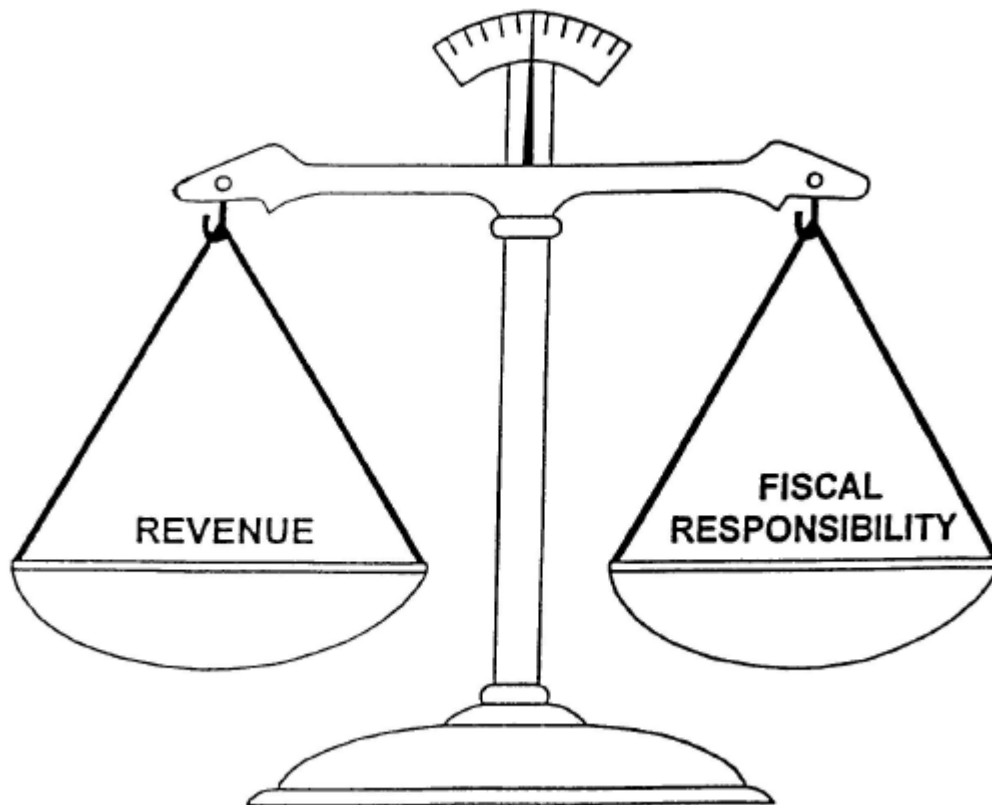


**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
NORTHBRIDGE FINANCE COMMITTEE**



**Spring Annual Town Meeting
Tuesday, May 1, 2018
7:00 p.m.**

**Northbridge Middle School Auditorium
171 Linwood Avenue
Whitinsville, MA**

THINK

VOTERS CHECK LIST

To be considered on each vote:

1. IS IT NECESSARY? Or is it something that is not really needed or perhaps already being provided by a private or public group?
2. CAN WE AFFORD IT? Remember, there is no limit to what we would like, but there is a limit to what we can afford.
3. WHAT WILL IT COST ULTIMATELY? Many proposals are like icebergs - only a small fraction of the total is apparent on the surface.
4. HOW WILL IT AFFECT BASIC LIBERTIES? If it imposes unreasonable or illegal restraints on your life or that of others, it should be vigorously opposed.
5. IS IT IN THE BALANCED BEST INTEREST OF ALL? If it is designed to benefit a small group or special interests, while taking unfair advantage of others, work for its defeat.
6. IS IT A "FOOT-IN-DOOR" PROPOSITION? Compromising a little now may bring an oppressive burden later, either in more regulation or more taxes or a combination of both.
7. DOES IT PLACE TOO MUCH POWER IN THE HANDS OF ONE INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP? Once decisive power is granted to a non-elected public official, a commission or a municipal authority, the private citizens may lose effective control.
8. DOES IT RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE MINORITY? This is a cornerstone of our Republic.
9. IS ITS APPEAL BASED ON EMOTIONAL PROPAGANDA OR FACTS? The farther a proposition gets away from facts, the more critical one should be.
10. DOES IT SQUARE WITH YOUR MORAL CONVICTIONS? If so, fight for it. If not, oppose it.

From Finance Committee Handbook

May 1, 2018

Dear Voters:

Enclosed is the warrant for the Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting along with a short summary prepared by the Town Manager and the Recommendations of the Finance Committee for each article.

The Town Budget was constructed using the Governor's estimates of Local Aid. Article 3 of the warrant details the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 budget of approximately \$43.4 million. A majority of the budget increase is reflected in the Town's contribution to education and increased debt payments for the new DPW facility project.

In this warrant, there are several articles seeking to expend funds for the purchase of capital items. There are two articles seeking authorization to fund expenditures from free cash for items for use by the Department of Public Works and for the School District. The Sewer Department is seeking to expend available funds for capital items as well. There is also an article to appropriate funds from the building maintenance fund to repair town-owned buildings as well as a request to purchase a new ambulance.

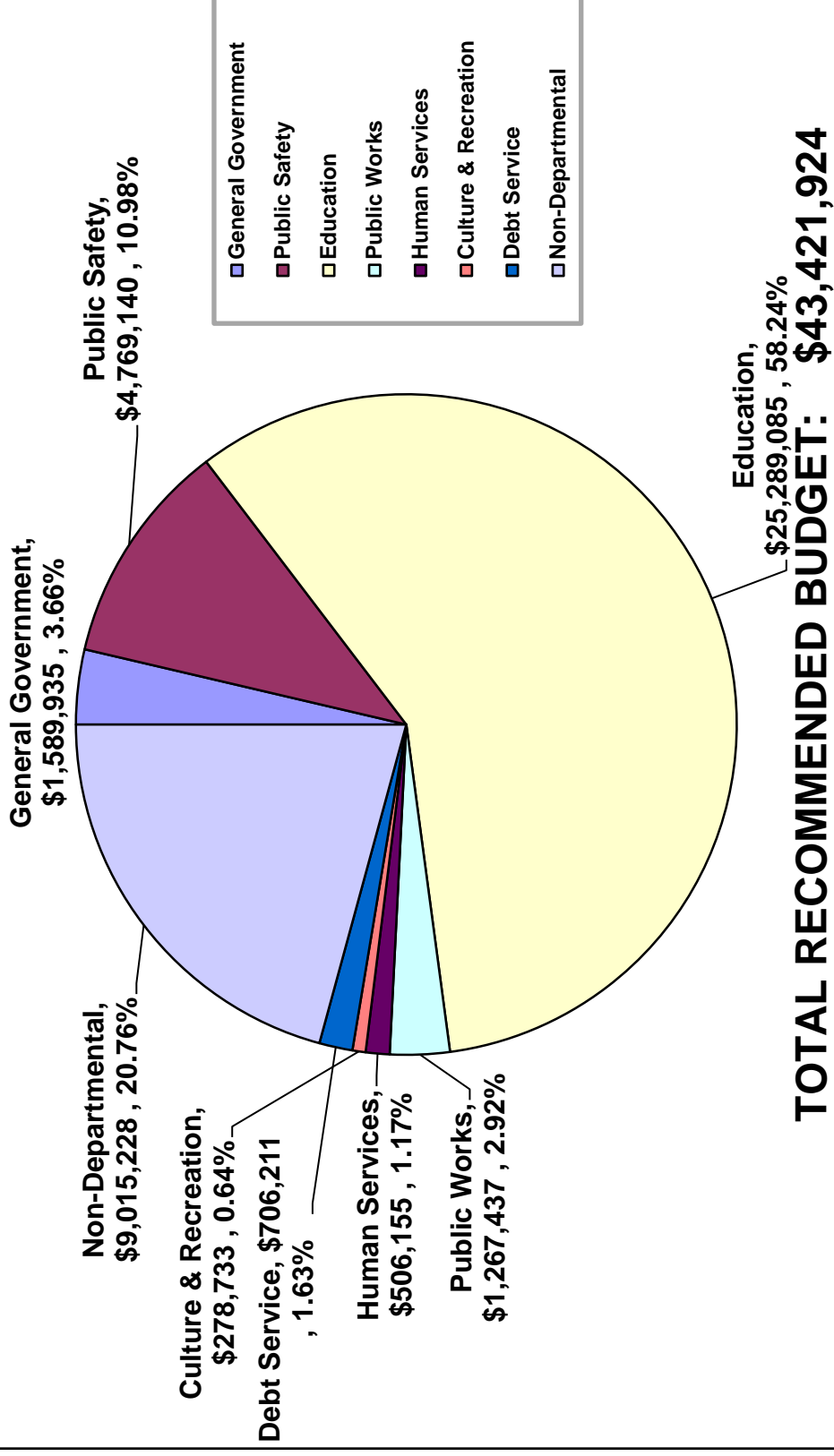
In addition to the capital articles, there is an article seeking to make changes to various town bylaws per recommendation of the Bylaw Review Committee. There are two articles seeking to amend both the town and zoning bylaws to ban recreational marijuana establishments. Lastly, there are three petition articles: one petition article seeking to amend the town's bylaw for kennel licensing and two petition articles authorizing the Selectmen to enter into tax agreements for two additional solar farms in town.

