

TOWN OF DEDHAM

In Re:

DEDHAM TOWN MEETING

DATE: Monday, May 15, 2023

PLACE: Dedham High School Auditorium
140 Whiting Avenue
Dedham, MA

COMMENCING: 7:05 p.m.

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

THE MODERATOR: The town clerk informs me that we are very close to a quorum, so now the last few people are being registered. Let's call upon the public service recognition committee to make their annual award. The chair recognizes Maryann Martin.

MS. MARTIN: Good evening. I'm Maryann Martin. I'm one of seven people who are on the Dedham public recognition committee, and the seven of us got a very, very -- a nice problem to have. We were inundated with people that were nominated to be one of our recipients.

For those of you who don't know anything about the public recognition, each year we ask fellow residents to nominate someone who's doing a kindness, a quiet unsung hero kindness, and this year you guys responded. It's very hard to pick. So I think we had some really quality people this year.

So I've asked two of my colleagues that are going to come up and present this year's recipients their award. So the first one

1 who will come up will be Gerry Roberts.

2 **MR. ROBERTS:** Hi. It's my pleasure
3 this evening to introduce Theo McGowan. Theo is
4 a second grader at the Riverdale School. Theo
5 is an avid reader, he loves to play soccer, and
6 he enjoys playing chess. Mostly, Theo loves his
7 dog, Johnny.

8 For Theo's eighth birthday, he
9 invited all of his classmates to McGaul (?) to
10 celebrate. Sounds like a normal birthday party
11 for a second grader. But what made this
12 birthday party special is that instead of asking
13 for gifts for himself, Theo asked his friends
14 for donations to the Rough Tails Dog Rescue.
15 This selfless act raised over \$200 for the Rough
16 Tails Dog Rescue, and this act of kindness is
17 what makes him the student recipient of the 2023
18 Dedham Public Service Award.

19 Theo, I know we already gave you this
20 recognition in our reception just before, but
21 when I mentioned what you had done, our good
22 friends at the Blue Bunny were so impressed by
23 your generosity, that they actually made you a
24 birthday gift. So applause for Theo.

1 So I'd like to invite my colleague,
2 Allison Sullivan, who's going to present this
3 year's recipients for the 2023 public
4 recognition award.

5 **MS. SULLIVAN:** Hello, everybody. In
6 March 2021, three months before graduation, a
7 Dedham High School senior, Jayden, was involved
8 in a tragic accident in which he was struck by a
9 car going 65 miles per hour on the highway. He
10 was in a coma for two and a half weeks, but once
11 he awoke, the following months proved to be
12 challenging in ways his family could have never
13 imagined.

14 Due to the pandemic, the Class of
15 2021 missed their junior prom and a true senior
16 year experience. Sadly, when he would have
17 attended the community-run senior prom or walked
18 across the stage at his graduation with his
19 classmates, Jayden was in an intensive
20 rehabilitation facility instead.

21 When released from the rehabilitation
22 facility in August 2021, Jayden was welcomed
23 home with a car parade and tremendous support
24 from members of his class, the town, and the

1 Riverdale community. However, most notably, two
2 women, strangers to the family, went above and
3 beyond in their support: Jean Martins, an
4 occupational therapist, and Sunshine Millea, a
5 physical therapist. When these two women
6 learned what happened, both volunteered their
7 time and expertise to work with him one-on-one
8 while he was at home.

9 Much of his progress is due to all
10 their hard work and encouragement during their
11 weekly sessions. They continue to go above and
12 beyond and have been able to get him into
13 additional rehabilitation programs and are
14 working on getting him into a program that aids
15 young adults who have suffered traumatic brain
16 injuries and finding a job.

17 Because of the hard work of Jean,
18 Sunshine, and Jayden, he was able to walk to
19 receive his diploma in a ceremony held for him
20 at Dedham High School in June of 2022, 15 months
21 after the accident.

22 For this reason, we recognize Jean
23 Martins and Sunshine Millea with the Dedham
24 Public Service Recognition Award. Thank you,

1 ladies, and congratulations. If you could all
2 come up, please?

3 **MS. MILLEA:** I just wanted to say a
4 quick something, everything that Allison said,
5 of course, but he was doing so well with us
6 working at home that we knew he needed something
7 more, and that's when we found out about
8 Inclusion Fitness. But when we took him for a
9 tour there, we knew that it was the right
10 program, but we couldn't afford it.

11 So all I had to do was set up a Go
12 Fund Me, and in four days, we had \$3,000. So I
13 just want to thank all of you here and everybody
14 in the Greater Dedham community for pulling
15 together that quickly to help fund this program
16 for Jayden to go to.

17 And he did so well at that, he's even
18 beyond that now. He doesn't need that program
19 anymore. So we've been going to Planet Fitness,
20 and maybe some of you have seen us there in the
21 afternoons. He's been doing really well doing
22 his own exercise program.

23 I'm pretty sure he's going to go in
24 for surgery to fix his elbow, so Jean and I

1 still have our work cut out for us to help him
2 to get over that. But again, I just wanted to
3 thank all the community for really helping him
4 and helping his family. We're so proud of all
5 the progress he's made. He's worked really,
6 really hard, and he still has a lot or work to
7 do, and his mom has been so supportive of him.
8 We've been really happy to get to know this
9 family. I speak for Jean and I when we say how
10 proud we are.

11 **MS. MARTINS:** I was just going to say
12 thank you. It's really nice to be honored.
13 This is definitely our skill set to work with
14 Jayden. And what I will also say is every time
15 we've walked into the house, it's been a
16 wonderful experience for both Sunshine and I.

17 Jayden and his mother Jacqui are just
18 wonderful, encouraging. It's just been
19 wonderful to work there. We don't always get
20 the same response at work, so it's been
21 wonderful for us to also have this experience
22 working with the two of them. So I thank the
23 two of you also.

24 **MS. MILLEA:** I just want to give a

1 shout out to not only the committee members that
2 served on this with us, all seven of us, and I'd
3 also like to note that the paintings that
4 they're holding today are from Nancy Howell.
5 She's a former resident of Dedham. She does
6 them one at a time. They're not mass produced,
7 so it's quite a labor of love. And every year
8 when I ask her, she says, without question,
9 she'd be happy to.

10 And then the plackets are done by
11 Mike Humphrey from Precinct 5. He owns Cherokee
12 Trophy, so if you need a plaque, an embroidery,
13 anything, please go to Mike. He never, ever
14 asks for a dollar. And then our friends at the
15 Blue Bunny.

16 When I shared Theo's story, he got a
17 nice little private note written inside one of
18 the books in his gift packet, and they said they
19 hope next year I trouble them again with more
20 eight-year-olds who are so generous and kind.
21 But thank you.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Our thanks to Maryann
23 Martin and the members of the public service
24 recognition committee, which, by the way, was a

1 committee created by town meeting a number of
2 years ago, and it has one member from each of
3 the districts.

4 As you know, in 2019, town meeting
5 voted to implement electronic voting. Almost
6 one half of the town meeting representatives
7 here tonight are new either this year or last
8 year, so the town clerk has decided to give just
9 a quick refresher course on how the system
10 works.

11 **MR. MUNCHBACH:** Welcome, and thank
12 you. So my name is Paul Munchbach, the town
13 clerk. As the moderator said, Dan Driscoll
14 mentioned that we've used electronic voting for
15 the past two spring town meetings and for the
16 fall town meeting. Everyone is assigned their
17 own individual electronic voting device.

18 Before we get started, if you could
19 just check the number on the back. If you have
20 Number 118 --I think that you received the wrong
21 electronic voting device -- just see one of the
22 staff members out in the foyer, and they will
23 correct that. So if you have 118 -- sorry, you
24 didn't win anything. It's not one of those. It

1 will not change the channel on your TV or open
2 your garage door either.

3 So the electronic voting devices are
4 very easy to work. They only have two numbers
5 that are working on there. It's 1 and 2, and
6 also green and red. So if you are voting yes,
7 as you can see from the -- well, the slide that
8 was up there earlier, green means yes, red means
9 no.

10 Those are your options. So if you
11 vote -- you want to vote yes, you'll vote green.
12 You'll look at your electronic voting device.
13 Once you put in your vote, it will say okay,
14 wait a second. If you're going to vote no, once
15 again, press the no button. You'll see it --
16 obviously, you'll see the same thing. It will
17 say okay.

18 Those of you who vote, you can vote
19 up until we close the vote. We ask you not to
20 vote until the moderator opens the vote. You'll
21 see the warrant article up on the screen, and
22 then we'll open it for voting. Once we open it
23 for voting, the voting will start. It will last
24 15 seconds, so you'll have 15 seconds to vote.

1 If you change your vote within that 15 seconds,
2 just make sure that you check down at your
3 electronic voting device.

4 So before we get started, I have a
5 couple of sample questions to get started, and
6 if we can put the first sample question up for
7 our town meeting representatives. Will the Red
8 Sox make the playoffs? You have 15 seconds to
9 vote. Green is yes, red is no. We're going to
10 close the vote, so get your votes in. And the
11 tally, please. A lot of optimistic Sox fans
12 here.

13 The electronic voting device -- also,
14 if you see on the top of the screen, if it
15 passes, you'll see it will be green, and then it
16 will say whether it's a majority or a two-thirds
17 vote. If it doesn't pass, it will be in red.
18 So that way, you'll be able to identify how the
19 vote went on that warrant article.

20 We also have, and we'll do one more
21 question before we get started, is we have it
22 set up for roll call. So everyone -- all the
23 town meeting representatives, as we mentioned,
24 has their own assigned electronic voting device.

1 These votes will be recorded.

2 All the votes are recorded, even
3 though they might not be showing up on the
4 screen. And the town clerk's office will by
5 bylaw put it up on our town website no later
6 than four days after the town meeting so you can
7 see how you voted or see how anybody else voted
8 on certain articles. So we try to be as
9 transparent as possible.

10 So we'll go on to the next question,
11 but it will be more of a roll call vote. Do you
12 feel comfortable using the electronic voting
13 device? The vote is now open. Just a couple of
14 more seconds. We're closing the vote. Great,
15 and the vote is now closed.

16 Does everyone that has an electronic
17 voting device at least see their name when they
18 clicked onto it? If you have a problem with
19 your electronic voting device, and you have x-
20 ray vision, and you can see your name -- if you
21 have a problem with your device, and it doesn't
22 say okay when you had voted, please see myself
23 or Kristen at the front of the auditorium, and
24 we'll make sure we double check your device. Is

1 everyone good? Great. Thank you very much. I
2 appreciate it.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.
4 By the way, we have -- I've got more coaches
5 behind me here than Joe Mazzulla does. These
6 are the folks that are helping us with the
7 electronic voting. They've come back again, and
8 we certainly appreciate it.

9 A quorum of 227 having been declared
10 by the town clerk, the 2023 spring annual town
11 meeting will please come to order. This is the
12 98th year that Dedham has used the
13 representative town meeting form of government.
14 Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

15 (All Rise.)

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. The Chair
17 is pleased to welcome Father Steve Josoma, a
18 long-time pastor at Saint Susanna's Church, to
19 welcome us with an invocation. Father Steve.

