SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY APPROPRIATION POLICY

Town of Highgate

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 V.S.A. § 2691. The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for managing social service agency appropriations that will be voted upon at the Town of Highgate annual meeting.

APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to appropriation requests from social services agencies and programs subject to the provisions of Title 24, Chapter 73 of Vermont Statutes Annotated. Such programs include 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 town membership organizations such as the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, or the Northwest Solid Waste Management District.

PROCEDURE: All social service agencies requesting an appropriation from the Town of Highgate must submit the request in letter form. The request must be submitted annually, and filed with the Town Clerk by December 1st of each year. The request must include an overview of the organization, the purpose of the proposed appropriation, a detailed description of the overall services provided and the number of Highgate residents served, and a breakdown of the appropriation amount spent on the program services vs. administrative costs of the organization.

Those social service agencies that are requesting an appropriation in the amount of $1,000.00 or greater must also submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3)(A). Such petition must be signed by at least five percent of the voters of Highgate and filed with the Town Clerk by December 1st of each year.

The petition should be in substantially the following form:

Petition of Legal Voters of the Town of Highgate

We, the undersigned legal voters of the Town of Highgate, hereby petition the Selectboard to add the following article to the warning for the annual town meeting to be held on Tuesday, March _____20___:

Shall the Town appropriate *[amount of request)* to *[name of social service agency}*, for [brief description of the purpose of the proposed appropriation] in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691

Print Name	Address	Signature

REQUIREMENTS: 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 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3)(A) and 24 V.S.A. § 2691 shall be returned by the Town Clerk within 72 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 refiled with the Town Clerk not later than 72 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.

Those social service agencies that have an appropriation request in the amount of $1000.00 or greater are required to submit a petition annually for an article requesting an appropriation, if the amount requested is less than $1,000.00, the agency should make its request by letter to the Selectboard and received by the town clerk no later than December 1st of each year. If the last day for filing letters with the Selectboard falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, then the deadline shall be extended to the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. The letter should identify the name of the agency, the amount requested for appropriation, and a person to contact for more information. Agencies that do not meet the December 1st deadline must submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with the above paragraph.

Social service agencies requesting appropriations under this policy are required to submit a description of the agency's programs for inclusion in the Highgate Town Report. Descriptions must be limited to one page and should describe the program or services provided to Highgate Town residents. Agency representatives are encouraged to attend Highgate's Town Meeting to explain the appropriation request to the voters and answer their questions.

Approved social service appropriations will be paid by the Town as follows:

All appropriations approved at town meeting will be put on the first check warrant of each December for selectboard approval. Appropriation payments will be mailed the following business day. Payment is subject to the availability of funds.

The foregoing policy is hereby adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Highgate, Vermont, this 17TH day of December, 2015 and is effective as if the date until amended or repealed.

Jeff Towle

Chair

Paulette Fatio

Diana O'Hara