Pierson Library, Historic Town Hall and Municipal Campus Projects Bond Survey
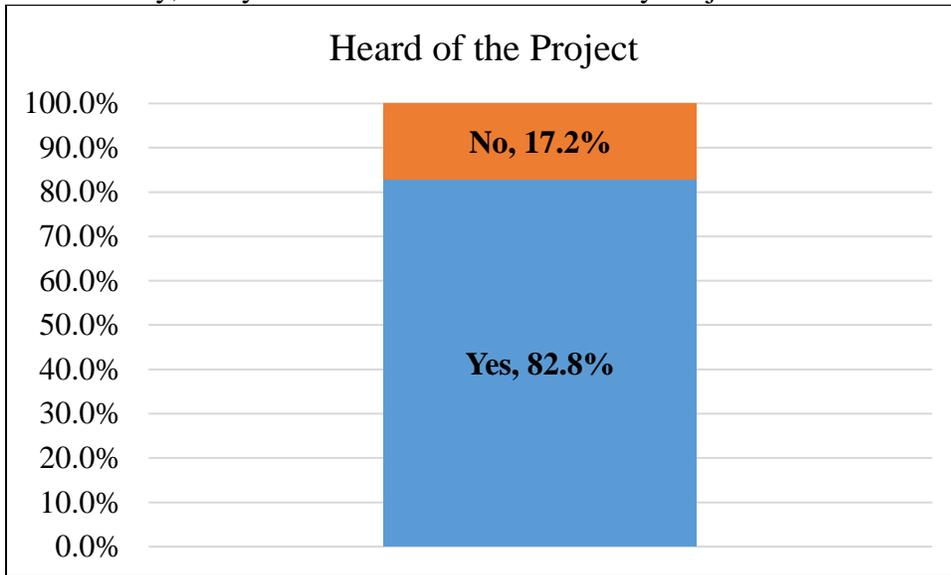
Methods:
The Town of Shelburne Selectboard and Pierson Library Trustees sought input on community support for two different bond amounts to support components of a Pierson Library renovation, Historic Town Hall restoration and associated municipal complex parking, pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow challenges. A survey instrument was developed and administered in collaboration with a third-party consultant to test levels of support for two bond levels ($3 million and $6.5 million) that would address, respectively, some of the needs or all of the needs related to these projects.

