

TOWN OF DIXMONT
MARCH 18, 2023
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
116 VOTERS

A pre-meeting was held at 9:05 to 9:55 for people to air grievances, concerns, ask question, etc. A good amount of people showed up. It did seem that many of those that were complaining the most on Facebook concerning the roads did not show.

First selectperson David Bright spoke before the beginning of the meeting recognizing and giving thanks to various town officials. David also recognized Pagiel Rose for becoming a naturalized citizen on 2/3/2023 and a small gift was presented to him. Clerk Julie Bonin read the list of residents that had paid their property taxes in full since the close of books on January 31, 2023.

- Art. 1. To nominate and elect a moderator to preside at said meeting, and fix compensation therefor.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Charlies Gilbert and set compensation at \$50.00. Charles Gilbert was elected moderator and compensation of \$50.00.

- Art. 2. To see if the votes cast on Articles 4 through 10, if there is only one person nominated for a single position, shall be cast by allowing the Town Clerk to cast one written ballot, rather than by written ballot of all those present and voting, unless a citizen shall object, in which case a written ballot of all those present and voting shall be held for that Article.

Motion was made and seconded to accept the article. A motion was made and seconded to amend the article to included Article 11. The motion to amend the article was passed by a show of hands. A motion was made and seconded to accept the amended article. The motion passed by a show hands.

- Art 3. To see if the voters will agree to approve Articles 12 through 23 as a consolidated article for the purposes of enactment unless a citizen shall object to the passage of any article, in which case that article shall be removed from the block and voted on separately. In the invent that the Art. 3 is voted down, a vote on each individual article will proceed. **A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. David Bright made a motion and seconded to amend the article to take Article 23 out to vote on separately due to the fact that there is money attached to it. The motion to amend the article to say "Articles 12 through 22" was passed by a show of hands. A**

motion was made and seconded to accept the amended article. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 4. To nominate and elect a Third Selectperson for a term of three years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate David Cookson. A motion was made and seconded to nominate James Zimmerman. Both nominees came to the podium and spoke.

While the votes were being counted the Town voted to allow County Commissioner Andre Cushing to speak on “happenings” at the county level. He spoke about \$50,000 grants that were available. He also spoke about recruitment and retention problems. Penobscot County is the third largest county in Maine but ranks last in wages.

David Cookson received 55 votes, James Zimmerman received 57 votes. James Zimmerman was elected Third Selectperson, replacing Beverly Paré who did not run.

Art. 5. To nominate and elect a three-member Board of Overseers for the Poor for the ensuing year.

A motion was made and seconded to elect the Select Board. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 6. To nominate and elect a three-member Board of Assessors for the ensuing year, and fix compensation therefor.

A motion was made and seconded to elect the Select Board and set compensation at \$1.00. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 7. To nominate and elect a member of the Planning Board for a term of five years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Lisa York. Lisa York was re-elected with one vote.

Art. 8. To nominate and elect an RSU #19 School Board Director for a term of three years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Chris Easton. Chris Easton was re-elected with one vote. (side note: Chris had earlier suggested that someone who had children in the system would be a better fit but he would be willing to continue if no one stepped up).

Art. 9. To nominate and elect one trustee to the Cemetery Trustees for a term of five years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Dana Ivers. Dana Ivers was re-elected with one vote.

Art. 10. To nominate and elect a second trustee to the Cemetery Trustees for a term of five years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Kelly Stevens. Kelly Stevens was re-elected with one vote.

Art. 11. To nominate and elect one trustee to the Toothaker Family Trust for a term of three years.

A motion was made and seconded to nominate Richard Andren. Richard Andren was re-elected with one vote.

Articles 12 through 22 were read prior to the vote being taken as approved in Article 3.

Art. 12. Shall the Town vote to give the Select Board authority to sell any hay, wood, or buildings on tax acquired property?

Art. 13. Shall the Town vote to give the Select Board authority to allocate any unexpected funds from the sale of real estate, hay, wood, buildings, or reimbursements for damages to the capital improvement fund?

Art. 14. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board on behalf of the Town to sell or dispose of any real estate acquired by the Town.

