

Town of Acton

Annual Town Meeting Warrant



Monday, April 6, 2015

**The Annual Town Meeting will convene at 7:00 PM in the
Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Auditorium
36 Charter Road**

Notice of Election and Meeting

**Annual Town Election
Tuesday, March 31, 2015
7:00 AM – 8:00 PM**

Precincts 1, 2 and 6 – Conant School – 80 Taylor Road

Precincts 3, 4 and 5 – Blanchard Auditorium, R. J. Grey Junior High School – 16 Charter Road

For assistance in determining your election voting location, please use the State Elections Division's web site **www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com** or contact the Town Clerk's office by e-mail at **clerk@acton-ma.gov** or by telephone at **(978) 929-6620**.

**Annual Town Meeting
Monday, April 6, 2015
7:00 PM
Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Auditorium
36 Charter Road**

Note: Copies of the detailed Municipal Operating Budget will be available at Town Hall. Copies will also be available at Town Meeting.

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Free Transportation to Town Meeting

Don't miss Town Meeting because you can't get a ride!



The Town of Acton is offering **free** door-to-door van rides to the Annual Town Meeting. The Meeting starts at 7:00 PM and generally concludes by 10:30 PM.

The MinuteVan will have a driver covering the hours from 6:15 PM to 10:30 PM for each of three nights of Town Meeting. The Dial-A-Ride dispatch service will be open until 4:00 PM on the day of each meeting. Rides can be booked with the MinuteVan dispatcher at (978) 844-6809 or on-line at www.minutevan.net. The service will run even if there are no reservations, as we will take walk-ons from Town Meeting that want a trip home. There will be no charge to passengers for any of these Town Meeting trips. When the van is not in use between 6:15 PM to 10:30 PM, it will be parked in the Acton-Boxborough High School parking lot where Town Meeting is being held. The driver will be waiting in the van for anyone that would like a ride home.

MinuteVan Dial-A-Ride is a unique transportation service offered by the Town of Acton. It is available to all citizens Monday through Friday (except holidays) for rides around town and to nearby locations. Hours of operation are 8 AM - 11 AM and 1:15 PM - 6:15 PM. The Dispatcher is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM by calling (978) 844-6809. Trips within Acton cost \$2/trip, \$1/trip for seniors and disabled. Out-of-town trips (within 3.5 mile radius of Acton Town Hall) are \$4/trip, \$1.50/trip for seniors/disabled. Locations served include: West Concord Center, Emerson Hospital, Maynard Center, Skating Rink, the Food Pantry in Boxborough, and more. Policies may be reviewed on-line at www.minutevan.net.

Need a Sitter for Town Meeting? Family Friendly Movie Night

Would you like to go to Acton Town Meeting but cannot find a sitter?

Bring your school-aged kids with you and let them enjoy a
Family Friendly Movie Night
while you attend Acton Town Meeting

Monday (4/6) and Tuesday (4/7)

6:30 pm until 9:00 pm

Lower Gym at the AB Regional High School

- ◆ Parents need to RSVP to Alycen Nigro (alycen.nigro@gmail.com) by **Monday (4/6) at noon** indicating the nights and spots needed.
- ◆ A release waiver will be required for each child. This waiver will be emailed to you when you reserve your spot and should be presented to the chaperones upon drop off.
- ◆ Parents who have reserved spots are welcome to drop their school aged children off at the Movie Night starting at 6:30 pm before heading down the hall to attend Town Meeting.
- ◆ The children will be chaperoned by adult volunteers (all CORI checked) including school district teachers, administrators and parents. In addition, high school volunteers will be on hand to help out.
- ◆ Recreation activities will also be available for the children's use in the gym.
- ◆ Food will not be served but children are welcome to bring a water bottle.



For questions or to reserve a spot, contact: Alycen Nigro (alycen.nigro@gmail.com)

This event is sponsored by the Town of Acton, the Acton Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD), the League of Women Voters (LWV), the Acton Boxborough Education Association (ABEA) and the local PTOs.

Acton-Boxborough United Way Residential Survey

Acton-Boxborough United Way Announces Residential Survey to Assess Community Needs: Now Available

Acton-Boxborough United Way is pleased to invite community participation in the ABUW Community Needs Assessment Survey. This brief and confidential on-line survey is available to all residents of Acton and Boxborough. With your help, we will identify the most pressing human service needs and trends in our community. **The survey is available on the ABUW website abuw.org.**

Translations are also available at the survey site in Mandarin, Portuguese and Spanish.

"Acton-Boxborough United Way is proud to be conducting this critical effort in support of our community," said Patty Higgins, ABUW Board member and Chair of the Community Needs Assessment. "A Steering Committee comprised of community leaders and human service providers has provided expertise and guidance through out the project."

ABUW Volunteers will be present at a number of locations throughout Acton and Boxborough to help community members access the survey. If you are a member of a group that would like assistance, please contact Rachel Sagan, Executive Director, for help at abuw@abuw.org.

The survey is just one component of the Community Needs Assessment which includes in-depth focus groups and extensive interviews with experts in their field. The final report is anticipated in the late spring of 2015. ABUW has engaged Carlisle and Co as a consultant to the project www.carlisle-co.com.

Notes from the Town Clerk's Office

The Town Clerk's office welcomes requests by the Acton community for special provisions in order for citizens to attend Town Meeting. Services provided include wheelchairs, a wheelchair lift, special check-in and seating for the mobility-impaired.

In order to accommodate as many citizens as possible, we ask that all requests be received by our office no later than Friday, March 27.

Parties needing support may contact the Clerk's Office at clerk@acton-ma.gov or (978) 929-6620.

Any person, committee or action group that would like to reserve a display table at Town Meeting needs to provide a copy of their handout material to the Town Clerk in order to receive approval by the Moderator.

Requests need to be received by the Clerk's Office no later than Friday, April 3 to ensure coordination with Acton-Boxborough Regional High School staff to provide the requested number of tables.

We would like to thank the Acton Water District and Green Acton for providing reusable water bottles for our staff, Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. As a Green Community, we are happy to participate in this endeavor!

Board of Selectmen's Message

This Town Meeting Warrant is your invitation to participate in the legislative portion of Acton's Town government. Acton citizens have a cherished tradition of governing themselves by means of an open Town Meeting. We encourage all Acton residents to attend. All registered voters are urged to participate in the debate and vote on the Articles presented. Other residents, even if they are not registered voters, are invited to attend and observe, or to view the proceedings on our government cable television channels, Comcast channel 99 and Verizon channel 41.

Town Meeting Dates, Times and Location

The Annual Town Meeting will begin Monday, April 6 at 7:00 PM in the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Auditorium. Town Meeting is then expected to continue on additional consecutive nights. All adjourned sessions will begin at 7:00 PM in the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Auditorium. Come early to get checked in by the Town Clerk's staff and to obtain additional information. Check-in will take place in the High School cafeteria.

Regular attendees at Annual Town Meeting will note that many of the Articles in this Warrant relate to matters which are routinely addressed every year, such as the established Enterprise Budgets and the Schools' and Municipal Operating Budgets, while other Articles relate to issues and matters that are new or unique this year. Although some Articles, such as Zoning or Bylaw amendment proposals, do not involve appropriation of funds, much of the Annual Town Meeting's attention is focused on fiscal matters.

Town Meeting Warrant and Procedures

The Town Meeting Warrant is the agenda for the meeting. It is drawn up by the Selectmen from various proposals made by the Selectmen, the School Committee, other Boards, staff and citizens. The Selectmen determine the order that the Articles appear in the Warrant. The Articles will be considered in the order in which they appear, unless the Moderator, or the Meeting itself, changes that order. Each article is intended to give fair notice of the topic to be discussed and voted upon, thus any motion made at Town Meeting under one of these articles must be found by the Moderator to be within the scope of the printed article. At Town Meeting, the motion made under each article will describe the specific proposed action. The wording of the motion, and any amendments that might be offered to the main motion, may differ from the exact wording of the article, but as indicated above must be within the scope of the article. Accordingly, it is suggested that each attendee listen closely to the reading of the motion, and any amendments made before voting.

Your attention is invited to the Warrant section on Town Meeting Parliamentary Procedure, serving as a basic guide to Town Meeting process written by the Town Moderator. The best debate is conducted by those who have informed themselves concerning the issues. Informed debate is delayed when speakers rise only to ask basic questions that could be individually addressed. To assist speakers to inform themselves in advance, and to avoid delays during the meeting engendered by persons seeking basic information, the Board of Selectmen strongly encourages and solicits questions in advance concerning any of the proposed Articles. Information regarding the Articles may be obtained from any of the contacts listed after each Article summary, or a general inquiry may be made to the Town Manager's office at (978) 929-6611 or manager@acton-ma.gov for an appropriate referral. Copies of the Municipal Operating Budget will be made available in advance of the meeting at the Memorial Library, West Acton Citizens' Library, Public Safety Facility, and Town Hall. Copies will also be available at Town Meeting. Furthermore, personnel designated by staff or the Moderator will be available in the auditorium during the Meeting to answer informational questions, which may not be of interest to the entire assemblage, on a one-on-one basis.

Thank You to Our Volunteers

In addition to trying to balance our budgetary needs against limited resources, another necessity for the healthy function of our local government and community is the flow of active, interested citizens willing to volunteer their time, talents, and energy to participate as members of the Town's many volunteer regulatory and advisory Boards, Commissions and Committees. Volunteers are the very foundation of our government, and as the needs of the Town expand, so does the need for volunteers. No special knowledge is necessary to volunteer, only an interest to serve the community and advance the public good, combined with a willingness to learn. The rewards may be intangible, but are very real.

We encourage you to volunteer by reviewing the list of opportunities available on our web site at www.acton-ma.gov/volunteer. The application is available online as well as an appendix in this Warrant. Handwritten applications may be submitted to the Town Manager's office at Town Hall or handed to any Selectman during Town Meeting. Please consider helping your Town by volunteering some time – we believe you will find it very rewarding.

Mike Gowing, Chair
Katie Green, Vice Chair
Peter Berry, Clerk
Janet K. Adachi
Franny Osman

Board of Selectmen

Town Manager's Message

"Most of the things worth doing in the world had been declared impossible before they were done."

— Louis D. Brandeis

Dear Town Residents:

As we enter into budget season, I believe that there are many things to be proud of: The Town continues to maintain its AAA bond rating due to strong financial management; The Cross Town Connect program continues to grow and improve transportation services to the Town and beyond; The Town continues to fund its OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) obligation; with close cooperation between the Town and School administrations, we enjoyed a successful transition to a full Regional School system; and the Town continues to be a model for civility in the workplace.

Entering into the preliminary work on the FY16 budget, I had several overarching goals:

- Increase focus on economic development
- Place some of our reserves into a Stabilization Fund
- Implement additional senior tax relief
- Commence a Complete Streets Program, our policy is ranked sixth best in the Country
- Implement the SMART program for recycling
- Develop a Fixed Route Transportation program
- Fund OPEB as part of the operational budget
- Incorporate Acton Nursing Service as a General Fund department, pursuant to the Town meeting vote of November 12, 2014
- Create a Director of Land Use Management and Economic Development position to ensure improved communication and cooperation between all the land use and permitting departments as well as promote economic development in Town

FY16 BUDGET PROCESS

Work commenced on the FY16 budget in September when departmental requests were reviewed. A two-day budget retreat, commonly known as "The Hill", was held on October 8 and 9. Operational budget requests of \$30,573,977, as well as capital and personnel requests of \$6,257,542, were presented. Part of "The Hill" process is to have peer review of capital requests. On the last day of the process, all capital requests are rated by secret ballot into A and B categories, with A being the highest priority. "A" capital priorities (including labor) totaled \$3,748,548.

Upon conclusion of "The Hill", the Town Manager convened a budget team consisting of the Finance Director, Assistant Finance Director, Town Accountant, Human Resources Director, Assistant Town Manager and jack of all trades, Health Director Doug Halley, to discuss, review and brainstorm the issues surrounding the budget. The group devoted one full day per week from mid October to early December. The result is the Town Manager's recommended budget for FY16.

The recommended operational budget for Fiscal Year 2016 is **\$31,468,112** a **4.72%** increase over FY15. The total request, when factoring recommended capital, subsidies to Enterprise Funds and contribution to OPEB is **\$31,954,851**: A **1.62%** increase over the total Town budget appropriation for FY15.

It should be pointed out that, as of this writing, we are attempting to understand and resolve a discrepancy in the preliminary FY16 Middlesex Retirement System (MRS) assessment. The preliminary assessment from

MRS is \$3,305,943, an increase of over 29% from the FY15 assessment. The FY15 assessment was lowered due to full regionalization of the Acton Public Schools with the Regional School District. We have asked for data from the System’s actuary. It is doubtful that this matter will be resolved before this budget is presented to the Board of Selectmen.

It should be further noted that the recommended budget does not contain any wage settlements for the four municipal unions whose contracts expire on June 30, 2015. The Unions are: Police Patrol; Police Superior Officers; Highway, Municipal Properties and Natural Resources; and Dispatch.

FEATURES OF THE FY16 BUDGET

- Increasing the Overlay Account by **\$200,000** for Senior Tax Relief
- Placing **\$2,000,000** in General Fund Stabilization Fund
- Placing **\$1,600,000** in Sewer Stabilization Fund
- West Acton Sewer Design, **\$22,000** (Funded in Sewer Enterprise Budget)
- Creation of Director of Land Use and Economic Development, **\$140,000**
- Fixed Route Shuttle Service, **\$70,000**
- OPEB in the Operational Budget, **\$454,000** as well as an OPEB factor for new positions created in last three years of **\$112,800**
- Acton Nursing Service in General Fund, **\$478,143** (Benefit Cost in Finance Director budget)
- Purchase of 66-68 Harris Street, **\$225,000** (Funded by Prior Year Articles and a Land Swap with the State)

Note: All salaries for new positions include cost of benefits and OPEB factor.

RECOMENDED GENERAL FUND CAPITAL

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| • Natural Resources truck replacement | \$ 55,800 | |
| • Kennedy Building accessibility | <u>\$ 32,500</u> | (Cemetery Building, split with Trust Fund) |
| Total | \$ 88,300 | |

Note: The Town will fund an analysis of all Town building infrastructures in the FY15 budget to better determine useful life and to develop a Building Capital Plan for FY17.

RECOMMENDED ENTERPRISE and REVOLVING FUND CAPITAL

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| • Fixed Route Service | \$ 70,000 | (Transportation Enterprise) |
| • Transfer Station Trailer | \$ 98,000 | (Transfer Station and Recycling) |
| • Landfill Checker (Personnel) | \$ 70,000 | (Transfer Station and Recycling) |
| • Sewer Equipment Replacement | \$ 60,000 | (Sewer Enterprise) |
| • Administrative Vehicle, Ambulance | \$ 40,000 | (Ambulance Enterprise) |
| • West Acton Sewer Design | <u>\$ 22,000</u> | (Sewer Enterprise) |
| Total | \$360,000 | |

GENERAL FUND SUBSIDIES

- Transportation **\$164,439**
- Ambulance **\$162,000**
- Cultural Council **\$ 2,000**

Total \$328,439

MAJOR NEW BUDGET INITIATIVES

Focus on Economic Development

The Town has experienced significant vacancy rates as well as diminishing property values in the Commercial/Industrial sector of the Town over the past several years. In addition, new economic initiatives at the local level have been approved by the Legislature. The FY16 budget proposes the creation of a Land Use and Economic Development Director, to serve as a liaison between the Town and existing business as well as potential new businesses, implement any applicable State incentives, and serve as a staff person to the Town's Economic Development Committee. In addition, the position would oversee, direct, and coordinate the multi-faceted components of the Land Use Department, which includes, Building, Planning, Zoning, Health and Natural Resources. This position will ensure proper communication between the land use divisions as well as assure efficiency and more streamlined review and approval of building projects, another key component of economic development.

The second component of the Economic Development proposals is to develop a fixed route transportation system in Town, linking businesses with customers who need transportation as well as employees of the businesses.

Under Chapter 61, Section 2 of the Massachusetts General Laws, it is stated that a city or town which accepts this section may impose a local sales tax upon the sale of restaurant meals originating within the city or town by a vendor at a rate of 0.75 percent of the gross receipts of the vendor from the sale of restaurant meals. For Acton, according to data on the Department of Revenue web site, if the Town had adopted this local option in FY13, it would have generated over \$270,000 in additional revenue. In our immediate region, Concord, Maynard, Sudbury, Westford and Littleton have adopted this local option, and according to the Massachusetts Municipal Association, more than half of the communities in the Commonwealth have adopted it. The local option tax would be \$.75 on a \$100 restaurant bill.

Senior Tax Relief

Senior tax relief has been a focus of much discussion throughout the community. The proposed budget places \$200,000 in the Overlay account specifically to be used by the Board of Assessors for senior tax relief. Specificity as to how the program will work will be discussed and developed in the months leading to Town Meeting.

West Acton Sewer Study

The proposed budget includes funding a sewer design for West Acton for \$22,000. The Economic Development Committee has determined that in order to truly revitalize the economy of West Acton, sewers are vital. The budget proposes a preliminary design of a West Acton Sewer, to be funded out of the Sewer Enterprise Budget.

Stabilization Funds

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 5B, a municipality may have a Stabilization Fund. A stabilization fund is a mechanism for setting aside money either for unforeseen needs or for capital projects, according to the Division of Local Services. Such a fund is intended to equalize the effect of capital expenditures over time and to provide a “rainy day” fund. A community may appropriate up to ten percent of the previous year’s tax levy into the fund, so long as the fund balance does not exceed ten percent of the community’s equalized valuation. A two-thirds vote by the community’s legislative body (town meeting or city or town council) is required to appropriate funds into the stabilization fund. Two-thirds vote of the community’s legislative body is required to appropriate money out of the fund.

This proposed budget would place **\$2,000,000** of the Town’s Reserves into the Stabilization Fund, specifically to be used for future major capital projects.

In addition, it is recommended that **\$1,600,000** of Sewer Reserve be placed in a Sewer Stabilization fund for future sewer needs.

OPEB

FY16 marks the third year of funding for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB). The FY16 budget places \$454,000 in the Trust Fund. FY16 marks the first year that OPEB funding has been placed in the Operating Budget as opposed to a standalone warrant article. The Town also continues to fund new hires with an “OPEB factor” to fund those positions future OPEB costs up front. For FY16, that factor is \$112,800.

Acton Nursing Service

As a result of the November 12, 2014 Special Town meeting, Acton Nursing Service is now included in the operational budget in the amount of **\$487,143**. Employee benefits are included in the Finance Director budget, consistent with all General Fund departments.

66-68 Harris Street

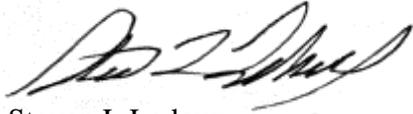
66-68 Harris Street is property owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and formerly used by its Fisheries and Wildlife Department. The Town is interested in acquiring this property as the existing garage on the site is ideally sized to house Natural Resources and Cemetery equipment. It is proposed that this acquisition be funded through repurposing of two prior year articles, valued at \$186,504 as well as a land swap of Town-owned property adjacent to the Quail Ridge Golf Course.

