TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
WARRANT ARTICLES

Tuesday, May 3, 2016
7:00 p.m.
Oakmont Regional High School Auditorium
9 Oakmont Drive
Ashburnham, MA 01430

The following is a list of warrant articles and the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen, the Advisory Board and the Capital Planning Committee for the May 3, 2016 Annual Town Meeting.

		Selectmen Recomm.	Capital Plan. Recomm.	Advisory Recomm.	Tax Rate Increase
	CONSENT AGENDA – Articles 1 thru 8	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 1	**Accept reports of Town Officers and Committees**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 2	**Light Department PILOT payment**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 3	**Tax Anticipation Note Authority for Treasurer**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 4	**Authority for Town Administrator to Contract with Mass. Highway**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 5	**Authority to Expend Ch. 90 Road Repair Money**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 6	**Transfer of Cushing Academy Trust Fund Income**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 7	**Transfer Title V receipts to pay principal and interest on septic loans**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 8	**Offset receipt account for Waterways Improvement Fund**	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**

Art. 9	FY17 Budget	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**$.44**
Art. 10	School budget override				
Art. 11	FY17 Water Enterprise Budget	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 12	FY17 Sewer Enterprise Budget	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art. 13	Capital Planning Committee recommended expenditures	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art 14	Borrowing for DPW, Water, and Sewer Facility	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**FY 18**
Art 15	Light Department Land Purchase	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**N/A**
Art 16	Citizen petition to accept Mass General Law Ch 60 section 62A	**NO**	**N/A**	**NO**	

Current Tax Rate for FY16 is $22.75
Estimated Tax Rate for FY17 is $23.19 a 1.94% increase

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

WORCESTER, SS

TO THE CONSTABLES OF THE TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM, IN WORCESTER COUNTY,

GREETINGS:

IN THE NAME OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, YOU ARE HEREBY DIRECTED TO NOTIFY AND WARN THE INHABITANTS OF SAID TOWN QUALIFIED TO VOTE IN ELECTIONS AND TOWN AFFAIRS TO MEET AT OAKMONT REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, 9 OAKMONT DRIVE, ASHBURNHAM, MA ON

TUESDAY, THE THIRD OF MAY, 2016
BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M.

THEN AND THERE TO VOTE ON THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ARTICLE 1:

To accept the reports of several town officers and all outstanding committees, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Board of Selectmen)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND **YES**	RECOMMEND: **N/A**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	IMPACT: **N/A**

Brief Explanation: ***Annual article to accept the reports of Town officials and boards.***

ARTICLE 2:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize a PILOT payment based on the annual kilowatt sales of the Light Department multiplied by a per kilowatt value. from the Municipal Light Plant Funds, to the town treasury, as authorized by its Light Board in accordance with Chapter 164 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Municipal Light Department)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: **YES**	RECOMMEND: **N/A**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	IMPACT: **N/A**

Brief Explanation: ***The PILOT agreement is tied to the Pilot payment in the annual kilowatt sales of the light department multiplied by a per kilowatt value. This was put in place for FY13 to ease the calculation and establish a standard process for future years. In FY17 it is estimated we will receive $66,000.***

ARTICLE 3:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the financial year beginning July 1, 2016, in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 4, and to issue a note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 17, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Treasurer)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: YES	RECOMMEND: N/A	RECOMMEND: YES	IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***Allows the Treasurer to temporarily borrow operating funds for the Town to ensure payments are done in a timely manner. The Treasurer can only borrow that amount which is expected to be received.***

ARTICLE 4:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a contract or contracts with the Massachusetts Highway Department for the construction and maintenance of town roads in conformance with the Massachusetts General Laws, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: YES	RECOMMEND: N/A	RECOMMEND: YES	IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***This article allows the Town Administrator to contract with the State to do road repairs in Ashburnham.***

ARTICLE 5:

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate all funds which become available in the Fiscal Year 2017 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Highways, Chapter 90 Bond Issue proceeds, to be used by the DPW for the repair and maintenance of town roads in conformance with Massachusetts General Laws, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: YES	RECOMMEND: N/A	RECOMMEND: YES	IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***This annual article allows the Town to expend its Chapter 90 state funds. For fiscal year 2017 the amount of those funds is estimated to be $345,503.***

ARTICLE 6:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the transfer of trust fund income not to exceed $2,500 from the Cushing Academy Trust Fund to pay for the fiscal year 2017 secondary school expenses, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: YES	RECOMMEND: N/A	RECOMMEND: YES	IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***This is the transfer of funds (interest) from the Cushing Academy Trust fund ($116,000). When the Town students were removed from Cushing Academy it was required to deposit $114,000 into the Town's funds and the interest earned on these monies were to be used to offset the cost to the Town for secondary education in public schools.***

ARTICLE 7:

To see if the Town will vote to transfer $25,873 from special assessments Title V Receipts Account (septic system loan program) to pay principal and interest due on notes payable to the

Water Pollution Abatement Trust, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***The Town established a Septic System Loan Program where the cost was established as betterments. Each year charges are levied on the tax bills, and the revenue required is reserved or appropriated. We then must transfer monies required to cover the loan payment.***

ARTICLE 8:

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money not to exceed $3,500 from the Waterways Improvement Fund for the purpose of waterway improvement, maintenance, and safety, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Ashburnham Lakes Coalition)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***The Waterways Improvement Fund is funded by a portion of the boat excise tax to be used for waterways maintenance, access, law enforcement or fire prevention. The Lakes Association has been given the charge of recommending the use of these monies to the Board of Selectmen who then approve or disapprove expenditures. In the past these monies have been used for Police boat patrols, lifesaving courses, purchase of a Police boat and other water related expenditures.***

ARTICLE 9:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or appropriate by transfer from available funds such sums of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2016 and to set the salaries of elected officials; or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Board of Selectmen and Advisory Board)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: $0.50

LINE	DEPARTMENT	FY15 SPENT	FY16 BUDGET	FY17 ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMEND
1	Moderator	100	100	100
2	Board of Selectmen	5,213	6,885	6,935
3	Town Administrator	190,700	182,705	187,667
4	Advisory Board	50,500	50,500	50,500
5	Town Accountant	68,339	69,105	67,660
6	Board of Assessors	109,374	108,500	111,500
7	Treasurer	117,294	110,340	122,078
8	Tax Collector	69,943	65,193	68,383
9	Information Technology	174,853	190,575	208,623
10	Town Clerk	52,411	53,083	57,502
11	Land Use	28,366	41,317	41,567
12	Town Hall	41,514	43,103	44,315
13	Town Buildings	141,451	155,921	154,733
14	Non-Departmental	174,647	89,168	90,681

LINE	DEPARTMENT	FY15 SPENT	FY16 BUDGET	FY17 ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMEND
15	Police	1,120,010	1,204,286	1,238,736
16	Resource Officer	-	30,000	35,000
17	Emergency Dispatch	222,625	274,090	287,120
18	Fire	645,034	615,274	638,566
19	Inspections	64,194	89,797	91,097
20	Animal Control	29,917	30,600	33,850
21	Monty Tech	442,182	463,668	445,572
22	AWRSD	6,577,007	6,552,760	6,727,170
23	DPW	707,222	719,872	741,801
24	Snow & Ice	367,034	200,000	220,000
25	Board of Health	18,000	22,868	23,719
26	Conservation Commission	24,978	31,373	30,181
27	Council on Aging	15,943	24,639	25,448
28	Veterans' Services	71,949	77,905	75,688
29	Library	194,495	203,449	203,833
30	Agricultural Commission	-	300	300
31	Parks & Recreation Comm.	20,040	19,900	20,550
32	Historical Commission	-	2,000	2,000
33	Debt Service	2,034,519	2,003,241	1,943,085
34	Employee Ins. Benefits	1,398,344	1,169,756	1,195,201
TOTAL		**15,178,198**	**14,902,273**	**15,191,159**

