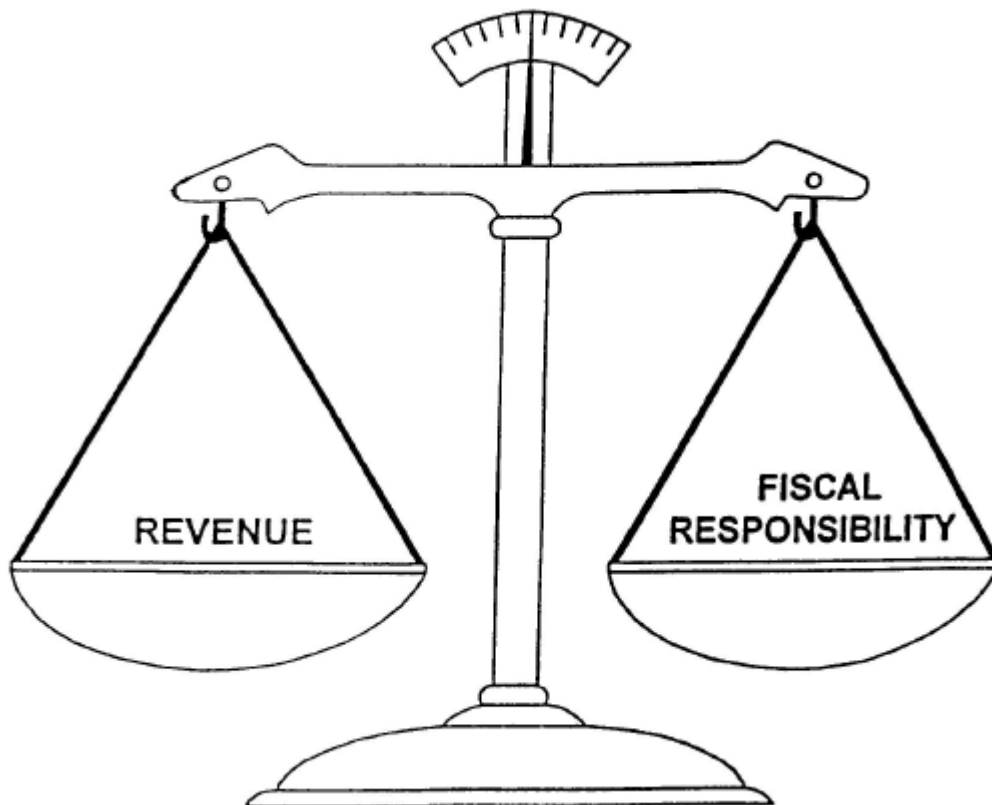


**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
NORTHBRIDGE FINANCE COMMITTEE**



**Spring Annual Town Meeting
Tuesday, May 6, 2014
7:00 p.m.**

**Northbridge High School Fieldhouse
427 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 6, 2014

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.

Article three of the warrant details the proposed Fiscal Year 2015 budget of approximately \$38.8 million. The budget was constructed using the Governor's estimates of Local Aid. At this point, the House and Senate appear to be proposing only small increases to Local Aid. Article four seeks additional budget funding through the passage of a Proposition 2 ½ override. These funds would be used to support the School Department budget and allow the Fire Department to hire four firefighters.

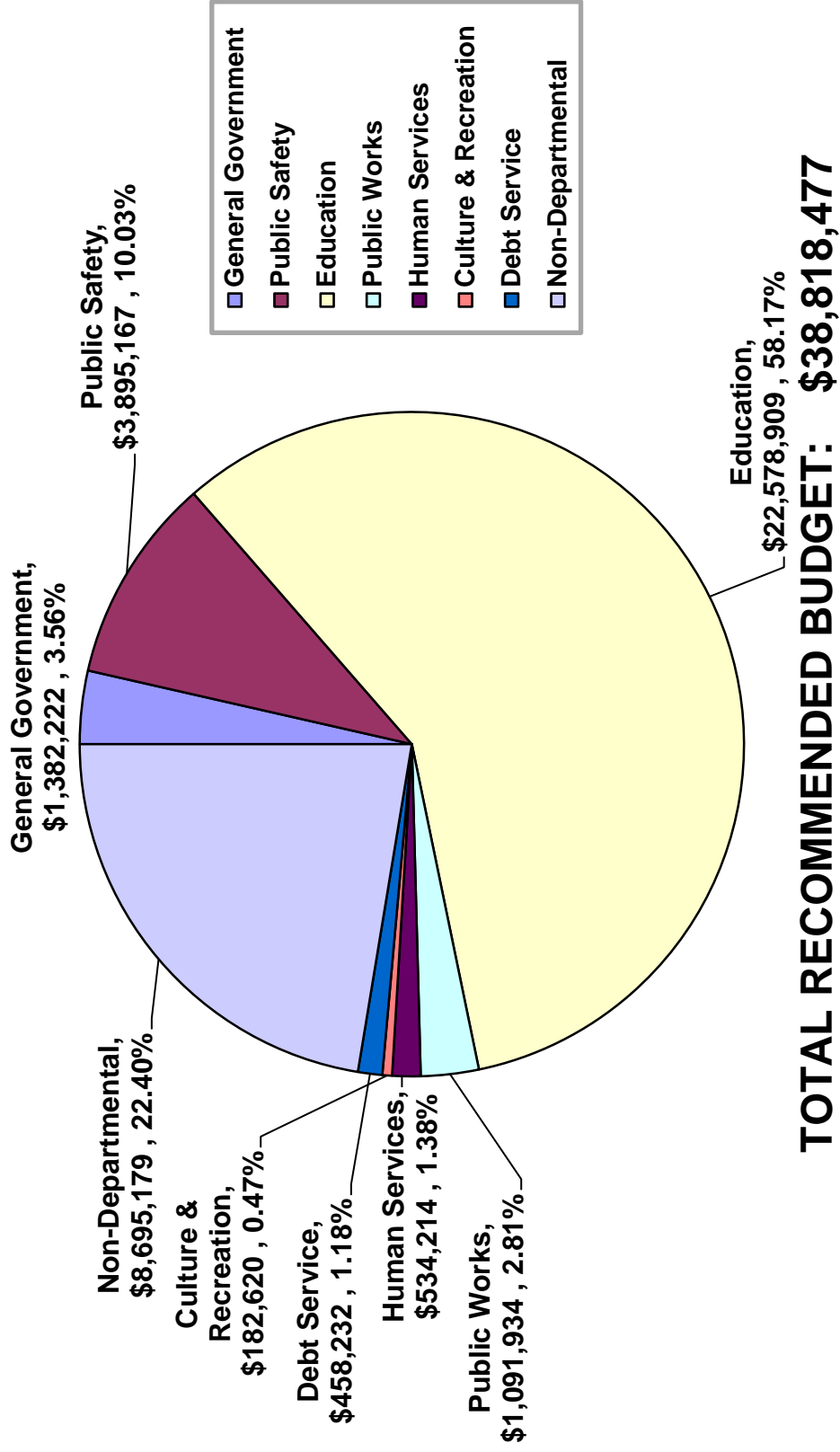
Other warrant articles include a request for expansion funding by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District, funding work recommended in the Northbridge Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan and improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Facility and changes in the zoning bylaws to address Registered Marijuana Dispensaries. Finally, there is a petition article to create a new by-law that will require that any waste collection or disposal contracts shall be awarded pursuant to the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30B.