The survey was mailed out to a list of ~5,480 registered Shelburne voters after Town Meeting day. Recipients were encouraged to respond with an offer to enter to win randomly-awarded cash cards. The following analysis includes the responses of 1,188 registered Shelburne voters. Standard response rate for this type of mail-out survey methodology is around 10%. We were pleasantly surprised to note a nearly 22% response rate for this survey. The high level of participation is an indicator of the community's interest in these projects and associated expenses.
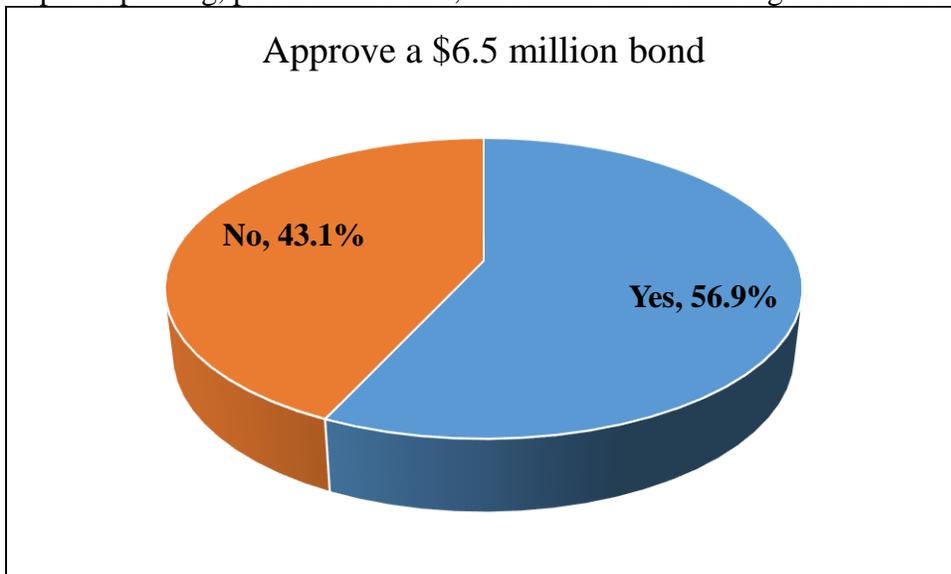
Additionally, the results presented below are highly representative to the entire community, with a Confidence Level of 99% and a Confidence Interval (Margin of Error) of +/-3.3%. In lay terms, this means that if this survey were conducted 100 times, 99 of those times, the results would come back within a range of plus or minus 3.3%
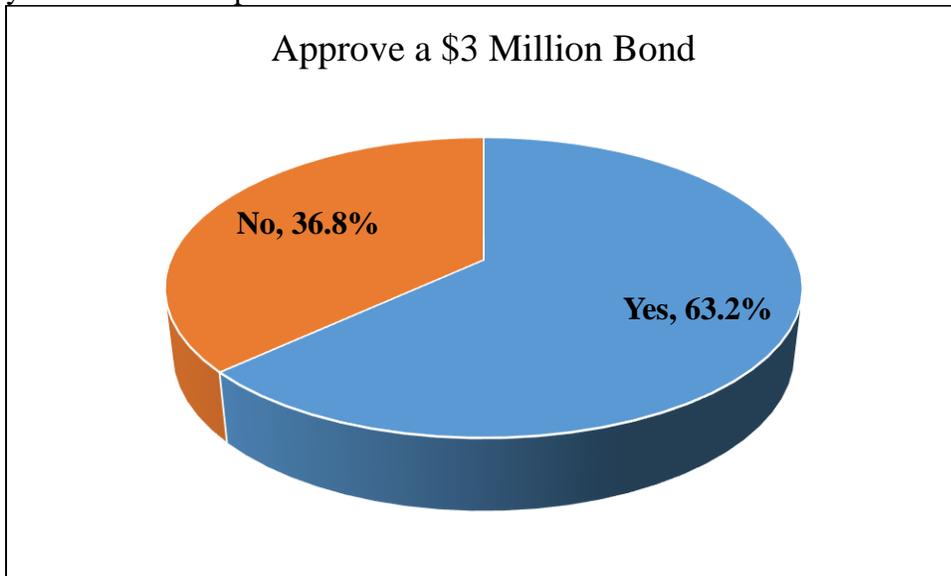
Univariate Frequency Analysis:

Before today, had you heard of the Pierson Library Project?
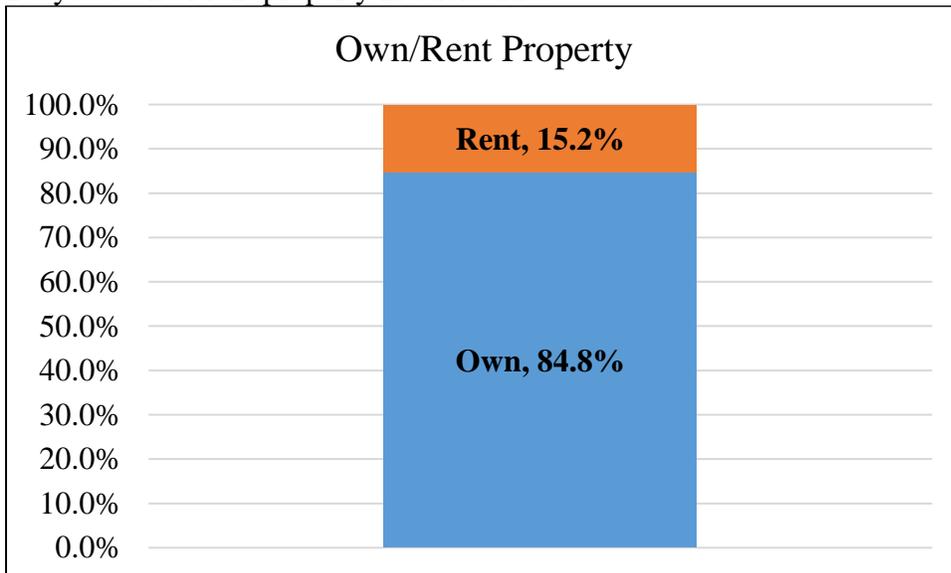
Heard of the Project

No, 17.2%

Yes, 82.8%

Would you vote to approve a $6.5 million bond to fully address the ongoing Pierson Library maintenance and space issues, to provide needed restoration for the historic Town Hall, and to improve parking, pedestrian access, and traffic flow challenges on the municipal campus?

