



SOUTH COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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NK voters to decide on Bostitch, septic program bonds

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By James Bessette Staff Writer

On Nov. 8, North Kingstown voters will decide if the town will spend upward of \$1.8 million to purchase and renovate the former Bostitch Building on Callahan Road and to set aside up to \$2 million to fund the community septic system loan program.

The Bostitch building, 545 Callahan Road, North Kingstown, houses the town Fire Maintenance building, and will also house town records and golf course equipment. Then-Town Manager Michael Embury authorized the town to enter into a 10-year lease with Quonset Development Corporation for the building in 2013. The town is paying \$114,000 annually for the first five years of the lease, and will pay \$127,000 per year for the final five years, with an option to buy the building.

The lease includes allocating \$4,792 of the monthly payment for a "buyout discount" during the first five years and \$5,295 each month for the final five years. As of Aug. 1, \$172,500 had accumulated in that fund.

An estimated \$350,000 of the bond funds would be used for building upgrades and renovations, including information technology, electrical, HVAC, parking and paving, overhead doors, plumbing, file storage, racks and lighting in the building. To date, \$234,685 in improvements have been made to accommodate the fire department and the municipal golf course, Director of Public Works Phil Bergeron said in an Aug. 2 email to Town Manager Thomas Mulligan.

Septic system loan program

Funding the town's septic system loan program will guarantee \$2 million is set aside to help homeowners upgrade from cesspools to septic systems or to upgrade septic systems. The program has been in place since 2002, and has issued about 250 loans totaling \$2.5 million in that time, town Water Quality Specialist G. Timothy Cranston said.

Cranston said interested residents apply for the program on the town website - north.kingstown.org - or through Rhode Island Housing & Mortgage Finance Corp. In the application, residents would include a good-faith estimate from a contractor as to how much the upgrades would cost and the town determines the awards after all the financial statements are reviewed. Cranston said the goal is to eliminate cesspools, and about 50-60 percent of the loans helped residents repair failed leach fields.

"We want to have this funding available for people to say 'yeah, I want to get rid of the cesspools,'" Cranston said. Cranston also said loans are offered in three-, five-, seven and 10-year payback periods, with up to \$25,000 of the loan amount financed at a 1 percent interest rate. "It's almost free money to get your septic repaired," Cranston said. "We're looking at this as a good bang for the buck."