20 **FATHER JOSOMA:** I appreciate the
21 opportunity to begin the session with a prayer.

22 I first arrived in 1986, and I think
23 the first event I recall being a part of was in
24 the planting of a tree, an interfaith planting

1 of a tree, for your 350th birthday back then.

2 And after seven years at Saint Mary's
3 in East Dedham, and for the last 22 years at
4 Saint Susanna's, through all these years, it's
5 been -- I think Dedham has been its best when
6 different traditions, groups, ages, and
7 neighborhoods have come together, with neighbors
8 helping neighbors, a COVID task fund to help all
9 sorts of folks in need.

10 Even now, there's many different
11 parishes working together. There's different
12 faith communities working together who welcome
13 refugees to our land as they begin their time of
14 new hope and a new beginning.

15 As we come together alone, we can
16 shape our future. I offer this prayer in the
17 light of the founding covenant of our town
18 entered into in 1636 by our first town settlers.
19 They gave the mission statement of Dedham in one
20 sentence, and this is it.

21 We whose names are here unto
22 subscribed do in the love and reverence of our
23 Almighty God mutual and severally promised
24 amongst ourselves and each other to profess and

1 practice one truth according to that most
2 perfect rule, the foundation whereof is
3 everlasting love.

4 I'm not sure how many knew that the
5 town was founded on the founding principle of
6 love. They seem to understand that the only
7 life giving way forward for all was the way of
8 life. So I offer this as our prayer this
9 evening.

10 The first part of this is from 2600
11 years ago. If there is to be peace in the
12 world, there must be peace in the nations. If
13 there is to be peace in the nations, there must
14 be peace in the cities and towns. If there is
15 to be peace in the cities and towns, there must
16 be peace between neighbors. If there is to be
17 peace between neighbors, there must be peace in
18 the home. If there is to be peace in the home,
19 there must be peace in our heart.

20 And so we pray. God of love, God of
21 peace, this fractured world cries out in pain,
22 burns deep into my soul and challenges me to
23 make a difference. God of love, God of peace,
24 God of this world scarred by grief and tears,

1 in.)

2 **THE MODERATOR:** As we conduct our
3 meeting tonight, we'll be aware that for many of
4 our members, this is their first experience.
5 There are 47 new town meeting representatives
6 this year, joining the 80 new members from last
7 year. The reason last year's number was so big,
8 as you recall, because of redistricting, all 39
9 members in every district were up for
10 reelection, so there was a bigger pool of
11 people.

12 That means about half of the town
13 meeting representatives in the auditorium this
14 evening are relatively new to this legislative
15 meeting. I hope you will extend a courtesy to
16 them as they hopefully get up and speak and join
17 us in participating in this meeting. And we do
18 ask that all members, especially the new
19 members, clearly state their name and district
20 when speaking.

21 Let's now review the rules of our
22 meeting. This is a representative town meeting.
23 Elected town meeting representatives shall have
24 precedence over others in speaking, unless voted

1 otherwise by the town meeting. When speaking,
2 please use the microphone. State your name and
3 precinct for the benefit of the official
4 stenographer, who creates a permanent record of
5 the town meeting under the direction of the town
6 clerk.

7 Upon any article, the Moderator may
8 direct that no person shall speak more than ten
9 minutes on any question, unless extended by a
10 vote of the body. In the case of complex
11 articles or issues involving significant sums of
12 money, the Moderator may allow for speakers who
13 are responsible for creating -- for presenting
14 critical information to speak more than ten
15 minutes. And we do, at the suggestion of a
16 bunch of town meeting members, have a clock down
17 here, and our official timekeeper for the
18 evening is Joe Hamilton. Thank you, Joe.

19 Only elected town meeting
20 representatives may vote, including voice votes,
21 which we do not have many of anymore. Others
22 found to be voting will be asked to leave the
23 hall.

24 When electronic voting is being used,

1 a roll call will be held at the request of 15
2 members or at the discretion of the Moderator.
3 Any member who believes his or her vote was
4 recorded in error may stand and request that
5 their vote be confirmed by the town clerk. All
6 articles will be deliberated in the order in
7 which they are printed in the warrant, except
8 that any member may move that an article be
9 taken out of order. This motion requires a
10 majority vote.

11 In order to make town meeting more
12 efficient, Dedham's bylaws call for the use of
13 what's called a consent calendar. This means
14 that at the beginning of the meeting, the
15 Moderator reads all article numbers and all
16 budget line item numbers.

17 If a member wishes to discuss,
18 question, or amend the original motion printed
19 in the warrant, he or she should so indicate by
20 calling "pass." Simply calling out "pass" will
21 suffice. You do not need to be recognized.
22 Those articles that are passed will be set aside
23 for deliberation.

24 All other articles and line items

1 that have not been set aside for discussion will
2 be voted by one single vote. A vote will be on
3 the original motion that is printed in your
4 book. This allows for noncontroversial matters
5 to be dealt with quickly so that members can
6 focus their attention on matters that need more
7 attention.

8 The finance and warrant committee has
9 met with the proponents of all the articles,
10 except for zoning related, planning related
11 articles. They have closely reviewed them.
12 They've held public hearings on all articles and
13 the budget, again, with the exception of the
14 planning board related.

15 That committee, the finance and
16 warrant committee then makes a recommendation on
17 those matters to town meeting. Those
18 recommendations are printed in the book. When
19 you vote, you are voting to accept, reject, or
20 amend those recommendations. They are
21 recommendations only.

22 The planning board also holds public
23 hearings on their articles, and they, too, issue
24 recommendations, which are printed in the book.

1 When you vote on planning related articles, you
2 are voting to accept, reject, or amend those
3 recommendations. Any town meeting
4 representative may propose an amendment to those
5 recommendations of either the finance and
6 warrant committee or the planning board.

7 If you are proposing a significant
8 change or amendment, we would like to have those
9 amendments submitted in writing to the town
10 clerk before we deliberate on them. Significant
11 changes to the motions that are already printed
12 in the warrant book are sometimes referred to as
13 substitute motions.

14 Whether a motion is a simple
15 amendment or a more significant substitute,
16 they're handled in the same way, and the terms
17 are basically interchangeable. Some motions
18 require a two-thirds vote. In some cases, state
19 law requires a two-thirds vote. In other cases,
20 Dedham's procedural rules require a two-thirds
21 vote.

22 When a two-thirds vote is required by
23 state law, the Moderator may call for a voice
24 vote and make a declaration based on what he or

1 she hears that two-thirds of the members so
2 voted. However, if any seven members doubt that
3 declaration, all they need to do is stand, and
4 an electronic vote will be taken.

5 Move the question. This is a -- so
6 "pass" is one word that gets used at town
7 meeting differently than it's used in the rest
8 of your life. "Move the question" is probably
9 not a term you use at all in the rest of your
10 life. It means stop debate. So if somebody
11 moves the question, what they're asking the town
12 meeting body to do is stop talking and vote.

13 There's a high bar for that. Two-
14 thirds of you have to agree that it's time to
15 stop talking and vote. Any member may make a
16 motion to move the question. However, you
17 cannot speak on the article, then end your
18 speech by saying "move the question." So please
19 remember that.

20 Questions of quorum. Town meeting
21 representatives may ask to be recognized to
22 raise issues of quorum. If so recognized, the
23 town meeting representative can question the
24 presence of a quorum, but not speak on any other

1 issue or article.

2 If it's determined that a quorum is
3 lacking, that a meeting cannot continue its
4 business, we all go home and come back next
5 Monday night. It does not affect any business
6 already completed, including a vote that was
7 just taken. If the number of members voting is
8 less than a quorum, that vote still stands. We
9 cannot presume that people did not abstain or
10 are in the lobby or out having a cigarette.

11 Any quorum is presumed to be present
12 until it is successfully challenged. So once
13 the town clerk, which he has done, has declared
14 a quorum, it is presumed to be present until it
15 has been successfully challenged. This is not a
16 Dedham rule. This is a rule that most town
17 meetings adopt.

18 Reconsideration doesn't happen often
19 in Dedham, but a motion to reconsider a previous
20 vote requires a majority vote. So a majority
21 vote to even reconsider it, and then we would
22 vote on it again. That's if the original vote
23 was taken an hour ago or less. If it was longer
24 than an hour, the quantum to request --

1 successfully request a reconsideration rises to
2 two-thirds.

3 No action taken by town meeting is in
4 effect until all articles have been acted upon
5 and the meeting is dissolved. So anything that
6 was voted on in the first night, if we went to a
7 second night, they're all pending in limbo until
8 the meeting is dissolved.

9 Matters of law will be referred by
10 the Moderator to the town counsel. Questions of
11 town meeting procedure are the responsibility of
12 the Moderator.

13 I've been asked to let you know that
14 the unveiling of the William B. Gould statue
15 will take place on Sunday, May 28 at 1:00 at the
16 William B. Gould Park on Milton Street right
17 outside East Dedham Square.

18 Let's move to our blue book. This is
19 the warrant book. This is the agenda, if you
20 will, of what we will be discussing this
21 evening. The warrant is available many months
22 before town meeting. The recommendations are
23 available approximately two weeks before town
24 meeting. The warrant is available on the town

1 website, and this past year, it was sent out via
2 mail to every member of the town meeting.

3 If you would turn to Page 3, this
4 somewhat complicated looking chart lists all the
5 sources of money that come into the Town of
6 Dedham. So that top half of the page is
7 entitled "Sources," and you will see state aid,
8 you will see property tax, etcetera. Then below
9 that are "Uses." This is where all the money is
10 being spent in summary form.

11 So you will see that there are three
12 years of numbers to the left of that dark line.
13 To the right of that dark line, there is the
14 recommendation of the town manager, and next to
15 that is the recommendation of the FINCOM, the
16 finance and warrant committee, and it's always
17 those numbers that we are voting on. But you
18 can compare them to see what the town manager
19 recommended, what the budget was in '23 -- we're
20 still in fiscal '23 -- and what was actually
21 spent in '22 and '21.

22 As I indicated before, I'm going to
23 read each warrant article and each item in the
24 -- each line item in the budget, and if you have

1 a question, want to discuss or amend, call out
2 the word "pass."

3 By the way, somebody was good enough
4 to send me an old newspaper article. Dedham has
5 been using that pass term since 1945. Now, some
6 of you suggest it's probably time to come up
7 with another word, since what we're actually
8 doing is the opposite of passing, so we may ask
9 the bylaw review committee to look at that.

10 A thing about yelling out "pass,"
11 it's a non-binding, anonymous, don't worry, you
12 can change your mind when we come back to it,
13 because what we'll do is we will take a vote on
14 everything not asked. Well, what am I voting
15 on? You're voting on the original motion, the
16 recommendation to -- you're accepting the
17 recommendation, and then we will go back and
18 talk about the articles and line items that have
19 been set aside when you yell out the word
20 "pass."

21 If you change your mind, if you've
22 got your question answered in the meantime,
23 there's no public shaming in having called out
24 "pass" and not taking the step when the time

1 comes. First of all, almost no one knows who
2 calls out "pass" because it's very just -- it's
3 the only time you can shout from the audience
4 without being recognized.

