

Whitefield Town Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2020

To: Robin Huntley, Resident of the Town of Whitefield, County of Lincoln, State of Maine.

GREETINGS:

In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify the voters of Whitefield, Maine, qualified to vote on Town affairs, to meet at the Whitefield Central Fire Station in said Town on the Fourteenth day of July, 2020, at 7:45 AM, then and there to act upon Article 1 and by secret ballot on Article 2, the polling hours therefor to be from 8:00 AM in the morning until 8:00 PM in the evening:

Pursuant to Title 21-A, Section 759(7), absentee ballots will be processed at the polls at the following time of 8:00 PM.

And to notify and warn said voters to meet at the Whitefield Elementary School in said Town on the Eighteenth day of July, 2020 at 10:00 AM then and there to act on Articles 3 through 47 as set out below, to wit:

Interim Clerk Tina Laskey opened the meeting at 7:45 AM on Tuesday July 14, 2020 and called for nomination of a moderator.

On Saturday July 18, 2020 Select Board Chair Lester Sheaffer explained budgetary cuts that were made to the Warrant due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jeffrey Frankel explained meeting procedures.

There was a motion to allow Fire Chief Scott Higgins to speak at the meeting. Motion was seconded and passed.

Select Board Member Charlene Donahue delivered the Spirit of America Award speech honoring the Whitefield Volunteer Fire Department.

Article 1. To elect a moderator by written ballot to preside at said meeting.

- Jeffery Frankel was nominated Moderator. The nomination was seconded and he was elected by written ballot. Robin Huntley was appointed Warden.

Article 2. To elect by secret ballot municipal officers namely, two Select Board Members/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor for three-year terms; one RSU 12 School Board Member, for a one-year term; two openings on the Planning Board for two-year terms; and one opening for Road Commissioner for a three-year term.

- Select Board: William McKeen was elected with 408 votes, Charlene Donahue was elected with 421 votes. RSU 12: Suzanne Balbo was elected with 66 votes. Planning Board: Margaret Mason was elected with 494 votes. Road Commissioner: David Boynton was elected with 499 votes.

Article 3. To see if the Town will fix dates when taxes shall be due and payable, and to see if the Town will fix an annual interest rate to be charged on unpaid taxes after said dates, and to allow the Tax Collector and Treasurer to accept the prepayment of taxes not yet committed pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A §506.
19/20 budget year interest rate 4%.

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: Taxes due November 30, 2020 and April 30, 2021 and a 4% interest rate for unpaid taxes.

- Article 3 was passed without discussion.

Glenn Angell moved to combine Articles 4 through 11. The after discussion the motion was seconded and carried. All eight articles were passed in one vote.

Article 4. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from surplus funds to pay for tax abatements and any interest due thereon.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 5. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Tax Collector to enter into a standard agreement with taxpayers establishing a “tax club” payment plan for property taxes, whereby:

- the taxpayer agrees to pay specified monthly payments to the Town based on his or her estimated and actual tax obligation for the current year property taxes;
- the Town agrees not to charge interest on timely payments made pursuant to the tax club agreement;
- the Town authorizes the Town Tax Collector to accept tax club payments for current taxes which may be due prior to the commitment of those taxes.
- the agreement is automatically terminated if a scheduled payment is late, and the taxpayer then becomes subject to the same due dates and interest dates and rates as other taxpayers who are not participating in a tax club.
- only taxpayers who do not have any outstanding tax obligations for prior tax years are eligible to participate in the tax club program.
- taxpayers wishing to participate in a tax club for a particular property tax year shall enter into an agreement with the town by a publicly advertised deadline determined by the Town Tax Collector.
- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 6. To see if the town will authorize the Treasurer to waive the foreclosure of a tax lien mortgage pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A §944 upon finding by the Select Board that ownership of the property subject to the lien would be contrary to the Town’s best interest.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 7. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into multi-year contracts to negotiate optimal value for the procurement of certain necessary services to the Town.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 8. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board on behalf of the Town to sell and dispose of any real estate acquired by the Town for nonpayment of taxes thereon, for such terms as they deem advisable and execute quitclaim deeds for the same; with the exception that the Municipal Officers shall use the special sale process required by the new elderly tax law 36 M.R.S. § 943-C for a qualifying homestead property if they choose to sell it to anyone other than the former owner(s).

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 9. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to accept gifts of money or personal property to the Town and to appropriate and expend such gifts for such public purposes as the Select Board deem to be in the best interest of the Town.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 10. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to apply for and accept state and federal grants and grants from nonprofit organizations on behalf of the Town for municipal purposes including, when necessary, the authority to sign the grant contract and accept the conditions that accompany grant funds, and to appropriate and expend grant funds for the authorized purposes.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Article 11. To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to dispose of town owned property valued up to \$1,000. Property valued over \$1,000 will be sold through auction or sealed-bid process.

