

Warrant set to go

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GateHouse Media
Thu Apr 19, 2007, 01:00 AM EDT

Maynard -

Selectmen combed through the warrant articles Tuesday night with last minute revisions. The 22 articles — ranging from requests for a newly renovated police station to school repairs and upgrades — will be signed and made available to residents before the May 21 Town Meeting.

“There are all pretty basic and straightforward,” said Chairman Sally Bubier as she flipped through the rough draft.

Only one article will result in raising taxes above the levy limit and, perhaps, it is the most needed.

Grouped under one warrant article are the request for the replacement of four 40 year-old boilers — all had a lifespan of 20 years, renovations of the old library for a police station, and for repairs and upgrades to the Green Meadow Elementary School.

“[Article 14] is the most significant because it requires a debt exclusion,” Bubier said. “We were able to find alternative funding for all of the other requests. But these are all critical capital needs.”

Article 14 will cost the town roughly \$4,820,000.

Two articles relate to upgrades, repairs and studies at the Maynard High School. Allocating \$32,000 from free cash for an engineering study, the School Committee is hoping to secure \$12,000 from the state to replace some of the cost to tax payers.

The School Committee is requesting \$122,000 from free cash and \$122,000 from overlay surplus for the removal and backfilling of two underground oil storage tanks at the High School and for upgrades addressing the deficiencies in the school library.

“The intent of articles 17 and 18 is to keep us on probation, while we explore our options for the Maynard High School,” Bubier said.

Residents will see their sewer rates rise, if they vote for Article 21. The article requests \$10 million for design, project management and upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant.

According to the Department of Public Works, this upgrade will address the town’s wastewater needs for the next 20 or 30 years or more. It will also meet regulations for the concentration of certain chemicals being discharged into the Assabet River.

The Finance Committee estimates the average sewer bill will rise by \$178 each year. Due to the wide-range of water users, the per-household pay-in for these upgrades is difficult to calculate.

To alleviate tax burdens on the town’s seniors, Article 22 increases the number of seniors who qualify for tax relief. Any person over the age of 65 and with incomes less than \$40,000 will no longer have to pay real estate taxes. The tax deferral remains in place until the resident’s home is sold at which time they will pay the taxes.

Currently, homeowners must earn less than \$20,000 to qualify for this program.

“If you meet this criteria you never have to pay real estate taxes again, until you sell you home,” said Selectman Bill Cranshaw.

Selectmen will sign the warrant on Tuesday, April 24. They intended to sign the warrant on April 17, but did not have a quorum to do so.

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