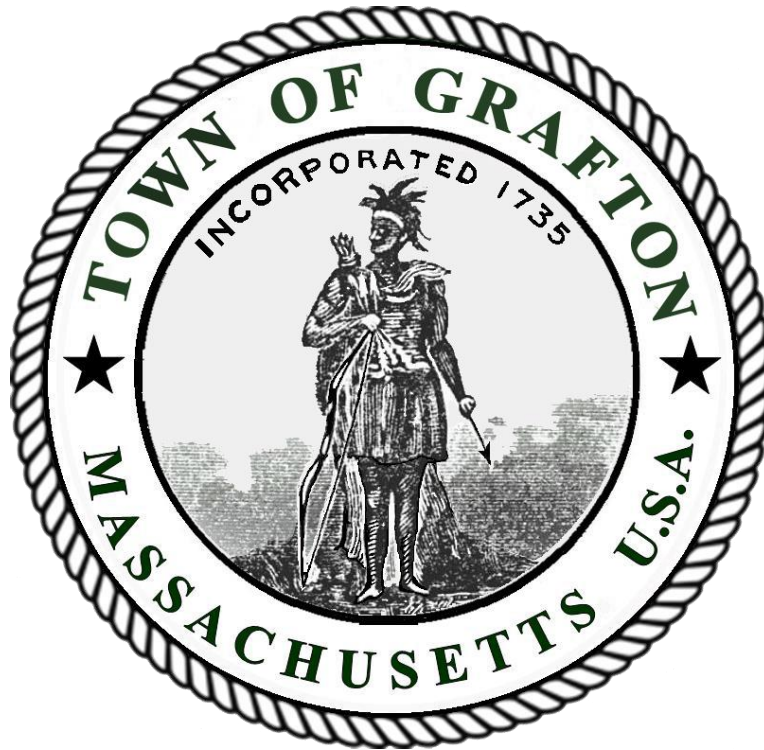


**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT**



**MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

**GRAFTON HIGH SCHOOL**

**AUDITORIUM**



## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Town of Grafton

30 Providence Road  
Grafton, MA 01519  
(508) 839-5335 x 1167

[www.grafton-ma.gov](http://www.grafton-ma.gov)

### State of the Town Message May 2023

This evening the Finance Committee is pleased to report on the state of the town as we near the end of Fiscal Year 2023.

The Town Administrator and Superintendent continued to work diligently this year to provide necessary services while preserving as much of our dwindling override capacity as possible. The town's combined Free Cash and Stabilization reserves are within the 5-10% threshold prescribed in our financial policies and are adequate to support a stable AA+ bond rating.

The town continues to improve the budgeting process using the ClearGov financial transparency platform that was implemented last year, resulting in the details of the current, next, and past several years' budgeted and actual expenditures being available online to the general public. Links can be found on the Town of Grafton homepage. This platform also includes a "Projects" section where pending, ongoing, and past capital projects are being shown with data on the progress of the project, including photos of the project as they happen. As projected last year, in concert with the change in the town's accounting software package, this year's budget includes budget category reorganizations aimed at providing greater transparency to the taxpayers and aligning more closely with standard accounting practices.

The majority of the \$5.5M from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has been allocated. The new HVAC system at Grafton Middle School is still in progress due to limited availability of equipment. The money allocated for additional nursing staff for the schools for SY2022-23 was not needed, and it has been proposed to the committee that the remaining money be used instead for ADA improvements. The overhaul of the municipal website was completed in the fall. A new minivan was purchased for use by the Senior Center.

In FY21, the town voted to allocate funds from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to a rental assistance program for residents facing economic hardship during the pandemic. That money was used last fiscal year. A vote for another round of CPC funding will be happening this evening. The Affordable Housing Trust is reviewing proposals for the 25 Worcester St parcel that was gifted by the Town to the Trust at the 2020 Spring Town Meeting.

There are still several development projects in the works. The developer of the mixed-use development at 8 Pine Street and the former DPW site at 17 and 27 Upton St is still working with the Town and the Affordable Housing Trust to advance those projects. The Select Board has entered into a few Local Initiative Program (LIP) agreements in the past year for developments on 59 Pleasant St, 116 Upton St, and Snow Road. Despite all the proposed and potential future construction, a School Department-sponsored study in 2019, that is being updated now, shows that our current school buildings have more than sufficient capacity for the projected needs. Enrollment is on a downturn due to birth rates that have been declining since a peak in the early 2000s.

A second cannabis retail shop opened in FY23, with the remaining one still moving towards opening after an ownership change and construction delays due to COVID. Due to recent legislative changes, it is unclear whether we will receive the payments that were part of our original host agreements. As such, this budget only includes a minimal amount of revenue from the shops, in keeping with financial best practices and our own fiscal policies.

The FY24 budget represents a \$4.9M (6.9%) increase compared to FY23. Consistent with the 2020 override plan, the school department budget increased by \$1.57M (3.75%). The School Department is adding its first counselor to be shared between the two lower elementary schools. The number of classroom teachers needed next year has decreased, and through retirements the overall staffing level has not increased with this added counselor. The cost of health insurance increased again this year at a rate of 5%. Our costs for Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT) increased by \$263k (20%) due to a 10% increase in enrollment in 2022/23 (97) compared to 2021/22 (88), and a 10% increase in per-student cost for Grafton from \$14,138 to \$15,556. Thus far we are only projecting the minimum \$30 per student increase in our Chapter 70 state aid for schools but are working with our legislators to try to get this year's funding increased and to encourage changes to the state aid formula so that towns such as Grafton get a fair share of the state aid and aren't regularly limited to the bare minimum aid increases.

We are still on target for the Proposition 2 ½ override from 2020 to last us through FY2025, as originally projected. The remaining excess levy capacity at this time is \$130,000. The revenue estimate for the year is conservative as usual, so this remaining amount should increase. Significant continuing long-term issues include a shortfall in OPEB funding.

The remaining balance of the Capital Stabilization Fund will be \$138,273.35. Our certified Free Cash is \$1,777,324. If all articles funded by free cash are approved this evening, (Article 3 \$150K & Article 14 \$233,218) the remaining free cash balance will be \$1,394,106. Grafton continues to have significant capital needs to fund.

In FY2023, the average assessed value of a single family home was \$507,939, up from \$488,565, and the tax rate was \$15.71 per thousand, down \$1.19 per thousand from FY2022, resulting in an average single family tax bill of \$7,980.

In conclusion, the risks in and challenges to Grafton's fiscal health continue, and we continue to search for ways to meet our increasing costs while state aid as a percentage of our budget continues to decline.

We would like to welcome Amber Diffenderfer who joined the Town Administrator's office this year as an Administrative Assistant covering the Select Board, Finance Committee, and the Affordable Housing Trust. This follows the retirement of our long-time Administrative Assistant Sue Fiacco. Thanks to Sue for her years of service and for ensuring a smooth transition.

We would like to thank Town Administrator Evan Brassard, Assistant Town Administrator William Blake, Administrative Assistant Amber Diffenderfer, Town Finance Director Mary Lauria, the Select Board, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jay Cummings, School Department Director of Finance Anita Patel, the School Committee, all Department Heads, and all members of the Finance Committee for their hard work as part of the budget process this year.