The proposed Town Manager’s FY16 budget is ambitious. It seeks to provide senior tax relief, focus on economic development by creating an Economic Development Director, fixed route bus service and sewer design for West Acton. It continues our quest to streamline the permitting process, set aside funds for a “rainy day” by placing money in the Stabilization Fund, places the Nursing Service in the General Fund, and continues to fund our OPEB obligation.

Acton is a very special place and this proposed budget strives to preserve its strength by making progress in the areas cited. Benjamin Franklin once said, **“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.”**

As always, I remain ready and willing to work with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee as we move forward to the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

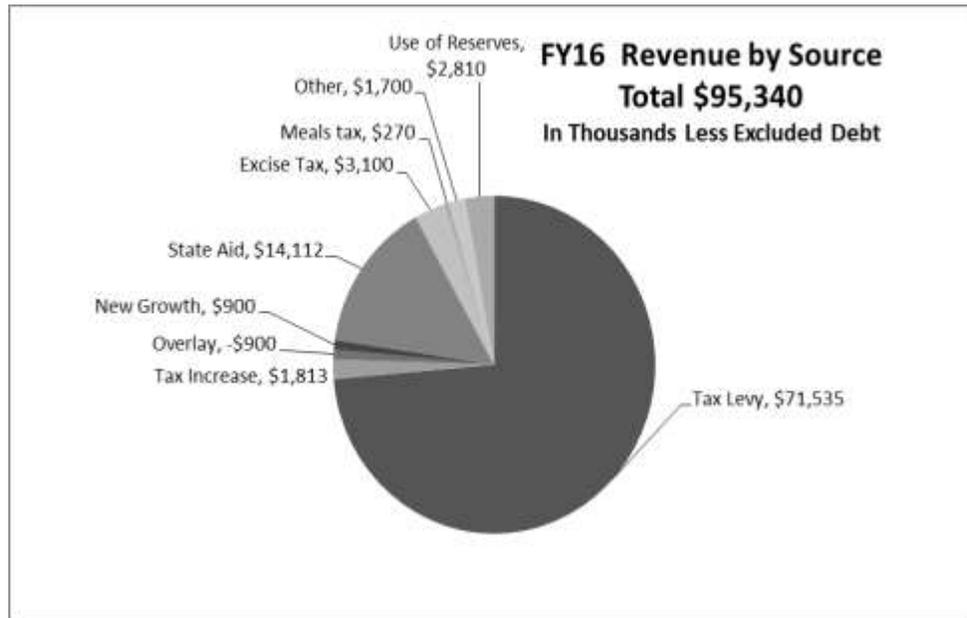
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven L Ledoux". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Steven L Ledoux
Town Manager

Budget Overview

The numbers contained in these next few pages for FY16 (the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015) are derived from the Acton Leadership Group plan, which does not include debt service for excluded debt nor Enterprise Funds and Revolving Funds. Because this document only pertains to Acton's revenues and expenses, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Budget line is shown as a percent of the budgeted amount, which reflects Acton's share of the total regional school district budget.

What Are Our Sources of Revenue?



More than three-quarters (77%) of our revenue comes from local property taxes, which is comprised of three components:

1. **Property Tax Levy** – the existing assessed property taxed at the current rate per thousand
2. **New Growth** – additional assessed value from new homes, additions to homes, and changes in parcels
3. **Tax Increase** – typically a 2-½ percent increase allowed on the property tax levy

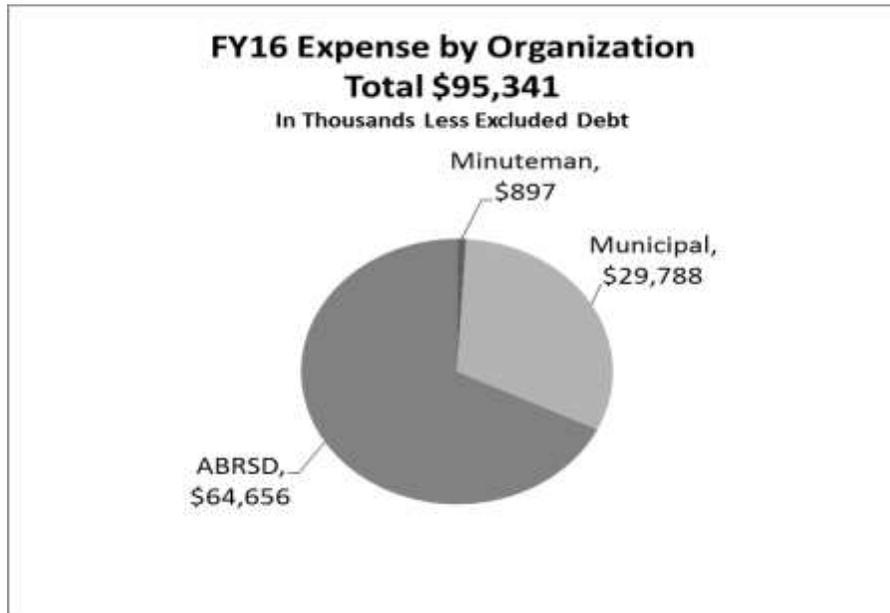
State aid, our second largest segment of revenue accounting for nearly 15 percent of the total, consists of education aid and municipal aid.

In addition in the FY16 Budget, adoption of the local option meals tax is included for \$270,000.

Other categories of revenue include excise taxes, which are assessed on motor vehicles and trailers, and account for 3 percent of our total revenue. Fees and interest account for 2 percent of revenue. Acton collects fees for various permits, vital records, and licensing. Interest varies year-to-year depending on the interest rate and the amounts deposited.

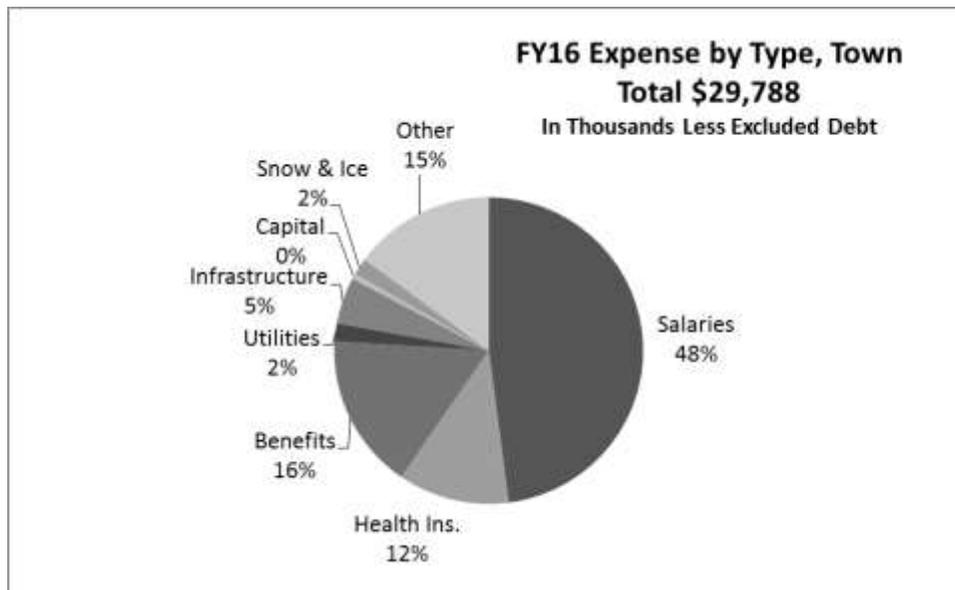
In this year's budget, reserves account for 3 percent of the total revenues. One of the ways in which our town has been able to effectively weather the downturn in the economy including reductions in state aid and local receipts has been through prudent use of reserves to fill in some of the gaps between service costs and lower revenues.

Which Town and School Entities Spend Our Money?



The Town's revenues support three budgets within our Town. Over two-thirds of our expenditures support education priorities: Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools assessment (68 percent of expenditures), and Minuteman Regional School District assessment (1 percent of total expenditures). The municipal government (which funds police, fire, highway, library, health, planning and other general government services) accounts for the remaining 31 percent of the total expenditures.

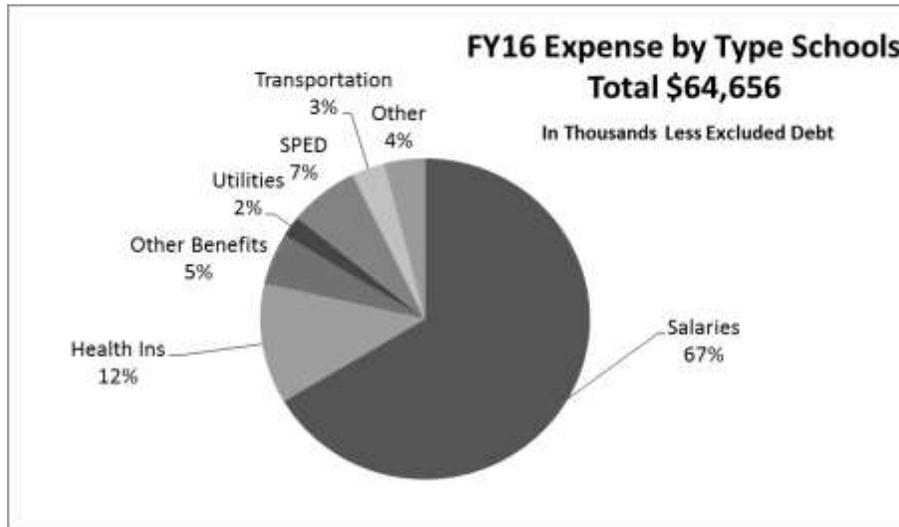
What Does the Municipal Government Spend Our Money For?



Approximately 76 percent of the Town spending goes to salaries and benefits, the cost for the people who provide services to the residents. Infrastructure cost accounts for 5 percent of the spending. This category includes the maintenance and improvement of roads, sidewalks, buildings, grounds, and information technology.

What Do the Schools Spend our Money For?

As with the Town, the largest category is the cost of people to provide services to our students. Salaries and benefits account for more than 84 percent of the total. The next largest category is special education which accounts for almost 7 percent, followed by student transportation at 3 percent, and utility costs at 2 percent in the combined school budgets.



Finance Committee's Message

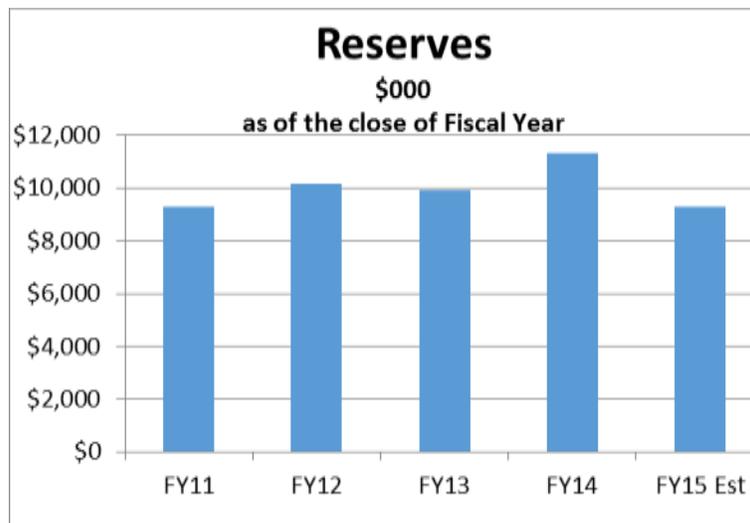
Fiscal Year 2016 Headlines

- The proposed FY16 budget increases spending by 4.1%, with the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District assessment increasing 7.0% and the municipal budget increasing 1.6%.
- Virtually all of the increase is in compensation to our town and school employees.
- The property tax levy will increase by 2.5%, allowed by state law. In addition, our proposed revenue would include a new meals tax, which would increase the sales tax for restaurant meals in town by 0.75%.
- Even with taxing the full 2.5% and using revenue from a proposed new meals tax, our structural deficit will increase this year by \$500,000, for a total deficit of \$2.8 million, which will be covered by our reserves. Continued vigilant management of expenses will be required to ensure that reserves do not get consumed in just a few years by these structural deficits.
- Thus, since employee compensation is the main driver of our budget increases, we encourage town leaders to carefully consider effective ways to negotiate collective bargaining contracts that will promote fiscal sustainability for our town.

Financial Condition of the Town

- Acton continues to be in a very sound financial position.
- Both the Town of Acton and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District have been rated AAA by Standard & Poor's.
- In addition, our level of reserves is at a high level, \$11.3 million as of the close of fiscal year 2014 which was June 30, 2014 (see chart below).

Reserves increased in FY14 by \$1.4 million, including \$1 million from a reserve for potential liabilities for the North East Solid Waste Collaborative which was no longer required. For the last several years, revenue and spending have been favorable, thus reserves have continued to accumulate.



FY16 Spending

The proposed FY16 budget increases spending by \$3.7 Million or 4.1%.

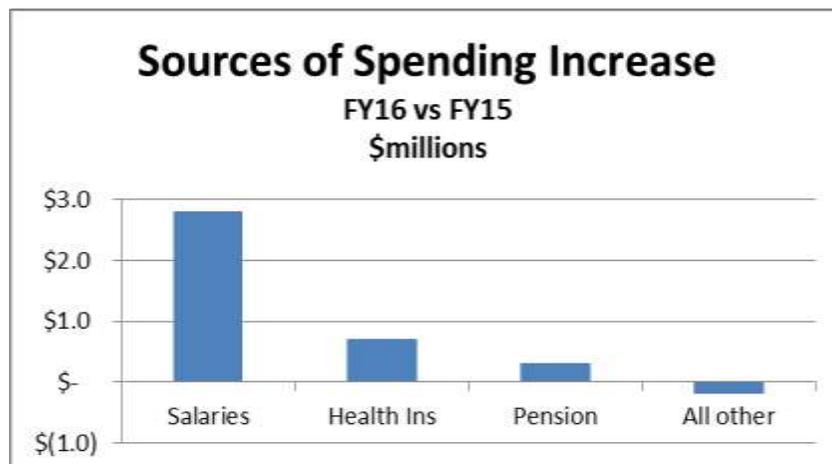
- AB Regional School District assessment increases by \$3.5 million or 7.0%
 - Total spending for the School District increased 4.4%, but Acton’s percentage of students increased relative to Boxborough
 - In addition, state aid to the schools decreased
- Municipal spending increases by \$507,000 or 1.6%
- Minuteman Regional School District spending increases by \$137,000 or 18%

There have been many changes in our financial reporting over the past few years which make comparisons difficult. However we can look at the highest level numbers. The chart below shows the FY14 Actual, FY15 Budget, and FY16 Budget. As part of the expanded regional agreement, costs are shifted from Acton to Boxborough. That number is \$1.0 million in FY15 and \$1.3 million in FY16. The following chart shows the spending by entity. School spending is Acton’s share which is different from the assessment which includes revenue.

\$ millions	FY14	FY15	FY16	Inc/(dec)
	Actual	Budget	Budget	FY16 v FY15
Schools	\$ 60.9	\$ 63.2	\$ 66.2	\$ 3.0
Town	\$ 29.2	\$ 31.4	\$ 32.0	\$ 0.6
Minuteman	\$ 0.7	\$ 0.8	\$ 0.9	\$ 0.1
Subtotal	\$ 90.8	\$ 95.4	\$ 99.1	\$ 3.7
Excluded Debt	\$ (3.6)	\$ (3.8)	\$ (3.8)	\$ -
	\$ 87.2	\$ 91.6	\$ 95.3	\$ 3.7

More detailed breakdowns of each of these budgets can be found on page 24 for the Town and page 25 for the Schools.

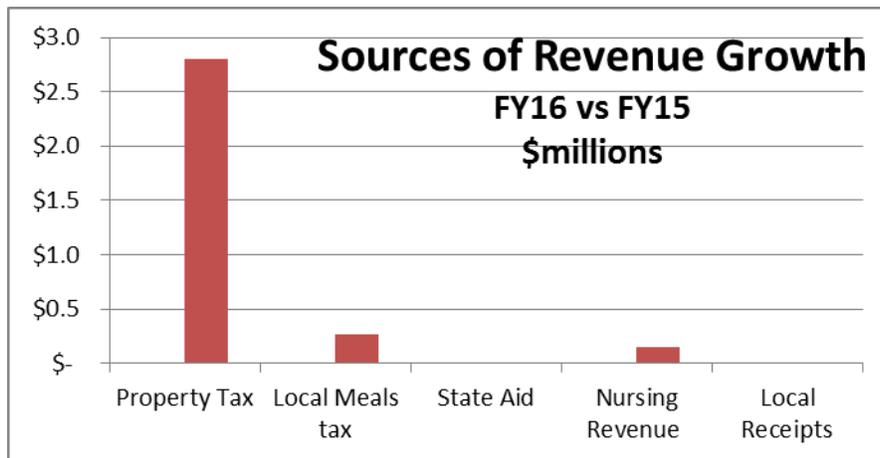
- School spending accounts for 67% of the total, however the schools account for 81% of the increase in spending from FY15 to FY16.
- Virtually all of the increase comes from employee compensation, including salaries, health insurance, fringe benefits and contributions to the Other Post Employment Benefit trust as shown in the chart below.



- The increase in salaries includes adding only one additional person. The town will be adding a Director of Land Use and Economic Development; the schools are not adding any net new positions. Salaries for the Acton Nursing Service add \$358,000 to this amount; previously these salaries were carried in the Nursing Enterprise Fund Budget.
- The remaining amount represents increases in salaries, pensions, and OPEB for existing employees most of whom are covered by collective bargaining units.
 - Over half of our employees are members of Collective Bargaining Units or unions.
 - Approximately 80% of the salary increase is due to our obligations under existing contracts. Funding for the Other Post Employment Benefit trusts increased from \$1,100,000 in FY 15 to \$1,249,000 an increase of \$149,000 or 13.5%. This funding covers our share of healthcare costs of our employees in retirement.

FY16 Revenue

Total revenue excluding debt increased from \$89.3 million in the FY15 Budget to \$92.5 million in FY16, an increase of \$3.2 million or 3.6%. The following chart shows the key components of revenue growth between the Budgets of FY15 and FY16.



With no growth in State Aid and Local Receipts we need to rely on the property tax levy to cover our increases in spending the FY16 budget includes a tax increase of 2.5%.

The FY16 budget includes a new source of revenue. If this Town Meeting votes to adopt the Local Option Meals Tax (see Article 4), it will increase revenues by \$270,000. This will add 0.75%, or three-quarters of one percent, to the sales tax for all meals in town. So for a \$100 restaurant bill this will add \$0.75. In addition, \$150,000 in revenue from the Nursing Service is included. In FY15 this item was budgeted in for \$490,000 in the Nursing Enterprise Fund.

