

TRANSCRIPT MARCH 4 2025 PLAINFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING HELD AT PLAINFIELD TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSE

NOTE: due to technical difficulties Article 17 (surplus funds) was not transcribed but has been documented via notes taken at meeting. The time stamp is zeroed at 2:02:47 on page 35 and begins again.

Donny Osman 0:00

Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the 2025 town meeting. The hour is 1001, and I'm going to gavel this meeting into order with my very expensive gavel. By ancient Plainfield tradition, we are always proud to start the town meeting with a poem by our Plainfield Poet Laureate and moderator Emeritus, Charlie Barish. Charlie

Charlie Barrasch 0:42

and we're going to read a poem. Call it the Tidewater motel

when the next Bible is written, or the history of the world, the Garden of Eden will be the Tidewater motel outside Ellsworth Maine, where the portable sign says blueberries and lawn ornaments, chocolates and fishing tackle, featuring Ruth and wimpy's kitchen home in the 495 lobster lobster Supper, where wimpy with a musty Betty Boop catch it on his bicep, not a cheap one, either, and on his other arm, on a woman With a snake stirs the lobster pot outside over a soft wood fire, and Ruth serves it all in the dining room with real wood paneling and pictures of Elvis and John Wayne and Paper place mats that tell you wrongly this state bird of Maine is the blue jay, and then gives you the key to number six, where the concrete floor is covered with A thin green carpet,

and the glasses are Sandy clean, and the toilet seat has a ribbon around it. And in the morning, you can make love watch Sesame Street while you get dressed and give the key back to Ruth, who bring you blueberry pancakes.

While wimpy gets the fire started while the sun rises over the ocean and the state bird, the chickadee, whistles in the pines. Please make sure my children know I have been there and my children to children.o

Donny Osman 3:10

Thank you, Charlie. We plainfielders are forever indebted to you for your years of dedicated service to this town before we get into the agenda, and before I ask the floor to allow our state representative, Mark Mahali, to speak, I just want to speak just a little bit about some rudimentary procedure that will follow today. There are two in order to speak. You have to be a registered voter and you have to be recognized. There are two microphones on both ends of the room over there by the exit door and over here, it's really important that when you speak, you do

two things. One, say your name so the minute taker can get that and do that repeatedly. And two, it's very important that you always speak into the microphone, even if you have a loud voice like I do, because people listening at home and others will not be able to hear what's happening. So it needs to be into the microphone. Whenever you speak, you can. I will try and recognize as many different people as I can, but if you want, people can line up in front of the two microphones, and I'll alternate between the two microphones, recognizing people. Those of you there's also a mic up there's also a mic up front, people in the balcony. I just got to say, I sometimes have a tendency not to look up, so wave your hand, and please make a little noise or something so I don't miss you and others. Please help me out. If there are people in the balcony that want to speak, people that know me know that I am opinion of a person of pretty strong opinions, and I'm not shy about them all. Those are tabled today. My. Only job is to facilitate the will of this meeting, no matter what that is, most of the votes we take are voice votes. I shall ask for the yeas and nays, and then I will say the yeas or the nays appear to have it. I will wait a few moments. I am waiting to see if anybody requests a division of the house. If you doubt what I've how I've seen it, or you just want proof, anybody gets to say a division of the house. And then we'll count votes by people standing up for yay, and afterwards, standing up for no. The board of civil authorities will count. You also have the right, if we can have some order, thank you. You also have the right to ask for a secret ballot. If you ask for a secret ballot, you must be sustained by seven other people, and I want to inform you that that will take, likely, 20 minutes to a half an hour before we can get back to business. I want to say that's, that's, that's about it just one quick anecdote about town, about something I learned a long time ago about Vermont town meeting and this town, when my wife, Jana, and I moved into our house over a half a century ago, we did some work early on, and the town listers came to Check out the work, and you might find it hard to believe, but when I was younger, I was a bit on the brash and sassy side. And after the listeners took a look at the house, an older man who I was sure at the time was a native Vermonter looked at me and said, Well, are you going to come to town meeting. I said, Yes, I am, and I'm not sure you're going to like what I have to say. And that man looked at me, and he said, You come to town meeting. You say, what's on your mind? That's what town meeting's about. And he taught me that lesson, and I'll never forget it. And every time I've come to town meeting, we have treated each other, regardless of our differences, with respect and humanity and neighborliness. And I have no doubt that that will continue today, and in that vein, we'll go forward. I'm going to ask. Is there unanimous consent? Or another way to ask it is, does anybody object to Marc Mihaly who is not a plain field resident, giving us a short legislative report? Are there any objections? Seeing none representative. Mark Mahali, the floor is yours. Testing

Marc Mihaly 8:12
one, Testing one, two.

Can you hear? I think there's an intention that I should keep it very short, right? Well, then it's okay. Maybe are you controlling this? Just down a little because it's okay. I just want to say, to start, I know you are confronting issues around the flooding and recovery from the flooding, and what you're going to do today, how you're going to vote. I want to say that it is, it's, you are really unusual. This town is really different than most towns that have suffered flooding. Most towns

that suffer flooding are completely focused on that flood. They can't think beyond one flood. They most towns. I mean, it certainly happened with New Orleans. They can't confront the reality that it might happen again and again. And what that means this town is confronting that issue. That's why you're debating amongst yourself. You're really looking at, what do we really do? Do we move part of the town? Can we keep it where it was, given the flooding, you are unique. There are very few towns anywhere that are doing that, and I congratulate you for that. To keep that in mind, I know you're focusing on the conflict, the issues, that's inevitable, but you're special. There is no other town that is doing what Plainfield is, and I can tell you, Plainfield is known for that.

Also, I'm I have the dubious honor of being Chair of the Committee in the House now that is dealing with housing. And I don't think housing is more important, despite the fact that I spend my life on it. Now, I don't think housing is more important than other issues. Certainly, we're struggling with health care, which is out of control, and health care costs and you can't, you can't get to see your doctor. I mean, we're really suffering. And we're dealing with property taxes and education, which is just very these are very difficult issues. We will be holding the line on property taxes. I've said before, personally, I wish we use the income tax rather than the property tax for education, but what I think doesn't matter, but on housing. The thing about housing is it's kind of what I consider to be a fundamental issue, because if we don't solve the housing problem, it's very difficult to solve the school problem or the health care problem we need. We need to housing that's affordable, that normal people can buy, or else companies can't hire people. We have taken testimony. I had the chair of the Northeast Kingdom Chamber of Commerce almost crying in our committee about how all their companies are ready to grow, ready to offer jobs, and they hire people, and they come here and they leave because they can't find housing they can afford, and this right now, outside of Chittenden County, the cost of materials and interest rates are so high, and if with this tariff stuff, they're going to go higher. Normal people cannot afford a house, and good developers with good will cannot build houses that people can afford to buy. And so what we're working really hard. I think we'll have a bill that will make it easier to permit housing easier to finance it and finance infrastructure. It's all about money. And also we've got almost a million dollars currently in the bill that I've got that I'm working on to try to train more people to be carpenters, plumbers, electricians, et cetera. Because if we don't have more people in the trades, we could do anything we want, and it would still we're not going to build the housing because there's nobody to build it. So that's the issue I'm working on really hard. I've learned in my time in the state house, everything comes at you. You have to focus, or you don't get anything done. I'm focusing on housing. So that's it. Thank you.

Donny Osman 13:35

Okay, thank you, Mark. Thank you before we get into the agenda. Just a quick couple now, if you're standing in the back, I believe there are some seats right up here, up front, and I also think there are quite a few seats up in the balcony if you're standing in the back. So you know, also, just want to mention that Paula Emery is here. She's going to help. If there are amendments, make sure that we get the writing of the amendments that people propose exactly right. Appreciate that Paula articles one and two are voted on on Australian ballot. We shall

move on to Article Three to hear the reports of the town officers and act on the same the town clerk's report is on page 31 may I hear a motion on the town clerk's report, it's been moved. Is there a second? Please say state your name, please for the for the record. Thank you. Is there a second? I didn't hear it. Thank you. Steven. Been moved and seconded. We accept the town clerk's report, questions, comments, statements on the town clerk's report.

Seeing none

all those in favor of accepting the clown town clerk's report, please say, aye. The. Aye, All those opposed say no, and you've accepted the town the eyes appear to have it, and you've accepted the town clerk's report. The Treasurer's Report is on page 33 and do I understand that there's also a handout for that that's been given?

Karl Bissex 15:29

Josh, is there a handout?

Donny Osman 15:30

May I hear a motion on on the Treasurer's Report? Yes. Mary needling, Mary needling, is it been seconded. Couldn't hear please speak up. Jana, oh, second, it's been moved and seconded to accept the town Treasurer's Report. Discussion, questions, comments. Charlie Codd, Bill, you should say your name, not me. Charlie

Charlie Cogbill 16:05

I made a comment at last year's town meeting about the treasurer's report, saying that the narrative that was submitted in that year, the previous year, and it continued this year under three different treasurers. The treasurer's narrative is uninformative as to our finances. It is very nice of looking at what is being done in terms of process. It is very nice in saying that the they're on top of it, but it doesn't say what the state of our finances are. We there's a lot of concern about our finances, both now and in the future, and I think the town Treasurer's report should state the finances. It doesn't show up in the balance sheet, which, by the way, is distributed after the printing of your book. So things I would like to see are particularly the resolve a revolving loan fund is not included financially anywhere in the town report or the subsequent the cemetery commissions on funds are not included. Last year, I was assured at town meeting that those would be considered. There's nothing in this town report about the flood and reimbursement in 2023 the budget does not include any mention of how the 2024 finances. They're they're in limbo. There a lot of unknown, but there's no indication in the Treasurer's Report, how they will be considered. So even though we have a report, the report has not filled us in, and I think the town should be filled in on these important issues,

Donny Osman 18:17

other discussion. I

I'm sorry. Is there a hand that I'm missing? I'm sorry, yes, please. Wondering

Donny Osman 18:32

The additional handout, where is it? Downstairs, in the table downstairs, on the tables

downstairs, they're all gone. Other questions, comments, yes, if you, if you have questions, it'd be a good idea to line up in front of the mic, and then that's easier for me to see. No, you need to be on the microphone, please.

Dan Fingas 18:59

There's one by the pie table. There's one over there. It's a problem in

Frances Rose 19:02

terms of notice and information. If

Donny Osman 19:05

there's nothing else, that's a problem in terms of going forward. Thank you, Steven, thank you. It's also a problem if you don't speak into the microphone because we cannot hear you. There is a hand by only one hand.

Okay? Yes, please.

Janice Walrafen 19:40

Janice I just was wondering, since the reports ran out, if we could have the treasurer speak to the report. So those of us who didn't get to read it know what's going on.

Donny Osman 19:58

I'm happy for that. Any other questions? Comments?

Seeing none. Okay, Josh,

Josh Pitts 20:18

if you if you have a handout, raise your hand. I Okay, the missing page from the Treasurer's Report was the balance sheet, and the main reason that I had difficulty reconciling the balance sheet in time of the printing was, there were, there was a few errors in the in the recording of the highway assets. So I wanted to make sure that I gave a very I gave an accurate indication of what the the highway, what I thought the highway fixed assets relative to the purchases the prior year and the net equipment assets. And so that was the cause of the delay. And you know, one of the things that is, you know, one of the expectations is we have a system that you know should like present us the you know, should record accurately the transactions that we're doing. And in the process of, you know, preparing for town meeting and also being, you know, essentially starting this role in November, it's, it's difficult to, like to trace back to the previous fiscal year. After you're halfway through the fiscal year and you've been through a couple other treasurers to determine what you know, where things have have gone awry, I have five copies of the balance sheet that I brought with me. Just hand those down. And so people want to look at that. If you don't have it, you know, you want to pass that around the and I apologize that there

are more, but the you know, they are available on the website, and you know, I can make them available, and I'm happy to, you know, to speak to any specifics, like around the the state of the finances, I don't believe there's a any, I don't believe there is any problem that is urgent, or there were any errors that were, you know, malicious or intentional? I just think it's a matter of the the town needs, you know, help from an outside, you know, CPA or or other type of like financial organization to assist us to kind of reset things, because we have a lot of, there are a lot of recording errors, and, you know, in trying to get this all set up in time for town meeting was very like it, put a it put a big, you know, pressure on me to get this sorted out. And, you know, I did the best I could, you know, with the time I had

Donny Osman 23:39

other questions, comments,

seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the treasurer's report say, aye, all those in favor, no, the Ayes appear to have it. The eyes do have it, and you've accepted the Treasurer's Report. The listers report begins on page 37 May I have a motion on the listers report, please say your name loud so we can hear who's making the motion. We didn't. I'm just sure we got it. I'm deaf and I'm deaf, and a second, questions, comments, I'm sorry, the second, who is the second? Please?

paula emery 24:33

If you're, if you're moving or seconding, you, can you say your name, please?

Donny Osman 24:38

Okay, when you move in second, why don't we stand up and it'll be a little more recognizable for us up here, I think so. It's been moved and seconded to accept the listeners report, questions, comments, discussion on the listeners report

seeing none

all those. Favor of accepting the listeners report. Signify by saying, aye, All those opposed say now No, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the listeners report. The Development Review Board report begins on page 38 May I have a motion on the Development Review Board report, stand up when you make the motion. Second discussion on the Development Review Board Report. Yes, thank you for going to the microphone

Janice Walrafen 25:41

again. I'm Janice warrifen, and I'm the chair of the development revolt Review Board, and I've been on the board since it was playing field. Moved from a zoning board to a development Review Board, and right now, we have our very busy due to the flooding and the development needs at the town, and we have three members on our five member board, and it's taxing those of us who've been on the board a long time, and it's actually a good board to be on because we are working with our neighbors and making decisions together about how we live peacefully

together and develop together. So encourage any interested members to speak to myself and then the Select Board, or Mary, who's on the board and Seth mullendore, he might be here. We're our three members, and we meet monthly on the second Wednesday of the month. So we encourage people, two more people, to join us. Thank you. Thanks.

Donny Osman 26:40

Janice, further discussion on the Development Review Board report,

seeing none?

Is there somebody who's being recognized? I'm not seeing it. I'm sorry. Okay, therefore, all those in favor of accepting the Development Review Board report, please say Aye. All opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the Development Review Board Report. There's some state there are still seats up front, if people are standing in the back, and I think there are also seats up in the balcony. And please try and

Dan Fingas 27:30

I don't, I don't think you can stand in the voting area once you finish voting. So if you've already finished voting, you have to come forward and not stand in the voting area.

Donny Osman 27:48

Yeah, okay, thank you. Okay, the Plainfield Planning Commission Report begins on page 39 May I have a motion on the planning commission report. Thank you. Jesse, a second? Is there a second been moved and seconded? Discussion on the Plainfield Planning Commission Report?

Seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the planning commission report, the Central Vermont Regional Planning report begins on page 40, may I have a motion please. Thank you, Janice. And a second please. Thank you, Jody. Discussion on the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission Report. Applause.

Seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the planning commission report, please say aye. All in favor. Say no, opposed. All opposed. Say no. It's going to be a long meeting and

the eyes appear to have it. I'm confident the eyes do have it. And you have passed this report. You, you, you, I'm going a little nuts the zoning and we're not even we haven't even started the Zoning Commission report is on page 42 may I have a motion on the zoning administrator's report? Please? Steve moved second. Janice moved and seconded discussion on the zoning administrator. Of report,

seeing none. All those in favor say, Aye, All those opposed, no, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have passed the Zoning Commission. The social concerns report begins on page 43

I'm going to, I'm going to let you look at this. I'm not going to read every, every figure discussion on the social concerns report, can we have a motion on the social concerns report, Steve motion and a second Thank you. Moved and seconded discussion on the social concerns. Report, do

Seeing none.

All those in favor signify by saying aye. All those opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. You've passed the social concerns report faster than I can remember you.

