

Town Meeting Minutes March 9, 2010
Plainfield, New Hampshire

The annual meeting for the Town of Plainfield was held at the Plainfield School Gymnasium on Bonner Road on March 9, 2010. Stephen H. Taylor opened the Meeting at 8:00 a.m. with the reading of Article 1. Ruth Ann Wheeler made a Motion to dispense with the reading of the warrant, seconded by Michelle Marsh. The balance of the warrant will be read on Saturday March 13, 2010.

Total Number on Checklist: 1618
Total Number of ballots cast: 304
Percentage voting: 19%

ARTICLE 1. To choose by ballot: One Treasurer for three years, one Town Clerk for three years, one Tax Collector for three years, one Selectman for three years, one Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, one Library Trustee (west side) for three years, two Library Trustees (east side) one for three years, one for one year, one Cemetery Trustee for three years, one Supervisor of the Checklist for six years and any other necessary town officers.

Town Clerk for three years:

Michelle Marsh had 296 votes

David Grobe had 1 vote

Michelle Marsh was declared elected.

Selectman for three years:

Judith Belyea had 255 votes

Write-ins:

Beverly Widger & Diane Rogers each had 3 votes

Numerous single votes were also cast.

Judith Belyea was declared elected.

Tax Collector for three years:

Ruth Ann Wheeler had 288 votes.

Michelle Marsh had 3 votes and Deb Beaupre had 1 vote.

Ruth Ann Wheeler was declared elected.

Treasurer for three years:

Fred Sweet had 281 votes.

Sarah Governo had 2 votes and Liz Clark had 1.

Fred Sweet was declared elected.

Trustee of Trust Funds for Three Years:

Jesse Stalker had 280 votes.

Jesse Stalker was declared elected.

Cemetery Trustee for Three years:

Jesse Stalker had 279 votes.

Jesse Stalker was declared elected.

Library Trustee for Three years-West Side of town

Anita Brown had 276 votes.

Anita Brown was declared elected.

Library Trustee for Three years-East Side of town

Kara Toms had 156 votes

Andrea Bueno Keen had 102 votes.

Kara Toms was declared elected.

Supervisor of Checklist for six years.

Diane Rogers had 288 votes.

Diane Rogers was declared elected.

Library Trustee for One Year

Mark Pensgen had 260 votes

Numerous single votes were cast.

Mark Pensgen was declared elected.

The meeting was recessed at 7:01 p.m.

ARTICLE 2. To see what action the town will take with regard to the following amendments to the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance, **said changes being recommended by the Planning Board:**

Amendment #1. In order to insure a defined process for handling wind powered generating systems (WPGS), the following additions to the town's zoning ordinance are proposed:

Add to the list of Special Exceptions in the Village Residential, Rural Residential, Rural Conservation I and Rural Conservation II Zoning Districts **#23 Wind Powered Generating Systems.**

Add to the zoning ordinance Section 3.17 WINDPOWERED GENERATING SYSTEMS

The town, through its policies and zoning ordinance in accordance with RSA 672:1 III & 674:62-66, supports and encourages the development of alternative energy systems. However, like telecommunication towers, wind powered generating systems (WPGS)

have the potential to impact other properties, including view sheds, because of their height. Therefore, no building permit for a WPGS shall be issued without the project first having been granted a special exception by the Zoning Board of Adjustment and, in the case of projects where a single family house is not the primary use on the property, a site plan review by the Planning Board.

For proposed projects that are governed by RSA 162 H, the town's role in the review process shall be as allowed by the statute.

Since the visual impact of WPGS can transcend town lines, communities that may be visually affected shall be formally notified of applications for WPGS as projects having regional impact.

Projects that are limited to a single generating unit that is in keeping with the established primary use on the property and whose total height is less than or equal to 100' will be granted an expedited review. By example, these applications are not required to provide engineered stamped drawings.

In the case of an application involving more than one generating unit and or a height greater than 100', engineer stamped drawings and specifications are required. In addition, an applicant-funded peer review by a WPGS expert of the town's choosing may be required. The standard used for this review will consist of current industry best management practices. As part of developing the peer review scope of services, the applicant will be provided a copy of the BMP benchmark document to be used.

