
Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting



**Town of Freetown
Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Monday, June 5, 2023
7:30 pm**

**Apponequet Regional High School
Robert C. Falcon Auditorium
100 Howland Road, Lakeville, MA 02347**

BRISTOL, SS:

To either of the Constables of the Town of Freetown, GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Freetown who are qualified to vote in the Elections and Town Affairs to meet at Apponequet Regional High School, 100 Howland Road, Lakeville, Massachusetts, on Monday, the Fifth day of June, 2023 at 7:30 P.M., then and there to act on the following Articles, viz:



**Warrant for the
Annual Town Meeting**

Monday, June 5, 2023, at 7:30pm

Apponequet Regional High School

Robert C. Falcon Auditorium

100 Howland Road, Lakeville, MA 02347

Article 1: Town of Freetown Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer such sums of money as may be necessary to defray the Town charges for the Fiscal Year 2024, viz: General Government, Public Safety, Health & Human Services, Public Works, Education, Culture & Recreation, Interest and Principal Debt, Town Wide Fueling, and Unclassified: SRPEDD Assessment, Retirement, Insurances, Medicare and Transfers, Capital Equipment, Capital Building & Other Property Improvements, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Finance Committee recommends \$30,593,161.96

Explanation of Article: This Article serves as the introductory Article for presentation of the Omnibus Budget.

Article 2: Salary & Compensation of Elected Officers of the Town of Freetown

To see if the Town will vote to fix the salary and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as provided by Chapter 41, Section 108 and Chapter 71, Section 52 of the General Laws, as amended, for the Fiscal Year 2024, and/or take any action relative thereto.

	<i>Voted FY 2023</i>	<i>Departmental FY 2024 Request</i>	<i>Recommendation of & Selectmen</i>	<i>Recommendation of & Finance Committee</i>
Moderator	\$165.00/meeting	\$175.00/meeting	\$175.00/meeting	\$175.00/meeting
Board of Selectmen (Each)	\$6,000.00/year	\$6,000.00/year	\$6,000.00/year	\$6,000.00/year
Town Clerk	\$66,950.00/year	\$72,900.00/year	\$72,900.00/year	
Board of Assessors (Each)	\$5,000.00/year	\$5,000.00/year	\$5,000.00/year	\$5,000.00/year

Tree Warden	\$23.00/hour	\$23.00/hour	\$23.00/hour	\$23.00/hour
Highway Surveyor	\$75,647.00/year	\$80,184.00/year	\$80,184.00/year	
Regional District School Committee (Each)	\$1,106.00/year	\$1,106.00/year	\$1,106.00/year	\$1,106.00/year
Water-Sewer Commissioners (Each)	\$250.00/year	\$250.00/year	\$250.00/year	\$250.00/year

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Finance Committee recommends Dept Req Amounts

Explanation of Article: Elected officials are not covered under Article 10 of the Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan or under a union contract. This is the only avenue to adjust elected official salaries to keep pace with inflation and contractual increases to other employees.

Article 3: Operating Budget of the Water-Sewer Enterprise Fund

To see if the Town will vote to approve the sum of One Million, Five Hundred Sixteen Thousand Five Hundred Eight Dollars (\$1,516,508.00) to operate the Water-Sewer Enterprise Fund for FY 2024, with an appropriation for the following direct expenses:

Personnel:	\$ 137,708.00
Expenses:	<u>\$1,288,800.00</u>
Total:	\$1,426,508.00 in the Water-Sewer Enterprise fund

and the sum of \$ 90,000.00 for indirect costs appropriated in the general fund as part of the Omnibus Budget, with all costs totaling \$1,516,508.00 and supported with \$0.00 from certified retained earnings and with \$1,516,508.00 from Water-Sewer Enterprise receipts, and/or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by Water and Sewer Commission
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Total Water-Sewer Enterprise Budget (information purposes only)

Direct Expenses:

Salaries	\$ 137,708.00
Purchase of Services	\$ 1,166,800.00
Purchase of Supplies	\$ 23,500.00
Other Charges	\$ 3,500.00
Replacement equipment	\$ 20,000.00
Unforeseen Reserve	\$ 75,000.00

Indirect Costs (in the general fund):

Finance	\$ 19,500
Utilities	\$ 850
IT service	\$ 750
Insurance	\$ 30,000
Retirement	\$ 36,000
Gen'l Admin	\$ 3,000

Debt Service (ST interest)	\$ 0.00	Less Int Credit	\$ - 100
Subtotal	\$ 1,426,508.00	Subtotal	\$ 90,000

Explanation of Article: This is the operating budget for the Water-Sewer Enterprise fund presented in accordance with M.G.L. chapter 44, section 53F 1/2.