Approve a $6.5 million bond

No, 43.1%

Yes, 56.9%

Would you vote to approve a $3 million bond to undertake library renovations focused on the youth area and to provide needed renovations for the historic Town Hall?

Approve a $3 Million Bond
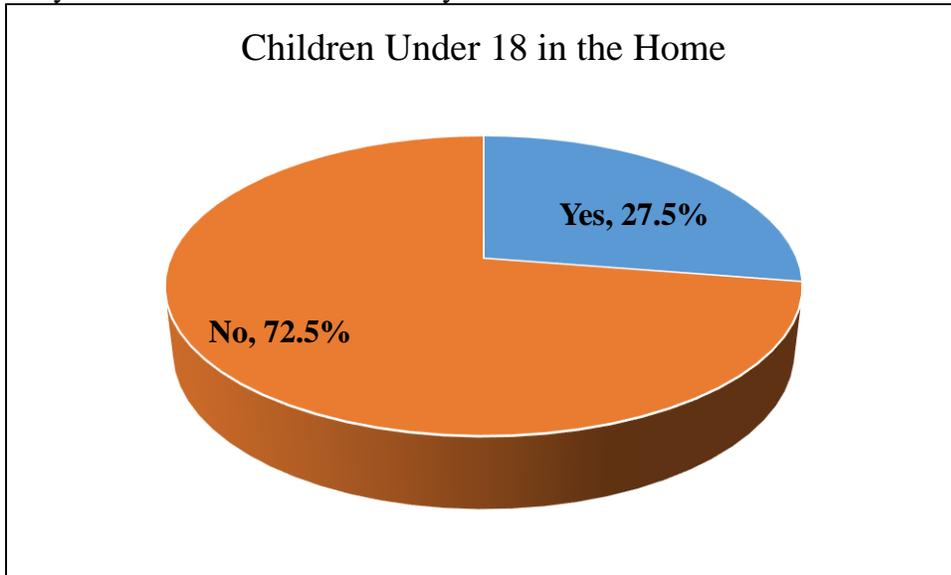
No, 36.8%

Yes, 63.2%

Do you own or rent property in Shelburne?

Own/Rent Property

Rent, 15.2%

Own, 84.8%

Shelburne renter households represent 22.9% of total households, with owner households representing the balance- 77.9%.

Do you have children under 18 in your household?

Children Under 18 in the Home

Yes, 27.5%

No, 72.5%

32% of Shelburne households have one or more people under 18 years of age.

Age

Percentages based on 18+ population only	Survey Pop.	Shelburne Pop.
18-24	5.8%	9.0%
25-34	5.5%	6.5%
35-44	10.4%	16.2%
45-54	16.8%	22.0%
55-64	23.6%	17.7%
65-74	18.7%	13.5%
Over 75	19.1%	15.1%

Typical for this type of research, younger demographics are less likely to respond while older demographics are more likely to respond. The differences between respondent ages and population ages is within typical margins of error for the Census estimates and present no concerns.

Income

	Survey Pop.	Shelburne Pop.
Less than $50,000	21.0%	24.7%
$50,000-$100,000	30.7%	22.7%
$100,000-$200,000	33.5%	32.0%
More than $200,000	14.8%	18.7%

Cross-tabulations: $6.5 Million

Generally-speaking, any cross tabulation results with a Chi-Square of under 0.1 can be said to have a high level of validity. We have provided all results regardless of level of validity.

Chi-Sq. .000		Respondent Own/Rent	
		Own	Rent
$6.5 million	No	47.2%	21.8%
	Yes	52.8%	78.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%

Property Owners are slightly more likely (52.8%) to support the $6.5 million bond level than not support (47.2%). Renters are much more likely to support (78.2%) the $6.5 million bond level than not support (21.8%).