Finally, we also wish to recognize retiring Finance Committee member Sue Robbins and thank her for her 25 years of service to the committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Finance Committee

Mark W. Haddad, Chair  
Greg Marr, Vice Chair  
Angelina Correia, Clerk  
J. Roger Currier  
Daniel S. Cusher  
Victoria Duckworth  
Heather McCue  
Nicholas Rioux  
Sue Robbins

## **2023 Grafton Annual Town Meeting Consent Agenda**

A consent agenda's purpose is to act expeditiously upon certain types of articles that historically have generated no controversy and can reasonably be voted upon without debate. With a consent agenda, several articles can be addressed with a single vote, thereby ensuring that a greater proportion of Town Meeting's time is dedicated to articles that are the subject of genuine debate.

When the Consent Agenda is called, the Moderator will read out the number of each article, one by one. If any voter objects to any particular article being included in the Consent Agenda, they may say "hold" in a loud voice when that Article's number is called. That Article will then be removed from the Consent Agenda and restored to its original place in the Warrant, to be debated and voted upon in the usual manner. After the calling of the individual Articles in the Consent Agenda, the Moderator will ask for a motion that the voters pass all remaining Consent Agenda Articles AS A UNIT, with a single vote. Use of the Consent agenda makes the Town Meeting more efficient by speeding up the handling of non-controversial items, thereby allowing more time for discussion where concern exists.

***In this Warrant there will be two Consent Agendas. The Consent Agendas below will be taken up before discussion of individual Articles at the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 8, 2023.***

Please review the list of articles and motions proposed for each Consent Item which follows.

**Consent Motion 1 pertains to Articles that will affect the current fiscal year. Having these articles in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant eliminates the need for a Special Town Meeting.**

***Motion: I move that the Town vote to act upon Article 1, 2, and 3 and that they be "passed by consent."***

**Consent Motion 2 pertains to Articles that will affect the next fiscal year, and have historically generated little to no discussion. They have been added to the Consent Agenda to ensure time is available for discussion of genuine concerns.**

***Motion: I move that the Town vote to act upon Article 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, and that they be "passed by consent".***

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Appropriation:** An authorization to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is granted by Town Meeting. Any part of the general appropriation not spent or encumbered by June 30 automatically reverts to surplus, which may become Free Cash. A specific appropriation is carried forward from year to year until spent for the designated purpose or transferred by Town Meeting vote to another account.

**Budget:** A plan of financial operation consisting of an estimate of proposed expenditures for a given period and the means of financing them. The budget is voted on during the Spring Town Meeting for the fiscal year that begins the following July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Capital Budget:** A plan of proposed capital projects and the means of financing them for the current year.

**Community Preservation Act (CPA):** The Town adopted the CPA in 2001. This Act allows the town to collect up to a 3% surcharge (Grafton has voted 1.5%) on property tax bills which creates the Community Preservation Fund, to use for specific Community Preservation purposes. These funds are managed by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The Committee has two important functions: to evaluate community needs in the areas for which CPA funding can be used, and to make recommendations to Town Meeting for the use of CPA funds.

**Debt Service:** Payment of interest and repayment of principle to holders of the Town's debt.

**Enterprise Fund:** A separate account for municipal services for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services. The costs of these goods and services are recovered through the user fees, and do not impact the general fund budget.

**Free Cash:** The remainder of unreserved fund balances from operations of the previous fiscal year, including actual receipts in excess of estimates and unspent amounts in budget line-items. The amount is certified annually by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

**General Fund:** The major town-owned fund which is created with town receipts, and which is charged with expenditures payable from revenues.

**Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB):** The term OPEB refers to all benefits, other than pensions, that retirees receive. Primarily these benefits come in the form of retiree healthcare and life insurance. Grafton currently has an unfunded liability of roughly \$81.5 Million. In order to fund this obligation, an OPEB Trust Account has been established and receives annual funding from a variety of sources.

**Raise and Appropriate:** A phrase used to identify a funding source for an expenditure which refers to money generated by the tax levy or other anticipated local receipts.

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**TOWN OF GRAFTON**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – MAY 8, 2023**

**WARRANT**

**Worcester, SS.**

To Any 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 at their respective precincts:

Precincts 1, 2, & 3	Grafton Middle School 22 Providence Road	Precincts 4 & 5	Millbury Street Elementary School 105 Millbury Street
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On Tuesday, the Sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) of May, 2023, from eight o'clock AM (8:00 AM) until eight o'clock PM (8:00 PM) to cast their votes for the following Town Offices:

Vote for Two	Select Board	3 Year Term
Vote for One	School Committee	3 Year Term
Vote for One	Planning Board	3 Year Term
Vote for Two	Board of Library Trustees	3 Year Term
Vote for One	Town Moderator	3 Year Term
Vote for One (To fill a vacancy)	Housing Authority	3 Year Term

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 Auditorium located at 24 Providence Road on Monday, the Eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) Day of May 2023 at Seven PM (7:00 PM) and act on the following articles, to wit:

**ARTICLE 1 (CONSENT AGENDA 1):**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer Seventy-Seven Thousand and Four Hundred Eleven Dollars (\$77,411.00) from the CPA Affordable Housing Reserve account to the Grafton Affordable Housing Trust, with such funds to be used in accordance with the CPA guidelines for community housing, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 1 in the amount of \$77,411.00.**

This is a yearly transfer from the Community Preservation Committee to the Affordable Housing Trust to support the mission of Affordable Housing in the Town of Grafton.

**ARTICLE 2 (CONSENT AGENDA 1):**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer and appropriate One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000.00) from the PEG Access/Verizon Contributions Account to the Cable Project Account as recommended by the Cable Oversight Committee, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Cable Oversight Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This article will fund renovations to Conference Room F, so that the room can support hybrid meetings and allow better public access to the Town's Boards and Committees. Funding for this project comes from the yearly Cable Oversight Committee budget, which is funded through resident cable subscriptions. This project will not impact the general fund budget or use additional property tax dollars.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 2 in the amount of \$125,000.00.**

The proposed renovations to Conference Room F will allow for greater public access to meetings, by supporting hybrid meetings and creating an overflow contingency for Conference Room A.

**ARTICLE 3 (CONSENT AGENDA 1):**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer and appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) from Free Cash to the Grafton Public Schools for the purpose of funding roof repairs, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** Article 3 will appropriate additional funds for the repairs of the North Grafton Elementary School. This project previously went out to bid with the cost of the work coming in higher than anticipated, these additional funds will allow the project to proceed. The anticipated cost of the project is \$380,000.00.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 3 in the amount of \$150,000.00.**

The increased funding will ensure that the complete estimated cost of the project is met, and the Town can maintain one of its most important assets.



**ARTICLE 4 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To hear the reports of the several Town Officers, Boards and Committees, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article. Town Meeting no longer “hears” reports, however, the Town Reports are available online at [www.grafton-ma.gov](http://www.grafton-ma.gov), or by request in the Select Board’s Office.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 4,** to accept the printed annual reports.

