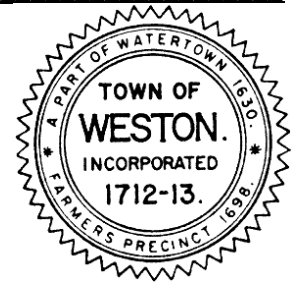

WARRANT FOR SPECIAL TOWN MEETING November 28, 2023



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 High School Auditorium at 444 Wellesley Street in said Town on Tuesday, the twenty-eighth day of November 2023, at 7:00 o'clock p.m., to act upon the following articles:

CONSENT AGENDA Articles 1 - 6

ARTICLE 1: PETITION FOR SPECIAL LEGISLATION: DETAIL OFFICERS

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the Massachusetts General Court for special legislation amending Chapter 74 of the Acts of 2020 to raise the age limit of retired police officers working in Weston from age 65 to age 70; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approve amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, and provided further that the Select Board 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.

Article 1 Explanation: In December of 2019, the town adopted a change to the general laws to allow Weston to hire retired police officers as specials for the purpose of using them as detail officers if needed. The Police Chief has recommended that the cutoff age of the retirees be raised from 65 to 70 provided they are still able to safely and adequately perform the duties as has been done in other communities. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 2: AMEND THE GENERAL BY-LAWS REGARDING SPECIAL EVENTS & OBSERVANCES

To amend the Town's By-laws by deleting Article II Section 16 and replacing it with the new Section 16, Special Events and Observances Committee as detailed below; or take any other action relative thereto.

Town of Weston General By-laws

ARTICLE II

SECTION 16. There shall be a Special Events & Observances Committee (the 'Committee') of three (3) to five (5) members to be appointed by the Select Board to implement and oversee special event activities in the Town, such as the Memorial Day and Veteran's Day observances, as well as other town-wide celebrations or observances. In addition, the Committee will work closely with the Town Manager's office on the creation and maintenance of a master event calendar for the Town. In appointing members to the Committee, the Select Board shall seek, but not be limited to, members from groups representing school parents, the Scouts BSA and Girl Scouts of the USA (or similar organizations), Weston-based service organizations, and veterans. Members shall be appointed by the Select Board to initial terms of one, two and three years, and thereafter for terms of three years; provided, further, that the vote taken hereunder shall supersede any previous votes establishing a Memorial Day Committee in the Town.

Article 2 Explanation: The Select Board wishes to amend the Town's By-Laws by amending the By-law establishing the Memorial Day Committee, which is currently appointed by the Moderator, by expanding the Committee's scope

to assist in many different events such as Veteran's Day, Town Celebration and other major Town events and to provide assistance to other such events sponsored by other groups. The committee will also serve in a coordinating role with the Town calendar of events by working closely with the Town Manager's office and other such Town departments. This proposal has the support of the Moderator. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 3: AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

To amend the following line items in the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget adopted under Article 2 of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting by appropriating additional funds to other line items as follows:

	<u>Changing From</u>	<u>Changing To</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Board of Health - Expenses	\$13,300	\$29,800	\$16,500

And, as funding therefor, that \$16,500 be transferred from available funds and/or free cash; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 3 Explanation: The Board of Health is requesting \$16,500 in one-time monies to cover the cost of transitioning to the SimpliCITY Health Permit Management System. This project has been considered for several years and will greatly improve the permit tracking systems in Weston. This one-time cost covers the acquisition of the program and set-up. Moving forward, the annual cost of the program will be included in the IT budget. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 4: AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2024 PUBLIC ACCESS OPERATIONS