Please review the information in this booklet, make note of any questions you might have, and bring the booklet with you to Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Plato Adams, Chairman
James Barron
Lisa Ferguson
Steven Gogolinski
Jill Meagher
Christopher Pilla
Christopher Thompson

FISCAL YEAR 2019 RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET



TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE REVENUE SOURCES AND TRENDS FY 2015-2019

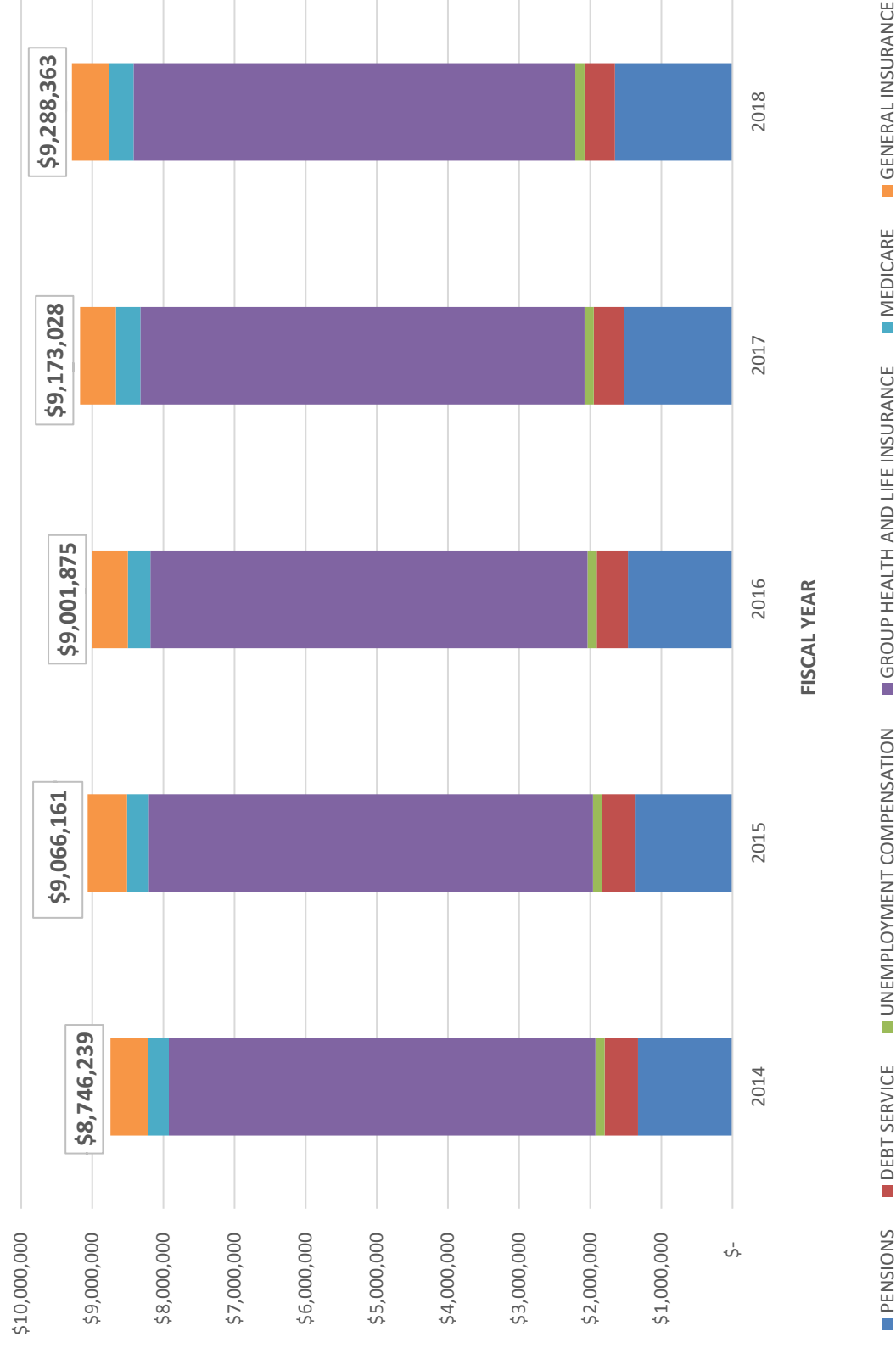
Source:
Town Accountant



STATE AID LOCAL RECEIPTS TAX LEVY

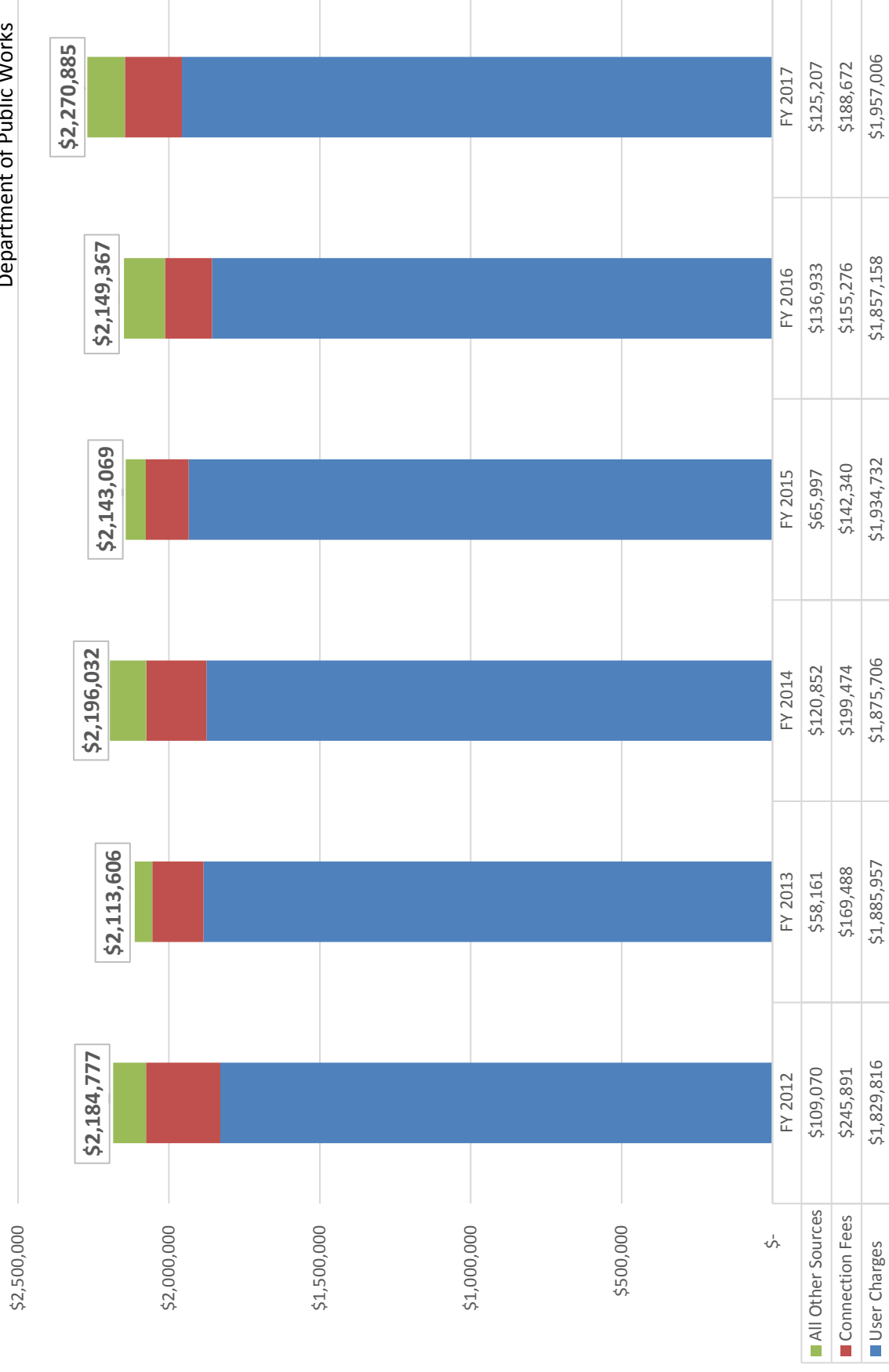
TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE FIXED COST BY FISCAL YEAR FY 2014-2018

