

SO – WHAT ARE WE VOTING ON IN ADDTION TO TOWN COUNCIL & SCHOOL BOARD POSITIONS?

In addition to two Town Councilor seats and two School Board positions for RSU #25, voters of the Town of Bucksport are being asked to vote on two referendum questions. The purpose of this article is to explain what these questions are all about. This article is not meant to advocate for or against these referendum questions – but simply to explain what they involve and where they originated.

- 1. Question 1: Shall the Resolve entitled ‘Borrowing of up to \$560,000 for the purpose of replacing two culverts on Jacob Buck Pond and Bucks Mills Roads be approved?
Yes No**

The Town of Bucksport has been offered a grant from the Maine Department of Transportation for \$190,000 toward the replacement of two major culverts in the community. One is located on Bucks Mills Road at White’s Brook and the other is on Jacob Buck Pond Road at Stubbs Brook. These culverts are in poor condition and located on Town owned/maintained roads. They are also high on the State’s list for replacement in order to attain fish passage through the installation of culvert types that will allow for that. The total cost of replacement of these two culverts has been estimated at \$750,000. Acceptance of the MDOT grant would leave \$560,000 to be funded locally. The proposal is to borrow for this project with a fifteen year repayment. The Town will have to eventually replace these two culverts. Acceptance of these grants will help to defray that cost. The financial impact to the Town’s debt service is shown on the ballot itself

- 2. Question 2: Shall an ordinance be approved titled “Amendment to the Council-Manager Charter of the Town of Bucksport, Article 9, Referendum & Initiatives, Section 9.04 Ordinances, Orders or Resolves Submitted to Popular Vote, Section 2 to increase the referendum funding requirement from \$250,000 to \$300,000.”**

The purpose of this change to the Town Charter is to increase the dollar amount that the Town Council can approve for projects without voter approval from \$250,000 to \$300,000. This change was proposed after the Town was offered a \$275,000 grant from the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) for replacement of retaining walls in the downtown area which are deteriorating, which required a 50% match to bring the total project to \$550,000. Under the current Charter regulations, the Town Council could not accept the full \$275,000 grant because the match required would have been over the \$250,000 limit. These retaining walls are in bad shape and the Town will have to replace them and some concern was expressed that the \$250,000 limit was not sufficient to address matching grant opportunities for large projects.