



Town of Ashland

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

Smart. Safe. Sustainable.

**WARRANT ARTICLES, INFORMATION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
FOR THE
MAY 3, 2023
TOWN MEETING
ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

ADA ADVISORY

Anyone in need of special arrangements for the Town Meeting, please contact the Office of the Select Board at (508) 881-0100 by April 28, 2023 in order that reasonable accommodations may be made.

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Moderator's Motions

1. That this meeting dispenses with the reading of the warrant and of the Constable's return of service of that warrant and that the Moderator not be required to read warrant articles verbatim, but may refer to them by number and subject matter.
2. That the moderator may extend the floor to Town management and staff and other non-voters provided that they must first be recognized by the Moderator.
3. That the Moderator, pursuant to G.L. c. 39 § 15 be allowed to declare a two-thirds vote rather than taking a standing count.
4. That once final action has been taken on an article and the next order of business has been taken up, or the session of the meeting has been adjourned, the matter may not again be taken under consideration at that town meeting unless, in the best judgment of the Moderator, a significant error or omission occurred in the language or the process of the original action on the article, or a significant change of circumstances has occurred, such that there is a clear likelihood that the outcome could change upon reconsideration or that reconsideration would be in the Town's best interest.

TOWN OF ASHLAND

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
May 3, 2023
Ashland High School

Article 1: Town Reports
Sponsor: Select Board

To see if the Town will hear the reports of the several town committees, or pass any vote or take action relative thereto.

Article 2: Fiscal Year 2024 Budget
Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director

To see if the Town will vote to raise, appropriate and/or transfer from available funds in the treasury such sums of money as are necessary to defray charges and expenses of the town, including debt and interest, for the ensuing fiscal year, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town approves the balanced budget of \$88,718,180.

DEPT. #	DEPARTMENT	2022 ACTUAL TOTAL	2023 ATM BUDGET TOTAL	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
01123	TOWN MANAGER	572,753	592,922	610,524	17,602	2.97%
01138	CENTRAL PURCHASING	60,087	72,500	72,500	-	0.00%
01139	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	76,706	90,000	90,000	-	0.00%
01151	TOWN COUNSEL	194,583	225,000	200,000	(25,000)	-11.11%
01155	DATA PROCESSING	537,876	576,929	633,799	56,870	9.86%
01161	TOWN CLERK	152,368	162,049	164,326	2,277	1.41%
01162	ELECTIONS/TOWN MEETING	10,564	55,115	52,365	(2,750)	-4.99%
01163	BOARD OF REGISTRARS	8,232	10,650	13,650	3,000	28.17%
01180	HUMAN RESOURCES	246,144	253,009	275,200	22,191	8.77%
SUBTOTAL: ADMINISTRATION		1,859,313	2,038,174	2,112,364	74,190	3.64%
01135	TOWN ACCOUNTANT	134,296	221,783	176,810	(44,972)	-20.28%
01141	ASSESSORS OFFICE	234,171	228,005	260,225	32,220	14.13%
01145	TREASURER	183,228	199,333	203,875	4,542	2.28%
SUBTOTAL: FINANCE		551,694	649,120	640,910	(8,210)	-1.26%
01171	CONSERVATION COMMISSION	60,624	76,465	84,757	8,292	10.84%
01172	OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE	100	450	450	-	0.00%
01175	PLANNING BOARD	180,132	188,794	197,325	8,532	4.52%
01241	INSPECTION SERVICES DEP	213,779	141,359	200,831	59,471	42.07%
SUBTOTAL: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES		454,636	407,068	483,363	76,295	18.74%
01210	POLICE DEPT.	3,264,075	3,845,630	4,235,255	389,625	10.13%
01220	FIRE DEPARTMENT	2,579,865	2,818,903	2,702,214	(116,690)	-4.14%
SUBTOTAL: PUBLIC SAFETY		5,843,940	6,664,533	6,937,468	272,935	4.10%
01510	HEALTH DEPARTMENT	191,011	174,871	209,014	34,143	19.52%
01543	VETERAN'S SERVICES	116,780	131,222	132,850	1,628	1.24%
01544	HUMAN SERVICES	450,820	463,284	453,104	(10,181)	-2.20%
01610	PUBLIC LIBRARY	422,695	409,896	435,944	26,047	6.35%
SUBTOTAL: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES		1,181,306	1,179,274	1,230,911	51,637	4.38%
01192	PUBLIC BUILDINGS & PROPERTY MAINT.	470,241	667,779	622,731	(45,048)	-6.75%
01421	DPW ADMINISTRATION	89,007	119,415	159,454	40,039	33.53%
01422	HIGHWAY	636,154	691,010	702,050	11,039	1.60%
01423	SNOW & ICE REMOVAL	285,200	285,200	285,200	-	0.00%
01424	HIGHWAY-STREETLIGHTING	33,258	45,000	45,000	-	0.00%
01429	HIGHWAY COMBINED FUEL	160,082	165,000	182,000	17,000	10.30%
01491	CEMETERY, PARKS & TREES	236,745	248,655	281,287	32,632	13.12%
SUBTOTAL: PUBLIC WORKS		1,910,687	2,222,059	2,277,721	55,662	2.50%