Article 4: Spending Limits for Assorted Revolving Funds

To see if the Town will vote to establish the following fiscal year spending limits for each revolving fund established under Article 29 of the General By-laws, and/or take any action relative thereto:

<i>Authorized Revolving Fund</i>	<i>FY 2024 Expenditure Limit</i>
Board of Selectmen Annual Town Report	\$1,200.00
Police Department Exams	\$5,000.00
Police Department Firearm Safety Course	\$10,000.00
Board of Selectmen Long Pond	\$25,000.00
Vaccine Revolving Fund	\$5,000.00

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This article establishes the annual spending limit of expenditures for authorized departmental revolving funds.

Article 5: Engineering study for the Assonet Four Corners Intersection

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000.00) for an engineering study for the Assonet Four Corners intersection, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Planning Board
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: The article would allow the Town to hire an engineering firm to develop options to improve the safety at the intersection located at the corners of Main Street/Water Street/and Elm Street ("Four Corners").

Article 6: Maintenance of Veterans' Graves

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with General Laws Chapter 115, Section 9, to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) for the maintenance of veterans' graves, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Cemetery Commission

Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This is an annual article that funds the maintenance of certain veterans' graves as provided by M.G.L. Chapter 115, Section 9.

Article 7 Continuing Police Cruiser Lease Purchase Program

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a tax exempt lease purchase (TELP) financing agreement with All American Investment, LLC to acquire and equip police cruisers that may be financed by the issuance of debt, for a term up to the useful life of the property, being 3 years, to be procured as determined by the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 21C, and furthermore the sum needed to satisfy the first year payment of this agreement will be separately identified, raised and appropriated in the capital budget section of the Omnibus Budget for FY24, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Chief of Police

Requires 2/3 Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This article is necessary for the continuation of the cruiser lease program established in 2004 by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

Article 8: Amend General By-Law Article 10, Personnel Classification/Comp. Fire Chief

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General By-Law, Article 10, Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan, Section 10.8(2) Fire Chief by replacing the words "Step 3 Firefighter" as they appear therein with the words "Top Step Firefighter", and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Fire Chief

Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Finance Committee takes no action

Explanation of Article: When the current wording was adopted, Step 3 was the highest rate for Career firefighter in the CBA between the town and the Firefighters union. There are currently five (5) steps listed in the CBA. This change will bring the Fire Chief's Payrate back in alignment with the rest of the Fulltime Fire Department Employees.

Article 9: Reallocate Funds Appropriated for Chipaway Pump Station Backup Generator

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article 18 of the June 6, 2022 Special Town Meeting, which appropriated Fifty Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$50,500.00)

for the Chipaway Pump Station backup generator, to authorize use of those funds for the purpose of water infrastructure repairs and any incidental or related expenses, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by the Water and Sewer Commission
Requires Majority Vote
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This article is to repurpose funds that were allocated to purchase a generator for the Chipaway Pump Station. The Town was able to use ARPA funds to purchase the backup generator and would like to repurpose the funds to be used for town wide water infrastructure repairs such as fire hydrants and shut off valves.

Article 10: Repair & Restoration of Monuments in Various Cemeteries

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with General Laws Chapter 114, Section 18, to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) for the repair or restoration of monuments in various cemeteries, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Cemetery Commission
Requires Majority Vote
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: The Cemetery Commission would like to continue its recent program of repairing/restoring older monuments, especially in some of the older cemeteries that do not have perpetual care

Article 11: Transfer Funds from Sale of Cemetery Lots for Maintenance and Improvements

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of Thirty-five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500.00) from the Sale of Cemetery Lots Account to be used by the Cemetery Commission for maintenance and improvements at the Assonet Burying Ground, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Cemetery Commission
Requires Majority Vote
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This is an annual appropriation. According to state law, revenues from lot sales may only be spent for the benefit of the cemetery in which those lots were sold.