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

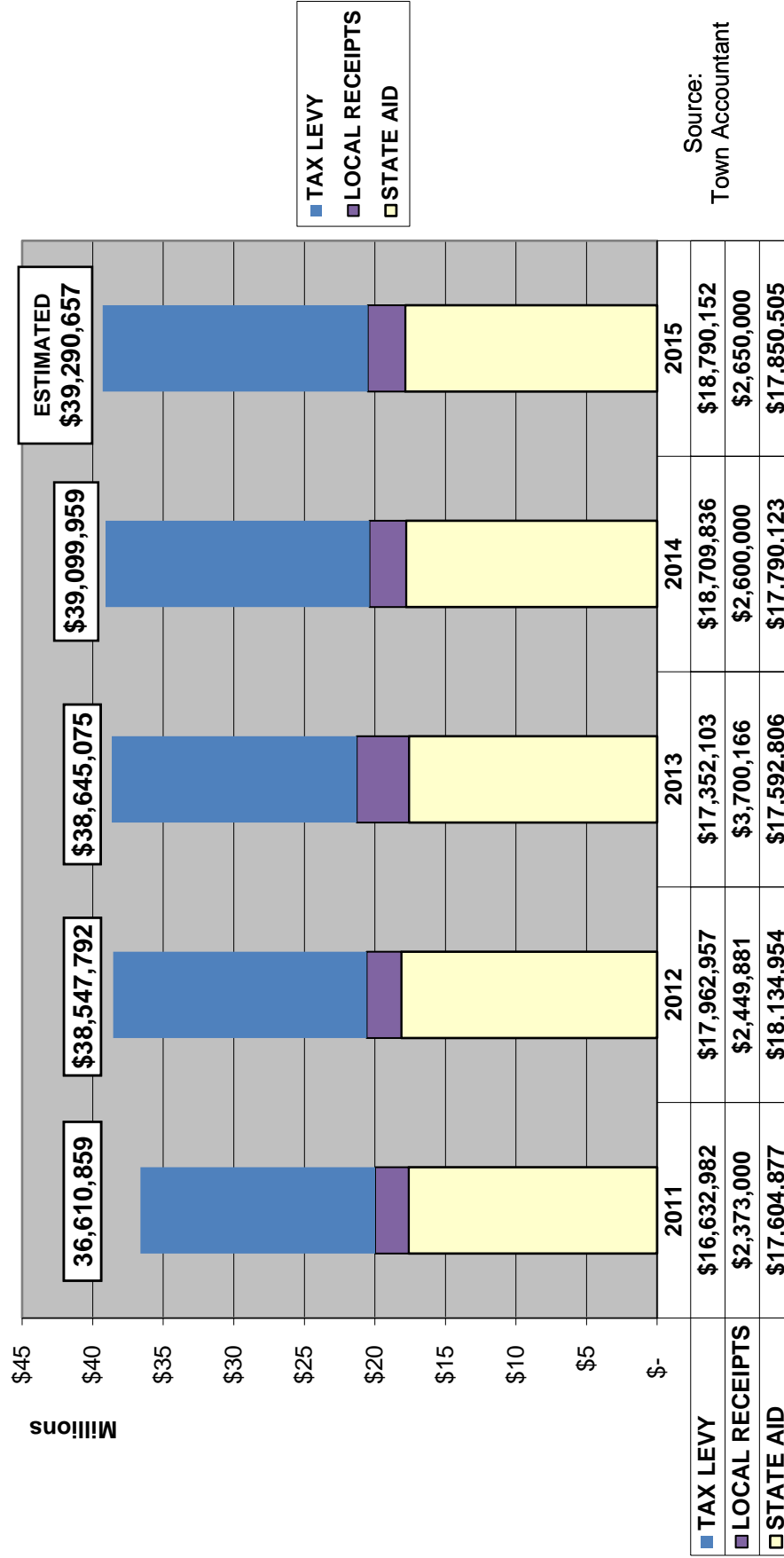
Respectfully submitted,

Salvatore D'Amato, Chairman
Plato Adams
James Barron
Lisa Ferguson
Steven Gogolinski
Jill Meagher
Christopher Thompson

