

**TOWN OF ACWORTH  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES  
March 11, 2025  
ACWORTH TOWN HALL, 13 TOWN HALL ROAD**

**Elections – 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Absentee ballots opened at 2:35 p.m. and finished at 2:36 p.m.  
Business Meeting – 7:05 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Polls closed at 8:01 and business meeting adjourned. Counting of ballots began  
Counts given to Town Clerk beginning at 8:30  
Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**

**Article 01: To vote by non-partisan ballot for the following Town Officers:**

Results of ballots cast – declared winners’ names are noted in **bold print**

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Selectmen – One person for three-year term<br><b>Kathi Bradt</b>  | <b>152</b>                     |
| Town Clerk – One person for three-year term<br><b>Charlotte Comeau</b>  | <b>158</b>                     |
| Tax Collector - One person for one-year term<br><b>Marianne Wierenga Nevelson</b>                                   | <b>157</b>                     |
| Treasurer - One person for one-year term<br><b>Melinda R Loiselle</b>   | <b>145</b>                     |
| Local Auditor – One person for one-year term<br><b>Lisa DeValk</b>  | <b>150</b>                     |
| Trustee of Trust Funds – One person for three-year term<br><b>Laurie Luther-Houghton</b>                            | <b>158</b>                     |
| Cemetery Trustee – One person for three-year term<br><b>Alison Ferrell</b>  | <b>153</b>                     |
| Planning Board – Two persons for three-year term<br><b>James Neidert</b><br><b>Dean Gowen (write-in)</b>            | <b>140</b><br><b>22</b>        |
| Library Trustee – One person for three-year term<br><b>Melinda Loiselle</b>   | <b>157</b>                     |
| Budget Committee – Two persons for three-year term<br>Frank Emig<br><b>Claudia Istel</b><br><b>Cheryl Sanctuary</b> | 54<br><b>115</b><br><b>121</b> |

Moderator, John Luther called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He announced that the polls were suspended and would be open after the meeting for those that had not had a chance to vote. He asked whether all had their secret ballots to vote. He welcomed everyone and set ground rules asking everyone be civil to one another and that no foul language is acceptable. He then asked everyone to stand, the men to remove their hats, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator acknowledged Kathi Bradt. Kathi thanked all the people who signed the petition which resulted in the State coming forward with a \$300,000 grant and Gregg for administering the grant and Mark for overseeing the work. She then thanked AVFR for working all day to put out the fire on Halls Pond Road with the support of Highway and our own Emergency Management during last year's drought. Last she thanked Charlotte, John Luther and all the election people for guiding us safely through the biggest election we had ever seen back in November.

#### **Article 02 – Alternate Project**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,033,324.03 for the FEMA-funded Alternate Project consisting of (a) restoration of Derry Hill Road and (b) purchase of a small truck for the highway department. This Alternate Project is to be carried out in lieu of the previously approved restoration of Nye Road following 2021 flash flood damage, it being determined that the public welfare would not be best served by such restoration. One hundred percent of the Alternate Project costs shall be covered by FEMA grant funding and no amount is to be raised by taxation. This special warrant article will be non-lapsing until December 31, 2030, per RSA 32:7, VI. *(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N) (Recommended by the Budget Committee, 4:Y, 1:N, 1A). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Norman Bernaiche. Seconded by Judy Aron.**  
**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Jennifer Bland spoke about this process.**  
**After some discussion, the article was moved to vote by voice vote.**

#### **ARTICLE 02 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**On a motion by Stephen Murrell. Seconded by Linda Christie, a recommendation to restrict reconsideration of this article was made. After a brief discussion with explanation on this meaning that the article can't be brought up for discussion again, the motion was moved to vote by voice vote.**

#### **RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **ARTICLE 03 - Empower the Selectmen**

To see if the Town will vote to empower the Selectmen to serve as pound keepers, measurers of wood and fence viewers. *(Majority Vote Required)*

**A motion was made by Helen Frink. Seconded by Mike Aron.**  
**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. A question was raised on the meaning of this. Mike Aron gave a historical background on this. With no further questions it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

#### **ARTICLE 04 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **ARTICLE 04 – APPLY FOR TANS**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. *(Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Linda Christie. Seconded by Brenda Melius.**  
**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. After a brief discussion it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

#### **ARTICLE 05 PASSED BY A MAJORITY**

**Article 05 - Fund the Operating Budget**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of \$2,192,401 for general municipal operations with \$549,000 to come from unassigned fund balance (This amount represents partial FEMA reimbursement funds received in 2024) This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. *(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N (Recommended by the Budget Committee, 5:Y, 1:N). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Kathi Bradt. Seconded by Ken Cubberley.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Kathi gave a brief overview of this article. After some discussion, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 05 PASSED BY A MAJORITY**

