

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH  
SPECIAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING &  
REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2023

Jay Kullman called the Special Informational Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Board members in attendance were Jay Kullman, Rick Kaminski, and via Zoom, Keith Cappellini Audience members in attendance were David Olster, Bruce Pauley, Justus and Michelle Pingree, Donald and Phyllis Martin, Mark and Tina Fletcher, and Cedric and Beverly Johnson. Also, via zoom, were Craig O'Briskie, Elliot Rubin, and Paula Benson.

Jay opened the discussion with Article 1 on the ballot. He stated the reason for the re-vote was to be clear regarding if the town wants to approve up to \$800,000 in bond debt in order to renovate the municipal building.

Rick Kaminski spoke to the history of the building and the process to determine what needs to be done to correct the issues of heat loss, mold and leaks due to heavy rain and ice. He explained the town has approved money for the project, but building costs have escalated far beyond the towns original vote of \$950,00 for the renovation.

Rick stated that Jay found a new bond funding source that the town can pursue with a grant application to the state for \$500,000. The next round of bond funding is in early summer. We will apply for that funding.

The audience spoke to the current building code standards that must be met and the deficiencies that exist regarding fire safety standards and access for persons with disabilities.

In the interest of being transparent, Rick explained fellow selectboard member, Keith Cappellini's suggestion that we tear down the existing municipal building, build a new building to house the Fire Department and Highway Departments, and move the Clerk's and Lister's offices to the former school building. Keith then spoke to the concern he has regarding assuming this debt to the town tax payers.

Jay stated the estimated annual payment for a bond repayment is approximately \$70,000 per year. Our building reserve will disappear if we do this. He explained the estimated tax increase for a property with a value of \$300,000 would be \$85.74 per year until the debt is paid.

Several members in the audience spoke about the deferred maintenance over the years and questioned whether a pitched roof would be possible. More information was stated with regards to commercial building structures and the cost of changing the overall design.

Next on the agenda were Articles # 2 and 3, asking the town voters to decide if the Select board should appoint rather than elect a Clerk and Treasurer.

Jay stated the change would offer a more stable employment picture for someone interested in applying for the positions. The appointed position would be for a term, just as the elected position, the difference being the appointed position would not require petitioning the town to continue serving in the clerk or treasurer capacity, and being up for election at the end of their term. It also would allow the board to select an applicant, based on their qualifications. Elected officials are totally autonomous. Appointed officials can be guided by the Select Board. The Select Board would have the option to not re-appoint a person who does not meet expectations of competency.

There were questions from the audience regarding both positions requiring an applicant to be a resident of the town and whether a Town Manager would be an option. Jay stated the town voters would have to petition and vote to amend the town charter in order to change the town government.

Next, concerns were raised from members of the audience regarding the constant idling of the front end loader the highway department uses to load trucks. Rick Kaminski will check with the manufacturer regarding fuel used at idle.

The special meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Jay then called the Select Board meeting to order.

The Fire Department, represented by Kurt Turner, Fran and Angela Kissel, Steve Radonis, and David Olster spoke to the board regarding the acquisition of a fire engine to replace the 32 year old truck, which was purchased, in used condition, from Ludlow. The fire truck does not have 4 wheel drive, or the horsepower to quickly respond to calls at higher elevations within the town.

Kurt pointed out that without replacing this truck, the town would have to seek support from neighboring towns, at a price to be determined. The fire department has applied for a grant from FEMA, but were turned down.

They have also followed thru on potential used trucks for sale with no success. It is imperative that we have a 4 - wheel drive vehicle with enough horsepower to reach all properties quickly.

Homeowners insurance rates are determined by the presence of an active fire department with adequate equipment to meet the standards required to underwrite a policy for property owners.

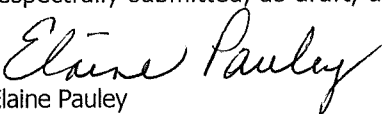
The fire department is able to pay \$100,000 towards the purchase of a truck, but needs the town to underwrite the balance. A new truck that fits the specs the town terrain requires will cost approximately \$492,000. They are requesting an article to be placed on the March 7, 2023 town ballot, asking the voters to approve the purchase of a new truck.

Jay stated the next Select Board meeting will be on Monday, February 6, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.

Before adjourning the meeting Craig O'Briskie commented, via zoom, regarding his concerns for the financial responsibilities of town residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M., after which payroll and check warrants were signed.

Respectfully submitted, as draft, until approved.

  
Elaine Pauley