

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 17, 2015
FINAL MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

Board members present: Gail Cromwell, George Willard

2015 Bond Hearing for Purchase of a New Loader

Call to order by Cromwell at 7:00 p.m.

2015 Loader Bond Hearing: Cromwell opened the bond hearing for the proposed purchase of a new loader for the Highway Department. In attendance were Tim Fiske, Road Agent, and four members of the public.

Cromwell explained that the loader purchase would be financed and the Board would try to obtain 3 bids. The Board has obtained quotes for 3, 4, 5 and 6 year terms in the past and interest rates are generally higher the longer the term. Cromwell also explained that the Board would have to obtain Bond Counsel, the purpose of which is to review the legal authorization for the bonding. Costs for Bond Counsel usually range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. The Board is anticipating bonding \$164,000, which consists of a purchase price of \$159,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 for Bond Counsel. Payment would begin in 2016.

Ken Caisse asked if there would be any penalties or fees for early payments. The town has generally negotiated financing without penalties or fees for early payments. Any early payments would need to be in a future budget and approved at Town Meeting.

Cromwell informed the public that the loader is the last "big ticket" item on the CIP plan until 2020. A new truck for the highway department is scheduled at that time. The next few years may allow the town to put money into capital reserve funds for future purchases. Caisse stated that, in his opinion, financing interest rates is using tax payer money with any retention or increase in service or benefits, and he thinks it is a waste of tax payer's money. Cromwell felt that with interest rates so low on reserve accounts there is may be no real benefit to saving money for future purchases as this ties up cash.

Cromwell told the public that the maximum amount to be financed would be \$164,000. The current loader could be traded in and any trade in value would lower the amount to be financed.

Cromwell asked Fiske about the warranty on a new loader. Fiske said the warranty would depend on the machine purchase. Fiske also explained that the extended warranties purchased on other equipment have not saved the town any money, but may have paid for the price of the extended warranty.

The hearing was closed at 7:13 pm.

Cromwell opened a short Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:13 pm, the Board signed the 2015 State of NH Budget form MS-636 and the 2015 warrant.

The Board of Selectmen meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

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2015 Public Hearing for the SB-2 Petition Warrant Article

Board members present: Gail Cromwell, George Willard.

Call to order by G. Cromwell at 7:30 p.m.

Ten members of the public were in attendance.

Cromwell explained that the Board had received a petition for the town to vote on changing to the SB-2 form of voting, which would be by official ballot at the polls. Cromwell informed the public that SB-2 changes from a town meeting form to a deliberative session where warrant articles may be discussed and amended, then approximately one month later the warrant is voted on at the polls.

Cromwell asked if any members of the public wished to speak in favor of SB-2, no one spoke in favor.

Cromwell asked if any members of the public wished to speak against SB-2. Mary Beth Ayvazian stated that town meeting is the only form of direct democracy. Ayvazian has changed the way she voted on items in the past after hearing both sides of discussion.

Bill Faller said he started going to town meeting about 15 years ago. Faller thinks that voting and attending town meeting is a privilege and the town would lose a lot if there is no town meeting. Faller also stated that the proponents of SB-2 generally do not attend the hearings. Faller also felt that SB-2 is an "end run" around the way the citizens who do attend town meeting vote. Faller said that he has spoken to people who have signed the petitions and voted for SB-2 and found that most of them did not understand what SB-2 is about.

Sandy Benotti stated that people generally do not attend deliberative sessions without an agenda and often go to the polls uninformed. Deb Harling gave some statistics regarding the patterns, of the people who signed the SB-2 petition in 2015, 75% of them voted at the polls in 2014 and only 12% of them attended the 2014 town meeting.

Camilla Lockwood stated that the fallacies alleged are that you will go to the deliberative session and then have 30 days before you vote, but it has been shown in other towns and school districts that people don't attend the deliberative sessions.

George Willard stated that he has travelled out of state quite a bit and in talking to people from other parts of the country has found that they would like to have a town meeting form of government and more input into how their tax money is spent.

Rose Lowry said that she agrees with most of what had been said. Lowry feels that SB-2 allows for more representation because more people vote at the polls, but there are a lot of flaws in SB-2 and this is a problem for her. Deb Harling stated that she feels there is actually less representation with SB-2 and gave the example that Temple usually has 39% to 50% of voters go to the polls and 15% to 25% of the voters go to town meeting to vote on the budget, money warrant articles and any other warrant articles. The average attendance around

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the State of NH for an SB-2 deliberative session is .1% to 1%. Warrant articles may be amended at a deliberative session and the amended warrant article is voted on at the polls. Changes to SB-2 now require that the "intention" of the warrant article may not be changed, but money warrant articles can still reduced or increased. Harling asked how there can be more representation if .1% to 1% of the voters are determining what the rest of the voters are voting on. Jeanne Whitcomb stated that since the Conval School District changed to SB-2 attendance at the school's deliberative session has been very low.

The hearing was closed at 7:59 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Debra Harling