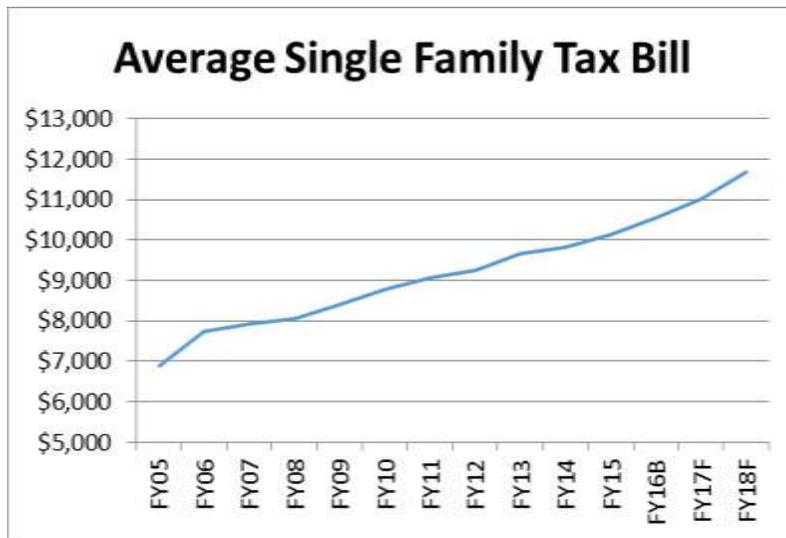
FY16 Deficit

As in previous years, the plan for FY16 is to use reserves to cover the shortfall in revenue versus spending. The FY15 Budget planned for the use of \$2.3 million in reserves. The FY16 increase in revenue is \$3.2 million and the increase in spending is \$3.7 million, which increases the deficit by \$0.5 million. So we now have a structural deficit in our budget of \$2.8 million. This deficit will be covered by spending our reserves.

\$millions		FY15	FY16
Revenue		\$ 89.3	\$ 92.5
Spending		\$ 91.6	\$ 95.3
Deficit		\$ (2.3)	\$ (2.8)

FY17 and FY18

The graph below shows the average single family tax bill for the years FY05 to FY14 and the budget and forecasted amounts for FY15 through FY18, based on the current assumptions about future years in the ALG plan.



From FY05 to FY14 the average single family tax bill increased at an average annual rate of 4.7%. The multi-year plan shows a similar rate of increase for FY15 through FY18. Acton's average single family tax bill is the 16th highest in the state.

The increases in the deficits in the next few years could use up our reserves unless we make some significant changes. In past years when faced with such looming deficits we took actions like negotiating a salary freeze for employees, negotiating changes to lower the cost of healthcare, and implementing cost savings initiatives.

It is time to consider such actions again.

Over the next couple of years revenue increases from state aid will be limited. The state has a serious budget gap of its own. In addition, most of our state aid comes in the form of aid to education and that formula is heavily based on enrollment, which continues to decline in our schools.

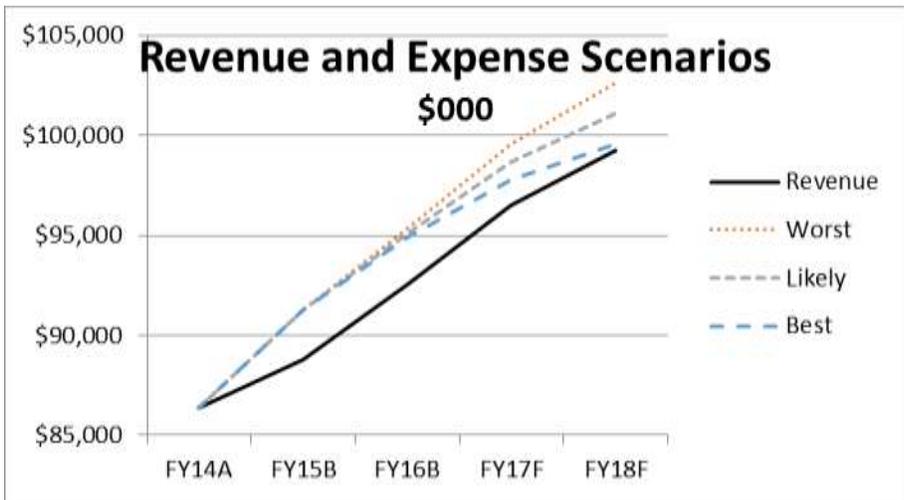
Increasing the commercial tax base is not a short term solution. While this budget includes the addition of a person devoted to economic development, the near term impact over FY17 and FY18 will be limited.

Longer term it is hoped that new commercial development can lower the burden on residential property taxes.

As has been said previously, compensation costs are the main driver of our spending increases. If we are to avoid even more significant increase in residential property taxes then we need to look at these costs. The table below shows the amount of potential savings from a 1% or 2% changes in the categories of costs listed. So if in FY 17 our salary cost escalated 2% rather than 3%, for example, we would reduce our spending by \$536,000.

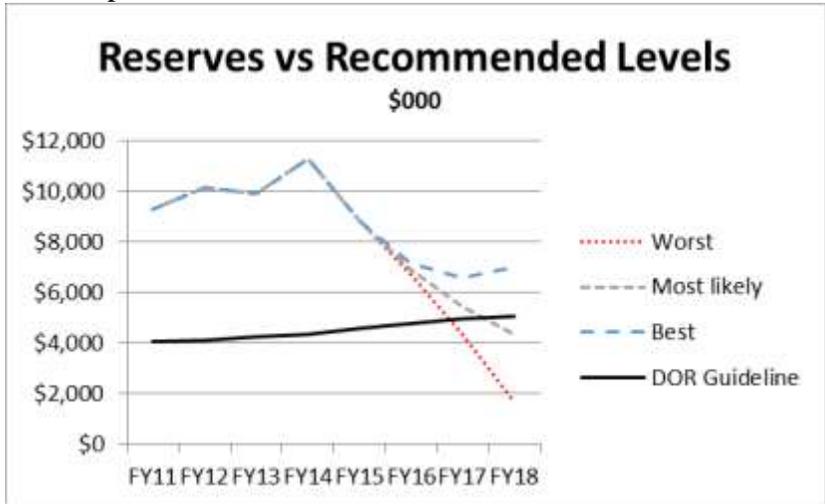
	1% Reduction	2% Reduction
Salaries	\$536,000	\$1,032,000
Health Insurance	\$112,000	\$224,000
Non -compensation cost savings	\$230,000	\$460,000

Using these assumptions and applying them to the multi-year plan we can develop a set of three scenarios with different outcomes for FY17 and FY18. The current multi- year plan shows deficits increasing to \$3.0 million in FY17 and to \$3.4 million in FY18. For purposes of this exercise this is the Worst Case scenario, the 1% reduction is the Most Likely scenario and the 2% reduction is the Best Case scenario.



It is clear that the best case scenario or the 2% reduction is the only one that closes the gap between revenue and spending in a two year time frame.

The chart below shows the impact on reserves of these three scenarios.



The Department of Revenue recommends that municipalities maintain 5% of spending in reserve. It is not a requirement but a recommendation, and it is a recommendation that Acton has not always followed. Bond rating agencies also recommend a balance be kept in reserve. Again only the Best Case scenario allows us to maintain reserves at the recommended guideline. In the other two scenarios reserves fall below the guideline and in the worst case scenario the reserves approximately \$2 million in FY18.

If we are to avoid a property tax override we should slow the growth of spending in accordance with the Best Case scenario. The Town and Schools will be renegotiating contracts with the collective bargaining units so the potential exists to accomplish this.

Beyond FY18

Looking beyond FY18, it is hoped that a renewed emphasis on commercial development as evidenced by the plan to hire a Director of Land Use Planning and Economic Development will shift some of the property tax burden away from the residential property owners. As enrollment in the schools continues to decline, potential reductions in school spending may be available. Spending challenges may include the phased elimination of the shift in school costs to Boxborough which could add \$1.6 million to our spending by FY20, the potential Minuteman School District building project which may add another \$250,000 annually to spending and the Town's commitment to new programs and potential capital projects. The particulars about these interlocking parts will become clearer at a later date, but for now these are trends that we should monitor and anticipate.

Acton attracts many individuals and families with the quality of its schools, land resources, and municipal services. We will all need to work together for continued planning and fiscal management to ensure that it will offer an affordable quality of life for its taxpayers into the future.

The Finance Committee

Steve Noone, Chair; Mike Majors, Vice- Chair; Margaret Busse, Clerk
Members: Mary Ann Ashton, Bill Mullin, Bob Evans, Doug Tindal,
Herman Kabakoff, and Roland Bourdon

Summarized Budgets

The following tables show the breakdown of the budgets by significant line item and show how the various articles relate to the overall budget. The school line item amounts represent Acton's share of the total regional budget.

TOWN of ACTON MUNICIPAL BUDGET		Summarized Budget				
	FY14 Actual	FY15 Budget		FY16 Budget	Variance	% Chg
Salaries	\$ 12,363,882	\$ 13,328,315		\$ 14,275,344	\$ 947,029	7.66%
Health Insurance	\$ 2,444,717	\$ 3,320,307		\$ 3,472,470	\$ 152,163	6.22%
Middlesex Retire	\$ 2,421,454	\$ 3,078,676	(a)	\$ 3,217,033	\$ 138,357	5.71%
OPEB	\$ 432,000	\$ 674,845		\$ 566,800	\$ (108,045)	-25.01%
Fringes Other	\$ 897,641	\$ 884,563		\$ 1,097,801	\$ 213,238	23.76%
Legal	\$ 655,791	\$ 600,000		\$ 400,000	\$ (200,000)	-30.50%
Gas & Diesel	\$ 232,191	\$ 342,061		\$ 292,061	\$ (50,000)	-21.53%
Snow & Ice ex salaries	\$ 635,664	\$ 526,862		\$ 541,159	\$ 14,297	2.25%
Property Liability Insurance	\$ 348,546	\$ 323,500		\$ 344,116	\$ 20,616	5.91%
Infrastructure Maintenance	\$ 1,688,610	\$ 1,512,654		\$ 1,469,201	\$ (43,453)	-2.57%
Inside Debt	\$ 814,875	\$ 743,355		\$ 602,036	\$ (141,319)	-17.34%
Utilities	\$ 528,279	\$ 525,742		\$ 567,100	\$ 41,358	7.83%
All other	\$ 2,460,637	\$ 2,647,814		\$ 2,455,829	\$ (191,985)	-7.80%
Subtotal	\$ 25,924,287	\$ 28,508,694		\$ 29,300,950	\$ 792,256	3.06%
Excluded Debt	\$ 2,092,174	\$ 2,215,213		\$ 2,167,162	\$ (48,051)	-2.30%
Total	\$ 28,016,461	\$ 30,723,907		\$ 31,468,112	\$ 744,205	2.66%
AB Cultural Council	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000	\$ -	0.00%
Transportation	\$ 120,845	\$ 120,845		\$ 164,439	\$ 43,594	36.07%
Capital	\$ 760,000	\$ 311,000		\$ 158,300	\$ (152,700)	-20.09%
COA Subsidy	\$ 50,000	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
Nursing Subsidy	\$ 135,000	\$ 165,000		\$ -	\$ (165,000)	-122.22%
Ambulance Subsidy	\$ 200,000	\$ 123,548		\$ 162,000	\$ 38,452	19.23%
Subtotal	\$ 1,267,845	\$ 722,393		\$ 486,739	\$ (235,654)	-18.59%
Total	\$ 29,284,306	\$ 31,446,300		\$ 31,954,851	\$ 508,551	1.74%
Excluded Debt	\$ (2,092,174)	\$ (2,215,213)		\$ (2,167,162)	\$ 48,051	-2.30%
Total Amount per Multi Year Plan	\$ 27,192,132	\$ 29,231,087		\$ 29,787,689	\$ 556,602	2.05%
Summary by Article						
		FY15 Budget		FY16 Budget	Variance	% Chg
Town Operating Budget		\$ 30,723,907	Article 5	\$ 31,468,112	\$ 744,205	2.42%
Ambulance Subsidy		\$ 123,548	Article 17	\$ 162,000	\$ 38,452	31.12%
Nursing Subsidy		\$ 165,000		\$ -	\$ (165,000)	-100.00%
AB Cultural Council		\$ 2,000	Article 21	\$ 2,000	\$ -	0.00%
Transportation		\$ 120,845	Article 19	\$ 234,439	\$ 113,594	94.00%
Capital		\$ 311,000	Article 9	\$ 88,300	\$ (222,700)	-71.61%
		\$ 31,446,300		\$ 31,954,851	\$ 508,551	1.62%

(a) A cautionary note on pension costs. The assessment from Middlesex Retirement Fund for the Town is \$610,000 higher than the amount being carried in the FY16 budget. The FY16 assessment of \$3.3 million represents a 29% increase from the previous year. The total increase in assessments for all members of the Middlesex Pension system was only 6%. Although in the past Middlesex has misclassified employees, the Town has always provided the correct information. However if the assessment is not revised by the beginning of the fiscal year, the Town manager will implement \$610,000 in budget cuts in order to stay within the operating budget in Article 5. If that happens the breakdown of line items in the town budget shown on page would be different. The total amount would remain the same.

Acton Share of the Acton Boxborough Regional Budget (a)						
	FY14 Actual	FY15 Budget	FY16 Budget	Variance	%Chg	
Salaries Teaching	\$ 25,902,479	\$ 26,806,988	\$ 27,984,711	\$ 1,177,724	4.39%	
Salaries Other	\$ 12,237,814	\$ 13,879,082	\$ 14,967,614	\$ 1,088,532	7.84%	
Health Insurance	\$ 7,177,214	\$ 7,210,056	\$ 7,840,674	\$ 630,617	8.75%	
Fringes Other	\$ 1,384,471	\$ 2,491,603	\$ 2,770,565	\$ 278,962	11.20%	
OPEB	\$ 306,854	\$ 417,096	\$ 592,200	\$ 175,104	41.98%	
Capital & One time Items	\$ 658,187	\$ 455,532	\$ 283,798	\$ (171,734)	-37.70%	
SPED Tuition	\$ 4,156,716	\$ 4,297,500	\$ 4,458,379	\$ 160,879	3.74%	
SPED Trans	\$ 1,200,459	\$ 1,104,901	\$ 1,293,235	\$ 188,335	17.05%	
Transportation	\$ 1,756,421	\$ 773,141	\$ 793,802	\$ 20,660	2.67%	
Utilities	\$ 1,284,917	\$ 1,426,428	\$ 1,379,402	\$ (47,026)	-3.30%	
All other	\$ 3,109,292	\$ 3,128,181	\$ 3,567,709	\$ 439,528	14.05%	
Sub Total	\$ 59,174,824	\$ 61,990,508	\$ 65,932,090	\$ 3,941,582	6.36%	
Debt	\$ 1,641,687	\$ 1,575,956	\$ 1,590,276	\$ 14,320	0.91%	
Total Acton Share paid by ABRSD	\$ 60,816,511	\$ 63,566,464	\$ 67,522,366	\$ 3,955,902	6.22%	
Elementary debt paid by town		\$ 768,391	\$ 794,876	\$ 26,485	3.45%	
Total Acton Share per Table 6		\$ 64,334,855	\$ 68,317,242	\$ 3,982,387	6.19%	
Amount per ALG Multi year Plan						
Total Acton Share per Table 6		\$ 64,334,855	\$ 68,317,242	\$ 3,982,387	6.19%	
Excluded Regional Debt		\$ (1,575,956)	\$ (1,590,276)	\$ (14,320)	0.91%	
Cost Shift per Appendix A		\$ (1,061,165)	\$ (1,359,325)	\$ (298,160)	28.10%	
Amount per ALG Multi year Plan		\$ 61,697,734	\$ 65,367,641	\$ 3,669,907	5.95%	
Article 6 ABRSD Assessment		FY15 Budget	FY16 Budget	Variance	%Chg	
Chapter 70 Base aid		\$ 11,969,483	\$ 12,173,917	\$ 204,434	1.71%	
Choice/Charter School Assessment		\$ (541,935)	\$ (462,241)	\$ 79,694	-14.71%	
Charter School Aid		\$ 111,917	\$ 22,634	\$ (89,283)	-79.78%	
Regional School Transportation		\$ 1,290,685	\$ 1,071,022	\$ (219,663)	-17.02%	
Bonus Regional Aid		\$ 116,718	\$ 94,053	\$ (22,665)	-19.42%	
Middlesex assessment paid by town		\$ 384,255	\$ -	\$ (384,255)	-100.00%	
Transfer from Premium on Loan		\$ 553	\$ 6,365	\$ 5,812	1050.99%	
Transfer for Excess and Deficiency		\$ 251,910	\$ 169,160	\$ (82,750)	-32.85%	
Subtotal		\$ 50,751,310	\$ 54,530,334	\$ 3,779,024	7.45%	
Cost Shift per Appendix A		\$ (1,061,165)	\$ (1,359,325)	\$ (298,160)	28.10%	
Article 6 Assessment Basis		\$ 49,690,145	\$ 53,171,009	\$ 3,480,864	7.01%	
(a) Acton's share of the total,budget changes each year based on enrollment % between the two towns						

Town of Acton Multi-Year Financial Model

Prepared by Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee

Summary					3/16/2015
Town of Acton Revenues		FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
A. Revenues (GROSS)					
Tax Levy (excluding debt exclusion)		\$70,450	\$73,348	\$77,089	\$79,658
State Aid		\$14,141	\$14,382	\$14,541	\$14,702
Local Receipts		\$4,703	\$4,800	\$4,841	\$4,884
Debt Exclusion		\$2,868	\$2,835	\$2,818	\$2,769
SBAB Reimbursement		\$923	\$923	\$923	\$923
Total Revenues (including debt)		\$93,086	\$96,288	\$100,213	\$102,936
B. Debt Exclusion Debt Service					
APS School Debt Exclusion		\$611	\$588	\$559	\$552
Public Safety Facility Debt Exclusion		\$451	\$434	\$423	\$411
Municipal Debt Exclusion		\$230	\$222	\$201	\$185
JHS/SHS Debt Exclusion		\$1,576	\$1,590	\$1,636	\$1,620
SBAB Reimbursement-Parker/Damon		\$923	\$923	\$923	\$923
Total Debt Exclusion/SBAB		\$3,791	\$3,758	\$3,741	\$3,692
C. Available Town Revenues (NET) (A - B)		\$89,294	\$92,530	\$96,472	\$99,245
Town of Acton Expenditures					
Total Acton Municipal Allocation less Debt		\$29,126	\$29,788	\$30,625	\$31,375
Percentage change year-to-year		2.34%	1.62%	2.42%	2.19%
Final Assessment Shift Per Appendix A of Regional Agreement		(\$1,061)	(\$1,359)	(\$1,649)	(\$1,649)
Total Acton Contribution To ABRSD Budget		\$61,698	\$65,368	\$68,013	\$70,311
Percentage change year-to-year		5.5%	5.9%	4.0%	3.4%
Net ABRSD ASSESSMENT		\$49,690	\$53,171	\$56,214	\$58,466
Percentage change year-to-year		4.78%	7.00%	5.72%	4.00%
Total Minuteman Allocation		\$760	\$897	\$925	\$954
Percentage change year-to-year		-8.01%	18.03%	3.13%	3.13%
D. Town of Acton Expenditures (NET)		\$91,584	\$95,341	\$99,563	\$102,639
E. Subtotal Town of Acton Projected Balance		(\$2,289)	(\$2,810)	(\$3,092)	(\$3,395)
F. Appropriation of Reserves (TOTAL)		\$2,290	\$2,810	\$3,092	\$3,395
G. Total Town of Acton Projected Balance		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Contributions Towards Long Term OPEB Liability		\$1,100	\$1,249	\$1,400	\$1,400
Town of Acton - Tax Impact		FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
Existing Valuation ('000s)		\$3,857,124	\$3,934,266	\$3,973,609	\$4,053,479
New Growth value ('000s)		\$48,733	\$47,246	\$32,283	\$30,427
Total Valuation ('000s)		\$3,905,857	\$3,981,512	\$4,005,892	\$4,083,906
Tax Rate		\$19.05	\$19.36	\$20.11	\$20.93
% Change in Tax Rate		-2.08%	1.63%	3.87%	1.90%
SF Value		\$531,639	\$542,272	\$547,694	\$558,703
% Change in SF Value		5.17%	2.00%	1.00%	2.01%
SF Tax Bill		\$10,127	\$10,499	\$11,014	\$11,694
% Change in SF Tax Bill		2.99%	3.67%	4.91%	2.92%
\$ Change in SF Tax Bill		\$293.88	\$371.21	\$515.43	\$331.30

Consent Calendar

In an effort to streamline Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen and Town Moderator use the concept of a Consent Calendar. The use of Consent speeds the passage of articles which the Selectmen feel should generate no controversy and can be properly voted without debate. Its purpose is to allow motions under these articles to be acted upon as units and to be passed without debate.

