

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD DECEMBER 8, 2023

The duly warned and notified Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Cornwall was held on Friday, December 8, 2023, at 7:30 p.m., in the Cornwall Consolidated School Gathering Room. First Selectman Gordon M. Ridgway presided. Approximately 35 townspeople attended.

Scott Cady was elected Moderator and Town Clerk Vera Dinneen read the call of the meeting.

The first order of business was to receive the Town Report for the year ending June 30, 2023. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway thanked Barbara Herbst, Finance Director, for compiling the report. He explained that by state statute, only the financial statements of the town are required in the report. Mr. Ridgway gave a brief overview of each section of the report. There were no questions or comments.

First Selectman Ridgway made a motion to adopt the Five-Year Capital Plan for the Town of Cornwall as recommended by the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen. Anna Timell seconded the motion.

Specific fire trucks are not listed in the plan like the town highway equipment because there is a better understanding of the highway truck rotation. It depends on the amount of use and how the trucks hold up. The fire truck line is reduced by \$20,000. First Selectman Ridgway explained that right now there is money for both fire department equipment and apparatus. As the fire department does more capital planning, the town will be able to see where the numbers line up.

The West Cornwall Septic and the River Road bridge repairs are not in the Capital Plan because it is only for routine expenditures. Road improvement is up slightly. The Board of Selectmen is looking at where the pressure points are in the town's infrastructure and is taking steps in planning for community resiliency.

The West Cornwall Septic project is more than half way through the review by an independent engineer, which is required in order to meet federal guidelines. No adverse impact has been found. The findings will be noticed. The project will be designed in 2024, then the project will go out to bid.

The composting project is stalled because the permitting process is burdensome. Submitted plans were not approved. An engineer needs to be hired. The town hopes to have a composting system in town instead of trucking it away. We need to have leaf composting before we can compost food scraps. Residents can contact our representatives to ask for their support. 2027 is the deadline for finding a diversion of our food scraps and Mr. Ridgway thinks we should be able to meet that deadline. Wetlands are a concern and the property is a capped landfill. Those complicate the process. The composting facility can not be moved to other town owned property because it must be supervised. The transfer station building was just rebuilt, so it would be too expensive to move that. A motion to call the question was unanimously for. The 5 year capital plan was unanimously accepted.

FIRST Selectman Ridgway made the following motion "Upon recommendation of the Board of Selectmen, to adopt an ordinance for the establishment of an Affordable Housing Commission" Mr. Ridgway stated that the draft did not mention the number of members or their terms. He amended the motion to add that it would be an eight-member commission, appointed by the Board

of Selectmen. Terms would be two and four years, then subsequently four-year terms, staggered. The Board of Selectmen will fill vacancies. Richard Bramley seconded the amendment. The positions could possibly be elected positions in the future. It was unanimously voted to amend the motion. Funding will be discussed during the budget process. The Housing Corporation and the Housing Commission will overlap and cooperate with each other, not compete. The Housing commission would not construct housing. The amended motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Ridgway made the following motion "To amend the ordinance, last amended October 23, 2009, Building Permit Fees, to increase the fees as follows:

<u>Fee</u>	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
Building Permits – First \$1,000	\$25.00	\$30.00
Building Permits – Each additional \$1,000	\$7.00	\$10.00
Tent Fee	None	\$50.00

Rocco Botto seconded the motion. Mr. Ridgway said that Cornwall was on the low end compared to other towns, now it will be in the middle. The motion passed unanimously.

Gordon Ridgway made a motion to adjourn. Richard Bramley seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Vera L. Dinneen, Town Clerk