

elaine la roche wrote:

Jim - thanks for your email. As I dont know whether your voting rules allow for absentee ballots, given that I am in China, I would like to register my vote as an "abstain" or "no" If it is an up or down vote. The reasons are simple, I am not against the concept, but am against the financial tems of the transaction and find that they do not represent market or fair value for the acquisitions of the properties. Additionally, as a financial professional ,the limited financial projections and costs that have been presented to the public lack rigor and the project will likely be much more expensive than what is presented. My issue is that voters deserve greater financial accuracy in the proposal, for there is no accountability for most of the numbers presented. They are "best guesstimates" by some who have a vested interest in seeing this passed with little scrutiny.

I have follwed this process closely, and as you recall had offered to sit on the committee to lend some financial focus and expertise but was rebuffed. I know that Zenas has also raised a number of issues that I do not believe have been adequately addressed.

While I know that everyone is very busy, and many have committed a great deal of time and effort in pursuing this project, I would only say that the voters of the comunity deserve a more thorough and detailed financial projection and budget so their can be full transparency and accountability as to the execution of this deal.

Thank you.

Elaine La Roche

On Thu, 5/1/08, Jim Dresser <jdresser@snet.net> wrote:

Elaine,

Thanks for writing about this important issue. I will try to answer each of your points.

There is no provision for absentee ballots for a Town Meeting. As the LJ's editorial reminded us today, we have had the Town Meeting form of government in Salisbury for 250 years because it so well fits our needs. All those interested in a topic can gather to listen and share their views with their neighbors and then vote on the basis of this synthesis. On important topics like the transfer station site, we hold them at 7:30 on Fridays to accommodate the travel schedules of the "weekenders".

I find the following comment on the lack of "financial rigor" insulting to many parties:  
"The limited financial projections and costs that have been presented to the public lack rigor and the project will likely be much more expensive than what is presented. My issue is that voters deserve greater financial accuracy in the proposal, for there is no accountability for most of the numbers presented. They are "best guesstimates" by some who have a vested interest in seeing this passed with little scrutiny."

I can't imagine what evidence you have that the "the project will likely be much more expensive than what is presented." There is some unavoidable uncertainty to the construction cost projections because we will not build the new facility for a few years. As you can see by referring to the L-F Committee report, which has been on the town website for two months, we have allowed for this by using the high end of the range in our financing projections. Rigorous analysts like Zenas Block and Bob Palmer were intimately involved in the construction of these financial projections. They then voted for the Committee's recommendation that we should exercise the Luke and Fitting options.

We know what the land purchase will cost (\$2M). The next most important number is the cost of constructing the facility. The cost range was provided by Anchor Engineering, which has built transfer stations all over the

state. It is insulting to Anchor Engineering to say that there is "no accountability" and that they have a "vested interest in seeing this passed with little scrutiny". They have the finest reputation and have worked with TRAC for eight years. Their reputation is on the line in providing these numbers.

The final data that were missing were up-to-date appraisals. These came in yesterday (and are available on the town website) at \$950K for Fitting and \$915K for Luke, certainly within the ballpark of the \$1M option prices, given that appraisal is an approximate art.

Sincerely,

Jim Dresser