FISCAL YEAR 2015 RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET

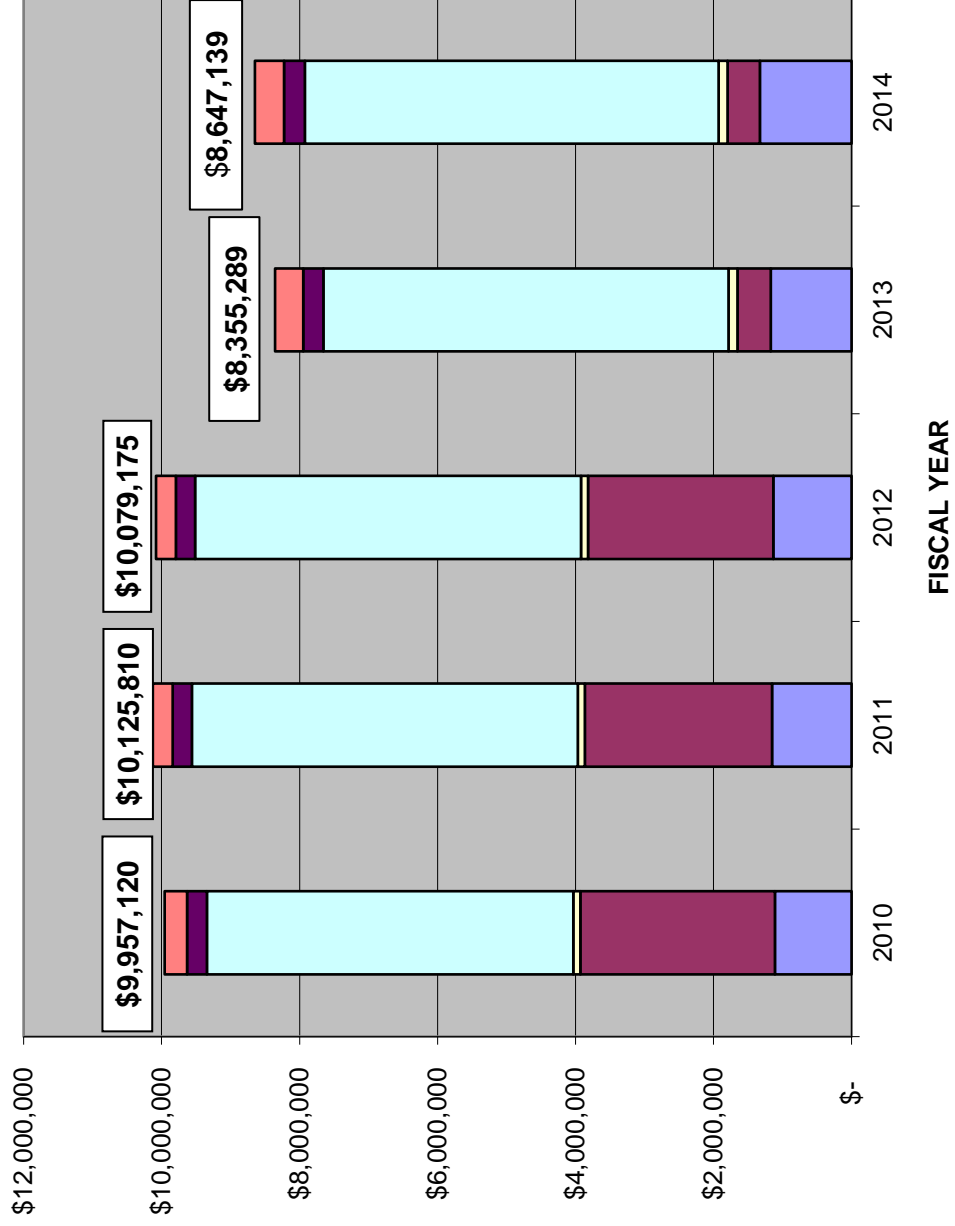


TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE **REVENUE SOURCES AND TRENDS** FY 2011-2015



Source:
Town Accountant

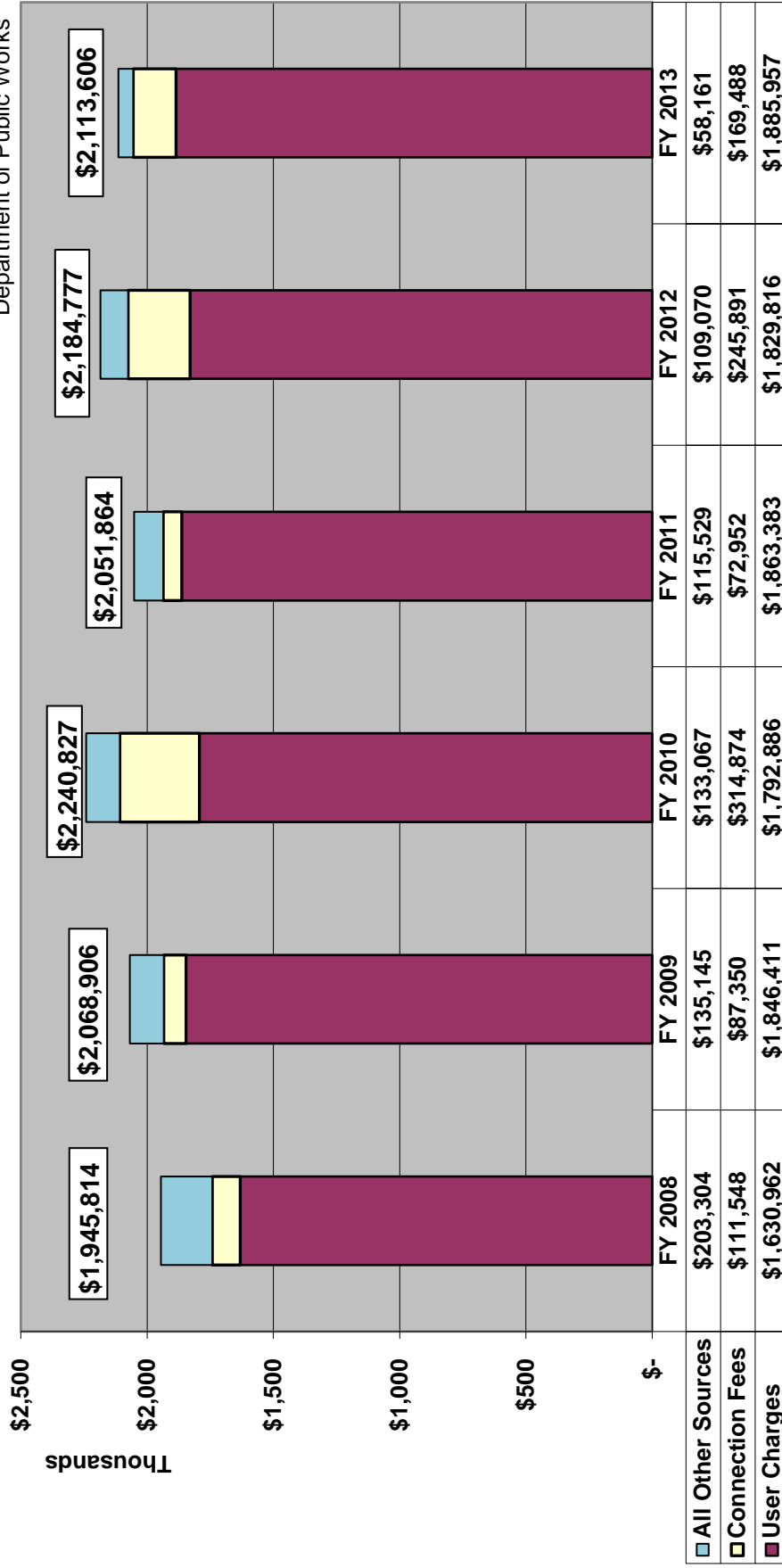
TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE **FIXED COSTS BY FISCAL YEAR** FY 2010 - 2014