Chi-Sq. .069		Respondent Children at Home	
		No	Yes
$6.5 million	No	44.2%	38.3%
	Yes	55.8%	61.7%
Total		100.0%	100.0%

Respondents with children in the home are more likely to support the $6.5 million bond option.

Chi-Sq. .020		Respondent Age						
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and Over
$6.5 million	No	34.8%	39.1%	34.2%	45.3%	48.5%	47.1%	36.3%
	Yes	65.2%	60.9%	65.8%	54.7%	51.5%	52.9%	63.7%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

		Respondent Income			
Chi-Sq. .005		Less than $50,000	$50,000-$100,000	$100,000-$200,000	Over $200,000
$6.5 million	No	44.5%	42.2%	33.4%	48.7%
	Yes	55.5%	57.8%	66.6%	51.3%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Respondents with incomes between $100,000 and $200,000 are most likely to support the $6.5 million bond while the wealthiest respondents, those with incomes over $200,000, are least likely to support this option.

Cross-tabulations: $3 Million

Chi-Sq. .386 (No significant difference)		Respondent Own/Rent	
		Own	Rent
$3 million	No	37.0%	33.3%
	Yes	63.0%	66.7%
Total		100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Sq. .032		Respondent Children at Home	
		No	Yes
$3 million	No	38.0%	30.9%
	Yes	62.0%	69.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Sq. .220 (No significant difference)		Respondent Age						
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and Over
$3 million	No	35.5%	30.6%	35.7%	28.4%	40.4%	38.5%	38.6%
	Yes	64.5%	69.4%	64.3%	71.6%	59.6%	61.5%	61.4%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

		Income			
Chi-Sq. .002		Less than $50,000	$50,000-$100,000	$100,000-$200,000	Over $200,000
$3 million	No	43.7%	36.7%	27.2%	36.4%
	Yes	56.3%	63.3%	72.8%	63.6%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Additional Comments- Synopsized

$6.5 million bond is high but restoration worth expense
$6.5 million bond is the first choice but is $3 million in the only one offered, would still vote for it
1) $6.5 is exorbitant amount 2) Support $3 million only for simple community oriented space 3) Parking and pedestrian access is fine 4) Budget should be funded by private dollars 5) Consider regional library sharing costs with Charlotte and Hinesburg
1) Believes library is important, but concerned about finances. 2) Town hall needs repairs
1) Cannot afford to say yes because of increased taxes due to legal fees, and paying for SCS renovations
1) Can't afford a bond due to tax increases 2) Gave donations for project 3) Donations would be the way to complete this project
1) Chose "no" to the $3 million bond in fear of, and to emphasize support for the $6.5 million bond. 2) Would support $3 million bond if that was the only choice.
1) Citizens are tired of raising taxes 2) Shelburne isn't meant to be a city like Burlington
1) Combine the school library w/ the public library? 2) The inefficiency of two libraries in town must have a real cost that could help to satisfy some of the repair expenses
1) Cost is too high 2) No need for courtyard
1) Could be interested in option #2 with more detail 2) Not in support of new building at $6.5 million
1) Demo of a decent building is a waste, other potential uses for this space. 2) More direct access for fire apparatus is important 3) Two great ball fields but don't relate to this issue, should be fixed 4) Keep much needed Town Hall Restoration as a separate issue
1) Doesn't know what the costs for the library and town hall would fix, the library seems fine. 2) Call to discuss further 985-2007.
1) Doesn't see use of improved parking and improved pedestrian access 2) Wants to know if the "emergency vehicles only" exit by the train station will be open to the public and the traffic will be squeezed into "lanes"
1) Doesn't see what's "needed" for both library and Town Hall more "wants" 2) Doesn't think library has space issue 3) Would be willing to vote for if there was more information on the "issues"
1) Don't like the design. 2) Discouraged that money support from wealthy Shelburne residents was not obtained. 3) 50% of cost should have been promised beforehand. 4) Same funding as 4 years ago
1) Don't need a new library, never crowded, enough books 2) Last year approved SCS bond, and new fire truck this year 3) Bonds put pressure on the higher assessed homes 4) Cost estimates are too high
1) Don't need another library 2) There's 1 computer store, 2 library's, 2 schools, 7 churches, 4 stores (that all hold books)
1) Focus on library not town hall renovation 2) Issues should be voted on separately 3) Tax budget doesn't allow for increase to fix library
1) Handicap parking near entrance? 2) Add bathrooms and handicap access in Town Hall performance space?
1) How long is bond meant to run? 2) New parking configuration does not significantly increase number of parking space. 3) Historic Town Hall is redundant; 4)"Campus" is too crowded, library doesn't need to stay there. Shopping center has traffic may have space for new building
1) How much is the library really being used? 2) Restoration could be down at a cheaper cost
1) Improved library increases value of homes; helpful for vibrant community 2) Town Hall restoration is important
1) Indicate how many years bond would run. 2) Having to walk across the improved fire vehicle egress to get from your car to the library does not look safer. 3) Town center too crowded 4) Recommends against shared parking with fire department
1) Justify need for project, don't see problem w/ current library 2) Option #2 can incorporate some of the "flexible spaces for quiet etc." into the historic Town Hall
1) Library good 2) Tax increase bad
1) Library is fine but wants more senior programs 2) For $3 million bond can't it be done at lower cost?
1) Library should be repaired not replaced 2) Funds should be private donated and not tax money
Voting yes only if designs for option 1 are "acceptable", more historic looking
1) Member of the Shelburne Garden Club that needs room to meet 2) Library is the only space where it's free 3) If larger library is built, the rooms should remain free
1) No new taxes 2) Restoring library in electronic age is a waste
1) Not sure on numbers 1-3 because needs more information 2) What needs to be restored for the Town Hall? 3) What are the maintenance/space issues for the library?
1) Not willing to pay for new facilities due to town's poor showing of its fiduciary responsibilities 2) Neighborhood (Martindale) has been without street lighting 3) Spend tax money more wisely before new renovations