There will be **two** Consent motions throughout Town Meeting – one for budgetary articles and one for all other articles on Consent. It is likely that these two motions will occur on different nights of Town Meeting.

Each Consent Calendar will be taken up when the first article “on Consent” is reached (for example, if Article 14 is the first Consent article in the Warrant, there will be a motion after Article 13 to take up the items on that Consent Calendar). At this time, the Moderator will call out the article numbers one-by-one.

Articles on Consent are distinguished from other articles by the asterisk (*) notation following each article number in the index on page 3, as well as in the title of each article.

If **two or more** voters object to any particular Article being included in the Consent Calendar, they should say the word “**hold**” in a loud voice when the number is called. The Article will then be removed from the Consent Calendar, to be debated and voted in the usual manner, **immediately following** the vote on the Consent motion.

After the calling of the individual items in each Consent Calendar, the Moderator will ask that all remaining articles be passed **as a unit** by the voters.

Please carefully review the articles and motions. Summaries are also included with each article printed in this Warrant. Motions for consent articles are included under the text of each article. Motions will be available as a separate handout at Town Meeting.

If you have any questions about the Consent articles, motions or procedure, please feel free to contact the official listed in the summary of the article or to contact the Town Manager’s Office, by e-mail at **manager@acton-ma.gov** or by telephone at (978) 929-6611, before Town Meeting.

Donald MacKenzie
Town Moderator

I served with General Washington in the Legislature of Virginia before the Revolution and, during it, with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves.

– Thomas Jefferson

Annual Town Meeting Warrant



*Town of Acton
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, ss.*

To either of the Constables of the Town of Acton, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify the legal voters of said Town of Acton, qualified to vote at Town Meetings for the transaction of Town affairs, to meet in their respective precincts to wit:

Precincts 1, 2 and 6 – Conant School – 80 Taylor Road

Precincts 3, 4 and 5 – Blanchard Auditorium, R. J. Grey Junior High School – 16 Charter Road

On **Tuesday, March 31 between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM**, by posting a copy of this Warrant by you attested, at each of the places as directed by vote of the Town, fourteen days at least before the thirty-first day of March 2015,

To bring their votes on one ballot for the following officers:

One Moderator for a one-year term,
One Selectman for a three-year term,
Two School Committee members for three-year terms,
One Trustee of the Memorial Library for a three-year term,
One Member of the Acton Housing Authority for a five-year term.

In addition, the Acton Water District will elect the following officers:

One Commissioner for a three-year term,
One Moderator for a three-year term.

You are also to notify legal voters aforesaid to meet at the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Auditorium in said Acton on **Monday, April 6, 2015 at 7:00 PM**, then and there to act on the following articles:

Articles

One or more of the following symbols may appear following an Article number:

*	This article is on the Consent Calendar
#	This article was submitted by Citizens' Petition

One or more of the following recommendations may appear at the end of an Article's summary:

Recommended	This board voted to <u>recommend</u> passage by Town Meeting.
Not Recommended	This board voted to <u>not recommend</u> passage by Town Meeting.
Deferred	A recommendation will be made by this board when the Article is considered at Town Meeting.
No Recommendation	This board voted to make no specific recommendation to Town Meeting.

Article 1 Choose Town Officers

(Majority vote)

To choose all necessary Town Officers and Committees and to fix the salaries and compensation of all the elective officers of the Town as follows:

Moderator	\$ 20.00 per Town Meeting session
Board of Selectmen, Chairman	\$ 750.00 per year
Board of Selectmen, Member	\$ 650.00 per year

, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article provides for the election of Trustees of the Elizabeth White Fund, Trustees of the Acton Firefighter’s Relief Fund, Trustees of the Goodnow Fund and Trustees of the Citizens’ Library Association of West Acton and establishes the salaries of the Town’s elected officials.

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 2 Hear and Accept Reports

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will accept reports and hear and act upon the report of any committee chosen at any previous Town Meeting that has not already reported, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article provides for the acceptance of the Annual Town Report, any other reports Town Boards and Committees may need to offer, and to offer for acceptance any reports of committees chosen at previous Town Meetings.

Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 3 Budget Transfer

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from available funds a sum of money to defray necessary expenses above the amount appropriated at the 2014 Annual Town Meeting, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article is routinely placed on the Warrant to allow Town Meeting to transfer funds and supplement monies, if necessary, to cover expenses in the current fiscal year.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Deferred	<u>Finance Committee</u> Deferred
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Article 4 Adopt Local Option Meals Excise

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to accept Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 64L, Section 2(a), to impose a local meals excise upon the sale of restaurant meals originating within the Town, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

Massachusetts law provides any city or town the ability to impose an excise of 0.75% on the sales of restaurant meals originating within the municipality by accepting Chapter 64L, Section 2(a). The Department of Revenue (DOR) will collect the local meals excise at the time it collects the state tax on the sale. Therefore, the local excise applies to all meals subject to the state sales tax. A community may not vary the rate or the meals subject to the excise. The DOR will distribute the collections to the city or town on a quarterly schedule. For FY14, the DOR estimates Acton would have received \$279,302 from this tax.

(Source: <http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/mdmstuf/localoptions/meals-estimates.xls>)

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Selectman assigned: Janet Adachi: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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Article 5 Town Operating Budget

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, and/or appropriate from available funds, a sum of money to defray the necessary expenses of the departments, offices and boards of the Town, exclusive of the Regional School budgets, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article requests funds for the municipal operating budget. The standard motion for the municipal budget appropriation may include the transfer of other monies such as Cemetery Trust Funds and Wetland Filing Fees.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 6 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Assessment

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds, a sum of money to defray the necessary expenses of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article requests funds for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Assessment. This assessment, voted by the Acton-Boxborough Regional District School Committee, is governed by the terms of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Agreement.

Direct inquiries to: Glenn Brand, Superintendent: gbrand@abschools.org / (978) 264-4700

Selectman assigned: Katie Green: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 7 Stabilization Fund – Capital

(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Stabilization Fund for general capital purposes, and to transfer and appropriate from available funds a sum of money to the Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

The 1945 statute that initially authorized cities and towns to establish a stabilization fund restricted the use of any fund balance to capital expenditures. In 1991, permitted uses were expanded to include any lawful purpose, but funds could still not be reserved for a specific purpose. However, with the adoption of legislative amendments in 2003 to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 5B, municipalities can now create multiple stabilization funds, assign a different purpose to each and take advantage of a new funding option. This Article requests the creation and funding of a capital stabilization fund. The amount recommended for transfer from available funds to the Capital Stabilization Fund is \$2,000,000.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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Article 8 Stabilization Fund – Sewer

(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Sewer Stabilization Fund for sewer purposes, and to transfer and appropriate from Sewer Enterprise Fund available funds a sum of money to the Sewer Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

The Department of Revenue has opined that a town may establish a special sewer enterprise stabilization fund pursuant to G.L. c. 40, §5B. Once established, amounts raised in the annual budget process for this purpose may be transferred into the sewer stabilization fund by a two-thirds vote of town meeting. This will enable the Town to build up this savings to fund/help offset equipment replacements, new acquisitions, and capital improvements. The stabilization fund is maintained with the town’s trust funds along with any other stabilization fund(s) and not in the enterprise fund. The amount recommended for transfer from Sewer Enterprise available funds to the Sewer Stabilization Fund is \$1,600,000.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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Article 9 Capital Infrastructure and Equipment
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, transfer and/or appropriate from available funds a sum of money to be expended by the Town Manager for the purchase, replacement or improvement of facilities, vehicles, infrastructure and equipment as listed below, including related incidental costs, or take any other action relative thereto.

A.	Natural Resources Truck Replacement	55,800
B.	Cemetery Service Building Accessibility	32,500
Total		\$ 88,300

Summaries

A. Natural Resources Truck Replacement

This article requests funding to replace a 2001 Ford F-350 truck used primarily by the Cemetery Department. It is also used by the Highway Department for snow plowing.

Direct inquiries to: Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director
nr@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6634

B. Cemetery Service Building Accessibility Improvements

The Kennedy Cemetery Service Building, located in the Woodlawn Cemetery, is the Cemetery Department’s main office and is open to the public. This building is not in compliance with accessibility guidelines. This article requests funding to install an accessible entrance, accessible bathroom and office improvements for public meetings. This funding request is for half of the estimated cost to perform this work. The remaining funding will come from Cemetery Trust Funds.

Direct inquiries to: Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director
nr@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6634

Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Deferred**

Article 10 Transportation Enterprise Fund
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 53F½ of the General Laws to establish a Transportation Enterprise Fund for transportation purposes, to be effective on July 1, 2015, and further to see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds a sum of money for such transportation purposes, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This is the sixth year of the transportation program that has previously been funded through Article appropriations at Annual Town Meetings since 2009. This Article will establish a Transportation Enterprise Fund from which all transportation programs will operate. The Council on Aging Van which was formerly funded from a separate Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund will now be operated and funded from the Transportation Enterprise Fund. Also included in this fund are the MinuteVan transportation services; the Dial-A-Ride (General Population), Rail Shuttle (Commuters), and the Road Runner service (Seniors and People with Disabilities). In addition, a fixed route business/customer/employee service will be launched this year. This service will have hourly runs with stops along Great Road, Kelley’s Corner, West Acton Center and South Acton Center. All of these programs run Monday through Friday and are dedicated to meet the needs of commuters, local travelers, seniors and people with disabilities. Matching funds for portions of the programs are received from the Lowell Regional Transportation Association and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. Funds from the Commuter Parking lot fund are also dedicated to the Rail Shuttle service.

Fund Balance 6/30/14	Budgeted Revenue FY15	Budgeted Expense FY15	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/15	Budgeted Revenue FY16	Budgeted Expense FY16	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/16
				\$ 509,400	\$ 509,400	\$ 0

Direct inquiries to: Doug Halley, Health Director: health@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6632
Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Deferred**

Article 11 Minuteman Regional School District Assessment

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, and/or transfer and appropriate from available funds, a sum of money to defray the necessary expenses of the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article requests funds for the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District Assessment. This assessment, voted by the Minuteman School Committee, is governed by the terms of the Minuteman School District Agreement.

Direct inquiries to: Dr. Ed Bouquillon, Superintendent: ebouquillon@minuteman.org / (781) 861-6500
Selectman assigned: Janet Adachi: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 12 Fund Collective Bargaining Agreement – Police Superior Officers (FY16-FY18)

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer and/or appropriate from available funds a sum of money necessary to fund the cost items contained in Collective Bargaining Agreement(s) between the Town and the Acton Superior Officers’ Union MCOP Local 380 as filed with the Town Clerk, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article requests funding for collective bargaining agreement cost items under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 150E, Section 7. When a tentative agreement is reached with a union, the Town will bring a funding request for the financial elements of the agreement to the first available Town Meeting for approval. If the funding is approved, the Town is obligated to fund the remaining years of the contract. If the funding request is rejected by Town Meeting, the parties must return to the bargaining table for further negotiations.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Deferred **Deferred**

Article 14 * Septage Disposal Enterprise Budget
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of septage disposal, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53 F¹/₂, Enterprise Fund Law, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town appropriate \$142,556 for the purpose of septage disposal, and to raise such amount, \$142,556 be raised from department receipts.

Summary

This article requests that the receipts from septage haulers, licensing of septage haulers, licensing of septic system inspectors, licensing of septic installers, and disposal works construction permit fees be used for the purpose of allowing septage collected within Acton to be taken to a water pollution abatement facility and to maintain the Town’s septage waste disposal program. These fees will be deposited in a separate account and may be expended to pay part or all of the anticipated costs of septage waste disposal. If income in any year is in excess of expenses, the excess shall be deposited in a separate fund and used for capital expenditures of the Enterprise or to reduce user fees. Fund status is noted below (for budget detail see Municipal Supplement).

Fund Balance 6/30/14	Budgeted Revenue FY15	Budgeted Expense FY15	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/15	Budgeted Revenue FY16	Budgeted Expense FY16	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/16
\$ 153,063	\$ 137,679	\$ 137,679	\$ 153,063	\$ 142,556	\$ 142,556	\$ 153,063

Direct inquiries to: Doug Halley, Health Director: health@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6632
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 15 * Sewer Enterprise Budget
 (Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of operating and maintaining a sewer collection and treatment facility, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53 F½, Enterprise Fund Law, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town appropriate \$1,747,423 for the purpose of operating the sewer system, and to raise such amount, \$1,725,423 be raised from department receipts and \$22,000 be transferred from retained earnings.

Summary

This article requests funding for operation of the municipal sewer system. Sewer charges, private sewer treatment plant fees, connection fees, sewer inspector fees, betterments, State and Federal aid for Sewers, and any other income derived from the operation of the municipal sewer system will be deposited in a separate account and may be expended to pay part or all of the anticipated costs of sewerage disposal for the system. Fund status is noted below (for budget detail see Municipal Supplement).

Fund Balance 6/30/14	Budgeted Revenue FY15	Budgeted Expense FY15	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/15
\$ 2,229,050	\$ 1,765,128	\$ 1,765,128	\$ 2,229,050
Budgeted Revenue FY16	Budgeted Expense FY16	Transfers Out	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/16
\$ 1,725,423	\$ 1,747,423	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 607,050

The FY16 Budgeted Expense includes \$22,000 for a West Acton Sewer Feasibility Study.

The Transfers Out column represents the use of reserves applied to other appropriations in this Warrant.

Direct inquiries to: Stephen Barrett, CPA, Finance Director: collector@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6624
 Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 17 * **Ambulance Enterprise Budget**
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of health care, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53 F½, Enterprise Fund Law, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town appropriate \$897,169 for the purpose of operating the ambulance service, and to raise such amount, \$664,000 be raised from department receipts, \$162,000 be transferred from general revenues and \$71,169 be transferred from retained earnings.

Summary

This article requests an appropriation to operate the Town’s ambulance service. The enterprise fund includes the salaries and benefits for eight Firefighter/EMTs allocated to this fund. Charges for ambulance service and any other income derived from the operation of the ambulance service will be deposited in this fund and used for expenditures of the enterprise fund or to reduce user fees. Fund status is noted below (for budget detail see Municipal Supplement).

Fund Balance 6/30/14	Budgeted Revenue FY15	Budgeted Expense FY15	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/15	Budgeted Revenue FY16	Budgeted Expense FY16	Est. Fund Balance 6/30/16
\$ 1,123,971	\$ 749,427	\$ 1,326,707	\$ 546,691	\$ 826,000	\$ 897,169	\$ 475,522

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Deferred**

Article 18 * **Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund – Authorization to Revoke**
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote, effective as of the close of Fiscal Year 2015, to revoke the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 53F½ of the Massachusetts General Laws as to the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund; to close the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund balance to the General Fund; and to transfer any assets, debts and long-term liabilities of the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund to the General Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that, effective as of the close of Fiscal Year 2015, the Town revoke the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 53F½ of the Massachusetts General Laws as to the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund; close the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund balance to the General Fund; and transfer any assets, debts and long-term liabilities of the Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund to the General Fund.

Summary

This Article will revoke the existing Council on Aging Van Enterprise Fund. The operation and funding of the Council on Aging Van will migrate to the Transportation Enterprise Fund which will be established in Article 10. With four van services operating Monday through Friday, and a 5th fixed route shuttle to be implemented in FY 2016, it is important to have all of these transportation programs managed through one fund; to better track the service being provided and improve the efficiency of each service. As approved at the 2014 Annual Town Meeting the fund balance of \$32,315 is being used to offset costs in FY 2015. It is anticipated that the fund balance will be at zero on June 30th but if any funds remain they will flow into the General Fund.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 19 * Self-Funding Programs (Revolving Funds)
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53 E½ to establish or continue revolving funds for the Historic District Commission, Building Department, Sealer of Weights and Measures, Health Inspectional Services and Fire Department Fire Alarm Network as noted below:

Fund	FY16 Estimated Revenue	FY16 Authorized Expenditure
Historic District Commission	\$ 200	\$ 200
Building Department	295,588	295,588
Sealer of Weights and Measures	14,623	14,623
Health Department		
Food Service Inspections	53,555	53,555
Hazardous Materials Inspections	50,999	50,999
Stormwater Inspections	49,815	49,815
Crosstown Connect	225,000	225,000
Fire Department		
Fire Alarm Network	64,165	64,165
Total	\$ 753,945	\$ 753,945

, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the revolving funds for the Historic District Commission, Building Department, Sealer of Weights and Measures, Health Department and Fire Department be continued in the amounts and for the purposes set forth in the expense column of this Article.

Summary

This article allows the Town to fully fund the Historic District Commission activities, Building Department inspectional programs, Sealer of Weights and Measures services, specified ongoing Health inspectional programs and the Town-wide Fire Alarm Network from their respective receipts and fund balance. This article removes the cost of these services from the tax base. Fees are deposited in a separate account and may be expended to pay part or all of the anticipated costs of operating each program. If income exceeds costs, the excess is retained for use of the specific program in any subsequent period.