Source:
Town Accountant



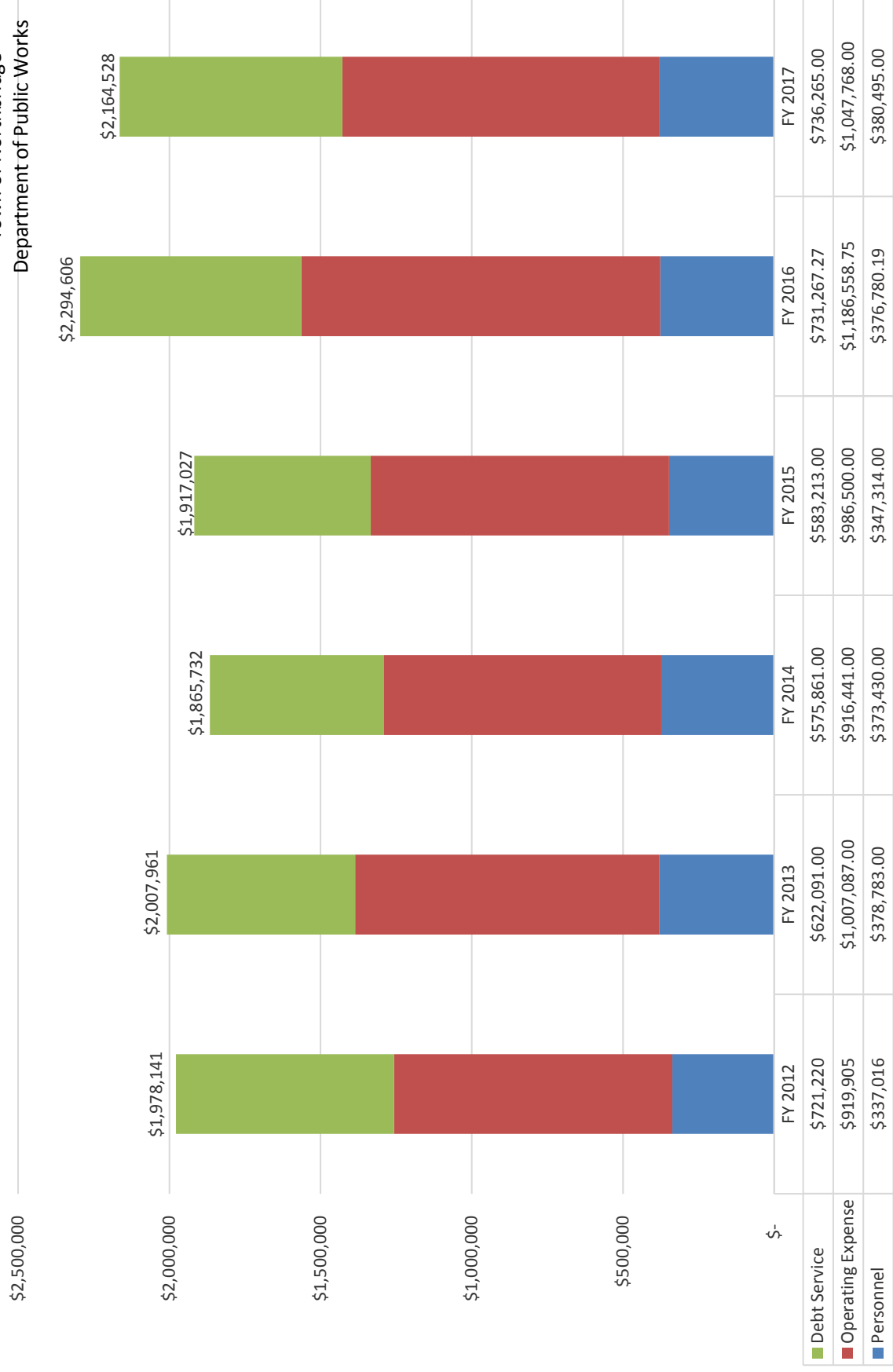
Sewer Enterprise Fund Revenues by Source FY 2012-2017

Town of Northbridge
Department of Public Works



**Sewer Enterprise Fund
Expense Analysis
FY 2012-2017**

Town of Northbridge
Department of Public Works



TOWN of NORTHBRIDGE

FY2019 CAPITAL PROGRAM

Dept Rank	Department	Project/Item	Article	Request	Not Fund	Free Cash	Water RE	Sewer RE	Ambul.	Bld. Main.	PG Trust	Swr Tran	Enc Tran
	Annex	Slate Roof Inspection/Repairs		\$8,500						\$8,500			
	Annex	UST Fuel Oil Tank Removal		\$15,000						\$15,000			
	Annex	Hot Water Tank (Green Communitieis Match)		\$7,120		\$7,120							
	COA	COA Carpeting & Window Treatments		\$18,000						\$10,000			
	DPW	Town-wide Sidewalk Maintenance Program		\$25,000		\$25,000							
	DPW	Pine Grove Cemetary Tree/Stump Removal		\$15,000							\$15,000		
	DPW	F-350 Pickup Truck w/Plow		\$40,000	X								
	DPW	Pine Grove Cemetary Road Improvements		\$100,000	X								
	DPW	Town-wide Pavement Maintenance Program		\$150,000		\$150,000							
	DPW	Heavy Duty Dump w/Sander and Plow		\$185,000	X								
	DPW	Heavy Duty Dump w/Sander and Plow		\$185,000		\$185,000							
	DPW	Fencing/Guardrails (along Ponds)		\$35,000		\$35,067							
	Fire Dept.	Replace Rescue 1 (Ambulance)		\$230,000					\$230,000				
	Police Station	Drainage Repairs		\$10,000						\$10,000			
	Police Station	Sidewalk Repairs		\$25,000						\$25,000			
1	NPS	District-Wide Technology Purchases		\$185,000		\$185,000							
2	NPS (MS/HS)	Heating System Repairs (MS/HS)		\$50,000		\$50,000							
3	NPS	District-Wide Security Upgrades		\$199,441		\$199,441							
4	NPS (MS/HS)	Repair Sidewalks and Catch Basins		\$75,000		\$23,372							\$51,628
5	NPS (MS)	Remove 20,000 Gallon Oil Tank		\$31,000		\$31,000							
6	NPS	Zero Turn Mower		\$14,000		\$14,000							
7	NPS (MS)	Classroom Furniture/Fixtures/Flooring		\$35,000		\$35,000							
8	NPS (MS)	Middles School Auditorium Lighting		\$20,000		\$20,000							
9	NPS	District-Wide Document Storage / Shredding		\$40,000		\$40,000							
10	NPS (MS)	Relocate Main Office to 1st Floor Entry Area		\$50,000	X								
11	NPS (MS)	Replace Two 1955 Fitzgibbon Boilers		\$1,089,000	X								
12	NPS (LF)	Lasell Field Storage/Bleachers/Lift/Press Box		\$380,000	X								
13	NPS (HS)	Painting (Refer to Paint Plan For Locations)		\$25,000	X								
14	NPS (HS)	Replace Classroom Furniture (2 classes)		\$6,000	X								
	Sewer	Replace 2003 F-550 Utility Body Truck (S-1)		\$35,000								\$35,000	
	Sewer	Removal and Replace Heating Fuel UST		\$47,800								\$47,800	
	Sewer	CWMP Program Improvements		\$150,000								\$150,000	
	Town Hall	HVAC Modernization (Split System)		\$100,000	X								
FINAL		TOTALS		\$3,580,861	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$230,000	\$68,500	\$15,000	\$232,800	\$51,628

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
WARRANT FOR
SPRING ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018 - 7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE 1: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury and/or transfer from the unexpended appropriated funds of one or more of the departments of the Town the following sums of money and authorize the payment of prior year bills:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor</u>
Department of Public Works [Highway Division]	\$1,058.00	Berkowitz Trucking Company
Sewer Enterprise Fund	\$ 30.23	Fastenal Company

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks authorization to pay prior year bills of the Department of Public Works [Highway Division] and the Sewer Enterprise Fund as follows: \$1,058.00 to Berkowitz Trucking Company and \$30.23 to Fastenal Company.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article authorizes the payment of prior year bills. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 2: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the votes taken under Article 3 of the 2017 Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting (May 2, 2017), and under Article 1 of the 2017 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 24, 2017), appropriations and transfers under the Omnibus Budget Article; or take any other action relative thereto.

BUDGET TRANSFERS

PUBLIC SAFETY:

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Line 14B: Police Expenses

By **transferring from Line 14A [Police Personnel]**

The additional sum of \$ 25,000

TOTAL POLICE: \$ 25,000

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Line 15B: Fire Expenses

By **transferring from Line 26B [Veterans Expenses]**

the additional sum of \$ 15,000

TOTAL FIRE: \$ 15,000

AMBULANCE

Line 16B: Ambulance Expenses

By **transferring from Line 26B [Veterans Expenses]**

the additional sum of

\$ 3,000

TOTAL AMBULANCE: \$ 3,000**TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY: \$ 43,000****DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

Line 21C: Snow/Ice Personnel

By **transferring from the undesignated fund balance (free cash)**

the additional sum of

\$ 344,040

TOTAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: \$ 344,040**NON-DEPARTMENTAL:**

Line 46: Retirement Benefits

By **transferring from Line 40 [Unemployment]**

the additional sum of

\$ 33,000

TOTAL NON-DEPARTMENTAL: \$ 33,000**TOTAL ARTICLE 2: \$420,040**

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to allow amendments to the FY 2018 operating budget, which was also amended at the Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting held October 23, 2017.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article authorizes transfers between departmental accounts established in the 2018 budget. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:**ARTICLE 3: (Finance Committee)**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury and/or transfer from the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund such sums of money not to exceed \$43,421,924 to defray the necessary and usual expenses of the several departments of the Town for FY 2019, beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2019, as follows:

LINE # ACCOUNT NAME	FY 18 Approved	FY19 Recommended
GENERAL GOVERNMENT		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
1 SELECTMEN		
1A Personnel	5,150	5,150
By allocating \$1,150 to the Chairman and \$1,000 to each of the other 4 Selectmen		
1B Expenses	131,485	133,500
Total Selectmen	136,635	138,650

2 TOWN MANAGER		
2A Personnel	273,888	284,377
2B Expenses	17,509	21,559
Total Town Manager	291,397	305,936
3 FINANCE COMMITTEE		
3B Expenses	15,000	15,000
Total Finance Committee	15,000	15,000
4 TOWN ACCOUNTANT		
4A Personnel	120,767	126,628
4B Expenses	15,350	15,380
Total Town Accountant	136,117	142,008
5 ASSESSORS		
5A Personnel	166,072	169,839
5B Expenses	14,831	15,870
Total Assessors	180,903	185,709
6 TREASURER/COLLECTOR		
6A Personnel	163,049	157,894
APPROPRIATE FROM PARKING TICKET RECEIPTS		
6A Personnel	5,000	0
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
6B Expenses	34,700	37,300
Total Treasurer/Collector	202,749	195,194
7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS		
7A Personnel	75,091	76,589
7B Expenses	96,188	106,188
Total Information Systems	171,279	182,777
8 TOWN CLERK/ELECTIONS		
8A Personnel	121,958	128,282
8B Expenses	29,440	48,822
Total Town Clerk/Elections	151,398	177,104
9 CONSERVATION		
9A Personnel	32,722	33,701
APPROPRIATE FROM WETLAND FEES		
9A Personnel	5,000	5,000
9B Expenses	0	0
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
9B Expenses	1,940	2,500
Total Conservation	39,662	41,201

10 PLANNING BOARD		
10A Personnel	94,464	98,290
10B Expenses	9,627	9,849
Total Planning Board	104,091	108,139
11 ZONING/APPEALS BOARD		
11A Personnel	9,125	9,337
11B Expenses	6,255	6,255
Total Zoning/Appeals Board	15,380	15,592
12 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
12A Personnel	0	0
12B Expenses	0	0
Total Economic Development	0	0
13 TOWN HALL/CENTRAL SERVICES		
13A Personnel	24,000	24,000
13B Expenses	58,625	58,625
Total Town Hall/Central Services	82,625	82,625
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	1,527,236	1,589,935
PUBLIC SAFETY		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
14 POLICE		
14A Personnel	2,516,343	2,543,512
14B Expenses	256,892	280,548
Total Police	2,773,235	2,824,060
15 FIRE		
15A Personnel	588,482	760,253
15B Expenses	142,140	151,123
Total Fire	730,622	911,376
APPROPRIATE FROM AMBULANCE RECEIPTS		
16 AMBULANCE		
16A Personnel	644,971	758,279
16B Expenses	93,950	99,550
Total Ambulance	738,921	857,829
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
17 CODE ENFORCEMENT		
17A Personnel	142,477	145,408
APPROPRIATE FROM WEIGHTS AND MEASURES RESERVE ACCOUNT		
17A Personnel	5000	5,000

RAISE AND APPROPRIATE

17B Expenses	10,095	10,167
APPROPRIATE FROM WEIGHTS AND MEASURES RESERVE ACCOUNT		
17B Expenses	1,500	1,500
Total Code Enforcement	159,072	162,075

RAISE AND APPROPRIATE**18 CIVIL DEFENSE**

18A Personnel	3,500	3,500
18B Expenses	9,500	10,300
Total Civil Defense	13,000	13,800

TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	4,414,850	4,769,140
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EDUCATION**RAISE AND APPROPRIATE****20 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

20 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT	22,910,443	23,367,385
20A TRANSPORTATION	0	0
20B TRADE SCHOOL	300,000	300,000
20C BLACKSTONE REGIONAL	1,304,155	1,621,700
TOTAL EDUCATION	24,514,598	25,289,085

PUBLIC WORKS**RAISE AND APPROPRIATE****21 DPW HIGHWAY DIVISION**

21A Personnel	537,259	568,601
21B Expenses	598,836	598,836
21C Snow/Ice Personnel	100,000	100,000
Total Highway (Includes Snow & Ice)	1,236,095	1,267,437

21 DPW FACILITIES DIVISION

21D Energy and Utilities	0	0
21E Building Maintenance (non-personnel)	0	0

TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	1,236,095	1,267,437
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BUILDING, PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION COMM.**RAISE AND APPROPRIATE****21F BUILDING, PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION COMM.**

21F Expenses	0	0
TOTAL BUILD, PLAN, & CONSTRUCT	0	0

**HUMAN SERVICES
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE**

22 BOARD OF HEALTH

22A Personnel	55,411	56,562
22B Expenses	19,658	19,995
Total Board of Health	75,069	76,557

23 LANDFILL ANALYSIS

23A Expenses	15,000	15,000
Total Landfill Analysis	15,000	15,000

24 COUNCIL ON AGING

24A Personnel	152,277	157,154
24B Expenses	20,508	20,508
Total Council On Aging	172,785	177,662

26 VETERANS

26A Personnel	0	0
26B Expenses	242,840	236,936
Total Veterans	242,840	236,936

TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES

505,694 506,155

**CULTURE & RECREATION
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE**

27 LIBRARY

27A Personnel	154,567	213,102
27B Expenses	53,731	28,731
Total Library	208,298	241,833

28 RECREATION

28A Personnel	0	0
28B Expenses	12,000	12,000
28C Youth League Equipment	0	0
Total Recreation	12,000	12,000

29 HISTORICAL COMMISSION

29A Expenses	4,000	500
Total Historical Commission	4,000	500

30 MEMORIALS		
30A Soldiers Memorials	15,000	15,000
30B Veterans Celebrations	1,900	1,900
Total Memorials	16,900	16,900
31 RECYCLING		
31A Personnel	0	0
31B Expenses	7,500	7,500
Total Recycling	7,500	7,500
 TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION	 248,698	 278,733
 DEBT SERVICE		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
32 Debt Principal	227,000	500,000
APPROPRIATE FROM RECEIPTS RESERVED - TITLE V		
32 Debt Principal	15,108	15,108
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
33 Debt Interest	86,755	95,855
34 Short Term Interest	20,000	20,000
35 BVRS Debt	78,122	75,248
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE	426,985	706,211
 NON-DEPARTMENTAL		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
36 Medicare	345,000	345,000
37 Life Insurance	10,000	10,000
38 Retirement System	1,653,651	1,720,251
39 Workers' Compensation	150,380	150,380
40 Unemployment Comp.	131,300	131,300
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	5,367,000	5,400,000
APPROPRIATE FROM AVAILABLE FUNDS [FREE CASH]		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	783,000	750,000
APPROPRIATE FROM OVERLAY SURPLUS		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	50,000	50,000
APPROPRIATE FROM HEALTH INSURANCE STABILIZATION		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	0	0
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
42 Property & Liability Ins.	371,047	371,047
43 Reserve for Wage Adj.	12,500	12,500
44 Stabilization Fund	0	0
45 Reserve Fund	50,000	50,000
46 Retirement Benefits	24,750	24,750
TOTAL NON-DEPARTMENTAL	8,948,628	9,015,228
 TOTAL	 \$41,822,784	 \$43,421,924

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article is the Town's Omnibus Operating Budget Article for FY 2019, which cannot exceed \$43,421,924. Sewer and Water are enterprise funds that are approved by separate articles.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to establish the Fiscal Year 2019 budget in the amount of \$43,421,924. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 4: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from the Retained Earnings Account of the Sewer Enterprise Fund a sum of money to operate the Sewer Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2019; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,238,505 for expenses and debt service to operate the Sewer Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2019, said sum to be offset by the sum of \$2,238,505 from betterments and other revenues received by the Sewer Enterprise Fund during Fiscal Year 2018; said appropriations to be used for the following purposes:

Wages and Salaries	\$ 410,362
Expenses	\$ 867,482
Interest on long term debt	\$ 83,662
Sewer maturing principal	\$ 633,439
Total:	\$1,994,945;

and further vote to transfer \$243,560 from said \$2,238,505 to the General Fund as reimbursement for shared costs and fringe benefits.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to appropriate funding in the amount of \$2,238,505 for the operation of the Sewer Enterprise Operation. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 5: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from the Retained Earnings Account of the Water Enterprise Fund a sum of money to operate the Water Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2019; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,527,495 for expenses and debt service to operate the Water Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2019, said sum to be offset by the sum of \$1,527,495 from revenues received by the Water Enterprise Fund during Fiscal Year 2018, said appropriation to be used for the following purposes:

Wages and Salaries	\$ 26,330
Expenses	\$1,423,942
Interest on long term debt	\$ 11,125
Water maturing principal	\$ 35,000
Total:	\$1,496,397;

and further vote to transfer **\$31,098** from said **\$1,527,495** to the General Fund as reimbursement for shared costs and fringe benefits.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to appropriate funding in the amount of **\$1,527,495** for the operation of the Water Enterprise Operation. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 6: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money and such additional funds as may become available from the Commonwealth's Department of Transportation, Chapter 90 Bond Issue proceeds, to be used by the Department of Public Works for the repair and maintenance of Town roads in conformance with MGL and further to see if the Town will vote to meet said appropriation by borrowing and to authorize the Treasurer/Collector, with approval of the Board of Selectmen, to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor in anticipation of the receipt of said State Aid; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article is an annual request to authorize the Board of Selectmen to expend Chapter 90 State Road funds for FY 2019.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article allows for the expenditure of Chapter 90 road funds and allows the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of receiving Chapter 90 funds. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 7: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer/Collector to enter into a compensating balance agreement or agreements for FY 2019, pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53F of the M.G.L.; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article authorizes the Treasurer/Collector to enter into agreements with banks and to manage Town funds.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This is an annual article that allows the Treasurer to enter into agreements with banks to manage Town funds. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 8: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to set the FY19 spending limits for the Town's revolving funds under Section 5-113 of the Northbridge Code as follows:

Program or Purpose	FY 2019 Spending Limit
Playgrounds and Recreation	\$20,000
Food Health and Safety	\$20,000
Compost Site	\$10,000

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is for the annual reauthorization of the Playground & Recreation Commission's revolving account not to exceed \$20,000; for the annual reauthorization of the Board of Health's revolving account for Food Health and Safety not to exceed \$20,000; and for the annual reauthorization of the Board of Health's revolving account for the Compost Site not to exceed \$10,000.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article authorizes spending limits for the revolving funds associated with the Playground and Recreation Commission, Food Health and Safety [Board of Health] and the Compost Site. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 9: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury, and/or transfer from the undesignated fund balance (free cash), and/or transfer from the Stabilization Fund a sum of money for the Compensated Absences Fund for FY 2019; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury, and/or transfer from free cash, and/or transfer from the Stabilization Fund a sum of money for the Compensated Absences Fund for FY 2019.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *supports passing over* Article 9. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 10: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer a sum of money from the Pine Grove Cemetery Trust to fund operations of the Pine Grove Cemetery for FY 2019 beginning July 1, 2018 and ending on June 30, 2019, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to transfer a sum of money to the Pine Grove Cemetery Trust Fund to fund operations of the Pine Grove Cemetery for FY 2019.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer funds from the Pine Grove Cemetery Trust to fund the operations of the cemetery during Fiscal Year 2019. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 11: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$450,977 from the Healthcare Reimbursement Account No. 80121814 to the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund Account No. 80091310; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer \$450,977 from the Healthcare Reimbursement Account to the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer funds from the Healthcare Reimbursement Account to the Health Insurance Stabilization fund. These funds were established to offset costs associated with the Town switching to the Commonwealth's Group Insurance Commission's (GIC) insurances. The change to GIC did not occur. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 12: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article 2 of the 2007 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 23, 2007) by increasing the real estate tax abatement for Senior Tax Work Off volunteers from \$750 to \$1,000 per Fiscal Year, in addition to any other exemptions or abatements for which they may be eligible; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to increase the real estate tax abatement amount for seniors who volunteer under the Senior Tax Work-Off Program from \$750 to \$1,000 per Fiscal Year.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to increase the tax abatement for the Senior Tax Work off program. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 13: (Board of Assessors)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$8,100 from Account No. 01022113 and the sum of \$11,800 from Account No. 01021516 to fund the cost of the upgrade to the Vision Government Solutions software to version 8.0; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to transfer a total of \$19,900 in funds from various accounts to cover the cost to upgrade the Vision Government Solutions software used by the Assessor's Office to version 8.0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer funds to upgrade the Assessor's computer system. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 14: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the undesignated fund balance (free cash) the following sums of money to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works for the following purposes: \$25,000 for a Town-Wide Sidewalk Maintenance Program; \$35,067 to Repair or Replace Fencing/Guardrails along Town Ponds; \$150,000 for a Town-wide Pavement Maintenance Program; and \$185,000 for a Heavy-Duty Dump Truck with Sander and Plow; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer funds from free cash for the following purposes: \$25,000 for a town-wide Sidewalk Maintenance Program; \$35,067 to repair or replace fencing/guardrails along Town ponds; \$150,000 for a town-wide Pavement Maintenance Program; and \$185,000 for a heavy-duty Dump Truck with sander and plow. Funds to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to purchase capital items under the direction of the Director of Public Works for use by the Department of Public Works. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 15: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer a sum of money from the Town Building Maintenance Fund, established pursuant to Chapter 438 of the Acts of 2012, for maintenance of Town-owned buildings and facilities in Fiscal Year 2019, the following sums of money to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works: \$15,000 for the Removal of an Underground Fuel Oil Storage Tank at the Town Hall Annex; \$8,500 for the Inspection of the Slate Roof at the Town Hall Annex; \$10,000 for Carpeting and Window Treatments at the Northbridge Senior Center; \$10,000 for Drainage Repairs at the Northbridge Police Station; and \$25,000 for Sidewalk Repairs at the Northbridge Police Station; and, in addition, appropriate and transfer the sum of \$7,120 from the undesignated fund balance (free cash) to fund the Town's match to a Green Communities Grant Application for Replacement of the Hot Water Tank at the Town Hall Annex; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer funds from the Town Building Maintenance Fund for maintenance of Town-owned buildings and facilities in FY 2019 as follows: \$15,000 for the removal of an underground fuel oil storage tank; \$8,500 for inspection of the slate roof at the Town Hall Annex; \$10,000 for carpeting and window treatments at the Northbridge Senior Center; \$10,000 for drainage repairs at the Northbridge Police Station; \$25,000 for sidewalk repairs at the Northbridge Police Station; and to transfer \$7,120 from free cash to fund the town's match to a Green Communities Grant Application to replace the hot water tank at the Town Hall Annex. Funds to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer funds from the Town Building Maintenance Fund to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works. These funds will be used to perform work at various town-owned buildings. Also, this article seeks to fund the Town's match to a Green Communities Grant Application to replace the hot water tank at the Town Hall annex. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 16: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the unexpended balances of Sewer Capital Accounts, Account No.'s: 60000214-589004 - \$21,825.00; 60000307-589004 - \$16,106.01; 60000309-589004 - \$49,113.22; 60001111-530300 - \$31,620.27; 60001215-530300 - \$107,846.03; and 60001916-585002 - \$6,289.47, for a total of \$232,800, to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works as follows: \$35,000 for the purchase of a Utility Body Pick-Up Truck; \$47,800 for the Removal and Replacement of an Underground Fuel Oil Storage Tank at the Wastewater Treatment Plant; and \$150,000 for Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Program Improvements; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer \$232,800 from the unexpended balances of Sewer Capital Accounts for the following purposes: \$35,000 for the purchase of a utility body pick-up truck; \$47,800 for the removal and replacement of an underground fuel oil storage tank at the Wastewater Treatment Plant; and \$150,000 for Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Program Improvements.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer funds from the unexpended balances of Sewer Capital Accounts to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works. These

funds will be used to purchase a pick-up truck for use by the Sewer Department. The funds will also be used to remove an underground fuel oil tank at the Sewer Treatment Plant and for Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Program Improvements. The Finance Committee **recommends passage** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 17: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Ambulance Receipts the sum of \$230,000 to replace the Rescue 1 vehicle; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to appropriate \$230,000 from Ambulance Receipts to replace Rescue 1.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The article seeks to appropriate ambulance receipts to replace the existing ambulance. The Finance Committee **recommends passage** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 18: (School Committee) PLEASE SEE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAGE 23.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article 4 of the 2017 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 24, 2017) as follows: by revising the purpose for which the sum of \$200,000 was appropriated thereunder for improvements at the Middle School, as follows: Repairing Plaster and Reinforcing Drop Ceilings in the 1905 section of the Middle School, Making Repairs and Upgrades to the Middle School Auditorium Sound System, and Replacing Middle School Student Lockers; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to re-appropriate \$200,000 to repair plaster and reinforce drop ceilings in the 1905 section of the Middle School, make repairs and upgrades to the Middle School Auditorium sound system, and to replace the Middle School student lockers. Funds to be expended under the direction of the School Committee.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The article seeks to amend the vote taken under Article 4 of the 2017 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 24, 2017) to change the use of these funds, particularly allowing the funds to be used for student lockers. The Finance Committee **recommends passage** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 19: (School Committee) PLEASE SEE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAGES 24-25.

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the undesignated fund balance (free cash) the following sums of money to be expended under the direction of the School Committee: \$185,000 for District-wide Technology Purposes; \$50,000 for Heating System Repairs at the Middle School and High School; \$199,441 for District-Wide Security Upgrades; \$31,000 for Removal of a 20,000-gallon Oil Tank at the Middle School; \$14,000 for a Zero-Turn Mower; \$35,000 for Replacement of Middle School Classroom Furniture, Fixtures, and Flooring; \$20,000 for updates to the Middle School Auditorium Lighting; \$40,000 for District-Wide Document Storage and Shredding; \$23,372 for the Repair of Sidewalks and Catch Basins at the Middle School and High School; and, further, to transfer the total sum of \$51,628 from the following accounts in the following individual amounts: Account No.