Standards to be met: In addition to evidence of conformance to all the general performance standards found in section 5.6II of this ordinance, proposals for WPGS must satisfy all of the following:

- a. **Setback:** To insure the safety of the general public, the property line setback for any new WPGS that exceeds 35' in height (measured from ground level at the base of the tower to the tip of one of the blades when in the vertical position) shall be a distance equal to 110% of the height of the WPGS. If the fronting street for the project is a designated scenic road the setback shall be 150% of the height of the WPGS.
- b. **Height:** Regardless of the type of mount, WPGS shall not be higher than 30' above the tree canopy height measured from ground level at the base of the tower to the tip of one of the blades when in the vertical position. If an applicant demonstrates that, due to specific site characteristics additional tower height significantly improves the proposed unit(s) performance without adversely impacting the local view shed, an additional 10' of height may be approved by the zoning board.
- c. **Signs:** The tower structure may not be used for any other purpose or to display any signs or banners other than those necessary for safety without specific written approval of the Zoning Board.
- d. **Lighting:** No lighting shall be permitted on towers except as may be specifically required by another governmental agency with jurisdiction, or where deemed necessary by the Zoning Board.

- e. **Sound Level:** The WPGS shall not exceed 60 decibels using the A scale (dBA), as measured at the site property line, except during short-term events such as severe wind storms and utility outages.
- f. **Vibrations:** WPGS units must not cause vibrations through the ground that are perceptible beyond the property line of the parcel on which it is located.
- g. **Reception Interference:** WPGS units shall not cause interference with television, microwave, navigational or radio reception in neighboring areas.
- h. **Visual Analysis:** All WPGS proposals must include a written plan for minimizing the visual impact of the tower, blades and related tower fixtures. Construction materials, colors, and landscaping shall all be addressed. The units must not cause shadow flicker upon any structure on a neighboring property.
- i. **Code Compliance:** All WPGS shall be required to demonstrate that they have been designed and built to satisfy local codes and nationally accepted design standards.
- j. **Blade Clearance:** Minimum clearance from blade tip to ground is twenty (20) feet.
- k. **Guy Wires:** If used to support the tower, these wires must be covered with a high visibility material to height of at least six (6) above the ground.
- l. **Access:** All towers will be fenced, have lowering mechanisms locked, or have bottom steps removed in a manner, which prevents unauthorized access.
- m. **Connections:** When a WPGS is not immediately adjacent to the structure, all power lines, control lines or other connections between the WPGS and any other structure shall be underground.
- n. **Visual Test:** Unless specifically waived by the Zoning Board of Adjustment, all applicants for WPGS will be required to raise a three foot diameter balloon for a period of three days at the maximum height of the proposed facility within 50' of the proposed location. Dates of test will be set by mutual agreement of the applicant and zoning board. A visual simulation of how the tower will look in its surroundings may be used at the discretion of the Zoning Board in lieu of the balloon test. Temporary towers used to position wind data gathering instrumentation may be used, without review, for up to a six month period.
- o. **Decommissioning:** All proposals for WPGS will include provisions to insure that once the facility is no longer in use, it will be completely removed from the site within ninety (90) days. The Selectboard may declare any WPGS which remains unused for more than one year as abandoned and require its immediate removal. The landowner shall be responsible for and guarantee the tower removal. The zoning board may require the applicant to post a bond to cover the decommissioning of the unit(s). Approvals shall run with and place a burden upon the land, which is enforceable by the town. See "Expiration of Permit "(currently section 6.5 of the Zoning Ordinance) for more information.

p. **Enforcement:** See RSA 676:17.

Application Requirements: All applications for WPGS shall include the following items:

- a. Names and addresses of the owners of the property where the WPGS is proposed.
- b. Abutter list.
- c. Written description of the project which includes the specifications of the proposed generating unit (s).
- d. Site map of the property and proposed facility including topography, elevations, access roads and accessory structures.
- e. Average height of vegetation within 100' of the proposed facility.
- f. Visual analysis.
- g. Decommissioning plan.
- h. Hazard mitigation plan, to include fire prevention and security measures to be taken.

Add to the Article VIII the following definitions:

Wind Powered Generator System (WPGS): A wind energy conversion system which converts wind energy into power. A system includes a tower, pylon, or other structure, including all accessory facilities, on which one or more of the following are mounted:

1. A wind vane, blade or series of wind vanes or blades or other devices mounted on a rotor for the purpose of converting wind into electrical or mechanical energy.
2. A shaft, gear, or belt or coupling device used to connect the rotor to a generator, alternator, or other electrical or mechanical energy-producing device.
3. A generator, alternator or other device used to convert the energy created by the rotation of the rotor into electrical or mechanical energy.

Yes 248 votes No 33 votes

It was declared a vote in the affirmative.

Amendment #2.

To streamline opportunities for the creation of accessory and rental housing throughout town, the following is proposed:

Add to the list of permitted uses in the Rural Residential, Rural Conservation I and Rural Conservation II zones **Accessory Apartment**.

