

**TOWN MEETING MINUTES
PERU, VT
MARCH 5, 2024**

Peru's Moderator, Gary Ameden, called the meeting to order at 10:00am. Gary welcomed everyone to the 2024 Town Meeting. Gary asked that anyone new to the area introduce themselves. Jim Bowen introduced himself and his wife Carol as new full-time residents of Peru. Joe Dickson introduced himself and his husband John Livingston. Also attending was the spring class from the BBA Mountain Campus accompanied by Director Andy Dahlstrom and Cole Hefernan, spring semester Program Assistant. Gary Ameden asked that all present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

WARNING: As read by Gary Ameden – The legal voters of Peru are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Peru Town Center on Tuesday March 5, 2024, at the hour of 10:00am to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: To elect a Town Moderator. Ivanna Reed nominated Gary Ameden. Barbara Petra seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Moderator – 1 year Gary Ameden

ARTICLE 2: To hear and act on the reports of the Town Officers. Motion made by Jay Reichman to accept the reports. Jane Worley seconded.

Gary Ameden asked if there was any discussion or comments. Jay Reichman brought up the difference in revenue numbers for the Fire Department. Chuck Black addressed this and advised that it would be investigated.

Gary asked if those assembled were ready to accept reports of various Officers. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To elect Town Officers as the law directs.

Town Clerk: Karen Utiger nominated Melinda Beebe. Andy Dahlstrom seconded. Hearing no other nominations proposition B was moved by Tracy Black, seconded by Ivanna Reed. All in favor; motion passed.

- Town Clerk – 1 year Melinda Beebe

Treasurer: Chuck Black nominated Cheryl Fox; Barbara Petra seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Treasurer – 1 year Cheryl Fox

Select Board: Jon Mowry nominated Ben Foltz, seconded by Chuck Black. Hearing no other nominations, Chuck Black moved Proposition B. Tracy Black seconded. Hearing no other nominations Gary Ameden asked if all were in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Selectboard – 3 years Ben Foltz

Lister: Jack Pennypacker nominated Jay Reichman; Barbara Petra seconded. Gary moved the question; all in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Lister – 3 years Jay Reichman

Auditor: Ivanna Reed nominated Josh Witkin. Josh respectfully declined the nomination. Barbara Petra nominated John Livingston; Joe Dixon seconded. Hearing no other nominations Ivanna Reed moved Proposition B, Josh Witkin seconded. So voted by voice vote.

- Auditor – 3 years John Livingston

Cemetery Commission: Ivanna Reed nominated William Crandall. Lori Ameden seconded. Hearing no other nominations Susan Bradford moved Proposition B., Karen Utiger seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Cemetery Commission – 5 years William Crandall

First Constable: Barbara Petra nominated Mike Gayda. Josh Witkin seconded. All in favor; Motion passed by voice vote.

- First Constable – 1 year Mike Gayda

Second Constable: Jim Potter nominated Josh Witkin; Andy Dahlstrom seconded. Hearing no other nominations Jon Mowry moves Proposition B., Ivanna Reed seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

- Second Constable – 1 year Josh Witkin

Delinquent Tax Collector: Jennie Freeman nominated Tracy Black; Jay Reichman seconded. Hearing no other nominations Terry Crandall moved Proposition B., Jane Worley seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

- Delinquent Tax Collector – 1 year Tracy Black

Grand Juror: Jane Worley asked exactly what a Grand Juror does. Ivanna Reed explained this position very thoroughly. Jane Worley, hearing the explanation, promptly nominated Ivanna Reed, Josh Witkin seconded. Hearing no other nominations Susan Bradford moved Proposition B., Lori Ameden seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

- Grand Juror – 1-year Ivanna Reed

Trustee of Public Funds: Jon Mowry nominated Josh Witkin. Ivanna Reed seconded. Hearing no other nominations Jim Bowen moved Proposition B, Ivanna Reed seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