**On a motion by Stephen Murrell. Seconded by Jim Jennison, a recommendation to restrict reconsideration of this article was made. With no discussion, the motion was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 06 - Fund the Fire Truck CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2020. *(Recommended by the Budget Committee, 6:Y, 0:N) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Jim Jennison. Seconded by Norman Bernaiche.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 06 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 07 - Fund the Highway Equipment CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2000. *(Recommended by the Budget Committee, 6:Y, 0:N) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by RYANNE SCHOONOVER. Seconded by Jim Jennison.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 07 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 08 - Fund the Bridge CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate 10,000 for the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2014. *(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N) (Recommended by the Budget Committee, 6:Y, 0:N). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Kathi Bradt. Seconded by Ken Cubberley.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 08 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 09 - Fund the Revaluation CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$5,000 for the Building and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund established in 2020. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N) *(Recommended by the Budget Committee, 6:Y, 0:N.) (Majority vote required)*

**As the moderator read this article it was pointed out the wording stated “Building and Grounds CRF established in 2020 rather than Revaluation CRF established in 2010.**

**On a motion by Jim Jennison. Seconded by Brenda Melius the article was amended to read “fund the Revaluation CRF established in 2010”. Amendment moved to vote by voice vote.**

**AMENDMENT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 09 as amendment moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 09 AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 10 - Fund the Building and Grounds CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$2,500 for the Building and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund established in 2020. *(Recommended by the Budget Committee, 6:Y, 0:N) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, 3:Y, 0:N). (Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Kathi Bradt. Seconded by Joe Fedora.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 10 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 11 - Change the Class V portion of Russell Road to a Private Road**

To see if the Town will vote to discontinue absolutely, pursuant to RSA 231:43, the Class V portion of Russell Road so-called and noted on Map 239, Lot 4 and State Nodal Map reference page 9 Nodal 0062-0063 (Anne Russell and Jennifer Mahoney) from its intersection at Grout Hill Rd. *(Majority vote required)*

**A motion was made by Kathi Bradt. Seconded by Marianne Nevelson.**

**The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the article. After a brief discussion, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

**ARTICLE 11 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Article 12 - Replace the Road of the Alternate Project (By Petition)**

To see if the Town will vote to replace Derry Hill Rd with Crescent Lake Road as the FEMA funded alternate project, reflecting that the town’s best interest is in protecting Crescent Lake from contamination and that the continuing lack of maintenance of Crescent Lake Road is a key contributor to pollutants entering the lake. A contamination event in the lake would have a serious and detrimental impact on the current property assessments on the lake supporting tax revenue. *(Majority vote required)*

**Due to the “restrict reconsideration” for warrant article 02, this was not discussed.**

**Article 13 - Other Business**

To transact any other business that may legally be brought before this Town Meeting.

Mike Aron asked that folks get involved with town boards. He encouraged people to come to the meetings. They just finished the latest revision of the Master Plan. He asked for a show of hands of anyone interested that would like to know more about it. It's on the calendar for this coming Saturday and will be at 2PM.

Gerry Demuro recognized people that are helping Acworth, in addition to the great job the highway dept. is doing. He mentioned that John Tuthill has been working with toxic waste which is coming into Claremont stating if this happens our county taxes will increase. He thanked our state reps. Mike and Judy Aron, for voting against this last week. He stated that he has received positive feedback from many people on how welcoming the staff is at our village store.

Geoffrey Jones spoke on having access to the Keene Sentinel prior to moving to Acworth but that the Sentinel doesn't deliver to Acworth. He would like to be able to have the Sentinel and suggested that perhaps the store could buy 50-60 copies a day to get the Sentinel to deliver here.

Gary Baber mentioned that the snow is going away therefore people need to apply for burn permits for brush piles and campfires. They are available online for campfires and the brush fires are available through Gary or one of his Lieutenants. Seasonal ones are available online.

Sarah Vogel is the school board representative for Acworth. She wanted to let people know there is going to be a research group created in each town in the district to participate in a school district reorganization study pursuant to RSA 195:16a to explore potential changes to our cooperative structure. She said there are some towns that want to pull out of the district. If that happens then this study will be put off until their study is complete. She encouraged people to get involved and be on the committee.

Ryanne mentioned that she is on the committee and if anyone is not able to attend and has any questions to reach out to her. Her contact information is on the town website.

Judy Aron said the store is having a St Patrick's Day dinner on Monday March 17<sup>th</sup> at 5PM. Anyone can call the store and can come out to eat in or take out.

A motion was made by Jim Jennison. Seconded by William Vannah to adjourn the business portion of the meeting. Motion passed. The Moderator announced at 8:00p.m. that the business portion of the meeting was adjourned and that anyone who wishes to vote may do so. There was no further voting so polls closed at 8:01 p.m. Meeting was recessed at 8:01 p.m. to count ballots.

Counting of ballots completed at 9:00 p.m. Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. All information was given to the Town Clerk to compile and complete necessary paperwork.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Comeau  
Acworth Town Clerk