

**DRAFT**  
**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**  
**MAY 11, 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Cook at 7:00 PM. Moderator Thayer was unable to attend the meeting and a request for a Moderator was made to moderate this meeting. A motion made by Mary Layton to nominate Jack Candon to moderate the meeting seconded by Christopher Ashley, was made. The nomination passed on a voice vote.

Candon began the meeting asking that we consider both articles concurrently and read the articles as follows:

*Article 1. Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Norwich in an amount not to exceed \$2,805,000, subject to reduction from available grants-in-aid, be issued to finance the cost of public safety building construction at an estimated cost of \$2,110,000 and public works buildings improvements at an estimated cost of \$695,000, the aggregated estimated cost thereof being \$2,805,000?*

*Article 2. If Article I shall be approved, shall the general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Norwich approved in Article I be increased by \$211,000 to finance the cost of installing energy efficiency improvements at the new public safety building with a goal that the energy uses of the buildings would be from renewable resources, the aggregated estimated cost of such improvements being \$211,000?*

The Selectboard decided to use a Power Point presentation to present the articles to be voted on. Selectman Ashley gave the presentation on behalf of the Board. (This power point presentation will be filed with the minutes of the meeting in the Town Clerks Office).

Ashley started the presentation outline for Article 1 with the differences between this bond and the one presented at the Annual Town meeting in the size and of the project cost. He explained the floor plan for the police and fire department and the functions of the room layouts and the joining of the police and fire department.

The board used a comparison project from Vergennes as it was designed and built by Breadloaf Construction and were similar size although the layout is different than ours. Some of the differences are the owner's costs, site cost, square footage and the different room layouts.

For the Public Works facilities Ashley noted there needs to be roof repairs, heated storage for the plow trucks, space to maintain the vehicles, an office for the Department head and a locker/break room space for the employees. Also, they have downsized the storage shed to 60' x 100', and there will be space for a solar tenant available.

Article 2. If article one were to pass this would finance the installation to make the buildings energy efficient. Ashley noted that 10% of the people who were surveyed would support an increase in the buildings to make them energy efficient. We have received two quotes one from Breadloaf Construction and one from Efficiency Vermont. Breadloaf quoted that \$211,000 while Efficiency Vermont gave the Board a quote of \$70,000. It was noted that both firms stand behind their numbers and we are not sure why the difference is so large between the two.

The total impact of the two bonds if passed would be \$3,016,000.

If the bond is approved, the town would apply to the Vermont Bond Bank in July. Then, an architect would prepare the final design documents for the police/fire facility. There are three ways this could be done. 1. Design/Build, 2. Design/Bid/Build, 3. Construction Management at Risk. For the public works building we would Design/Build. The term of the bond will be for thirty years at an interest rate of 3.1%.

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Ashely stated that it is unlikely the bid would exceed the bond authorization but if it did we would seek the most qualified bidder and they will provide a price for a reduced scope.

If there is extra money we would receive bids on options for more insulation, more energy efficient windows and an electric heat pump. The town could also use the surplus to reduce the bond payments or we can at a Town Meeting vote to approve the use of the surplus for a different capital purpose.

Ashley explained the “Smoothing” of the tax rate. This occurs when the Selectboard decides to borrow from the undesignated fund to help offset the tax rate. The board would borrow from this fund for three years when the tax rate for the bond would be at its highest rate. After three years and the bond payments and tax impact reduces we would pay the money back into the undesignated fund over the next three years.

Ashley expressed urgent needs for this project to go forward.

After the presentation there was general discussion from people who were both for and against the articles. Many felt that an urgent need is there for the buildings and the town employees to have a better work environmental and to take advantage of the low interest rate this year. Many felt that the project was too big and the expense to high and could be done for less money.

Of the people present, most either for or against the bond agree that something has to be done with the police department and done soon. Also, most agree that all three projects need attention.

A motion to adjourn, motion passed on a voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bonnie J. Munday,  
Town Clerk

Jack Candon,  
Moderator, pro tempore

Nancy Dean,  
Chairman, Board  
Civil Authority