Source:
Town Accountant

Sewer Enterprise Fund Revenues by Source FY 2008-2013

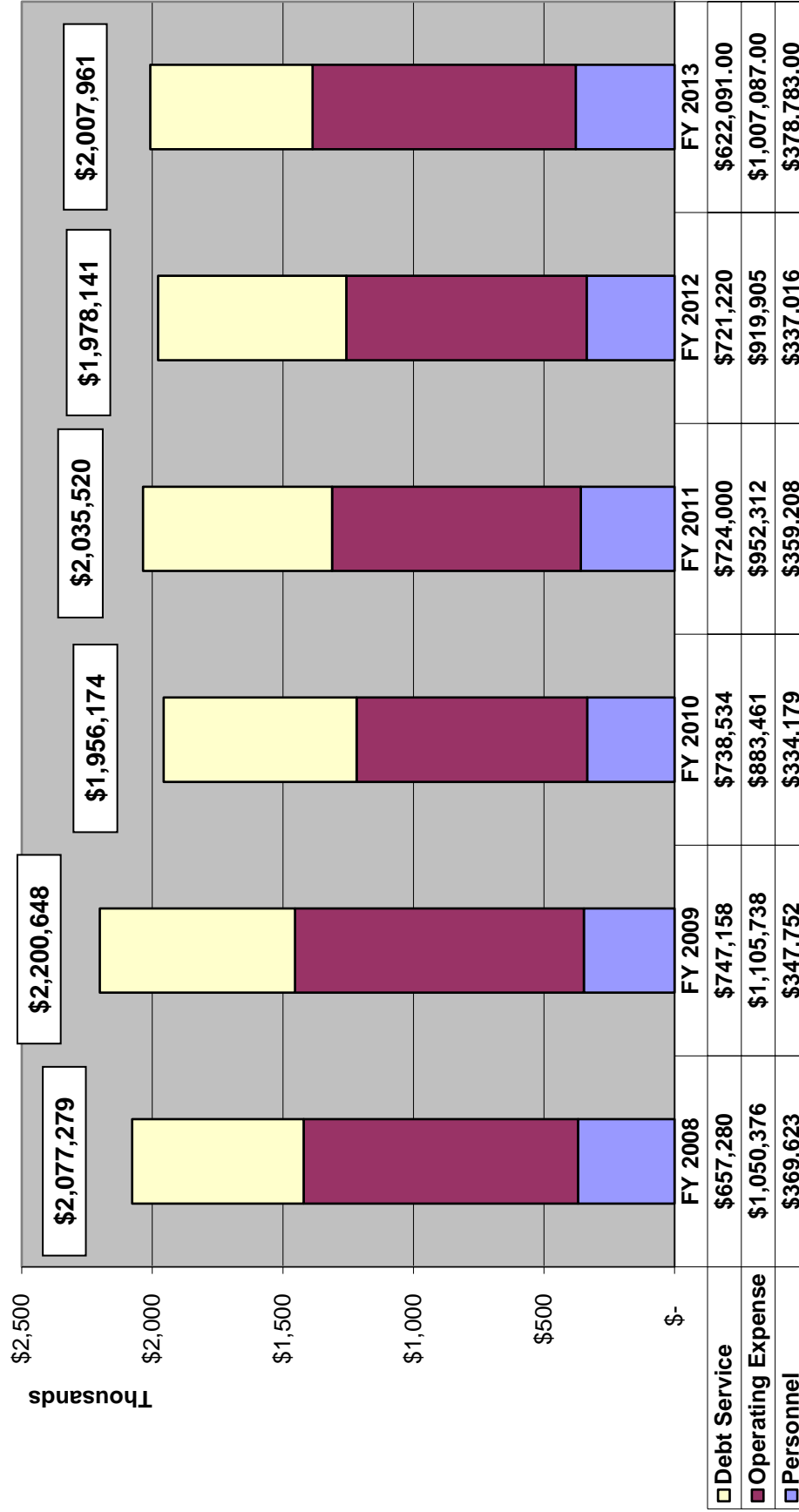
Town of Northbridge
Department of Public Works



Sewer Enterprise Fund Expense Analysis

Town of Northbridge
Department of Public Works

FY 2008-2013



TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
WARRANT FOR
SPRING ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2014 - 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:

or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks authorization to pay prior year bills.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passing over* this article because there are no prior year bills. 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 2013 Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting (May 7, 2013), and under Article 2 of the 2013 Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting (October 22, 2013), appropriations and transfers under the Omnibus Budget Article; or take any other action relative thereto.

BUDGET TRANSFERS:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

PLANNING BOARD

Line 10A: Planning Board Personnel

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

the additional sum of

\$ 1,700

TOTAL GENERAL GOVT.:

\$ 1,700

PUBLIC SAFETY:

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Line 14B: Police Expenses

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

the additional sum of

\$ 10,000

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Line 15A: Fire Personnel

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

the additional sum of

\$ 45,000

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Line 15B: Fire Expenses

By transferring from Line 26B [Veterans Expenses]

the additional sum of \$ 10,500

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Line 17A: Code Enforcement Personnel

By transferring from Line 17B [Code Enforcement Expenses]

the additional sum of \$ 400

TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY: \$ 65,900**HUMAN SERVICES:****BOARD OF HEALTH**

Line 22A: Board of Health Personnel

By transferring from Line 40 [Unemployment Comp.]

the additional sum of \$ 1,100

TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES: \$ 1,100**NON-DEPARTMENTAL:**

Line 39: Workers Compensation

By transferring from Line 40 [Unemployment Comp.]

the additional sum of \$ 32,000

TOTAL NON-DEPARTMENTAL: \$ 32,000**TOTAL ARTICLE 2: \$100,700**

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to allow amendments to the FY 2014 operating budget, which was also amended at the Fall Session of the Annual Town Meeting held October 22, 2013.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: 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 \$39,060,000 to defray the necessary and usual expenses of the several departments of the Town for FY 2015, beginning July 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2015; or take any other action relative thereto.

