

# MINUTES

## ANNUAL TOWN AND TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING HYBRID (PHYSICAL and REMOTE)

The legal voters of the Town of Springfield and Town of Springfield School District were notified and warned to meet at Riverside Middle School Gymnasium in said Town on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. (8:00 o'clock in the forenoon) until 7:00 p.m. to vote by Australian ballot for Town and Town School District Officers, for all appropriations to be voted by Australian ballot, and all other items of business to be voted by Australian ballot.

A hybrid public informational hearing was held in-person and was accessible remotely by electronic means, and aired live on SAPA TV at the Springfield High School Cafeteria on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. to hear reports of the Town Officers, Town School District Officers and Committees, to discuss all Australian ballot articles on the Annual Town and Town School District Meeting Warning and to do any other business that can legally be done under this Warning.

Moderator, Lawrence Kraft opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and stated the hearing is a statutory requirement and that no action would be taken and that the purpose of the hearing is to have a public dialogue on the articles to be voted on tomorrow at Town Meeting. Boy Scout Troup 252 led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call attendance of the Selectboard in-person included Everett T. Hammond, Michael E. Martin-Vice Chair, Walter E. Martone, Kristi C. Morris-Chair and Crissy L. Webster. Roll call attendance of the School Board in-person included Denise Hunter, Stephen Karaffa, Patti Kemp was not participating, Mary Krueger, Troy Palmer-Chair. Also present were Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Sherri Nichols, and Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus as well as other town and school administrative staff. A moment of silence was held to remember members of community who have passed and to celebrate new members of the community. Moderator, Lawrence Kraft, outlined the expected conduct of the meeting and that Robert Rules of Order and Vermont Law govern, therefore, no motions made and no actions taken. All questions and comments must be germane to the article that is on floor. Moderator, Lawrence Kraft, explained the process by which a citizen may be heard in-person and remotely and that the discussion of the warned articles will proceed in the order as they appear on the Warrant.

ARTICLE 1: To elect the following Town Officers and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year:

Cemetery Commissioner	School Director	Town School District Moderator
Library Trustees	Selectboard	Trustee of Public Funds
	Town Moderator	

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 2: Shall the Town vote a salary of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$50.00) per meeting for the Town Moderator for the ensuing year?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Town vote to pay each Selectperson the sum of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving the Town in that office?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FOURTEEN MILLION, TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY FOUR THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED NINETY NINE and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$14,284,999.00) for the budget of the Town for salaries, incidental and necessary Town expenses, including highways, and for the purposes for which the law requires appropriations, and for which a Town may legally vote?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, recognized department heads in person and on zoom and explained that the projected budget is \$14,284,999 of which \$11,141,781 is the amount to be raise by taxes; the other three million is raised by fees, annual taxes from the state and other revenue. Budget has an increase of \$527,438 which is 4.97% of which the largest portion is fixed costs followed by Public Works, Police, Administration and Fire then Library and Parks & Rec at the low end. Largest increase to payroll line item of \$389,112; health insurance line item of \$101,000 for a total increase of 490,112 or 92.9% is directly attributable to payroll items. There are 2.5 positions more than current year with 2 police position being added. We have now filled 11 officer positions which includes 2 officers who will clear field training by the end of the month and we are now doing our own 24/7 coverage, however, there are 5 volunteer overtime hours from 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.; no longer reliant on state police. The proposed budget would allow up to 13 officers and next year with the additions of two more officers we will be back to full capacity of 15 officers. The half-time position is for an Evidence Technician which is the only truly new position to make sure all evidence is logged in and available when we go to court. Other officers are returned positions from previous years.

Expected Capital Investments are as follows:

Plow Dump Truck.....	\$190,000
Cemetery Dump Truck.....	\$ 60,000
Culvert on Eureka Road.....	\$300,000
Replace Fire Engine #1 .....	\$460,000
Replace Police Vehicle.....	\$ 58,000
Replace Police Car Computers.....	\$ 50,000
Replace portion of Library Roof.....	\$100,000
Building Improvements at Community Center.....	\$ 30,000

Before next year will have to act on a new boiler and ADA access issues.

