

SECRET BALLOT ELECTION AND ANNUAL
TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Friday, March 8, 2024

and

Saturday, March 9, 2024

To Tracey Rotondi, a citizen in the Town of Athens, in the county of Somerset.

Greetings:

In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the town of Athens, in said county and state, qualified by law to vote in town affairs, to meet and assemble at The Town Office (Somerset Academy), in said Athens, on Friday the 8th day of March, 2024 A.D. at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, then and there to act on Article 1 and by secret ballot on Article 2 as set out below, the polling hours therefore to be 4 o'clock in the afternoon until 8 o'clock in the evening;

And, to notify and warn said inhabitants to meet at The Athens Town Office (Somerset Academy) on Saturday the 9th day of March 2024 A.D. at 1:30 in the afternoon to act on the remaining articles.

Art. 1. To choose a Moderator by written ballot to preside at said meeting.

Art. 2. To elect all municipal officers and school committee members as are required to be elected.

Art. 3 Shall the town vote to accept funds as provided by the Maine State Legislature:

State Municipal Revenue Sharing.

Highway Maintenance Funds.

Tree Growth Reimbursement Funds.

Veterans Reimbursement Funds.

Support of the Poor Reimbursement Funds

Snowmobile Registration Refund Funds.

Homestead Exemption Reimbursement Funds

Any State grants that are made available by the State.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 4. To choose two members for the Budget Committee.

Art 5. Taxes

A. To fix the time when taxes are due and collectable.

Budget Committee recommends taxes be due on receipt of the bill.

B. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to charge interest at the rate of 08.5% on all taxes not paid by November 30th.

Budget Committee recommends 08.5%.

C. To see what rate of interest the Town will authorize the Treasurer to charge on tax liens in accordance with Title 36, MRSA Section 505.4.

Budget Committee recommends 08.5%.

D. To see if the Town will authorize the Tax Collector to retain \$1.75 on each Excise tax application processed.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

E. To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to sell and dispose of Real Estate acquired for nonpayment of taxes thereon. Any property so acquired will be made available to the former owner for a period of ninety (90) days. If the original owner does not make acceptable arrangements for payment within this period, the property may be advertised and sold by the process of sealed bids and a quit claim deed will be executed for such property. The Town reserves the right to charge an additional fee, not exceeding the delinquent tax, for each year the property is acquired, to the original owner." Except that the Municipal Officers shall use the special sale process required by M.R.S. ss 943-C for qualifying homestead property if they choose to sell it to anyone other than the former owner (s)."

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

F. To see if the Town will authorize at the selectman's discretion the return of any or all excess funds to the party named on a tax lien mortgage at the time of the levy of a tax lien, or that party's successors, heirs or assign after subtracting the tax liens, interest, fees for recording the liens, costs of mailing notices, court costs, taxes that should have been assessed while the property was held by the municipality and any other expenses incurred in disposing of the real estate.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

G. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to borrow money on behalf of the Town in anticipation of tax receipts.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 6. To see if the town will vote to allow appropriation of taxation above the Tax Cap Growth rate set by the State.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 7. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$158,729.00 for the general management of the Town as follows:

A. Miscellaneous Account: \$45,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$20,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$25,000.00

B. Insurances: \$28,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$14,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$14,000.00.

C. Maine Municipal Association dues: \$2,229.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$2,229.00 from Excise Tax.

D. Unemployment, social security, and Medicare taxes: \$22,000.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$22,000.00.

E. Officer's Salaries: \$61,500.00

I. First Selectman: \$20,000.00

II. Second Selectman: \$6,500.00

III. Third Selectman: \$6,500.00

- IV. Tax Collector \$7,500.00
- V. Town Clerk \$6,000.00
- VI. Treasurer: \$7,500.00
- VII. Animal Control Officer \$2,000.00
- VIII. Municipal Fire Chief \$5,500.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$61,500.00

Art. 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000.00 to fund a Code Enforcement Officer with an hourly rate to be established and a reimbursement of 50 cents a mile.

Budget Committee recommends raising \$1,000.00

Art. 9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,000.00 for Support of the Poor.

Budget Committee recommends raising \$11,000.00

Art. 10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$40,000.00 for Town Grounds and Buildings.

Budget Committee recommends taking \$10,000.00 from Excise Tax, Raising \$22,000.00, and taking \$8,000.00 from Surplus.

Art. 11. To see if the Town will vote to pay any money received from the Snowmobile Registration Refund to A.C. Lineriders to build and maintain trails.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 12. To see if the town will raise and appropriate \$4,000.00 for Mt. Rest Cemetery Association to be used for yearly upkeep with a yearend breakdown of expenses.

Budget Committee recommends taking \$1,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$3,000.00.

Art 13. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$3,500.00 for tax map updates.

Budget Committee recommends raising \$3,500.00

Art. 14. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$5,510.00 for Community Programs as follows:

A. Athens-Cornville Food Pantry: \$1,500.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$1,500.00.

B. Harmony Cares Food Pantry: \$1,500.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$1,500.00.

C. Family Violence Project: \$635.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$635.00.

D. K.V. Van Transportation Services: \$225.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$250.00.

E. K.V. Child & Family Services: \$250.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$250.00.

F. Hospice Volunteers of Somerset County: \$500.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$500.00.

G. Senior Spectrum \$300.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$300.00.

H. Somerset Economic Development Corp. \$100.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$100.00.

I. The Life Flight Foundation \$250.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$250.00

J. The Baker Mountain Ski Tow Club \$250.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$250.00.

Art. 15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,380.00 for the disposal of stray animals at the Somerset Humane Society.

