

Voter Information Bulletin

Town of Douglas

November 2006

Special Town Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2006 at 7:00 PM
Douglas High School Auditorium

Message from the Finance Committee

This Fall Special Town meeting seeks to correct and adjust some previously voted articles. Also, repairs and upgrades to infrastructure and assets have been requested. New initiatives and cost-effective multi-town agreements will be presented to the Town. Ongoing Economic Development through a new T.I.F. agreement with a business relocating to Douglas has been advocated.

The financial articles requiring funding utilize revenues from Free Cash (see below), surplus from other projects and additional State funding realized through the finalization of the State budget process; additional funds available for appropriation \$218,169.

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

Free Cash - Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates shown on the tax recapitulation sheet, and unspent amounts in budget line-items minus unpaid property taxes and certain deficits.

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| Article 1. Prior Year's Bills | Article 9. Library Study |
| Article 2. Transfer Funds from Free Cash to Stabilization | Article 10. Municipal Center Keyless Access Control System |
| Article 3. Short Term Interest for Yacino Judgement | Article 11. Post Office/Senior Center Parking Lot Expansion |
| Article 4. Supplemental Funding for Fiscal Year 2007 Budget | Article 12. Regional Agreement for Animal Control Services |
| Article 5. High School Repairs | Article 13. Inter-municipal Agreement for Recycling Services |
| Article 6. Home Composting Bin Program | Article 14. TIF Agreement |
| Article 7. Ambulance Wages | Article 15. Zoning By-Law Change |
| Article 8. New Ambulance | |

Article 1. Prior Year's Bills

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$7,081.57 to pay for the following prior year's bills or to take any other action related thereto.:

Greenman-Pederson Inc.	\$5,200.00	A & B Lawnmowing	\$900.00
Fallon Clinic	\$510.00	IC Systems (Verizon)	\$34.73
Amcomm Wireless Inc.	\$142.46	Philip Conrad (NEASC)	\$157.55
Kelley & Ryan	\$27.68	Viking Office Products	\$54.07
Unibank	\$55.08	Total	\$7,081.57

Explanation: These bills are mostly from Fiscal Year 2006 and were not paid due to oversight, reorganization of purchasing or timing of services.

Finance Committee: Recommend through transfer from Free Cash upon Certification of total Free Cash amount by the DOR (Department of Revenue).

Article 2. Transfer Funds from Free Cash to Stabilization

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$172,915 from Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: Town Meeting voted to use money from the Stabilization Fund to augment the current 2007 Fiscal Year Budget with the stipulation that the funds would be returned via Free Cash in the Fall.

Finance Committee: Recommend upon Certification of Free Cash amount by the DOR .

Article 3. Short Term Interest for Yacino Judgement

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$22,789 to pay for the Short Term Interest on the \$767,200 Yacino Judgement, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The calculation and payment timing of this debt resulted in this amount of interest due.

Finance Committee: Recommend payment by transfer of \$22,789 from Free Cash upon Certification by the DOR.

Article 4. Supplemental Funding for Fiscal Year 2007 Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money to supplement the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The estimated revenues for use in the current Fiscal Year 2007 budget were based upon State funding that was not finalized until after Town Meeting. The final funding from the State increased the Town's total available revenues.

Finance Committee: Recommend the Town raise and appropriate \$216,940 in additional funding for the Douglas School Department.

Article 5. High School Repairs

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow the sum of \$35,000 to complete repairs to the Douglas High School, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The New High School has experienced some flooring damage resulting in potential safety issues that require repair. The School Administration is investigating the causes for this unexpected damage through the design and construction companies involved.

Finance Committee: Recommend repairs to be funded by transfer of \$35,000 from Free Cash upon Certification by the DOR.

Article 6. Home Composting Bin Program

To see if the Town will vote to establish the following account fund and to authorize the expenditure of funds from said fund for the below indicated purpose and not to exceed amount or to take any other action related thereto:

#	Department	Receipts	Expenditures
1	Home Composting Program pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, § 53E ½	All receipts received in connection with the Home Composting Program	The Board of Health may expend a sum not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for the purpose of operating the Home Composting Program.

Explanation: This is a standard request to begin a Revolving Account under Massachusetts General Laws for the purpose stated with a fixed amount of expenditures allowed. It is self-funding through receipts received by the Board of Health through the sale of Composting Bins.

