

Approved: 6-23-25

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN AGENDA
JOINT MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, April 29, 2025 7:00pm
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front St., Winchendon, Mass.

Present: Rick Ward, Chair
Andrew Beauvais, Vice Chair
Audrey LaBrie
Melissa Blanchard
Erika Eitland

William McKinney, Town Manager
Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant

Finance Committee Members Present:
Tom Kane, Chair
Dr. Maureen Ward, Vice Chair
Charles Corts
Doug Delay
Mike Giovannucci
Adam Gardner

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Final Draft May 19, 2025 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Chair Ward called the meeting to order at 7:00P.M. Finance Chair Tom Kane called the Finance Committee to order. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Ward asked if anyone would be audio or video recording this meeting tonight to which there was no response heard.

- 1. Public Hearing of the Warrant Articles for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 19, 2025 at the Murdock High School at 7:00pm**

Chair Ward said Article 19th will be deleted and Bill McKinney will explain why.
Bill McKinney explained that only the School Committee can submit a school budget.

Selectwoman Labrie moved the Board amend the vote taken April 28, 2025 delete article 19 from the May 19th Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Selectwoman Eitland second. Vote All aye.

Finance Chair Kane explained the way the Public Hearing will proceed. There are some unusual articles pertaining to the override.

Article 1 Finance Chair Kane said the Finance Committee will have a report pertaining to the fiscal situation.

Article 2 Bill McKinney said this is to pay bills submitted in September related to Veterans benefits. Finance Vice Chair Ward asked why 4/5 vote? Bill McKinney said it's because it is an annual Town Meeting vote. Jane LaPointe said she was curious as to how much the town gets reimbursed. Bill McKinney said 75% reimbursement.

Article 3-Bill McKinney said that is the amount of money overspent on snow and ice which is typical to be overspent. Finance Chair Kane asked if Free Cash is certified. Bill McKinney said it should be certified by the Town Meeting. He said you can deficit spend snow & ice. Finance Member Doug Delay asked can we vote to approve an amount that no one knows what it is. Selectwoman LaBrie said you can take no action tonight.

Article 4-Chair Kane said there is no amount in the article. What are other operating costs? Bill McKinney said it could be legal, or some other that we went over the budget. Chair Kane said seems odd to have an article to raise money in this budget. Bill McKinney said if free cash is enough to cover than we wouldn't need it. Vice Chair Ward said if we can cover that then would the motion be up to? Bill McKinney said it could be.

Article 5 Finance Chair Kane said what the balance in the water enterprise fund retained earnings is. Brian Croteau said last year it was 35 to 50 thousand. I know there are retained earnings in water, sewer, and transfer station. He said there was expenses with increase in materials and water breaks.

Article 6-Brian Croteau said it's streamed more towards power. Less power was from solar. Chemical costs are up. If we don't need it, it will go back to the enterprise fund.

Article 7-Brian Croteau said there was an increase in usage, demolition disposal has increased.

Article 8-Revolving Funds-Finance Chair Kane asked is this the same as last year. Any new? Bill McKinney said yes. Finance Vice Chair Ward asked are we using these all up. Bill McKinney said he will get the information.

Article 9-Senior Work Off Program-Bill McKinney said this is the same amount as last year.

Article 10-2.9 million General Government Budget-Bill McKinney said this is the higher override amount proposed budget for that. Finance Vice Chair Ward asked what is added to this budget. Bill McKinney said one million is allocated for expenses, Stabilization accounts, OPEB, Separation Benefits, Road Paving, \$50,000 Fire and Police, \$25,000 for Park & Recreation, and Library. Finance Member Giovannucci asked if there was any pay increases. If no override who gets increases. Bill McKinney said no increases in there. Fire Chief would get one per his contract. All union contracts expire in June. 1.9 million override \$215,000 would be available for pay increases. Finance Chair Kane said he noticed initial draft warrant sequence has changed. Bill McKinney said just started at the larger amount. Chair Kane said if the override fails on Monday we would just skip over them. Bill McKinney confirmed. Mike Barbaro unemployment numbers are usually pulled out. Bill McKinney said it is \$150,000. Mike Barbaro said last year I said the number was wrong. If override fails this amount is wrong. These numbers aren't accurate. Selectwoman LaBrie said speaking for myself that will have to be something we will have to address if the override doesn't go through. Karen Kast-McBride-clarify vote on Monday but also need to pass it on town floor. Chair Kane said it is a two vote process for the override. If

it does pass at the town election on Monday then it will need to be voted on again at town meeting.

Article 11-1.9 Million override-Bill McKinney said the number would fund the Library, Senior Center, and Recreation, money for WCAC and YMCA and set aside money for negotiations with the unions.

Article 12-Vice Chair Ward asked what we are losing. Bill McKinney said this is the budget with closing the Library, Senior Center try maintain meals on wheels, Recreation, roads not cleared as well in the winter, no raises on the town side unless it is in the contract.

Article 13-Water Department Enterprise Budget-Brian Croteau said this budget allows the water department to operate as it does now. Chair Kane asked is this with water-sewer rates. Brian Croteau said he raised the rates to make this budget work.

Article 14-Wastewater Department Enterprise Budget-Brian Croteau said this is the same as the water.

Article 15-Transfer Station Enterprise Budget-Brian Croteau said the budget increased due to usage increase. Selectwoman LaBrie said with an enterprise fund funds are collected and goes into the enterprise fund but takes a vote of town meeting floor to authorize using that money.

Article 16-PEG Media Enterprise Budget-Bill McKinney said this is the same amount as last year. Finance Committee Member Adam Gardner asked where the revenue comes from. Bill McKinney said there is a user fee on everyone's cable bill that comes to the town.

Article 17-School Committee Budget-2.9 million-No comments.

