



Town of Webster



Town Meeting Guide

May 13, 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

TOWN MEETING INFORMATION	3
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SPECIAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLES

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS	6
ARTICLE 2. SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS.....	6
ARTICLE 3. WATER ENTERPRISE FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS	7
ARTICLE 4. FUND SNOW AND ICE DEFICIT.....	7
ARTICLE 5. SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION DEFICIT	7
ARTICLE 6. SPECIAL EDUCATION TUITION DEFICIT	8
ARTICLE 7. G.L. CH. 44 § 53 CLAUSE 4: OPIOID SETTLEMENT RECEIPTS.....	9
ARTICLE 8. RESCIND UNUSED AUTHORIZED BORROWING	9
ARTICLE 9. ACCEPTANCE OF PRUDENT INVESTMENT RULE.....	10
ARTICLE 10. WEBSTER LAKE MAINTENANCE FUNDING.....	10
ARTICLE 11. APPROPRIATION FOR TOWN CAPITAL PROJECTS.....	11
ARTICLE 12. APPROPRIATION FOR SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS.....	13
ARTICLE 13. APPROPRIATION FOR WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS.....	14
ARTICLE 14. PUMPER TRUCK.....	15
ARTICLE 15. FIRE/DRIVE RESCUE BOAT.....	15
ARTICLE 16. SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM REHABILITATION CONSTRUCTION.....	16
ARTICLE 17. REHABILITATION NARROWS PUMP STATION.....	16
ARTICLE 18. PFAS WATER TREATMENT PLANT.....	17

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLES

ARTICLE 1. REPORTS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR BOARD OF SELECTMEN	19
ARTICLE 2. AUTHORIZE REVOLVING FUNDS CHANGES	19
ARTICLE 3. FY2025 GENERAL FUND ANNUAL BUDGET	22
ARTICLE 4. FY2025 SEWER ANNUAL BUDGET	23
ARTICLE 5. FY2025 WATER ANNUAL BUDGET	23
ARTICLE 6. AUTHORIZE SHORT-TERM BORROWINGS	23
ARTICLE 7. CREATE BUDGET FOR CABEL ACCESS.....	24
ARTICLE 8. DISCONTINUANCE OF PORTIONS OF DAVIS STREET	24
ARTICLE 9. MAY STREET PARK DESIGNATION.....	25

Town Meeting Information

Thank you for taking an interest in the Town of Webster's Town Meeting. Town Meeting is part of a great tradition of democracy which has been taking place in Webster ever since it's townspeople came together to found Webster in 1832. Town Meeting is the legislative body of the Town, acting much like our legislative counterparts at the State and Federal level, to fund a budget and to establish bylaws. One important difference is that in Webster's Open Town Meeting form of government, every registered voter of the Town is a Legislator and has the opportunity to participate in, and vote on, every issue.

Procedures

Webster's Town Meeting is governed by State law, the Town's Bylaws, tradition, and the book "Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law". Voters don't need to read these documents in order to participate in Town Meeting as your elected Town Moderator is there to guide the Town through the meeting while adhering to all applicable rules and regulations. Always remember that if you are not clear on the issue being voted on or the topic being discussed, you can always step up to the nearest microphone and ask questions.

At the front of the room you will find:

- The Moderator: Elected to preside over Town Meeting
- The Town Administrator: Webster's Chief Administrative and Financial Officer
- Town Counsel: the Town's attorney
- The Town Clerk: Officially records the votes taken at Town Meeting

Sitting at tables, also at the front of the room, are the following Boards/Committees:

- The Board of Selectmen: The Governing Body of the Town
- The School Committee: Recommends the School Department Budget
- The Finance Committee: Makes recommendations on all articles involving Town finances

Town Meeting Warrant

The Board of Selectmen post a Warrant before the Town Meeting. The Warrant lists the agenda for what topics will be discussed and voted on at the Town Meeting. Each item on the agenda is called an "Article". An Article may be specific or broad. The booklet distributed at the Town Meeting includes both the Warrant that was posted by the Board of Selectmen as well as the Motions expected to be presented following the reading of each Article. Keep in mind that these may change.

Motions

While a Warrant Article generally describes what topics will be discussed, a Motion is a statement of a specific action that is proposed to be taken. For example, a Motion to appropriate (designate) funds would specify the dollar amount, the source of the funds, and what purpose the funds are for. The Motions that are expected to be presented are printed in this booklet, but the actual Motion that ends up being presented may differ. It's important to realize the difference between the Warrant Article and

the Motion: the Warrant Article is the agenda item describing the subject matter to be voted on, and the Motion outlines the specific action to be voted on.

Amendments to Motions

A Motion may also be made to amend the original Motion, in which case that amendment will be discussed and voted on before the original Motion. If the amendment passes, then discussion will return to the original Motion as amended. If the amendment is defeated, then discussion will return to the original Motion.

Motions to Pass Over

A Motion to “Pass Over” is a proposal to take no action on the Warrant Article at the Town Meeting. The Town’s practice has been to either make a "Motion to Pass Over" or a "Motion to Pass Over for More Information". The Town of Webster’s General Bylaw, 253-14, prohibits an Article that received a favorable vote on a “Motion to Pass Over” from being re-considered prior to the next Annual Town Meeting. If the Motion to Pass Over is approved, then no action will be taken and the Town Meeting will move on to the next Article. If the motion is defeated, then the Town Meeting would ask for a Motion to take action as it relates to the Article being discussed.