The Select Board report begins on page 43 May I have a motion on the Select Board Report? 4747 I'm sorry, 47 Thank you. May I have a motion on the Select Board Report? Steve moved tennis second, been moved and seconded to accept the Select Board Report. Discussion. Janice. Janice, it says you want to thank the Select Board. I I would dare to step out of the moderator's role by saying, Amen, Carl,

Karl Bissex 32:16

I do want to note that I incorrectly had a date of April 15 of our last year's meeting, and it was actually may 22 I just want to get that corrected. That was the day, by the way, I was asked to sit in for one day

Donny Osman 32:36

any further discussion on the Select Board Report. Yes,

Betsy Zeigler 32:47

hi. Betsy Ziegler, I had a question about the route to project. I haven't heard anything I you know, we all just barely made it across the street here today, and we know that if we want to continue to invite revitalize our town, we need to make it walkable. So any report on the route to project, intersection? Project, yes, intersection. I Well,

Karl Bissex 33:23

the Select Board is well aware of the need to get that intersection corrected. We have a in one of our next upcoming meetings. We're going to have we expect V trans here to talk to us about where it's at. We haven't heard much, and we've heard about some changes that we weren't aware of earlier. And so we are on that, and we do know it's a priority.

Donny Osman 33:51

Other discussion on the Select Board report,

Okay, seeing none.

Somebody say, right here. Okay, seeing none. All those in favor of accepting the Select Report say, Aye. All opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. You've accepted the Select Board report. The Plainfield Town Hall, Opera House annual report is on page 61 may I have a motion on the town hall? Opera House Annual Report moved and a second please moved and seconded discussion on the Plainfield Town Hall, Opera House annual report.

Seeing none all those in favor of accepting the report, please say aye, All those opposed. Say No, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have accepted the Opera House Select Board. Don't miss the show next Sunday. Thank you. The library report is on page 64 May I have a motion on the library report, please? Lita,

Donny Osman 35:26

say your name loud. Lita, thank you. It's been moved. And is there a second please? Mary nibling, second discussion on the library report. Yep. Do

Michael Billingsley 35:45

I would ask that we approve to have Angela ogle the librarian who is not a resident to speak. He's

Donny Osman 35:51

asking for Angela to be able to speak. Is there any objection to the librarian who is not a plain field resident speaking at this meeting, seeing none that's fine. Hello.

Angela Ogle 36:16

Hello, everyone. I'm Angela Ogle. I'm your librarian, the director of the Cutler Memorial Library. Another year has passed, and I'm here again, and I'll take any questions. I think that I've given you a good report of what we've done over the past year with the funds that you've donated to to the Cutler, but I'm very happy to answer any questions and elaborate on anything that may be lacking.

Steven Farnham 37:02

Hi, Steven Farnham, there was talk of an expansion couple years ago. Can you give us a report on whether that's happening or not or progress? Thank you, sure.

Angela Ogle 37:13

Of course, there was talk of an expansion, and that was prior to the COVID pandemic, and prior to my tenure, I have looked at the plans, and we have a building committee that has been formed that has sort of shifted our priority with the library, which is to make sure that the library itself, as it currently functions, is in tip top shape before we add on or build on to this library. So we've been, we have a list, and we've been plucking away at it, and, in fact, I'm not supposed to announce, but we did get another grant recently that's going to give us one more element to,

you know, take off the list, and we've just been consistently doing that. At that point when we have no more things on our list, maybe as a community, we can start to talk about an expansion again. But let's get that building and tip top shape and get us a get us a parking lot so that people can actually use the library. We have more and more patrons, and the library's parking lot fills up really fast. So let's do get the building in order, get us a parking lot, and then we'll talk expansion. Sound good?

Donny Osman 38:40

Other questions, discussion on the library report, up, Yep, thank you. Thanks for yelling up here.

Jan Waterman 38:52

This is all encompassing, starting with Angela and the library. Gratitude, just huge gratitude for the difference you've made and continue to make, and the contributions to this community, everyone on this stage, I cannot find words to thank you all. Bram, I cannot thank you, Carol, you are all so wonderful and so giving and so marvelous. I just thank you. Thank you. Thank you all so much over

Donny Osman 39:47

plate, okay, somebody who, somebody's left their blinkers on with handicap plates. We you don't want a dead battery when you when you leave, okay, further discussion on the library report. Do?

Aye, seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the library report, say, aye, opposed. Say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the library report. The wastewater report begins on page 67 May I have a motion on the wastewater report. Yes, we need you to stand up and say your name loud for the record, please. Mary lane, thank you. A second. I don't see it. Thank you, Karen. It's been moved and seconded discussion on the wastewater report.

Seeing none. Okay.

Cooper, there's a hand. It's Jesse Cooper, say your name, Jesse just

Jesse Cooper 40:59

I assume there are folks here that could answer this question. I was curious, how many households are paying into the wastewater system? I couldn't quite pull that out of the report, and maybe it's in there. Josh, are

Donny Osman 41:21

Somebody have an answer to that?

Dan Fingas 41:35

just he's looking it up. One second

Donny Osman 41:49

the compliments are wonderful, but they are out of order.

Josh Pitts 41:58

So the the number of the number of build units, which a domicile that has essentially a kitchen sink, is kind of the most basic unit. So, like, if you have an apartment, you've got a kitchen sink, a toilet, a shower, that's kind of, that's considered sort of the one standard unit. We have 350 of those. But, for example, the outer spice restaurant is on the system, and it's billed based on state tables which give an equivalency. So some of those units are, you know, account for that. You know, positive Pi has a certain number of units based on and it's based on the number of seats that the restaurant has as well. So like that is and the number of meals. It's very like precise. So, so the the main division of billing would be 350, and a half for, for reasons,

Donny Osman 43:01

further discussion.

Michael Billingsley 43:10

Michael Billingsley, I just wanted to make sure that everyone knows that there are some remarkable things, as Mark was saying, there are some remarkable things about Plainfield, but there's some remarkable things about our water and wastewater system. It's one of the best in the state. It's winning awards. Scott and Tristan are winning awards. Not only are they keeping it running and getting it back to running after enormous damage, but they're also working with a system that is not only efficient, but nowhere near capacity, so we can absorb new people and serve the needs of people already on the system. And I think it's just we're enormously lucky to have those people working for us.

Donny Osman 43:57

Further discussion on the wastewater report,

John Harrison 44:00

just wondering Is John Harrison, is there a capacity? Please state your name. John Harrison, is there a capacity? Like, is there a limit? And what is it?

Josh Pitts 44:16

So the the capacity is based on design flow and the the wastewater system underwent its 20 year evaluation. And this in 2021 I believe, and in that they go through everything they they, they look at all of the systems individually like it's a very fine tooth comb. And it's a very large report. And if everybody wants it, it is available the roughly speaking, I think we're around a little over 50% of its of its capacity. It was built in 1968 Eight, and then it was completely overhauled in the late 90s. And so the you know, every 20 years, we get an evaluation, and in most regards, it's actually in quite good condition. Like any system that is has to be maintained in perpetuity, there's always going to be things that you have to but one of the key things about to know about the wastewater system and Plainfield is that the expectation when it was first designed was that

most populations go up, and so it was designed for growth for a number of decades in the future, expected typical growth and in the meantime, a lot of the older infrastructure that has groundwater ingress that contributes to the flow had been corrected. So one of the things about running a wastewater treatment plant is you need a certain amount of flow to make it to optimize its functional utility, and it's we have a lot of capacity in that system for more flow. We used to joke that the water wastewater department should put pay toilets on Route two just to get more flow and funds into the system. I

Donny Osman 46:24

aye, is there further discussion on the wastewater report?

Seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the wastewater report, say, aye, all opposed say, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the wastewater report. I want to remind folks that if you do want to speak, one way to let me know is by queuing up in front of the microphone. The Conservation there, and also there are some more seats up front, because I think the rules are that after you register, you're not supposed to be in the voting area,

Paula Emery 47:02

three in the front row over here. There's one in the second row back another one back there.

Donny Osman 47:08

The Conservation Commission report is on page 77 May I have a motion on the Conservation Commission Report moved and a second is the movement Second. Thank you. Discussion on the Conservation Commission Report,

seeing none.

All those in favor of the Conservation Commission report say, Aye. All opposed. No eyes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have accepted the Conservation Commission Report. The Green Up report is on page 81 may I have a motion on the green up report. So

okay, do we have and a second? Okay, we have that discussion on the green up report. Seeing none. All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed. No. Eyes appear to have it. Eyes do have it. You've accepted the green up report, the Plainfield Area Community Trust report is on page 82 may I have a motion on the Plainfield Area Community Trust report, please. Thank you. It's moved and seconded. Thank you. Discussion on the Plainfield Area Community Trust report,

seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed say, No. Eyes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the Community Trust report, the Plainfield e 911, report is on page 83 May

I have a motion on the E 911, report, Thank you, Karen, thank you. It's been moved and seconded discussion on the E, 911, report,

seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye,

Meg Davis 49:50

I just happened to read that

Donny Osman 49:53

we sent your name for the record. Sorry. Meg Davis, thank you.

Meg Davis 49:55

I just happened to read that it says you have to log into your account and to confirm your registration. Every 12 months, and that the E, 911, board will reach out with a reminder message. I have never received such a message. I have never re registered. This is a surprise to me. Anybody,

Donny Osman 50:15

anybody respond to this question? Any further discussion on the E 911? Report,

seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the report say, aye, all opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the E 911, report, the Fire and Rescue is on page 84 May I have a motion on the fire and rescue report, Janice and a second been moved and seconded, discussion on the Plainfield Fire and Rescue report,

seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting the Fire and Rescue report say, aye, All opposed. No. Eyes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the Plainfield Fire and Rescue report Washington County Sheriff's Department report is on page 85 May I have a motion on the Washington County Sheriff's report? Thank you, Karen. A second, thank you. Grace, been moved and seconded discussion on the on the sheriff's report.

Seeing none all those in favor of accepting the sheriff's report. Say, Aye. All opposed. Say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the Washington County Sheriff's report. The Plainfield Emergency Management begins on page 89 May I have a motion on the plain field emergency management report? Jana Osman moved and seconded. I knew who that was. Well.

Paula Emery 52:30

Steve Farnham also did. Thank you. Who's who moved? For who moved? It was recognized, recognized for second. Okay, sorry,

Donny Osman 52:40

Steve, been moved and seconded discussion on the Plainfield emergency management report. Michael,

Michael Billingsley 52:50

I wanted to say that I don't want to add anything to the multiple thank yous that I extend and try to list literally the hundreds of people who contributed to our response to the disasters of the last two years, as well as being available up to the present. There's one important omission, someone who came on board after I submitted my report, which is Michael Zahner, who has done an enormously along with Gary Smith done an enormously productive job in helping us find federal money and state money to recover many of our losses that are arduously being documented by multiple people. It's a huge job to get ready for that. I want to step into a slightly forward looking role, and speak to what Mark Mahali said earlier, which is that we're already bracing for our next year, and part of that is knowing the predictables, which are things like, yes, we're going to have another flood of some kind. But also there are unpredictables. Will there be a drought this spring, and will we have a forest fire that forces people to evacuate from their homes in a certain area or neighborhood of Plainfield. So looking ahead, we have been modifying this building for the last year so it can become an emergency shelter. You wouldn't know it, but there's actually a room under the stage now which has all our shelter supplies, and we have nine people who step forward to become shelter volunteers who are going to be meeting in this room next this coming Saturday, at three o'clock in the afternoon. If you're interested in becoming a shelter volunteer, there is another training coming up in a couple of months, and if you're interested, we'd love to have you come to our orientation. We always need more help, especially if we end up having some kind of a sheltering event where people are here for three or four days even. I'm hoping it's never that long, but it's it's always important to be to be able to respond quickly and and you should know that if there is an extremely hot series of days in the summer, that the downstairs is now air conditioned and will be a cooling center if anybody needs to retreat from heat in their. Home. And similarly, if we have a long electrical outage, this building not only has a new generator that will keep it running all the time, but also at the same time, we'll be able to offer a warm space for people whose furnaces fail. So that's where we're looking ahead. Thank you. We're not entirely sure. The question was, what is the capacity? But we have cotton beds and blankets for 25 people. Yes.

Karen Hatcher 55:35

Karen Hatcher just officially want to give gratitude to Michael Billingsley, our emergency management director, for the role that he played, not only in 2023 but in 2024 tirelessly devoted himself at his own cost in health, and who has just been the pillar of looking out for this community as emergencies go and without whom we wouldn't have the all of the good things that he just named, and also the team of volunteers who stepped up. So I just really want to acknowledge Michael's contribution to the town today.

Donny Osman 56:22

I ain't it the truth any further discussion on the Plainfield emergency management report? Seeing none. All those in favor of accepting the report, say aye. Opposed. Say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the Plainfield emergency management report, the Plainfield Hazard Mitigation committee report appears on page 92 may I have a motion on the Plainfield Hazard Mitigation committee report moved and is there A second moved and seconded discussion on the plain field Hazard Mitigation committee report, seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes, do have it and you've accepted the hazard mitigation report, the Plainfield Historical Society report is on page 93 May I have a motion on the Plainfield Historical Society report? Grace, thank you. And a second. Mary lane. Mary lane, done discussion on the Historical Society report.

Seeing no further discussion. All those in favor of accepting the report say Aye. All opposed? No, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. And you have accepted the Plainfield Historical Society report, the recreation and Public Arts Committee annual report is on page 95 May I have a motion on the recreation and public arts move, Janice and the second

Donny Osman 58:47

moved and seconded to accept the Historical Society Report. I'm sorry, the recreation report discussion,

seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye, all opposed, no, and you have passed the recreation report. Lost my place. Cemetery commission is on page 100 May I have a motion on the cemetery commission report? Moved second? Peter Young, discussion on the cemetery commission report,

seeing none.

All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed, no, and you have accepted the cemetery commission report. The energy coordinator report begins on page 102, may I have a motion on the Plainfield energy. Coordinator report, Steve moves, seconded to accept Thank you. Been moved and seconded discussion on the energy. Coordinator report, Bob Atchinson

Bob Atchinson 1:00:22

hunt, yeah, I guess so. Hi, I'm Bob Atchison Plainfield energy coordinator. I just would like to say a couple of quick things. One is that I totally appreciate the work that is resilient, see work and also recovering from disasters. I'm here the guy who wants to help you get together and be proactive, weatherizing your house, trying to find alternative means of fossil fuel other than fossil fuel to use. And keep looking for little things that'll make a difference. We owe it to our children.

We owe it to our world. We owe it to our civilization. So keep your foot on the gas in a positive direction, and not really the gas at all. Thank you, Bob.

Dan Fingas 1:01:25

everybody. I just wanted to thank Bob. Bob took it upon himself to work with our Regional Planning Commission to get a municipal Energy grant, the Merc grants this last year, and he won us over \$300,000 for us to Yeah, for us to renovate and and modernize and make more efficient all of our town buildings. So this building, the Municipal Building, the firehouse and the town shed. So all that work is still to be done, but it's thanks to the volunteerism and leadership of Bob that we're getting that much money and that much help

Donny Osman 1:02:03

further discussion.

We appreciate you going to the mic. Thank you.

Anne Van Courvering 1:02:17

I just want to know what's happening with the EV charger, because it looked like it was going to be done, according to this thing, but I don't see that it is done.

John Harrison 1:02:31

Was the speaker

Donny Osman 1:02:36

for the discussion?

Bob Atchinson 1:02:38

Bob, yeah. Hi. We have a quote on it, I just need to get together with Josh and get the purchase order formed and we'll be getting it back in as soon as we can. Thank you,

Donny Osman 1:02:55

Steve, did you have a hand up before other further discussion on the energy coordinator report?

