

## Special town meeting

May 7th, 2022

### Meeting Minutes

**Moderator:** Steve Murphy

Steve Murphy called the meeting to order at 10:02.

Rules: Robert's rules of order, unless superseded by VT law. Attendees have the right to challenge the moderator, his job is to facilitate the will of the voter and can be surpassed by 2/3 vote.

Article: An article may only have one amendment at a time.

Debate: All motions and discussions must be addressed to the moderator; he will do his best to keep track of who's hand is raised first. Speech limited to 2 minutes. Individuals can ask for permission to speak longer. Discussion must be kept to the article in discussion. Once an individual has spoken, they can't speak a 2<sup>nd</sup> time until every other member of the assembly has had a chance to speak. An individual can speak a 3<sup>rd</sup> time with a 2/3 vote.

Voting: A vote by division of the house may be called and a vote by paper ballot may be called by 7 voters. Reconsideration of an article is permitted. A motion for reconsideration must be made by a member who voted with the prevailing party. Steve asked that those who are not registered voters in the town of Woodbury to raise their hands and identified who is unable to vote.

**Article 1:** Steve Murphy started by reading Article 1 which asks: "Shall the town appropriate up to \$85,000.00 to the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department Inc. for the purpose of financing the cost for construction of a new Fire and Emergency Operations center at a total cost of \$1,300,000.00?"

Steve Murphy called for a brief recess at 10:12 to allow additional attendees to join the meeting. The meeting was called back to order at 10:18.

Monty Shatney requested clarification on the amount of \$85k. It was clarified that that was the amount for every year for 20 years.

Diana Peduzzi moved that article 1 be approved

Sarah Vanhoff seconded the movement of the article.

Heather Winkler asked what would happen if the \$85k was approved for this year and denied next year.

Chance Payette responded that the amount has to be approved every year. If the project was started and voted against in a later year, it would become a defunct project and would be seized by the bank.

Laura Murphy asked for clarification of the meaning of the language of "up to 85k"

Chance Payette clarified that the language of "up to" is to account for changes in interest rate over time which will determine what the yearly payment would be.

Jim Smith asked what the bank would put a lien on if it was passed today and voted against another year. Chance Payette clarified that the lien would be put on the piece of property being developed and nothing else.

Anne-Marie Wakeen asked if the property is worth 1.3 million dollars.

Chance replied yes

Paul Cerutti clarified that the land is \$100k, and it is \$1.3 million for the value of the construction, which is what the lien would be put on. This has already been agreed upon with the bank.

Peter Petlz discussed that Calais has agreed to pay 30% of the project and inquired why the fire department doesn't want to accept funding from Calais, as it would be a substantial relief for the taxpayers of Woodbury.

The fire department responded that they haven't received an offer from Calais. They also mentioned that the property is Woodbury property and wants to ensure the town would be the ones to inherit the property should something happen with the fire department. They stated that it's easier today to ask to town of Woodbury to pay the full amount.

Lynn Gallison expressed concern about the population of voters changing over the course of 20 years, not guaranteeing the vote being approved every year.

Alex Peltz agreed on the validity of that concern, but stated he also believes it would be a good investment to the town that may attract residents. Alex also inquired whether the current fee charged to Calais would increase.

Paul Cerutti acknowledged the concerns of there being no guarantee the project is approved every year for the next 20 years but agreed that the project would be an investment for the town.

Mike McGlynn asked how the people of Woodbury could agree to pay the whole cost when Calais utilizes a lot of the services of the fire department.

Chance Payette responded that Calais will be asked to assist with some of the bill. He stated that, if approved, the amount would be added to the operating cost in their budget, of which Calais pays 33%. It was explained that Calais is a contract town and could decide not to approve that amount, but as a result would lose services from Woodbury's fire department, making it unlikely that they wouldn't approve the operating cost budget.

Monty Shatney asked when the amount for the \$1.3 million was determined.

Chance responded that the amount was reviewed in December of 2021 and stated they would only be able to spend the approved amount on the project.

Monty asked when the project would start if approved today.



Paul Cerutti responded that they can't exceed the amount that's approved and would have to work within those constraints. They wouldn't know when it would be started until it went out to bid.

Chuck asked whether it would be a separate item or if it would be in the budget of the town.

Chance responded that it would not be part of the town budget and would be the fire department budget and included in their operational budget.

Chuck Batchelder asked if anyone has talked to the town of Calais about the inclusion of the cost into the operating budget.

Chance responded that they have made them aware of the cost and plan. Historically they've approved all their articles.

Heather Winkler inquired about the current land the fire department is utilizing.

Paul responded that the current plot of land is too small so they can't expand it. He explained that a study was done to show that they need 7000 sq. ft. and an additional study showed that the town preferred the fire department be in the village. The chosen location for the project would meet both location preferences for the town and space requirements.

Peter Peltz inquired about budgeting to maintain within the constraints of the \$1.3 million and also asked about plans for the use of the existing firehouse.

Paul Cerutti responded that they may need to make decisions to reduce costs to maintain within the \$1.3 million budget. They plan to use the current building for storage instead of including storage on the new property.

Chuck Batchelder stated that the current fire department needs a lot of work and is worried about needing to spend money to bring that building up to code while the new project is underway.

Paul responded that they hope that the town would get involved in improving the current building after construction of new building.

Norm Etkind stated that it is a large cost but noted that the fire department has been doing more than they used to. He stated that he's spoken with some Calais residents, and they feel they have a responsibility to pay their fair share, as they benefit from the services provided by Woodbury's fire department.

Lisa Flood stated that, based on what's being said about Calais, the projection of the cost of the project would be about 33% less, but that wouldn't necessarily be guaranteed.

Chance agreed to Lisa's statement, as long as Calais votes to approve the operating budget.

Diana Peduzzi asked about the timeline of construction

Paul Cerutti stated that construction time would be about 4-6 months.

Robert Martin asked if they were planning on hiring a general contractor to oversee the project.

Paul Cerutti responded that it's a design build, of which most are now through construction management who would oversee all the work. He also stated that the fire department would oversee construction management.

Chuck Batchelder asked what would the distance of the building would be from the road.

Paul Cerutti stated that the setback is 68ft and that they went through the zoning board of adjustment and the distance was approved. He also stated that they ensured that there was enough space to get the trucks through.

Rose Riley made a motion to call to question to cease debate and move to vote.

Susie Graves seconded the motion.

2/3 required to pass the motion to cease debate and move to vote on article.

Motion passed to call to question article 1:

*Shall the town appropriate up to \$85,000.00 to the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department Inc. for the purpose of financing the cost for construction of a new Fire and Emergency Operations center at a total cost of \$1,300,000.00?*

Mike McGlynn requested a paper ballot, of which 7 are needed. More than 7 requests were received for use of a paper ballot.

**Results of the vote:**

97 votes were cast and 49 were needed to pass

70 voted for

26 voted against

1 unintelligible

Motion Passed. Article 1 is adopted.

**Article 2:** Adjourn the meeting.

Chuck made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded.

Meeting adjourned.

WOODBURY TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
Date 6-1-2022 at 9 o'clock  
00 minutes 7 M and recorded in  
Book 11 Page 281-284  
of Miscellaneous Records  
Attest: Rene B. White  
Town Clerk