

Town of Peterborough
Town Meeting – Open Session
Wednesday, May 11, 2022
Upper Town Hall, 1 Grove Street, Peterborough, NH

Town Moderator L. Phillips Runyon III called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and began by reviewing the Rules of Town Meeting.

Moderator Runyon recognized Tyler Ward, Chair of the Select Board who welcomed all in attendance. He introduced the two other members of the Select Board, Bill Taylor and Bill Kennedy; Town Counsel, John Ratigan; Town Clerk, Linda Guyette; Town Administrator, Nicole MacStay; Supervisors of the Checklist, Carol Lenox, Denise Sweet and Kathy Sullivan; and department heads in attendance including Corinne Chronopoulos, Library Director; Fash Farashahi, IT Director; Lilli Gilligan, Finance Director, Scott Guinard, Police Chief; and Ed Walker, Fire Chief; and Budget Committee members Mandy Sliver, Carl Mabbs-Zeno, Al Lenos, Ronnie McIntire, and Rick Lesser. He congratulated those who won seats in yesterday's election.

Select Board Chair Ward described the two remaining warrant articles for deliberation and voting and pointed out that Article 13, the budget for Fiscal Year 2023, will be passed over because Article 3 passed by ballot vote on Tuesday, May 10th.

OPEN SESSION ARTICLES
May 11th, 2022

Article 14 – Municipal Campus and Fire & Ambulance Facility

\$2,000,000

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000)** (gross budget) for the purpose of designing and engineering a Municipal Campus and Fire & Ambulance Facility located off of Elm Street; to authorize the issuance of not more than Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, R.S.A. 33.1 et seq., as amended; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof as shall be in the best interest of the Town; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept Federal, State or any and all other aid, grants, gifts or revenue source that may become available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to take any and all action necessary to carry out any vote hereunder or any other action relative thereto; and further to raise and appropriate the amount of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000)** for the Fiscal Year 2023 bond payment.

Pursuant to the Charter of the Town of Peterborough, a two-thirds vote in favor is required for passage of this article.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation by a vote of 3-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 6-1

Motion: Select Board Chair Tyler Ward moved the article; Select Board Member Bill Taylor seconded the motion.

Mr. Ward indicated that there was an amendment to the article to drop the requested bond amount from \$2 million to \$1.3 million:

**Article 14 – Municipal Campus and Fire & Ambulance Facility
(Bond Article, Amended)**

\$2,000,000

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000)** (gross budget) for the purpose of designing and engineering a Municipal Campus and Fire & Ambulance Facility located off of Elm Street; to authorize the issuance of not more than **One Million Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,300,000)** of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, R.S.A. 33.1 et seq., as amended; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof as shall be in the best interest of the Town; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept Federal, State or any and all other aid, grants, gifts or revenue source that may become available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to take any and all action necessary to carry out any vote hereunder or any other action relative thereto; and further to raise and appropriate the amount of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000)** for the Fiscal Year 2023 bond payment.

Pursuant to the Charter of the Town of Peterborough, a two-thirds vote in favor is required for passage of this article.

Motion: Select Board Chair Tyler Ward moved the article; Select Board Member Bill Taylor seconded the motion.

There were several speakers to the amendment including Sandy Bibace who inquired whether the payment due would decrease to \$32,500 since the bond amount has been lowered to \$1.3 million.

Andrew Osterman asked if the Town would lose the \$700,000 if this article does not pass. It will not be lost as we have already received the money.

Geoffrey Frank asked where did the \$700,000 come from? Per Select Board member Taylor, it is Federal money from the American Rescue Act.

Debbie Bruchez asked if this is a new design or the same one that was rejected previously. It will be a new design.

With no further speakers, the amendment as proposed was put to a voice vote.

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the positive and the proposed amendment **PASSED**.

Select Board member Bill Taylor spoke to the amended article. He commended Town Administration and staff and encouraged everyone to vote in favor of the article. We need a new fire and ambulance building and we should be looking into the future and do it in the context of a municipal campus where several municipal services will share resources, thus saving operating costs.

Select Board member Bill Kennedy pointed out that the Town already owns the property on Elm Street where the Community Center and DPW barn are located and, in the future, the Police Department could be relocated there. Article 14 is about taking the next step, at a cost we can afford, and so that we are able to seek state and federal funding.

Kathleen Allen asked what the price tag will be to do the Fire Department/Ambulance building first, then the Police Department at a later date. Select Board member Taylor indicated that the \$23 million

price tag discussed previously is off the table. However, we don't have a cost amount without a design, etc. Select Board member Kennedy responded that the Police Department will not be part of the initial design but is planned for shared facilities in the future.

Carl Mabbs-Zeno said that he doesn't question that we need a new fire department building but why we haven't moved forward with this sooner. He pointed out that it will be the largest project that the town has ever undertaken so we should garner as much information as possible from other towns that have recently built new fire stations.