	Fund	FY2014	FY2014	Fund	FY2015	FY2015	Fund	FY2015	FY2015
	Balance	Actual	Actual	Balance	Budgeted	Budgeted	Balance	Actual	Actual
	6/30/2013	Revenue	Expense	6/30/2014	Revenue	Expense	6/30/2015	Revenue	Expense
Historic District Commission	\$ 895	\$ 165	\$ -	\$ 1,060	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 1,060	\$ 90	
Building Department	\$ 123,530	\$ 199,724	\$ 166,148	\$ 157,106	\$ 252,134	\$ 252,134	\$ 157,106	\$ 125,637	\$ 110,525
Includes fees for Electrical, Plumbing & Gas Permits/Microfilming/Periodic Inspections									
Sealer of Weights and Measures	\$ 44,721	\$ 20,766	\$ 12,485	\$ 53,002	\$ 12,986	\$ 12,986	\$ 53,002	\$ 1,050	\$ 10,891
Health Department									
Hazardous Materials Inspection	\$ 40,361	\$ 39,184	\$ 44,102	\$ 35,444	\$ 49,306	\$ 49,306	\$ 35,444	\$ 12,278	\$ 32,548
Food Service Inspections	\$ 101,506	\$ 38,535	\$ 78,369	\$ 61,672	\$ 51,480	\$ 51,480	\$ 61,672	\$ 36,011	\$ 34,217
Stormwater	\$ 24,339	\$ 28,710	\$ 33,716	\$ 19,333	\$ 43,146	\$ 43,146	\$ 19,333	\$ 27,940	\$ 18,071
CrossTown Connect		\$ 4,500		\$ 4,500	\$ 166,000	\$ 166,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 27,500	\$ 50,902
Fire Department									
Fire Alarm Network	\$ 24,686	\$ 60,483	\$ 37,691	\$ 47,479	\$ 64,165	\$ 64,165	\$ 47,479	\$ 14,000	\$ 25,854
All Monetary Figures Rounded to the Nearest Dollar									
Actuals as of 3/10/2015									

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
 Selectman assigned: Janet Adachi: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 20 * Town Board Support – Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council
 (Majority vote)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds, the sum of \$2,000 to be expended by the Town Manager for the ongoing expenses of the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council for programs in Acton, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town raise and appropriate \$2,000 for the ongoing expenses of the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council.

Summary

The Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council (ABCC) seeks a sum of money to produce cultural activities and programming in Acton. These funds will help to foster collaborations among local artists and cultural organizations and to address the cultural needs of the Town. This will augment the funds received by the ABCC from the State through the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
 Selectman assigned: Janet Adachi: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 21 Non-Binding Resolution – Senior Tax Relief

(Majority vote)

Resolved that Town Meeting concur in the decision to set-aside, over and above the usual funds available for exemptions, an additional \$200,000 so the Board of Assessors can implement a pilot program to further assist long-term senior residents of Acton. This pilot program is designated to assist those seniors, who after receiving the maximum refund under the State's Senior Circuit Breaker Program, need additional assistance with Real Estate Taxes.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article is to allow the Town of Acton to put a cap on property taxes for qualifying seniors who are currently spending more than 10% of their income on property taxes for their primary residence. The amount of relief cannot exceed 50% of the total amount of a senior's property taxes. The exemption also sets forth various requirements including age, income, asset, and residency requirements. Specifically, applicants must meet the same income and assessed home value requirements as the state Circuit Breaker requires. In addition, applicants must satisfy an asset test as determined by the Board of Assessors and must have lived in Acton for at least 10 consecutive years. The total amount of relief is limited to \$200,000 in the first year and will be funded by the Town's overlay account, as is the case with other tax relief and abatement programs. To the extent qualifying requests exceed the maximum amount permitted, they shall be prorated.

Direct inquiries to: Brian McMullen, Principal Assessor: assessor@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6621

Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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Article 22 **Non-Binding Resolution – SMART/ Pay as You Throw**
(Majority vote)

Resolved that Town Meeting supports the creation of a plan and timeline to evaluate and implement fiscally responsible solutions for increased recycling and waste reduction, including strategies such as “save money and reduce trash (SMART)” or “pay as you throw (PAYT),” or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This Article is advisory to the Board of Selectmen and asks them to develop a SMART/PAYT system for the transfer station.

What is SMART/PAYT?

“SMART” stands for Save-Money-And-Reduce-Trash. The SMART/Pay-As-You-Throw system is one in which residents pay a basic fee to cover the fixed costs of trash management and then a user fee for the amount used—much like the way we use and pay for electricity, water, or gas. Acton’s SMART/PAYT program would be based on a pay-per-bag basis.

A SMART/PAYT system works to reduce overall trash disposal costs and increase recycling. Neither education nor enforcement yields the improvement of simply having special trash bags priced to pay for the cost of disposing of the trash.

Those households that shift to a PAYT system to reduce trash will be rewarded with reduced costs. Every time something is about to be thrown away is another chance to consider alternatives: Is this recyclable? Could I keep using it, give it away, or sell it? Is it compostable? A SMART/PAYT system encourages us to consider putting something in the trash as a choice of "last resort."

Reducing our trash and increasing our recycling are key to being better stewards of the environment. SMART/PAYT increases our awareness of this stewardship each time we need to open a new trash bag; it aligns household financial goals with environmental goals.

When trash disposal was simple and inexpensive, it made some sense to have a one-cost-for-all system. As the financial and environmental costs of trash disposal are rising, SMART/PAYT treats trash service as a utility, like water, electricity, gas, or oil: When you use more, you pay more.

Direct inquiries to: Corey M. York, P.E., Town Engineer: engineering@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6630
Selectman assigned: Katie Green: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 23
(Majority vote)

**Community Preservation Program –
Direct Appropriations From Fund Balances**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or set aside for later appropriation, and to authorize and direct the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager to expend or set aside, from the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund balances as set forth herein, the amounts listed below for community preservation purposes, with such expenditures to be subject to conditions listed in the Article’s Summary and to be further specified in award letters from the Community Preservation Committee, with each item considered a separate appropriation;

FY 2014 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND BALANCES	
FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues	
Community Preservation Fund Surcharge Collected in FY 2014	\$ 839,328.61
State Community Preservation Trust Fund Receipt, October 2014	\$ 263,941.00
Other FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Components	
Interest Earned in FY 2014	\$ 21,468.94
Unencumbered FY 2014 Fund Balance	\$ 2,454.53
Recapture of unspent previous years’ project appropriations	\$ 71,823.13
Total - FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Balance	\$1,199,016.21
FY 2014 Open Space Set-Aside	
Set-Aside Fund Balance from appropriations for the Acquisition, Creation, and Preservation of Open Space and its Rehabilitation and Restoration	\$1,658,571.87
Total FY 2014 Open Space Set-Aside Fund Balance	\$1,658,571.87
FY 2014 Historic Set-Aside	
Set-Aside Fund Balance from appropriations for the Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Resources	\$ 0.00
Total FY 2014 Historic Set-Aside Fund Balance	\$ 0.00
APPROPRIATIONS FROM COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND BALANCE	
Purposes	Recommended Amounts
Set-Aside Appropriations for	
A. Acquisition, Creation, and Preservation of Open Space, and its Rehabilitation and Restoration	\$ 300,000.00
B1. Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Resources; required set-aside for meeting 10% of spending from FY 2014 revenues	\$ 30,326.97
B2. Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Resources; required make-up for under-spending 10% of revenues in 2012 after recapture	\$ 2,707.85
Spending Appropriations	
C. Acton Housing Authority – Project Feasibility Study	\$ 35,000.00
D. Community Housing Program Fund*	\$ 150,000.00
E. Forest Cemetery – National Register Nomination	\$ 10,000.00
F. Acton Woman’s Club – Phase 2, Preservation & Accessibility	\$ 70,000.00
G. Acton Arboretum – Fern Boardwalk and Tree Removal	\$ 24,952.19

H. Ice House Pond & Robbins Mill Pond – Water Chestnut Removal	\$ 36,000.00
I. Acton Arboretum – Irrigation Well	\$ 26,124.50
J. Schools – Nature Play Space, Construction	\$ 120,000.00
K. Discovery Museum – Discovery Woods & Creativity Playscape	\$ 150,000.00
L. Assabet River Rail Trail	\$ 143,230.00
Administrative Appropriation	
M. A fund for CPC direct expenses and for reimbursing the Town of Acton for administrative services and operating expenses provided in support of the Community Preservation Committee	\$ 55,163.00
Total Recommended Appropriations from FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Balance	\$1,153,504.51
SPENDING APPROPRIATION FROM OPEN SPACE SET-ASIDE FUND BALANCE	
N. Wright Hill Open Space Land Acquisition - Debt Service	\$ 7,000.00
Total Recommended Appropriations from the Open Space Set-Aside Fund	\$ 7,000.00
Resulting Fund Balances	
Resulting FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Balance	\$ 45,511.70
Resulting Balance in the Set-Aside Fund for the Acquisition, Creation, and Preservation of Open Space, and its Rehabilitation and Restoration	\$1,951,571.87
Resulting Balance in the Set-Aside Fund for the Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Resources	\$ 33,034.82

* Provided further pursuant to Town Charter Section 6-5 that the appropriation to the Community Housing Program Fund shall not lapse three years and one month following the effective date of the vote on this article, and that this appropriation and all prior appropriations to the Community Housing Program Fund shall continue to be available for the purpose specified until expended for that purpose or until the CPC recommends and Town Meeting votes to rescind the appropriation of any unspent funds appropriated for this purpose.

, or take any other action relative thereto;

And, whereas Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B requires that the Town appropriate for spending, or set-aside for future spending, from the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues at least 10% for open space, 10% for historic preservation, and 10% for community housing;

And, whereas the recommended appropriations for open space, historic preservation, and community housing each meet or exceed 10% of the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues;

And, whereas Town Meeting may vote to delete or reduce any of the recommended amounts;

Therefore, in the event that recommended amounts are deleted or reduced, vote to appropriate as a set-aside for future spending from the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Balance the minimum necessary amounts to allocate not less than 10% of the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for open space (\$110,326.97), not less than 10% of the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for historic preservation (\$110,326.97), and not less than 10% of the FY 2014 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for community housing (\$110,326.97), or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

This article would make appropriations from the Town's Community Preservation Fund balance and from the Community Preservation Open Space Set-Aside Fund. All items listed are recommended by the Community Preservation Committee.

In 2002, the Town adopted the Community Preservation Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B (CPA). This established Acton's Community Preservation Fund through a 1.5% annual surcharge on real estate property tax bills with certain exemptions, and made the Town eligible to receive annually additional monies from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund, which are added to the Town's Community Preservation Fund. Under the CPA, the Community Preservation Fund may be used to acquire, create and preserve open space; to acquire, preserve, rehabilitate, and restore historic resources; to acquire, create, preserve and support community housing; to acquire, create, preserve, rehabilitate and restore land for recreational use; to rehabilitate and restore open space and community housing that were acquired or created with Community Preservation Funds; and for certain related expenses in support of the foregoing. Community housing is defined as housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. This is the eleventh year of appropriations from Acton's Community Preservation Fund.

Local adoption of the CPA established the Acton Community Preservation Committee as a statutory committee under the Act (Chapter S of the Bylaws of the Town of Acton). The Community Preservation Committee's duties under the law are to study the needs, possibilities, resources, and preferences of the Town regarding community preservation; to engage in an open and public process of deliberation and consult with other Town Boards and Committees; and to make recommendations to Town Meeting for appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund.

In September 2014, the Community Preservation Committee published its 2015 Community Preservation Plan with guidelines for the submission of projects seeking funding. The Committee received fourteen applications for funding of proposed projects and programs. The Committee reviewed the applications, interviewed proponents, and solicited legal opinions on the proposals to help evaluate their eligibility under the Act. This article represents the Committee's overall recommendation for appropriations, which includes recommended funding from the available Community Preservation Fund balances for eleven of the proposed projects and programs, statutorily required adjustments, debt service on a prior year bond, and administrative program support. The recommended funding levels may differ from the amounts requested by the projects' proponents and some of the proposed projects have undergone significant transformations from how they were proposed originally.

All recommended amounts are "up-to" spending limits. Savings, if any, will be available for future appropriations. As in previous years the recommended appropriations include a set-aside for open space. The recommended appropriations leave a remaining Community Preservation Fund balance of \$45,511.70 that is available for future Town Meeting appropriations in all eligible funding categories under the Act.

The CPA states that Town Meeting may delete or reduce any of the recommended appropriations, but may not add new items or increase the recommended appropriations. The Act also requires that the Community Preservation Committee recommends and that Town Meeting appropriates in each fiscal year the spending of not less than 10% of the annual revenues in the Community Preservation Fund (\$110,326.97 in FY 2014) for each of the following: open space; historic resources; and community housing. The Committee may also recommend the eminent domain taking by the Town of interest in real property (not recommended this year), the borrowing of funds for Community Preservation (not recommended this year), and an appropriation of not more than 5% of the annual revenues of the Community Preservation Fund for the Committee's administrative and operating expenses (\$55,163.00 recommended).

A total of \$71,823.13 has been recaptured from unspent prior years' Community Preservation project appropriations and closed to the Community Preservation Fund. The recaptured amounts came from two

prior years' projects and programs. The recapture of prior year project appropriations can result in spending less than the statutory minimum 10% in any particular fiscal year for historic, open space, or community housing projects. This article makes appropriations to the Historic Set-Aside fund to compensate for such shortfalls in one prior year, as well for a funding shortfall for historic preservation projects in the current year.

A. Open Space Set-Aside

The current Open Space Set-Aside Fund balance is \$1,658,571.87. This item adds \$300,000. Town Meeting, with the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, may appropriate spending from the Open Space Set-Aside Fund for the purpose of acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space, or its rehabilitation or restoration.

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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B1. and B2. Historic Preservation Set-Asides

The recapture of prior years' unspent CPA funds appropriated in 2012 for historic purposes put the Town below the 10% statutory minimum threshold for either spending or setting aside for later spending CPA funds for historic preservation, rehabilitation and restoration purposes in that year. To make up this shortfall, the Committee recommends an appropriation of \$2,707.85 to the Set-Aside Fund for the Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Restoration of Historic Resources.

This year the total recommended appropriation for historic preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration projects is less than the statutory 10% minimum. To make up for this shortfall, the Committee recommends that Town Meeting also set-aside \$30,326.97 to the Set-Aside Fund for the Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Restoration of Historic Resources.

Town Meeting, with the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, may appropriate spending from this set-aside fund for the purpose of acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources.

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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C. Acton Housing Authority – Project Feasibility Study

The recommended \$35,000 appropriation for the Acton Housing Authority will fund consulting services for a planning and feasibility study. The study will assist in determining the most feasible options for creating new affordable housing opportunities for low-income Acton seniors, disabled, and families. The study will also look at the feasibility of reusing existing affordable housing for low-income seniors.

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Recommended
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D. Community Housing Program Fund

The recommended \$150,000 appropriation replenishes the existing Community Housing Program Fund for "the acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing in the Town of Acton." The Fund was first established with a CPA appropriation in 2004. It is used to finance a diversity of affordable housing initiatives and opportunities as they arise, for Acton residents and their adult children, for employees who work for and in the Town, as well as for new residents from outside of Acton. This fund is managed by the ACHC for Community Housing activities and projects that are allowable under the CPA and recommended by the ACHC or any other entity subject to approval by the Board of Selectmen.

As in previous years, the ACHC proposes to largely continue current programs and initiate new programs. Recent programs and projects include:

- Funding a Housing Production Plan;
- Closing costs and mortgage payment assistance to 19 first-time homebuyers of affordable units;
- The purchase or subsidy of 7 units for the Acton Housing Authority’s low income rental program including 4 new construction units;
- Funding sewer betterments for affordable units in 4 developments;
- A condo buy-down and selling price subsidy for 9 units;
- Capital improvements for 8 affordable units, and
- Supplementing funding for 4 years of membership in the Regional Housing Services Office.

The ACHC has access to privately funded affordable housing gifts that can be leveraged or supplemented with CPA appropriations to the Community Housing Program Fund.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

E. Forest Cemetery – National Register Nomination

The Massachusetts Historical Commission has previously deemed the cemetery eligible for inclusion in the National Registry Listing and the Cemetery Commissioners have affirmed their desire to pursue this designation. The recommended \$10,000 will provide funding to hire a Historic Preservation Consultant to prepare the nomination papers to be submitted to the National Parks Service. Adding the Forest Cemetery to the National Register will give it the recognition it deserves, increase the protection on the property via Mass Historical Review of future adjacent projects, and allow Federal grants for restoration of the property.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

F. Acton Woman’s Club- Phase 2, Preservation and Accessibility

The Acton Woman’s Club is located in the Acton Center Historic District. The Woman’s Club received Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding in 2011 for the installation of an accessible sloped walkway at the right-side building entrance to provide handicap accessibility to the first floor. Subsequently, the improvements triggered the requirement of full building accessibility by the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. Following this determination, the Club requested CPA funding to help address full accessibility for this historic property by installing a vertical lift to the second floor and renovating the first floor bathroom. \$150,000 was appropriated in 2014 from the CPA for the project. The total cost for this rehabilitation project was estimated at \$248,400, including contingencies. The award in 2014 anticipated the difference would be made up through third-party grant funds or by completing the project with a phased CPA funding approach. Unfortunately, the Club’s application for a \$98,000 grant from the State’s Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF) was unsuccessful. The recommended \$70,000 will complete the second phase of the project and include addressable fire alarm system, illuminated exit signs, emergency lighting and panic devices on the exit doors. With the work already done, knowledge of the building is sufficient to eliminate funding for any contingencies. This rehabilitation work must be carried out to be in compliance with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties codified in 36 C.F.R Part 68.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

G. Acton Arboretum – Fern Boardwalk and Tree Removal

The recommended \$24,952.19 appropriation will help fund the construction of a new boardwalk and the removal of 14 trees to improve safety and forest diversity. The fern boardwalk is the last of three, deteriorated, wooden boardwalks to be replaced and made ADA accessible in the Arboretum in three years with CPA fund requests with each boardwalk being over 25 years old. The current fern boardwalk is failing; there is rot in vertical columns; decayed concrete footings; rotten and patched railings; sagging and uneven floorboards. The total cost of a new boardwalk is \$23,102.19. A large, multi-trunked red maple tree next to the boardwalk is dying and may fall onto the boardwalk. In addition, there are 13 black walnut trees along the wildflower trail that would be removed to improve forest diversity. The total cost for tree removal is \$2,850.

