

TOWN OF HEATH
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HANDOUT & NOTES
August 1, 2020, 9:00 a.m., 18 Jacobs Road

Article 1: To hear the reports of the Town Officers and to act thereon.

Article 2: To choose all necessary officers not elected by ballot for the ensuing year.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or otherwise provide, a sum or sums in accordance with the proposed budget to defray the operating expenses of the Town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended in part by the Finance Committee

Article 3 Notes

***** Accounts:** Indicates those salaries that are proposed to receive a 1.5% cost of living adjustment.

Stipends: **FinCom** recommends (3-2 vote) a 50% reduction for the following stipend accounts: #2 & #3 Select Board; #9 & #10 Finance Committee; #15 & #16 Board of Assessors; #39 & #40 Planning Board; #82 School Committee; #110 & #112 Board of Health; #131 & #132 Library Trustees. This would total a reduction of \$8,400.

#12 & #13 Accounting services are contracted at the present time and must be considered an expense rather than a salary amount for an employee. Line 13 includes the contract fee and other expenses for this office.

#29 Post Office Operating Expense has been incorporated into #5 Office Supplies.

#42 Technical Support reflects the monthly subscription fees for the proposed new internet and email provider. Savings will be realized in building maintenance & utility accounts once the transition is complete. IT services will no longer be provided by or paid to the current provider.

#43 MLP Manager is a newly created position. The manager will work an average of 10 hours per week and will be responsible for the day-to-day operations and oversight of broadband accounts and service. The position has been rated at pay grade 12 and the salary reflects a mid-range wage. **FinCom** recommends reducing this amount to \$10,834 for a pro-rated 10-month period.

#46 Increased amount reflects entire hours worked at all town buildings and an increase of hourly wage based on experience, demands of the job and merit of performance.

#47, 48, 49, 51 Increase in each account reflects inclusion of internet service accounts that had been separate line items.

#49 The amount proposed is the Select Board's recommendation of \$15,000 plus internet service cost. The current balance in the MTRSD account for operating costs is \$53,362.65 which will be drawn down prior to spending from this account. **FinCom** recommends an amount of zero for this line.

#50 The copier is now town-owned and pays only a service fee based on level of usage.

#53 Increase is a reflection of premium changes across policies.

#75 Animal Inspector's Expense now covered by the FC Sheriff's Dept. Animal Control Program.

#101 Towns are now charged a per-ton fee for disposal of recycled materials. The increase of \$6,193 is based on the average recycled tonnage from previous years.

#104 Uniforms amount reflects an increase of rental costs for servicing and cleaning work attire.

#105 New state requirement.

#114 Account includes a \$1,000 membership contribution to the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District.

#124 Assessment of Veterans Benefit is based on eligibility level of recipient and 70% is refunded by the federal government.

#156 & #157 Amounts based on collective salaries.

#163 Special Projects monies carry over into this fiscal year and will be used to complete designated projects that are feasible.

#164 Pre-School Support funds may also be carried over. There are more than adequate funds from FY20 that will cover the anticipated budget of \$7,000 for FY21.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$965,369.00** for payment of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District Operating Assessment, or take any action related thereto.

Not Recommended by the Select Board

Not Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: It is requested by the MTRSD School Committee that this article be rejected as a final operating budget has not been set. At this time the state budget for FY 2021 and school district funding is unknown.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$13,023.24** for payment of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District Capital Assessment, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$56,303.00** for payment of the Franklin County Technical School Operating Assessment, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,389.09** for payment of the Franklin County Technical School Capital Assessment, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$180.96** from FY19 Free Cash to pay a Fiscal Year 2019 invoice from Heather Hathwell travel expenses; or take any other action related thereto.

Recommended by Select Board

Recommended by Finance Committee

4/5 vote required.

Note: Expenses incurred to attend a Heath Historical Commission seminar.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$5,906.91** from FY19 Free Cash to pay for the broadband dropline construction costs for Sawyer Hall, Community Hall, Highway & Fire Garages, and the former elementary school building, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: Paying for these constructions costs allows each town location to be considered as a separate customer and, therefore, entitled to be included in the customer reimbursement of \$500 each.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$2,500.00** from FY19 Free Cash to an Internet Technology Start-up Account for initial internet technology upgrade costs, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: This is a one-time expense to enter a contract with Northeast IT for services that include security, off-site backup, email security.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$7,200.00** from FY19 Free Cash for the purchase of a new snow plow for Highway Dept. Truck #3, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: To replace the existing 11 ft. Vortex Plow. Cost to rebuild current one would be almost ½ the cost of a new one.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$5,200.00** from FY19 Free Cash for the purchase of a new snow plow to equip the highway crew truck, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: This will outfit the crew truck with a Fisher 7' 6" standard duty plow to assist in snow removal on town-owned property with corners, smaller intersections and narrow roads such as Ledges Rd., Saunders Rd., town center parking, broadband hut, etc.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$5,500.00** from FY19 Free Cash for the remaining balance needed to purchase and install a paper compactor, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: The amount will be added to an \$8,000 grant that was awarded early this year and two years of RDP grant awards (\$4,200 each) for a paper compactor. Based on quantities of paper recycling, and less transport for the paper bin, this money will be recouped in about 2 years.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$12,500.00** from the Audit Stabilization account and **\$5,500.00** from FY19 Free Cash for the purpose of hiring a service to audit the Town financial records, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by Finance Committee

2/3 vote required.

