

**Minutes of the Special Town Meeting
September 26, 2015 9:00 AM
Calais Elementary School**

Moderator Gus Seelig called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM and read the article:

Article 1. Shall the Town of Calais adopt the appropriation for the Kellogg Hubbard Library annually at Town Meeting day by Australian ballot?

Linda Gray moved the question and it was seconded.

Doug Lilley said the intent of the article is not to take money away from the library, but to vote by Australian ballot. Gail England said she lived in Barre where everything was voted by Australian ballot and over the years voter turnout decreased. I value hearing other people's opinions, she said. We can change the library budget. True democracy is coming together. Pat Finnie said he took a vacation day to attend the meeting and vote. Sharon Winn Fannon pointed out that town meetings have moved from the town hall to the school so that more people can vote and meetings could be moved to Saturdays. There are still solutions to explore besides Australian ballot, she said. True discussion is Vermont democracy. Art Edelstein said that voting on Australian ballot for one budget item is cherry picking. "It seems some want to cut the tree down," he said. As an educator, Art said, we need *more* libraries. Gail Graham said the point is not trying to defund Kellogg Hubbard Library, that it is important to have a chance to discuss the amount. However, she said, "I have tried to reduce the amount at town meeting, and I was told it was all or nothing. That's not fair." Susan Shedd pointed to UVM Professor Frank Bryan's research which shows that with Australian ballot voting participation goes down. A round of applause followed her remark that we should storm the State House and request that town meeting day be a legal holiday. "We value each other and the conversation," she said. "Let's take these steps first." Fletcher Dean said he was for holding town meeting on Saturday. He called the question. Debate ended by a more than two-thirds vote by hand count. A ballot vote was called for.

The results of the vote were **118 NO** and **74 YES**. The article to vote the Kellogg Hubbard Library by Australian ballot was defeated.

Article 2. To adjourn the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM.

A true record,

Attest,

Town Clerk and Treasurer

Attest,

Selectboard

Attest,

Selectboard