

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



REPORTS TO THE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2025
7:00 P.M.**

**AT THE KATHERINE L. BABSON JR. AUDITORIUM
Wellesley High School
50 Rice Street**

**by the
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Please read this Report and bring it with you to Town Meeting.

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TOWN OF WELLESLEY



ADVISORY COMMITTEE LETTER SPECIAL TOWN MEETING, November 3, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

TERM ENDS 2026

Susan Clapham
Phil Jameson
Jay Prosnitz, Vice Chair
Madison Riley, Chair
Lucienne Ronco

TERM ENDS 2027

Mark Benjamin, Vice Chair
Jay Bock
Rani Elwy
Penny Rossano
Doug Wilkins, Secretary

TERM ENDS 2028

Paul Barnhill
Doug Smith
Mariana Vinacur
Dan Weinger
Aaron Williams

To the Town Meeting Members of the Town of Wellesley:

October, 2025

Welcome to the November 2025 Special Town Meeting (STM). Attached please find the Report to Special Town Meeting containing the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the November 2025 STM Warrant articles ([STM Warrant](#)). Advisory's Report is referred to during Town Meeting and is most useful if read in advance and kept handy during the presentations and discussions.

For this Special Town Meeting Report, Advisory is testing a new format for the article write-ups. The overviews and considerations that veteran TMMs have experienced in years past are unchanged. What is new is that we have replaced the gray Article language box with a new quick review executive summary that provides key elements of the article; what a Town Meeting Member's (TMM) vote no or vote yes means; anticipated costs; and additional stakeholders. The addition is made in response to feedback Advisory received about its report after the 2025 Annual Town Meeting. Advisory plans to survey TMMs after STM regarding our report and this new format to seek to understand if we are meeting the needs of TMMs in their preparation for Town Meeting.

The Report will also be posted on the Town's website at [2025 Special-Town-Meeting](#).

Notable matters coming before the November 2025 STM include:

- **Article 5** – Construction funds for the RDF Administration building.
- **Article 6** – Use of the Baler Reserve Fund to fund the purchase of a replacement baler at the RDF.
- **Article 7** – Approval of funds for the Team Rooms construction at the Hunnewell Track and Field to complete the final portion of the Phase II enhancement plan.
- **Article 8** – A request for funds to modernize the Assessor's reporting software.
- **Article 9** – The addition of personnel policies to conform with state law.
- **Article 12** – A bylaw amendment to General Bylaws Article 47, Animal Control regulations to conform with "Ollie's Law" (M.G.L. Chapter 140)– the State kennel law.
- **Article 13** – A Citizen Petition to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court, subject to approval of a nonbinding public opinion advisory question at the Town election in March, to enact legislation to allow qualified 17-year-old residents to vote in Town elections.

The Advisory Committee appreciates the dedication, expertise, and knowledge of all those who presented to us as we prepared for Special Town Meeting. The Advisory Committee is also grateful for the many hours that elected and appointed officials, Town employees, and other concerned citizens devote to make our Town run so efficiently and effectively, and their dedication to making Wellesley a better place in which to live.

I personally want to recognize all members of the Advisory Committee for their hard work and diligence in making sure Town Meeting Members are well-informed and fully prepared for Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee always welcomes input, whether through the Citizen Speak opportunities available at our meetings or via email at advisorycommittee@wellesleyma.gov.

Sincerely,

Madison Riley, Chair
Advisory Committee

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SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

ARTICLE 1 - Choose Moderator and Receive Reports

No Motion is expected under Article 1.

AUTHORIZATIONS

ARTICLE 2 – Changes to IT Department Job Classifications and Salary Plan (Human Resources Board)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 2, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 2 seeks STM approval for modifications to the Job Classifications and Salary Plan for the Town Information Technology Department and an appropriation of funds to finance the modifications.
Proponent	Human Resources Board (HRB)
Other Stakeholders	Managers and Employees of the IT Department
Voting Yes will...	Permanently modify the IT department job classifications, and update the salary ranges for IT employees, retroactive to July 1, 2025.
Voting No will...	Leave the current salaries and job classifications in place.
Sponsor's Position	The IT department was the only Town department that did not receive an update of job classifications and salaries at ATM 2025. To remain competitive, to retain existing employees and to be an employer of choice, HRB believes that the Town needs to make these changes now.
Downsides	By making these changes, the Town will occur a one-time FY2026 cost of \$9,154 to address retroactive salary changes. Beyond FY2026, the ongoing costs for the IT department may rise.
Financial or Tax Impact	\$9,154 in FY2026
Other Impacts	N/A

Overview

Background: 2025 ATM Town-Wide Changes in Job Classifications and Compensation

In April 2025, Town Meeting approved a Town-wide change in job classifications (ATM 2025, Article 4) and compensation scale (ATM 2025, Article 5) for all non-school, non-union Town employees – *other than IT Department employees*. It also approved the appropriations required to fund these changes, along with length of service adjustments captured in the Omnibus budget (ATM 2025, Article 8).

For a detailed discussion of the 2025 ATM process, see below, "APPENDIX: 2025 ATM JOB RECLASSIFICATION." For a discussion of the transition from the former classification system

(Hay System) to the Town's current job classification and compensation system, see [Report of the Advisory Committee to 2025 ATM](#), pp. 71-76 and Article 4.

Article 2 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant

In Article 2, the HRB seeks Town Meeting approval of revised job classifications and compensation scales for the IT Department, as required by Town Bylaws Article 31. HRB's goal is to use final survey data to overhaul the IT Department's job classifications and compensation scales, just as 2025 ATM did for the rest of the Town's non-union employees. All changes would be effective retroactive to July 1, 2025

HRB has separated the IT Department pay schedule from that of other Town departments for many reasons, including:

- IT roles generally require technical certification and specialized training.
- The labor market for IT positions is very competitive, and competition with higher-paying industry is common.
- IT has rapidly evolving responsibilities as new technologies are introduced and adopted, which is not the case for most other domains of municipal employment.
- IT has a cross-departmental "enterprise" service role and does not perform a single function.

The table below shows the **current FY26 Wage schedule** for the IT Department, including the 2% COLA adopted at 2025 ATM.

Job Group	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
61	102,428.87	130,068.40	157,707.94
60	96,248.50	121,833.55	147,418.60
59	89,826.38	113,704.28	137,582.17
58	86,078.19	108,959.73	131,841.28
57	81,090.18	102,000.23	122,910.28
56	75,989.63	95,584.44	115,179.25
55	72,185.82	90,799.78	109,413.73
54	68,814.26	86,558.82	104,303.38
53	65,941.30	82,426.63	99,324.08
52	62,896.52	78,620.65	94,737.88
51	59,938.73	74,923.41	90,282.71

The table shows, for each of the 11 IT Department job groups and the range of salaries available (Minimum, Midpoint and Maximum).

DATA COLLECTION AND SURVEY OF PEER COMMUNITIES

To collect the most relevant data for IT employees, HRB and MGT Consultants conducted a survey of comparable communities. Their survey questionnaire listed seven position descriptions (rather than just job titles) for the current Town IT positions. They circulated the questionnaire to 17 municipalities, 11 of whom provided information for many of the positions. Six did not respond. HRB also consulted CompAnalyst®, an AI-powered compensation management tool from Salary.com for an additional data set.

The table below summarizes the results of the survey. Except for Systems Administrator, the survey returned at least 3 data points per position.

Current IT Department Ranges Compared to Survey Data

Hays Level	Position	Range Minimum			Range Maximum		
		Wellesley	Survey	Survey Diff %	Wellesley	Survey	Survey Diff %
58	Network/Cybersecurity Manager	\$ 86,087	\$ 99,226	115%	\$ 131,841	\$ 136,005	103%
58	Applications/Project Manager	\$ 86,087	\$ 101,009	117%	\$ 131,841	\$ 132,188	100%
56	Cybersecurity Administrator	\$ 75,990	\$ 90,831	120%	\$ 115,179	\$ 116,048	101%
57	GIS Manager	\$ 81,090	\$ 90,027	111%	\$ 122,910	\$ 121,994	99%
55	Systems Administrator	\$ 72,186	\$ 89,384	124%	\$ 109,414	\$ 108,887	100%
55	Applications Administrator	\$ 72,186	\$ 87,071	121%	\$ 109,414	\$ 107,724	98%
54	Desktop Technician	\$ 68,814	\$ 87,813	128%	\$ 104,303	\$ 105,960	102%
			Average	119%		Average	100%

The table confirms that the Town has fallen behind other communities in IT salaries. The salary range minimums for the positions listed demonstrate this most clearly: the survey data averaged 119% of the Town's minimum. That is, the Town's minimum salaries are between \$8,000 to \$17,235 below the minimum salary range of the survey data. For a candidate considering an IT position at the bottom of their salary range in Wellesley, HRB believes that the Town is not competitive with peer municipalities. The survey maximums, however, are roughly on par with those offered by the Town.

PROPOSED NEW SALARY RANGES

Following analysis of these data, MGT has proposed and HRB is requesting the changes shown in the table below.

Proposed IT Department Ranges Compared to Survey Data

New Level	Position	Range Minimum			Range Maximum		
		Wellesley	Survey	Survey Diff %	Wellesley	Survey	Survey Diff %
IT-12	Network/Cybersecurity Manager	\$ 104,186	\$ 99,226	95%	\$ 140,652	\$ 136,005	97%
IT-11	Applications/Project Manager	\$ 99,225	\$ 101,009	102%	\$ 133,954	\$ 132,188	99%
IT-10	Cybersecurity Administrator	\$ 94,500	\$ 90,831	96%	\$ 127,575	\$ 116,048	91%
IT-10	GIS Manager	\$ 94,500	\$ 90,027	95%	\$ 127,575	\$ 121,994	96%
IT-8	Systems Administrator	\$ 85,500	\$ 89,384	105%	\$ 115,425	\$ 108,887	94%
IT-7	Applications Administrator	\$ 81,225	\$ 87,071	107%	\$ 109,654	\$ 107,724	98%
IT-6	Desktop Technician	\$ 77,164	\$ 87,813	114%	\$ 104,171	\$ 105,960	102%
			Average	102%		Average	97%
IT-9*		\$ 90,000			\$ 122,000		

*There is currently no Town position at the proposed IT-9 level.

With the proposed adjustments, the Town IT Department ranges would approach those of peer municipalities, achieving a near match to the survey data (survey data averaging 102% of Town minimums, and 97% of Town maximums).

YEARS OF SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS

HRB also proposes adjustments for the IT Department, based on years of Town service, as shown in the table below.

Proposed Years of Service Adjustments

Years of Service as of 7/1/2025	Percent Adjustment
0 - less than 1 years	0.00%
1 - less than 5 years	0.50%
5 - less than 10 years	1.00%
10 - less than 15 years	1.50%
15 - less than 20 years	2.00%
20 - less than 30 years	2.50%
30 plus years	3.00%

BUDGET IMPACT

The table below summarizes the FY26 budget impact of all the proposed changes described above, totaling \$9,154, or an additional 1.28% added to the IT budget.

Job Class Code Desc	First Name	Current Level	New Level	Hire Date	Yrs of Service	Hourly Rate	FY 26 Annual Pay	Service Adj.	Salary with Adj
NETWORK & CYBERSECURITY MGR		58	IT - 12	08/15/1994	30.90	68.3503	124,397.69	1.03	128,129.62
APPLICATION & PROJECT MANAGER		58	IT - 11	01/30/2002	23.43	64.1877	116,821.75	1.025	119,742.29
CYBERSECURITY ADMINISTRATOR		56	IT - 10	01/10/2024	1.47	52.4760	95,506.43	1.005	95,983.96
GIS MANAGER		57	IT - 9	01/20/2016	9.45	63.1426	114,919.49	1.01	116,068.68
SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR		55	IT - 7	10/28/2020	4.68	48.0661	87,480.12	1.01	88,354.92
APPLICATIONS DMINISTRATOR		55	IT - 6			53.0709	96,589.10		96,589.10
DESKTOP TECHNICIAN		54	IT - 6	07/02/2025	0.00	43.9560	80,000.00	1.0	80,000.00
							715,714.58		724,868.58
							Cost:		9,154.00

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS

The IT Director voiced support for these proposed departmental changes, and relief that the department's employees will see a change in salary ranges and that some will receive near-term changes in compensation. The Director noted some disagreements with HRB about the spring 2025 ATM proposed changes, since the IT Department faced retention challenges that 2025 ATM did not fully address. The biggest challenge was the time required for any IT employee to see a material change based on merit increases. IT salaries were not keeping pace with industry positions, much to the frustration of department members. Anecdotally, the Director cited a recent experience recruiting for a Hays level 55 employee, during which the department received 75 applicants, only one of which was from a comparable community – suggesting that the Town is not attracting candidates away from competing municipalities.

In summary, the Director felt that the proposed overhaul in this Article 2 is beneficial and overdue but cautions that it only partially resolves the compensation challenges facing the department, and that the pull of private sector positions and those of nearby communities will continue to be a challenge.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory broadly supported the proposed IT classification and salary range changes. Those changes resolve the final component of the large-scale overhaul of Town employee pay schedules and compensation that 2025 Annual Town Meeting approved. Many members noted the value that the IT department brings to the Town. Given the role technology plays in our digital world and the increasing challenge of cyber-security, Wellesley, like all organizations, needs to retain and appropriately compensate IT personnel. One member commented that, having seen

the impact of Town employee turnover – particularly the loss of institutional knowledge – that they were grateful to see this type of compensation review happening.

A member commended HR for its good judgment in postponing IT compensation changes until the data were sufficient for a fully informed decision, and in completing a thorough survey after 2025 ATM before returning to STM with the current motion.

Several members, including two IT professionals who supported the motion, expressed concerns about future IT compensation trends. One observed at least two positions remain somewhat behind survey average salaries even after adjustment. Members discussed whether Town IT pay scales were competitive both with neighboring towns and with industry. Another noted a growing sense of downward pressure on IT salaries and a complex future for IT department compensation, which may not always move on an ascending trajectory. Many members commented that IT department salaries will likely remain an area of competitive concern well into the future.

Overall, while Advisory members agreed that these changes are both overdue and a material step in the right direction, they noted that the Town's ability to retain and compete for IT professionals will continue to present substantial challenges.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

APPENDIX: 2025 ATM JOB RECLASSIFICATION.

As of last spring, a complete study of Town salaries had not been conducted in 20 years, the Town was experiencing job turnover at a higher rate than for nationwide government employees (13% in 2024 – actually lower than the prior 4 years - vs 7.6% nationally in 2022 data), and this turnover was estimated to have cost the Town over \$970,000 in 2024 alone. Of the Town's 1398 employees, 155 were covered by this project.

