

## Select Board Recommends Approval of FY 2024 Budget Proposal, Reviews Plan For Implementation of Town Governance Study Committee Communications Priorities

**ANDOVER, MA** - The Andover Select Board met on Monday, March 13 in the Robb Senior Center's Lifelong Learning Room. The meeting's agenda covered a wide range of topics including the implementation of communications initiatives recommended by the Town Governance Study Committee, the appointment of a member to the Board of Registrars of Voters, and the acceptance of grants of easements necessary in the Ledge Road Landfill closure project.

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- **Select Board presented with plan for implementation of communications priorities of the Town Governance Study Committee;**
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- **Recommends approval of FY 2024 Budget and Capital Plan; and**
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- **Continues review of warrant articles for 2023 Annual Town Meeting.**
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### Town Governance Study Committee Communications Initiatives

Director of Communications Phil Geoffroy provided the Select Board with an update on the Town's plan to implement six communications and public engagement-related priorities outlined in the Town Governance Study Committee's [2021 report](#). The recommendations include improving educational material about Town Meeting, producing and distributing new resident welcome packets, and creating a regular digest to convey information about Town government.

In his presentation to the Board, Geoffroy said that the Town plans to begin the implementation of several of these priorities in the lead up to Annual Town Meeting. The Town Manager's Office intends to host an enhanced version of its traditional "Town Meeting Preview" event that will take place in a hybrid format in April. Intended to streamline discussions during Town Meeting, the event will provide an explanation of articles, and will allow participants to ask questions of the Town Manager and other presenters. Details of this event will be announced in the coming weeks. Geoffroy also outlined plans to leverage digital tools, including videos and infographics, to generate awareness around particular warrant articles and general information pertaining to Town Meeting throughout the weeks leading up to the May 1 Town Meeting.

Several recommendations of the Town Governance Study Committee are already being implemented according to Geoffroy, including the creation of a regular digest conveying key updates and information about Town affairs to residents. The Bartlet Street Dispatch, the Town of Andover's official, biweekly newsletter, launched in January and has generated 750 new subscribers in its initial weeks.

### FY 2024 Budget and Capital Improvement Program

In continuing their review of articles that will appear on the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant, the Select Board voted to recommend adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024 budget recommendation. The proposal totals \$234,752,077, representing a \$8,169,340, or 3.6 percent, increase over the current fiscal year budget.



The budget recommendation was released on February 1, and was recently reviewed in a day-long budget workshop by the Select Board and Finance Committee on Saturday, March 4. The full budget can be viewed online at: [andoverma.gov/FY2024budget](http://andoverma.gov/FY2024budget).

The Board also reviewed the FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), voting to recommend approval of articles authorizing capital expenditures from the following sources:

**General Fund Revenue:** \$2,890,000

**Free Cash:** \$1,919,128

**General Fund Non-Exempt Borrowing:** \$4,850,000

**Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds:** \$13,360,000

The FY 2024 CIP represents a total investment of \$24,454,254 in Town projects. Projects recommended to receive funding in the CIP include sidewalk replacement and repairs, park and playground improvements, road maintenance, school improvement projects, and water main replacements. The full plan is outlined in the FY 2024 [budget document](#).

## Review of Other Warrant Articles

Four other articles slated to appear on the Annual Town Meeting warrant were considered by the Select Board on Monday.

- **Financial Housekeeping Articles:** Authorizing a series of routine financial functions, including FY 23 budget transfers and supplemental appropriations. The Board will revisit several of these articles at a future meeting, but voted to recommend approval of four items, including those related to establishing expenditure limits for revolving accounts, the disposition of unexpended appropriations capital projects fund, the appropriation of cable franchise fees to support PEG access services, and the transfer of funds into the pension obligation bond stabilization fund.
- **Home Rule Petition for Excess Levy Capacity:** Authorizing the Town to petition the Legislature to pass special legislation that would allow for the use of excess levy capacity resulting from the Town's pension obligation bond issuance solely for the purposes of paying pension obligation bond debt service, funding post-employment benefits liabilities, and funding capital projects.
- **Zoning Bylaw Recodification:** Amends the Town's Zoning Bylaws by making formatting and organizational changes to the Zoning Bylaw intended to make it more accessible and easier to navigate, and to clarify existing provisions. The recodification would not change existing zoning or introduce major policy changes.
- **Town Bylaw Amendment – Stormwater Management and Erosion Control:** Amends provisions of the Town's Bylaw related to Stormwater Management and Erosion Control through a series of technical changes intended to ensure compliance with state guidelines.

The Zoning Bylaw Recodification and Stormwater Management and Erosion Control amendment articles will be revisited at a future meeting of the Select Board after the Planning Board makes a recommendation on each article.

The 2023 Annual Town Meeting will begin on May 1. The Board's recommendations on warrant articles will be published in the Finance Committee's Report, mailed to residents prior to Town Meeting.



## Other Actions

- The Board appointed Jennifer Zhang to a three-year term on the Board of Registrars of Voters.
- Three grants of easements from property owners on Greenwood Road that will provide access necessary to complete the Ledge Road Landfill closure project were accepted by the Select Board.
- The Select Board voted to extend the period during which the Town can negotiate a land disposition agreement (LDA) with Minco Development related to the sale and transfer of the Old Town Yard at 11 Lewis Street.

The Andover Select Board's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 27.

