

approved 3/24/2026

Town of Ira
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Date: March 2, 2026
7:30 PM

Present: Nathan Hewitt, Tim Carter, Darin May, Mary Richthammer

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
Call meeting to order	Nathan called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
Introduction of meeting facilitator	Nathan turned the meeting over to Mary Richthammer, meeting facilitator. Mary reviewed the expectations of the meeting and provided guidance on asking questions.
Article 1: To elect town officers as required by law	Mary read the article and reminded meeting participants to vote Tuesday; polls open 10:00 am – 7:00 pm. There were no questions or comments.
Review and Discuss Article 2: Shall the voters authorize payment of real and personal property taxes to the Town Treasurer on or before October 20, 2026?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. There were no questions or comments.
Review and Discuss Article 3: Shall the voters authorize the total expenditure of \$330,996 for the Town General Fund and Highway Fund for the fiscal year 7/1/26 – 6/30/27, for which \$233,429.26 shall be raised by taxes and \$97,566.74 by non-property tax revenue?	Mary read the article and invited comments from the select board. Nathan stated that the Board works hard on keeping costs down. The highway budget was increased by \$500 for expenses related to the town garage. The general town budget increase of \$7,000 was primarily due to increasing salaries of those serving in town positions. The increases by no means fully compensate individuals for all the time required to be spent on town business but hopefully helps; also, it is hoped to spark interest to others to serve in town positions. There were no further questions/comments.
Review and Discuss Article 4: Shall the voters appropriate \$12,000 to be raised by taxes for the Rutland County Sheriff's Department?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Jeanne Kirbach asked whether the \$12,000 was the only cost. Nathan explained that the \$12,000 was removed as a line item in the budget and presented as an article to be voted on. Nathan stated that the town only gets so many hours per week from the Sheriff's department depending on hourly rate. There were no further questions/comments.
Review and Discuss Article 5: Shall the voters appropriate \$44,450 for the support of the Ira Volunteer Fire Department to provide services to the residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Dan Perry, Chief, stated that it was a very busy year including a structure fire in town. Dan expressed appreciation to all for support. Rutland City provided mutual aid and it was good to see that they are willing to assist. Bob Toppin stated that the federal government has set up guidelines on how to run as an emergency resource, regionalizing fire departments and pooling resources; West Rutland has dropped from 40 personnel to 20. Madeline Kerstetter commented that the population of state is going

Review and Discuss Article 6: Shall the voters appropriate \$15,000 to the Ira Volunteer Fire Department to go into the reserve fund for the purpose of replacing a fire truck?	down and aging. Madeline Kerstetter asked how close they were to getting new building? Dan stated that they are still pursuing the parcel down the road. They have met with VT State Fire and Safety, and requirements are more than anticipated. Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Bruce Gee stated that there is \$100,000 in the truck fund right now. A tanker truck was purchased from Clarendon for \$5,000 and \$10,000 was used to equip the tanker. Bruce stated that West Rutland just purchased a new truck for \$385,000. They will continue to ask to fund the reserve fund, so a purchase doesn't hit all at once. Bruce also stated they are always looking for volunteers, and one doesn't have to go into burning building.... there are many ways to help.
Review and Discuss Article 7: Shall the voters of Ira vote to raise, appropriate and expend \$3,500 to the Rutland Free Library to provide services to the residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Jeanne Kirbach, Ira Representative to the Library, spoke to the many services/programs the library offers. MaryAnn Black spoke of the library's sponsorship of various downtown events during the recent school vacation week and noted the library is a valued community hub and gathering place.
Review and Discuss Article 8: Shall the voters of Ira vote to raise, appropriate and expend \$973 for support of the VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region to provide services to the residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Benjamin Kerstetter stated he would prefer individuals knock on his door for support rather than having articles voted on. Bob Toppin stated VNA and Hospice provided invaluable support to him for four months when his wife was ill; he could not have managed without them. There were no further questions or comments.
Review and Discuss Article 9: Shall the voters of Ira vote to raise, appropriate and expend \$500 to the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging to provide elder services to the residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Sara Meling stated they are a valuable resource guiding you through the scenarios of aging. Bob Toppin stated that the SWCOA provided a lot of assistance with getting grants to help get the Town Hall restored. There were no further questions/comments.
Review and Discuss Article 10: Shall the voters of Ira vote to raise, appropriate and expend \$375 to the RSVP & Volunteer Center to provide services to the residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. No comments or questions.

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Review and Discuss Article 11 : Shall the voters of Ira appropriate \$300 to support the Bird's Eye View?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Sara Meling expressed thanks to the people who put the newsletter together. Mary Richthammer stated she appreciates the electronic format which she shares with those no longer living in town. There were no other comments/questions.
Review and Discuss Article 12 : Shall the voters of Ira vote to raise, appropriate and expend \$150 to support the Vermont Farmers Food Center to provide services to residents of Ira?	Mary read the article and asked for questions or comments. Sara Meling spoke of the various services/programs offered by the Vermont Farmers Food Center. Nathan questioned how the \$150 request was arrived at. Sara indicated she was being conservative and felt the amount was reasonable and affordable considering the size of the community. There were no other questions/concerns.
Discussion of other non-binding business	Benjamin Kerstetter noted that the sign was not put up outside the town hall informing of the informational meeting. Nathan noted this was an oversight but notice of meeting and voting dates and times were in the Town Report and posted in several places. Bob Toppin thanked the Board for conditions of road. Benjamin Kerstetter stated he did not feel that Articles 7 – 12 should be included when voting.
Adjourn	Nathan made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm, Darin 2 nd ; passed unanimously.
In my capacity as the minute recorder for the Ira Select Board, I certify that the above is a true and accurate copy of the approval minutes of the board meeting held on March 2, 2026.	

Recording: Jerri Hoffman