The Human Resources Board (HRB), provided 2025 ATM with a set of specific aims for the project:

- To ensure that job classifications were current and appropriate.
- To ensure that the Town remains externally competitive.
- To ensure internal equity
- To attract high quality candidates
- To retain high performers
- To become an employer of choice

The approved changes moved employees from the Hay Classification system, adopted in the 1970s, to a new scale, and were proposed by HRB following a survey of regional town salaries and classifications by the consultancy MGT; a survey funded by a Community Compact Grant. HRB contacted 22 comparable communities and received responses to survey questions from 18 of them. The survey data showed that Wellesley starting salaries were low, with new hires generally needing a starting salary at or above the midpoint set for their job classification. In addition, salary steps within a classification were too small, meaning that it took many years to see material changes in compensation. Employees who left Town service ended up working in nearby communities, such as Brookline, Dover, Needham, Newton, and Sudbury, among others.

The cost of the approved changes was \$80,000, which brought a set of 13 employees up to the new minimums for their respective ranges, plus an additional \$200,000 to make one-time service adjustments for all eligible employees.

At the time of Annual Town Meeting in 2025, the survey data collected for evaluating the Town's Information Technology (IT) Department salaries – with the exception of that of the IT Director - was deemed insufficient for any department-wide overhaul, and consequently, the IT department was not included in the above articles and motions. ATM 2025 did update the IT Director's salary and salary range and did award the IT Department a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) at that time.

2025 STM Warrant

HRB Presentation to Advisory (9/17/25): <https://wellesleyma.gov/317/Advisory-Committee>

ARTICLE 3 – FY26 Budget Supplement Appropriations (Select Board)

Recommendation:

Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 3, Motion 1, 14 to 0.

Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 3, Motion 2, 11 to 1 with 2 abstentions.

Executive Summary	<p>Article 3 contains two motions:</p> <p>Motion 1: Demolition of 3 Bacon Street. This Motion seeks a \$60,000 appropriation from Free Cash to contract for demolition of 3 Bacon Street; these funds are legally collectible from the owner of the property. The Town plans to proceed under a state law that authorizes it to demolish unsafe structures whose owners fail to respond to repeated Town requests to fix the properties or to pay for demolition of the properties.</p> <p>Motion 2: Advisory Supplemental Budget. This Motion requests a \$11,000 supplementary appropriation to the Advisory Committee's line item from the 2025 All Town Meeting (ATM) budget. Several years ago, Advisory's Administrator role expanded, and these additional funds will finally "right size" Advisory's personal services to what is actually incurred for the committee. The funds will also address the recent-year increases for printing, postage, and mailing of the Advisory Report. The appropriation would also fund acquisition of artificial intelligence (AI) software for meeting minutes.</p>
Proponent	Select Board
Other Stakeholders	<p>Motion 1: Inspector of Buildings, Fire Chief, Town Engineer (Survey Board)</p> <p>Motion 2: Advisory Committee</p>
Voting Yes will...	<p>Motion 1: Appropriate \$60,000 to fund the bidding and contracting for immediate demolition, site clean-up, and securing of 3 Bacon Street, for public health and safety reasons.</p> <p>Motion 2: Appropriate \$11,000 to cover a shortfall in funding for the Advisory Committee's administrative costs and expenses.</p>
Voting No will...	<p>Motion 1: Make no appropriation for demolition of a dangerous building.</p> <p>Motion 2: Leave a deficit in the Advisory Committee's budget.</p>
Sponsor's Position	<p>Motion 1: The motion serves the following beneficial purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abating dangerous property and promoting public health and safety. • Avoiding less desirable funding avenues, such as a year-end transfer of funds to cover the cost of demolition, seeking funds from the Advisory Committee on an emergency basis, or leaving 3 Bacon Street

	<p>in its current state until the 2026 ATM and again request appropriations for Free Cash at that time.</p> <p>Motion 2: The motion has the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding a year-end transfer. • Right-sizing the Advisory Committee's budget for future years as the Town builds the FY27 budget off the FY26 budget. • Promoting efficient Advisory Committee activities and reporting of meetings
Downsides	<p>Motion 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term expenditure of funds from Free Cash to cover the demolition costs. • Recovery of those funds will take some time through a municipal lien on the owner's property tax bill or litigation. <p>Motion 2: No net downsides came to Advisory's attention, as the alternative is a year-end transfer.</p>
Financial or Tax Impact	<p>Motion 1: Short-term removal of \$60,000 in recoverable funds from Free Cash.</p> <p>Motion 2: \$11,000 in funds to pay costs already incurred for services and expenses.</p>
Other Impacts	<p>Motion 1: The Select Board may consider creating a demolition fund for similar properties.</p> <p>Motion 2: None</p>

Overview

Article 3 contains two motions: **Motion 1:** Demolition of 3 Bacon St. and **Motion 2:** Advisory Supplemental Budget.

Article 3, Motion 1:

Under M.G.L. c.143, §6, the Inspector of Buildings may order the owner to remove or make safe any dangerous or unsafe structure. Failure to comply allows the Town to act directly to abate the danger.

In the fall of 2024, the Town Building Inspector inspected the structure at 3 Bacon Street ("Building"), found it dangerous and determined that demolition is necessary to protect the public health and safety. On October 7, 2024, the Inspector sent his first demolition order for the Building by certified mail to the owner, who lives in another Massachusetts town. The owner did not respond. On February 12, 2025, the Town's Survey Board (Inspector of Buildings, Fire Chief, and Town Engineer) convened under c. 143 §8 and found that the Building was unsecured and open to entry; was vacant and uninhabitable; and had roof failure, a collapsing porch, extensive interior water damage, mold growth and other hazardous conditions. The Survey Board determined that the structure is dangerous and that demolition is necessary for public health and safety. The Town sent another notice to the owner by certified mail on September 9, 2025, and received the signed green card reflecting receipt on September 13, 2025. The owner took no action in response to any of the Town's requests to fix the Building or pay for demolition. However, the owner is current on property tax payments for 3 Bacon Street.

When an owner fails to act upon a Survey Board's declaration that demolition is necessary, M.G.L. c.143, §9 grants the Town authority to demolish a structure or make it safe. In this case, the Town has determined that demolition is necessary.

Motion 1 seeks an appropriation of \$60,000 to the Building Department, which will outsource demolition of the Building through a bidding process. Funds will cover demolition contractor

services, site cleanup and disposal, and securing the lot after demolition. The Town can recover its demolition and cleanup costs from the owner through a municipal lien on 3 Bacon Street or litigation. The Town does not plan to acquire 3 Bacon Street, which has potential environmental contamination issues and is near the Paint Shop Pond superfund location. The proposed demolition work will occur within the building footprint, and Town Counsel has opined that the demolition will not subject the Town to environmental liability for the pre-existing contamination. The Select Board may consider creating a demolition fund for similar properties in the future. The 3 Bacon Street property will serve as a test case prior to establishing a Demolition Reserve Fund.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory supports this motion without reservation. It agrees that the condition of the 3 Bacon Street property poses a safety hazard which requires the Town to act. Several members noted the property's visible disrepair and emphasized the public health importance of addressing the issue promptly. They hoped that the Town would recoup the demolition costs quickly, by placing a lien on the property and recovering the funds upon sale of the property or through prompt litigation, if necessary to avoid undue delay. One member wondered why the Town was not trying to force a sale of the property but acknowledged that the owner is current on their property tax payments.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

Article 3, Motion 2:

The Select Board seeks a FY26 supplemental appropriation of \$11,000 from Free Cash for the Advisory Committee's budget.

The Advisory Committee requires an annual appropriation for past administrative services and expenses needed to carry out its work under Article 11 of the Town By-laws. Over each of the last 4 years, Advisory has needed to request year-end transfers to cover shortfalls in its budgeted funds. The supplemental appropriation requested in Motion 2 would "right size" the Advisory Committee's budget for both personal services and expenses, thereby minimizing the need for future year end transfers.

Administrative Services: The role and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee's Operations Administrator expanded in FY24 after the FY24 budget was approved at Annual Town Meeting. The Operations Administrator position is a part-time, non-benefited position. The hours vary each week and month, as the work of Advisory varies and depends on the issues that come before it and Town Meeting. Therefore, accurate forecasts of personal services costs are difficult. History shows, however, that the hours have steadily increased over the last 4 years.

Expenses: Section 11.8 of the Town's By-laws provides: "A copy of the report of the Committee shall be mailed or delivered to each Town Meeting Member and Town Department at least seven days before the commencement of any Town Meeting." This mandate requires Advisory to expend funds for postage, printing and mailing. All of those expenses have increased in recent years and are projected to exceed the FY26 budgeted amounts. In addition, the Select Board has had great success using an AI tool called ClerkMinutes for its meeting minutes. Advisory generates lengthy minutes, because it regularly holds multi-hour meetings to inquire into every matter that comes (or will come) before Town Meeting. To improve efficiency, the Advisory Committee seeks funds for its own subscription of ClerkMinutes.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory held a detailed discussion regarding Article 3.2, which seeks a \$11,000 FY26 supplemental appropriation for Advisory's expenses and personal services. This supplemental

request would address ongoing underfunding of the Advisory Committee's operational needs – both in expenses and in personal services. This underfunding has persisted for the last 4 fiscal years and has required year-end transfers in each of those years to make for the insufficiency in budgeted funds.

Many members expressed strong support for the article, emphasizing that the underfunding problem has persisted for multiple years and that the current budget does not reflect the actual costs required to fulfill the committee's responsibilities. Supporters noted that the current budget was set below the actual FY25 expenditures, making it insufficient from the outset. They argued that approving the adjustment now would allow for a more accurate foundation when preparing the FY27 budget, avoiding the need for repeated year-end transfers to cover shortfalls.

Supporters also noted that these supplemental funds are needed to fulfill Advisory's duties as set forth in the Article 11 of the Town's bylaws. These funds would pay not only for personal services, but also for expenses related to the printing and mailing of the Advisory Report (as required by Article 11.4 of the Town's Bylaws), and software tools such as AI for the creation of meeting minutes, in light of Advisory's frequent, lengthy meetings on all matters coming before Town Meeting.

Some members acknowledged the need for the adjustment, but expressed discomfort with the optics of voting on a budget that directly affects the Advisory Committee itself. A few members abstained from voting for this reason.

Others saw no actual or perceived impropriety in voting on this Article. They noted that the Select Board – not the Advisory Committee - is the article's proponent. Since Advisory has fully disclosed its interest as a stakeholder (see above), these members believed that they have discharged any duty the committee has to inform STM prior to voting on this measure. They also pointed out that other boards routinely vote on their own budgets and that Advisory's vote here is consistent with its mandate to provide informed recommendations to STM. Finally, Advisory cannot avoid involvement in this issue – already it has had to vote to approve year-end transfers to meet the above-described shortfalls every year for the last four years. The committee acknowledged the importance of transparency and clarity in presenting Advisory's recommendation to Town Meeting.

One member commented regarding the Advisory personnel costs, feeling that the number of hours required for the Operations Administrator should be a fixed number of hours, and the work completed within that set number of hours because a job is a job. This member noted that the article seeks to budget adequately for the hours necessary to complete the current job and questioned why the adjustment was being brought forward at the Special Town Meeting rather than waiting for the annual budgeting process at Annual Town Meeting. Other members explained that addressing the issue now would allow for a more accurate FY27 budget and will avoid the now-annual need for year-end transfers which are approved by a vote of the Advisory Committee at the end of the fiscal year.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 11 to 1, with 2 abstentions.

ARTICLE 4 – Rescind or Transfer Debt; Appropriate Premiums (Select Board)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 4, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 4 seeks to rescind the Town's authorization for additional borrowing for the Hardy School construction. The Town no longer needs to incur additional debt on this project, because it has received reimbursements from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Since the 2025 Annual Town Meeting (ATM), the Town has received an additional \$751,481 from MSBA, for a current total of \$6,810,678.
Proponent	Select Board
Other Stakeholders	None
Voting Yes will...	Rescind the Town's authorization for additional borrowing on the Hardy School project.
Voting No will...	Leave in place unnecessary authorization for additional borrowing on the Hardy School project.
Sponsor's Position	The Town should not maintain a borrowing authorization that it knows it will not need to exercise. Keeping the borrowing authorization suggests to financial markets and rating agencies that the Town contemplates additional borrowing.
Downsides	None has come to Advisory's attention.
Financial or Tax Impact	None
Other Impacts	None

Overview

Article 4 seeks to rescind the Town's authorization for additional borrowing for the Hardy School construction. The Town no longer needs to incur additional debt on this project, due to reimbursements received from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Since the 2025 ATM, the Town has received an additional \$751,481 from MSBA, bringing the Town's total reimbursements to date to \$6,810,678 for the Hardy School project. In total, the Town anticipates \$15-\$16 million in reimbursements by the end of the 2-3 year period during which MSBA typically provides reimbursements.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory members fully supported this article, which is largely a recurring matter of fiscal housekeeping. Rescission is considered a best practice for municipalities, because it will free up borrowing for other potential projects and thus plays a role in bond ratings. Moreover, it would not be responsible to borrow more money than needed. One member stressed the importance of informing the public and financial markets that the Town no longer intends to incur this debt.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

APPROPRIATIONS

ARTICLE 5 – Construction of New RDF Administration Building (Permanent Building Committee / Board of Public Works)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 5, 13 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 5 seeks \$5,510,158 to be expended under PBC's direction for design and construction of a new RDF Administration Building and associated improvements.
Proponents	Permanent Building Committee (PBC) and Board of Public Works (BPW)
Other Stakeholders	N/A
Voting Yes will...	Appropriate \$ 5.5 million to construct a new administration building and related improvements at the RDF.
Voting No will...	Maintain the status quo – <i>i.e.</i> , the RDF will continue to operate from its existing administrative building.
Sponsor's Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The existing administration building is significantly deteriorated.• The existing systems are inefficient and beyond their useful life.• The existing facilities are ill-suited both for RDF use and for public access.• The proposed new building will provide more space, an improved layout and more efficient systems.
Downsides	Fiscal impact on the Town and taxpayers.
Financial or Tax Impact	<p>The total estimated construction phase cost is \$5,510,158, including \$3,889,000 for general contracting.</p> <p>Upon completion, the building's estimated FY 28 operating costs could exceed the existing building's FY 26 operating costs by just under \$17,000. The project's solar arrays will likely make up some of that difference through anticipated electric cost savings of about \$6,600.</p>
Other Impacts	N/A