**ARTICLE 5 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to appoint Bridget Webber as a Trustee of the Nelson Park and Memorial Library and Building Fund for a term of three years, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Nelson Park and Memorial Trustees

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This Article will appoint Bridget Webber to a three-year term as a Trustee of the Nelson Park and Memorial Library Building Fund.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 5,** and supports the appointment of Bridget Webber as a Trustee of the Nelson Park and Memorial Library and Building Fund.

**ARTICLE 6 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate Five Hundred Three Thousand Two Hundred and Seventy Three Dollars and Thirty Four Cents (\$503,273.34) for State-Aid Highway purposes, as requested by the Select Board, to be reimbursed by the Commonwealth under the provisions of the Transportation Bond Bill, so-called, and amendments thereto, for roadway construction, reconstruction and improvements, including surface treatments and other work incidental to the above, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article which allows the Town to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer funds in anticipation of reimbursement revenues from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for road repair assistance under M.G.L. c.90. The spending of these funds is under the direction of the Select Board.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 6 in the amount of \$503,273.34.** Accepting the state funding helps the Town keep pace with its Asphalt Management Plan.

**ARTICLE 7 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board, pursuant to Article 4, Section 9, of the Town By-Laws, to sell surplus items under such terms and conditions as it deems to be in the best interests of the Town, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article authorizing the Select Board to sell surplus items.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 7 as written,** to allow for the sale of surplus items.

**ARTICLE 8 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer/Collector, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of revenue of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 4, and amendments thereto, and to issue a note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 17, and amendments thereto, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article authorizing the Town Treasurer/Collector to undertake the operational banking duties needed for Town functions.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 8 as written,** to allow the Treasurer/Collector to borrow money in accordance with their operation duties in the Town.

**ARTICLE 9 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the total expenditures for the following revolving funds pursuant to G.L. c. 44 Section 53E ½ for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, to be expended in accordance with the bylaws heretofore approved:

<b>Board/Department/Officer authorized to expend:</b>	<b>Revenue Source and Maximum Expenditure</b>	<b>Funds may be expended only for:</b>	<b>FISCAL YEARS</b>
Town Administrator	Rent and Utilities \$200,000	One Grafton Common maintenance	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
School Department	State and Federal Grants \$10,000	Staff Development Workshops	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
School Department	Tuition Payments \$200,000	Early Childhood Programs	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years

School Department	Out of district fees \$200,000	Out of district transportation	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
School Department	Sale of Surplus \$200,000	Education Tablets & Laptops	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
School Department	Rental Revolving Fund \$50,000	Maintenance of school facilities	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
School Department	Extended Services Revolving Fund \$50,000	Programs outside of the school day or year	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Council on Aging	Ridership fees \$35,000	Elder Bus Transportation	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Conservation Commission	Filing Fees \$25,000	Expenses related to duties	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Fire Department	Inspection Fees \$10,000	Fire Sprinkler System Review	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Board of Health	Medicare Part 855B \$20,000	Vaccine Administration	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Board of Health	Community Nursing Gift Account \$5,000	CPR and Sharps Containers	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Board of Health	Tufts Biomedical Inspections \$10,000	Inspections at Tufts University	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
South Grafton Community House	Rental fees \$20,000	Maintenance and upkeep	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Library	Lost Book fees \$5,000	Replacement of materials	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Council on Aging	Program Fees \$35,000	Program Funding	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Conservation Commission	Storm Water Bylaw \$10,000	Expenses for Administration	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Library	User fees \$10,000	Replenishing materials	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
Recreation	Program and Activity Fees \$450,000	Department Operations	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years

School Department	18-22 School to Work Program Revolving Fund \$200,000.00	Tuition Payments & Program Expenses	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years
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or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article which is required to operate our revolving funds. This allows the Town to raise revenue from a specific service and use those revenues without appropriation to support said service. M.G.L. c.44 § 53E½ stipulates that each fund must be reauthorized each year at Annual Town Meeting, and that a limit on the total amount that may be spent from each fund be established at that time. This article reauthorizes the revolving accounts necessary for the various departments listed in the Article to conduct routine business.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 9 as written,** to approve the various revolving accounts for the ensuing Fiscal Year.

**ARTICLE 10 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to request the funding of transportation services from the WRTA, and to contract for and provide elderly bus services for the Town of Grafton, for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article authorizing the Select Board to receive transportation funding and use the funds appropriately. These services provide senior citizens with vital transportation that they would otherwise be unable to secure on their own.

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 10 as written** so that Town can receive funding and services from the WRTA.

**ARTICLE 11 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the Town will vote to accept M.G.L. Ch. 59 § 5, Clause 56, which provides for a real estate exemption for taxpayers who are members of the Massachusetts National Guard or are reservists, and are serving on active duty outside the United States, and to provide that the fiscal exemption shall be 100% of the real estate tax, prorated for days served during the Fiscal Year for which the application is being made, to be effective for two Fiscal Years beginning on July 1, 2023, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Assessors

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 11 as written,** establishing real estate exemptions for Grafton taxpayers who are National Guard Military Reservists serving outside the United States.

**ARTICLE 12 (CONSENT AGENDA 2):**

To see if the town will vote to accept M.G.L. Ch. 59 § 5 C1/2, providing for an additional real estate exemption for taxpayers who are granted personal exemptions on their domiciles under M.G.L. CH. 59 § 5, including certain blind persons, veterans, surviving spouses and seniors, and to provide that the additional exemption shall be up to 100% of the personal exemption, to be effective for exemptions granted for two Fiscal Years beginning on July 1, 2023, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Assessors

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 12 as written,** to provide additional real estate exemptions for Grafton taxpayers under the Massachusetts General Laws.

**ARTICLE 13:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer and appropriate any sum of money as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for the ensuing fiscal year, the period from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, as outlined in Appendix A, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This annual article provides for all tax supported Town operations and activities, including the operating budgets of the schools and general government. The appropriations presented for Town Meeting are within the projected revenue forecast. Approval of this article will set the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024). The operating budget may include funding which provides for additional work hours and/or salary increases for employees, including those previously negotiated and contractual.

**Finance Committee recommends the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget in the amount of \$73,143,829.00** which represents a balanced budget within the anticipated revenues for Fiscal Year 2024. The Town Administrator and Finance Director worked cooperatively with the Finance Committee to create this Budget. Due to the outstanding cooperation of the Department Heads and the School Department, the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget process was transparent and straightforward.

**ARTICLE 14:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money in the amount of One Million Seven Hundred Eighty Nine Thousand Four Hundred and Eighteen Dollars (\$1,789,418.00) toward a program of lease payments on capital items, purchases, improvements, and special articles as generally illustrated in Appendix B, and to meet said appropriation, transfer and appropriate Two Hundred Thirty Three Thousand Two Hundred and Eighteen Dollars (\$233,218.00) of certified free cash, transfer and appropriate Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000.00) from the Sewer Enterprise Account, and transfer and appropriate One Million Four Hundred Ninety Six Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,496,200.00) from the Capital Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator/CIPC

Required Vote: **TWO-THIRDS**

**Explanation:** This is an annual article which seeks to appropriate funds for the next fiscal year for Capital Projects and Purchases.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 14 as presented in the amount of \$1,789,418.00.** The Capital Plan was developed by the Town Administrator and Capital Improvement Planning Committee, and addresses the needs of the Town in a fiscally responsible manner.