Discussion

After a Motion is presented, the topic of the Article is then open for discussion, questions, and debate by everyone participating in the Town Meeting. In order to for this to take place, residents may line up behind microphones stationed in each aisle if they have questions or would like to make comments. When recognized by the Moderator, the individual clearly states their name and address so that others in attendance know who is speaking. All comments should focus on the specific topic of the Article being discussed and not address a particular person or group other than the Moderator.

Ending the Discussion

If a voter has heard sufficient discussion and wants to end further debate, they can make a Motion to end the debate which is often referred to as "moving the question". A voter cannot both comment on an Article and then “move the question” during the same turn at the microphone: he/she can only do one or the other. A motion to “move the question” is not debatable and requires a 2/3 majority vote in order to pass. If the motion to “move the question” passes, then further debate on the Article ends and Town Meeting will vote on the Motion. If the Motion to “move the question” is defeated, then the debate of the Motion continues.

Reconsideration

If substantial new information becomes available that could alter the outcome of a vote after it has already been taken, a voter can make a “Motion to Reconsider” that earlier vote. The Moderator will not entertain a “Motion to Reconsider” on the basis of having different voters present in the room or because some voters are unhappy with the outcome of the original vote. If the “Motion to Reconsider” is accepted by the Moderator, it will be discussed by the Town Meeting. If the majority of the Town Meeting vote in favor of Reconsideration, then the original Motion that was previously voted upon will again be read to the voters. A “Motion to Reconsider” can only be made by an individual who earlier

voted on the prevailing side. The Town of Webster General Bylaw 253-13 requires a 2/3 majority vote in order to Reconsider.

Voting

Rather than a voice vote or raising hands, each voter will be assigned an electronic voting device when they register at the door. Voters simply need to press a designated button, as instructed by the Moderator, for their vote to be recorded. Not only will this system be more accurate, but it also allows each vote to remain confidential. Additionally, the use of the electronic voting system will eliminate the need for any ballot votes, thus potentially reducing the length of Town Meeting. The electronic voting system will be tested prior to the Town Meeting to ensure that all votes will be accurate.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Moderator's Motions to begin the meeting:

1. The Moderator moves the Town votes to dispense with the reading of the warrant.
2. The Moderator moves that the Moderator may extend the floor to Town Management and staff and other non-voters provided that they must be recognized by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from any available funds in the Treasury, a sum sufficient to the Town Administrator Unpaid Bills account for the purpose of funding the payment of prior years' unpaid invoices; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer from the authorizations listed below totaling \$6,075.00 to the Town Administrator Unpaid Bills account (0112352-579000) for the purpose of funding the payment of prior years' unpaid invoices.

Amount	Vendor	Account #	Account Description
\$ 3,382.50	CHA Consulting, Inc.	0142252-530006	Other Charges & Expenses
\$ 1,281.25	CHA Consulting, Inc.	0142252-530006	Other Charges & Expenses
\$ 1,411.25	Clough, Harbour & Associates, LLP	0142252-530006	Other Charges & Expenses
\$ 6,075.00	Total		

Background: In accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 64 Town Meeting may appropriate funds to pay bills of a previous year's appropriation. If there were sufficient monies in the appropriation at that time, but the bill was presented too late by the vendor, lost, etc. So that appropriation has been closed out, then a majority vote is sufficient. As is the case with the prior year bills presented.

ARTICLE 2. SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from any available funds in the Treasury, a sum sufficient to the Sewer Unpaid Bills account for the purpose of funding the payment of prior years' unpaid invoices; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend to pass over this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to pass over this article.

Background: In accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 64 Town Meeting may appropriate funds to pay bills of a previous year's appropriation. If there were sufficient monies in the appropriation at that time, but the bill was presented too late by the vendor, lost, etc. So that appropriation has been closed out, then a majority vote is sufficient.

ARTICLE 3. WATER ENTERPRISE FUND PRIOR YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from any available funds in the Treasury, a sum sufficient to the Water Unpaid Bills account for the purpose of funding the payment of prior years' unpaid invoices; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend to pass over this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to pass over this article.

Background: In accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 64 Town Meeting may appropriate funds to pay bills of a previous year's appropriation. If there were sufficient monies in the appropriation at that time, but the bill was presented too late by the vendor, lost, etc. So that appropriation has been closed out, then a majority vote is sufficient.

ARTICLE 4. FUND SNOW AND ICE DEFICIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or appropriate and transfer from any available funds in the Treasury, a sum sufficient to the DPW Snow and Ice Supplies Accounts; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Town Administrator

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer from free cash the amount of \$130,000 for funding anticipated FY24 snow and ice deficit accounts.

Background: The Town annually budgets \$155,000 for snow and ice. For FY 2024 the Town anticipates a snow and deficit of \$130,000.

ARTICLE 5. SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION DEFICIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or appropriate and transfer from any available funds in the Treasury, a sum not to exceed \$550,000 to the Special Education Transportation Accounts; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the School Superintendent

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer from the Stabilization Fund the amount of \$550,000 for purposes of this article.