- Articles 4 through 11 were passed in one vote.

Glenn Angell moved to adopt Articles 12 through 40 in one vote. After discussion the motion was seconded and carried. All twenty-eight articles were passed in one vote.

Article 12. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate to provide compensation to the Select Board during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$14,800

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$14,800 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$ 14,800 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote.

Article 13. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the purpose of providing compensation and employee benefits to Town employees during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$173,564

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$167,721 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$167,721 (6-0)

Note: This includes salaries, insurances, Social Security for all departments (including part time employees), and retirement, travel, and training.

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 14. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for general expenses associated with the operation of Town government during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$106,938

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$100,617 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$100,617 (5-0)

Note: Includes audit fees, assessing fees, MMA dues, computer software, maintenance, utilities, supplies, legal services, liability insurance, workers compensation insurance, contracted services, etc. Town equipment is now under the Facilities department.

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 15. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Elections expenses during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$4,569

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$5,178 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$5,178 (6-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 16. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Planning Board expenses and Code Enforcement Officer expenses during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$12,400

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$11,150 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$11,150 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 17. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Townhouse (Historical Society) building expenses during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$100

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$100 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$100 (6-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 18. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Facilities Maintenance during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$30,060

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$32,266 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$ 32,266 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 19. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the operation of the Whitefield Fire Department during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$91,494

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$96,963 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$96,963 (6-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 20. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the Animal Control Contract during the ensuing fiscal year during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$5,000

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$7,500 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$7,500 (6-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 21. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for repairs and maintenance of Town roads during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$432,381

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$151,398 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$151,398 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 22. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for winter maintenance of Town roads during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$279,517

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$319,414 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$319.414 (6-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 23. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the General Assistance Program during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$3,000

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$2,000 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$2,000 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 24. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate in support of the following outside services: Lincoln County Humane Society, \$2,990; Hatch Hill, \$23,000 during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$25,645

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$25,990 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$25,990 (5-0)

Article 25. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for salaries, utilities and maintenance for the Recycling Center during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$1,901

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$3,369 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$3,369 (5-0)

- June Lordi questioned the reason for the increase. Lester Sheaffer explained it was due to an increase in staff salary and other operating expenses.

Article 26. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the Fire Department capital outlay during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$9,000

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$9,000 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$9,000 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 27. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate to be expended for repairs of the Leonard's Bridge Culvert on South Hunts Meadow Road.

19/20 Budget \$50,000

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$50,000 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$50,000 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 28. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the future purchase of the Solar Panels on the Central Fire Station.

19/20 Budget \$8,910

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$8,910 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$8,910 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 29. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the Senott Road Culvert Replacement.

19/20 Budget \$50,000

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$ 0.00 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$ 0.00 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 30. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate funds for Town Building Security Updates.
19/20 Budget \$0

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$ 0.00 (5-0)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$ 0.00 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 31. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Street Lighting.
19/20 Budget \$0

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$ 0.00 (5-0)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$ 0.00 (5-0)

NOTE: Eight LED streetlight installations are proposed at the locations described in the information sheet

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 32. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for software upgrade to allow online tax payments.
19/20 Budget \$0

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$2,355 (4-1)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$2,355 (5-0)

NOTE: If an upgrade is approved, a yearly licensing fee will be added to our software licensing will be approximately \$330.00.

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 33. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for an electronic sign located at the Whitefield Elementary School. Sign use will be shared by the School and the Town. Expending these funds is contingent on matching funds from the RSU #12.
19/20 Budget \$0

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$ 0.00 (5-0)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS: \$ 0.00 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 34. To see if the Town will vote to lapse all balances into undesignated Fund Balance except those which must be carried forward by statute and the balances of the following accounts: Town Roads, Emergency Management Operations, Fire Department Capital, Central Fire Station Solar Panels, Leonard's Bridge Culvert, Senott Road Culvert and the Facilities Maintenance that accounts will not lapse and to allow the Select Board to expend from them in future years for their designated purposes.

Article 35. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for a Tax Anticipation Note during the ensuing fiscal year.
19/20 Budget \$600

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$600 (5-0)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$600 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 36. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for soldiers' graves and Whitefield Cemetery during the ensuing fiscal year.
19/20 Budget \$3,300

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$4,400 (5-0)
BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$4,400 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 37. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate to support the debt service incurred for the Fire Department and fire truck during the ensuing fiscal year.

19/20 Budget \$46,019

Fire Truck Principal	\$16,740
Fire Truck Interest	\$ 5,206
Fire Station Principal	\$18,272
Fire Station Interest	<u>\$12,115</u>
	\$52,333

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$52,333 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$52,333 (5-0)

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 38. To see if the Town will allow revenue received from Cable Franchise Fees to be used for matching grant for local Broadband.