Tax comparison year by year increase:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>
TOWN TAX AMOUNT	\$44,968	\$336,729	\$51,709	\$534,245	\$527,438
PERCENTAGE INCREASE	0.47%	3.48%	0.51%	5.3%	4.97%

We have had some excess funds in FY21 due to vacant positions. In the current year, there was a \$400,000 surplus, and we used \$200,000 in surplus to reduce the tax rate. This year I plan to recommend that the Selectboard apply surplus funds from FY21 in the amount of \$120,000 to reduce the tax rate as we step back up to full revenue generation. This cannot be done until the Selectboard votes on the Tax Rate in July. This would bring the amount of the tax increase down to \$407,438. This would reduce the tax rate by about 2 cents. Setting the tax rate lower is how the town can return surplus funds to the taxpayer. Once the grand list is set and the

state sets the education rate on June 30, the tax rate will be set in July. The tax rate is set by dividing the budget by the grand list. Impact to Taxpayer Estimated Annual Tax Increase if budget is voted “as is”:

<b>Assessed Value</b>	<b>Full Town Budget</b>	<b>With Surplus Adjustment**</b>
\$100,000	\$82.41	\$63.66
\$125,000	\$103.02	\$79.58
\$150,000	\$123.62	\$95.49
\$200,000	\$164.82	\$127.32
\$300,000	\$247.24	\$190.98

\*subject to Selectboard approval in July when setting the tax rate.

This shows the benefit of using the surplus dollars from FY21 vacancies in the budget. Reducing the tax rate with a surplus is how we can return money to the voters over time.

Town Manager, Jeff Mobus, believes this is a responsible budget. Inflation is at 8 to 9 % and yes this is an increase of 5% but is lower than inflation rate. Budget Advisory reviewed each line item and held several hearings and voiced support of this budget. This is a mandate on the level of services and if a no vote, then we will have to re-evaluate services we can provide; a yes vote is a validation of services. Selectboard unanimously approved this budget and went through each line item and acknowledges that this is a lot of money. Springfield needs to invest in our community to attract in new people and make town attractive and that’s why we are putting money into water lines, paving, new fire truck and bridges to make our town attractive and better.

Discussion ensued:

Robert J. Farnsworth of 1646 Massey Road commented that department budgets are up dramatically not counting trucks being purchased. Department reports do not address what is being purchased, why? Don’t you think department heads should tell us what they are buying prior to this meeting?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that the book is report on what happened last year; not this year. Public warned budget meetings are held during the budget process and that is where purchases are discussed. The report you are looking at is what happened in FY22 and so it won’t address what purchases are coming up in the future year.

Selectboard Chair, Kristi Morris, responded that the Selectboard has a strategic plan and a plan so our capitals are adequately funded so that they’re paid for each year a little bit as opposed to a large purchase in one year. To the capital equipment fund we contribute a smaller amount every year so that we adequately fund capital purchases. So it’s not necessarily added into the budget but it is added into the capital plan and that capital plan is used for the purchase. We will be buying against the equipment fund but pay for it over a 4 or 5 years.

Robert J. Farnsworth asked why don’t we have that information in the report?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that he will have that information in the report next year but reminded that the report is of the prior year’s financials, FY22.

Alan Lockwood of 89 Spencer Hollow Road asked why Eureka Road hasn’t had anything done in last 2 years? It’s only got stone down. He asked how far away is it from 143 to Eureka Road to the end, 3 or 4 miles?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that it's about 3 miles and 3 culverts to replace.

Alan Lockwood asked how many years to complete it, 8 or 10?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded he wants to come to this meeting next year with a bond to finish up Eureka Road and Parker Hill. You are right it would take 8-10 years. We've done about 2000 feet in each of the first 2 years and will do 2000 feet this year and a culvert project this year. We have 120 miles of road and when one million dollars does approximately 5 miles, it's a challenge. The RSMS guides us on needs on what roads are to be done. This is not the right year to do a bond note to knock off some of these big projects.