DEPT. #	DEPARTMENT	2022 ACTUAL TOTAL	2023 ATM BUDGET TOTAL	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
01300	SCHOOL DEPARTMENT	35,674,508	37,907,474	40,211,608	2,304,134	6.08%
01399	KEEFE TECH VOC SCHOOL	1,323,379	1,126,966	1,350,000	223,034	19.79%
SUBTOTAL: EDUCATION		36,997,887	39,034,440	41,561,608	2,527,168	6.47%
	NON-EXCLUDED DEBT	2,783,103	3,388,382	3,136,260	(252,122)	-7.44%
	EXCLUDED DEBT	2,753,200	2,861,428	4,284,286	1,422,858	49.73%
01710	TOTAL DEBT	5,536,303	6,249,810	7,420,546	1,170,736	18.73%
01930	CAPITAL PROJECTS	1,710,343	500,000	-	(500,000)	-100.00%
DEPT. #	DEPARTMENT	2022 ACTUAL TOTAL	2023 ATM BUDGET TOTAL	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
01911	EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT	3,542,699	3,793,010	3,973,251	180,241	4.75%
01912	WORKERS COMPENSATION	242,622	350,000	357,000	7,000	2.00%
01913	UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION	15,368	60,000	60,000	-	0.00%
01914	EMPLOYEE HEALTH FRINGES	-	-	-	-	-
01915	GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE	6,558,970	7,295,013	7,645,763	350,750	4.81%
01945	OTHER INSURANCE	688,747	690,250	750,000	59,750	8.66%
Subtotal: BENEFITS & INSURANCE		11,048,405	12,188,273	12,786,014	597,741	4.90%
01960	SALARY CONTINGENCY		95,000	275,000	180,000	189.47%
01965	MUNICIPAL EFFICIENCY PROGRAM	-	-	-	-	-
01132	RESERVE FUND	-	450,000	450,000	-	0.00%
TOTAL GENERAL FUND		67,094,513	71,677,751	76,175,904	4,498,153	6.28%
DEPT. #	DEPARTMENT	2022 ACTUAL TOTAL	2023 ATM BUDGET TOTAL	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
6000	WATER ENTERPRISE	2,390,107	3,108,623	3,136,512	27,889	0.90%
6100	SEWER ENTERPRISE	5,246,880	6,119,034	6,600,945	481,911	7.88%
6200	TRASH COLLECTION	1,299,725	1,666,972	1,785,721	118,749	7.12%
6300	FIELD MANAGEMENT	151,800	99,228	131,638	32,410	32.66%
6400	CABLE ACCESS	427,437	582,000	545,000	(37,000)	-6.36%
6500	STORMWATER	314,586	331,471	342,460	10,989	3.32%
TOTAL ALL FUNDS		76,925,048	83,585,079	88,718,180	5,133,101	6.14%

- a. For the General Fund, that the following amounts be transferred from the respective accounts:

Account Name	Balance in Account	FY24 Transfer
EMS Revolving	\$702,055.33	\$200,000.00
Sale of Cemetery Lots	\$33,712.00	\$30,000.00
Dog Licenses	\$41,273.00	\$25,000.00
Recreation Revolving	\$556,193.50	\$12,976.00

And that the balance be raised and appropriated \$70,397,607

And,

- b. For the Water Enterprise Fund that \$3,136,512 be raised through the water rates;
- c. For the Sewer Enterprise Fund that \$6,600,945 be raised through the sewer rates;
- d. For the Rubbish Collection Enterprise Fund that \$1,785,721 be raised through the solid waste rates;
- e. For the Fields Management Enterprise Fund that \$131,638 be raised through fees for field usage;
- f. For the Cable Access Enterprise Fund, that \$545,000 be raised through cable franchise fees;
- g. For the Stormwater Enterprise Fund that \$342,460 be raised through stormwater rates.

