

# Town of Wenham

---



**Warrant Hearing**  
**Monday, April 26, 2021**

# Welcome & Introductions

- **Finance & Advisory Committee: Jim Purdy, Chair; Alex Begin; Carrie Jelsma; Susan Mehlin. David Molitano**
- **Board of Selectmen: Gary Cheeseman, Chair; Catherine Harrison; and Interim Town Administrator Tom Younger**
- **Interim Moderator: Anthony Feeherry**
- **Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee**
- **HWRSD Superintendent: Mary Beth Banios**

# Materials for tonight's meeting

- Warrant Books have been delivered to households via USPS
- Warrant Book is available online:  
[www.wenhamma.gov/townmeeting](http://www.wenhamma.gov/townmeeting)
- Resident Budget Forum is available at HWCAM
- Additional budget information available at:  
[www.wenhamma.gov/budget](http://www.wenhamma.gov/budget)
- Residents needing assistance can call TA Office, Finance Department, or Town Clerk at 978-468-5520 ext.'s 1 or 2 or 3

# Article Overview

- **Articles 1 and 2 – Appropriate and fund the balanced annual operating budget**
- **Article 3 – Capital Improvement Program**
- **Articles 4-7 – Annual Articles – Consent Calendar**
- **Article 8 – Water Transfer due to Retiring Employee**
- **Article 9 – CPA Appropriations**
- **Article 10 – Net Metering Credit Purchase**
- **Article 11 – “Select Board”**
- **Citizens Petition – Recall of Elected Officials**
- **Article 12 –Officers for May 6, 2021 Annual Election**

# Article 1: Budget Appropriations

**Motion:** To see if the Town will determine what sum of money may be necessary to defray the Town's expenses for Fiscal Year 2022, the twelve month period beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, including expenses for the Town and Regional School District; make appropriations for the same and determine the source thereof; provided, however, that the budget proposed hereunder is intended, in concert with Article 2, to provide for a budget within the Town's levy limit.