Alan Lockwood asked about why Crown Point Road hasn't been started yet, two years ago that was going to be started. What happened to good method of fixing roads with the trailer with tar, fill and roll? Now it's thrown down with a shovel and plowed into the ditch with a plow.

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that in winter we can only use cold not hot patch. In winter when it warms up and rains, cold patch washes out. There is not a good solution.

Alan Lockwood asked how come we are about highest tax rate in Vermont? Machine shops supported the town; now it's on the taxpayers and that money is going to run out.

Robert J. Farnsworth asked how come the budget is \$573,536 for a library?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that level funding services, personnel and programming. Older building required new roof this summer for \$100,000 by a certified roofing expert.

Robert J. Farnsworth asked Chairman, Kristi Morris, do you think Springfield has enough quality jobs to support this budget for kids coming up from this school?

Selectboard Chair, Kristi Morris, responded that this board and previous recent boards have invested in this community in the appearance of the town to attract more residents and businesses so that the tax burden is paid out with more people, more contributors. The goal with some of the funding that we've been implementing over the past 5 years is to improve appearance in town and that is the method for attracting new business.

Robert J. Farnsworth responded that it not working because we've lost businesses within the last 2 years.

Robert J. Farnsworth asked why the Fire Department budget went up \$206,890 and the Police Department went up \$302,000 and stated that it's ridiculous and something has to be done; the taxpayers cannot afford this.

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that the Fire Department budget increase is overstated \$150,000 due to an accounting thing. Prior year's revenue from fire and ambulance runs had netted out the write-offs out of the revenue and that is not proper accounting; we've changed that. Basically, \$150,000 a year is bad debt, revenue that we build but don't receive. We are also adding to the expense side \$150,000 so that the real increase is about \$56,000 revenue fire ambulance and paid off paid debt under. We are required to show the gross amount but it's not part of amount to be raised by taxes. The revenue \$150,000 offsets the expense \$150,000.

A. Richard Hunter of Pine Brook E9 commented that infrastructure needs to be in good repair and town neat to be attractive. The other factor is the library and the services provided by the town are attractive to new

residents and keeping residents. The police being back to full strength is absolutely essential. I do believe Selectboard is acting in good faith. I will vote for just about everything in budget and additional items.

Krystal Ayne of 185 Harvard Street commented that the Library is an amazing asset to this community with sessions and activities. The roof in budget was being repaired in pieces and is damage on a historic building that needs to be taken care of. I think police are doing a wonderful job and have been responsive to Valley Street. We've had more significant home fires this year and the fire department is doing everything they can.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$750,000.00) for repaving, road construction, gravel road improvements, and ancillary professional services for the projects specified in the Road Surface Management System Report dated December 2021 or other duly warranted sidewalk improvements?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, presentation: Paving list is based on RSMS that goes out 40 years from now. Separate article is specifically for paving and nothing else, in case budget doesn't get passed. List of roads to be paved:

Seavers Brook Road (from the start of Will Dean Road to the 4-corners)  
South Street from Seavers Brook Road towards Springfield High School  
Breezy Hill Road  
French Meadow Road (the end towards Route 11)  
Sunny Hill Road (return small portion to gravel from paved)  
Frederic Street  
Autumn Street  
Trombley Road  
Baltimore Road

Should everything pass we would have \$1,075,000 to do as much as we can. We won't know until we go out to bid how much road we can cover but we need to do as much as we can each year.

Discussion ensued:

Charles Burton Gulick, III "Terry" of 376 Parker Hill asked when is Parker Hill and Brockway Mills Road in the schedule. Can we raise a bond to get our town roads up to snuff?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that he agrees and bond for paving would knock off some of these roads. The three to five million it would take for each Parker Hill, Brockway Mills Road or Pleasant Valley Road and others will never be saved up; big projects require bonding.

Charles Burton Gulick, III "Terry" mentioned that emergency lights on Charlestown Road and Bridge Street are not working. One pole at bottom on South Street not working and it ought to come down.

Robert J. Farnsworth asked if Seavers Brook Road was being done? That road has a bridge and car and a truck cannot pass each other on the bridge; there is going to be an accident. He stated that the width of bridge should be addressed.

