

**TOWN OF ACWORTH
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8th, 2022
ACWORTH TOWN HALL, 13 TOWN HALL ROAD**

**Elections – 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Absentee ballots opened at 4:40 p.m. finished at 4:50 p.m.
Business Meeting – 7:07 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Polls closed at 8:45 and counting of ballots began
Counts given to Town Clerk beginning at 9:00 to complete necessary paperwork
Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.**

ARTICLE ONE: 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 Kathi Bradt	138
Town Clerk – One person for three-year term Charlotte Comeau	147
Tax Collector - One person for one-year term Marianne Wierenga-Nevelson	149
Treasurer - One person for one-year term Melinda R Loiselle	148
Moderator – One person for 2-year term John Luther	154
Local Auditor – One person for one-year term Lisa DeValk	141
Trustee of Trust Funds – One person for three-year term Dennis Eaton	135
Cemetery Trustee – One person for three-year term Helen Frink	146
Library Trustee – One person for three-year term Melinda R Loiselle	149
Planning Board – Two persons for three-year term James J Neidert	137
Ann Marie Kosa (write in)	13
Budget Committee – Two persons for three-year term Linda Christie	80
Claudia Istel	100
Cheryl Sanctuary	113
Supervisor of the Checklist – One person for six-year term Karen Dillon	143

ARTICLE TWO BY BALLOT: Are you in favor of amending the existing Town of Acworth Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board? The amendments clarify permitted uses, eliminate some need for building permits and simplify the definition of Structure.”

Results of Article Two Cast Ballot Vote: YES 83 NO 80

ARTICLE TWO PASSED

Moderator John Luther called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. He announced that the polls would be open after the meeting for those that had not had a chance to vote. He welcomed everyone and asked that everyone be civil to one another. He then asked the men to remove their hats and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator acknowledged Carol Wallace. Carol thanked the community for their donations to the bake sale. Around \$1,600 was raised for the “Friends of the Acworth Meetinghouse” which will be used for painting the steeple.

The Moderator acknowledged Selectman Frank Emig. Frank thanked Administrative Assistant, Kathi Bradt for her 19 years of service. She was given a round of applause.

The Moderator acknowledged Selectmen, Jim Jennison. Jim thanked Frank for all his time on the Select Board and other committees he has served on over the years.

The Moderator acknowledged Marci Maynard who also thanked Kathi as well as the road crew for all their hard work.

ARTICLE THREE: To see if the Town will vote to empower the Selectmen to serve as pound keepers, measurers of wood and fence viewers.

A motion was made by Mike Aron. Seconded by Brenda Melius.

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

ARTICLE THREE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ARTICLE FOUR: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

A motion was made by Sally Eaton. Seconded by Ed Metsack.

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

ARTICLE FOUR PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ARTICLE FIVE: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of \$125,000 payable over a term of 3 years to for a highway truck, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$42,000 for the first year’s payment for that purpose. *Selectmen and Budget Committee do not recommend this article. 3/5 Majority vote required.*

A motion was made by Susan Metsack. Seconded by Claudia Istel.

The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article.

After much discussion, Jim Jennison called the question. Seconded by Ed Metsack.

The Moderator asked for a voice vote to call the question. Vote passed.

The Moderator announced that this would be a ballot vote and to use the ballot with the letter “G” and any other letters used would not be counted. Sally and Dennis Eaton collected the votes.

Meeting was recessed at 7:35 to count votes. Results announced at 7:38.

YES 33 NO 42

ARTICLE FIVE FAILED

ARTICLE SIX: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of \$1,416,799 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

**A motion was made by Rob Vogel. Seconded by Will Starks.
The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article.
After some discussion, the Moderator moved to vote by voice vote.**

ARTICLE SIX PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE SEVEN: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

**A motion was made by Jim Jennison. Seconded by Gary Baber.
After some discussion, the Moderator moved to vote by voice vote.**

ARTICLE SEVEN PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE EIGHT: To see if the Town will Vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund previously established. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

**A motion was made by Bill Starks. Seconded by Judy Aron.
The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

ARTICLE EIGHT PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE NINE: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Transfer Station Capital Reserve Fund previously established. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

