TOWN OF TOPSFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS

Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants

Finance Committee Fiscal 2020
Budget Report and Recommendations

MAY 7, 2019

TOWN MEETING

"OPENING OUR DOORS"

March 27, 2019

Dear Fellow Citizens,

In accordance with the bylaws of the Town of Topsfield, the Finance Committee reviewed and prepared recommendations regarding the Town's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY2020) and for other Warrant Articles to be voted upon by all citizens in attendance at the Annual Town Meeting (ATM) to be held at 7 P.M. on Tuesday, May 7, 2019.

In Fall 2018, the FinCom issued guidelines to all Town departments and elected supervising boards to consider as they built their budgets based on their assessment of needed services and known costs. The guidelines are not a guarantee of funding, but rather provide a starting point that hopefully produces a balanced budget without a need for overrides. These guidelines requested the submission of department budgets with appropriate adjustments to the salary and wage grid for non-represented personnel, negotiated contractual salaries and wages, and a 0.0% increase in "Other," which is comprised of non-salary and wage accounts. The guidelines stated no new programs, and departments were asked to continue to focus on services that are essential to the Town. Departments were also encouraged to propose new initiatives that might save the Town money in the long run. For Elementary Schools and the Masconomet Maintenance & Operating (M&O) Budget, the guideline was 3%. Department budgets and any needed capital items were discussed and voted in public meetings of their respective elected supervising boards.

As in years past, over the course of the winter and early spring, the Finance Committee worked with Town boards and department heads to understand department needs and costs, and potential revenue sources. Topsfield is a small town with little available land for new construction and a limited commercial tax base; approximately 85% of the FY2019 operating budget is funded through the tax levy, and roughly 92% of the tax levy is from residential sources. Every year it is a challenge to provide even level services within the constraints of available funds. We gratefully acknowledge the hard work done by elected and appointed volunteers, and by Town employees, to provide needed services within guidelines.

The Finance Committee has recommended an FY2020 budget with an **8.37%** increase in the General Operating Budget (Article Third). The Masconomet Regional School assessment, as certified by its School Committee, is **$7,693,568**, a **1.51%** increase over FY2019. This is smaller than the increase in Masconomet's M&O budget (a **3.77%** increase compared to FY2019) due to a decrease in Topsfield's share of the enrollment at Masconomet.

Notable items in the Article Third budget:

- The health insurance line item again came in at a 0% increase.
- The FinCom voted to approve an FY2020 Elementary School budget that shows an increase of 9.93%, including a recommended Proposition 2 ½ operating override of $593,068 and a slight decrease in extraordinary special education (XSPED) costs. This would result in a level services budget compared to FY2018, due to contractual increases for salaries, a decrease in a Title I grant, depleted revolving accounts, and restoration of some cuts made in FY2019. The Elementary School Committee had also hoped to expand services, including free 5-day Kindergarten, smaller class size in one grade, curriculum enhancements and a start on conversion to a 21st century education model.

- The salary & wage lines of department budgets reflect settled contracts with a number of unions, a 2% cost-of-living adjustment to the non-union salary & wage grid, appropriate movements on that grid based on employee performance, and longevity payments as appropriate.
- Most of the cost of the Town Hall and Elementary School Envelope projects has now been bonded, with the final permanent bond issuance expected in November 2019 when the projects are closed out. The Town's S&P bond rating has improved to the highest possible AAA rating, due to the Town's financial stability, evidence of commitment to maintaining our infrastructure, and having in place clear financial policy guidelines that demonstrate the Town's approach to addressing current and future liabilities. The Debt Service budget increase is 25.98%, reflecting the long-term bonds that have been issued. The FinCom has chosen to apply additional Free Cash in the amount of $100,000 to partially offset the increase in debt service, in addition to applying $400,000 of Free Cash to balance the budget. Some older debt was paid off in FY2018 and FY2019, with additional components paying off in FY2020, FY2021 and FY2022.

Overall, the recommended FY2020 budget for Annual Town Meeting is projected to increase 9.28% compared to FY2019. After taking into account projected state aid and local receipts, Free Cash and other available funds, the projected increase to the tax levy is 6.93% compared to FY2019. The recommended operating budget for FY2020 requires a Proposition 2 ½ override for the Elementary Schools budget. Without the override, the FY2020 budget for Annual Town Meeting would be 7.31% higher than FY2019, and the projected increase to the tax levy would be 4.40%.

In addition to certain fixed charges that resulted in an increase in FY2020 compared to FY2019 (e.g. increased pension obligations, property insurance costs and a required bi-annual audit), the FinCom considered a number of other requests over guidelines that are contractual or aim to improve Town services. A number of these were approved, including costs associated with operating a larger Town Hall, increased Library repair and maintenance contracts, increased use of the Council on Aging van, an increase in the cost of electricity for streetlights, and police training expenses. Increased costs associated with the Town website are covered by Public/Educational/Governmental funds from the Town's cable providers, and $10,000 in licensing fees for the Building Inspector's permit software will be recovered through a $10 charge per building permit. The FinCom has also approved several larger beyond-guidelines costs:

- Moving towards professional support for Town facilities management and Town Hall Information Technology support that has been covered to date by volunteers, at a cost of $25,000 each.
- An additional $44,000 in Fire Department wages to provide station coverage from midnight to 6 AM on Saturdays and Sundays. Despite recruiting additional call firefighters and offering a stipend to those promising availability, these weekend shifts have a low response rate for calls, putting public health and safety at risk.
- An additional $66,000 in Salary Reserve and a decrease of $40,000 in Police wages associated with a plan by the Police Department to reduce overtime costs by hiring two additional full-time officers to provide a third officer scheduled for day and evening shifts during weekdays; an officer on vacation or out sick during these shifts would then

not need to be replaced. This should be cost-neutral based on analysis of several years of overtime use; the funds in the salary reserve will be used if the one-year trial shows the additional personnel costs are larger than the overtime savings.

The total of these contractual and other requests is $214,467 or about 0.8% of the total tax levy.

The FinCom worked with the Town Administrator and departments/boards on funding for a number of capital and one-time purchase items. Some items, including a security system for Proctor School and funds for a consultant to conduct a search for a new Police Chief, are being dealt with during the 5/7/19 Special Town Meeting (STM) using unspent FY 2019 funds in certain line items (aka turn-backs). During the ATM, FinCom recommends funding other items from Free Cash, such as a security system for Steward School, replacement of a police cruiser and a highway front-end loader, technology for the Elementary Schools and Town Hall, a backup fire rescue vehicle, and so forth. These were deemed the most important of many competing needs. Additional capital items associated with the Water Department are recommended to be funded through the Water Enterprise Fund. The FinCom has also voted to use Free Cash to make annual contributions to two Stabilization Funds and to the Other Post-Employment Benefits fund. These can be thought of as the Town's savings accounts against an unexpected need and/or future financial commitments. Free Cash expenditures for these capital items totals $742,500, with another $425,000 going to the stabilization and OPEB funds.

We encourage you to read the warrants carefully, then participate in the Town Moderator's Forum on April 30th and Annual Town Meeting on May 7th, and to give careful consideration to both the immediate and long-term implications of all the important decisions before you.

Additional detail for each budget addressed in this Warrant, as well as more general information about Town Meeting, are available on the Topsfield website: http://www.topsfield-ma.gov/.

Respectfully submitted by the Topsfield Finance Committee,

Karen A. Dow, Chairman Che Elwell Jonathan D. Guido

Michael Hartmann Eric Menzer Louis Ross Dana E. Warren, Jr.

