

*City of Taunton
Office of the Mayor*



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O'CONNELL THANKS VOTERS FOR SUPPORT OF PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Taunton, MA... Today Mayor Shaunna O'Connell expressed her appreciation to Taunton voters for passing the Special Election referendum on Saturday, April 29, 2023 in support of the new public safety facility which will help first responders work in a safer environment and better serve the City of Taunton. The ballot question passed with over 65% of the vote.

“This project is long overdue and I am grateful for the teamwork that has brought us together to address the City’s dire need for an updated public safety building. This is a major step forward for Taunton in becoming a leading city in the Commonwealth. This vote will have a positive impact for generations. Thank you to our Police and Fire Chiefs, City Council, Police and Fire Departments and their unions, and the people of Taunton for supporting this plan to move our City forward,” said O’Connell.

The O’Connell administration and Project Team held multiple community information sessions throughout the City and hosted open houses at the Police and Fire stations that highlighted the extreme need for a new building. Four out of five of the City’s fire stations are over 100 years old built to accommodate horses and wagons, and the Police Department has been housed in “temporary” locations for over 40 years. The City’s Chief Financial Officer, Patrick Dello Russo, devised a financial plan that allowed the City to fund the Bristol-Plymouth School construction project within the City budget and partially funded the public safety facility with an appropriation of \$11.4 million. The remaining amount of the project needed approval of the voters for a debt exclusion of \$67.7 million.

Police Chief Edward Walsh emphasized that each year the cost of the project increases, so the right time to move forward is now. “We appreciate the Mayor’s strong commitment to moving this project forward and we’re glad the residents agreed and voted to fund the public safety facility. This project is long overdue and we’re looking forward to the next steps,” said Walsh.

“We’re grateful to Mayor O’Connell and her administration for recognizing how important this project is to the Fire Department and to the City of Taunton,” said Fire Chief Timothy Bradshaw. “We have had to make do for a long time. We are looking forward to finally having the training facilities we need as well as adequate maintenance bays, decontamination areas, and safe living spaces for our firefighters.”

The next step in the process will be the preparation of the site at 90 County Street to begin construction in the spring of 2024. To follow the ongoing process of the public safety facility project, please visit the City of Taunton website at taunton-ma.gov. ###