

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING**

TOWN FIRE DISTRICT NUMBER 3, TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT AND TOWN OF WESTMINSTER - 2017

The legal voters of the Town Fire District Number 3, Westminster Town School District and the Town of Westminster are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bellows Falls Union High School Auditorium in Westminster, Vermont on Saturday March 4, 2017 at ten o'clock in the morning (10:00A.M.) to take action on the Articles following Article 1.

The meeting will be recessed to the Westminster Institute, East Parish, Westminster, Vermont to meet at eight o'clock in the forenoon (8:00 A.M.) on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 for the consideration of Article 1, 12 and 13 by Australian Ballot. The polls shall remain open until seven o'clock in the evening (7:00 P.M.) at which time the meeting will recess to meet at the Bellows Falls Union High School Auditorium at eight o'clock in the evening (8:00 P.M.) on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 to consider any remaining articles, if necessary.

Article 1: To choose all Town Officers, Town Fire District Number 3 Officers, Town School District Officers by Australian ballot, Tuesday, March 7, 2017 from eight o'clock in the forenoon (8:00 A.M.) until seven o'clock in the evening (7:00 P.M.).

Article 2: To hear the reports of the Town Fire District Number 3 and to take action thereupon.

Article 3: To see whether Town Fire District Number 3 shall authorize and instruct its Prudential Committee and Treasurer to borrow money, if necessary, to meet current expenses, on the credit of the District, in anticipation of the collection of taxes and/or the receipt of any State or Federal Funds.

Article 4: To see if Town Fire District Number 3 shall raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty-Two Thousand, Three Hundred Fifty dollars (\$252,350) to pay the indebtedness and other general expenses of the District for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.

Article 5: To transact any other business proper to be brought before the Town Fire District Number 3 meeting.

Article 6: To hear the reports of the Westminster Town School District Officers for the last year and to take action thereon.

Article 7: To see if the Westminster Town School District will vote to pay its District Officers compensation in the following amounts: Town School District Board Chair, \$1,100.00 per year; other Town School District Board members, \$800.00 per year, and; the Town School District Clerk, \$125.00 per district meeting.

Article 8: To see if the Westminster Town School District will apply the sum of fifty-seven thousand, eight hundred forty-three dollars and forty-five cents (\$57,843.45) from the fiscal year 2016 fund balance to create a reserve fund to be used for grades 7 and 8 tuition payments to Vermont public and approved independent schools and authorize the board to expend said funds.

Article 9: To see if the Westminster Town School District will apply the sum of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) from the fiscal year 2016 fund balance to create a reserve fund to be used for capital improvements at the Westminster Schools and authorize the board to expend said funds.

Article 10: To see if the Westminster Town School District will apply the sum of sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00) from the fiscal year 2016 fund balance to create a reserve fund to offset expenditures in fiscal year 2019 in order to reduce taxes.

Article 11: Shall the voters of the Westminster Town School District approve the school board to expend four million, four hundred twenty-four thousand, nine hundred fourteen dollars and fifty-seven cents (\$4,424,914.57), which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of fifteen thousand, two hundred eighty-three dollars and sixty-eight cents (\$15,283.68) per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 4.40% lower than spending for the current year.

Article 12: Shall the voters of the Westminster Town School District vote to form the Windham Northeast Unified School District ("Unified School District") on the following terms:

1. The districts listed below (referred to herein as Member Districts) shall all be identified as "necessary" for the formation of the New Unified School District:

Athens School District
Grafton School District
Rockingham School District
Westminster School District

The Bellows Falls Union High School District shall also be considered necessary for the formation of the new Unified School District but it shall not be referred to as a Town School District and its interests are represented by the voters of each of the Town School Districts.

2. The Windham Northeast Unified School District will offer education to pre-kindergarten through Grade 12.

3. The Windham Northeast Unified School District Board of Directors will be comprised of ten (10) board members who shall have equal votes and whose initial representation will mirror that of Union High School District #27 (Bellows Falls High School) on March 7, 2017. This ratio will be reviewed upon the issuance of each U.S. Census and may be reviewed more frequently to reformulate its membership in accordance with existing state law at that time. Formulation of the initial membership on the board of school directors as detailed below:

Number of Board Members by District

Athens	1
Grafton	1
Rockingham	5
Westminster	3

The Windham Northeast Unified School District Board Directors will be nominated from the legal voters of each Town School District (and after formation of the Unified School District, each member town), and will be elected by Australian ballot for three-year terms, except for those initially elected at the time of the formation of the Windham Northeast Unified School District. Candidates will be elected by an at-large vote of the electorate in the Town School Districts.

4.A. The use of the Windham Northeast Unified School District schools and related facilities and property will be determined by the Windham Northeast Unified School District Board of Directors in a manner that most effectively and efficiently attains quality and equitable education for all students. However, the Windham Northeast Unified School District Board of Directors will continue to use all school facilities operating as elementary/middle public schools on July 1, 2018 for Windham Northeast Unified School District programs and activities unless a majority vote of the electorate of the municipality in which the school is located approves a plan to close a school facility. Decisions regarding the use of schools for pre-kindergarten programs will be determined by the Windham Northeast Unified School District Board of Directors.

