



Town of Nantucket

October 17, 2016

Special Town Meeting

***The Voter's Guide to
Warrant Articles***

INTRODUCTION

***Greetings, Nantucket Voter!
And welcome to the October 17, 2016 Special Town Meeting.***

A Special Town Meeting is called when there are issues, fiscal or otherwise, that need to be resolved by the citizens of Nantucket sooner than the next, regularly scheduled Town Meeting. In this version of the Guide, we discuss the warrant-article motions that convey the issues of 2016 that need resolution. Please note that certain types of appropriations made at Special Town Meeting require a quorum of registered voters (either five percent or three percent). It is extremely important for you to attend and vote.

If you are familiar with the workings of Town Meeting, you may skip the next few paragraphs and move right into the section that explains the motions. Of course, if you are new to Town Meeting, or want a refresher on how it works, please read on.

Warrant articles are written to conform to the language of various Laws and Codes and are crafted to accomplish intended administrative and legal purposes. The language is necessarily technical and does not always allow the articles to be easily understood. This Guide provides an easy-to-understand overview of the warrant articles; it explains the objective(s) of an article and how the article would realize those objectives.

The Guide takes no position on any article. It is meant for informational purposes only and is not legally binding. There will likely be Technical Amendments to Motions that arise after the warrant goes to print. Those amendments are not covered in this Guide. They will be addressed as one of the first orders of business at the beginning of Town Meeting.

Also not covered are citizen-sponsored articles. Citizen sponsors are expected to represent their own articles and sponsors often make informational handouts available at the handout table in the lobby. The articles discussed in this guide have been written by Town Boards and Committees.

Voters vote on the MOTION to an article. See the Town Moderator's *Traditions and Procedures for Annual Town Meeting* booklet (available at the handout table) for details on voting, amendments and other procedures.

In case you wondered...How are motions and recommendations developed for Town Meeting warrant articles?

-- In the fall, the warrant for annual town meetings “opens” to citizen petitions - usually mid-October to mid-November. During this “open” period, citizens are encouraged to meet with Town Counsel about a potential article. Multiple sessions are scheduled to help citizens craft their language to accomplish their intended purpose. Nantucket is one of the Commonwealth’s few towns to offer its citizens this service.

-- Several other groups expend considerable effort reviewing and preparing financial and other articles for Town Meeting: the Planning Board, the Community Preservation Committee, the Health and Human Services Contract Review Committee, the School Committee, the Airport Commission, the Nantucket and Sconset Water Commissions and the Board of Selectmen.

-- In December, the Finance Committee (a 9-member group appointed by the Board of Selectmen) begins its comprehensive review of all warrant articles. From December through mid-March the Committee meets 2-3 times weekly starting at 4:00 pm. Meetings are open to the public and you are encouraged to attend.

-- In October, the Capital Program Committee (CapComm) begins its review of all General Fund and Enterprise Fund capital project requests. (CapComm is a 7-member group comprised of at-large citizens appointed by the Board of Selectmen, plus representatives from the Finance Committee, Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission and Board of Selectmen.) CapComm typically meets once a week through December. Every department submitting request(s) attends at least one meeting, and often several.

-- Except for zoning articles, each article on the warrant has a Finance Committee Motion. Zoning articles have Planning Board Motions. There also may be Comments to various articles by the Planning Board, Finance Committee or Board of Selectmen. This Guide does not address their Comments.

On to the Guide...

Article 1 is a citizen article and not explained here, as noted in the Introduction to this Guide.

Article 2 – Appropriation: Sewer Project/Madaket/Warren’s Landing/Somerset

The article seeks an appropriation for the second of several sewer projects recommended in the Town’s Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. The first (Nantucket Harbor Shimmo, Plus Parcels) was approved at the 2016 Annual Town Meeting. A two-thirds majority Town Meeting vote is required. In addition, a ballot vote is required because the appropriation will require a debt exclusion. The ballot vote is scheduled for the December 6, 2016, special town election.

Several forums, meetings and documents have been generated in connection with this project/warrant article and these can be found on the Town’s website at:
<http://www.nantucket-ma.gov/719/Sewer>

The Finance Committee’s Motion is positive and if approved, would appropriate \$80,000,000 for the project, which would be financed through a zero-percent loan from the State. The annual estimated tax increase would be as follows:

For a home valued at \$1,784,378 the impact would be \$54.43 for the Somerset project, and \$189.65 for Madaket/Warren’s Landing. For a total estimated tax bill impact of \$244.07. For a home valued at \$1,144,544 the estimated impact would be \$34.91 for the Somerset project, and \$121.64 for Madaket/Warren’s Landing. For a total estimated tax bill impact of \$156.56.