Bob Atchinson 1:03:01

We're also thinking about putting in a second charger in town, location to be identified. But

Donny Osman 1:03:13

further discussion

Seeing none

all those in favor of accepting the energy coordinator report, say, aye, All opposed? No. The eyes appear to have it. The eyes do have it, and you have accepted the energy coordinator report, the town health officer report is on page 105 May I have a motion on the town health

officer report, I'd like to move that. Yes, Paula moves. Paula Emery and a second please. Thank you, Michael. It's been moved and seconded to accept the town health officers report, discussion on the town health officer report,

yes in the balcony, yep, wait for the they'll get your mic. Okay, you're not obligated to speak, even if you raise your hand. Is there any further discussion on the health officers report? Seeing none. All those in favor say, Aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have accepted the health officer's report the Central Vermont solid waste report begins on page 106 May I have a motion on the solid waste report and a second been moved and seconded. I. All discussion on the solid waste report, seeing none. Oh Betsy,

Betsy Zeigler 1:05:20

just it's in the report, but just for everybody's information, the next year we're going in the next year, we're going to have a recycling center, I forget with it, it has a special name, and it will be open sometime mid July, and at which you can take hazardous waste, alternative waste. I'm forgetting what else, but those are the two main things that will be available throughout regularly, throughout the whatever, on a weekly schedule, so that you don't have to wait for once a year hazardous waste, pickup, drop off, etc. So that's coming. And, yeah,

Donny Osman 1:06:05

further discussion on the solid waste report. Okay,

wait, Deborah and Mike's not on yet. Go ahead.

Deborah Stoleroff 1:06:21

I'm just curious, where will that be?

Betsy Zeigler 1:06:29

I'm sorry, I don't remember the name of the road. It's in Berlin. If you were going to there's It's okay. You're going up 64 and it's one of those roads to the east of it. I don't know. Does that help? It's near everything up there. So

Donny Osman 1:06:54

further discussion on the solid waste up in the balcony. Okay? Any further discussion, any answer to the question, I believe,

Dan Fingas 1:07:07

based on that description, I believe she meant up near the airport.

Donny Osman 1:07:13

Any further discussion, seeing none. All those in favor of accepting the solid waste report, please say aye. All those opposed say, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the solid waste report, the rural community transportation incorporation report begins on page 107, may I have a motion on the rural community transportation report,

whether you accept the report? And a second Karen moved and seconded discussion on the transportation report. Is there a hand? Seeing none

Alex Forbes 1:08:09

Hi. Alex Forbes, just wondering how many people actually use the rural community transportation? Are there any figures or tracking of that from Plainfield. Dan,

Dan Fingas 1:08:31

I'll fix that. Based on the report, it says,

Dan Fingas 1:08:37

I believe in that report on the route to the 9400 rides, I believe, in the rural anyway. Just so everyone knows this zoom is not the official video of town meeting. And so we have a video up there. So unlike other times, and we have important bombers, and it takes us hours and hours to clean up the film and actually get it to a size we can put on our website. We shouldn't have this problem this time. So

Alex Forbes 1:09:04

okay, then let me just clarify my question. The town of Plainfield is paying \$6,833 for how many Plainfield riders. It doesn't say that's the that's what we're paying to support this. But I was just wondering the number of Plainfield riders, just because of how expensive this is.

Donny Osman 1:09:40

on one second here first and then the balcony.

Anne Van Courvering 1:09:46

I As somebody who has used the bus service, and you know people I know use the bus service, they just reinstated the noon one, which makes it really a lot easier. It has just been. Yeah, you could go in the morning and you could come back at five, and that was it. So it's very difficult to do anything that's quicker. Now that the noon service has been reinstated, I think that more people are using it and wanting to use it. So just that, that is an input there

Dana Woodruff 1:10:21

in the balcony. State your name for the record, please. Dana Woodruff, oh, sorry. Dana Woodruff, I ride the bus. I love riding the bus. I don't know where everyone's getting on. It starts at St Johnsbury, but I've definitely met neighbors I hadn't met before that lived around the corner for me. So there's other plain fielders that get on at the park and ride or in town. And I'm really glad that the midday bus is back too, so that if you want to run errands, you don't have to be in town all day. And it's great when your car is in the shop. And the my RIDE program also you can request rides. I went from work to an appointment up on Granger road, and people got on and off at the hospital. So I encourage people to ride the bus, if you'd like. If you have any questions, let me know,

Donny Osman 1:11:16

is there further discussion on the transportation report? Yeah. Mike Bob, sorry,

Bob Atchinson 1:11:21

yeah, just letting you know that when they did cut out the midday route, it was inconvenience for a lot of people. I heard about it. I took it to the TAC committee, transportation Advisory Committee of CBR PC, and somehow Green Mountain transit found the wherewithal to put it back on the route, so I'm really glad it's there.

Donny Osman 1:11:49

Sasha, Sasha, can we can we get Sasha a hand mic? Please. You.

Sasha Thayer 1:12:03

You. Thank you so much. I'm just wondering if we could make sure that the website has a link to this and also has a link to what the path is, where the bus goes to and the other busses that might be available to hitch up to it. We are. We've been shelling out a lot of money for a lot of years, and I think public transportation is great, but the best you know more we can do to let people know what you know, how to use it, where it's going to go, would be would just be nice for all of us

Donny Osman 1:12:39

up in the balcony.

Jake McBride 1:12:42

Hi. My name is Taylor Jake McBride. I just had a quick clarifying question. I'm not sure if I'm reading it right. Does anyone know what the total is for the amount that playing field pays into the system?

Donny Osman 1:13:01

Is there further discussion? He

Donny Osman 1:13:09

Further discussion, yeah.

Dan Fingas 1:13:12

Dan, I'll just note, I think the actual amount we're putting in is going to be an article on itself that we'll vote on in a minute. Right? It's article. I'd have to look it up. But there is an article that we'll be voting on. This is just voting on the report, not on the article. Shall the town of Plainfield votes, raise an appropriate expend \$6,833.06 so we will still be voting on that after we get through all of these reports.

Donny Osman 1:13:39

Thank you. Dan, further discussion on the transportation report. Seeing none. All those in favor of accepting the transportation report say, aye. All those opposed, no, the Ayes appear to have

it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted the transportation report, the Central Vermont fiber report is on page 109, may I have a motion on the CV? Fiber report moved and a second.

Paula Emery 1:14:19

Can you stand up the person who said, can't see you. Was it? Mom? Okay? You are standing Okay.

Donny Osman 1:14:26

Thank you. Been moved and seconded to accept the CV fiber report. Discussion on the CV fiber report,

seeing none

all those in favor of accepting the report say aye. All those opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have accepted the CV fiber report.

Frances Rose 1:14:56

Yes, of course. Frances, hello, I want to tell. Asked for an actual, literal temperature check in the room, I'm seeing people fanning themselves. Are people open to opening this back window? Would anyone sitting next to that window? Is anyone able to lift either of those windows?

Stand by. Thank you very much.

Donny Osman 1:15:23

Okay, Article four, moving on. We are on Article four. Article four reads, shall the town vote to raise appropriate and expend the sum of \$6,833.06 for the support of rural community transportation incorporated to provide services to the residents of the town of Plainfield. May I have a motion on Article four, please? Peter Young moves and a second. Bob

Donny Osman 1:16:00

Discussion on Article four. Okay, up in the balcony.

Taylor Jake McBride 1:16:13

This is Taylor, Jake McBride, again, apologies if I'm just not reading this correctly. But is that \$6,000 in addition to a budget that we already had for our portion paying into that. Or is that the total? That's the total? Yes, fantastic. That is a very small amount for our town to have public transportation. That is awesome. Thank you.

Donny Osman 1:16:41

Further discussion on Article four, seeing none. All those in favor of Article four, please say, aye. All opposed say, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've accepted article four, Article Five shall the town of Plainfield appropriate the sum of \$1,499 to Green Mountain transit as its share of the 2025 year cost of the commuter bus service along Route two with service into Montpelier, this appropriation funds a portion of the total cost of the service,

which is also supported by appropriations from other towns, state and federal funds and passenger fares. May I have a motion on Article Five, please. And seconded been moved and seconded to accept Article Five. Discussion on Article Five, right here.

Anne Van Courvering 1:18:00

I was reading that Green Mountain transit is talking about getting out of the rural bus service area. Sorry, not far, not close enough. And I just wondered, if this money goes to green mountain transit, do they get to keep it if they decide to stop servicing us.

Donny Osman 1:18:26

Anybody answer the question or further discussion? Yep.

Meg Davis 1:18:38

Meg Davis, I have a question, because whoever spoke earlier, who said that they had contacted somebody about getting the noon service reinstated, I thought he said that it was green mountain transit that was doing the noon service. Is it green mountain transit, or is it the rural transportation people who are doing that noon one,

Donny Osman 1:19:01

the article says Green Mountain transit, Further discussion,

Bob Atchinson 1:19:13

yeah, I know it's it's started out as Green Mountain transit, and they were running their busses to meet halfway in Danville, and then RCT picked it up. So it's pretty much under the RCT is the primary provider, but it's a coalition of using busses and routes as best works out

Donny Osman 1:19:43

further discussion,

seeing none.

All those in favor of accepting Article Five say Aye. All opposed, no, the Ayes appear to have. It, the eyes do have it, and you have accepted Article Five. Article Six, shall the town voters authorize the expenditures for the following, not for profit, service agencies, as recommended by the appointed social concerns committee, community Capstone, Community Action, \$500 Central Vermont basic education, \$400 Central Vermont Council on Aging, \$1,300 Central Vermont home health and hospice. \$3,100 circle \$525 elevate Youth Services. \$550 Family Center of Washington County. \$500 Good Samaritan Haven. \$1,000 neighbors in action, \$250 Onion River food shelf, \$1,000. Our house \$150

Donny Osman 1:21:08

people's health and wellness clinic, \$750 twin Valley Senior Center, \$4,500 twin field together mentoring program, \$250 Center for Independent Living, \$175 for a total of \$14,950 May I have

a motion on Article Six, the social concerns committee moved Okay, seconded to accept discussion on social concerns.

Seeing none. Wait a hand up. The hand up. I happen.

Marcy Hale 1:22:18

Hi, yes, I'm Marcy Hale, and I am here, right over here,

Donny Osman 1:22:23

Marcy, can you walk us through how you got to these numbers and how they compare to the last one or some of them? Are there changes?

Marcy Hale 1:22:32

It is actually in the report. Okay, everybody asks for a number, and most of it is level funding. There are two groups that received increases and one group that is a first time recipient.

Donny Osman 1:22:52

Further discussion on the social concerns committee on Article Six,

seeing none.

All those in favor, say, aye, All opposed. Say, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have passed the social concern. I do believe that that might have been record time. I'm sorry, yeah, go ahead. You're out of order, but go ahead. I

Marcy Hale 1:23:26

just wanted to add that the three of us who are on the committee have been on for a while, and if anybody is interested in joining the committee, we have an order of which we will remove ourselves from the committee. So anybody interested, just contact someone in the town office. Thank

Donny Osman 1:23:47

Article Seven shall the town voters authorize an appropriation of \$54,000 to the Cutler Memorial Library to pay for the librarian, a library assistant, and the purchase of materials and services, including those to make the library accessible to the community. May I have a motion on Article Seven, please? And there was a second there. It's been moved and seconded to accept Article Seven. Discussion on Article Seven,

seeing none. All those in favor of accepting article seven say, Aye. All opposed, no, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes, do have it, and you've passed Article Seven. Article eight, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the recreation and Public Arts Project reserve fund for the purpose? Building reserves to cover larger projects, including matching funds for grants to be initially funded by \$2,500 from the general fund in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 May I have a motion on Article eight, please, moving

Donny Osman 1:25:28

It's been moved in second to accept, to accept article eight. Discussion on Article eight,

Leda Shubart 1:25:35

yes. Leader Schubert, some of us have been involved in discussions about the reserve funds, and we totally understand them and what they're for and how they work, but some people might not. Are there people that would need further explanation of what the reserve fund is? People are shaking their heads. Jude, what have I done? Is there anyone who wants for well, you're asking for discussion.

Karl Bissex 1:26:01

You want me to there's a number of reserve funds that we've put on the ballot today. The reserve fund is essentially a bucket that is allowed to carry year to year, unlike most of the budget items that have to be re voted on every year and refunded every year. The reserve fund allows us to take in money and hold it through the several years or until we get rid of it. So that's the difference, and that's why we would like the fund. So if money is collected, it doesn't disappear at the year end, it can be used the following year.

Frances Rose 1:26:51

I want to add also to that description that carrying over money from year to year allows us greater resilience economically when large ticket purchases or dollar outlays are necessary that it's less felt by taxpayers in each given year, and that it's able to be split across a number of years.

John Harrison 1:27:15

The other thing I would add is the reference to 24 VSA subject to 2804 is state language. It talks about reserve funds. It basically says that they can't be used for anything else. The Select Board is not allowed to use those for anything, borrow it for other uses without the approval of the voters. That's just standard language.

Donny Osman 1:27:35

Further discussion on Article eight, yes,

Marge Christie 1:27:51

hi Marge, Christie, if I'm not mistaken, each of these reserve funds in the next four or five articles that has \$1 amount attached to it is already in the budget. So if we vote one of these down, that means we have to subtract it from the budget, proposed budget.

Donny Osman 1:28:16

Further discussion,

seeing none. Yep. Okay.

Meg Davis 1:28:28

Sorry. It seems to me, Meg Davis, again, it seems to me that this is all about creating the reserve fund. So if we vote this down, doesn't the money stay in the budget. It just doesn't go into the reserve fund, or does it? Are we voting? Are we voting for the money amount and the reserve fund? Are we just voting to put money that's already in the budget into a reserve fund? I think that clarification is important.

Dan Fingas 1:28:59

Yeah, so in all of these cases that have money involved, we have put line items in the budgets of those areas for next year's regular use, and then this is an additional amount of money to put into a reserve fund for additional projects. And so you'll it's it is extra money. And so if we do vote these down, we can then reduce the number from the floor of the overall budget by those amounts and make the budget slightly lower. But they're not like, it's not like we said here. There should be \$5,000 for culverts. We either spend it this year or put it in, like we put what we needed in the actual road budget, the highway department budget, and then there's reserve fund amount that's also a line item in the budget.

Donny Osman 1:29:46

Further discussion on Article eight,

seeing none

all those in favor of Article eight, please say aye. Aye. All opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. And you have passed article eight. Article Nine, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the disaster reserve fund for the purpose of providing readily available cash in emergencies for immediate response, including matching funds for grants to be initially funded by \$10,000 from the general fund in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 May I have a motion on Article Nine, please. And is there a second? Do we see a second? Second? Got that been moved and seconded to accept Article Nine. Discussion on Article Nine, Sasha, we get the mic to Sasha, please.

Sasha Thayer 1:31:09

It's my understanding that this is an entirely new line item, whether it's a reserve fund or not. If there were a disaster that happened this year, it would be available if it were voted but it is a significant amount of money. The prior budget for emergency management has been pretty slender. I'm not saying that it's been adequate in the past, but I did want people to understand, unless I'm wrong and somebody can correct me that this is essentially a new, very substantial line item to plain fields budget.

Donny Osman 1:31:48

Further discussion on Article Nine.

Seeing none

all those in favor of Article Nine say, Aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. You've passed Article Nine, by the way. I think Plainfield has the distinction of the most reserve fund votes in the state. I think I read that in digger article 10, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the sidewalk and pedestrian reserve fund for the purpose of funding sidewalk and other pedestrian infrastructure, including matching grants, matching funds for grants to be initially funded by \$500 from the general fund in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 May I have a motion on article 10? Please

Donny Osman 1:33:01

to accept article 10 discussion on article 10, yep, yep, go ahead. Wait for the mic. Please state your name for the record, Ben

Ben Graham 1:33:15

Graham. Is the \$500 was that in particular going towards some matching grant, or is that just a little starting boost?

Josh Pitts 1:33:36

So every year we we put away my we put money in the budget for sidewalks maintenance and etc, but we don't hold any money, like for major, like, major infrastructure improvements in like pedestrian infrastructure. And so the idea was to start doing that instead of placing money in the budget to kind of work on it like, you know, to expend money to, like, make small repairs. But we don't really like create anything that builds over time that we can direct solely to that purpose. So while \$500 is fairly modest, side marks are costly, especially to construct them to to create more walkability, like Betsy spoke about earlier. You know, the starting out small, creating some funds that will build up over time will then like be used to be typically the matching funds for that operation to do upgrades. There's a lot of interest in extending sidewalks to the health center. If we're going to have more housing at Goddard, that is going to drastically increase the pedestrian traffic. So this is just a little way to get. You know, something rolling so that when the time comes and we're ready to receive a grant or come up with a plan for that, we we do have the funds available.