**Or take any other action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

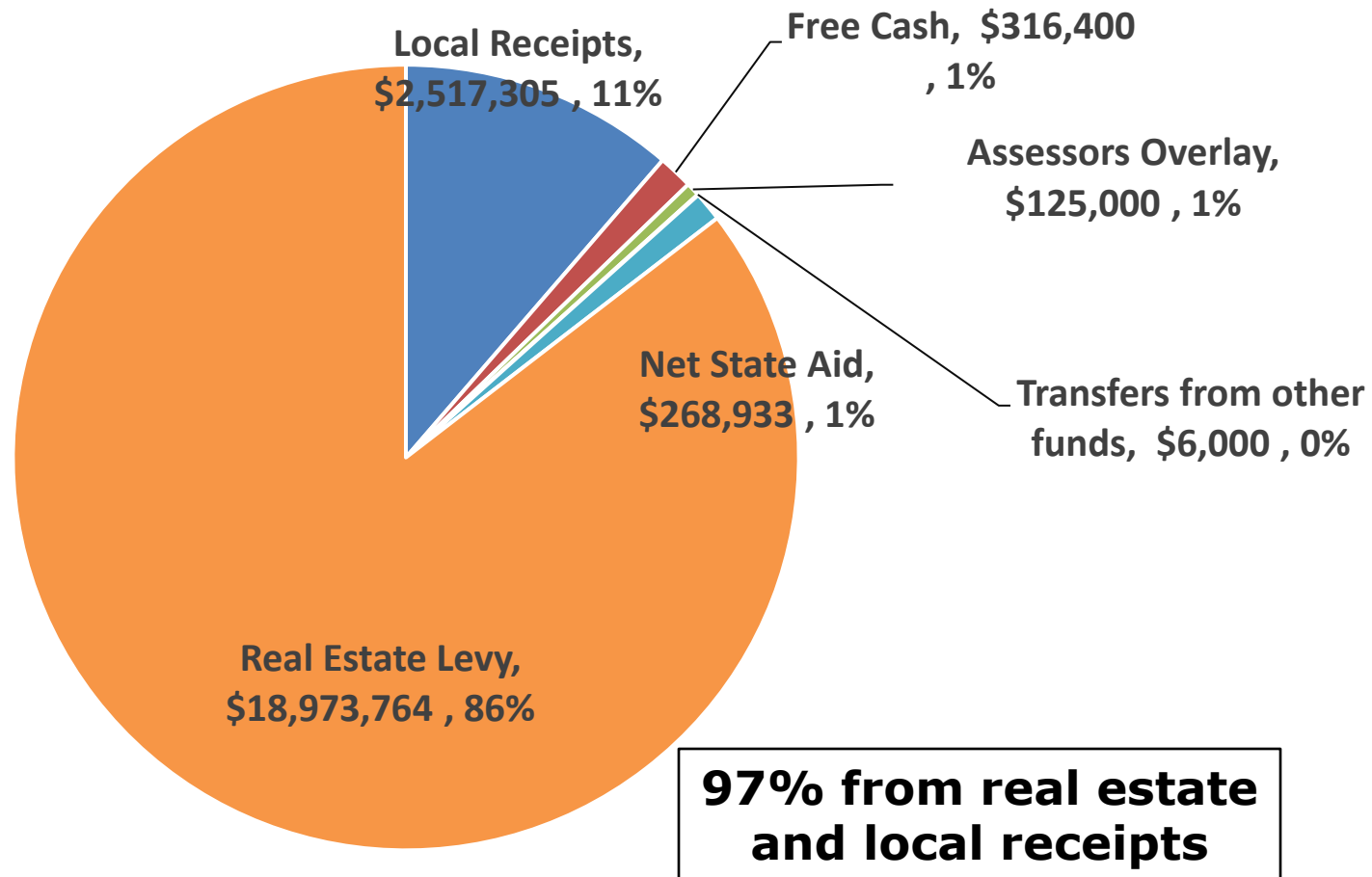
*Vote Needed: 2/3 Majority*

# Article 1: Budget Appropriations

***Commentary:*** The FY 2022 budget appropriation in this article, as recommended by the Finance & Advisory Committee, totals \$21,998,714. The FY 2022 budget requires the use of \$316,400 in FY 2020 free cash (see Article 2) to balance the budget and stay within the levy limit. See financial exhibits contained within the Article 1 warrant for further details about departmental line item funding amounts. If the FY 2022 budget outlined in Article 1 is accepted as recommended, total revenues from local property taxation rise by \$643,911, in line with a 2.5% levy limit increase under Proposition 2½ with the addition of new growth and the debt exclusions approved by prior Annual Town Meetings. This article, along with the use of free cash in Article 2, fully funds both municipal and Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District operations within the Town's levy capacity. Article 3 identifies additional use of free cash for one-time capital items. Assuming no changes in the Town's overall property valuation, the tax rate is set to rise to \$20.49/1000 upon the passage of this article, an increase of \$.81 or 4.12% from FY 2021 final tax rate of \$19.68/1000. The estimated FY 22 tax rate is lower than the projected tax rate for FY 21 (\$20.70/1000) due to the rise in the Town's overall valuation. This article requires a 2/3 majority, rather than a simple majority, as it includes the approval of a five year lease.



# FY22 Budget – Updated Revenues

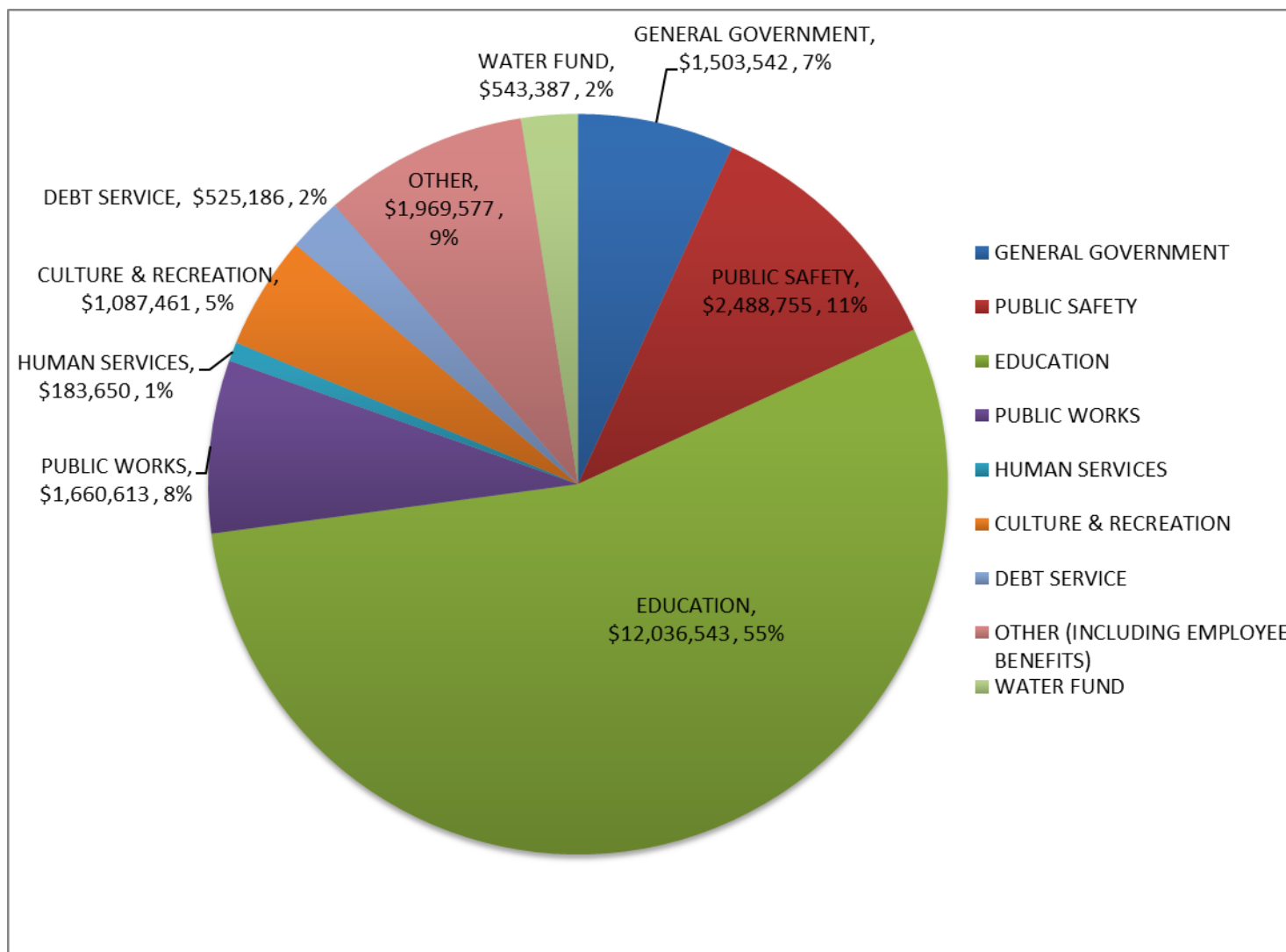


Local Receipts   Free Cash   Assessors Overlay   Transfers from other funds   Net State Aid   Real Estate Levy