This article requires a quorum of voters present, of five percent (of registered voters); in addition to a quorum of the vote, of two-thirds.

Article 3 – Bylaw Amendment: Board of Sewer Commissioners/Sewer District Map Changes

The article allows the listed parcels, which are also shown on the accompanying map, to be sewered by the appropriation in Article 2, to be included in the Town Sewer District.

The Finance Committee’s Motion is positive.

Article 4 – Long-term Lease Extension – Academy Hill Property

The Town of Nantucket has an existing long-term lease with a private entity for the Academy Hill property which houses a mix of low-income, affordable and market rate units for qualified elderly and disabled persons. The Lessee is seeking an extension of the lease in

connection with re-financing of the existing debt so that the property may be maintained with the affordable housing components and to continue with a program for physical improvements to the property. The current lease expires in 2054 and the Lessee is seeking an additional twenty years.

The Finance Committee's Motion is positive and authorizes the Board to extend the lease.

Article 5 – is a citizen article and not explained here, as noted in the Introduction to this Guide.

Article 6 – Land Bank: Bond Refinancing

Interest rates are currently at historic low rates and it is an opportune time to issue refunding bonds to achieve interest cost savings. Passage of this article is needed to reauthorize the pledge of the Town's full faith and credit to secure the principal and interest on bonds to be issued to re-fund the Land Bank's 2007 bonds. If authorized, the original pledge will be replaced by this reduced pledge, thereby lowering the Town's financial exposure. Over the life of the refunding bonds, the Land Bank expects to achieve a savings of roughly \$1.1 million or 10% of the outstanding principal of the 2007 bonds, after paying all costs associated with the issue. The refunding bonds will be set up to mirror the structure of the original bonds; payable in the same years, producing savings annually through the life of the bonds.

The Finance Committee's Motion is positive and the quorum of vote required for passage is two-thirds.

Article 7 – Appropriation: Airport

This is an additional appropriation for three Airport Improvement Plan (AIP) capital projects to cover the actual costs of the projects resulting from the bid process. AIP projects are both Federal and State grant funded for a total of 95% reimbursement of the total cost. The Airport's total additional financial exposure is estimated to be \$17,000.

The Finance Committee's Motion is positive and appropriates \$340,000 for the projects listed in the Article, of which 95% is reimbursable through grants. This article requires a quorum of voters present, of five percent (of registered voters); in addition to a quorum of the vote, of two-thirds.

Article 8 – Appropriation: Lined Landfill

This is a supplemental appropriation for the construction of an additional lined landfill cell. The cost of the cell, now that a bid has been received, substantially exceeds the initial estimate and the additional funds are needed for this project.

The Finance Committee’s Motion is positive and appropriates an additional \$700,000 for the project, which will be paid from a combination of Solid Waste Enterprise Fund and General Fund revenues.

This article requires a quorum of voters present, of five percent (of registered voters); in addition to a quorum of the vote, of two-thirds.

Article 9 – Appropriation: Fire Department

At the time the warrant was adopted, Town Administration was reviewing the possibility of an office trailer unit to be placed at the Fire Department pending construction of a new Fire Station; however, costs became prohibitive and the project was not pursued.

The Finance Committee’s Motion is to take no action on the Article.

Article 10 – Appropriation: General Fund

This article will appropriate \$165,000 to pay for the dredging of Polpis Harbor. The town intends to cover the cost of the dredging, by selling the sand that is dredged from the Harbor.

The Finance Committee’s Motion is to appropriate \$165,000 in additional funds for the project, which is expected to be offset by the sale of sand material to be dredged.

This article requires a quorum of voters present, of five percent (of registered voters).

Articles 11 – 12 are citizen articles and not explained here, as noted in the Introduction to this Guide.

Article 13 – Zoning Map Change: LUG-2 to LUG-1 – 106 and 108 Surfside Road

This article rezones two properties, one where a dense and inappropriate so-called “40B affordable” 52-unit apartment housing development was proposed at 106 Surfside Road

(which includes adjacent “paper street” parcels (nos. 7-11) not recognized in Assessor records) and a second parcel at 108 Surfside Road to the east, which is necessary to connect to an existing zoning district avoiding the creation of a “spot zone.” The purpose of the article is to end further efforts to overdevelop 106 Surfside Road by allowing residential-scale private development at a slightly higher intensity but still consistent character with the surrounding neighborhood. Passage of the article will result in one additional lot of more than an acre in size with up to three additional dwelling units (primary/secondary/tertiary) in addition to what is currently allowed. This proposal is in keeping with the overall single-family home pattern of development and low density quality of the area.

The Planning Board’s Motion is positive.

Quantum of vote required for passage of the motion is two-thirds.

Articles 14 – 16 are citizen articles and not explained here, as noted in the Introduction to this Guide.