Town of Fair Haven THE SLATE CENTER OF THE NATION • CHARTERED OCTOBER 27, 1779

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SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY APPROPRIATION POLICY

PURPOSE: Under Vermont law, a town may appropriate such sums of money as it deems necessary for the support of social service programs and agencies that provide services to town residents. (24 VSA §2691) This policy establishes procedure for managing social service agency appropriations that will be voted at the annual March Town Meeting (1st Tuesday).

APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to appropriation requests from social services agencies and programs subject to the provisions of 24 VSA Chapter 73. Such programs include, but may not be limited by statute to, transportation, nutrition, child care, medical care, and other rehabilitative services for persons with low incomes, senior citizens, children, disabled persons, drug and alcohol abusers, and persons requiring employment to eliminate their need for public assistance.

This policy does not apply to the following organizations:

- Fair Haven Free Library
- Greater Rutland Humane Society
- Rutland Economic Development Corporation (REDC)
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC)
- Solid Waste Alliance Communities (SWAC)
- Vermont League of Cities & Towns and its affiliates (e.g., PACIF)
- Other organizations (generally membership based) budgeted by majority action of the Selectboard in the General Fund or Highway budgets.

Any other organization not listed in the above two paragraphs seeking an appropriation shall be considered the equivalent of a social services agency and shall adhere to the procedure below.

PROCEDURE: Any social service agency requesting an appropriation from the Town must submit a petition for an article requesting such appropriation in accordance with 17 VSA §2642(a)(3)(A). Such petition must be signed by at least five percent (5%) of the registered voters of the Town and filed with the Town Clerk not less than 45 days before the day of the annual Town Meeting. The petition should be in substantially the following form:

State of Vermont, Rutland County
Petition of Legal Voters of the Town of Fair Haven, VT

We, the undersigned legal voters of the Town of Fair Haven, VT, hereby petition the Fair Haven, VT Selectboard to place the following Article on the Warning for the annual Town Meeting to be held on the _____ day of March, 20__. This petition is filed pursuant to 24 VSA §2691. We certify that we are presently voters of Fair Haven, VT. The Article to be placed on the Warning to read:

Article: Shall the Town of Fair Haven vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of [amount of request] for the support of [name of social service agency] to provide services to residents of the Town

_____	_____	_____	_____
Signature	*Printed Name*	*Street Address*	*Leave this blank*

Town of Fair Haven, VT
Social Service Agency Appropriation Policy

No proposed article may contain any opinion or comment. Petitions submitted after the deadline will **not** be honored. Petitions submitted prior to the deadline, but not otherwise conforming to the requirements of 17 VSA §2642(a)(3)(A) and 24 VSA §2691, shall be returned by the Town Clerk within 24 hours from receipt stating in writing on the petition why it cannot be accepted. Any petition returned to the petitioners may be amended to correct any stated deficiencies and re-filed with the Town Clerk not later than 48 hours after the petition was returned. Supplementary petitions shall not be accepted if the original petition did not meet the filing deadline or did not contain the requisite number of signatures.

Regardless of subsequent year's requested amounts (even if the same or less than the amount approved by the voters in the previous year) those social service agencies that have had an appropriation request approved at the most recent annual Town Meeting remain required to submit an annual petition for an article requesting an appropriation.

In addition to the required petition, no later than January 5, social service agencies requesting appropriations under this policy are required to submit to the Town Manager a description of the agency's programs, how the agency's services specifically benefitted the Town's citizens in the most recently ended fiscal year, and how the agency's services intend to benefit the Town's citizens in the coming fiscal year. Descriptions must be limited to a succinct, not to exceed 2-3 paragraphs (e.g., not exceeding about 25 lines of text).

Lastly, the Selectboard believes that local taxpayers deserve attendance by any Agency petitioning for funding at the Town's public information meeting on the Monday evening immediately preceding Town Meeting Day to explain the appropriation request to the voters and to answer their questions. It is not the policy or the responsibility of the Selectboard to explain or otherwise speak about the Agency, its programs, or its services during said public informational meeting.

Thus, in sum, while the Agency's annual petition is all that is statutorily required, the Town believes it is the combination of the Agency's petition, a written report, and meeting presence that creates the best opportunity to inform voters of the Agency's request and the reasons for the request.

Approved social service appropriations will be paid quarterly by the Town on a fiscal year basis (ending on June 30). Payments will be sent USPS no later than 15 days after September 1, December 1, March 1, and June 1. Payment is subject to the availability of funds.

Adopted by the Selectboard this 31st day of March, 2015.

Robert Richards, Chair

Roderic Holzworth, II

Richard Frazier, Clerk

Jeffrey Sheldon

Sean Galvin