



WARRANT FOR SPECIAL TOWN MEETING November 30, 2015

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Middlesex, ss.

To any Constable in the Town of Weston, Greetings:

In the name of The Commonwealth you are hereby required to notify and warn the voters of said Town, qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet in the Auditorium of the Senior High School in said Town on Monday, the thirtieth day of November 2015, at 7:00 o'clock p.m., to act upon the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: **AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2016 OPERATING BUDGET**

To amend the following line items in the Fiscal Year 2016 Operating Budget adopted under Article 3 of the 2015 Annual Town Meeting, by raising and appropriating additional sums and reducing amounts as follows:

	<u>Changing From</u>	<u>Changing To</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Insurance–Unemployment Compensation	\$100,000	\$130,000	\$30,000
Land Use, Planning & Inspectional			
Services - Expenses	183,740	215,949	32,209
School Department – Salaries	32,246,404	32,152,529	(93,875)

or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 1 Explanation: This article reduces funding for the School Department to eliminate a kindergarten section that is not needed. In addition, additional funds are requested for Unemployment Compensation, to handle an unexpectedly high volume of claims, and for the Conservation Commission, to make necessary repairs to the sugar shack and shed, located at the Weston Middle School.

ARTICLE 2: **INCREASE REQUIRED SIGNATURES FOR CITIZENS’ PETITIONS SUBMITTED WITH RESPECT TO ANNUAL TOWN MEETINGS FROM 10 TO 100 (SUBMITTED BY CITIZENS’ PETITION)**

To authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for special legislation to increase from 10 to 100 the number of signatures necessary to place an article on the warrant by petition for an Annual Town Meeting, as set forth below; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to such bill, unless the Board of Selectmen approves amendments to the bill prior to enactment by the General Court, and provided further that the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition; or take any other action relative thereto.

“An Act Relative to the Town of Weston Town Meeting

Section 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10 of chapter 39 of the General Laws or of any other general or special law to the contrary, the board of selectmen of the town of Weston shall insert in the warrant for an annual town meeting all subjects the insertion of which shall be requested of it in writing by 100 registered voters of the town.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.”

Article 2 Explanation (provided by proponents): The Selectmen’s Town Meeting Advisory Committee (STMAC) recently delivered its recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. One unanimous recommendation was to increase the number of signatures required for a citizens’ petition at Annual Town Meeting from 10 to 100, bringing the requirement in line with the existing requirement for Special Town Meetings. The committee believes, and research supports, that the higher number of signatures demonstrates broader support, a higher likelihood of success, and thus greater justification for using Town Meeting time to consider the petition. In addition, based on the 607 responses to STMAC’s town-wide survey question, 60% of residents strongly support or support this change, with less than 16% strongly opposing or opposing it: a 4 to 1 ratio, ignoring the 25% who have no preference. This article was presented as a citizens’ petition, with over 100 verified signatures, to show

inherently that the proposal is not intended to discourage citizens' petitions altogether and that gathering 100 or more signatures is not an undue burden. If this change is approved at the town level, the state will need to pass special legislation to implement it.

ARTICLE 3: APPROPRIATE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR LAMSON PLAYGROUND

To raise and appropriate an additional sum of money for the completion of a playground at Lamson Park, Town House Road, including the purchase and installation of new playground equipment, and all incidental costs related thereto; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 3 Explanation: At May 2014 Annual Town Meeting, voters appropriated \$225,000 to relocate Tavernside Playground to Lamson Park, to upgrade equipment to comply with current safety regulations, and to provide equipment for a wider age range; an additional \$40,000 was raised privately. Due to dramatic grade changes in the site and handicap accessibility requirements, the original concept plan proved to be prohibitively expensive. The Recreation Commission recently voted to pursue a revised plan (referred to as "Option 6" at a hearing preceding that vote). The revised "Option 6" plan would have an anticipated funding shortfall of \$51,000, approximately half of which is expected to be raised privately. The amount to be requested under this article is \$25,000.

