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## Town passes water district

Measure approved by close vote as Poestenkill faces new development

By BOB GARDINIER, Staff writer

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First published: Thursday, August 2, 2007

POESTENKILL -- Almost every eligible voter cast a ballot to decide whether to build a water district in the western part of the town. It took nearly every vote to pass it.

Residents barely approved a measure Tuesday to form the town's first water district, a \$9.2 million proposal that won by a razor-thin 274 to 264 votes. There were just under 600 voters eligible to vote on the measure.

The voting machine count showed the measure failed by a vote, 233 to 234, but the addition of absentee ballots secured the win.

Election results were posted at all public locations in town as well as on the Web site <http://townofpoestenkill.com>.

Water District 1, which will serve the more populated western side of the town, will extend

16 miles of water main on Snyder's Lake Road from the North Greenbush town line to Weatherwax Road, a portion of Weatherwax Road to state Route 355, Route 355 to the North Greenbush town line, Spring Avenue Extension, the entire hamlet of Poestenkill and portions of state Route 351. Water District 1 will also include the installation of 107 fire hydrants, according to Town Supervisor Margaret Schmidt.

Residents at recent public hearings were clearly divided on the issue. While many liked the safety of having a municipal water source, many were intimidated by the costs of the project and some just wanted the town to remain rural, Schmidt said.

Officials noted two main reasons to build the water district. One is that the town is experiencing steady development and will have 50 new homes built over the next two years, Schmidt said.

The other problem is that many residential wells are polluted.

Tests have shown that traces of trichloroethane, dichloroethane, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), bacteria and other contaminants are in local wells.

Schmidt also said many of the small residential lots in town do not meet the required separation distance between well and septic system.

Everyone within a water district pays for the cost to build the water system. People who hook up to the system will also pay for the water they use and the long-term operation and maintenance. It is estimated the monthly cost for the water district will be \$65 to \$70, which includes capital costs, water use, operation and maintenance costs.

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