



Dear

Over the past five years, the Town of Medina has entered a time of unprecedented change - from the high cost of road repair to constantly new election rules. The challenge of maintaining of our current town facilities has proven no different. The purchase of the farm on Missouri Road met our immediate critical need of replacing our near-collapsing salt shed and provided much more space for trash/recycling. It also offered the opportunity for the Town of Medina to, someday, modernize and replace its woefully undersized, dilapidated town hall and garage.

Well, that day is now. On April 5th, we are asking town residents in an advisory referendum to support the need for a new town hall and garage. For many years, we have all benefitted by not having to pay anything for our town facilities. Doing so now may provide the best and only opportunity to provide residents a suitable town facility that will meet our needs for generations to come.

As a Board, we believe this is an important and critical investment in the future of the Town of Medina. We sincerely hope you agree. Please take a look at the enclosed information regarding this project. We are also holding two informational meetings on March 10th and March 15th at 7 p.m. at the town hall.

Thank you for your consideration, and please vote on April 5th.

Todd Weinberger
Town Chair

John Ward
Town Supervisor

John Hellenbrand
Town Supervisor

Sue Zingshiem
Town Supervisor

Phillip Braithwaite
Town Supervisor

April 5th Advisory-Only Referendum

“Do you support the construction and financing of a new town hall/garage to address the identified needs of the town for a financial amount not to exceed \$3.3 million?”

Approval of the referendum does not mean the project is approved. Final approval could only come from residents who attend a special town meeting later in April so that those who attend the special meeting can vote to formally authorize funding for the project. The Board would notify everyone regarding the date and time of such a meeting.

The Town Board is reevaluating the new facility plan based on comments, concerns, and information shared at community meetings last fall and at the October 5th vote. Since it was a very close decision with only 121 votes, the Board feels it is appropriate to continue working on a solution that will serve town residents.

WHY THE NEED?

- Currently no secure environment exists for staff and town assets. Records are stored haphazardly and are difficult to retrieve. Staff who work at the current hall location are provided minimal security protections.
- With the current town hall’s location very near a state highway and next to a river, any future expansion of the building itself or new building on the site is a very cost prohibitive option.
- Lack of space inhibits any sizable gatherings for meetings and election organization.
- The hall’s outdated bathrooms do not provide proper access to handicapped individuals, among other building code violations and zoning constraints.
- Continuing to split highway operations between the current town garage and the Missouri Road location is a very inefficient use of staff time and resources.

WHAT ARE WE ASKING FOR?

New Facility Project Description:

- Approximately 3,000 square feet for administrative operations includes office space for the clerk and treasurer, larger secure storage area, a small meeting room, bathrooms, breakroom, and mechanical room. It also includes a larger community meeting room to hold more activities, including elections, and which will be offered to town residents for private and organizational use with a security deposit.
- Approximately 5,500 square foot highway garage/maintenance area which can accommodate town vehicles and equipment and an area for light maintenance. This includes a wash bay which is vital in preventing the deterioration of plow trucks during the winter.
- Overall, the new town hall/garage encompasses about 10,000 square feet and the new site plan keeps the existing recycling and trash drop-off area.

Cost to Taxpayers:

According to Baird and Co. Inc., a \$3.3 million loan at 2% for 20 years would amount to a maximum property tax impact of \$1.03 per mill or \$1,000 of fair market property valuation:

\$100,000 Property	\$103 / year
\$200,000 Property	\$206 / year
\$300,000 Property	\$309 / year

Other Options Considered:

- Not cost-effective to convert existing pole sheds on the farm to year-round truck storage - would have to remodel to meet commercial code which is expensive.
- Local area experiences show that contracting out highway services does not guarantee nor control future costs or expected levels of services to town residents.

WHY NOW? WHY NOT WAIT A FEW YEARS?

Construction Costs Have Skyrocketed:

Just within the last 5 months, construction costs have increased nearly 25%. This is well above the 3-5% increase in such costs normally experienced due to inflation. The initial cost of \$3 million for this project last October is now estimated to cost in the \$3.75 million range - for the same building. There is a very real possibility that in three to five years this project could cost over \$5 million and be out of reach for the Town to afford.

Due to cost increases and concerns expressed last fall, we are currently reassessing prior plans to find ways to reduce these increases. We have removed adding on the debt obligation for the purchase of the farm, and we have eliminated plans for a trash compactor and a new trash/recycling area. This alone has saved us \$600,000. We are continuing to explore other cost saving opportunities regarding the facility.

Borrowing Costs Will Increase:

Over the next several years, the current trend for the cost of borrowing money very likely will increase. On a project this size, for every one-half of a percentage increase in the rate to borrow money, it will cost \$100,000 more.

In response, the Town Board is currently planning to conduct an annual audit of its finances by May. While an audit is useful in itself, its completion also would significantly lower the rate by which the Town would be borrowing funds to build a new facility. Depending on financials, such a borrowing rate decrease could be 1% or better. On a 20-year loan for \$3.3 million, this would translate to a savings of \$350,000.

Lack of Handicapped Accessibility is a Real Issue:

State and federal law require that all government facilities provide adequate access for handicapped individuals as part of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Recently, a town resident who is personally affected by the current town hall's lack of accessibility notified the Town of Medina regarding intent to pursue action against the Town for its failure to meet ADA requirements. This action could include a formal complaint to state/federal agencies and also a potential civil lawsuit unless these violations are addressed in a timely fashion. Since chances are good a lawsuit against the Town would be successful and very costly, it is best to be proactive now in addressing these issues.

Plan to Sell Town Properties:

To reduce the financial impact of a new facility, the Town Board will develop a plan to sell the town's current properties:

- After approval of a new facility, we will look to sell the Town's 5-acre parcel on Box Elder Road where the old town dump used to be.
- We will also begin to consider options to market and sell about 20 acres of the current farmland at 5536 Missouri Road.
- And as soon as the Town would be able to move into a new facility, the Board also will look to market and sell its current town hall/garage property at 634 Highway 19 in Marshall.

Proceeds from these sales will be used to reduce the cost of a new facility on Missouri Road.