

Belmont votes down mill renovation

By TIM CAMERATO | Mar 11, 2015

0



Photo by: TIM CAMERATO/CITIZEN

BELMONT SELECTMAN RUTH Mooney was reelected to a seat on the board on Tuesday.

BELMONT — A push from town officials to renovate the Belmont Mill for use as town offices failed at the polls on Tuesday.

Article 3 was voted down by 164 votes in favor to 467 against. It requested \$3,357,250 to refurbish the building into a town hall. Of that money, \$2,957,250 would be raised through the issuing of bonds, while another \$400,000 would come from the Municipal Facilities Capital Reserve.

The building is currently home to the Belmont Early Learning Center, Belmont Senior Center, and Belknap Family Healthcare. Lakes Region Community College rented the fourth floor for its culinary program until 2012, when they reported a sagging floor and found structural problems.

If construction had been approved, space on the second floor would have been left for the Senior Center, while the doctor's office and child care center would have left to make room for town offices. Lakes Region General Hospital has been in talks with the town to lease the old Northway Bank building for Belknap Family Healthcare and the Belmont Early Learning Center has outgrown its space and is looking for a new location.

Residents voted for the recommended operational budget of \$7,257,691 by 330 to 275 votes. If that hadn't passed, a default budget of \$7,052,519 would have taken effect.

Voters also re-elected Ruth Mooney to a seat on the Board of Selectmen. She was challenged by former selectman George Condodemetraky, who was defeated by a vote of 379 to 230.

Mooney previously served on the Budget Committee before her first successful run for the board in 2012. She currently owns and works at Province Kiln-Dried Firewood, although she tries not to be there full-time, so she can devote herself to public issues.

"If you're really going to do the position justice, you have to put the time into it," Mooney said. "It's a bigger job than what I thought it was going to be but I have stepped up to the plate, I feel, and I've begun doing my part as a taxpayer in the

town of Belmont.”

Mooney said she’s not sure what the board will accomplish within her next term, since a lot of the plans they have on the town were attached to tonight’s warrant.

Condodemetraky said the loss “Doesn’t change a thing in my life.” He said he’s glad to hear that many residents paid attention to the bond issue on the mill, which he opposed during his campaign.

Belmont also voted down an effort to rescind its SB2 status by a vote of 157 to 453. The town left its traditional Town Meeting format after voting to adopt SB2 style during the 2008 Town Meeting. It splits Town Meeting into two separates ones – a deliberative session where warrant articles are debated and amended and a later day where the articles are voted on via ballot.

Budget Committee member Tracy LeClair submitted the petitioned article because she feels there aren’t enough people educating themselves on the town warrant.

“My goal is for people to come and make an educated vote because I feel a lot of people aren’t doing their due diligence prior,” LeClair said at a hearing last month. “They’re just voting ‘no’ because they see a tax dollar amount and they’re assuming its money out of their pocket.”

0

Comments (0)

Staff Profile

<p>Tim Camerato Reporter 603-581-1967 Email Me</p>
--

Recent Stories by Tim Camerato

- **[Belmont votes down mill renovation](#)**
Mar 11, 2015
- **[Bid to ban fireworks in Gilford fails](#)**
Mar 11, 2015
- **[Year-Round Library wins funding](#)**
Mar 10, 2015
- **[Students get taste of policing in Belmont](#)**
Mar 10, 2015
- **[Fireworks, selectmen race key Gilford issues](#)**
Mar 10, 2015