Art. 15. Shall the Town vote to charge interest at an annual percentage rate on 2023 unpaid taxes after a certain date and to determine that date and the rate of interest to be charged?
(Recommended: October 31, 2023 at 8 percent)

Art. 16. Shall the Town vote to pass the following resolution or take any actions with respect thereto:

RESOLVED: That the Town Treasurer, with approval of the Select Board or a majority thereof, be authorized to borrow from time to time, in anticipation of taxes from the taxable year commencing April 1, 2023, a total sum not to exceed \$250,000 and for such purpose to issue and sell promissory note or notes of the Town, said note or notes to be in such form, to bear interest at such rate, and to be payable at such date within the taxable year in which they are issued as the Select Board or a majority thereof may approve, and to be paid out of money raised by taxation during the year. The proceeds of such note or notes to be used for and are hereby dedicated to purposes for which the Town may legally raise money or incur debt.

Art. 17. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to spend an amount not to exceed 25 percent of the total amount of the FY 2024 (Feb 1, 2023 to Jan. 31, 2024) annual budget from February 1, 2024 to the 2024 annual meeting?

Art. 18. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Tax Collector to accept payment of taxes not yet committed as a service to taxpayers? Any excess prepaid over the amount finally committed shall be repaid without interest per 36 M.R.S.A Section 506. Excess payments of \$10 or less may be credited to 2024 taxes.

Art. 19. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to accept and expend or not accept any donations made by private individuals or corporations to the Town of Dixmont to be applied to the account specified by the donor? (This includes, but is not limited to,

items such as Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Community Development, Community Forest, Historical Society, Recreation, and Memorial Park)

- Art. 20. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to accept and expend or not accept any and all Grants, Revenue Sharing, Reimbursements, County, State or Federal FEMA monies and any or all other Federal, State, County, Private, or International Grants or Reimbursements as provided by the Maine State Legislature, State of Maine Divisions, Departments, or Bureaus, and/or any Federal or Private sources? (includes Snowmobile grants and registration reimbursements to the Dixmont Gold Crest Riders Snowmobile Club & reimbursements for online fire permits to the Fire Department)
- Art. 21. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to use the tax overlay for abatements?
- Art. 22. Shall the Town vote to authorize an increase in the property tax levy limit, established for the Town of Dixmont by State Law, in the event that the municipal budget approved under the following articles would result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax limit?
A motion was made and seconded to accept Articles 12 through 22 as written. There was some discussion. The motion passed by a show of hands.
- Art. 23 To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$35,000.00 from Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (aka American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA funds) received by the Town from the federal government for the following project: Transfer Station Upgrade (Including, but not limited to Electricity, gate, building reconstruction, etc.)
A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. David Bright explained the article. Richard Proctor said the “bathroom” situation at the Transfer Station needs to be addressed. There as some discussion. The motion passed by a show of hands.
- Art. 24. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$158,000.00**
A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. A request to explain what this covered was asked. David explained. The motion passed by a show of hands.
- Art 25. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for **ANNUAL STIPEND for the Select Board** and how much? **Select Board recommends \$8000.00 for the First Selectperson and \$4,800.00 each for the Second and Third Selectpersons. To be paid for by one or more of Dixmont Revenue Sources. (Note: Select Board compensation has not changed since 2007.)**
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. There was some discussion. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 26. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **PUBLIC WORKS** services; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$551,751.66**

- A. General Expenses.....\$ 66,762.18
 - General Operating-\$23,289.62
 - Truck Payment-\$9,972.56
 - Major Truck Repairs-....\$12,500.00
 - Garage Rental-.....\$11,000
 - Storm Emergency.....\$5,000.00
 - Culverts-.....\$5,000.00

Roads.....\$366,386.48

1. Summer

- General.....\$ 88,404.00
- Paving.....\$150,000.00
- Gravel.....\$ 25,000.00

2. Winter.....\$ 97,982.48

- Gravel.....\$ 5,000.00

Solid Waste and Recycling..... \$118,603.00

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. Treasurer Shirlene Lindsey made a motion which was seconded to amend the article to be increased by \$10,000. Shirlene explained that the town received bills for January diesel fuel after close of books and is starting out with a deficit. The motion to amend the article to increase \$10,000 was passed by a show of hands. A question was asked what was budgeted last year. Kathy Jo Kind asked to have last year's numbers in the warrant for next year. There was more discussion. A motion was made and seconded to amend the article to increase gravel for summer roads from \$25,000 to \$50,000, an increase of \$25,000. Road Commissioner Corey Sprague was asked to comment. After much discussion, the motion to amend was passed by a show of hands. A motion to pass the article as amended (twice-a total increase of \$35,000) was passed by a show of hand. Thus the final amount voted was 586,751.66.

