

TOWN OF MERRIMAC

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

April 27, 2026



DISTRIBUTION:

Mead, Talerman & Costa LLC, Town Counsel
Earl Baumgardner, Moderator
Chris Manni, Select Board Chairperson
Irina Gorzynski, Select Board Member
Janet Bruno, Select Board Member
Wayne Adams, Select Board member
Robert Gustison, Select Board member
Carol McLeod, Town Administrator, Finance Director/Treasurer
Anne Jim, Town Accountant
Marcia Zosack, Finance Chairperson
Jennifer Penney, Select Board's Executive Assistant
Gwen Lay Sabbagh, Town Clerk

**Town of Merrimac Warrant Articles
Annual Town Meeting, April 27, 2026**

Essex, ss.

To one of the Constables of the Town of Merrimac:

GREETINGS,

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the voters of the Town of Merrimac to meet in the Sweetsir School Cafeteria, 102 Church St. Merrimac, on April 27, 2026 at 7:30 PM.

Article 1: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Free Cash for **FY2026**, a sum of money in the amount of **\$477,246** for the following specific purposes outlined below;

a. Snow and Ice Deficit **\$180,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the snow and ice deficit. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: **Yes 5 - 0**

FinCom Recommendation: **Yes 7 - 0**

b. Lake Attitash Invasive Weeds **\$ 5,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the management of invasive weeds and water quality at Lake Attitash. Amesbury will also be contributing. Requested by the Lake Attitash Association.

Select Board Recommendation: **Yes 5 - 0**

FinCom Recommendation: **Yes 7 - 0**

c. OPEB Actuarial Study **\$ 4,500**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the bi-annually required OPEB Actuarial Study. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: **Yes 5 - 0**

FinCom Recommendation: **Yes 7 - 0**

d. Poll Pad Upgrade and Replacement **\$ 3,400**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the upgrade. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: **Yes 5 - 0**

FinCom Recommendation: **Yes 7 - 0**

e. OPEB Trust Funding **\$ 40,000**

Rationale: The OPEB Trust has been established to fund the cost of Retirees Health Benefits. The Town is required to report the OPEB Liability on the Town's books annually. This article will appropriate funds to the OPEB Trust. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0

f. Facility Repairs for the COA **\$ 7,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the facility repairs. Requested by the COA Director.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0

g. Health Insurance Consultant **\$ 12,500**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for a Health Insurance Consultant to review insurance options for the town employees. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0

h. Employee Retirement Funding **\$ 40,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the required costs of employee retirement accrual payments and training. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0

i. Police Patrol Vehicle **\$ 80,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the purchase of a replacement police cruiser for the Police Department. Requested by the Police Chief.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation: Yes 4 - 0

j. Tasers **\$ 17,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the 1st year lease payment for a 5-year lease for tasers and training package for the Police Department. Requested by the Police Chief.

Select Board Recommendation: Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation: Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation: Yes 4 - 0

k. ADA Compliance for the Town Sidewalks and Public Meetings \$ 45,000

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for ADA compliance work on the Town sidewalks in coordination with the DPW Department. Requested by the Commission on Disabilities.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

l. Asbestos Tile Repairs at the Pentucket Regional Elementary Schools \$ 44,000

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the asbestos tiles' removal and replacement at the Donaghue and Sweetsir Schools. Requested by the Facilities Director of Pentucket Regional School District.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

or take any other action relative hereto.

Article 2: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for **FY2026** a sum of money in the amount of **\$ 125,000** for the following specific capital purposes outlined below;

a. Water Meter Replacement \$ 25,000

Rationale: To upgrade older meters to become lead free and radio read. Reducing time needed to read meters and increase public water quality. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

b. Water Infrastructure \$ 45,000

Rationale: This will replace/upgrade existing infrastructure to meet current DEP requirements. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

c. Ford Maverick Truck \$30,000

Rationale: This will allow for the replacement of the 2015 Transit Van with a 2026 Ford Maverick. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

d. Plan Development for Interconnect with Haverhill **\$ 25,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for Plan development and DEP coordination for Interconnect with Haverhill, part of the Sanitary Survey requirements for the Water Department. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

or take any other action relative hereto.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for **FY2026** a sum of money in the amount of **\$ 10,000** for Building and Road Maintenance at the Wallace Way Treatment Plant for the Water Department. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

or take any other action relative hereto.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Wastewater Retained Earnings for **FY2026** a sum of money in the amount of **\$ 335,000** for the following specific capital purposes outlined below;