2019 Consent Calendar

The concept of a "Consent Calendar," which was introduced several years ago by the Moderator, has been used successfully during the last few years to expedite the passing of certain warrants at Town Meeting and thus shortening the total time spent at Town Meeting. Although the number of articles presented this year will be a reduction over last year, we will still use the "consent" in a limited way. We will only use it for articles that traditionally pass with little or no discussion and those articles with a common component such as relating to the Water Department and their funding source. The consent will not be used for capital items as done previously.

Consent speeds the passage of certain articles which the Selectmen and the Finance Committee expect, based on previous experience, to pass without controversy or debate. Its purpose is to allow the Finance Committee's recommendations under these articles to be acted upon in a single vote. (As this requires suspension of the usual rule that the Meeting acts on each article separately, it requires unanimous consent; hence the use of the term "Consent Calendar.") It is hoped that the time saved by not reading and explaining the Finance Committee's recommendation under each Article separately will allow the Meeting to proceed more quickly rendering more time for discussion on the remaining articles.

The Consent Calendar will be taken up when the first article "on Consent" is reached. Specifically, where Article Eighth (Grant Authorization for Town Projects) will be the first Consent article in the Warrant, there will be a motion after Article 7 to adopt the Finance Committee's recommendations on each Article included within the Consent Calendar. The same will happen prior to Article Fifteenth.

When that motion is made, the Moderator will ask whether any voter objects to the inclusion of any of the articles which are so listed. Any voter may rise and object to the inclusion of any particular article in the Consent Calendar. Any article to which an objection has been raised will be removed from the Consent Calendar and will then be debated and voted in the usual order. ***A voter need not state a reason for making an objection and making an objection does not obligate the voter to comment on, or vote against, the recommendation under that article.***

The Finance Committee's recommendations as to all articles to which no objection has been made will then be offered for acceptance by the Town Meeting in a single vote without debate.

This year, we are proposing two groups of articles for action by unanimous consent: (1) annually recurring authorizations and appropriations (distinguished by the asterisk (*) notation following each article number in the following index); and (2) those related to the Water department whose funding is related to that department's revenue source.

This year, in preparation for this year's Town Meeting, we will review all warrants in a cable broadcasted event to be held on April 30th this year. It is hoped that many citizens will have the opportunity to review the warrant document and ask questions prior to TM. It is not meant to

substitute debate on any of the articles, merely to clarify and inform. Naturally, all public debate for this year's warrants will occur at Town Meeting on May 7,2019 at 7PM. It is always our goal to start promptly at the 7 o'clock hour in order not to finish too late. Last year, those who arrived at seven were delayed in entering the hall due to the need to register with a teller. I am suggesting that arriving a few minutes early is necessary so that we can start our meeting on time.

If you have any questions about the Consent articles, motions or procedure, please feel free to contact the official listed in the summary of the article or to contact the Selectmen's Office by telephone at 978-887-1500 before Town Meeting.

Thank you.

Stephen T. Whelan, Town Moderator (moderator@topsfield-ma.gov)

2019 Annual Town Meeting
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TOWN OF TOPSFIELD

WARRANT FOR THE 2019 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Essex, ss.

To the Constable of the Town of Topsfield, in said County,

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify the inhabitants of the Town of Topsfield, qualified to vote in elections and in Town affairs, to meet at the

PROCTOR SCHOOL
WOODBURY AUDITORIUM
60 MAIN STREET

in said Topsfield on Tuesday, the seventh day of May, 2019, at seven o'clock in the afternoon (7:00 PM), then and there to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE FIRST:
REPORTS

To hear all reports that may legally come before the meeting.

ARTICLE SECOND:
BALANCE TRANSFERS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer certain account balances and appropriate the same to fund the General Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 to be voted under Article Third, or take any other action relative thereto.

Account:	Amount:
Fund Balance Reserved for Reduction of Future Excludable Debt	1,226
Cable/PEG Fund	49,000
Total Balance to Transfer:	**$50,226**

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer the sum of $50,226 from various funds listed under Article Second in the warrant and appropriate the same to fund the General Operating Budget in Fiscal Year 2020 to be voted under Article Third.

This article transfers available funds from various accounts to help fund the Fiscal Year 2020 General Operating Budget.

ARTICLE THIRD:

GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to fix the annual salary and compensation of all elected officers, and raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for schools, highways, and other Town expenses from July 1, 2019 for Fiscal Year 2020, and determine the manner of expending the same, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of $20,902,941 for schools, highways, and other Town expenses, and fix the annual salary and compensation of all elected officers from July 1, 2019, and determine the manner of expending the same as stated in Attachment A to the warrant; and to meet said appropriation, in addition to the amount transferred for such purposes under Article Second, to raise and assess the sum of $20,852,715; and further, that the Town vote to raise, assess, and appropriate the additional sum of $593,068 for the Elementary Schools as stated in the column entitled "Contingency Appropriation" in Attachment A, provided, however, that such additional appropriation shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters at an election of a so-called Proposition 2 ½ override pursuant to General Laws Chapter 59, Section 21C(g).

This article approves the Fiscal Year 2020 General Operating Budget for the Town for general government purposes and the elementary schools of which $20,852,715 is funded within the Town's levy limit, of which $50,226 is funded by transfers listed under Article Second, and $593,068 is proposed as additional funding for the Elementary Schools subject to the approval of a Proposition 2 ½ override question appearing on the ballot at the May 9, 2019 Annual Town Election.

Please refer to "Attachment A" for the detailed Fiscal Year 2020 General Operating Budget.

ARTICLE FOURTH:

WATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for the Water Department for Fiscal Year 2020 and determine the manner of expending the same, or take any other action relative thereto.

WATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET

Actual Appropriation FY2019		Proposed Appropriation FY2020
$ 302,539	Salary & Wages	$ 378,387
349,180	Other	415,824
152,500	Long-Term Debt Principal	529,000
68,578	Long-Term Debt Interest	342,695
-	Short Term Debt Principal	-
377,634	Short-Term Debt Interest	115,375
5,000	Debt Issue Costs	5,000
56,710	Water Reserve Fund	50,000
300,000	Unanticipated Emergency	100,000
1,612,141	**SUB-TOTAL – DIRECT COSTS:**	**1,936,281**
159,760	Indirect Costs	155,083
$1,771,901	**TOTAL WATER DEPARTMENT BUDGET:**	**$2,091,364**

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer from Water Revenue the sum of $1,936,281 and appropriate the same as detailed under Article Fourth in the Warrant, to operate the Water Department from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, and to approve the sum of $155,083 of indirect costs appropriated in the General Fund under Article Third, to be funded from Water Revenues.

This article approves the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget for the Water Department.

ARTICLE FIFTH:
MASCONOMET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSESSMENT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Gross Budget of the Masconomet Regional School District and to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for the Town's share of the assessment of same, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Gross Budget of the Masconomet Regional School District in the amount of $37,057,467 and raise and assess and appropriate the sum of $7,693,568 to fund the Town's share of the Fiscal Year 2020 Masconomet Regional School District Assessment, of which the sum of $7,408,262 supports the Maintenance & Operating Budget, and the sum of $285,306 supports the Masconomet Building Debt Service.

This article approves the Fiscal Year 2020 assessment for the operations, maintenance and debt service for the Masconomet Regional School District.

ARTICLE SIXTH:
MASCONOMET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Masconomet Regional School District Fiscal Year Stabilization Fund request that includes parking and sidewalk repairs, wood shop safety upgrades, and an appropriation to the District Stabilization Fund as requested by the District School Committee and to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for the Town's share of the Stabilization Fund request of same, or take any other action relative thereto, provided all three communities approve this article by January 2020.