Alexander J. Bolaski, Jr. "Joe" of 10 Walker Road asked when Walker Road will be paved? It's just about impassible near the end and the first hundred yards is brutal on vehicle. I thought it would be done at the same time Chester Road was done.

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, responded that he will talk with the Public Works supervisor. To do all that needs to be done, we are looking at ten million plus.

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Michael Martin, answered Robert J. Farnsworth that no, there are no plans to widen bridge.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$100,000.00) for sidewalk reconstruction in various locations throughout the Town?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, presented that Giddings Road in North Springfield was done; this year Mineral Street/Main Street route. The 2024 top priority is the sidewalk on Wall Street which is crumbling down the bank towards the post office; dangerous and the guardrail won't save anybody.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 7: Shall the Town of Springfield issue general obligation bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed THREE MILLION, FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$3,400,000.00), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid and other financing sources, for the purpose of making water system improvements, the total estimated cost of such improvements being THREE MILLION, FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$3,400,000.00)?

Town Manager, Jeffrey Mobus, presented that this bond is for the replacement of water lines along Clinton Street from Bridge Street to Desert Storm Bridge; bottom of Seavers Brook Road; Mill Road in North Springfield and a little bit towards end of Wall and Frederick. Our main water lines go back to 1905. They are undersized and contain lead. Lead needs to be remediated and pipes enlarged for fire protection. One million dollars of the loan is forgiven to deal with lead remediation. We will repay \$2.4 million bond over 40 years at 0% interest; bond is repaid by rate users only not taxpayers. Approximate increase of \$25 per year for each water rate user. This project is holding up other projects such as the road diet gateway and Seavers Brook Road since we don't want to do surface work and dig into it later to do water work.

Wayne Elliott of Aldrich & Elliott presented that Contract I was started in 2005. Contract H is continued improvement at the intersection of Bridge, Clinton, Franklin, Wall, Mill Rd and Seavers Brook. Pipes are cast iron and have deteriorated. The existing water main is unreliable, prone to breaks, unsanitary conditions and contamination. No fire protection for an aged pipe. Contract includes 6,800 feet of new 8" and 12" water mains on Bridge Street, Franklin Street, Wall Street, Clinton Street, Seavers Brook Road, and Mill Road. Installation of new gate valves, fire hydrants, and curb stops with services to the edge of the right-of-way. Construction planned to start in Summer 2024. Mr. Elliott continued to run through the maps of each street project. First loan payment is due first year after construction 2025; rate payer increase of \$2.00 month.

**Total Project Costs**

<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Construction	\$2,630,000
Construction Contingency (15%)	\$394,500
Engineering	\$370,000
Other Costs	\$20,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$3,414,500</b>
<b>Total Bond Amount</b>	<b>\$3,400,000</b>

Springfield is one of three communities in Vermont to be awarded lead funding remediation. Total savings with

this package are about \$550,000 in interest over the next 20 years. Plan to minimize interruptions and provide advance notice of disturbances. In 2024 project schedule will advertise for bids; March open bids; May start construction; December substantial construction; December 2025 end one-year warranty.

Discussion:

Hugh S. Putnam of 29 Meadow Drive commented that this project needs to be done. It will be more than 2 years before it can be bid again, the price will be up and by then the favorable things to pay for it will have gone away.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District authorize the Town Treasurer, subject to the direction and approval of the School Board, to borrow money in anticipation of taxes needed to meet the requirements of the Town School District for the ensuing year?

Superintendent, Dr. Sheri Nichols stated that this allows the school district to acquire money we need to while we wait for taxes to come in.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 9: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve a payment of FIFTY and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$50.00) per meeting for the Town School District Moderator for the ensuing year, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 10: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the payment to each School Board member of FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$500.00) to help defray the costs and expenses incurred in serving in that office, the funds for which are included in the school budget?

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 11: Shall the voters of the Springfield Town School District approve the School Board to spend THIRTY FIVE MILLION, SIX HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED FORTY SEVEN and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$35,650,947.00), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?

