



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

**Town Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2022**

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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 25, 2022 at 7:30 pm. A quorum of 375 registered voters gathered at 7:30 pm. The Annual Town Meeting was held in the cafeteria with an overflow area outside which was equipped with lights and sound system. This overflow area was put into place for any capacity issues and in an effort to ease concerns of the citizens who may want to practice social distancing.

The Town Meeting was called to order by Moderator John Santagate. Moderator Santagate led the assembled citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Santagate stated upon his inspections of the Warrant for the meeting, he deemed it proper and correct as posted by Constable Keith Pollman.

Moderator Santagate introduced myself, Town Clerk, Gwendolyn Lay Sabbagh, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, Benjamin Beaulieu and Selectman Chris Manni and Selectman Joel Breen.

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 Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to appropriate from Free Cash for FY2022, a sum of money in the amount of \$809,363 for the following specific purposes outlined below; or take any other action relative hereto.

a. Battis Road Landfill Closure Activities	\$100,000
b. Former Coastal Metals Site Testing	\$ 75,000
c. Tax Title Revolving Account	\$ 10,000
d. OPEB Actuarial Study	\$ 5,000
e. Employee Retirement Funding	\$ 2,500
f. Open Space Committee for Tree Removal	\$ 3,000
g. Lake Attitash Invasive Weeds	\$ 5,000
h. Town Planner	\$ 10,000
i. Town Health Insurance	\$ 50,000
j. Snow and Ice Projected Deficit	\$ 28,000
k. Mill St. Culvert	\$100,000
l. (4) Election Ballot Tabulator Machine	\$ 22,300
m. COA Parking Lot and Building Repairs	\$ 40,000
n. Boiler and Hot Water Replacement at the Elementary Schools	\$150,000
o. Repair of the Roof Awning at the Sweetsir School	\$ 25,000
p. ADA Compliance for the Town Sidewalks	\$ 45,000
q. Police Patrol Vehicle	\$ 57,000

Commented [MR1]: Just confirming that you have your Free Cash from FY 21 already certified

r. Police Firearms and Training	\$ 15,000
s. Fire Department Roof Top Heating Unit	\$ 65,000
t. OPEB Trust Funding	\$ 1,563

Motion by Harry Bowen and duly seconded to allow for an individual letter item vote and discussion if requested for letter items in Article 1.

Motion did not pass by hand vote, so declared the Moderator.

Motion by Harry Bowen and duly seconded to discuss and reject item Q.

After much discussion by the voters of Merrimac the motion failed by a majority, so declared the Moderator.

Original Motion for Article 1, Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 2: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to appropriate from Water Retained Earnings for FY022, a sum of money in the amount of \$ 245,000 for the following specific capital purposes outlined below; or take any other action relative hereto.

a. Water Meter Replacement	\$ 10,000
b. Well Replacement	\$ 40,000
c. Building Maintenance and Road Replacement	\$ 25,000
d. Water Infrastructure	\$170,000

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Motion by Michelle Gustison and duly seconded to take Article 14 out of order.

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 14: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded raise and appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$470,000 to fund a portion of its share of the assessment of the Pentucket Regional School District Budget for Fiscal Year 2023, contingent upon the successful passage of a levy limit override question in the amount of \$470,000 on May 2, 2022, under Mass. General Laws Chapter 59, Section 21C; or take any other action relative thereto.

After much discussion on the floor of Town Meeting by the citizens of Merrimac and a presentation given by Superintendent Dr. Justin Bartholomew,

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Motion from the floor and duly seconded to take Article 15 out of order.

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 15: Motion by Joel Breen, and duly seconded to amend the Town of Merrimac Zoning By-Laws, as printed in the warrant.



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After much discussion and participation by the citizens of Merrimac the

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

**Motion from the floor
and duly seconded to take Article 17 out of order.**

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 17: Motion by Joel Breen, and duly seconded to amend the Town of Merrimac Zoning By-Laws, as printed in the warrant.

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 3: Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to transfer from the Wastewater Retained Earnings for FY2022, a sum of money in the amount of \$ 210,000 for the following specific capital purposes outlined below; or take any other action relative hereto.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| a. Wastewater Plant Improvements | \$150,000 |
| b. Wastewater Pumps | \$ 60,000 |

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 4. Motion by Benjamin Beaulieu and duly seconded to appropriate from Wastewater Retained Earnings for FY2022 a sum of money in the amount of \$157,736.63 for I & I repairs throughout town; or take any other action hereto.