Donny Osman 1:35:13

Further discussion. Article 10, Jesse, okay, I'm sorry. Jesse

Jesse Cooper 1:35:23

Cooper, while we're all learning about reserve funds, I'm also curious, in addition to the town putting items in the budget to add to these once they exist, are there other mechanisms by which funds are added to or can grow within a reserve fund, generally over the course of a year. Could private donors or grant money seed these further or is it all town budget money?

Josh Pitts 1:35:54

I think, I think that would be kind of a case by case basis, depending on where the funding is coming from, if it's, you know what constraints are placed on it. But there, there is the

opportunity to, you know, if the Select Board, like receives a grant, they can direct me to put that money into a reserve fund. I believe that is, that is perfectly acceptable, as far as I can understand

Donny Osman 1:36:20

it. Further discussion on article 10, yep, yep.

Liz Perrault 1:36:28

Liz peralt, and I wasn't going to say anything, because I have not done my due diligence with the homework. However, I will say I would throw up some caution with these reserve funds. And this one just really highlights My concern is the fact that we do have a line item to take care of sidewalks, roads, whatnot, as part of our maintenance and in part of our job as a town is to look ahead at projects that should we should be considering and plan for, and then you come with a thought out plan to the town and ask for the money. At that point, you get bonded blah, blah, blah, yada, yada yada. You get the money and you move on to the project. However, once you have a reserve fund. We will consistently vote it in year after year. I'm not sure what the oversight will be on this money. I don't know what the process is, so I I apologize. I don't know ins and outs. However, I do know, in a town where our taxes are unmanageable. We're just adding fuel to the fire, really. And I think we need to be a little more conscientious about how we say yes to everything and out of the goodness of our hearts. So don't get me wrong. I'm not saying you're we're making bad decisions. I'm just thinking we're not making the most economically feasible decisions for our town in the people who live here. So I would say no to this particular reserve, but I throw caution out there to for everybody to consider what we're doing today, because you're setting a precedence, and it's really difficult to go backwards, as you see with the social concerns. I remember when those weren't a thing, and now we've got easily, you know, \$14,000 which you know, isn't a lot, and especially when you break it down, they're all good causes. I'm not saying that's bad again, but we really need to think about what we're doing fiscally and we need to be responsible, and we need to think about more than just our desire to do good, and think about what it really means to pay those taxes year in, year out, and trying to keep a community alive that is struggling. So that's my two cents.

Donny Osman 1:39:05

Thank you up in the balcony.

Taylor Jake McBride 1:39:11

Hello, hey. This is Taylor, Jake McBride, again. Am I close enough? Yeah, I hear that concern, and I share it. And also I just wanted to say that I think that putting \$500 into the fund is a pretty small amount, and what that could allow us to do is to get a match. So if it's like a percentage match, to get a grant from another source that is not the town budget, that \$500 could enable us to get \$3,000 that we don't have. So I just, I'm in support of setting aside a tiny little bit of money to potentially get ourselves more money. Dan,

Dan Fingas 1:39:55

I'll just, I'll just say kind of overall, we aren't to the budget yet, but all of this plays into the Budget. We worked as a select board really, really hard. The cost of living increase for Vermont this year is about 4% and we worked really hard to keep our budget increase at about 2.8% and we do expect there'll be money at the end of the year to buy some of that down, which is something that always happens. So I will say, like even with these reserve funds in there, we are under cost of living increase, and we have a budget that is much more level than it has been in the last few years. So we did take that into account as we put these things either either on the ballot and in the budget. So I just wanted to note that. Janice,

Janice Walrafen 1:40:38

yeah, I just want to note what I read in the report last year's minutes said that our budget, what we approved when we changed things with 1,000,003 16, 845, okay, and this year we got a grant for \$300,000 which raises what we're appropriating by that amount, we actually are spending less than \$42,000 more this year. So that's a really small increase in a year when everything is going up. So I want to thank you, Michael.

Michael Billingsley 1:41:18

Michael Billingsley, I also want to say, in terms of how I view the reserve funds, there's one there's a reserve fund for the shelter. As an example is that it's a pocket that money can go into, if money is created that comes especially from sources that are either unexpected or are a temporary boon. A good example would be this, the community development block grant that is being developed by the funding Committee, which might turn into \$5 million that portion of which could go toward infrastructure and sidewalks. It's actually been discussed. So it isn't that it creates a burden in my mind and for the taxpayers, as much as it creates a pocket into which to put unexpected and or sought funds.

Anne Van Courvering 1:42:05

Further discussion on article 10, yes. Hi. Anne Vancouver, I just have a question, when we have this money in there, how do we pick when it goes who it goes to, what's the process for dispersing it forward? Yeah,

Josh Pitts 1:42:28

that would require the Select Board to then approve the use of those funds. So the reserve fund there, you know, absent like a fully fledged capital plan, creating reserve funds, constraints the treasurer and the Select Board. So we're putting constraints on, you know, building out capital, building up capital over time, to apply to these various like activities. And so the with, you know, it with situations where you have a lot of volatility, like especially right now, by having a reserve you you do build some interest on that. You know, typically they're a deposit held in escrow. And so the you know, it's about creating constraints, so that, you know, as the taxpayers that every year say, we put 500 into the sidewalks, I can't, I can't actually use that money to do I can't do anything with that money. At the end of the year, it stays there. It rolls over into a new like interest bearing account and, and I think that's like, you know, and we have the most reserve funds because, you know, the town has, like, said, We want to, we want to constrain the treasurer. We want to, you know, we want to explicitly hold these for this purpose. And I think

that's, I think that's good. And every year we don't have to in the in the normal budget, once the funds are created, we don't have to put the same amount in every year. It's, you know, we could opt to, you know, not fund the sidewalk, the sidewalk reserve, ever again if we chose to do so, I would hope we wouldn't, but the but it's really about putting constraints In

Donny Osman 1:44:33

further discussion. Article 10. See Steve. Thanks,

Steven Farnham 1:44:46

yeah, so suppose we get a grant written to have solar power electric sidewalks that melts the snow and ice off the sidewalks all winter long. But the matching grant, the matching amount required is not 500 say 5000 1000? Is there a mechanism to augment the funds so we can accept that grant?

Josh Pitts 1:45:11

Yeah, that would not have any impact to the reserve fund if the reserve fund held 500 and the Select Board decided to approve a grant that required a \$5,000 match, then they would have to ask the treasurer for the 4500 difference to meet the match, and if we had a surplus available to do so, but the So, it's not explicitly that it's the only source of matching funds, but it is like but the funds that are in the reserve are only for those types of operational purposes, like out further in the future, Beyond the operating year.

Donny Osman 1:45:58

Further discussion on article 10.

See Seeing none

all those in favor of article 10, say, Aye. All opposed say, No, the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have passed article 10. Article 11, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the bridges reserve fund for the purpose of funding bridge construction and maintenance, including matching funds for grants to be initially funded by \$5,000 from the general fund in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 May I have a motion on Article 11? Please been moved and seconded to accept article 11. Discussion on Article 11, the

aye, seeing none.

All those in favor of Article 11 say, aye, all opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it and you have passed article 11, Article 12,

keeping in the theme, shall this town establish a reserve fund to be called the culverts reserve fund for the purpose of Funding culvert construction and maintenance, including matching funds for grants to be initially funded by \$10,000 from the general fund in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 May I have a motion on Article 12? Meg Davis been moved in second to accept article 12. Discussion on Article 12,

seeing none

all those in favor of Article 12 say Aye. All opposed, no, the eyes appear to have it. The eyes do have it. You have passed. Article 12, fashion your seat belts.

Article 13, if

this is about the past article that,

I think your question has been answered. Article 13, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the east side of the village by acquiring land and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA, 2804 May I have a motion on Article 13

Donny Osman 1:49:29

accept? It's been moved and seconded. Discussion, the second you have to pick.

Donny Osman 1:49:37

Number three, I don't care. It's been moved and seconded to accept article 13. Let the discussion begin. Discussion on Article 13. Mike,

Donny Osman 1:49:58

please. Yeah. It. Helpful if you line up, if you want to speak, to line up behind the mic, and then I will see you or and

paula emery 1:50:06

if you can't get to a mic, just make sure you see, once I make eye contact with you, I'll get you here, and you'll be on stack. You don't have to keep waving

Michael Birnbaum 1:50:15

Michael. Say your name for the record. It's Michael Birnbaum is it in order to make an amendment? Yes, okay, I would like to move that we amend this article to delete the words the east side of so it would read, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 Okay,

Donny Osman 1:50:49

so it's been moved. Is there a second to this been moved and seconded? Let me try and get this right now. Been moving second to delete, to amend it by deleting the east side of so therefore shall that the article would read, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land and Making

municipal infrastructure improvements, in according with 24 VSA 2804 do I have that correct?
Yes. Discussion. We are now discussing only the amendment, not the underlying article.
Discussion on the amendment. Yeah. You really need to in order for we really need you to come
to the microphone and say it's a good idea and state your name for the record, please.

Michelle Clark 1:51:58

Michelle Clark, I think it's a good idea. Michael was very smart. Thanks. Thank you. Michelle.

Donny Osman 1:52:04

Other discussion on Article 13

Ben Graham 1:52:12

This is Ben Graham, yes, I would just like to ask, what is the intent? Is that, just simply to create
a broader a broader situation. Or, yeah, I'm just curious what is the intent behind the
amendment offering. But

Donny Osman 1:52:32

he want to speak to that.

Michael, are you stepping up to the

Michael Birnbaum 1:52:40

mic? I'm willing to speak to the intent. Thank you. As most of us have, I've followed the
discussions, and there are merits on both sides and there are issues on both sides, and by
locking us into the original article, we are choosing up or down on one conception, but by giving
The Select Board flexibility and the town time to determine the best course this article can work
for all of us, including the proponents of the existing plan and the opponents of the existing plan,
which who can Then hash it out over a little bit more time and determine what's best for all of us.
We're never going to all be satisfied, but I think we needed more room to find consensus,

Donny Osman 1:54:01

further discussion on the amendment, which deletes the word east side of from the article.
Further discussion on this amendment,

Linda Wal 1:54:13

yep, Hi, Linda wall slab, so that changes everything I had understood about what this was
about. So are there other properties? Are there other plans? Are there, or is it still just about the
project?

Donny Osman 1:54:34

Further discussion,

seeing none

all those in favor of the amendment that deletes the words east side of from article 13, say aye. All those opposed say no, the Ayes appear to have it. I. Aye, the ayes do have it, and you have passed the amendment. We are now on to the article. So I will reread the article with the deletion one more time. Article 13, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 further article, further discussion on Article 13 as amended. Go

David Schectman 1:55:43

I'm David Schechtman. I just like to, I don't know if you can do this, but I'm asking the Select Board, if this now passes, how are you going to relate to that in relation to the original purpose of the reserve fund, which was really not to be a reserve fund, as much as it was to gage an up or down sentiment on the East Hill project. So with this change, I'm guessing it's hard for you to say, but I'm asking the question.

Karl Bissex 1:56:28

So we established this, as you said, to get a gage of the feelings of this project. This project was brought to brought to the Select Board by a group of volunteers who were looking to recover from the flood. This is the only option we've addressed. We have no other option, so we're looking at it, and we were advised to take it step by step, which we're doing with this. With this article, we would hope that there's a committee, a building committee that is formed, that's an actual committee, not a volunteer group, but a Select Board, sanctioned committee that will look at all options, and we have to look at the best ones. Our intention is to replace housing that was lost and to preserve neighborhoods, our neighborhood, so we we're open to that, I believe, I'm speaking, I think, from my further crowd, but and that, I think would be the best Next step, and that is our intention, and we will work towards getting funds to help us do this so that this this is our planned next step. Peter.

Peter Young 1:57:53

I'm Peter Young. I live on Hudson Avenue. We were badly affected by the flood and helped by many people in this room, I'm seeing faces I haven't seen since they mucked out my basement. But I'm on the committee to create the new neighborhood, the one as proposed, the one that's controversial. And I'm here to read comments from displaced residents who are no longer members of Plainfield, who can't come and vote on this, or some residents who are uncomfortable standing up in front of a group. This is from Plainfield resident. I rent a one bedroom apartment with kids. I spend 15% of my income on rent. I want to be part of this village renewing itself and be a model not just of how we can adapt to climate change, but also how we can live in harmony and heal ourselves and the earth. From Plainfield resident Eli Barlow, who lived in the Heartbreak Hotel and lost everything looking for secure housing in Vermont, feels pretty hopeless right now, and regardless of whether I'm able to be housed by this project, specifically, it makes me more hopeful for everyone. This from Lucy Schmidt, who was displaced from the heartbreak My name is Lucy Schmidt, and I've been a Plainfield resident for the last 10 years, residing in apartment two of the iconic Heartbreak Hotel. I consider Plainfield my home as someone displaced by the flood and now seeking more stable, permanent housing.

I want to express strong support of the Plainfield village expansion project. While living in the heart of Plainfield village, I got to experience a sense of community that many people dream of. I knew that eventually I would want to own a home and put down roots somewhere. I really hope that place would be Plainfield, but often cast that hope aside, given that the market is so sparse I am now at a fork in the road. Keep running for the next few years, or start investing in a home, likely outside of Plainfield. I know that some folks have expressed concerns about the pace of the project. To me, this pace feels timely. It feels like. My chance to get to keep putting my spirit and energy towards the growth and thriving of this quirky and wonderful community now from Gregory and Bernadette, I be Plainfield residents waiting for FEMA. We, the people of Plainfield, are left with choices, the choice to accept the continuing loss of residents, the structures they live in and much needed town revenue for most homeowners, rebuilding in place after each devastating flood is not an option, and relying on future help from FEMA is certainly not guaranteed. Or we can choose to embrace an unusual opportunity to rebuild and improve the community this all within the town's reach with our support, hoping for a good outcome. Thank you. I will read one more. My name is Yoko Kishida, and I lived at 100 Brook road until July 11, 2024 while I may not be purchasing a lot at this time, I would like to see the town of Plainfield revitalized. I missed the days when towns folks walked by my house, stopped at the little bridge to admire the great book and even enjoyed my humble garden. Plainfield needs a community that will thrive in fostering a sense of belonging, to survive, and not a division of interests. I am hopeful that the town and stakeholders will find ways to seize this opportunity. I support the Plainfield village expansion project, and we on the committee, hope you do too by voting yes on this amendment. Thank you very much,

Leda Shubart 2:01:33

leader. I was surprised by my esteemed neighbor, Michael Birnbaum, suggestion for the amendment, and I'm trying to figure out how I feel about this, and I want to I'm confused. I'm not sure the the amendment and the wording change does what I want it to do. And I think because we have a committee that has been working on this so hard with so many people for so long, and has so much in place. I'm not sure that the amendment, changing the wording makes the difference that we might want it to make. So I, in fact, urge people to vote against the reserve fund. This is a hard, hard place to be. We need more people. Maybe we need a revival. I hate that word revitalized. I think Plainfield is pretty great. Um, I've lived here for 55 years. I just, I don't want 247 houses. I don't know 47 I just don't know. So I urge people to vote no on the reserve fund. Carl,

Donny Osman 2:02:43

then, yeah, I

Karl Bissex 2:02:47

just wanted to say on that point of population, the population hasn't changed in Plainfield for 40 years, the school has lost 100 students Marshfield and Plainfield. So what it's telling me is that our population is aging and not leaving. And I think I talked to Mike Davidson yesterday, who's the buyer of Goddard's campus. He supports this project, or any project that brings more housing to town. He talked about a critical mass, an energy that comes with people that are

hopefully homeowners, who are taking care of their properties and raising children that will bring vitality to the community that's really important to anyone who's wants to start a little business, or who wants to move here, or wants to get involved with the school. So these, I think this initiative, which was a volunteer initiative, the town has spent no money on this project, but we have paid a lot of attention to the ideas. So we want, and if there are other ideas, we want to hear them. Mike Davidson has a lot of ideas for a lot for turning Goddard's campus into a rental community, among other things. So we were open to all ideas. But this is, this is one that's been presented, and that's the one we're looking at. Yeah.

Leda Shubart 0:00

Donnie and then Janice. Donny, can I just add one sentence out of order? Yes, the entire the entire state population education, is down. There used to be 106,000 students. I worked at the department for 17 years. There are now 82,000 students. It's a statewide issue.

Donny Osman 0:20

Take Charlie then Denise.

Charlie Cogbill 0:26

I would like to address the motion. The emotion as worded now is ambiguous and misunderstood to have two different meanings, one of which is the plain language meaning, create a reserve fund there is hidden or buried an implicit meaning that this is a vote about the expansion, a particular expansion, or the amount of money for that expansion. Also buried in this is that the Select Board has set up this question with a subsequent condition that this vote be considered a referendum or a straw vote as a first step on the development. I would hope that this motion could be amended either by changing the language into the subjunctive, or by explicitly stating what the Select Board views this vote as. Otherwise, we have no idea of which side of the question we are voting on. Are we voting on a reserve fund? Are we voting on a particular project? Are we voting on a potential, wonderful potential, to expand and have more community? I hope we can get such an amendment. Are you proposing an amendment? I am not in a position, because I think it's the Select boards or the people associated with the Select Board to indicate what, how they will in the future, view the vote that we are to have, and put that in writing on the motion. Janiece,

Genese Grill 2:10

hi, so I wasn't going to talk, but I can never help it. I guess what I want to say is the expansion project, I feel that it shouldn't be couched as a yes or no. I am in favor of expanding the village. I'm even in favor of expanding on this particular property. It's just that from the beginning for me, and I'd be able to leave a lot of people. The number of lots and the number of units has been much too high, and while I appreciate very much the fact that members of the steering committee have taken public input and even input of neighbors about buffers and trees and gardens and where The buildings would be less disturbing the number of units, the number of plots, which is very different from the number of units. This is very confusing. Has not gone

down. It's gone up. And I believe a lot of people are uncomfortable with that number. So this amendment seems like it might, except that it's very unclear. I agree with Charlie, and very confusing, to allow for an exploration of this project and other projects in the village that is not bound to the committee's vision and the committee's map, the steering committee that seems to insist that we have at least 4041 units or plots. Excuse me, I even mix it up for this to go forward, one of the very creative ideas that has been floated around is that, instead of saying, you know, we have \$2,500,000 so let's cram as many units in there as possible to pay that back, is that instead we look at the land. We look at the 5.8 acres or so that are buildable. We look at the surrounding area. We look at what the land can handle environmentally, ecologically, decide what could be built there. I hear, for example, that there are eight families affected by the flood who are interested. We could certainly have a smaller project help those families, and more. We could have 10, we could have 15, we could have 20 plots. And I think many more people would be happy. So what I would like to see is a real opening of a real discussion, to allow different voices in without maligning Them or us as being, you know, elitist or rednecks or whatever, or NIMBYs. And really have a real, new committee. And I'm not saying and I thank the other committee for all their work, and I'm not blaming them, but that we could use that work as a stepping stone to a better process, a more inclusive process. And I don't know how to do that, and I don't know how to make it. Amendment that says doing that, but that's what I want. I want to see it happen. I want to see it happen in a way that surely can please everyone, but that pleases more people, and that takes more voices into consideration. Thank you in

Donny Osman 5:14
the balcony. Thank you.

Jared Burch 5:18

All right, so my name for the record, Jared Burch more, I was a resident of the Heartbreak Hotel, also a member of the steering committee. Just a couple things that I want to clarify throw out there. As it has been said, the entirety of the work that's been done thus far in terms of this project, has been volunteer efforts. I agree that there should be a committee, and I think that the really the work that this volunteer committee has done is really just trying to keep our foot on the gas so that we keep this in mind to know that as a town, we really need to do something different, to build something different for us, as we're dealing with increased flooding and climate change that will impact our town every year. I also want to just point out, as we've been talking about with these other reserve funds, this is a way to create a bucket for us to receive funds from other sources that we can then put towards this purpose of expanding the village, being able to bring more people here To set down roots and to be able to continue building the incredible, incredible community that Plainfield already has. So I would urge everyone to vote yes on this. I think that it's a really fantastic way for us to have a space to receive funds and move forward in a way, to build the the town in the future. Thanks.

Donny Osman 7:10

Let's, let's do this. Let's take over here, and then Jesse, you're there. And then in that, in that line, I don't see anybody else, but they were all first, 1234,

Ray Carter 7:22

Carter, I really appreciate the opportunity that this not amendment, but that this article asked for, for this conversation to continue. I think it would be really sad for this conversation to end here. One of the things I think about a lot when it comes to all of the change that we are experiencing in all of the different ways is that planning needs to adapt. And when we come up with very specific plans and try to move forward with them from one place to another, and we don't take into consideration how we adapt to the conditions that are coming down on us, from weather, from politics and from all sorts of other angles that we are doing ourselves a disservice in being able to have processes and planning processes that can adapt. And so I think that this is an opportunity for us to adapt a group has come together with a lot of heart and soul. Absolutely. Have there been mistakes and missteps? Yes, but part of the process of being able to change and adapt and meet our needs is that we look at making mistakes as progress, as something that we can learn from together. And I think what this amendment, or what this article does is it allows us to form a different kind of committee, to be more inclusive, to take into consideration all of the different viewpoints and all of the different skill sets and ideas that people have so that we can continue moving forward to meet the needs of our community. I also serve as the CO manager of the Plainfield farmers market. I have worked diligently this year, volunteering my time to try to improve and increase visibility of the market, to bring in new vendors, and we started to get to a place this summer where we started to have some really lovely traction, and then the flood hit, and a bunch of the vendors weren't able to do it anymore, and we have had way less customers. The market is one small little piece of potential viability of this community. And when we have more folks living here, more diverse folks, folks that have different income backgrounds and different age backgrounds, that we have a lot more opportunity for different types of products to come in, more interest for customers to purchase those products. And then it's a ripple effect of being able to bring in more vendors, more other types of small businesses, which just improves the viability of our entire town. I urge you to vote yesterday. Thank you very much.

Donny Osman 9:53

Yeah, I'm in. I'm informed that the order of people at the microphones are John, Jana, Steve and then. Jesse, and then Alicia and then Alicia in the balcony.

John Cleary 10:13

let's go. John, okay, thanks. John Cleary, and what I wanted to say is that all of this is early in the process of this project, and so a lot of the concerns that are raised are simply because we don't know all the answers yet, and that's okay. What I'm saying is, I think we can trust the process. This is sort of a gentle step forward for this article, and I'm just urging people to say, let us take this initial step forward, and all these questions will become clear as we develop the project. Will listen to each other, and I think we can find answers that that work. So I just would have, I wouldn't want to see, see us stop the process now, and we're so early in it. Thank you.

Sasha Thayer 10:58

Hi Jenna Osman, I want to support what John just said, which is really what I was going to say, which is really that this is an opportunity to keep the conversation going, and I think it behooves

us to keep the conversation going and asking as many questions as we have, to find a place where we can have some resolve and grow as a community. And that's really what I want to say.

Donny Osman 11:28

Steve then Jesse.

Steven Farnham 11:30

Steven Farnham, find an interesting little plaque up here. It says problems are meant to be solved.

Jesse Cooper 11:40

Microphones are meant to be spoken.

Steven Farnham 11:44

I should know that. I think, I think what we're looking at is what, what we consider ourselves here today. Are we a room full of possibilities, or are we a room of impossibility? And I'm not sure anyone has spoken directly to that question, regardless of the vote, if we voted up, I understand it is, it clears a certain number of hurdles, and we can move forward, and more questions will come up, and more decisions will be made. What is the consequence of voting? No. Does that stop the project dead in its tracks? What happens? I'd like someone to answer that question. Please,

Paula Emery 12:31

direct response. We

Donny Osman 12:32

have a direct response, a direct response,

Frances Rose 12:35

yes. My direct response is the memory of the Select Board meeting when this plan this kind of course of action, dividing the bond vote from the establishment of the reserve fund. It was indeed spoken that the outcome of this vote is important. It is a temperature check in the community. No motion was passed that made the result or effect of this vote binding. It has indeed come out, filtered and continued to percolate, that the result of this vote is impactful. It is meaningful where the town is right now, but it was never established in a binding way, and I can ask my Select Board members on the stage here with me to confirm my memory, but there was no motion that carried in the Select Board meeting. Minutes to that Select

Charlie Cogbill 13:39

have not been published, no way at all. Continuing

Donny Osman 13:51

Jesse, this

Jesse Cooper 13:55

is a little bit of a technical point. I think the original article before it was amended, I think was actually asking two things, and I think it can do that. One is whether we want to set up this fund, which is a mechanism allowing the town to collect money. But it was also taking the temperature on this very specific project, which is the project on East Hill Road. And I think the amendment has confused that, because what the amendment has done is has suggested that perhaps in creating this fund, it could then be used for other projects somewhere else in town. And I think it would behoove us, just as a town, to be really clear what we're voting on, and I would therefore make an amendment to re include language that specifically says we are voting on the project on East Hill Road, and unless others would like to change the nature of the article. But I think that's the that's really the subject that the town has been discussing over these past months. We have not extensively discussed other alternative projects, and I just think it's important that we know what we're voting on, and I think that should be what we vote on. So my amendment would be to reintroduce language specifying the property between East Hill Road and Main Street.

Donny Osman 15:14

Jesse, you want to state your amendment?

Jesse Cooper 15:17

Do? I need to say the whole thing you do? Okay? I so

I'm amending article 14. Excuse me, I'm amending article 13. Shall the town establish a reverse a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the east side of the village, specifically the property between East Hill Road and Main Street by acquiring land and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA, 2804 that was already

Genese Grill 15:59

voted when the

Donny Osman 16:01

amendment this may then the amendment was passed, yes, but he's got a different amendment. Is there a second to this amendment? Go ahead. Charlie, okay, I believe that you're out of order. Then, Jesse, I think that that amendment, to go back to the original is out of order. I'm not i The chair is not sure. And if that, and if and you in the house have it, have have every right to disagree with my ruling, and I will confess that I'm not 100% sure of this. I think the amendment is out of order for the reasons Charlie stated

Dan Fingas 16:42

the I think, I think adding east side of back in would be out of order. I think an amendment that specifically named the property would not be out of order.

Donny Osman 16:54

Do you want? Yes, do you want to retry and restate it? The day.

Dan Fingas 17:02

Well, he named it, but he also said he signed up.

Jesse Cooper 17:11

Yes, okay, I'm going to restate my proposed amendment to Article 13, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring the land between East Hill Road and Main Street and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA 2804

Donny Osman 17:36

Okay, I think That's in order. Who's

paula emery 17:40

that? Hold on pause. Excuse me by acquiring the land between East Hill Road and Main Street.

Mary Lane 17:55

Thank you. Okay, I'm

Donny Osman 17:57

going to try and try and read this. It's been moved and seconded to amend article 13 to read, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land between East Hill Road and Main Street and making this making municipal infrastructures to the improvement in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 sure point of order that

well, we have an amendment on the floor that we're discussing that doesn't have that. So you want to amend the amendment, please state what your amendment to the amendment is, Charlie, we are now on the amendment to the amendment to strike the word.

paula emery 19:14

Yeah. I don't see the word we,

Donny Osman 19:17

Charlie, you need to state your amendment in full.

paula emery 19:21

He withdrew. Okay,

Donny Osman 19:25

then we are on the amendment. Can you reread, I shall reread the amendment, Article 13, as proposed. Amended is, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land between East Hill Road and Main Street and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 2804 further. Discussion on the amendment to Article 13. Yes, point of information. Go ahead,

Maureen Lynch 20:09

it's Maureen up in the balcony. Maureen Lynch, at least up here. I heard that the amendment as stated, was the land between Main and East Hill, and you just stated land. I know that sounds silly, but those are two very different things.

Donny Osman 20:23

Yes, it does say the land, okay, if I didn't, if I read it incorrectly, it does state the land that is correct. Okay,

Maureen Lynch 20:30

and so that is, well, I'll save my I guess most of my commentary that's highly interpretable. There's a lot of land between those roads. So anyways, thank you for the appointment. For

Donny Osman 20:40

me, yeah, I hope that clarified. Thank you. Further discussion on the amendment, yes.

Alicia Weiss 20:47

So what I'm understanding is that we're making this amendment so that we are clear that we are voting about a specific project and that this is the pulse of the town that the Select Board was trying to achieve. I mean, doesn't mean that we can't find other ways to expand the town later, or whatever, but this particular vote on this particular article is needed to be this specific, because this is how the Select Board will interpret it. Is that correct for Yeah,

Donny Osman 21:22

further discussion on the amendment.

Dan Fingas 21:30

Are folks that are standing

Donny Osman 21:31

there waiting? Yeah, I'm No, I'm okay. I'm sorry. Can

paula emery 21:35

I? Can I interrupt really, really quick. Okay, we have a stack of people who are speaking to Article 13, but now we're on an amendment. If you are speaking to the amendment, can you please reorganize yourselves at the mics? Thank you.

Rebecca Yahm 21:56

Rebecca yams, I guess I I feel like we're talking about two very different things, and that the original amended article was much more open ended, and was basically establishing a reserve fund to do some expansion at some point. But we all know there's a particular project in mind. I think it would be really helpful to hear from the Select Board whether you need us to be as specific as this amendment that was just proposed, like, is the original article or the originally amended article that's more open ended. Is that useful to you in going forward, or do you need something as specific as this amendment that was just proposed in deciding,

Dan Fingas 22:58

yeah, I don't speak for all five of us, they can say something different. But I would like to know where folks stand on this specific project, so that we can know as a select board if we should be sending our time and energy creating a committee around it and doing other things. I think we all as a Select Board, think housing and revitalization of the town is going to be something we're working on no matter what. I don't think we need that indication from folks, but we do. I need the indication of how we should be spending Select Board time on projects like this. So that's what the reason for the vote was. I think because we the reserve fund is helpful, but also we could move forward with the project without a reserve fund, but we don't want to move forward with that, with the project, unless we know that the town is interested in us spending our time and energy in this way.

Donny Osman 23:52

We're on the amendment. By the way, we're not on the main thing. We're still on the amendment to Article 13.

Phillip Parisi 23:57

Parisi, I'm talking about the amendment.

paula emery 23:59

Can you speak close to the mic and say,

Phillip Parisi 24:04

I have a big mouth? Philip Parisi, is that better? Okay, I think with the East Hill Road and Main Street, I think we need to be really specific. This is an in all due respect to Bram. This is Bram property. If we want to talk about specifics, we need to be that specific. Okay, this project is very much affecting my life and Alicia's life. I'm not going to talk about the amendment because I promised I was going to keep my mouth shut, but I think we need to be very specific about what property we're talking about. Thank you.

Alicia Weiss 24:47

Alicia Weiss also speaking to the amendment, speaking to the amendment. Yeah, I am. I was going to speak.

Donny Osman 24:52

So it's Alicia and then Peter,

Alicia Weiss 24:55

more broadly, but I actually, I think it's unfortunate, and this is going to make. Make me uncomfortable with the current amendment that we can put the expansion project wording back in there, because I really think what we're trying to take the temperature on is people's willingness to go forward with an interest in a specific project that has created a lot of passion and a lot of heat, and I don't think the name and the nature of the project is so neutral that we can take it out and meaningfully take a vote on it. Peter young bear,

Peter Younbaer 25:39

I want to second what Dan said that I think it would be most helpful to us, to me, to have as specific a vote as possible. And guidance on this particular project might be helpful to those who haven't followed as closely or attended to select board meetings, but we had a bond vote proposed to us in January that would have put two and a half million dollars for this specific project out to a vote. The Select Board decided that was not ripe for any number of reasons, legal and otherwise. And we do not have answers to some of those questions yet, but as an alternative, we discussed at that Select Board Meeting putting some other kind of vote out there. Carl came up with some language, which we took to the League of Cities and towns that basically would have been an advisory vote on this particular project. Their lawyers advised against us doing that, because we have what is known as a hybrid town meeting. We vote certain things by Australian ballot here, which is officers and for example, the vote the zoning that is up here, Bond votes would be such a thing that would go to Australian ballot, but all our other policy decisions are made here on the floor after discussion. And so they came up with this language for this reserve vote as an idea to test as best as possible the support for or lack thereof for this particular project, so I'm looking for a specific guidance as we can get. Thank you.

Donny Osman 27:29

Okay, her, it's her, yes, and then Meg Davis, please state your name for the

Allison Joya 27:33

record, please. Alison Joya, my question regarding the amendment is, just say sales fall apart all the time. Say the property owner passes away tomorrow. Would there? Well, you know, I mean, things happen. I've been a housing counselor for 30 years in this state. Everything isn't done until it's done. And let's say the sale falls apart. Now you're making it very, very specific about this very little piece of land. And so do we wait a whole year to start this project again? Because now we've been very specific in town meeting that it can only be this piece of land. So I urge against the amendment.

Dan Fingas 28:17

I'll just say so this specific reserve fund would only be able to be used for this specific land. Does not stop the Select Board from using other funds or other things to work on other projects. So it would only be for this very specific thing. Okay,

Donny Osman 28:31
still on the amendment.

paula emery 28:33
Meg Davis is ahead of you.

Meg Davis 28:38
Sasha, alright, yeah, okay. Meg Davis, again, I originally voted for the addendum that Michael proposed, but I've changed my mind because of what we've heard from Peter and Dan about why they wanted this vote. They wanted this vote to know if we wanted that particular project to go ahead, or at least possibly go ahead. We're not voting for the project. This is just to establish a reserve fund. That's all we're doing. But because of what they wanted to know, I am changing my mind, and I think it should be more specific.

Donny Osman 29:21
Okay, further discussion on the amendment. Sasha, can we?

Sasha Thayer 29:34
I think the Select board's intent was well intended. This is not the vehicle to take a straw vote. This is to establish a particular reserve fund. To my mind, the passage of the amendment, stripping the language, restricting it to the East Hill Road project, actually. I gave them a and, you know, a sense from the community that the community was not comfortable with an exploration of expansion of the village being restricted to that particular proposal. I also think if they had wanted to get a straw vote, they should have come up with some other language and not money to it. It may well be it would be good to have a reserve fund, to acquire funds to look at a variety of proposals. Anyway, I think we should vote against the amendment that's now proposed, and I think we should vote in favor of the article as it currently stands, before being amended. The people can contact the Select Board. I just think we've already given them a straw vote on this in terms of being restricted to that one particular project.

Donny Osman 30:56
Further discussion on the amendment. Seeing none I shall read one more time. Article 13 proposed amendment. The proposed amendment says Article 1313, shall read as follows. Shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring land between East Hill Road and Main Street and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA, 2804 all those in favor of this amendment, please say aye. All those opposed say no. The chair is unsure. I'm going to ask for a division of the house. If folks are in favor of this amendment, please stand. Will the board of civil authority count and tell me when we have you have your pieces of paper for this and remain standing until somebody from the board who is standing up here, please remain standing until somebody from the board of civil authority says the aye, votes are counted. You.

paula emery 32:54

They're moving around, stay still up on the balcony. Just hold still. Hold your name again, right?

Leda Shubart 34:13

start 55 When you cross the line, you

Dan Fingas 34:54

Steven, did you go through. Up.

Donny Osman 35:08

58 in favor. No, no, that's half the crowd, okay, 52 the other okay.

Mary Lane 35:16

Now you guys gotta switch, right?

Dan Fingas 35:20

I know you gotta count the nose now.

Donny Osman 35:23

Okay, so what's the total on the eyes? Okay, please sit down. If you're in favor. If you are opposed to this amendment, please stand up. Remain standing till the votes are counted by the board of civil authority. If you are opposed, please stand less

close than I thought it was. Did you get the Video?

The language

Donny Osman 37:02

that? It okay. Okay, thank you. Are we done? You can sit down now. Thank you very much for that the there are 110 eyes. 41 knows the amendment passes. We are now on Article 13 for clarity. For clarity, I shall one more time read article 13 as amended, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring the land between East Hill Road and Main Street for The purpose of fund and Main Street a village by acquiring land and making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA, 2408 we are now back on the original article. Okay, in the balcony, Christiana, please state your name for the record. Hi,

Christina Blackwell 38:20

I'm Christiana Athena Blackwell. I live with my husband and our two year old son and nine week old baby on Hudson Ave and we were flooded twice since we moved here. We moved here to have our forever home and set roots in Plainfield, and now that's very tenuous. I wanted to make a point that maybe hasn't been vocalized broadly. We have about 20 plus houses on a waiting for a buyout from FEMA. If the buyout goes through, and we all accept those buyouts, those houses get knocked down, it becomes a park. We are forever not allowed to rebuild on that land. And so one way to look at this is to see it as transferring a lost village so that we can

keep our village like rather than expanding, which we do need to expand, because we have a dire need for housing in Vermont, but we need to also keep our community, and this is the only path that we can see that's affordable for us to stay in the town we chose to set our forever roots, and we're living in a place that now we're scared. We're scared to get flooded again. So we'll see what happens. Lots of decisions to be made, but I urge you to please vote yes on Article 13.

Donny Osman 39:47

I'm going to read the next few names in the queue. So we have Mary lane, Alicia first over here. Mary lane, Karen Hatcher, Michael Billingsley and Doug.

Alicia Weiss 40:03

So Alicia, okay, thank you, newborn up in the balcony and thinking that its first words are going to be, is this better? Yes, looking at this little newborn and as opposed to big newborns, I don't know, in the balcony and thinking its first words are going to be democracy is messy, and that's a quote often used by Goddard, by Charles Woodard, who many of us know and love, and I had the pleasure of working with it very closely for many years. So credit to Charles. With a citation below, I'm very uncomfortable with the current expansion plan as it stands. And one of the question, and I'll speak to that, but one question that was passed to me, since I'm in line, is, is a vote for this article, a vote for the project as it's now conceived, represented in scheme, in beautiful schematics, in terms of the pace, the and the the scope, the density, and that's not clear to me. Are we voting for the project in general? Are we voting for it as it's represented with the X number of lots units and the timeline. My deep concern is that while I mean, I'm awe blown away by the work and the commitment of the people on the expansion committee. I can only imagine how much they've learned in the process, but so this is not an aspersion on them, but I think process wise, this is back as word, so to speak. I you know, I reread the 2021 town plan this morning, bright and early, and while we certainly talk about the need for housing and some density in village, in the village area, we haven't had as a town, a discussion about what is desirable density for Plainfield and how fast that should grow we I see the current project moving at a rate that doesn't allow us to get feedback about a certain number of additions before we incrementally add others. I also think that funding efforts should be driven by the needs and the determined desirability of the density of the project and the shape of the project, not vice versa. And perhaps someone will correct me, but I keep hearing that to pay the 2.5 million loan, which, yes, is not a mortgaged and is a wonderful opportunity that we have to build this number of units. And I don't think that that's how density decisions should be made. I hope that whatever way this, you know, I think there's been not just noise and differing opinions, there's actually been acrimony over this, which has made me incredibly sad. I thought we were better than that, but maybe we're all influenced by sort of the times and the National tenor. But I hope that whatever way we go through however this vote goes, that there is insurance that this, and I guess this is my charge to the Select Board for equal representation, or Equal Opportunity representation, across a broad range of residents on The committee that would take this forward, or any project forward, and I hope we would also examine other opportunities. We've got building, historic, beautiful deer, historic buildings which aren't slated for demolition yet. We've lost so many, some of which are empty, some of which for sale. There are opportunities

there for development. I don't think it has to happen in all in one place. I'm so I should. I want to pull back. I'm not against the expansion project conceptually, but I do have problems with the number or the scope, the density and the speed of it. Thank you, Mary.

Mary Lane 44:47

Hi. I cannot stand up any longer. I have a really, seriously understood foot, so I'm sitting down. I'm Mary lane. I'm the chairperson of the water wastewater commission. I saw a bunch of. Of comments, I guess, questions about which were misinformation, I think about the water wastewater, and how this would impact that. So we talked to the to the chief operator, and he came up with the fact page, which is on the website. So I'm not going to read it all, but I'm just going to go over some of the the headline, you know, the major bullet points, yeah, that if you have any more questions, you can ask me, or you can look at it on the website. So the first is, is there capacity to add new users to water and wastewater system? We kind of went through this with Josh, yes, there is, in fact, we need it. Does the system need more users? Yes, we do both water, wastewater, and I think water too are the mains for water and sewer that go up Main Street big enough to handle this new usage from the proposed village expansion location. Yes, yes, it is. Would what would be the impact on existing users if 40 to 50 more users were added? I think I'm going to read this one, since the water and wastewater budgets come exclusively from rate payers and not from tax dollars. Adding additional users will spread out the financial burden, allowing similar increases in yearly water and wastewater bills, the quality of service provided will remain unchanged, which is a big thing we've we're going to lose a lot of revenue because of this. Does the water wastewater Department have any concerns about the addition of new water and sewer lines as proposed by the village expansion. Does it feel like this addition could be undertaken by the town with contractors, or would this be better handled by a private developer? He said, adding additional water and wastewater users is a positive thing for the water wastewater department from both financial and operational perspectives, and that we have no opinions on regards to a private developer or the town and taking a project like this. So that's pretty much the fact questions like I said, you can see it on the website, or probably ask Josh or myself some questions. Any questions you have.

Donny Osman 47:28

Okay, Karen,

Mary Lane 47:30

you done. Mary, I was just going to say one more thing, okay, I'm sorry. Speaking of me being injured, having a floor vote is I would say very against Ada, Thank you.

Karen Hatcher 47:58

Good. Karen Hatcher, I want to speak to my role as town grants administrator and just let folks know the kind of support that has been brought to Plainfield over the course of the last six months from folks at the state and at within the federal representation at the state, because you haven't been in those meetings, you wouldn't know that people are genuinely rooting for us, like they genuinely want to bring us all the resources we could possibly need to be able to rebuild and revitalize the town. We have been moved to top positions for grants. We have been, you

know, it's amazing what's going on. So I just want to say that it would be a shame to not move forward with this project as it is now, because the money is there now, the interest is there. Now, whether the plan is the plan as it's currently written, or it is amended to some other number of lots or something, the fact is that we have a window we will not see again. This is it right here, millions of dollars, free money, no matching being brought to Plainfield that people want us to succeed. They want us to do this project, and they are lining up funders behind one another to help us. So I would just say, whatever considerations we have as a town about the current plan, I believe the process through a process, we can work through it. We can figure out the right numbers to make this thing go but I would say to to hit the stop button on this right. Now would be tragic. It would be tragic. Tragedy upon tragedy. I would just encourage us to have faith in each other and to have faith in the process, and to believe that together we can create something really remarkable with the sport that's coming. So that's all I wanted to make sure I put into the conversation today

Donny Osman 50:25

I'm going to read off. I'll read off the next three, the next four people who are who are in the queue, so Doug, Michael Billingsley, then Michael Billings. Oh, I'm sorry, it's Michael Billingsley, then Doug, then Frances, Then Jacob, are you up in the then Steve Farnham, then Betsy Ziegler, if we can remember that. So,

Michael Billingsley 50:50

all right, Michael, I'm ready. I'm going to do something I haven't done for a long time, which is, I'm going to speak selfishly. I'm going to speak about my own needs, my own neighborhood, my own home. But before I do that, I want to correct a misconception that seems to be floating around a lot, which is that the land that is in the focus of this discussion is owned by Bram Towbin and Erica DeCosta. And I wish Bram a long and healthy life. But I don't think we're looking at a situation that was sort of like it. All focused on this one thing, and it's going to benefit our town clerk. It's really that that land has been proposed for development for quite a long time. There's a number of development choices available. If this particular development option is withdrawn, that land will probably still be developed. It may be developed by the private developer that some people think should happen. And that would potentially mean 10 lots with 10 colonial, big houses on they could all be identical. They'll still be there. So that's my first point. Is that, just to clarify that, but speaking for myself, I live at the corner of husband and Creamery on a house that I inherited, and I also know that I have cherished my neighborhood at what drew me to it in the first place. I look down my street, I see Peter and Lauren. I see Bob Casey and his son. I see Walker and Christiana. I see Marty and his brother, Simon. I see all these people I know by name, David and Annie, across the street, around the corner, Sarah and Bob and Susan, all the people that have put their houses up for buyout because their houses were really badly damaged. They can't live there anymore right now, we still see one another, we still talk with one another, we still visit each other's houses, but that's going to go away my neighborhood. I sometimes describe it just visually as a moonscape. What I'm looking forward to now as a person in a neighborhood supported by community is finding a whole raft of people to become my neighbors. I walked up to the meadow that's under consideration yesterday from below, which is a hard struggle going up through a very street, steep slope, and I'm I'm offered

the possibility that there will be a footpath going from Creamery street up into that meadow that will allow me to meet my new neighbors if they end up living there. I'm looking forward to a diverse group of people of all ages there. I'm looking forward to a possible community center that is being discussed. I'm looking forward not to 200 people, maybe 90 people at best. And you know, you can do the math really easily. It's not going to be more than that many. Than that many, but I want to meet them all. I want this household of mine to be extended into other households, so that I can see people by their faces, so I can love my community in a different way and be enjoying being part of a network again. Thank

Doug Weinreich 54:05

Doug weinerich, just have a quick question. I sat at a lot of the Select Board meetings, and I asked direct questions, and I thought I was getting direct answers. I asked, Is this bond vote? Is this bond vote just the place to park grant money and call you said yes, and I asked if it was to take the temperature of the town on this project, and the answer was no, I'm getting a very different take today. Is this bond vote to take the temperature on the town on this particular or is it not they all right, there is to refund. Excuse me, I misspoke, but I did ask that in a Select Board meeting, and you told me that it was a place to park grant money because Karen, Karen had said how much was potentially out there? Is it? Is it? To take the temperature of the town on this particular project, or is it a place to park grant money for future projects? What is

Donny Osman 55:12

it? Frances, you're the next speaker.

I don't have an answer.

Dan Fingas 55:23

So I was, I wasn't at the first board, Select Board meeting where, I guess there's no minutes, because I usually do minutes, and I wasn't there. So I don't know the full discussion of what happened at that meeting, the second meeting where we discussed it and we passed the article. We very clearly, because we had an argument, maybe the only argument we've had, Peter and I raised our voices and yelled at each other about whether we should put this on as a signifier or put the bond on as an Australian ballot item. It's very clear conversation we had about why we were putting this article on. It does create a bucket for money that is the reserve what a reserve fund is. And I remember you asking, What does the reserve fund do? Which? That's the answer, it's a bucket for money. But we very clearly had a very in depth conversation about getting the temperature of the town, and I don't know who you think said no, I know it wasn't me. I don't know which one of the members of the Select Board you think said no, but we can review the video. And maybe, maybe there was some miscommunication. But it's been very, very clear that this has been an indicator and that it does both things.

Doug Weinreich 56:25

There's no miscommunication. Just saying people should be clear on what they're voting for.

Donny Osman 56:39

Frances, you're next on the list,

Frances Rose 56:48

I wanted to speak to where we are in the process, like, where are we in this exploration. I am a cook. I'm a baker. Where we are right now is the wet batter has been not even placed in the oven yet, and, yeah, sampling it now. It's like not the right time to sample the what's in the oven. The conversations are still ongoing. The process of feedback is I have been witness to the steering group for this idea be very responsive to the feedback that it is getting. The reason we don't have the bond vote on the Australian ballot today is because, despite the claims about the pace of the project, we don't have all the answers. Nobody here is saying that we have all the answers. This is an exploration ongoing, and so a vote now, no, excuse me, a vote no now is like actually cutting off the supply of answers and responsiveness to feedback. And to me, I want to honor the amount of work and labor gone not just into the brainstorming of this idea, the East Village expansion is not the product of just a brainstorm of people sitting around coming up with good ideas that we ought consider. There has been so much leg work, so much labor, the donation of 10s of 1000s of dollars as like a very conservative estimate of donated labor to this effort, there have been independent and independently solicited and received grants for monies to see about this work, I hear other ideas. I mean, it's like the other ideas are, are being tossed around like added to the conversation, to the collective stew pot of consideration. But no other ideas have gotten this far in terms of a feasibility study, the Select Board posture is one of receiving ideas. We're not here making design decisions for the town. We are allowing design decisions to be brought forward to us for our consideration by the town. There is responsibility needed, and in my mind, honor that won't be given to the depth of labor and consideration of this feasibility study. We're really deep in it. And for me, like turning off the oven or taking it out is just it's not the time. And so there are in order for this village expansion idea to go forward. There's another at least seven opportunities for this idea to become before this. Board to offer opportunity for public comment. We're going to know more as we go. A vote here saying yes is a vote to allow this conversation, this exploration, to continue to be explored and be refined, reflective of the vast amount of very good, real feedback coming the way of the Select Board and the steering group. We're all just up here as volunteers, that whole steering group, the Select Board. We're just here doing our best I'm

Donny Osman 1:00:50

going to read next orders. Jacob McBride, you're next then. Steve Farnham, Betsy Ziegler, Liz Peralta, Melinda view, need the mic, please state your name for the record.

Jake McBride 1:01:10

My name is Taylor, Jake McBride, not Jacob. I

Dan Fingas 1:01:16

just wanted to say what Karen Hatcher said much more eloquently than I could have

Donny Osman 1:01:22

Jacob, Steve,

Steven Farnham 1:01:25

it's this one. So one of the things that we keep hearing about is affordable housing. It might be interesting to know that well over 3000 counties in the 50 states in this country. I believe it's five or seven of the most resilient in the face of climate change. Here in Bram. People who know this want to come here, and they want to buy property here, even if they don't come we keep hearing about housing shortage. I don't think that's what we have. I think what we have is housing hoarding. People buy stuff and then they don't live here. They rent it out as an Airbnb or something like that, or they come here for a couple weeks of the year, and then bye, bye, and we won't see them again until catastrophe hits. That's what's driving up the cost of our housing. This particular project, as I understand it, has, I think six units for Habitat for Humanity, or maybe it's five, and I think it's five units from down Street, all aimed at affordable housing. Now I don't know that the state of Vermont can take on all the climate refugees from all over the country, and I don't know that the town of Plainfield can. I think if you want to consider affordable housing, I guess the question is, do we want to avail affordable housing to a few people that were displaced from the flood? And I think that's a big part of what this is about. I'm not saying yes, I'm not saying no, but I think we should consider these things. Thank you. Betsy,

Betsy Zeigler 1:03:12

yes, hi. I'm here because I have been interested in this project for quite a while, and I see concerns. So I wanted, I felt like I needed to say what those concerns are. One is I really felt, I felt like this community hasn't all been engaged in this process. And if we're in the if we're considering going forward, we need a cross community committee, appointed by the slack board, not self appointed. And I know that the people who, who have come forward, have done a tremendous amount of work, but we need everybody to think around the town, to feel like, well, a larger portion of the people around the town to feel like this is good for us. We've also been told that borrowing \$2.5 million is a good idea for a town, and as far as I know, no town has ever done that. They've never borrowed money to buy real estate, except for Ethan Allen, and he hasn't been here in a while, and he was not, he was a bit of a crook anyway, so we, we don't need to set a precedence and be the first town ever to borrow money to to prepare property, to sell it. I think we're getting into a huge can of worms in terms of how all the and all the responsibilities of selling 40 different lots, six. Etc, etc. I'm not saying this isn't a we don't need housing, and I'm not saying in any way we aren't a concerning, concerned community, and I am a concerned citizen. I'm concerned about all the people who have lost housing, but I'm just saying I don't want, I feel I'm concerned about taking a financial risk for our town. We have so many other issues in terms of this is the moment. This is the perfect moment. I guess. I don't agree. I'm not a grant writer, but I've heard from others that there will be other opportunities to get money so we, if we wanted to have a development happen, we don't have to be the funders there. There's opportunity in the future, maybe not at this present moment, but I think in the future we can, we can find money. I think the other factors are that concern me are that this is a subdivision which needs to be looked at by we need to apply for an act 250 permit. That's certainly going to close show, slow us down, but it will get us a really good quality product or development, or whenever we're a subdivision, we're not development. But anyway that will look those 10 criteria will be looked at neighbors, esthetics, noise, water, runoff, all these things will

be addressed thoroughly. It's not stupid for us not to take advantage of that and just keep thinking, well, we're we'll get there, that maybe we'll get there, maybe we won't, maybe we'll get an exemption. We for choice to assure the community we should have that product, we should go through that process. And I would like this left board to say, yes, we acknowledge that in the future, even if it's not right this moment, but soon, when we're ready, we need to begin the Act 250 permitting process. And thank you. And one more thing, I guess, I just shouldn't appreciate. I just want to say, I just want to say I went to the in I went to the early Tom meeting discussion, and I was told that there we were taking out 100 \$150,000 grant to begin some of the engineering work. And it wasn't clear who was taking this grant out, who was playing. I mean, sorry, loan, who was paying it back. I We need to be clearer on what we're doing. So I think this needs to be driven by you. This left board, and I hope you have room on your plate to take it on more. Thank you.

Karl Bissex 1:08:01

Thank thanks, Betsy. We on the Select Board are just listening to information as it comes in. We're taking this step by step by step the best we can. We assure everybody that we are trying to make the right decisions for this town. And I hope you have some trust in that this board is not monolithic. There are different opinions and strong opinions, in some cases, on what should be done next, but I think we're all in agreement. We need tax base, we need community, we need folks who can afford to live here and make this a thriving community. Again, I'm as I was. I said to many, I'm over 50 and and as such, I know that my time is going to be limited. I would like to leave something for the next generation, and I so I can assure you that the Select Board is taking all this very seriously. We have talked about having a committee, a formal committee formed with minutes, agendas open to the public. The steering group that's been working has just been a volunteer and just exploring with a huge amount of information that they've developed. But as they say in engineering school, you never have enough time and you never have enough information, at some point you have to make decisions. So this board is going to continue to do the best we can for the town. Take it slow, as slow as we can. But I also having sit on the grant committee, we need to take advantage of a really hot moment where. We have a lot of support from the community, from the state, from the feds, even although if we don't know what's going to happen there. So we want to, we want to act anyway. We're on it. I think.

Donny Osman 1:10:11

Liz. Liz,

Liz Perrault 1:10:17

hi, thank you. So Betsy actually said a lot of what I was thinking and feeling about. Certainly, the legwork and the exploration of what is possible in this particular piece of property that we're discussing is appreciated, however I strongly, vehemently agree that that has to be dissolved, and a formal committee be formed and appointed by the Select Board, overseen by the Select Board, and become more formalized, to talk about what the next steps are, what some of my concerns are. What are those next steps? Like, how like, as the as the plot sits, as it is downstairs. Currently, I see multiple issues with lot sizes and the density and not so much that our infrastructure couldn't handle it, because from what I understand, it could. I'm talking about

longevity of a real community that will stand the test of time. Nobody says, oh, please give me the postage stamp lot where I can't sneeze without my Okay, talk to me when you're there for 20 years and your kids are living with you and your mother's living with you, see how that little spot of land i we need to think about longevity. We need to think about more than our needs right now. In 10 years from now, we need to think about this as our village, and I love that idea. I am so excited. This is our moment. Let's not screw it up. Can we please do this with transparency, with take let's try to take some of the emotion out of it and be logical. And I know this is an emotional thing, and I know it's about people's homes and our home. I'm third generation plainfielder, not even Vermonter, so I have a stake in how this goes, and I just want to hear what are the next steps? What happens when we I want to say yes, I desperately want to say yes, let's do this. Because I also think that the iron is hot. We need to strike now. As far as the money that will disappear, the disaster of last year was it only last year will quickly be in the history books and forgotten, so we absolutely need to take the money and run but we need to make sure we know what the hell we're doing, and we have to do it with a lot of oversight and transparency. And I want to know from the Select Board, what is the plan if this is voted today, what? What are the next steps? How are we going to formalize this? How are we going to be able to have input from the entire town about what that community looks like? Because I don't want a bunch of track houses or whatever in a field that I don't feel like I can go into, because it's not our village, it's somebody's little cul de sac, like, well, I will be if it's a village, you're right, and that's why I'm excited about the opportunity. But I really want to make sure that we're thinking about long term, not just 1020 years. That's not long term. I have underwear long older than that, so, I mean, come on, we need to think long term. Like Carl said, we're leaving something for our youth. Hopefully our youth are still around to like, enjoy what we create. It's out of the flood plain. I love that. Let's do this, but let's do it right. Melinda,

Melinda Vieus 1:14:29

I've been thinking about the numbers that keep me keep being said over and over again about how many, how many will be added to the waste water and wastewater, but I believe that there are X number of people who are moving up there. I don't believe their new numbers. They've been, they've had, they've had toilets and water in, you know, in the village. Is that correct? That's correct. Yeah, well, but okay, I see. I don't think that represents the truth. I think the truth is that, and I'm not opposing this. I just want us to be truthful about the numbers of that are, of toilet and water are, are going to be reflecting the actual new human beings going up there. Just that's it.

Donny Osman 1:15:26

I have listed there are four people in the balcony that want to speak. Would you sort yourselves out and you can go 1234, from up in the balcony, please.

Aldo Gray 1:15:38

Hi. My name is Ola Gray. I'm a native plainfielder, and my father's house was taken by the flood this last time. He avoided it for 60 years, but it finally went. My father owned a house on the brook road. It finally went after 60 years, he dodged all the other floods. I'm a native to town. I listened to Frances rose impassioned speech, and I wondered, it seems to me, reading

everything on front porch forum, that there's been a few lines that have been kind of blurred, like I'm wondering after Frances Rose's speech, how many of the Select border on the expansion committee? And I really have a thing about the town being responsible for two and a half million dollars. That's what it comes down to. For me, it's not about expanding the town. It's about who is delegating the money. And I don't think it is the town's responsibility to delegate the money for an expansion project.

Donny Osman 1:16:41

There's another person in the balcony. There are four people altogether.

Thank you, Mo for bringing around the microphone, by the way.

Jared Burch 1:16:59

All right. Jared, Burch more, I think there I have a couple of comments. I'll try and keep them brief and concise. I do want to reiterate what Frances Rose said about there being a lot of opportunities if we vote yes on this article, there being a lot of opportunities in the future through this process, for the project to be voted down, for it to be determined that it's not viable in its current form, or that it needs to be shrunk in size, all of those things are possibilities that could come down the line. Voting No on this article today means that we do not explore further any of the questions or concerns that people are raising about this project. I also want to highlight something related to what Betsy was saying, the architect that's been working on the steering committee, Sandy has been working with act 250 permitting in mind in the case that it is required for us. So I think that that's a really important thing to acknowledge as well, is that it's not that that is not being considered through the designs that have been put forth thus far. And the last thing I want to say is I think that rather than speculating about whether grants and funds will be available in the future, we should not discredit or deny the insight of our professional grant writer, Grant Administrator Karen Hatcher in saying that this window will not be available forever. We need to strike when the iron is hot. And I believe voting yes on this article will allow us to take the work of again, an entirely volunteer steering committee, and as many have suggested, move forward with a committee that is engaging directly with the Select Board and with the public to take advantage of this moment and incorporate all of the insights that have been shared here in this meeting and also with the steering committee and the Select Board over the last six plus months that we've been working on this. Thank you.

Donny Osman 1:19:29

There's two more in the balcony, I believe,

Frances Rose 1:19:30

and a quick direct response to the person who asked about who from this Select Board is on the steering committee. I'm not on the steering committee. I'm a liaison between the Select Board and the steering committee. At the outset, Carl and Dan were participating on the steering committee to a certain degree. I believe that

Dan Fingas 1:19:55

in my role as the I was the volunteer during the flood recovery, I was the Volunteer Corps. Eight or I was asked to be a part of the steering committee in September. I mostly spent a few weeks in the early part helping with the community survey and making sure that there was community input on things that were going on. I think I am still on the email exchange, but I am not an active participant in the village expansion, beyond trying to, you know, help make sure that as many people in the community are getting their voices into the process, so that's the only role that I have taken. I am privy to their conversations as and Frances Rose and I are trying to use that information to help keep the Select Board informed when it makes sense. But even then, we're behind. I mean, when, when Sandy the architect, came to the info meeting and said that there was a potential or an offered \$150,000 loan that Betsy spoke to earlier? It's first time I'd heard about it, and I still don't have all the details on it. And there is no loan being accepted by the town of any kind. There's just been one offered, and I'm guessing at a future Select Board meeting, if this vote is a yes, we would then discuss what that meant and even even the details of it. But that hasn't even happened yet. So we're just trying to stay informed. We're trying to balance the calls for us to lead the way and also the calls for us to not spend any time on this. So we're trying to do both.

Donny Osman 1:21:26

I think we're one more in the balcony. Yep, I

Michael Moreland 1:21:31

failed to turn on my own microphone. I'm Michael Moreland up on East Hill Road. I am a climate refugee and a political refugee from Texas. Well, I'm relatively new here. We arrived in late 2019 just before all the insanity. The first insanity now we're in the second, one thing I value most about this community is that each and every one of us has an outsized influence on the direction of that community, which I never felt in the big city. And that's just amazing to me, the fact that I can speak and and everybody has an opportunity to hear my feelings on the matter. And these are those feelings having come here five years ago now, six as a refugee, I will never want to close the door on other refugees. In some ways, some of the people who have been displaced in our own community are now refugees trying to find a place to live again the lower village, much of it is going to become Parkland if we don't heal the wound created by climate change, I fear that this community will be in decline, not in a place of stability or growth, and I encourage everybody To vote yes on this article. Thank you. Live you. Eli.

Eli Barlow 1:23:03

Eli Barlow, Oh, there I am, and my heart's beating really fast, and I just wanted to say I'm on the steering committee, and I am for a Select Board, selected committee to manage this project. Just wanted to say

Donny Osman 1:23:21

thanks, Eli. Lauren clearing Lauren.

Lauren Cleary 1:23:29

Hello, okay, I think at this moment I would just like to point out I feel like we're starting to go in circles, right? And here we are. I've heard really genuine concerns that all I want to hear the answers to those as they come, and I hear people who are like, really in support of this project. And so let's just, let's, let's vote. Let's do it like, right? All we need to do this is a vote to say, do we want to keep having conversation as community? And I think we do, it's clear, like, we want to have conversation, so let's do that in a way that's actually going to be productive from here on out, versus right now, we're just, we're stuck. Okay, so that's, that's me saying, like, Let's go team, let's vote and let's make sure that we continue to have productive conversation.

Donny Osman 1:24:25

You can call the question.

The question has been called that is a two thirds vote majority all those in favor of calling the question, please say aye. All those opposed say no, no, the the Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and we are now voting believe it. Or not on Article 13. Article 13, Article point of clarification, please. What's your point of clarification? Glenda,

Donny Osman 1:25:26

we are voting on creating the reserve fund for the expansion plan. However,

Betsy Ziegler 1:25:31

it with no money, all right? Well, that needs to be clear, because for people who are concerned about the density issue. It doesn't have to be the way it is in the plan. Now, okay,

Donny Osman 1:25:46

I am doing okay. Article 13 as amended reads, shall the town establish a reserve fund to be called the village expansion reserve fund for the purpose of expanding the village by acquiring the land between East Hill Road and Main Street, and Making municipal infrastructure improvements in accordance with 24 VSA subsection 24 all oh eight, all those in 2804 subsection 28 all those in favor of Article 13 as amended, please say aye. All those opposed say no, the Ayes appear to have it. We'll take a division of the house. All those in favor the cards you were given, please stand, remain standing until the board of civil authority has completed The entire count.