5 So it is better to say "pass," and if
6 you have a question, and by the time we get back
7 to it, your question has been answered, you just
8 don't have to stand up. You don't have to own
9 it or anything like that, and we'll just move
10 on, and you will see that happen a lot.

11 If you look on Page 4, just to get an
12 idea of how the book is set up, Article 2,
13 personnel bylaw changes, so that's the subject
14 matter of this agenda item. The text is right
15 below it. Then in three boxes, shaded gray
16 boxes below, there's the recommendation of the
17 finance and warrant committee. That's always
18 what you'll be voting on.

19 There's a short, in English, I hope,
20 description of the article, and then there is
21 reference information. So there's a lot of
22 information in the appendices. Nobody likes to
23 read appendices, but there's a lot of
24 information in the appendices if you have any

1 questions about this.

2 So I'm now going to start reading,
3 and let me know if you want to talk about
4 anything.

5 Article 2. Article 3. This is the
6 town budget. We're going to come back to a
7 little discussion from the finance committee
8 chair and the town manager before you actually
9 have to vote on anything. But for the time
10 being, we're going to go through each of these
11 line items. We can move at a decent pace.

12 By the way, if you get left behind on
13 something and want to pass on something we've
14 already called out, just get my attention, and
15 we'll go back, and we'll put a pass sign behind
16 it.

17 So on Page 6, Line Item 1, 2, 3, 4.
18 Legal services, Line Item 5.

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Pass.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** 5 is passed. 6, 7,
21 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.
22 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. Human
23 resources, 28, 29, 30. Top of the next page,
24 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38. 39, planning

1 department, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46. Police
2 department, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51. Turn the page,
3 fire department, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59,
4 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,
5 72, 73.

6 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Pass.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** 73 is passed. 74,
8 75, 76, 77, 78, 79 and 80. 81, 82, 83, 84, 85,
9 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97,
10 98, 99, 100, 101, 102. Board of health, 103,
11 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112,
12 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121,
13 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129 and 130.
14 131, 132, 133, and 134. On Page 11, 135, 136.
15 Debt service, 138. Employee benefits, 139, 140,
16 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, and 147.

17 So two-thirds of the way down that
18 page, there's a bolded expense item called
19 "Total Expense." If you go to the far right,
20 129,362,918. That's the amount of town
21 expenditures that will be raised by taxes, and
22 you can compare that to prior years.

23 Article 4 is passed by the Chair. We
24 have a few change -- yes?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

MS. GILBERT: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: On what, Ms. Gilbert?

MS. GILBERT: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: Page 9, which line
item?

MS. GILBERT: 88.

THE MODERATOR: 88, rubbish and
recycling. It's passed.

?: Mr. Moderator?

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

?: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: 118.

MR. MAHER: Mr. Moderator?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Maher?

MR. MAHER: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: 100. So Article 4 is
passed by the Chair. Article 5 -- we're on Page
14 -- prior year bills, Article 5. Article 6,
Article 7. Article 8 is passed by the Chair,
requires a two-thirds vote. On the next page,
Article 9, departmental revolving funds.
Article 10, Article 11. Article 12 is a zoning
bylaw change that requires a two-thirds vote, so
the Chair will pass on that. Article 13.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

THE MODERATOR: Pass. Article 14 will be passed by the Chair. This requires a majority vote. Is there a pass on Article 14? Just shout it out, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. The original motion for that article is on Page 26. So now we're on 27, Article 15, Article 16, Article 17, Article 18, Article 19.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

THE MODERATOR: Passed. Article 20 is passed by Mr. McDermott. Article 20. Article 21.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

THE MODERATOR: Passed.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: No pass on 21?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

THE MODERATOR: This requires a two-thirds vote to create a stabilization fund, so it will be passed anyway. 21 is passed. 22.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

THE MODERATOR: Passed. 23, two-

1 thirds vote, so the Chair will pass. 24, 25.

2 On Page 39, Article 26. Next page -- did I hear
3 a pass on 26? Is there a pass on 26?

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

5 **THE MODERATOR:** You're not usually so
6 low voiced like that, Maryann. Article 27.

7 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Pass.

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Pass on 27. That was
9 28. Article 29 -- Article 27 was passed. Was
10 Article 27 passed? Thank you. 28.

11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Pass.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Passed. Thank you.
13 Article 29, Article 30 on Page 44. Also on that
14 page, Article 31 and Article 32.

15 So I'm going to read back to you
16 everything that we at the front here have
17 indicated as being passed. This was a
18 suggestion by selectboard member Demetra
19 Sullivan a couple of years ago, and it works
20 very well. So we're just reconciling the lists
21 here.

22 So here's the collective wisdom of
23 the people on the stage. Article 3, Line Item
24 5, 73, 88, 100, and 118. That's the budget

1 article. Returning to the rest of the articles,
2 Article 4 was passed, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20,
3 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 30, and 32. There being
4 no further discussion, a vote comes on the
5 original motion of all remaining line item
6 numbers and articles. All those in favor,
7 please say aye.

8 (Aye.)

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
10 ayes have it.

11 So now we go back to Article 3, Line
12 Item Number 5. That's on Page 6, and it's
13 entitled "Purchase of Services" under the legal
14 budget. Is there discussion, questions?

15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Oh, yes, I'm sorry.
17 We felt it was important because there are some
18 reductions from what was requested in this
19 budget, and a little later along we're going to
20 talk about the difference between a cut and a
21 reduction and what was requested. So to set the
22 stage for why this is happening this year, the
23 Chair recognizes the chairman of the finance and
24 warrant committee, Dave Roberts.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr.

Moderator. At the beginning of the finance and warrant committee public hearing process, town manager presented a level service budget recommendation, which represented an increase of 5.6 percent over FY '23. This included a 6.9 percent increase of the school (inaudible.)

Given the recent increases to the average residential taxpayer, and following the representations of every department head, the finance and warrant committee requested information and implications of a 1, 2, 3 percent reduction in spending divided equally between municipal and school components.

After reviewing those options, we chose to present a budget with a 1 percent reduction, which equals \$990,000. Our goal was to reduce taxpayer burden without greatly reducing the services that taxpayers received by the town.

As to the implications of reductions and requested budget increases, the town's recommendation includes reduction for legal services, yard waste, and the postponement of

1 vehicle replacements in the facilities
2 department. To achieve their reduction, the
3 school department indicates that they will
4 maintain class size ratios, but may have a
5 reduction in staff of seven members -- seven
6 positions.

7 With the above budget modifications
8 and following the nine-zero vote, the finance
9 committee is recommending a 4.75 percent budget
10 increase for FY '24. Thank you.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. The Chair
12 would like to recognize the town manager to give
13 us a definition of level service. And also, Mr.
14 Goodwin, there have been some changes. People
15 were given an update to Article 3, if you could
16 just explain that, please.

17 **MR. GOODWIN:** Good evening, town
18 meeting. Leon Goodwin. I'm the town manager.
19 So just to briefly give you an overview of the
20 terminology that we use, level service versus
21 level funded. Level service is the cost to
22 provide that level of service, which you
23 experience this year, this fiscal year, next
24 year based on cost increases to that service or

1 line item. For example, everyone knows a dozen
2 eggs last year cost \$3. This year, it's \$6.

3 If you use one dozen per week, the
4 level service budget would mean that you have a
5 \$6 cost of eggs per week, even though in prior
6 years, that would cost you \$3. A level budget
7 would mean you're only buying six eggs because
8 you're only buying half, and you're using \$3.
9 That's the difference. So that's a level fund
10 versus level service. I hope that is clear to
11 everyone.

12 We also have a yellow handout in the
13 -- that you were provided with this evening.
14 The changes to that you see on -- I'll get
15 closer to the mike. There we go. The change
16 that you see there is to Line Item 9 and 10.
17 Previously, the reserve fund was mistyped into
18 Line 9. It should be in Line 10. There's no
19 bottom line change, but you do have that one
20 line adjustment. That's all.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Do you
22 have more to say, or are you just helping us
23 with the mike?

24 **MR. GOODWIN:** I'm just trying to fix

1 the mike.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Just let me know.
3 I've got a whole team back here. Technically,
4 they're not my people, but -- thank you, Jeremy.

5 One further piece of information on
6 financing the budget. In your warrant book, in
7 the back, on Page A32 -- it's actually the last
8 printed page in the book -- you'll see
9 information about the trend in the average tax
10 bill in Dedham and the changes from year to
11 year. So that may affect some of your thinking
12 and understanding, as well.

13 So on Line Item Number 5, it was
14 passed. Is there anybody who wishes to discuss
15 it? Hearing none, the vote comes on the
16 original motion of \$285,098. All those in
17 favor, please say aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, nay. The
20 ayes have it.

21 Let me just for a second -- let's try
22 to navigate through this very complicated chart.
23 Let's use Page 6 as an example. If you wrote 1,
24 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 above each of those columns,

1 the last column, Number 6, this is what you're
2 always voting on, and this is also the column
3 that if you want to change something, this is
4 the column that you're amending.

5 Number 5, town manager, is there for
6 your information to see what the difference is,
7 if any, between what the town manager
8 recommended and what was ultimately -- what's
9 ultimately being put before you. The line --
10 the column right to the left of that is the
11 level service class that the town manager
12 described to you, and then there is that dark
13 line, and the three columns to the left give you
14 three years' worth of information on the same
15 line item.

16 So the key thing to remember is we're
17 always talking about Column 6. But feel free to
18 stop and ask for clarification on any of these
19 things. You can see I've already had two things
20 clarified for me, and I've been doing this
21 longer than you have.

22 Line 73, the school department
23 budget. The Chair recognizes Kristin Relyea,
24 and Lindsay -- I was going to say Lindsay Lohan.

1 I am so sorry -- and Andrew Czazasty, the three
2 sponsors of this proposed amendment, which you
3 all should have, right? Do you all have this?
4 It was -- oh, there was no paper, okay.

5 **MS. LOWDER:** Thank you, Mr.
6 Moderator, for recognizing us. My name is
7 Lindsay Lowder, and I'm from Precinct 6. Not
8 Lindsay Lohan, Lindsay Lowder.

9 **MS. RELYEA:** I'm Kristin Relyea from
10 Precinct 4.

11 **MR. CZAZASTY:** I'm Andrew Czazasty,
12 Precinct 7.

13 **MS. LOWDER:** So Kristin, Andrew, and
14 I are here today on behalf of a group of town
15 meeting members interested in restoring the
16 school budget, Line 73, to the amount in the
17 town manager's initial request, which is an
18 increase of \$495,000.

19 We want to begin by thanking the
20 finance and warrant committee for their work in
21 establishing a budget proposal in a particularly
22 challenging year. There were many hard
23 decisions that were reviewed as part of that
24 process. Their dedication and careful

1 consideration of the needs of our town was
2 apparent in all our conversations in the last
3 few weeks as we considered this motion.

4 So as many of you may have heard at
5 the mini town meeting last week, the cuts
6 proposed by the finance and warrant committee
7 would result in a reduction of seven full-time
8 teachers in the areas of specials,
9 extracurricular programming, and academic
10 intervention.

11 Our proposal today would reverse that
12 reduction. These changes would result in a tax
13 increase of roughly \$44 per household next year,
14 but would allow our schools to retain these
15 teachers and academic programming.