Leslie Lewis asked why we're also not discussing the other two buildings: the DPW barn and the Community Center. Select Board member Taylor responded that the new fire/ambulance building is the focus of the article but that it will be a municipal campus building.

Dewitt Clark said that with structural defects at the current fire station, the need is urgent and the design project needs to happen now. Can we not afford to do this?

Anna Carter asked how much was spent on the previous proposal and whether any of the plans, etc. can be used? Town Administrator Nicole MacStay responded that \$200,000 was authorized at the 2020 town meeting and that approximately \$85,000 has been spent of the \$200,000 to date.

Stephanie Hurley asked if we know how much the Town of Peterborough can afford to bond. Select Board member Taylor said that the Town has no intention of bonding \$23 million. TA MacStay said that the \$23 million was a gross estimate and that according to the Department of Revenue Administration, the Town has a maximum bonding capability of \$29,415,648. However, it would be recommended that the maximum amount the Town would bond would not exceed \$25 million.

Joanne Carr asked about the \$350,082 that was approved at yesterday's ballot vote. Where did the additional \$350,000 go? TA MacStay answered that the monies had to be designated to that they will be earmarked for this project.

Shelley Hulbert asked that, if passed, what will be the effect on our tax bills? TA MacStay replied that it would be 35 cents per \$1,000 of the assessed property value.

Jeanne Dietsch asked who determines which volunteers get paid for an emergency event? Fire Chief Ed Walker responded that all responding fire fighters get paid for a minimum of one hour.

Joseph "Jay" Cox asked if EMTs et benefits? Chief Walker responded that they get paid out of the ambulance revolving fund. Moderator Runyon said that we were getting off tangent and that these topics could be discussed with the upcoming article.

Sarah Steinberg Heller, Bob Haring-Smith, and Dennis Cilley all spoke in favor of the article, that we need to take this step tonight for our Fire Department who we've hung out to dry. Let's not continue to kick the can down the road.

Tori Haring-Smith pointed out that the Somersworth fire department project is the most comparable to Peterborough and their project cost is approximately \$9.5 million. Select Board member Taylor said that DPW Director and Deputy Town Administrator Seth MacLean will be overseeing the project. We need to go forward tonight so that we can begin to get bids on the cost of the new fire/ambulance building.

Sandy Bibace asked if there will be a concerted effort made to decrease the square footage of the proposed building? Select Board member Taylor applied in the affirmative.

Tom Dardas said that to compare Peterborough with Somersworth is not comparing apples to apples because Somersworth uses a private ambulance service, unlike Peterborough.

Tina Kriebel asked to move the question. There were several seconds in the audience.

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative to end discussion on the article.

Dewitt Clark proposed an amendment to Article 14. However, per Town Counsel John Rattigan, we could not hear the amendment because the question was called and approved by the voters.

With no further speakers, Moderator Runyon put the article to a ballot vote requiring a 2/3 majority vote. Used yellow ballots, YES favorable, NO against. The polls were declared open at 8:24 PM and would remain open for voting for one hour.

Moderator Runyon announced at 9:24 PM that the polls were closed. Counting of votes commenced by Supervisors of the Checklist.

Moderator Runyon announced results of vote for Warrant Article 14:

268 ballots cast:
YES 213
NO 55

Warrant Article 14 passed with more than the 2/3 required votes.

Article 15 – Ambulance Service Revolving Fund \$328,738

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred Twenty-Eight Thousand, Seven Hundred Thirty-Eight Dollars (\$328,738)** to be placed in the Ambulance Service Revolving Fund. This amount represents the Town of Peterborough's share of the cost to operate the 911 Emergency Response Ambulance Service for calendar year 2022.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation by a vote of 3-0
The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 9-0

Motion: Select Board Chair Tyler Ward moved the article; Select Board Member Bill Taylor seconded the motion.

Town Administrator Nicole MacStay spoke to the article. The Ambulance Service Revolving Fund supports two services: the 911 emergency service and the interfacility patient transfer service.

The 911 emergency service also includes regional towns who are billed for their share of the shortfall between the cost of the 911 service and the fees it takes in. Peterborough's share of the costs to run the 911 service has been primarily supported by the profits from the patient transfer service. This year we are asking voters to fully support the cost of Peterborough's share of the 911 service with tax dollars.

With no additional speakers, the article was put to a voice vote.

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative and Warrant Article 15 was **PASSED**.

Gary Gorski asked to speak. He indicated that 7pm town meetings disenfranchise young families and those who work late shifts or have to get up very early in the morning. Could we move town meeting to the weekend?

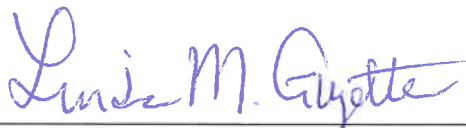
As there was no further business, Moderator Runyon adjourned the meeting at 9:34 PM.

Total Registered Voters on Checklist:	4,848
Total Registered Voters at Town Meeting:	268

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Guyette
Town Clerk

This is a true and certified copy.



Linda M. Guyette, Town Clerk