MINUTES FOR MARCH 5, 2018

ANNUAL TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

The legal voters of the Town of Springfield and Town of Springfield School District were notified and warned to meet at the Springfield High School Cafeteria in said Town on Monday, March 5, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. (7:30 o'clock in the afternoon) to act upon all matters which may be voted upon by acclamation and not otherwise to be voted by ballot, following which all articles to be voted by Australian Ballot on March 6, 2018, were discussed, and then to adjourned to the Riverside Middle School Gymnasium at 8:00 a.m. (8:00 o'clock in the forenoon) on March 6, 2018, to vote by ballot for Town and Town School District Officers, for all appropriations to be voted by ballot, and all other items of business to be voted by ballot.

Moderator Patrick M. Ankuda called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the presentation of the Colors and Pledge of Allegiance lead by Springfield Area Boy Scout Troop #252. Applause was given for new community members. A moment of silence was held for members of the community who had passed. Thank you to Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne and Assistants Maxine Aldrich and Sara Allen, the Board of Civil Authority and the Town Constable.

Moderator Patrick M. Ankuda explained procedure and that Roberts Rules of Order and Vermont law govern the meeting. Only registered voters of the Town of Springfield are permitted to speak during the meeting under rules of Vermont Law. Non-registered voters are welcome but they have limited participation and cannot vote on any of the floor votes tonight. As a practical matter town and school district employees who need to speak and answer questions and I'm going to allow them to do so. The special appropriations will be treated on a case-by-case basis and if there is no objection, non-registered voters will be permitted to speak on those articles. All questions and comments must be addressed to me as the Moderator unless indicated otherwise. Raise your hand, wait to be recognized by me, come to microphone to speak, clearly state your name and address. Expectations of conduct were further explained regarding multiple questions and accommodation of disabilities.

Moderator Patrick M. Ankuda explained that there are 27 Articles in the Warrant and will be presented out of order so that since Articles 2, 6, and 8 are floor votes, they will be first. Articles 1, 3-5 and 7, and 9-11 then special appropriations 12-26, and then Article 27 will open the floor to citizen concerns. Each floor article must be moved, second, restated by the Moderator before discussion. Once discussion is over, question will be called, question restated and a voice vote taken of only registered voters. A revote of a floor vote can be requested by one voter which will divide the house by chairs or will take a paper ballot, which needs to be requested by 7 people. Once decided, an article cannot be reconsidered in the same meeting once consideration of the next article begins.

ARTICLE 2: To receive and act on reports of the Town Officers, Town School District Officers and Committees.

Motion: Charles Burton Gulick, III of Parker Hill
Second: Roseanne E. Putnam of Meadow Drive
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town authorize the Board of Selectmen to expend such grant monies, gifts, or bequests which may be received by the Town of Springfield in accordance with the terms of said grants, gifts, or bequests?

Motion: Charles Burton Gulick, III of Parker Hill
Second: Scott D. Farr of Pleasant Street
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District authorize the Town Treasurer, subject to the direction and approval of the School Board, to borrow money to meet the requirements of the Town School District for the ensuing year, and also authorize the Town Treasurer, subject to the approval of the School Board, to borrow money in anticipation of taxes rated to meet the requirements of the Town School District for the ensuing year?

Motion: Charles Burton Gulick, III of Parker Hill
Second: Scott D. Farr of Pleasant Street
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

ARTICLE 1: To elect the following Town Officers and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year:

Cemetery Commissioner	Selectmen
First Constable	Town Agent
Library Trustees	Town Moderator
Lister	Town School District Moderator
School Directors	Trustee of Public Funds

No comments or questions.

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town vote a salary of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS ($50.00) per meeting for the Town Moderator for the ensuing year?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town vote to pay each Selectperson the sum of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving the Town in that office?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of ELEVEN MILLION, SIX HUNDRED FORTY NINE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED THIRTY NINE and 00/100 DOLLARS ($11,649,339.00) for the budget of the Town for salaries, incidental and necessary Town expenses, including highways, and for the purposes for which the law requires appropriations, and for which a Town may legally vote?