To see if the Town will transfer from the PEG and Cable Related Fund an additional sum of money as a grant to Weston Media, Inc. for Cable Access and PEG purposes for FY2024, and to authorize the Select Board, or the Town Manager as its designee, to enter into a grant agreement with Weston Media, Inc. upon such terms and conditions as the Town Manager deems appropriate; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 4 Explanation: The Commonwealth established rules governing the method by which cable franchise fees are used to support public access operations by requiring Town meeting to appropriate from franchise fees collected by the Town to Weston Media, Inc. This article transfers franchise fees collected by the Town totaling \$8,200 and required to be used for public access operations. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 5: APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS FOR MEMORIAL POOL DEBT SERVICE

To appropriate a sum of money from the Community Preservation Fund for land for recreational use, particularly, for the debt service due in connection with the Memorial Pool project approved under Article 6 of the September 13, 2022 Fall Town Meeting, to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager, and, as funding therefor to transfer said amount from the Community Preservation Fund FY2024 estimated annual revenues, the Open Space Allocation or otherwise; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 5 Explanation: This is a technical correction to the vote authorizing repairs to the Memorial Pool under Article 6 of the September 13, 2022 Fall Town Meeting. At the May 8, 2023 Town Meeting, the Town voted to approve the debt service payments for a variety of projects however the ultimate motion failed to include the debt service on the recently completed Memorial Pool project. This vote will correct that omission and authorize that payment of \$381,445. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 6: APPROPRIATE FOR STEWARDSHIP ENDOWMENTS FOR CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS AT THE CASE ESTATES AND WELLINGTON FARM

To appropriate a sum of money for land for open space use under the Community Preservation Program for the cost of stewardship endowment contributions for the enforcement of Conservation Restrictions currently placed on Case Estates Conservation Land located at 0 Wellesley Street (Parcel ID: 032_022_050) & Ash Street (Parcel ID: 032_023_001) as well as Wellington Farm Conservation Land (Parcel ID: 056_001_071 & 056_001_030) 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 6 Explanation: This article will provide funding for one-time stewardship endowment contributions for two Conservation Restrictions (CRs) that must be placed on Town properties that were purchased using Community Preservation Act funds – the Case Estates and Wellington Farm. Without this funding, it may not be possible to find an organization willing to hold the conservation restrictions. CPA funds in the amount of \$30,000 will be requested to fund this article. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 7: GENERAL BY-LAWS - ADOPTION OF SPECIALIZED ENERGY CODE

To see if the Town will vote to accept and adopt the so-called “Specialized Energy Code”, found at 225 CMR 22 and 23 and Appendices RC and CC, including amendments or modifications thereto, with an effective date of July 1, 2024, a copy of which is on file with the Town Clerk, all for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and to amend the Town By-laws, Article XXXII to reflect adoption of such code as follows; or take any other action relative thereto.

Delete the title and text of Article XXXII and insert in place thereof the following:

Specialized Energy Code

SECTION 1. Acceptance/Adoption. The Town of Weston has accepted and adopted the provisions of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, the so-called Specialized Energy Code, as it may be amended from time to time, in place of the provisions otherwise established by the Stretch Energy Code or the baseline Massachusetts Energy Code.

SECTION 2. Purpose. The Specialized Energy Code shall, for new construction of residential and commercial buildings, establish a more energy efficient and low greenhouse gas emissions alternative to the applicable provisions of the Stretch Energy Code or the baseline Massachusetts Energy Code.

Article 7 Explanation: In 2021, Massachusetts adopted the Climate Act, which obligates the state to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. The state’s long-term policy on buildings is to “electrify everything”. To make that happen faster, the state has introduced two new building energy codes which align to its future direction: the “Specialized Energy Code” and the “All-Electric Pilot”. This article proposes adopting the Specialized Energy Code as part of the Town’s General By-laws. This Specialized Energy Code applies to new construction only. Adoption of the Specialized Code will reduce building emissions in line with State requirements and Weston’s “Climate Action and Resilience Plan.” Adoption of this code will also protect future Weston homeowners from costly energy retrofits. The Specialized Energy Code allows for both all-electric and “mixed-fuel” homes (homes that use a fossil fuel like natural gas or oil). It requires only that new, mixed-fuel homes are pre-wired for future electrification and include some rooftop solar if the roof angle and nearby trees allow. The code does not require anyone to cut down trees. The proposed Specialized Energy Code By-law uses standard, templated language from the state that is exactly the same as that used in other surrounding towns. A majority vote at Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST HOUSING HOME REPAIR GRANT PROGRAM

To raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money to establish a Home Repair Grant Program, to be used to pay the costs of housing repairs to qualified homeowners, under the direction of the

Affordable Housing Trust and to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 8 Explanation. The Weston Affordable Housing Trust is proposing to offer a third round of the Home Repair Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to provide financial assistance to income-eligible Weston residents that currently own a home that has an affordable housing deed restriction currently in place. The grant may be used to make general repairs to address health and safety issues, repairs that are necessary for the integrity of the home, and repairs that maintain the value of the home. The program is sponsored by the Weston Affordable Housing Trust (WAHT) for the benefit of Weston residents. The request will be for \$100,000. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 9: APPROPRIATE FOR FIRE STATION DESIGN FEES

To appropriate a sum of money to pay costs of engineering and architectural services for plans and specifications for the design of the rehabilitation of the two fire stations, including all incidental and related expenses, to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager, the money so appropriated to be raised and appropriated or transferred from any available fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 9 Explanation: In 2018, the Fire Department formally submitted to the Town Manager, Facilities Department, and Permanent Building Committee (PBC) a Fire Station Deficiency Report. As a result, the PBC and Facilities Department began their investigation into the stations and their space issues. The PBC continued their analysis of the stations until 2020 when the UMASS Collins Center began their analysis of the Fire Service Operations and sited facilities deficiencies which needed to be addressed. Among the many recommendations, the report stated that the Town should “Consider conducting a full evaluation of facilities needs for the Weston Fire Department and otherwise explore new space options to accommodate new firefighters and all genders” as well as stating that the “facilities should be evaluated by licensed personnel for deficiencies including, but not limited to, physical access, air quality, appropriate sleeping areas, gear cleaning and separation, medical storage and contamination. Any due diligence conducted in the evaluation of facilities and the design of a new station should take these factors into consideration.” In early 2022, the PBC drafted an RFP to engage qualified architectural firms to conduct the feasibility study and chose Tecton Architects for the study given their work history and familiarity with public safety buildings, knowledge of Fire Service programmatic factors and considerable/recent history of Fire Station design. Programmatic factors refer to the design of the physical plant to accommodate operational needs such as bunking structures to accommodate mixed gender use and prevent the spread of illnesses, provide proper stations to ensure standard decontamination space/processes, office and living space needs, etc.

A Working Group was established by the Select Board to work with Tecton to determine a scope for design services to address the numerous deficiencies in Town’s two fire stations. The Working Group has reviewed and made adjustments to the program, confirmed the finding that significant improvements are needed, and recommended to the Select Board that the Fire Headquarters (built in 1914 and renovated in 1986) and South Ave Station (built in 1967) need significant improvements. The preliminary plans include adding to the historic Fire Headquarters located in the Town Center and a rebuild of the South Avenue Fire Station. The next step is to appropriate design funds that will be used, under the direction of the Permanent Building Committee working with others designated by the Select Board, to develop detailed plans, specifications, and bid documents, working with an architect and owner’s project manager.