Background: Special Education transportation costs generally increase commensurate with Special Education Out-of-District placements. The FY24 actual expenses are projected to exceed the budgeted amount by approximately 46%. The District is required, by law, to provide transportation to and from schools that provide Special Education Services that the District is not able to provide. Transportation providers, and subsequently school districts, have experienced high rates of inflation since the pandemic which have further driven up costs over time. It is not standard District practice to include budgetary slack to prevent these types of deficits from occurring which is the reason for bringing this article to Town Meeting for approval.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ARTICLE 6 SPECIAL EDUCATION TUITION DEFICIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer or borrow from any available funds in the Treasury a sum not to exceed \$600,000.00 for the purpose of funding a Special Education Tuition deficit; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the School Superintendent

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer from the Stabilization Fund the amount of \$600,000 for purposes of this article.

Background: During, and shortly after the period of the Covid pandemic, a state-wide and nation-wide trend of significant increase in mental health needs, and in some cases, physical health of children, occurred. The pandemic also sparked a residual high rate of absenteeism. This included an uptick in child and adolescent hospitalizations. With the increased rate of identification of students with special needs in the district, as well as a surge of students requiring therapeutic school settings, our overall Special Education costs have escalated to a level that we have not seen before. Webster's rate of special needs has historically been a percentage point or two higher than the state rate. However, Webster's current rate of Students with Disabilities is close to 26%, while the state average lies just under 20%. This is a concerning pattern that the District is tracking and analyzing. Another factor associated with the increase in cost in Special Education has to do with the number of students requiring out-of-District placements. This rate has risen significantly in the few years since the pandemic. Additionally, at the end of fiscal year 2023, the state issued approval for an across the board increase of 14% for collaborative and private Special Education school tuition. Now we are facing an increase for fiscal year 2025 of another 4.69% increase. This rate increase, along with an increase in need for therapeutic placements, has substantially increased the overall Special Education budget. The 2024 school year started with a budget of \$3.1 million for Special Education tuition. By February tuition costs were \$3.85 million and now exceed \$4 million. School administration has applied for extraordinary reserve relief for which State Officials have confirmed we are eligible to receive. A response from the state regarding this funding is

expected in early- to mid-May. The District implemented a spending freeze to help offset some of the deficit.

The District continually considers creating programs for students with needs within the district as well as emphasizing the need for wrap-around support from health and community agencies to help support Webster's children and families. With this, it is our desire to achieve a leveling off of Special Education expenses.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ARTICLE 7. G.L. c. 44, § 53 CLAUSE 4: OPIOID SETTLEMENT RECEIPTS

To see if the Town will transfer Opioid Settlement Receipts in the amount of \$106,382.77 from free cash to Opioid Settlement Special Revenue Fund (3129); or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by Town Administrator

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented in the warrant.

Background: Through fiscal year end June 30, 2023 the Town received Opioid Settlement Receipts totaling \$106,382.77 which were recorded to the Town's general fund and ultimately became part the Town's 7/1/2023 certified free cash; however, the settlement placed certain requirement of their use. Voting the transfer of the settlement funds to the Opioid Settlement Special Revenue Fund will facilitate the use and expenditure of those funds in accordance with the applicable law and Massachusetts Division of Local Services guidance per below.

On December 4, 2023, Governor Healey signed Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2023, Section 9 of which provides, in part, for the following exception to the general rule that all receipts are to be recorded as general fund revenue per G.L. c. 44, § 53: *"(4) non-recurring, unanticipated sums received by multiple cities, towns or districts and not otherwise provided for by general or special law, may, upon the approval of the director of accounts, be expended at the direction of the chief executive officer without further appropriation only for the singular purpose for which the monies were received"* (emphasis added). The Director of Accounts has determined that cities and towns that have received or will receive funds in Fiscal Year 2024, or thereafter, pursuant to settlement agreements entered into by the Commonwealth with opioid distributors and opioid-makers for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery, may place said funds into a special revenue fund. The proceeds can then be expended, without further appropriation, at the direction of the chief executive officer only for the purpose identified in said settlement agreements.

ARTICLE 8. RESCIND UNUSED AUTHORIZED BORROWING

To see if the Town will vote to rescind the following amounts that have been authorized to be borrowed, but which are no longer needed for the purposes for which they were initially approved:

Unissued Amount	Date of Approval	Warrant Article #	Original Purpose
\$ 588,235	10/21/2019	11	Veterans Memorial Beach Improvements
\$ 180,000	10/19/2020	9	Lincoln, Whitcomb, Nelson Water Mains

or take any other action relative thereto.

Sponsored by the Finance Director

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend to pass over this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to pass over this article.

Background: The Town routinely clears its books of borrowings authorized but no longer needed because the project or expenditure is completed. The Town's independent auditor recommends the balances of old borrowings be rescinded as a sound financial practice.

ARTICLE 9. ACCEPTANCE OF PRUDENT INVESTMENT RULE

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.44, §54(b) to allow Town trust funds to be invested in accordance with G.L. c.203C, the so-called "Prudent Investment Rule"; or take any other action relative thereto.