Article 12: Establish a By-Law to Charge Fees for Weights and Measures Services

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c. 98, § 56, to amend the General By-laws, Article 3, Power and Duties of Town Officers, by adding new Section 3.9, Fees for the Sealing and Inspecting of Weighing or Measuring Devices, as on file in the Town Clerk's office and included as Attachment A to this Warrant, and/or take any other action relative thereto.

See Attachment A at end of Warrant.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires a Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of the Article: The state, on behalf of the Town, performs inspections of equipment used for weighing and measuring. The State charges the Town a fee for this service based on a schedule of fees. The Town would like to pass those fees through to the user. In order to do that the Town must vote to establish a by-law allowing the Town to collect the costs of these inspections from the owners of the weighing and measuring devices. Proposed fee schedule is listed as Attachment A at the end of the ATM Warrant.

Article 13: Establish a Community Program Revolving Fund

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General By-laws, Article 29, Revolving Funds, Section 29-6, Authorized Revolving Funds, by inserting therein the following language creating an additional revolving fund, said fund to be used by the Community Program Director to create programming for the residents of Freetown, pursuant to G.L. c 44, sec 53E1/2:

REVOLVING FUND PROGRAM OR PURPOSE	DEPARTMENT RECEIPTS TO BE CREDITED TO FUND	REPRESENTATIVE OR BOARD ENTITY AUTHORIZED TO SPEND
Community Programs – offset costs of community programs offered to residents	Fees charged and received in connection with the programs	Community Program Director

and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This will allow the Community Program Director to schedule and pay for various programs to benefit the residents of the Town of Freetown. Fees for the programming could then be collected and deposited to the revolving fund

Article 14: Apply, Accept and Expend Massachusetts Public Library Construction Grant

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Library Trustees to apply for, accept, and expend Massachusetts Public Library Construction (MPLCP) grant funds for a public library project, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Board of Library Trustees
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This authorization is a steppingstone in the process for seeking state grants towards the construction of new library facilities.

Article 15: Planning and Design Phase of Massachusetts Public Library Construction Grant

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) as local funding for the Planning &

Design Phase of the Town's participation in the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by Board of Library Trustees
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This fund's the Town's beginning steps in applying for a library construction grants, and may be used with previously allocated funding if any is available. The amount expended would be matched, up to \$100,000, by the MPLCP. It is important to note that appropriating these funds is a requirement of the Grant Process and that these funds will not be expended if the Town does not receive the grant.

Article 16: Funding to the Capital Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) for the purpose of supplementing the Capital Stabilization Fund, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Explanation of Article: This appropriation would add funds to the Capital Stabilization Fund to be used for purchasing capital assets or payment of related debt service on capital assets. Any proposed use of the fund would require a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting.

Article 17: Funding the Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) for the purpose of supplementing the Stabilization Fund, and/or take any action thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen
Requires Majority Vote

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee



Explanation of Article: This appropriation would add funds to the Stabilization Fund to be used for any lawful purpose. The Stabilization Fund is a "rainy day fund" or reserve to support the Town during times of financial stress. Any proposed use of the fund would require a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting.

And you are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof at the following places: the Assonet Post Office, the East Freetown Post Office, Junior's Convenience Store in Assonet, the Freetown Town Hall, Freetown Communications Center, and Freetown Fire-Rescue Station #3. Hereof, fail not and make return of the original Warrant with your doings thereon immediately after making service thereof to the Town Clerk of the Town of Freetown, Massachusetts.

Given under our hands and seal of the Town of Freetown, this 15th day of May, Anno Domini, Two Thousand Twenty-Three.


Trevor R. Matthews

The Town of Freetown Board of Selectmen


Jared C. Zager
Carlos A. Lopes

Attachment A – Weights & Measures Fee Schedule noted in Article #12

Attachment A	
Weights & Measures Fee Schedule	
Type of Scale	Fee per Scale
0-100 lbs	\$25
100+ lbs	\$125
Gas Meters	\$25