Selectboard Chairman, Kristi Morris highlighted projects such as the purchase of two Main Street properties and the demolition of one of those properties; partnership with Springfield Housing Authority, Vermont Housing, Springfield Regional Development Center and Springfield on the Move regarding the rehabilitation and occupancy of the Woolson block as well as the creation and adoption of local ordinances addressing vacant structures, unsafe and dilapidated buildings. Addressing of blight and nuisance in neighborhoods, specifically on Union Street near the school. Hiring of a Code Enforcement Officer to issue clean-up orders, on several parcels, for nuisance properties having abusive trash, debris and other junk items thereon. The County Road culvert was repaired and we contracted for the design concepts of the Industrial Park access road. The 17/18

budget contains additional efforts for further revitalization in the Downtown district. Chairman Morris called for change and partnership of public and private entities, to avoid higher budgets that will cause consideration for cutting our much needed public services to keep budgets from growing. Read Chairman Morris' full presentation attached to these Minutes.

Town Manager Tom Yennerell began with recognition and thank you to department heads and staff that provide great services for our citizens. Last year's improvements include paving of 7.76 miles; purchase of some new and new to us vehicles; snow-blower; boiler. Out of an 11M budget we are returning a lot back into improvements and large capital expenditures that we need to do. Proposed budget is an increase of $346,613.00 which is a 3.73 increase in taxes which is driven by unavoidable expenses and fixed costs. Unavoidable expenses are increases in regular pay for town employees, substantial workman's comp increases, retirement contributions and health care insurance. Safety committee works to get it down workman's comp increase, however, statewide pool drives increases. Fixed costs accounts for 30% of the budget; Public Works 22%; Police 17%; Fire & Ambulance 12%; Administration 10%. Taxpayer impact on an assessed value of 100K would result in $48.65 per year; impact for 150K of assessed value would result in $72.98 per year.

Capital expenditures of $239,600.00 were delayed in the proposed budget to fund to allocate downtown to design the Comtu Falls Park; build Phase I improvements in the park; create a Main Street curb extension and green strip between Summer & Valley Streets; support improvements to the Main Street Theater Plaza. This is a one-time delay of purchases not detrimental to equipment, however, there is a five-year capital budget plan where those items were due for replacement and can hold off without any problems. The main point is to attract private investment. Bakery building is owned by town and for sale and redevelopment.

Budget Advisory Committee Chairman Char Osterlund of 108 Summer Street named committee members and explained the committee's investigative process with site visits and department head meetings. Committee finds the proposed budget fiscally responsible and also moves Springfield forward. Committee asks for yes vote to the budget.

Bruce Richardson of Crown Point Rd asked that the town manager explain the 35% increase in administrative costs.

Town Manager Tom Yennerell explained that the $239,600.00 that we shifted from capital improvements to the improvements to downtown needed a place to be put as a one-time thing and that is the majority of that increase.

Elwood D. Bickford of Sunrise Terrace expressed approval of the Selectboard's plans for the future but questioned why the audit didn't appear in the Town Report and requests Town Report to include resident demographics to make more informed decisions on taxes and fee obligations as well as residents vital statistics, age groups, employment, construction and deconstruction of the town as a historic record; old reports used to have this information. Requests the Town Report to include in the Assessment Department Report an explanation of how appraisal values are derived. Thank you to Barbara for keeping delinquent taxes down and Selectboard for its policy enabling them to keep their homes. Poverty is alive and growing in Springfield. Thank you to Chief Johnston Police reports traffic stops are down. Questioned the quality of the chip seal that was put down and is now being plowed off. Wonders why the State can't stand by its correction facility agreement. It's almost 20 years now that we don't have a land deed to this town. Requests Planning Commission Report to talk about some of the major features and changes to Town Plan, not many are going to read it in its entirety. The Airport can accommodate larger planes and is one of the largest unused assets of town; could be automotive repair facility with jobs. Housing Authority complimented on nice buildings; questioned if they pay taxes or not.

Town Manager Tom Yennerell responded that Vermont Housing is not a tax free entity and they do pay us taxes under a revenue arrangement.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($600,000.00) for repaving, road construction, gravel road improvements, and ancillary professional services for the projects specified in the Road Surface Management System Report dated March 2015?

Town Manager Tom Yennerell stated that this is the third year the article was put before the voters and increases each year in accordance with RSMS. RSMS asks for $900K and there is already $300K in the budget for paving which we intend to spend with the $600K. Plan to pave 4.7 miles of repaving; rebuild 3,595 ft. long failed section on Spencer Hollow Road which will be the first time build of road under this program. No chip sealing under this plan. This past summer was second time on rural roads and it does work well, despite problems this year. It seals and protects pavement for longevity and our investment in it. What was applied this past year is defective and the company is going to stand behind it but they cannot explain why it's pealing. It's about 1/3 less cost over paving and gets us more for dollars on paving. Roads in pavement plan include: Reservoir Road, Birch Lane, Pierce, Piper, Mark, Hartness Ave, Bridge Street, Wall Street, Spencer Hollow and County Road.

Elwood D. Bickford of Sunrise Terrace questioned why a separate special article for paving is needed if the town budget includes paving?

Town Manager Tom Yennerell responded that the separate article is not necessary, however, we want to give the voters the option. Each year this article increases by 100K and that's the plan until it get up to 1M over time and we feel it's better to give the taxpayers the option versus putting it in the budget. It will be added later along with all the other special appropriations. It's not on the tax rate yet.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris explained that paving budgets have been underfunded for many years and there are really only two places that you can have any impact on reducing the budget at all. You can nickel dime budgets and not get $100K in reduction. Capital equipment and paving budgets are typically the only places that you can have a significant impact on reducing so over the years that's what past Selectboards have done. Three years ago this Selectboard decided that we needed to put more into the paving because our roads are atrocious and falling short. The danger of incorporating it into the line item for the highway department is that if the budget is defeated, then where do you make cuts? Selectboard decided to put it before voters to find out if there was support; and there is overwhelmingly. The increase is $100K from last year's tax rate to this year's tax rate, not $600K additional to previous year. By having it as a warned article, the voters are either supporting it or they are against it. Further, the audit is not in the Town Report because the Town Report has to be printed and distributed by a certain date and it was not ready; it will be available.

ARTICLE 9: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve a salary of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS ($50.00) per meeting for the Town School District Moderator for the ensuing year, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 10: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the payment to each School Board member of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving in that office, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 11: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the School Board to spend TWENTY NINE MILLION, FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED SIXTY THREE and 00/100 DOLLARS ($29,518,263.00), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of $16,846.00 per pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 1.7 % higher than spending for the current year.

School Board Chairman Ed Caron began with the presentation of a plaque to Laura Ryan for recognition for years of service on School Board. School District previously acquired 47 Union Street and recently acquired 33 Union Street and plans to beautify that lot also. The District has a one-year MOU with SRDC for the possible takeover and repurpose of Park Street School. At Riverside Middle School Moira Farnsworth was awarded outstanding counselor of the year and at the High School Michael Ruppel was awarded a Rowland Fellowship.
Past three years budget goal was to reduce school tax rate. Cannot continue goal forever, seeks to reorganize central offices; improve student performance; assist elementary school student behavior. With key retirements and other efforts, may see 2020 potential savings of $100K. To address Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium scores budget includes $60K for new K-8 math program. Introducing 1:1 computing for grades 3-12 with electronic doesn't impact budget and is funded by $300K federal grant and $100K grant from Seagal Family Foundation for computer science teacher. Budget proposes shared assistant principal for K-5. Reduction of just under 5 staff. Budget is 1.4% increase and a 1.7% per pupil spending increase. State surplus money not available for 18/19 budget. New state data indicates that 2% increase is likely which translates to 6 cents per $100K.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda explained that Mr. Hier is a School District employee; not a Springfield registered voter and hearing no objection the Moderator allowed him to speak.

School Finance Director Steve Hier explained that Act 60 was passed almost 20 years ago which fundamentally changed the way school tax rates were established. We no longer really set our school tax rates locally, the State sets them for us and so the system has become more complicated than it ever used to be. Act 60 establishes one tax rate for residential and one tax rate for non-residential. Residential is your home plus 2 acres and all else is non-residential. 63% of the grand list is residential, however, they don't all pay the same school tax rate and the next layer is income sensitive provision so that many Springfield residents pay on income. For Springfield the group of residential payers is further broken up into three sections. A third of residential payers will pay based on announced residential rate. A third will pay based on income. A third will pay based on super circuit breaker and have both school and town taxes capped based on income. We've chosen four mythical taxpayers for example owning a residential home with an assessed value of $140K which average town house site value; all will pay different taxes. Larry the Landlord pays non-residential statewide fixed rate going up by .09 cents. Nancy the Nurse has income in excess of $90K pays based on announced residential tax rate of revised increase of .06 cents. Betsy the Bookkeeper $50K income pays 2.84% of her income. Ralph Retiree on social security income has capped income level and will pay school and town taxes combined based on super circuit breaker; capped at 4.5%. Tax impact depends on circumstances of income and assessed value
Tracy Goodrich of South Street requested if the proposed budget holds special education programs accountable for compensatory services involving federal grant monies.

School Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin, not a resident, discussed that policies and procedures are in place to be followed in order to receive state and federal funds for special education services.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda reminded that this is a budget hearing and is sounding like litigation and conversation will be limited.

School Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin explained that we are the highest spending special education district in the state; we give a large amount of services to largest population in need. Spend more on special education even after grant money is applied in Springfield than we do on any one school alone.

Tracy Goodrich of South Street questioned how the district can accept funds for services not provided and are there assurances that money is adequately spent.

School Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin explained compensatory services process to identify unprovided services by making a plan and looking for opportunity to provide those services because they will not take funds for unprovided services. We are not claiming funds for things we have not done. Compensatory time made up and can be pushed out by 6 months because other options didn't work.

Troy Palmer of Massey Road stated he was the only school budget committee member. As only member it was challenging. There is a diagnostic feature for special education in this budget. Feels this is a good budget to improve test scores and to help with behavioral issues at a young age in the classroom. Encourages a yes vote.

Richard Andrews of Center Street question Steve Hier regarding Betsy Bookkeeper income sensitivity and has heard that those like her are insulated and don't care how much is spent because it doesn't affect them, is that correct? There is an impact as per pupil spending goes up, so there is impact to that group but not to the same level of Nancy the Nurse.

Elwood D. Bickford reminded that there was a $200K surplus used in last year's budget to help. Concerned with the elephant in your budget room more ways than one is special education. Special Ed budgets are more than RMS and SHS combined. Someone has to get a handle on this.

School Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin stated that the Federal Government does require us to do things that they don't pay for. Civil rights for equal education and this is expensive to do. Challenge is we are facing challenges of youngest students not prepared to learn and be safe. We currently have a little more than 20 students transported daily around the state from Hartford to Brattleboro; $100K students prior to reimbursements at 57% of first $50K and 90% over first $50K spent. Even with reimbursements, special educations second highest part of budget. What you are voting on is not a net budget. In some years look at raw expenditures vs net out. This year not the case. Twenty out of district students and sixteen have behavioral disabilities. Dysregulated students is a real thing. Proposed assistant principal is needed to start sharing load to deal with behavioral work and specialist. Making a real push to make the future so that we don't have to send that many kids out of district. No students in residential placement at the moment; all transported.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($2,500.00) to the Springfield Community Band for eight (8) concerts?

Representative Barbara Rodgers of Boedtker Road stated that for 72 years the appropriation has been approved. Includes 40-45 players. Have many expenses for $2,500.00 appropriation increase. We all perform for free; only conductor is payed for 8 free concerts; insurance and new music. Last increase was in 1996 from $1,800 to $2,000. Looking for players and announcer to make concert more fun.

Charles Burton Gulick, III is a former member and mentioned that this past year's concerts were as good as it's ever been; add to summer plans.

ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($9,000.00) to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Springfield in responding to the emergency needs of the community and to provide all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need?

Representative John Synovetz of Wall Street and he is the family services outreach worker for Springfield. Agency has been serving since 1965 to reduce hardships of poverty. Mr. Synovetz continued to read from SEVCA's report on page 32 of the Town Report.

Discussion: None

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of SIXTY THREE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($63,500.00) to help support the high-quality home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patients' homes and in community settings by the Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT and NH? Care is provided regardless of ability to pay.

Representative James E. Rowland, III of Park Street referred to the agency letter on page 27 in the Town Report. Thank you for previous contribution. Serves 140 towns in Vermont and NH and in Springfield last year made 13,102 healthcare visits to 462 residents for unreimbursed care. Serve residents of all ages, levels of income thru full circle of life. Vermont's population is second oldest in country. Without VNH services the town would see an increase in emergency services. VNH provides at least 15 Springfield residents with employment.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of EIGHT THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($8,500.00) for the support of Senior Solutions (formerly Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont) for help to support seniors and their families who are trying to remain at home and not be placed in a nursing home?

Representative Carol Stamatakis is not registered Springfield voter and is the Executive Director of Senior Solutions whose main office on Pleasant Street. Serves Windham and Windsor Counties since 1973. Thank you for support. Enable older adults to remain vital members of community. Services provided includes information and assistance through helpline and visits in office with questions such as with Medicare; applying for lower income programs; in home management to solve problems such as financial. Family can do well checks for concerned family members. Provide respite grants. Population of older adults is increasing relative to other age groups. Costs are increasing but funding hasn't kept up with needs; do get other funding and grants i.e. Christopher Reeves Associations, Efficiency VT home energy. DOJ grant to support statewide funding with law enforcement for coordinating services. Thank you for past support and continued support of work.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris asked if agency is court appointed to check on or make referrals.

Representative Stamatakis responded that we are not court ordered but we do assist with self-neglect and those who may be experiencing difficulties. Agency makes referrals to appropriate entities and/or work with people. Concerned citizens can make a referrals through the helpline to have the agency check on someone.

ARTICLE 16: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($4,000.00) to help support the Valley Health Connections (formerly Precision Valley Free Clinic) to help the uninsured access health care?

Representative Lynn Raymond-Empey who is not a Springfield voter. Thank you to town's people and taxpayers for many years of support. Request same as it has been for many years which allows them to get $72.00 for each dollar received and serve all the populations that Steve Hier. Healthcare needs and works closely with Springfield Medical Care Systems. Agency fills gaps such as dental for seniors without insurance. Call if you are not buying a prescription because you cannot afford it; call and someone will help you.

ARTICLE 17: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TWELVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($12,500.00) for the support of the Current operated by Southeast Vermont Transit, Inc., to provide transit services to the residents of the Town of Springfield?

Representative Cathy Nichols not registered voter expressed thanks to Springfield for past assistance. Requesting level funds this year. Funds are raised from towns, resorts, human service partners and private funding sources to serve 27 towns of Windham/Windsor County. Springfield residents had 54,994 uses of public transportations; fair free became available last December and ridership increased 113%. Drivers are volunteers.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 18: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($3,000.00) to Green Mountain RSVP & Volunteer Center of Windsor County to develop opportunities for people age 55 and older to positively impact the quality of life in the community of Springfield through volunteer service?

Representative Coren Mitchell of Hartness Ave is the Volunteer Coordinator for GM RSVP. 124 volunteers including 33 Springfield residents. Volunteers at Meals on Wheels; Santa Claus Club; Hospital; Elm Hill; North School Preservation Society; $3K is slight decrease from previous year to support current volunteers with training and to recruit volunteer drivers growing here and in area towns. Directs folks to read her report on page 30 of the Town Report.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 19: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($10,000.00) to assist with the cost of operating the Meals on Wheels Program of Greater Springfield that provides daily hot & cold congregate and home delivered meals and other nutritional needs to the qualified residents of Springfield?

Representative Elwood D. Bickford of Sunrise Terrance has been associated with MOW for 25 years. Fifteen warned articles are poverty driven. These agencies replace town's overseer of the poor. MOW thanks you for many years of support for nutritionally challenged seniors. There are things you need to do as a senior to stay alive and upright. Drivers stop and make sure someone is home and is ok. Older people cannot remember if they have had their meals and are nutritionally challenged. Drivers call for services to help if necessary. Union Street is meal site and only takes donations. Food costs have increased greatly. Last year served 92 homebound seniors with 17,648 meals.

Hallie Whitcomb of Highland Road discussed the valuable interaction of MOW volunteers with her and her 90 year old mom during a particular stressful time of receiving services.

ARTICLE 20: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($3,000.00) to Windsor County Partners, for youth mentoring services provided to the children of Windsor County?

Representative John Bastille of Dean Street state WCP's request has been level funded for about 4 years and continued to read from page 29 Town Report. WCP thanks Springfield for their 40 plus years of support.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 21: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($5,000.00) to the Springfield Supported Housing to assist families and individuals find permanent housing and provide in home case management services for 6 months to two years after placement?

Representative Christine Chapman of Main Street in North Springfield pointed out information on Page 28 in the Town Report. Ms. Chapman touched on Springfield statistics i.e. assistance to 19 families; 12 individuals; help with housing; jobs; transportation; training for jobs to be productive and stable members of our community.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 22: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($55,000.00) to the Springfield Family Center to assist with the cost of providing a free meal daily, a free food shelf, and other services related to hunger, homelessness and related social-service needs in the community?

Representative Mike Wiese of Baker Road. Family center provides food and security; hub for connecting folks for other services; get to know folks so they can be further directed to helpful organizations. Poverty is alive and well unfortunately in town. Served about 2000 families last year. Even though unemployment rate is down but there is an increase in food shelf use. There is underemployment and minimum wage with no benefits and limited hours of employment. Food shelf supplements twice a month. Value of food distributed is about $95K. Humbled by support from the community donations. Asking for same amount as in last three years; have lost some state funding and hope to continue to make up with grants and fund drives. Thank you to volunteers.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 23: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($4,000.00) to the Women's Freedom Center for general budget support to provide services to women and their children who are experiencing emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and are residents of the Town?

Representative Kelly not Springfield voter and is an advocate in Springfield office. Been in Springfield 4 years; organization is 40 years strong Windham/Windsor counties. Free and confidential hotline to offer shelter, safety planning, legal, economic, emergency transportation; gas food community education and outreach. Request is level funding of $4K. Thank you for prior and continued support.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris asked if we see these services increasing over the years in over years based on the social economic climate of the area.

Representative Kelly responded that domestic and sexual violence is not income based, knows no boundaries and is often people who have resources and means may not seek our services so that leaves the most vulnerable part of the population needing resources. The problem is not getting better it is getting worse.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris asked if the number of request for services has increased over the past 3/5 years due what's currently happening around the country.

Representative Kelly responded that the agency is being asked to do more. Problem is not getting better rather getting worse.

ARTICLE 24: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS ($9,500.00) to the Springfield Art and Historical Society to assist in preserving, maintaining, and displaying, for the public, the history and art of the Town of Springfield, Vermont?

Representative Rosanne Putnam of Meadow Drive thanked voters for signing petition that allows her to be here. Mission to preserve Springfield's history and share with the public. Various programs are free and held the third Saturday from 1-4 or by appointment 9 months of the year. Displays change two or three times a year. Interact with Springfield school system and have two high school intern students who all but one went to college; one went into the service. Operating budget is $22K year all spent on housing, preserving displaying collections all done by volunteers; no paid staff. Raise money by memberships, donations, calendar sales, raffles. Thank you for past approval and support for Article 24.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 25: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($9,000.00) to Turning Point Recovery Center Drop-In Center and Transition House to help with the everyday cost of providing recovery services and housing for men and that are in recovery from alcohol, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders?

Representative Michael Johnson of South Street suggested that everyone should be concerned about the Opioid crisis. Provide a place to get well, get help and open services for all phases of recovery. Affects everyone in the community. Center provides prevention; education; treatment; recovery for change of life that takes time. Transition house last year supported 30 people for 3 months to a year. 57% of those served have found their way back to jobs and are living a normal life in the community. Opioid counsel is a key piece.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris mentioned that this is not just a Springfield organization and it is statewide.

Representative Johnson affirmed that there are 12 Turning Points in Vermont and try to do uniform things.

Selectboard Chairman Kristi Morris questioned if Mr. Johnson is seeing an increase in numbers to which he responded in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 26: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS ($10,000.00) to help support outpatient, mental health and substance abuse services by the staff of Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Inc.?

Representative Jeffrey Mobus of Orchard Street is an employee at HCRS and read from their report found on page 34 of the Town Report.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 27: To do any other business that can legally be done under this Warning.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda stated that we cannot take up binding issues under this article, however, it is an opportunity to bring up issues not previously covered:

Elwood D. Bickford of Sunrise Terrace mentioned that the education problem interfacing with people who are mentally ill. Mr. Bickford retold a story about guns in school from 1962 and the problem is the same today. Today's problem is behavior.

School Superintendent Zachary McLaughlin mentioned that the two recent events at the high school in last two months required him to put out messages to the community and parents. A student can make a flip comment about doing harm and we are having conversations with kids that this is not a joke you can make because we have to treat as "the real thing". The equation has changed that we have to treat these types of moments as real life and death instances. We are going to make sure we keep our buildings and kids as safe as they can be.

Elwood D. Bickford of Sunrise Terrace thanked the town manager and department heads for doing their jobs to the best of their ability.

Moderator Patrick Ankuda adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m. to Riverside Middle School on March 6, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. to vote by ballot.

Kristi C. Morris, Selectboard Chair

Patrick M. Ankuda, Moderator

Attest: Barbara A. Courchesne, Town Clerk

Town Meeting March 5, 2018
Selectboard Chairman's Report

In the 2016 budget, the Springfield Selectboard initiated an active approach for revitalizing the community, which continued into 2017. Our Strategic Plan included: downtown economic development, economic development outside of the downtown, residential neighborhood improvements and Town Governance.

We successfully purchased two Main St. properties and had one of them demolished. We partnered with Springfield Housing Authority and Vermont Housing along with SRDC and SOM for the rehabilitation and occupancy of the Woolson block, thru the use of revolving loan funds. Construction is scheduled to begin this year.

Local ordinances were created and adopted for addressing vacant structures, unsafe and dilapidated buildings. We addressed blight and nuisance parcels in our neighborhoods, specifically on Union Street near the school. A Code Enforcement Officer was hired and subsequently issued clean-up orders, on several parcels, for nuisance properties having abusive trash, debris and other junk items thereon.

The County Rd culvert was repaired and we contracted for the design concepts of the Industrial Park access road.

The 2017 – 2018 budget contains additional efforts for further revitalization in the Downtown district. Thru the efforts of the Town Manager and Selectboard, with cooperation from the Department Heads, we initiated a one-year delay in purchasing several capital equipment items and have shifted the funding toward improvements.

We hope most everyone will agree that the Selectboard has not been idle and wished development would occur on its own. We determined that if we continue along the same path that we were on, (always doing what we always did), future budgets would continue to rise from fixed costs and inflation of material goods, while our grand list remains stagnant. An increased grand list will lead to a reduction in individual property tax amounts.

If we do not initiate change, higher budgets will cause consideration for cutting our much needed public services to keep budgets from growing. Coupled with our needed improvements for roads, sidewalks, bridges, water and wastewater systems, budgets will not decrease anytime soon. We must initiate change, partner with public and private entities, outline specific action and control our own destiny for improving Springfield and growing the grand list.

Historically, total taxes typically increased approximately 2.4 – 4.4% annually. The proposed budget continues that trend and is at 3.7% but provides for funding on sidewalk and park improvements on Main St., specifically between Summer St and Valley St.

Those improvements will continue across the street at the recently demolished Visiting Nurses Building, for extending the park that is adjacent to that property and extending behind the Bakery Building. The goal is to provide a facelift for these areas and is intended to improve the aesthetics of our downtown. The goal is to attract investors and provide for much needed visibility improvement to Main St.

The Selectboard is dedicated to improving our community. Past, and proposed, efforts have only scratched the surface for development and we recognize it is only a start. Much more is needed and our goal for attracting private investors is critical for an increase to the grand list.

Included in the proposed budget is additional funding for our two local economic development partners, Springfield Regional Development Corporation and Springfield-On the Move. They are instrumental for finding those private partnerships and for filling the storefronts on Main St.

The Town recently partnered with those two organizations, and the Chamber of Commerce, for developing several marketing video's to promote Springfield. The videos can be viewed by a link found on the Town's website.

There are many potential projects being considered by our economic development, partners, private enterprise and State and Federal agencies. Many of the projects may not yet be public, as private developers continue to explore opportunities within our community. The Town Manager, Selectboard, SRDC, SOM and the Chamber remain positive that some of the projects will come to fruition and change is forthcoming.

Many of you have seen the Downtown Streetscapes Master Plan that was rolled out in 2017. Several of these projects are being considered and explored. While some are arguably "pie in the sky" dreams, several of them are very possible and have consideration.

Opportunity attracts interest, and interest attracts development, and development results in more opportunity. By being proactive now and funding potential opportunity goals, development dividends can result in the future. They will not happen by themselves

Tomorrow, we are voting on the budget and we sincerely hope you will consider supporting it in recognition of this proactive approach and our Town services, as we advocate for change from the past and strive to improve Springfield.

Economic development can, and will, have an impact. Change is needed and our grand list must grow to provide tax relief for our property owners. We cannot do it alone. Springfield must unite with our economic development partners, where we can to encourage the necessary change that is needed.

In closing, the Selectboard is asking that you support our community by voting yes on Article 5 for the proposed 2017 – 2018 Town budget and Article 7 for the extra paving funds and consider passing the School Budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi C. Morris