16 Personally, as a parent of three kids
17 at Oakdale, I can speak to the vital importance
18 of these classes and these programs for our
19 kids. When I ask my kids about their day, all
20 three of them start their answers by telling me
21 what special they had that day, so what book Ms.
22 Dewitt helped them pick out in the library, what
23 song they're working on with Mr. M in music.
24 And these classes may not be considered core

1 academic programs, but they really are the heart
2 of how our children experience our schools. And
3 I urge our town meeting members to view them
4 that way.

5 So part of the situation we find
6 ourselves in is driven by the fact that DPS
7 faces several large one time cost increases
8 beyond their control this year. Among them are
9 extraordinary jumps in the cost of utilities for
10 our schools. The cost of electricity alone
11 increased by 100 percent year over year.

12 And another increase was a one time
13 above average tuition increase of 14 percent for
14 special needs students that receive services out
15 of district. So that impact alone was \$600,000
16 of additional cost in the budget.

17 It's really important to understand
18 that before this request came in to take at
19 another \$495,000 reduction, DPS worked
20 diligently with town management and the school
21 committee to make a first round of \$1.2 million
22 of budget cuts from their original budget --
23 level service budget proposal.

24 These initial cuts were painful, but

1 liveable. And just to say that again, because
2 the numbers I find a little confusing, the
3 amounts reflected in the town manager's budget
4 column of the warrant reflect programming that
5 has already been cut from level services by \$1.2
6 million. This first round of cuts included
7 reductions in administrative personnel,
8 materials, supplies, and professional
9 development training.

10 However, the FINCOM recommendation to
11 cut an additional \$495,000 will eliminate the
12 funding for seven student facing professionally
13 licensed educators and directly impact the
14 quality of education Dedham students receive in
15 these areas of specials, extracurricular
16 programming, and academic intervention.

17 This is a decision that's not easily
18 reversible, and it's not like putting off a
19 project or delaying the purchase of equipment.
20 Once we lose these great educators, they are
21 going to be gone.

22 **MS. RELYEA:** Thank you. So like many
23 of you guys are probably wondering right now,
24 the first question that we were asking is like

1 well, wait, is this really necessary? Can we
2 possibly just find the money somewhere else in
3 the school budget? It has to be there. But
4 Lindsay and I have spoken with our interim
5 superintendent directly, as well as several
6 other knowledgeable members of committees.

7 And we've investigated other avenues
8 for cuts, but we've really been assured that
9 everything that could be spared to avoid the
10 impact to student learning -- so things like
11 supplies, office admin, closing positions that
12 hadn't been filled yet -- these were already cut
13 in the initial 1.2 million.

14 So as a parent of elementary age
15 students who have suffered loss of learning time
16 through this pandemic, this is a tradeoff I fear
17 that we will regret. The pandemic impact of
18 student learning in Dedham is very real. If you
19 don't realize it, we're seeing it in our MCAS
20 scores. We are hearing reported delays of
21 executive function. We have record demand for
22 in school mental health services, which we
23 cannot accommodate, and we also have demand for
24 intervention support.

1 The Boston Globe actually recently
2 published a study that was run by Harvard and
3 Stanford, which is quantifying learning loss by
4 town, of which we are included, and shows that
5 students are still further behind than even
6 their parents realize. It's predicting that
7 Massachusetts students in this cohort are going
8 to experience a lifetime loss of earnings in
9 their future careers if this gap is not closed.

10 So what I want you to understand is
11 we have ground to make up, and now is not the
12 time to pull back programming that supports
13 academic intervention and engages students in
14 our schools.

15 In addition to the school performance
16 stats, the programs on the line here are
17 providing a critical outlet for relieving stress
18 and anxiety, also developing different modes of
19 intelligence for different learners. To
20 Lindsay's point, these are not nice to haves.
21 These are a core part of the educational
22 experience.

23 For some of us, the memory of
24 lockdown is starting to fade into the past, but

1 you might not realize that we're only just
2 getting back to normal and resuming the full
3 suite of programming that kids have missed out
4 on in the last few years. So it just really
5 breaks my heart to think about pulling these
6 opportunities away again -- we're talking about
7 band, we're talking about library time -- when
8 they so desperately need these things right now.

9 Investment in education is an
10 investment in our community, and it's one that
11 these kids more than deserve after what they've
12 been through. So please vote yes on our motion
13 to restore 495k to this DPS budget to retain
14 these seven student facing staff and specials,
15 academic intervention, and extracurricular
16 programming. We hope the town will see this as
17 a worthwhile investment to support our students,
18 our educators and our community.

19 And now I'd like to introduce a
20 graduate of Dedham Public Schools with a
21 personal perspective on this matter. Thanks,
22 Andrew.

23 **MR. CZAZASTY:** So first of all, I
24 want to thank the finance and warrant committee

1 for creating a conservative budget. I deeply
2 respect that. However, they trimmed too much
3 from the school department's request for my
4 liking.

5 So at mini town meeting last week,
6 the interim superintendent suggested that
7 without this 500,000, the school department
8 would be looking at cutting library programming
9 and performing arts programming. So I just
10 wanted to note the impact such cuts would have
11 on students.

12 So as many of you know, in the early
13 2000's, Dedham was the pinnacle of performing
14 arts in the region under the direction of then
15 fine arts director Joe Rogan and then the middle
16 school band director, Don Heald. If you just
17 look at the trophy case in this hallway here,
18 you'll see how large and accredited our
19 performing arts programs were, and Dedham was a
20 force to reckon with in higher division
21 competitions.

22 But in the early 2010's, Mr. Rogan
23 retired, Mr. Heald got sick, and the programs
24 collapsed, and the fine arts department took

1 about seven years to return to a fraction of
2 what it once was. And students are only in
3 Dedham Public Schools for 13 years, so seven
4 years to build up a program is a long time.

5 And I'm part of that transition. I
6 remember when I was a freshman at Dedham High
7 back in 2014, marching band was about half a
8 dozen members, and senior year the number
9 multiplied eightfold, and we were steadily
10 increasing our numbers and abilities, and the
11 future looked bright.

12 But then in 2019, the new fine arts
13 director retired, the middle school band
14 director went to a new district, and performing
15 arts were back to square one. And we're at the
16 point where bands didn't even perform at the
17 Flag Day parade last year. That's always been a
18 symbol of success for our town's fine arts, and
19 their absence shows how bad it's gotten.

20 It will likely take half a decade for
21 the fine arts department to reach where it was
22 circa 2016, and it will be a generation until we
23 can return to where we were pre-2010. However,
24 none of that will be possible if the schools

1 must cut this due to a lack of funding at this
2 critical point. So performing arts in Dedham is
3 at the brink of extinction right now.

4 Many students won't be able to
5 express their creativity if this cut goes
6 through. I can't tell you how many hundreds of
7 students have gone through this building and
8 found a home performing in the auditorium or in
9 the band room behind us.

10 Middle and high school students who
11 enjoy the performing arts are a large supportive
12 group. If we cut this funding, we'll have
13 dozens of students entering middle school each
14 year who don't have a feeling of belonging.

15 As I'm sure you will all remember
16 from your middle school days or your children's
17 middle school experience, finding that niche is
18 vital at that age and has a significant impact
19 on one's mental health. For those concerned
20 with test scores, how can a student perform well
21 on a test if they don't enjoy school?

22 Studies show that students involved
23 in high quality music programs perform better
24 academically. If you notice, every graduation

1 three students get to speak: the class
2 president, the valedictorian, and the
3 salutatorian. I want you to keep an eye out
4 during those speeches. Every year at least one
5 student involved in performing arts at Dedham
6 Public Schools is one of those speakers. It's
7 the case every single year.

8 These cuts would come out of
9 elementary schools first, and elementary school
10 is where students first gain this experience as
11 they learn what they like. It isn't easy to get
12 students to pick up new extracurriculars in
13 middle school, and if they aren't at least in
14 the beginning band by the sixth grade, good luck
15 trying to get them into the program in seventh
16 or eighth grade.

17 In high school, they require students
18 -- for a high school band, they require students
19 to have previous musical experience, so if we
20 have cuts in the earlier years, that will come
21 back to bite when these kids get a little bit
22 older.

23 Now let's discuss the impact of
24 cutting our school's library services. So it's

1 no secret that kids are not reading as much as
2 they used to. I mean, many people here have
3 questioned how to get kids to read more, and I
4 can tell you what won't solve the problem is
5 cutting library personnel.

6 And it's more than just reading. Our
7 school librarians act as the defacto tech gurus
8 keeping students and teachers up to date with
9 technology that enhances the classroom
10 experience and helps students better understand
11 the subject matter.

12 So if you cut school libraries,
13 you're also cutting technological advancements
14 in the schools. Students must understand
15 computer science and research methods to succeed
16 in higher education and careers, and that
17 teaching can't start in high school. This must
18 begin at their elementary schools.

19 If students don't have this
20 continuous service throughout their 12 years,
21 they'll be disadvantaged when they get to
22 college. So for the advancement of the next
23 generation of students, and for the sake of our
24 school's programs and something our whole town

1 can be proud of, I'd urge you to vote for this
2 motion.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** The Chair recognizes
4 Cecilia Emery Butler.

5 **MS. BUTLER:** Well, I certainly feel
6 like Debbie downer. My name is Cecilia Emery
7 Butler, and I am a town meeting rep from
8 District 4.

9 I prepared a sheet of paper with
10 information about pupil spending in Dedham and
11 nearby towns. You should have received it when
12 you signed it. Across the top it says "How Does
13 Dedham School Spending Compare With Nearby
14 Towns?" I compiled this because I wanted to see
15 how Dedham is spending compared to others.

16 This information came from the
17 Massachusetts Department of Education website
18 for the year '21 -- 2021, 2022. The current
19 year is not available yet. Please refer to the
20 third row in the table. It shows that Dedham
21 has 2,549 in district students, spent an average
22 of \$22,790 per student, had an operating budget
23 of \$58 million, operated seven school buildings,
24 and had a teacher/student ratio of one to 11.2.

1 When compared to nearby towns,
2 several points came to my attention. I list
3 them on the comments section under the table.
4 For example, Dedham's per pupil spending is the
5 second highest. Only Wellesley exceeds Dedham.
6 Dedham's enrollment is about the same as Foxboro
7 and Medfield, all about 2,500, yet Dedham spends
8 \$11.7 and \$14.1 million more than those
9 communities. Canton's enrollment is about 24
10 percent greater than Dedham, and it spends 59.7
11 million. Essentially the same as Dedham that
12 spent 58 million.

13 Please note that the DOE includes
14 expenses like the amount Dedham pays for health
15 insurance for the school department employees.
16 For example, the fiscal year '24 expense for
17 health insurance is 13.5 million, and it is
18 found on Budget Line 141 on Page 11. This
19 includes all school department and town staff,
20 but is not broken down for town meeting, but the
21 Department of Ed does break that down.

22 It seems to me that other communities
23 have figured out ways to operate their schools
24 for less, and the Dedham School Committee should

1 look carefully to these other towns for ideas on
2 how to operate Dedham schools. I respectfully
3 urge you to help Dedham taxpayers and vote
4 against the substitute motion, and vote for the
5 finance and warrant committee's motion. Thank
6 you.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
8 Butler. The Chair recognizes Mr. Delloiacono.

