

## Voter Information Bulletin

Town of Douglas

November 2010

### Special Town Meeting

Monday, November 15, 2010 at 7:00 PM

Douglas High School Auditorium

The November Special Town Meeting has nine articles on the warrant. The first three articles are related to building projects for the school, library and public safety. While these are not intended to fund the actual construction associated with these projects, they represent vital next steps in each project to perform design, cost estimates and other testing that would support future construction decisions. Each of these projects has received the support of the Capital Committee and Board of Selectmen. While there is certainly debate amongst the town's leaders and residents as to whether considering these projects will be "too much at one time" for the Town to support financially, there is consensus that these are important projects, that the work being funded will provide important information for the Town to make final funding decisions on construction, and that while the Town is enduring the hardships of the economic downturn, this period also presents an opportunity for potential costs savings for each of these projects. In addition, in the case of the school project, it is important for the town residents to understand the current terms for reimbursement from the Commonwealth on this project, as these terms have changed over the years and likely are more favorable today, then perhaps they will be in the future. While the Finance Committee has "recommended" these articles, we also understand that the information that is produced will require careful attention and analysis with respect to future funding decisions. Certainly everyone in Town can recognize the importance of these articles and should appreciate the great efforts that have been put forth by Town officials and residents to get these projects to the points that they are.

In addition, there are articles that seek to address modifications in FY 11 budgets in response to reductions in state funding and other changes.

As always, the Finance Committee encourages your attendance and participation at Town Meeting to exercise your voting privileges.

Article 1.	Intermediate/Elementary School Building Project- Schematic Design
Article 2.	Library Renovation Design
Article 3.	Public Safety Complex - Site Evaluation and Preliminary Design
Article 4.	Transfer from Free Cash (MTBE Funds)
Article 5.	Prior Year Bill
Article 6	Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Transfers/Amendments
Article 7.	Fire/Ambulance Wages
Article 8.	Purchase of Advanced Life Support Equipment -Paramedic Level
Article 9.	Library Sign - Gift Acceptance Authorization

#### **Article 1. Intermediate/Elementary School Building Project- Schematic Design**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$495,000 to be expended under the direction of the School Building Committee for schematic design for the repair and rehabilitation of the Douglas Intermediate Elementary School and the schematic design for the construction of a New Elementary School, and all associated and/or resultant project costs; the Town may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any costs the Town incurs in connection with the schematic design in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: Town Meeting appropriated \$350,000 for the Feasibility Study phase of the School Building Project in May 2008. This article will fund the next phase of this project - "Schematic Design." During Schematic Design, the School Building Committee will define the project in much greater detail. At the conclusion of Schematic Design the School Building Committee will have sufficient information available to voters to move forward with construction, including a detailed cost estimate. The School Building Committee has received the support of the School Committee, Capital Committee and Board of Selectmen on this request. This article would be funded from the Stabilization Fund, which requires a 2/3rds vote of Town Meeting. Under the Massachusetts School Building Authority program, the Town will receive 53.53% reimbursement of these funds from the Commonwealth. The Finance Committee anticipates that the total reimbursement of approximately \$400,000 from both Feasibility and Schematic Design be returned to the Stabilization Fund.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

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#### **Article 2. Library Renovation Design**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds the sum of **\$49,000** for the preparation of final design plans and specifications (bid documents), and cost estimating for the renovations and improvements to the Simon Fairfield Public Library, said sum to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This article will fund the design and bid specifications for renovations and improvements to the Library. This article would be funded from the Overlay Reserve Surplus Account.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

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#### **Article 3. Public Safety Complex - Site Evaluation and Preliminary Design**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds the sum of **\$100,000** for the survey, testing, analysis and preliminary design of a Safety Complex comprised of the police-fire-highway departments or any combination thereof, and all associated project costs, said sum to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen; or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This article will fund the survey, testing, analysis and preliminary design of a Safety Complex comprised of the police-fire-highway departments. This article would be funded from the Overlay Reserve Surplus Account (\$91,588) as well as from the funds remaining from other completed capital projects (Fire Station Exhaust \$7,251; Article 9 ATM 5-7-07 & School Pick-Up Truck \$1,161; Article 8 ATM 5-3-10).*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

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#### **Article 4. Transfer from Free Cash (MTBE Settlement Funds)**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of **\$22,024.18** from Certified Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: Similar to votes in prior year town meetings, this article seeks to transfer monies received by the town in settlement of a class action lawsuit related to MTBE contamination to the stabilization account where future designations may be made.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

