

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF SEYMOUR
Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 6:30 PM
Seymour Town Hall – Norma Drummer Room**

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 9/16/25
TIME: 4:15 PM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Members Present: Annmarie Drugonis, Fred Stanek, Theresa Conroy, Trisha Danka, Robert Findley, Scott Andrews and Al Bruno (6:40 PM).

Others Present: Town Counsel, Richard Buturla; CAO/Treasurer/Town Moderator, Kurt Miller; Jay Pena, Tony Chaverri, Michael LoSasso, Assunta Snell, Rebecca Bennet, Andy North, Ed Zehall, Nikki O'Toole, Lori Miko, Beverly Lowden, Lilly Moir, Kristen Bruno, Nicole Heriot-Mikula and Dr. Susan Compton.

The Special Town Meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Town Moderator, Kurt Miller asked everyone to stand and salute the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Moderator read the warning of the Special Town Meeting into the record:

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Seymour, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that a Special Town Meeting will be held at Seymour Town Hall, 1 First Street, Seymour, Connecticut on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 6:30 P.M. for the following purpose:

ITEM 1. To discuss a Resolution:

- (a) To appropriate \$60,000,000 for the construction of a new Bungay Elementary School:
- (b) To finance said appropriation by issuing bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed \$20,000,000:
- (c) To authorize the First Selectwoman and Treasurer to determine the terms, conditions, and other details of the bonds or notes:
- (d) To declare the Town's intent to finance the project so that project costs may be temporarily advanced: to authorize the First Selectwoman and Treasurer to enter into agreements to bind the Town in connection with financing the project: and to determine that, if necessary, financing of the project on a taxable basis in the public interest: and
- (e) To authorize the First Selectwoman to apply for and accept or reject grants-in-aid for the project, and to authorize the First Selectwoman to execute agreements and other documents on behalf of the Town for the project and the financing of the project.

At the conclusion of the Special Town Meeting, the above item shall be submitted to a referendum vote on the voting tabulators or paper ballots by Town electors and qualified voters for approval or disapproval on Thursday, October 9, 2025 between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. Item 1 shall be placed upon the voting tabulators or paper ballots under the following heading:

Question 1.

"SHALL THE TOWN OF SEYMOUR APPROPRIATE \$60,000,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW BUNGAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION BY ISSUING THE TOWN'S BONDS OR NOTES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000,000?"

YES

NO

Voters approving said resolution will vote "YES" and those opposing said resolution will vote "NO".

Voting will be at the Seymour Community Center, 20 Pine Street, Seymour, CT 06483

Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's Office.

The Town Moderator explained that only eligible voters or property owners with at least \$1,000 in taxable property may speak. Speakers must give their name and address and have three minutes. Town officials or employees may only present facts, not take sides.

Public Comment:

Fred Stanek (22 North Benham Road), cochair of the Bungay Elementary School Building Committee, explained Bungay Elementary School's history: built in the early 1950s, opened in 1954, expanded in 1971, and upgraded in 1996. A prior Facilities Needs Committee assessed the school and submitted recommendations to the Board of Selectpersons in December 2023, leading to the formation of the Bungay Elementary School Building Committee in January 2024. Working with Antinozzi Associates architects, the committee reviewed renovation versus new construction costs. Findings showed a new school would be less expensive and qualify for higher state reimbursement (66% vs. 56%). Fred emphasized the need for a modern facility, citing health, safety, and educational benefits, as well as traffic and bus safety improvements. He compared the project's potential success to the positive outcomes of the Chatfield LoPresti School project in 2008, stressing that it is now Bungay's turn for renewal.

Jay Pena (8 Hine Street) asked whether there had been discussion about involving apprentices or union workers in the school project, highlighting the benefits of engaging local carpenters.

Tony Chaverri (20 Carriage Drive) asked about the cost and the estimates for renovating Bungay School vs building a new School. He spoke against building a new school.

Michael LoSasso from Antinozzi Associates discussed the reimbursement rates. A renovation project is 10% higher reimbursement rate than general reconstruction. This particular project demonstrates that new construction is a less expensive alternative to renovation. In 2023, legislation was passed that permits an additional 10% be applied to the project.

Kurt outlined the financial comparison between building a new Bungay Elementary School and renovating the existing one.