Note: The Town has not had an audit of its financial services since 2016. During the past year, personnel has changed which is one indicator of the timeliness of a municipal audit.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to accept a sum of money under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 90 to be expended for roadway improvements and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a contract with Massachusetts Highway Department for such purposes, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by Finance Committee

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to authorize all Town departments, boards, and committees to apply for any new state or federal grants without prior permission from the Board of Selectmen, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept such grant awards providing no matching funds or other costs are required by the Town, or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by Finance Committee

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to transfer during FY21 the sum of **\$645.00** from the Revolving Fund for Animal Control Officer for the use of the Heath Free Public Library, or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen

Recommended by Finance Committee

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to amend the current Personal Property exemption under M.G.L. CH59, Section 5, Clause 54th from \$10,000 to \$5,000; or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Assessors

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: Passage of this article would reduce the taxable amount of personal property for second homeowners and businesses from \$10K to \$5K.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to establish a five-member Municipal Light Board, which shall have authority to construct, purchase or lease a gas or electric plant in accordance with the vote of the town and to maintain and operate the same, that is independent from the Select Board, to be elected at the 2021 Annual Town Election. Of the five-member board, initially one shall be chosen for one year, two for two years and two for three years and thereafter, the term shall be for three years, or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Not within the purview of the Finance Committee

Note: Accommodations in Mass. General Law allow for an elected MLB which is established to function in the best interest of the broadband subscribers.

Article 20: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44, §53E ½, as most recently amended, to establish FY21 spending limits as set forth below for the revolving funds established in Section 7, 7.3 of the General Bylaw entitled, “Revolving Funds”, with such limits to be applicable from fiscal year to fiscal year until revised by Town Meeting prior to July 1 for the ensuing fiscal year:

Authorized Revolving Funds	Fiscal Year Expenditure Limit
<i>Hearings Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 1,000
<i>Animal Control Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 2,000
<i>Board of Health Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 5,000
<i>Council on Aging Meals Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 3,000
<i>Board of Health Vaccine Program Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 3,000
<i>Recycling Program Revolving Fund</i>	\$10,000
<i>School Building Use Revolving Fund</i>	\$30,000
<i>Senior Center Revolving Fund</i>	\$ 1,000
<i>Treasurer Tax Taking Revolving Fund</i>	\$15,000

or take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws of the Town of Heath, by replacing Section 9: Animal Welfare with the language that is on file in the Town Clerk's Office in substantive form, or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Animal Control Collaborative

Recommended by the Select Board

Not within the purview of the Finance Committee

Note: The proposed Animal Welfare Bylaws are very similar to what is already a part of the General Bylaws. These amendments bring the bylaws up-to-date with current Mass. General Law and allow for continuity within the towns who are members in the county Animal Control Officer program.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Heath's General Bylaws, Section 4.1.2 [Town Boards, Committees and Commissions] to include the following language:

In order to be appointed to any Town Board, Committee, Commission or ad hoc Committee created by the Select Board; a person must have established fulltime residency within the Town of Heath not less than six months prior to appointment, or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by Citizen Petition

Not within the purview of the Finance Committee

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$5,000 in legal and acquisition costs, and \$15,000 in land purchase expense, for a total appropriation of \$20,000 to enable the Town of Heath to provide interim financing subject to the Town of Heath receiving notice of an affirmative award of a Mohawk Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to acquire for conservation purposes and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept the deed to the town of fee simple interest or less, of a parcel of land along an abandoned portion of Flagg Hill Road Extension (formerly known as Burnt Hill Road or Pocumtuck Road) consisting of 11.2± acres of open land identified as land belonging to the Heirs of John R. Davenport in the records of the town assessors; a map being on file with the Town Clerk, together with all flowage rights and easements and subject to all well rights and easements; said land to be managed by the Heath Conservation Commission; and that to meet this appropriation the sum of up to \$20,000 be transferred, and the treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen, and to authorize the Conservation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Committee, and the Board of Selectmen to submit on behalf of the town any and all applications deemed necessary for grants and/or reimbursements from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States, under the Self-Help Act (M.G.L. Chapter 132A § 11) and/or any other state or federal programs including those in aid of conservation land acquisition; and/or any others in any way connected with the scope of this Article; said gifts or grants to be deposited in a Parks and Recreation Committee Endowment Fund account balance; and that the Board of Selectmen be directed to grant a perpetual conservation restriction in said parcel of land meeting the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 44B, § 12 and M.G.L. Chapter 184, §§ 31-33, and to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary to affect said purchase, said funds to be expended by the Conservation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Committee; or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Parks and Recreation Committee

Recommended by the Select Board

Recommended by the Finance Committee

Note: The Parks & Rec Committee have applied for a state grant that would be used to purchase the above named land which would connect the town-owned Shapiro Land with Catamount State Forest. If the grant is received and the land purchased, a hiking trail would be built connecting the trails in the Shapiro Land with trails in Catamount. If the grant is not awarded, the land will not be purchased.

Article 24: To see if there is any other business for discussion to come before the Town Meeting, or take any action related thereto.

Submitted by the Select Board