Finance Committee: Recommend.

Article 7. Ambulance Wages

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$15,000 to increase the Ambulance Wage Account approved at the Annual Town Meeting of May 1, 2006 from \$125,779 to \$140,779, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The funding for this article derives from the Ambulance Receipts Account and the purpose is for weekend coverage of the Ambulance Department. Personnel to be hired on a per diem basis for weekend coverage.

Finance Committee: Recommend transfer of \$15,000 from the Ambulance Receipts Account.

Article 8. Purchase of a New Ambulance

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow the sum of \$135,000 for the purchase of a New Ambulance, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The older back-up Ambulance (yr. 1995) has experienced increasing mechanical and electrical problems. It has been determined that for optimum safety and reliability it should be replaced.

Finance Committee: Recommend the Town transfer \$135,000 from Ambulance Receipts Account to purchase a new Ambulance.

Article 9. Library Study

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$3,000 to create a Library ADA Compliance account for the purpose of hiring an architect to provide a plan for the implementation of renovations necessary for the Simon Fairfield Public Library to meet ADA regulations, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The Library Board of Trustees is developing a 5 Year Plan at the request of the Board of Selectmen. This funding will result in a coordinated and prioritized plan that incorporates known ADA compliance issues with potential projects that focus on upgrading and utilizing currently unused spaces in the Simon Fairfield Public Library.

Finance Committee: Recommend transfer of \$3,000 from Free Cash pending Certification of amount by the DOR.

Article 10. Municipal Center Keyless Access Control System

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$3,500 for the design, purchase, and installation of a keyless access control system for the Municipal Center, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The current system of using keys for access to our Municipal Center has become outmoded and overburdened. The records and resources in the building should be secure. This cost-effective system will monitor access and record persons and timing of entry to the building.

Finance Committee: Recommend transfer of \$3,500 from Free Cash pending Certification of amount by the DOR.

Article 11. Post Office/Senior Center Parking Lot Expansion

To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 2 (item 7) of the Annual Town Meeting of May 16, 2005, and to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$10,000 to increase the amount appropriated from \$35,000 to \$45,000 for the Post Office/Senior Center Parking Lot Expansion Project, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The design and estimates for this project were done prior to the increase in oil products; asphalt costs have increased significantly. Additionally, privacy fencing will be added to the project as well as additional drainage. Funding will be transferred from unused funds appropriated for the ADA Study during FY2006; \$25,000 was appropriated for the study.

Finance Committee: Recommend transfer of \$10,000 from Article 1 of the Special Town Meeting of November 7, 2005.

Article 12. Regional Agreement for Animal Control Services

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into inter-municipal agreements, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40, Section 4A of the Massachusetts General Laws, for animal control services, said agreement to be on such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen deems to be reasonable, appropriate and in the best interest of the Town, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The Town is in the process of establishing a joint agreement with the Towns of Uxbridge and Mendon for Animal Control Services.

Finance Committee: Recommend.

Article 13. Inter-municipal Agreement for Recycling Services

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate and enter into an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Blackstone in accordance with the provisions of General Laws Chapter 40, section 4A pursuant to which Blackstone will accept recycling materials from the Town for processing, said inter-municipal agreement to have a term not to exceed twenty-five years, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: Currently the Town receives no compensation for recyclables that are collected at the Transfer Station. The Town's hauler has agreed to transfer the recyclables to Blackstone and Douglas will receive some benefit for its community recycling efforts.

Finance Committee: Recommend.

Article 14. TIF Agreement

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Tax Increment Financing Agreement between the Town, Nicholas R. Jane Landscapes, Inc. and N.A.J. Properties, LLC, substantially in the form as is on file with the Town Clerk prior to the Town Meeting (the "TIF Agreement"), pursuant to GL c. 40, §59, and to confirm the Board of Selectmen's designation of the location of the project as an Economic Opportunity Area ("Riedell Road Economic Opportunity Area #2"), and to authorize the Executive Administrator to submit an Economic Opportunity Area Application, the TIF Agreement, Tax Increment Financing Plan, and Certified Project Application to the Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council all relating to the project as described in the TIF Agreement to be located in the Riedell Road Economic Opportunity Area #2, and to take such other actions as may be necessary to obtain approval of the Certified Project Application, the Economic Opportunity Area, the Tax Increment Financing Plan and TIF Zone and to implement the TIF Agreement, or to take any other action related thereto.

