

TOWN OF AVON
WARRANTS FOR
SPECIAL
TOWN MEETING
and
Finance Committee Report



.....
AVON MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

Saturday, November 18, 2023

Meeting begins at 10:00A.M.

Bring this Copy with You to Town Meeting



TOWN OF AVON
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
Saturday, November 18, 2023

at 10 o'clock in the morning at the Avon Middle/High School

Norfolk, SS: To either of the constables in the Town of Avon in the County of Norfolk.

Greetings: In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Avon qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet in the Avon Middle/High School Auditorium on West Main Street, in said Town of Avon on **Saturday, November 18, 2023, at 10:00 o'clock in the morning** then and there to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money by taxation, by transfer from available funds, by borrowing, by acceptance of grants or any combination thereof, to contribute funds toward the purchase and other costs incidental and related thereto, of property owned by T.L. Edwards Realty, LLC, Trustee of South Street and Route 24 Realty Trust u/d/t dated June 25, 2003 and recorded with Norfolk County Registry of Deeds in Book 19426, Page 14, and Terry L. and Katherine Edwards individually, and consisting of 36 acres +/- acres of land located on shown on plan entitled "Definitive Subdivision Plan of Land in Avon, MA, Parkview Lane-Avon, MA Prepared for T.L. Edwards" dated February 22, 2023 and plan entitled "Plan of Land in Avon, MA Prepared for T.L. Edwards" dated October 25, 2021 both made by Curley and Hanson Surveyors (Assessor's Map and Parcels B1-2-1, B1-2-2, B2-4-10, 11, 12 and C2-2-2 & 3) for water supply protection, conservation and recreation purposes and for the purpose of granting restrictions and easements for the purpose of preserving the land for conservation purposes; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire such land on such terms and conditions and subject to such restrictions, easements and rights as the Board of Selectmen may determine, and to grant restrictions, easements and rights as the Board of Selectmen may determine; or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Notes: Town has been awarded a grant from the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant program for 75% of the land acquisition costs and Wildlands Trust raised the remaining funds to support the application. This funding will be used to protect 29.97 acres of forested land adjacent to D.W. Field Park.

The Finance Committee withholds recommendation on this article for further information.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of MGL c.44, §54(b) to allow Town trust funds to be invested in accordance with MGL c.203C, the so-called “Prudent Investment Rule”, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: FINANCE DIRECTOR

Notes: This section enables Municipal Treasurers to apply the Prudent Investor Rule to optimize returns on trust fund monies, as defined in MGL Ch. 203C. The use of this new law requires local approval at Town meeting before implementation.

The Finance Committee withholds recommendation on this article for further information.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of Thirty Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixteen Dollars and Ten Cents (\$32,716.10) or such other amounts as Town Meeting may approve, for the purpose of programs and projects set out in the Massachusetts State-Subdivision Agreement for Statewide Opioid Settlements and the National Opioid Settlement Agreement to combat the opioid epidemic including; Opioid Use Disorder (“OUD”) Treatment; Support Programs for People with OUD in Treatment and Recovery; Connects to Care for People with or at risk of developing OUD; Harm Reduction efforts to prevent overdoses deaths or other opioid related harms; Support of Pregnant or Parenting Women and their Families, Including Babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome; To prevent Misuse of Opioids and Implement Prevention Education, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: FINANCE DIRECTOR

Notes: In May at our ATM (Article #10) the Town voted to set up a stabilization account for these funds. There is an ongoing State and Nationwide Opioid Settlement in which we received \$32,716.10 in FY23 it closed out to Free Cash and now that it has been certified the monies need to be placed into the Stabilization Account for future funding.

The Finance Committee recommends this article as written.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) for the purpose of financing the following water pollution facility projects: repair, replacement and/or upgrade of septic systems, pursuant to agreements with the Board of Health and residential property owners, including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C of the General Laws; to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by borrowing from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust or otherwise, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: BOARD OF HEALTH

Notes: This is a state sponsored program in which low interest loans are granted to homeowners. Town Meeting has approved this program two times previously.