ARTICLE 4: APPROPRIATE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING – ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL HOUSING AT BROOK SCHOOL APARTMENTS AND ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

To appropriate a sum of money for community housing purposes under the Community Preservation Program in order to pay costs of 1) a feasibility study for developing additional affordable housing units at Brook School Apartments, 44 School Street, and 2) reviewing, analyzing and, as appropriate, developing zoning by-law revisions to support the creation of affordable housing in the town on private property, and for other related expenses; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; and as funding therefor, to transfer said sum from the Unallocated allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 4 Explanation: Recently proposed housing developments in Weston under M.G.L. Ch. 40B, which allows developers to ignore local zoning restrictions related to density, setbacks, and other requirements in a town where less than 10% of the housing stock is designated "affordable," have motivated the formation of a Housing Production Plan Steering Committee (HPPSC) to propose a Housing Production Plan. Such a plan must be approved by the State and set forth specific plans for producing affordable housing annually until the 10% goal is achieved. Progress must be made each year in order to provide a "safe harbor" from developments proposed under M.G.L. Ch. 40B that do not fit the character of the town. In other words, the purpose of a Housing Production Plan, if adopted, is to help the Town take more control over the development of affordable housing.

As an initial phase, the Board of Selectmen, working with the HPPSC, is proposing to explore the construction of additional elderly housing units at Brook School Apartments (BSA). A key reason for exploring this possibility first is that the construction of additional units at BSA has been proposed previously and independently of any Housing Production Plan, by the Elderly Housing Commission and others, as a way to meet the shortfall in senior housing options for Weston residents, especially since the BSA campus already provides some of the necessary infrastructure for elderly residents. However, the HPPSC emphasizes that a Housing Production Plan could not be satisfied by BSA units alone, which is why some of these funds will also be used to explore the feasibility of other strategies for the development of affordable housing such as zoning bylaw changes, partnering with private property owners, such as at Regis College and Boston Properties (owner of the Biogen/Monster site), and subsidizing private developers whose plans meet the guidelines set by Weston's Housing Partnership.

Any proposed affordable housing project to be funded by Weston taxpayers, or requiring zoning by-law changes, will be subject to one or more votes of approval at Town Meeting. And further, as part of the process, involvement and input regarding any proposed project will be sought from neighborhoods, abutters, and all other residents, with consideration given to the specific concerns about any proposed site. Nothing can proceed without the involvement of and approval by voters. The amount to be requested under this article is \$160,000.

ARTICLE 5: APPROPRIATE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING – ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL HOUSING ON OTHER MUNICIPAL PROPERTY

To appropriate a sum of money for community housing purposes under the Community Preservation Program in order to pay costs of feasibility studies for developing affordable housing on up to three municipal properties, and for other related expenses; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; and as funding therefor, to

transfer said sum from the Unallocated allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 5 Explanation: In the previous article, funds were requested to explore the construction of additional elderly housing units at Brook School Apartments (BSA) and units on private property. However, the HPPSC believes the BSA should not be the only municipal site considered for the first phase of the Housing Production Plan and is requesting funds to explore the physical and financial implications of development of affordable housing on up to three other private or municipally owned sites. Exploration of other possible sites would be conceptual only and would involve input from the neighboring residents to determine the pros and cons of small scale developments dispersed throughout the town.

Any proposed affordable housing project to be funded by Weston taxpayers, or requiring zoning by-law changes, will be subject to one or more votes of approval at Town Meeting. And further, as part of the process, involvement and input regarding any proposed project will be sought from neighborhoods, abutters, and all other residents, with consideration given to the specific concerns about any proposed site. Nothing can proceed without the involvement of and approval by voters. The amount to be requested under this article is \$20,000.

ARTICLE 6: APPROPRIATE FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF IMPROVEMENTS TO WESTON’S HISTORIC TOWN CENTER

To appropriate a sum of money to investigate physical improvements to Weston’s historic Town Center, generally located along Boston Post Road between Linwood Avenue and School Street, along Church Street between Boston Post Road and Town House Road, and along Town House Road, including all related incidental costs; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; the money so appropriated to be raised through taxation and by transferring an amount from the Unallocated allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 6 Explanation: The Board of Selectmen, working with the Town Center Planning Committee, is proposing to investigate physical improvements to Weston’s Town Center, a part of the Boston Post Road Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including streetscape design; natural gas and electrical infrastructure; lighting; paving; pedestrian safety; traffic; parking; and other related issues. The intent of this project is to study improvements to the Town Center that are historically accurate; that are sensitive to the existing street scale; that enhance public safety; that improve the economic viability of local businesses; and that make the Town Center more of a destination for Weston citizens. The portion of this project relating to the historic rehabilitation/restoration of the district is expected to be funded with CPA funds. The amount to be requested under this article is \$150,000: \$105,000 in general funds and \$45,000 in CPA funds.