Total cost of the project is \$25,952.19 which would be offset by pledged and anticipated contributions to this effort which include a \$1,000 donation from the Friends of the Acton Arboretum and an in-kind donation from Axe Brothers of \$500.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

H. Ice House Pond and Robbins Mill Pond - Water Chestnut Removal

The recommended \$36,000 appropriation will fund a three-year water chestnut removal program for Ice House Pond and Robbins Mill Pond. This preservation project will be conducted by a licensed environmental company using mechanical harvesting. Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) is a “non-native” (or exotic) and invasive aquatic plant that is covering the ponds’ surfaces and building up detritus on the bottoms. Without annual intervention, these impoundments develop anaerobic conditions destroying the aquatic ecosystem. Volunteers in Acton have been working to hand pull the plants from the surface of Ice House Pond since 2010 and Robbins Mill Pond since 2013 but cannot keep up with the growth of water chestnuts with human volunteer efforts. Both ponds have scenic, recreational and ecological benefits. Robbins Mill Pond is within a listed NHESP Endangered Species Habitat. Removal of the water chestnuts will restore the natural riverine characteristics and preserve Acton’s important water resources.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

I. Acton Arboretum - Irrigation Well

The recommended \$26,124.50 appropriation will fund the cost and installation of an irrigation well at the Acton Arboretum. The Acton Arboretum water supply has been shut down for 2 years due to a leak. The Acton Arboretum water comes from a metered town service near the corner of Taylor Road and Main Street. The Natural Resources Department has been unable to locate the leak, necessitating the Municipal Properties Department to shut off supply. Volunteers have been carrying and hand watering all of the Arboretum plantings via a portable water tank. The total cost for the irrigation well is \$28,249 which would be offset by pledged and anticipated contributions including: \$500 donation from the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, and \$1,624 from the Acton Recreation Department budget.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

J. Schools – Nature Play Spaces, Construction

Last year Town Meeting appropriated \$24,000 from CPC funds for the planning and design of the outdoor, natural play spaces at each of Acton’s elementary schools. This request is for the construction of the Nature Play Spaces for the Acton elementary schools as part of the regional school system. Currently the play

areas and structures at the elementary schools in Acton are situated in the outdoors, but do not invite children to interact with nature in independent ways. The recommended \$120,000 will fund the construction of handicapped accessible, resource rich, simply constructed nature place spaces for the elementary schools in Acton. The Play Spaces will include areas for sand and dirt play, climbing on natural materials, planting stations, areas of native grasses, willow tunnels, and gathering spaces for class use. Each space will reflect the unique landscape of the school site, and a curriculum will be planned around these spaces. The total cost for this project is \$165,600. This award anticipates the difference will be made up through various school partners and facilities and labor provided by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

K. Discovery Museum – Discovery Woods and Creativity Playscape

The Discovery Museums, Inc. proposes to build two main outdoor recreational activity areas, called Discovery Woods and Creativity Playscape, to relocate parking and to build a gateway/portal to allow better access to the adjacent Great Hill conservation and recreation land. The total project cost is \$1.3 million, of which 85% is funded through private donations. The recommended \$150,000 will help fund the two main outdoor areas, Discovery Woods (a nature playscape) and the Creativity Playscape. The two areas will be fully inclusive and accessible outdoor learning and recreation spaces serving citizens of all ages and, importantly, of all abilities. The project will both preserve and enhance open space at The Discovery Museums, relocating parking to restore a natural landscape along Great Hill and create a prominent portal to the conservation land. As a condition of funding to a private entity, the Community Preservation Committee will require that the Museum grants the Town an access trail easement (across a portion of The Discovery Museums' property to the Town's Great Hill Conservation and Recreation Area) for public use, and a use restriction (preserving and authorizing active recreation on that portion of the Discovery Museums' property subsidized with CPA Funds).

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

L. Assabet River Rail Trail

The 12.5-mile Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT) is proposed to run from Acton via Maynard, Stow, and Hudson, to Marlborough. The five communities have jointly advanced the trail since 1995 and a section of the ARRT in Marlborough and Hudson is built and actively being used. To date, the ARRT has received close to \$2.2 million in public and private funding, donations, and commitments. Acton Town Meeting has appropriated \$30,000 in 1998 and an additional \$170,000 from a 2004 Community Preservation appropriation to meet their 20% local share for trail design cost. This local funding leveraged Federal funds for trail design and now for the construction phase of the ARRT in Acton-Maynard, which has been scheduled on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for construction funding in Federal Fiscal Year 2016. To meet this schedule all plans must be finished, all permits must be in-hand, all property interests must be secured, and the project must be advertised before the end of September 2015.

Acton's +/-1.4-mile/7.9-acre portion of the ARRT begins at the south side of the South Acton commuter rail station, through the Caouette-Simeone land, south along a former rail line and parallel to Main Street, to the Maynard line. A commercial building near the Maynard Town line at 20 Main Street obstructs the former rail corridor. In 2005, the Town obtained an easement from the property owner to align the trail behind the parking lot and building. In 2013 MassDOT indicated they were not in support of said trail alignment behind the building due to the extremely high cost of constructing an elevated trail through extensive wetlands and flood plains. Accordingly, the trail alignment has changed to reduce impact to wetlands and reduce construction cost. A new easement in the front of the property is now required. In addition, there is a need for easements in other locations to facilitate trail access, including emergency access, to accommodate

wetlands replications, landscaping, and trail alignment and construction. The recommended \$143,230 will help fund the easement acquisitions estimated to cost approximately \$170,000. The difference will be made available from gifts. This is a federally funded project. Under Federal and State policies and regulations, municipalities are responsible for the funding and executing any acquisitions for the Assabet River Rail Trail. Further, in accordance with Federal laws the Town cannot enter acquisition talks with the land owner until specific Federal permits and sign-offs are in place, and the Town must offer each affected land owner fair market value compensation. If the easement is donated, the funds will be returned to the Community Preservation account.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

M. Administrative and Operating Expenses

The recommended appropriation in the amount of \$55,163.00 is 5% of the FY 2014 revenues in the Community Preservation Fund as provided in the Act (local surcharge and State trust fund receipts). The funding is to help the Town with administrative and legal expenses incurred in connection with the support of the Community Preservation Committee and Program, and to pay for the Community Preservation Committee's direct expenses such as the annual membership in the Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

N. Wright Hill Open Space Land Acquisition – Debt Service

The recommended \$7,000 will fund the first year of required debt service for the purchase of the Wright Hill open space parcel. This amount will pay for short-term borrowing costs until the Town has issued a larger municipal bond package. The 2014 Annual Town Meeting authorized the Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen, and pursuant to the favorable recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee to borrow for a repayment term of not less than 15 years and not more than 20 years up to \$990,000 for the Wright Hill open space land.

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, AICP, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Article 24 **Amend Previous Authorization – Cemetery Facilities (1 of 2)**

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to amend and extend authorization under Article 15 of the 1985 Annual Town Meeting such that funds previously appropriated for the construction of a maintenance building on Cemetery property may be utilized to purchase the vacant Fish & Wildlife facility located at 66 Harris Street, including related incidental costs, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

\$100,000 was approved at the Annual Town Meeting in 1985 for the construction of a maintenance building at the Mount Hope Cemetery. The building was designed, went out for public bid, but was never constructed. The remaining balance from the 1985 article (\$94,656) will be used in conjunction with articles 25 & 26 to allow the Town to acquire the vacant Fish & Wildlife facility at 66 Harris Street. The facility at 66 Harris Street has a 40’ X 60’ three-bay storage building to be utilized for storage of Town equipment.

Direct inquiries to: Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director: nr@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6634

Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Deferred
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Article 25 **Amend Previous Authorization – Cemetery Facilities (2 of 2)**

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to amend and extend authorization under Article 27 of the 1998 Annual Town Meeting such that funds previously appropriated for the construction of a storage building on Cemetery property may be utilized to purchase the vacant Fish & Wildlife facility located at 66 Harris Street, including related incidental costs, or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

\$100,000 was approved at the Annual Town Meeting in 1998 for the construction of a storage building at the Woodlawn Cemetery. The building was designed and went out to bid, with the lowest bid exceeding the approved funds, thus the storage building was never constructed. The remaining balance from the 1998 article (\$91,848) will be used in conjunction with articles 24 & 26 to allow the Town to acquire the vacant Fish & Wildlife facility at 66 Harris Street. The facility at 66 Harris Street has a 40’ X 60’ storage building constructed in the 1990’s that would be utilized by the Town for storage of equipment.

Direct inquiries to: Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director: nr@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6634

Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u> Recommended	<u>Finance Committee</u> Deferred
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Article 26 **Authorize Land Exchange with the Commonwealth – Harris Street**
(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the following disposition of real property to the Commonwealth and acquisition of real property from the Commonwealth:

1. To transfer from general municipal use to the Selectmen for purposes of disposition, and to authorize the Selectmen to dispose to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, its Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (“DFW”) and/or its Division of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance (“DCAMM”), as applicable, on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Selectmen may determine, and to convey, exchange or donate the deed of a fee simple interest in, that certain parcel of land shown as Parcel 22 on Town Assessor’s Map D4, known as 558 Main Street Rear, consisting of approximately six (6) acres of woodland described in a deed from Quail Ridge Country Club LLC to the Town dated March 16, 2004, and recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds at Book 42294, Page 359, said parcel to become part of the protected wildlife management area known as the Whittier Land;
2. To acquire from the Commonwealth, DFW, and/or DCAMM, as applicable, by purchase, gift, exchange, eminent domain or otherwise, on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Selectmen may determine, for general municipal use, and to accept the deed of a fee simple interest in, the land with the buildings and improvements thereon shown as Parcels 89 and 90-2 on Town Assessor’s Map C5, known as 66-68 Harris Street, consisting of a total of approximately 1.9 acres as described and identified in (a) a deed from Sven S. Hagen to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on October 28, 1953, recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds at Book 8181, Page 354, and a plan entitled “Plan of Land in Acton to be Conveyed by Sven S. Hagen to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Surveyed by P. Bowers, September 16, 1953,” and (b) a deed from Sven S. Hagen to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through its Division of Fisheries and Game on March 26, 1965, recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds at Book 10928, Page 156, and is a portion of the land shown on a plan entitled “Plan of Land in Acton, Mass. Owned by Sven S. Hagen, Scale 1” = 50’ December 14, 1963, Fred X. Hanack, L.S.-C.E.” (both plans being on file at the offices of the Town Clerk); and
3. To reserve, acquire or dispose of such easements over, across, under and along the foregoing properties as the Selectmen may deem appropriate;

or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

The 6 acre general municipal parcel, once gifted, will become part of the “Whittier Land,” a protected open space property managed by the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. The assessed value of the 6 acre land gift will be appropriated towards the Town’s purchase of the property at 66 Harris Street.



Direct inquiries to: Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director: nr@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6634
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 27 Amend Zoning Map – Brookside Shops

(Two-thirds vote)

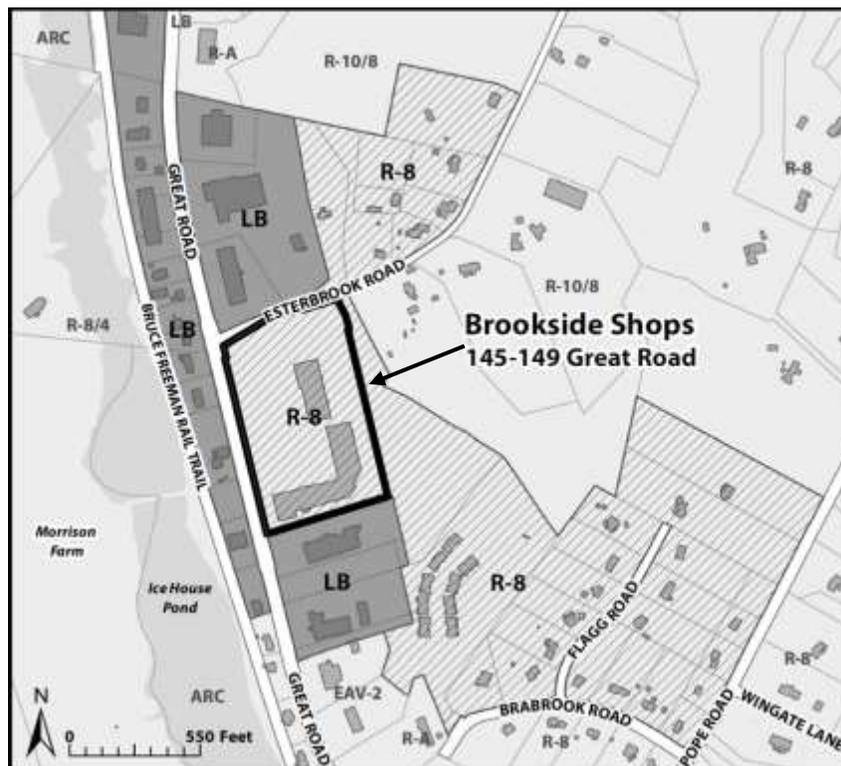
To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Map Number 1, by changing the zoning district designation for Town Atlas parcel F4-37 (145 to 149 Great Road) from Residence 8 (R-8) to Limited Business (LB), or take any other action relative thereto.

Summary

145-149 Great Road is the site of Brookside Shops (Staples, Trader Joe’s, Talbots, etc.). Originally zoned for General Business, the site was rezoned to single-family residential (R-8) in 1990 as part of a comprehensive zoning plan for Great Road. The then-owners of the subject site objected to the rezoning of their property and availed themselves of statutory grandfathering protection devices to preserve the pre-1990 General Business zoning for their property. Brookside Shops was built about 13 years ago under these grandfathering protections in conformance with pre-1990 General Business District zoning requirements.

Today, the grandfathering protections for the subject property have expired, and the site is subject to R-8 zoning regulations. Severe non-conformity restrictions result from the mismatch between the established commercial use and the residential zoning regulations. This makes it often impossible for the existing businesses to implement changes to their establishments, or to change business establishments in the plaza, without frequent involvement by the Board of Appeals for special permits or variances. This article is intended to acknowledge the commercial nature of the property that now exists.

The General Business District no longer exists in Acton. The proposed LB zoning is consistent with other business properties along Great Road. LB zoning for the site will not eliminate all non-conformities, but will reduce them considerably.



Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, AICP, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>	<u>Planning Board</u>
	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

Article 28 * Amend Town Bylaws – Police Details
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter E of the General Bylaws by adding the following section E58:

E58. Police Details

1. **Requested Police Details.** Any person or entity performing any construction, operation, excavation, maintenance, repair, installation, restoration, utility work or other work within, over, under or along any public way, street, sidewalk, road shoulder or other public place within the Town shall first notify the Acton Police Department. Any person may request that police details be furnished by the Acton Police Department as the Chief of Police (or his or her designee) may determine to protect public health, safety and welfare during the performance of such work or for any other activity or event for which a police detail is requested. The person or entity requesting such police details shall pay the Acton Police Department at the prevailing rate for all such police details as are provided by the Acton Police Department pursuant to such a request. The Chief of Police (or his or her designee) may in his or her discretion determine that such police details are not required in the event the person or entity complies throughout such work with applicable provisions of the General Laws permitting the use of flagmen as an alternative to such police details.
2. **Required Police Details.** Upon receipt of a notice pursuant to the prior section, or on his or her own initiative, the Chief of Police (or his or her designee) shall have the authority to require police details where he or she determines that the passage or flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic may be disrupted, or where the public safety, health and welfare may be otherwise affected, on any public way, street, sidewalk, road shoulder or other public place within the Town as a result of any construction, operation, excavation, maintenance, repair, installation, restoration, utility work or other work within, over, under or along said public way, street, sidewalk, road shoulder or other public place, except where police details are provided by the Massachusetts State Police for that work. The person or entity performing such work shall pay the Acton Police Department at the prevailing rate for all such police details as are provided by the Acton Police Department.
3. **Prohibited Work.** No person or entity shall perform any construction, operation, excavation, maintenance, repair, installation, restoration, utility work or other work within, over, under or along said public way, street, sidewalk, road shoulder or other public place within the Town until the person or entity has complied with these bylaws.
4. **Regulations.** The Chief of Police shall adopt written criteria consistent with applicable law and with these bylaws concerning the process to be implemented, payments to be made for, and emergency exceptions (if any) to the procurement of such police details. The Chief of Police may require the posting of a bond or cash in advance of such work as reasonably necessary to secure payment for such police details.
5. **Failure to Pay.** Any such person or entity who fails to make payment for requested or required police details when due shall pay to the Town, in addition to the cost of the police details as set forth above, interest at the rate equivalent to that assessed for unpaid taxes pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59, Section 57, as said provisions may from time to time be amended, calculated from the date the police details are provided to the date on which the person or entity makes full payment for such police details as required hereunder.

- 6. Violations. Any such person or entity that violates any provision of this Section E58 shall be subject to a penalty of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for each offense. Each day that such violation continues shall constitute a separate offense. The Chief of Police or his or her designee is hereby authorized to stop any work conducted in violation of any provision of Section E58.
- 7. Exemptions. The Town of Acton is exempt from the requirements of Section E58.

And further to see if the Town will amend Chapter E, Section E45, by adding the following provision after the provision entitled “Chapter E - Section E45 - Non-Criminal Disposition:”

Chapter E - Section E58 - Police Details - enforcing Persons – Regular Police Officer - Fine \$300.00, each offense.

, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town adopt the General Bylaw amendments as set forth in the Article.

Summary

The article asks Town Meeting to amend the Town’s General Bylaws to add a section governing the use of and payment for police details and to amend the section governing enforcement of the proposed Bylaw. The Bylaw proposed by this article requires anyone doing work along a public way in Acton to notify the Police Chief of that work. If a police detail is requested for such work or for another event or activity, or is otherwise determined to be necessary by the Chief, the party utilizing that detail shall pay the Town the prevailing rate for such police details. The Chief is required to develop the procedures for making such requests and payments of the same, and for determining any emergency exceptions. This Bylaw largely codifies the Town’s existing practice.

Direct inquiries to: Frank Widmayer, Police Chief: fwidmayer@acton-ma.gov / (978) 263-2911
 Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 29 * Amend Kennel License Fee Structure
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will amend its fee structure for kennel licenses as follows:

Type of Kennel	Fee
Commercial Boarding or Training Kennel	\$125.00
Commercial Breeder Kennel	\$125.00
Domestic Charitable Kennel	No Fee (exempt by statute)
Veterinary Kennel	\$125.00
Personal Kennel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$ 45.00 (1-4 dogs, six months of age and older) • \$ 89.00 (5-9 dogs, six months of age and older) • \$ 125.00 (10 or more dogs, six months of age and older)

, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town amend its fee structure for kennel licenses as set forth in the article.

Summary

This article proposes to amend the Town’s fee structure for the issuance of kennel licenses. This article does not request any appropriations. Currently, the Town Clerk’s office calculates kennel license fees as follows:

- 1-4 dogs = \$45.00
- 5-9 dogs = \$89.00
- 10-19 dogs = \$125.00

Recent revisions to state law governing animal control define kennels in five categories for licensing purposes: Commercial Boarding or Training Kennels, Commercial Breeder Kennels, Domestic Charitable Kennels, Personal Kennels, and Veterinary Kennels. This amendment would modify the Town’s licensing fee structure to reflect the five new statutory categories listed above. This amendment does not change any zoning provision related to kennel uses or permit any uses currently not allowed. Under this new fee structure, the fee for a Personal Kennel license would remain the same as it is now. This article changes fees only for non-Personal Kennels operated for commercial or veterinary purposes to a flat \$125.00, which is in line with kennel fees in other towns. A kennel license is in lieu of individually licensing dogs owned by the kennel.

