation.
MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: The rhetorical question was asked: Is the town hiring?
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 20 in favor, none opposed
The article passes.

Various Standard and Administrative Articles

- ART. 32. To see if the Town will vote to have all taxes due and payable at a certain date, and interest charged on all taxes paid thereafter.
(Standard article.)
MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: What is date? That will be set in Article # 33.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 18 in favor
The article passed.
- ART. 33. To fix the date and interest mentioned in Article 32.
(The maximum allowed by State law this year is 7 percent. Standard Article)
MOTION: To set the date at Dec. 1 and to use 7% as the interest rate.
MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Dave Timpe
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 18 in favor
The article passed.
- ART. 34. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to sell any real estate on which the Town holds tax liens and on which the liens have foreclosed. (Standard article.)
MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 15 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.
- ART. 35. To see if the Town will vote 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. (Standard article.)
MOTION: accept as written
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 17 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.
- ART. 36. To see whether the Town will vote to pass the following resolution or to take any action with respect thereto: 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, 2012, 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. (Standard article.)
MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Dave Timpe

DISCUSSION: Can someone say what it means? Neal explained it was a standard article. Neal also said that Ann Marie can explain more if anyone wants her to.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.

ART. 37. To see if the Town will vote 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, 2013, to the Cooper Annual Town Meeting. (Standard article.)
MOTION: accept as written
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.

ART. 38. To see if the Town will vote to accept the categories of funds listed below as provided by the Maine State Legislature. (Standard article. Amounts shown are estimates only.)

Education Subsidies	\$4,079
Municipal Revenue Sharing	\$7,315
Local Road Assistance	\$12,984
Snowmobile Registration Fund.....	\$92
Gasoline Tax Refund.....	\$568
Tree Growth Reimbursement	\$12,645
Veterans Reimbursement	\$143
Property Tax Relief	\$313
Homestead Reimbursement	\$2,458
General Assistance Reimbursement	(50 percent of Town cost)

MOTION: That we accept all monies the Maine legislature will pay us!
MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Stuart Shotwell
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor, none opposed
The article passes.

ART. 39. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to accept advance taxes for FY 2012. (Standard article)
MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Jessie Timpe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: Should it be 2012? Or should it be 2012/2013? Ann Marie said it should be 2012/2013, but we can let it stand as written. Norm said it may be a tax advantage for some who pay ahead. Ann Marie said it is confusing. She asked Brenda Gove to clarify. Brenda said Ann Marie was right, next year we will fix it.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor, none opposed.
The article passed.

ART. 40. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the selectmen to make final determinations regarding the closing or opening of roads to winter maintenance pursuant to 23 MRSA 2953. (Standard article)
MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Dave Timpe SECONDED: Jessie Timpe
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor
The article passed.

Payments to Third Parties

ART. 41. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$2,137 as its yearly stipend for emergency ambulance (rescue) services. Balance from General Fund.

MOTION: To raise and appropriate the amount specified.
MADE BY: Stuart Shotwell SECONDED: Scott Jamieson
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor, none opposed
The article passed.

ART. 42. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$300 for Septic Services in 2012.

MOTION: as read
MADE BY: Dan Ackley SECONDED: Stuart Shotwell
DISCUSSION: Stuart asked if are we still paying Bunny? Yes was the answer. Then it was asked if Steve Preston have a similar arrangement? It would be nice to do business with Steve Preston, since he is a local guy. It was agreed to look it for next year, or to ask someone to look into it.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 16 in favor
The article passed.

ART. 43. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$315 as sustaining dues for the Washington County Soil and Conservation District.

MOTION: as written
MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 14 in favor, none opposed.
The article passed.

ART. 44. To see if the Town will 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. (Selectmen estimate around \$50.)

MOTION: accept as written
MADE BY: Danny Sullivan SECONDED: Stuart Shotwell
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 13 in favor, none opposed.
The article passes.

ART. 45. To see if the Town of Cooper will vote to raise \$2,500 for funding of Third party requests, subject to Select Board's approval.

Greenland Point Center	\$500
Washington Hancock Community Agency	\$245
Downeast Health Services	\$245
Catholic Charities / Calais Maine	\$150
American Red Cross, Pine Tree Chapter	\$100
Cathance Lake Association	\$100
Community Health and Counseling Services	\$50
The Lifelight Foundation	\$ _____
Down East AIDS Network	\$ _____
House of Peace	\$ _____

NOTE: Anyone having strong feelings for or against a certain request should bring it to the attention of the Select Board on or before the April 5, 2012 Select Board meeting.

Explanation:

To save time at Town meetings, many other communities authorize the Select Board pay third parties after the requests have been discussed at regularly scheduled Select Board meetings.

MOTION: That we authorize the Select board spent up to \$2,500 as they see fit on these kinds of requests.

MADE BY: Norm Howe SECONDED: Dan Ackley
DISCUSSION: Peggy spoke to the assembly about the CLA request. They need it to apply for a grant. They will be doing the grant this week, so she asks if there is any change, please let them know.
VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS: 18 in favor, none opposed
The article passes.

The moderator asked for elected officials to please come forward to be sworn in.

Discussion: The Select Board will be holding meetings regularly to discuss what we voted on at this annual meeting. All who wish to attend are encouraged to do so.

The Town Clerk swore in the elected officials. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

A TRUE COPY

ATTEST: *Sandra Lyon*

Sandra Lyon
Cooper Town Clerk