Sponsored by the Finance Director

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented in the warrant.

Background: The FY24 state budget, Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023, includes a change to the standards for investment of trust funds in municipalities. Section 26 amends G.L. c. 44, §54, to insert a local acceptance provision that allows investment in accordance with the so-called "Prudent Investment Rule" (G.L. c. 203C), which essentially allows for a broader range of investments, then that of the "legal list" but still providing adequate safeguards. The Town's Scholarship Funds have been invested in accordance with the "Prudent Investment Rule" since 2007. Acceptance of the provision will allow other gifted trust funds to be invested similarly. Town authorized Trust Funds such as the Stabilization Trust Fund continue to be invested in accordance with the "legal list".

ARTICLE 10. WEBSTER LAKE MAINTENANCE FUNDING

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$20,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of funding Webster Lake maintenance; or take any other action relative thereto.

Sponsored by the Town Administrator

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented in the warrant.

Background: In April of 2023, town and state officials met with leadership of the Webster Lake Association (WLA) to discuss possible funding opportunities for maintenance of the state's lake.

Out of that series of meetings it was determined that WLA would continue their fund-raising efforts to help care for the lake, and, that the town and state would seek funding to aide in the maintenance effort. In addition, Senator Ryan Fattman and Rep. Joe McKenna agreed to pursue state funding for a comprehensive lake management plan as well as annual funding to maintain this resource. Town officials participating in these discussions, including the Town Administrator and members of the Board of Selectmen, agreed to request local funding to assist this effort. If appropriated, the funds will be used to supplement state and/or WLA funding efforts for maintenance and/or development of the lake management plan.

ARTICLE 11. APPROPRIATION FOR TOWN CAPITAL PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from free cash, a sum sufficient for the purpose of funding capital purchases/projects as listed in the table below, including all costs incidental and related thereto; or take any other action thereon.

Department	Project	Amount
Town Administrator	Inventory of Town Buildings /Structures and their related systems	\$ 50,000
Information Technology	Computer Upgrades for Library	\$ 16,000
Information Technology	Re-Design Town's Domain Infrastructure	\$ 150,000
Information Technology	Multifactor Authentication	\$ 100,000
Police Department	Cruiser/SUV Replacement Plan	\$ 75,000
Police Department	Phone System	\$ 150,000
Police Department	Replace 20 Cameras	\$ 30,000
Police Department	Replace 10 Portable Radios	\$ 50,000
Police Department	Cruiser/SUV Cameras	\$ 40,500
Highway Department	Catch Basin Cleaner	\$ 165,600
Senior Center	Senior Center Renovations	\$ 100,000
School Department	Middle School Glycol Changeout	\$ 35,000
School Department	Middle School Doors and Breakout Rooms	\$ 30,000
School Department	Middle School Paving/Sealing	\$ 45,000
School Department	Middle School Upgrade/Replace Gym Sound System	\$ 45,000
School Department	Park Ave. Elementary Security Camera Expansion	\$ 100,000
School Department	Park Ave. Elementary Gym Bleachers/Risers	\$ 100,000

Sponsored by the Town Administrator and School Superintendent

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer from free cash \$1,282,100 for purposes of this article.

Background:

Inventory of Town Buildings /Structures and their related systems: In an effort to gain a better understanding of conditions of the Town's facilities/structures and their integral systems, Town management has been tasked with inventorying the Town facilities and structures. Having a study done to inventory the Town's facilities/structures and evaluate their integral systems will provide Town management an understanding of the condition of Town owned properties.

Computer Upgrades for Library: Windows 10 will be unsupported as of October of 2025 and Library computers need to be replaced computers that operate on Windows 11 or higher.

Re-Design Town's Domain Infrastructure: Stronger security and control over the network, servers and workstations. Multifactor authentication has become a standard process in adding security for IT access and use. Without upgrading to multifactor authentication, the Town will be at greater risk to IT threats. The Town may be subject to higher insurance costs or could risk not being insurable for certain IT costs.

Multifactor Authentication: Stronger security over many IT functions and processes. We cannot integrate full Multifactor functionality until the Town's Network has been upgraded and/or reconfigured. Without upgrading to multifactor authentication, the Town will be at greater risk to IT threats. The Town may be subject to higher insurance costs or could risk not being insurable for certain IT costs.

Cruiser/SUV Replacement Plan: The Town has implemented a plan to replace 3 vehicles annually. Replaces aging vehicles in the fleet, which can either be traded, auctioned or repurposed. The plan allows for most heavily used vehicles to be replaced every 3 years. Administrative and other vehicles are replaced every 6 to 8 years.

Phone System: The current system is 9 years old. The manufacturer was bought years ago and the system is no longer supported. Due to unique needs of court evidence/recordings, the Police Department needs an on-premise system versus a cloud system.

Replace 20 Cameras: The Police Station contains 60 cameras, all of which were installed in 2014 and provide full security coverage of the inside and outside of the building. While the cameras are still operable, they are at the end of their expected lifespan and failures are likely to begin occurring.

