

# NOTICE OF REFERENDUM ELECTION

NOVEMBER 8, 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that at an election to be held in the Town of Springdale of the State of Wisconsin, on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, the following questions will be submitted to a vote of the people pursuant to law:

**Question 1:** Resolved, that “We the People” of the Town of Springdale, Dane County, Wisconsin, seek to reclaim democracy from the expansion of corporate personhood rights and the corrupting influence of unregulated political contributions and spending. We stand with communities across the country to support passage of an amendment to the United States Constitution stating:

1. Only human beings are endowed with constitutional rights – not corporations, unions, nonprofits or other artificial entities, and
2. Money is not speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech.

Be It Further Resolved, that the Town of Springdale Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to our state and federal representatives with instructions to enact resolutions and legislation to advance this effort.”

Shall the Town of Springdale electors adopt the foregoing resolution?

**Explanation** – Question 1 relates to the United States Supreme Court “Citizens United” decision in 2010. In this decision, the Court decided that corporations and unions are entitled to “personhood” and therefore, lawmakers cannot limit the amount of money they can spend to influence elections. If the majority of Springdale voters vote “yes” on this question, the town clerk will send a letter to all of our elected representatives in Washington, D.C. advising that Springdale voters support a constitutional amendment to overturn “Citizens United.” Seventy-seven other Wisconsin towns, villages and cities have already affirmatively voted to send similar messages to our legislators. Mount Horeb, New Glarus and several towns in Green County will be holding a similar referendum in November.

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**Question 2:** Should the Town of Springdale participate in the Mt. Horeb Fire Department Joint Public Safety Building project to provide space for the Fire Department and emergency medical services (EMS) which provide services in the Town of Springdale, at the cost to the Town of up to \$2,183,558 (includes principal and interest) financed up to 40 years?

**Explanation** – Question 2 asks the voters to decide whether the Town should financially support the proposed new building for the Mt. Horeb Area Joint Fire Department and EMS. (The Mount Horeb Police Department will also be housed in the new building and those costs will be borne entirely by the Village of Mt. Horeb.)

It is estimated that owners of a home valued at approximately \$300,000 would pay \$90/year in increased taxes. This is an advisory referendum to the Town Board. After the vote of the Springdale electors and the electors in the other municipalities in the Fire Department and EMS district, the seven town boards and the Village of Mt. Horeb will meet in December, 2016, to determine whether the new building will begin construction in 2017.

The Town Board sees the following reasons to support the new building:

1. It is to the Town of Springdale's advantage to continue as a member of the joint Fire Department and EMS district because there is no practical alternative for fire and EMS services in our area. If the new building is approved by the other municipalities and not Springdale, the Town of Springdale will be forfeiting its membership in the joint Fire Department and EMS district. We would then have to contract with another fire department, which is likely to increase costs to the Town, increase response time and potentially increase homeowner's insurance premiums.
2. The current building is in need of major repairs. Making necessary repairs and improvements to the current fire station would be a short-term solution. The joint Fire Department and EMS district is increasing in population. The current location in the center of the Village of Mt. Horeb does not provide sufficient space to meet the needs of this growing population and will soon be outgrown.
3. Interest rates are low. It appears reasonable to begin construction before the rates increase.

For more information, watch the Fire Department's website, [www.fdmh.org](http://www.fdmh.org).

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**Question 3:** Shall the person holding the office of Town Clerk in the Town of Springdale be appointed by the Town Board?

**Question 4:** Shall the person holding the office of Town Treasurer in the Town of Springdale be appointed by the Town Board?

Explanation – Questions 3 and 4 ask the voters to decide whether the job of clerk and the job of treasurer should be appointed/hired by the Town Board. This is a binding referendum; the Town Board may only appoint/hire the clerk and treasurer if a majority of electors vote “yes.” This is a change from the current process by which the clerk and treasurer are elected every two years. In April, 2017, the incumbents Treasurer Nona Erfurth and Clerk Vicki Anderson will retire. If the voters vote “yes” and support appointing/hiring the clerk and treasurer, a job description will be advertised and candidates interviewed for the positions in the first quarter of 2017. If the voters vote “no” and prefer to elect a clerk and treasurer, candidates will follow the nomination and candidacy process outlined in state law.

The Town Board sees the following advantages to appointing/hiring the clerk and treasurer:

1. An appointed clerk and treasurer could provide services with more stability, efficiency and continuity. The jobs of clerk and treasurer have become more complex with the population growth in Springdale and with the frequently changing state laws and policies that impact town government. The jobs are too large and the learning curve too long to expect an applicant to learn the job and be subject to an election every two years.
2. More applicants may be interested in the appointed/hired positions since an election would not be required every two years. Whereas, an elected clerk and treasurer must go through the election process every two years, even if no one else is interested in the position. The appointed/hired clerk and treasurer could be hired for a three-year contract that may be renewable. This added stability is likely to make the positions more appealing to qualified applicants.

3. The job description for an appointed clerk may be broader than the job description for an elected clerk. The Town through the Town Board outlines the job responsibilities of an appointed/hired clerk. Whereas, an elected clerk can be required to fulfill only the responsibilities outlined in State law. An appointed/hired clerk would be advantageous because the position could include administrative tasks in addition to the legally required clerk tasks.

4. Springdale citizens could evaluate the job being done by an appointed/hired clerk and treasurer promptly, after the first six months of employment. In contrast, the first job review for an elected clerk and treasurer is the election after two years on the job. The appointed/hired clerk and treasurer would be employees of the Town, as is the Town Patrolman, and subject to job performance reviews and termination with just cause. The appointed/hired clerk and treasurer could be hired for a three-year contract at most.

5. More people could apply for the jobs. With appointed positions, the candidates may be a resident of Springdale or a non-resident. Whereas, an elected clerk and treasurer must always reside in Springdale. Appointed positions could give the Town Board a greater number of qualified applicants to choose from, and would extend the employment opportunities to people who are not residents of Springdale.

6. The clerk and treasurer are non-voting positions. Therefore, appointing/hiring them does not reduce citizen control of government decisions.

DONE in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_,  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

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*(Signature of Town Clerk)*

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