

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN OF GRAFTON
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
OCTOBER 19, 2020
7:30 PM**

Worcester, ss:

To Either of the Constables of the Town of Grafton, in the County of Worcester.

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the Town of Grafton, qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet in the Grafton High School located at 24 Providence Road on Monday, the Nineteenth (19) Day of October, 2020 at Seven Thirty (7:30) PM to act on the following articles, to wit:

ARTICLE 1. ADJUST FY21 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of adjusting certain line items within the operating budget for FY21, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 2. PRIOR FISCAL YEAR BILLS

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to pay bills incurred in a prior fiscal year, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 3. FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREMENT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money to the Fire Department Retirement Account, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 4. SICK AND VACATION BUYBACK

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund the accumulated sick and vacation leave buyback for retiring employees pursuant to the Town By-Laws and/or collective bargaining agreements, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 5. AMENDING FY20 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of adjusting certain line items within the operating budget for FY20, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 6. ADJUSTMENTS TO SEWER RECEIPTS

To see if the Town will vote to amend the funding of Article 5 of the June 20, 2020 Annual Town Meeting for the FY 2021 budget by increasing to \$229,867 funding from Sewer Receipts, and decreasing to \$229,867 the appropriation from the tax levy, so that the total appropriation of \$64,046,257 will be funded by as follows: \$60,866,922 to be raised and appropriated; \$3,156,521 to be transferred from Sewer Receipts; and \$22,814 to be transferred from sewer betterments; or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 7. CPC EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000) from the FY2021 CPC Budgeted Reserve Account for the purpose of administering and funding an emergency rental assistance program, administered by MCO Housing Services, LLC, with such funds to be expended by February 28, 2021, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

ARTICLE 8. CPC ADA ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Ten Thousand Dollars (\$210,000) from Community Preservation Act Funds, with \$75,000 coming from the FY2021 CPC Budgeted Reserve Account, and \$135,000 from the CPC Undesignated Fund Balance Account, for the purpose of installing ADA accessible routes and surfacing at the following parks and playgrounds: Perry Hill Park, Airport Park, Norcross Park, Riverview Park, Ferry Street Park, and Silver Lake Beach, with such funds to be expended by June 30, 2023; or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

ARTICLE 9. CPC OPEN SPACE RESERVE ACCOUNT

To see if the Town will vote to transfer seventy-nine thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars (\$79,950) from the CPC Undesignated Fund Balance to the CPC Open Space Reserve; or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

ARTICLE 10. CPC RESCIND ARTICLE FROM PRIOR YEAR

To see if the Town will vote to rescind its passage of Article 11, of the October 21, 2019 Town Meeting entitled "Baseline Reports for CPC" which contained an incorrect funding source, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

ARTICLE 11. BASELINE REPORTS FOR TOWN OWNED LAND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for the purpose of creating baseline reports for Conservation Restrictions held by the Grafton Land Trust on the Webber and Mazza Farm parcels, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 12. ROAD IMPROVEMENT STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$1,500,000 from the Road Improvement Stabilization fund to the Road Improvement Capital Expenditures fund for road improvement projects consistent with Chapter 90 rules and regulations as recommended by the DPW Advisory committee and approved by the Town Administrator, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 13. LONG RANGE TREE REMOVAL/REPLACEMENT ACCOUNT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to the Long Range Tree Removal/Replacement Account (800.6420.5884) established under Article 14. of the May 2019 Annual Town Meeting, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 14. ACTIONS TO AMEND THE FORM OF THE GRAFTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

To see if the Town will vote a package of actions to change the form of the Grafton Fire Department from a Board of Fire Engineers to that of one headed by a "Strong" Fire Chief (so-called) and the authority to appoint same to be vested in the Select Board. Such items may be voted as a single block, or in any combination, but however voted, will be treated for accounting and legislative purposes as if each item were voted as a separate article.

A. Amend the Town Charter

Amend Section 8-5 (b) of the Town Charter by deleting certain symbols and words (in strikethrough) to read as follows:

~~• Board of Fire Engineers, a Fire Chief, forest wardens and other firefighters to serve for indefinite terms;~~

B. Amend the Town's General By-Laws

Amend Section 9-2 (c) of the Town's General By-Laws by deleting certain symbols and words (in strikethrough) to read as follows:

~~• Board of Fire Engineers, a Fire Chief, forest wardens and other firefighters to serve for indefinite terms;~~

C. Adopt MGL Ch. 48 §42 (the so-called "Strong Chief" statute).

Adopt MGL Ch. 48 §42 (the so-called "Strong Chief" statute) contingent upon approval by the Attorney General of an amendment to the Town's General By-Laws, and a ballot vote amending the Town Charter to remove the authority of the Town Administrator to appoint a Board of Fire Engineers, a Fire Chief, forest wardens and other firefighters to serve for indefinite terms.