9 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** Thank you, Mr.
10 Moderator, members of town meeting. This is
11 Carmen Delloiacono, Precinct 4.

12 Mr. Moderator, first off, I'd like to
13 say thank you for keeping up the tradition of
14 having the prayer before town meeting. I think
15 it was very nice tonight to see Father Steve,
16 and I really appreciate the fact you're moving
17 forward with that tradition.

18 On this particular article, it's --
19 well, it was changed. I shouldn't say article.
20 The due diligence has been done with this with
21 respective members of FINCOM. They went through
22 the town manager's budget numbers, they looked
23 at it, they did the homework, they came back
24 with the recommendation.

1 I understand, and I could feel the
2 passion about funding the difference, I really
3 do, but it's not that it's tightening the belt.
4 The recommendation is put forward. In the past,
5 it's always had -- you have to identify where
6 you're getting the money. Has that changed, Mr.
7 Moderator, or is it just flatly taxes will
8 increase 40-something dollars?

9 **THE MODERATOR:** That rule of the
10 meeting has stopped now for several years
11 because we are far enough below the Prop 2 ½
12 levy limit to allow town meeting to exercise its
13 prerogatives without hitting the limit.

14 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** I wanted to hear
15 that. Thank you. That was my point. It is \$44
16 in the past, this town meeting. Other town
17 meetings have battled over \$22, \$28 of adding
18 for school science labs, it's only this, it's
19 only that.

20 I understand it's seven jobs. Due
21 diligence, again, has been done. Contracts have
22 been signed. Will the contracts that have just
23 been signed recently cause another seven jobs
24 the next time, I'm not too sure about that, but

1 it has to start somewhere, and this is where.
2 It has to start with this budget that's proposed
3 tonight. To keep it even keeled, I would
4 recommend and suggest that we support the
5 FINCOM'S recommendation. Thank you.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
7 Delloiacono. Dr. Pearrow.

8 **DR. PEARROW:** Hi. My name is Melissa
9 Pearrow. I'm from Precinct 2. I'm also a
10 former school committee member.

11 What I want to add to this
12 conversation is that our school committee has
13 already done a very careful and diligent review.
14 I want to commend the school committee because
15 all the (inaudible) funds that came in, none of
16 them were used for our current staffing. It's
17 only been used for the learning loss that our
18 students have experienced. And we know that
19 that loss has been significant, not just for our
20 community, but for all communities. So this is
21 an unusual time for our community to have the
22 opportunity to fully support our students.

23 The part I want to add, though, is
24 that 14 percent at a district cost increase,

1 that was for every district in the Commonwealth,
2 and that added up to a total of 1 percent on top
3 of every town's budget.

4 So the fact that our budget is losing
5 less than half of that percent -- they have made
6 cuts, they have made very hard decisions about
7 how to do the budget and move forward, and I
8 would please ask that you support this
9 additional motion to return this funding to
10 schools so we can keep the staffing for our
11 students.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Dr.
13 Pearrow. The Chair recognizes Mr. Preston from
14 the finance and warrant committee.

15 **MR. PRESTON:** Thank you, Mr.
16 Moderator. Kevin Preston, finance and warrant
17 committee, Precinct 2.

18 I actually rise just to clarify one
19 point. There seems to be a misunderstanding
20 that the finance and warrant committee is
21 recommending that seven positions be eliminated
22 or that certain programs be cut. That is
23 absolutely not the case.

24 That is the case with respect to

1 everything that we recommend on the town side of
2 the budget. If we go -- if you look at the
3 numbered line items, there are more than 100
4 line items that specify what particular things
5 will be funded and what won't be funded. That's
6 decidedly not the case with the school side.

7 The only thing that the finance and
8 warrant committee recommended if you look at
9 Line 73 is that the original request for 7
10 percent increase in the budget be reduced to 5.9
11 percent. If that figure is -- the 5.9 percent
12 is appropriated, it is entirely within the
13 discretion of the school committee and the
14 superintendent to decide how best to achieve
15 those cuts.

16 The finance and warrant committee and
17 this town meeting have absolutely no input into
18 what decision they make. So if they can find
19 other ways -- and they haven't had a lot of time
20 to study this, obviously. If they can find
21 other ways to achieve that level of a 5.9
22 percent increase in a less painful way, they're
23 entirely within their rights and duty, I would
24 suggest, to do so, and I'm sure that they will.

1 Thank you.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
3 Preston. Ms. Carney.

4 **MS. CARNEY:** Let me preface my
5 remarks by saying personally, when it comes to
6 spending money, my top two priorities -- number
7 one is health, number 2 is education. So I have
8 a very high regard for education.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Sue, just identify
10 yourself.

11 **MS. CARNEY:** Oh, I'm sorry.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** We have a lot of new
13 folks here today.

14 **MS. CARNEY:** I'm sorry. I'm Sue
15 Carney from Precinct 7.

16 Now, back, I guess, it was in March,
17 the board of selectmen had a gentleman who came
18 from the Collins Center who came before the
19 board of selectmen, and he was putting forth
20 some indication of how we spend money, and he
21 made reference to the fact that in looking
22 through the budgets of Dedham, he found -- now,
23 this is -- I forget the gentleman's name, but we
24 had a contract with him to give us a proposal on

1 how we could have a financial plan to move
2 forward.

3 And he made the remark that the Town
4 of Dedham seems to be able to be guaranteed that
5 3 percent increase in our income annually was
6 pretty realistic, but he also said that when he
7 looked at the picture, we were spending more
8 than we were taking in.

9 Now, he did specifically mention --
10 welcome Mrs. Murphy, the school department. He
11 specifically mentioned that it appeared that the
12 school department was getting 4 ½ to 5 percent
13 increase annually. Ladies and gentlemen, I
14 spent my whole career in education, and I was
15 involved in more budgets than I care to think
16 of.

17 When a school system, in good times
18 or bad, gets 4 ½ to 5 percent annually, there
19 would be a lot of school systems that would be
20 dancing in the street for that. That's a very
21 high annual increase.

22 And the man from the Collins Center
23 pointed out to us you have 3 percent that you
24 can guarantee coming in, and yet -- and not just

1 the school department, ladies and gentlemen, but
2 he looked, and he said the school department
3 annually has been getting 4 ½ to 5 percent. He
4 said you can't sustain that, and he's right.

5 We can't continue to spend more than
6 we're taking in. Somehow we've been trying to
7 do it, and we've made ourselves work through it,
8 but the school committee this year has gone
9 through hell and high water -- excuse me. The
10 finance committee this year has gone through
11 hell and high waters, pardon my French.

12 And so I say when you look at this,
13 for a 6.95 proposal to come forward from the
14 school department, understand that there would
15 be school systems that would be absolutely
16 awestruck to get that kind of an increase. Do I
17 believe in strong educational programs, yes, I
18 do, but I also know that money isn't always the
19 answer.

20 So I'd like to have two questions
21 answered by either a member of the school
22 administration or the school committee. Number
23 one would be is this 495,000 lower than what was
24 requested going to create a loss of an academic

1 program, and number two, is it going to create a
2 significant negative impact on the class size.
3 Because for a very long time, Dedham has enjoyed
4 a very, very advantageous class size. And I'm
5 not minimizing that, but I'm also knowing that
6 when you take 60 children, and you make four
7 classes of 15 fairly routinely, and they have
8 certainly been doing that in the past, it's okay
9 to have 20 children in a classroom.

10 So I'm saying if they can answer
11 those two questions for me -- will it create a
12 loss in a program or will it detrimentally
13 affect an increase in class size -- other than
14 that, I think we should honor the recommendation
15 of the finance committee and go with their
16 original recommendation. Thank you very much.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
18 Carney. Dr. Kelly, do you want to address those
19 questions?

20 **DR. KELLY:** I do. Thank you, Mr.
21 Moderator. Ian Kelly, interim superintendent.
22 Ms. Carney, thank you for the question.

23 To your first question -- I believe
24 it was the class size, or was that the program

1 elimination?

2 **MS. CARNEY:** The program.

3 **DR. KELLY:** So this would impact
4 programs across the seven schools. It would not
5 eliminate any co-curricular programs, but it
6 would have an impact on those programs. And
7 again, academic intervention, art, music, PE,
8 and library would be where those seven
9 (inaudible) would be coming from. Second
10 question, class size, this would not increase
11 class size in any way.

12 **MS. CARNEY:** Thank you.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Dr. Kelly.
14 Mr. Maher.

15 **MR. MAHER:** James Maher, Precinct 5.
16 The first question I have is past 100 (?)
17 because I had a question about utilities. Are
18 utilities under the facilities department or
19 under the school department, because I'm trying
20 to figure out if the utilities are impacting the
21 school budget based on what I'm reading here.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** I see your connection
23 there. Dr. Kelly. So your question is is the
24 cost of utilities contributing to the school

1 department's --

2 **MR. MAHER:** Based on what I'm reading
3 here in the substitute motion that the cost of
4 utilities spike, which did go up in Article
5 [sic] 100 for the facilities department.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** So are they in the
7 school department budget is really what you're
8 asking.

9 **MR. MAHER:** They're not in the
10 budget.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** That's your question?

12 **MR. MAHER:** Yes.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Don't let me put
14 words in your mouth, but it sounds like that's
15 your question.

16 **MR. MAHER:** Yeah.

17 **DR. KELLY:** So the school facilities
18 is its own facilities budget. And yes, so those
19 costs -- those utility increases are reflected
20 in that. So under Line 73 is where we bring
21 Line 100 and the school facilities over to bring
22 us to the total request for the school system.

23 So again, looking at the FY '24 level
24 service, 50,786,550, and then the school

1 facilities, 485,609, we get the total request.
2 So that roughly \$360,000 increase for utilities
3 is reflected in the facilities portion of the
4 school department budget.

5 **MR. MAHER:** But it's not part of the
6 school budget, it's part of the facilities
7 budget, which was fully funded by the finance
8 committee, correct?

9 **DR. KELLY:** Let me flip over.
10 There's a slight reduction, if I recall. Yes,
11 about \$120,00 reduction to the facilities
12 department.

13 **MR. MAHER:** So the school budget now,
14 is there an area -- because we can't see it
15 because it's hundreds of pages long -- is there
16 an area in the budget that was cut by \$400,000
17 because of utilities?

18 **DR. KELLY:** Not in Line 73.

19 **MR. MAHER:** That's what I thought. I
20 just want to clarify that an impact on utilities
21 did not impact the school budget because it is a
22 separate line item as part of our budget
23 process, is that correct, beyond -- and the
24 finance committee?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Goodwin.

MR. GOODWIN: I guess to answer that question simply, when we look at the school budget, we look at it in a combined manner, so that's when we're talking about a 6.9 percent increase, it did include the facilities line under schools, which did include the utility increase. But as far as Line 73 is concerned, it does not include the utilities because they're separated out in this line item budget.

MR. MAHER: Clarification. I'd like to get some clarification how we're actually going to fund this substitute motion. Originally when I was contacted, I was told it was coming out of free cash, but now I'm being told it's going to be an actual tax increase. Could someone clarify that for me?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Arnett.

MR. ARNETT: John Arnett, director of finance. Can everybody hear me okay? So the increase in this line would have a direct impact on the levy as you're going to increase the total expenditures, so it would be an automatic increase to the levy. So it would be directly

1 impacted to the taxes.

2 **MR. MAHER:** Thank you. Lastly, as a
3 parent of a Dedham High student who was in arts
4 and drama and was impacted when the school
5 department cut a class on their own and took out
6 an option for him to go on to music therapy as a
7 class -- excuse me, music theory as a class,
8 which he needed for his music therapy graduate,
9 I'm one of those parents that was impacted in
10 student school committee meeting and during --
11 and sat for three hours until the end of the
12 meeting to discuss the fact that they were
13 taking opportunity away from a number of
14 children who had a severe interest in music
15 going forward at the collegiate level.

16 And I just want to make sure that
17 we're making the right decision for our
18 children. But I also want to make sure that all
19 of the information is getting out there on what
20 the real impact is. And I know that the school
21 budget, once they get approval tonight, they can
22 change everything that they got approved through
23 the finance committee. Once it's approved, it's
24 approved as a lump sum, and they can change any

1 of the directives that they presented to the
2 finance committee and to the town manager
3 because it's now their budget. It's no longer
4 the town's budget. Thank you.

5 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr. Maher.
6 Ms. Gilbert.

7 **MS. GILBERT:** Mary Gilbert, Precinct
8 4.

9 I struggle a little bit with this
10 because I do have sympathy for the potential
11 programs that are supposed to be being cut. But
12 I attended many of these financial committee
13 meetings. I saw the in depth analysis, and none
14 of these recommendations came by easily.

15 I think we need to understand going
16 forward -- people are saying it's only \$44 to
17 our tax bill. Well, this is FY '24. In FY '25,
18 we have a significant hole in our budget that
19 we, as a town -- town meeting members -- and
20 residents -- are going to have to deal with.

21 That is something that we have to
22 take in consideration when we talk about
23 increasing this budget by 495. I am not in
24 favor of the substitute motion because I

1 appreciate the programs and what they're talking
2 about. But I believe, based on Mr. Maher's
3 comment, once they get this budget, they can
4 make a decision not to make cuts to these
5 programs.

6 They seem to -- and I don't mean to
7 put it down. They go for easy low hanging
8 fruit. There's no reason necessarily to try to
9 get people revved up about we're going to cut
10 the singing, the library. I don't know,
11 ultimately that would be the decision of the
12 schools, but I think the parents should insist
13 you've got this budget, do not cut those
14 programs.

15 I think that if the parents put
16 pressure on like that, they will not cut these
17 programs. And again, be aware that we have a
18 significant hole in our budget coming up in FY
19 '25, and we also have a school coming online
20 probably within 18 months. Now, that's going to
21 be a significant perhaps 30-year loan that we
22 have to pay off.

23 And one final point. I sympathize
24 with -- you know, the budget had a one-time hit

1 -- you know, the utilities. I can't imagine any
2 resident that hasn't had this hit to their
3 utilities, to their food bill. \$44 seems
4 minimal. I can tell you that from what I've
5 heard back from my constituents, significantly
6 more they pay to on their electric and their
7 food bills, etcetera.

8 We have to start curbing our
9 expenses, and this is a very small price, in a
10 sense, to give. I support the article for the
11 financial committee. I do not support, and I
12 respectfully ask that the rest of town meeting
13 come along and support the original motion.
14 Thank you.

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
16 Gilbert. Mr. Chapdelaine.

17 **MR. CHAPDELAINÉ:** Thank you, Mr.
18 Moderator. Adam Chapdelaine, Precinct 1.

19 I have a few comments I want to make,
20 but before I make those comments, I want to
21 thank the finance and warrant committee, school
22 committee, town administration, school
23 administration, because regardless of the
24 outcome of this debate tonight, very hard

1 decisions were made. A lot of thought went into
2 this, and I think it's important to recognize
3 all of that good work.

4 But I rise tonight in support of the
5 substitute motion as presented by the
6 proponents, and I want to lay out really three
7 things in regards to why I'm supportive.

8 I want to talk a little bit about the
9 comparative tax burden when we look at Dedham
10 and its neighboring or nearby or similar
11 communities, I want to talk a little bit about
12 budget process, and I want to talk about why I
13 think this is important to me, but also likely
14 important to other parents of Dedham Public
15 School students who are here tonight.

16 In terms of comparative tax burden, I
17 know there has been a lot of talk over the past
18 couple of years, and certainly during this past
19 election season, about Dedham's tax burden, and
20 it's a real thing. Property taxes are a
21 regressive form of taxation. Survey, after
22 survey, after survey across the nation shows
23 that property taxes are the most hated form of
24 taxes.

1 So we're not unique in that, right?
2 It's very normal actually that property taxes
3 are looked -- or frowned upon, and that's why
4 Prop 2 ½ went in place. That's why across the
5 country in the late '70s and early '80s, laws
6 like Proposition 2 ½ went in place, to try to
7 control the property tax.

8 But it's helpful, I think, to look at
9 perspective. So I took a look at the average
10 single-family tax bill as a percentage of
11 household income, and I look at that as an
12 ability to pay metric because basically it's
13 measuring what the tax burden is in Dedham up
14 against what people's ability to pay is.

15 And I looked at Westwood, Needham,
16 Canton, Norwood, Foxboro, Natick, and Walpole.
17 I didn't use any science to pick those
18 communities, other than that they're nearby, and
19 I think I've seen some of them on lists that
20 others have used as comparable communities for
21 Dedham.

22 And when you look at that, Dedham is
23 actually just a little bit better than the
24 middle in terms of the average single-family tax

1 bill as a percentage of household income. We
2 have a lower percentage than Norwood, Foxboro,
3 Natick, and Walpole, only slightly higher than
4 Canton, and a couple of points higher than
5 Westwood and Needham. And I think what that
6 demonstrates is though the burden can be very
7 real for individuals trying to pay that tax bill
8 ever year, we're not out of line. We have a
9 fair level of taxation as compared to our peers.

10 So I don't offer that tonight
11 thinking I will change the mind of anybody who
12 is feeling stressed by their property tax
13 payment, but I hope sharing that analysis can
14 help those who are here tonight concerned about
15 those to better understand that there is not an
16 undue or disproportionate burden that's
17 occurring here in Dedham.

18 The next point I want to make is
19 about process. I know that the school committee
20 worked very hard in cooperation with town
21 administration to reduce \$1.2 million from their
22 FY '24 proposed budget, and I know there was a
23 lot of hard decisions that were involved in
24 that.

1 That wound up having the town manager
2 recommend a budget for the finance committee,
3 and then the finance committee did their due
4 diligence and ultimately made a decision, I
5 believe in late March or early April, to
6 recommend this cut. And unfortunately -- and
7 some of this falls on me and others who are just
8 getting caught up on things -- a lot of this
9 didn't come to light until just about a week ago
10 at mini town meeting, and it's forced many of us
11 to have what is a pretty strained or
12 controversial debate tonight.

13 And what I would argue for, again,
14 whether or not this motion is successful
15 tonight, is in the future to use that long range
16 model that was referenced by a prior speaker
17 developed by the Collins Center and think about
18 putting together a process where members of the
19 finance committee, members of the select board,
20 the school committee, school administration, and
21 town administration work over the course of the
22 fall, look at the long-term picture, understand
23 what those future pitfalls are, and develop
24 budget guidelines so that the town manager and

1 the school superintendent can build a budget
2 that conforms with preset budgetary guidelines
3 as set by the leadership elected and appointed
4 of this town.

5 And that would give all of us more
6 time to socialize, understand, and potentially
7 advocate for changes instead of feeling like we
8 needed to rush between mini town meeting and
9 tonight to advocate to protect some of these
10 core services that have been outlined.

11 But the final point I want to make is
12 really why I think this is important. And I
13 used to work in town government, and often when
14 school folks would be advocating for more money,
15 I would wonder, man, why are people so
16 passionate about this, why is everybody so upset
17 or agitated about school cuts. And this was
18 before I either had children or had school aged
19 children, and I now have children, one at the
20 ECEC, one at the Riverdale.

21 And as I think about it, I better
22 understand that every parent's child is only in
23 kindergarten once and then first grade once, and
24 so on and so forth. So for that year, that one

1 year that your kid's in kindergarten, they don't
2 get that service, they don't get that special --
3 they don't get that librarian, they don't get
4 that special attention. That's forever lost.
5 It can be replaced in a subsequent budget, but
6 your student, your kid, didn't get that benefit.

7 So I think that's why it's so
8 important as we continue to work through some of
9 the challenges, some of the tax burden
10 challenges, the process challenges that have
11 been described here tonight, that we think about
12 protecting what's provided to the students in
13 the Dedham Public Schools. So for those
14 reasons, I ask those here tonight to vote in
15 favor of the substitute motion.

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
17 Chapdelaine.

18 Welcome. I know this is your first
19 town meeting. I don't know your name.

20 **MS. SCHELL:** Well, hi. I'm Ashley
21 Schell from Precinct 2.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Welcome.

23 **MS. SCHELL:** Thank you. So I just
24 want to speak out. I am in favor of the

1 substitute motion being presented, and I want to
2 say how much support, obviously, we know the
3 schools and teachers deserve, which I think we
4 can all agree upon. It was evident coming out
5 of the pandemic.

6 I am both a Riverdale parent and a
7 volunteer in the school library, so I've
8 witnessed benefits that are art, library, music,
9 PE intervention, all these teachers provide to
10 the kids. We know that the kids need breaks
11 from the traditional classroom setting.

12 Reducing their time in PE, whether they're not
13 -- where they're usually getting out energy and
14 also problem solving with their classmates, loss
15 of that time would deprive them of important
16 social development. Taking time away from art
17 and music would cut down on creative outlets
18 that kids have, which are desperately needed as
19 the stress increases in other areas.

20 But specifically, I want to speak to
21 the hour I spend every week at the Riverdale
22 Library, yes, checking out books and shelving
23 them, but also, I've listened to the lessons
24 that are being taught by the amazing librarian

1 there.

2 Of course, there's what you'd expect:
3 lessons on nonfiction, fiction, women's history
4 month, and what have you. But the students are
5 also being taught to be aware, for example, of
6 their digital footprint and what their internet
7 activity means for them, not just now, but as
8 they go out and try to find jobs or get into
9 schools.

10 They're also learning how to identify
11 credible sources for projects, how they can sift
12 through the vast quantity of information that
13 their generation is being bombarded with and
14 know what to rely upon. These are the skills
15 that they'll need, not just as students, but as
16 adults. And if we reduce the amount of library
17 time that these kids get, it is going to impact
18 them, not only now in their childhood, but for
19 years to come.

20 I implore each and every one of you
21 to think about the long-term effects of the
22 reduction of seven teachers and what that will
23 mean to the kids who have already gone through
24 so much throughout this pandemic. Let's give

1 them more opportunities, not less. Thank you.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
3 Schell. Ms. Daly. I've kind of figured out
4 who's next here.

