

June 6, 2022

2022 Annual Town Meeting

Board of Selectmen

Informational Forum

MAY 31, 2022 OLD TOWN HALL



Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Overview

- ✓ 41-article Annual Town Meeting Warrant includes the Town's Fiscal Year 2023 proposed \$24 million operating budget, with a 3% overall increase over Fiscal Year 2022
- ✓ FY23 proposed operating budget will be a recalibrated, core-services focused budget that continues town's commitment of responsibly meeting the needs of town residents
- ✓ **Various warrant articles reflect ranked priorities of Capital Outlay Committee; financial limitations, however, only allow a few to be proposed for funding at this time**
- ✓ Article 30 seeks approval for the Town to acquire the historic building and property located at 207 Main Street to serve as the new home of the Dighton Public Library
- ✓ The remaining proposed ATM Articles include proposals to fund a elementary and middle school feasibility study, various zoning-related articles, and a proposed article to increase the Senior Tax Exemption to \$1,000

Article 1

To hear reports from Town officials



Photo Text: Town Meeting Clip Art Graphic

Article 2

To allow Board of Selectmen to appoint all necessary town officials and Board/Committee members



Photo Text: Clip Art depiction of individuals meeting at conference table

Article 3

Payment of Fiscal Year 2021 Unpaid Bills

- Funds payment of \$6,914.15 in unpaid bills from prior year due to invoices being received after close of the fiscal year

Finance Committee Recommends to Raise and Appropriate
Board of Selectmen Recommends to Raise and Appropriate

Article 4

Set Salaries for Elected Town Officials for Fiscal Year 2023

- Includes proposed salary increase for Town Clerk from \$65,000 to \$73,000, informed by survey of similarly-suited communities provided by Town Clerk
- Proposed salary for new Treasurer/Collector of \$76,000, informed by survey of similarly-suited communities provided by former Treasurer/Collector

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 5

Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Proposed Operating Budget

- FY23 proposed operating budget will be a recalibrated, core-services focused budget that continues town's commitment of responsibly meeting the needs of town residents
- Conservative-based budgeting would ensure that Town's FY23 operating position and excess levy capacity (difference between Town's tax levy limit and actual tax levy) would closely mirror that of FY19
- Budget increases include a \$345,000 increase in combined education assessments for D-R, Bristol Aggie, and B-P; a \$100,000 increase in trash/recycling pick-up and disposal costs; \$96,000 for a one-percent increase and additional enrollment in employee health insurance; and one-time retirement separation costs

Article 5

Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Proposed Operating Budget (continued)

- Funding for transition planning in the Treasurer/Collector's office, including for FY22 close-out efforts
- Streamlined and strengthened town human resources efforts
- Proposed adjustment in wages for Animal Control Officer, a position that is currently funded less than minimum wage for hours worked
- One-time retirement costs for longtime fire, police, library and Prime Time employees, which are proposed to be funded using free cash
- Funding for Dighton Council on Aging to expand programming for services to a greater number of Dighton seniors, along with maintaining Prime Time programming as part of broader COA operations

** Free cash is the portion of unreserved fund balance available for appropriation. It is not cash but rather is * the total of cash and receivables less current liabilities and earmarked reserves also reduced by reserves for uncollected taxes. This is also referred to as "available cash". The amount is certified annually by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.*

Article 6

Administration of Sewer Enterprise Fund by Sewer Commissioners for FY23

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM
- Establishes the budget for the Sewer Department Enterprise Fund for FY23

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 7

Establishment of FY23 Departmental Revolving Funds

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM, required by state law
- Revolving funds established for Dighton Public Library Trustees and the Council on Aging Board of Directors
- Includes respective departmental spending limits

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 8

Authorizes Town Treasurer/Board of Selectmen to auction land acquired by tax title

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM; authorization required by state law

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 9

Authorizes Town Treasurer/Board of Selectmen borrow funds in anticipation of fiscal year revenue collections

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM as required by state law
- Town's revenue flow has historically not necessitated revenue anticipation notes, but this article safeguards town's ability to pay bills

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 10

Authorizes expending state Chapter 90 funds for town roadway capital improvements

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM
- State driven funding formula based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%)



Board of Selectmen Recommends

Photo Text: Roadway in the Town of Dighton

Articles 11 through 13

Authorizes Town, through Board of Selectmen, to:

- Make changes in grade, take land by eminent domain, and settle damages related to roadway capital improvements
- Make changes in grade, obtain easements, purchase land, etc. for highway maintenance and bridge reconstruction projects
- Hold auctions to dispose of surplus property/equipment
- All Articles are routine articles required by state law

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 14

Applies Cost of Living Allowance to Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Exemption

