

Annual Town Meeting Bonding Questions Explained

By First Selectwoman Lynne Vanderslice

Registered voters and qualified property owners, who weren't able to vote immediately following Tuesday's Annual Town Meeting, may vote on Saturday at the Clune Center from 8:00am to 6:00pm. In addition to the FY2023 Annual Budget, there are six bonding questions on the ballot as follows:

- \$1.1 million for roads. This is the last year of a 10-year effort to pave all 125 miles of town-owned roads.
- \$760,137 for bridges. The amount represents the Town's share of a multi-year bridge replacement and restoration program, much of which is funded through state and federal grants ranging from 50% to 80% of the cost.
- \$500,000 for a Vacuum Truck. This truck is an essential DPW vehicle used to clean catch basins and storm drains. The current truck is 27 years old operating at 65% efficiency, for which parts are no longer available.
- \$600,000 for school roof replacements as part of an ongoing program to replace school roofs or roof sections, as required. All roofs were inspected using thermal imaging.
- \$100,000 to fund the initial planning and design under phase one of an estimated \$2.1 million replacement of the heating, ventilation and air condition systems at Middlebrook Middle School and Cider Mill School.
- \$16.4 million for a new Police Headquarters to be located on the Town Campus between the current Headquarters and Town Hall. Almost 20 years ago, the then Board of Selectmen recognized headquarters was overcrowded, outdated and in need of infrastructure upgrades. No improvements were made. Almost 20 years later, the building is 48 years old, with original failing infrastructure, severe overcrowding and noncompliance with many current building codes, including ADA, fire suppression and electrical.

Last week, the Town applied for a \$1.2 million federal grant for the proposed building. If awarded, the grant would reduce the amount required to be borrowed.

A video of the recent detailed project presentation made to the Board of Finance is available here: <https://vimeo.com/703169902/39eb8c33da>. The PowerPoint presentation, itself, is available here: https://www.wiltonct.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf4046/f/agendas/bond_referendums_april_25_2022.pdf, beginning with the 4th side.

All information and documents related to the project are available here: <https://www.wpdtownhallproject.org>, including a quick guide available here: <https://www.wpdtownhallproject.org/quick-guide.html>. Large size scale drawings are on display at the Wilton Library.

A building committee comprised of Wilton residents, with assistance from consultants and town employees, recommended the proposal to the Board of Selectmen. The members, all with relevant professional qualifications and experience, are co-chairs Patti Temple and Dave Waters, Matt Bezanson, Keith Fordsman, David Johnson, Kathy Poirier and Jack Suchy. The community can be proud and grateful for the work of the Committee

If approved, Chris Burney, who served as the town employee responsible for the highly successful Miller Driscoll renovation project, which was delivered under budget and ahead of schedule, will again be responsible for this project.

The Board of Finance voted to support all six bonding proposals. Questions may be emailed to lynne.vanderslice@wiltonct.org. Thank you.