- **New School:** \$60M total cost, with 66.6% state reimbursement. Seymour's share would be about \$20M. Borrowed over 30 years, annual payments would be ~\$1.22M, with a tax impact of 0.659 mils. For a \$300K home, that equals about \$198 more per year.
- **Renovation:** \$15M cost, no state reimbursement. Annual payments ~\$1.16M, a 0.628 mil impact. For a \$300K home, about \$188 more per year.

The difference between the two options is only ~0.03 mils (\$10 annually on a \$300K home). Renovations wouldn't improve educational space, while a new school would meet modern teaching and safety needs. Interest rates could alter these projections, but currently, a new school offers more long-term value.

Assunta Snell (22 Charles Road) asked about viewing plans for the new school. She asked what renovations would be done.

Fred Stanek explained that only conceptual plans exist so far. Specifications have been submitted to the state, and if the referendum passes, an RFP will be issued for architects to bid

on the final design—Antinozzi Associates may or may not be chosen. A “renovation as new” would update systems like HVAC, windows, doors, ceilings, flooring, technology, and Wi-Fi but would also require displacing students during construction.

Rebecca Bennet (21A Kozey Lane), a nurse at Bungay School and a Bungay Elementary School Building Committee member, emphasized the need for a new school. She noted that Bungay originally attracted families to Seymour, but now lacks adequate space, especially for special education—some high-need students work in hallways. She stressed that renovating would force students into trailers, making learning difficult, and concluded that building a new school is the best solution for both children and the town.

Andy North (4 Ajellos Farm Road) a committee member and parent, shared his positive experiences with Bungay School, praising its teachers and community value. He noted the outdated electrical system prevented him from even donating air conditioners. Supporting a new school, he called it an investment in the community and thanked the committee for their efforts.

Ed Zehall (5 Davis Road) supported building a new school but raised concerns about the proposed location, citing potential water issues due to slope and elevation. He suggested using portable classrooms and rebuilding on the current site at a higher elevation. While not opposed to the project, he emphasized the need for careful consideration of the site. He also noted a new school would help attract young families to Seymour.

Nikki O’Toole (29 Deer Run Drive), a local realtor and grandparent of Bungay students, spoke in favor of building a new school. She compared the aging 1950s facility to old houses that become “money pits,” citing outdated plumbing as a major issue. She stressed the importance of investing in a new school for children, future generations, and the community’s legacy, while noting the drawbacks of renovation.

Lori Miko (9 Jefferson Street) supported building a new school and questioned whether the state reimbursement rate of 66–67% would remain the same if the project were delayed and costs increased.

Kurt stated they applied for the state reimbursement and it is locked in.

Lori continued on to ask about the potential plans.

Lilly Moir (15 High Ridge Road), a third-generation Bungay alum, spoke in favor of a new school. She shared her positive experiences at Bungay and emphasized that all Seymour students deserve pride in their schools. Rebuilding would create a better learning environment, attract families to town, and help lower taxes by broadening the tax base. She stressed that investing in Bungay School is investing in Seymour’s future.

Beverly Lowden (20 Hickory Lane) spoke in favor of a new Bungay school. She asked what was included in the renovation estimates.

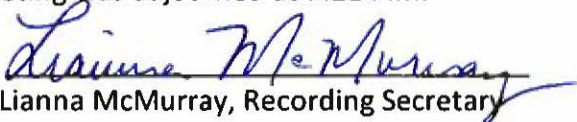
Kurt explained.

Kristen Bruno (10 MacConnie Court) praised the Bungay Elementary School Building Committee's efforts and spoke in favor of a new School. She highlighted her children's experiences and emphasized the school's needs.

Nicole Heriot-Mikula (58 West Street) a member of the Bungay School Rebuild Alliance, spoke in favor of a new school and shared upcoming referendum-related events. These include community walkthroughs at Bungay Elementary School on 9/24 (6:30PM) and 9/29 (7:30PM), Zoom Q&A sessions on 10/2 (9 AM) and 10/7 (7:30 PM), and after-school care on referendum day. She also mentioned lawn signs are available for supporters.

Moderator, Kurt Miller, explained that the Special Town Meeting would be adjourned to a Referendum vote on the voting tabulators or paper ballots by town electors and qualified voters for approval or disapproval on Thursday, October 9th 2025 between the hours of 6:00 AM an 8:00 PM at the Seymour Community Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 P.M.

Attest: 
Lianna McMurray, Recording Secretary