Remove from the Rural Residential, Rural Conservation I and Rural Conservation II zones list of possible special exception **#11 Accessory Apartment**.

A similar change was made in 1994 in the Village Residential Zone. Based on the positive experience with that change, the Planning Board is proposing this change to expand housing opportunities throughout the community.

Yes 243 No 40

It was declared a vote in the affirmative.

On Saturday, March 13th, Moderator Stephen Taylor re-opened the meeting at 10:08 a.m. The meeting began with the salute to the flag followed by words of inspiration given by Rev. Suellen Leugers and the singing of God Bless America led by Alice Jordan.

Moderator Taylor recognized Selectman Robert Taylor. Robert Taylor began the meeting with recognition of several long-term employees.

First, the town commended Fred Sweet for his 52 years of service as Town Treasurer. Sweet received a standing ovation and will be further recognized by the Select board.

Secondly, Ruth Ann Wheeler was recognized as retiring as Town Clerk. Wheeler will be continuing to serve as Tax Collector. Wheeler was given a standing ovation.

Next, Taylor presented Stephen Halleran, town administrator with a plaque for twenty years of service directing and guiding the town. Halleran was given a standing ovation.

Chief Gillens presented a plaque to Sgt. Lawrence Dore for twenty years of service as an officer. Dore has been with the police department in a part time capacity since 1975, which adds up to 34 years or more of actual service. Dore was given a standing ovation.

Taylor asked Chief Gordon Gillens to come forward. Gillens was presented with a plaque for his 25 years of service to the town. Gillens will be retiring this summer. Officers Lawrence Dore, Paul Roberts, and Anthony Swett as well as representatives from the State Police, Sheriff's department and Hanover dispatch were present to honor Gillens. A standing ovation of several minutes was given.

Taylor said that at the last Select board meeting, a decision was made to name the police station the "Gordon Gillens Police Station". An official dedication ceremony will be held in the future.

Taylor said that last December the Select board also made the decision to change the longevity policy to financially recognize employees who have provided many years of service.

Moderator Taylor resumed the meeting. Paul Franklin moved to dispense with the reading of the articles and Dewey Jones seconded it.

Article: 3

Stephen Halleran offered the following resolution and moved its adoption: Resolved that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,885,544** to defray town charges for the 2010 fiscal year. Judith Belyea seconded the motion.

1. Executive	\$163,325
2. Election/Registration/Vital Statistics	8,080
3. Financial Administration	62,100
4. Revaluation of Property	10,000
5. Legal Expenses	10,100
6. Personnel Administration	10,950
7. Planning and Zoning	2,200
8. General Government Buildings	5,850
9. Cemeteries	28,000
10. Insurance	36,030
11. Regional Associations	5,100
12. Police Department	283,439

13. Ambulance Service	30,000
14. Fire Departments -Plainfield	43,000
-Meriden	38,000
15. Building Inspection	6,800
16. Emergency Management	250
17. Hydrant & Forest Fire Expense	6,900
18. Dispatching for Fire, Police & Ambulance	18,000
19. Highway Administration	23,800
20. Highways and Streets	591,400
21. Road Projects	109,539
22. Street Lights	9,000
23. Solid Waste Collection	150,000
24. Solid Waste Disposal	52,110
25. Health Agencies	20,785
26. Animal Control	500
27. Welfare	6,250
28. Recreation Commission	18,925
29. Libraries - Plainfield	59,608
- Meriden	40,253
30. Patriotic	1,500
31. Conservation Commission	500
32. Principal Long-term debt	25,000
33. Interest Long-term debt	8,250
Total:	\$1,885,544

Halleran explained that every \$276,000 of appropriations changes the rate by \$1.00.

Towns don't have the same kneecap assessments offered to schools but in consulting with the Municipal Association, the state average of town expenditures is \$818 per resident and Plainfield spends \$764 per resident. Lebanon spends \$1700 and Claremont \$1200. If you look at the Department of Revenue Administration equalization rate-Lebanon would be \$7.51 per thousand, Claremont \$10.96 and Plainfield at \$3.59 well below average.

One of the largest expenses is pavement replacement. This years budget will not be adding \$5000 to the Bridge Fund but putting this amount into paving so there will be no new dollars for this project.

The Town is still pursuing a FEMA grant for Willow Brook Road. If it is not received, the town will go forward with further work.