Superintendent, Dr. Sherri Nichols, commented that this is the most supportive community she has been in and the budget process for the budget before you has been a thoughtful process. Coming into the community we had to figure out what does it mean to be a Cosmo and what happens in the end after graduation and we want to have the end in mind. So we started looking at what are those skills, dispositions and knowledge points that we want our students to have; we have a great Northstar from all stake holders who participated and the budget reflects that participation. All of our decisions going forward are looking back at that portrait and what it means to be a graduate Portrait of a Graduate (POG). Community partnerships make a thriving draw for people to want to be in. One our 40 grants is around aviation for exams towards pilot licensing. Another way we are expanding is with a grant cosmetology program. Expanding opportunity and pathways for students is the goal. PLC (Professional Learning Community) that looks at data analysis of what is being done well and replicate that process. Goal is to support students and to make sure they have sense of belonging. We just completed a Culture Audit and are completing an Equity Audit. We are ushering back in-person activities and have a lot of events happening. Partnering with RVTC and highlighting students, which are the heart of community.

Cohesion and progression with our Portrait of Graduate (POG) from pre-K through 12 to ascertain skills and having the application for those skills to go into any endeavor. There are staffing reductions with this budget due to lower enrollment and a shift in student needs: 1.0 Transportation Coordinator; 0.5 Music Teacher; 1.0 Instruction; Teaching Coach; 1.0 SPED Teacher; 1.0 SPED Para educator. Done audit of schools regarding music sessions; we currently have 6 grants out; we need help getting better and figuring out root cause analysis to obtain robust unified arts program with music in the forefront. Priorities are to increase proficiencies in literacy and math. We also want to build a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to offer intervention and support. Special education staff is working with Agency of Education to grow and ensure that students' needs are met at every age and every level. Springfield serves 27% students with special services vs state level is at 17% and the national level 13%. The budget contains \$7.7 million to be raised by tax payers; the rest of the money will come from state, federal and grant monies. We have a 3% increase vs January inflation rate of 6.4%; under ½ of the inflation rate.

#### Discussion:

Angela C. Farrar of 28 Craigue Hill commented that as the mother of an out-of-district special education student the last 7 years she supports the budget. She asked how many students are in-district? Does it make sense to have a more specific special education district in town?

Superintendent, Dr. Sheri Nichols, responded that 26 students are out-of-district and 380 plus are in-district and that they have looked at programs with changes of Act 173. They have had conversations with Kindle Farms for a potential Kindle Farms "north" school in Springfield.

Krystal Ayne of 185 Harvard Street asked why is our count of special needs students high in our district?

Superintendent, Dr. Sherri Nichols, responded that we have a robust amount of services in this area. There are early identification services for this area and that we might see the number change with a multi-tier support services.

Director of Special Services, Kelly Ryan, responded that there are a couple of reasons for the hypothesis of why. One of the reasons is that we are the hub of services for Windsor County; folks are drawn in here. Lack of reliable transportation is another reason parents are encouraged to move to Springfield to relieve that burden. Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) identifies what we are doing for all students; we don't always have tools effectively to address each tier. One other piece he noted was in a presentation at a school board meeting given by Pre-K Coordinator, Rachel Hunter, of a look back 3 or 4 years of an increase over 300% of kids in region that have been identified at age 3 or younger needing services. Part of that is Covid and part of that is staffing shortages and they cannot always do as much early intervention as they would like, not from the lack of trying but from the lack of resources.

Kathleen Flanagan of 641 Massey Road commented that special education identification should be based on disability not on availability of services or catching something early. This is something the district needs to look at; that is an extremely high percentage.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$2,500.00) to the Springfield Community Band for eight (8) concerts?

Representative, Karen Mather, stated she has been a Community Band member for over 40 years. Community Band has been in existence over 75 years. Appropriation provides for new music, conductors, administration fees, post office box expenses and insurances.



Discussion: None

ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,000.00) to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Springfield in responding to the emergency needs of the community and to provide all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need?

Discussion: None. No representative.

ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of SIXTY THREE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$63,500.00) to help support the high-quality home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patients' homes and in community settings by the Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT and NH? Care is provided regardless of ability to pay.