Art. 27. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **CEMETERY** services, including Sexton pay, Cemetery Committee expenses, and memorial purposes; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$13,000.00**

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 28. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for **ASSESSING**; and if so how much? **Select Board recommends \$9,900.00**

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 29. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **RESERVE ACCOUNTS**; if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$28,100.00**

- A. Heavy Equipment Repair Fund..... \$2,500.00
- B. Conservation Commission \$200.00
- C. Community Development Committee\$200.00
- D. Plow Truck Fund..... \$5,000.00
- E. Fire Truck/Fire House Fund.....\$10,000.00
- F. Historical Society Fund.....\$200.00
- G. Heavy Equipment Purchase..... \$5,000.00
- H. School Payment Buffer\$5,000.00

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. There was discussion. A motion was made and seconded to amend the article to increase D. Plow Truck Fund from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and G. Heavy Equipment Purchase Fund from \$5,000 to \$10,000. After some discussion the motion to amend passed by a show of hands. A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as amended. The motion passed by a show of hands. Thus the final amount voted was \$38,100.

Art. 30. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **PUBLIC HEALTH** services; and if so, how much. **Select Board recommends \$9,734.13**

- A. Animal Control \$8,299.98
- B. Public Health Nursing Services \$1,434.15

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 31. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **PUBLIC SAFETY** services; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$47,338.98.**

- A. Code Enforcement.....\$1,720.98
- B. Fire Department \$41,118.00
- C. Rescue Squad \$4,500

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. There was some discussion. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 32. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the following **SOCIAL SERVICES** needs; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$4,000.00**

- General Assistance...\$2,000.00
- Social Service Agencies.. ... \$2,000.00
 - Unity Area Food Pantry-....\$750.00
 - Newburgh Food Pantry-...\$1000.00
 - Red Cross-.....\$50.00
 - Eastern Area on Aging-.....\$100.00

•Penquis Cap-.....\$100.00

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 33. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for **RECREATION**; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$1,804**

A. School Recreation \$ 539.00

B. Gold Crest Riders Snowmobile Club \$1,265.00

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. There was some discussion. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 34. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the **PLANNING BOARD**; and if so, how much? **Select Board recommends \$500.00**

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. There was some discussion. The article passed by a show of hands.

NOTE: The following two items are assessed to the Town and paid from Property Taxes. The items listed are for informational purposes only. You are not voting to approve either of these items at Town Meeting. The County Tax will be assessed to the Town. The RSU# 19 budget will be voted by voters of all the Towns in the District in June, 2023.

Penobscot County Tax for 2022-2023 was \$167,046.00

The County Treasurer estimates the 2023-2024 tax will be \$180,409.68.

RSU# 19 Assessment for 2022-2023(July 2022-June 2023) was \$1,110,874.02.

RSU# 19 Payments (Feb 2022-Jan 2023) was \$1,078,489.53

The best estimate to date for the 2023-2024 Assessment is \$1,141,864.20

Art. 35. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$824,128.77** to fund the Town’s 2023-2024 tax commitment from the following sources:

TOWN OF DIXMONT REVENUES SOURCES

- A. Property Taxes
- B. Excise Taxes
- C. Anticipated Fees and Reimbursements
- D. Surplus
- E. Carry Forward
- F. Local Road Assistance Program(LRAP)
- G.

Note: For informational purposes only. The following are only estimates of what will be used from the above sources subject to change as additional information is gathered:

A.	Property Taxes	\$270,971.11
B.	Excise Taxes	\$177,331.56
C.	Anticipated Fee and Reimbursements	\$ 77,050.00
D.	Surplus	\$113,405.51
E.	Carry Forwards	\$118,346.59

F.	Local Road Assistance Program (LRAP)	\$28,224.00
G.	American Rescue Plan Act	\$38,800.00

Due to the fact that several of the previous article were amended with a monetary increase equaling \$45,000.00, a motion was made and seconded to amend this article to increase the amount from \$824,128.77 to \$869,128.77. The motion to amend passed with a show of hands. A motion was made and seconded to accept the amended article. The motion passed by a show of hands. Thus the total amount voted was \$869,128.77.