5 **MS. DALY:** I'm Vivian Daly, Precinct
6 2, and I am a graduate of Dedham High School,
7 Class of 2009.

8 So I am in favor of the substitute
9 motion to maintain the originally proposed
10 budget for the Dedham Public Schools, and I
11 wanted to just speak a bit about why that is.
12 Our interim superintendent has made it very
13 clear that extracurriculars will be impacted by
14 this, such as libraries and band, and I want to
15 provide some perspective about what that may
16 mean for your children.

17 I don't have children, but I moved to
18 Dedham in the sixth grade, and the library in
19 the middle school was my after school program.
20 Both my parents worked, and I'd go there every
21 day after school until 3:30 or 4:00 when my mom
22 picked me up. It's also where I met my best
23 friend who was my maid of honor, and whose
24 wedding I'll be in later on this year.

1 These are lifelong friendships that
2 your kids could be making. It's amazing to hear
3 about how kids are learning about their digital
4 footprints, but also think about the
5 relationships that they're making in the
6 library. I also did color guard, so I was in
7 the state championship color guard and marching
8 band for multiple years, and those are still my
9 best friends to this day.

10 So these aren't just skills that your
11 kids could be learning, but these are
12 relationships that could be lost if impacts to
13 these programs are made. And by impacts, I
14 think that means reductions, as this is a
15 reduction in the budget. So I'm in favor of the
16 substitute motion, and I encourage other
17 parents, town meeting members, Dedham residents
18 to vote in favor of it, as well.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms. Daly.
20 Ms. Stephens, thank you for your patience.

21 **MS. STEPHENS:** So I'm Ann Stephens.
22 I'm from Precinct 6.

23 I'd like to say, first off, that I'm
24 also a graduate of the Dedham Public Schools,

1 but it was a little bit before 2009. I'd also
2 like to say that -- I was going to say all of
3 these things that have already been covered. So
4 I did have a lot more to say when I originally
5 got up to speak, but I won't bore you guys with
6 that.

7 I will say that after mini town
8 meeting, I walked outside, and I was just really
9 considering what the impact of the loss of seven
10 full-time employees would look like, and it
11 devastated me. Many of the things that Andrew
12 had mentioned when he was up there definitely
13 came to mind. I have children all over the
14 place. I've got one at the high school, I've
15 got one at the middle school, I've got one at
16 Avery --

17 **THE MODERATOR:** I'm glad you
18 clarified that.

19 **MS. STEPHENS:** -- one will be at the
20 ECEC, not next year, but the year after. So I'm
21 in this for the long haul. And I do spend also
22 a lot of time volunteering at the schools, and I
23 see firsthand what the educators that are in
24 jeopardy of losing their jobs do on a daily

1 basis. It is invaluable.

2 And given that we don't expect a lot
3 of these budgetary increases to be ongoing, I
4 don't think that I can justify voting to cut
5 these positions. And we have been told that
6 ultimately, that's what will happen.

7 Did anybody go to Spongebob this past
8 weekend? So at the cast party, they went around
9 from student to student, and they asked each
10 person to share a positive shout out with
11 another member of the cast or crew. So just
12 think about that. Like first of all, what an
13 impactful way to build people up. Middle
14 schoolers really need that. And that was all
15 thanks to the music and art teachers, along with
16 a lot of the other supportive staff members.

17 The Avery Institute is the
18 programming for summer that serves as basically
19 a camp for the month of July for many first
20 through fifth graders here in Dedham. Basically
21 the librarians, the art teachers, the music
22 teachers, phys ed teachers, they all run
23 programs each week, and they are always the most
24 popular and the first to fill up.

1 After school enrichment is another
2 way that these particular staff members
3 contribute. The Avery School offered four
4 spring enrichment options for students. Three
5 of the four were run by the librarian and the
6 physical education teacher.

7 I attended the school committee on
8 November 2, where the Metro West survey results
9 highlighted that one of the biggest issues with
10 students in Dedham was that they don't have a
11 sense of belonging. COVID certainly didn't help
12 with that. And kids that have that sense of
13 belonging are going to be more successful and
14 are going to be better prepared to be good
15 citizens.

16 The programming provided by the staff
17 that is in danger of being cut is vital to the
18 sense of belonging for a lot of students. So I
19 am in favor of the substitute motion, and I urge
20 you all to vote with me.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you very much.
22 Thank you for your patience, as well.

23 **MS. HOWARD-KARP:** Marisa Howard-Karp,
24 Precinct 3.

1 Those of us who know Ann Stephens
2 know that she generally deserves the last word.
3 So I'd like to absolutely move the question.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** So moving the
5 question is a vote that the body takes. The
6 body has to decide to cut off debate. It
7 requires a two-thirds vote. So yes means cut
8 off debate; no means no. Let's try a voice
9 vote. We're going to try it. All those in
10 favor, say aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 **THE MODERATOR:** No.

13 (No.)

14 **THE MODERATOR:** The ayes clearly have
15 a two-thirds vote. So the vote now comes on the
16 -- so what you're voting on is the substitute
17 motion. You're voting on the higher number. So
18 if you're in favor of the higher number, you
19 vote yes. If you're not, vote no.

20 The original motion of the finance
21 and warrant committee is always the standing
22 motion we vote on. If there's an amendment to
23 that motion, you vote on the amendment first to
24 see whether you want to substitute it for the

1 original motion.

2 So if the substitute passes, then
3 that's the law of the land. If it fails, then
4 we will go back and vote on what the finance and
5 warrant committee has recommended. So if you're
6 in favor of the proposal to add money back,
7 that's a yes. If you're not in favor, that's a
8 no. It's important that that be clear. Don't
9 be afraid to ask if you're not sure. Are you
10 sure, Mark? You're nodding your head there --
11 okay, he's sure.

12 The vote is open. On your electronic
13 indicators, please vote green for yes or red for
14 no.

15 The voting is closed. 164 town
16 meeting representatives having voted in the
17 affirmative, and 79 in the negative, the
18 substitute motion does pass.

19 Move to Line 88, rubbish and
20 recycling. Ms. Gilbert.

21 **MS. GILBERT:** Just a clarification.
22 Mary Gilbert, Precinct 4. So there are going to
23 be cuts in the pickup of the rubbish. Is it
24 rubbish or yard refuse? So I'd like that

1 clarification. I believe it's yard refuse.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Goodwin.

3 **MR. GOODWIN:** Thank you, Mr.

4 Moderator, Ms. Gilbert, town manager. This
5 would be a reduction to the yard waste budget,
6 which is included in the overall rubbish and
7 recycling budget, and this is part of the 5 --
8 or \$495,000 decrease that was approved by the
9 finance and warrant committee.

10 So within that would be a \$253,071.50
11 reduction to rubbish and recycling, which would
12 reduce the leaf pickup in town. We're working
13 on the exact numbers, but it would take it from
14 the current number of 34 down to something
15 significantly less than that in the 12- to 14-
16 week range.

17 **MS. GILBERT:** That was my question.

18 I last heard when I was at the meeting it was 12
19 weeks. So the clarification I want, is that six
20 weeks in the fall, six weeks in the spring? How
21 are you doing that, is it A week, B week; is it
22 three and three? What's going to happen,
23 because that's going to be very noticeable to
24 the resident.

1 **MR. GOODWIN:** So the public works
2 director is still working with our vendor on
3 that. It probably won't be exactly evenly
4 divided. We're going to try and do it in the
5 least impactful way possible, cutting out the
6 service in the middle of the summer when the
7 least number of people use it and trying to time
8 it so that we get the most leaves in the spring
9 and the most leaves in the fall to at least
10 impact the residents.

11 **MS. GILBERT:** And one more question.
12 So this is, again, for fiscal year '24?

13 **MR. GOODWIN:** That's correct.

14 **MS. GILBERT:** So that goes from
15 January to June of next --

16 **MR. GOODWIN:** That goes from July 1.

17 **MS. GILBERT:** Excuse me, yeah, July
18 to June?

19 **MR. GOODWIN:** That's correct.

20 **MS. GILBERT:** So fiscal '25, we're
21 going to start discussions on that budget, and
22 you're going to see -- is this an experiment to
23 see how we work this, and if town -- if
24 residents start saying I've got 50 bags of

1 leaves, I can't handle this anymore, you will
2 listen and perhaps amend that, or not? That's
3 my question. Thank you.

4 **MR. GOODWIN:** We're always opening to
5 listening.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Chief Driscoll.

7 **CHIEF DRISCOLL:** Jim Driscoll,
8 Precinct 4.

9 If the yard waste is cut, is there
10 going to be an option where residents can take
11 the additional yard waste that isn't picked up
12 and take it someplace to dispose of it?

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Goodwin.

14 **MR. GOODWIN:** I'm tempted to make Joe
15 walk all the way from the back there down to the
16 front here, but I'm not going to.
17 Unfortunately, we don't have a drop-off location
18 for yard waste as of this time. There are
19 private services that are available that I know
20 that other communities do offer. We're trying
21 to avoid that, again trying to be strategic and
22 figure out the weeks that would be most
23 impactful and important for our residents. So I
24 guess the answer to that question is there is

1 not a drop-off location.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Any other questions?
3 If not, the vote comes on the original motion,
4 as published on Page 9 in this last column. All
5 those in favor, please say aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
8 ayes have it. Mr. Maher, are we finished with
9 Line Item 100?

10 **MR. MAHER:** Yes.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. All those
12 in favor of the original motion on Line Item
13 100, please say aye.

14 (Aye.)

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
16 ayes have it. Thank you.

17 Line Item 118 on Page 10 under
18 Veterans Services. Ann Mercer. Ms. Mercer.

19 **MS. MERCER:** I couldn't give up my
20 chance to get to the microphone.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** You're not going to
22 talk about the (inaudible), right?

23 **MS. MERCER:** No, no, I know. I mean,
24 I'm going to make something up now. No, I was

1 just curious as to why there was such a big
2 drop-off in the expenditures versus past years.
3 It's the veterans. You want to make sure
4 they're not getting poked.

5 **MR. HAMILTON:** Great question. Joe
6 Hamilton, Dedham VSO. That cut came out of our
7 Chapter 115 program as a state funded program,
8 and it follows the federal poverty line.

9 So essentially, to be a recipient,
10 you have to be the veteran or the widow or
11 widower of a veteran who's not remarried. And
12 at that point, the state reimburses the town 75
13 percent of what we pay out, and the numbers now,
14 which is not a bad thing -- 115 numbers are
15 somewhat down, and we're hoping that's because
16 people are doing okay -- so that money that
17 could have been cut from the budget will not
18 affect any veterans at all in Dedham.

19 **MS. MERCER:** Thank you.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
21 Hamilton. Any other discussion? The vote then
22 comes on the original motion for Line 118. All
23 those in favor, say aye.

24 (Aye.)

1 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
2 eyes have it. Thank you.

3 That concludes our consideration of
4 Article 3, which is the operating budget. Now
5 we're moving to the capital budget, which is
6 Article 4. And Mr. Goodwin, maybe it would help
7 if you explained. We just have a couple of
8 small changes here from what's published in the
9 book -- or Mr. Arnett, whichever.