Total Revenue: \$ \$22,012,402 \*

\*Net of \$195,000 Reserve for Abatement

# FY22 Budget – Expenses

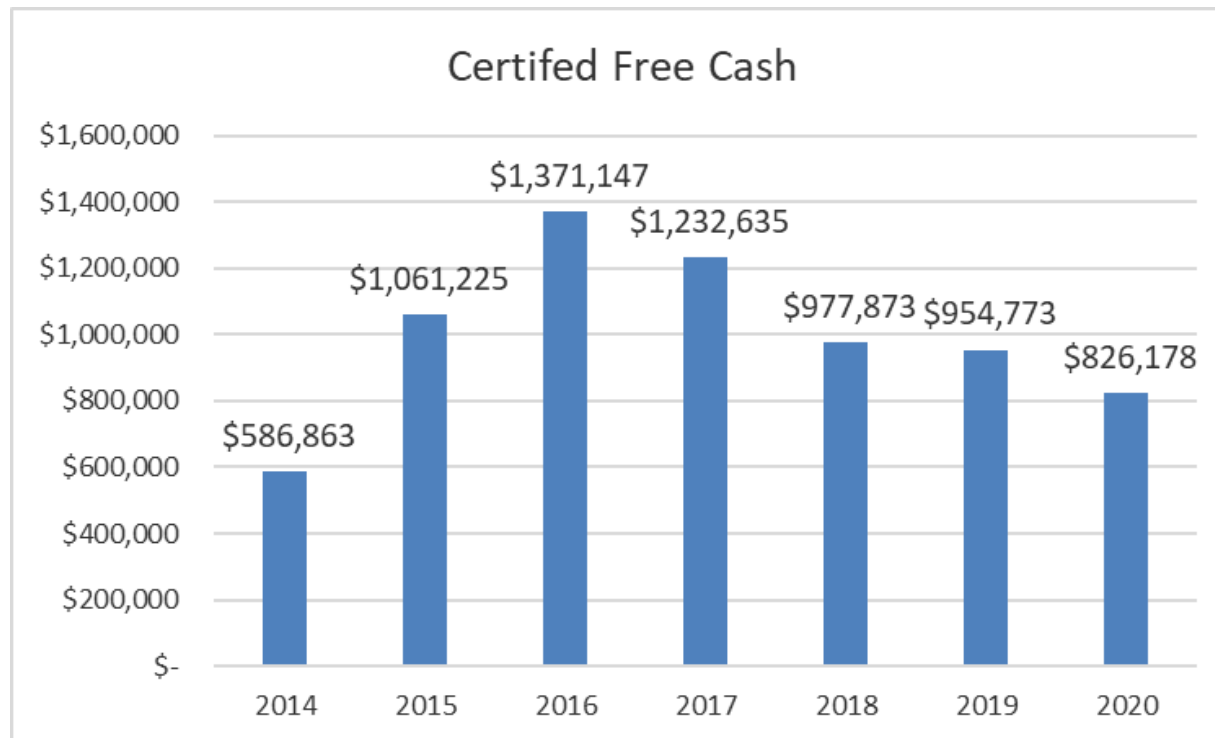


Total Budgeted Expenses: \$21,998,714



## FY22 Budget – Free Cash & Capital Highlights

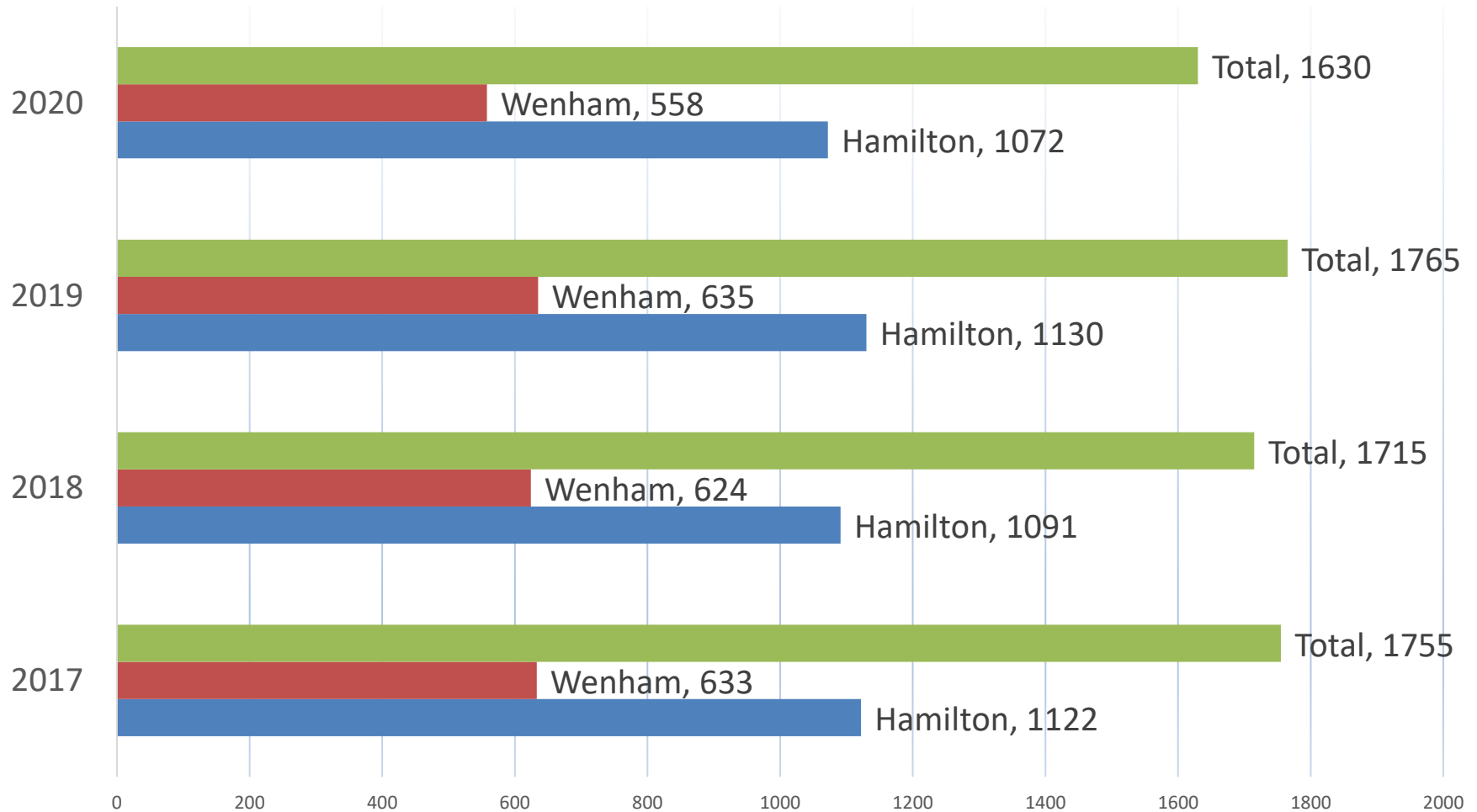
- FY20 Certified Free Cash: \$826,100 (\$250k set aside as reserve)
- Use of Free Cash in FY 22 Operating Budget \$316,400 (from \$499k prior)
- Use of Free Cash for one-time capital: \$259,600





