

**Special Town Meeting
November 20, 2023
Explanation Sheet**



Good evening and welcome to the FY24 Paxton Special Town Meeting. We have taken this opportunity to provide a brief handout to compliment the Special Town Warrant. The hope for this handout is to provide explanations and helpful information for each of the articles on this evening's warrant.

Current Balances (as of 09/30/2023)

Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation	\$ 400,278
Free Cash (Certified)	\$ 538,771
Sale of Cemetery Lots	\$ 102,375
Stabilization – Operating	\$ 360,568
Stabilization -Capital	\$ 52,962
Water Enterprise Retained Earnings (Certified)*	\$ 109,167

*Funds can only be used for projects related to the Water Department.

Town Meeting Articles

Article 1 – Water Enterprise – Prior Year Appropriation

This article is to officially authorize the payment of a Worcester Water bill that had a remaining balance of \$21,246.64 at the end of June 30, 2023. The water department had enough funds to cover the bill, however, the Town's appropriation at Town meeting could not lawfully be exceeded without a Town Meeting vote. This article would remedy this matter and properly appropriate the funding to pay the balance due to Worcester through the FY24 certified Water Retained Earnings.

Article 2 – Transfer – Revise Cemetery Commission

This article would revise the previously voted Cemetery Commission budget at Annual Town Meeting, to increase the funding by \$1,800 which would cover the unanticipated cost of damage to a stone wall in front the cemetery, that as a result, will leave the budget short for the spring/early summer season. At their 11.16.2023 Select Board Meeting, the Select Board recommended to passover this article and have the Cemetery Commission seek either a Reserve Fund or Year-End Transfer for the small amount.

Article 3 – Transfer- Elections/Registrars

This article would have remedied the unanticipated costs expended as a result of the special primary and state election for the Senator seat left vacant by Anne Gobi. The Finance Committee voted on 11.15.2023 to appropriate Reserve Funds to cover these unanticipated costs. As a result, additional funding for this is no longer required and the article will be passed over.

Article 4 – Transfer – Fund Interim Town Administrator

This article would provide funding for the purpose of funding an Interim Town Administrator while the permanent Town Administrator is out on anticipated Parental Leave for approximately two months. While the Town Administrator is out, she will be using vacation and sick time, so she will remain on the payroll and there will not be much extra remaining in the Town Administrator's budget. The total additional funding needed to fund an interim is anticipated around \$15,000. These funds are recommended by the Select Board to come from the Town's Certified Free Cash.

Article 5 – Transfer – Public Safety Generator Repairs

This article would replenish funds exhausted as a result of the unanticipated generator repairs for the Town's generator that backs up all of the Town's Communications and Data at the public safety complex. The total expected expense between the generator repair parts, labor, and rentals is around \$23,000. It is anticipated that there is some absorption ability for a small portion of the costs in the current Public Building Budgets, but additional funds are still needed to allow

for routine maintenance and contracted repairs at the Public Safety Complex for FY24. This article would transfer \$20,000 from Free Cash to replenish the budget.

Article 6 – Transfer – Replacement DPW Mower

This article is to cover the third part of cost for the shared Recreation/DPW/Cemetery replacement mower. At the ATM, a third of the cost was appropriated from Capital Stabilization and Recreation has committed the other third. Due to expenses, the Cemetery Commission was unable to commit the remaining third and this article would transfer that sum of \$4,613 from the Sale of Cemetery Lots fund.

When there is a Sale of a Cemetery Lot, 50% of the sale is deposited into the Sale of Cemetery Lots Special Revenue Fund. Expenditures from this revenue can only be made through appropriation at Town Meeting for costs associated with care, improvements, embellishment, or enlargement of the Cemetery.

Article 7 – Water Enterprise – Water Department Receipts

At the annual town meeting in June, the Water Enterprise Budget (Article 3) was approved allowing for a total FY24 budget of \$1,046,856. After additional review of our current water department expenses and revenues, including prior year expenditures and current year to date numbers, it was determined that the current water enterprise budget will not be sufficient to cover all of the costs expected for FY24 and that revenues also needed to be increased in order to balance the enterprise budget. If approved, the revised budget will increase estimated departmental receipts (by increasing from June – July 2024 Meter Fees paid monthly by user from \$21.45 to \$27 by an additional \$40,460); and additionally, will apply \$47,177 of retained earnings to help offset the costs.

Article 8- Contract 5 Years

This article provides the Town Administrator as the Chief Procurement Officer for the Town with authority, under Mass General Laws Ch 30B, S 12(b), to enter into a contract with the Town's postage machine company, Pitney Bowes, for a period of time greater than 3 years. If approved, the Town will enter into the contract for a five-year period, which will reduce the costs of the overall contract. If this article is disapproved, the annual contract rate will be \$1,601.28 for each of three years. If approved, the annual contract would be \$1,231.20 for each of five years, or a savings of \$370.08 per year.

Article 9 – Public Way – Olivia Knoll

This article, if approved, will accept Olivia Knoll as a public way and the Town will assume responsibility for maintenance of the road and plowing. All legal requirements, including Select Board meetings and Planning Board approval have been met. Following the a vote to approve the road at Town Meeting, the developer has 120 days to give the Town good title to the road, otherwise, the road will not have been accepted.

Article 10 – WRSD Agreement - Amend

This article, if approved, will amend the representative weighted votes for Wachusett Regional School District Towns.

Article 11 – Bylaw – Revolving Fund Bylaw

This article, if approved, would amend the Town's current revolving fund bylaw to add an allowance for Town Building Rentals/Leases revolving fund that would go into effect for the FY25 fiscal year. This would allow the small amount we collect as rent for our current property, 10 West, to be retained and available if and when we need to provide maintenance or make repairs to the property, such as a boiler or septic issues. Currently, all rental fees are retained by the general fund, this would reduce our general fund revenues by \$4,000 a year and allow the Town to build the revolving fund up for larger repairs/maintenance items without significantly influencing the general fund.