



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH
OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
807 Mill River Southfield Road, Mill River, MA 01244-0099
Phone: 413-229-8116 Fax: 413-229-8253
E-mail: nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov**

**Minutes
Town Hall Planning Committee
August 25, 2023
9:00 am**

Committee Members Present: Barbara Marchione, Chair
Chris Gregor
Mari Enoch
Robert Hartt
Rona Easton

Others present: Marc Trachtenberg
Tara White

Barbara called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

A motion was made, seconded, and so voted to approve the minutes of August 18, 2023.

The Committee looked at the results of the recent online survey. There were 152 responses and the results are as follows:

Q1) In your opinion, based on what you know, what is the best option for the Town?

- 77 votes (50.99%) Acquire and renovate the Robin Hall
- 42 votes (27.81%) Renovate Town Hall
- 21 votes (13.91%) Acquire land and build a new town hall
- 11 votes (7.28%) not enough information
- 0 votes (0%) no preference
- 1 respondent skipped the question

Q2) What is your level of support for renovating town hall?

- 57 votes (38%) not supportive
- 48 votes (32%) very supportive
- 29 votes (19.33%) somewhat supportive
- 16 votes (10.67%) neutral
- 2 respondents skipped the question

Q3) What is your level of support for acquiring and renovating Robin Hall?

- 71 votes (46.71%) very supportive
- 46 votes (30.26) not supportive
- 28 votes (18.42) somewhat supportive
- 7 votes (4.61%) neutral

Q4) What is your level of support for acquiring land and building a new building?

- 81 votes (54%) not supportive
- 38 votes (25.33%) somewhat supportive
- 19 votes (12.67%) very supportive
- 12 votes (8%) neutral
- 2 respondents skipped the question

Q5) How likely are you to vote positively for any option if your taxes were to increase an additional 2.5% ?

- 123 votes (83.67%) likely
- 24 votes (16.33%) unlikely
- 2 respondents skipped the question

Q6) How likely are you to vote positively for any option if your taxes were to increase an additional 4.5% ?

- 91 votes (63.19%) unlikely
- 53 votes (36.81%) likely
- 8 respondents skipped the question

Q7) Given all that you know today, which is most important to you?

- 87 votes (58.78%) best value
- 40 votes (27.03%) preservation
- 19 votes (12.84%) lowest cost
- 2 votes (1.35%) no preference
- 4 respondents skipped the question

Q8) Do you understand and agree with the premise that the town needs to address its town hall deficiencies?

- 147 votes (96.71%) yes
- 5 votes (3.29%) no

Q9) Are you a registered voter in the Town of New Marlborough?

- 116 votes (76.82%) yes
- 35 votes (23.18%) no
- 1 respondent skipped the question

Marc Trachtenberg presented a spread sheet showing the previous votes taken at the public listening sessions in June alongside the votes of this recent poll. The questions were exactly the same. The participants in the in person surveys taken in June and the recent online survey both rank the Robin Hall project first, but the second and third choices have switched. In June, building a new building ranked higher than renovating the current town hall. The results of this survey ranked renovating the current town hall above building a new building. It was noted that we don't know how many people participated in both versions of the survey and the results should be viewed in a qualitative rather than quantitative manner. It was also noted that 116 registered voters participated in the online survey which is greater than the number of voters who attended the last Annual Town Meeting. Mari will have the results posted online.

The Committee spent some time discussing the program requirements including number of offices, size of meeting room and conference room, etc. The program will be included in the Requests for Proposals and the Committee can define the minimum criteria and award more points to proposals which meet the ideal.

It was decided that the minimum program requires seven offices with operable windows, a conference room, a multipurpose/meeting room, kitchen/staff room, bathrooms, storage/mechanical/IT space. Some of the offices will be best suited to have customer service windows or half door counters. The Committee will further consider the program.

There was more discussion on the cost of a new build. It is difficult estimating a cost of the new build because we do not know the site, and we do not know the type of construction (stick build vs panel built). The Committee agreed to continue using the estimate of \$400 per square foot in its new building cost estimate as it was the best number they had to go on at the moment. It may be low.

Mari will distribute sample of RFPs for Real Property that other towns have used.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, August 30 at 9:00 am.

A motion was made by Chris, seconded by Mari, and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 am.

Submitted by,
Mari Enoch

Date Approved: September 22, 2023