

Results of the Special Town Meeting Town of Middlefield 2018-12-20

Present: Selectboard: Chair David DiNicola, Judith Hoag and Albert Sirard MBI member Bill Ennen

Moderator: Joseph Kearns Town Clerk: Suzanne C. Lemieux

Joseph Kearns opened the meeting at 7:07 with a quorum of 12 present.

Special Town Meeting was issued by the Selectboard, Duly signed and posted by the Constable.

Article 1: A motion was made and seconded to see if the Town will appropriate \$1,300,000 to pay the Town's share of the cost of designing, construction and installing a high-speed broadband network, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, which project shall be undertaken by the Town acting alone, and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen, is authorized to borrow up to said amount under and pursuant to M.G.L. c.44,s.8(8), or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor. Any premium received by the Town motion upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44 Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount; provided, however, that any borrowing authorized hereunder shall be contingent on the passage of a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion vote, or take any other action related thereto.

People were invited to come up to the lectern to speak for 2 minutes. Issues such as the tax rate, seasonal subscriptions, the 4% unserved, subscription costs, customer services, loan terms, infrastructure, and how MBI incentives work were addressed. MBI's Last Mile Liaison Bill Ennen was on hand to answer people's questions.

White Yes and No ballots were handed out by the Registrar to Registered Voters. Votes were deposited in the container on the table. Article 1: Yes means you're willing to vote to have the Town appropriate \$1,300,000 to pay the Town's share to build the infrastructure. No means you are not. The voter may submit his vote into a pot on the table and discard the other. The Registrars will count the ballots as we continue the meeting and discuss Article 2.

Article 2: A motion was made and seconded to see if the Town will vote to accept the Comcast proposal to build a cable/broadband network that will serve at least 96% of the Town pursuant to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's Flexible Grant program and to further request that the Selectboard execute a Cable Television License Agreement with Comcast pursuant to statutes and regulations overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable. Several people spoke at the lectern. The cost of hooking up the unserved 4% was debated and preliminary design work that was requested by Charlemont was negated.

Article 1 tabulations were in; result was announced as Yes 39 and No 89. Article 1 failed because a 2/3 vote was not reached.

Article 2: Yellow Yes and No ballots were handed out by the Registrar to Registered Voters. Votes were deposited in the container on the table. Votes were tabulated. Results were announced: Yes 69 and No 49. Article 2 passed by a majority vote.

A motion was made and seconded to dissolve the meeting at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne C. Lemieux (Town Clerk)