

Public Safety Building

One of the initiatives the Select Board has been working on over the past couple of years is our Fire Station/EMS/Plow Truck building. We have been referring to it as North Haven's Public Safety Building.

The specific question the Board has been grappling with is whether to repair and renovate the existing building or to erect an entirely new building, probably on the Town's land in the State Pit (Crabtree Farm). You may recall that following the August 2019 meeting at Turner Farm, this was the highest priority in the informal survey we conducted. Unfortunately, the virus intervened right after our 2020 Town Meeting. Moving forward with a major project like a potentially new Public Safety Building became too challenging to pursue. Public gatherings were restricted, so we were unable to schedule time for open debate and public meetings. And, the Board was and remains concerned about borrowing money in a time of economic uncertainty.

But we cannot put this off indefinitely. The people who use the building — EMS, Fire, and our Road Commissioner's crew — need an effective place to work. And our EMS crew in particular should have a building with a bathroom so they can wash up and change out of any potentially contaminated gear before returning home.

Here is the work that would be done in the short term:

- Open a doorway between the Fire Department and EMS meeting rooms
- Partition part of the Fire Department meeting room space and install a bathroom
- Remove and replace shingles on roof
- Replace or paint the trim boards
- Remove the existing brick chimney and replace it with a Metalbestos chimney
- Remove the partition between the ambulance and the adjacent fire engines
- Insulate the plow truck bay
- Ensure we have effective heat throughout the building
- Service and repair the garage doors as needed

With this in mind, we have decided to add a warrant article asking voters to approve \$80,000 for these repairs. The article reads:

Article 12: Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$80,000 from taxation for the Town Garage Reserve Fund?

(Budget Committee recommends approval)
(Select Board recommends approval)

The idea is to keep the existing facility going while we engage in a broader discussion about whether to build a new building or make longer-term, more substantial renovations to the existing one.

So here is the plan:

Date	Action
Currently	Use up to the \$40,000 in reserve funds to get a bathroom installed
May 8 th	Ask voters to approve \$80,000 in new funds to complete the repairs and renovations to the building
June 11 th	Solicit bids to perform the work
July 16 th	Award a contract
September 30 th	Work fully complete

Once we have a more solid and functional building in place, we can then begin discussions about whether to replace that building with a modern Public Safety Building.

The immediate question that will be on the ballot in May is whether voters will approve \$80,000 in taxes to make improvements to the existing building.