1) Plan is poorly designed 2) People have to go up a flight of stairs to work at a table, do other activities 3) Put children's area on the second floor
1) Plan sketch looks like the parking space in front of and near the library are eliminated making short trips less convenient 2) Improve buildings but don't reduce access
1) Postponing improvements would increase costs 2) If the $3 million bond were the only option would vote for it
1) Prefer $6 million 2) Connectivity is biggest challenge 3) Site design continues to prioritize cars 4) Design of building is unfitting
1) Prefer option #1 2) Can town residents purchase the bonds?
1) Prefer option #2 though it doesn't solve all the problems 2) For option #1 improve and update without new structure, taxes are too high 3) Perhaps bridge between the two options
1) Prefers having new library 2) Don't fix library halfway 3) Not thrilled w/ library being attached to Town Hall 4) Has the parking in front of the library been eliminated? Hurts seniors and kids
1) Private participation should be encouraged 2) New facility should include community room with Kitchenette, a young adult reading room, a computer/internet access room
1) Probably would vote for library but taxes are getting at critical high level 2) Does this proposal deal with the Town Hall that's attached? 3) Where will the library be during construction?
1) Project was sold as privately funded 2) Actually privately fund it and will support
1) Proposed plan for the library is poorly designed 2) Add-ons for library should be removed 3) Costs for library should be separated from cost of Town Hall
1) Provide improved accessible library spaces 2) Community meeting rooms 3) Ground level youth area
1) Roof should be green 2) Water permeable structures are better for clean waterways 3) More trees for shade and offset CO^2
1) Segregate library needs from municipal (town hall) needs 2)Don't focus on youth area (no senior center) 3) $6 million is too big for personal budget
1) Separate Pierson Library from the Town and operating as a non-profit organization 2) Town could fund the majority of the operating costs 3) Would enable a new building without tax burden 4) Project isn't viable in current form
1) Should be an option to restore Town Hall, improve parking, pedestrian and traffic, at lower cost 2) What are statistics on library use? 3) If school spending was reduced would be in favor of projects
1) Small town shouldn't build/maintain facilities for large towns 2) Cooperative efforts among libraries of neighboring towns; let people know of other libraries
1) Spend money now rather than let things get worse and rely on future residents 2) Don't like the way people in charge spend money 3) Survey could have been done online (waste of paper)
1) Stack space in library should increase 2) Necessary to develop and maintain vibrant community center
1) Taxes are already too high. 2) Plans should suggest both upgrades to library services and building
1) Taxes are too high in Shelburne, kids can't afford to live in hometown 2) Media stated the money was going to be raised privately, what happened?
1) Taxes in VT are too high, state is in downward demographic spiral - fewer births, more seniors 2) Project should not be built with taxpayer support 3) Scale it down and a fundraising drive should be attempted
1) There needs to be meeting rooms, community use, business/technology center, and youth area for library 2) What existing spaces could be used for these ideas? 3) Existing library was built to "last generations" as well
1) There should be fundraising 2) Duplicating facilities with the high school tax already in place 3) Property taxes are too high
1) Town and state taxes are too much 2) Library building is 35 years old and shouldn't need to be replaced
1) Town deserves better public library without having to pay a pee to go to Burlington library 2) Left turn exit lane would be essential 3) Include easy access to Shelburne Road
1) Town Hall is used more than library; more for Town Hall renovation 2) Would be in support of library expansion if it had a more welcoming atmosphere 3) There's plenty of parking in the municipal offices area
1) Wants to see Town Hall restored 2) Will not support either bond with the way the library looks, should look more historic
1) Wants to support $6.5 million bond but doesn't know how long the bond will be for 2) If the $3.5 million bond were approved would the renovations be adequate and for how long?
1) Wants to support but amount too high 2) Property taxes are very high due to renovations needed at SCS
1) When will there be a presentation of this project in full? 2) Why isn't the project privately funded anymore?
1) When would the bond be paid off? 2) Would our taxes go back down?
2) What renovations are required for the town hall? 3) How long would the new taxes be in effect (how many years)?
1) Will vote for whichever amount 2) Loves the library and wants it to grow