Replace 10 Portable Radios: Radio Communications are critical to police operations. The replacement radios would be utilized to replace officer issues portable radios that are 8 years old allowing those radios to be shifted to spare status, replacing 15-year-old radios

Cruiser/SUV Cameras: Replaces existing, cameras, and are able to be synced with body worn cameras. Current in car cameras are old and constantly not working. Unable to get local repairs, and are essentially useless.

Senior Center Renovations: Renovations including flooring, lighting, and etc.

Middle School Glycol Changeout: Preventative maintenance to ensure proper functioning of HVAC system. Boiler is 20 years old and requires a glycol change.

Middle School Doors and Breakout Rooms: There is a need to add doors on 3 rooms for both privacy and safety reasons. There are two entry ways for each room. Condition of rooms are in excellent condition. This is not a replacement project.

Middle School Paving/Sealing: The back of the building is used for student pick up and has a high amount of daily traffic during the school year (approx. 250 daily). The asphalt requires a fresh layer to address structural damage such as potholes, cracking, rutting, etc.).

Middle School Upgrade/Replace Gym Sound System: The sound system in the gymnasium is used by school and community functions and is necessary for communications. The existing sound system in the gymnasium is 20 years old and no longer functions optimally. One speaker does not work, the controller is damaged and the XLR ports are corroded.

Park Ave. Elementary Security Camera Expansion: Administration does not have full visibility within the school or on the school property. This provides enhanced security and monitoring to ensure student and staff safety. The current equipment is in good condition and this item is intended to expand the equipment on the building interior and exterior.

Park Ave. Elementary Gym Bleachers/Risers: Seating will enhance the facility for assemblies and events as there is currently no seating in the gymnasium. The gymnasium 9 years old and in very good condition.

ARTICLE 12. APPROPRIATION FOR SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from Sewer retained earnings, a sum sufficient for the purpose of funding capital purchases/projects as listed in the table below, including all costs incidental and related thereto; or take any other action thereon.

Project	Amount
Waste Water Treatment Plant Aeration System Phase 2 Design	\$ 400,000
Replace Heating System Pre-Treatment Building	\$ 42,000
Digester Building Repairs Holes in Masonry Walls	\$ 10,000
Digester Building Repairs Silicone Joint Between Tanks	\$ 10,000
Digester Building Evaluate Replacement Pumps	\$ 10,000
Digester Building Repair Top Course of Tank Walls	\$ 10,000
Sandpiper Lime Pump #1	\$ 13,250
Sandpiper Lime Pump #2	\$ 13,250

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission and Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer \$508,500 from Sewer retained earnings for the purposes of this article.

Background:

Waste Water Treatment Plant Aeration System Phase 2 Design: Anoxic/Nitrogen Removal/Blower Upgrades (MLE). National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Requirements.

Replace Heating System Pre-Treatment Building: Current system recently failed and is temporarily back up and running. Poor condition-past useful life span

Digester Building Repairs Holes in Masonry Walls: Reduce rain infiltration. Walls are in poor condition.

Digester Building Repairs Silicone Joint Between Tanks: Reduce rain infiltration. Joints are in poor condition.

Digester Building Evaluate Replacement Pumps: Existing pumps have been problematic. Repairs are expensive and lead times are long

Digester Building Repair Top Course of Tank Walls: Repair concrete blocks. Blocks are close to sliding off the top wall of the tank which is a safety issue.

Sandpiper Lime Pump #1: Replace Batch Pump. Pumps are past their useful life span.

Sandpiper Lime Pump #2: Replace Batch Pump. Pumps are past their useful life span.

ARTICLE 13. APPROPRIATION FOR WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from Water retained earnings, a sum sufficient for the purpose of funding capital purchases/projects as listed in the table below, including all costs incidental and related thereto; or take any other action thereon.

Project	Amount
Milling and Paving Parking Lot at 38 Hill Street	\$ 45,000

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission and Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to transfer \$45,000 from Water retained earnings for the purposes of this article.

Background:

Milling and Paving Parking Lot at 38 Hill Street: Pavement is in very poor condition and is very uneven. Potential trips/falls for staff and customers. Poor condition-past useful life span.

ARTICLE 14. PUMPER TRUCK

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$1,200,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new pumper truck, including associated equipment and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor; or to take any action thereon.

Sponsored by the Fire Chief

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town appropriate \$1,200,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new pumper truck, including associated equipment and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor.

Background: The Fire Chief is proposing to purchase one new fire apparatus to replace the existing Engine 3, and Tanker 1. Engine 3 and Tanker 1 will be traded in immediately to offset the cost of the new apparatus. Tanker -1 repairs/maintenance costs are impracticable due to the age of the apparatus. The new apparatus will have a water tank size of 1500-2000 gallons. By replacing the two trucks with one truck, the Town will save over \$1 million in replacement costs plus thousands of dollars in ongoing maintenance costs. If approved, Engine 3 and Tanker 1 will be approximately 23 and 39 years old respectively when they are replaced. NFPA guidelines recommend that vehicles be removed from front-line service at 15 years and taken out of service at 25 years.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ARTICLE 15. FIRE/DIVE RESCUE BOAT

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$150,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new fire/dive rescue boat, including associated equipment and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor; or to take any action thereon.

Sponsored by the Fire Chief

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town appropriate \$150,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new fire/rescue boat, including associated equipment and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor.