Setting of Elected Salaries under Article 9:

a. Town Moderator: $100
b. Board of Selectmen: Chairman - $1,300; Clerk - $1,100; Member - $1,100
c. Board of Health: $140 per member

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: **YES**	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: **N/A**	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: **YES**	TAX RATE IMPACT: **$.44**

Brief Explanation: ***Annual operating budget article as noted represents a 1.94% increase over 2016. The revenues to offset the cost of the proposed budget come from the following sources:***

Taxes	***$13,156,510***
State Aid	***$ 938,645***
Local Receipts	***$ 1,096,004***

ARTICLE 10:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the operating budget of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District, in addition to the sum voted under Article 9 for said operating budget, provided that no funds shall be expended and no bonds shall be issued unless the Town has first voted at an election to exempt this expenditure from the provisions of Proposition 2½, so called, and further provided that the Town of Westminster also votes to approve and fund its proportional share of such additional appropriations, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Board of Selectmen)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: **TBD**	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: **N/A**	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: **TBD**	TAX RATE IMPACT: **$0.00**

Brief Explanation: ***This article if passed with a subsequent ballot question will add monies to the AWRSD budget to support their assessment request.***

ARTICLE 11:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money to operate the Water Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***This year's budget represents a $20,840 decrease in operational costs but includes the new borrowing costs of $59,000 for the recently completed water line replacement project for a net increase of $38,160 or 5.39%. This loss water which historically has been as high as 21% is now at a manageable rate of 12%. This is the measure of the amount of water we treat to what we bill our customers and has a large impact on lowering the cost assessment of plant operations. Rates will increase slightly and yet still be lower than they were in 2009. In FY17 the Joint Water Authority has also authorized a proposed Capital Plan for repairs at the treatment plant. All monies raised come from the Water Enterprise Fund.***

ARTICLE 12:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money to operate the Sewer Department for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***This year's budget for the third year in a row has decreased by $17,632 or 2.02%. Gardner is looking to make some improvements/upgrades in the sewer system which will begin a series of rate increases to cover the costs. It is projected that we will see this affect over the next four to five years. Although the budget has decreased this is the first year where the debt payments ($279,260) are not offset by user assessment fees. This results in the revenue being raised by increased rates. In FY17 the rate will move to $16.50 per hundred cubic feet. What this means to the rate payers is that they will be paying $16.50 for every 748 gallons that they generate. Over the last 11 years this will mean an average of 1.9% per year. On the positive side, this debt payment's last year will be in 2019.***

ARTICLE 13:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or appropriate by transfer from available funds the sum of $469,490 to fund the recommendation of the Capital Planning Committee to include the following:

Line	Item	Amount
1	Fire employee (5)Turnout Gear - Replacement	$12,990
2	Ford F-350 Truck – DPW-replaces 2007 vehicle	$39,000

3	Fire truck Pumper-Tanker- three year lease to purchase – replaces 3 existing engines	$190,000
4	Road Repair – adds to Chapter 90 funding	$125,000
5	Police Cruiser Car #5 – replaces 2013 cruiser	$42,500
6	Traffic improvements to intersection at Williams and RT 101	$60,000
	TOTAL	**$469,490**

and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease with an option to purchase for a term of three years for the fire truck pumper-tanker (Item #3), and to sell, trade in or dispose of any equipment being replaced, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: **YES**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	IMPACT: **N/A**

Brief Explanation: ***The Capital Planning Committee has developed a sustainable capital plan that can be funded within the raise and appropriated tax levy. This year's plan includes spending $469,490. Revenue to offset cost for this article will come from Local Receipts.***