And,

- h. For the Economic Development Special Revenue Fund that \$299,450 be appropriated from available meals tax funds.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town adopt a balanced fiscal year 2024 budget as detailed in the motion above.

Article 3: Transfer to OPEB Trust
Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director

To see if the Town will transfer \$300,000 from OPEB Contribution Account #01915-51709 to the OPEB Trust, Account #88100-49710, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto

MOTION: That the Town transfer the sum of \$300,000 from OPEB Contribution Account #01915-51709 to the OPEB Trust Account #88100-49710

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town transfer the sum of \$300,000 from OPEB Contribution Account #01915-51709 to the OPEB Trust, Account #88100-49710.

Article 4: Transfer from Special Education Stabilization to General Fund
Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director

To see if the Town will transfer \$250,000 from the Special Education Stabilization Fund to the General Fund, Account #49700-49760 or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto

MOTION: That the Town will transfer \$250,000 from the Special Education Stabilization Fund to the General Fund

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town transfer the sum of \$250,000 from the Special Education Stabilization Fund to the General Fund.

Article 5: Annual Consent Article - General
Sponsor: Select Board

To see if the Town will vote the following consent articles:

1. Grant Program Authorization - To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board and/or the Town Manager to apply for, accept and enter into contracts from time to time for the expenditure of any funds allotted to Ashland by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the U. S. Government under any State or Federal grant program;
2. Road Contracts - To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with the Massachusetts Highway Department Commissioner or the Federal Government for the construction and maintenance of public highways in the Town of Ashland for the ensuing year;
3. Contracts in Excess of Three Years - To see if the Town will vote in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 30B, § 12(b), to authorize the Town Manager or the Superintendent of Schools to solicit and award contracts for terms exceeding three years, including any renewal,

extension or option, provided in each instance the longer term is determined to be in the best interest of the Town by a vote of the Select Board or the School Committee, as appropriate;

4. Lease Purchase Agreements – To see if the Town will vote in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 44 §21C to authorize the Select Board to enter into lease purchase financing agreements to acquire equipment or improve a capital asset that may be financed by the issuance of debt under G. L. c. 44 or otherwise allowed by law, for a term up to the useful life of the property and to be procured in accordance with appropriate procurement laws. or take any other action relative thereto.

5. Revolving Funds: To see if the Town will vote to Amend the General Bylaw section 26-5(D)(A) Table as set forth below to add two new revolving funds, Recreation and Vaccination Clinic and then to fix the maximum amount that may be spent during FY 2024 beginning July 1, 2023 for the revolving funds established in the town bylaws for certain departments, boards, committees, agencies or officers in accordance with G.L. c. 44 §53E 1/2, or take any other action relative thereto.

6. Grant Easements: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board and the School Committee to grant easements for access, water, drainage, sewer and utility purposes on terms and conditions the Board and the Committee deem in the best interest of the Town; or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town approve Article 5 as set forth in the Warrant and amend the General Bylaw section 26-5(D)(A) two new revolving funds as follows and further the Town set the maximum amount that may be spent on revolving funds in subsection 5 of Article 5 as follows:

Fund	Revenue Source	Authority to Spend Funds	Use of Funds	Fiscal Year
Recreation Revolving	Participant fees for any program offered by the Recreation Department	Recreation Director	Costs associated with implementing recreation programs including part-time and full-time staff, contracted services,	2024 and subsequent years

			equipment and supplies	
Vaccination Clinic Revolving Account	Reimbursements from implementing vaccination clinics	Health Director/Health Agent	Support costs associated with hosting vaccination clinics and community health and other expenses	2024 and subsequent years