<u>LINE # ACCOUNT NAME</u>	<u>FY 2014 Approved</u>	<u>FY 2015 Recommended</u>
----------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

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	121,485	121,485
Total Selectmen	126,635	126,635
2 TOWN MANAGER		
2A Personnel	235,070	243,527
2B Expenses	12,509	12,509
Total Town Manager	247,579	256,036
3 FINANCE COMMITTEE		
3B Expenses	15,000	15,000
Total Finance Committee	15,000	15,000
4 TOWN ACCOUNTANT		
4A Personnel	106,007	106,972
4B Expenses	18,775	18,775
Total Town Accountant	124,782	125,747
5 ASSESSORS		
5A Personnel	140,766	149,768
5B Expenses	13,992	12,200
Total Assessors	154,758	161,968
6 TREASURER/COLLECTOR		
6A Personnel	172,084	152,757
APPROPRIATE FROM PARKING TICKET RECEIPTS		
6A Personnel	5,000	5,000
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
6B Expenses	31,714	54,214
Total Treasurer/Collector	208,798	211,971
7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS		
7A Personnel	67,490	69,858
7B Expenses	68,786	68,786
Total Information Systems	136,276	138,644
8 TOWN CLERK/ELECTIONS		
8A Personnel	105,322	105,322
8B Expenses	27,370	41,920
Total Town Clerk/Elections	132,692	147,242
9 CONSERVATION		
9A Personnel	14,817	14,973
APPROPRIATE FROM WETLAND FEES		
9A Personnel	5,000	5,000
9B Expenses	107	0

RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
9B Expenses	1,797	1,915
Total Conservation	21,721	21,888
10 PLANNING BOARD		
10A Personnel	85,921	88,396
10B Expenses	6,227	6,227
Total Planning Board	92,148	94,623
11 ZONING/APPEALS BOARD		
11A Personnel	9,009	9,088
11B Expenses	6,255	6,255
Total Zoning/Appeals Board	15,264	15,343
12 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
12A Personnel & Expenses	0	0
Total Economic Development	0	0
13 TOWN HALL/CENTRAL SERVICES		
13A Personnel	24,000	24,000
13B Expenses	43,125	43,125
Total Town Hall/Central Services	67,125	67,125
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	1,342,778	1,382,222
PUBLIC SAFETY		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
14 POLICE		
14A Personnel	2,073,961	2,175,941
14B Expenses	252,592	275,392
Total Police	2,326,553	2,451,333
15 FIRE		
15A Personnel	563,938	466,796
15B Expenses	135,811	135,811
Total Fire	699,749	602,607
APPROPRIATE FROM AMBULANCE RECEIPTS		
16 AMBULANCE		
16A Personnel	488,446	606,553
16B Expenses	70,000	70,000
Total Ambulance	558,446	676,553
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
17 CODE ENFORCEMENT		
17A Personnel	138,649	140,309
17B Expenses	9,865	9,865

APPROPRIATE FROM WEIGHTS AND MEASURES RESERVE ACCOUNT		
17B Expenses	1,500	1,500
Total Code Enforcement	150,014	151,674
 RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
18 CIVIL DEFENSE		
18A Personnel	3,500	3,500
18B Expenses	9,000	9,500
Total Civil Defense	12,500	13,000
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	3,747,262	3,895,167
 EDUCATION		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
20 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT		
20 SCHOOL DISTRICT	21,250,051	21,329,443
20A TRANSPORTATION	0	0
20B TRADE SCHOOL	250,000	275,000
20C BLACKSTONE REGIONAL	918,794	974,466
TOTAL EDUCATION	22,418,845	22,578,909
 PUBLIC WORKS		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
21 DPW HIGHWAY DIVISION (Includes Snow & Ice)		
21A Personnel	505,308	494,437
21B Expenses	496,352	522,497
21C Snow and Ice	75,000	75,000
TOTAL HIGHWAY DIVISION	1,076,660	1,091,934
 21 DPW FACILITIES DIVISION		
21D Energy & Utilities	0	0
21E Building Maintenance (non-personnel)	0	0
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	1,076,660	1,091,934
BUILDING, PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION COMM.		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
21F BUILDING, PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION COMM.		
Expenses	0	0
TOTAL BUILDING, PLAN, & CONSTRUC.	0	0
HUMAN SERVICES		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		

22 BOARD OF HEALTH		
22A Personnel	52,642	54,484
22B Expenses	26,950	28,128
Total Board of Health	79,592	82,612
23 LANDFILL ANALYSIS		
23A Expenses	19,600	19,600
Total Landfill Analysis	19,600	19,600
24 COUNCIL ON AGING		
24A Personnel	132,725	138,896
24B Expenses	20,508	20,508
Total Council On Aging	153,233	159,404
26 VETERANS		
26A Personnel	65,074	64,598
26B Expenses	208,000	208,000
Total Veterans	273,074	272,598
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES	525,499	534,214
CULTURE & RECREATION		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
27 LIBRARY		
27A Personnel	120,800	140,800
27B Expenses	22,420	22,420
Total Library	143,220	163,220
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	500	500
Total Historical Commission	500	500
30 MEMORIALS		
30A Soldiers Memorials	5,000	5,000
30B Veterans Celebrations	1,900	1,900
Total Memorials	6,900	6,900

31 RECYCLING		
31A Personnel	0	0
31B Expenses	0	0
Total Recycling	0	0
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION	162,620	182,620
DEBT SERVICE		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
32 Debt Principal	232,000	232,000
APPROPRIATE FROM RECEIPTS RESERVED – TITLE V		
32 Debt Principal	15,297	15,297
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
33 Debt Interest	106,478	96,870
34 Short Term Interest	20,000	20,000
35 BVRS Debt	96,465	94,065
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE	470,240	458,232
NON-DEPARTMENTAL		
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
36 Medicare	300,000	305,000
37 Life Insurance	10,000	10,000
38 Retirement System	1,327,299	1,374,229
39 Workers' Compensation	166,000	166,000
40 Unemployment Comp.	131,300	131,300
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	5,014,397	5,419,225
APPROPRIATE FROM AVAILABLE FUNDS [FREE CASH]		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	920,603	765,775
APPROPRIATE FROM OVERLAY SURPLUS		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	50,000	50,000
APPROPRIATE FROM HEALTH INSURANCE STABILIZATION ACCOUNT		
41 Employee Ins. Benefits	0	0
RAISE AND APPROPRIATE		
42 Property & Liability Ins.	356,400	386,400
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	8,363,249	8,695,179
TOTAL ARTICLE 3:	\$ 38,107,153	\$ 38,818,477

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article is the Town's Omnibus Operating Budget Article for FY 2015. Sewer and Water are enterprise funds that are approved by separate articles.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee voted unanimously ***not to support*** Line Item 20C [Blackstone Regional] in the amount of \$1,007,506 as requested by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District, however, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to ***support*** Line Item 20C [Blackstone Regional] in the amount of \$974,466. The Finance Committee also voted unanimously to ***recommend passage*** of this article in an amount not to exceed \$39,060,000.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 4: (Finance Committee)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate an additional sum of money to defray the necessary and usual expenses of the several departments of the Town for FY 2015, beginning July 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2015, subject to the condition that the Town shall have first voted, at an election, to allow the Town to assess said additional sum in real estate and personal property taxes pursuant to MGL Chapter 59, Section 21C(g) (Proposition 2 ½ so-called); or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to appropriate an additional sum of money via an override for the FY 2015 budget subject to the condition that the town shall have first voted to allow the town to assess said additional sum in real estate and personal property taxes pursuant to MGL Chapter 59, Section 21C(g).