4.B. No later than June 30, 2018, the Forming Entities will convey to the Windham Northeast Unified School District all of their school-related real property and personal property, including all land, buildings and contents for One Dollar subject to all encumbrances of record and the Windham Northeast Unified School District will assume all capital associated therewith.

4.C. In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the Windham Northeast Unified School District determines that any of the real property, including buildings and land, conveyed to it by the Forming Entities other than the Union High School District is or are unnecessary to the continued operation of the Windham Northeast Unified School District and its educational programs, the Windham Northeast Unified School District shall convey such real prop-

erty, for the sum of one dollar, and subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or repayment of all outstanding bonds and notes and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants as required by Vermont law, to the municipality in which it is located.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town/village owning and utilizing the real property for community and public purposes for a minimum of five years. In the event a town/village elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town shall compensate the Windham Northeast Unified School District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the Windham Northeast Unified School District and prior to the sale to the town/village. In the event a town/village elects not to acquire ownership of such real property, the Windham Northeast Unified School District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the Windham Northeast Unified School District Board of School Directors.

4.D. For at least the first year that the Windham Northeast Unified School District is fully operational and providing educational services, students will attend elementary school and middle school according to their town/district of residence.

5.A. Capital Debt:
The Windham Northeast Unified School District will assume all capital debt of Forming Entities, including both principal and interest, as may exist at the close of business on June 30, 2018.

5.B. Operating Fund Deficits and Balances:
The Windham Northeast Unified School District will assume any and all general operating deficits and/or surpluses and fund balances of the Forming Entities that may exist at the close of business on June 30, 2018. Those Forming Entities with surpluses, fund balances or remaining reserve funds at the close of business on June 30, 2018, will transfer all such funds to the Windham Northeast Unified School District. In addition, reserve funds identified for specific purposes will be transferred to the Windham Northeast Unified School District and will be applied for said purpose unless otherwise determined through appropriate legal process.

5 C. Specified Funds:
The Forming Schools will transfer to the Windham Northeast Unified School District any pre-existing school district specific endowments or other restricted accounts that may exist on June 30, 2018. Scholarship funds or like accounts held by school districts on June 30, 2018 that have specified conditions of use will be used in accordance with said provisions.

6. The provisions of the Report and Formation Plan approved by the State Board of Education on December 20, 2016, which is on file at the offices of the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union shall govern the Unified School District. (Voted by Australian Ballot)

Article 13: To elect the following directors to the initial Board of Directors of the Windham Northeast Unified School District:

Athens: 1 Director for a one-year term expiring in March of 2019
Grafton: 1 Director for a two-year term expiring in March of 2020
Rockingham: 5 Directors
2 for one year terms expiring in March of 2019
1 for a two-year term expiring in March of 2020
2 for three year terms expiring in March of 2021

Westminster: 3 Directors

1 for a one-year term expiring in March of 2019
1 for a two-year term expiring in March of 2020
1 for a three-year term expiring in March of 2021
(Voted by Australian Ballot)

Article 14: To transact any other proper business to be brought before the Town School District Meeting.

Article 15: To hear the reports of the Town Officers and to take action thereupon.

Article 16: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will raise and appropriate the sum of \$130,000 for the Town Highway Equipment Reserve Fund.

Article 17: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000 for the Bridge Rehabilitation Reserve Fund.

Article 18: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,200 in addition to the sum (\$4,200) included in the budget proposed by the Selectboard making the total \$8,400, for the support of the Westminster West Public Library.

Article 19: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,534 for the support of Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies to provide workforce and economic coordination services to residents of the Town.

Article 20: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will create a reserve fund for the proposed needed upgrades to the Town Highway Garage and place \$63,000 in this fund from the FY 16 budget surplus.

Article 21: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will approve the placement of \$100,000 in the Capital Improvement Fund for the purpose of the approved renovation to the Town Hall with the money coming from the FY16 surplus.

Article 22: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will the placement of \$140,000 in its Rainy Day Reserve Fund for the purpose of any and all emergency expenses that the Town may face due to unplanned circumstances, with the money coming from the FY16 surplus.

Article 23: To see if the voters of the Town of Westminster will raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,901,185 to pay the indebtedness of the Town, repair highways and pay general expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018.

Article 24: To transact any other proper business to be brought before the Town of Westminster Meeting.

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER - WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT
SELECTBOARD**

Sheldon Beebe, Chair
Craig Allen, Vice Chair
Nancy Dalzell, Clerk
Susan Harlow
Toby Young

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Major, Chair
Rick Gordon, Clerk
Elise Manning-Sterling
Cheryl Charles
Tim Young

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

Christopher J. Hackett, Chair
Robert J. Haas
Daniel Green

Copies of the Town Report will be available on or before February 15, 2017 at the Westminster Town Hall, Westminster West and/or Westminster Center Schools, Butterfield and/or Westminster West Libraries.

The Town will mail or distribute a copy of the report to any voter or resident upon request. To do so please contact the Town office at 802.722.4255 NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 10, 2017.

As authorized by 24 VSA § 1682, copies of the July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 Financial Audits are now available at the Westminster Town Hall, Westminster West Library, Butterfield Library, and on the Westminster website at www.westminstervt.org