FUND DESCRIPTION	USE OF FUNDS	Maximum Amount of Expenditure From Fund
Senior Program Revolving	The purpose of which shall be to pay for programs conducted by the Council on Aging for the benefit of Ashland senior citizens	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$25,000
Community Center Rental	The purpose of which shall be to pay for expenses and maintenance incurred for the rental of said building	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$25,000
Town of Holliston Animal Control Revolving	The purpose of which shall be to pay for expenses incurred for the care and capture of animals on behalf of the Town of Holliston	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$76,000
Library Materials Replacement	The purpose of which shall be to acquire equivalent Public Library materials to replace items lost or damaged by those who borrow such materials	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$1,500

Hazardous Waste Revolving	The purpose of which shall be to be able to continue to drop off programs for TV's & Computers	Expenditures shall not exceed monies into the fund \$15,000
Sidewalk Construction Fund	The purpose of which shall be to pay for sidewalks	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$50,000
Guidance Revolving Fund	The purpose of which shall be to pay for the institutional, per student cost for our students who take the PSAT and/or Advanced Placement (AP) tests and to pay for proctors during the exams	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$40,000
Food Inspection Program	The purpose of which shall be a self-supporting program which will collect fees for the services provided to pay for food establishment programs provided by the Board of Health for the delivery of routine inspections, investigations and reviews for food establishments	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$45,000
Electrical, Plumbing, & Gas Inspections Revolving Fund	The purpose of which shall be a self-supporting program which will collect fees charged and received by the Building Department for electrical, plumbing and gas inspections and permits. During each fiscal year, the Building Department may incur liabilities against and spend monies from the Revolving Fund for salaries or wages of for inspectors performing electric, plumbing or gas inspections, education, contractual services and any other expenses in connection	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$225,000

	with the operation of the inspectional services program	
Tobacco Program Revolving	The purpose of which shall be a self-supporting program which will collect fees for the services provided to pay for inspections and programs provided by the Board of Health for the delivery of tobacco control comprehensive inspections at tobacco sales locations and for evidence based education programs that will benefit the residents of Ashland	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$15,000
Ambulance Revolving	The purpose of which shall be to pay for the costs of providing ambulance and emergency response services.	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$825,000
Recreation Revolving	The purpose of which shall be to support the cost of providing recreation programs throughout the year.	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$500,000
Vaccination Clinic Revolving	The purpose shall be to create a self-supporting program which will pay for the costs associated with running the regional vaccination clinics.	Expenditures shall not exceed receipts into the fund and in any case shall not exceed \$25,000

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town approve Article 5 as set forth in the Warrant and further the Town set the maximum amount that may be spent on revolving funds in subsection 5 of Article 5.

Article 6: Annual Consent Article: Community Preservation Act
Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee

To see if the Town will vote the following consent articles:

- a. **Community Preservation Funds – FY24 Annual Appropriations** - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from the Community Preservation annual revenues in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for committee administrative expenses, community preservation projects and other expenses in Fiscal Year 2024, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

Appropriations:

From FY 2024 estimated revenues to Committee Administrative Expense **\$ 87,937**

Reserves:

From FY 2024 estimated revenues to Historic Resources Reserve **\$ 167,080**

From FY 2024 estimated revenues to Community Housing Reserve **\$ 167,080**

From FY 2024 estimated revenues to Open Space Reserve **\$ 167,080**

From FY 2024 estimated revenues to Undesignated Reserve **\$ 1,169,560**

- b. **Community Preservation Funds – Oak Street Bond Payment** - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$ 142,025** in Community Preservation Act funds to fund the bond payment approved in Article 1 of the Special Town Meeting of November 26, 2007 that acquired by eminent domain a certain parcel of land off Oak Street, now or formerly owned by Stephanie A. and Kristen McCook consisting of 1,305,929 +/- sq. ft. and more particularly described as parcel #003D-005-000 on the Assessors Map and further defined in an Order of Taking by Eminent Domain filed with the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds Southern District on January 7, 2002, all in accordance with the Agreement for Judgment issued by the Superior Court Department of the Trial Court, Civil Action No. MICV2003-02643 which amount supplemented the funds raised in its vote of Article 6 of the Fall Special Town Meeting of October 20, 1999, for the acquisition of the aforesaid parcel, from the Community Preservation Fund Undesignated Reserve Account, to be added to 01710 Debt Service passed in Article 3 of this Town Meeting; or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.
- c. **Community Preservation Funds – H.S. Athletic Fields Bond Payment** - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$ 307,650** in Community Preservation Act funds to fund the bond payment approved in Article 11 of the Annual Town Meeting of May 4, 2011 to construct and equip athletic fields to be located at the Ashland High School and other ancillary uses and to pay for all related engineering and legal fees associated therewith from the Community Preservation Fund Undesignated Reserve Account, to be added to