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The intent of this article is to appropriate an additional sum of money via an override to support the School and Fire department budgets. 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 Sewer Enterprise Fund a sum of money to operate the Sewer Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2015; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article appropriates the funding necessary to support the operations of the Sewer Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2015. The Sewer Enterprise Budget is estimated to be \$2,077,012.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. These funds are necessary to operate the Sewer Enterprise Operation. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 6: (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 2015; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article appropriates the funding necessary to support the operations of the Water Enterprise Operation of the Department of Public Works for FY 2015. The Water Enterprise Budget is estimated to be \$1,631,159.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. These funds are necessary to operate the Water Enterprise Operation. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 7: (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 2015.

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

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 8: (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 2015, 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: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. This is an annual article that allows the Treasurer to enter into agreements with banks to manage Town funds. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 9: (Playground and Recreation Commission)

To see if the Town will vote to reauthorize a revolving account pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53E 1/2 for the Playground & Recreation Commission, to credit to such account any grants, donations, program user fees and fund raising proceeds received by said Commission and to authorize said Commission to expend from such account amounts required to maintain the Town's playgrounds and recreation fields, to make improvements thereto and to purchase, lease or rent equipment and support facilities for programs and activities taking place thereon provided, however, that the total amount which may be expended from the account in FY 2015 is \$20,000; 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.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. This is an annual reauthorization of the Playground and Recreation Commission's revolving account. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 10: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from one or more Expendable Cemetery Trust accounts for the purpose of funding cemetery operations of Pine Grove Cemetery, said sum to be expended under the direction of the Department of Public Works; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer money from one or more Expendable Cemetery Trust accounts for the purpose of funding cemetery operations of Pine Grove Cemetery. Funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Public Works.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article in the amount of \$5,000. This will allow for the funding of the cemetery operation. The vote was 3-2 in favor.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 11: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and/or 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 FY 2015; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to transfer funds from the Town Building Maintenance Fund for the maintenance of town buildings.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article in the amount \$39,213. This will allow the transfer of funds for the maintenance of town buildings. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 12: (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 the sum of \$250,000.00 (TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS), to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works, for the purpose of financing work recommended in the Northbridge Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan which was prepared as outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's "Guide to Comprehensive Wastewater Management Planning," for maintenance, repair and expansion of the Town's sanitary sewer system and wastewater treatment plant, said work to include commencement of a sewer system evaluation study (SSES) program with system flow isolation studies, CCTV inspections, manhole inspections, smoke testing, and other means of evaluation, with GIS updates as needed, and additional sewer modeling as required, plus additional work to assist in the evaluation of alternatives for the Northbridge Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet new EPA issued permit limits for the discharge of nitrogen effluent to the receiving water; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article requests the expenditure of \$250,000 to finance the cost for the maintenance, repair and expansion of the Town's sanitary sewer system and wastewater treatment. The work will also include commencement of a sewer system evaluation study program as well as additional work to assist in the evaluation of alternatives for the Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet new EPA issued permits limits for discharge of nitrogen to the effluent receiving water.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The funds will be used to finance the cost for the maintenance, repair and expansion of the sanitary sewer system and the wastewater treatment plant. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 13: (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 the sum of \$250,000.00 (TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS),

to be expended under the direction of the Director of Public Works, for the purpose of design, construction and engineering services during construction of improvements to the existing sludge gravity thickeners at the Northbridge Wastewater Treatment Plant including replacement of the complete internal mechanism feed wells, tubes, arms, bridges, drives and motors, plus any associated electrical and instrumentation and control work, including without limitation all costs thereof as defined in Section 1 of Chapter 29C of the General Laws; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow said sum of money and issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor under Chapter 44 of the General Laws and/or chapter 29C of the General Laws or any other enabling authority, including a borrowing from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust established pursuant to Chapter 29C and in connection therewith to enter into a loan agreement and/or security agreement with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to such loan and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; that the Board of Selectmen be authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary to carry out the project; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article requests the expenditure of \$250,000 for the design, construction and engineering services during the construction of improvements to existing sludge gravity thickeners at the Wastewater Treatment Plant including replacement of the complete internal mechanism.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. This article seeks funding for the design, construction and engineering services for improvements being made at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 14: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of financing the purchase of an Asphalt Hot-Box and Accessories for use by the Highway Division of the Department of Public Works; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks funding to purchase an Asphalt Hot-Box and Accessories for use by the Department of Public Works-Highway Division.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. This equipment will assist the Highway Division of the DPW with road repairs. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 15: (Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District Committee)

To see if the Town will vote to approve the total \$2.9 million debt authorized by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee on April 17, 2014 for costs of adding to, equipping, reconstructing and making extraordinary repairs to the regional school, including all costs incidental and related thereto, with the Town's apportioned share of debt payments computed in accordance with the Regional Agreement and commencing in fiscal year 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks the Town's approval of \$2.9 million in debt approved by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee for adding to, equipping, reconstructing and making extraordinary repairs to the regional school. The Town's share will be computed in accordance with the Regional Agreement and commencing in fiscal year 2016.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. This expansion and reconstruction will allow the Regional School District to expand its programs. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 16: (Board of Assessors)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds in the Treasury a sum of money not to exceed \$ 24,000 for temporary assistance to the Board of Assessors to fulfill the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's requirement for a measure and listing of properties, interim year revaluation, and system software upgrades; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article requests the expenditure of up to \$24,000 for temporary help in measuring and listing properties for an interim year revaluation as required by the Mass. Department of Revenue as well as system software upgrades.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 17: (Board of Assessors)

