

## Special Town Meeting 2018 – Finance Committee Recommendations

The Finance Committee has a responsibility for creating the budget for the Town, as well as providing for recommendations on articles in the Town Meeting Warrant. The committee reviews each article on the Warrant, listens to presentations, asks questions, discusses and finally votes for a recommendation. While our recommendations are printed in the warrant, we are presenting additional information about our recommendations in advance of Town Meeting. It is our hope and goal that making this additional information available will be of benefit to the voters.

### Article 1 – Debate Rules

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Recommend: Approval

7-0-0

This Article proposes the adoption of procedures for Town Meeting. These are the usual procedures under which we operate Town Meeting. They provide a means by which an orderly and efficient meeting may be run.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 2 – General Bylaw Amendment - Amend Historic District Commission Bylaw to Authorize Solar Panels Within the Historical

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Recommend: Approval

5-2-2

The changes to the bylaw would allow residents of the Historic District to put solar panels on their roofs without obtaining approval of the Historic District Commission (“HDC”), provided the panels meet certain standards. The standards are intended to make it such that the panels blend in as much as reasonably possible. The petitioners intend to present examples at Town Meeting and voters can decide for themselves if the panels as shown do blend in well enough such that HDC approval should not be required. The citizen petitioners stated that the bylaw change should be made now, because delay could mean missing out on incentives that might not be available later.

The Finance Committee considered arguments against changing the bylaw, including that to maintain the special nature of the Historic District HDC approval for changes like solar panels should continue. HDC approval was not considered to be particularly burdensome or unfairly withheld. It was also considered that the bylaw, if Town Meeting approves it, might be disallowed by the Attorney General as violative of the Act of the Legislature establishing the HDC.

This would be the second exception to not having to obtain approval, the first is that a resident may paint their house white without HDC approval.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 3 – General Bylaw Amendment - Cable Television Committee

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-1

The Selectmen are proposing this bylaw change to expand the charge to the Cable Television Committee. The Selectmen would like to have a plan for the town around media and technology. There have been many advances in media technology since the Cable Television Committee was first formed. We questioned this approach and whether or not a reluctant committee that may not have the right expertise can be effective. The Selectmen believe they need an avenue for moving forward with a media technology strategy for the Town. The Finance Committee believes it is the Selectmen's prerogative to make this change.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 4 – Zoning Map Amendments - Elimination of Remaining Limited Business Districts and Two Overlay Districts Superseded by the Great Road District

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Recommend: Approval

7-0-0

The Great Road Zoning District recently established at Annual Town meeting is intended to replace most usage of other business districts and mixed use overlay districts. Prior to eliminating bylaw references to the no longer needed districts, proposed in Article 6, the Town must first rezone several residual parcels to a remaining zone, and eliminate map references to the old overlay districts. The proposed new zone designations are appropriately based upon contiguous zoning and current use. The Finance Committee supports the Planning Board desire to make these overlay changes.

The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

### Article 5 – Zoning Bylaw Amendment - Elimination of Remaining Limited Business Districts

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Recommend: None

This article is expected to be indefinitely postponed.

### Article 6 - Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Elimination of Remaining Limited Business Districts and Great Road Follow-up Amendments

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Recommend: To be given at Special Town Meeting

Since this Article is expected to be amended at Special Town Meeting. The Finance Committee has no recommendation at this time.

## Article 7 - Carleton Willard Village Conservation Restriction

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Recommend: Approval

9-0-0

Carlton-Willard is asking to relocate a Conservation restriction to another location on their property. The town would be picking up close to an additional 1 1/2 acres of restricted land. In this exchange the land being added to the Conservation Restriction seems to be more desirable for the Restriction. The Finance Committee continues to support this project for its financial tax benefit, and for increased opportunity for senior residents.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 8 - John Glenn Middle School Design and Construction Document Bond Authorization

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

This article would authorize bonding in the amount of \$426,265, for design and construction documents for the John Glenn Middle School Addition and Improvements Project. A system wide review of space requirements validated the need for additional classrooms and space modifications to accommodate increased student enrollment and program requirements. In light of increased enrollment, the Finance Committee supports these additions to the school.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 9 - Bedford High School Design and Construction Document Bond Authorization

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

This article would authorize bonding in the amount of \$126,000, for design and construction documents for the Bedford High School Improvements Project. A system wide review of space requirements validated the need for space modifications to accommodate increased student enrollment and program requirements. In light of increased enrollment, the Finance Committee supports these additions to the school.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 10 - Community Preservation Surcharge Effective July 1, 2019

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Recommend: Approval

6-2-1

This article would continue the 3% Community Preservation surcharge for fiscal years beginning on or after July 1, 2019. Two major points made in favor of the Article were the likelihood of continuing to receive state matching funds, and the continued support of town meeting.

There were some concerns expressed about whether we should continue to tax residents at the full 3% given the overall strong financial condition of the town, but given the amount required due to past CPA bonding and the matching funds, continuing with the 3% surcharge seems the correct approach.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 11 - Amend FY 2019 Community Preservation Budget

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

This Article would reduce the Community Preservation budget to account for a reduced anticipated bond cost. The measure was seen as altogether uncontroversial.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 12 - Land Acquisition Fund

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

This article will appropriate \$300,000 for real property acquisition for municipal and/or school use and \$300,000 for Community Preservation Fund use. The Land Acquisition Fund has a list of properties that are authorized for purchase which was approved at the November 2017 Special Town Meeting. These funds will allow the Selectmen to enter into good faith negotiations should one of these properties become available. Providing sufficient funds to enter negotiations is a prudent move at this time and is supported by the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

### Article 13 - Rescind Bond Authorizations

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

This article would authorize rescinding two bonded capital projects. These projects include a DPW Large Dump Truck \$72,498 (voted 2017 ATM) and the Lane School Parking Lot \$300,000 (voted 2017 ATM). Funding is no longer required for these projects; therefore, bonding is no longer necessary.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 14 – Appropriate Funds for Bedford Police Supervisors Association Collective Bargaining Agreement - FY 19

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Recommend: Approval

8-0-0

Transfer funds to the Police Department operating budget be used to compensate members of the Bedford Police Supervisors Association according to the negotiated contract. The amount represents an increase of 8.64% over 3 years and will cost \$25,717 in FY2019. These funds have already been appropriated in the FY2019 operating budget.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 15 – Appropriate Funds for Transportation Infrastructure Fund

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Recommend: Approval

7-1-0

The Town received \$3,311.70 from the Commonwealth Transportation Infrastructure Fund. The funds are made available to use for alternative transportation projects. This Article appropriates these funds into a special revenue fund, which allows the Town to expend them for it purpose.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this article.

## Article 16 – Amend FY 2019 Operating Budgets

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Recommend: Approval

7-0-0

Changes to the operating budget adopted at 2018 Annual Town Meeting are made when more accurate information becomes available regarding costs and reimbursement amounts reflected in the budget. Overall, the operating budget will decrease by \$236,917. This article allows for these adjustments.

The Finance Committee recommends the approval of this Article.

Thomas Busa

Stephen Carluccio

Karen Dunn

Erica Liu

Elizabeth McClung, Vice Chair

Paul Mortenson, Clerk

David Powell

Stephen Steele

Ben Thomas, Chair