Direct inquiries to: Eva Szkaradek, Town Clerk: clerk@acton-ma.gov/ (978) 929-6620

Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 30 * **Accept Street – Brabrook Road**
(Two-thirds vote)

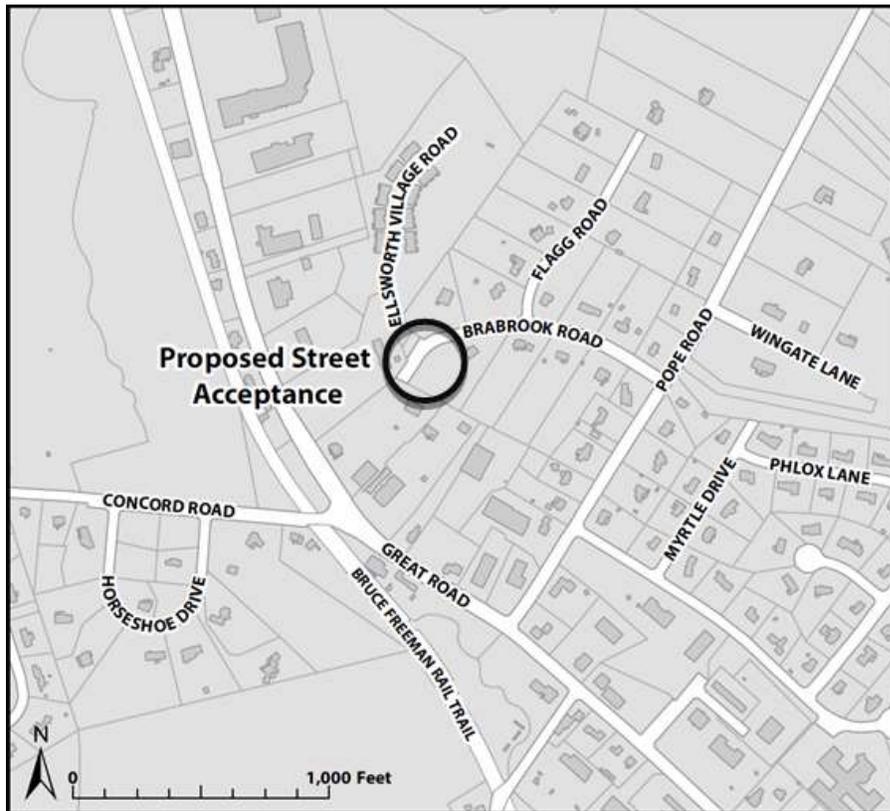
To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to layout a portion of Brabrook Road and acquire and take, on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen may determine, by purchase, gift, eminent domain or otherwise and accept the deed of a fee simple or easement interest in the land owned by Ellsworth Village, LLC, shown as “Parcel 1D-2” on a plan entitled “Plan of a Portion of Brabrook Road To Be Accepted as a Town Way in Acton, Massachusetts, As Laid Out by Order of the Board of Selectmen, 2015” prepared by Stamski and McNary Inc, on file with the Acton Town Clerk, said acquisition and taking to be included in the layout extension of Brabrook Road as described in more detail in the Order of Layout, including without limitation the taking or acceptance of easements for roadway, drainage or other purposes; and further to see if the Town will raise, appropriate, transfer from available funds, or accept gifts for this purpose, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town accept as a public way the extension of Brabrook Road, and authorize the acquisition, transfer or taking of the fee or easement interest of Parcel 1D-2 for roadway layout and associated easement interests, all as described in the article.

Summary

This article is to accept the land necessary for the extension of Brabrook Road, as part of the Ellsworth Village Senior Residence Special Permit. The developer obtained a Special Permit for this development from the Planning Board. The land developer then constructed the new extension of Brabrook Road according to this plan and the rules and regulations of the Planning Board. The Engineering Department inspected the street during construction to insure compliance with these standards. Upon completion of the street, the developer petitions the Board of Selectmen to start the legal process that will lead to acceptance of the street as a town way. Prior to Town Meeting, the Selectmen held a public hearing and adopted an "Order of Layout" containing a legal description of the street. Town Meeting authorized the Selectmen to obtain title to the street by deed or eminent domain. Such streets are built and donated to the Town at no cost; however, the Town will assume future maintenance costs as with any other Town way. The subdivision process is contained in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, and the layout of Town ways is in Chapter 82. The extension of Brabrook Road followed this process, and is now ready for acceptance.



Direct inquiries to: Corey M. York, P.E., Town Engineer: engineering@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6630
 Selectman assigned: Janet Adachi: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 31 * Accept Sidewalk Easements – Great Road

(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by purchase, gift, eminent domain or otherwise and to accept deeds of easement interests for sidewalks and associated drainage structures within and along the frontage on the following ways for all purposes which streets, sidewalks and ways are now or hereafter used in the Town, on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen may determine and in a final location or locations as the Selectmen may determine, on, across, over, and/or under the following land:

Great Road:

1. Land n/f of Iris Court Apartments, LLC of 1-5 Iris Court (Town Atlas Map G-5 Parcel 72),
2. Land n/f of Nagog Woods Condominium (Nonset Path & Town Atlas Map B-4 Parcel 8-5),

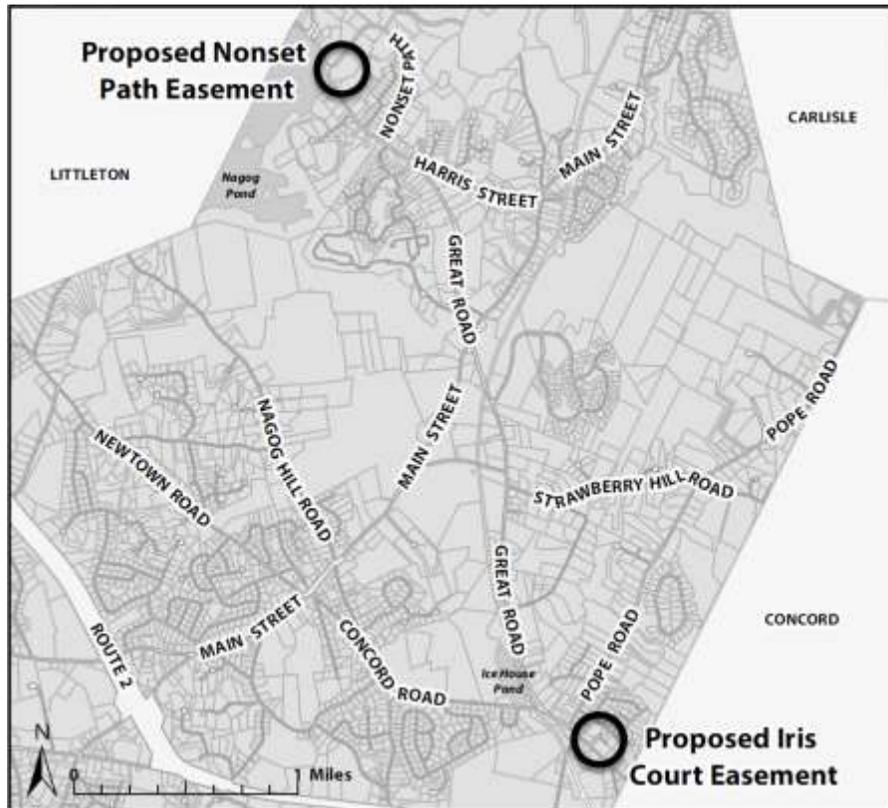
and further see if the Town will raise, appropriate, transfer from available funds or accept gifts for this purpose, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town authorize the acquisition of the easements as set forth in the Article.

Summary

These easements would provide the Town sufficient width along the road for sidewalks. These easements are needed due to the fact that there is insufficient room within the limits of the public way for the sidewalks given the location of the road pavement and the abutting properties.



Direct inquiries to: Corey M. York, P.E., Town Engineer: engineering@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6630
 Selectman assigned: Peter Berry: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 32 * **Highway Reimbursement Program (Chapter 90)**
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds, a sum of money for highway improvements under the authority of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 90, and any other applicable laws, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town authorize the Town Manager to accept Highway funds from all sources and that such funds are hereby appropriated for highway purposes.

Summary

Each year, the State provides communities with reimbursement for certain highway projects. The State Legislature annually establishes the level of highway improvement funds available to cities and towns under the so-called “Chapter 90” Program. This process is not completed until after Acton’s Annual Town Meeting; therefore, we are unable to specify a dollar amount at Town Meeting. State law requires that these State Highway Reimbursement Funds be appropriated by Town Meeting. The purpose of this article is to make that appropriation and allow the town to fully utilize whatever level of appropriation the State may make available during the upcoming fiscal year. If Town Meeting were to not adopt this article, it is conceivable that monies allocated to Acton may be redistributed to State projects or other cities and towns.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Katie Green: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 33 * Insurance Proceeds
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the proceeds of any insurance policy reimbursements of costs incurred as a result of any covered loss, including without limitation any liability insurance, property insurance, casualty insurance, workers’ compensation insurance, health insurance, disability insurance, automobile insurance, police and fire injury and medical costs, and any other insurance of any name and nature whatsoever, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town Manager is authorized to accept insurance proceeds of any name and nature whatsoever from all sources and such funds are hereby appropriated.

Summary

According to Massachusetts General Laws, reimbursements received from insurance carriers in excess of \$20,000 require appropriation. This article would authorize the Town Manager to expend such reimbursements.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 34 * Gifts or Grants
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the proceeds of any gifts or grants accepted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A, and any interest thereon, and that, consistent with the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 4A, the Board of Selectmen or Town Manager are authorized to enter into an agreement or agreements on behalf of the Town, on such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager may determine, for the stated purposes of the gifts or grants, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the proceeds of any gifts or grants from any source accepted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A, and any interest thereon, are hereby appropriated for the stated purposes of the gifts or grants, and may be expended with the approval of the Board of Selectmen or otherwise as stated in Section 53A.

Summary

Section 53A authorizes Town officers and departments to accept “grants or gifts of funds from the Federal Government and from a charitable foundation, a private corporation, or an individual, or from the commonwealth, a county or municipality or an agency thereof” and to expend said funds for the purposes of such grant or gift with the approval of the Board of Selectmen or otherwise as specified in the statute. The Department of Revenue has taken the position that such funds may require appropriation in certain circumstances. This Article provides that appropriation so that those funds may be expended for their stated purposes.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations: **Board of Selectmen** **Finance Committee**
 Recommended **Recommended**

Article 35 * **Federal And State Reimbursement Aid**
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate any Federal Government and State Government reimbursement for costs incurred as a result of any declared emergencies or other occurrence, and that, consistent with the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 4A, the Board of Selectmen or Town Manager are authorized to enter into an agreement or agreements on behalf of the Town, on such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager may determine, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town Manager is authorized to accept Federal and State reimbursement funds from all sources and that such funds are hereby appropriated for the purposes outlined by such reimbursement.

Summary

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) each provide planning and mitigation monies to cities and towns, and each reimburses for certain costs during declared emergencies. In addition, monies may be distributed for Homeland Defense, other Federal programs and other State programs. This article would authorize the Town to expend all such monies.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 36 * **Performance Bonds**
(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the proceeds of any performance bonds for the purposes stated in said bonds available as a result of any default, non-performance or other covered conditions, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town appropriate the proceeds of any performance bonds, for the purposes stated in said bonds, available as a result of any default, non-performance or other covered conditions.

Summary

The Department of Revenue has issued an opinion that the Town cannot expend performance bonds without appropriation. This article would authorize the Town Manager to expend funds secured from performance bonds provided by or on behalf of contractors and others to secure the performance of obligations by such persons to the Town.

Direct inquiries to: Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager: manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611
Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 37 * Sale of Foreclosed Properties

(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of foreclosed properties acquired by the Town for nonpayment of taxes in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move in the words of the Article.

Summary

This article grants authority to the Board of Selectmen to sell and convey properties that the Town has obtained via tax foreclosure.

Direct inquiries to: Stephen Barrett, CPA, Finance Director: collector@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6624
Selectman assigned: Mike Gowing: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

Article 38 * Accept Chapter 59, Section 5C½ – Elderly, Veterans & Disabled Tax Relief

(Majority vote)

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 5C ½, to allow an additional property tax exemption to a taxpayer who otherwise qualifies for an exemption pursuant to any clause specifically listed in the first paragraph of Section 5 of Chapter 59 for which receipt of another exemption on the same property would otherwise be prohibited, or take any other action relative thereto.

Motion

Move that the Town accept Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 5C½.

Summary

This is a reauthorization of an ongoing program of tax relief for certain qualifying individuals that was first adopted by Town Meeting in 1999. In 2014, state law was amended to provide for a one-time acceptance of the authorizing legislation, in place of the annual acceptances as had been the previous practice under Section 4 of Chapter 73 of the Acts of 1986 as amended by Chapter 126 of the Acts of 1988. The 2014 legislation makes it possible for the Town to accept Section 5C ½ once and thereby to grant certain real estate tax relief for the elderly, disabled and veterans who qualify for certain additional property tax exemptions which would otherwise be unavailable if the legislation were not accepted by the Town.

Direct inquiries to: Brian McMullen, Principal Assessor: assessor@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6621
Selectman assigned: Franny Osman: bos@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>
	Recommended	Recommended

And you are directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof fourteen days at least before the time of said meeting, in not less than six public places in Town, to be designated by the Board of Selectmen.

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

Given under our hands at Acton this seventeenth day of March, 2015.

Mike Gowing, Chair
Katie Green, Vice Chair
Peter Berry, Clerk
Janet K. Adachi
Franny Osman

Board of Selectmen

A true copy, Attest:



Constable of Acton

Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in Municipal Finance

Abatement: A complete or partial cancellation of a tax bill imposed by a governmental unit; applicable to tax levies and special assessments.

Appropriation: An authorization granted by a legislative body to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is usually limited in amount and the time when it can be expended. Any amount that is appropriated may be encumbered.

A warrant article appropriation is carried forward from year to year until spent for the designated purpose or transferred by town meeting vote to another account.

Assessed Valuation: The value placed upon a particular property by the local Board of Assessors for the purpose of apportioning the town's tax levy among individual property owners equitably and in accordance with the legal requirement that property be assessed at "full and fair cash value", certified periodically by the Commonwealth's Commissioner of Revenue (no less frequently than once every three years).

Audit: Work done by accountants in examining financial reports, reviewing compliance with applicable laws and regulations, reviewing effectiveness in achieving program results. A basic audit examines only the financial reports and legal compliance. An outside Certified Public Accountant (CPA) audit is directed primarily toward the expression of an opinion as to the fairness of the financial statements and submission of a management letter. An auditor must be independent of the executive branch of government. A state auditor, private CPA or public accountant, or elected auditor meets this test.

Balance Sheet: A statement that discloses the assets, liabilities, reserves and equities of a fund or government unit at a specified date.

Budget: A plan of financial operation embodying an estimate of proposed expenditures for a given period and the proposed means of financing them. A budget may be preliminary (the financial plan presented to the town meeting) or final (the plan approved by that body).

Capital Budget: A plan of proposed capital outlays and the means of financing them for the current fiscal period. It is usually a part of the current budget.

Capital Exclusion: A vote to exclude from the levy limit the cost of a capital project. This exclusion only affects the levy limit for the year in which the project was undertaken.

Cemetery Land Fund: A fund established to which revenues are earmarked for the acquisition of land development costs on designated cemetery land purchases.

Cherry Sheet: An annual statement received from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue detailing estimated receipts for the next fiscal year for the various state aid accounts and estimated state and county government charges payable by the Town in setting the tax rate. The actual receipts and charges may vary from the estimates.

Classification: The division of the real estate tax and personal property voted by the Selectmen. The Selectmen may choose one rate for residences, another rate for business, and another rate for open space.

Debt Exclusion: A vote to exclude from the levy limit the costs of debt service for capital projects. This exclusion remains in effect for the life of the debt only.

Debt Service: Payment of interest and principal related to debt.

Encumbrance: Obligations such as purchase orders, contracts, salary commitments which are chargeable to an appropriation and for which a part of the appropriation is reserved.

Enterprise Fund: A standalone fund with its own assets, liabilities, fund balance, revenues and expenses in which a municipal service is operated as a business unit. Costs of the service are primarily recovered from user charges, and may be supplemented by general revenues.

Equalized Valuation: The value of all property as determined by the Commissioner of Revenue biennially, to place all property in the state upon an equal footing, regardless of date of assessment.

Excess and Deficiency: Also called the "surplus revenue" account, this is the amount by which cash, accounts receivable, and other assets exceed a regional school district's liabilities and reserves as certified by the Director of Accounts. The calculation is based on a year-end balance sheet which is submitted to the Department of Revenue by the district's auditor, accountant, or comptroller as of June 30. The regional school committee must apply certified amounts exceeding five percent of the district's prior year operating and capital costs to reduce the assessment on member cities and towns.

Expenditure: The spending of money by the town and schools for the programs or projects within the approved budget.

FTE: A full-time equivalent employee based on a 40-hour work week. May be one or more employees, but the total weekly hours equal 40.

Fiscal Year ("FY"): A 12-month period, beginning July 1 and ending June 30, to which the annual budget applies and at the end of which a governmental unit determines its financial position and the results of its operations. The number of the fiscal year is that of the calendar year in which it ends; for example, FY16 or FY 2016 is the fiscal year which begins July 1, 2015 and ends June 30, 2016.

Free Cash: Certified as of each July 1 by the State, this is the portion of Undesignated Fund Balance available for appropriation. It is not cash *per se*, rather it is approximately the total of cash and receivables less current liabilities and earmarked reserves, reduced also by reserves for uncollected taxes.

Fund: An accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts that is segregated for the purpose of carrying on identified activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with specific regulations, restrictions or limitations.

General Fund: The fund into which the general (non-earmarked) revenues of the town are deposited and from which money is appropriated to pay expenses.

General Obligation Bonds: Bonds issued by the Town that are backed by the full faith and credit of its taxing authority.

Joint Labor Management Negotiation Process: A negotiation process available to Police and Fire Unions, which utilizes Commonwealth of Massachusetts' mediators and arbitrators. If an arbitration decision is issued, it is binding upon the Executive Branch (The Board of Selectmen and Management Staff). Further, the Executive Branch must fully support such an arbitration decision before Town Meeting, even if they believe such a decision is not in the best interest of the Town.

Level-Service Budget: A budget that describes the funding required for maintaining current levels of service or activity, plus cost increases for contractual and mandated obligations. It brings previously-approved programs forward at existing levels of service.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB): The set of benefits, other than pensions, that government employees earn while actively working, but do not receive until they retire. Typically included is health insurance coverage for retirees, their spouses and in some cases their beneficiaries.

Overlay: The amount raised from the property tax levy in excess of appropriations and other charges. It is used to cover abatements and exemptions granted locally or on appeal, and cannot exceed an amount deemed reasonable by the Commissioner of Revenue.

Override: A vote to increase the amount of property tax revenue that may be raised over the levy limit.

Personnel Services: The cost of salaries, wages and related employment benefits.

Purchased Services: The cost of services that are provided by a vendor.

Property Tax Bill: The amount produced by multiplying the assessed valuation of property by the tax rate. The tax rate is expressed per thousand dollars of assessed valuation, for example:

House Value:	\$ 300,000	
Tax rate:	\$ 10	which means \$10 per thousand
Levy:	\$ 10	multiplied by \$300,000 and divided by \$1,000
Result:	\$ 3,000	

Raise: A phrase used to identify a funding source for an expenditure which refers to money generated by the tax levy or other local receipt.