ARTICLE 7: APPROPRIATE FOR LAND FOR RECREATIONAL USE – WALKWAY ON WINTER STREET

To appropriate a sum of money for land for recreational use under the Community Preservation Program for the creation of a walkway on Winter Street for recreational purposes, including all related incidental costs; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager, and as funding therefor, to transfer said sum from the Unallocated allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; and, further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire, by purchase, gift or eminent domain, fee or easement interests as may be required to create said walkway or foot path, or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 7 Explanation: Walkways and sidewalks provide safe recreational opportunities and connections to open space, land for recreational use and recreational facilities. Studies have shown that there exists a positive relationship between the existence of walkways and the use of the same for recreational activities as well as the general health benefits of activities such as walking and running. This is a multiyear project with CPA funding requests for other priorities identified in the Traffic and Sidewalk Committee’s 2010 Master Plan expected in subsequent years. CPA funding for the first phase of this project, \$250,000 for the design and construction of approximately one mile of walkway/sidewalk along portions of Brown Street and Winter Street, was approved at the May 2013 Annual Town Meeting. Construction bids were solicited this fall, and the May 2013 CPA Fund appropriation, in combination with existing Town general funds, proved sufficient to complete the Brown Street portion of the project only. This request is expected to fund the Winter Street portion of the project. The amount to be requested under this article is \$250,000.

ARTICLE 8: AMEND REGIONAL AGREEMENT TO ALLOW THE TOWN OF WAYLAND TO WITHDRAW FROM THE MINUTEMAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

To accept and approve the “Amendment to Minuteman Regional Agreement regarding the Withdrawal of the Town of Wayland from the Minuteman Regional School District” which was approved by the Minuteman Regional School Committee on July 7, 2015 and which has been submitted to the Board of Selectmen consistent with the current Minuteman Regional Agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 8 Explanation: On April 15, 2015 the Wayland Town Meeting voted to seek the Town of Wayland’s withdrawal from the Minuteman Regional School District. Section IX of the current Minuteman Regional Agreement requires the Minuteman Regional School Committee, under such circumstances, to draft an amendment to the Regional Agreement setting forth the terms by which the town seeking to withdraw may withdraw from the District. To this end, the Regional School Committee on July 7, 2015 voted to submit an Amendment to the member towns for their approval. The Town of Wayland can only withdraw from the District if all sixteen of the current member towns of the District, as well as the Commissioner of Education, approve the Amendment.

ARTICLE 9: AUTHORIZE REVOLVING FUND – SOLAR ARRAY REVENUE

To establish a revolving fund for revenue received from solar arrays on Town property, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 44, §53E ½ for the purpose indicated below:

Revolving Fund	Authority to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Fund	FY16 Budget
Solar Array Revenue	Town Manager	Payments to the Town for the generation of solar energy from solar arrays on Town property	Electricity expenses	\$200,000

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 9 Explanation: The Town will receive payments from Eversource for electricity generated by solar photovoltaic panels in the process of being placed on the closed landfill. In order to access those payments, which are intended to offset electricity bills paid from the Town’s budget, a revolving account must be established under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 44, section 53E½. The Revolving Fund must be authorized annually by vote of the Town Meeting. The Fund is credited only with payments made to the Town for generation of solar energy, and expenditures may be made from the Revolving Fund without further appropriation.

ARTICLE 10: AMEND GENERAL BY-LAWS - ARTICLE XVII – COUNCIL ON AGING

To amend Article XVII of the General By-laws of the Town of Weston by deleting the word “concurrent” in the third sentence and inserting in place thereof, the word “consecutive.”

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 10 Explanation: The Council on Aging has requested that a simple correction in the language of this by-law be made to more accurately reflect the intended meaning.

And you are to serve the warrant by posting four attested copies thereof at the Town Hall, at the Kendal Green Railroad Station, at the Town of Weston Transfer Station and on the kiosk at the front of the High School by the gymnasium, fourteen days at least before the time appointed for said meeting.

Hereof fail not to make due return of this warrant with your doings thereon to the Selectmen at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands October 28, 2015

Douglas P. Gillespie
Michael H. Harrity
Christopher E. Houston
Selectmen of the Town of Weston

PLEASE BRING THIS WITH YOU TO TOWN MEETING

notes

6:30 to 6:45 p.m. – Ask the Moderator: Town Meeting Orientation

Meet with the Moderator in the High School Auditorium to get answers to any questions you have about Town Meeting and procedures.

Have questions on Town Meeting, procedures or the Warrant Articles?

Visit www.weston.org/TownMeeting for details

Last day to register to vote is November 20th