Representative, Anthony Knox, Community Relations Manager, commented that they are the oldest and largest long term case management hospice nonprofit in the State of Vermont providing care from birth to end of life. In FY22 we provided 9326 in-home visits to individuals in Springfield; served 348 residents; provided \$86,000 in unreimbursed care. The town's appropriations helps with meeting some unreimbursed services but the agency won't stop care based on inability to pay.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of EIGHT THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$8,500.00) for the support of Senior Solutions (formerly Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont) for help to support seniors and their families who are trying to remain at home and not be placed in a nursing home?

Representative, Mark Boutwell, Executive Director mentioned that it is Senior Solutions 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary; thank you for support. One of five private not-for-profit agencies for aging in Vermont and serves 46 towns helping to plan and coordinate comprehensive services and support for older adults, caregivers, and younger adults with disabilities. Work with community partners, meal sites, Turning Point Recovery Center, Springfield Hospital, food shelters and others. There are 36 employees and over 70 volunteers. Provide a help line call center among other supports. Senior Solutions strives for a standard of services with humor, grace and upstanding knowledge and reliability to assist, support, coordinate and advocate to enable older Vermonters to age with dignity in the place of their choice.

Discussion:

Krystal Ayne of 185 Harvard Street commented that she has concerns of transparency and oversight. There isn't a list of board of directors on the website and she wants to know the status of the Meals On Wheels program and the cuts that were made to reimbursements without prior knowledge of around 25%.

Representative, Mark Boutwell, responded that the list of board of directors is in their annual report which is on their website. Last summer Senior Solutions was in the position of having to cut our operating budget so we cut staff positions and several staff did not get raises and part of the internal cuts did involve some reduction of reimbursement to meal sights. In light of those reductions that were painful for all of us, a donor has stepped forward and we have raised \$167,000 to restore those budgets. Thanks to all who made contributions toward that fund.

Krystal Ayne of Harvard Street asked that when Covid hit 2020, Wendy Germain ordered 1400 meals and were they given out?

Representative, Mark Boutsell, responded that to the best of his knowledge the boxes were either distributed to meal sites or some had expiration dates and if so, the practice is to dispose of them.

Krystal Ayne of Harvard Street commented that 2017 and 2018 had exactly the same data, the same number of people called, same number of people served in their report and she finds it strange that the report was same for two consecutive years.

ARTICLE 16: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$4,000.00) to help support the Valley Health Connections (formerly Precision Valley Free Clinic) to help the uninsured access health care?

Representative, Samantha Ball, Director commented that we served 425 Springfield residents; assisted with 410 insurance enrollments; offered 5 pharmacy vouchers; assisted with 360 Hospital and Northstar financial aid applications and offered 171 social service enrollments. 92% Springfield residents served remained or became insured. Moving forward to support residents to understand insurance and assist with Medicaid online. Valley Health has been around since 2000 and looks forward to assisting with understanding insurance.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 17: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TWELVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$12,500.00) for the support of the MOOVer f/n/a the Current operated by Southeast Vermont Transit, Inc., to provide transit services to the residents of the Town of Springfield?

Representative, Randy Schoomaker, CEO of SEVT, commented that SVET operates public transit services with vans, volunteers and buses. Operates an in-town route in Springfield Monday through Friday with connections between Bellows Falls, Springfield, Chester and Ludlow. Operates services for Medicaid clients, elderly and disabled. Last year they provided 40,000 rides in town of Springfield. Contribution from the town helps provide match for grants.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 18: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$2,500.00) to Green Mountain RSVP & Volunteer Center of Windsor County to develop opportunities for people age 55 and older to positively impact the quality of life in the community of Springfield through volunteer service?

Discussion: None. No representative.

ARTICLE 19: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) to assist with the cost of operating the Meals on Wheels Program of Greater Springfield that provides daily hot & cold congregate and home delivered meals and other nutritional needs to the qualified residents of Springfield?

Discussion: None. No representative.

ARTICLE 20: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$3,000.00) to Windsor County Partners d/b/a Windsor County Mentors, for youth mentoring services provided to the children of Windsor County?