# HWRSD Enrollment

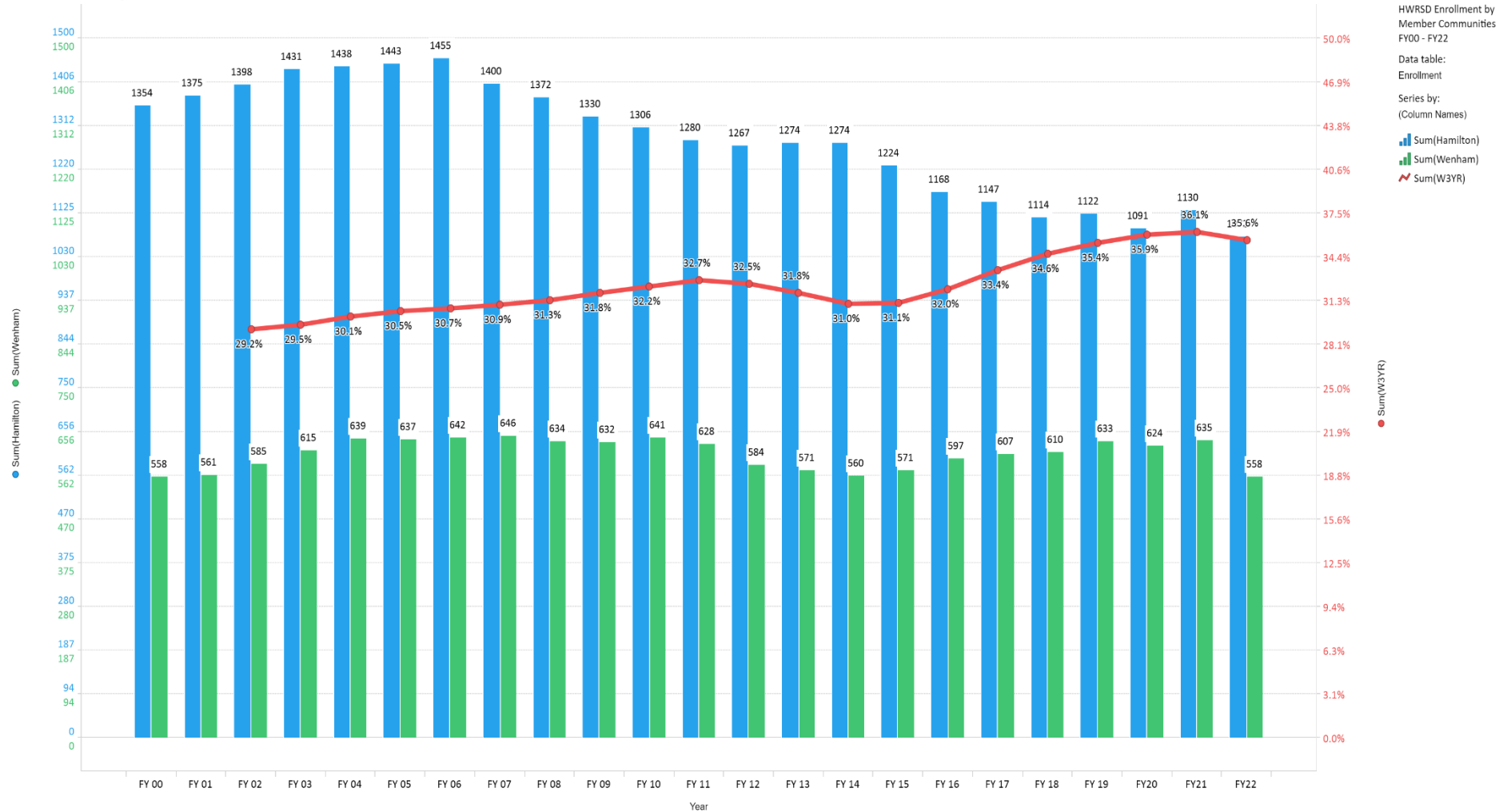
School Enrollment 2017-2020





# HWRSD Enrollment with Three Year Rolling Average

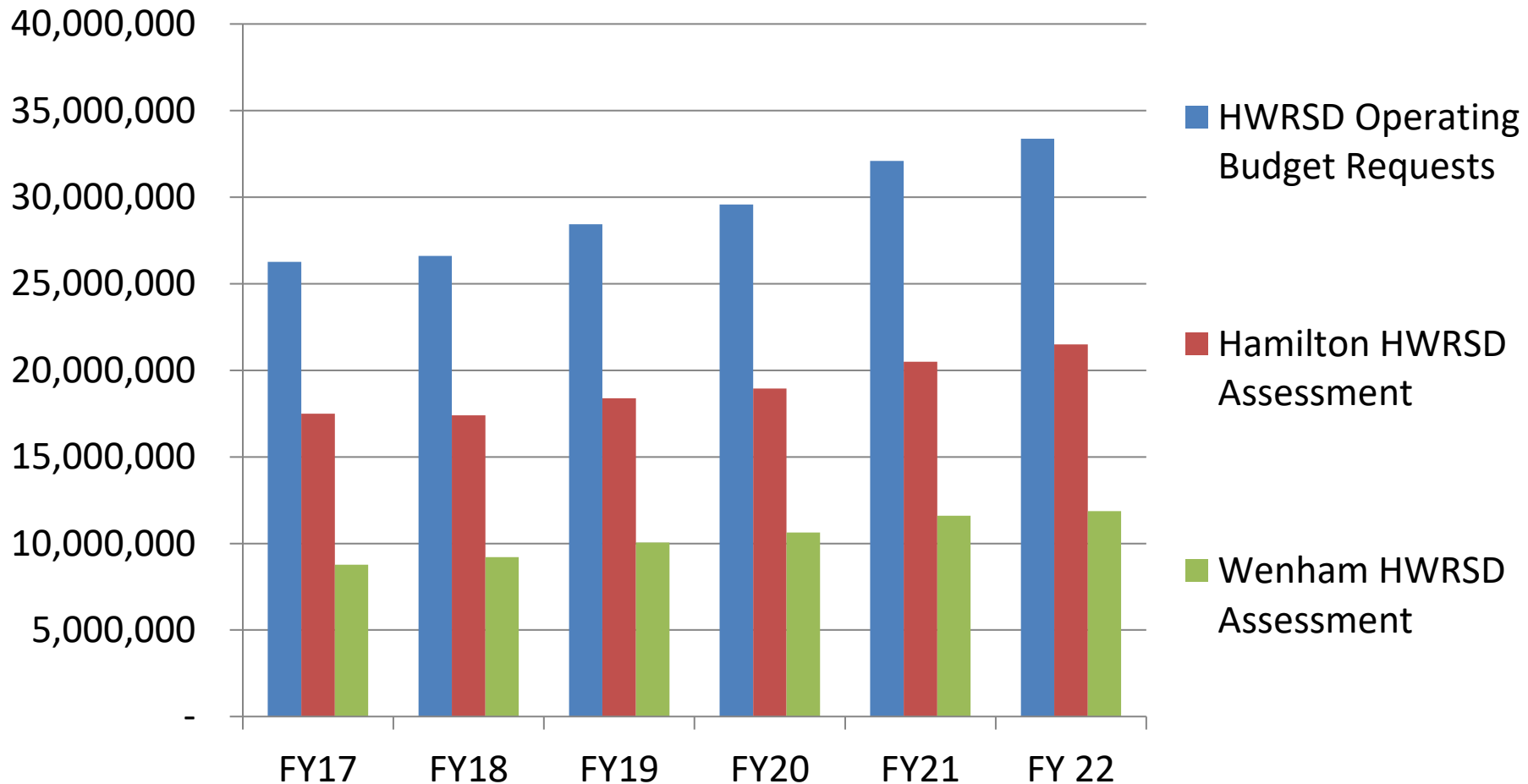
HWRSD Enrollment by Member Communities FY00 - FY22





# HWRSD Spending & Town Assessments by Dollar

## Amount: FY17-Present



FY 22 Wenham Assessment: \$11,865,575  
FY 22 Hamilton Assessment: \$21,502,184  
FY 22 Total HWRSD Assessment: \$33,367,759



# Tax Rate Impact of Articles 1 & 2

	<b>FY 21 Tax Rate</b>	<b>Est. Tax Rate Impact</b>	<b>Resulting estimated Tax Rate*</b>	<b>Percent Increase FY21 to FY22</b>
<b>Articles 1 &amp; 2, levy limit budget and free cash</b>	<b>\$19.68</b>	<b>+ \$0.81 /\$1,000</b>	<b>\$20.49</b>	<b>+4.12%</b>

Valuation at this time last year (FY 2020): \$885,688,516

Valuation this year (FY 2021): \$925,512,543

Next valuation change will occur during FY 2022 when tax rate is being set

Valuation includes each year's new growth and is impacted by the values as they go up and down

## **Article 2: Use of Free Cash to Balance the Budget**

***Commentary:*** This article seeks to transfer the sum of \$316,400 from the FY 2020 certified free cash amount of \$826,178 to balance the FY 2022 budget. This article seeks to use 38.3% of the FY 2020 certified free cash amount, leaving a balance of \$250,178, which is consistent with the Town's Financial Policy to maintain a minimum balance of \$250,000 in free cash. For comparison purposes, last year, the Town's FY 2019 free cash was certified at \$954,005 and 2020 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$499,085 to balance the budget, utilizing a total of 52% of the available free cash and leaving a balance of \$250,000. The Town's annual certified free cash balances have decreased over the past few years due to more conservative budgeting, leading to less excess funds available at the end of each fiscal year. An additional 31.42% of free cash is proposed for allocation in Article 3 for the FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program for one-time projects.

## **Article 2: Use of Free Cash to Balance the Budget**

**Motion: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash to be used to balance the budget for the period July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.  
Or take any other action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

## Article 3: Use of Free Cash to Fund FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program

**Motion:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum or sums of money to fund the Town's FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program, including the acquisition, equipping, and all other incidental and related costs, of Items A through J, as printed below:

A.	Police – replacement cruiser	\$42,000
B.	Police – replacement rifles (2) (Year 2 of 3)	\$ 2,600
C.	Library – roof replacement (supplemental allocation)	\$75,000
D.	Administration – Compensation & Classification Study	\$15,000
E.	Land Use/Administration – Town-Wide Master Plan	\$125,000

Or take any other action relative thereto.