More information about the proposed Fire Station Project can be found on the Town’s website at www.westonma.gov. The amount to be requested under this article is \$4,500,000 to be appropriated from available Free Cash. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (Articles 10-12)

ARTICLE 10: APPROPRIATE FOR RECREATIONAL USE – ASH STREET WALKWAY

To appropriate a sum of money for land for recreational use under the Community Preservation Program for the construction of a walkway in the Ash Street corridor for recreational purposes, including all incidental and 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; and, further, to authorize the Select Board 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 10 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. Funds requested under this article would be spent to construct a 5' wide walkway with a total length of approximately 1,500' comprised of approximately 800' of stone dust trail and 700' of paved asphalt connecting the existing Ash Street walkway and trails, which currently terminate at the MWRA reservoir bridge, by extending them northward to a connection with the existing Legacy Trail at the Case Estates, thereby providing a continuous safe walkway the length of the Ash Street corridor. CPA funds in the amount of \$525,000 will be requested to complete this project. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 11: APPROPRIATE FOR RECREATIONAL USE – TENNIS COURT DESIGN FEES

To appropriate a sum of money for land for recreation use under the Community Preservation Program in order to fund costs of engineering and architectural services for plans and specifications for the design and renovation of the High School tennis courts and outdoor associated basketball courts, including all incidental and 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 11 Explanation: This warrant article requests \$111,000 of CPA funds for design fees and planning work to prepare for reconstruction of the six tennis courts and outdoor basketball court at Weston High School. The current courts are severely cracked, making them unsuitable for match play and posing a safety risk to athletes and community members using the courts. The proposed solution is to reconstruct the courts using post-tensioned concrete. Funds requested under this article will pay for design fees and other related expenses to enable a construction funding request at a subsequent Town Meeting, likely the May 2024 Annual Town Meeting. This article is co-sponsored by the Weston School Committee and Weston Recreation Commission. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 12: APPROPRIATE FOR DESIGN FEES FOR LOWER FLOOR RENOVATIONS TO ELDERLY HOUSING APARTMENTS

To appropriate a sum of money for community housing use under the Community Preservation Program for the cost of engineering and architectural services for plans and specifications for renovation of the lower level of Brook School Apartments, 44 School Street, for use as rental housing for the elderly, including all incidental and related expenses; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager working with the Permanent Building Committee as provided in Article XXII of the General By-laws and as funding therefor, to transfer said sum from the Community Housing allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 12 Explanation: The Elderly Housing Committee is seeking \$50,000 of CPA funds for the design of renovating the lower level of Building A at Brook School Apartments for two additional units of senior housing. This Article would provide funding for Construction documents and design specifications. The next phase of this work, construction funds, will be requested at a subsequent Town Meeting. A majority vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

And you are to serve the warrant by posting attested copies thereof at the Town Hall, the Police Station, the Public Library, the Transfer Station and on the kiosk at the front of the Weston High School on Wellesley Street 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 Select Board at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands October 24, 2023.

Thomas Palmer
Laurie Bent
Christopher E. Houston

Select Board of the Town of Weston

**LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE FOR TOWN MEETING IS
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

Register online or in person (in the Town Clerk's Office at Town Hall). Voters must be registered in Weston. See www.weston.org/Voting for additional information.

Save the Dates:

Annual Town Caucus – March 11, 2024 – 7:00 p.m. At the Caucus, prospective candidates for the various town elective offices are nominated to be placed on the ballot for the Annual Town Election, held in May each year. The two candidates for each open position who receives the largest number of votes at the caucus are designated "Caucus Nominees" on the Town Election ballot. Each caucus nominee must receive a minimum of 8 percent of the votes cast that evening.

Annual Town Election – May 4, 2024 The election of Town Officers and the Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion vote will be held at the Town Hall Auditorium for all four precincts. Only registered voters of Weston may vote in the Town Election. Visit the Town's website at www.westonma.gov/TownElection for the list of candidates a description of the duties of each office, and the ballot question. Contact the office of the Town Clerk at (781) 786-5010 for information if you cannot vote in person on May 4.

Annual Town Meeting – May 6, 2024 – 7:00 p.m. Town Meeting is Weston's legislative body of government where all spending decisions for the budget and various projects are made. Town Meeting is typically held at the High School.

Interested in volunteering? Weston needs you! Be an integral part of Weston's Town Government.

See www.weston.org/volunteer for more information.