Budget Committee recommends taking \$2,380.00 from Excise Tax.

A. To set mileage reimbursement for the Small Animal Control Officer and set a disposal fee for stray animals paid from Misc. Acct.

Budget Committee recommends \$0.50/mile and \$25.00 per animal.

Art. 16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 for the Athens Volunteer Fire Department as follows:

A. Incidental expenses: \$13,000.00

Budget Committee recommends Raising \$13,000.00.

B. Electricity, phone, and fuel: \$6,000.00

Budget Committee recommends Raising \$6,000.00

C. Firefighters Pay (excluding Fire Chief) to include hourly pay for authorized training and when responding to emergency calls (\$18.00/hr.) not to exceed \$12,000.00 total.

Budget Committee recommends taking \$12,000.00 from Excise Tax.

D. Equipment Maintenance Account: \$12,000.00

Budget Committee recommends Raising \$12,000.00.

E. Truck and building savings account (Capital Savings Account): \$7,000.00

Budget Committee recommends raising \$7,000.00

Art 17. To see if the town will vote to allow any funds not spent on Article 16. A, B, D above to be rolled into E. The Truck and Buildings Savings (Capital Savings Account)

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art 18. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$37,500.00 for recreational purposes as follows:

A. Athens swim program: \$4,500.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$4,500.00 from Excise Tax.

B. Recreation and Conservation Commission Account: \$14,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$7,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$7,000.00.

C. Recreation Area Maintenance Account: \$11,500.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$11,500.00 from Excise Tax.

D. Fairgrounds Recreation Maintenance Savings Account. \$7,500.00 (Revenues will be used for ongoing repairs and improvements to the recreation areas, fairgrounds, ice/skateboard rink, playground tennis & basketball courts, etc.)

Budget Committee recommends raising \$7,500.00.

Art. 19. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$272,500.00 for Road Maintenance as follows:

A. Town's Savings Account for Equipment \$25,000.00.

Budget committee recommends to Raise \$25,000.00.

B. Cutting Brush and roadside mowing: \$5,000.00

Budget Committee recommends to Raise \$5,000.00

C. Equipment Maintenance Account: \$40,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$15,000.00 from Excise Tax, to Raise \$20,000.00, and taking \$5,000.00 from Surplus.

D. Stockpiling sand and salt \$45,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$15,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$30,000.00.

E. Summer Roads \$75,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$26,000.00 from Excise, to Raise \$44,000.00 and taking \$5,000.00 from Surplus.

F. Winter Roads \$75,000.00

Budget committee recommends taking \$20,000.00 from Excise Tax, to Raise \$50,000.00, and taking \$5,000.00 from Surplus.

G. To set wages for the Road Crew for the ensuing year.

Budget Committee recommends up to \$26.00 / hour for the Road Commissioner and up to \$22.00 /hour for Assistants.

H. Electricity, phone and heating oil, mileage reimbursement \$7,500.00

Budget Committee taking \$7,500.00 from Excise Tax.

Art. 20. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 for the Road Paving Account. (Highway Maintenance)

Budget Committee recommends raising \$50,000.00.

Art. 21. To see if the Town will allow any monies left in the yearly Equipment maintenance account to be deposited into The Towns Savings Account for Equipment.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 22. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$5,000.00 to be placed in the Legal Funds Account.

Budget Committee Recommends raising \$5,000.00.

Art. 23. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$82,500.00 for Solid Waste Disposal as follows:

A. Transfer Station: \$15,000.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$5,000.00 from Excise Tax and to Raise \$10,000.00.

B. Municipal Solid Waste Disposal: \$67,500.00

Budget Committee recommends taking \$30,000.00 from Excise Tax and to raise \$37,500.00.

Art. 24. To see if the Town will vote to raise \$10,000.00 for the Town Audit

Budget Committee recommends to Raise \$10,000.00.

Art. 25. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000.00 for renovations and repairs to the Exhibition Hall.

Budget Committee recommends to Raise \$10,000.00.

Art. 26. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to pay tax abatements and any applicable interest, and to pay any legal fees if necessary, from Overlay generated through Tax Commitment.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 27 To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$68,196.00 from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (aka American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA funds) received by the Town from the federal government for the following projects: Stormwater Control, including payments for Culverts, Ditching, Gravel, and associated Labor, and repairs and renovations to the Somerset Academy (Town Office) building.

Budget Committee recommends doing so.

Art. 28. To see if the Town shall adopt an ordinance entitled "Solar Energy Facility Ordinance" for the Town of Athens?

Budget Committee makes no recommendation.


Art. 30. To see if the Town shall adopt a moratorium ordinance entitled "Moratorium Ordinance on Wireless Transmission Facilities" for the Town of Athens?

Budget Committee makes no recommendation.

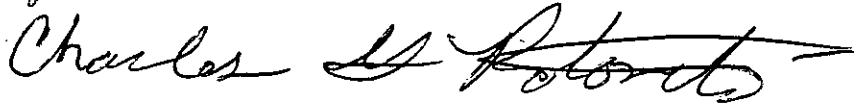
Selectmen:

Date 2/28/24

Hillary J. Lister, First Selectman



Charles G. Rotondi, Second Selectman



Guy C. Anton, Third Selectman



Tracey H. Rotondi
Town Clerk