Reserve Fund: A fund appropriated each year that may be used only by vote of the Finance Committee for “extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.”

Revolving Fund: Those funds that may be used for special uses. For example, Recreation fees may be paid into a revolving fund, and expenditures can be made without appropriation with the approval of the Town Manager. Revolving funds are established by state law or town bylaw. Some revolving funds must be annually reauthorized by Town Meeting.

Stabilization Fund: A fund designed to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose (MGL Ch. 40 §5B). Stabilization funds may be established for different purposes, and interest generated by such funds is added to and becomes part of the stabilization fund. A two-thirds vote of town meeting is required to establish, amend the purpose of, or appropriate money into or out of the stabilization fund.

Tax Levy: Total amount of dollars assessed in property taxes imposed by the Town each fiscal year.

Turn Back: Unexpended funds of a prior fiscal year operating budget are returned to the Town, which ultimately revert to Free Cash.

Unreserved Fund Balance or Surplus Revenue Account: The amount by which cash, accounts receivable and other assets exceed liabilities and restricted reserves. It is akin to the stockholders equity account on a corporate balance sheet. It is not, however, available for appropriation in full because a portion of the assets listed as “accounts receivable” may be taxes receivable and uncollected. (See Free Cash)

Warrant: A list of matters to be acted on by Town Meeting.

Town Meeting Parliamentary Procedure

Town Meeting is an old and honored tradition in New England. After more than 200 years we can say it still works – it does its job – and hopefully it’s more than a little enjoyable for you, the voters. It’s also the only form of government where the leaders must face the citizenry directly to answer all reasonable queries – and perhaps even some not so reasonable! However, to work well it must have rules of order – and it does. Town Meetings operate under what is generally called “parliamentary procedure” – in our case, as spelled out in Town Meeting Time. Unfortunately, this wonderful little book is widely read only by Moderators, Town Clerks, Town Counsels and a few others with unusual tastes. In addition to such formal procedures Town Meetings also are subject to relatively arbitrary rules of order set forth by the Moderator and precedent. The following information puts forth the most widely used of these “rules of the road” as an effort to help you enjoy and participate in our Town Meetings.

Moderator’s Rules

These are quite arbitrary, but hopefully are consistently applied:

1. Any registered voter may speak to any article, but all must speak politely and respectfully to other voters and members of town boards. Civility is required at all times.
2. Since many voters may wish to speak, brevity of comment is appreciated. In addition, speakers are encouraged to add new points to the debate as opposed to repeating what others have already stated.
3. Voters may speak to an issue more than once, but generally “first time” speakers will be recognized before “repeaters”.
4. Remember to listen closely to the motion as stated. The motion puts the warrant article “in play” and it is the motion that is voted on, not the article as written in the warrant. However, there should be a strong similarity between motion and article.
5. Most motions must be “seconded”. Seconding motions is an easy way for newcomers to participate in the meeting. One does not even need to stand or be directly recognized. Generally calling out “second” at the right time will suffice.
6. Voting is most often done by voice. As the Moderator’s hearing fails, “standing” counts may be taken. The last resort, due to time constraints, is to take a counted vote by teller.
7. Although not encouraged, the Moderator’s judgment can be questioned as to the accuracy of the vote as announced. If seven (7) people request a “recount” of a voice or standing votes, it shall be done.
8. The Moderator will generally accept the motion to “move the previous question”, or more easily understood, “to cut off debate.” Many people think this motion is somewhat unfair, but it has been my experience that, more often than not, it is passed unanimously or by overwhelming numbers. In the past, the Moderator has been accused of knowing who plans to make such a motion – generally such accusations are accurate!
9. After a motion has been made and seconded, the mover of the motion speaks first, followed by the appropriate Town Boards (generally the Selectmen and the Finance Committee) who state their opinions. The motion is then available for general discussion – pro, con, or questions.
10. Other than when seconding a motion or requesting a point of order, speakers must be recognized by the Moderator before they launch into their point or question. For the most part this “rule of the road” is rigorously enforced.

More Formal Parliamentary Procedure

There are many types of motions that may come before a meeting. The table below is far from all-inclusive, but indicates the most commonly used motions.

Motion	Second Required	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	May Reconsider	May Interrupt
Dissolve	Yes	No	No	Majority	No	No
Fix the Time to Adjourn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Lay on the Table	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	Yes	No
Previous Question	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	No	No
Limit Debate	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	Yes	No
Postpone to a Time Certain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Majority	Yes	No
Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes	No
Point of Order	No	No	No	None	No	Yes
Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varies	Yes	No
Reconsider ²	Yes	Yes	No	Two-thirds	No	No

¹ In Acton, we generally do not accept amendments to amendments – too confusing.

² Controlled by Town bylaw – 2/3 Vote same night; 3/4 Vote, plus posting ensuing nights.

Some of the motions listed above may not be totally understandable in table form only. The following elaboration may help.

The motion to *dissolve* ends the Town meeting and is appropriate only when all business is completed.

Fix the time to adjourn is a motion often made by the Selectmen and indicates when a given Town Meeting session will end and when the next session will begin.

Lay on the table is a motion used to end debate temporarily or permanently on a given motion. A motion laid on the table may remain there forever, or may be retrieved by the appropriate “take from the table” vote.

The previous question cuts off debate immediately and causes a vote on the article or amendment under discussion.

Limit debate is a motion generally used to put a specific time limit on a motion or time limits on individual speakers.

Postpone to a time certain is a motion generally used to rearrange the order of the articles (or a single article) in the warrant.

Amend – Many types of motions can be amended or altered to bring them to an even higher state of perfection. Of course, since amendments are a little like “beauty being in the eye of the beholder,” they

sometimes fail to pass. In any event, after the amendment is disposed of by a vote, the primary motion, either so amended or not, comes back to the assemblage for further discussion and vote.

Postpone Indefinitely serves the same basic purpose as laying a motion on the table except that it is debatable and requires only a majority vote. If the postpone motion carries, the motion to which it applies is dead – in parliamentary terms, at least.

Point of Order – Anyone at any time may rise to a point of order and interrupt the speaker, simply stating, “Point of order, Mr. Moderator.” The Moderator will immediately stop discussion, listen to the point of order and rule on its validity. Points of order may relate to many issues, for example, the right of a speaker to the floor, proper procedures, indecorous conduct or rarely, but within the realm of possibility, some error that the Moderator is committing.

Main Motions are made when no other business is pending and are the devices used to bring the warrant articles to the Town Meeting floor for discussion.

Reconsideration may be used to bring an article (or motion) which has already been disposed of back for a second time. If reconsideration is passed, it nullifies the previous vote and the article is re-discussed and re-voted. Many people feel that reconsideration is unfair, but it is a valid procedure and is occasionally used. In Acton, a Town Bylaw controls the vote quantum rather than Town Meeting Time. Anyone who wishes to reconsider a motion, particularly on a different night from the original vote, would be well advised to consult the Town Clerk on proper procedures.

Parliamentary procedure is not really complex, but the rules, like the rules of golf, do not always make sense. However, they should be consistently applied. If they are, then the Town Meeting can conduct its business in both an orderly and a fair fashion.

I hope this small treatise is helpful to you and adds to your understanding and enjoyment of a most precious right – TOWN MEETING.

Don MacKenzie
Town Moderator

Internet & Telephone References

Official Town of Acton Web Site	http://www.acton-ma.gov
Document Management System (“Docushare”)	http://doc.acton-ma.gov
Geographic Information System (“GIS”)	http://www.acton-ma.gov/gis

The Town maintains electronic mail distribution groups for all Boards, Committees and Commissions, as well as Departments. These groups are commonly referred to as “e-mail shells.”

E-mails sent to shells are automatically forwarded to all members of the committee who have provided their e-mail address to the Town.

Using e-mail does *not* satisfy Open Meeting Law requirements (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, Section 23B). Please direct questions regarding this law to the Town Clerk.

To use a shell, send your e-mail to the address listed in the center column of this table. When replying to an e-mail sent to a shell, it is recommended that you use the "Reply to All" function of your e-mail program so that all members are copied on your reply.

Town offices converted to a Voice-over-IP telephone system in 2010. Below are the new telephone numbers associated with each department and committee. Old numbers will continue to work for a period of time.

<u>Department, Board or Committee</u>	<u>E-mail address</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Acton 2020 Implementation Committee	acton2020@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6631
Acton Community Housing Corporation	achc@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6611
Acton Leadership Group	alg@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6611
Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council	abcc@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6611
Appeals, Zoning Board of	boa@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6631
Assessor Department	assessor@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6621
Assessors, Board of	bas@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6621
Building Department	building@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6633
Cable Advisory Committee	cac@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6612
Cemetery Department	cemetery@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6642
Citizens' Library Department, West Acton	wacl@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6654
Clerk Department, Town	clerk@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6620
Collector Department	collector@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6622
Commission on Disability	cod@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6633
Community Preservation Committee	cpc@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6631
Community Resources Coordinator	lducharme@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6651
Conservation Commission	conscom@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6634
Council on Aging	coa@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6652
Council on Aging Department (Senior Center)	seniorcenter@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6652
Design Review Board	drb@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6631
Economic Development Committee	edc@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6631
Emergency Management Agency	ema@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-7730
Engineering Department	engineering@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6630
Finance Committee	fincom@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6611
Fire Department	fire@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-7722
Green Advisory Board	gab@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-7744
Health, Board of	boh@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6632
Health Department	health@acton-ma.gov	(978) 929-6632

Health Insurance Trustees	hit@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Highway Department	highway@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-7740
Historic District Commission	hdc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6631
Historical Commission	hc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6631
Human Resources Department	hr@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6613
Information Technology Department	it@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6612
Land Stewardship Committee	lsc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6634
Manager Department, Town	manager@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Memorial Library Department	library@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6655
Memorial Library Trustees	mlt@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6655
Morrison Farm Committee	mc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6634
Municipal Properties Department	mp@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-7744
Natural Resources Department	nr@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6634
Nursing Department	nursing@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6650
Nursing Service Task Force, Acton	anstf@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6650
Open Space Committee	osc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6634
Parking Clerk	parkingclerk@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Planning Board	pb@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6631
Planning Department	planning@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6631
Police Department	police@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-7711
Public Ceremonies Committee	pcc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Recreation Commission	reccom@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6640
Recreation Department	recreation@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6640
School Committee, A-B Regional	abrsc@abschools.org	(978)	264-4700
School Committee, Acton Public	apsc@abschools.org	(978)	264-4700
School Committee, Minuteman		(781)	861-6500
Selectmen, Board of	bos@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Senior Center Study Committee	scsc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6652
Senior Taxation Aid Committee	stac@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6621
Sidewalk Committee	sidewalks@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6630
South Acton Train Station Advisory	satsac@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6630
Town Report Committee	trc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Transportation Advisory Committee	tac@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6630
Treasurer's Advisory Committee	trac@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Veterans Service Officer	vso@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6614
Volunteer Coordinating Committee	vcc@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6611
Water Resources Advisory Committee	wrac@acton-ma.gov	(978)	929-6632

Emergency Notification Systems

The Town of Acton is committed to delivering timely and important information to its residents. Several emergency notification systems are operational within the Town of Acton providing varying degrees of information for those who need it.

Examples of Emergency Notifications include:

- Shelter Locations
- Missing Persons
- Utility Outages
- Bomb Threats
- Road Closures
- Other emergency incidents where rapid and accurate notification is essential for life safety
- Evacuation Notices
- Floods
- Fires
- Drinking Water Contamination
- Hazardous Materials Incidents



Blackboard Connect (Previously Connect-CTY)

The Blackboard Connect system is a high-speed telephone communication service for emergency notifications. The system allows authorized Town officials to disseminate voice messages to every telephone number stored in the notification database in a matter of minutes. Additionally the system allows us to target specific geographic areas of the Town such as individual neighborhoods or a defined radius around an incident.

While we receive telephone record updates from Verizon to populate our contact database, no one should automatically assume his or her phone number or e-mail address is included. Just as citizens may choose to opt *out* of these notifications, citizens in these categories are particularly invited to *add* their information to the database:

- Use a cellular phone as their primary phone
- Have unlisted phone numbers
- Have changed their phone number or address within the last year
- Have recently moved, but kept the same listed or unlisted phone number
- Wish to receive text and/or email messages in addition to telephone calls
- Receive their phone service over the internet (e.g. Verizon FIOS, Comcast XFINITY, Vonage)

In recent years, many people have converted their telephone service to Internet-based Voice-over-IP systems such as Vonage, Comcast XFINITY, and Verizon FIOS. While traditional land-lines are powered from the phone company's central office, these newer technologies rely on power supplied at the premise. These services typically connect through a device in the home that is equipped with a backup battery that will last about four to eight hours. That means corded phones using this service will work without your home's electric power for a limited amount of time. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that you register your cellular phone number in addition to your primary home number. During extended power outages, the Town has opened public "charging stations" where residents can charge their cellular phones and other electronic devices at Town facilities that are backed up by generator power.

We encourage residents to update their own information including adding cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses by visiting the Town's website at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/cty>. Here, you can register, review,

and update your contact information. Residents without access to the Internet may accomplish this by calling the **Information Technology Department** at **(978) 929-6612** or by visiting Town Hall.



Town Web Site

The Town's official website is continually updated with emergency information as soon as it is made available. We encourage residents to utilize the "Notify Me" feature to receive e-mail alerts when emergency information is added or updated on our site. You can do this by visiting the website at <http://www.acton-ma.gov> and clicking on the 'Notify Me by E-mail' link.



Mobile Message Boards

The Town maintains several trailer mounted, solar powered LED message boards. They are routinely used to alert motorists to road closures and construction work, to announce Town meetings and events, direct traffic during elections and special events and, most importantly, display pertinent instructions and information during emergency situations. While the mobile message boards can be dynamically deployed, during a Town-wide emergency such as weather related event these boards will primarily be staged at the following, or similar high-profile, locations:

- Acton Public Safety Facility – 371 Main Street
 - The intersection of Great Road and Main Street (Routes 2A and 27)
 - The School Campus entrance, Massachusetts Avenue (Route 111) at Charter Road
-



Acton TV Government Cable Channel

The Town of Acton Government Cable Channel will be continually updated with the latest emergency instructions and notifications. The Government Channel can be found on the following channels depending on your cable system provider:

Comcast: Channel 99

| **Verizon FIOS:** Channel 41

Volunteer Application

VOLUNTEER COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Town Hall
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

E-mail: vcc@acton-ma.gov
Telephone: (978) 929-6611
Fax: (978) 929-6350

Residents interested in serving on a Town Board, Committee or Commission are asked to complete this form and forward it to the Office of the Town Manager at Town Hall.

(Please print or type)

Date _____

Name Title (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.) / First / Last / Suffix (Sr., Jr., III, etc.)

Address Number / Street

Contact E-mail Address / Telephone Number(s) (Home, Business, Cell, etc.)

Please indicate below, in order of preference, the Board, Committee or Commission that is of interest to you: _____

Have you previously been a member of a Board, Committee or Commission (either in Acton or elsewhere)? If so, please list the Board name and your approximate dates of service: _____

Do you have any time restrictions? _____

Are you a United States Citizen? _____ Are you a Documented Resident Alien of Acton? _____

How long have you lived in Acton? _____ In Massachusetts? _____

Present occupation and employer (Optional: Attach résumé) _____

Do you or your employer have any current or potential business relationship with the Town of Acton that could create a conflict of interest? _____

Education or special training: _____

Please list below any additional information or comments that may help in the matching of your interests with the most appropriate Board/Committee, such as civic experience, special interest/hobbies, etc.:

Thank you. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact a member of the Volunteer Coordinating Committee. Current membership may be obtained through the Town Manager's office at Town Hall, manager@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6611.

The space below is for use by the Volunteer Coordinating Committee and the appointing body to record the status of your application.

VCC Interview

Applicant Called _____

Schedule Date & Time _____

Recommendation _____

Board, Committee or Commission

Recommendation Sent _____

No openings at this time

Appointing Body

Selectmen / Manager / Moderator

Interview Date _____

Appointed Date _____

Term _____

Member / Alternate / Associate

Notification of Appointment

Received by VCC _____

Committee Notified _____

Applicant Notified _____

Proposed Town Meeting Booklet

As I have previously mentioned at Town Meetings, I plan to put together a series of thoughts or vignettes on Town Meeting during the latter part of the Twentieth and the first years of the Twenty-First Centuries. No such work presently exists, and I'll need your help.

I'd very much appreciate your writing a few thoughts on Town Meeting – the “good” or the “less than good” about the process, a fond (particularly humorous) memory, a good or otherwise decision made, or anything in general you'd like to have included and be attributed to you in the booklet.

Please mail your submission to me at 12 Wilson Lane, Acton. I'd like to receive 100 or more different ideas for inclusion. Thank you.

Don MacKenzie
Town Moderator

Thoughts or Comments on Town Meeting

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(Please continue on reverse side)

Online Bill Payments

*Pay Real Estate or Personal Property Tax Bills, Motor Vehicle Excise bills, or
Sewer Operation and Maintenance Bills Online*

www.acton-ma.gov/payonline

The Town of Acton is pleased to offer an easy and secure way to view, print, and pay real estate and personal property tax bills, motor vehicle excise bills and sewer operation and maintenance bills online. We support electronic presentment (viewing) and billing, as it is more convenient for our residents and better for the environment. Online presentment and payment eliminates the need to print and receive paper bills (except for motor vehicle excise bills, which the State requires be mailed).

The Town, in partnership with City Hall Systems, a web-based, electronic invoice presentment and processing company, offers online payment of the above bills via either EFT/ACH electronic checks (i.e., electronic fund transfers from your bank checking or savings accounts), or, Visa or Master Card credit/debit cards. The Town feels that this service presents the best value for online presentment and payments for our residents. City Hall Systems uses the highest standards in Internet security, and provides ease of use, and convenience to all our residents, for, in some instances, little more than the cost of a postage stamp.

- Access, view and pay your tax bills or sewer operation and maintenance bills online
- Available 24 hours/7 days from anywhere you have access to the Internet
- Paying your bill online is faster and, in some instances, cheaper than writing and mailing a check
- You may choose to eliminate paper invoices to reduce clutter and help the environment (except motor vehicle excise bills, which the State requires be mailed)
- You have the option to pay immediately, schedule a payment, or sign up for Auto-Pay
- You can pay with electronic check, or Visa or Master Card credit/debit cards

Please note: This service begins with, and goes forward from, the FY 2015 fourth quarter Real Estate and/or Personal Property tax bills, Sewer Operation and Maintenance bills, and any subsequent calendar year 2015 Motor Vehicle Excise bills. Any prior billing and/or payment activity that pre-dates July 1, 2013, will not be available online, and must involve the Town of Acton Collector's Office at (978) 929-6622.

For more details on payment options, fees and frequently asked questions, please see the Town web site at:

www.acton-ma.gov/payonline

Notes



**Town of Acton
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720**

**BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #67
ACTON, MA 01720**

**POSTAL PATRON
ACTON, MA 01720**