**ARTICLE 15:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for the operating costs of the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the Fiscal Year commencing on July 1, 2023, which is inclusive of all expenses and interfund transfers as outlined in Appendix C, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Sewer Commissioners/  
Finance Director

Required Vote: ***MAJORITY***

**Explanation:** The Grafton Sewer Department is an enterprise fund, meaning all operation costs are covered by service fees and do not require property tax dollars. This article covers the FY24 Sewer budget, including \$1,324,345.00 in expenses and \$2,170,835.00 in transfers, for a total operational budget of \$3,495,180.00.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 15 in the amount of \$3,495,180.00.** This year's budget is in line with expectations and does not contain any major changes. Maintaining the Grafton Sewer Department remains a priority of the Town in the interest of public health and safety.

**ARTICLE 16:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money to fund the Grafton Community Television budget as recommended by the Cable Oversight Committee in the amount of Five Hundred Sixty Five Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$565,228.00) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Grafton Cable Oversight Committee

Required Vote: ***MAJORITY***

**Explanation:** In May 2016, Town Meeting voted to accept Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53F<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, which established a special revenue fund known as the PEG (Public, Educational, and Government) Access and Cable Related Fund, into which a small fee on all cable subscribers' bills is collected. This article appropriates money to fund the Grafton Community Television budget from the fee that is collected, the GCTV budget does not require the appropriation of property tax dollars.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 16 in the amount of \$565,228.00.** The FY24 Cable Budget contains the final payment on the Cable Studio Bond, as well as funding for the purchase or replacement of mission critical equipment.

**ARTICLE 17:**

To see if the Town of Grafton will appropriate **\$1,551,295** for its net operating and capital assessment by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District (the “District”) for the Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2023, which is inclusive of **\$42,341** of Proposition 2 ½ exempted funds to be applied against debt service associated with Grafton’s previously (2001) voted amount for the District’s addition/renovation project.

Submitted by: Blackstone Valley Vocational  
Regional School District Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 17 in the amount of \$1,551,295.00.**

This article funds Grafton’s portion of the net operating cost of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District for FY24. In addition, this article funds Grafton’s capital assessment obligation in the amount of \$42,341.00 to fund the FY24 principal and interest costs for its capital expansion project. This will be the last year of payments on the capital expansion project debt.

**ARTICLE 18:**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer and appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) from the Sewer Retained Earnings Account to the Major Equipment Account, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Sewer Commissioners

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 18 in the amount of \$150,000.00.** This article will transfer funds to the Major Equipment Account, allowing the Sewer Department to make any necessary repairs that may arise during the next Fiscal Year.

**ARTICLE 19:**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer and appropriate One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) from the Sewer Retained Earnings Account to the Plant Upgrade/Expansion Account, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Sewer Commissioners

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 19 in the amount of \$100,000.00.** This article transfers funds to the Plant Upgrade/Expansion Account, ensuring that the equipment at the Sewer Department is upgraded as necessary.

**ARTICLE 20:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from the Community Preservation Fund annual revenues in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for its administrative expenses, community preservation projects, and other expenses in fiscal year 2024, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

**Appropriations:**

From FY2023 estimated revenues for Community Preservation Administrative Expenses:  
**\$24,000.00**

**Reserves:**

From FY2023 estimated revenues for Historic Resources Reserve	<b>\$73,700.00</b>
From FY2023 estimated revenues for Affordable Housing Reserve	<b>\$73,700.00</b>
From FY2023 estimated revenues for Open Space Reserve	<b>\$73,700.00</b>
From FY2023 estimated revenues for Budgeted Reserve	<b>\$358,884.00</b>

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends passage of Article 20 as written.**

This is an accounting procedure that is necessary so that the Community Preservation Committee will have access to the funds raised during Fiscal Year 2024. Except for the CPC Operating Expenses, none of these funds will be spent without additional approval at Town Meeting.

**ARTICLE 21:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Sixty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$62,500.00) from the Fiscal Year 2024 Community Preservation Estimated Revenue for the purpose of making the fifteenth of twenty (15<sup>th</sup> of 20) interest and principal payments on the \$1.2 million bond issued for the purchase of the Pell Farm property, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 21 in the amount of \$62,500.00.** The routine payment of this debt helps the Town maintain a strong bond rating.

**ARTICLE 22:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Seventy-Two Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$72,100.00) from the Community Preservation Historic Reserve for the purpose of making the ninth of twenty (9<sup>th</sup> of 20) interest and principal payments on the \$1.1 million bond issued for the restoration of the Grafton Town House, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 22 in the amount of \$72,100.00.** The routine payment of this debt helps the Town maintain a strong bond rating.

**ARTICLE 23:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Twenty-Seven Thousand Six Hundred Ninety-Two Dollars (\$227,692.00) from the FY24 Community Preservation Budgeted Reserve for the Norcross Park Inclusive Playground, with such funds to be expended by June 30,



2025, unless the CPC by majority vote extends the deadline, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 23 in the amount of \$227,692.00.** This article supports more than half the funding for the Norcross Park Inclusive Playground project, to repair and renovate the playground at Norcross Park.

**ARTICLE 24:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) from the FY24 Community Preservation Budgeted Reserve to establish a Rental Assistance Program for Grafton Housing Authority Residents and Applicants, with such funds to be expended by June 30, 2025, unless the CPC by majority vote extends the deadline, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Community Preservation Committee

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 24 in the amount of \$10,000.00.** Establishing a Rental Assistance Program will aid current and future residents in combating home insecurity.

**ARTICLE 25:**

To see if the Town will vote to amend *Section 3 – Use and Intensity Regulations*, subsection 3.3.3.1, of the Grafton Zoning By-Law as detailed in the language below, and further that the Town authorize non-substantive changes to the lettering, numbering, and pagination of the Zoning By-Law to be consistent with said By-Law. (Deleted text ~~struck out~~, added text **bolded**)

**3.3.3 Special Cases**

**3.3.3.1** Where two or more principal structures are erected on the same lot, adequacy of access to utility service, and drainage serving each **individual** structure shall be functionally equivalent to that required for **structures on** separate lots **as stated** in the Planning Board’s adopted Subdivision Regulations; the minimum lot area, width, and frontage shall be the sum of the requirements for each **individual** structure; and the minimum distance between ~~such~~ **the** structures shall be the height of the higher building.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Department

Required Vote: **TWO-THIRDS**

**Explanation:** Modifying the language in Section 3.3.3.1 will clarify how two or more principal structures erected on the same lot are reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 25 as written.** Amending this section will ensure that there is no confusion on how to handle multiple structures on the same lot moving forward.

**ARTICLE 26:**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Grafton Zoning By-Law by renumbering Section 12.6.2 to Section 12.6.3, and further to authorize non-substantive changes to the lettering, numbering, and pagination of the Zoning By-Law to be consistent with said By-Law, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Department

Required Vote: ***TWO-THIRDS***

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 26 as written.** This is a clerical change which will make the Zoning By-Law consistent within itself.