Donny Osman 1:28:55

informal temperature with a group if they want to take a lunch break or power or power through the next three articles, I'll just ask,

Donny Osman 1:29:29

we're done. You can sit down now. Those opposed to the motion, please stand and have your vote counted. Remain standing until, until we have all the votes counted. You

Donny Osman 1:31:36

Very loud, all right, the votes are

The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've passed article 15. Article 16, shall the town approve? All right, like, bring the meeting to order. Please. The votes are counted. The eyes are 130 the nays are 30. Article 13, as amendment has passed, let me just take a break in the action for a second without a formal vote or anything, just a general grumbling of understanding, we have three more articles. Do we want to plow through? Or does the group want to take a lunch break for a half an hour? Or something like that? Onward? Is what I'm hearing. Article for. Article 14. Could we have order, please, if you're leaving, we understand, but we still need order in the house in order to get through the rest of our business. Article 14. Shall the town approve 291 million? No, I'm sorry. I don't think we should do that. I apologize. Shall the town approve 291,667 \$1,666 for the operation of the water department for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, to be paid by the ratepayers of the system. May I have a motion on Article 14 moved and seconded. What do we have? It's been moved and seconded to adopt article 14. Discussion on Article 14. Please keep order, folks. It's hard to hear discussion on Article 14. Seeing none? Glenda, are you standing to speak? Seeing none? All those in favor of Article 14, please say Aye. All opposed, nay. The ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you've passed article 14, Article 15, shall the town approve \$363,985 for the operation of the wastewater department for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, to be paid for by the ratepayers of the system. May I have a motion on Article 15 been moved seconded discussion on Article 15, seeing none all those in favor of Article 15, please say aye. All those opposed say No. Of total fund expenditures of \$1,660,863.44

to pay for administrative operations, Fire and Rescue Department and highway department of the town of Plainfield for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, of which \$1,354,413.44

shall be paid by taxes and \$306,450 by non tax revenue. May I have a motion on Article 16? Moved seconded discussion on Article 16. Peter young bear, I believe

Peter Younbaer 1:35:56

because of the motions that we've passed on two previous articles, we need to make some minor adjustments that I believe Josh

Donny Osman 1:36:04

has been working. Are you proposing an amendment? Peter, yes, Josh will have the numbers your approval. So the the amended number for article 16, the first number, shallow town approved total fund expenditures, should read \$1,662,695.50 to pay for administrative operations, Fire and Rescue Department and highway department of the town of Plainfield of the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, six,

Donny Osman 1:37:06

of which you put that in the form of an amendment,

Donny Osman 1:37:19

Okay, so we're on the amendment now it's been proposed. We need to add another number. Yes, he's given you two numbers. He's

Peter Younbaer 1:37:31
going to give you two numbers. Okay,

Josh Pitts 1:37:33
my number and the tax number. Okay, yeah, my amendment is going to include two numbers. So I will read the amended version of the article shall the town approved total fund of expenditures of \$1,662,695.50 to pay for administrative operations, Fire and Rescue Department and highway department of The town of Plainfield for the period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, of which \$1,000,356.03 \$156,245.50 shall be raised by taxes and the remainder by non tax revenue.

Peter Younbaer 1:38:37
That number doesn't change. Okay,

Donny Osman 1:38:55
the proposed amendment changes article 16 to read, shall the town approve a total funded expenditure of \$1,662,695.50

to pay for the administrative operations, Fire and Rescue Department and highway department to the town of Plainfield for the period of July, 1 2025, to June, 30, 2026, of which 1,000,356 \$6,245.50

shall be paid, shall be raised by taxes, and the last number stays the same, and \$306,450 by non tax revenue. Discussion on the amendment to change those two numbers.

paula emery 1:40:00
Oh, yeah, right.

Donny Osman 1:40:04
Moved and seconded, moving it. Discussion, further discussion on the amendment. All those in favor of the amendment say Aye. All opposed say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it and you've amended article 16. Now we are back to the article. I shall. Are you ready for the question, if there's further discussion? Yes. Is

Charlie Cogbill 1:40:32
there a discussion? Am I recognized? Go ahead. Okay. Charlie cog, to put this in perspective, I haven't put the two new numbers in, but apparently there was 2000 more dollars that was have to be raised by taxes, which is minimal, and I don't know where they arrived at that. Okay, there's about \$2,000 more that was quoted that isn't in the book, that is minimal of funds to be raised by taxes. If you look at it closely, compared with last year, the amount to be raised by taxes is 2.9% which is wonderful. We're not in double digits the amount to be raised by taxes, however, that is because increased revenues have been anticipated. For example, the town has taken out a \$1 million bond, which is a line of credit to pay for some of those, some of that

information that isn't in the budget, okay, if you look at the budget itself, not the amount to be raised by taxes compared with last year's, that has gone up 8.4% which is the difference that we have, that we've raised the budget, but We've also raised the revenue, very good. However, the 3.9% raised in taxes is based on no consideration of the grand list abatements Or the reapportionment, and we figure we might have 11% of the grand list decreased, added to the 3.9% we are looking at a projected 14% increase in our taxes for next year. That's just information. That's what the numbers say. I want to point out that the budget that's proposed for this year is 129 or \$128,000 more than the budget for last year for the same items, \$128,000 more than half of that are salaries For town officers. In fact, the town clerk and treasurer's proposed salary has been increased by 112% their proposed salaries are more than any other town clerk or treasurer in Washington County, or in 12 towns of the same population in the vicinity, except for one Warren's treasurer is going to be paid more than plainfield's treasurer is going to be paid if We pass this budget now we cannot make line item changes to the budget. All we can do is vote on the bottom line, except for the one allowed change, which is that the town at town meeting, by town staff or by state statute is allowed and required to set the compensation of town officers. That is the only change we can make, other than the bottom line for this budget, I put back to the town. Do we want our town officers to have an increase of 112% of their salaries over one year, if not, what do we want their salaries to be? And that is a question that only the town at town meeting can set. Thank you.

Dan Fingas 1:44:39

Yep. So I just want to remind everybody that last year at town meeting, we had a budget that included the clerk and treasurer being one single full time position. This body at town meeting decided to split those roles and make them two full time positions, and so 100% of the 112% Increases the fact that we followed your vote and made it to two full positions. So we're talking about a 12% increase split between two people. We're talking about the difference between 55,000 roughly to 60,000 of a salary. And so just want to put that in perspective, there is no one employee getting 100% raise. I know Charlie meant to probably point that out as a fact, but maybe missed it. I did not

Donny Osman 1:45:29

Karen. Karen next,

Karen Hatcher 1:45:32

Karen Hatcher. I just want to say that you can't, in my mind, you can't compare last year to this year. We're living in a different world. The amount of work that's been put on our town officials over the course of the last year trying to deal with this recovery is immense. It's not apples and apples and so when we looked at what kind of infrastructure do we need in terms of personnel to be able to manage what is coming, what we're in the middle of we are woefully understaffed, woefully and the amount of time that people are putting in for these salaries that we say are so much more than last year, but really So little when you compare what they're actually producing. I'm sorry, but I think we've been getting a bargain for a long, long time, and the world has changed, and we need to pay people fairly, and we and we can afford to do that, and we should.

Donny Osman 1:46:37

Are you? Are you ready for the question, is there any further discussion? Yeah, we have Peter

Peter Younbaer 1:46:43

along that line. You know, we not only made a full time town clerk, a full time town treasurer, but we also expanded the Select Board to five, and we have had a hard, very hard time even keeping the town office open, we are short and staff. All our crews are down at least one due to injury, illness or otherwise. And so when we are looking at a village expansion project, we have to look at the capacity of the staff that we have and the volunteers that we have to actually pull this off, I would just say we need to keep that in mind as we move forward. It is a serious concern, and there are only so many hours in the day. I would draw your attention to page 26 of your town report, which is part of the minutes of last meeting, when then select Board Chair Jim Volz made the point that it's not much work to be on the Select Board. I'll just let that sit.

Donny Osman 1:47:57

Is there further discussion? Or are you ready for the question? We don't, I don't think we have to do that, seeing no further discussion, Article 16 as amended reads, shall the town approve a total fund expenditures of 1,662,695 and \$62,695.50, to pay for administrative operations, Fire and Rescue Department and highway department of the town of Plainfield for the period of July, 120 25 to June, 30, 2026, of which 1,356,002 and \$356,245.50

shall be raised by taxes. And \$306,000

Mary Lane 1:48:52

\$450..... \$306,450

Donny Osman 1:48:56

by non tax revenue. All those in favor of Article 16, please say aye. Opposed. Say No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. You have passed article 16. Article 18, shall the town vote to accept the provisions of public statutes relating to the collection of towns by the town treasurer, VSA 32 section, 4791 and vote to collect municipal taxes 30 days from mailing and not prior to August 13, 2025, and collect school taxes on November 19, 2025 and February 11, 2026, collecting half the total of the school taxes on each of those dates. May I have a motion on Article 18, moved seconded discussion on Article 18. I Seeing none. All those in favor of Article 18, please say, aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have passed article 18, Article 19, to transact any other non binding business that may properly come before the meeting.

Mary Niebling 1:50:35

Thank you for those who bought pie. We have three slices left, which is a record. So come on, come on and buy the last well,

Donny Osman 1:50:50

that's other business to transact before the meeting.

Deborah Stoleroff 1:50:59

Well, I'm going to propose a motion for a resolution that is an international, federal, state, local and personal issue. I'm going to ask that the town of Plainfield pledged to be an apartheid free community before I read the pledge, I would like to give some context. The pledge is a commitment to humans who are experiencing life under in a system under which they similar to South Africans before the 1990s live in a second class as second class citizens. They are discriminated against in countless ways. They are forced, oops, they are forced to go through countless checkpoints drive on separate roads, which can turn a 10 minute drive into a five hour. One these humans endure seeing their homes and farms demolished and destroyed. They live in constant fear under military occupation without civil rights, access to safe shelter, food, water and or electricity. Indeed, they live in fear of their lives and the lives of their children, the fact that our tax dollars have paid 17 point 6 billion to the Israeli military. Makes us complicit, according to the unit to the US, US, PCR, CPR, which is the Council for Palestinian I forget exactly what the R is right now Vermont share of that money is 26 point 6 million Plainfield share of that is approximate. It's approximate approximately \$92,000.90 \$2,000 Think of what that amount of money could afford our town, which so badly needs money. Vermont indeed, Plainfield has voted on resolutions such as this before, just last year call we called for a cease fire in Palestine with with very few people saying no to that. 30 years ago, we opposed apartheid in South Africa. We voted for nuclear weapons freeze. This is a humanitarian issue. It is not anti semitic to disagree with a government that is harming, indeed killing, civilians. The ICC, which is the International Criminal Court, has called Israel's action a crime against humanity and one that affects us all personally as a Jewish person, Israel's actions, which get conflated to an action taken by all Jews, which it isn't, makes me unsafe. I'm going to read the pledge that I'm hoping that we will vote to affirm.

Donny Osman 1:53:56

Is this the part that you want to put onto the floor to read now, and can you submit it to us?

Deborah Skoleroff 1:54:13

It's the part in the box to the right the apartheid Free Community Pledge: we affirm our commitment to freedom, justice and equality for the Palestinian people and for all people, we oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination and oppression, and we declare that ourselves an apartheid free community. And to that end, we pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism and military occupation. And I just want to say that this pledge comes from the American Friends Service Committee The Quakers.

Donny Osman 1:54:54

So Deborah I'm not sure.... you're proposing that we adopt this apartheid for. Community Pledge, which I shall now reread. Is that correct? Yes, so it has been moved. Is there, is there a Is there a motion to adopt this it's been moved. Is there a second and seconded? It's been moved and seconded to adopt this pledge, apartheid Free Community Pledge. We affirm that our commitment to freedom, justice and equality for the Palestinian people we I'm sorry, we

affirm our commitment to freedom, justice and equality for the Palestinian people and all people. We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination and oppression, and we declare ourselves an apartheid free community, and to that end, we pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism and military occupation. Discussion on the proposed article. But and is somebody in the balcony?

Dana Woodruff 1:56:13

Hi. Dana Woodruff, thank you for presenting this. Deborah. I i it's really startling. I know that our tax money is going towards weapons that are harming the Palestinian people, and to see the numbers, to see that \$92,000 is going from our community right here, when it's needed so badly, for housing, for our schools, for all the needs that we have that are not met and we can't not pay taxes, or we face imprisonment if we don't face tax, pay taxes. So this is a way that we as a community can show our support to the people of Palestine and to call for an end of the apartheid and the genocide there. Thank

Donny Osman 1:57:07

you Jamie in the balcony.

Jamie Spector 1:57:20

Thank you. Jamie Spector, I also wanted to speak in support of Plainfield adopting the apartheid Free Community Pledge. As a Jewish community member here in Plainfield, I feel very strongly that it's important for us to do what we can on the local level to stand up in support of human rights here in our community and around the world, there are those who want to say that making statements like this is somehow anti semitic, or in some way, will make Jewish people unsafe, and I want to very loudly state that I do not feel that that is the case. Speaking out against a national government that is committing human rights abuses is not anti semitic, and the State of Israel should not get a pass for that. And in terms of Jewish people here in our community being unsafe. Speaking out against a government for human rights abuses does not make me feel unsafe, and my safety as a Jewish community member is certainly not wrapped up in in an apartheid state halfway around the world, my safety as a Jewish community member is because of you. Is because of you. Carl Bix is because of you. Alex Forbes is because of you. Deborah and Sarah and you know all of you in this room, we as a community, make each other safe. And so community safety is about knowing each other here and supporting each other here in our community, and we can stand together with each other, knowing each other and supporting each other and standing strong and making a statement like this, I think is a way that something that we do have in our control at the local level to make a strong statement for human rights for all people. I.

Donny Osman 2:00:03

Are you ready for the question, is there more discussion? Michael,

Dawn Fancher 2:00:10

hi. Dawn Fancher, I also standing to speak in favor of this statement. I want to add on to the things that previous people have said, I'm sorry, this was off the cuff. I don't have anything

prepared. One way that the apartheid is working in against the Palestinian people is through displacement. A lot of the people. Just take Gaza, for example, and there's, you know, that's just one small part of Palestine. A lot of the people living there are were displaced, or the children or grandchildren of of people who are displaced decades ago and are not allowed to go back. Um, we have seen the destruction, the almost total destruction of the Gaza Strip. We know, and have spent most of today, most of the last months, discussing the destruction of one small part of our town, and that was done by nature and not by Animus. And imagine if our entire town was destroyed and all the surrounding communities and our universities and our museums and our hospitals, all of our hospitals, imagine what that would be like. And now there is a threat that those people who are still living there, still trying to survive in their destroyed communities will be displaced, you know, and our government is making that threat, or people speaking on behalf of our government is making that threat. Imagine we're worried about a little gentrification. We're worried we won't like what the development looks like. Imagine if none of us could come back and it would all be a resort. So I just want you to all think about that. Thank you.

Donny Osman 2:01:48

Are you ready for the question, is there further discussion? Michael, sorry, yeah.

Michael Billingsley 2:01:51

I just want to say a brief thing about safety, the larger safety of any of us. I mean, I can look at different ways in which I am certainly a majority. I'm a white man in North American culture, but there are also ways not necessarily apparent, in which I'm not in the majority, and in fact, am a minority population, including the fact that I'm an immigrant to this country. And one of the things I can say is this whole idea of allowing anybody in the world that we have any effect on to be thrown under the bus, which happens frequently and is being encouraged at this moment to embrace larger and larger portions of our population. We get back to the question of whatever happens to the least of us happens to us. So we need to protect as part of our community the idea of whoever is the least, whoever's the most disadvantaged, whoever is the most disenfranchised, whoever is the most vulnerable, to all together, stand up for those people, and this is one way I encourage us to do that.

Donny Osman 2:03:02

I Are you ready for the question? Is there any more discussion? The question is, shall the plain town of Plainfield adopt the apartheid Free Community Pledge, which reads, we affirm our commitment to freedom, justice and equality for the Palestinian people and all people. We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination and oppression, and we declare ourselves an apartheid free community. And to that end, we pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israelis, apartheid regime, settler colonialism and military occupation. All those in favor of adopting this pledge, please say Aye. All opposed, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it, and you have adopted the apartheid free pledge. Is there any further business to come before this meeting? Seeing none. I would be delighted to entertain Stephen. I would be delighted to entertain a motion to adjourn. He made the motion. So moved, seconded. All those in favor, say, aye, All those opposed. Say, No. The Ayes appear to have it. The ayes have it. You've passed the motion, and that's how the chair adjourns the meeting.

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