Overview

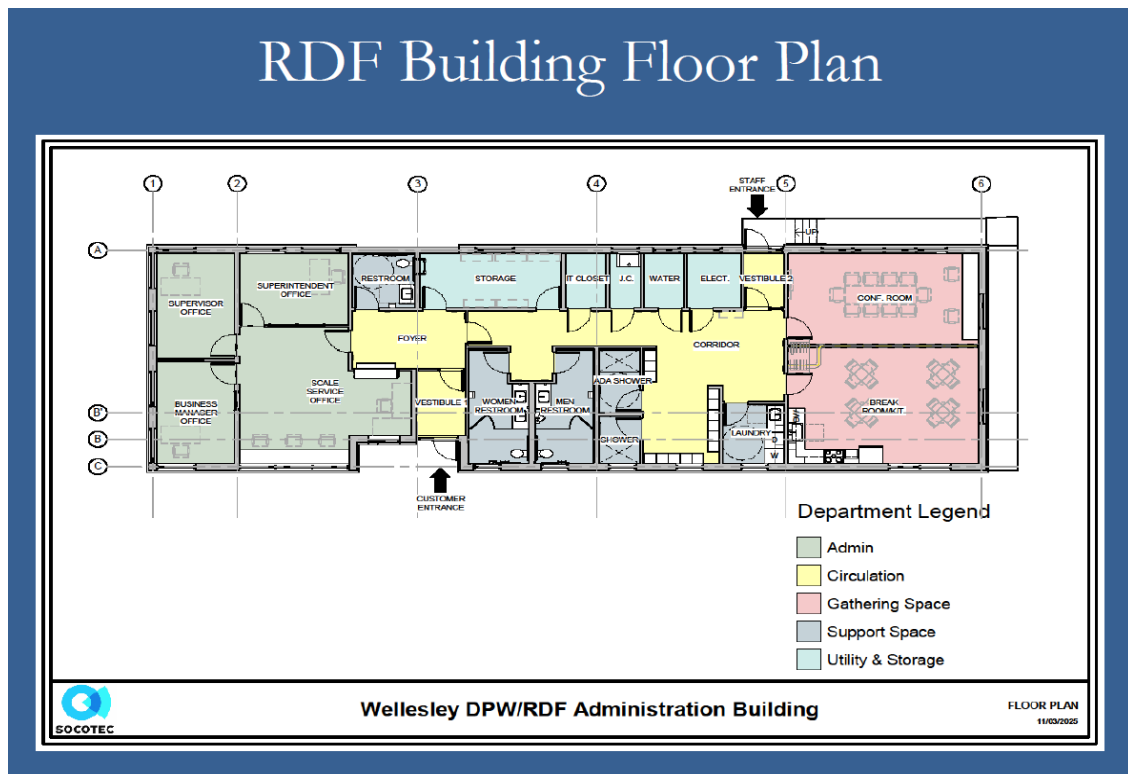
This article seeks appropriation of \$5,510,158, to design and construct a new Administration Building at the Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) and related improvements, located at 169 Great Plain Avenue (the "Admin Building").

This project reflects a multi-year planning effort that began with a feasibility study funded at ATM 2018 and completed in 2020. Because the Town was pursuing many other capital projects, it put the new Admin Building on hold from 2020 until 2023. Although the original study contemplated additional projects, including a Baler Building and a Parks & Highway Building, BPW has decided to move forward with only the Admin Building at this time.

The existing Admin Building is significantly outdated. It suffers from deteriorating exterior conditions, inefficient mechanical systems, worn interior finishes, and inadequate space for staff and public functions. It also lacks public restrooms, has limited storage, and presents several

accessibility challenges. Office layouts are inefficient, and locker areas are in public hallways, compromising privacy and functionality.

The proposed new Admin Building addresses these deficiencies. It would increase building space by approximately 50% - to approximately 3,300 square feet. The design includes private offices for key staff, a training and muster room, improved circulation, and clear separation between public and staff areas. The plan also incorporates adequate storage and solar readiness.



The planning team evaluated two site options: rebuilding at the existing location or constructing a new standalone building on the other side of the truck scale. The team selected the latter, which has several advantages, including better separation of public and operational traffic, improved visibility of site operations and more convenient visitor parking. It also avoids costly swing space requirements and eliminates the need for a sprinkler system due to the building's smaller footprint. Unlike the existing site, the new location is conducive to the installation and operation of solar panels. The architect has provided the following photo simulation of the building:

RDF Building View Looking South



The project design aligns with Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines. It will utilize wood-frame construction with a high-performance thermal envelope that exceeds code requirements. The building will be fully electric, using a Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) HVAC system, and will feature LED lighting throughout. The proponents expect the building to achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of 35–38 kBtu/sf. Plans include a 46-kilowatt rooftop solar array, which, according to the proponents' estimates, will probably meet about 50% of the building's electric needs, amounting to about \$6,600 in annual electric cost saving versus current operating run rates.

The Town received final bids on October 16, 2025. The total estimated construction phase cost is \$5,510,158. This includes \$3,889,000 for general contracting, along with allocations for architectural services, commissioning, materials testing, furnishings, IT, insurance, and contingency.

Construction Phase Costs

Construction Cost

- General Contractor \$3,889,000

Architect & Other Professional Services

- Architect/Engineer \$257,200
- Legal \$5,000
- Commissioning (MEP) \$46,200
- Materials Testing \$30,000

Clerk of the Works \$316,000

FF&E & IT \$191,000

MLP Charge \$50,000

Other General Supplies

- Project Portal, FMD, Printing, etc. \$28,000
- Builder's Risk Insurance \$75,000

Contingency (10% Const. & 15% Arch) \$622,758

TOTAL REQUEST \$5,510,158

DPW RDF Admin Building

If approved, the construction contract would be executed in November 2025, with procurement running through January 2026. Building construction would occur from February 2026 to January 2027, followed by a move-in in February 2027 and project completion by May 2027.

In rough numbers, the anticipated FY 28 operating costs for the new Admin Building should be about \$117,000, compared to FY 26 operating costs of about \$100,200 for the current Admin Building. The anticipated savings in electric costs (see above) should make up some of the difference.

RDF Admin Building Estimated FY28 Operating Budget	
Expense	Budget Estimate
Utilities	
Water	\$1,200
Sewer	\$3,000
Electricity ¹	\$13,750
Custodial	
Custodial M&R Supplies	\$21,000
Other Contractual Services - Custodial	\$6,000
Maintenance	
Building Maintenance ²	\$36,000
Building M&R Supplies	\$12,000
Other Contractual Services - Maintenance.	\$24,000
Total⁵ =	\$116,950

Notes:

1. No reduction in electricity cost due to PV array contribution taken.

2. Preventive maintenance costs for PV array (assumed \$12k) included in Building Maintenance
3. No changes in personal services (no new staff added)
4. FY26 Operational Budget = \$100,209 (\$60/sf)
5. FY28 Operational Budget = \$116,950 (\$39/sf)

Advisory Considerations

Advisory strongly supported this Article for several reasons. It has been more than seven years since the 2018 ATM funded a feasibility study for a new RDF Administration Building. During that time, the need to replace the existing structure has become increasingly evident, given the building's deteriorating condition and poor working environment. The current proposal has emerged after consideration of multiple iterations over the years.

Advisory members cited the following benefits: The building space will increase by 50% (to 3300 sq ft) providing work functionality not available today; will be constructed under the Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines; will accommodate solar rooftop panels which will contribute an estimated 50% of the building's electrical needs; will clearly delineate staff and public space, providing operational benefits; and will have one of the three proposed bathrooms be gender neutral.

Advisory appreciated the cost-savings achieved by constructing the new building at a new site. That efficient and well-thought-out approach allows continued use of the existing facility during construction and eliminates the need to pay for temporary swing space. It also accommodates solar panels, which are not feasible at the existing location given the building's orientation.

Another consideration noted was that delaying the project further would likely increase costs in the long run.

The annual budget to maintain and operate the Admin Building should decrease by 35% per sq ft., although overall operational costs will rise somewhat because of the new building's increased square footage.

Advisory identified few downsides to the proposal. However, a member did note that the estimated \$6,600 in savings in electrical costs per year due to the proposed electrical panels, is significantly less than the assumed \$12,000 annual cost of maintaining the solar array.

Overall, Advisory stressed the need for an Administrative Building that serves both employees and the public effectively.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 13 to 0.

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

ARTICLE 6 - RDF Baler Replacement (Board of Public Works)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 6, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 6 seeks an appropriation of up to \$800,000 from the Baler Stabilization Fund to replace the existing baler at the Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF)
Proponent	Department of Public Works (DPW)
Other Stakeholders	N/A
Voting Yes will...	Authorize expenditure of up to \$800,000 from the Baler Stabilization Fund
Voting No will...	Keep the Baler Stabilization Fund at its current level and require the RDF to use its 28+ year old baler.
Sponsor's Position	A new, more efficient and dependable baler will replace the existing baler, which is well beyond its lifespan. This will save equipment, maintenance and repair costs (estimated at \$10-30,000 per year); reduce downtime that leads to additional materials handling, truck trips and product storage problems (hard to estimate costs); and will maximize total revenue from sales of baled materials (\$70 - \$150,000 with a functional baler).
Downsides	The expenditure will nearly deplete the Baler Stabilization Fund.
Financial or Tax Impact	Up to \$800,000 previously appropriated to the Baler Stabilization Fund, plus \$400,000 in cash capital appropriated at 2025 ATM
Other Impacts	N/A

Overview

The Wellesley RDF employs a large piece of capital equipment that bales different recyclables, "the Baler." The RDF bales about 800 tons of recyclables annually from residents who sort materials along Recycling Wall and from other commercial and municipal sources. This maximizes revenues from the Town's recycling program, because sales of baled material command a premium over sales of unbaled material. That premium has accounted for increased revenue to the Town of \$70K/year over the last five years and an average of \$150K/year since 1999, compared to sales of unbaled materials. Baled materials require significantly less storage space and allow the RDF to hold inventory for up to 100 days, which improves the Town's ability to minimize loss of revenue by avoiding sales during downturns in recycling markets. Baling also reduces by about 1/3 the number of transportation trips required to dispose of the materials and promotes sustainability.

The Town purchased the existing baler in 1995 for about \$400K. While the baler had an expected useful life of 15-20 years, DPW's proactive maintenance has prolonged its utility to 28+ years. Believing that the baler has now reached the end of its useful life, DPW seeks a new baler to avoid increasing maintenance and repair costs and a disruptive permanent breakdown. In 1996, Wellesley established The Baler Stabilization Fund ("Stabilization Fund") to hold reserve funds to replace the RDF's critical equipment, including the baler, compactors, and other

equipment. The Stabilization Fund currently holds just over \$800,000, funded over time by town meeting since 1996.

DPW estimates that a new baler will cost up to \$1.2 million. To meet the \$1.2 million purchase price, DPW requests \$800,000 from the Stabilization Fund, in addition to the \$400,000 already approved from cash capital in Article 8 of the 2025 ATM. DPW then plans to replenish the Stabilization Fund gradually by requesting annual appropriations at future ATMs, consistent with past practice.

The final purchase price for the baler will reflect competitive bids, which DPW expects to receive by 2025 STM. If the winning bid exceeds \$1.2 million, DPW would need a supplemental appropriation at 2026 ATM. It is hard to predict when the new baler will come online, because of uncertainties in equipment lead times and installation as well as the need for coordination with construction of the RDF Administration Building (see Article 5).

Advisory Considerations

Advisory overwhelmingly supports appropriating up to \$800,000 from the Baler Stabilization Fund to supplement the \$400,000 of cash capital that 2025 ATM approved to purchase a new baler for the RDF. The Committee applauds the DPW for prolonging the utility of the current baler for 28+ years. It appreciates the establishment of the Stabilization Fund in 1996 and the consistent annual contributions by TM to that fund in the past. The Committee looks forward to learning the Department's plans to fund the Stabilization Fund in the future.

The fact that the new baler will save an estimated \$10 - \$30K of labor and repair parts annually during the first years of installation is significant plus.

Sales of baled material generate revenue for the Town, currently about \$70,000 per year. Baled material commands a higher price than loose materials. The new, more dependable baler will enable maximization of those revenues, because it will reduce downtime and permit efficient storage of recycled material until the resale market is favorable. It also may provide a revenue-generating opportunity to receive (and subsequently bale) other communities' recycled materials.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

DPW Presentation to Advisory (9/3/25): <https://wellesleyma.gov/317/Advisory-Committee>

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

ARTICLE 7 – Hunnewell Track and Field Team Room Construction (School Committee)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 7, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 7 seeks to appropriate and transfer funds for the construction of Team Rooms at Hunnewell Field.
Proponent	School Committee
Other Stakeholders	Natural Resources Commission (NRC) (landowner), Department of Public Works (DPW) (construction proponent), and Facilities Management Department (operational maintenance).
Voting Yes will...	Authorize funds to be expended under DPW's direction to construct a student-athlete changing and equipment storage facility for use by Wellesley Public Schools' Athletic Department
Voting No will...	Maintain the status quo that has existed since the opening of the high school in 2012.
Sponsor's Position	The team rooms will meet a longstanding need for additional locker and storage space for athletes outside the WHS building. This, in turn, will free up existing indoor locker room space, to the benefit of all student athletes. The team rooms will reduce or eliminate the need for some athletes playing at Hunnewell Field to prepare for games and store equipment inside the High School. Visiting teams will also be able to use more suitable and appropriate changing locations with less impact upon WHS users.
Downsides	There will be some impacts on taxpayers (see below). This project will have minimal environmental implications by adding to the impervious ground footprint and by slightly increasing utilities consumption (see below).
Financial or Tax Impact	\$1,280,000 (estimated as of this report's publication, subject to revision based on bids in hand), drawn from FY'26 Free Cash. Operational cost: The initial estimated annual costs of the team rooms are about \$20,000 for maintenance and cleaning and \$4,000 for utilities.
Other Impacts	With a portion of the building in the 100-ft buffer zone, a review by the Wetlands Protection Committee was triggered and led to an approved Order of Conditions.

