

Office of the Select Board
Office of the Town Manager



Town of Ayer| Ayer Town Hall| 1 Main Street| Ayer, MA 01432|978-772-8220| www.ayer.ma.us

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 7, 2023

TO: Ayer Select Board

FROM: Robert A. Pontbriand
Town Manager

SUBJECT: Summary of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant (As of March 7, 2023)

Dear Honorable Select Board Members,

As the Select Board is aware, per the Town's Budget and Town Meeting Calendar, the Select Board and Finance Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 4, 2023 to review and approve the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Upon approval by the Select Board, the Warrant will be publicly posted by Friday, April 7, 2023 at the Town Hall; Post Office Lobby; Police Station Lobby; Library Lobby; The Jack-O-Lantern; Pauline's Variety Store; Transfer Station Swap Shed; Ayer Dog Park; and on the Town's website. Additionally at that time, the Warrant will be sent for printing and to be mailed to each Ayer household in advance of Town Meeting which will take place on Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7pm in the Auditorium of the Ayer Shirley Regional High School.

The following is a summary of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles as of March 7, 2023. Please note that the Warrant officially closes at 12pm on Friday, March 31, 2023. This is also the deadline for all Citizens Petitions to the Town Clerk.

Finally, as presented by the DPW Director and Water and Sewer Superintendent at the February 21, 2023 Select Board Meeting, there may be the need for a Special Town Meeting right before the Annual Town Meeting on April 24, 2023 to consider two (2) Articles for the transfer of retained earnings from the Water Enterprise and the Sewer Enterprise respectively to cover shortfalls in both Enterprise Accounts for FY 2023 largely due to the unforeseen significant increases in the cost of chemicals, services and supplies.

Article 1: Salaries of Elected Officials

This Article is required by MGL Chapter 41, Section 108 as Town Meeting sets the salaries of elected officials. The compensated elected officials are the Moderator; Select Board Chair; Select Board Members (2); Assessors Chair; Assessors Members (2). The salaries receive the 2% COLA adjustment for FY 2024.

Article 2: Contract Funding: Ayer Town Hall/Clerical Union

This Article is for the first-year funding of the Ayer Town Hall/Clerical Union Contract. A brief presentation on the cost impacts is made at Town Meeting.

Article 3: FY 2024 Omnibus Budget

This Article is for the FY 2024 Omnibus Budget. There will be a printed insert of the budget in the Town Meeting Warrant. All information related to the FY 2024 Omnibus Budget is available on the Town's website at www.ayer.ma.us/budget. A brief presentation on the FY 2024 Omnibus Budget will be made at Town Meeting.

Article 4: FY 2024 Ayer Shirley Regional School District Assessment

Article 5: FY 2024 Nashoba Valley Technical Vocational School Assessment

Enterprise Fund Articles (Information provided in the Budget Book at Town Meeting:

Article 6: Solid Waste Enterprise Fund

Article 7: Ambulance Enterprise Fund

Article 8: Sewer Enterprise Fund

Article 9: Water Enterprise Fund

Borrow Article:

Article 10: Capital Budget Requests

This Article will contain the FY 2024 Capital Requests recommended by the Capital Planning Committee which require the Town to borrow for in accordance with the Town's Financial Policies. For more information on the FY 2024 Capital Plan please go to the Town's website at www.ayer.ma.us/budget. Information on each item will be available to present at Town Meeting.

Debt Exclusion Articles:

Article 11: Authorization for Debt Exclusion for the Fire Department – Fire Ladder Truck

This Article must pass by a 2/3 majority vote. Additionally, voters must pass this debt exclusion by ballot at the Annual Town Election on May 9, 2023. Brief presentation to be made at Town Meeting.

Article 12: Authorization for Debt Exclusion for the DPW – West Main Street Bridge Replacement

This Article must pass by a 2/3 majority vote. Additionally, voters must pass this debt exclusion by ballot at the Annual Town Election on May 9, 2023. Brief presentation to be made at Town Meeting.

Transfer Articles:

Article 13: Capital Budget Requests

This Article will contain the FY 2024 Capital Requests recommended by the Capital Planning Committee which will be purchased directly using funds from the Town's Capital Stabilization Fund. For more information on the FY 2024 Capital Plan please go to the Town's website at www.ayer.ma.us/budget. Information on each item will be available to present at Town Meeting.

Article 14: GASB-45/OPEB (Post-Employment Benefits) Fund

This Article would fund the Town's GASB-45/OPEB Fund with \$300,000 of which funding will come from the Local Meals Tax and Free Cash.

Article 15: Replenishment of Ayer Library Trust Funds

This Article would transfer \$35,000 from Free Cash to replenish the Ayer Library Trust Funds which were expended by the Library Trustees last year for the purposes of an emergency repair to the Ayer Library heating system.

Article 16: Funding of the Reserve Fund for Future Payments of Accrued Liabilities for Compensate Absences

This Article would transfer \$10,000 from Free Cash to this Fund for the purposes of funding planned and unplanned retirements from the Town; as well as separation from the Town in which the employee is due certain accrued benefits such as unused vacation time. This fund was created by the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 17: Forward Funding of the Town's Pension Assessment

This Article would forward fund the Town's pension assessment in the amount of \$300,000 for the purposes of realizing estimated future savings.

Article 18: UDAG Fund Replenishment for Park Street Utility Infrastructure Study

This Article would replenish the UDAG Fund in the amount of \$14,185 which was previously authorized by the Select Board for the Park Street Utility Infrastructure Study.

Article 19: Stabilization Fund

This Article would fund the Town's Stabilization Fund and the Town's Capital Stabilization Fund with amounts to be determined as of March 7, 2023.

Raise and Appropriate Articles:

Article 20: First Year's Interest-General Fund Borrowing

This Article would raise and appropriate the sum required to provide for the first-year interest charges associated with the administrative expenses on all General Fund borrowing/bonding authorized by Town Meeting. Note: The exact sum is currently being calculated.

Article 21: Funding for Aquatic Weed Control for Town Ponds

This Article would raise and appropriate the sum of \$ _____ (sum to be determined as of March 7, 2023) for the purposes of aquatic weed control for the Town's ponds as requested and administered by the Conservation Commission.

Community Preservation Act Articles:

Article 22: Community Preservation Act

Article 23: Community Preservation Fund – FY 2024 Transfer of Funds

Article 24: Pirone Park Playground Project: \$750,000

This Article would provide CPC Funding in the amount of \$750,000 toward the Pirone Park Playground. This funding would be in addition to the \$220,000 recommended by the Capital Planning Committee. CPC to hold Public Hearing on March 22, 2023.

Article 25: Ayer Affordable Housing Trust: \$ _____ TBD

This Article would provide CPC funding in the amount of \$ _____ TBD for the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust. CPC to hold Public Hearing on March 22, 2023.

Note: The deadline for all Warrant Articles is Friday, March 31, 2023 at 12pm (noon) to the Select Board/Town Manager's Office

Citizens Petitions:

As of March 7, 2023 there are no Citizens Petitions. Deadline is Friday, March 31, 2023 at 12pm (noon) for Citizens Petitions to the Town Clerk's Office at Town Hall.

Thank you.

Cc: Town Moderator
Town Clerk
Finance Committee