

Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Town Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

March 7, 2023

Town Moderator Donny Osman called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

Moderator Osman reminded attendees that the polls were open. Moderator Osman then recognized Select Board Chair Jim Volz.

Chairman Volz rose and addressed the meeting, explaining that this meeting had not been properly warned and would therefore need to be rescheduled to a later date. He further explained that at the February 22, 2023 Select Board meeting Town Clerk Robin Miller had informed the Select Board of problems putting together the Town Report and had stated that the report would go out on February 27, 2023. Chairman Volz noted that the reports had gone out on that date and at that time the Select Board hadn't realized that the reports would not be delivered to residents in time for Town Meeting. He shared that the Town Report is available on the Town website.

Chairman Volz acknowledged retired Town Clerk Linda Wells for her 27 years of service. He then acknowledged Select Board member Sasha Thayer for her service on the Select Board over the past six years as she has decided not to run again. He expressed appreciation for Thayer's help putting together and posting meeting agendas and researching issues important to the Town. He presented Thayer with a gift certificate to Sarducci's Restaurant and a flower arrangement, to which meeting participants responded with applause.

Peter Youngbaer made a motion that attendees properly thank Linda Wells with a round of applause. Chairman Volz agreed and meeting participants offered a standing ovation in honor of Wells service to the Town. Wells stated her appreciation.

Andrea Gould made a motion to recognize past Moderator Charlie Barasch for 40 years of service as Town Moderator. Meeting participants offered Barasch a standing ovation.

Sasha Thayer explained that the Select Board will research how the rescheduling of Town Meeting will affect the ballots. She stated that ballots already cast will not be thrown away. She further clarified that the Town Meeting had been warned on time but that the statute stating the Town Report needed to be mailed out ten days prior to Town Meeting had not been met.

Linda Wells made a motion that the Town Meeting for the Town of Plainfield and all articles on the Town Meeting warning, including the election of town officers, be adjourned from Plainfield Town Meeting Minutes March 6, 2023 - Draft

March 7, 2023 to April 25, 2023 at 9 am and that all articles be voted on by Australian ballot. (Gentleman sitting in the middle) seconded the motion. Debra Stoleroff asked on what day of the week April 25, 2023 falls and expressed concern about community member's ability to attend the rescheduled Town Meeting if they will need to take time off from work. Sasha Thayer responded that the motion included taking up all items by Australian ballot.

Sasha Thayer moved to amend the motion to adjourn the meeting to April 18, 2023 at 9 am rather than April 25, 2023. ??? seconded the amendment. Michael Billingsley noted that April 18, 2023 is a Tuesday. Betsy Zeigler stated that more people could probably attend Town Meeting if it were held on a Saturday, noting that many towns in Vermont are currently changing their Town Meeting to a Saturday. Peter Youngbaer asked if the portion of the motion regarding the use of Australian ballot for all items is being done under the temporary legislation allowing this during the pandemic and asked for clarification on the legality of that part of the motion. Sasha Thayer responded that the state law currently reads that there can't be a switch to all future meetings being by Australian ballot except at an in-person Town Meeting. She clarified that there was legislation passed in January 2023 allowing Town Meeting use of Australian ballot until January 2024. Jamie Spector asked for clarification on the original motion and stated her support for Town Meeting being held on a Saturday and with a Zoom option for greater participation. Moderator Osman reminded participants that the discussion was currently to address the amendment proposing a change from April 25, 2023 to April 18, 2023. Owen Bradley asked for clarification about whether the original motion had included mention of Australian ballot. Moderator Osman responded that the original motion did address the change to voting by Australian ballot. Bradley then asked for clarification about who is responsible for the meeting not being able to be held today. Moderator Osman stated that the question was out of order. Bradley asked if Charlie Barasch was going to read a poem at today's meeting and requested that respectful language be used regarding deafness as a disability. Moderator Osman encouraged discussion to remain focused on the amendment to the motion.

Debra Stoleroff moved to amend the amendment to state that the Town Meeting for the Town of Plainfield and all articles from the Town Meeting warning, including the election of Town Officers, be adjourned until April 15, 2023 and that the meeting be held in-person. Steve Farnham asked if the amendment to the amendment strikes the part of the original motion that stated voting will be by Australian ballot. Moderator Osman stated his belief that it does. Michael Billingsley stated that he didn't think it was legal to vote on a switch to Australian ballot since the issue hadn't been warned.

Moderator Osman called for a vote on the amendment to the amendment. **The motion to amend the amendment was approved.**

There followed a brief discussion among participants and Moderator Osman on the rules of parliamentary procedure.

Moderator Osman called for a vote on the amendment as amended to state the Town of Plainfield and all its articles on the Town Meeting warning, including the election of Town Officers, be adjourned from March 7, 2023 to April 15, 2023 at 9 am and that meeting be an in-person meeting. **The motion to amend the original motion was approved.**

Moderator Osman called for a vote on the original motion to state that the Town Meeting for the Town of Plainfield and all the articles on the Town Meeting warning, including the election of Town Officers, be adjourned from March 7, 2023 to April 15, 2023 at 9 am and that be an in-person meeting. Moderator Osman opened the floor to discussion. Peter Youngbaer asked if the Town Hall will be available on April 15th. Keith Swann of the Friends of the Town Hall Opera House responded that the building would be available that day. Debra Stoleroff asked if a Zoom option for Town Meeting could be discussed at this time. Moderator Osman stated the question was out of order.

The motion to adjourn Town Meeting to April 15, 2023 at 9 am in-person was approved at 10:26 am.

Respectfully submitted by Kristin Brosky, Plainfield Town Administrative Assistant.