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority for all items*



## Article 3: Use of Free Cash to Fund FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program

***Commentary:*** : The Town is committed to continuing our efforts to make strategic investments in our infrastructure, facilities, and equipment. To that end, we have developed an updated 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that seeks to comprehensively address our needs in a way that is both realistic and sustainable. The items identified in this article have been prioritized for FY 2022 as one-time projects as part of an annual evaluation process (annual leases and debt payments for capital projects are included in the operating budget in Article 1). Using \$259,600, or approximately 31.42%, of available certified FY 2020 free cash to fund annual capital needs is consistent with best practices in municipal financial planning. It is important to note that the Town is actively seeking warranty funds for the additional costs of the Library roof as outlined in this Warrant and this additional allocation would only be used if no funds are gained from the warranty. The full capital improvement program information can be found in the appendices and a more detailed summary can be found in the Finance Committee's Report at the beginning of this Warrant.

## **Articles 4-7 – Consent Calendar**

**The following four articles are annual approvals and may be taken up by Town Meeting at once in the form of a consent calendar**

## Article 4: Cemetery and Other Trust Funds

**Motion:** To see if the Town will vote to accept the Cemetery and other Trust Funds received in FY 2020, as printed in Part I of the Town Report and on file with the Town Clerk.

**Or take any other action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

## Article 4: Cemetery and Other Trust Funds

***Commentary:*** This is a standard acceptance article required to enable expenditure of annually accruing funds from trust donations for general or restricted purposes as provided by the terms of the gift or trust.

## **Article 5: Cemetery Maintenance Fund Transfer**

**Motion: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer to transfer the sum of \$6,000 from the Sale of Cemetery Lots - Receipts Reserved for Appropriation account to be used with the amounts appropriated for Highway Department expenditures under Article 1 for the care and operation of the three cemeteries in the Town of Wenham.**

**Or take any action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

## **Article 5: Cemetery Maintenance Fund Transfer**

***Commentary:*** The Sale of Cemetery Lots - Receipts Reserved for Appropriation account is restricted for expenditure for certain purposes, including costs to maintain the cemeteries. For many years, this service has been provided by DPW staff rather than a private grounds keeping service. The DPW estimates their cost to maintain the cemeteries totals approximately \$30,000 each year. Proceeds from burials and the sale of lots have historically directed about \$15,000-20,000 to the General Fund to help offset these expenses.

This article seeks to transfer \$6,000 from the Sale of Cemetery Lots - Receipts Reserved for Appropriation account to cover the balance of projected DPW General Fund expenses for cemetery maintenance next year. Based on historical sale of lot proceeds, transfers from this account at this level should continue to be self-sustaining over time, but due to current actuals has been reduced to \$6,000 from the previous figure of \$7,500.

## **Article 6: Transfer from Water Operating Budget to Water Capital Reserve Fund**

**Motion: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$35,000 from the FY 2022 Water operating budget into the Water Capital Reserve account.  
Or take any other action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# Article 6: Transfer from Water Operating Budget to Water Capital Reserve Fund

*Commentary: The Water Department is responsible for the maintenance of more than 28 miles of water main throughout town. While most of this infrastructure is still in relatively good condition, it was all installed 40+ years ago and will need to be incrementally replaced over time in the coming years. This work will come at a significant cost, requiring a debt issuance that will be authorized by Town Meeting when the time comes. Several years ago, based on a permanent reduction in approximately \$35,000 in annual debt payments, Town Meeting approved a transfer of \$35,000 into a new capital reserve account in order to mitigate future impacts to the water rate from these capital projects.*



## Article 7: Road Work – Chapter 90 Funding

**Motion:** To see if the Town will vote from available funds a sum of money for work on Town Roads, subject to conditions detailed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30, Section 39M; Chapter 149, Section 44J; and Chapter 149, Section 26-27F; said work to conform to the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division.

**Or take any other action relative thereto**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

## Article 7: Road Work – Chapter 90 Funding

*Commentary: This annual article allows the Town to expend funds for work on Town roads in anticipation of reimbursement through the state's Chapter 90 program. The actual amount of funding available to the Town will not be confirmed until the state votes to appropriate funding later in the calendar year, but has historically totaled approximately \$150,000 and no major changes are anticipated for this coming year based on anticipated bond authorizations*

## **Article 8: Transfer from Water Surplus for Sick-Time Buy Back Account for Retiring Employee**

**Motion: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$16,000 from the Water Department Surplus to an account for the use of paying a sick time buy back for the Town's obligation to a retiring water department employee. Or take any other action relative thereto.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

## **Article 8: Transfer from Water Surplus for Sick-Time Buy Back Account for Retiring Employee**

***Commentary:*** The Town has an upcoming retirement in the Water Department. The Water Department funds its retirement obligations annually and transfer those funds to the Town for the cost. This transfer from the Water Surplus account would seek to transfer those funds to pay the sick-time buy back obligation the Town has for this upcoming retirement. Historically, the Town has relied on Reserve Fund and Year End Transfers to fund this obligation to retirees, but since last year's FY 2020 Operating Budget, the Town has included funding for this obligation in the personnel reserve line (See Article 1). This transfer would serve the same purpose, but for a Water Department employee. Going forward, the Town will expect additional employee retirements based on more employees becoming eligible for retirement and is including this item as a budget request moving forward as a better financial planning practice as the Town is required pay this commitment.

