



## Special Town Meeting

January 7, 2020

A Special Town Meeting was held on Tuesday, January 7, 2020 after moving to the Town Hall Auditorium due to the large number of attendees. The meeting was attended by the Board of Selectmen including First Selectman Angus McDonald, Selectman Duane Gates and Selectman James Olson. Margo Hilfiger and John Greene video recorded the meeting for broadcast on our public access channel. Democratic Registrar of Voters Lori Gregan was accompanied by her deputy Katie Wright, Republican ROV deputy Tom Lindner and former deputy Karen Abercrombie. In addition there were approximately 200 residents in attendance.

First Selectman Angus McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM. George Eckenroth made a motion to appoint Leonard Rodriguez as Moderator of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ted Mackenzie and was approved by voice vote. Rodriguez appointed Town Clerk Amy Winchell to act as clerk of the meeting who then read the call.

A motion to accept the call as read was made by John Kennedy and seconded by Lori Guerette. The motion was approved by voice vote.

A motion to decide the item of the call by paper ballot for each individual name was made by John Kennedy and seconded by Kathleen Capuciat. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Clerk Winchell explained the paper balloting process for this Town Meeting. As it was an electoral procedure, only registered voters were permitted to vote.

Motion to approve Item #1 was made by Guerette and seconded by Eckenroth.

**To approve actions of the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting of December 10, 2019:**

**Appointments to the Community Health Committee:**

<b>Joanna P. Giuliano: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2021</b>
<b>Carol Jones: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2021</b>
<b>Grace Krick: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2021</b>
<b>Russell G. Marth: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2021</b>

### **Appointments to Planning and Zoning Commission:**

<b>David Basilone: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2022</b>
<b>Chris Desrosiers: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2022</b>
<b>Daphne M. Stroud: alternate member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2022</b>
<b>Cathie Jefferson: alternate member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2021</b>

### **Appointments to Zoning Board of Appeals:**

<b>Donald Grohs: regular member</b>	<b>Term to expire: 12/01/2022</b>
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Discussion: Kennedy requested that, in the future, appointees be present at this meeting to introduce themselves and field questions. Kim Clark read a letter describing her negative experience with former Zoning Enforcement Officer Cathie Jefferson and asked First Selectman Angus McDonald what his intentions were. Jefferson was not present but McDonald spoke to the fact that he and his wife moved to town fifteen years ago, bought and cleaned up a property where they started a business. He stated that they went through the proper process to obtain a Special Permit, as required by regulations, and have continued to operate within the regulations. He was recently re-elected and intends to remain as First Selectman for as long as the Town elects him. Susan Huybensz questioned why the business increased its employee count from 5-25 without further permitting. McDonald explained that the business was originally restricted by lack of sewer. When the sewer system was scheduled to expand to include the business, they went back to P&Z and were successful in getting their special permit modified to allow for such changes. Moderator Rodriguez reminded the audience that FOI requires only items listed on the agenda for a special meeting may be discussed. Robert Ghinder spoke of his negative experience with Jefferson regarding FOI and feels she favored his neighbor. Kennedy asked for an explanation of why these people were chosen to be appointed. McDonald explained that most appointees were incumbents on their boards. Carol Jones was appointed to CHC not only because she is qualified but because her office is adjacent to our Social Services Director and she's already helping her out. The Selectmen agreed that Jefferson is most qualified to serve on P&Z but recognized the controversy with her appointment. Lisa Bibbiani reminded everyone that Jefferson was ZEO with our former First Selectman Richard Smith for 26 years and that they worked together toward the dramatic improvement our

town has seen in that time. Charlie Brashears pointed out that the current Board of Selectmen was just re-elected to do this job and that they should be allowed to do it. Peter Lewis believed everyone came to this meeting already knowing how they wanted to vote and then called the question. Guerette seconded this motion. Kennedy made a motion to keep discussion open and Wright seconded. A vote by show of hands was taken and it was determined to move the question. Voting by paper ballot took place from 7:10-8:25. The count was completed and Gregan read the results: all appointments were approved with the exception of Jefferson as an alternate to P&Z who received 144 No votes to 66 Yes votes.

Motion was made by Guerette and seconded by Olson to adjourn. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM.

ATTEST: Amy M. Winchell, Town Clerk