Note: The funds received vary, in fiscal year 2017-2018 the revenue was \$4,214, in fiscal year 2018-2018 the revenue was \$4,896.

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 39. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for donations to the following organizations:

	Budget	Select Board	Budget Comm.	Select Board	Budget Comm.
	19-20	20-21	20-21	Recommends	Recommends
American Red Cross	\$250	\$250	\$250	4-1	5-0
Midcoast Maine CAP	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	4-1	5-0
Maine General Hospice	\$1,137	\$1,137	\$1,137	4-1	5-0
Kenn. Behavioral Health	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	4-1	5-0
New Hope for Women	\$610	\$580	\$580	4-1	5-0
Spectrum Generations	\$730	\$730	730	4-1	5-0
Young at Heart	\$150	\$150	\$150	4-1	5-0
Healthy Kids	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	4-1	5-0
Waldo Coun.Comm. Act.	\$245	\$0.00	\$0.00	4-1	5-0
Lifeflight	\$575	\$0.00	\$0.00	4-1	5-0
Whitefield Library	\$0.00	\$500	\$500	4-1	5-0
Totals	\$6,697	\$6,347	\$6,347		

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$6,347 (4-1)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS: \$6,347 (5-0)

- June Lordi questioned why the New Hope for Women donation amount was less this year. The reason is they requested less this year.
- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 40. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate funds for the Whitefield Food Bank in the ensuing year.

19/20 \$0.00

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$3,000 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$3,000 (6-0)

Note: Last fiscal year \$6,000 was donated through William Turner Charity Trust. In the upcoming fiscal year \$3,000 will be donated from the Will Turner Charity Trust Fund. Therefore, a total will be \$6,000.

- Articles 12 through 40 were passed in one vote

Article 41. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate all funds received by the Town from the State of Maine for snowmobile registrations to the Snowmobile Club for the purpose of maintaining snowmobile trails and to authorize the municipal officers to enter into an agreement with the Club, under such terms and conditions as the municipal officers may deem advisable, for that purpose. These funds are to be used for the maintenance of snowmobile trails within the Town.

- Article 41 was passed without discussion.

Article 42. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the purchase of Solar Panels to be installed on the Kings Mills Fire Department building.

19/20 Budget \$0

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$0.00 (5-0)

BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SAME: \$0.00 (5-0)

- Article 42 was passed without discussion.

Article 43. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to include the Town in the proposed RSU #12 solar farm purchase.

- After discussion and recommendation from the Select Board against participating in the solar farm purchase, Article 43 failed.

Maine State Senator Dana Dow and Legislature candidate Chris Hamilton each spoke to the voters.

Article 44. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to move funds in the municipal budget from categories with balances to those with deficits during the ensuing fiscal year.

- Article 44 passed without discussion.

Article 45. ~~To be decided by written ballot:~~ (Executive Order 56 FY 19/20 June 3, 2020 Order 1. L. ...written ballot...is suspended in favor of either a show of hands or voice vote during the state of emergency.)

To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax levy limit established for the Town of Whitefield by State Law in the event that the municipal budget approved under the preceding articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than the property tax levy limit.

- **Article 45 passed without discussion.**

Article 46. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and authorize the Select Board to expend funds from the following General Fund revenue sources to be applied toward the 20/21 budget thereby decreasing the amount to be raised from property taxes.

19/20 Budget \$752,419

Auto Excise	\$390,000
Boat Excise	\$ 2,250
Agent Fees	\$ 14,275
Licenses/Certificates	\$ 1,250
Cemetery Mowing Reimbursement	\$ 2,000
Cable Franchise Fee	\$ 4,000
Interest on Taxes	\$ 7,300
Lien Cost	\$ 6,500
Other non-property	\$ 10,040
Insurance Reimbursement	\$ 1,500
Local Roads Assistance Program	<u>\$ 30,000</u>
Total	\$469,115

SELECT BOARD RECOMMENDS: \$469,115 (5-0)

- Dennis Merrill moved to eliminate the Cable Franchise fee of \$4,000 as it was addressed in Article 38. The motion was seconded and carried. Article 46 was amended to \$465,115 and passed as amended.

Article 47. To authorize the Select Board to accept and expend any other revenue from State, Federal, local or private sources for the support of the Town during the ensuing fiscal year.

- Dennis Merrill questioned how Article 47 was different from Article 10, Lester Sheaffer explained that Article 10 is specific to grants. Article 47 was passed.

The Registrar will be in session during Town Meeting to register anyone eligible to vote in Town matters.

Fail not to make return on this warrant with your doings thereon or at said meeting of the Select Board.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and carried.

Minutes done by: Tina J. Laskey, Interim Clerk.