**ARTICLE 27:**

To see if the Town will vote to amend *Section 4.2 Off-Street Parking and Loading*, subsections *4.2.1 General* and *4.2.2. Off-Street Parking Schedule*, of the Grafton Zoning By-Law as detailed in the language below, and further to authorize non-substantive changes to the lettering, numbering, and pagination of the Zoning By-Law to be consistent with said By-Law. (Deleted text ~~struck out~~, added text **bolded**)

**4.2 Off-Street Parking and Loading**

**4.2.1 General**

Sufficient off-street parking and loading shall be provided to serve all persons needing vehicular access to new structures and uses, and to enlarged, extended, or changed structures and uses to the extent such need is increased by such enlargement, extension, or change. Minimum parking requirements are set forth in the “Off-Street Parking Schedule”. **The Grafton Common Historic District will be exempt from parking requirements set forth under Section 4.2.2.**

**4.2.2 Off-Street Parking Schedule**

Use	Unit of Measure	Parking spaces required per unit or fraction thereof
One- or two-family Dwelling	Dwelling unit	2.00
Multi-family Dwelling	Dwelling unit	2.25
<b>Multi-family Dwelling in the Village Mixed Use Districts:</b>	<b>a.) Studio and 1 bedroom</b>	<b>1.25</b>
	<b>b.) 2 bedrooms</b>	<b>2.25</b>
	<b>c.) 3 or more bedrooms</b>	<b>2.25</b>
Lodging House, Hotel, Motel or Motor Court, Bed and Breakfast Homestay (T.M.5-13-91)	Each guest room or suite	1.00
Nursing and/or Convalescent Home	2 Employees, maximum shift plus 3 beds	1.00 1.00
Recreational use available to the public, Restaurant	3 seats plus each employee maximum shift	1.00 1.00

Other Business use:		
Buildings with less than 2,000 sq. ft. excluding storage area	200 sq. ft. gross floor area excluding storage area	1.00
Buildings with more than 2,000 sq. ft. excluding storage area	150 sq. ft. gross floor area excluding storage area	1.00
Transportation <del>Industrial</del> and Utility Use	<del>1-3 employees, maximum shift</del> <b>750 sq. ft.</b>	1.00
Industrial and <del>Warehouse</del> Use (T.M. 10-17-94)	<b>750 sq. ft. gross floor area</b>	1.00
<b>Warehouse Use</b>	<b>750 sq. ft of gross floor area</b>	<b>1.00</b>

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Department

Required Vote: ***TWO-THIRDS***

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 27 as written.** Which exempts the Grafton “Common” Historic district from the parking requirements so that new business do not need to regularly seek an exemption from said requirements. It also adjusts the requirements for some one-bedroom dwellings and commercial uses to be more in line with normal usage.

**ARTICLE 28:**

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 12.7 *Parking* of the Grafton Zoning By-Law by repealing subsection 12.7.4 *Shared Parking* and 12.7.6 *Off-Street Parking Schedule*, and replacing them with the new wording provided below, and further that the Town authorize non-substantive changes to the lettering, numbering, and pagination of the Zoning By-Law to be consistent with said By-Law.

**12.7.4 Shared Parking.** Please see Section 4.2.5.3 for Shared Parking requirements for the Village Mixed Use Districts.

**12.7.6 Off-Street Parking Schedule.** Please see Section 4.2.2 for Off-Street Parking requirements in the Village Mixed Use Districts. Parking for new construction shall provide an adequate number of spaces to satisfy conformance with Section 4.2.2 or may apply for a Special Permit from the Special Permit Grant Authority (SPGA) for an exemption, provided there is adequate off-site parking that is identified on the provided plans.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Department

Required Vote: ***TWO-THIRDS***

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 28 as written.** The proposed changes to Section 12.7 of the Zoning By-Law will streamline parking requirements in Village Mixed Use (VMU) Districts.

**ARTICLE 29:**

To see if the Town will vote to amend Grafton Zoning By-Law as follows:

Amending *Appendix A 3.2.3.1 – Use Regulation Schedule, Accessory Uses* to add a new item, Item #15:

Accessory Uses	A	R40	R20	RMF	NB	CB	I	OLI	VMU- -SG	VMU- WS	VMU- TV	VMU- GW	FP	WSPO
15. Seasonal outdoor eating and drinking establishments, including banquet facilities, alcohol sales and live entertainment that relate to operations of the principal agricultural use in an amount of no more than 10 percent of the total agricultural acreage (limited to no more than 10 db above ambient noise levels at the property line) for agricultural/farm principal uses for properties over 20 acres.	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

Adding a new section, *Section 5.12 – Accessory Uses in Agricultural and Residential Districts for Seasonal, Outdoor Eating and Drinking Establishments, including Banquet Facilities, Alcohol Sales, and Live Entertainment:*

**5.12 Accessory Uses in Agricultural and Residential Districts for Seasonal Outdoor Eating and Drinking Establishments, including Banquet Facilities, Alcohol Sales, and Live Entertainment**

5.12.1 Requirements – A range of uses accessory to an agricultural use including, but not limited to, restaurants or similar food service establishments, outdoor dining, indoor or outdoor events, and retail stores selling agricultural, food, craft, art, or similar products.

5.12.2) Standards:

5.12.2.a) The Board shall find that the primary use must be an agricultural use.

5.12.2.b) The Board shall find that the property must be a minimum of 20 acres.

5.12.2.c) The Board shall find that the accessory uses must not exceed 10 percent of the total agricultural acreage, which shall include all associated requirements under this Zoning Bylaw.

5.12.2.d) The Board shall find that the accessory use must satisfy noise level requirements that are limited to no more than 10 decibels above ambient noise levels at the property line, per CMR 310 section 7.10 or its successor.

5.12.3) Review: A Special Permit from the Planning Board is required. In determining whether to approve an application for a special permit authorizing this accessory use, the SPGA shall consider the following:

5.12.3.a) All conditions specified in Section 1.5 of this Bylaw that pertain to Special Permits generally;

5.12.3.b) The compatibility of the proposed accessory use with the primary agricultural use;

5.12.3.c) Mitigation measures taken to minimize potential negative impacts to surrounding properties; and

5.12.3.d) Whether the proposed accessory use and the primary use will not have detrimental effects which outweigh its benefits to the neighborhood, Town, or zoning district in which it is located.

Adding a new condition, Condition K, in *Section 1.5.5 – Conditions for Granting Special Permits*:

1.5.5 Conditions for Granting Special Permits:

k. Uses and their accessory uses will not have detrimental effects which outweigh their benefits to the neighborhood, Town, or zoning district in which it is located.

And further authorizing non-substantive changes to the lettering, numbering, and pagination of the Zoning By-Law to be consistent with said By-Law, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Department

Required Vote: ***TWO-THIRDS***

**Explanation:** Article 29 seeks to amend the Zoning By-Laws to allow farms in Town over 20 acres to apply for a Special Permit to use their agricultural space for seasonal outdoor eating and drinking establishments, including banquet facilities, alcohol sales, and live entertainment. This special permit would be controlled by the Planning Board.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 29 as written,** to allow the specified accessory use by farms over 20 acres through a Special Permit.