The Finance Committee recommends this article as written.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to transfer funds from STM 2013 Article #8-\$2,000 to purchase an additional Poll Pad and Poll Pad Receipt Printer at a cost of One Thousand Six Hundred and Twenty-Five dollars (\$1,625) and any items pertaining to the purchase or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: TOWN CLERK

Notes: STM 2013 Article #8 was to survey private roads. This project has been completed.

The Finance Committee recommends this article as written.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from ATM 2021 Article #29-\$44,800 for a Building Condition Assessment of the Town Library at a cost of Forty-Four Thousand Eight Hundred dollars (\$44,800) located at 280 West Main Street or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Notes: ATM 2021 Article #29 was for the purchase of a rescue pumper truck. The truck has been purchased and delivered.

The Finance Committee recommends this article as written.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from ATM 2019 Article #15 the sum of \$7,242.53 and ATM 2021 Article #7 the sum of \$6,400.00 and ATM 2021 Article #8 the sum of \$45,536.50 and ATM 2022 Article #23 the sum of \$25,436.06 for a grand total of \$84,615.09, and to transfer from Free Cash the sum of Eighty Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty Four Dollars and Ninety One Cents (\$80,784.91) to conduct a Wastewater and Water Connection Feasibility study of the MWRA, or City of Brockton, and/or local wastewater disposal for the Avon Industrial Park and Stockwell Drive, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Notes: Total Project cost is \$315,400.00. The combined old article money to be utilized is \$84,615.09 and an earmark from the economic Development Bond Bill for the project of \$150,000 brings the remaining balance needed to \$80,784.91.

The Finance Committee recommends this article as written.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of Twenty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$23,000) to the Park and Recreation Revolving Account to correct an accounting entry made in Fiscal Year 2023, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Proposed by: PARK AND RECREATION

The Finance Committee withholds recommendation on this article for further information.

And you are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof, at not less than seven (7) public places, including the Post Office, and by leaving not less than twenty (20) copies in each of the public places for distribution in said Town, fourteen (14) days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

HEREOF FAIL NOT, and make do 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 2nd day of November, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Three.

A True Copy. Attest:


PATRICIA BESSETTE, TOWN CLERK


ERIC S. BECKERMAN, CHAIRMAN


JEFFREY BUKUNT, POLICE CHIEF


JASON L. SUZOR SR., CLERK

SHANNON M. COFFEY

AVON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DUTIES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN OF AVON BY-LAWS: ARTICLE II, SECTION 6 (f)

It shall be the duty of the Finance Committee to study the financial and other affairs of the Town and to advise all officers of the Town as to the expenditures and recommendations for appropriations to be made by them. All officers of the Town shall, on the request of the Committee, furnish it with all the facts, figures, and all other information pertaining to their several departments. The Finance Committee shall consider all articles in the warrants for all Town Meetings and report in print to the Town prior to each Town Meeting, Annual and Special, their estimates, and recommendations for the action of the Town. Said Finance Committee Report shall be distributed to each dwelling within the Town not less than seven (7) days prior to the Annual Town Meeting and posted in not less than seven (7) public places, including the Post Office, three (3) days prior to a Special Town Meeting.

The Finance Committee represents the Avon taxpayers. We are the official financial watchdog of the Town. We study financial and other affairs of the Town on behalf of ALL Town citizens – not just a special interest group. We have a duty to inform, provide advice, and make recommendations on all budgets and monetary articles that come before a Town meeting.

We are appointed (and reappointed) by the Town Moderator. The Committee consists of seven (7) members:

Derek Staffier	Appointed 2025
Daniel Norian	Appointed 2024
James Norian	Appointed 2024
Richard Jordan	Appointed 2025
Jarrett Beeley	Appointed 2025
Suzzette Waters	Appointed 2026
Paul Smith	Appointed 2026

Glossary of Financial Terms

Available Funds -- Funds established through previous appropriations or resulting from financial operations. Examples include Free Cash Funds, Stabilization Fund, and Overlay Surplus.

Cherry Sheet -- Named for the cherry colored paper on which they were originally printed, the Cherry Sheets are the official notification of the fiscal year's state aid and assessments to communities (State and County Charges) and regional school districts.

Cherry Sheet Offset -- Local aid accounts that may be spent without appropriation in the annual budget, but must be spent for specific municipal and regional school district programs.

