

2026 TOWN OF MAIDSTONE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
Meeting was held at Town Hall, at 508 VT Route 102

The Annual Town Meeting was called to order at 7:16 pm by Scott Lovell, the Town Moderator.

TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT: Amy Pear (Town Clerk), Sam Graham (Asst. Town Clerk), Tammy Haas (Asst. Town Clerk/SB Admin. Asst.), Bob Champagne-Willis (Treasurer/Lister/PC/ZBA/Del. Tax Collector), Bill Sanborn (Fire Warden), Jack Donnelly (Auditor), Sandy Gray (Lister/Auditor/Health Officer), Andy Champagne-Willis (JP), Brad McVetty (Selectboard), and Bruno McKenzie (Selectboard – Chair).

VOTERS PRESENT: Chris von Alt, Heather LeFoll, Mary von Alt, June Lockert, Linda Sanborn, Craig Sanborn, Sam Gorham, Carol Gorham, Linwood Mixer, Lloyd Tippitt, and Kathy Lovell.

NON-VOTERS PRESENT: Sebby LeFoll

The Town Moderator (Moderator) opened the meeting by reading Article 1, “Shall the voters authorize payment of the 2026 property taxes in 2 (two) installments, with the due dates being October 15, 2026, and April 15, 2027, by physical delivery to the Town Treasurer at the Town Hall before 3:00 p.m. on each of the said due dates, or by delivery to the Town Hall via USPS, postmarked on or before said due dates?” Bob Champagne-Willis made the motion to accept Article 1 as read, seconded by Andy Champagne-Willis. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 2, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$20,000, and put it in the earmarked Town Road Rebuild Account within the Highway Fund?” Linwood Mixer made the motion to accept Article 2 as read, seconded by Heather LeFoll. There was a short discussion about what the \$20,000 would be used for. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 3, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$2,000 for a donation to the Maidstone Lake Association to help support the Aquatic Nuisance Prevention Program at Maidstone Lake?” Heather LeFoll made a motion to accept Article 3 as read, seconded by Linwood Mixer. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 4, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$3,000 and put it in the Reappraisal and Maintenance of the Grand List Fund?” Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to accept Article 4 as read, seconded by Andy Champagne-Willis. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 5, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$4,000 to set aside for the biannual purchase of official Maidstone Trash Bags?” Lloyd Tippitt made a motion to accept Article 5 as read, seconded by Linwood Mixer. A question was asked about what should be done if someone receives damaged bags. The Town Clerk replied that the bags should be returned to Town Hall, and they will be replaced. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 6, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to use the prior year’s interest on Town of Maidstone bank accounts to offset the municipal tax rate for the current year?” Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to accept Article 6 as read, seconded by Amy Pear. A short discussion ensued that this money had been just sitting in the Town’s accounts earning minimal interest, and this year was invested in short-term CDs by the Town Treasurer, with the support of the Selectboard, which earned approximately \$19,000. This amount would be used as an offset of the current year’s municipal taxes. Motion carried.

The Moderator read Article 7, “Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to allocate funds to give annual Cost-of-Living Adjustment, as set by the United States Government, to all employees of the Town that the voters have statutory authority to set the pay?” Chris von Alt made a motion to accept Article 7 as read, seconded by Andy Champagne-Willis. A short discussion ensued about how a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increases a pay level to match inflation, ensuring that an employee’s pay level remains the same in relation to the value of money; how not being given a COLA in effect decreases how much an employee is being paid, because inflation makes money worth less. Some voters said that in the past, the Selectboard has been responsible for deciding the pay level of town employees; the Treasurer corrected that assumption, pointing out that the Selectboard makes a recommendation to the voters,

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and the voters have the responsibility to decide on the wages for the town employees. Discussion continued as to whether this Article applied to this year or to all future budgets. The consensus was that it should apply only to this year, ensuring the flexibility to address future budgetary concerns as necessary. Jack Donnelly then made an amended motion, "Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to allocate funds to give a Cost-of-Living Adjustment, as set by the United States Government, to all employees of the Town that the voters have statutory authority to set the pay, for this calendar year?", seconded by Lloyd Tippitt. Vote on the amended language carried. Vote on the amended Article 7 carried.

The Moderator read Article 8, "Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to amend the Flag Display Policy, to include flags honoring Veterans Service?" Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to accept Article 8 as read, seconded by Chris von Alt. The Town Clerk advised that this was being asked because there is a Proclamation from the Town of Maidstone, recently located, that honors the "Silver Star Families", and she wanted to honor them by flying a Silver Star flag; the only way to do that with the current flag policy is to follow its direction for the people to take a vote. Several people voiced concerns that by voting for this, a precedent would be set, making it difficult to refuse other requests to fly various flags in the future. Suggestions were made to use other methods than adding flags to the flagpole. It was stated that this conversation was going to continue at future Selectboard Meetings. Motion failed.

The Moderator read Article 9, "Shall the Town of Maidstone vote on all public questions by Australian Ballot?" Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to accept Article 9 as read, seconded by Mary von Alt. A discussion ensued on why this was being asked. This would provide an opportunity for voters to participate who could not be present at Town Meeting. The Treasurer explained that an Informational Meeting is required to be held for public questions on an Australian Ballot, giving voters the opportunity to discuss the questions prior to voting. There was a vote count made for this motion; 14 voted in favor, and 3 voted against. Motion carried.

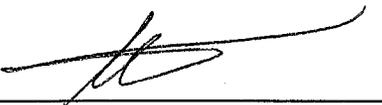
The Moderator read Article 10, "Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$295,657.00 to pay current expenses as requested in the proposed Budget plus the amounts raised in Articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7?" Linwood Mixer made a motion to accept Article 10 as read, seconded by Mary von Alt. Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to amend Article 10 as there was a typo in the amount, and the correct amount should be \$296,657.00, as was published in the Town Report; Jack Donnelly seconded the motion. This amendment was voted on and carried. Then Bob Champagne-Willis made a motion to add \$488 to \$296,657 to make it \$297,145, to increase the Selectboard pay as recommended by the Auditors; Chris von Alt seconded the motion. The discussion on this was that the Auditors were not recommending this increase if town employees did not receive the COLA in Article 7. The motion was voted on and carried. The amended Article 10, "Shall the Town of Maidstone vote to raise \$297,145 to pay current expenses as requested in the proposed Budget plus the amounts raised in Article 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7?", was voted on and carried.

Selectman McVetty announced that Valerie Foy and Gary Brown of Guildhall were looking for volunteers for a 250th year celebration committee. Meetings of this committee will be on the 2nd Monday of each month.

The motion to adjourn was made by Linwood Mixer, seconded by Lloyd Tippitt. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted: _____


Amy Pear, Town Clerk



Scott Lovell, Moderator



Bruno McKenzie, Selectboard Chair