Discussion: None. No Representative

ARTICLE 21: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$5,000.00) to the Springfield Supported Housing to assist families and individuals find permanent housing and provide in home case management services for 6 months to two years after placement?

Representative, Astrid White, commented that Springfield Supported Housing (SSL) is a private non-profit agency that helps families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness or potentially homeless locate and secure permanent, affordable housing and then provides housing support up to two years of case management. Serve Springfield, Windsor and Saxton's River. In FY22 assisted a monthly average 146 individuals and households; 171 adults and shelter units were used all year for 12 families with 23 children; 40 households transitioned to permanent housing options. Last year we created a landlord liaison position that is dedicated to working with area landlords and helping case management team navigate the rental market. SSL acts as the lead agency for Coordinated Entry for the Springfield Agency of Human Services District.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 22: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$55,000.00) to the Springfield Family Center to assist with the cost of providing a free meal daily, a free food shelf, and other services related to hunger, homelessness and related social-service needs in the community?

Representative, Paul Cioffi, expressed thanks to town and leaders for past support of \$55,000. You'll notice in the town's report we distributed over 50,000 pounds of food to over 1000 local residents and that's our primary task, to feed people who need help. Since the pandemic we've partnered with local restaurants to provide restaurant meals. The money is really well spent.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 23: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of FOUR THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$4,000.00) to the Women's Freedom Center for general budget support to provide services to women and their children who are experiencing emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and are residents of the Town?

Discussion: None. No Representative.

ARTICLE 24: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,500.00) to the Springfield Art and Historical Society to assist in preserving, maintaining, and displaying, for the public, the history and art of the Town of Springfield, Vermont?

Representative, Roseanne Putnam, commented that the Historical Society is a totally volunteer organization with no paid employees. Every dollar received is used to preserve and protect our town's history. Continue to receive many unique new items for the collection and answer questions regarding people, places and objects. Have received some dolls and toys from mid-1800 that were made here in Springfield, period clothing, Bennington pottery, pewter and Springfield ceramic souvenirs, photographs and paintings. Now house the Fellows display that was in Great Hall which is still in-tact. Developing a reference library including

Springfield High School yearbooks. Information and resources are for the public. We do not charge admission. Open Saturdays 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and other times by appointment. Thank you for past support and vote yes.

Discussion: None

ARTICLE 25: Shall the Town of Springfield appropriate the sum of NINE THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$9,000.00) to Turning Point Recovery Center Drop-In Center and Transition House to help with the everyday cost of providing recovery services and housing for men and that are in recovery from alcohol, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders?

Representative, Michael Johnson, expressed thanks for supporting our Transition House for at least the past ten years. The Transition House is a place where people have a chance for success; recovery is a long term project with 80% success rate. We have 7 beds; last year only 6 available due to drainage damage. People live there for 6 to 18 months and it's often a struggle and takes a while to find the way in life through recovery. There is a lot of baggage get rid of, to understand and work through. Other organizations within community are our partners such as Police and Senior Solutions. We have a youth program in some schools. The lucky individuals who get into the Transitions House's 7 beds are able to change their lives.

Discussion: None


ARTICLE 26: Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND and 00/100 DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) to help support outpatient, mental health and substance abuse services by the staff of Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Inc.?


Representative, George Karabakakis, CEO, commented that HCRS is a designated community mental health agency that provides adult mental health and addiction services and other services. HCRS operates Kindle Farm as well as provides a range of services. Staff does police social work acting as a liaison in Brattleboro and VT State Police barracks. Agency has provided 44,000 hours of service to 555 people in Springfield. This funding will support the Access Navigator who connects peoples with services. Thank you for support over the years.

Discussion: None

At 8:55 p.m. there being no other public comments Moderator Kraft adjourned the meeting to Riverside Middle School Gymnasium in said Town on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. to vote by Australian ballot for Town and Town School District Officers, for all appropriations and other items of business including River Valley Technical Center School District, which held their Annual Meeting on March 2nd.

  
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Lawrence J. Kraft, Moderator

  
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Kristi C. Morris, Chair of Selectboard

Attest:   
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Barbara A. Courchesne, Town Clerk, CVC