To see if the Town vote to adjust the age limit under Clause 41C Section 5, of Chapter 59 of the Massachusetts General Laws, providing tax exemptions to persons 70 years of age or older occupying property as their domicile, by decreasing the age requirements to persons 65 or older and/or to raise the exemption amount; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article seeks to adjust the age limit under Clause 41C Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws, which provides a tax exemption to persons 70 of age or older and/or raise the exemption amount. The intent is to decrease the age requirement to 65 years of age or older.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was 4-1 in favor.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 18: (Planning Board)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173 of the Code of Northbridge, by DELETING IN ITS ENTIRETY Section 173-18.4 [Temporary Moratorium on Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers] and REPLACING IT WITH Section 173-18.4 [Registered Marijuana Dispensary] described as follows:

Registered Marijuana Dispensary

§173-18.4 Registered Marijuana Dispensary

A. Purpose

- (1) To provide for the placement of Registered Marijuana Dispensaries (RMD), in accordance with the Humanitarian Medical Use of Marijuana Act, G.L. c.94C, App. §1-1, et seq., in locations suitable for lawful medical marijuana facilities and to minimize adverse impacts of RMDs on adjacent properties, residential neighborhoods, historic districts, schools, playgrounds and other locations where minors congregate by regulating the siting, design, placement and security of RMDs within the Town of Northridge.

B. Definitions

- (1) Where not expressly defined in the Zoning Bylaw, terms used in this section shall be interpreted as defined in the Humanitarian Medical Use of Marijuana Act, G.L. c.94C, App. §1-1, et seq. and the Department of Public Health Regulations promulgated thereunder, 105 CMR 725.001, et seq., and otherwise by their plain language.
 - a. Registered Marijuana Dispensary: also known as a Medical Marijuana Treatment Center, means a not-for-profit entity registered under 105 CMR 725.100, that acquires, cultivates, possesses, processes (including development of related products such as edible marijuana-infused products ("MIPs"), tinctures, aerosols, oils, or ointments), transfers, transports, sells, distributes, dispenses, or administers marijuana, products containing marijuana, related supplies, or educational materials to registered qualifying patients or their personal caregivers. Unless otherwise specified, RMD refers to the site(s) of dispensing, cultivation, and preparation of marijuana.

C. Location

- (1) RMDs may be permitted by Special Permit within the Industrial-Two (I-2) Zoning District of the Town of Northbridge.
- (2) RMDs may not be located within 500-feet of the following:
 - a. School, including a public or private elementary, vocational, or secondary school or a public or private college, junior college, or university;
 - b. Child Care Facility;
 - c. Library;
 - d. Playground;
 - e. Public Park;
 - f. Youth center; or
 - g. House of Worship
- (3) The distance under this section is measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the property line of the protected uses identified in Subsection C (2) to the nearest point of the property line of the proposed RMD.
- (4) The distance requirement may be reduced by twenty-five percent or less, but only if:
 - a. The applicant demonstrates that the RMD would otherwise be effectively prohibited within the Town;

- b. The applicant demonstrates that the RMD will employ adequate security measures to prevent diversion of medical marijuana to minors who are not qualifying patients pursuant to 105 CMR 725.004.
- (5) RMDs shall have a minimum lot size of 40,000 square-feet with a minimum frontage of 150-feet. Structures shall be set back a minimum of 50-feet (front), 50-feet (side) and 50-feet (rear); where RMD sites abut a Residential Zoning District the rear and side setbacks shall be 100-feet.

D. Procedure

- (1) The Planning Board shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for a RMD special permit.
- (2) In addition to the materials to be submitted required under Section 173-49.1 [Site Plan Review by Planning Board] of the Zoning Bylaw, the applicant shall provide the following:
 - a. A copy of its registration as an RMD from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health ("DPH");
 - b. A detailed floor plan of the premises of the proposed RMD that identifies the square footage available and describes the functional areas of the RMD, including areas for any preparation of MIPs;
 - c. A detailed site plan that includes the following information:
 - i. Compliance with the requirements for parking and loading spaces, for lot size, frontage, yards and heights and coverage of buildings, and all other provisions of this Bylaw;
 - ii. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement on the site and for the location of driveway openings in relation to street traffic;
 - iii. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement off the site, if vehicular and pedestrian traffic off-site can reasonably be expected to be substantially affected by on-site changes;
 - iv. Adequacy as to the arrangement and the number of parking and loading spaces in relation to the proposed use of the premises, including designated parking for home delivery vehicle(s), as applicable;
 - v. Design and appearance of proposed buildings, structures, freestanding signs, screening and landscaping; and
 - vi. Adequacy of water supply, surface and subsurface drainage and light.
 - d. A description of the security measures, including employee security policies, approved by DPH for the RMD;
 - e. A copy of the emergency procedures approved by DPH for the RMD;
 - f. A copy of the policies and procedures for patient or personal caregiver home-delivery approved by DPH for the RMD;
 - g. A copy of the policies and procedures for the transfer, acquisition, or sale of marijuana between RMDs approved by DPH;
 - h. A copy of proposed waste disposal procedures; and
 - i. A description of any waivers from DPH regulations issued for the RMD.
- (3) The SPGA shall refer copies of the application to the Building Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, the Highway Department, Board of Water Commissioners (Board of Selectmen), and the Planning Board. These boards/departments shall review the application and shall submit their written recommendations. Failure to make recommendations within 35 days of referral of the application shall be deemed lack of opposition.

- (4) After notice and public hearing and consideration of application materials, consultant reviews, public comments, and the recommendations of other Town boards and departments, the SPGA may act upon such a special permit application.

E. Special Permit Conditions on RMDs

- (1) The SPGA shall impose conditions reasonably appropriate to improve site design, traffic flow, public safety, protect water quality, air quality, and significant environmental resources, preserve the character of the surrounding area and otherwise serve the purposes of this section. In addition to any specific conditions applicable to the applicant's RMD, the SPGA shall include the following conditions in any special permit granted under this Bylaw:
 - a. Hours of Operation, including dispatch of home deliveries.
 - b. The permit holder shall file a copy of any Incident Report required under 105 CMR 725.110(F) with the Building Inspector, local Law Enforcement, Board of Health and the SPGA within 24 hours of creation by the RMD. Such reports may be redacted as necessary to comply with any applicable state or federal laws and regulations.
 - c. The permit holder shall file a copy of any summary cease and desist order, quarantine order, summary suspension order, order limiting sales, notice of a hearing, or final action issued by DPH or the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, as applicable, regarding the RMD with the Building Inspector and SPGA within 48 hours of receipt by the RMD.
 - d. The permit holder shall provide to the Building Inspector and Chief of the Police Department, the name, telephone number and electronic mail address of a contact person in the event that such person needs to be contacted after regular business hours to address an urgent issue. Such contact information shall be kept updated by the permit holder.
 - e. The special permit shall lapse within five years of its issuance. If the permit holder wishes to renew the special permit, an application to renew the special permit must be submitted at least 120 days prior to the expiration of the special permit.
 - f. The special permit shall be limited to the current applicant and shall lapse if the permit holder ceases operating the RMD.
 - g. The special permit shall lapse upon the expiration or termination of the applicant's registration by DPH.
 - h. The permit holder shall notify the Building Inspector and SPGA in writing within 48 hours of the cessation of operation of the RMD or the expiration or termination of the permit holder's registration with DPH.