Motion Passed by Unanimously, so declared the Moderator.

Article 5: 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 FY2023 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 identified in the Warrant.

Motion Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 6: Motion by James Archibald and duly seconded to fix the salary and compensation of all elective officers of the Town as provided by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108 as amended: Town Clerk, three Assessors, three Commissioners of Municipal Light,

Commented [MR2]: Did we discuss this? I have a vague recollection that we talked about maybe there wasn't a vote re: the FY21 limits?

Also, for future reference, if these numbers are not changing from last year's limits, you actually don't need to include it on the warrant, since we've framed the prior year's vote to state that the limitations remain applicable from FY to FY unless later amended by Town Meeting.

As a result, if article 4 passes we wouldn't even need to vote on Article 5. But rather than have to explain to everyone why we are passing over Article 5, let's just vote it. And then, next year, if the amounts for the maximum FY expenditures are the same, we don't even need to put this on the warrant.

and 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, 2022 and make appropriations for the same, said sums of money so raised, appropriated or transferred to be expended for specific purposes to be voted.

And that **\$19,957,778** be raised as follows:

Raise and Appropriate		\$ 19,809,682
Transfer from Cable TV Receipts Reserved		\$ 148,096
General Government	Lines 1 - 35	\$ 1,218,776
Public Safety	Lines 36 - 49	\$ 2,537,531
Education	Lines 50 - 52	\$ 11,974,175
Highway	Lines 53 - 55	\$ 653,602
Cemetery	Lines 57 - 58	\$ 64,484
Health & Sanitation	Lines 56, 59 - 62	\$ 141,784
Public Assistance	Lines 63 - 65	\$ 423,781
Library	Lines 66 - 67	\$ 326,082
Parks & Rec	Line 68	\$ 11,520
Town Gardens	Line 69	\$ 600
Debt Service	Lines 70 - 71	\$ 1,061,803
<u>Gen Govt Unclassified</u>	<u>Lines 72 - 73</u>	<u>\$ 1,543,640</u>
Total Omnibus		\$ 19,957,778

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 7: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Wastewater Department Enterprise for FY2023; or take any other action relative hereto.

Salaries:	\$ 630,019
Expenses:	\$ 442,588
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 158,751</u>
Total	\$1,231,358

And that **\$ 1,231,358** be raised as follows:

Departmental Receipts:	\$ 1,211,358
Wastewater Betterment Fund:	\$ 20,000

Article Passed Unanimously, so declared the Moderator.



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Article 8: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to operate the Water Department Enterprise for FY2023; or take any other action relative hereto.

Salaries:	\$ 505,986
Expenses:	\$ 457,196
<u>Debt Service:</u>	<u>\$ 200,838</u>
Total	\$1,164,020

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 9: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded 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 2023; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Passed Unanimously, so declared the Moderator.

Article 10: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money in the amount of **\$ 1,000** 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 M.G.L. Chapter 114, Section 15 and Section 25; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 11: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to raise and appropriate a sum of money in the amount of **\$185,000**, to be used to make necessary repairs to Town roadways; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 12: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to accept the State Grant of Chapter 90 Highway Funds and authorize the Board of Selectmen to expend said funds for Highway purposes in accordance with the terms of said grants; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Passed Unanimously, so declared the Moderator.

Article 13: Motion by Chris Manni and duly seconded to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money in the amount of **\$280,000** for Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Recycling Collection; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Passed Unanimously, so declared the Moderator.

Article 16: Motion by Joel Breen and duly seconded to amend the Town of Merrimac Zoning By-Laws with additions to the indicated Articles as written in the Warrant.

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 18: Motion by Joel Breen and duly seconded to amend Article 19 of the Merrimac Zoning By-Laws with the addition written in the Warrant.

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 19: Motion by Joel Breen and duly seconded to amend Article 19 of the Merrimac Zoning By-Laws with the addition written below:

Article Passed by a Majority, so declared the Moderator.

Article 20: Motion by Joel Breen and duly seconded to transfer from the tax custodian for tax title purposes to the Board of Selectmen for general municipal purposes and for the purpose of conveyance, the care, custody and control of the parcel of land located on Vendome St., identified by the Assessors as Parcel 9-2-4, and acquired by the Town by low value foreclosure recorded with the Essex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 4429, Page 121, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to convey a parcel of land located on said parcel on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate; or take any other action relative hereto.

Article 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**



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