01710 Debt Service passed in Article 3 of this Town Meeting; or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.

d. **Community Preservation Funds – Warren Woods Bond Payment** - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$ 153,906** in Community Preservation Act funds to fund the bond payment for the purchase of that certain parcel of land which was owned by Northeastern University and described as Assessors 'Map 28, Lots 070 and 072, consisting of approximately 118.36 +/- acres, more or less, known as Warren Woods and which the Town acquired by deeds dated June 5, 2012 and recorded in Book 59237, Page 246 and Book 59237 Page 252 and which said expenditure and purchase was approved in Article 8 of the Special Town Meeting of November 29, 2010 and further modified by Article 5 of the Special Town Meeting of October 18, 2011, from the following FY 2014 CPA reserve accounts;

Historic Resources Reserve	<u>\$ 49,250</u>
Open Space Reserve	<u>\$ 41,555</u>
Undesignated Reserve	<u>\$ 63,102</u>

e. **Community Preservation Funds – Valentine Estate** – To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$ 46,586** in Community Preservation Act Funds to fund the bond payment for the purchase of land known as and numbered 125 through 133 West Union Street, Ashland, Middlesex County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts including the land shown as Parcel A., Lot 1, Lot 2, Lot 3 on a plan entitled “Plan of Land Ashland, MA” dated January 21, 1997 as revised December 14, 1998 by GLM Engineering Consultants, Inc., 1750 Washington Street, Holliston, MA recorded as Plan Number 148 of 1999 in Plan Book 29795, Page 18 including 7.67 acres +/- and which said expenditure and purchase was approved in Article 10 of the Annual Town Meeting May 2, 2018 and further that the bond payment be paid from the following CPA reserve accounts;

Open Space Reserve	<u>\$ 6,657</u>
Undesignated Reserve	<u>\$ 39,929</u>

or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town approve the CPC Consent Article as set forth in Article 6.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town approve CPC consent article as set forth in Article 6.

Article 7: Appropriate Funds to Restore Antique Fire Truck
Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$175,000 to enable the Fire Association to complete the restoration of the original 1947 town Mack fire truck and that to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$175,000 be transferred from the Historical Resources Reserve Account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and so long as there is a Grant Agreement executed between the Fire Association and the Community Preservation Committee prior to the disbursement of any funds hereunder and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2025 being returned to their funding source; or pass any vote or take any other action thereon.

MOTION: The Town will appropriate up to \$175,000 to enable the Fire Association to complete the restoration of the original 1947 town Mack fire truck and that to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$175,000 be transferred from the Historical Resources Reserve Account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and so long as there is a Grant Agreement executed between the Fire Association and the Community Preservation Committee prior to the disbursement of any funds hereunder and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2025 being returned to their funding source; or pass any vote or take any other action thereon.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town appropriate up to \$175,000 from the Historical Resources Reserve Account from the Community Preservation Fund balance as detailed in Article 7.

Article 8: Dispose of Real Property: Lease of Main Street Fire Station
Sponsor: Town Manager

To see if the Town will vote to support the Select Board to lease, for a term of up to thirty (30) years, for the Town owned property at 151 Main Street, for use as a tap room and restaurant and other related uses, and for the Select Board in their discretion to enter other related agreements which are necessary to effectuate the lease and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board shall determine to be in the best interest of the Town, or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION: The Town will support the Select Board to lease, for a term of up to thirty (30) years, for the Town owned property at 151 Main Street, for use as a tap room and restaurant and other related uses, and for the Select Board in their discretion to enter other related agreements which are necessary to effectuate the lease and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board shall determine to be in the best interest of the Town, or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town support the Select Board to lease Town owned property at 151 Main Street as described in Article 8.

Article 9: Establishment of the Capital Stabilization Account by South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School)

Sponsor: South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School)

To see if the Town will authorize the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District Committee to establish a Capital Stabilization Account for the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District, pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, or take any action other action or relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town authorize the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District Committee to establish a Capital Stabilization Account for the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District, pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, or take any action other action or relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town authorize the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District Committee to establish a Capital Stabilization Account for the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School (Keefe Regional Technical School) District pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Article 10: Citizen Petition

Sponsor: Citizen Petition

To see whether the Town Meeting will vote to amend the Town Code by inserting a new Section §63-10, Speaking Time, as follows:

§63-10 Speaking Time: Any individual who wishes to address the Town Meeting shall, when recognized by the Moderator, complete either remarks in three (3) minutes, or less, unless extended by leave of the Moderator and yield the floor.

NOTE: There was a typographical error when transcribing the submitted proposed bylaw language. It should have read:

§63-10 Speaking Time: Any individual who wishes to address the Town Meeting shall, when recognized by the Moderator, complete **their** remarks in three (3) minutes, or less, unless extended by leave of the Moderator and yield the floor.

Article 11: Remove Police Department from Civil Service
Sponsor: Town Manager

To see if the Town would support a ballot question at the next regularly held or special election to exempt all Town of Ashland police officers, regardless of rank, from the provisions of Chapter 31 of Massachusetts General Laws.

MOTION: That the Town supports a ballot question at the next regularly held or special election to exempt all Town of Ashland police officers, regardless of rank, from provisions of Chapter 31 of Massachusetts General Laws

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town to support a ballot question to exempt all Town of Ashland police officers, regardless of rank, from the provisions of Chapter 31 of Massachusetts General Laws.

Article 12: Funding for I&I
Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director

To see if the Town will appropriate a sum of money to make infiltration and inflow improvements to the Town's sewer system, including improvements for infiltration and inflow reduction purposes that are eligible for loans or other financial assistance through the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's I/I Local Financial Assistance Program - Phase 12 Funding Allocation, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Public Works; to determine whether such amounts should be raised by taxation, borrowing, transfer from available funds or otherwise, and to authorize the Select Board to apply for and accept, any grants that may be available to pay costs of such projects; or pass any vote or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town appropriate \$550,000 to make infiltration and inflow improvements to the Town's sewer system, including improvements for infiltration and inflow reduction purposes that are eligible for loans or other financial assistance through the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's I/I Local Financial Assistance Program - Phase 12 Funding Allocation, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Public Works; to determine whether such amounts should be raised by taxation, borrowing, transfer from available funds or otherwise, and to authorize the Selectmen to apply for and accept, any grants that may be available to pay costs of such

projects. And to meet said appropriation the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to M.G.L Chapter 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town appropriate \$550,000 to make infiltration and inflow improvements to the Town’s sewer system as detailed in Article 12.

Article 13: Update Bylaw: Accept Specialized Stretch Code
Sponsor: Sustainability Committee

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 98.7 of the General Bylaws of the Town of Ashland Bylaws, entitled “Stretch Energy Code” as follows (underline and bold new, ~~cross-out~~ removed):

- a. Section 98.7 change the title to the following: “Stretch Energy Code and Specialized Energy Code”
- b. Add a new Section 98.8 as follows: Specialized Energy Code: The Specialized Energy Code shall be adopted for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, pursuant to the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23 including Appendices RC and CC, including future editions, amendments or modifications thereto, with an effective date of September 1, 2023.
- c. Change the existing numbered Section 98.8 Enforcement to 98.9.

or take any other action relative thereto.

MOTION: That the Town will amend Section 98.7 of the General Bylaws as outlined in Article 13.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee defers to Town Meeting.

Article 14: Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by the Town of Ashland
Sponsor: Sustainability Committee/Town Manager

Chapter 98, Building Construction and Town Power Sources
Article IV Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by the Town of Ashland, Inclusive of the Ashland Public Schools

§98-10 Findings and Purpose.

Greenhouse gas emissions exceeding the capacity of the environment to absorb them leads to accelerated climate change. Accelerated climate change will lead to challenges that will be difficult for many humans to survive. Alternatives to emitting greenhouse gases must be implemented to mitigate this accelerated climate change.