Recommended that the Town vote to approve the Masconomet Regional School District Fiscal Year Stabilization Fund request in the amount of $450,000 including parking and sidewalk repairs, wood shop safety upgrades, and an appropriation to the District Stabilization Fund as requested by the District School Committee and transfer and appropriate the sum of $119,250 from Free Cash to fund the Town's share of the Stabilization Fund request of same.

This article approves a request from the Masconomet Regional School District for a total of $450,000 to be added to the District's Stabilization Fund. Topsfield's share of the Stabilization Fund request is $119,250. Passage requires that all three communities approve their respective share of the request.

ARTICLE SEVENTH:
ESSEX NORTH SHORE AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Gross Operating Budget of the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School District and to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for the Town's share of the assessment of same, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Gross Operating Budget of the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School District in the amount of $29,643,949 and raise and assess and appropriate the sum of $302,815 for the Town's share of the assessment of same.

This article approves the Fiscal Year 2020 Gross Operating Budget for the school district and authorizes the appropriation for Topsfield's share of the school district's assessment. Topsfield's participation in the school satisfies the Commonwealth's statutory requirements to offer vocational education at the high school level. Currently, there are 18 students enrolled from the Town of Topsfield. The above motion is based on the Preliminary Assessment as of February 12, 2019.

*** * * * * * * * * CONSENT AGENDA ONE * * * * * * * * ***

***ARTICLE EIGHTH:**

GRANT AUTHORIZATION FOR TOWN PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend without further appropriation any private, state, or federal grants or loans for Town projects, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend without further appropriation any private, state, or federal grants or loans for Town projects.

This annual article allows the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept and expend any private, state, or federal grants and loans for Town projects.

***ARTICLE NINTH:**

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTS

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for the ensuing year, and to accept and expend such sums as may be made available to the Town in accordance with G.L. c.90, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for the ensuing year and to accept and expend any sums of money made available to the Town in accordance with G.L. c.90.

This annual article allows the Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts with the State for roadway and highway improvement purposes and to accept state funds such as "Chapter 90" funds for road maintenance and reconstruction.

***ARTICLE TENTH:**

LEASE OF EMERSON FIELD

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Parks and Cemeteries Commissioners, and under such terms as the Board deems advisable, to enter into a lease with The Congregational Church of Topsfield for certain property in Topsfield commonly known as Emerson

Field, and to see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money for said lease, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Parks and Cemeteries Commissioners, and under such terms as it deems advisable, to enter into a lease with The Congregational Church of Topsfield for certain property in Topsfield commonly known as Emerson Field, and transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $1,250 to fund said lease.

This article allows the Town to enter into an annual agreement with The Congregational Church to lease Emerson Field for recreational purposes.

***ARTICLE ELEVENTH:**

TRI-TOWN COUNCIL ON YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money as a grant for Fiscal Year 2020 to fund certain activities of the Tri-Town Council, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $20,500 as a grant for Fiscal Year 2020 to fund activities of the Tri-Town Council.

This article approves funds for a grant to support the activities of the Tri-Town Council, a non-profit organization serving Topsfield, Boxford and Middleton. The Council's mission is to reduce and prevent at-risk behavior and strengthen the social and emotional well-being of Tri-Town youth.

***ARTICLE TWELFTH:**

SENIOR CARE

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money as a grant to Senior Care Inc., an authorized service provider for elders in Topsfield, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $1,500 as a grant for Fiscal Year 2020 to fund activities of Senior Care Inc.

This article appropriates funds for a grant to support Senior Care Inc. for its provision of services to seniors. Senior Care Inc. has been the service provider for over 40 years, serving Topsfield and eight other towns on the North Shore. These services, in part, include Meals on Wheels and a multitude of care, intervention and nursing services.

***ARTICLE THIRTEENTH:**

TOWN FACILITIES REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to fund facilities repairs, maintenance and any associated costs to repair, maintain and ensure the safety and security of Town-owned properties, facilities equipment and assets, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $37,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to fund facilities repairs, maintenance and any associated

costs to repair, maintain and ensure the safety and security of Town-owned properties, facilities equipment and assets, including all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds Town facility repairs and maintenance needs that arise during the fiscal year.

***ARTICLE FOURTEENTH:**
POLICE SUV CRUISER

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Police Chief, to purchase and equip a new SUV Police Cruiser, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $62,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Police Chief, to purchase and equip a new SUV Police Cruiser, including all incidental and related expenses.

This article allows the Town to continue its annual replacement schedule of front line police cruisers on a rotating basis. Beginning in FY2020, the standard police cruiser is a newly modified Ford Explorer SUV model. The base cost of this new police model is higher than the previous police cruisers. The change in base design has increased the cost of outfitting and equipping the new cruiser.

*** * * * * * * * * CONSENT AGENDA TWO * * * * * * * * ***

****ARTICLE FIFTEENTH:**
WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to fund water system improvements including design of water main replacements projects, replacement of fire hydrants, replacement/extension of water mains and other water system projects; and including all incidental and related costs, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate $100,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to fund water system improvements including design of water main replacements projects, replacement of fire hydrants, replacement/extension of water mains and other water system projects; and including all incidental and related costs; and, further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to take any other action necessary.

This article expands on Article Thirty-Ninth of the 2013 Annual Town Meeting that set aside funds for limited water main replacement projects. Approval of this article will set aside funds that can be used for the design of water main replacement projects as well as minor system improvements. Typically, a water main replacement project takes at least two years to obtain the design funding, conduct the design, go to bid and construct the project. This could be shortened by a year if the design funds were immediately available.

****ARTICLE SIXTEENTH:**

WATER METER READING SYSTEM UPGRADES

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to purchase and install meter reading equipment and software, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommend that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate the sum of $25,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to purchase and install water meter reading equipment and software, including all incidental and related expenses; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to take any other action necessary.

The Water Department installed a drive-by radio read metering system approximately twelve years ago. The radios used to transmit the meter readings to the receiver are now obsolete and the reading equipment is not compatible with the radios currently available. This article allows the Water Department to purchase and install a new drive-by reading system and associated software.

****ARTICLE SEVENTEENTH:**

NORTH STREET EXPLORATORY DRILLING

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to conduct exploratory drilling and well testing at the North Street Wellfield, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate the sum of $100,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to conduct exploratory drilling and well testing at the North Street Wellfield; including all incidental and related expenses; and, further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to take any other action necessary.

The North Street wellfield is the Town's primary source of water. Half of the wells were installed in 1949 and the other half in 1969. Corrosion of the wells and piping manifold system, coupled with capacity reduction, indicate that the wells will need to be replaced in the near future. This article allows the Water Department to conduct testing at the site to determine aquifer characteristics. The testing will help determine or guide the selection of well replacement options, and eventually, the well design. This type of testing was conducted several years ago at the Perkins Row wellfield. This funding represents the next step and phase of a larger project to replace water supply wells and rehabilitate pumping stations.

*** * * * * * * * END OF CONSENT AGENDA * * * * * * * ***

ARTICLE EIGHTEENTH:

HIGHWAY FRONT END LOADER

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Road Commissioners, to

purchase and equip a front-end loader, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of $165,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Road Commissioners, to purchase and equip a front-end loader, including all incidental and related expenses; and to meet said appropriation to transfer the sum of $150,000 from Free Cash, and the sum of $15,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings Account.

