



Office of the Town Clerk  
2 School Street, Town Hall  
Merrimac, MA 01860

**Town Meeting Minutes  
April 29, 2024**

**April 29, 2024**

Pursuant to the foregoing Warrant, the legal voters of the Town of Merrimac met at the Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School, Merrimac MA, on April 29, 2024 at 7:30 pm. A quorum of 110 registered voters gathered at 7:30 pm. The Annual Town Meeting was held in the cafeteria of the Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School, Merrimac, MA.

The Town Meeting was called to order by Moderator W. Earl Baumgardner. Moderator Baumgardner led the assembled citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Baumgardner stated upon his inspections of the Warrant for the meeting, he deemed it proper and correct as posted by Constable David Vance

Moderator Baumgardner introduced myself, Town Clerk, Gwendolyn Lay Sabbagh, Legal Counsel Kate Feodoroff, Chairman of the Board Chris Manni, Select Board Clerk Benjamin Beaulieu and Select Board member Irina Gorzynski. Moderator Baumgardner appointed members of the Finance Committee as follows:

Michael Marden  
David Luoma  
Marcia Zosack  
Thomas Ackerman  
Robert Gustison  
Ken Tingle  
Michael Bevelaqua  
Melinda Davis

Moderator Baumgardner explained Town Meeting procedures and MGL and statutes governing Town Meeting.

**Motion to dispense with the reading of the Warrant by Benjamin Beaulieu, second by Chris Manni, Motion carried by hand count so declared the Moderator.**

**Article 1: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to appropriate from Free Cash for FY2024, a sum of money in the amount of \$630,442 for the purposes and in the amounts stated in the warrant.**

**Motion to break article 1 out individually and duly seconded, motion failed by hand vote so declared the moderator.**

**Article 1: Hand Vote; motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 2: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded** to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for FY2024 a sum of money in the amount of \$ 65,000 for the following specific capital purposes outlined below;

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| a. Water Meter Replacement                          | \$ 30,000 |
| b. Water Infrastructure                             | \$ 25,000 |
| c. Water Departmental Share of a Roadway Compressor | \$ 10,000 |

or take any other action relative hereto.

**Article 2: Hand Vote, motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 3: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded,** to appropriate from the Wastewater Retained Earnings for FY2024 a sum of money in the amount of \$ 192,000 for the following specific capital purposes outlined below;

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| a. Wastewater Plant Engineering and Improvements         | \$177,000 |
| b. Water Meter Replacement                               | \$ 10,000 |
| c. Wastewater Departmental Share of a Roadway Compressor | \$ 5,000  |

or take any other action relative hereto.

**Article 3: Hand Vote; motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 4.** to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for FY2024 a sum of money in the amount of \$ 27,000 for the following specific purposes outlined below;

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| a. Water Department Building and Road Repairs | \$ 15,000 |
| b. Water Pump Replacements                    | \$ 12,000 |

or take any other action relative hereto.

Motion to amend Article 4 and duly seconded to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for FY2024 a sum of money in the amount of \$ 27,000 for the following specific purposes outlined below;



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**Amended motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 4. Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded, motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 5. Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to appropriate from Wastewater Retained Earnings for FY2024 a sum of money in the amount of \$125,000 for I & I repairs throughout town.**

**Article 5. Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 6: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded, to transfer \$100,000 from the Inspectional Services Revolving Account to the Town General Fund for FY2024; or take any other action hereto.**

**Article 6: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 7: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to transfer the balance of \$14,603.51 from Article 3.o, Highway Loader John Deere, of the April 24th, 2023 Annual Town Meeting to the Highway Roadway Maintenance Account for the use of general roadway maintenance for FY2024.**

Motion to amend Article 7 by Robert Sinibaldi and duly seconded to change article 7

From "To see if the Town will vote to transfer the balance of \$14,603.51 from Article 3.o, Highway Loader John Deere, of the April 24th, 2023 Annual Town Meeting to the Highway Roadway Maintenance Account for the use of general roadway maintenance for FY2024; or take any other action hereto."

To: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the balance of \$3,603.51 from Article 3.o, Highway Loader John Deere, of the April 24th, 2023 Annual Town Meeting to the Highway Roadway Maintenance Account for the use of general roadway maintenance for FY2024; or take any other action hereto.

**Amendment to Article 7, Hand Vote Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 7 as amended, Hand Vote Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 8: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to transfer the balance of \$3,653.40 from Article 1.a, Highway Bear Hill Culvert Non-Federal Match, of the April 26th, 2021 Annual Town Meeting to the Highway Culvert Repairs for the use of general culvert maintenance for FY2024; or take any other action hereto.**

**Article 8: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 9: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded, to transfer the balance of \$10,810.74 from Conservation Assessment line item to the Conservation Agent & Admin Wages line item for FY2024; or take any other action hereto.**

**Article 9: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 10: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44, Section 53E½, as most recently amended, to establish Fiscal Year 2025 limitations on expenditures from the revolving funds established by the General Bylaw entitled, "Departmental Revolving Funds", with such limitations to remain applicable from fiscal year to fiscal year until such time as they are later amended as follows:**

<b>Revolving Fund</b>	<b>Fiscal Year Spending Limit</b>
Firearms	\$12,000
Zoning Board of Appeal	\$9,000
Town Nurse	\$10,000
Zoning and Building Code Compliance	\$15,000
Board of Health Projects	\$4,500
Rental Inspections	\$4,000
Inspectional Services	\$100,000
PRSD Grounds	\$50,000
Tax Title	\$10,000
Fire Watch	\$5,000

or take any other action relative hereto.