01021208-530000 - \$12,763.69; Account No. 01021310-585002 - \$10,350.00; Account No. 01021311-585002 - \$11,759.31; Account No. 01021618-585002 - \$7,305.00; and Account No. 01021824-585002 - \$9,450.00 for the Repair of Sidewalks and Catch Basins at the Middle School and High School; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer money from free cash for the following purposes: \$185,000 for district-wide technology purposes; \$50,000 for heating systems repairs at the Middle School and High School; \$199,441 for district-wide security upgrades; \$31,000 for removal of a 20,000-gallon oil tank at the Middle School; \$14,000 for a zero-turn mower; \$35,000 for replacement of Middle School classroom furniture, fixtures, and flooring; \$20,000 to update the Middle School Auditorium lighting; \$40,000 for district-wide document storage and shredding; \$23,372 for the repair of sidewalks and catch basins at the Middle School and High School; and to transfer \$51,628 from miscellaneous project accounts for the repair of sidewalks and catch basins at the Middle School and High School. Funds to be expended under the direction of the School Committee.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to purchase items to be used by the School District. This article also seeks to transfer funds to repairs sidewalks and catch basins. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 20: (Planning Board)

To see if the Town will vote to accept a deed in lieu of foreclosure from The Hill Street Nominee Trust, or the then current owner(s), pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 60, Section 77C, to seven (7) parcels of land identified by the Assessors as Map 15, Parcels 82, 169, 170, 214, 215, 216 and 217, said parcels being designated as open space and being a portion of a subdivision commonly known as The Hills at Whitinsville, and which are subject to tax takings held by the Treasurer/Collector for unpaid real estate taxes, said parcels to be under the care, custody, control and management of the Board of Selectmen for general municipal purposes, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to record the deed, provided the Board of Selectmen determines that the deed and the acceptance shall comply with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 60, Section 77C; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to consider the acceptance of Open Space within the Hills at Whitinsville subdivision. These open space parcels were accepted at the 2017 Fall Annual Town Meeting, however because of the status of the property (back taxes owed) the warrant language, motion and action taken in October 2017, did not adequately address the disposition of the parcels. This article seeks Town Meeting vote to accept the open space parcels in lieu of foreclosure as provided for and in accordance with MGL.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article allows the Selectmen to accept seven parcels of land from The Hills at Whitinsville subdivision. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 21: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Board of Selectmen, for general municipal purposes, to the Conservation Commission, for conservation purposes, the care, custody, control and management of seven (7) parcels of land identified by the Assessors as Map 15, Parcels 82, 169, 170, 214, 215, 216 and 217; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer the Open Space parcels within the Hills at Whitinsville subdivision to the Conservation Commission. Conveyance of the open space will allow the Commission to preserve land that contains several ecologically significant resources. The land is contiguous with open space in other developments. The Commission hopes to ultimately develop a trail or passive use through this land and abutting open space that will provide recreational and educational opportunities for the residents of Northbridge.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to transfer the parcels accepted in Article 20 and transfer them to the Conservation Commission. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 22: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173 of the Code of Northbridge, with the understanding that, in accordance with MGL Chapter 94G, section 3(a)(2), such amendment must also be approved by the voters of the Town by the passage of Ballot Question 1 on the May 15, 2018 Annual Town Election, as follows:

- A) By adding the term "Recreational Marijuana Establishments" to Section 173-2, Definitions, with the following definition:

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENTS

Consistent with G.L. c.94G, § 3(a)(2), all types of non-medical "marijuana establishments" as defined in G.L. c.94G, §1, including marijuana cultivators, independent testing laboratories, marijuana product manufacturers, marijuana retailers or any other types of licensed marijuana-related businesses.

- B) By adding a new Section 173-18.6, "Recreational Marijuana Establishments," as follows:

§173-18.6 Recreational Marijuana Establishments.

Recreational Marijuana Establishments shall be prohibited within the Town of Northbridge. In addition, the sale of marijuana accessories, as defined in G.L. c.94G, §1 and any other applicable law or regulation, shall be prohibited within the Town of Northbridge.

- C) By adding to Section 173-12, Table of Use Regulations, a new entry for Recreational Marijuana Establishments, and a corresponding footnote, as follows:

§173-12 Table of Use Regulations

USE	ZONING DISTRICT											
	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5	R-6	B-1	B-2	B-3	I-1	I-2	H
Retail Services												
Recreational Marijuana Establishments, including marijuana social consumption operations ⁷	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

⁷ Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 173-48 or any other provision of this Zoning Bylaw, no use variance for a Recreational Marijuana Establishment or sale of marijuana accessories shall be permitted.

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173 of the Code of Northbridge, as follows: 1) By adding the term "Recreational Marijuana Establishments" to Section 173-2, Definitions; 2) By adding new Section 173-18.6 entitled "Recreational Marijuana Establishments; and 3) By adding a new entry, "Recreational Marijuana Establishments" to Section 172-12, Table of Use Regulations. This article is contingent on the passing of Question 1 on the May 15, 2018 Annual Town Election Ballot.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to prohibit recreational marijuana establishments by amending the Northbridge zoning bylaws. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was 4-1.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 23: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 9 of the Code of Northbridge, Certain Conduct Regulated, by adding a new Section 9-1100, "Recreational Marijuana Establishments," with the understanding that, in accordance with MGL Chapter 94G, section 3(a)(2), such amendment must also be approved by the voters of the Town by the passage of Ballot Question 1 on the May 15, 2018 Annual Town Election, as follows:

Section 9-1100: RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENTS

§9-1101: Recreational Marijuana Establishments Prohibited.

Consistent with G.L. c.94G, § 3(a)(2), all types of non-medical "marijuana establishments" as defined in G.L. c.94G, §1, including marijuana cultivators, independent testing laboratories, marijuana product manufacturers, marijuana retailers or any other types of licensed marijuana-related businesses, shall be prohibited within the Town of Northbridge. In addition, the sale of marijuana accessories, as defined in G.L. c.94G, §1 and any other applicable law or regulation, shall be prohibited within the Town of Northbridge;

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to amend Chapter 9 of the Code of Northbridge, Certain Conduct Regulated, by adding new Section 9-1100, "Recreational Marijuana Establishments". This article is contingent on the passing of Question 1 on the May 15, 2018 Annual Town Election Ballot.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to prohibit recreational marijuana establishments by amending the Northbridge bylaws. The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was 4-1.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 24: (Bylaw Review Committee)

To see if the Town will vote to amend its general by-laws in accordance with the Report and Recommendations of the By-law Review Committee appointed in 2016 pursuant to Section 7-8(b) of the Charter, said report, recommendations and proposed amendments being on file with the Town Clerk; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks town meeting approval to amend the general bylaws of the Town of Northbridge in accordance with the report and recommendations of the Bylaw Review Committee. Said report, recommendations, and amendments are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to amend its general bylaws as recommended by the Northbridge Bylaw Review Committee. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 25: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote, in accordance with G.L. c. 59, § 38H(b), to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Tax Agreement with Green Apple Farms, IV, LLC or its affiliated entity, for a period of up to twenty-five (25) years, for payments to the Town in connection with a Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 11 MW AC to be installed on a one hundred thirty six (136) acre +/- tract of land consisting of twelve parcels located at 0 Puddon Street, Northbridge, and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Tax Agreement with Green Apple Farms, IV, LLC or its affiliated entity, for a period of up to 25 years, and to approve said agreement under which Green Apple Farms, IV, LLC or its affiliated entity, will pay the Town a sum of money per year relative to a 136-acre +/- tract of land consisting of 12 parcels located at 0 Puddon Street, Northbridge, MA related to the proposed construction and operation of a large-scale ground mounted solar photovoltaic installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 11 MW AC, and further allow the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to allow the Board of Selectmen to enter into a tax agreement concerning a solar project on Puddon Street. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 26: (Petition Article)

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with G. L. c. 59, § 38H to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Real and Personal Property Tax Agreement with Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, with its business address at 250 West 57th Street, Suite 701, New York, NY 10107, for a period of up to twenty-five (25) years, and to approve said agreement under which Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, will pay the Town a sum of money per year relative to a ninety five (95) acre +/- parcel of land located adjacent to Church Street, Northbridge, MA related to the proposed construction and operation of a Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 5 megawatts (MW) AC, and further to allow the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Real and Personal Property Tax Agreement with Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, under G.L. c.59, §38H, for a period of up to 25 years, and to approve said agreement under which Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, will pay the Town a sum of money per year relative to a 95-acre +/- parcel of land located adjacent to Church Street, Northbridge, MA related to the proposed construction and operation of a large-scale ground mounted solar photovoltaic installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 5 megawatts (MW) AC, and further allow the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to allow the Board of Selectmen to enter into a tax agreement concerning a solar project adjacent to Church Street. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 27: (Petition Article)