§98-11 Definitions

Greenhouse gas emissions – generation or leakage of gases that trap heat in the Earth’s atmosphere including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases. Though water vapor is a greenhouse gas, it is not generally driven directly by human behavior and is not included in this definition of greenhouse gas emissions.

100% renewable electricity – Electricity generated from renewable resources as defined in the statutes, regulations and guidelines administered by Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources Renewable Energy Division.

§98-12 Vehicles and Equipment

The Town of Ashland will consider buying or leasing vehicles and equipment that have zero greenhouse gas emissions by comparing total lifecycle costs where a zero greenhouse gas emission option is available. Though this section does not require the purchase of zero greenhouse gas emission vehicles and equipment at this time, the transition to zero greenhouse gas emission vehicles and equipment must begin in order to meet the commitment to Net Zero in 2040.

§98-13 Buildings

The Town of Ashland shall only implement zero greenhouse gas emission technologies in new buildings and improvements or retrofits of existing buildings. Examples of building functions using greenhouse gas emitting technologies include space and water heating, cooking, and backup power. Heat pumps and battery storage are examples of zero greenhouse gas emission technologies that can be used in these building functions. Natural gas plumbing must not be added to new buildings or as part of a retrofit to a building.

§98-14 Electricity Supply

The Town of Ashland shall only purchase electricity that is from 100% renewable sources. Contracts to purchase electricity that does not meet the 100% renewable requirement, existing at the time of adoption, will continue, but will not be extended.

§98-15 Exemptions

Buildings may have equipment repaired and replaced that is functionally equivalent to existing equipment. Improvements and retrofits to existing building equipment are not exempt from the requirement to implement zero greenhouse gas emission technologies.

Buildings may use greenhouse gas emitting technologies for safety purposes if specifically approved by the appropriate building authority.

§98-16 Effective Date

This bylaw shall take effect in the fiscal year after the year when the bylaw is approved by the Town of Ashland or July 1, 2024, whichever is later.

MOTION: That the Town will amend the general bylaw as presented in Article 14.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town amend the general bylaw as presented in Article 14 with the understanding that future costs are unknown and may affect future budgets negatively.

TOWN MEETING VOCABULARY

Abatement	A reduction or elimination of a real or personal property tax, motor vehicle excise, a fee, charge, or special assessment imposed.
Available Funds	Balances in the various fund types that represent non-recurring revenue sources. Examples include free cash, stabilization funds, overlay surplus, and enterprise retained earnings.
Bond	A means to raise money through the issuance of debt.
Bond Authorization	The action of town meeting authorizing the executive branch to raise money through the sale of bonds in a specific amount and for a specific purpose. Once authorized, issuance is by the treasurer upon signature of the selectmen.
Cherry Sheet	An annual statement from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue detailing estimated reimbursements and charges to the Town. Its name derives from the fact that it was once written on cherry colored paper. In this manner the Town receives its share of various state funds and aid accounts, and is charged its share of running state government. Although the Cherry Sheet is required to be distributed by the first of March of each year, in actuality it is sent after the Legislature has passed the budget, which may not occur until June or July.
Citizens' Petitions	10 citizens for an Annual Town Meeting or 100 citizens for a Special Town Meeting may submit a petition requesting that a specific article be included in the next Town Meeting warrant for consideration. 200 citizens may submit a petition calling the Board of Selectmen to set a Town Meeting within 45 days.
Community Preservation Act	Permits towns accepting its provisions to establish a restricted fund from which monies can be appropriated only for a) the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space; b) the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources; and c) the acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use; d) the creation, preservation and support of community housing; and e) the rehabilitation and restoration of open space, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.
Community Preservation	A special revenue fund established to receive all monies collected to support the

