

Town of Peterborough
Town Meeting – Open Session
Wednesday, May 11, 2016
Upper Town Hall, 1 Grove Street, Peterborough, NH

Town Moderator L. Phillips Runyon III called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and began by reviewing the Rules of Town Meeting.

Moderator Runyon recognized Barbara Miller of the Select Board who welcomed all in attendance. She described Peterborough's charter form of government which is a hybrid, incorporating official balloting and the open session, also known as town meeting. Ms. Miller recapped the results of yesterday's official ballot voting where there were 734 voters out of 5,168 registered voters on the checklist, for a 14.2% voter turnout.

Select Board Member Miller described the six remaining warrant articles for deliberation and voting. She pointed out that Article 9, the budget for Fiscal Year 2017, will be passed over since Article 3 passed by ballot vote.

Article 8. Main Street Bridge Reconstruction and Improvements to Route 202, Pine Street

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Million Six Hundred Ninety Three Thousand Dollars (\$5,693,000)** for the purpose of designing, engineering constructing and replacing the Main Street Bridge and Improvements to Route 202, Pine Street, and to authorize the issuance of not more than **One Million One Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand Dollars (\$1,138,000)** of bonds or notes for such purpose in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds and/or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Select Board to apply for, obtain and accept Federal, State, or any and all other aid or revenue source that may be or may become available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to authorize the Select Board to pass any vote relative thereto and to take any and all action necessary to carry out any such vote or take any other action relative thereto and to take any and all action necessary to carry out any such vote or take any other action relative thereto; with \$4,554,400 to come from Federal Highway Administration/New Hampshire Department of Transportation Municipal Bridge Aid funds.

By ballot vote (Requires 2/3 vote).

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 5-0

By ballot vote (Requires 2/3 vote).

Motion: Select Board Chair Barbara Miller moved the article; Select Board member Tyler Ward seconded the motion.

Moderator Runyon indicated that there was an amendment to the article, basically a 'housekeeping' amendment to correct a typographical error in the original warrant article.

Motion: Amendment #1 to Warrant Article 8 was moved by Barbara Miller, second by Tyler Ward.

Ms. Miller moved to amend the motion under Article 8 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Million Six Hundred Ninety Three Thousand Dollars (\$5,693,000) for the purpose of designing, engineering constructing and replacing the Main Street Bridge and Improvements to Route 202, Pine Street, and to authorize the issuance of not more than One Million One Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand **Six Hundred** Dollars (\$1,138,**600**) of bonds or notes for such purpose in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds and/or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Select Board to apply for, obtain and accept Federal, State, or any and all other aid or revenue source that may be or may become available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to authorize the Select Board to pass any vote relative thereto and to take any and all action necessary to carry out any such vote or take any other action relative thereto; with \$4,554,400 to come from Federal Highway Administration/New Hampshire Department of Transportation Municipal Bridge Aid funds.

There were no speakers to the amendment.

Moderator Runyon asked the attending voters if they wanted to vote on the amendment at that time and, by a show of paddles, received an overwhelming approval.

Vote: By a show of paddles, Amendment #1 to Warrant Article 8 passed.

Select Board member Miller spoke briefly to the article. The purpose of the project is to address the structurally-deficient bridge that has been red-listed with the State since 2003. In addition, the boulder retaining wall needs to be stabilized and, of course, improve safety at the intersection. She turned over the presentation to Rodney Bartlett, Town Administrator.

Mr. Bartlett explained the key elements of the project:

- Replace bridge “in-kind” +/-
- Construct a permanent pedestrian bridge
- Realign the intersection and make roadway improvements
- Build a new retaining wall
- Stabilize the existing boulder wall
- Repair the Main Street canal
- Potentially relocate utilities underground (such as Fairpoint, Comcast, etc.)

Mr. Bartlett gave an estimated timeline of the proposed work:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| • NHDES permit applications | Early 2017 |
| • Final Plans | Early 2017 |
| • Complete National Environmental Policy Act permit | Spring 2017 |
| • Bidding on project | Summer 2017 |
| • Award project | August/September 2017 |
| • Begin construction | Fall/Winter 2017 |
| • Bridge closure | Spring to Winter 2018 |
| • Construction complete | Fall 2019 |

The pedestrian bridge configuration will be coordinated with the pedestrian bridge at the Riverwalk parking lot.

The anticipated construction costs for the Main Street Bridge Reconstruction Project:

- Bridge Project \$5.693 Million
(80% Federally Funded / 20% Town)
- Intersection/Retaining Wall \$3.8 Million
(80% Federally Funded / 20% Town)

There were several speakers to the article. Jim Orr asked if the project would include work to the Transcript Dam that has been breached. Mr. Bartlett responded that it did not but that a warrant article to repair the dam is scheduled for Town Meeting 2017.