Overview

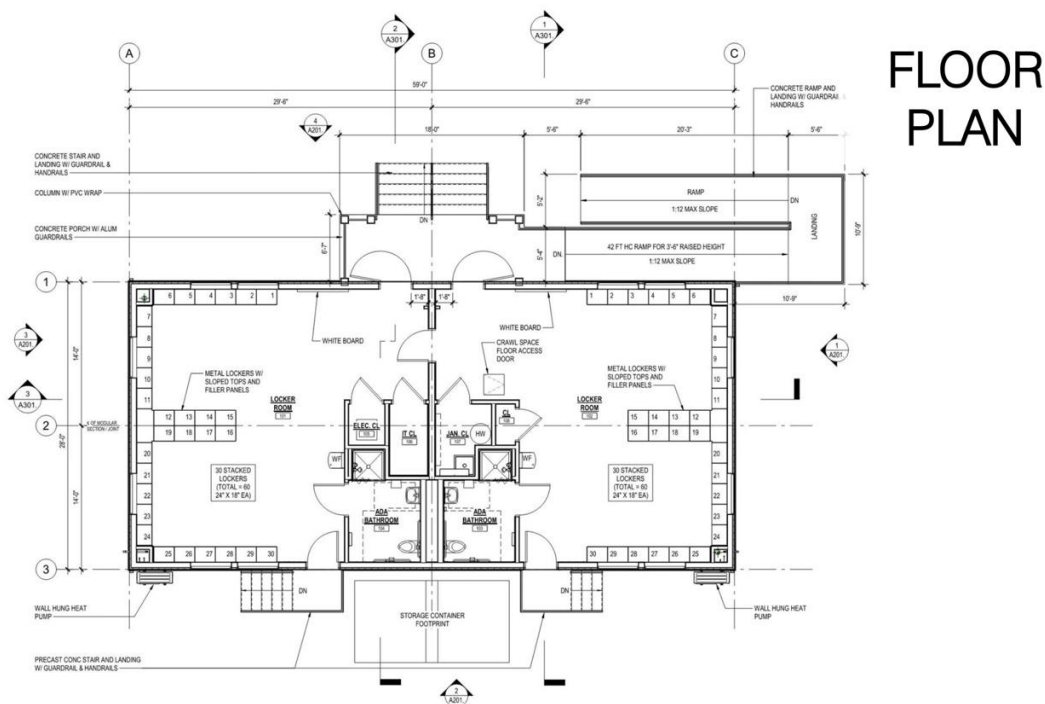
This article seeks funds to construct a "Team Rooms" building for student-athletes to facilitate preparation for practices and games held on Hunnewell Field, located at 55 Rice Street. The proposed project will solve a long-standing unmet need for student-athletes who have been negatively impacted by undersized athletic facilities at Wellesley High School. That undersizing resulted from cuts that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) mandated, as a condition of MSBA sponsorship, in the original design for a much larger athletic space in the new high school building,

Team Room construction is the primary item remaining in "Phase II" of the Track and Field Enhancement project, originally brought to Town Meeting in 2018 [see Article 17 in "2018 ATM Report" in resources below]. After approval in 2018, the proponents encountered funding constraints amid cost escalations. The pandemic further delayed the project, and WPS turned its focus to the design, funding, and construction of Hunnewell and Hardy schools. Please refer to

the Advisory Committee's 2024 ATM report [see Article 21 in "2024 ATM Report"] for a detailed narrative of this project as well as additional resource links.

The proponent and stakeholders contracted in January 2024 with a consultant (Weston & Sampson) for an abbreviated feasibility study to reaffirm the decision to go with a modular build. Based on the feasibility study, the School Committee voted to go with a modular build and to partner with DPW on the implementation, a decision that the Permanent Building Committee supported in June 2024. Following approval of Article 21 at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, the Town retained Weston & Sampson to assist with the design and permitting process. The design has since been approved by both School Committee and NRC (as landowner). The bidding window was open at the time of this writing and should conclude by the end of October 2025 with the information needed to request an accurate amount of construction funds.

The building will be in the southwest corner of the field site, with a footprint of approximately 28' by 59' (1652 square feet), excluding the entry and rear storage container. It will include two changing rooms, each with lockers and its own ADA-accessible bathroom and shower facility. Along with standard janitorial and utility spaces, the building includes a dedicated information technology closet to fulfill basic HVAC and alarm requirements on day one, with the ability to house any future demands for specialized networking and A/V equipment. An image of the approved floorplan is included below.



Weston & Sampson

8

The estimated project cost is \$1,680,000. The actual cost will be determined based on the bids submitted. The balance in the Wellesley Field Fund (estimated at \$400,000) is available to offset the total cost, leaving the remainder (TBD after bids are in hand) as the total funding request. A table outlining the use of funds follows.

Description	Size(SF)	Cost / unit	Cost	Notes
Team Building (28'x59')	1652	\$332/sq. foot	\$547,800	Includes: aluminum ramp and steps, electrical, water, and sewer connections inside building footprint, hoisting crane, 120 lockers
Building Foundation	1652	\$95/sq. foot	\$156,450	Includes: Concrete Foundation or Slab Excludes: Augured Concrete Footings
New Construction Subtotal		\$426/sq. foot	\$704,250	
Site Development	0.3 acre	\$971,447/acre	\$291,434	Includes: electrical, water, sewer connections on site, assumes level site with no contamination, existing structures/utilities, etc.
Escalation and Design Contingency			\$330,628	Includes: general conditions, bonds, overhead, profit, design contingency (5%), escalation (2.5%), tariff cost allowance to 2026
Owner's Soft Cost			\$352,447	Includes: A&E (construction admin), FFE (furnishings), exterior storage shed, comms (low voltage alarm / security system), printing cost, utility back charges, commissioning, moving, construction tests & inspections, owner's contingency (9%), construction contingency (6%)
Site dev., design contingency, escalation, soft cost subtotal		\$590/sq. foot	\$974,509	
ESTIMATED TOTAL			\$1,680,000	(Rounded)

The project has received the necessary approvals from the Town Wetlands Protection Committee, Design Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. It needs no further approvals at this stage. Assuming STM approval and a successful bidding process, construction could start in early 2026 and conclude in time for WHS use in fall 2026.

Once built, the building will be available for use by WPS. Tentative plans entail use by the football team in the fall and by the softball and girls' lacrosse teams in the spring, ensuring gender equity in building use. While the Town may receive requests from other groups to use the building during the limited periods when not in WPS use, there are no current plans or building design features to accommodate any such requests. NRC would consider such requests only if and when they arise and do not conflict with WPS use.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory expressed broad support for Article 7, which proposes funding the construction of team rooms at Wellesley High School. It unanimously agrees that this project will benefit all WPS student athletes, not just ones using the team rooms. Moving a few teams out of the overcrowded WHS locker rooms will have a positive cascading impact on all athletes by freeing up space in the WHS building itself. Since more than 80% of WPS students currently participate in athletics,

most students will benefit from this addition. This benefit will extend to both home and visiting teams, creating a respectful environment of competition and sportsmanship.

Several committee members hoped that the Town would make the team rooms available in the off-season to other organizations in Town thereby sharing the project benefits more widely, possibly generating revenue and maximizing value.

One member expressed reservations about the prioritization of funding, raising equity concerns for non-athletes and a preference to direct the money to academic endeavors and other student-facing services; however, they acknowledged TM's previous approval of this project in 2018, which they felt was an important factor in continuing to support this updated request.

The Town expects to fund the project from free cash, leading several members to note that, while the project is not being weighed against other capital priorities in this cycle, the Town does have the financial capacity to support it.

Members appreciated the project's sound, straight-forward design; its approvals from Wetlands, DRB and ZBA; and the proponents' long-standing determination to deliver students the resources needed to thrive. Advisory regrets that those facilities were not included in the 2012 High School construction project due to MSBA cuts.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

September 2025 SC Presentation to Advisory for Article 7:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/LGze1WqTsE8jwTKC--4xu4kSh8jPjdoJ/playlists/2774/media/977084?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true&fullscreen=false&show_title_description_summary=true

2024 ATM Report (Article 21, pp. 142)

<https://wellesleyma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/39027/2024-ATM-Advisory-Report-FINAL>

Facilities Master Plan: Hunnewell Track and Field Project page

<https://wellesleyps.org/district-information/facilities-master-plan/hunnewell-track-field-projects/>

2018 ATM Report (Article 17, pp. 118-120)

https://www.wellesleyma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9573/2018-ATM-Advisory-Report_ORIGINAL-PDF

ARTICLE 8 – Funding Request for Replacement of Computer-assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) System (Board of Assessors)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 8, 12 to 1.

Executive Summary	Article 8 seeks \$190,000 in capital funds to replace the Town's Computer-assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system, which the Board of Assessors uses to collect, manage, analyze, and report property appraisal data for citizens, town departments, and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR).
Proponent	Board of Assessors (BOA)
Other Stakeholders	IT, Building, Finance, Planning and GIS
Voting Yes will...	Authorize a one-time capital investment of \$190,000 for procurement, configuration, data migration, system integration, and training for a new CAMA system.
Voting No will...	Deny BOA funds for an updated CAMA system.
Sponsor's Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaces a legacy system with potential cybersecurity vulnerabilities, improving IT security posture. • Prevents future disruption from outdated technology by adopting a modern system with easier integration and ongoing vendor support. • Reduces risk of losing DOR certification of assessed values and avoids related financial and operational consequences. • Frees BOA staff from many manual tasks, allowing them to devote more time to work that provides greater value to the Town.
Downsides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will need retraining, which may temporarily disrupt current workflows • Data migration complexity or unforeseen integration issues with the Town's interconnected systems could increase implementation costs beyond the budgeted contingency. • The new system may fail to deliver all expected benefits.
Financial or Tax Impact	One-time cost of \$190,000. The new system could save up to \$54,000 annually in estimated costs for valuation consulting and software maintenance. BOA does not expect a reduction in staffing, because BOA staff would shift its workload toward high-value work and away from manual data entry, system upkeep, and report generation.
Other Impacts	The proposed system would reduce the town's reliance on a single vendor, helping ensure continuity even if key personnel retire or become unavailable. The new system also enables more efficient tracking of property improvements and valuations, supporting more accurate assessments that could contribute to tax levy growth. Finally, the upgrade could make future costs easier to understand and plan for, improving both transparency and predictability in the town's budgeting process.

Overview

BOA is responsible for assessing, maintaining, and reporting property data. This requires continuous data analysis, property valuation, taxpayer notification, and promotion of tax equity through consistent valuation methodology. BOA relies on Computer-Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) for these critical functions.

The current database application has been reliable and stable for the Town's needs. However, at nearly 30 years old, it lacks many features found in modern CAMA systems. The Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) has recommended replacing it to ensure continued compliance and operational efficiency.

The current CAMA application is called WinAppraisal. John F. Ryan and Associates set up the system in 1998 and still provides maintenance services, ad-hoc customizations, and annual valuation model services. The FY26 consulting services contract with John F. Ryan and Associates costs \$96,000, and the annual software license fee is \$8,000. Wellesley will soon be the last remaining Massachusetts town to operate WinAppraisal.

For the reasons more fully described below, BOA believes that the time has come to update its CAMA system. Rather than building a custom system from scratch, Wellesley plans to solicit bids for a ready-made, cloud-based solution that supports the Town’s IT strategic priorities – cost-effectiveness, vendor-supported maintenance, and long-term sustainability. This approach improves the chances of a smooth transition and allows the Town to benefit from modern automation tools and built-in connections to other systems. The bid specifications will require compatibility with the various other databases, software and systems used by BOA now and in the foreseeable future. The vendor will undertake to update the software over time, keeping it aligned with changing needs and standards.

The funding request seeks a one-time appropriation of \$190,000. This figure includes a 10% contingency and is based on interviews with peer municipalities and vendors. The estimate covers CAMA conversion, training, software licensing, and cloud hosting. Annual ongoing costs are projected to be in the \$50,000 range for the first year of software maintenance and model valuation services.

Early, proactive collaboration tends to improve results for major technology projects and helps ensure smoother integration across departments. Accordingly, BOA has coordinated with several Town departments – including IT, Building, Finance, Planning, and GIS – to ensure agreement on the proposed system upgrade. None of them has raised objections.

If STM approves this article, BOA anticipates the following schedule for conversion to a new CAMA system:

EXPECTED PROJECT TIMELINE	
November 2025	Town releases the RFP.
January 2026	Contract award; commencement of conversion.
September 2026	Anticipated completion of conversion.
December 2026	New system goes live.

BOA will run both the old and new systems in parallel during part of FY27, until the new system goes live (hopefully, in December 2026).

Risks of Continuing Without a CAMA Upgrade

Acquiring a modern replacement for the current CAMA system addresses several critical risks:

1. DOR Certification. While DOR’s Bureau of Local Assessment (“BLA”) has certified Wellesley’s BOA for the next five years, it has recommended a new or updated CAMA system to ensure future certification of state-mandated reporting requirements. The BLA Directives – Fiscal 2025 states:

"Wellesley's current system requires upgrades to more easily and efficiently produce all necessary certification review documents and will reduce delays in review. Again, it is recommended that your community acquires additional software or upgrade the existing computer assisted mass appraisal (CAMA) system to facilitate your analysis and report production. The current CAMA system used is still lacking in its ability to produce analytical reports according to DOR standards." [sic].

Continuing with the existing CAMA system would thus increase the risk that the BOA would fail state local assessment requirements, possibly leading DOR to deny certification of BOA annual valuations and reports. This could lead to delays in setting tax rates, loss of public trust, and potential impacts on the Town's bond ratings.

2. Vendor Viability and Risk. Wellesley is the only town currently dependent on WinAppraisal in Massachusetts, which was developed by John F. Ryan Associates. This small, independent consulting firm also provides valuation modeling expertise and WinAppraisal system support. This creates concerns about vendor viability and high dependency on a sole proprietor.

3. Unanticipated Costs. Over time, the upgrade likely will protect the Town from future disruptions and provide stable, long-term support through a widely used platform adopted by other Massachusetts communities. A new platform will streamline manual tasks, improve system functionality, and make property data more accessible to residents online. The proposed new system will enhance cybersecurity and reduce dependence on a single vendor or key personnel. Upgrading Wellesley's property assessment system would also help the town avoid costly risks associated with state non-compliance, including delays in tax bill issuance and unexpected consulting fees and staff overtime.

Five-year CAMA System Cost Comparison

The following table illustrates the anticipated financial impact of implementing the new CAMA system versus continuing with the current WinAppraisal system over a five-year period.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Current (WinAppraisal) System—consulting and license costs	\$104,000	\$104,000	\$104,000	\$104,000	\$104,000
New CAMA System (see note)	\$190,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Annual Difference	-\$86,000	\$54,000	\$54,000	\$54,000	\$54,000
Cumulative Savings/Cost	-\$86,000	-\$32,000	\$22,000	\$76,000	\$130,000

Table Note: Cost projections are based on FY2026 estimates for planning purposes. Actual costs may vary based on bids received, implementation timing and any period of parallel system operation.

Summary of five-year cost estimates:

- **Annual savings:** Beginning in Year 2, the Town realizes an estimated \$54,000 in annual savings compared to the current system.
- **Break-even point:** The investment is likely to pay for itself between Year 2 and Year 3.
- **Five-year net impact:** Cumulative savings of about \$130,000 by the end of Year 5, with ongoing annual savings of an estimated \$54,000 thereafter.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory generally supported the BOA's proposal to replace the town's legacy property assessment software system. Members voting in favor of the article cited improved accuracy in property appraisals, and enhanced cybersecurity. Several members emphasized the risks of the outdated current system, including cybersecurity vulnerabilities. One member noted that the only other Massachusetts town that still uses a similar legacy system, is already transitioning away from it. Additionally, members in support also noted that the new system has a payback between the 2nd and 3rd years in use and beyond would yield ongoing cost savings versus the current system.

