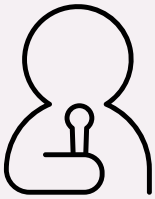
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

ARTICLE GUIDE



ARTICLE 1 - REPORTS

Article 1 allows any Town Board, Committee, or Officer to provide a report of their work in FY24.

ARTICLE 2 - UNPAID BILLS OF FY23

This article is necessary to pay bills of prior fiscal years consistent with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44 Section 64. This requires a 4/5ths vote at Town Meeting.

The Town has one prior year bill that needs approval for payment: a Verizon telephone bill in the amount of $139.95.

ARTICLE 3 - TRANSFER TO WATER ENTERPRISE FUND

This article allows for financial transfers from available funds to the Water Enterprise Fund. At present, the Town does not anticipate the Water Enterprise Fund to require any additional appropriations or transfers for the current fiscal year, FY2024.



ARTICLE 4 - OPERATING BUDGET

Article 4 is the Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget for the Town and Schools in the amount of $13,107,748.

Budget Category Spending:

General Government: $631,255
Public Safety: $1,687,507
Public Works: $895,811
Library and Recreation: $310,494
Human Services: $79,328
Debt Service: $179,627
Insurance and Assessments: $967,574
Regional School Districts: $8,356,152

Revenue Sources:

Town's Property Tax Levy: $11,766,908
Local Receipts: $750,000
State Aid: $384,676
Free Cash: $358,724

ARTICLE 5 - FREE CASH TRANSFER FOR FY2025

This article is necessary to appropriate Free Cash to subsidize the FY2025 operating budget.

The FY2025 operating budget is reliant on $358,724 of free cash to balance the budget.



ARTICLE 6 - REVOLVING FUND EXPENDITURE LIMITS

This article is necessary to set expenditure limits for FY2024 for Town Revolving Funds pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E½.

A revolving fund separately accounts for specific revenues and earmarks them for expenditure for particular purposes to support the activity, program or service that generated the revenues.

The Town has 6 revolving funds:

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ARTICLE 6 CONTINUED

Cemetery.....$10,000
Recreation.....$7,000
COA Transport.....$3,500
Permit Application Fees.....$5,000
Approval Not Required Plans.....$15,000
Transfer Station.....$155,400

ARTICLE 7 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS

This article requests approval for funding to support capital expenditures for the Town. The total funding request is $119,344 to support the following capital projects and purchases:



POLICE CRUISER
$60,000



POLICE STATION WINDOW REPLACEMENT
$20,000



POLICE STATION GUTTER IMPROVEMENTS
$844



FIREFIGHTER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
$16,000



HIGHWAY SPREADER AND SANDER
$22,500

ARTICLE 9 - COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

This article would appropriate or reserve from the annual Community Preservation Act annual revenues in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for debt service, community preservation projects, and potential administrative expenses,

ARTICLE 10 - REMOVAL OF INVASIVE WEEDS AT LAKE MASSAPOAG

This article would appropriate $3,500 from the CPA Open Space/Recreation Allocation to support the continued removal of invasive weeds at Lake Massapoag.

ARTICLE 11 - RENOVATION OF WELLS AT LARTER FIELD

This article would appropriate $11,940 from the CPA Open Space/Recreation Allocation to continue and complete the restoration work on the Larter Field wells, replacing 2 of the 7 wells.

ARTICLE 8 - WATER SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

This articles requests $35,0000 from Water Enterprise retained earnings to fund MassDEP mandated improvements to the Town's municipal water supply. As a result of water quality impacts from high seasonal temperatures in 2022 and 2023 and a MassDEP inspection, a permanent water disinfection system is required to be installed. The system includes equipment to constantly measure chlorine levels in the water and provide remote notification to the water system operators.

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ARTICLE 12 - TOWN CENTER TRAIL LOOP FEASIBILITY STUDY

This article would appropriate $20,000 from the CPA Undesignated Allocation to fund a feasibility study and concept design to advance the development of a 1.5m shared-use path network in Town Center. The proposed trail connects key local destinations through a loop over publicly-owned land. The goal of this project is to advance an accessible, safe, and enjoyable trail loop to encourage recreation by residents and visitors of all ages and abilities .

The Town has submitted a grant application through the MassTrails program in the amount of $110,000. The Town is requesting $20,000 as matching funds to the grant. If the Town does not secure the grant, this project will not move forward until another funding stream is secured.



ARTICLE 13 - UNION SCHOOL BUILDING RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION

This article requests a total of $1,132,750 - $200,000 from CPA Historic Preservation Allocation and to borrow the remaining balance of $932,150 - to rehabilitate and restore the exterior of the Union School Building. This request is derived from an update of the original condition assessment preformed by Spencer Preservation Group, and also includes a 15% contingency.



Over the last year, the Union Building Rehabilitation Committee has worked with Northern Middlesex Council of Governments and Spencer Preservation Group to identify potential and viable re-use options and a plan to improve the building which has included an extensive community outreach program. As a result of this work, a Final Project Report will narrow down re-use options for the community to consider.

