

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
3 ISSUES TO BE VOTED ON

Article I: To Borrow Money to Buy Fire Truck

It replaces two vehicles – a pumper and a rescue vehicle

When the budget was put together for the last annual meeting, a new vehicle was put on the Capital Budget for FY2028. We need to buy sooner. The original estimate was \$600,000 plus, but we found one being completed at a plant in Louisiana for under \$500,000. This involves borrowing, so there will be some interest cost. Two members of the Fire Department used fund-raised dollars to fly to Louisiana to inspect the truck. This truck checks all the boxes.

Article II: To Abate taxes for the Caspian Beach owned by the Town of Hardwick

This vote needs to be made by Greensboro voters.

Greensboro has never charged Hardwick taxes on the beach which is owned by the Town of Hardwick and used by residents of both communities. The law, passed recently, says that education taxes are not to be charged to Hardwick. It is only in the 'definitions' section of the law that it identifies 'municipal taxes' for levy – unless the Voters forgive taxes – and this can be done for up to 5 years (Education taxes were exempt by the State.)

Article III: To enact a local option tax

This would be a local options tax on 'short-term rentals,' served liquor and rooms and Meals. The Town does not need to do any policing. The State charges for these items When it collects taxes on these items and then sends the Town the applicable taxes.

The Warning for the informational meeting and for the Australian Vote is on the Town website and in The Barton Chronicle for 3 weeks.

The Informational meeting will be held after the Community Dinner in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, October 28 at 6:30 pm. The tables for the Community Dinner will be cleared and chairs set up. The folks putting on the Community Dinner have agreed to work to wind up that get-together early so that the hall can be set up for the Informational Meeting

This meeting will be streamed on Zoom, but it *is not* interactive. (In other words – you can watch the meeting online, but cannot participate online.) The session will be recorded – and, it should be available on the Selectboard Meetings page.

The vote will be held by Australian Ballot on Thursday, November 13th from 10 am to 7 pm. You will be Able to request a ballot from the Town Clerk by mail, or in person *at the Town Clerk's office*. When you receive an absentee ballot, you can mail it or put it in the drop-box outside the Clerk's office – or you may bring it to the Town Hall on voting day.

A sample ballot, the Warning for the meeting, and how to request an absentee ballot are all posted online. You may also call the Clerk's office with questions at 802-533-2911 during business hours.

Ballots will not be handed out at the Informational Meeting. The Absentee Ballot request form will be available at the Informational Meeting. A sample ballot is available online and posted in Town. There will be a sample ballot at the informational meeting.

Town of Greensboro

Selectboard Briefing: Fire Truck Replacement Proposal

Prepared by: Tim Brennan, Selectboard Vice Chair

Date: October 23, 2025

Background

Greensboro Fire Chief Dave Brochu has recommended that the Town replace two aging fire trucks with a single new pumper. The Selectboard has discussed this proposal at several meetings and agrees that upgrading the department's equipment is a prudent and necessary investment in public safety.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) advises that fire trucks be moved to reserve status after 15 years and retired after 25 years. Greensboro's primary pumper, purchased in 2006, has developed recurring electrical and pumping problems, resulting in costly repairs and three failures during active fires. The department's backup truck, dating from 1985, is well beyond its recommended service life.

Recommendation

Chief Brochu proposes purchasing a new pumper to replace both of these trucks. He explored several options and found that a new custom-built truck would cost approximately \$650,000 and require a two- to three-year delivery time. Through a broker, however, he located a new pumper available immediately for \$495,000. Two members of the Greensboro crew traveled to the broker in Alabama to see the truck, inspect it, and test drive it. They reported that they believed the truck was in excellent shape and would meet the town's needs.

At its July 9 meeting, the Selectboard voted to approve this purchase and has signed a sales agreement with Brindlee Mountain Fire Apparatus, contingent on voter authorization to borrow funds. A \$25,000 deposit has been made to secure the vehicle.

Financial Considerations

Because the purchase represents a long-term capital investment, the Selectboard recommends borrowing to finance the truck rather than drawing down the Town's Capital Fund.

- The Capital Fund does not have sufficient available funds to cover the purchase while providing for other town capital needs.
- However, the fund could support the required loan payments as reflected in the Capital Plan submitted to the 2025 Town Meeting.

- Under state statute, municipalities must receive voter approval to borrow, which must occur through Australian ballot.

The Selectboard is evaluating loan options through two commercial banks and the Vermont Bond Bank. The Bond Bank currently offers the most favorable interest rates but will not make new funds available until March 2026. To bridge the gap between voter approval and Bond Bank funding, the Town is exploring a bond anticipation loan with Community National Bank. The loan terms will be negotiated after voters authorize the borrowing.

Voter Approval

An Australian ballot vote is scheduled for Thursday, November 13, 2025, at the Town Office (polls open 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Absentee ballots will be available on request and must be received by the Town Clerk before the close of voting.

An informational meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at 6:30 p.m., at Fellowship Hall of the Greensboro United Church of Christ to provide details and answer questions.

Operational Impact

Once the new pumper is delivered, both the 2006 and 1985 trucks will be retired from service. This will improve reliability, reduce maintenance costs, and ensure the Fire Department can respond effectively to emergencies without relying on mutual aid for primary coverage.

Greensboro maintains mutual aid agreements with Hardwick and other neighboring towns to ensure continued coverage when apparatus is unavailable due to repairs or when other, specialized equipment is needed.

Chief Brochu observes:

“Your fire department has been concerned for some time about the reliability of our fire trucks. Our main truck is nearly 25 years old, and the backup is 40 years old. I have recommended to the Selectboard that we replace the pumper as soon as possible.”