Town of Hooksett

WARRANT ARTICLE REQUEST FORM

Revised 1/31/2024

Date of Request: January 10, 2024 **Date of Town Meeting:** March 2024

Name of Department Submitting Request: Community Development

1. Please provide the wording of the proposed article.

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **$1,500,000.00** (gross budget) for the reconstruction of the intersection of Martins Ferry Road and North River Road including roadway realignment and construction of a new bridge ("the Project"); of that amount, to appropriate $349,277.00 from fund balance; to appropriate $385,000.00 of that amount from Roadway Impact Fees; to appropriate $15,723.00 of that amount from Federal Local Fiscal Recovery Funds; and to authorize the issuance of bonds or notes of not more than $750,000.00 of that amount in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Town Council to fix the date, maturities, denominations, interest rate and other details of said bonds or notes; to authorize the Town Council to apply for, accept and expend any federal, state, or private funds that are available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and furthermore to raise and appropriate the sum of $20,000.00 from taxation for the bond issuance costs and first years debt service payments on such bonds or notes? (3/5 ballot vote required). Recommended by Town Council (5 Yes – 1 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (10 Yes – 0 No).

2. What is the intent and purpose of the article?

The purpose of this project is to reconstruct the intersection of Martins Ferry Road and North River Road including roadway realignment, realignment of Messer Brook and construction of a new bridge. The improvement will address speed concerns and will eliminate the risk of flooding and erosion and redirect the stream to its natural course. It will also eliminate significant maintenance concerns regarding the existing guardrails and drainage culvert.

Currently, the guardrails on both sides of the bridge are in disrepair. If the proposed bridge project is not completed, the guardrail on the southeast corner must be replaced with a bridge rail because replacing the guardrail will not meet code requirements. Installing a bridge rail will include removing all of the pavement over the entire culvert, dismantling and replacing a portion of the concrete slab on top of the culvert, re-forming the concrete slab to accept the bridge rail, then installing the new slab, with a new membrane over the entire culvert structure and replacing the pavement. In addition to the above, any other areas where the culvert has deteriorated will have to be repaired or replaced.

The brook as it exists presents a flooding hazard. The 90 degree angles that the brook takes could result in debris getting hung up and causing backups. In addition, there is an existing sewer main that runs through the culvert at an elevation close to the water

line creating additional risk of flow restrictions. Any flooding that occurs puts the roadway and the sewer pump station downstream on Depot Street at risk.

The intersection as it currently exists is very flat over the culvert. The minimal cover over the culvert makes it impossible to properly grade the road to direct runoff away from the road. The proposed project will include the proper slopes and drainage infrastructure to handle runoff.

The existing culvert has been posted no trucks due to its low structural rating. A new bridge will be safe for all vehicles to pass over it (although posting the roadway "No Thru Trucks" is still an option if the Town Council chooses to do this). The design will be completed based on a design speed of 25 miles per hour with a fairly sharp curve to slow traffic down.

The new bridge will be inspected by the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation Bridge Inspection Division every two years (at no cost to the Town). In addition, the bridge will qualify for State/Federal Funding for future maintenance.

Putting Messer Brook on its natural course has garnered the enthusiastic support of several natural resource agencies, such as the New Hampshire Wetlands Bureau, the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Division and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

3. If this article is not passed at Town Meeting or approved by the Town Council, what affect would this have on your department goals and programs?

If the warrant article is not passed and the work isn't done, the Town will spend significant funds replacing guardrails and performing other repairs of the existing culvert including dismantling and replacing a portion of the top concrete slab on top of the culvert and replacing the pavement. In addition, the Town will remain at risk of erosion along the steep roadway embankment adjacent to Messer Brook and safety will not be improved. Two years ago, the Town spent $133,970 on erosion repair along Martins Ferry Road. Because the slope between Martins Ferry Road and Messer Brook is so steep, the likelihood of the occurrence of additional erosion remains. This project eliminates the possibility of any significant erosion. The roadway and downstream pump station on Depot Street will remain at a greater risk due to potential flooding.

4. Estimated cost?

Fund balance = 2022 SB401 & 2023 SB270 Bridge Aid	$263,862
Fund balance = 2023 SB 270 Highway Block Grant:	85,415
Impact Fees:	385,000
ARPA Funding:	15,723
Bond:	750,000
Total:	$1,500,000

Based on the July 2023 bond sale from the NH Municipal Bond Bank, the town can estimate paying $196,875.00 in interest over the life of a 10-year bond with an interest rate of 4.75%. The first year's payment (principal and interest) is estimated to be a 3-cent impact on the tax rate.