Article 18- School Committee Budget-This is what the School Committee submitted. Vice Chair Ward said this is not the level funded article that the Town Manager came up with. Chair Kane said the Town Budget calculated if this is the baseline for the School budget this would throw the budget off. Vice Chair Ward said if the 1.9 doesn't pass then the town would have to find \$600,000 more. Karen Kast McBride said the only committee that can present a school budget is the school committee. We gave our number –the warrant articles are written the way they are written we have no control over that. Selectwoman Eitland said she understands Article 18 is level service.

Article 19-TAKEN OFF

Article 20-Monty Tech Assessment-This is the amount that Monty Tech has assessed the Town to pay.

Article 21-WCAC-Bill McKinney said this will be contingent if the override passes.

Article 22-MSBA Feasibility Study-Bill McKinney said the motion will have the \$200,000 amount in it. Selectwoman Eitland said if we are going to go for this we need to go all the way. They will reimburse us 77%. Karen Kast-McBride said the second piece takes up to two years down the road.

Article 23-Boiler Replacement-Brian Croteau said you have to have money to pay for the RFQ. This goes out as a closed bid. The engineering firm that does the bid speck will put an amount of money on it.

Article 24-Police Cruiser Replacement-911 Grant. Finance Committee Member Doug Delay said as a member of the Capital Planning Committee there was a lot of discussion on this. Forego purchasing cruiser and use the money for something else. Brian Croteau said he oversees all vehicle maintenance in the town. He said he doesn't agree to not replace the cruiser. Not fiscally responsible to not replace the cruiser in the rotation.

Article 25-Transfer to stabilization, OPEB, and Separation Benefits-Bill McKinney said if the 2.9 million dollar override passes we can fund these.

Article 26-Convey 4 Summer Drive-Bill McKinney said this is the property that Bull Spit was using. They didn't complete the process so it goes back to the town. Jim Roth for Robert Grady said Keith Kopley owned the Bull Spit property and I bought Bull Spit. Bill McKinney said legal counsel sent a letter to the prior owner saying they didn't fulfill their obligations. We want to convey it over to the Redevelopment Authority.

Article 27-General Bylaw Amendment-Postcards-Bill McKinney said we would not have to send out postcards for Town Meeting.

Article 28-Hero Act-Bill McKinney said currently depending on their disability they get a certain exemption off their taxes. This would increase the exemption up to 100%. This would be solely paid for by the town. Currently \$65,000 go up 25% it would be an additional \$16,000.

Article 29-Regulated Technologies/Advanced Recycling Ban (AKA Incinerator Ban)-Bill McKinney said this would put a moratorium for one year. This is a way to push back a little bit and see what the Attorney General approves.

Article 30-Contaminated Soils-Bill McKinney said this would be going forward. It wouldn't prevent current operations.

Article 31-Multi-Family Wording-Nicole Roberts, Planning Coordinator came forward. She said this article is going to allow for growth in the town. Previous article limited the number of units a person could have on their property. Adam R10 down by the fire station-PE (down town). Small acres of land by the down town.

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to take a five minute recess at 8:39pm. Selectman Beauvais seconded. Vote: All aye.

The Board reconvened at 8:48pm.

2. Vote on recommendations for the Warrant Articles

Board of Selectmen Recommendations:

Article 2-LaBrie moved to make no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 3-Eitland moved to make no recommendation at this time. LaBrie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 4-LaBrie moved to make no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 5- LaBrie moved to make no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 6- LaBrie moved to make no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 7- LaBrie moved to make no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 8-LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 9- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 10- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard nay, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 11- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 12- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 13- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 14- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 15- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 16- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 17- LaBrie moved to not recommend at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais nay, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 18- LaBrie moved not recommend at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 19- This article will be deleted.

Article 20- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard abstained, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 21- LaBrie moved no recommendation at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 22- Selectwoman LaBrie said we need to invest in the buildings. Eitland moved to recommend. Beauvais seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 23- LaBrie moved to not recommend at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 24- LaBrie moved to recommend. Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 25- LaBrie moved to not recommend at this time. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 26- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 27- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 28- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 29- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 30- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Article 31- LaBrie moved to recommend. Eitland seconded. Roll Call Vote: Beauvais aye, Blanchard aye, LaBrie aye, Eitland aye, and Ward aye.

Finance Committee Recommendations:

Article 1- Recommend 7-0

Article 2-No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 3- No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 4- No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 5- No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 6- No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 7- No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 8-Recommend 7-0
Article 9-Recommend 7-0
Article 10-Not Recommend 5-0-2
Article 11-Recommend 7-0
Article 12- Recommend 7-0
Article 13-Recommend 7-0
Article 14-Recommend 7-0
Article 15-Recommend 7-0
Article 16-Recommend 7-0
Article 17-Not recommend 5-2-0
Article 18-No Recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 19-This article will be taken out.
Article 20-Recommend 7-0
Article 21-No recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 22-Recommend 5-1-1
Article 23- No recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 24-Recommend 6-1-0
Article 25-No recommendation at this time 7-0
Article 26-Recommend 7-0
Article 27-Recommend 7-0
Article 28-Recommend 7-0
Article 29-Recommend 7-0
Article 30-Recommend 7-0

3. **Member Comments**-Finance Committee Vice Chair Ward reminded residents that on Monday May 5th voting will be from 8am-8pm at the Senior Center. She also said if you vote yes on the 2.9 override then vote yes on the 1.9 override. Selectwoman LaBrie asked on the May 12th agenda to place on the review of the warrant articles that the Board made no recommendations on tonight.
4. **Public Input**-There was no public input at this time.
5. **Adjournment**-Selectwoman LaBrie moved to adjourn. Selectman Beauvais seconded. **Vote 5-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55pm.

Respectfully submitted



Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant