



TOWN OF LYNDON
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING

Via Zoom
March 1, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Selectboard: Christian Thompson-Chair, Dan Daley, Nancy Blankenship

Officials: Dawn Dwyer, Justin Smith

Press: Todd Wellington – The Caledonian-Record

Public: Doug Conley, Gary Royer – Lyndon Youth Baseball/Softball, Jason Kaiser, Erin Rossetti, Mary Ellen Reis – NEK Council on Aging, Ellen Hinman, C Breen, Holly Taylor, Ashley Van Zandt – Catamount Arts, Sarah Bona – Lyndon Area Chamber of Commerce and Village Improvement Society/Powers Park, Mike Flynn – Helping Other People Everyday, Cindy Santaw-Brown – Lyndon Area Meal Site, HandC, Jeremy, Barrett & Jill Nichols, Jim Gallagher, Laurie Bellizzi – Caledonia Home Health, Patti, Laura Nelson – NEK Human Services, Anna Rubin – Fairbanks Museum, Shawn Tester, Sue Russell – Lyndon Outing Club, Representative Marty Feltus, Joanie Hahr, Pauling Dwyer, Loretta, (507) -856-0689, 535-4478

The meeting was called to order by Selectboard Chair Christian Thompson at 6:00 PM. Christian explained the purpose of the informational meeting and reviewed the process to be followed.

Christian explained that Senator Joe Benning and Representatives Patrick Seymour and Marty Feltus were asked to join the informational meeting tonight. Representative Feltus will join the meeting once she is done speaking at the Burke Informational Meeting.

Christian began the reading of the articles as they appear on the warning and ballot. He informed the attendees that he would read the article and then take any questions or comments. Christian reviewed the Town positions that were open for election before starting with article one. All articles can be found in the back of the Town Report.

Article one, relating to permitting the operation of licensed cannabis retailers and Integrated Licensees, brought one question, about what benefits this type of establishment offers to the Town of Lyndon. Justin Smith, Municipal Administrator, explained that the Town would receive a 3% local use tax on all sales. Mr. Gallagher asked if Chief Harris offered any feedback on the subject and was told he had not, as it had not been asked for by the Selectboard at this time.

Articles Two and Three were read with no questions or comments.

Article Four, pertaining to the General Fund Budget, in the amount of \$2,711,338, was read and a power point presentation was presented.

Representative Marty Feltus joined the Informational Meeting at 6:35 PM and gave a brief overview of the happenings in Montpelier. Representative Feltus reported that the State had a surplus of approximately \$200 million dollars and with a level funded budget, the surplus would be used in areas such as broadband infrastructure, weatherization assistance, the housing shortage, Vermont State Colleges, IT improvements within the State and workforce development. The education fund was fully funded reducing the expected \$.09 increase in the education tax down to \$.03. It could be lower as school budgets are coming in lower than anticipated. There is more money in Transportation, which will mean more money in State Aid to local towns. Another issue being looked at is the State teachers and employee's pension. There are currently a lot of unfunded liabilities. Representative Feltus made herself available by email to answer any questions the residents may have.

Christian the returned to the power point presentation and completed the presentation on the General Fund budget. There being no questions relating to the General Fund budget, Christian moved on to Article Five.

Article Five relates to the adoption of the Town Highway Fund budget. Again, Christian pointed out the highlights of the Highway budget. Ashley Van Zandt asked if a sidewalk up College Road could be a project funded by the potential stimulus money that is likely to come through? Christian replied that the Town is always looking to spread taxpayers' dollars with grant funding.

Article Six, regarding the setting of the property tax due date and penalty and interest, was read. It was asked if there are concerns about how people will manage property taxes due to Covid and is there a plan to deal with them. Dawn Dwyer, Clerk & Treasurer, explained that when taxes went delinquent in November 2020, it was the same percentage as in 2019. It is believed that taxpayers used additional unemployment wages and stimulus monies to pay their property taxes. Delinquent taxes will be collected in the same manner as years past. The Town is always willing to work with taxpayers with agreements. Those that do not have agreements will be collected through tax sales.

Articles Seven and Eight were read with no questions. Articles Nine through Twenty-one address the special appropriation requests. The requests as they appear on the warning, representatives that attended the informational hearing, and comments and questions, if any, are as follows:

Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice represented by Laura Bellizzi.

Catamount Arts represented by Ashley Van Zandt.

Fairbanks Museum was represented by Anna Rubin.

Helping Other People Everyday (HOPE) represented by Mike Flynn.

Lyndon Area Chamber of Commerce represented by Sarah Lafferty.

Lyndon Area Meal Site was represented by Cindy Santaw-Brown. Dawn Dwyer asked if the Meal Site would be holding their annual Turkey Dinner fundraiser. Ms. Santaw-Brown said it was still under consideration.

Lyndon Outing Club (LOC) was represented by Sue Russell. Sue Russell thanked Sarah Lafferty and Whites Market for the Coins for our Community program.

Lyndon Youth Baseball/Softball represented by Gary Royer.

Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging represented by Mel Reis.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services was represented by Laura Nelson.

Rural Community Transportation (RCT) and Umbrella did not have representatives.

Village Improvement Society/Powers Park was represented by Sarah Lafferty.

This concluded the formal presentation of the warning to be voted on. Dawn Dwyer, Town Clerk reminded attendees that voting would take place on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at the Municipal Office Building Gymnasium, to wear masks and practice social distancing. She also reminded dog owners to license their dogs and call the office if they had questions pertaining to cost and process.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.