Kathleen Allen asked if the bridge would have single-lane access during the reconstruction. Per Mr. Bartlett, there was a savings of \$1 Million to completely close the bridge and that the DOT preferred this. John Franklin asked if the pedestrian bridge would be constructed prior to the bridge being demolished. Mr. Bartlett responded in the affirmative.

Liz Thomas asked if anyone had looked into a bailey bridge. Mr. Bartlett said that it couldn't be considered due to environmental issues and that bailey bridge is meant when the road is straight, without curves or corners.

With no additional speakers to the amended article, debate closed on Article 8 and Moderator Runyon put the question to a ballot vote, requiring a 2/3 majority to pass. Used light blue ballots. YES favorable, NO against. The polls were declared open at 7:39 PM and would remain open for voting for one hour.

Moderator Runyon announced at 8:39 PM that the polls were closed. Counting of votes commenced by Supervisors of the Checklist, William Sweet, Denise Sweet, and Carol Lenox.

At 8:50 PM Moderator Runyon announced results of vote for Warrant Article 8:

187 ballots cast:

YES	88	
NO	0	(1 spoiled ballot – wrong color)

Warrant Article 8 passed successfully with more than the 2/3 required votes.

Article 9. Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 - \$13,927,031

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirteen Million Nine Hundred Twenty Seven Thousand Thirty One Dollars (13,927,031)** for the support of General Government, Water, and Wastewater. This represents the fiscal year 2017 budget period, July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. This article does not include appropriations in special or individual articles addressed separately. Pursuant to the Peterborough Charter, if the Official Ballot Session adopts an annual budget by approving **Article 3**, this article will be passed over.

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 5-0

Pursuant to the Peterborough Charter, the Official Ballot Session has adopted the annual budget by approving Article 3. Therefore, Article 9 was **PASSED OVER**.

Article 10. Union Street Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund - \$60,000

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Sixty Thousand Dollars** (\$60,000) to be placed in the previously established Union Street Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. This appropriation is to be supported 100% by the West Peterborough TIF District Fund.

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 5-0

Motion: Select Board Chair Tyler Ward moved the article as read. Select Board member Ed Juengst seconded the motion. Mr. Ward spoke to the article.

The balance in the West Peterborough TIF is in excess of \$600,000. The original total budget estimate was \$1,650,000. Today's total budget estimate is \$1,838,125 (no contingency included).

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

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative and Warrant Article 10 was **PASSED**.

Article 11. Union Street Bridge Reconstruction – \$300,000

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred Thousand Dollars** (\$300,000) for the purpose of engineering and reconstruction of the Union Street Bridge and furthermore, to authorize the withdrawal of **Sixty Thousand Dollars** (\$60,000) from the previously established Union Street Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund and the remaining \$240,000 to come from the NH Department of Transportation Municipal Bridge Aid Program. This Article has no effect on the tax rate.

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 5-0

Motion: Select Board Chair Tyler Ward moved the article as read. Select Board member Ed Juengst seconded the motion. Mr. Ward spoke to the article.

Selectman Ward spoke to the article.

There was one speaker, Kathleen Allen, who asked why the bridge is already being demolished if “the money part” hasn't been finalized? Mr. Ward explained that the contractor promised completion of the bridge before the end of 20-16 if they could start the project now.

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

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative and Warrant Article 11 was **PASSED**.

Moderator Runyon then recognized Select Board member Barbara Miller who announced that the Walter Peterson Medallion Award was presented to Jim Grant at the 30th Anniversary Open House held at SDE Inc. earlier in the day. Roland Patten and Fire Chief Ed Walker also spoke of Mr. Grant's many contributions to Peterborough and its residents.

Ms. Miller also recognized other residents who have made substantial contributions to the town. Dr. Michael Gordon was lauded for the beautiful public gardens that he and the other members of the Parks Committee are responsible for creating and maintaining.

Beth Alpaugh-Cote was thanked for her many years of service on the Water Resources Committee, the Contoocook and North Branch Rivers Local Advisory Committee, the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, and the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Ms. Miller also recognized Rodney Bartlett for the work on NH's largest solar array, with 3,088 solar panels, generating 1.2 million watts.