One member questioned the urgency of bringing this proposal to a Special Town Meeting when BOA's next state review and recertification will likely occur in 2030. This member felt that the project needed more analysis, particularly regarding alternative systems used by other towns and a clearer cost-benefit comparison.

Other members disagreed. One countered that the implementation timeline is lengthy - potentially over a year, including a parallel run with the old system - which justifies starting the process now. Another pointed out that costs could only be determined through competitive bidding and that no one had questioned the Town's anticipated bid specifications.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 12 to 1.

Note: At the time of the printing of the Report, Advisory's vote was taken on a Motion with \$160,000 as the cost. Prior to Town Meeting, Advisory will re-vote the \$190,000 and update recommendations at Town Meeting.

Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services/Bureau of Local Assessment GUIDELINES ON CAMA SYSTEM ACQUISITION

DOR BLA Directives - Fiscal Year 2025

2025 STM Warrant

ARTICLE 9 – Changes to Town Non-Union Employee Personnel Policies (Human Resources Board)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 9, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 9 seeks approval from Special Town Meeting to adopt a series of six personnel policies, all but one of which are new.
Proponent	Human Resources Board (HRB)
Other Stakeholders	Select Board, Town non-union employees
Voting Yes will...	Grant necessary approval (under Town Bylaw Article 30.10) for HRB to adopt 6 personnel policies
Voting No will...	Deny HRB the authority to adopt the 6 policies
Sponsor's Position	Facilitates Town compliance with State laws. Some of these policies are mandated and are long overdue, but all provide clear guidance to Town employees.
Downsides	Requires managers and employees to be familiar with, and apply, policy specifics, which may require training.
Financial or Tax Impact	N/A (all material provisions are required by state law)
Other Impacts	N/A

Overview

Article 9 submits six personnel policies for Town Meeting approval pursuant to Town Bylaw Article 30.10 ("Human Resources Board"). Approval will authorize the Human Resources Board (HRB) to promulgate these 6 policies as drafted and approved by Town Counsel, HRB and the Select Board. Except for the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy, all are new policies. They all codify legal mandates already in place for Town employees and serve as formal rules of the workplace by outlining expectations for behavior, responsibilities, and management practices. State law mandates some of these policies, while others facilitate compliance with state law. The policies also provide legal support for the Town in the event of employee disputes.

The six personnel policies proposed under this single Motion are:

Anti-Nepotism Policy

[M.G.L. c. 268A](#) regulates the conduct of public officials and employees by, among other things, prohibiting inappropriate use of public employment to benefit family members. The proposed Town Anti-Nepotism Policy clarifies the law's expectations for Town employees, including extending certain state-imposed prohibitions on favoring close family members to acts that favor certain other relatives. The policy also creates a vehicle for employees to disclose situations in which they have been or will become involved in a matter with direct impact on the hiring, firing or financial interests of a relative. Examples of prohibited nepotism include:

- Direct supervision of a relative
- Influencing the hiring of a relative
- Influencing the granting of Town contracts to relatives
- Overseeing the salaries of relatives

While the Town must adhere to state law, Massachusetts does not require towns to have a written anti-nepotism policy.

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy

The Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) manages and administers, among other things, the Commonwealth's law enforcement information and criminal records systems. DCJIS Regulation 803 CMR 2.00 establishes the CORI system and its access and use in the evaluation and hiring of candidates for employment. See ([DCJIS Regulation 803 CMR 2.00](#)) Section 3C of the DCJIS CORI Booklet requires a CORI policy for organizations that conduct 5 or more criminal record checks per year. See [DCJIS CORI Booklet](#).)

See also M.G.L. c. 6, §172, which regulates the creation, maintenance and electronic access to criminal offender records ([M.G.L. c. 6, §172](#)). The proposed Town CORI Policy identifies personnel who may access CORI data after completing mandatory training. It regulates Town employees' CORI requests and the review, use and disclosure of DCJIS-provided CORI data when considering candidates for employment, as outlined in state law and DCJIS policies.

CROWN ('Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair') Act Policy

The CROWN Act amended state anti-discrimination law. See M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, cls. 62, 63; M.G.L. c. 71, § 1D, both as amended by Chapter 117 of the 2022 Massachusetts Session Acts, An Act Prohibiting Discrimination Based on Natural and Protective Hair Styles ([Acts of 2022, Chapter 117](#)). The Act expands the definition of unlawful discrimination based on "Race" to include "...traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.....Protective hairstyle shall include, but not be limited to, braids, locks, twists, Bantu knots, hair coverings and other formations." The Act, adopted effective October 2022, followed a 2017 incident involving two African American sisters, disciplined for wearing school-banned hair braid extensions. By adopting the CROWN Policy, the Town broadens the scope of discriminatory acts prohibited in its existing [Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation](#). The Human Resources Board plans more changes to its anti-discrimination policy soon.

Domestic Violence Leave Policy

State law entitles employees to take leave from work for certain purposes when the employee or a family member "has been the victim of abusive behavior." See [M.G.L. c. 149, § 52E](#). The Town's proposed Domestic Violence Leave Policy grants the statutorily required leave for Town employees in documented instances of intimate partner violence. It gives eligible employees an opportunity to manage matters related to their safety and wellbeing through protected leave for a total of 15 workdays in any rolling 12-month period. The Town must restore the employee to their original or equivalent position upon return to work unless unrelated circumstances have changed the employee's employment status. Employees may use available sick or vacation time but do not otherwise receive compensation for missed days. The policy defines "intimate partner violence" and "family member."

Subject to an "imminent danger" exception, the statute requires "appropriate advance notice of the leave to the employer as required by the employer's leave policy." Because Wellesley does not have a generally applicable advance notice leave policy, the proposed policy establishes a notice requirement, which HRB views as reasonable. Specifically, it requires one-week written notice in advance except in cases of imminent danger. Likewise, the statute requires the employee to document entitlement to leave "within a reasonable period after the employer requests documentation relative to the employee's absence." The proposed policy implements this statutory provision by requiring documentation in advance where possible or, if impossible, then within a reasonable period up to 30 days after returning to work. Documentation includes

protective orders, police reports, medical evidence, a sworn statement of the employee or certain care providers, etc. Town employees must keep all information provided by the employee as confidential as possible.

While Massachusetts law does not explicitly require a written violence leave policy, it does require employers to notify employees of their rights under the law. The new policy facilitates that notification.

Massachusetts Pay Equity Act Policy

Massachusetts prohibits discrimination based on gender in payment of wages. See [M.G.L. c. 149, § 105A](#) (the “Frances Perkins Workplace Equity Act”). The new Town policy implements that law by ensuring that Town employees of different genders are not paid differently for comparable work, unless a bona fide pay differential is “based on specific factors” such as seniority, a merit system, geographic location, differences in travel requirements or job-related education, training or experience. The policy also prohibits asking job applicants for salary history and gives employees the right to freely share and discuss their compensation with others.

While the state does not require a written Pay Equity policy, the proposed policy provides the Town with clear guidance to achieve pay equity and a mechanism to evaluate any claims of pay inequity.

Small Necessities Leave Act Policy

Massachusetts adopted the Small Necessities Leave Act (SNLA) in 1998 to establish eligibility criteria and enforcement mechanisms for employee family-related leave for up to 24 hours in any rolling 12-month period. See [M.G.L. c. 149, § 52D](#). Employees may use the leave to manage family-related short-term needs, such as accompanying children or elderly relatives to medical or dental appointments, etc. The employee may use available paid vacation, personal or sick leave (following the Town’s sick leave policy), but otherwise would not receive compensation for SNLA leave. Town employees are eligible for SNLA leave if they are eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which requires the completion of 1250 hours of service to the Town prior to FMLA leave-taking. Details of Wellesley’s FMLA policy are available here: <https://www.wellesleyma.gov/213/Forms>. Consistent with the Domestic Violence Policy, the SNLA Policy imposes a one-week notice requirement for foreseeable leave (or, if infeasible, notice as soon as practicable), although there is no requirement for written notice (unlike the Domestic Violence Policy).

The SNLA does not explicitly require a written Small Necessities Leave Act policy.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory unanimously supported approving HR’s six proposed policies under this motion. The policies conform to and comply with state law requirements. Advisory believes that the policies are significant and should be officially adopted, making the requirements readily available to Town managers and employees.

Advisory members raised questions concerning any personnel training required to ensure compliance; the storage, term of retention and ultimate disposal of confidential information gathered under certain policies (such as the CORI or Domestic Violence Leave policies); notification periods for employee compliance; the processes under certain policies for dispute resolution; and the identification of the key decision-making Town departments or individuals charged with evaluating compliance.

Note: recommendation to the Town of Wellesley as it relates to Article 30.10 of the Town Bylaws and future Town Meeting Approval of HR policies:

Some Advisory members questioned the requirement (see Town Bylaws Article 30.10) that all proposed HR policies be established "...subject to approval by Town Meeting..." Members noted the time and expense of TM approval and the resulting delay in HR policymaking, even for HR policies that ensure Town compliance with, or conformity to, State law. Even after STM, HR will have a lengthy list of new or revised policies to adopt.

The Committee debated which policies should be exempt from TM approval requirements and discussed a mechanism for determining such exemptions. Reflecting that discussion, a member proposed that Advisory make the following recommendation to Town Officials and, perhaps, Town Meeting to consider in the future:

Recognizing that Article 30.10 of the Town's Bylaws requires Town Meeting approval for HR policies, some members questioned whether that requirement always makes sense. At least for some policies, approval simply appears to take up time at Town Meeting and to delay HR in implementing policies, some of which are legally mandated. Advisory recommends that the Town review Article 30.10's approval requirement and, if appropriate, propose amending the bylaw to eliminate Town meeting approval requirements for HR policies that, in the opinion of Town Counsel, merely conform to or comply with non-discretionary state mandates.

After reading this statement into the record, Advisory conducted a straw poll of its members, pursuant to the guidelines in the Town of Wellesley Advisory Committee Handbook (July 2022) Section III, sub section D.2.d. In that poll, members unanimously (14-0) supported this recommendation to the Town. This poll is informal and independent of Advisory's vote on the Motion 1 of Article 9 before STM.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 14 to 0.

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

HRB Presentation to Advisory (9/17/25):

<https://wellesleyma.gov/317/Advisory-Committee>

ARTICLE 10 – Creation of PFAS Special Revenue Fund (Select Board)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 10, 13 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 10 seeks to properly account for and expend per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) settlement proceeds in line with law and settlement requirements. The MA Department of Local Services (DLS) guidance recommends creation of a PFAS Special Revenue Fund under Statutory Authority. To date, the Town has received \$973,414.99 from national PFAS settlements. The Town seeks to place these funds in a PFAS Special Revenue Fund.
Proponent	Select Board
Other Stakeholders	Board of Public Works; Town's Financial Department.
Voting Yes will...	Create a separate Town revenue account to receive funds from the national PFAS settlements, to be expended, subject to appropriation, only for PFAS removal projects.
Voting No will...	Deposit the funds upon receipt to the Town's General Fund, subject to the same restriction: to spend them only for PFAS removal projects.
Sponsor's Position	<p>The Article will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help the town account for and expend PFAS settlement proceeds properly for projects addressing PFAS removal from the water supply.• Provide transparency by separating PFAS settlement proceeds from General Fund and Water Enterprise operations.• Ensure compliance with DLS financial reporting recommendations.• Retain the need for appropriations from the PFAS Special Revenue Fund prior to expenditure.• Reduce complexity and promote clarity, thus saving some time that Town personnel will spend to account for the settlement proceeds.
Downsides	No downsides came to Advisory's attention.
Financial or Tax Impact	None; PFAS receipts and allowable purposes will remain the same with or without the Article.
Other Impacts	None, other than simplifying the Town's accounting function.

Overview

Article 10 seeks to properly account for and expend per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) settlement proceeds in line with law and settlement requirements. PFAS are a large group of human-made chemicals found in many consumer and industrial products, known for their grease- and water-repellent properties but also for their persistence and potential health effects. The MA Department of Local Services (DLS) guidance recommends creation of a PFAS Special Revenue Fund under Statutory Authority: Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2023, Section 9 – Exception to G.L. c.44, §53. This law states that “Non-recurring, unanticipated sums ... may, upon approval of the director of accounts, be deposited in a separate revenue account ... and expended, with appropriation, only for the purposes for which the monies were received.”

To date, the Town has received \$973,414.99 from national PFAS settlements (3M, DuPont, Tyco/BASF). Under the settlements, the Town must use all PFAS Special Revenue Funds exclusively for Town projects addressing PFAS removal. Guidance from DLS's Director of Accounts calls for depositing these funds in a Special Revenue Fund and expending them

according to the settlement or closing the funds to the general fund at year end and certifying them as free cash during the free cash certification process (still subject to the above legal restrictions on using the funds).

A PFAS Special Revenue Fund provides transparency by separating funds from General Fund and Water Enterprise operations and ensures compliance with DLS financial reporting requirements. It does not bypass the appropriations process, because expenditures from the PFAS Special Revenue Fund require Town Meeting action. All PFAS Special Revenue Funds will be used for Town projects addressing PFAS removal.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory broadly supports creating a special revenue fund dedicated to PFAS remediation, viewing it as a prudent way to manage funds related to PFAS settlements and expenditures. While the Town expects to receive large settlement amounts from major corporations such as 3M, DuPont, Tyco, and BASF, it may use the proceeds from those settlements only for PFAS remediation. Creating a separate fund is a logical step to ensure that the Town clearly accounts for these receipts and spends them appropriately. The proposed dedicated fund would accomplish those goals, enhance transparency and simplify accounting.

One member noted that, for these reasons, the Massachusetts Division of Local Services (DLS) recommends setting up such a fund, instead of mixing PFAS-related funds into the general fund or free cash. While the state (DLS) does not mandate a dedicated PFAS settlement fund, it strongly encourages it as a best practice. Article 10 follows this guidance.

Advisory notes that under the Article and as required by state law, all appropriations from the PFAS settlement fund will still require Town Meeting approval. This Article will neither expand nor restrict Town Meeting's power over the purposes of those appropriations, because the PFAS settlements expressly limit expenditure of funds to PFAS remediation,

Advisory recommends favorable action, 13 to 0.

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

ARTICLE 11 – MBTA Easement

No Motion is expected under Article 11.

BYLAW AMENDMENT

ARTICLE 12 – Ollie’s Law (Select Board)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 12, 14 to 0.

Executive Summary	Article 12 seeks to amend the Town By-laws with respect to animal control regulations to conform the regulation of kennels and canine daycare facilities to state law, an <i>Act to Increase Kennel Safety</i> , G.L. c. 140, § 174G, dubbed “Ollie’s Law.” These changes include an updated fee schedule for kennel operation, and updated penalties for violations of the law, among other ancillary changes.
Proponent	Select Board
Other Stakeholders	Town Clerk, Animal Control Officer
Voting Yes will...	Amend the Town’s By-laws to conform the regulation of kennels and daycare facilities to the State’s <i>Act to Increase Kennel Safety</i> , aka Ollie’s Law.
Voting No will...	Make no changes to the Town’s bylaws.
Sponsor’s Position	Passing this Article brings the Town into compliance with Ollie’s Law. If Town By-laws are not consistent with the State laws, the Town still has to follow the State laws; thus, the Town would like the Town By-laws to conform to with Ollie’s Law.
Downsides	Advisory did not learn of any substantive downsides.
Financial or Tax Impact	None.
Other Impacts	None (State law already controls these matters).

Overview

On September 20, 2024, Governor Maura Healey signed an *Act to Increase Kennel Safety* (AKA Ollie’s Law). G.L. c. 140, § 174G. This act updated dog kennel licensing laws and authorized state-level kennel regulations in Massachusetts. The passing of Ollie’s law—named after a 7-month-old labradoodle by the name of Ollie who was severely mauled by other dogs at an East Longmeadow, MA boarding facility and later died—gave the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) the ability to work with an appointed advisory committee to create standards and enact regulations for commercial boarding and training kennels, including dog daycares.

Ollie’s Law now clarifies existing kennel license requirements, requires municipalities to report kennel licenses to MDAR, requires kennels to report to municipal officials any canine injuries that occur, and establishes enforcement protocols for the municipality, with state assistance when necessary. It now requires kennel licenses for:

- Personal Kennels – more than 4 dogs
- Commercial Kennels – more than 4 dogs

- Boarding, daycare or training services
- Breeders and foster homes (shelters and rescues fee waived)
- Vets if boarding beyond medical necessity
- Dog care apps located in Wellesley – Rover and Wag

Article 12 proposes the following changes to the Town of Wellesley's Article 47, Animal Control Regulations, to conform to Ollie's Law:

- 47.1-2: Expand accordance of 137A-174G to cover all applicable laws
- 47.5: New Kennel Section, listing new fees:
 - 1) Kennels with 5-8 Dogs \$75
 - 2) Kennels with 9-12 Dogs \$150
 - 3) Kennels with 13-25 Dogs \$200
 - 4) Kennels with 26 or more Dogs \$250
- 47.10: Violations and Penalties. Non-Kennel and Kennel fines—update to include an increased maximum penalty and Kennel Law violations
- 47.6-10: Renumbering due to the addition of a new 47.5 Kennels
- Renumbering references to reflect revised numbering

The Town Clerk will continue to perform, administer and enforce the Town's dog licensing function, supported by inspections, investigations and certain enforcement actions by the Town's Animal Control Officer where appropriate. Article 12 replaces Town Bylaw 47's existing reference to the "Town Clerk" with the phrase "Licensing Authority", which the proposed bylaw (and Ollie's Law) defines as the Town Clerk. It designates the Town's Executive Director as the "Hearing Authority." The proponent explained to Advisory that the Executive Director will serve as the hearing officer in the event of a Town hearing on alleged violations.

Article 12 incorporates references to G. L. c. 140, § 174F into Town bylaw Article 47 regarding Confinement of an Animal in a Motor Vehicle. This allows Animal Control Officers, Law Enforcement or Fire Fighters to save an animal whose health is threatened due to exposure to extreme heat or cold in motor vehicles and imposes fines for these offenses.

Article 12 also proposes changes to the Town of Wellesley's Article 52, Bylaw, Rule or Regulation Violations, Non-criminal Disposition. The changes reflect the revised numbering in Article 47 and make a typographical correction.

Ollie's Law took effect on December 19, 2024. The Town of Wellesley was one of 237 municipalities that complied with the deadline of June 1, 2025, for sending information on licensed kennels to the state.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory broadly supported this motion. The proposed bylaw changes align with state law. The changes will have minimal financial impact on the Town, because they address obligations, official roles and duties that already exist by reason of state law. Members noted the importance of updating the bylaws to reflect state law, to conform to current standards, and to improve conditions for kennels and animals in the community.

One member stressed the need for plain language in Town bylaws; non-lawyers should be able to read and understand the bylaws, and no reader should be put to unnecessary time, effort and expense in that pursuit. This member thanked the Town for allowing broad input before finalizing the bylaw's language in Article 12 – and for responding to citizen input by making specific plain-language changes to the original draft. That approach is preferable to including specific bylaw text in the warrant, as has occurred in the past, which tends to freeze the language and preempt discussion about plain language.

However, this member also noted that the current bylaw's proposed language still includes some unnecessary jargon, such as replacing the existing bylaw's reference to the "Town Clerk" with the proposed phrase "licensing authority," even though that phrase means "Town Clerk." Also, the proposed bylaw uses the phrase "Hearing Authority" to refer to the Executive Director's role, but the member expressed uncertainty about the scope of that phrase and about the interaction between the Hearing Authority and the Town Clerk, given state law. This member supported the article with the hope that further refinements could occur before the motion is presented at Town Meeting.

Advisory recommends favorable/unfavorable action, 14 to 0.

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

CITIZEN PETITION

ARTICLE 13: Authorization for Special Act -“Vote 17,” An act providing for voting by qualified residents aged 17 in Town elections in the Town of Wellesley (Citizen Petition)

Recommendation: Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 13, 10 to 4.

Executive Summary	Article 13 seeks Town authorization for the Select Board to place a nonbinding public opinion advisory question on the March 2026 Town election ballot, and if voters approve the question, to petition the Massachusetts legislature to enact special legislation allowing qualified residents of Wellesley aged 17 to vote in Town elections.
Proponent	Citizen petition by Anya Khera (Wellesley TMM Precinct F) and Kourosh Farboodmanesh (Wellesley TMM Precinct E)
Other Stakeholders	Town Clerk
Voting Yes will...	Allow Select Board (1) to place a nonbinding public opinion advisory question on the March 2026 Town election ballot, and (2) upon approval of the ballot question, to petition the Massachusetts legislature to enact special legislation allowing qualified residents of Wellesley aged 17 to vote in Town elections.
Voting No will...	Retain the current voting age limit of 18.
Sponsor's Position	Lowering the voting age will increase youth civic and political participation; build a potentially life-long “habit” of registering and voting in elections; and foster societal awareness of positions on local issues across age categories
Downsides	Concerns about appropriate cognitive development, mental health issues. Insufficient civics education or life experience to be adequately prepared. Giving decision power to voting bloc which may be easily influenced by outside factors
Financial or Tax Impact	None or Negligible
Other Impacts	n/a

Overview

This Article seeks to allow Wellesley residents aged 17 to register and vote in **Town** elections. It would **not** make 17-year-olds eligible to run for Town offices that require registered voter status.

History of This Initiative

Article 13 appears on the Fall Special Town Meeting Warrant pursuant to a Citizen's Petition, submitted by two Wellesley Town Meeting members, who also happen to be high school students. They obtained the required 100 signatures from registered Wellesley voters for consideration at a STM.

Veteran Town Meeting members may recall that a similar proposal came before Annual Town Meeting in 2024. The proposal at that time was to lower the voting age to 16. During robust discussion, TMMs raised some concerns which the current Article seeks to address. Some

expressed concern about making 16-year-olds eligible to run for townwide positions such as Select Board or School Committee. STM Article 13 addresses that concern by excluding 17-year-olds from those positions. Others felt that younger voters wouldn't have "skin in the game," as they don't pay property taxes. Supporters pointed out that most 18-year-olds and renters do not pay property taxes. The revised proposal also now advocates lowering the voting age to 17; most high school students turn 18 during their senior year, and the proponents felt that there is little significant difference in maturity between 17- and 18-year-olds.

The National Debate: Lowering the Voting Age – or Not

People who support lowering the voting age say that it would recognize the political and civil rights of younger individuals and benefit society socially and culturally, while opponents express concern about the maturity of this group to make informed political decisions. Advocacy in support of a lower voting age has increased in the past decade, as a number of organizations now support lowering the voting age, including Vote16USA (and its state chapters, including Vote16MA), Generation Citizen (which incubated Vote16USA), and the National Youth Rights Association (NYRA).

Proponents of STM Article 13 believe that allowing 17-year-olds to vote will foster a greater sense of civic engagement and help to build a lifelong "habit" of voting. Approximately four million US citizens turn 18 every year, but it is estimated that fewer than 30% are registered to vote. Providing support for younger voters to cast their first ballot while they are still living at home and attending high school would help overcome perceived and actual barriers to voter registration experienced by young adults. Research by Generation Citizen shows that voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over 25%.

Supporters of a lower voting age also point out that, socially, 16- and 17-year-olds already take on many adult responsibilities, such as driving, working, using public services and paying taxes (as well as: applying for passports, using credit cards, suing for legal emancipation from their parents). They are directly affected by important issues like climate change, gun control, affordable housing, school quality and health care (as well as transportation infrastructure). They point out that decisions made about these issues have consequences not only today but, in the future, giving younger voters an even greater stake in the outcome. Because many candidates target only "likely voters," who are, by definition, already registered, they miss older teen voters—and the issues they care about.

People who oppose lowering the voting age express concerns about teenagers' cognitive and social development. They are concerned about youth impulsiveness, vulnerability to social manipulation, and youth's lack of understanding of the full context of the issues. Some neuroscience research suggests that teenagers can make reasonable decisions when they have time to think things through, but opponents do not believe that the evidence supports the proponents' claims regarding youth cognition or voting participation. Some also point out that many 17-year olds are likely to sever ties with Wellesley soon anyway, when they leave for college or other pursuits.

The proponents cite some research in response to these concerns, which is discussed below in the "Appendix: Research Cited by the Proponents." Proponents of STM Article 13 also argue that it is unreasonable to set expectations about political cognition for youth, given that other age groups do not have to prove their competence to vote.

Impact on Wellesley Elections

Discussions with the Wellesley Town Clerk indicate that lowering the voting age to 17 would not significantly increase the Town's costs. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts already allows

citizens to preregister to vote at age 16 when they apply for a driver’s license. Most Wellesley Town elections require a ballot specific to the Town because state congressional districts differ from Town precinct boundaries.

According to the Town Clerk’s data, the Town has approximately 352 17-year old residents. If they all register, that would increase the total number of registered voters by about 1.9%, but it is likely that not all will vote, and not all will request a mail-in ballot. Adding these new voters would not significantly affect the total number of ballots that the Town needs to print, because the Town buys ballots in large quantities anyway. Even in the rare instance where the Town holds a local election on a State ballot, the incremental cost of printing special ballots for 352 additional 17-year-old voters would likely not exceed about \$1,000.

Historical Background.

In most countries, the legal voting age is 18 or older. Voting rights in the United States changed greatly during the 20th century. The 19th Amendment (1920) extended the right to vote to women; the Snyder Act (1924) granted Native Americans citizenship (and thus the right to vote). The Voting Rights Act of 1965 protected the voting rights of racial minorities. The campaign to lower the federal voting age from 21 to 18 began in 1942, and nearly 30 years later (1971) resulted in ratification of the 26th Amendment, thereby aligning the right to vote with draft eligibility.

International Trends

Internationally, a trend to lower the voting age began in the second half of the 20th century. Today, countries including Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Belgium, Israel, Greece, Indonesia, Scotland and Wales allow citizens ages 16 and/or 17 to vote in at least some elections. Recently, the British government confirmed plans to introduce measures to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in the next general election.

Voting Age in the United States.

Because a nationwide change to the voting age would require a Constitutional amendment, advocates have set their sights on making changes at the local level, and campaigns are ongoing in multiple states. Activists in Takoma Park, Maryland, launched a successful campaign in 2013 to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school board and local elections. Since then, other local communities have extended voting privileges to younger voters.

Current Status of Voting Age Requirements in the United States		
16-Year-Olds Can Vote	Campaigns	Massachusetts
<u>Local Elections</u> Maryland Cheverly Chevy Chase College Park Greenbelt Hyattsville Mount Rainer Riverdale Park Somerset Town Takoma Park Vermont Brattleboro <u>School Board Elections</u>	Washington D.C. San Francisco, CA Culver City, CA Boulder, CO Kansas City MO <i>Note: One-third of U.S. states allow 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they will be 18 by the time of the general election.</i>	Acton (passed: 2023, 2025) Arlington (passed: 2025) Ashfield (passed: 2017) Boston (passed: 2023, 20250) Brookline (passed: 2021) Cambridge (passed: 2021) Concord (passed: 2019, 2021) Conway (passed: 2025) Deerfield Newton (passed) Northampton (passed 2023, 2025) Lawrence Leominster Lowell

California Albany Berkeley Oakland New Jersey Newark		Shelburne Somerville (passed: 2019, 2021, 2023, 2025) Swampscott Wellesley Wendell (passed 2017, 2019, 2021) Worcester
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Favorable action on Article 13 would request the Select Board to place a nonbinding, public opinion question on the ballot for the Town election held in March. Following a positive outcome at the March election, the Select Board would then petition the state legislature for a “Home Rule” petition to amend the Town bylaws. Home Rule petitions must be approved by both legislative chambers and signed by the state governor to take effect.

Advisory Considerations

Advisory’s members had many different perspectives on this article. Some expressed support for the article, others opposed it and some expressed support with reservations.

Most importantly, however, all members strongly urged Town Meeting Members to **focus on the precise content of the Article**. This is not an up-or-down vote on lowering the voting age to 17. Rather, Article 17 would authorize the Select Board to place a nonbinding referendum on the March Town election ballot to give the broader Wellesley community an opportunity to express their opinion about lowering the voting age to 17 in local elections. If the referendum’s results favor lowering the voting age, the Article would also authorize the SB to seek approval of special legislation by the state legislature,

Those expressing strong support for Article 13 cited research that early civic engagement increases long-term voter participation. They emphasized the value of fostering civic habits at a young age and noted potential secondary benefits, such as increased awareness among families and broader community engagement. One member pointed to other forms of gradual responsibility, like learner’s permits, suggesting that allowing 17-year-olds to vote in local elections could be a safe and constructive step to becoming engaged citizens. Other members pointed out that the number of potential 17-year-old voters was relatively small and unlikely to substantially sway the results of an election. A member observed that 17-year-olds have a stake in the issues resolved by Town elections and noted that Wellesley already allows residents younger than 18 to serve as voting members of Town Meeting.

Others supported the article primarily because it would allow the broader community to weigh in through a public referendum. These members clarified that they did not necessarily endorse lowering the voting age but did favor advancing the question to the public. They stressed the importance of clearly communicating this distinction to Town Meeting Members.