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with G. L. c. 59, § 38H to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Real and Personal Property Tax Agreement with Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, with its business address at 250 West 57th Street, Suite 701, New York, NY 10107, for a period of up to twenty-five (25) years, and to approve said agreement under which Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, will pay the Town a sum of money per year relative to a fifty four (54) acre +/- parcel of land located at 0 Providence Road, Northbridge, MA related to the proposed construction and operation of a Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 5 megawatts (MW) AC, and further to allow the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Real and Personal Property Tax Agreement with Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, under G.L. c.59, §38H, for a period of up to 25 years, and to approve said agreement under which Syncarpha Solar, LLC or its affiliated entity, will pay the Town a sum of money per year relative to a 54-acre +/- parcel of land located at 0 Providence Road, Northbridge, MA related to the proposed construction and operation of a large-scale ground mounted solar photovoltaic installation with an expected nameplate capacity of approximately 5 megawatts (MW) AC, and further allow the Board of Selectmen to negotiate any amendments necessary to said Tax Agreement.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The article seeks to allow the Board of Selectmen to enter into a tax agreement concerning a solar project on Providence Road. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 28: (Petition Article)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Chapter 8 (Regulation of Animals), Article 8-100 (Dogs), Section 8-112.A (Kennels) of the Code of Northbridge, by deleting said Section 8-112.A in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

Kennel license required. A kennel license shall be required for all kennels and shall be classified as a Grade One License for the keeping of four dogs, a Grade Two License for the keeping of five to 10 dogs, and a Grade Three License for the keeping of 11 to 25 dogs or for the keeping of greater than 25 dogs. A kennel in excess of 25 dogs shall not be permitted unless the Animal Control Officer determines that such kennel in excess of 25 dogs shall board dogs primarily within a building and such building shall provide for not less than one hundred (100) square feet of gross floor area per dog. The new kennel licensing requirements shall become effective on January 1, 2012; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to amend Chapter 8 (Regulation of Animals), Article 8-100 (Dogs), Section 8-112.A (kennels) of the Code of Northbridge, by deleting said Section 8-112.A in its entirety and replacing it with the following: Kennel license required. A kennel license shall be required for all kennels and shall be classified as a Grade One License for the keeping of four dogs, a Grade Two License for the keeping of five to 10 dogs, and a Grade Three License for the keeping of 11 to 25 dogs or for the keeping of greater than 25

dogs. A kennel in excess of 25 dogs shall not be permitted unless the Animal Control Officer determines that such kennel in excess of 25 dogs shall board dogs primarily within a building and such building shall provide for not less than one hundred (100) square feet of gross floor area per dog.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: This article seeks to amend the Northbridge bylaws to allow a kennel in excess of 25 dogs as long as the Animal Control Officer determines that such kennel in excess of 25 dogs shall board dogs primarily within a building and such building shall provide for not less than one hundred (100) square feet of gross floor area per dog. The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 29: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or to transfer from the undesignated fund balance (free cash), and/or amend the votes taken under Article 3 of the 2017 Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting (May 2, 2017), and under Article 1 of the 2017 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 24, 2017), appropriations and transfers under the Omnibus Budget Article, to transfer a sum of money to the Stabilization Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to transfer a sum of money into the Town's Stabilization Fund.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***supports passing over*** this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:



The Northbridge Public Schools

Town of Northbridge

87 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, Massachusetts 01588 (508) 234-8156 FAX (508) 234-8469 www.nps.org

Dr. Catherine Stickney, Superintendent
Kathleen Perry, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Amy McKinstry, Director of Curriculum
Melissa Walker, Director of Business and Finance

April 4, 2018

Dear Community Members,

The mission statement of the Northbridge Public Schools is always kept in the forefront when developing the upcoming year's budget. The mission of the Northbridge Public Schools is to prepare our students to become responsible, contributing members of society by providing a challenging, rigorous educational program which will maximize academic achievement, enable intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development in an atmosphere which promotes creative and critical thinking. Additionally, the three strategic plan goals are taken into account. These goals include the following: 1. Teaching and Learning: All students will reach their maximum potential for college and career readiness including academics, as well as social and emotional well-being; 2. Buildings and Operations: The Northbridge Public Schools will provide a creative and challenging academic and social atmosphere that is safe, supportive, and respectful; and 3. Communication and Community: Student achievement will be maximized - producing healthy, knowledgeable, active members of global and local societies.

Building the FY2019 School Department budget was very challenging. Revenue was expected to be limited, and expenses were projected to grow. Over the last four years, since the failed override in May of 2014, significant staff and service reductions have taken place, and fees have increased. While the School Committee has consistently tried to put forth a budget that maintains the current level of services offered, upon calculating that cost for FY2019, it became apparent that a level services budget could not be funded.

Based on this knowledge, the School Committee charged the administrative team to build two budgets: one budget that was level services and one budget that was level funded. When the level services budget was compiled, it showed that the cost to maintain the same level of services offered in FY2018 again in FY2019 would be \$598,876, which reflected a 2.21% increase over the FY2018 budget. The primary driver behind this increase was the \$626,764 increase in salaries due to contractual obligations. Additionally, there was a \$70,984 increase in the transportation line items due to contract rate increases. There was a decrease, however, in the out of district tuition and transportation line items in the amount of \$167,609, which helped to defray these increases.

Knowing that a level services budget would require an increase of \$598,876, it was clarified that this would be the amount that would need to be reduced from the budget in order to put forth a level funded budget.

Before a decision could be made as to what level of budget could be supported, whether it be level services, level funded, or somewhere in between, the amount of available revenue first had to be determined. Unfortunately, for the sixth year in a row, the Governor's proposed Chapter

70 funding again only increased by the minimum required amount per student. For FY2019, this increase translates to \$20 per student, or \$44,320 total. The town contribution to the School Department increased by \$412,622 resulting in a total proposed appropriation increase of \$456,942. Despite this increase, grant funding is anticipated to decrease slightly and a lesser amount of revolver funds are available to fund the FY2019 budget compared to FY2018. The decrease in grants and decreased available revolvers funds offset, for the most part, the increase in the appropriation, resulting in only a total of \$32,454 in new revenue available for the School Department to put towards the FY2019 budget.

As a level services operating budget totaled \$27,678,759, but available revenue only totaled \$27,112,337, a shortfall of \$566,422 needed to be addressed in order to balance the budget. The majority of this shortfall needed to come in the form of budget reductions. Since our budget has not allowed the School Department to maintain level services for two of the previous four years, there were not too many areas to reduce other than personnel. While supply line reductions in the amount of \$5,188 were made, and capital items in the amount of \$121,994 were pulled from the operating budget with the intent that they would be funded through a capital article, the majority of budget reductions are in the form of staffing. Reducing staff is always incredibly difficult and much thought and deliberation goes into the decision making process. After many thoughtful discussions on the proposed cuts and after considering the feedback that was shared by the staff and the community, a final list of staff reorganizations and reductions was agreed upon.

This list includes reorganizing the following positions:

REDUCTION				REPLACEMENT			
Site	Position	FTE	Reduction	Site	Position	FTE	Replacement
District	Systems Administrator	1.0	74,985	District	Technology Support	1.0	50,000
Balmer	Librarian	0.5	35,133	MS	Librarian	0.5	35,133
MS	Library Clerk	1.0	12,401				
HS	Spanish Teacher	0.4	19,058	MS	Spanish Teacher	0.4	19,058
MS	In School Suspension	1.0	16,851	MS	Cafeteria Support	0.6	14,000

It also includes reducing the following positions:

Site	Position/Item	FTE	Reduction
NES	Assistant Principal	0.3	35,727
BALMER	Grade 3 Teacher	1.0	57,353
BALMER	Grade 4 Teacher	1.0	81,479
BALMER	Paraprofessional	1.0	17,641
BALMER	Paraprofessional	1.0	17,641
MS	Grade 6 Teacher	1.0	54,888
MS	Instructional Coach	1.0	82,286
MS	Secretary	0.2	8,000
HS	Science Teacher	1.0	51,680
HS	Special Education Teacher	0.5	28,677
HS	Secretary	0.2	8,000

Despite the need to reduce the budget, additional support for our English learners needed to be added to the budget. The number of English learners in the District is growing and the current level of staffing is not sufficient to meet the required number of service hours for these students. One additional EL teacher was proposed to be added to the budget.

Overall, a total of \$610,790 including 9.6 FTE's was reduced from the budget and 1.0 FTE in the amount of \$57,353 was added to the budget, resulting in net reductions from a level services FY2019 budget of \$553,437 and 8.6 FTE's. As the total shortfall was \$566,422, it was decided that an additional \$12,985 would be utilized from revolver funds to balance the budget. This will result in just under a projected \$1M balance being held in the revolver accounts for emergency purposes.