This article allows the Town to purchase and equip a front-end loader for Highway and Water operations. The purchase will be partially funded by the Water Enterprise based on a prorated share of estimated usage for Water Department operations.

ARTICLE NINTEENTH:
TOWN HALL COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, to purchase and install twenty-six (26) computer workstations at Town Hall, including hardware, software and all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $26,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to purchase and install twenty-six (26) computer workstations at Town Hall, including hardware, software and all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds the replacement of computer workstations in Town Hall, including upgrades to Microsoft Windows 10 and Microsoft Office 2019. All of the existing workstations are on Windows 7 or older, and more than 75% of the workstations are greater than 6 years old. Microsoft Windows support for the existing system ends next year (January 2020).

ARTICLE TWENTIETH:
AMBULANCE/RESCUE VEHICLE REPLACEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Fire Chief, to purchase and equip a used Ambulance/Rescue Vehicle, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $30,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Fire Chief, to purchase and equip a used Ambulance/Rescue Vehicle, including all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds the purchase of a used Ambulance/Rescue Vehicle, including a power stretcher and LUCAS chest compression system. The capital improvement plan previously included this item as a new vehicle purchase for $250,000. The Fire Chief updated the request to recommend a used vehicle as a backup to the primary Ambulance/Rescue Vehicle. Thanks to generous donations from the residents of Topsfield, the Topsfield Firefighters Relief Association raised $7,338 to offset the purchase of the LUCAS system.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FIRST:
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install technology at the Proctor and Steward Elementary Schools, including hardware, software and all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $210,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install technology at the Proctor and Steward Elementary Schools, including hardware, software and including all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds the purchase and installation of technology that will support direct teaching and learning in the classroom. The purchase will include investments in teacher laptops, interactive presentation technology, and end-user student technology at the Proctor and Steward Elementary Schools.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SECOND:
STEWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SECURITY & SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install a security and surveillance system for the Steward Elementary School, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $85,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install a security and surveillance system for the Steward Elementary School, including all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds the purchase and installation of a security and surveillance system for the Steward Elementary School. A video surveillance system is one part of a comprehensive crisis plan that includes infrastructure (controlled entry, video surveillance), real-time communication, and training and drilling with students, staff and public safety. Topsfield's elementary schools do not have an active surveillance system. This system would be used in the event of a crisis but also for daily operations including visitor management, after-hours incidents, vandalism/theft prevention, non-custodial parent issues, traffic control and external interactions. Middleton schools have started to install a similar system, and Boxford schools have an expansion of their current system on their capital plan. An appropriation for the Proctor School Security and Surveillance System is included in the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THIRD:
LIBRARY MAINTENANCE & ROOFING REPAIRS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Library Director, for building maintenance and roof repairs to the Topsfield Library, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommend no action.

This request from the Library Director and the Library Board of Trustees seeks funding of $21,500 for the Topsfield Library to repair the roof, repaint the walls in the Mystery and Periodical Rooms, and to replace carpeting in the Mystery and Periodical Rooms and the original lobby.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FOURTH:
GENERAL STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to the General Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $25,000 to the General Stabilization Fund.

The General Stabilization Fund is sometimes called the "rainy day fund", and appropriations to such fund remain in the fund from year to year. This article transfers funds to the Town's financial reserves. Stabilization Funds may be appropriated by Town Meeting for any legal purpose. Appropriation of monies into this fund requires a majority vote of Town Meeting. However, appropriation of monies from the fund requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FIFTH:
CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c.40, §5B to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to the Capital Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $100,000 to the Capital Stabilization Fund.

The Capital Stabilization Fund was established for the purpose of setting aside funds annually to address long term capital needs. This article transfers funds to the Town's financial reserves. Stabilization Funds may be appropriated by Town Meeting for any legal purpose. Appropriations of monies into this fund require a majority vote of Town Meeting. However, appropriation of monies from this fund requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SIXTH:
OTHER POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ("OPEB" TRUST FUND)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $300,000 to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund.

The Town accepted G.L. c.32B, §20 establishing an Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund ("OPEB" Trust Fund) under Article Twenty-Third of the May 4, 2010 Annual Town Meeting. This article allows the Town to continue to fund its OPEB liability by depositing funds in the Trust. OPEB liabilities relate primarily to funding healthcare for retirees.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVENTH:

REVOLVING FUNDS: PUBLIC HALL REVOLVING FUND

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.44, §53E½ to create a new Public Hall Revolving Fund, and for such purposes, to amend the chart appearing in Section 64-1 of the Town By-Laws by inserting a new row for the Public Hall Revolving Fund, as shown below:

PROGRAM OR PURPOSE	DEPARTMENT RECEIPT	AUTHORIZED TO SPEND
Public Hall Revolving Fund (Paying costs and expenses related to the use and rental of the Public Hall, including direct and incidental expenses for the use, care and maintenance of the hall. Fees charged are deposited into the fund to pay for contractor fees, part-time wages, supplies and operating expenses.)	Receipts from the use of the Public Hall.	Board of Selectmen

And further, to establish an annual expenditure limit of $10,000 for such fund with such expenditure limit to be applicable for each fiscal year until such time as Town Meeting votes, prior to July 1 for the ensuing fiscal year, to change the same; provided however, that the Board of Selectmen, with the approval of the Finance Committee, may change such limit, for that current fiscal year, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.44, §53E½, as most recently amended, to establish a new Public Hall Revolving Fund, and, for such purposes, to amend Section 64-1 of the Town By-Laws to insert in the chart set forth therein a new row for the Public Hall Revolving Fund as printed in the warrant under Article Twenty-Seventh, and to approve an annual expenditure limit of $10,000 for such fund with such expenditure limit to be applicable for each fiscal year until such time as Town Meeting votes, prior to July 1 for the ensuing fiscal year, to change the same; provided, however, that the Board of Selectmen, with the approval of the Finance Committee, may increase such limit, for that fiscal year only.

This article creates a new revolving fund, and amends the Town By-Laws accordingly, allowing fees collected from the use of the Public Hall to be deposited into a fund and expended, without further appropriation. Expenses must be related to the rental, care, cleaning and operational costs of the hall.

ARTICLE TWENTY-EIGHTH:

AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: ARTICLE I, DEFINITIONS

To see if the Town will vote to amend certain sections of the Town Zoning By-Laws, Article I, Definitions as follows, with the provisions to be added shown in bold italics:

1.95 Special Permit Granting Authority.
The Planning Board, Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts, ***unless otherwise defined herein.***

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommendation pending further review.

This article updates the definition of Special Permit Granting Authority to recognize that certain Special Permits are granted by boards other than the Planning Board. Passage requires a two-thirds vote.

ARTICLE TWENTY-NINTH:

AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: ARTICLE V, ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to amend certain sections of the Town Zoning By-Laws, Article V, Administration and Enforcement as follows, with the provisions to be deleted shown in strikethrough and the provisions to be added shown in bold italics:

5.02 Permit Granting Authority and Special Permit Granting Authority.

A. Permit Granting Authority. The Zoning Board of Appeals, hereinafter called "The Board", shall be the Permit Granting Authority pursuant to the Zoning Act.