- Trustee of Public Funds 1 – year Josh Witkin

Article 4:

- A)** To see if the town will vote a tax to defray the expenses of the town for the fiscal year, July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, as set forth in the budget submitted in the Town Report, subject to such modifications as this meeting may vote.
Tracy Black motions to move the article. Ivanna Reed seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.
- B)** To authorize the selectboard members to set the rate on the 2024 Grand List to meet the budget voted. Jon Mowry made a motion to move the article. Karen Utiger seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.
- C)** To establish the date of payment of such taxes.
Tracy Black moved we collect taxes from July 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023.
Barbara Petra seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

Article 5: To see if the town will vote to accept the provisions made by law for payment of taxes to the Town Treasurer. Tracy Black moved the article. Jim Bowen seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

Article 6: Shall the voters vote a sum of money to the following organizations that serve our community. Ivanna Reed moved the article, Jane Worley seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

South Londonderry Free Library	\$ 1,200.00
My Community Nurse Project	\$ 2,500.00
Project Against Violent Encounters	\$ 150.00

Mountain Valley Health Council	\$ 3,000.00
Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad	\$ 5,250.00
Visiting Nurse Assoc. of VT/NH	\$ 2,700.00
VT Center for Independent Living	\$ 140.00
SW Vermont Council on Ageing	\$ 200.00
Center for Restorative Justice	\$ 300.00
Neighborhood Connections	\$ 3,540.00
Green Up Vermont	\$ 50.00
The Collaborative	\$ 750.00
Peru Cemetery Commission	\$ 5,000.00
Total	\$24,780.00

Regina Downer introduced herself and addressed those present about The Community Nurse Project. Being that there is never a charge for the services of the MCNP, Regina voiced her extreme gratitude for the town's financial support. The services of MCNP include home visits, meal delivery and telemedical visits for the six mountain towns. Resulting in 96 home visits to Peru residents, providing care for 8 residents.

Article 7: To see if the town will approve a Veteran's Exemption to include an amount up to \$3,000.00. The State of Vermont currently provides a maximum exemption of \$4,000.00 with the first \$10,000.00 provided by the state. The total exemption is deducted from the appraised value of the parcel. Ivanna Reed moves the motion. Jane Worley seconded. All in favor; motion passed by voice vote.

Representative Mike Rice was invited to address the assembled voters. He brought us up to speed on what the legislature has been working on. Some of those issues are: Budget assistance for flood ravaged cities and towns. Working on programs to get school budgets and taxes under control and to shift some of this financial burden away from the taxpayers. Mike had high praise for the budgeting efforts of Taconic and Green School District. Childcare providers have already seen financial improvements through Act 76. Common sense reforms need to be made to Act 250, protecting forests and farmland while allowing them to be more diversified. Bills are being discussed that will recognize and invest in our outdoor recreation economy. Restricting the use of harmful pesticides affecting our Bee (pollinator) population is also of great concern.

Liam Elio, Director of Mountain Towns Recreation was present to speak to the progress being made by this program. He stated that a basic web site has been set up to gather surveys and comments. The site also contains information about programs available and fees charged. Take a look at mountaintownsrecreation.org. This is a great beginning to an exciting program for our entire community.

Article 9: To address any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

Jack Pennypacker inquired about any movement on the changing of the traffic pattern in the center of Peru. Jon Mowry advised that this project is still under consideration.

Jim Potter addressed traffic issues persisting in the center of town. Jon Mowry suggested that attending selectboard meetings could bring some resolution to these ongoing issues. Select Board meetings are held the first and third Wednesday of the month. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Meetings are at 6:30 pm.

Beth Knox voiced concern about the listserv that is set up not being fully utilized. Info can be found at the town offices.

Ivanna Reed thanks Jon Mowry for his many years of dedicated service to the town as a Select Board member, it is much appreciated.

Tracy Black made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the meeting adjourned at 10:54am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melinda M. Beebe
Peru Town Clerk
Dated March 12, 2023
