

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
Annual Town Meeting
March 12, 2024

The Annual Bridgewater Town Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at approximately 8:00 pm. Present were Moderator Matthew Denton, Selectman Terence Murphy, Selectman Maurice Jenness, Selectman P. Wesley Morrill and approximately 320 residents.

Article #1: “To choose a Selectman for three (3) years and all other necessary Town officials.”

This vote was made by town ballot of which there were 254 votes cast. Votes cast were as follows:

Selectman – 3 Years
Terence Murphy – 219 Votes

Moderator – 2 Years
Matthew Denton – 251 Votes

Treasurer – 3 Years
Margaret Petraszewski (Peggy) – 241 Votes

Trustee of the Trust Fund – 3 Years
Rose Williams – 152 Votes

Library Trustee – 3 Years
Helen Hemphill – 247 Votes

Article #2 – “Shall the Town of Bridgewater adopt the provisions of House Bill 349 (2023) to withdraw from the Newfound Area School District/SAU #4 on June 30, 2025, and effective July 1, 2025, form a separate cooperative school district and single district SAU called the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District, in accordance with the provisions of House Bill 349 (2023) and where applicable, RSA 195 and RSA 194-C, and further, shall the Town of Bridgewater adopt the proposed Articles of Agreement for the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District.”

This Article was moved by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Cameron Woolsey. A Petition for a ballot vote on this Article was submitted to the Selectmen. Selectman Murphy and Moderator Denton explained the process and clarified that voting “Yes” was a vote to withdraw from the SAU and voting “No” was a vote to remain in the SAU. Also explained was the need for a motion to restrict reconsideration of Article #2 once this Article was voted on. If that motion was not made, it would allow the option seven days from this election for a motion to reconsider to be filed where the Town would need to hold another election on this Article. Selectman Murphy further explained that in order for this Article to pass District wide, it

requires all three Towns - Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton to all vote in the affirmative and it is not a cumulative vote among the three towns, but an individual vote per town. Voting then commenced with the Yes/No ballots. Once the ballots were counted, the results for Bridgewater were:

Yes – 291 No – 28

Article Passed.

Resident David Thorne made a motion to restrict reconsideration of Article #2 which was seconded by Cameron Woolsey. All in favor.

Article #3 – “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,813,000 (amended) which represents the operational budget. Said sum does not include amounts to separate or special warrant articles.

Selectman Jenness made a motion to move this Article as written, which was seconded by Selectman Murphy.

Selectman Murphy made a motion to amend this Article as written to change the raise and appropriation sum to \$1,853,000, which was seconded by Ken Weidman.

Selectman Murphy spoke on this article and the need for the additional \$40,000 amendment stating the new ambulance quote came in at \$40,000 higher than originally budgeted for. In addition, the Highway grader and backhoe have required unexpected maintenance. The \$40,000 increase would allow for these unexpected costs. Selectman Murphy spoke further on the previous year budgets, increased road costs due to weather, machine, and vehicle failures, etc.

The vote on the Motion to Amend Article #3 to \$1,853,000 was voted on with all in favor. This Amendment carries.

The vote on the Amended Article #3 was held with the majority in favor.

Article #3 Passed.

Selectman Morrill made a motion to adjourn this meeting, which was seconded by Cameron Woolsey. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen M. Kenny
Bridgewater Town Clerk