a. Wastewater Plant Engineering and repairs and upgrades **\$ 100,000**

Rationale: This will replace/upgrade/existing out of date and obsolete equipment as well as building improvements. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

b. Willowdale Pump Station Repairs **\$ 85,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for repairs to the Willowdale Pump Station. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

c. Red Oaks Acres Pump Station Repairs **\$ 50,000**

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for repairs to the Red Oak Acres Pump Station. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

d. Replacement of 2013 Chevy Pickup

\$ 75,000

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the replacement of the 2013 Chevy Pickup. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

e. Water Meter Replacement

\$ 25,000

Rationale: To upgrade older meters to become lead free and radio read. Reducing time needed to read meters and increase public water quality. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

or take any other action relative hereto.

Article 5. To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c. 44 sec. 21C, to authorize the Board of Select Board to enter into a lease agreement for the lease purchase of Tasers for the Police Department for the period of 5 years, but in any event not in excess of the useful life of the property to be purchased, to be procured on such terms and conditions as the Board of Select Board deem in the best interest of the Town; and to authorize the Board of Select Board to take all actions necessary to administer and implement such agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

Rationale: This will authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease for the purchase of the Tasers. Requested by the Police Chief.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

Article 6. To see if the Town will vote to transfer **\$20,000** from the Inspectional Services revolving Account to the Town General Fund for FY2026; or take any other action hereto.

Rationale: This will transfer excess funds in the Inspectional Revolving Account to the Town General Fund. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 7. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$100,000** for the demolition of 28 School St., and transfer **\$100,000** from Article 3A of the April 24, 2023 Annual Town Meeting, Coastal Metal Testing; or take any other action hereto.

Rationale: This will transfer funds from the Coastal Metals Testing Article, for the demolition of the abandoned building at 28 School St. The building is no longer covered by insurance due to the condition of the building. This site will then be added to Coastal Metal Site and placed out to bid for affordable housing. Requested by the Building Commissioner.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 8. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate **\$20,000** for the IT Server and upgrades at the Fire Department and transfer the following additional funds; **\$13,750** from Article 3M of the April 24, 2023 Annual Town Meeting, Forestry Truck and **\$6,250** from Article 1S of the April 25, 2022 Annual Town Meeting, Fire Department roof top heating unit for the purchase of the IT Server and upgrades at the Fire Department; or take any other action hereto.

Rationale: This will appropriate funds for the IT Server and upgrades at the Fire Department and transfer excess balances in the Fire Departments Special Articles to fund the appropriation. Requested by the Fire Chief.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0
Capital Planning Recommendation:	Yes 4 - 0

Article 9. To see if the Town will vote 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 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, 2026 and make appropriations for the same, said sums of money so raised, appropriated or transferred to be expended for specific purposes to be voted; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: This article approves the Town's FY2027 Operating Budget as specified in the attached breakdown. Requested by the Select Board.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Wastewater Department Enterprise for FY2027;

Salaries:	\$ 706,836
Expenses:	\$ 659,265
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 56,864</u>
Total	\$1,422,965

And that **\$ 1,422,965** be raised as follows:

Departmental Receipts:	\$1,414,965
Wastewater Betterment Fund:	\$ 8,000

or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: To set FY2027 Budget for Wastewater Department as an Enterprise Fund (M.G.L. c.44 §53F1/2). Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Water Department Enterprise for FY2027;

Salaries:	\$ 606,027
Expenses:	\$ 649,205
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 154,513</u>
Total	\$1,409,745

And that **\$1,409,745** be raised as follows:

Departmental Receipts:	\$ 1,409,745
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or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: To set FY2027 Budget for Water Department as an Enterprise Fund (M.G.L. c.44 § 53F1/2). Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money from the Electric Light Operating Balance said money to be used by the Assessors to reduce the Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2027; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: This is an amount of funds approved by the Merrimac Light Commissioners to reduce the tax rate; this amount helps to offset the costs of general governmental services that all taxpayers use. The Light Department does not pay property taxes. Requested by the Light Commissioners.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 4-0-1
FinCom Recommendation:	Holding Vote

Article 13. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or otherwise provide \$ 9,000 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.

Rationale: This appropriation authorizes the transfer of funds collected from the previous fiscal year to be used by the Cemetery Trustees for the upkeep of the said cemeteries. Requested by the Cemetery Trustees.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 14. To see if the Town will vote 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.

Rationale: This article will allow the DPW Director to use the funds for necessary roadwork beyond the end of the fiscal year, which will give more flexibility when planning the needed repairs. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 15. To see if the Town will vote 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.