1) Will vote to support whichever option is on final ballot. 2) Lives at Wake Robin.
1) Would rather spend the money once than only do 1/2 and spend more later 2) Happy to support library and town hall - important to town
1) Would support a $1-1.5 million dollar bond 2) Taxes are going up for residents
1) Would there be an improvement in annual maintenance and utility costs in either of the options? 2) Would support either approval but would prefer the $6.5 million bond
3/4 of the cost should be covered by fundraising. Current infrastructure of library is inadequate. Supports bond increase that just supports a new library.
Adding to already high property taxes is a hardship for many citizens.
Answer depends on total town debt over next 10-15 years (Bay Road bridge, sewage treatment plant upgrade, and other debt)
Are youth upgrades in option #1 as well?
Cannot afford property tax increase
Can't afford on fixed income
Can't help with library because taxes are too high; basic family needs need to be met first
Community library could have perhaps been considered in renovation to community school
Complains about increase in taxes for other demands of the town
Confused whether the library will be new building or modifying current structure
Currently do not or would not use library due to current taxes and financial situation
Doesn't know enough about town facilities to make intelligent questions 1-3
Excited for a new library, believes it's worth it for community
First option is too expensive and not necessary
Fix it well, or don't do it part way.
For $3 million bond: only for existing youth area and town hall, no new construction. Disagree with design, should be more historic looking. Too much money and increase in our taxes, look for private supplement of 1/2 of funds.
For option #1 ($6.5 million bond) would want to see some cuts in other areas before approving something that expensive
For the $6.5 million bond, raise 20% privately then bond the rest.
For the rent/own question = lives at Wake Robin
For the rent/own question = lives at Wake Robin (monthly fee)
Grandchildren under 18 who live in Shelburne (?)
Happy to support upgrades to Shelburne library, great asset to community
Hard to estimate household income
Has the library committee applied for grants? Library is old and in need of renovations but wants to see a mix grant, other fundraiser and bond to go to a new library, not ask tax-payers
Have enough buildings don't build a new one, repurpose the town hall (old school). Debt should be cleared prior to adding additional projects. Give staff raises, and the library a better budget for supplies.
How long will this bond be for?
How many years would the $6.5 million bond be for?
How were these amounts of money decided upon for the renovations?
If the library is going to be reconstructed go for full renovation otherwise they'll be another bond in a few years.
Improvements in library should be softer lighting, and better carpeting
In favor of long term approach, but can't afford taxes
In support of option 1; library is important to a good town
Is this the current plan vs a new library or an option?
Issues should be separate and voted on.
Larger project is more what is needed for community
Libraries are going instinct; spending money to fix it would be a waste
Library building is not that old compared to the Town Hall; don't spend $6.5 million on new one
Library could separate from the town if it could raise more money
Library is complete waste of money
Library is heart of community and needs a transplant
Library needs to be a place for community gathering and be an asset to the community
Love the library

