

Tremont voters re-elect Selectman Thurlow [and pass plastics ordinances]

Blake Cass

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<https://www.mdislander.com/maine-news/tremont-voters-re-elect-selectman-thurlow>

TREMONT — Voters elected Jamie Thurlow to a second term on the Board of Selectmen Monday. He received 157 votes. Morgan Black, the only other candidate to run for the open seat, received 21 votes.

Jessica Bass was elected to School Board with 130 votes. Her opponent for the one open seat, David “Jed” Campbell, received 44 votes.

Kristine McKee, who ran unopposed for the Mount Desert Island High School Board of Trustees, received 161 votes.

The fireworks ordinance was approved by a vote of 122-50. The ban on plastic carryout bags was approved by a vote of 126-39. And the ban on polystyrene food containers was approved by a vote of 141-37.

At the annual town meeting on Tuesday, voters approved every article of the school budget. Article 14, which asked for a recommended \$2,777,818 in local funds for public education from kindergarten to grade 12, required a written ballot and passed by a vote of 36-1.

Addressing the crowd, Superintendent Marc Grousse said, “Our students and staff are doing a great job, and we appreciate your continued support.”

The municipal budget was approved without a single vote of opposition. However, there was some concern that the town had not allocated enough funds for public works.

“Given the damage to roads this winter, is that enough?” one resident said, referring to Article 21, which grants up to \$354,550 for public works.

“Hopefully,” Chairman Kevin Buck said, causing many of the residents gathered in the Harvey Kelly Meeting Room to laugh.

Voters unanimously approved Article 41, which sets a maximum height for cell towers at 125 feet.

The only article to garner significant discussion was Article 42, which recommended changing the status of land that runs just north and south of the Marsh Bridge from Resource Protection, which requires houses to be built 250 feet from the high water mark, to Limited Residential Shoreland, which only requires houses to be built 75 feet from the high water mark.

Residents were curious to know why the Planning Board and Selectmen had recommended the change.

Code Enforcement Officer John Larson said that he had consulted with the state Board of Environmental Protection, which saw no reason for the land to have Resource Protection status.

Still, residents were skeptical about the intentions of landowners requesting the status change.

“This is not some random developer trying to rape the marsh,” said Amy Rich, one of the landowners to request a change in status to Limited Residential Shoreland. “We’ve been paying taxes on the land for years thinking we had a buildable lot. It came as a shock to learn it wasn’t.”

Selectman Mike Mansolilli addressed fears that Limited Residential Shoreland status would allow property owners to develop their land in a way that prevents others from enjoying the view.

“We investigated it thoroughly,” he said. I don’t want to ruin it for tourists who like to take pictures by the bridge.”

The vote went to a hand count and passed 28-5.