B. Special Permit Granting Authority. The Topsfield Planning Board shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority ~~pursuant to the Zoning Act. In this capacity the Planning Board shall be~~ responsible for hearing and deciding upon applications for special permits for the following

~~1. Uses in the Business Park District requiring special permits in accordance with Section 3.06 and the Table of Use Regulations.~~

~~a. The installation and maintenance of wind energy conversion systems.~~

~~1. Special Permit and Site Plan Approval for multifamily residences for the elderly in an Elderly Housing District.~~

1. ***Special Permit and Site Plan Approval for multifamily residences for the elderly in an Elderly Housing District (Article III, Section 3.16).***

2. ***Special Permit for a Common Driveway (Article IV, Section 4.07 J).***

~~2~~ *3. Temporary Accessory Apartment Special Permit By-Law (Article ~~IV~~VII, Section 7.03).*

~~3~~ *4. Special Permits for uses and activities in the Groundwater Protection District (Article XI).*

4 *5. Wind Energy Conversion Systems (Article XV).*

~~5~~ *6. Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations (Article XVI).*

~~3.~~ The Board of Selectmen may appoint one town resident as an associate member of the Planning Board for a one year term, who shall be eligible to participate solely in matters in which the Planning Board is acting as the Special Permit Granting Authority, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, § 9. The Chairman of the Planning Board, or the Acting Chairman, in the event of the absence of the Chairman, may designate the associate member to sit on the Planning Board for the purposes of acting on a special permit application, in the case of absence, inability to act, or conflict of interest, on the part of any member of the Planning Board or in the event of a vacancy on the Planning Board.

C. Special Permit Granting Authority. The Topsfield Board of Selectmen shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority responsible for hearing and deciding upon applications for special permits for the following:

1. ***Signs (Article XIII).***

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommendation pending further review.

This article revises and updates the list of Special Permits for which the Planning Board is responsible. Since 1990 and 2009, the last years in which changes were made to this article, new bylaws designating the Planning Board as the Special Permit Granting Authority were enacted, and Special Permits in the Business Park District were transferred to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Additionally, the Board of Selectmen is responsible for Special Permits under the Sign By-Law, Article XIII, Sign Regulations. Passage requires a two-thirds vote.

ARTICLE THIRTIETH:
LOCAL MEALS EXCISE

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.64L, §2(a) authorizing the Town to impose what is commonly known as a "local meals excise", a local sales tax at the statutory rate of 0.75 percent on the sale of restaurant meals originating within the Town, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.64L, §2(a) authorizing the Town to impose what is commonly known as a "local meals excise", a local sales tax at the statutory rate of 0.75 percent on the sale of restaurant meals originating within the Town.

A vote to accept this statute establishes a new restaurant meals tax in Topsfield at the statutory rate of 0.75 percent. Over 234 municipalities in Massachusetts have adopted this statute since 2010. It is estimated by the Department of Revenue that acceptance of the statute and imposition of the meals tax will provide an estimated $50,000 annually to the Town of Topsfield. Approximately $7 million in "restaurant" revenue is generated each year by venues in the Town of Topsfield, with the majority from event venues and the Topsfield Fairgrounds. As a preponderance of people who attend these venues are non-residents, the local meals excise paid by non-residents can help support our town and schools. With passage of this article, the meals excise will be effective on July 1, 2019.

ARTICLE THIRTY-FIRST:
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.40, §8J authorizing the Town to create a Commission on Disabilities, and in accordance therewith, to establish a Commission of five (5) Members to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen for alternating three year terms (other than initial appointments, which must be for one, two and three year terms), a majority of said Commission members shall consist of people with disabilities, one member shall be a member of the immediate family of a person with a disability and one member of said Commission shall be either an elected or appointed official of the Town; such Commission shall be charged to undertake all of the matters authorized by law, including but not limited to: researching local problems of people with disabilities, serving as a resource to the Town in ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal laws affecting people with disabilities; and reviewing and making recommendations about Town policies, procedures, services, activities and facilities of departments, boards and agencies as they affect people with disabilities, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.40, §8J to create a Commission on Disabilities of five (5) members, to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen, in accordance with the provisions of Article Thirty-First as set forth in the warrant to carry out the duties of such a Commission in accordance with law.

A vote to accept this statute establishes a Commission on Disabilities in the Town of Topsfield. The Commission would consist of five (5) members appointed by the Selectmen.

ARTICLE THIRTY-SECOND:
SPECIAL EDUCATION RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.40, §13E to create a Special Education Reserve Fund, consistent with the vote of the Topsfield School Committee, for future payments of unanticipated or unbudgeted special education costs, out-of-district tuition, or transportation, provided however, that the monies in such fund shall be expended only with the approval of the Elementary School Committee and Board of Selectmen, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.40, §13E to create a Special Education Reserve Fund, consistent with the vote of the Topsfield School Committee, for future payments of unanticipated or unbudgeted special education costs, out-of-district tuition, or transportation, provided however, that the monies in such fund shall be expended only with the approval of the Elementary School Committee and Board of Selectmen.

This article permits the school district to establish a special education reserve fund pursuant to G.L. c 40, §13E. The balance of the Special Education Reserve fund cannot exceed 2% of the annual net school spending of the school district. The Treasurer may invest the monies in the manner authorized in G.L. c 55, §54 and any interest earned thereon shall be credited to and become part of the fund in accordance with law.

ARTICLE THIRTY-THIRD:
CITIZEN PETITION: ADOPT GENERAL BY-LAW - PROHIBITION OF WILD OR EXOTIC ANIMALS FOR ENTERTAINMENT

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Topsfield General Bylaws by inserting a new bylaw to prohibit the use of certain wild or exotic animals for entertainment in any circus, carnival, fair, traveling show, exhibit, or similar event or undertaking, or take any other action relative thereto, as follows:

Chapter ____ – Prohibition of Wild or Exotic Animals for Entertainment

___-1. Purpose

The purpose of this Bylaw is to prevent the cruel and inhumane treatment of certain wild and exotic animals displayed for public entertainment in the Town of Topsfield and to thereby preserve and protect the general safety, welfare, and health of the public.

___-2. Definitions

"Displayed" – This term shall include, but is not limited to, animal acts or performances, animal rides, photographic opportunities, and parades.

"Domesticated Animal" - Any animal occurring naturally or historically in the United States, that through long association with humans, has been bred to a degree which has resulted in genetic changes affecting the temperament, color, conformation or other attributes of the species to the extent that makes it unique and different from wild animals of its kind.

"Entertainment" - Any replication of the traditional wild animal circus or other carnival, traveling show, fair, or presentation of any kind in which wild or exotic animals are required to perform tricks or are used in performances for the amusement of an audience.

"Traveling Show" - Any mobile or stationary act, public show, trade show or similar undertaking incorporating wild or exotic animals as defined in this bylaw wherein the animals are taken from their permanent residence and required to walk or travel for any distance.

"Wild or Exotic Animal" - Any or all of the following, whether born in the wild or in captivity, and also any or all of their hybrids with domestic species:

a. Elephants;
b. Lions;
c. Tigers;
d. Ocelots;
e. Cheetahs;
f. Jaguars;
g. Cougars;
h. Lynx;
i. Bears;
j. Giraffes;
k. Camels;
l. Zebras;
m. Kangaroos;
n. All non-human primates.

___-3. Prohibition of Wild or Exotic Animals for Entertainment

No living wild or exotic animal as defined in this bylaw shall be displayed or used for public entertainment on any property in the Town of Topsfield, including land owned by the Town, leased by the Town, or private property, and regardless of how such public entertainment is characterized, including, for example, a circus, carnival, fair, traveling show, exhibit, or similar event or undertaking.

___4. Exemptions

The provisions of __-3 shall not apply to:

1. Domesticated animals, including, but not limited to, dogs, cats, horses, and farm animal

2. Any non-domesticated animal that is not included in this bylaw's definition of "Wild or Exotic Animal"

3. Exhibits that are part of a duly licensed zoo and accredited by American Zoo and Aquarium Association, and exhibits that are deemed educational by either Mass Audubon, Massachusetts Society for the Protection of Animals, or the New England Wildlife Center, provided that the required permitting from the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA has been obtained.