Fund	community preservation program, including but not limited to, tax surcharge receipts, proceeds from borrowings, and funds received from the State.
Debt Exclusion	A community may vote at an election to exclude debt service payments for a particular capital project from the levy limit. The amount necessary to cover each year's principal & interest is added to the levy limit for the life of the debts.
Enterprise Fund	An enterprise fund is a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for municipal services for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services. With an enterprise fund, all costs of service delivery--direct, indirect, and capital costs—are identified. This allows the community to recover total service costs through user fees if it chooses. Enterprise accounting also enables communities to reserve the "surplus" or net assets unrestricted generated by the operation of the enterprise rather than closing it out to the general fund at year-end. We have sewer, water and trash enterprise accounts.
Exemption	Established by statute, it is a discharge from the obligation to pay all or a portion of a property tax. The exemption is available to particular categories of property or persons upon the timely submission and approval of an application to the assessors. Properties exempt from taxation include hospitals, schools, houses of worship, and cultural institutions. Persons who may qualify for exemptions include disabled veterans, blind individuals, surviving spouses, and seniors.
Fiscal Year	The Fiscal Year starts July 1 st of each year and ends June 30 th the following year.
Free Cash	Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates shown on the tax recapitulation sheet, and unspent amounts in budget line-items. Unpaid property taxes and certain deficits reduce the amount that can be certified as free cash. The calculation of free cash is based on the balance sheet as of June 30, which is submitted by the community's accountant. This amount is certified annually by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue and thereafter is available for appropriation by a Town Meeting.
Levy Limit	The amount of property taxes that can be raised in accordance with Proposition 2½ formulas. The levy may be raised by 2½% plus new construction.
Local Receipts	Income derived by the Town from Motor Vehicle excise taxes, fees, licenses and permits, penalties & interest on taxes, etc.

New Construction	New growth and increases to property independent of market inflation are added to the levy limit in addition to the 2½% inflation increase allowed under Proposition 2½.
Omnibus Budget	For convenience, all recommended appropriations for operating expenses of the various Town departments and boards are gathered together in one article called the Omnibus Budget. The period covered by the Omnibus Budget is the upcoming Fiscal Year, and money not spent during this period reverts to Free Cash. No department or board can overspend its budget.
Overlay	An account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year. The overlay reserve need not be funded by the normal appropriation process, but rather is raised on the tax rate recapitulation sheet.
Override	A vote by a community at an election to permanently increase the levy limit. An override question on the election ballot must state a purpose for the override and the dollar amount.
Raise and Appropriate	A type of funding for Town expenditures voted at Town Meetings. The funds are raised through taxes, local receipts, and state reimbursements. Funds raised and appropriated in warrant articles are available until a time set by the article or until voted out by a subsequent Town Meeting.
Reserve Fund	A fund, established by each Town Meeting, for extraordinary or unforeseen expenses in the upcoming fiscal year. The Finance Committee alone may transfer money from this fund, thus eliminating the need for frequent Special Town Meetings. The fund may not exceed 5% of the preceding year’s tax levy.
Revolving Account	Allows a community to raise revenues from a specific service and use those revenues without appropriation to support the service.
Stabilization Fund	A fund designed to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. It retains its own investment income. A two-thirds vote is required on any vote relative to this Fund. This fund serves as the Town’s primary “rainy day” fund.

Selected Town Meeting Procedures

Amending an Article: Any time after a main motion has been made and seconded, but before being voted on, it is possible to amend the main motion using the following procedures:

1. Proceed to a microphone and wait to be recognized by the Moderator.
2. Announce your intent to amend the motion verbally and submit a copy of the amended motion in writing to the Moderator. The motion to amend must include your name as sponsor. Any increase in appropriation must include a funding source.
3. The Moderator will ask for a second to the motion to amend.
4. If passed, the motion to amend will be opened for discussion and then must be voted on by Town Meeting separately from the main motion.
5. A simple majority is required to pass a motion to amend.
6. More than one motion to amend can be made to a main article, but each must be presented and voted on one at a time. A motion to amend must be made before the main motion is voted on.
7. After all motions to amend are voted, the main motion (or as amended) must be voted on.

Necessary Majorities *

Unless noted otherwise, a simple majority is required to pass a motion.

A 2/3 majority is required for all borrowing, land acquisitions or transfers and all zoning by-laws, except those which create multifamily housing in accordance with G.L. c40A sec. 9 and which will be so noted.

A 4/5 majority is required at Annual Town Meeting for unpaid bills of prior fiscal years.

A 9/10 majority is required at Special Town Meetings for unpaid bills of prior years.

Only votes cast will be counted in determining the percentage of votes in favor of a motion. If there are 170 voters present and 100 vote yes, 50 vote no and 20 do not vote, the results shall be interpreted as 100 yes votes out of 150 votes or 66.67% in favor.

* Please note that these vote majorities are for example only and there may be other types of votes which fall under each of the categories listed above.