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#### **Article 5. Prior Year Bill**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of **\$367.00** to pay for the following prior year bill:

<b>Fallon Clinic</b>	<b>\$367.00</b>
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Or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This bill is from fiscal year 2010 and was not paid due to the timing of receipt of the invoice. The article seeks to transfer \$367 from the FY 11 Police Expenses budget to pay this bill. This article requires a 9/10ths vote.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

**Article 6. Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Transfers/Amendments**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the action taken on Article 2 of the Annual Town Meeting of May 3, 2010 and continued to June 21, 2010, by making the following changes to the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget:

Decrease School Personnel & Expenses by	<b>\$101,557</b>
Decrease Assessor's Wages by	<b>\$20,115</b>
Increase Ambulance Wages by	<b>\$15,060</b>
Increase Fire Wages by	<b>\$15,060</b>
Increase Highway Wages by	<b>\$5,000</b>
Increase Norfolk Agricultural by	<b>\$16,897</b>
Increase Treasurer Expenses by	<b>\$7,000</b>

Or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: In response to reductions in state funding of local aid and shortfalls in FY 10 local receipts, this article seeks to adjust certain budgeted amounts for FY 11. This article will bring our FY11 budget back into balance. After the conclusion of our annual town meeting we received notice from the state that our local aid would be cut by an additional \$47,519. Our estimated receipts for FY10 came in at \$34,731 less than we expected requiring us to reduce our FY11 estimates by that amount. FY11 New Growth was certified at \$5,358 above what was anticipated. We also have to account for some unanticipated costs such as \$16,897 in additional costs from Norfolk Agricultural and a legal settlement (\$15,060 increase to Fire Wages and \$15,060 will be transferred from Ambulance RRA to Ambulance Wages). \$5,000 in Highway Department Overtime was inadvertently left out of the FY11 budget and we will need a \$7,000 increase in Treasurer Expenses for administrative costs associated with changes to the Town's Health Insurance program. Funding for these items will come from a decrease of \$20,115 in Assessor's Wages (a vacancy in the Assessor's Department was never filled) and a \$101,557 decrease in the School Budget.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

**Article 7. Fire/Ambulance Wages**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of **\$3,715** to the Fire and Ambulance Wage Accounts, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This article will appropriate \$3,715 to pay for the 2% contractual increase to base salaries for the Fire Union for FY 2011. This article will be funded by a transfer from the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation to Ambulance Wages in the amount of \$2,892, and by raising and appropriating \$823 to Fire Wages.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

**Article 8. Purchase of Advanced Life Support Equipment -Paramedic Level**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of **\$50,000** for the purchase of Advanced Life Support Equipment (2 Cardiac Monitors and associated equipment) for the Fire Department, which will enable the ambulance service to attain Paramedic Level, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This article will transfer \$50,000 from the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation to purchase 2 cardiac monitors which will allow the town to continue its transition into a certified paramedic service. This is part of an initiative that should allow the department to recover more fees for its provided services.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

**Article 9. Library Sign – Gift Acceptance Authorization**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept a gift from Merritt & Veronica Tetreault of a sign for the benefit of the Town Library on such conditions as the Board of Selectmen deems in the best interest of the Town, or take any other action related thereto.

*Explanation: This article would authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept a gift of a sign for the library. Under the terms of this generous gift, the Town will assume the responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the sign.*

**Finance Committee: Recommend**

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Dear Resident of Douglas:

One of my primary goals as Moderator has been to get new people involved in the town. There are so many ways to get involved in Douglas. There are currently openings on Cable Advisory, Capital Improvement, Cultural Council, Personnel Board, and even Octoberfest.

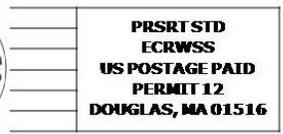
There is one committee in particular I would like to highlight in this letter, the Finance Committee. The FinCom is chaired by Todd Bari and meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at 7pm. The FinCom considers any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the Town. If you are interested in this very important committee please contact me.

If you are interested in any of these committees, or looking for other ways to get involved, please send me an email or call Town Hall and we will work to match your interests and background with the needs of the town.

Sincerely,  
Keith M. Menard, Town Moderator, Douglas MA, kmenard@douglasma.org  
508-476-4000



Town of Douglas  
29 Depot Street  
Douglas, MA 01516



**CURRENT RESIDENT  
DOUGLAS, MA 01516**

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Monday, November 15, 2010  
Douglas High School Auditorium**