

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
JUNE 18, 2009**

A Special Town Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM by Moderator Ned Gordon. Those in attendance were: Town Manager Paul Weston; Selectmen: Joe Denning, Paul Fraser, Don Milbrand, and Bruce Van Derven; Supervisors of the Checklist: Sue Martin and Loretta Carey; Town Clerk Raymah Simpson.

This special meeting was called to discuss the Water System Improvement Project and vote on the receipt of stimulus funds. A ballot vote is needed because the project is bonded. Polls were opened for one hour.

The Article reads as follows:

"To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$1,191,000 for a Bristol Drinking Water System Improvement Project: said project to include Storm Center Well upgrades and a new Hillside Avenue Booster Pump Station; to be funded 50% (\$595,000) Utilizing American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) funds from a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services loan per RSA 31:95-b, and funded 50% (\$595,000) by appropriating funds from the Bristol Water Department Capital Reserve: and to further authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into said loan agreement and a construction agreement to accomplish said project. Approval requires a super majority secret ballot vote of two-thirds of those present and voting".

(Note: The NHDES funding will be on a loan agreement basis with forgiveness of 50% of the principal and interest, and the local matching share will be appropriated from the Bristol Water Department Capital Reserve Fund, which had a balance of \$759,148.11 as of 12/31/08. No Bristol property tax dollars are utilized in this project, all local funding coming from Water Department fees).

Chairman Fraser made a motion to discuss Article I, seconded by Selectman Denning.

Chairman Fraser spoke about the current economy, pointing out that Bristol received stimulus money for this project during these difficult times. Town Manager Weston stated that this project has been identified as a top priority within the long range plan done for the Bristol Water System. With the ARRA Stimulus Funds, the money will allow Bristol to complete the needed project and create jobs locally. The Town of Bristol applied for five projects: Borough Road Bridge, Water System, Avery/Crouse Beach Stormwater Improvements, Minot-Sleeper Library expansion, and Sewer to the Lake. We received funding for the Borough Bridge and for the Water System Improvement Projects.

Town Manager Weston also explained that property taxes would not be used for this project. Costs associated with the improvements would be covered by Stimulus Funds and the Water Capital Reserve Fund – money raised through water rate fees. One half of the loan (\$595,000) would come from the American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) through a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services loan. This will be a loan, with one half of the principle forgiven (not needing to be paid back) and with no interest.

Mike Metcalf, Engineer, from Underwood Engineering explained how the water system would work and the improvements that would be made at the Storm Center well, along with the installation of a new water booster station above Hillside Avenue. The Storm Center is an excellent source of water, and these improvements will allow the Town to utilize either the well out to the Lake, or the Storm Center well here in the village. Currently Bristol has very low water rates, and these grant moneys will help us keep it that way.

Comments from the public were taken. Boake Morrison felt that this wasn't a project to be done at this time - there were other projects such as replacing the old pipes around Town that should be done first. He felt that the reason we don't have good pressure is because of the old pipes. It was explained that the project for replacing the pipes needs to be done, but that project was not engineered yet and was not "shovel ready" so the stimulus money would not cover this project.

Jeff Chartier, Superintendent of the Water/Wastewater Department, explained that the department has priority improvements that need to be done around town. The first issue is water supply, followed by new pipes throughout Town. A question was asked about the operating costs associated with this new project. Superintendent Chartier responded by explaining the financial details of this project, which will basically not affect the budget much, nor increase rates for water consumers.

Superintendent Chartier reviewed the proposed schedule for the project if it were to be favorably voted on tonight. Since the project is "shovel ready" it would go out to bid in August and the construction would begin in the fall with anticipated completion in the spring of 2010.

Town Manager Weston stated that he is always looking for grant money to cover projects that need to be done. Selectman Denning stated that as a consumer of the current water and sewer system, this project is necessary. Denning further added that he feels the concerns are more with the Sewer to the Lake extension, but that project is not "shovel ready" at this time. Selectmen Denning further added that this is an excellent opportunity and these funds were unexpected.

With no further questions on the project, the Moderator opened the polls at 7:03 PM for the ballot vote. The polls were closed at 8:03 PM and the results were tallied from 46 total votes. **40 Yes; 6 No.** This project needed a 2/3 majority or 31 votes to pass. The article passed.

The meeting was closed at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Raymah W. Simpson
Town Clerk/Tax Collector