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM as required by state law



Photo Text: Bridge Dedication for Clinton E. Rose

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 15

Establishes projected Community Preservation Committee (CPC) revenues for FY23

- Routine warrant article annually adopted at ATM; required by state law

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 16

\$25,000 CPC-funded Article to Complete Historical Commission's Phase II Community Wide Survey Project

- Continues the Historical Commission's work to update the documentation of historic properties
- Focus on updating the survey inventory forms for the Mt. Hope Finishing Company and the North Dighton Village
- Approximately 90-100 forms will be completed by a preservation consultant
- Mt. Hope Finishing Company has historical significance as a textile manufacturing company in Dighton from 1901-1951 with a surrounding planned community
- Updating these inventory forms will help to promote and preserve Dighton's rich history and adds to our cultural landscape

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 17

\$50,000 CPC-funded Article for preservation of Town of Dighton's Vital Records Books

- Would preserve *approximately* half of the Town's Vital Records Books, to plan for long term storage, and increase accessibility of these records
- Project to include scanning, restoration of books, creating a true copy of the book, and provide storage boxes
- Some of these books were restored in the past, but need to be restored again because they are used daily, which results in wear and tear. The "True Copies" will be able to be used daily for research purposes so the original vital record books can now "sleep" in the vault, therefore they should not have to be restored again.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 18

\$210,000 CPC-funded Article for North Dighton Playground reconstruction

- Funding would construct a new accessible and inclusive playground featuring play structures for a wide range of age groups
- Utilize multiple surfaces such as artificial turf, engineered wood fiber, and sand. In combination with the use of rubber matting, this will provide expanded accessibility and play opportunities
- Construct a concrete walkway from the existing parking area to the new playground to provide an accessible path
- Install protective netting along the outfield fence of the baseball field and install fencing along the front of the basketball court to protect the playground from stray balls
- CPC funding to be leveraged with Parks and Recreation operating budget funding and in-kind contributions from the Highway Department to complete the purchase and installation of the new proposed playground. Project would include all associated needs like walkways and fencing



Photo Text: Proposed North Dighton Playground rendering

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 19

\$106,146.76 for second payment of seven-year new Fire Engine lease-purchase

- No second year payment due at this time
- Production timeline of new engine delayed making of anticipated first payment to December 2022

Board of Selectmen Recommends Taking No Action

Article 20

\$50,561.92 for third year Highway Department Street Sweeper lease payment

- Third of five year lease-payment schedule for new Highway Department Street Sweeper approved at the June 2020 Annual Town Meeting

***Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends***

Article 21

Proposes funding for new Ambulance through first of a three-year lease-purchase

- Continues the Town's five-year ambulance replacement schedule
- Funded through Ambulance Fund dedicated revenue with no tax rate impact



*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends*

Photo Text: Dighton Fire Dept. Ambulance

Article 22

Proposed \$150,000 to fund Fire Station Feasibility Study

- Feasibility Study would include assessment of building/property needs, Fire Department operational needs, building and property accessibility requirements, and related issues
- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- **Not recommended by Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at this time due to limited available funding; revisit for fall Special Town Meeting**

Board of Selectmen Recommends Taking No Action

Article 23

Proposed \$12,000 Purchase of Transfer Station Roll-Off Containers

- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- Need for new containers to accept tires, mattresses, etc. brought to Transfer Station to prevent current roll-offs from falling into disrepair

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends*

Article 24

Proposed \$64,000 for New Police Cruiser Vehicle

- A fully-equipped police vehicle includes computer, firearm (Patrol Rifle), radio, antenna, and related accessories
- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- **Not recommended by Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at this time; revisit for fall Special Town Meeting**

Board of Selectmen Recommends Taking No Action

Article 25

Proposed \$5,000 for Police Station Parking Lot Sealcoating

- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- Preventative maintenance for nearly five-year old parking lot



Photo Text: Dighton Police Department

***Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends***

Article 26

Proposed \$63,000 for Highway Department 1-ton Dump Truck w/ Plow

- Would replace a 2002 1-ton dump truck that has fallen into disrepair
- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- Not recommended by Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at this time due to limited available funding; revisit for fall Special Town Meeting

Board of Selectmen Recommends Taking No Action

Article 27

\$43,000 for Williams Street/Old Williams Street Guardrail Replacement

- Would replace and reconstruct entire guardrail system on both sides of road/intersection
- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23



Photo Text: Intersection of Williams and Old Williams St.

***Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends***

Article 28

Proposed \$170,000 for Highway Department to Purchase New F750 Dump Truck & Related Accessories

- Would replace a 2004 F750 dump truck that has developed significant engine issues
- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23



Photo Text: Dighton Highway Dept. F750

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends*

Article 29

Proposed \$90,750 for Paving at School Lane, Lane Field & Tennis/Basketball Court Parking Lots

- Included as a Capital Outlay Committee funding priority for FY23
- Not recommended by Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at this time due to limited available funding; revisit for fall Special Town Meeting

Board of Selectmen Recommends Taking No Action

Article 30

Proposed Acquisition of 207 Main Street

- Proposes cost-effective long-term solution to address longstanding Dighton Public Library needs
 - 9,014 SF total on two floors
 - Main level is 4,500 SF (old Dighton Library was only 3,000 SF)
 - Potential future programming on lower level
 - ADA compliant elements
 - Compliant Fire Alarm
 - 34,848 SF ($\frac{3}{4}$ acre) site
 - 60+ parking spaces
 - Not in 100 Year Flood Zone
 - On MA Historical Commission Inventory



Photo Text: Interior library rendering of 207 Main St.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends

Article 30

Proposed Acquisition of 207 Main Street

- \$790,000 of ARPA Funds to purchase property, funded outside the local tax rate
 - Town Meeting approval for acquisition of property, not funding



Photo Text: Rendering of Children's Room proposed for
207 Main Street

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends*

Article 31

\$150,000 for 207 Main Street Improvements

- Would be used to fund exterior weatherization, improved accessibility entrances, and parking lot and grounds improvements
- An anticipated Community Preservation Committee request would fund additional **historically appropriate** exterior/interior improvements
- Town is actively working to identify alternative (state/federal) funding sources



Photo Text: Exterior rendering of 207 Main Street as
Dighton Public Library

***Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends***

Article 32

Proposed \$150,000 Feasibility Study for DES/DMS School Campus

- Needs analysis proposed by School Committee and prioritized by Capital Outlay Committee
- Study would include an assessment of building and property needs;
- Evaluation of enrollment trends; and
- Building and property accessibility requirements, and related issues



Photo Text: Photo of DES/DMS Campus

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends

Article 33

Accept Rear Silvia Way Parcel as Gift

- Would allow Board of Selectmen, after conducting due diligence, to accept a 7-acre parcel of vacant, unimproved land in the rear of Silvia Way subdivision (27-A)
- Parcel acquisition would link and preserve adjoining town-owned open space parcels



Photo Text: Sylvia Way layout with identified parcel

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 34

Proposed Update to Flood Hazard Overlay District

- Proposes update to Flood Hazard Overlay District so that all development in the floodplain overlay district, including structural and non-structural activities, whether permitted by right or by special permit, be in compliance with the Massachusetts Statewide Building Code and the Department of Conservation and Recreation Regulations
- Also continues compliance with applicable National Flood Insurance Program requirements

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 35

Proposed Update to Retreat Law Zoning Bylaw

- Bylaw update would incorporate language that 40 feet of street frontage be continuous so that it is in harmony with the Zoning Bylaw Lot, frontage of definition

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 36

Pleasant Street Roadway Acceptance

- Proposes to formally accept Pleasant Street as a public way in the Town of Dighton
- Pleasant Street discontinued by the state in the mid-1920s, but there are no records of the Town formally accepting the road
- Town needs to show record of formal acceptance in order to qualify for federal/state grant funding (i.e. Pleasant Street at Muddy Cove Bridge replacement funding)

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 37

Proposed Update to Solar Bylaw

- The Planning Board proposes to amend the solar bylaw to protect the town from over development solar farms
- A number of restrictions have been put in place to protect the Town and its residents, while also being fair to the solar companies. In addition, energy storage systems (i.e. battery storage systems) has been explicitly defined, as well as, setbacks determined in order to secure public safety concerns
- It must be noted that Rules & Regulations, utilizing the recently approved Standard Operating Procedure as a foundation, is currently being drafted
- Extensive research took place within the Planning Board and other Town Departments, including lot sizes, setbacks, noise levels, fee structures, resource replacement fees, to comprise what is presented

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 38

Proposed Increase to Senior Property Tax Exemption

- Proposes to increase Senior Property Tax Exemption from \$750 per year to \$1,000 per year for qualifying seniors (qualifications established in statute at:- [General Law - Part I, Title IX, Chapter 59, Section 5 \(malegislature.gov\)](#))
- 61 Dighton seniors have sought the exemption this year

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 39

Proposed Update to Kennel Bylaw

- Current Bylaw places costly burden on Applicant to obtain a Special Permit from ZBA to obtain a residential kennel license
- Proposed update would amend the Bylaw to allow the Applicant to have a residential kennel license as a matter of right if the location has a minimum lot size of 35,000 square feet. If the lot size is less than 35,000 square feet, the Applicant will be required to have a public hearing through the Board of Health.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Article 40

Resident Petition – Reconsideration of Warrant Articles

Article 41

Any other business?

THANK YOU!

Michael Mullen, Jr.

Town Administrator

mmullen@dighton-ma.gov