Background: The Fire Chief is proposing to purchase a new Fire/Dive Rescue Boat. This boat will replace Marine 22 and Marine 23. The proceeds from the trade in of Marine 23 and equipment on Marine 22 will help offset the cost of the Fire/Dive Rescue Boat. Marine 22 and Marine 23 will be approximately 24 and 29 years old respectively when they are replaced. Neither boat is suited particularly well for Fire/Dive Rescue operations on Webster Lake due there designs and workable

space. In addition to that, we have also had several mechanical issues which resulted in a delay of response time to emergency incidents.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ARTICLE 16. SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM REHABILITATION CONSTRUCTION

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$1,000,000 for the purpose of the Sewer Collections System Rehabilitation – Phase 3 project, and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor; or to take any action thereon.

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town appropriate \$1,000,000 for the purpose of the Sewer Collections System Rehabilitation – Phase 3 project, and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor.

Background: Cleaning and lining leaky sewer mains to eliminate rain infiltration. Infiltration causes strain on the collections pumping stations and the wastewater plant during rain events. Treating rainwater at the wastewater plant is not cost effective and strains the facility making it a challenge to meet state and federal permits.

It is anticipated that future debt service will be funded from future sewer fund receipts.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ARTICLE 17. REHABILITATE NARROWS PUMP STATION

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$990,000 for the purpose of the Rehabilitation Narrows Pump Station, and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor; or to take any action thereon.

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town appropriate \$990,000 to pay costs of rehabilitating the Narrows Pump Station, and all related incidental costs, and that to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor.

Background: Current system (pneumatic ejector pumps) recently failed and is temporarily back up and running. We budgeted \$75K for FY24 but recently discovered it could take over \$990,000 to

replace aging equipment. Tighe & Bond is evaluating options including retrofit submersible pumps. Recent emergency repairs were very expensive and the pumping system needs a retrofit

ARTICLE 18. PFAS WATER TREATMENT PLANT

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and raise by taxation, transfer from any available funds or issue notes or bonds, including borrowing from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, or any combination thereof, a sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for the purpose of financing the construction of a PFAS water treatment plant at the Memorial Beach well site and an iron, manganese, and PFAS water treatment plant at the Bigelow well site and all associated work and appurtenances related thereto including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 Chapter 29C of the General Laws; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen is authorized to borrow said sum and issue bonds or notes therefore under Chapter 44 of the General Laws and/or Chapter 29C of the General Laws or any other enabling authority; that such bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town unless the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen determines that they should be issued as limited obligations and may be secured by local system revenues as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C; that the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust established pursuant to Chapter 29C; and in connection therewith to enter into a financing agreement and/or security agreement with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to such loan and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; that the Town Administrator is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out the project; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for the purpose of financing the construction of a PFAS water treatment plant at the Memorial Beach well site and an iron, manganese, and PFAS water treatment plant at the Bigelow well site and all associated work and appurtenances related thereto including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 Chapter 29C of the General Laws; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen is authorized to borrow said sum and issue bonds or notes therefor under Chapter 44 of the General Laws and/or Chapter 29C of the General Laws, or any other enabling authority; that such bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town unless the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen determines that they should be issued as limited obligations and may be secured by local system revenues as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C; that the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust established pursuant to Chapter 29C; and in connection therewith to enter into a financing agreement and/or security agreement with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to such loan and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; that the Town Administrator is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to

expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out the project.

Background: PFAS treatment plan is need to be compliant with state water quality regulations. Through the MA Clean Water Trust State Revolving Fund Loan, a 30-year 0% loan will be provided to fund the project. New Treatment required by State/Federal Drinking Water Regulations. As this will be an addition to the water system, we anticipate increased operating costs upon implementation.

Massachusetts passed a drinking water standard for per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in October of 2020 which applies only to Public Water Systems (PWS) in Massachusetts. On Wednesday, April 10, 2024, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that they have finalized a new federal National Primary Drinking Water Rule for PFAS, which will apply to Public Water Supplies across the country. EPA's Maximum Contaminant Levels for PFAS compounds, PFOA and PFOS, at 4 parts per trillion (ppt), and PFNA, PFHxS, and GenX Chemicals at 10 ppt, are quite a bit lower than the Massachusetts Maximum Contaminant Level of 20 ppt for the sum of six PFAS compounds, which is referred to as PFAS6. Webster Water Department and the Water Sewer Commission had been closely monitoring PFAS since the Massachusetts standard took effect and carefully planned to meet the Massachusetts limit along with the new lower limits recently set by EPA.

It is anticipated that future debt service will be funded from future water fund receipts.

This requires a 2/3rds vote for passage.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Moderator's Motions to begin the meeting:

1. The Moderator moves the Town votes to dispense with the reading of the warrant.
2. The Moderator moves that the Moderator may extend the floor to Town Management and staff and other non-voters provided that they must be recognized by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 1. REPORTS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR BOARD OF SELECTMEN

To hear and act upon the report and recommendations of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the Finance Committee Report.