___-5. Enforcement and Penalties

This Bylaw shall be enforced by any available means in law or equity, including but not limited to enforcement by non-criminal disposition pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40, §21D. Display of a wild or exotic animal in violation of this bylaw shall constitute a separate violation for each day such violation exists. When enforced through non-criminal disposition, the penalties shall be as follows:

First violation:	$100.00
Second violation:	$200.00
Third violation and subsequent offenses:	$300.00

The Board of Selectmen or its designee, the Board of Health or its agent, and any Police Officer of the Town of Topsfield shall be considered "enforcing persons" for purposes of this bylaw.

Recommendation pending further review.

This article is a citizen petition filed pursuant to G.L. c.39, §10.

ARTICLE THIRTY-FOURTH:

CITIZEN PETITION: AMEND ZONING BY-LAW, ARTICLE III, SECTION 3.02 PERMITTED USES

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 3.02 of the Topsfield Zoning Bylaw entitled "Permitted Uses" by striking out the "S" (Special Permit) in the Table of Use Regulation, as shown in red (striked-out) and inserting therefore NP (Not Permitted) in lines 2.14 and 2.16 in the columns CR, BV and BHN as shown in the excerpt of the aforementioned Table seen below:

2. Community Facilities		ORA	IRA	CR	BV	BH	BP	BHN
2.14	Hospital	S	S	NP	NP	S	S	~~S~~ NP
2.16	Nursing and Community Care Facilities	S	S	~~S~~ NP	~~S~~ NP	S	S	~~S~~ NP

A positive vote will re-instate the 1993 ATM vote to limit the establishment of such facilities in Topsfield to the IRA, ORA, BH, and BP zoning districts that are less densely populated.

Recommendation pending further review.

This article is a citizen petition filed pursuant to G.L. c.39, §10. This article requires a two-thirds vote for passage.

ARTICLE THIRTY-FIFTH:

CITIZEN PETITION: APPROPRIATE FREE CASH TO DEBT SERVICE

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a total amount of four hundred thousand ($400,000.00) dollars of free cash in the town's current free cash account and apply the same to the town's current debt service for purposes of debt service relief, and to take any other action related thereto.

Recommendation pending further review.

This article is a citizen petition filed pursuant to G.L. c.39, §10.

ARTICLE THIRTY-SIXTH:

DONIBRISTLE FARM: TRANSFER FUND BALANCE RESERVED FOR CAPITAL EXCLUSION REDUCTION

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds and appropriate a sum of money to reduce the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2020, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from the Fund Balance Reserve Account, established by the Town Accountant upon receipt of a $400,000 LAND Grant, the sum of $405,190 to reduce the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2020.

This article appropriates funds from a special reserve account established by the Town Accountant upon receipt of a $400,000 LAND Grant awarded from the Commonwealth. The funding also includes $5,190 of an Essex County Greenbelt Grant. Funds were set aside to offset the tax impact from the Town's 2017 Capital Exclusion vote that allowed for the acquisition of a conservation restriction on two parcels associated with Donibristle Farm.

ARTICLE THIRTY-SEVENTH:

FREE CASH TO OFFSET THE TAX RATE

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds and appropriate a sum of money to reduce the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2020, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of $500,000 to reduce the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2020.

This annual article proposes to appropriate Free Cash to reduce the tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * ELECTION WARRANT * * * * * * * *

And you are also directed to notify said inhabitants, qualified to vote in the election of Town Officers, to meet at the St. Rose Church Hall, 12 Park Street, the ninth day of May 2019, when the polls will be open from seven o'clock in the morning to eight o'clock in the evening, to bring in their votes on one ballot for the following offices and question:

ONE	Assessor	(3 years)
ONE	Commissioner of Trust Funds	(3 years)
TWO	Library Trustees	(3 years)
ONE	Moderator	(1 year)
ONE	Park and Cemetery Commissioner	(3 years)
TWO	Planning Board	(3 years)
ONE	Regional District School Committee	(3 years)
ONE	Regional District School Committee	(1 year)
ONE	Road Commissioner	(3 years)
TWO	Elementary School Committee	(3 years)
ONE	Selectmen	(3 years)
ONE	Water Commissioner	(3 years)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

PROPOSITION 2 ½ REFERENDUM BALLOT QUESTION

QUESTION ONE: "Shall the Town of Topsfield be allowed to assess an additional $593,068 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the general fund operating budget for the elementary schools for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand and nineteen?"

Yes _____ No _____

****

****

You are directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof, one at the Post Office, one at the Town Hall, and one at each of the Public Meeting Houses in said Town, seven days at least before time for holding the election portion of said meeting.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of this Warrant, with your doing thereon, to the Town Clerk, at the time and place of meeting as aforesaid.

Given under our hands this twenty-fifth day of March in the year two thousand and nineteen.

TOWN OF TOPSFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Mark B. Lyons, Chairman

Lynne A. Bermudez, Clerk

Boyd R. Jackson, Member

John K. Spencer, Member

A. Richard Gandt, Member

A true copy

ATTEST:

Frederick J. Glatz, Town Constable

RECOMMENDATIONS AS VOTED BY THE TOPSFIELD FINANCE COMMITTEE

Karen Dow, Chairman
Che Elwell
Jonathan Guido
Michael Hartmann
Eric Menzer
Louis Ross
Dana Warren

TOWN OF TOPSFIELD

WARRANT FOR 2019 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Essex, ss.

To the Constable of the Town of Topsfield, in said County,

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify the inhabitants of the Town of Topsfield, qualified to vote in elections and in Town affairs, to meet at the

PROCTOR SCHOOL
WOODBURY AUDITORIUM
60 MAIN STREET

in said Topsfield on Tuesday, the seventh day of May, 2019, at seven-thirty o'clock in the afternoon (7:30 PM), then and there to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE FIRST:
REPORTS

To hear all reports that may legally come before the meeting.

ARTICLE SECOND:
PRIOR YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to pay any outstanding bills contracted prior to July 1, 2018, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommendation pending further approval.

This article appropriates funding to pay outstanding bills from a prior fiscal year. There were three invoices received in Fiscal Year 2019 for services delivered in Fiscal Year 2018. The bills were received after the Town's accounting system was closed. Passage requires a 9/10ths vote.

ARTICLE THIRD:

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET TRANSFERS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the unexpended balance of certain accounts, and/or from available funds, and appropriate said funds to certain other accounts to pay certain expenses for the 2019 fiscal year, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommendation pending further review.

ARTICLE FOURTH:

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION STUDY

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess or transfer from available funds and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to retain the services of a consultant to prepare a non-union employee compensation study for the Town of Topsfield, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommend no action.

This article allows the Town to fund a human resources consultant to review and analyze the town's current wages, salaries and benefits for non-union employees, and then evaluate these relative to other towns in the local municipal market. The town's previous study was completed in 2014.

ARTICLE FIFTH:

POLICE CHIEF SEARCH PROCESS & ASSESSMENT CENTER

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess or transfer from available funds and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to retain the services of a consultant to conduct a Police Chief Search Process and/or Professional Assessment Center for the Town of Topsfield, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from Article Third of the May 1, 2018 Annual Town Meeting for the Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget Accident-Police/Fire Insurances the sum of $10,000 to be expended by the Board of Selectmen to retain the services of a consultant to conduct a Police Chief Search Process and/or Professional Assessment Center for the Town of Topsfield.