## **Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations**

### **Annual CPA Article – 6 parts**

- 1. Annual Transfers of revenues and admin costs**
- 2. Town Hall Debt**
- 3. West Wenham Feasibility Study**
- 4. Wenham Museum HVAC System**
- 5. Wenham Affordable Housing Trust Transfer**
- 6. Revision to Community House Grant Terms**

# Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations

## Annual CPA Article

### 1. Annual Transfers of revenues and admin costs

	<b>Transfer and Reserve from additional CPF FY2021 Estimated Annual Revenues</b>
\$63,971.67	Historic Resources Reserve
\$63,971.67	Open Space & Recreation Reserve
\$63,971.67	Community Housing Reserve
	<b>Transfer and Reserve from CPF FY2022 Estimated Annual Revenues</b>
\$ 46,800	Historic Resources Reserve
\$ 46,800	Open Space & Recreation Reserve
\$ 46,800	Community Housing Reserve
\$319,100	FY 2022 Budgetary Reserve
	<b>Appropriate from CPF FY2022 Estimated Annual Revenues</b>
\$8,500	CPC Administrative Expenses

***Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)***

***Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)***

***Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (7-0-0)***

***Vote Needed: Simple Majority***

# **Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations**

## **Annual CPA Article**

### **2. Town Hall Debt**

**Transfer from the Community Preservation Fund the total sum of \$121,900 for FY2022 debt service on the borrowing for the rehabilitation of the historic Town Hall, of which the total sum shall come from the Historic Resources Reserves.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (4-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (7-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# **Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations**

## **Annual CPA Article**

### **3. West Wenham Feasibility Study**

**Transfer the sum of \$15,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Open Space and Recreation Reserve for the purpose of the West Wenham Feasibility Study, including all incidental and related expenses, which project is described in detail in the application submitted to the Community Preservation Committee on January 11, 2021, such sum to be expended under the direction of the Open Space and Recreation Committee.**

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (2-2-0)*

*Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (7-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*



# Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations

## Annual CPA Article

### 4. Wenham Museum HVAC System

Transfer the total sum of \$47,400, with \$31,567 from the CPF Historic Preservation Fund and \$15,833 from the FY2021 CPA Budgetary Reserve, for the purpose of the purchasing and installation of the Wenham Museum HVAC System, at the Wenham Museum located at 132 Main Street, Wenham including all incidental and related expenses, which project is described in detail in the application submitted to the Community Preservation Committee on January 12, 2021, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a grant agreement with the Wenham Museum, upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen shall deem appropriate, including but not limited to the provision to the Town of a 29-year historic preservation restriction, in such property, and further that historic preservation efforts be documented to the satisfaction of the Board of Selectmen, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept an historic preservation restriction in such property, execute documents, and take all other action needed to effectuate the purposes of this vote; provided, however, that if the project contemplated by this vote has not commenced on July 1, 2022, the appropriation authorized hereunder shall expire, said deadline to be extended at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen upon the request of the Wenham Museum as long as the Board determines that a good faith effort has been made by the Wenham Museum to advance the Project.

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (4-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (7-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# **Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations**

## **Annual CPA Article**

### **5. Wenham Affordable Housing Trust Transfer**

**Transfer the total sum of \$150,000, from the CPF Community Housing Fund to the Wenham Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of the creation and acquisition of affordable housing under the CPA Statute and the charge/charter of said trust, which project is described in detail in the application submitted to the Community Preservation Committee on January 11, 2021.**

***Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: TO BE MADE AT TOWN MEETING***

***Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: Favorable Action (3-1-0)***

***Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (5-2-0)***

***Vote Needed: Simple Majority***

# Article 9: CPA Reservations and Appropriations

## Annual CPA Article

### 6. Community House Update

Amend the vote taken under Article 8 of the July 11, 2020 Annual Town Meeting approving an amendment to the vote taken appropriating the sum of \$50,000 as a grant to the Community House, Inc., located at 284 Bay Road, Hamilton, Massachusetts, by deleting from said vote the words “the heating system”, and, further, to authorize the funds appropriated thereunder to be expended for any historic preservation work as outlined in the original 2019 application, maintaining the requirement for a 29-year historic preservation restriction, as to establish that July 1, 2022 as the new deadline provided for commencement of the project and lapse of the appropriation unless an extension is granted prior thereto by the Board of Selectmen following a determination that the project has moved forward in good faith.

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: (2-0-0)*

*Recommendation of the Finance & Advisory Committee: TO BE MADE AT TOWN MEETING*

*Recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee: Favorable Action (5-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# Article 10: Net Metering Credit Purchase Agreements

**Motion:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to (i) enter into one or more net metering credit purchase agreements with one or more owners of renewable energy facilities for terms of up to 30 years, and (ii) take any actions and execute any other documents and ancillary agreements necessary, convenient, or appropriate to accomplish the foregoing and to implement and administer the net metering credit purchase agreements, all of which agreements and documents shall be on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Board of Selectmen deems in the best interests of the Town;  
Or to act in any manner in relation thereto.

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# Article 10: Net Metering Credit Purchase Agreements

***Commentary:*** This article would authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into agreements to allow for solar projects on municipal buildings and for the Town to see the cost savings from the solar projects through agreements made with the Board of Selectmen.

# Article 11: Select Board

**Motion:** To see if the Town will vote to change the name of the “Board of Selectmen” to “Select Board”, by amending the General Bylaws to strike the words, “Board of Selectmen”, “Selectmen” and “Selectman” and inserting, in place thereof, respectively, as follows, “Select Board” and “Select Board member”, and further, to delete the first paragraph of Section 5-6(B) and insert therein the following:

**Powers and duties.** The Select Board shall serve as the chief executive officer and policymaking entity of the Town and have and exercise all the powers and duties vested in boards of selectmen under the General Laws or by vote of the Town, and such other authority as specified herein, including but not limited to the following; provided, however, that notwithstanding any of provision of this bylaw, Select Board shall not act to derogate from the statutory authority of multiple-member bodies and other appointees of the Board and departments under its responsibility or any other multiple-member bodies, officers and employees of the Town.