**Article 10: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 11: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to fix the salary and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as provided by G.L. c. 41, § 108 as amended: Town Clerk, three Assessors, three Commissioners of Municipal Light, and to raise, appropriate or transfer sums of money therefore and to determine sums of money raised to be transferred to defray the necessary and usual charges and expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2024 as follows:**

**\$21,983,388** be raised as follows:

Raise and Appropriate		<b>\$21,813,678</b>
Transfer from Cable TV Receipts Reserved		<b>\$ 169,710</b>
General Government	Lines 1 - 36	\$ 1,519,575
Public Safety	Lines 37 - 50	\$ 2,869,810
Education	Lines 51 - 53	\$ 13,297,142
Highway	Lines 54 - 56	\$ 689,777
Cemetery	Lines 58 - 59	\$ 72,513
Health & Sanitation	Lines 57, 60 - 63	\$ 149,862
Public Assistance	Lines 64 - 66	\$ 430,139
Library	Lines 67 - 68	\$ 370,147
Parks & Rec	Line 69	\$ 11,520
Town Gardens	Line 70	\$ 600
Debt Service	Lines 71 - 72	\$ 789,818
<u>Gen Govt Unclassified</u>	<u>Lines 73 - 74</u>	<u>\$ 1,782,485</u>
<b>Total Omnibus</b>		<b>\$ 21,983,388</b>

**Motion by Earl Baumgardner and duly seconded to read Article 11 as follows:**

**\$21,983,388** be raised as follows:

Raise and Appropriate	<b>\$21,813,678</b>
Transfer from Cable TV Receipts Reserved	<b>\$ 169,710</b>

**Article 11: Hand Vote; motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 12: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded, to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Wastewater Department Enterprise for FY2025;**

Salaries:	\$ 669,054
Expenses:	\$ 580,740
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 67,229</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,317,023</b>

And that **\$ 1,317,023** be raised as follows:

Departmental Receipts:	<b>\$ 1,297,023</b>
Wastewater Betterment Fund:	<b>\$ 20,000</b>

or take any other action relative hereto.

**Article 12: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 13: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Water Department Enterprise for FY2025;**

Salaries:	\$ 552,161
Expenses:	\$ 543,250
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 145,259</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,240,670</b>

And that **\$1,240,670** be raised as follows:

Departmental Receipts:	<b>\$ 1,240,670</b>
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or take any other action relative hereto.

**Article 13: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 14: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to transfer from available funds, a sum in the amount of \$38,000 from the Electric Light Operating Balance, said money to be used by the Assessors to reduce the Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2025.**

**Article 14: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 15: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to appropriate or otherwise provide \$ 8,200 or other sum of money from available funds known as "Sale of Cemetery Lots", such sum or part thereof, to be expended under the direction of the Cemetery Trustees for the care, improvement, and embellishment of said cemeteries, in accordance with G.L. c. 114, §§ 15 and 25; or take any other action relative hereto.**

**Article 15: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 16: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to raise and appropriate or otherwise provide \$185,000 or other sum of money to be used to make necessary repairs to Town roadways; or take any other action relative hereto.**

**Article 16: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 17: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded to accept the State Grant of Chapter 90 Highway Funds and authorize the Select Board to expend said funds for Highway purposes in accordance with the terms of said grants; or take any other action relative hereto.**

**Article 17: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 18: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded to raise and appropriate or otherwise provide \$330,000, or other sum of money for Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Recycling Collection; or take any other action relative hereto.**

**Article 18: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 19: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded, to rescind Article 28, Opioid Stabilization, of the April 24, 2023 Annual Town Meeting and transfer the balance of \$770.13 to a special revenue account for Opioid Settlement Funds and dedicate future Opioid Funds to the special revenue account for Opioid Settlement Funds; or take any other action relative thereto.**

**Article 19: Motion passed by 2/3's; Hand Vote passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**



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**Article 20: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded, to amend Article III, Section 1 of the Town of Merrimac General By-law as follows:**

Which currently read:

3.1 The Moderator shall, in accordance with G.L. Chapter 39, Section 16, at the Annual Town Meeting appoint a Finance Committee annually, to consist of not more than nine (9) citizens of the Town. A majority of members appointed shall constitute a quorum.

To read instead:

3.1 Finance Committee. The Moderator shall, in accordance with G.L. Chapter 39, Section 16, the Town shall establish a Finance Committee. The Town Moderator shall appoint a Finance Committee to consist of not more than nine (9) members, each a registered voter of the Town. A majority of the members appointed shall constitute a quorum. The Finance Committee shall be appointed annually to terms that begin and end with the town's fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. The Moderator may appoint members during the fiscal year to fill any vacancies that reduce the number of members to fewer than nine (9) members.

or take any other action relative thereto.

**Article 20: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 21: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded to adopt G.L. c.32 Section 4 (2)(b) Call Fire, Police credible service local option; or take any other action relative thereto.**

**Article 21: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 22: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded to amend the Town of Merrimac General Bylaws by adding a new Article XI as follows:**

Article XI.

11.1 Multi Member Body Meetings Prohibited: No multiple-member body of the Town shall conduct a meeting during the election hours of a municipal or state election that is occurring within the Town. For



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the purpose of this section, election hours of a municipal or state election shall include only the hours in which live voting is taking place on election day and shall not count early voting prior to election day.

or take any other action relative thereto.

**Article 22: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Article 23: Motion by Irinia Gorzynski and duly seconded to increase the current Veteran's Tax Abatement amounts adopted by the Town of Merrimac, by 50%; or take any other action relative thereto.**

**Article 23: Motion passed unanimously so declared the moderator.**

**Motion to adjourn by Chris Manni and duly seconded,  
Motion carried, so declared the Moderator.**

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Gwendolyn Lay Sabbagh,  
Town Clerk Town of Merrimac