Art. 36. Concerning Art. 29. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board not to fund the Reserve Accounts, some or all, as previously approved, in the event of decreased projected revenues?

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. David was asked if this needed to be done would it done proportionately. David said no. The motion passed with a show of hands.

Art. 37. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to transfer monies from a budget article that has a surplus in an amount up to and not exceeding the amount approved in that article to an account where there is a deficit? The Town's approved total budget cannot be exceeded.

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 38. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into multi-year contracts if the Board deems it more advantageous for the Town to do so? (i.e. Cemetery and Roadside mowing contracts)

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 39. To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to pay additional monies on any loan the Town may have if it deems it more advantageous to the Town, providing there are monies available in the current budget year to do so.

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 40. To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to expend funds awarded by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and other state, federal, or on-governmental institutions concerned with environmental protection to improve a portion of the South Road where it crosses over an unnamed stream feeding into Olney Brook and to improve storm water management in the vicinity of the crossing. Work is dependent on the awarding of at least \$135,000 in grant awards. **Select Board recommends \$135,000 from grants and an additional \$5,000, only if needed, from surplus.**

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. Conservation Commission Chair Beth Swartz spoke on the article. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 41. To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to expend grant funds awarded by the State of Maine Community Resilience Partnership for the following projects. All expenditures are dependent on confirmation of the awarding of the grants. Tax money will not be used for any of these projects.

Select Board recommends:

A) \$5,000 to develop and fund a Town Volunteer Corps.

B) \$25,000 to install an emergency generator, auxiliary heating, broadband internet, and other improvements to the town's FEMA-designated emergency public shelter (the Gold Crest Riders Snowmobile Club building).

C) \$20,000 to begin a long-range plan to identify and provide funding for Capital Improvements to storm water management and roadbed systems throughout the town, and other infrastructure from climate-caused damage, including management of vegetation along roadways to protect the utility infrastructure from storm damage.

A motion was made and seconded to pass the article as written. The article passed by a show of hands.

Art. 42 To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board, or a majority thereof, to expend an additional amount for paving of the North Road and/or Miles Road beyond what is budgeted if the Board can negotiate a better price per mile by extending the length of road to be paved. Funds will come from a loan (not to exceed \$100,000), surplus, and/or savings (Capital Improvement Roads Account, Savings CD, Savings Reserve).

In the event a loan is secured: Total **estimated** debt service of this bond issue is \$113,010 (5yr) or \$120,700 (10 yr), of which principal is \$100,000 and **estimated** variable interest costs over 5 years is \$13,010 or over 10 years is \$20,700.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – TOWN OF DIXMONT

The issuance of bonds by the Town is one of the ways in which the Town borrows money for certain purposes. The following is a summary of the bonded indebtedness of the Town as of the date of this Town Meeting:

Bonds Now Outstanding and Unpaid	\$ 37,130.45
Interest to be Repaid on Outstanding Bonds	\$ 2,752.37
Total to be Repaid on Bonds	\$ 39,882.82
Additional Bonds Authorized Buy Not Yet Issued	\$ 0.00
Total Additional Bonds (now proposed) to be Issued If Approved by Voters	\$ 100,000.00
Estimated Potential New Interest	\$ 13,010 (5yr) or \$20,700 (10yr)

Total Additional Bonds to be Issued and
Estimated Interest if Approved by Voters

\$ 113,010 (5yr) or \$120,700 (10yr)

A motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written. David explained. The motion passed by a show of hands.

Art. 43. To see if the Town will adopt the “Dixmont Mining Ordinance” dated March 18, 2023, as prepared by the Dixmont Planning Board.

Planning Board member Phil Dolan made a motion to table this article. It was explained that at the Public Meeting the Conservation Commission brought forth some new information that the Planning Board agreed needed to be addressed with in the ordinance. They would like to table so they are able to do additional work on the ordinance. There was some discussion. It was explained that the current moratorium on mining would remain in effect and the vote on the mining ordinance would be held at a future town meeting. The motion passed by a show of hands.

**Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the. Motion passed by a show of hands.
The meeting adjourned 12:28pm**

Respectfully submitted,

**Julie A. Bonin
Dixmont Town Clerk**