And, further, to authorize the Town Clerk, with the approval of the Town Administrator, to make such

other changes to the bylaws with respect to grammar as may be needed to ensure that such changes are properly integrated into the General Bylaws.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

*Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)*

*Vote Needed: Simple Majority*

# Article 11: Select Board

***Commentary:*** This article would change the title of the “Board of Selectmen” to “Select Board” as indicated in the article in the Town’s General Bylaws. There will be a future article to make this change to the Zoning Bylaw as changes to the Zoning Bylaw require a 2/3 majority at Town Meeting as well as a public hearing and recommendation by the Planning Board. This item will be included the next time the Planning Board has a public hearing for Zoning Bylaw amendments.

## Citizens Petition:

## Recall of Elected Officers

***To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board/Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for special legislation to provide for recall of officials elected solely by the voters of Wenham, and, further, to authorize the General Court to make changes of form only to such legislation unless approved by the Select Board prior to enactment, and, further, to authorize the Board to approve such changes as are within the public purposes of this petition. Or take any other action relative thereto.***

***Recommendation of the Board of Selectmen: Favorable Action (2-0-0)***

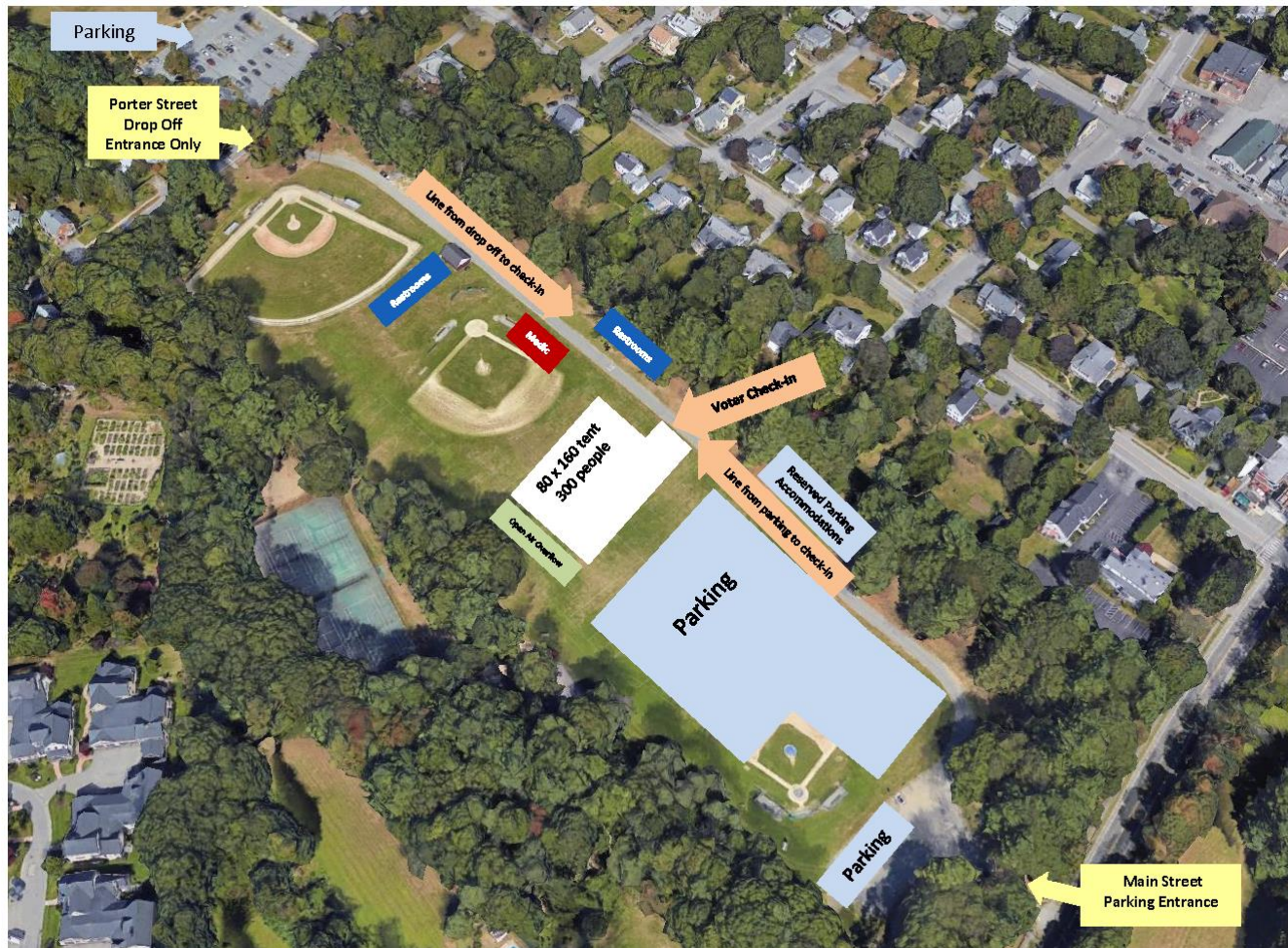


# Article 12: Election of Officers

**Motion:** To choose the following officers:

- Board of Assessors, one position, three year term
- Board of Health, one position, three year term
- Board of Selectmen, one position, three year term
- Hamilton Wenham Regional Library Trustee, two at-large positions, three year term
- Hamilton Wenham Regional School Committee, two positions, three year terms
- Town Moderator, one position, three year term
- Planning Board, one position, five year term
- Water Commissioner, one position, three year term
- Wenham Housing Authority, one position, five year term
- Wenham Housing Authority, one position, three year term to fulfill an unexpired term.

# Saturday at 1:00 pm at Pingree Park



Logistics and meeting materials can be found online at:

[www.wenhamma.gov/townmeeting](http://www.wenhamma.gov/townmeeting)

**Thank you for attending the Warrant  
Hearing.**

**Annual Town Meeting will take place  
on Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at Pingree Park.**

**Check-in will open at 12:00 PM and  
the meeting will begin promptly  
at 1:00 PM.**