Loves idea of the full plan, but can't keep adding to already high taxes
Loves the Pierson Library
Money could be better used to fix Bay Road Bridge, Town Center improvements, water and sewer improvements.
More interested in library than Town Hall
Need a new library
Need to relocate fire station first, it's in the wrong location
New library with more open/airy feel would be a good community gathering place
New library would be waste of money and bad idea
No need for a library taxes are too high
No tax relief in Shelburne, find more creative ways to fund besides bonds
Not opposed to projects, but costs are high. Wants more detail about the costs and scope of the project.
Not willing to approve $3 million bond at this time
Only willing if the amount it $1.5 million.
Option 1 ($6.5 million bond) is too big
Option 1 would be too hard of a financial impact on property taxes
Options were too expensive
Parents own house - college student
Prefers library to have front at Shelburne Road
Probably for the $6.5 million bond but wants more info.
Problem of "sue-happy" select board with $30,000 legal budget and over $298,000 in bills; money should go to library
Property taxes are too high so can't support
Property taxes are too high, can't afford more
Renting but own 1/6th interest in a house and property in Shelburne
Renting but own a share in a home and property - live in Shelburne
Said yes to $6.5 million bond if taxes were reduced by the same amount the next year.
Separate the library and town hall as two issues and let the two be voted on.
Space between Historic Town Hall and Schip's must stay, can't support plan that takes them out
Start using the SCS library
Stop tax increases
Strongly supports library project
Student so living and income questions don't apply
Student that lives with parents
Support option #1 but would vote for smaller bond is necessary; youth needs renovation
Supports improvements but at another time; Shelburne is taking on a lot of expensive projects
Taxes are high, don't need to renovate all buildings to top notch facilities
Taxes are too expensive
Taxes are too high already (give taxpayers a break), combine town & school libraries at SCS, raise donations to renovate town hall
Taxes need to go down then consider new library
Thanks committee for working on project
The picture of the library is ugly, doesn't go with town of Shelburne.
The vibrant library staff to maintain "family inclusiveness" is important for the Pierson library
There are more important things to do first, not a priority
Time for improvements
Too much has been spend on legal fees (rail road)
Traffic issue doesn't seem important
Very against projects
Vote is yes if the library won't be architecturally modern
Voted no because wants the library and town hall to be separate issues.
Voted no because: 1) Doesn't like structure of new library 2) Town Hall should be restored but not attached to cold, utilitarian modern structure. - Don't enter name in for $100 cash card

Voted no on #2 option because doesn't want to have the library renovation done half way. Wants complete renovation.
Wake Robin resident
Wants a more complete description of: 1) fire vehicle egress 2) left-turn exit lane 3) parking 4) what restoration of town hall? 5) clearer diagram of new library positioning 6) details of energy-efficient modifications
Wants Classic New England Style building that will fit with Historic Town Hall and Hall Center
Wants design of option 1 to go with architecture of Town Hall, not modern.
Wants details outlining: yearly savings from energy efficiently, details around sustainability, define "last for generations"?
Wants new library but should be a more minimal cost
Wants to see breakdown between money for Town Hall and for Library
Wants to see intergenerational activities and multiage usage stressed more
Wants to see library and Town Hall renovated and restored but can't afford increase in taxes
Wants town ballot proposal to "split the difference" between ideal but pragmatic library renovation
Wants Town hall restoration and the new library issue to be separated. More likely to vote the $6.5 million bond if other town taxes were also not increasing.
What value does the Town Hall provide the Town for $3 million?
Why can't option 2 support the "fire vehicle express" and pedestrian and traffic flow?
Willing to split the difference because can't afford that high of an increase in taxes
Would be more likely to vote yes for $6.5 million bond if the site map showed vehicular access from Harbor Road to and from the library
Would like option 1 but price tag is too high
Would prefer the town to upgrade the entire complex, more willing to pay for than the $3 million bond.
Would support this amount for a senior center instead
Would support update on the building for $1 million but not $3 million
Would vote for either option that appears