This article allows the Town to retain the services of a professional consultant to manage the search process and coordinate and/or manage a professional Police Chief Assessment Center when the Town begins its search for Topsfield's next Police Chief. Chief Evan Haglund is scheduled to retire in April of 2020.

ARTICLE SIXTH:

PROCTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SECURITY & SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install a security and surveillance system for the Proctor Elementary School, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate the sum of $85,000 from Article Third of the May 1, 2018 Annual Town Meeting for the Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget MIIA Health Insurance to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Topsfield School Committee, to purchase and install a security and surveillance system for the Proctor Elementary School, including all incidental and related expenses.

This article funds the purchase and installation of a security and surveillance system for the Proctor Elementary School. A video surveillance system is one part of a comprehensive crisis plan that includes infrastructure (controlled entry, video surveillance), real-time communication, and training and drilling with students, staff and public safety. Topsfield's elementary schools do not have an active surveillance system. This system would be used in the event of a crisis but also for daily operations including visitor management, after-hours incidents, vandalism/theft prevention, non-custodial parent issues, traffic control and external interactions. Middleton schools have started to install a similar system, and Boxford schools have an expansion of their current system on their capital plan. An appropriation for the Steward School Security and Surveillance System will be included on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

ARTICLE SEVENTH:

REVOKE SOLID WASTE ENTERPRISE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to revoke the vote taken under Article Eighteenth of the May 2, 2000 Town Meeting accepting G.L. c. 44, §53F ½ for the purpose of creating a Solid Waste Enterprise Fund, with the vote taken hereunder to be effective as of the close of business on June 30, 2019, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to revoke the vote taken under Article Eighteenth of the May 2, 2000 Town Meeting accepting G.L. c. 44, §53F ½ for the purpose of creating a Solid Waste Enterprise Fund, such vote to be effective at the close of business on June 30, 2019.

This article revokes the Town Meeting vote on May 2, 2000 under Article Eighteenth to establish a Solid Waste Enterprise Fund. This is a change in accounting procedure only, since there are no monies currently remaining in the fund.

ARTICLE EIGHTH:

RESCIND PRIOR YEAR BOND AUTHORIZATION

To see if the Town will vote to rescind a portion of the borrowing authorization for the "Prospect Street and River Road Water Main Replacement Project", approved under Article Twenty-Ninth of the May 2, 2017 Annual Town Meeting, in the amount of any authorized but unissued debt, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to rescind $530,000 of the $1,500,000 borrowing authorization approved under Article Twenty-Ninth of the May 2, 2017 Annual Town Meeting for the "Prospect Street and River Road Water Main Replacement Project", which amount was authorized but unissued.

In 2017, Town Meeting authorized an appropriation of $1,600,000, including borrowing in the amount of $1,500,000, for this project. The Town may rescind any authorized but unissued debt, an action typically favored by bond rating companies.

ARTICLE NINTH:

ROAD REPAIRS TO PROSPECT STREET AND RIVER ROAD

To see if the Town will vote to raise and assess, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate a sum of money to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to repair roadways on Prospect Street and River Road, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommend that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate the sum of $300,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings to be expended by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to repair and/or reconstruct areas of Prospect Street and River Road disrupted as part of the recent water main replacement project and previous water main breaks; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of the Board of Water Commissioners, to take any other action necessary to carry out this project.

Prospect Street and portions of River Road are in need of road repair and/or reconstruction due to the numerous water main breaks over the years and the recent water main replacement project. Funding for the repair work was included in a bond authorization to replace the water mains but sufficient retained earnings are available to pay for the work.

ARTICLE TENTH:

PEG ACCESS AND CABLE RELATED FUND – FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET TRANSFER

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds and appropriate a sum of money to fund PEG cable access services for the remainder of the fiscal year, or take any other action relative thereto.

Recommended that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate $400 from the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund to PEG and Cable Professional Services to fund cable access services.

The Town established a PEG Access and Cable Related Fund to reserve franchise fees and other cable related revenues to support Public, Educational and Governmental ("PEG") Access Services. Operating costs for professional services will require an additional allocation of $400 for Fiscal Year 2019 professional services provided by Boxford Cable Television. These expenses require a transfer and appropriation to meet all Fiscal Year 2019 expenses.

****

You are directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof, one at the Post Office, one at the Town Hall, and one at each of the Public Meeting Houses in said Town, fourteen days at least before time for holding the election portion of said meeting.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of this Warrant, with your doing thereon, to the Town Clerk, at the time and place of meeting as aforesaid.

Given under our hands this twenty-fifth day of March in the year two thousand and nineteen.

TOWN OF TOPSFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Mark B. Lyons, Chairman

Lynne A. Bermudez, Clerk

Boyd R. Jackson, Member

John K. Spencer, Member

A. Richard Gandt, Member

A true copy

ATTEST:

Frederick J. Glatz, Town Constable

RECOMMENDATIONS AS VOTED BY THE TOPSFIELD FINANCE COMMITTEE

Karen Dow, Chairman
Che Elwell
Jonathan Guido
Michael Hartmann
Eric Menzer
Louis Ross
Dana Warren

ATTACHMENT A

FISCAL YEAR 2020
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET
May 1, 2019
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	ELECTED OFFICERS		
50	**MODERATOR:**	50	
	SELECTMEN:		
1	Chairman	1	
1	Clerk	1	
1	Member	1	
1	Member	1	
1	Member	1	
	ASSESSORS:		
1,500	Chairman	1,500	
1,500	Clerk	1,500	
1,500	Member	1,500	
Appointed	**TOWN CLERK:**	Appointed	
300	**TOWN CONSTABLE:**	300	
	PLANNING BOARD:		
1	Chairman	1	
1	Clerk	1	
1	Member	1	
1	Member	1	
1	Member	1	
	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		
	Moderator:		
50	Salaries & Wages	50	
50	**TOTAL: Moderator**	**50**	
	Selectmen:		
260,411	Salaries & Wages	269,948	
18,311	Other Expenses	18,311	
278,722	**TOTAL: Selectmen**	**288,259**	
	Selectmen's Special:		
77,300	Other Expenses	77,300	
77,300	**TOTAL: Selectmen Special**	**77,300**	

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	Finance Committee:		
1,437	Salaries & Wages	1,505	
395	Other Expenses	395	
100,000	Reserve Fund	100,000	
101,832	**TOTAL: Finance Committee**	**101,900**	
	Town Accountant:		
146,583	Salaries & Wages	154,861	
30,226	Other Expenses	30,226	
176,809	**TOTAL: Town Accountant**	**185,087**	
	Board of Assessors:		
133,650	Salaries & Wages	140,903	
33,303	Other Expenses	43,303	
166,953	**TOTAL: Assessors**	**184,206**	
	Town Treasurer and Collector:		
203,611	Salaries & Wages	215,051	
52,068	Other Expenses	59,718	
255,679	**TOTAL: Town Treasurer / Collector**	**274,769**	
	Town Hall:		
-	Salaries & Wages	-	
188,331	Other Expenses	271,471	
188,331	**TOTAL: Town Hall**	**271,471**	
	Town Owned Buildings:		
600	Other Expenses (School Street Bldg Electricity)	600	
600	**TOTAL: Town Owned Buildings**	**600**	
	P.E.G. / Cable Advisory:		
-	Salaries & Wages	-	
37,000	Other Expenses	49,000	
37,000	**Total: P.E.G. / Cable Advisory**	**49,000**	
	Town Clerk:		
98,574	Salaries & Wages	106,905	
16,585	Other Expenses	13,885	
115,159	**TOTAL: Town Clerk**	**120,790**	
	Conservation Commission:		
84,294	Salaries & Wages	92,486	
84,294	**TOTAL: Conservation Commission**	**92,486**	