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ARTICLE 14 - TOWN HALL CHIMNEY AND ROOF REPAIRS

This article requests $20,000 from CPA Historic Preservation Allocation to make repairs to the Town Hall roof and chimney structure. This area of the roof has been the cause of roof leaks over the course of this fiscal year. Temporary repairs have recently been made for immediate relief but more permanent repair and restoration work is required.

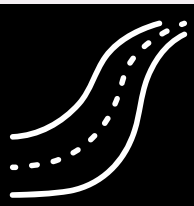
ARTICLE 15 - HIGH STREET PROPERTY CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

This article requests $300,000 - $6,000 from Administrative, $50,000 from Open Space/Recreation Allocation, and $244,000 from Undesignated Allocation to purchase a conservation restriction, through the Conservation Commission, for open space and conservation purposes on a property adjacent to 346 High Street.



ARTICLE 16 - CONSTRUCTION OF TENNIS COURTS AT LARTER FIELD

This article requests $140,875 from CPA Undesignated Allocation to fund the construction of new tennis and pickleball courts at Larter Field. On July 30, 2020, Town Meeting approved the appropriation of $182,000 to rehabilitate the existing tennis courts behind Swallow Union Elementary School. Last year, Town Meeting reallocated this previously approved funding for the new purpose of relocating and constructing new tennis courts at Larter Field. The Parks and Recreation Commissions issued an Invitation for Bids and the low bid on the project was $300,875. This funding request will cover the balance of the cost of the project and design and construction oversight for the Town.



ARTICLE 17 - CHAPTER 90 FUNDS

This article is necessary to authorize the Town to appropriate Chapter 90 funds received by the state. Per the legislatively established formula, the amount of funding a municipality receives is based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%). Local road mileage is gathered from MassDOT's Road Inventory File.

In FY2025, the Town of Dunstable is slated to receive $184,722 in Chapter 90 funding.

ARTICLE 18 - ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELDERLY AND DISABLED TAXATION FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING REAL ESTATE TAXES OF ELEDERLY AND DISABLED PERSONS OF LOW INCOME

This article asks Town Meeting to to accept the provisions of MGL Chapter 60, Section 3D. Acceptance of the statute authorizes the Town to allow residents to voluntarily donate, through a check off on their tax bills, for the purpose of defraying real estate taxes of low income elderly and disabled residents and also to establish an Elderly and Disabled Taxation Fund administered by a Taxation Aid Committee to consist of the chair of the Board of Assessors, Town Treasurer, and three residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

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ARTICLE 19 - MUNICIPAL ELECTRICAL AGGREGATION

This article would allow the Town to initiate the process to create a municipal electrical aggregation program for the residents of Dunstable. Municipal aggregation is the process by which a municipality purchases electricity in bulk from a competitive supplier on behalf of the residents and businesses within the community. It allows communities to determine where its electricity comes from.

Most residents and businesses currently get electricity supply, referred to as basic service, from their electric utility (in Dunstable, National Grid). Under state law, however, a municipal aggregation program allows communities to competitively bid and purchase electricity in bulk for Town residents, and the utility continues to deliver the electricity, maintain poles and wires, and provide other customer services. Customers would still receive a single electricity bill.

TOWN MEETING CHEAT SHEET

KEY TERMS

Capital Projects: One-time expenses to either construct new facilities, make significant, long-term improvements to existing facilities, or to improve the operation of Town Departments.

Fiscal Year: Abbreviated as "FY." The year on which the Town budget is based, running from July 1 to June 30.

Operational Budget: The annual budget that funds the operation of all Town services.

Enterprise Fund: An enterprise fund establishes a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for a municipal service for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services.

FUNDING TYPES

CPA Funds: Dunstable voted to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2006 allowing the addition of a 3% surcharge on local property taxes matched by the state annually.

Chapter 90: Funding the state provides for improvements to and investments in local transportation infrastructure.

Free Cash: Unappropriated surplus revenue from the prior fiscal year certified by the Department of Revenue for use by the Town.

Revolving Fund: Accounts established for specific purposes that fall outside of the Operating Budget and funded by user fees.

Retained Earnings: Unappropriated, surplus revenue collected by Enterprise Funds.

TOWN MEETING TERMS

Town Meeting: A gathering of a town's eligible voters and legislative body for towns in Massachusetts.

Majority Vote: Requirement that more than half of Town Meeting vote to approve an article.

Quorum: The minimum number of voters present in order to conduct business at Town Meeting. In Dunstable, the quorum for Town Meeting is 50 voters.

Warrant: The warrant lists a meeting's time, place, and agenda. A Town Meeting's action is not valid unless the subject is listed on the warrant.

Article: Articles are items on the warrant.

FY25 TOWN OPERATING BUDGET:
HTTPS://WWW.DUNSTABLE-MA.GOV/BUDGET

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING INFORMATION:
HTTPS://WWW.DUNSTABLE-MA.GOV/ATM2024

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