Rationale: This article allows the Town to accept State Transportation Aid to help maintain Town roadways. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or otherwise provide \$35,000 or other sum of money to be used necessary tree maintenance throughout Town; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: This article will allow the DPW Director to use the funds for necessary tree maintenance beyond the end of the fiscal year, which will give more flexibility when planning the needed maintenance. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:	Yes 5 - 0
FinCom Recommendation:	Yes 7 - 0

Article 17. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or otherwise provide **\$370,000**, or other sum of money for Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Recycling Collection; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: This article allows the Town to raise the funds necessary for the collection and disposal of solid waste, recycling and offset the costs with the funds collected through the sale of Trash Bags. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation:

FinCom Recommendation:

Yes 7 - 0

Article 18. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Merrimac General Bylaws Section 48-9 entitled Authorized Revolving Funds, and add two new funds for Hazardous Waste Collections and Rent Control Board to the table of Established Revolving Funds in section E as follows:

Town of Merrimac - Table for Establishing Revolving Funds [Amended 4-30-2018 ATM by Art. 12]						
A Revolving Fund	B Department, Board, Committee, Agent or Officer Authorized to Spend from Fund	C Fees, Charges or Other Receipts Credited to Fund	D Program or Activity Expenses Payable from Fund	E Restrictions or Conditions on Expenses Payable from Fund	F Other Requirements/Reports	G Fiscal Years
Hazardous waste collection	Board of Health	Hazardous Waste Collection	Hazardous Waste Collection Day			Fiscal year 27 and subsequent years
Rent Control Board Hearings	Rent Control Board	Rent Control Hearing Applications	Rent Control Board Hearings			Fiscal Year 27 and subsequent years

And finally, in accordance with G.L. c. 44, Section 53E½, the following single year spending limit shall be set as for Fiscal Year 2027:

FY2027 Revolving Accounts

Revolving Fund	Fiscal Year Spending Limits
Firearms	\$ 12,000
Zoning Board of Appeals	\$ 9,000
Town Nurse	\$ 10,000
Zoning and Building Code Enforcement	\$ 15,000
Board of Health Projects	\$ 4,500
Board of Health Rental Inspections	\$ 4,000
Inspectional Services	\$ 100,000
PRSD Grounds	\$ 50,000
Tax Title	\$ 10,000
Fire Watch	\$ 5,000
Library	\$ 10,000
Hazardous Waste	\$ 20,000
Rent Control	\$ 10,000

or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale:

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44, Section 53E ½, as most recently amended by the Municipal Modernization Act, towns must adopt a bylaw to establish revolving funds, which the Town did at a prior Annual Town Meeting. Town Meeting must still approve annual expenditure limits, however, as is proposed here. Be reminded that these revolving funds are required in order to receive and disburse funds generated through programs supported by such revolving funds. Revenues will be used to offset expenses related to these programs and activities and disbursed under the direction of those indicated. Requested by the Town Administrator.

Select Board Recommendation:

Yes 5 - 0

Article 19. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Merrimac General By-laws Article 94 Sections 94-1, 94-3(A), 94-3 (C) to change the time as stated there in from 7:30 PM to 6:30 PM as follows (~~cross-out removed and~~ **bold and underline** new);

94-1 The Annual Town Meeting, except that part dealing with the election of officers, shall be held each year on the last Monday in April at 67:30 p.m.

94-3(A) Town Meetings on dates certain. Those registered voters of the Town who are present at 67:30 p.m. on the following dates shall constitute the quorum to conduct Town Meetings otherwise posted as provided by state law: the last Monday of April, the second or third Monday of May or the third Monday of October.

94-3(C) Town Meetings on other dates. Except as provided in Subsections A and B, 150 voters of the Town of Merrimac must be present to open Annual Town Meetings and all Special Town Meetings should a warrant be posted as provided by state law. Sessions of Town Meeting conducted under this Subsection C must be scheduled for 67:30 p.m. and must adjourn for lack of quorum at 10:00 p.m. or at the conclusion of action on any main motion on the article considered unless 100 registered voters remain present. Resumption of Town Meeting conducted under Subsection C after adjournment shall be no less than seven days later, at 67:30 p.m. Sessions of Town Meeting conducted under this Subsection C shall not resume unless 100 registered voters are present.

; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: This article was recommended based upon the survey completed by the Governance Committee. Requested by the Town Moderator.