Background: - The Finance Committee works with Town Management and provides oversight for fair and comprehensive annual budgets and capital improvements program. Article 6 – Finances and Fiscal Procedures of the Charter of the Town of Webster provides a road map for the fiscal year budget and capital improvements program processes and Chapter 110 - Finance Committee provides direction to the Finance Committee for their role throughout these processes. One of the directives for the Finance Committee is to report a statement of the doings by the Committee during the year, a statement of bonded indebtedness of the Town, the amount of free cash and its recommendations or suggestions on those articles in the warrant which have been submitted to the Selectmen.

ARTICLE 2: AUTHORIZE REVOLVING FUNDS CHANGES

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 70 Departmental Revolving Funds of the Town of Webster General Bylaws at Section 70-1 Establishment; expenditures; spending limits, by deleting the portions shown in strikethrough and adding those portions shown in Bold as follows:

There is hereby established in the Town of Webster pursuant to the provisions of MGL c. 44, § 53E1/2, the following Revolving Funds:

A.

Revolving Fund	Authority to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Fund
Animal Control	Board of Health/Health Agent	Program fees	Program expenses
Auditorium Rentals	Town Administrator	Rental fees	Facility maintenance

Revolving Fund	Authority to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Fund
Leased Properties	Town Administrator	Lease payments	Facility maintenance
Graphic Arts	School Committee	Program fees	Program supplies
Recycling	Recycling Commission	Program fees	Program expenses
Firearms Licensing	Chief of Police	Program fees	Program expenses
Board of Health Training	Board of Health/Health Agent	Program fees	Program expenses
Board of Health Inspections	Board of Health/Health Agent	Inspection fees	Outside consultant
Senior Center	Senior Center Director	Program fees	Program expenses
Library	Library Director	Photocopier/printer printing, copying, faxing, vinyl printing, and laminating services fees	Program Expenses
Nuisance Properties	Health Director and Building Inspector	BOH violation fines	Nuisance property remediation
Inspectional Services	Town Administrator	Inspection fees	Part time
Municipal Hearing Officer	Town Administrator	Fines	Program expenses
Compost Facility	Highway Director	Program fees	Program expenses
Recreation	Recreation Director	Program fees	Program expenses
Code Enforcement	Health Director and Building Inspector	Board of Health inspection fees, Building Department Inspection fees, Code enforcement receipts	Code Enforcement expenditures

Revolving Fund	Authority to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Fund
Webster Historical Commission	Webster Historical Commission	Fees from sale of historic signs	Historic Sign Program

B.

Expenditures from each Revolving Fund set forth herein shall be subject to the limitation established annually by Town Meeting or any increase therein as may be authorized in accordance with MGL c. 44, § 53E1/2.

C.

And, further, to set ~~FY 2019~~ **FY 2025** spending limits for such Revolving Funds as follows:

Revolving Fund	FY 2019 FY 2025 Spending Fund
Animal Control	\$2,000
Auditorium rentals	\$5,000
Leased properties	\$50,000
Graphic arts	\$5,000
Recycling	\$1,000
Firearms licensing	\$10,000
Board of Health training	\$3,000
Board of Health inspections	\$15,000
Senior Center	\$10,000 \$8,000
Library	\$2,000 \$4,000
Nuisance properties	\$100,000 \$60,000
Inspectional Services	\$50,000
Municipal Hearing Officer	\$2,500
Composting facility	\$20,000 \$13,000
Recreation	\$105,000 \$135,000
Code Enforcement	\$715,000
Webster Historical Commission	\$5,000

And further to transfer any and all remaining funds in the Board of Health Inspections fund and Inspectional Services fund to the newly created Code Enforcement fund.

or take any other action relative thereto.

Sponsored by the Town Administrator

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented.

Background: Each year the Town may authorize the use of one or more revolving funds which are accounted for separately from all other monies. The purpose of these funds is to pay for expenses directly from revenues received to provide the related services and/or programs.

The code enforcement fund combines the activities of the building department, health department and part-time: electrical, gas/plumbing, and health inspections into one revolving fund as described above. Per MGL c. 44, § 53E1/2, when full time employees wages are charged to a revolving fund associated fringe benefits must also be charged to the fund. Of the \$715,000 FY25 code enforcement budget, fringe benefits costs approximate \$177,000. This results in other programs expenses of \$538,000. The impact of this to the Town’s general fund is revenue and expense neutral – estimated program revenue are expected equal estimated expenditures. The purpose of this change is to identify and segregate specific program receipts with program costs.

ARTICLE 3: FY 2025 GENERAL FUND ANNUAL BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to fix the compensation of elected officials, provide for a reserve fund, and determine what sum of money the Town will raise and appropriate including appropriations from any available funds to defray the charges and expenses of the Town including debt and interest for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to raise and appropriate an omnibus budget in the sum of \$59,575,648 an amount sufficient to fix the compensation of elected officials, provide for a reserve fund, and to defray the charges and expenses of the Town including debt and interest for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025. Said sum to be raised as follows:

Funding Sources	Amount
Property Tax, State Aid, Local and Other Receipts	\$ 57,552,582
Sewer Fund (Indirect Costs)	\$ 841,318
Water Fun (Indirect Costs)	\$ 682,228
SWCCC (Dudley Indirect Costs)	\$ 124,520
Donation from Fels Foundation for the Police & Fire Stations	\$ 200,000
Transfer from Waterway Improvements Fund	\$ 15,000
Donations from Friends of the Library	\$ 50,000
Transfer from Sale of Filmer Building	\$ 45,000
Transfer from Town Hall Stabilization Fund	\$ 65,000
Total of Funding Sources	\$ 59,575,648

Background: The total FY25 Estimated Operational Budget is \$62,067,347, inclusive of total appropriations totaling \$59,575,648 and estimated tax rate recapitulation costs of \$2,491,699. This is an increase of \$1,830,326 or 3.04% on the total FY24 estimated operational budget. Please see the separate budget packet for additional information.

