

Warning
Bristol Police District
Special Service District Meeting
Monday, September 26, 2011, at 7:00 pm
At Holley Hall

Moderator Fred Baser called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Fred Baser asked permission for Police Chief Kevin Gibbs and Town Administrator Bill Bryant to speak as they are not members of the police district. No objections.

The legal voters of the Police Department Special Service District of the Town of Bristol are hereby WARNED and NOTIFIED to meet at Holley Hall on Monday, September 26, 2011 at 7:00 pm to discuss and vote on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: Shall the Bristol Police District adopt its budget article or articles passed by Australian ballot in accordance with Title 17 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 2680(c); and hold its annual meeting on the first Tuesday of March (Australian ballot matters), with the budget informational meeting and other business to be conducted on the preceding Monday evening at a time to be determined by the Selectboard in accordance with Title 17 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 2643?

Fred Baser explained the article. Lee Beckwith moved the article. George Smith seconded. Brenda Tillberg would like an explanation on how they are going to handle the voting process at the polls. Town Clerk Therese Kirby explained the voter checklist can be sorted by Police District and non-Police District voters. Chairman Joel Bouvier said the Selectboard was considering holding the Police District meeting at 6 pm with Town Meeting starting at 7 pm. George Smith is not in favor of moving to Australian ballot because district voters could not amend an Australian ballot they would have to vote it down. He also feels that voters may be uninformed and automatically vote yes. Bob Bernstein wants to know the legal authority that allows this to happen. Bill Bryant said the authority comes from the merger document and read sections of it. Ted Lylis wants to know why the discussion can't be combined with the regular Town Meeting. Fred Baser explained this was discussed earlier and that is a possibility. Chairman Joel Bouvier explained the reasoning behind the idea of starting Town Meeting earlier. This has not yet been decided by the Selectboard. Peter Ryan liked the idea for control purposes of starting the meeting earlier with just Police District voters. Sharon Compagna thanked people for their input. Dave Melichar feels that rolling the Police District meeting into Town Meeting will dilute the process even more and weaken democracy. Bill Bryant stated that approximately 3% of the Police District voters come to the annual Police meeting. Bill estimates that if the Police budget is voted via Australian ballot a possible 300 voters could vote, thus increasing the voter participation tenfold. Carol Wells explained people can come to the Selectboard meetings while they are working on the Police budget. Bob Bernstein spoke in favor of voting this article down. John Moyers feels it is incumbent on voters to be educated and help educate their neighbors. John

would like to see a more open budget process that allowed for back and forth between the Selectboard and the voters. Jim Lathrop feels the Selectboard should put out a warning with dates and what department's budget are up for discussion. Sharon Compagna stated the agenda/warning is published and the name of the department whose budget is to be discussed is also published. Alan Huizenga reminded people the Selectboard meetings are televised and people who attend meetings can be informed. Peter Ryan feels it is erroneous to assume voters are uninformed. He also feels it is incumbent on people to educate themselves on the issues. Jo Van Buskirk said all meetings are on disk at the Library and can be signed out and viewed. Discussion of splitting the article into two votes. Brenda Tillberg requested a paper ballot. George Smith moved the question. The request for a paper ballot was granted by voice vote. Article 1 passed via paper ballot 15 yes 14 no.

ARTICLE 2: If the vote on the preceding article is in the affirmative, shall the Bristol Police District vote on all public questions by Australian ballot in accordance with Title 17 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 2680(d)?

John Moyers moved the article. Lance Perlee seconded. John wanted the article clarified. Bill Bryant read from the merger document and explained an example of a public question could be to create a capital fund. Bob Bernstein is in favor of this article. Jim Lathrop asked Moderator Fred Baser to reread the article. Article 2 passed by a show of hands.

ARTICLE 3: To transact any other non-binding business that may legally come before this meeting.

John Moyers would like the Selectboard to encourage Bristol residents to expand the Police district. Peter Ryan would encourage a group of citizens to spearhead the task, as the Selectboard has tried it before and been defeated. Chief Kevin Gibbs feel residents need to be educated about the Police district. Brenda Tillberg wonders if Towns could merge to create a regional Police district or share officers. Chief Kevin Gibbs discussed options that had been discussed among law enforcement. Peter Ryan moved to adjourn. John Moyers seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

List of attendees: Moderator Fred Baser, Chairman Joel Bouvier, Alan Huizenga, Carol Wells, Sharon Compagna, Town Administrator Bill Bryant, Town Clerk Therese Kirby, Andrew Stein, Jim Quaglino, Edward Shepard, Betty Anderson, Lance Perlee, Brenda Tillberg, David Lawyer, Chief Kevin Gibbs, Jane Dearborn, Carol Eldridge, Reg Dearborn, Robert Norris, Peter Ryan, Chauncy Eldridge, George Smith, John Moyers, Lee Beckwith, Sara Beckwith, Emmett Van Buskirk, Jo LaFontaine Buskirk, Gerald Heffernan, Robert Bernstein, David Melichar, J. Brett LaRose, Ted Lylis, Larry Gile, Randy Crowe, Jim Lathrop, Marian Baser, and Kris Perlee.