Select Board Recommendation:

Yes 5 - 0

Article 20. To see if the Town will vote to accept M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 100B; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: The purpose behind this request is to afford police officers and firefighters the opportunity to coverage from injuries upon written application by any of its police officers or fire fighters retired either before or after the acceptance of this section under a general or special law specifically relating to retirement for accidental disability. Requested by the Fire Chief.

Select Board Recommendation:

Yes 5 - 0

Article 21. To see if the Town will vote to affirm the Notice of Landfill in accordance with 310 CMR 19,000, filed on the land off Battis Road shown on Assessors Map 70 Block 1 Lot 1 and more particularly described in a deed recorded with the Essex South Registry of Deeds Book 3129 Page 510 said Notice recorded in Book 4321 Page 300 in said Registry; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: Affirmation by Town Meeting ensures that the Town formally acknowledges the presence, history or regulatory status of a landfill or former disposal area on this parcel; AS REQUIRED BY STATE LAW. Requested by the DPW Director.

Select Board Recommendation:

Yes 5 - 0

Article 22. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Merrimac Zoning By-Law Zoning Map, to include the MBTA Overlay District attached and on file with the Town Clerk; or take any other action relative hereto.

Rationale: The Town approved the MBTA Communities Multi Family Overlay Zoning District Bylaw at the 2025 Fall Town Meeting. The Zoning Map showing the location of the district was not included at that time. This warrant article is to vote on the zoning map showing the location that the MBTA Communities Multi Family Overlay Zoning District Bylaw pertains to. Requested by the Planning Board.

Select Board Recommendation:

Yes 5 - 0

Article 23. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Merrimac Municipal Light Department ("MMLD") to sell land and buildings located at 10 West Main Street, acquired by MMLD by deed, Book 010716, Page 559, upon such price and terms and conditions as MMLD may deem appropriate, and to authorize the MMLD General Manager and Board of Commissioners to negotiate and execute any and all agreements and other documents, and to take all other actions as MMLD determines to be necessary or appropriate to accomplish the foregoing sale, with all proceeds therefrom to be appropriated solely to MMLD for light plant purposes; or take any other action relative hereto.

2/3 Vote Required

Rationale: A favorable vote on Article 23 is a smart, strategic step that advances the Town's financial health, operational efficiency, and long-term planning goals.

By authorizing the Merrimac Municipal Light Department (MMLD) to sell the property at 10 West Main Street, the Town enables that parcel to return to private ownership and once again contribute to the tax roll. This creates an immediate opportunity to strengthen the Town's tax base while also opening the door for redevelopment of a prominent downtown site to its highest and best use—supporting economic activity and revitalization in the Town Center.

Just as importantly, the sale will allow MMLD to reinvest the proceeds into improving and consolidating its existing facilities at 20 Federal Way. By combining operations into a single, modernized location, MMLD can reduce duplication, improve coordination among staff, and operate more efficiently on a day-to-day basis. This consolidation will save time, reduce long-term costs, and allow staff to better focus on delivering reliable service to the community.

Rather than maintaining multiple properties, this approach makes better use of existing assets—streamlining operations while avoiding unnecessary expenditures. The result is a more efficient organization that is better positioned to serve residents and ratepayers.

In sum, Article 23 supports multiple community benefits: returning property to the tax roll, encouraging downtown redevelopment, reducing operational inefficiencies, and reinvesting in critical infrastructure. A favorable vote is a fiscally responsible decision that delivers both immediate and lasting value to the Town.

Requested by the Merrimac Municipal Light Department.

Select Board Recommendation:

Holding Vote

Finance Committee Recommendation:

Holding Vote

Merrimac, MA | 2025

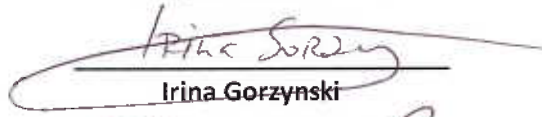
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Given under our hands this 31st day of March 2026

SELECT BOARD



Chris Manni

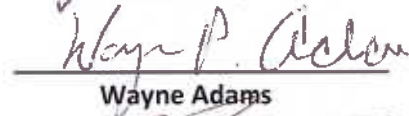


Irina Gorzynski

TOWN OF



Janet Bruno



Wayne Adams

MERRIMAC



Robert Gustison

A true copy attest:

CONSTABLE 

By virtue of the above warrant to me directed, I hereby notify and warn the legal voters of the Town of Merrimac, to meet at the time and said place for the purposes therein expressed.

Posted this 6th day of April, 2026 in the following three places:

Light Department
Cozy Cleaners
Town Hall