

TO ALL RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN OF NORFOLK

On behalf of the Advisory Committee, I invite you to Norfolk's Spring Town Meeting to be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at the King Philip Middle School, 18 King Street, Norfolk. This is the meeting at which the town's budget for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2015 (FY2015) is determined.

In addition, other topics of importance to the Town, such as zoning, a major farmland protection opportunity, the "Stretch Energy Code", and the potential acquisition of a building for Town use are the subject of articles in this year's warrant. Town meeting is your chance to let your voice and your vote be heard on the issues that affect all of us, so please join us.

The following is a summary of the major issues that will be discussed and voted upon at Town Meeting. The articles included in the Warrant and the Advisory Committee's article by article discussion and recommendations immediately follow this introduction.

The Budget

The Town's operating revenues for FY2015 are expected to be about \$1,428,000 higher than revenues for the fiscal year ending this June 30 (FY2014). Our property taxes are up by about \$1.3 million, and we also are expecting an increase in motor vehicle excise taxes of about \$100,000. There are also small increases in State aid and other miscellaneous sources of Town income. The increase in operating revenues is less than the increase in our two major sources of income because we are not using as much free cash in the budget this year as we did last year.

As in most years, most of this increase is being spent on our schools (about \$750,000), our Police and Fire Departments (\$250,000), and our Department of Public Works (\$110,000). General government absorbs another \$95,000 – the usual increases such as benefits and insurance, but also included this year is the addition of a town planner.

Other articles related to the Town's finances are the Water Department's budget and some anticipated expenditures for capital items, some of which will, if approved, be purchased with cash and others which will be funded through debt. None of these purchases will involve a request for an override.

Details of the budget, both revenue and expenses, are included later in this document, along with further explanation from the Advisory Committee.

Other Articles

In addition to the budget, there are about 30 other articles on the warrant. A few of these do not require a vote at Town Meeting, as they are simply procedural in nature. Many of the others are articles that are typically approved with little or no discussion because they are mandatory, or they enable some of the basic everyday functions of Town government, or they are just noncontroversial.

Articles that fall in the non-routine category for this meeting include:

- Article 20 relating to what is known as the “Stretch Energy Code”.
- Article 26, which would allow approximately \$1.7 million of the Community Preservation Fund to be used toward the purchase of a permanent agricultural restriction on about 70 acres of the property known to most of us as “Jane and Paul’s Farm”.
- Articles 27 through 31, which are zoning articles submitted by petition. The general intent of these articles is to reduce the potential development density and to change the zoning of some parcels that are currently zoned business (outside the core) to residential.
- Article 37 relating to the possible acquisition of a building suitable to house the Regional Emergency Communications Center. The building under consideration could be of use to the Town for other reasons as well.

The complete Warrant, including explanations of the meaning and intent of all the articles and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, are included in the remainder of this document.

We look forward to seeing you at the King Philip Middle School on May 13.

Patrick Snead, Advisory Committee Chairman

Committee Members:

David Benton, Arlie Sterling, Al Butters, Angela Wayne, Rick Stillman, Lisa Curl, Arthur Frontczak & Lisa Keating

Administrative Assistants:

Susan Jacobson & Marian Harrington