**ARTICLE 30:**

To see if the Town will vote to enter into a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement, with Feedback Earth, Inc., as negotiated by the TIF Committee for the Town of Grafton (a copy of which is on file at the Town Administrator's Office), or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator/TIF Committee

Required Vote: ***MAJORITY***

**Explanation:** Passage of this article will allow the Town to enter into a TIF Agreement with Feedback Earth, Inc., for a term of five years. The goal of this agreement is to stimulate growth for the company and create additional jobs in the Town.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 30 as written**, to allow the Town to enter into a TIF with Feedback Earth, Inc. The TIF Committee has worked diligently to negotiate a fair and equitable agreement that will serve all parties.

**ARTICLE 31:**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to enact special legislation to change the position of Town Clerk in the Town of Grafton from elected to appointed as follows:

**An Act Relative to the Charter and the Town Clerk in the Town of Grafton**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

**Section 1.** Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the office of town clerk in the town of Grafton shall be appointed by the town administrator in accordance with the charter of the town of Grafton. The town clerk shall have all the powers, perform the duties and be subject to the liabilities and penalties conferred and imposed by law on town clerks. The town administrator may establish an employment contract with the town clerk for salary, fringe benefits and other conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, severance pay, reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of office, liability insurance and conditions of discipline, termination, dismissal, reappointment, performance standards and leave.

**Section 2.** Notwithstanding section 1, the position of elected town clerk shall be abolished upon the effective date of this act and the term of the elected incumbent terminated provided, however, that the elected incumbent shall then become the first appointed town clerk and shall serve in that capacity for a period of time equivalent to the remainder of the elected term or sooner resignation, retirement or removal. Thereafter, appointments to the position of town clerk shall be made by the town administrator under said section 1.

**Section 3.** The charter of the town of Grafton, which is on file in the office of the archivist of the commonwealth as provided in section 12 of chapter 43B of the General Laws, is hereby amended by striking out section 3-1(a) and section 3-5, and inserting in place thereof the following section:

3.1(a) **Elective offices** – The Town offices to be filled by ballot of the whole town shall be a Select Board, a School Committee, a Board of Library Trustees, a Town Moderator and Planning Board. In addition, members of a Housing Authority, and such members of regional authorities or districts as may be established by statute, inter-local agreement or otherwise shall also be elected at Town election.

**Section 4.** This act shall take effect upon its passage. Provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments thereto before enactment by the General Court, which

amendments shall be within the public purposes of said petition; or to take any other action relative thereto.

or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Explanation:** This article would allow the Town to petition the State Legislature to change the position of Town Clerk from elected to appointed by a Special Act. This Act will change the Town Charter to be consistent with the change in position, and put the Town Clerk under the reporting authority of the Town Administrator, but they will retain all powers and perform all duties as are necessary to the office.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 31 as written,** and supports the petitioning of the State Legislature to make the Town Clerk of Grafton an appointed position. The Town Clerk is currently the only full-time elected position in town, and should be treated the same as all other Department Heads. In addition, changing the position from elected to appointed will bring greater accountability to the position, which is similar to all other full-time Department Head positions.

**ARTICLE 32:**

To see if the Town will appropriate Seven Million Dollars (\$7,000,000.00) to pay costs of the George Hill Road resurfacing and drainage improvement project, so-called, which project includes the full reconstruction of the road, its substrate and all associated stormwater infrastructure, together with full design, engineering, permitting and construction oversight, and all other costs incidental and related thereto; to determine whether this amount shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

Required Vote: **TWO-THIRDS**

**Explanation:** This article will appropriate \$7,000,000.00 for the George Hill Road project. This project has two funding sources. The first is a \$3,500,000.00 debt exclusion which will be repaid over a 15 year period. The second is the annual road stabilization budget which will allocate ~\$315,000.00 per year towards funding the project. The town is pursuing several grant opportunities to fund this project to reduce the overall costs incurred by the town and its residents.

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 32** in the amount of \$7,000,000.00 to fund the George Hill Road resurfacing and drainage improvement project. The proposed funding structure keeps the Town's debt low, while simultaneously mitigating the burden on the residents.

**ARTICLE 33**

To see if the Town will vote on the following Citizens' Petition:

*We the undersigned request Joncas Terr. be changed from a private street to a street owned by the town. We should not be responsible for filling "huge" potholes that are caused by public traffic.*

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Citizens' Petition

**Explanation:** Article 33 has been withdrawn by the Petitioner, and will be passed over on Town Meeting floor.

**Finance Committee recommends passing over Article 33.**

**ARTICLE 34:**

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following: Resolution in Support of Changing the Flag & Seal of Massachusetts

**Whereas** the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is replete with instances of conflict between the European Colonists and the Native Nations of the region, who first extended the hand of friendship to the Colonists on their shores in 1620, and helped them to survive starvation during the settlers first winters on their land;

**Whereas** members of the Native Nation for whom the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is named were ambushed and killed by Myles Standish, first commander of the Plymouth Colony, at Wessagusett (now Weymouth) in April of 1623, barely two years after the Pilgrims arrived;

**Whereas** the Colonial broadsword held by a white hand above the head of the Indigenous person on the Massachusetts Flag and Seal is modeled after Myles Standish's own broadsword, borrowed for that purpose from the Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth by the illustrator Edmund Garrett in 1884;

**Whereas** the belt binding the Native's cloak on the Flag and Seal is modeled after a belt worn by Metacomet, known to the English as King Philip, who was among the Indigenous leaders that resorted to a mutually destructive war in 1675-76 in defense of Native lands against Colonial encroachment;

**Whereas** the proportions of the body of the Indigenous person on the Flag and Seal were taken from the skeleton of an Indigenous person unearthed in Winthrop, the bow modeled after a bow taken from an Indigenous man shot and killed by a colonist in Sudbury in 1665, and the facial features taken from a photograph of an Ojibwe chief from Great Falls, Montana, considered by the illustrator to be a "fine specimen of an Indian," though not from Massachusetts;



**Whereas** the history of relations between Massachusetts since Colonial times and the Native Nations who continue to live within its borders includes the forced internment of thousands of so-called "praying Indians" on Deer Island, in Boston Harbor, where they died by the hundreds of exposure in the winter of 1675, the enslavement of Indigenous people in Boston, Bermuda, and the Caribbean Islands, the offering of 40 pounds sterling as bounty for the scalps of Indigenous men, women and children in Massachusetts beginning in 1686, increased to 100 pounds sterling for the scalps of Indigenous adult males by 1722, half that amount for Indigenous women and children;

**Whereas** Indigenous people were legally prohibited from even stepping foot into Boston from 1675 until 2004, when that Colonial law was finally repealed;

**Whereas** the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Colonists at Plymouth Plantation, which gave rise to the long chain of genocidal wars and deliberate government policies of cultural destruction against Native Nations of this continent, occurred in the year 2020, affording every citizen of the Commonwealth a chance to reflect upon this history and come to an appreciation of the need for better relations between the descendants of the Colonial immigrants and the Native Nations of the Commonwealth;

**Whereas** Native Americans have long suffered the many abuses of racism, the appropriation of their symbols for public schools and sports teams, the loss of their ancestral lands and the encroachment of their cultural lifeways;

**Whereas** the land area now known as the Town of Grafton, shares a long history with the Nipmuc Tribe, whose people have inhabited this area since long before the first colonial settlers arrived in 1718;

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town of Grafton hereby adopts this resolution in support of the work of the Special Commission on the Official Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth, established by a Resolve of the General Court in 2021 and appointed by the Governor to recommend changes to the current flag and seal of Massachusetts, and **in support of a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth** that may better reflect our aspirations for harmonious and respectful relations between all people who now call Massachusetts home; or take any other action relative thereto. The town clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution to Sen. Michael Moore and Rep. David Muradian, with the request that they support the work of the aforementioned Special Commission and advocate for a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth.