Explanation: The authorization of a T.I.F. allows the Board of Selectmen to negotiate certain agreements with a Douglas business that provide some property tax benefits at the local level; more importantly, the designation gives additional benefits within the State tax code. Generally, the Selectmen will consider a T.I.F. agreement that also ensures some ongoing economic benefit to the Town and its residents.

Finance Committee: Recommend.

Article 15. Zoning By-Law Change

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Douglas Zoning Bylaws by rezoning certain parcels in the area south of Main Street and east of Southeast Main Street from Residential Commercial 1 (RC-1) to Village Residential (VR) as outlined on the attached map and described below:

Explanation: The above article is not financial in nature.

Finance Committee: No recommendation given.

Description of Proposed VR Zone

The point of origin begins at the northerly point of the proposed new zone at a point where the southwest border of assessor's parcel 187-6 intersects the southerly edge of Main Street (Rt. 16). From this point the zone border proceeds southeasterly along the southwestern property line of assessor's parcel 187-6, ending at the southern corner point of assessor's parcel 187-6.

From this point the zone border proceeds northeasterly along the southeasterly border of assessor's parcel 187-6 and assessor's parcel 187-5, ending at the southeasterly corner of assessor's parcel 187-5.

From this point the zone border proceeds southeasterly along the southwesterly border of assessor's parcel 187-3, continuing southeasterly along the southwesterly border of assessor's parcel 188-28, ending at the southern corner of assessor's parcel 188-28.

From this point the zone border proceeds easterly along the southern border of assessors parcel 188-28, continuing along the southern border of assessor's parcel 188-8 to a point where the southern border of assessor's parcel 188-8 intersects the existing VR zone border, this VR zone border being 525 feet from the westerly edge of Glenn Street.

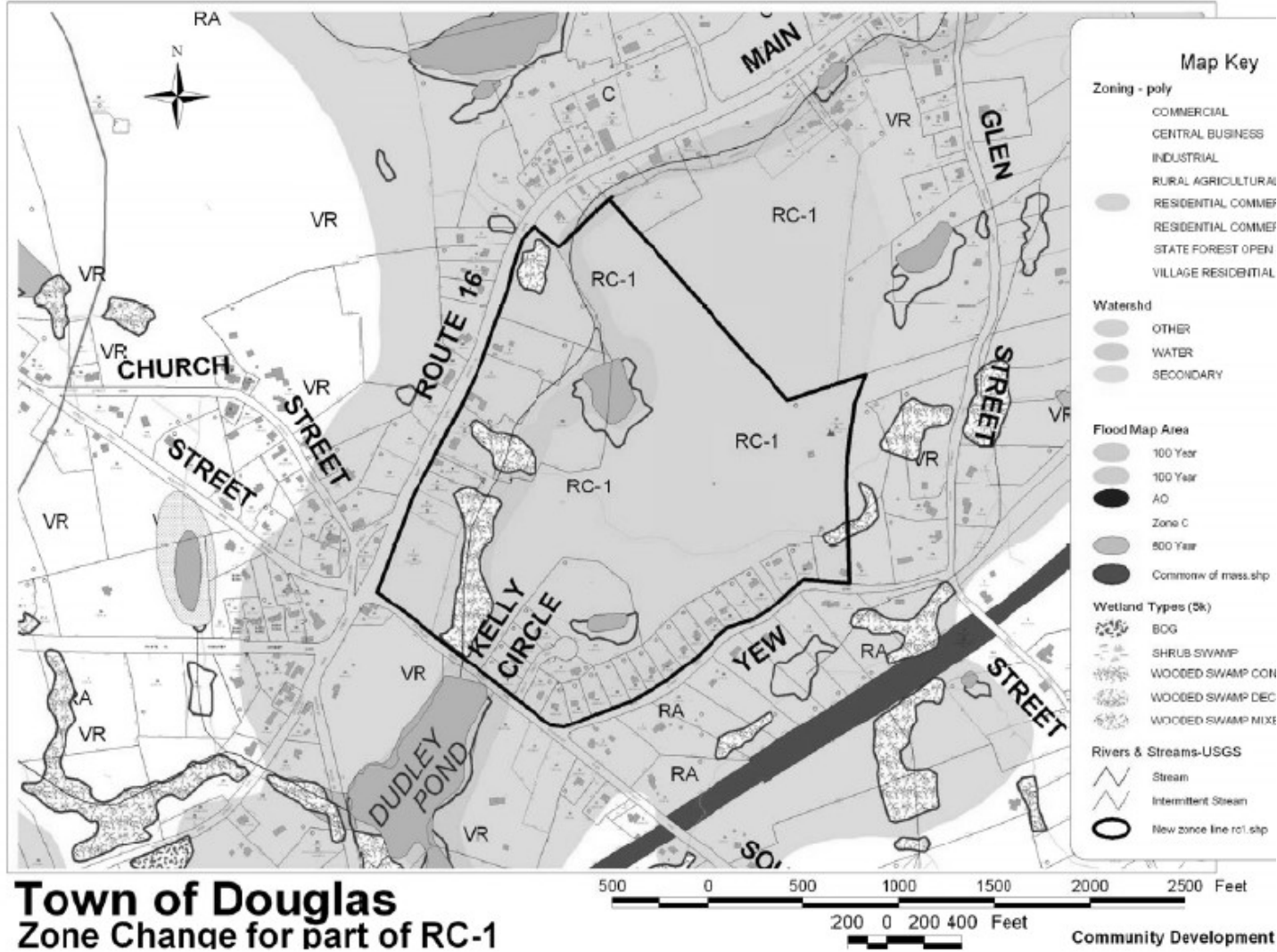
From this point the zone border proceeds southerly along the existing VR zone border, that border being 525 feet from the westerly edge of Glenn Street, ending at a point where the existing VR zone border intersects the northerly edge of Yew Street.