The operating budget adds no new services; includes a 2-1/2 percent increase for employees who didn't receive an increase in 2009; an increase in health insurance costs, which have been offset with higher deductibles for employees. Fuel prices are still cloudy. There have been no new legal expenses but the on going suit against Town Line Equipment if still open and must be budgeted for. So far, this suit has cost the town \$30,000 with no end in sight. The line item for the police department reflects the increase by the New Hampshire Retirement System.

On the revenue side, increasing the cost of trash stickers was discussed but it was decided to keep the current rate of \$2.00. The Town may be adding a second bin so that fiber and other materials can be separated.

A long-term agreement for Workers Compensation and Liability insurance has enabled the town to receive a discount reducing costs. Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department increase is for

replacement safety equipment. The value of these departments is reflected in their many hours of efforts after the recent windstorm.

Our welfare budget has remained stable due to the efforts of Al Grindle who has done an incredible management job.

This budget is \$70,000 more than last year but will be offset by the \$80, 000 overlay raised last year.

Thanks were given to the Finance Committee and all the executive departments for their efforts in keeping the budget in check.

A vote by paper ballot was taken.

Yes 207 No 11

It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

Article 4:

Robert Taylor offered the following motion and moved it adoption: that the Town Vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$137,500** to be placed in existing town capital reserve and general trust funds, pursuant to RSA 35:1 and RSA 31:19-a as follows: Seconded by Judy Belyea.

RSA 35:1 funds:

\$0	Town Bridge Capital Reserve Fund created in 1994.
\$15,000	Revaluation Fund created in 1993.
\$50,000	Highway Vehicles Fund created in 1987.
\$60,000	Transportation Improvement Fund created in 2006.
\$5,000	ADA Access Fund created in 2003

RSA 31:19a funds:

\$5,000	Town Hall Repair Fund established in 1996.
\$2,500	Library Building Repair Fund established in 1992.

Taylor explained that this was standard procedure and keeps the Town financially stable. There is zero funding for the Bridge Fund as explained earlier. Monies are being placed in the ADA fund for the first time and with hopes these monies will accumulate to assist the Meriden library with handicapped access in the future.

A vote by paper ballot was taken.

Yes 209 No 14

It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

Article 5:

Thomas P. Williams Jr. offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$131,000** for the purchase of a new dump truck to be used by the highway department, and to authorize the selectmen to withdraw up to the sum of \$131,000 from the Highway Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund created in 1987 pursuant to RSA 35:1 and to further authorize the selectmen to sell or trade the town's existing 1994 dump truck. Seconded by Judy Belyea.

Williams explained that the monies for this dump truck will come out of the Vehicle Fund and will not increase taxes. This purchase is a year early so as to purchase the current model rather than the new improved model coming down the road.

A vote by paper ballot was taken.

Yes 200 No 20

It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

Article 6:

Judy Belyea offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$3,500** to be used by the town's 250th Anniversary Celebration Committee which was appointed at the 2009 town meeting. Said funds to be used for the planning and implementation of the upcoming anniversary celebration. A second appropriation is likely for the 2011 annual meeting. All revenues from the celebration and grants awarded will be returned to the town's general fund to offset the appropriations for this event. Seconded by: Stephen Halleran.

Margaret Drye who is co-chair with Susan Jones said that they are using the 1960 celebration as a model and have lots of additional ideas. There are several towns in the Upper Valley who are also celebrating 250 years.

Moderator Taylor also said that there are plans for a commemorative coin and number plate.

A paper ballot was taken.

Yes 223 No 7

It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

ARTICLE 7.

Thomas P. Williams Jr. offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That The town, pursuant to RSA 41:26-e, will vote to authorize that the office of Town Treasurer be a Selectboard appointed office subject to annual appointment replacing the current procedure of electing a Town Treasurer every three years. Seconded by: Judy Belyea

A vote by voice was taken and the ayes were unanimous.

A vote in the affirmative and so declared.

ARTICLE 8.

Robert Taylor offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That The town vote to create beginning in 2011, a unified library department for the town by merging the two existing boards of trustees. The resulting library department shall be administered by a library board of five members each to serve three-year terms; and further, to authorize and instruct the Selectboard and the existing trustees to take all necessary action to achieve the purpose of this article. Seconded: Stephen Halleran

Selectman Taylor explained the Select board supports both libraries and its clear intention is not to close one library despite the rumors that are flying. This article is to create a single system for the Town. It will be unifying process and eliminating the East and West side of Town separation.

The Select board conceived this article. Trustees are elected by a townwide vote and it will continue that way.

The Finance Committee strongly supports this article. This merge would not start until 2011. It is hoped that the expertise of a joint board could help solve problems together such as the ADA problems at the Meriden Library.