Or, take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Citizens' Petition

Required Vote: **MAJORITY**

**Finance Committee recommends the passage of Article 34 as written.** Changing the Flag and Seal of the Commonwealth will bring about a more inclusive representation of the State's history and culture, thereby promoting unity and equity among all residents.

**ARTICLE 35:**

To see if the Town will vote to remove Article 35 and dissolve the existing affordable housing trust, voted in at town meeting on 5/11/2009, and transfer all funds and assets to the Town of Grafton (Municipal Stabilization Fund).

Submitted by: Citizens' Petition

Required Vote: ***TWO-THIRDS***

**Finance Committee does not recommend the passage of Article 35.**

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 this 18<sup>th</sup> day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Three.

SELECT BOARD


TOWN OF GRAFTON



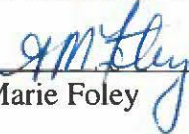
Colleen Roy, Chair



Mathew Often, Vice Chair



Andrew Jefferson, Clerk



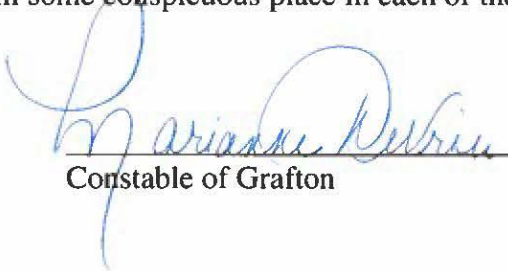
Ann Marie Foley

Raymond Mead

A TRUE COPY,  
ATTEST:

April 19, 2023

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



Constable of Grafton

**APPENDIX A: Compressed Budget**

<b>Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget</b>				
<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>FY23 Adopted</b>	<b>FY24 Proposed</b>	<b>\$ Change</b>	<b>% of Total Budget</b>
<b>General Government</b>	\$12,655,999.00	\$13,417,226.00	\$761,227.00	18.34
<b>Public Safety</b>	\$4,090,078.00	\$4,463,449.00	\$373,371.00	6.1
<b>Education</b>	\$41,858,117.00	\$43,427,796.00	\$1,569,679.00	59.37
<b>Public Works</b>	\$3,477,214.00	\$3,595,856.00	\$118,642.00	4.92
<b>Health &amp; Human Services</b>	\$639,126.00	\$631,963.00	(\$7,163.00)	0.86
<b>Culture &amp; Recreation</b>	\$1,387,798.00	\$1,475,005.00	\$87,207.00	2.02
<b>Debt Services</b>	\$6,069,729.00	\$6,082,534.00	\$12,805.00	8.32
<b>Interfund Transfers</b>	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	0.07
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$70,228,061.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$73,143,829.00</u></b>		

**APPENDIX A DETAIL:**

<b>FY2024 FINAL GF BUDGET</b>			
<b>General Government</b>			
	<b>Moderator</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$1,000.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$100.00
	<b>Total Moderator:</b>		<b>\$1,100.00</b>
	<b>Select Board</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$38,244.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$22,500.00
	<b>Total Select Board:</b>		<b>\$60,744.00</b>
	<b>Town Admin.</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$331,361.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$61,000.00
	<b>Total Town Admin.:</b>		<b>\$392,361.00</b>
	<b>Finance Comm.</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$3,760.00
	<b>Total Finance Comm.:</b>		<b>\$3,760.00</b>
	<b>Reserve Fund</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$75,000.00
	<b>Total Reserve Fund:</b>		<b>\$75,000.00</b>
	<b>Town Accountant</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$238,352.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$23,700.00
	<b>Total Town Accountant:</b>		<b>\$262,052.00</b>
	<b>Assessors</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$189,535.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$28,190.00
	<b>Total Assessors:</b>		<b>\$217,725.00</b>
	<b>Revaluation</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$26,700.00
	<b>Total Revaluation:</b>		<b>\$26,700.00</b>
	<b>Treasurer/Collector</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$253,371.00

		<b>Expenses</b>	\$65,250.00
	<b>Total Treasurer/Collector:</b>		<b>\$318,621.00</b>
	<b>Legal</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$130,000.00
	<b>Total Legal:</b>		<b>\$130,000.00</b>
	<b>Human Resources</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$113,918.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$53,775.00
	<b>Total Human Resources:</b>		<b>\$167,693.00</b>
	<b>Information Technology</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$277,363.00
	<b>Total Information Technology:</b>		<b>\$277,363.00</b>
	<b>Copiers</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$30,600.00
	<b>Total Copiers:</b>		<b>\$30,600.00</b>
	<b>Town Clerk</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$191,728.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$12,323.00
	<b>Total Town Clerk:</b>		<b>\$204,051.00</b>
	<b>Elect &amp; Registration</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$44,325.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$50,580.00
	<b>Total Elect &amp; Registration:</b>		<b>\$94,905.00</b>
	<b>Cable Tv</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$3,000.00
	<b>Total Cable Tv:</b>		<b>\$3,000.00</b>
	<b>Conser. Comm.</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$100,074.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$5,400.00
	<b>Total Conser. Comm.:</b>		<b>\$105,474.00</b>
	<b>Planning Board</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$135,502.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$35,115.00

	<b>Total Planning Board:</b>		<b>\$170,617.00</b>
	<b>Appeals Board</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$33,851.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$3,500.00
	<b>Total Appeals Board:</b>		<b>\$37,351.00</b>
	<b>Ec. Dev. Commission</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$34,253.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$15,500.00
	<b>Total Ec. Dev. Commission:</b>		<b>\$49,753.00</b>
	<b>Farnumsville Fire Hs</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$2,050.00
	<b>Total Farnumsville Fire Hs:</b>		<b>\$2,050.00</b>
	<b>S.G.C.H.</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$21,700.00
	<b>Total S.G.C.H.:</b>		<b>\$21,700.00</b>
	<b>Municipal Center</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$229,310.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$262,000.00
	<b>Total Municipal Center:</b>		<b>\$491,310.00</b>
	<b>Unclassified</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$10,123,296.00
	<b>Total Unclassified:</b>		<b>\$10,123,296.00</b>
	<b>Fuel/Gasoline</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$150,000.00
	<b>Total Fuel/Gasoline:</b>		<b>\$150,000.00</b>
	<b>Total General Government:</b>		<b>\$13,417,226.00</b>
	<b>Public Safety</b>		
	<b>Police Dept.</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$2,818,138.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$356,800.00
	<b>Total Police Dept.:</b>		<b>\$3,174,938.00</b>
	<b>Fire Dept.</b>		