Article 12. Transportation Improvement Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to adopt provisions of RSA 261:153 VI to collect an additional fee at the time of vehicle registration for the purpose of supporting a municipal and transportation improvement fund, which shall be a capital reserve fund established for this purpose. The maximum fee shall be \$5. And to see if the Town will authorize the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund (pursuant to RSA Chapter 35) to be known as the "Transportation Improvement Capital Reserve Fund" for the purpose of transportation improvements as defined in RSA 261:153 VI and to designate the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend. This article voted by ballot

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 3-2

This article was passed over because the enabling RSA 261:153 VI (c) (2) requires that a public hearing be posted between 15-30 days prior to the vote. Although there was a public meeting appointment, it was not noticed as a public hearing.

Article 13. Economic Development Authority Support - \$48,000

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty Eight Thousand Dollars** (\$48,000) for the purpose of a contractual service to support the Economic Development Authority in their efforts to promote business retention and new business development.

Petition Warrant Article

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

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation by a vote of 4-1

Motion: George Sterling moved the article as read; Jean Dietsch seconded the motion.

Mr. Sterling spoke to the motion. In the 1970's the Peterborough Industrial Committee was responsible for bringing big business to the town, including Brookstone, EMS, NEBS, National Cash Register, and the Millard Group. However, since then, all but two of these large businesses has closed their Peterborough locations, leaving huge vacancies on the tax rolls and a surge in local unemployment.

Mr. Sterling introduced Jeanne Dietsch who spoke further to the article. Both large and small companies are critical to Peterborough's economy. The town's largest employers are in technical manufacturing and local services such as senior care, hospitals and education. However, Peterborough is competing with other cities and towns in NH, as well as with the rest of the U.S. and the world for companies and

their employees. Peterborough's large employers needs skilled employees but the town must be able to supply affordable housing and quality of life to attract and keep them here. The town needs a system to track occupancies and vacancies – and to fill them. A system is needed to identify threats of job loss and to build 'stickiness'.

The Economic Development Authority's 3-year goals:

- Create new jobs and retain existing ones
- Lower the vacancy rate of commercial/industrial properties from 38% to 18%
- Attract and train a skilled and talented workforce to reside in the region
- Maintain a vibrant home business and telecommuter population that generates new business
- Increase tourism revenues by 25%
- Retain the Monadnock aesthetic, natural environment, culture and village life.

The 2-year EDA contract support plan:

- Raise visibility for Peterborough through an online presence that is designed to attract businesses, entrepreneurs and workforce.
- Create a system for tracking commercial occupancies and vacancies
- Identify complementary business targets and new venture opportunities
- Assure that an incubation space is available to support, mentor⁵ and build 'stickiness' in our growing entrepreneurial community
- Develop metrics to measure progress of the EDA's 3-year goal
- Consult with business owners to increase local business revenues; identifying opportunities for collaboration and cross-marketing
- Identify opportunities for state assistance in liaising with various local, state and federal agencies to meet PEDDA goals
- Draft policies and procedures, create support systems and communicate progress, opportunities, barriers, and solutions to the EDA

There were a number of speakers to the article. Carol Nelson verified that this was a 1-year contract at \$48,000. She also inquired as to the skill set required which was addressed by Pete Throop.

Kathleen Allen asked what measure would be taken to address the perceived 10-year business life cycle.

Seth Chatfield said that the town needs to retain people who already live here and who may not have – or were able to afford – a college degree. He also pointed out that there is a need for affordable housing, an issue that was also addressed by Kathleen Allen.

Jim Orr asked why the current school district isn't addressing basic 'skills' that are needed by young people coming into the workforce today. Ms. Dietsch responded that ConVal has an excellent vocational tech program.

Hope Taylor deemed that \$48,000 is a small amount to get this town rolling again.

Sean Ryan, Executive Director for the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce spoke to why we need an Economic Development Authority in Peterborough. He pointed out that when he moved here in 1994, there were 15 manufacturing companies here. There are now just nine.

Carol Nelson pointed out that the town paid \$75,000 to someone several years ago but questioned that we are now looking to pay only \$48,000? Seth Chatfield agreed, are we paying enough to get this project done? Jo Ellen D'Ambrosio asked how they arrived at the \$48,000 contract price.

Bill Chatfield proposed to amend the contract price to \$70,000: "to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000) for the purpose of a contractual service to support the Economic Development Authority in their efforts to promote business retention and new business development."

Karl Kaiser spoke in favor of the project but reminded us not to forget the other attributes of living here.

With no other speakers, the amendment was put to a voice vote.

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative and the amendment to Warrant Article 13 was **PASSED**.

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

Vote: By a show of paddles, the majority was in the affirmative and Warrant Article 13, as amended, was **PASSED**.

As there was no further business, Moderator Runyon asked for a motion to adjourn. By a show of paddles, the vote was manifested in favor of the motion. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Total Registered Voters on Checklist:	5,168
Total Registered Voters at Town Meeting:	90

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Guyette
Town Clerk