DOR -- Department of Revenue

Free Cash -- Unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year. The Department of Revenue certifies Free Cash. Each year, Free Cash is calculated based on the Town's balance sheet as of June 30. Certified Free Cash includes 1) unexpended free cash from previous year, 2) receipts in excess of estimates shown on the tax recapitulation sheet, and 3) unspent amounts in budgeted line-items. Unpaid property taxes and certain deficits reduce the amount that can be certified as free cash. *Maintenance of an adequate free cash level is not a luxury but a necessary component of sound fiscal management.*

Debt Exclusion -- A vote by the town at an election to exclude debt service payments for a particular capital project from the levy limit. The amount necessary to cover the annual debt service payment is added to the levy limit for the life of the debt only. Debt exclusion may temporarily increase the levy above the levy ceiling.

Levy Limit -- The maximum levy assessed on real and person property which grows 2½ percent of the prior year's levy limit plus new growth and any overrides.

Overlay -- (Overlay Reserve or Allowance for Abatements and Exemptions) An account established annually by the Board of Assessors to fund anticipated property tax abatements and exemptions in that year. The overlay reserve is not established by the normal appropriation process, but rather is raised on the tax rate recapitulation sheet.

Overlay Surplus--Any balance in the overlay account of a given year in excess of the amount remaining to be collected or abated. Within ten days of a written request by the Bd. Of Selectmen, the Bd. Of Assessors must provide a certification of the excess amount of overlay available to transfer. Overlay surplus may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. At the end of each fiscal year, unused overlay surplus is "closed" and becomes part of free cash.

Reserve Fund -- An amount set aside annually within the budget of the town (not to exceed 5% of the tax levy for the preceding year) to provide a funding source for extraordinary and unforeseen expenditures. The Finance Committee authorizes transfers from this fund.

Stabilization Fund -- A fund designed to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. Towns may appropriate into this fund in any year an amount not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the prior year's tax levy. The Fund's aggregate shall not exceed ten percent of the town's equalized value. Earned interest shall be added to and become part of the Stabilization Fund. A two-thirds vote of town meeting is required to appropriate money from this fund.

Tax Rate Recapitulation Sheet (Recap Sheet) -- A document submitted by the town to DOR in order to set a property tax rate. The recap sheet shows all estimated revenues and actual appropriations that affect the property tax rate.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services. www.dls.state.ma.us

GUIDE TO PROCEDURE AT TOWN MEETING

****Please note that few people are comfortable with these procedures at their first Town Meeting, but the Moderator will be very patient and help you through if you wish to speak. Town Meeting is YOUR meeting and the Moderator is there to serve you.**

TO VOTE:	Be checked off voting list Sit in voting section of the hall Signal in prescribed way
TO QUESTION VOTE:	Stand, be recognized, question with at least seven(7)other voters
TO REQUEST SECRET VOTE:	Be recognized, make motion Seconded Majority vote Only allowed on appropriations (money articles)
TO MAKE A MOTION:	Be recognized, state name and address Must conform to article under discussion Must be in writing (presented to the Moderator) Seconded and debated Voted by Majority
TO SECOND:	Call out "I second the motion"
TO AMEND:	Be recognized Make motion (also present in writing to Moderator) Seconded, amendment debated Voted by majority Only two (2) amendments per main motion
TO STOP DEBATE FOR VOTE:	Be recognized, state "I move the previous question" Seconded, no debate Voted 2/3 majority
TO RECONSIDER:	Anyone may make motion Be recognized, make motion Seconded and debated Made no later than one (1) hour after final vote Voted by 2/3 majority
TO QUESTION DECORUM OF MEETING:	Rise and state "Point of Order" Moderator rules on point
TO TAKE AN ARTICLE OUT OF ORDER:	Be recognized, make motion Seconded, debated Voted by 4/5 majority
TO ADJOURN:	Be recognized, make motion Seconded, no debate Voted by majority

NOTES

NOTES

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
TOWN OF AVON
BUCKLEY CENTER
AVON, MA 02322**

**PRSR T STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AVON, MA
PERMIT NO. 15
02322**

**TO: RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER
AVON, MA 02322**

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2023, 10:00 AM

WARRANTS ENCLOSED WITH THIS FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT