

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
AT MONUMENT MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
AUDITORIUM
600 STOCKBRIDGE ROAD, GREAT BARRINGTON, MA
APRIL 17, 2025 AT 6:00 PM
MINUTES**

In pursuance of the foregoing warrant the inhabitants of the Town of Great Barrington qualified to vote in Town Meetings proceeded to vote at the above named meeting place with the following results. The meeting was duly called to order at 6:02 P.M. by Moderator Michael Wise who welcomed everyone to the Town Meeting. Mr. Wise stated that there was a quorum present and noted the return and service of the warrant. Mr. Wise requested that everyone stand and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. He announced that the meeting is being taped for broadcast and asked that cell phones be shut off.

Mr. Wise introduced the Town Officials seated on the stage; Town Clerk Joshua Risen, Interim Town Manager Christopher Rembold and the empty chair for Town Counsel David Doneski. Town Counsel David Doneski was not present during the opening of the meeting as he was delayed due to traffic.

The rules of the meeting were explained by Mr. Wise. The meeting will be governed by the Massachusetts General Laws, the Bylaws of the Town of Great Barrington and Town Meeting Time. Only registered voters of the town may participate in the meeting unless permission is granted by the moderator. Before anyone addresses the Town Meeting, he/she must proceed to the microphone and when recognized by the moderator state their name and address. Mr. Wise requested that voters speak only once per motion and limit their comments to three minutes. Comments should be limited to the merits of the motion and should not be repeated. All motions and amendments must be made in writing and any motion to reconsider must be made within 15 minutes of the announced vote. All questions are to be addressed to the moderator who will ask the appropriate person to respond. Each voter has received a warrant, a yellow card and a packet of yes/no cards. Mr. Wise will instruct voters when these are to be used and what color to use if needed. He noted that a counter has been assigned to each section of the auditorium and they will report their numbers at the microphone when ready.

At 6:08 PM, Mr. Rembold made a Motion to waive the verbatim reading of the Warrant, which was seconded by someone in the audience and passed.

At 6:09 PM, Mr. Rembold made a Motion giving the Moderator authority to declare a two-thirds vote, which was seconded by someone in the audience and passed.

Mr. Wise requested that Mr. Rembold read a statement of legal opinion written by Mr. Doneski clarifying what is at stake for the Special Town Meeting.

At 6:14 PM, a motion was made pursuant to Article One, by Sharon Gregory of 32 Hollenbeck Avenue in Great Barrington to have the Town of Great Barrington acquire the Housatonic Water Works Company for the amount of zero dollars and not to exceed \$2.3 million

in total to own and control the Housatonic Water Works system and all its facilities and property rights. An enterprise fund should be used to separate the water utility from the municipality. The Motion was seconded by someone in the audience. Mr. Wise recognized the motion and asked for Mrs. Gregory to explain her motion.

At 6:31 PM Selectboard member Ben Elliot of 208 Pleasant Street, Housatonic spoke and made a Motion to indefinitely postpone the Motion put forward by Mrs. Gregory, which was seconded by someone in the audience. Mr. Wise requested discussion on the Motion to postpone indefinitely.

At 6:37 PM, Mr. Wise took a vote on the procedural motion to postpone indefinitely, the Motion failed.

Selectboard member Eric Gabriel of 1052 Main Street spoke against the original Motion made by Mrs. Gregory.

At 6:46 PM, Kate Van Olst of 24 Hart Street made a Motion to Amend Mrs. Gregory's original motion to remove the dollar amount of \$2.3 million, which was seconded by someone in the audience. Mr. Wise requested discussion on the Motion to Amend. Denise Forbes of 325 North Plain Road spoke against the Motion to amend.

At 6:49 PM, Mr. Wise took a vote on the Amendment proposed by Kate Van Olst, the Motion failed.

At 6:50 PM, a Motion was made and seconded to have a counted vote on the original Motion made by Mrs. Gregory, this motion passed.

Maureen Quigley of 7 Depot Street made a Motion to have a secret ballot on the Original Motion, this Motion failed.

The Counted results of the vote on Mrs. Gregory's original Motion was 140 yes votes to 241 no votes, Motion on Article One Failed at 6:58 PM.

At 7:00 PM, a motion was made pursuant to Article Two, by Sharon Gregory of 32 Hollenbeck Avenue in Great Barrington, to have the Town of Great Barrington acquire by merger the Great Barrington Fire District which means transferring the assets and liabilities into a Town enterprise fund. The Motion was seconded by someone in the audience.

At 7:10 PM, Walter Atwood of 370 Maple Avenue made a motion to postpone Mrs. Gregory's motion pursuant to article 2 to an indefinite date. Mr. Wise took a vote on the motion to postpone indefinitely which passed.

Motion to dissolve the meeting made by someone in the audience and seconded by someone in the audience.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:10 PM