ARTICLE 4: FY 2025 SEWER ANNUAL BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or appropriate and transfer from any available funds a sum sufficient to operate the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission and Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to appropriate an omnibus budget in the sum of \$4,671,857, an amount sufficient to operate the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 and that \$4,671,857 be raised from department receipts.

Background: The total FY25 Estimated Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget is \$5,513,175, inclusive of total appropriations of \$4,671,857 and indirect costs of \$841,318. This is an increase of \$1,048,026 or 23.5%. Please see the separate budget packet for additional information.

ARTICLE 5: FY 2025 WATER ANNUAL BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or appropriate and transfer from any available funds a sum sufficient to operate the Water Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Water Sewer Commission and Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to appropriate an omnibus budget in the sum of \$4,081,228, an amount sufficient to operate the Water Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 and that \$4,081,228 be raised as follows: \$477,000 from retained earnings and \$3,604,228 from department receipts.

Background: The FY25 Estimated Water Enterprise Fund Operating Budget is \$4,763,456, inclusive of total appropriations of \$4,081,228 and indirect costs of \$682,228. This is an increase of \$1,134,630 or 31.3%. Please see the separate budget packet for additional information.

ARTICLE 6: AUTHORIZE SHORT-TERM BORROWINGS

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer, with the consent of the Board of Selectmen, to temporarily borrow a note or notes, or make an inter-fund advance from available funds, in anticipation of revenue from taxation, bonds, or grants, and to repay said sums within the current fiscal cycle; or take any other action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to authorize the Treasurer, with the consent of the Board of Selectmen, to temporarily borrow a note or notes, or make an inter-fund advance from available funds, in anticipation of revenue from taxation, bonds, or grants, and to repay said sums within the current fiscal cycle; or take any other action thereon.

Background: This article allows the treasurer to borrow funds as needed throughout the fiscal year to meet cash flow needs in anticipation of future revenue.

ARTICLE 7. CREATE BUDGET FOR CABLE ACCESS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from cable PEG Access account the following Cable Access Budget in accordance with General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53F¾; or take any other action thereon.

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Salaries	3702-510000	\$ 42,000
Other Charges	3702-570000	\$ 50,000
Total		\$ 92,000

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented.

Background: This will adopt a budget from the Cable PEG Access account. The salaries will support two part-time positions. One, position will focus on the up keep of the equipment, software, and recording official meetings. The second position will focus on creating content for PEG channels as well as communicating town information to residents. The other charges have averaged expenditures of approximately \$50,000 over the last several years. This includes internet services, equipment, and recording services.

ARTICLE 8. DISCONTINUANCE OF PORTIONS OF DAVIS STREET

To see if the Town will vote to discontinue portions of Davis Street, being “Parcel 5” and “Parcel 7” as shown on a plan entitled “Davis Street Extension Plan Located Between Main Street and Tracy Court,” dated April 11, 2023, recorded with the Worcester South District Registry of Deeds as Plan Book 972, Plan 73, as a public way, said plan on file with the Town Clerk, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to release and convey all right, title and interest held by the Town in said discontinued roadway on such terms and conditions, and for such consideration, which may be nominal consideration, as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate; or take any action thereon.

Sponsored by the Board of Selectmen and Redevelopment Authority

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented.

Background: The purpose of this article is to establish a legal right-of-way that coincides with the existing layout of Davis Street and to accept the road as a public way for general municipal and/or public way purposes. Currently Davis Street crosses over privately owned property. This article will give the Board of Selectmen the authority to work with the private property owners to acquire their sections of property that are within the approved Davis Street layout plan.

ARTICLE 9. MAY STREET PARK DESIGNATION

To see if the Town will vote to dedicate May Street Park, located at 11 May Street (Assessor Parcel ID 13_B_18_0) as a public park, in perpetuity, for active recreational purposes under M.G.L. Chapter 45, Section 3; and to authorize the design, improvement, repair and enhancement of said May Street Park; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen and/or Town Administrator to apply for and accept on behalf of the Town, funds under the PARC Grant Program (301 CMR 5.00); and to authorize the Board of Selectmen and/or Town Administrator to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary or convenient to accomplish the purpose of this article ; or take any action thereon .

Sponsored by the Recreation Director

Recommendation: The Board of Selectmen recommend favorable action on this article.

Recommended Motion: I move that the Town vote to approve the article as presented.

Background: This project's funding has already been approved. This will dedicate the land to park use only. The project will make improvements to the May Street Park. The plan includes replacing both playgrounds, purchasing outdoor exercise equipment, resurfacing the basketball court and adding a walking track around the field. Benches and lighting will also be added.