**A motion was made by Sandra Binion. Seconded by Marianne Nevelson.
The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article. Being none, it was moved to vote by voice vote.**

ARTICLE NINE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ARTICLE TEN: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 for the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

**A motion was made by Marianne Nevelson. Seconded by Ed Metsack.
The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article.
After some discussion, Mark Girard moved to present an amendment to increase the amount to \$20,000. Seconded by Ryan Schoonover.
After some discussion on the amendment, the Moderator moved to vote by voice vote.
The Moderator was unable to determine and requested a show of hands. Sally and Dennis Eaton counted.**

YES 35 NO 27

After some confusion, a recount was done.

YES 39 NO 25

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE TEN PASSED

After a brief discussion on the article as amended, the Moderator moved to vote by voice vote.

ARTICLE TEN AS AMENDED PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE ELEVEN: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$8,000 for the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established. *Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

A motion was made by Mike Aron. Seconded by Frank Emig.

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

ARTICLE ELEVEN PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE TWELVE: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$77,000 for top coating the newly completed section of Cold Pond Road (1.1 miles from the center of Town). *Selectmen and Budget Committee do not recommend this article. Majority vote required.*

A motion was made by Dan Young. Seconded by Dennis Eaton.

The Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on the Article.

Frank Emig motioned to amend the amount to \$80,000. Seconded by Greg Thibodeau.

After much discussion, Gary Baber called the question. Seconded by Frank Emig. The Moderator asked for a vote to call the question. All in favor to call the question.

The amendment was moved to vote by voice vote. The amendment passed.

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE TWELVE PASSED BY A MAJORITY

Further discussion took place on the article as amended.

Ed Metsack called the question. Seconded by Frank Emig. The Moderator asked for a voice vote to call the question. Passed.

Article twelve as amended was moved to vote by voice vote.

ARTICLE TWELVE AS AMENDED PASSED BY A MAJORITY

ARTICLE THIRTEEN: To see if the Town will vote to reclassify the Class VI portion of Nye Road running from the intersection with Grout Hill Road to the Goodwin Farm to Class V.

A motion was made by Rob Vogel. Seconded by Will Starks.

After much discussion, Linda Christie called the question. Seconded by Jim Jennison.

The Moderator asked for a voice vote to call the question. Vote passed.

Article thirteen was moved to vote by voice vote.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN PASSED BY A MAJORITY

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

Mike Aron asked for anyone to consider joining the Planning Board as an alternate member. They could really use the help.

Greg Thibodeau spoke on the various things going on with the Conservation Commission and asked for anyone that is interested to consider joining.

Our state representative, Judy Aron, spoke on legislation she is working on to receive financial help for Acworth from the state. There are currently three bills working through the legislature. Two senate bills are in the senate finance committee. One, SB402, would allow for a 12.5% match from the town and 12.5% match from the state of the current 25% match of FEMA funds for project reimbursement. The other bill, SB409, changes current statute to make it easier to obtain an interest free loan after a disaster, which may not have to be paid back. She is also working on a House bill, HB1655, which establishes a disaster relief fund that municipalities could request grants from after a natural disaster.

Judy also mentioned that the county delegation will be meeting in April. The Sullivan County Nursing Home has an updated cost estimate of \$57 million for the renovation project. Rep. Aron and county delegation members have requested \$25 million in American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding from the state for Sullivan County for this project. This would minimize the amount of bonding the county would have to seek, and would minimize any increase in county tax as a result of the renovation project.

The Moderator announced at 8:45 p.m. that the business portion of meeting was adjourned and that anyone who wishes to vote may do so. There was no one else to vote, polls closed at 8:45 p.m. Meeting was recessed at 8:45 p.m. to count ballots.

Counting of ballots completed at 9:45 p.m. The information was given to the Town Clerk to compile and complete necessary paperwork. Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Recount of Article Two requested by more than ten voters. Recount was done on March 19th, 1:00 p.m. at the town hall.

Recount Results of Article Two: YES 83 NO 80

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Comeau,
Acworth Town Clerk