ARTICLE 14:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate by borrowing or otherwise, an amount not to exceed $7,884,127 to be used for the design, construction and related costs associated with the construction of a new Department of Public Works (70%), Water (18%)and Sewer (12%) facility, and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow a sum of money and to issue bonds or notes thereof under Chapter 44, Section 8, of the General Laws, or general authority; that such bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town and notes and charges shall be so established as to provide sufficient funds to ensure that the entire principal and interest payable on any borrowing associated with this project will be assessed to the users of the facility; that the Board of Selectmen be authorized to apply for, accept and expend, federal or state aid for the project, that the Treasurer, with approval of the Board of Selectmen, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and otherwise to contract with the USDA with respect to any such loan; and that the Board of Selectmen is authorized to expend all funds available from the project and to take other action necessary to carry out this project; including but not limited to entering into any and all contracts on such terms and conditions as are in the best interest of the Town; provided, however, that the Board of Selectmen has determined that grants or other financial assistance are available from the Federal Government, the Commonwealth or any other source, which in the aggregate, will provide for the project costs, provided that no bonds or notes shall be issued unless the Town has voted at an election to exempt this expenditure from the provisions of Proposition 2½, so called, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Town Administrator)*

SELECTMEN	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM.	ADVISORY BD.	TAX RATE
RECOMMEND: **YES**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	RECOMMEND: **YES**	IMPACT: **N/A**

Brief Explanation: ***This facility is the culmination of 11 years of work to remove and upgrade the DPW operations from the center of Town to an appropriate site. This facility will be built to meet all current state and local guidelines. Funding for the project will be supported***

proportionally with funds from the Town of 70%, Water (18%), and Sewer (12%) departments. It is currently estimated that the portion of the facility paid for by the Water & Sewer departments will obtain a 20% grant award from the USDA.

ARTICLE 15:

To see if the Town will vote to acquire, by purchase, eminent domain or otherwise as provided by the General Laws a parcel of land located at Williams and Turnpike Roads consisting of 17 acres, being the same land shown on Assessors Map 20, Parcel 51, for Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant (AMLP) purposes, any and all costs and expenses, including but not limited to any damages awarded, attorneys' fees, and engineering fees, associated with said acquisition to be paid by AMLP, or act in relation thereto. *(Requested by the Light Board.)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: YES	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: YES	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: YES	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: ***The Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant wishes to purchase the parcel of land that is immediately across Turnpike Road from the existing electrical substation which is owned by National Grid. AMLP currently uses this substation under a 30 year joint use agreement that was signed in 1996 and will be renegotiated in approximately nine years. There are a number of possible uses for this parcel of land, including as a potential location for grid battery storage (photovoltaic solar) within our system. It is also a possible site to relocate our substation equipment if for any reason we can't negotiate a favorable joint use agreement renewal.***
The funding for this purchase will come entirely from AMLP monies, and no taxpayer funds will be used towards this purchase.

ARTICLE 16:

To see if the Town will vote, to amend its General By-law by adding the following section to Chapter VII: Contracts by Town Officers:

Section 8: In accordance with the provisions of G.L., c. 60, Section 62A, the Treasurer is hereby authorized to enter into payment agreements with persons entitled to redeem parcels in tax title subject to the following terms and provisions; such agreements shall be for a maximum term of not more than five years and may waive not more than 50 per cent of the interest that has accrued on the tax title amount. *(Requested by the Citizen petition)*

SELECTMEN RECOMMEND: NO	CAPITAL PLAN. COMM. RECOMMEND: N/A	ADVISORY BD. RECOMMEND: NO	TAX RATE IMPACT: N/A

Brief Explanation: *(Citizen Petition)*

And you are hereby directed to serve this warrant in accordance with the provisions of Section 3, Chapter II of the Town By-Laws by posting attested copies thereof as therein provided.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this Warrant with your doings thereon, to the Town Clerk on or before the said day and hour of meeting.

Duncan Phyfe, Chairman

Kyle Johnson, Clerk

Leo Janssens, Member
ASHBURNHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN

A true copy, Attest:

Constable

Date