		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$591,575.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$383,800.00
	<b>Total Fire Dept.:</b>		<b>\$975,375.00</b>
	<b>Insp Of Buildings</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$209,682.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$4,450.00
	<b>Total Insp Of Buildings:</b>		<b>\$214,132.00</b>
	<b>Gas Inspector</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$12,855.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$1,300.00
	<b>Total Gas Inspector:</b>		<b>\$14,155.00</b>
	<b>Plumbing Inspector</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$13,814.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$1,300.00
	<b>Total Plumbing Inspector:</b>		<b>\$15,114.00</b>
	<b>Sealer Of Weights</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$8,375.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$650.00
	<b>Total Sealer Of Weights:</b>		<b>\$9,025.00</b>
	<b>Wiring Inspector</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$14,740.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$2,300.00
	<b>Total Wiring Inspector:</b>		<b>\$17,040.00</b>
	<b>Emergency Management</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$1,400.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$6,750.00
	<b>Total Emergency Management:</b>		<b>\$8,150.00</b>
	<b>Animal Control</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$32,620.00
	<b>Total Animal Control:</b>		<b>\$32,620.00</b>
	<b>Animal Inspector</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$2,900.00
	<b>Total Animal Inspector:</b>		<b>\$2,900.00</b>
	<b>Total Public Safety:</b>		<b>\$4,463,449.00</b>



<b>Schools</b>			
	<b>Public Schools</b>		<b>\$43,427,796.00</b>
	<b>Total Public Schools:</b>		<b>\$43,427,796.00</b>
<b>Total Schools:</b>			
<b>Public Works</b>			
	<b>Engineering</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$89,672.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$153,300.00
	<b>Total Engineering:</b>		<b>\$242,972.00</b>
	<b>Highway Department</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$916,281.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$585,500.00
	<b>Total Highway Department:</b>		<b>\$1,501,781.00</b>
	<b>Sanitation</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$1,281,500.00
	<b>Total Sanitation:</b>		<b>\$1,281,500.00</b>
	<b>Snow And Ice Control</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$200,000.00
	<b>Total Snow And Ice Control:</b>		<b>\$200,000.00</b>
	<b>Street Lighting</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$42,000.00
	<b>Total Street Lighting:</b>		<b>\$42,000.00</b>
	<b>Cem &amp; Parks Dept.</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$250,353.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$77,250.00
	<b>Total Cem &amp; Parks Dept.:</b>		<b>\$327,603.00</b>
<b>Total Public Works:</b>			<b>\$3,595,856.00</b>
<b>Health &amp; Human Services</b>			
	<b>Health Dept.</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$75,245.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$118,250.00
	<b>Total Health Dept.:</b>		<b>\$193,495.00</b>
	<b>Coun. On Aging</b>		

		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$223,975.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$25,225.00
	<b>Total Coun. On Aging:</b>		<b>\$249,200.00</b>
	<b>Veterans Serv</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$112,968.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$76,300.00
	<b>Total Veterans Serv:</b>		<b>\$189,268.00</b>
	<b>Total Health &amp; Human Services:</b>		<b>\$631,963.00</b>
	<b>Culture &amp; Recreation</b>		
	<b>Library</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$853,185.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$253,575.00
	<b>Total Library:</b>		<b>\$1,106,760.00</b>
	<b>Recreation</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$291,415.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$39,830.00
	<b>Total Recreation:</b>		<b>\$331,245.00</b>
	<b>Nelson Library</b>		
		<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$18,000.00
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$19,000.00
	<b>Total Nelson Library:</b>		<b>\$37,000.00</b>
	<b>Total Culture &amp; Recreation:</b>		<b>\$1,475,005.00</b>
	<b>Debt Service</b>		
	<b>Retirement Of Debt</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$4,427,282.00
	<b>Total Retirement Of Debt:</b>		<b>\$4,427,282.00</b>
	<b>Interest</b>		
		<b>Expenses</b>	\$1,655,252.00
	<b>Total Interest of Debt:</b>		<b>\$1,655,252.00</b>
	<b>Interfund Transfers</b>		
	<b>Interfund Trans to OPEB Trust</b>		\$50,000.00

<b>Total Interfund Transfers:</b>		<b>\$50,000.00</b>
		<b>\$73,143,829.00</b>

**APPENDIX B: Capital**

<u>Project</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Cost</u>
<b>Hennessey Culvert/Bridge</b>	Conservation	\$150,000.00
<b>Replace Fire Inspection Vehicle</b>	Fire	\$90,000.00
<b>Fire Pumper Tanker Lease</b>	Fire	\$100,000.00
<b>Station 2 Renovations</b>	Fire	\$100,000.00
<b>Engine 3 Lease</b>	Fire	\$104,000.00
<b>Deck Over Power Tilt Trailer</b>	Highway	\$15,000.00
<b>Dual Drum Material Roller</b>	Highway	\$34,000.00
<b>Replace Truck 26</b>	Highway	\$75,000.00
<b>Cat 304 Mini Excavator</b>	Highway	\$80,000.00
<b>Replace Ferris Mower</b>	Parks and Cemetery	\$35,000.00
<b>Master Plan</b>	Planning Board	\$20,000.00
<b>Police Department Phone System</b>	Police	\$29,218.00
<b>Taser Replacement Program</b>	Police	\$21,000.00
<b>Interior Cameras - GHS</b>	Public School	\$31,200.00
<b>Library Roof Replacement - MSES</b>	Public School	\$70,000.00
<b>Building Security</b>	Public School	\$85,000.00
<b>ADA Compliance Modifications - GPS</b>	Public School	\$100,000.00
<b>Upgrade Camera System - GHS</b>	Public School	\$200,000.00
<b>Fire Alarm Panel Replacement - NGES</b>	Public School	\$280,000.00
<b>Norcross Park Playground Replacement</b>	Recreation	\$100,000.00
<b>F250 With Plow Replacement</b>	Sewer	\$60,000.00
<b>Grafton Historic Society Building Envelope</b>	Town Administrator	\$10,000.00
	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>\$1,789,418.00</b>

**APPENDIX C: Sewer**

<b>FY2024 - SEWER ENTERPRISE FINAL BUDGET</b>		
<b>Sewer Enterprise Fund</b>		
<b>Public Works</b>		
	<b>Personnel Services</b>	\$539,354.00
	<b>Expenses</b>	\$734,600.00
	<b>Interest</b>	\$50,391.00
<b>Total Public Works:</b>		<b>\$1,324,345.00</b>
<b>Interfund Transfers</b>		
<b>Interfund Transfers to GF &amp; OPEB Trust</b>		
	<b>GF Debt Payment</b>	\$2,142,835.00
	<b>OPEB Trust</b>	\$28,000.00
<b>Total Interfund Transfers:</b>		<b>\$2,170,835.00</b>
		<b>\$3,495,180.00</b>

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