As has been discussed for the past several years, without a change in revenue structure going forward, these budget challenges will not go away. Fixed and contractual expense increases are outpacing available revenue. The balance in the revolver funds is decreasing, and less funds are available to balance the budget. Unfortunately, it is projected that the deficit for FY2020 will be larger than the original deficit for FY2019. Despite these fiscal challenges, the School Committee and the staff at the Northbridge Public Schools are dedicated to continuing to deliver a high quality educational program to the students of Northbridge.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Catherine Stickney

Superintendent of Schools

Michael LeBrasseur

School Committee Chair

Melissa Walker

Director of Business and Finance

A COMPLETE DETAILED LINE ITEM BUDGET IS AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL'S WEBSITE WWW.NPS.ORG
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Article 18 – School Committee

On August 22, 2017, when the School Committee originally voted to submit their warrant article to the Board of Selectmen for the Fall Annual Town Meeting, a request was made for funding for “repairing plaster and reinforcing drop ceilings in the 1905 section of the Middle School, and making repairs and upgrades to the Middle School Auditorium, including repairing/replacing the sound system, carpet, and seating”. On September 26, 2017, the School Committee voted to submit a revised warrant article to the Board of Selectmen for the Fall Annual Town Meeting, requesting funding for Middle School student lockers in place of auditorium carpeting and seating as the cost of the carpeting and seating exceeded the amount of available funds. On September 27, 2017, the article and the intended change to the article were discussed with the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee was in favor of the article and of the intended change. On October 16, 2017, the article and the intended change to the article were discussed with the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen was in favor of the article and of the intended change. On October 19, 2017, the Town Moderator determined that such a change could not be made on the floor as it was outside of the scope of the original warrant article. Since the article could not be changed on the floor during the Fall Annual Town Meeting, the article was approved as written that evening with the intention that the School Committee would submit an article for the Spring Annual Town Meeting to amend the original article to include the replacement of Middle School student lockers.

With the exception of three sections, student lockers throughout the Middle School are in major need of replacement. Many of the lockers are original to the building and well past their expectancy. The lockers have been repaired to the greatest extent possible; however, in many cases, doors do not fit properly, lockers either do not open or do not close, latches do not latch, and replacement handles and springs are no longer available. As the lockers require a complete replacement, the Committee is requesting funding to remove the existing lockers and install new replacement lockers in their place.

Article 19 – School Committee

The School Committee is requesting funding for capital purchases and improvements for the Northbridge Public Schools. The following items are being requested:

District Wide Technology Purchases: \$185,000

These funds will pay for a combination of new computers, chrome books, and other instructional hardware such as printers, document cameras, projectors, and projector carts. Teacher and support staff machines across the District will be updated, computer labs will be updated, and additional chrome book carts, which are needed for online testing, will be purchased.

Middle School and High School Heating System Repairs: \$50,000

Heating system repairs and updates need to be made at the High School and the Middle School. The nature of such repairs and updates includes making repairs to unit ventilators; making fin tube repairs; replacing valves, actuators, and diaphragms; rebuilding circulator pumps; repairing and replacing motors, repairing and replacing piping and insulation around the piping; installing boiler outdoor reset controls, and updating HVAC controls.

District-Wide Security Updates: \$199,441

In light of recent events, there is a need to make security updates district wide. At the time this booklet was printed, the exact scope for these security items was still under discussion. This line item is being further developed after meetings with administration, public safety, and other key stakeholders. Additional time is needed to brainstorm and identify the most strategic pro-active security measures and improvements, so they are not listed out here in this summary. Examples of items this line may pay for include additional security cameras, additional key fob boxes, walkie-talkies, phone system upgrades, intercom system upgrades, Middle School main office relocation to the entry of the school, and other items that the administration and public safety officers deem to be most appropriate.

Removal of the 20,000 Gallon Underground Oil Tank at the Middle School: \$31,000

Due to changes in the underground oil tank inspection processes, modifications would need to be made to the 20,000 gallon oil tank that is buried under concrete at the Middle School in order for those required inspections to continue to be performed. The cost of this modification is approximately half the cost of removing the oil tank all together. Although oil is no longer used to heat the building, there is an annual cost associated with having the underground oil tank inspected. Because there is an increased risk to an aging underground oil tank as older tanks are subject to cracking and releasing oil into the soil, it is more effective to remove the tank from the ground versus modifying the tank to continue inspections.

Replacement John Deere ZTrak Mower with Material Collection System: \$14,000

A replacement mower is needed to replace an existing 1993 mower. The mower is utilized to cut the fields and the grounds at the High School and the fields and grounds at the Middle School. The existing mower is constantly breaking down, stalls when attempting to go uphill, and requires frequent repair. The new mower will have bagging capability to adequately pickup clippings after the grass is cut.

Middle School Classroom Furniture, Fixtures, and Flooring: \$35,000

Furniture: Updated student furniture needs to be purchased for the Middle School. Parts required to make repairs to some of the existing furniture are obsolete. Some of the furniture pieces, such as the chair and desk combos where the chairs are attached to the desks, are not always able to be used as designed as not all students are able to fit in the furniture. Additionally, some of the existing furniture is not always conducive to collaborative group learning and engagement.

Fixtures: Seventeen chalkboards will be converted to whiteboards. Instead of removing the chalkboards and installing new whiteboards, the chalkboards will be resurfaced with a whiteboard resurfacing material to make the boards function as whiteboards. Flooring: Old carpeting needs to be replaced, particularly in the special needs room. The carpets are old and worn, but are additionally loose and have many waves/ripples. The carpets pose a trip hazard to those with mobility issues.

Middle School Auditorium Lighting: \$20,000

The electrical panel and the dimmer modules need to be updated. The electric system is very dated and when the lights are on for long performances, the lights start the strobe and the electrical panel gets extremely hot and causes the breaker to trip. Additionally, switches and stage lighting will be updated.

District-wide Document Storage and Shredding: \$40,000

The District currently stores required archived files in the attic of the Administration Building. Space is limited, organization needs to be improved, and it is difficult and time consuming finding older information, for example time slip and payroll records from the 1970's.

Additionally, there are concerns about the amount of weight the attic can store, there is no fire suppression system, and areas of the roof/ceiling show a history of leaking. In order to ensure all required documents are appropriately archived and maintained, the documents need to be organized, categorized, boxed, and moved to an appropriate storage space, as has been done by other Town departments. In addition to document storage, there is a need for document shredding and disposition across the District, along with selective digitalization. Organizing and storing required archived data, properly disposing of documents that do not require archiving, and digitalizing select documents will ensure information is stored and secured in an appropriate and easily accessible manner, as well as disposed of properly.

Middle School and High School Sidewalk and Catch Basin Repairs: \$75,000

Sections of the sidewalks at the High School & Middle School are in poor condition. The sidewalk sections and curbs have deteriorated and need to be replaced to provide a safe walkway. The sidewalks are also causing damage to the snow removal equipment because of their poor condition. Concrete bollards at the High School need to be reset and secured. Additionally, catch basins at the High School are caving in and need to be lifted and reset.

SOME COMMON TOWN FINANCE TERMS

APPROPRIATION

An amount of money voted to be spent for specific purposes.

ARTICLES

Each of the numbered items of business in the Warrant is called an Article. Articles for a town meeting are submitted to the selectmen by boards, departments, and by citizens of Northbridge. All Articles must be voted upon; none can be withdrawn from the Warrant.

CHERRY SHEET

The cherry colored form received each year from the state listing the town's State Aid and county and state charge against the town.

ENTERPRISE FUND

Accounts for activities for which a fee is charged to external users for goods or services. Accounts for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises - where the intent of the governing body is that the costs (expenses including depreciation) of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges.

FISCAL YEAR

July 1st through June 30th and normally designated by the year in which it ends.

FREE CASH – AVAILABLE FUNDS

Surplus revenue less all uncollected taxes from prior years. A source for funds at special town meetings, special projects, or lowering the tax rate. Actual amount is determined at the close of each fiscal year. Free Cash should be thought of as being the town's "Savings Account".

GENERAL FUND

The fund into which the general (not-earmarked) revenues of the town are deposited and from which money is appropriated to pay the general expenses of the municipality.

LOCAL RECEIPTS

Money collected by the town departments for Automobile Excise taxes, licenses issued by the clerk's office, Parks and Recreation activities, etc.

NET ASSETS UNRESTRICTED (formerly Retained Earnings)

An equity account reflecting the accumulated earnings of an enterprise fund that may be used to fund capital improvements, to reimburse the general fund for prior year subsidies, or to reduce user charges and to provide for enterprise revenue deficits (operating loss).

OVERLAY

The amount raised by the Assessors in excess of appropriations and other charges to cover abatements granted and avoiding fractions.

OVERLAY SURPLUS

The accumulated amount of the not used overlay for various years which may be used for extraordinary or unforeseen purposes or voted into the Reserve Fund.

OVERRIDE

A referendum question on the ballot in a general election which allows a town to assess taxes in excess of the allowable 2 ½ % yearly increased allowed by law. Override questions must specify the purpose of the override and require a majority vote for approval.

RESERVE FUND

A fund to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. A sum may be appropriated at the Annual Town Meeting not to exceed 5% of the tax levy of the preceding year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED)

Special Education is a program that serves students who have disabilities that impair learning. The town is partially reimbursed through Chapter 70 based on availability of funds and through recently enacted circuit breaker legislation.

SURPLUS REVENUE

The amount by which cash, accounts receivable and other assets exceed liabilities and reserve (a bookkeeping item not be confused with Available Funds.) Actual amount is determined at the close of each fiscal year.

TAX LEVY

The revenue a community can raise through real estate and personal taxes. This is limited by Proposition 2 ½ but can be increased by an override.

TRANSFER

The authorization to use an appropriation for a different purpose or from the Reserve Fund for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.

USER CHARGES/FEES

A municipal funding source where payment is collected from the user of a service to help defray the cost of providing the service.

WARRANT

The list of items, known as Articles, to be considered at the town meeting is called the Town Warrant. The only business that may be considered is that listed in the Town Warrant

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Spring Annual Town Meeting

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