Or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

ARTICLE 15. TOWN CHARTER AMENDMENTS - ARTICLE 2-3(b) – FINANCE COMMITTEE

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a special act as follows: Amend the Grafton Home Rule Charter by deleting Article 2, Section 2-3(b) "Finance Committee" in its entirety and inserting in its place a new Section 2-3(b) as follows:

Section 2-3(b) Finance Committee There shall be a Finance Committee, the members of which shall be appointed by a 3-person committee that shall consist of the Town Clerk, a member of the Finance Committee who is not being considered for reappointment, and the Town Moderator. The number of members, the term of office, and any other conditions will be established by by-law. The subject matter of all proposals to be submitted to a Town Meeting by warrant article shall be referred to the Finance Committee by the Select Board. The Finance Committee shall report its recommendations on each article contained in a town meeting warrant, in writing, together with a brief statement of the reasons for each such recommendation. Before preparing its recommendations, the Finance Committee shall hold one or more public hearings to permit public discussion of the subject matter of all articles contained in the Warrant.

or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Finance Committee

ARTICLE 16. TOWN GENERAL BYLAW AMENDMENTS– ARTICLE 3-2 – FINANCE COMMITTEE

To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 3-2, Finance Committee, of the General Bylaws of the Town of Grafton, by deleting Article 3, Section 2 of the Bylaw in its entirety and replacing it with a new Article 3, Section 2 as follows: SECTION 2. After the Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting each year and prior to June 30th, a 3-person committee that shall consist of the Town Clerk, a member of the Finance Committee who is not being considered for reappointment, and the Town Moderator shall appoint three (3) members of said committee for terms of three (3) years to fill the expired seats on said committee as they arise. Said committee shall choose its own officers and shall serve without pay, and it shall cause to be kept a true record of its proceedings. Members' terms shall run concurrent with the fiscal year, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Finance Committee

ARTICLE 17. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE BYLAW

To see if the Town will vote to enact the following Town General Bylaw:

Purpose

The committee shall study the requirements and needs for Capital Improvement in the Town of Grafton. The committee shall advise the Town Administrator, Select Board, and Finance Committee on the results of its work.

Establishment and Membership

There shall be a Capital Improvement Planning Committee, henceforth abbreviated CIPC, comprising seven (7) members. Three (3) members shall be chosen by their respective boards as follows: one member each from Finance Committee, School Committee and Select Board; the remaining four (4) members shall be citizens at-large appointed by the Select Board. Each citizen-at-large member shall serve a three (3) year term. The Town Administrator and Superintendent of Schools, or their designated representatives, will be non-voting members. All voting members shall choose committee officers, set the committee's procedures and serve without pay. Any vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment and persons appointed to fill vacancies shall serve for the remainder of their predecessors' terms of office.

Definitions

- A. **Capital Improvement**
 - Any acquisition, lease of land, building, or motor vehicles;
 - Any acquisition or lease of any single item of equipment with a total cost of \$10,000 or more, and a substantial useful life of at least (5) years;
 - Any construction, reconstruction, replacement, extension or other improvement of public buildings, highways, sidewalks, storm drains, sewerage installation, playgrounds, parks and substantially similar public works or for a facility, structure or a utility appurtenant to any of the same with a total cost of \$10,000 or more.

- B. **Capital Budget.** A one (1) year plan of estimated capital improvements and the method of financing them.

- C. **CIPC Five Year Plan.** An annual report assembled by the committee including prioritized recommendations for capital improvements for the following five (5) fiscal years to be submitted to the Finance Committee, Select Board and Town Administrator for consideration and preparation of the Capital Budget.

- D. Capital Package. All capital project submission forms completed by departments and submitted to the Town Administrator to be reviewed by the Capital Improvement Planning Committee.

Duties

The Capital Improvement Planning Committee is charged with carrying out the following duties, as appropriate, to fulfill its purpose:

- A. Maintain the CIPC Five Year Plan
- B. Review all requested capital projects in the Capital Package with Town Administrator
- C. Recommend an annual Capital Budget to the Select Board
- D. Collect additional capital project information, regardless of funding, as needed outside the budget process
- E. Track the delivery of the approved capital projects
- F. Research best practices related to capital improvement planning
- G. Any other relevant initiatives related to capital planning

Capital Request Submission Requirements

- A. All proposed capital improvements shall be submitted by departments in writing to the Town Administrator for inclusion in the capital improvement program.
- B. The Town Administrator shall compile all submitted requests into a comprehensive Capital Package, and transmit the Capital Package to the CIPC for review, including all original submission forms received from departments. The Capital Package shall be provided to the CIPC by September 15th for the committee to provide its recommendations to the Select Board and Town Administrator by December 15th in order to fulfill the requirements of section 6-7 of the Town Charter.

..... or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

ARTICLE 18. BUILDING REPAIRS – MUNICIPAL CENTER ENTRANCE RAMPS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the repair of entrance ramps at the Grafton Municipal Center located at 30 Providence Road, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

ARTICLE 19. POLICE DEPARTMENT CRUISERS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of purchasing a police cruiser and making certain repairs to the existing fleet, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

And you are directed to serve this Warrant by posting up an attested copy thereof in some conspicuous place in each of the precincts of the Town at least fourteen days before said meeting.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this Warrant, with your doings thereon to the town Clerk, at the time and place of meeting as aforesaid.

Given under our hands the 29th day of September in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty.

Peter Carlson, Chairman



Doreen DeFazio, Vice Chairman



Colleen Roy, Clerk



Mathew Often

Edward Prisby

A TRUE COPY,
ATTEST:

OCT. 1, 2020

I have complied with the requirements of the above Warrant and with the Town of Grafton By-laws by posting an attested copy of the Warrant in some conspicuous place in each of the precincts of the Town on the above date.



Constable of Grafton