From the point the zone border proceeds westerly along the northern edge of Yew Street ending at a point where it intersects the northerly edge of Southeast Main Street.

From this point the zone border proceeds northwesterly along the northern edge of Southeast Main Street to a point where it intersects Main Street (Rt. 16).

From this point the zone border proceeds northeasterly along the southern edge of Main Street (Rt. 16) to a point where the southwesterly border of assessor's parcel 187-6 intersects the southerly edge of Main Street (Rt. 16), this point being the origin of this description.

Or to take any other action related thereto.



**Town of Douglas
Government Study Committee
Questionnaire**

Dear Douglas Citizens:

We have been charged by the Board of Selectmen to look at the organization and structure of our town government. We would appreciate your time and your thoughts as we look for ways to understand and improve the way our town government works. The following questions are being asked to get your input for our study and we would appreciate your insights and ideas. Our findings will be reported to the Board of Selectmen next year and we thank you for your participation.

Government Study Committee

1. How long have you been a Resident in Douglas? _____
2. Have you ever been in an "official" capacity within Douglas? Check all that apply.
 Elected Employed Appointed Volunteer

How do you rate the following? Circle one.

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion /Not used
3.	Public Schools	5	4	3	2	
4.	Vocational Schools	5	4	3	2	
5.	Fire Protection	5	4	3	2	
6.	Police Protection	5	4	3	2	
7.	Road Maintenance	5	4	3	2	
8.	Snow Removal	5	4	3	2	
9.	Recreation Facilities	5	4	3	2	
10.	Recreation Programs	5	4	3	2	
11.	Recycle/Waste Removal	5	4	3	2	
12.	Permits and Process	5	4	3	2	
13.	Water & Sewer	5	4	3	2	
14.	Library	5	4	3	2	
15.	Sr. Citizen Programs	5	4	3	2	
16.	Public Health	5	4	3	2	
17.	Public Welfare Services	5	4	3	2	
18.	Town Hall Services	5	4	3	2	

Are there specific Departments you would like to rate within the Town Hall...please list below.

	5	4	3	2	
	5	4	3	2	
	5	4	3	2	

Additional Comments: _____

Once you have completed this questionnaire, please return it to the Government Study Committee's box at the Municipal Center or mail it to the Government Study Committee at 29 Depot Street, Douglas, MA 01516.



Town of Douglas
29 Depot Street
Douglas, MA 01516

**BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 12
DOUGLAS, MA 01516**

RESIDENT

DOUGLAS, MA 01516

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Douglas High School Auditorium**