Stephen Beaupre spoke on the fact that at one time, there were two school boards –one for each side of town and that both boards were merged into the present board representing the town as a whole.

A vote by paper ballot was taken.

Yes 164 No 75

It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

ARTICLE 9.

A motion was offered by Anita Brown and moved that it be adopted: That The town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$16,800** to upgrade the Librarian/Director's part-time position at the Philip Read Memorial Library to a full-time position. This upgrade is necessitated by the need to manage growth brought on by the increasing library services and demand. This change will allow the library to be open to the public an additional 9 hours per week. This amount represents the cost of increased salary and the addition of a benefits package from April 1st 2010 through December 31, 2010, after which, if approved, subsequent years will be funded through the library's regular operating budget. The cost of a full year of these additional hours and benefits at 2010 rates is \$20,565. Seconded by Dennis Girouard.

Brown explained that this is part of the library's ten-year plan. Increased technological advances and other added services have increased the workload for the librarian. Philip Read Memorial Library is also the community center for Plainfield Village and increased hours would increase the building's availability to the public.

A paper ballot was taken.

Yes 89 No 154

It was a vote in the negative and the motion was lost.

John Gregory-Davis moved that Article 13 be moved to the front.

A hand count was taken.

Yes 144 No 57

It was a vote in the affirmative to take up action under Article 13.

Marion Cash-Rondeau offered the following motion and moved that it be adopted:

Resolved: The citizens of New Hampshire should be allowed to vote on an amendment to the New Hampshire Constitution that defines "marriage". Seconded by Daniel B. Rondeau.

Rondeau explained that this article was not about homosexuality but about the citizens voting on the definition of marriage. Marriage is the cornerstone of our society.

Rondeau yielded the floor to Margaret Drye who spoke on the process of the bill changing marriage to include same sex marriage.

Richard Atkinson offered the following amendment and moved its adoption:
Resolved that the town vote to instruct the Board of Selectmen to send a letter to the Governor, our State Representatives, our State Senator, the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate commending them for passing and signing into law legislation affirming marriage equality for all New Hampshire residents. Seconded by Leslie MacGregor.

A paper ballot was taken on the amendment.

Yes 185 Not 56
It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

A vote was taken on the amended article 13 by paper ballot.
Yes 185 No 40
It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

At this point, the gavel was passed to assistant Moderator Paul Franklin and the meeting returned to Article 10.

ARTICLE 10.

John Yacavone offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That the town will vote to increase the real estate exemption on dormitories, dining rooms, and kitchens of Kimball Union Academy above the required \$150,000 as allowed in RSA 72:23, to one hundred (100) percent of the assessed value of property over which the town has statutory discretion. Seconded by Stephen Halleran.

A paper ballot was taken.

Yes 134 Not 59
It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

ARTICLE 11.

Judy Belyea offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That the town direct the selectmen to appoint, within 60 days of town meeting, a committee to continue the KUA/Plainfield study. The charge to this committee shall be to meet with representatives of the KUA administration and maintain an ongoing review of the relationship between the academy and the town, including any agreement pursuant to RSA 72:23, and to report its findings at next March's annual town meeting. Seconded by Stephen Halleran.

A vote by voice was taken.

The ayes were unanimous.
It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.

ARTICLE 12.

Thomas P. Williams Jr. offered the following motion and moved its adoption: That The town vote to instruct the moderator to appoint a finance committee (advisory only) of six Plainfield voters to advise the Selectmen and other officers of the town in the prudential affairs of the town. Seconded by Judy Belyea
Williams said that the Finance Committee is a good sounding board and helps the town make good financial decisions.

**A voice vote was taken.
The ayes were unanimous.
It was a vote in the affirmative and so declared.**

The gavel returned to Moderator Stephen Taylor.

ARTICLE 14.

Judy Belyea offered the following motion and moved its adoption:
To see what action the town will take with respect to the reports of town officers.
Seconded by Stephen Halleran.

**A voice vote was taken. The Ayes were unanimous.
It was a voice in the affirmative and so declared.**

ARTICLE 15.

Moderator Taylor asked that the town recognize Librarian Nancy Norwalk for her thirty years of service. A standing ovation was given.

Officers sworn in by moderator at end of meeting:

Judy Belyea	Selectman
Michelle Marsh	Town Clerk
Ruth Ann Wheeler	Tax Collector
Library Trustees	Anita Brown
	Mark Pensgen

Fred Sweet was sworn in as treasurer by Michelle Marsh on March 11, 2010.

Alan Ferguson moved to close the meeting at 2:55 p.m. seconded by George West.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Ann Wheeler