F. Exemption from RMD Special Permit Requirement:

- (1) RMDs that demonstrate that they are protected pursuant to the agricultural exemption under G.L. c.40A, §3 are not required to obtain a special permit, but shall apply for Site Plan Approval pursuant to Section 173-49.1 of the Zoning Bylaw.

G. Prohibition Against Nuisances:

- (1) No RMD use shall be allowed which creates a nuisance to abutters or to the surrounding area, or which creates any hazard, including but not limited to, fire, explosion, fumes, gas, smoke, odors, obnoxious dust, vapors, offensive noise or vibration, flashes, glare, objectionable effluent or electrical interference, which may impair the normal use and peaceful enjoyment of any property, structure or dwelling in the area.

H. Severability

- (1) The provisions of this Bylaw are severable. If any provision, paragraph, sentence, or clause of this Bylaw or the application thereof to any person, establishment, or circumstances shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or application of this Bylaw;

Or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article will amend the town's zoning bylaw by adding a new zoning provision entitled "Registered Marijuana Dispensary". As you may recall at the 2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting the town adopted a temporary zoning moratorium on Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers; this moratorium will expire on June 30, 2014. Article #18 proposes to delete the temporary moratorium section of the zoning bylaw and replace it with a new provision for Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD). The new provision will define and regulate the siting of potential RMDs in Northbridge; allowing RMDs within the Industrial-Two (I-2) Zoning District by Special Permit of the Planning Board. The proposed RMD provision includes siting requirements and restrictions to minimize potential adverse impacts on adjacent properties. Passage of this zoning amendment article will provide the town local oversight and safeguards in addition to the regulations established by the Department of Public Health (DPH). Failure to adopt the zoning article may potentially allow for RMDs (recognized as a legal use in Massachusetts) to locate in Northbridge within in any non-residential zoned property with little or no local control.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. This article proposes to delete the temporary moratorium section of the zoning bylaw and replace it with a new provision for Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD). The new provision will define and regulate the siting of potential RMDs in Northbridge. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 19: (Planning Board)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173 of the Code of Northbridge, Section 173-12 [Table of Use Regulations] by ADDING "Registered Marijuana Dispensary" to be permitted by Special Permit in the Industrial-Two [I-2] Zoning District as follows:

Section 173-12 [Table of Use Regulations – Wholesale and Manufacturing]

USE	ZONING DISTRICT											
	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5	R-6	B-1	B-2	B-3 (1)	I-1	I-2	H
Wholesale and Manufacturing:												
Mining and quarrying	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--
Construction activities or suppliers	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--
Manufacturing and light industries	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--	P	P	--
Railroads and railway express service	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--	P	P	--
Trucking service and warehousing	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	--	P	P	--
Other transportation services (taxicabs)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	--	P	P	--
Wholesale trade	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	P	P	--
Registered Marijuana Dispensary	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	--

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This zoning article is a companion article to Article #18; passage of this zoning amendment article will add Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD) to the Table of Use Regulations [Section 173-12] allowing RMDs within the Industrial-Two Zoning District by Special Permit.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. This article will add Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD) to the Table of Use Regulations [Section 173-12] allowing RMDs within the Industrial-Two Zoning District by Special Permit. The vote was unanimous.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 20: (Board of Selectmen)

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to execute a deed or other instrument releasing any right or rights of the Town in or to any gravel or gravel banks in or on the land on Lasell Road described in a deed recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 3220, Page 161 and known as Oakhurst Farm; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This article authorizes the Board of Selectmen to execute a deed or other instrument releasing any right or rights of the Town in or to any gravel or gravel banks in or on the land known as Oakhurst Farm.

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: 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 approve an Agreement for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) pursuant to the provisions of MGL Chapter 59, Section 38H(b), and Chapter 164, Section 1, or any other enabling authority, for a certain sum and a certain term of years, between the Town and the property owner for real property and personal property relating to a Renewable Energy Generation Facility on the land located on Lasell Road known as Oakhurst Farm and shown on Assessors' Map 1, as Parcel 97 [11.19 acres] and on Assessors' Map 1, Parcel 98 [9.40 acres]; or take any other action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: The purpose of this article is to approve a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes [PILOT] Agreement between the Town and property owner for real property and personal property relating to a Renewable Energy Generation Facility on the land located on Lasell Road known as Oakhurst Farm and shown on Assessors' Map 1, as Parcel 97 [11.19 acres] and on Assessors' Map 1, Parcel 98 [9.40 acres].

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee *recommends passage* of this article. The vote was unanimous based upon the Town Manager's recommendation and approval by the Board of Selectmen.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

ARTICLE 22: (Petition)

To see if the Town will vote to amend its general by-laws by adding thereto the following new by-law: "9-408 Residential Waste Collection and Disposal Contracts: The provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30B, Section 1(30) to the contrary notwithstanding, any contract for the collection, transportation, receipt, processing or disposal of residential solid waste shall be subject to, and awarded pursuant to, the remaining provisions of Chapter 30B as applicable."; or take any action relative thereto.

TOWN MANAGER'S SUMMARY: This petition article seeks to amend the Town's general by-laws by adding the following new by-law: "9-408 Residential Waste Collection and Disposal Contracts: The provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30B, Section 1(30) to the contrary notwithstanding, any contract for the collection, transportation, receipt, processing or disposal of residential solid waste shall be subject to, and awarded pursuant to, the remaining provisions of Chapter 30B as applicable."

FINANCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee ***recommends passage*** of this article. The vote was 3-2 in favor.

VOTER'S COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

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.

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.

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.

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.

**Presort Standard
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 108
Whitinsville, MA
01588**

SAVE THE DATE

MAY 6, 2014

Spring Annual Town Meeting

To: Postal Customer