

Greensboro Selectboard

February 27, 2025 – Minutes

[This was a hybrid meeting held at Lakeview School]

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Bobbie Nisbet, Eric Hanson, Ellen Celnik, MacNeil

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: David Kelley

OTHERS PRESENT in person: Kim Greaves, Paul Fixx, Mary Young, Jan Terwiesch, Tim Brennan, Davis Barnett, Tim Nisbet, Joseph Gresser, Mike Metcalf, Skip Hoblin, Liz Steel, Sheriff Jennifer Harlow, Beth Meachem, Judy Carpenter, Dede Stabler, Terry O'Connor, Wayne Young, Bill Chidsey, Sarah Lammert

OTHERS PRESENT remote: Christine Armstrong, Elissa Mackin, Gary Circosta, Glenn Olds, Iola Benedict, Janet Patterson, Janet Long, Jennifer Lucas, Liz Hatch, Mary Metcalf, Michael Porrazzo, Nancy Hill, Rick Lovett, Valerie Carter, Elaine Cole-Kerr, Rod Kerr, Aileen Gebbie, Blake Auchincloss, Alison Gardner, Jane Woodruff, John Mackin, Michelle Mackin, Lise Armstrong, Josh Karp, Ila Hunt, Anastasia Scollon

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None this evening.

PRE-TOWN MEETING

The warning for the 2025 Town Meeting was reviewed and discussed.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator to govern said town for the coming year. No discussion.

Article 2: To take action on the Town of Greensboro Annual printed report. No discussion.

Article 3: To elect town officers and school district officers required by law and one or more library trustees.

- **Selectboard.** There are three open seats this year: a three-year seat, a two-year seat, and a one-year seat (one year remaining of a three-year seat).

Outgoing selectboard member Bobbie Nisbet thanked Kim Greaves and other board members. Ellen thanked Bobbie for stepping up and serving on the board.

Eric asked if any candidates for selectboard would like to speak.

Tim Brennan announced he'll be running for a three-year term. Tim bought a house in Greensboro eight years ago, was in non-profit financial management for many years, and serves on the boards of area non-profits.

Davis Barnett announced he'll be running for selectboard for any of the open seats. He's been in the area since the 1980s, recently started the Greensboro Free Café and has joined the newly re-formed wastewater committee. Davis said the board needs some fresh perspectives.

Mike Metcalf announced he will be running for the one-year seat. Mike served many years on the selectboard in the past.

Judy Carpenter announced she will be running and would prefer the one-year seat. She has also served on the selectboard in the past.

- ***Cemetery Commissioner.*** Up for election this year is a three-year seat, currently held by commission chair Wayne Young who said he's running for re-election. Wayne said he wanted to clarify that the \$40k Cemetery Fund is a restricted fund for perpetual care and unless the legislature changes the law, only the interest can be expended. Wayne thanked residents for their support of town cemeteries.
- ***Library Trustee.*** There are two open three-year seats this year. Jennifer Lucas said library trustees recommend Valerie Carter and Galen Fisher for these seats. Both are long time library volunteers. Valerie said she's been in Greensboro for decades. She was the head of planning and budgeting for a large insurance company and currently serves on the Craftsbury Care Center board.
- ***Collector of Delinquent Taxes.*** This seat comes up for election every year and is currently held by Mike Cloutier, who would like to run again. Janet Long held this seat for many years and suggested that the term should be longer than one year.
- ***Hazen Union School Director.*** Up for election this year is a three-year seat held by MacNeil, who said he's not sure whether he'll run again. He clarified that after town voters select candidates, the Hazen School Board then votes to appoint them as directors.

David Kelley also serves as a Hazen Union School Director but will be stepping down in the near future. Ellen asked residents to consider serving on the Hazen School Board.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro appropriate the following sums to the agencies listed below. Liz requested that information about the outside agencies requesting town appropriations be placed on the website. Kim said this information will be available at town meeting.

Article 5: Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro approve the following Special Appropriation requests listed below? Davis noted that at \$44k, the library has the largest special appropriation and asked if a building project is in the works. Jennifer said no, but that payroll, the largest piece of their budget, is increasing by 3.5% and also that the trustees have decided to institute a small retirement plan to make staff positions more competitive. Historically library staff have received no benefits.

Ellen said the library provides an enormous amount of support to Greensboro and the surrounding community. Gary said the Morrisville selectboard discussed having their library contribute more to operating costs in years where the library endowment performed well. Given impressive stock market gains in 2024, Gary asked what fiscal gains Greensboro library endowment had last year. Jennifer said this is public information and is available at the library. She noted that the endowment funds have restrictions on their use. Gary said the Greensboro community is very supportive of the library and it should be more transparent about its finances.

Article 6: Shall the voters approve the proposed town expenditures budget in the amount of \$2,385,453 for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. This amount contains the necessary amounts required by law and includes the appropriations listed in Articles 4 and Article 5 above. No discussion.

Article 7: Shall the voters approve transferring the surplus, if any, from the current fiscal year (2025) Highway Fund into the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund (HERF)? No discussion.

Article 8: Shall the town change the day of its annual town meeting to the third day preceding the first Tuesday in March pursuant to 17 V.S.A §2640(b)? Tim Nisbet said the wording of this article was suggested by VLCT as a starting point, the specific day can be amended on the floor. He noted that even if

residents choose to hold Town Meeting on a different day, Australian Ballot votes must still be held on the traditional town meeting day, the first Tuesday in March.

Beth said the hope is that changing to a different day or time will allow a younger population that may be working during the week to engage in town decision making.

A recent Communications Working Group survey showed that Saturday and Tuesday are equally popular days for Town Meeting, with mornings preferred over evenings. The Highland Center was a slightly more popular Town Meeting venue than Lakeview School. About 10% of registered voters responded to the survey.

Article 9: Shall the registered voters of Greensboro, Vermont, elect its town officers by Australian Ballot? Beth said this would give those who are unable to attend Town Meeting for any reason – work, health, travel, etc. – the opportunity to vote on town officers and have a voice in the leadership of their community. She felt that voting for town officers using Australian Ballot would not detract from the traditional Town Meeting Day community gathering.

Anastasia said taking time off to attend Town Meeting can be a financial hardship for many.

Gary asked whether absentee ballots could be requested if Article 9 is passed. Kim said absentee ballots can be requested for any Australian Ballot vote.

Sarah asked what the deadline would be to announce your candidacy. Kim said absentee ballots must be available 20 days prior to the vote, so a candidate would have to file their petition well before that so ballots can be prepared in time. Kim recommended that the town automate ballot counting to save time. It would cost at least \$1000 to have a ballot printed and the voting machine calibrated.

Gary noted that while it's been said that petitions to run for town office must be signed by 5% of registered voters, according to his research only 1% is actually required.

Article 10: Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro approve having the Town Treasurer serve as collector of current taxes and set the tax due date of November 6, 2025? No discussion.

Article 11: Shall the registered voters of Town of Greensboro authorize a vote by Australian ballot on the question of whether to transfer ownership of Town Hall to Gilman Housing Trust, Inc. DBA Rural Edge?

Liz asked why there was a notice in the News & Citizen warning a Town Meeting Day vote on the property conveyance itself. Eric explained that while the selectboard initially voted to include that question on the warning, it rescinded that decision and instead approved the current language in Article 11. Therefore, that notice in the newspaper is no longer valid.

Article 12: To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting. No discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk