



Special Meeting Update

John Boccalini

First, thanks to the Selectmen for **settling the easement issues** related to the construction of the Fay Martin Bridge, getting **permission from the Superior Court** to hold an emergency Special Town meeting on Thurs., June 21., 2012 from 4 - 8 p.m., and **obtaining a letter** from the Department of Transportation (DOT) formally describing the status of funding for the bridge project and outlining the reimbursement. The letter states "*The project is being funded through the State Aid Bridge (SAB) Program where the State will reimburse the town 80% of all eligible costs related to design, permitting, right-of-way, and construction.*" Furthermore ; "*Based on the current tentative project schedule, I would anticipate that reimbursement would occur in fall 2012.*" The final phase payback will occur after completion of construction, a DOT inspection and proof of payment. This could be as early as the second half of 2013.

In our June issue we provided information about the impact of voting either way on the only warrant article at the upcoming Special Town Meeting on June 21, 2012 and the effect it would have on your Dec. 2012 tax bill. As of our publication date our information regarding taxation was accurate. Since then new information was received from the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and came to our attention after the issue was printed. Our information was based on the an email from the DRA dated May 14, 2012 stating "***If at the special town meeting the bond authorization is not granted to the Selectmen, then the requested 80% would come from taxation.*** Our disallow was only for the amendment granting borrowing authority; we are recognizing the \$879,000 for the bridge replacement. *Let's hope the bond authorization passes! Shelley.*"

The Rooster reported that if the new warrant (see Selectboard notes) authorizing the Select Board to borrow 80% of the bridge costs fails to pass by a 2/3rds majority at June's Special Meeting, the bridge would have to be funded by increased town taxes in December of this year, 2012.

After the Rooster was mailed, we received information that the DRA reversed their position. On May 31, 2012, Sandra Gillis received this email from the DRA: "*Hi Sandra, Just a quick update regarding the taxpayer inquiry we received earlier in the week. Barbara is back in the office and will be calling the taxpayer to discuss their concerns. As I indicated to you yesterday my letter incorrectly stated that in absence of the DOT Grant, the town could continue with the project and raise*"

The Richmond Rooster

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SPECIAL ISSUE

the 80% from taxation; our attorney has reviewed the town meeting minutes and believes that the article clearly defines three offsetting revenue sources and no money is to be raised in taxation. In the event that the court allows the special meeting yet the warrant article does not pass by the 2/3 ballot vote the town will still have three revenue sources to fund the project. It is my understanding that you have the 10% in the capital reserve fund, an agreement for 10% from St. Benedict Center (SBC) and approval for 80% from DOT for Bridge Aid to complete the project. Under no circumstances does warrant article 39 or the petition to the court for borrowing in anticipation of the State DOT Grant allow for town tax dollars to be raised or used for the project. In the event the borrowing initiative fails and the identified funding sources are no longer available separate appropriating action(s) would be required.

Please call me if you have any questions/concerns. Shelley.”

In other words, a Yes vote on the article at the Special Town Meeting means the town wouldn't need to find another means to fund the bridge. That process would move to completion of the bridge construction before the May 14, 2013 deadline and the town would avoid having to return \$87,500.00 plus interest to the SBC. The Town taxpayers would avoid assuming the responsibility any more than they have. It will remove the risk of a major expense for the town should a failure occur due to the current absence of structural quality in the bridge as it is today. Although a No vote would not increase taxes in December of 2012, the Town would still have to come up with an alternative means of financing the bridge, something that could not be voted on until next year's Town Meeting. Completion of the bridge would be delayed past the deadline date, the town would return the \$87,500.00 (plus interest) to the SBC and the taxpayer payers would be responsible for the \$87,500.00

THE ONLY SENSIBLE COURSE FOR RICHMOND VOTERS AND TAXPAYERS TO TAKE IS TO VOTE YES ON JUNE 21ST. AND SINCE IT NEEDS A 2/3 MAJORITY TO PASS, EVERY VOTE REALLY COUNTS!!!

Selectboard Notes

With taxation now off the table as a source of revenue, and if we are to meet the deadline of May 14, 2013 for bridge completion, the town has to rely on borrowing for construction costs to bridge the gap between incurring construction costs (ASAP) and NHDOT reimbursements (\$100,000 in late 2012 and the remainder in late 2013).

If the voters do not approve borrowing (it takes a 2/3 vote of those voting), the project will stall until voters appropriate funding through taxation at the next annual meeting in 2013. In either case, the Saint Benedict Center share will be refunded with interest, since construction must be completed by May 14, 2013.

The Selectmen urge you to VOTE YES on the following warrant article at the Special Town Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, June 21, 2012 at the Veterans Hall from 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM. Polls will be open from 4:30 until 8:00 PM.

“To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to borrow 80% of the \$879,000 appropriated at the annual town meeting on March 17, 2012 by warrant article 39, not to exceed \$703,200, to replace the Fay Martin Bridge over Tully

Brook; and further to authorize the selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. Said bond is intended to be paid by the reimbursements received from NH DOT Bridge Aid. Recommended by the Selectmen. A 2/3 vote is required.”

Thank you for your patience as we work our way through this process, and deal with the ever-changing landscape of funding and reimbursement details.

Letter to the Editor

Initially it was difficult for me to grasp and understand the situation with the Fay Martin Bridge. Many residents in Town don't get involved, don't attend town meetings and let the chips fall where they may. A Yes vote will make it possible to build a bridge that will provide safe passage well into the future.

This vote is so important. Please do not remain passive. Voting Yes allows us to proceed and take advantage of a program that will provide most of the funding we need. This is not so complicated.

Voting no or staying home will put us all in the position of not meeting the deadline and forfeiting the SBC share of \$87,500.00 and then the tax payers have to pick up their share. It doesn't matter that we avoid having to pay in December. If you don't vote or vote no your tax bill will go up. Thank you, Mary Schofield

Rooster Publisher Resigns

I have resigned as publisher of the Richmond Rooster in order to serve on the Selectboard of Richmond. At first I could not see that there would be a conflict of interest as I had previously held both titles at the same time years ago. The temperature has changed so much since then that it would be impossible for me to do both jobs now. I already miss the Rooster. Marie

THE STRUCTURE OF THE JUNE 21, 2012 SPECIAL MEETING

Pete Majoy/Moderator

- 1) The open discussion part of the Meeting starts at 4 P.M. (Note: Voter check-in does not take place until the discussion is closed);
- 2) Motion to accept the article (and seconded) is made followed by discussion. The Selectboard will speak about the article first, then the floor is open to comments/questions. Please be both brief and polite.
- 3) Motion is made to end discussion (and seconded) and passes;
- 4) Polls open and registered voters line up at Ballot Clerks for check-in and receive a ballot which the voter either checks “YES” or “No” and deposits in ballot box. (Note A: Check-in and voting take place in the kitchen area so line for Ballot Clerks will form on the southwest end of Vets Hall at the kitchen door).(Note B: NO VOTER REGISTRATION TAKES PLACE AT THIS SPECIAL MEETING. TO VOTE, YOU MUST BE A REGISTERED VOTER WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE MEETING.
- 5) Voters then exit Vets Hall or stay to observe vote counters count the ballots and record the results after which the results are announced. Thanks.