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	Planning Board:		
5	Salaries & Wages	5	
1,791	Other Expenses	1,791	
1,796	**TOTAL: Planning Board**	**1,796**	
	Zoning Board of Appeals:		
745	Other Expenses	745	
745	**TOTAL: Zoning Board of Appeals**	**745**	
1,485,270	**SUB-TOTAL: GENERAL GOVERNMENT**	**1,648,459**	
	PUBLIC SAFETY		
	Police Department:		
1,448,998	Salaries & Wages	1,449,627	
135,900	Other Expenses	134,150	
-	Capital Equipment	-	
1,584,898	**TOTAL: Police Department**	**1,583,777**	
	Fire Department:		
733,197	Salaries & Wages	791,859	
109,858	Other Expenses	123,558	
843,055	**TOTAL: Fire Department**	**915,417**	
	Inspectional Services:		
141,917	Salaries & Wages	143,500	
6,415	Other Expenses	16,415	
148,332	**TOTAL: Inspectional Services**	**159,915**	
	Sealer Weights & Measure:		
1,692	Salaries & Wages	1,726	
1,692	**TOTAL: Sealers Weights & Measure**	**1,726**	
	Animal Control Officer:		
10,028	Salaries & Wages	10,229	
571	Other Expenses	571	
10,599	**TOTAL: Animal Control Officer**	**10,800**	
	Animal Inspector:		
7,598	Salaries & Wages	7,750	
1,840	Other Expenses	1,840	
9,438	**TOTAL: Animal Inspector**	**9,590**	
	Tree Department:		
6,817	Salaries & Wages	6,882	
8,845	Other Expenses	8,845	
15,662	**TOTAL: Tree Department**	**15,727**	
2,613,676	**SUB-TOTAL: PUBLIC SAFETY**	**2,696,952**	

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION		
	Proctor Elementary School & Steward Elementary School:		
6,549,689	Total Salaries & Wages	6,667,434	593,068
79,664	Total Professional Development	78,417	
342,983	Total Supplies & Equipment	329,821	
	Total Food Service		
312,998	Total Transportation	339,935	
200,359	Total Utilities Expense	216,652	
238,205	Total Facilities Expense	216,937	
384,173	Total Special Education (Tuitions & Services)	378,461	
	Total In District Special Education Services	71,505	
	Total Insurance (Beneficial & Non-Beneficial)	21,000	
8,108,071	**TOTAL: Elementary Schools**	**8,320,162**	**593,068**
8,108,071	**SUB-TOTAL: ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**	**8,320,162**	**593,068**
	PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES		
	Stormwater Management:		
5,306	Salaries & Wages	5,413	
10,000	Other Expenses	10,000	
15,306	**TOTAL: Stormwater Management**	**15,413**	
	Highway Department:		
405,769	Salaries & Wages	435,009	
252,518	Other Expenses	252,518	
-	Capital Equipment	-	
658,287	**TOTAL: Highway Department**	**687,527**	
	Snow and Ice:		
30,828	Salaries & Wages	32,370	
183,345	Other Expenses	183,345	
214,173	**TOTAL: Snow and Ice**	**215,715**	
	Street Lights:		
24,860	Other Expenses	26,104	
24,860	**TOTAL: Street Lights**	**26,104**	
	MSW Collection, HHW & Recycling:		
429,915	Contracted Services	429,915	
429,915	**TOTAL: MSW Collection, HHW & Recycling**	**429,915**	
	Recycling:		
1,650	Other Expenses	1,650	
1,650	**TOTAL: Recycling**	**1,650**	
	Park and Cemetery Department:		
238,439	Salaries & Wages	255,069	
57,700	Other Expenses	54,770	
296,139	**TOTAL: Park & Cemetery Dept.**	**309,839**	

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	Landfill:		
40,000	Other Expenses	40,000	
40,000	**TOTAL: Landfill**	**40,000**	
1,680,330	**SUB-TOTAL: PUBLIC WORKS**	**1,726,163**	
	HUMAN SERVICES		
	Board of Health:		
99,146	Salaries & Wages	103,171	
20,208	Other Expenses	20,208	
119,354	**TOTAL: Board of Health**	**123,379**	
	Council On Aging:		
118,032	Salaries & Wages	129,311	
4,430	Other Expenses	5,530	
122,462	**TOTAL: Council On Aging**	**134,841**	
	Veterans' Benefits:		
20,960	Other Expenses	20,960	
20,960	**TOTAL: Veterans' Benefits**	**20,960**	
	Soldiers & Sailors Graves:		
1,000	Other Expenses	1,000	
1,000	**TOTAL: Soldiers & Sailors Graves**	**1,000**	
263,776	**SUB-TOTAL: HUMAN SERVICES**	**280,180**	
	CULTURE & RECREATION		
	Library:		
452,604	Salaries & Wages	478,190	
154,870	Other Expenses	158,168	
607,474	**TOTAL: Library**	**636,358**	
	Historical Commission:		
450	Other Expenses	450	
450	**TOTAL: Historical Commission**	**450**	
	Memorial Day/Veteran's Day:		
100	Salaries & Wages	100	
1,750	Other Expenses	1,750	
1,850	**TOTAL: Memorial Day/Veteran's Day**	**1,850**	
609,774	**SUB TOTAL: CULTURE & RECREATION**	**638,658**	

Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2019		Approved Appropriation Fiscal Year 2020	Contingency Appropriation
	DEBT SERVICE		
555,500	Long-Term Debt Principal	766,000	
134,567	Long -Term Debt Interest	467,097	
	Short-Term Debt Principal Pay Down		
447,000	Interest for Temporary Loans	200,000	
2,500	Issue Cost	2,500	
1,139,567	**TOTAL: DEBT SERVICE**	**1,435,597**	
1,139,567	**SUB TOTAL: DEBT SERVICE**	**1,435,597**	
	OTHER EXPENDITURES		
	Pensions:		
1,140,341	Essex Retirement	1,224,339	
1,140,341	**TOTAL: Pensions**	**1,224,339**	
	Insurance:		
456,503	Liability/Accident/Workmen's Compensation	461,844	
2,312,733	Life/Medical/Medicare	2,309,587	
	Unemployment		
2,769,236	**TOTAL: Insurance**	**2,771,431**	
	Other Employee Costs/Benefits:		
25,000	Salary Reserve	91,000	
25,000	**TOTAL: Other Employee Costs/Benefits**	**91,000**	
	Transfer to Other Funds		
	Unemployment	15,000	
	Compensated Absenses	40,000	
	Police / Fire Idemnity Leave	15,000	
	TOTAL: Transfer to Other Funds	**70,000**	
3,934,577	**SUB-TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURES**	**4,156,770**	
19,835,041	*****TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET *****	**20,902,941**	

Fiscal Year 2019: July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019
Fiscal Year 2020: July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
8 WEST COMMON STREET
TOPSFIELD, MA 01983

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 51
TOPSFIELD, MA

TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS:

CURRENT RESIDENT

TOPSFIELD, MA 01983

ANNUAL AND SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Proctor School, Woodbury Auditorium

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019 at 7:00PM

And if needed, continued on Wednesday, May 8, 2019

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2019

7:00 AM to 8:00 PM

ST. ROSE CHURCH HALL

12 Park Street, Topsfield