Some members who opposed the article expressed concerns about the maturity and neurological development of 17-year-olds, questioning the readiness of these younger citizens to make informed voting decisions. Others noted that Town Meeting debated and voted on the issue of lowering the voting age to 16 a year and one-half ago. See 2024 ATM article 48 (“Authorize special act to provide voting rights in local elections for residents 16 and 17 years old”) and electronic voting results (69 yes; 104 no). They questioned the need to revisit the matter so soon, especially with what some saw as only minor changes to the proposal.

Other members who opposed or had reservations about the article were skeptical about the practical impact of allowing 17-year-olds to vote, pointing out that many in this age group are

preparing to leave the community for college and may not be invested in local issues. One member expressed concern about the lack of input from school administrators, teachers, and parents, thus leaving the proposal without sufficient community context. Others cited concerns about the potential effect on the mental health of young people; they were worried that being subjected to political campaigning would cause additional stress for students who were already dealing with the anxieties inherent in high school.

Advisory recommends favorable action, 10 to 4.

APPENDIX: RESEARCH CITED BY THE PROPONENTS

A [UNICEF brief](#) on political maturity of youth states that a “significant proportion of scientists in the neurodevelopmental field have argued that lowering the voting age is in line with current evidence around adolescent brain development.” A published review of existing research into the political maturity of 16- and 17-year-olds notes: “Concerns about youths’ ability to vote are generally not supported by developmental science, suggesting that negative stereotypes about teenagers may be a large barrier to changing the voting age.” Oosterhoff B, Wray-Lake L, Hart D. “Reconsidering the Minimum Voting Age in the United States.” *Perspect Psychol Sci.* 2022 Mar;17(2):442-451. doi: 10.1177/1745691621994221. Epub 2021 Aug 26. PMID: 34436941. Other research concludes that 16- and 17-year-olds may be subject to poor decision-making in high-stress, hurried situations, but are capable of making reasonable decisions when they have time and resources to consider the issue – referred to as “cold cognition.” The proponents argue that favorable conditions for cold cognition are usually present for decisions about voting.

Further Reading/Viewing Submitted by the Proponents includes:

Voices for Vote16 podcast summary: [Updated Voices for Vote16 Podcast Compilation Video](#)

- Voices for Vote16 podcast with NJ Governor Phil Murphy: [Vote16 Advocate \(Governor Phil Murphy\) - YouTube](#)
- Vote16MA Symposium we ran: [Vote16MA Symposium - YouTube](#)
- Tufts CIRCLE articles (authored/co-authored by Anya)
 - [Youth Expertise - Insufficient Representation Hurts Youth Civic Engagement | CIRCLE](#)
 - [Lowering the Voting Age Can Instill Civic Responsibility in Youth | CIRCLE](#)

[2025 STM Warrant](#)

Vote 17 Presentation to Advisory (9/10/25): <https://wellesleyma.gov/317/Advisory-Committee>

APPENDIX A MODERATOR'S GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT OF THE WELLESLEY REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Wellesley Town Meeting (the "Meeting") is to reach decisions with respect to the matters brought before the Meeting by a democratic process. The process should not be partisan or adversarial. Rather it should demonstrate an effort by the elected representatives of the Town in open discussion, free from technicalities of parliamentary procedure, to establish constructive policies for the government of the Town. The Meeting depends for its effectiveness on familiarity of the Town Meeting Members with the matters before the Meeting and upon their ability to rely one upon the other and upon their elected or appointed boards and committees.

All who speak to the Meeting or present to it should seek to be worthy of this trust. Proponents of action should make full and fair disclosure of all facts and considerations bearing on a problem, not merely those favoring their proposal. On the other hand, those opposed to a proposal should make their opposition known to the sponsors as soon as possible, rather than seeking to succeed by surprise at the Meeting. Negotiations prior to Town Meeting are more likely than debate at Town Meeting to clarify the issues and to produce solutions that will receive the support of the Meeting as a whole.

The great diversity among the residents of the Town often will lead to differences with respect to the matter before the Meeting. The good faith of no one should be questioned; rather, there should be a cooperative effort to find solutions that are reasonably responsive to the needs of all.

The Meeting shall abide by the laws of the Commonwealth including the prohibitions of smoking and carrying firearms on school property.

The following guidelines are intended to inform and guide those who participate in the Meeting and, thus, to assist in its orderly conduct. These guidelines, except to the extent that they embody statutes and Town Bylaws, are not intended as rules having legal effect.

II. PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING

- A. *Public Meeting*** - The Town Meeting is a public meeting and may be attended by all. Since only the Members may make motions and vote thereon, they are seated separately from non-members.
- B. *Quorum*** - A majority of the Town Meeting Members shall constitute a quorum for doing business; but a lesser number may adjourn the Meeting to another time.
- C. *Moderator*** - The Moderator shall preside at the Meeting and shall regulate the proceedings and decide all questions of order.

No one shall distribute any material at Town Meeting except with permission of the Moderator.

The Moderator may appoint persons to assist in the conduct of the Meeting, including determination of the votes of the Meeting.

If the Moderator is absent or cannot act, a Moderator Pro Tempore may be elected by the Meeting, the Town Clerk to preside at such election.

The Moderator shall not be an elected Town Meeting Member and shall not vote with respect to any matters before the Meeting. A Town Meeting Member may be a Moderator Pro Tempore, but shall not vote while presiding at the Meeting.

- D. Clerk** - The Town Clerk shall determine the presence of a quorum and shall maintain the records of the Meeting, including the results of all votes and other action taken at the Meeting. If there is no Town Clerk, or if the Town Clerk is absent from the Meeting, the Meeting shall elect another person (usually the Assistant Town Clerk) to act as temporary Clerk of the Meeting.

The Town Clerk shall not be an elected Town Meeting Member and shall not vote with respect to any matters before the Meeting. A Town Meeting Member may be Temporary Clerk, but shall not vote while acting as Clerk of the Meeting.

- E. Town Counsel** - Town Counsel shall be present at all Meetings and, upon request, shall advise the Moderator and any Member or other person present with respect to any pertinent question of law on which his or her opinion is requested. Such opinion is advisory only and not binding upon the Town, any person, or the Meeting. If Town Counsel is unable to attend, the Select Board shall designate another attorney as Acting Town Counsel to perform those duties at the Meeting.

Town Counsel shall not be an elected Town Meeting Member and shall not vote with respect to any matter before the Meeting. A Town Meeting Member may be Acting Counsel, but shall not vote while so acting.

- F. Tellers** - The Moderator shall appoint Town Meeting Members as Tellers for the purpose of counting the votes of the Meeting. Such appointments may, in the Moderator's discretion, be effective for more than one session of any Meeting. The Tellers shall report the results of their count of the section of the Meeting assigned to them, indicating the number in favor of the motion, the number opposed, and, if so instructed by the Moderator, the number abstaining, and such shall be announced to the Meeting and maintained with the records of the Meeting. Tellers may vote on any question on which they act as Tellers, but any Teller who decides to participate in the debate of a question should request the Moderator to appoint another Teller to count the vote on that question.

III. MOTIONS

Need for Motion - Action by the Meeting is taken solely by a vote of the Meeting on a motion duly made at the Meeting.

- A. Subject of Motions** - Except for such matters as resolutions recognizing individual achievements and the like, no motion shall be entertained by Town Meeting unless the subject thereof is contained within the Warrant. The Moderator shall determine whether a motion is "within the scope of the warrant," that is, whether the warrant gave adequate notice that the action proposed by the motion might be taken at the Meeting. Motions may propose action at variance with that desired by the sponsor of the article. Such motions may, for example, propose the establishment of a guideline, referral to an existing board or committee or one to be established; but all such motions are proper only if "within the scope of the warrant" as determined by the Moderator.
- B. Order of Consideration** - All articles shall be considered in the order in which they appear in the warrant, unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Moderator,

or the Meeting by majority vote. Where there are a number of motions relating to a project calling for the expenditure of funds, the motion calling for the expenditure of the largest sum shall be the first put to vote, unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Moderator, or the Meeting by majority vote.

- C. *Formal Requirements*** - Motions can be made only by a Member of the Meeting. All motions, other than procedural motions, must be in writing signed by the sponsoring Member. No seconds are needed for any motion.

Sponsors of motions are required to submit their motions to the Select Board by a date specified by the Select Board. The motions must also be submitted to the Moderator and the Chair of the Advisory Committee. The exact form of any motion or amendment must be either distributed to Town Meeting Members or projected on a screen at Town Meeting before a vote thereon can be taken.

After the initial call to order of any Annual or Special Town Meeting, if a proponent informs the Moderator of an intention to present an amendment or substitute motion or resolution, notice of the action and the text must be made available to Town Meeting Members before action is taken on the article to which it relates.

- D. *Notice to Moderator*** - Every person who prior to the Meeting has decided to make a motion with respect to an article should inform the Moderator and the Chair of the Advisory Committee prior to the Meeting or, if the decision to make a motion is reached only during the Meeting, as early as convenient thereafter.
- E. *Reconsideration*** - Motions to reconsider any action shall be entertained only if in the view of the Moderator there is reason to suppose that Members may have changed their minds. The Moderator may rule that any motion is a motion for reconsideration if it is not substantially different from a motion previously voted upon.

No action taken at any session of a Town Meeting shall be reconsidered at any subsequent session, unless notice of intention to move for reconsideration shall have been given at the session at which such action was taken. If action taken at the final session is to be reconsidered, debate and a vote on a motion for reconsideration may occur at the same session only after all articles have been acted upon unless, in the Moderator's discretion, debate and a vote on the motion at an earlier point in the session would expedite the conduct of the session. Any vote that requires more than a simple majority for passage shall require a 3/5ths vote in order to be reconsidered by Town Meeting.

IV. DEBATE

- A. *Persons Authorized*** - All residents of Wellesley, whether or not Town Meeting Members or registered voters, may address the Meeting. Non-residents may address the Meeting with the approval of the Moderator or a majority of the Meeting. Only Town Meeting Members may make a motion.
- B. *Permission of the Moderator*** - Persons wishing to address the Meeting shall raise their hands or stand and wait, either at their seat or at a standing microphone if in use, until they are recognized by the Moderator, and no one shall address the Meeting without first requesting and receiving the permission of the Moderator.

- C. **Identification of Speaker** - Each person addressing the Meeting shall begin by stating his or her name and precinct if a resident of Wellesley or place of residence if a non-resident.
- D. **Conduct** - All remarks should be limited to the subject then under discussion. It is improper to indulge in references to personalities and all expressions of approval or disapproval, such as applause or booing, are out of order.

The Moderator may request any person to keep silent. If, after a warning from the Moderator, a person refuses to be silent or persists in other disorderly behavior, the Moderator may order such person to withdraw and, if he or she fails to withdraw, may order a police officer to remove such person from the Meeting.

- E. **Personal or Financial Interest** - Individuals who have a personal or financial interest with respect to a matter may speak or vote thereon but should frankly disclose their interest before speaking. However, no Town Meeting Member should accept compensation for speaking to or voting at the Meeting.
- F. **Speaking Time** – Individuals who address the Meeting should be as brief as possible, out of consideration for the others attending the Meeting and the need to give adequate time to all matters coming before it. Any person who wishes to address the Meeting for more than three (3) minutes shall first request permission from the Moderator to do so before the start of the Meeting or between sessions, but not while the Meeting is in session.
- G. **Repeated Speaking** - In order to give all a fair opportunity to speak, no one who has addressed the Meeting on any particular motion shall speak again, except to answer questions, until all others wishing to speak to the motion have done so.
- H. **Motions To Move The Previous Question** - At any point after there has been at least thirty (30) minutes of debate on any particular motion, a Town Meeting Member who has been recognized by the Moderator to speak in the regular course of the debate may make a verbal motion to move the previous question (or call the question) provided that said motion is made without any statement of reason or supporting comment of any kind. The Moderator shall then immediately call for a vote, which is not debatable, and which requires at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote in favor to carry. If the motion to move the previous question carries, the Moderator shall then put the pending motion under consideration to a vote. If the motion to move the previous question does not carry, the debate on the pending motion continues and a new motion to move the previous question shall not be in order until there has been at least another thirty (30) minutes of debate.
- I. **Maps** - The Planning Board has slides of Town maps available for use at all Meetings and may be requested on reasonable notice to make available a slide of any map appropriate to the subject under discussion.

V. VOTING METHOD

- A. **Electronic Voting** - Subject to the availability of a system to enable electronic voting by Town Meeting Members using handheld mobile devices, the Moderator may count the vote, or conduct a roll call vote, on any matter before the Town Meeting by the use of such a system. (As per Town Bylaw Article 8.25).

- B. *Voice Voting*** - If the Moderator decides not to use an electronic voting system on any motion either because of the unavailability of such a system or for any other reason, voting shall be by voice vote or as the Moderator may determine and the Moderator shall declare the results of such vote. If a vote so declared is immediately questioned by seven or more Members, the result shall be determined by counting the votes of the Meeting by means of a standing vote. (As per Town Bylaw Article 8.20).

VI. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Roll Call*** - Upon motion supported by not less than sixty members and made prior to the taking of a standing vote, the vote shall be by a roll call of all Members, the Clerk to indicate on the record with respect to each Member, "Aye," "Nay," "Abstain," or "Not Present" as the case may be. (As per Town Bylaw Article 8.22).
- B. *Secret Votes*** - There shall be no secret ballots or other secret votes at Town Meeting.
- C. *Majorities*** - Except as otherwise provided by law or the Town's Bylaw, all actions of the Meeting shall be taken upon vote of a simple majority of those present and voting.
- D. *Ballot Vote***
- a) Upon a motion supported by not less than 20 Members made prior to a vote on any question (whether required by law to be a counted vote or not), the vote shall be taken by ballot in such form as will in the opinion of the Moderator indicate how individual Town Meeting Members have voted on a question. The results of such vote shall be announced in terms of the numbers of aye, nay, or abstain votes cast. The Town Clerk shall, within a reasonable time after the session has been adjourned, compile a list of Members voting on the question, which list shall disclose how each Member voted. Said list, together with the original ballots, shall be open to public inspection so that the public shall be able to determine the way in which each Town Meeting Member voted on the question and shall be preserved for at least 3 years. (As per Town Bylaw Article 8.21(a)).
 - b) If a law or a bylaw requires a two-thirds vote for action by the Meeting, the Moderator is authorized to declare the vote without taking a count, subject to the roll call and ballot vote provisions noted above. If more than a two-thirds vote is required, the Moderator may first determine whether the vote is unanimous and, if it is not, the vote shall be counted either by means of a standing vote, by roll call or by ballot as provided in the Town's Bylaw. (As per Town Bylaw Article 8.21(b)).

VII. ADJOURNMENT AND DISSOLUTION

- A. *Adjournment*** - Sessions of the Town Meeting shall normally adjourn about 10:30 o'clock in the evening but may adjourn at such earlier or later time as the Town Meeting upon vote of a majority of its Members may determine.
- B. *Dissolution*** - The Meeting shall not dissolve until all articles in the warrant with respect to which any Member wishes to make a motion have been considered.

VIII. RECORD OF MEETING

The Town Clerk in consultation with the Moderator shall prepare and maintain a complete record of the Meeting at the office of the Town Clerk where, upon request, it may be inspected by any interested person and also shall deposit a copy of such record at the Main Library. Such record may, but need not be, verbatim. However, it shall at a minimum contain the text of all articles and motions, whether main motions or subsidiary motions, the name of the moving party, the action

of the Meeting with respect thereto and such summary of statements made at the Meeting as will in the opinion of the Town Clerk contribute to a better understanding of the action of the Meeting.

IX. REFERENCE TO TOWN MEETING RULES

The Wellesley Representative Town Meeting was established by Chapter 202 of the Acts of 1932 which has been amended several times since then. Certain customs have developed in the conduct of the Town Meeting. Wellesley custom does not differ substantially from the custom of other representative town meetings, as generally described in *Town Meeting Time* (Third Edition, 2001), a book that also contains references to applicable court decisions and statutes. All custom may be changed by law, or the Bylaws of Wellesley, as from time to time amended.

It is the combination of the foregoing which produces the "rules" of the Wellesley Town Meeting pursuant to which the Moderator regulates the conduct of the meeting.

APPENDIX B: TOWN MEETING ACRONYMS

AC	Advisory Committee
ACFR	Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
ACS	Access Control Systems
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
AFSCME	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
AMI	Advanced Metering Infrastructure
ATC	American Tower Corporation
ATM	Annual Town Meeting
BOH	Board of Health
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CB	Circuit Breaker
CBR	Circuit Breaker Reimbursement (State money for Special Education Expenses based on a formula)
CCF	Hundred cubic feet (water measurement)
COA	Council on Aging
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
CPA	Community Preservation Act
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
DAS	Distributed Antenna System
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
DOR	Department of Revenue
DPW	Department of Public Works
DRB	Design Review Board
ELL	English Language Learner
EOHLC	Executive Office of Housing and Living Communities
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FBPC	Fuller Brook Park Committee
FCM	Forward Capacity Market
FF&E	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment
FMD	Facilities Maintenance Department
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
GFOA	Government Finance Officers Association
GIC	Group Insurance Commission
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HDC	Historic District Commission
HHU	Hardy, Hunnewell and Upham
HRB	Human Resources Board
HRS	Human Relations Service, Inc.
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
ID	In District
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IND	Innovative Neighborhood Design (Planning)
ISO-NE	Independent System Operator – New England
IT(D)	Information Technology (Department)
LHR	Large House Review
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
LTD	Long Term Disability
MAAB	Massachusetts Architectural Access Board
MAR	Municipal Annual Requirement (Library)
MassDOT	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
MGL	Massachusetts General Laws
MIAA	Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association
MLB	Municipal Light Board
MLP	Municipal Light Plant
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSBA	Massachusetts School Building Authority
MUNIS	Integrated suite of Municipal Software primarily used for Financial, HR, Payroll, Billings, and various other Town Departmental needs
MWRA	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
MWRTA	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
NCD	Neighborhood Conservation District
NRC	Natural Resources Commission
NRP(Z)	Natural Resource Protection (Zoning)
OOD	Out of District
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
OPM	Owner's Project Manager
PARCC	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
PAWS	Preschool at Wellesley Schools
P&S	Purchase and Sale Agreement
PB	Planning Board
PBC	Permanent Building Committee
PFTP	Playing Fields Task Force
PILOT	Payment in lieu of taxes
PSI	Project of Significant Impact
RDF	Recycling and Disposal Facility
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification System
RFP	Request for Proposals
RMD	Registered Marijuana Dispensary (Planning)
SADI	System Average Interruption Duration Index
SBHD	Single Building Historic District (Planning)
SC	School Committee
SEC	Sustainable Energy Committee
SFC	School Facilities Committee
SFMP	School Facilities Master Plan
SMMA	Symmes, Maini, McKee & Associates
SOI	Statement of Interest
SPGA	Special Permit Granting Authority

SR	Single Residence (District)
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STM	Special Town Meeting
SWG	Security Working Group
TDRT	Town Development Review Team
TGSC	Town Government Study Committee
TM(M)	Town Meeting (Member)
TPC	Tolles Parsons Center
TWFP	Town-Wide Financial Plan
UMAS	Uniform Municipal Accounting System
UP	Unified Plan
VMS	Video Management System
WCRS	Wellesley Contributory Retirement System
WFL	Wellesley Free Library
WHA	Wellesley Housing Authority
WHC	Wellesley Historical Commission
WHDC	Wellesley Housing Development Corporation
WHS	Wellesley High School, Wellesley Historical Society
WMS	Wellesley Middle School
WPC	Wetlands Protection Committee
WPS	Wellesley Public Schools
WSCD	Wellesley Square Commercial District
WSHG	West Suburban Health Group
WSVD	West Suburban Veterans' District
ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE TERMS

ABATEMENT. A complete or partial cancellation of a tax or assessment levied (imposed) by the Town. Abatements usually apply to tax levies and special assessments.

APPROPRIATION. An authorization granted by Town Meeting to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is usually limited in amount and as to time when it may be expended.

ASSESSED VALUATION. A valuation set upon real estate or other property by the Town as a basis for levying taxes. Equally assessed valuation refers to the Town's assessed valuation as determined by the Assessors, adjusted by the State Department of Revenue on a biennial basis to reflect full market value ("equalized valuation").

BUDGET. A plan of financial operations 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 Town Meeting, or "final" – the plan approved by Town Meeting.

CAPITAL PROJECT. A major nonrecurring physical acquisition expenditure often including planning, acquisition, and construction phases.

CHERRY SHEET. An annual statement received by the Assessors from the State Department of Revenue detailing estimated receipts for the next fiscal year from various State Aid accounts and the Local Aid Fund (Lottery) and estimated charges payable by the Assessors in setting the tax rate. Supplemental Cherry Sheets may be issued during the year and there is no guarantee that the estimated receipts and charges shown thereon will not vary from actual receipts and charges.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. Negotiations between an employer and union representative regarding wages, hours, and working conditions.

DEBT AUTHORIZATION. The formal approval required under the procedures set forth in Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws before the Town may lawfully incur debt.

DEBT SERVICE REQUIREMENT. The amount of money required to pay interest on outstanding debt, and serial maturities of principal for serial bonds.

ENTERPRISE FUND. A fund established to account for operations (a) that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises – where the intent of the governing body is that the costs (expenses, including depreciation) of providing goods or services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges; or (b) where the governing body has decided that periodic determination of revenues earned, expenses incurred, and/or net income is appropriate for capital maintenance, public policy, management control, accountability, or other purposes. Examples of Enterprise Funds are those established for the Town's water, sewer, and electric utilities.

EQUALIZED VALUATION. The value of all property as determined by the State Tax Commission biennially, using a standard of "full and fair value." This is also referred to as "100% valuation." The equalization figures are reported in December and affect State Aid distributions for the two-year period beginning the following July.

EXCESS LEVY CAPACITY. The difference between the Town's maximum tax levy limit as established by Proposition 2 ½ and its actual tax levy in the most recent year for which the Town

has set a tax rate. This is the additional tax levy that the Town could raise without going to the voters for an override or debt exclusion.

EXCLUSIONS. A provision in the Proposition 2 ½ Law (Chapter 580 of the Acts of 1980) that provides, through referendum, to add funds to the total tax levy on a temporary basis. Exclusions and Debt Exclusions are specifically for capital or special onetime items. Exclusion type questions, if approved by voters, are used to fund onetime items, usually large capital projects. These funds do not become part of the permanent tax levy base. An exclusion for debt service on a loan to pay for a major capital project expires when the loan is paid. The amount added to the tax levy for a particular year is the debt service needed for that year only. Exclusions are only effective until the funding for the project to which they apply is complete.

FISCAL YEAR. A 12-month period to which the annual operating budget applies and at the end of which the Town determines its financial position and the results of its operations. The Commonwealth and the Town operate on a fiscal year that begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. The number of the fiscal year is that of the calendar year in which the fiscal year ends; e.g., the fiscal year 2014 begins July 1, 2013, and ends June 30, 2014, usually written as FY 14.

FIXED ASSETS. Assets of a long-term character which are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, machinery and equipment.

FREE CASH. Sum of funds appropriated and raised by the Town, but not expended in the years for which they were appropriated, minus uncollected taxes of prior years. This amount must be certified by Massachusetts Bureau of Accounts before it can be used.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT. A term that expresses the amount of time a position has been budgeted for in terms of the amount of time a regular, full-time employee normally works in a year. For most positions in Town, one FTE has been set to equal the number of hours a typical full-time employee works during a calendar year after deducting holiday, vacation, sick and personal time from a 52.2 week year consisting of 2,088 total hours. A position that has been budgeted to work full-time for only six months is 0.5 FTE.

FUND. A fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts recording cash and other financial resources, together with all related liabilities and residual equities or balances, and changes therein, which are segregated for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations.

FUND TYPE. In governmental accounting, all funds are classified into seven generic fund types: General, Special Revenue, Capital Projects and Debt Service (Governmental Funds), Enterprise and Internal Service (Proprietary Funds), and Trust and Agency (Fiduciary Funds).

GAAP. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. There are twelve basic principles of accounting and reporting applicable to state and local governments. These include the use of the modified accrual basis of accounting, as appropriate, for measuring financial position and operating results. These principles must be observed in order to provide a basis of comparison of data among different cities and Towns.

GENERAL FUND. The fund used to account for all financial resources of the Town except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

GENERAL REVENUE. The revenues of the Town other than those derived from and retained in an enterprise. If a portion of the net income in an Enterprise Fund is contributed to another non-enterprise fund, such as the General Fund, the amounts constitute general revenue of the Town.

GROWTH REVENUE. The amount of property tax revenue that the Town can add to its allowable tax levy (above the 2 ½%) from new construction, alterations, subdivision, change of use or anything being taxed for the first time. It is computed by applying the prior year's tax rate to the increase in valuation.

MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS. The accrual basis of accounting adapted to the government fund type, wherein only current assets and current liabilities are generally reported on fund balance sheets, and fund operating statements present "financial flow" information (revenues and expenditures). Revenues are recognized when they become both "measurable" and "available to finance expenditures of the current period." Expenditures are recognized when the related fund liability is incurred except for a few specific exceptions. All governmental funds and Expendable Trust Funds are accounted for using the modified accrual basis of accounting.

OFFSET RECEIPTS. Includes certain education programs, aid to public libraries and environmental programs which are designated on the Cherry Sheet as offset items. These amounts can be spent without appropriation but must be spent only for these specific municipal programs.

OPERATING BUDGET. Plans of current expenditures and the proposed means of financing them. The annual operating budget is the primary means by which most of the financing, acquisition, spending and service delivery activities of the Town are controlled.

OVERLAY. The amount raised by the Assessors in excess of appropriations and other charges for the purpose of creating a fund to cover abatements on real and personal property taxes and to avoid fractions in the tax rates.

OVERRIDE. A provision in the Proposition 2 ½ Law (Chapter 580 of the Acts of 1980) that provides, through the referendum process, to add funds to the total tax levy on a permanent basis. If approved by a Town-wide vote, the override amounts become a part of the tax levy base and therefore the amount approved in a given vote does grow with the rest of the base by 2 ½% per year. An override question can only provide for additional funding for either the operating budget or the ongoing capital budget.

PRIMARY LEVY LIMIT. 2 ½% of certified full and fair cash value of taxable property.

PROPOSITION 2 ½. A statewide tax limitation initiative petition limiting the property tax levy in cities and Towns in the Commonwealth to 2 ½% of the full and fair cash valuation of the taxable real estate and personal property in that city or Town. The statute also places an annual growth cap of 2 ½% on the increase in the property tax levy.

REIMBURSEMENTS. (1) Repayments of amounts remitted on behalf of another party. (2) Inter-fund transactions which constitute reimbursements of a fund for expenditures or expenses initially made from it which are properly applicable to another fund – e.g., an expenditure properly chargeable to a Special Revenue Fund was initially made from the General Fund, which is subsequently reimbursed. They are recorded as expenditures or expenses (as appropriate) in the reimbursing fund and as reductions of the expenditure or expense in the fund that is reimbursed.

RESERVE FUND. A fund established by the Annual Town Meeting which is under the control of the Town's Advisory Committee and from which transfer may be made for extraordinary and unforeseen expenditures. It may be composed of an appropriation of not more than 5% of the prior year's tax levy.

REVOLVING FUNDS. Those funds which may be used without appropriation and which are established for particular uses such as school athletics, continuing education programs, school lunch programs, self-supporting recreation and park services, conservation, etc.

SECONDARY LEVY LIMIT. Prior year levy limit plus 2 ½% (Base) plus “growth revenue.”

SPECIAL APPROPRIATION. An authorization to expend funds for a specific project not encompassed by normal operating categories.

STABILIZATION FUND. A special reserve account created to provide for capital improvements which is invested until used. The Town may appropriate into this fund in any year an amount no more than 10% of the prior year’s tax levy. The outstanding balance in the account cannot exceed 10% of the Town’s equalized valuation. Generally, it requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting to appropriate money from the Stabilization Fund.

STATE DISTRIBUTION. All revenue flowing from the Commonwealth. Major categories include reimbursement for loss of taxes, educational distributions and reimbursements, funds for direct education expenditures, general government reimbursements and distributions.

SURPLUS REVENUE. This is the amount by which cash, accounts receivable and other floating assets exceed the liabilities and reserves.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION. An appropriation submitted after the main budget has been approved, which must specify a revenue source.

TAX LEVY. The net amount to be raised by the Town each fiscal year by assessing ad valorem taxes on real estate and personal property located within the Town.

TAX RATES. The amount of tax stated in terms of a unit of the tax base; for example, \$8.91 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of taxable property.

UNFUNDED PENSION LIABILITY. Unfunded pension liability is the difference between the value assigned to the retirement benefits already earned by the Town’s employees and the assets the Town’s retirement system will have on hand to meet these obligations. The dollar value of the unfunded pension liability is driven by assumptions about interest rates at which a retirement system’s assets will grow and the rate of future costs of living increases to pensioners.

UNENCUMBERED APPROPRIATION. The portion of an appropriation not yet expended or encumbered.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM. A comprehensive and practical municipal accounting system that conforms to GAAP for local governments. UMAS is regarded by the Department of Revenue as the professional standard for modern municipal accounting in Massachusetts. Among the benefits of conversion to UMAS are increased consistency in reporting and record keeping and enhanced comparability of data among cities and Towns.