10 **MR. ARNETT:** John Arnett, director of
11 finance. So what you'll see here, there's only
12 a couple of small changes to this schedule that
13 you'll see here. Again, this goes through the
14 deliberations through CEC. The department
15 requests the CEC, the town manager, and then the
16 finance and warrant committee.

17 The small change that you'll see is
18 in Line 19, vehicle replacement, as part of the
19 cuts that we are looking at for that 1 percent
20 on the town side. This was part of that.
21 They're just replacement -- they're rolling
22 stock for the vehicles. We could forego that
23 one more year, so that was removed.

24 Another small change, which is Item

1 Number 41, Colburn Street traffic calming, the
2 survey that went out -- this was part of this
3 whole process. We put it in there for approval.
4 However, part of that survey came back, did not
5 meet the requirements for it, so it couldn't
6 move forward. So hence why you're seeing the
7 reduction there of that \$100,000 from funded to
8 no longer funded.

9 So what you'll see there is the free
10 cash use, what dropped from the original in the
11 book from about \$1.3 million to the \$1.2
12 million. And then the bonded number at the far
13 right is the amount of money that would give the
14 authorization to the town treasurer to go out
15 and issue debt for those projects.

16 So that's what this recommendation is
17 for. This year, we also threw in their grant,
18 so you can see that we are seeking grants to
19 fund other types of large projects.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Mr.
21 Arnett is referring to the handout you got, the
22 freestanding yellow page. That's the capital
23 budget that replaces the one that's in the book.
24 But as he indicated, the changes are pretty

1 minor. So if you look on the far right hand two
2 columns, "Free Cash" and "Bonded," and go all
3 the way down to the bottom, you'll see that
4 we're using \$1,266,000 in free cash. The number
5 in the book was higher than that, but the fact
6 that it's lower reflects just what Mr. Arnett
7 explained. The number being bonded is the same
8 as in the book, so that hasn't been impacted.

9 So the way this very complicated
10 looking chart works is every project that has a
11 number beside it and the free cash and bonded
12 line has been approved, as recommended to you,
13 and it's either in the free cash line or the
14 bonded line, depending on how it's being paid
15 for. So the sum totals of those columns are
16 down the bottom. You won't have to look at this
17 again for years. So any questions before we
18 vote? Ms. Gilbert. Ms. Mercer.

19 **MS. MERCER:** Ann Mercer, Precinct 4.

20 I have a question kind of similar to
21 Mr. Maher's earlier, insomuch that it references
22 another portion of the agenda. On Page 35 -- it
23 is Article 22 -- the rescind prior authorized,
24 yet unissued debt -- and when I was reviewing

1 both, it seemed as though -- I just want some
2 clarification.

3 There seemed to be some redundancy
4 between projects on the capital expenditure list
5 and on that table. And I just was wondering
6 like did they happen, did they not happen, is it
7 just sort of like a carryover because it didn't
8 happen?

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Good. Mr. Arnett.

10 **MR. ARNETT:** John Arnett, director of
11 finance again. So what you'll see in Article
12 22, and I'm sure we'll be talking about this in
13 the future later on, but what that article
14 really is doing is that some of these projects,
15 which were voted on in the past, what we're
16 doing is we're authorizing a different source of
17 funds. So there's some that are not
18 redundancies.

19 In the current article, in Article 4
20 tonight, these are new projects in Article 4.
21 If you may see some redundancies or anything of
22 that nature, that's not the case. These are
23 referring -- what you would see in the future
24 article is in regards to prior approved last

1 year's capital projects.

2 **MS. MERCER:** So why am I seeing them
3 again? I'm confused still, sadly.

4 **MR. ARNETT:** Which one are you
5 referring to is redundant?

6 **MS. MERCER:** Like let's say number --
7 well, the first one on that list, "Entrance
8 safety vestibules, 23 DMS construction FY '24
9 Riverdale design." Maybe that's not the best
10 one, but I think I highlighted it.

11 **MR. ARNETT:** That's actually a really
12 great one. We can talk about that. I'd love to
13 clarify that. So that one is when projects come
14 in, that one has been talked about at great
15 length during the finance and warrant committee,
16 and effectively, there's a growth in the cost of
17 that project from design phase, build, COVID,
18 all these other things that go along with that.
19 So what you're seeing here in Article 4 is the
20 additional authorization to complete that
21 project.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Let me try, Ms.
23 Mercer. So Mr. Arnett, in Article 22, the
24 entrance safety vestibule project was originally

1 intended to be borrowed?

2 **MR. ARNETT:** That is correct.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** And now we're
4 changing our mind and rescinding the borrowing,
5 but we're going to use free cash instead?

6 **MR. ARNETT:** I would say we're being
7 a little bit more fiscally responsible using
8 cash rather than issuing debt and increasing --

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Cash is cheaper.

10 **MS. MERCER:** So we're just going to
11 pay up front instead of doing -- okay.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** So what you're seeing
13 in Article 4 is in addition to this, due to the
14 cost of the project, so they're not really
15 related. Is that correct?

16 **MR. ARNETT:** Correct, because the
17 total cost is \$700,000 authorization for the
18 total project.

19 **MS. MERCER:** Okie-dokie. Thank you.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** I applaud you for
21 correlating two articles.

22 **MS. MERCER:** I did my homework.

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Ms. Gilbert.

24 **MS. GILBERT:** Mary Gilbert, Precinct

1 4. Fiscally responsible, I like that language.

2 So I have a question on Line 19 and
3 20 where you're putting out to bond \$30,000 and
4 \$50,000. Is there not a policy that you're not
5 going to bond? It's on this yellow sheet. So
6 let's see. I might have given you -- it's
7 probably 20 and 21.

8 **MR. ARNETT:** 20, town facilities.

9 **MS. GILBERT:** The town -- the gutter
10 replacement.

11 **MR. ARNETT:** Gutter replacement and
12 the cupola. That's all part of a larger project
13 cost. I know that you've talked in much more
14 great length about anything dealing with the
15 Ames building. So I'll let the town manager
16 answer that one.

17 **MS. GILBERT:** Oh, that's a nice pass.

18 **MR. GOODWIN:** Thank you, Ms. Gilbert,
19 for the question. So you've mentioned Line 19,
20 Line 20, and then I would like to draw
21 everyone's attention to Line 23, which is
22 600,000.

23 **MS. GILBERT:** Yes, that was something
24 I was going to ask.

1 **MR. GOODWIN:** So combined, the total
2 project would be 680,000, and we expect to lump
3 those together as a project, which would then
4 put it within the realm of something that we
5 should be bonding for.

6 **MS. GILBERT:** You just decided to
7 make it a separate line item, as opposed to --

8 **MR. GOODWIN:** As it was submitted
9 into the capital process, they were separate,
10 but as a recommendation, we would lump them
11 together.

12 **MS. GILBERT:** Could you not, though,
13 put the 80,000 -- there's free cash that you
14 didn't spend on something. Take that 80,000
15 out. That bonded number will drop by 80,000.
16 You still have 600,000 you're going to spend.

17 **MR. GOODWIN:** We could have. This
18 was somewhat strategic in our work with the
19 finance and warrant committee to preserve free
20 cash going forward, to use bonding responsively
21 on certain projects. It was, I think, one of
22 those situations where it made sense at the time
23 to lump them together. Certainly town meeting
24 could with some of the information you have

1 tonight say okay, town, you could go and spend
2 free cash on those. Our recommendation at the
3 time was to bond it as a \$680,000 project. We
4 weren't looking at it separately.

5 **MS. GILBERT:** Right, but again, I
6 would -- we just saved 100,000 in free cash,
7 which is great. We'll still say 20 if you pay
8 80 grand and take that off the bond.

9 **MR. GOODWIN:** It's certainly an
10 option that the town meeting could entertain.
11 It's not something that we were recommending.

12 **MS. GILBERT:** Right. So if the town
13 meeting wanted to entertain that, what is the
14 process, Mr. Moderator, for that to happen?

15 **THE MODERATOR:** You need a substitute
16 motion in writing, please.

17 **MS. GILBERT:** So I can't do -- can we
18 take 80,000 and put it in free cash? Obviously,
19 I can't write anything right now.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Well, let's put it
21 this way, Ms. Gilbert, you could write it, but
22 you're asking do we have to write it. So what
23 you want to do is take the 30 and the 50 and
24 move it from the bonded column to the free cash

1 column?

2 **MS. GILBERT:** Yes. I just didn't
3 know the process if that was possible.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** That's close enough.
5 So that's your substitute motion, that those
6 sums be moved to the free cash column instead of
7 the bonded column; is that right?

8 **MS. GILBERT:** Correct. Thank you.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** So you're moving
10 that?

11 **MS. GILBERT:** I'm moving that.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Is there a second to
13 that?

14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Second.

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Is there a discussion
16 on the amendment, this amendment from Mary
17 Gilbert? Yes, sir?

18 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)
19 Thumbs up.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thumbs up, okay. You
21 may have to thumbs up on your machine there for
22 a minute, but we'll accept that as like exit
23 polling. So we've got one vote there.

24 **MS. GILBERT:** Am I done with like --

1 **THE MODERATOR:** I think so, Mary,
2 yeah.

3 **MS. GILBERT:** Thank you.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** You made your motion.
5 It's been seconded.

6 **MS. GILBERT:** Thank you.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Now, let's make sure
8 people understand what we're voting on, which is
9 another obstacle. Is that clear? Are you ready
10 to vote on it? Any questions?

11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Point of
12 order.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Point of order, state
14 your point of order, please.

15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Sure. So we're
17 looking at the yellow page that was handed out,
18 and you will see on Lines 20 and 21 there are
19 two projects, which are components of a larger
20 project. They have to do with some needed
21 repairs at our town hall.

22 Ms. Gilbert is recommending that the
23 \$30,000 project and the \$50,000 project, that
24 yes, they will be done, but we will use free

1 cash instead of borrowing money to do it. So
2 are you going to pay cash for the car, or do you
3 want to put it on a payment plan. Mr. Loporto.

4 **MR. LOPORTO:** Bob Loporto, Precinct
5 5. Can we still discuss the article before we
6 vote on the amendment?

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Oh, yeah, we always
8 discuss them before we vote them, yeah. So go
9 ahead.

10 **MR. LOPORTO:** I shall proceed. Can
11 someone from the finance and warrant committee
12 discuss the amendment and what they think about
13 it?

14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Mr. Loporto,
15 are you asking for us to take a position on
16 this, the finance and warrant committee?

17 **MR. LOPORTO:** A position, maybe not.

18 **THE MODERATOR:** They can't do that,
19 Bob.

20 **MR. LOPORTO:** They can't do that?

21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

22 **MS. DALY:** Vivian Daly, Precinct 2.
23 I think the town manager -- oh, sorry, you
24 didn't recognize me.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

THE MODERATOR: I do now.

MS. DALY: Thank you. Vivian Daly,
Precinct 2.

I think the town manager mentioned something about just now making a decision to keep that bonded versus free cash, to have more free cash available. Could maybe the town manager or someone else further explain that?

THE MODERATOR: Either Mr. Goodwin or Mr. Arnett, if you could just explain the pros and cons. What goes into deciding what's bonded and what's free cash? What's the up side and the down side of using free cash, because free cash is not free cash, right?

MR. ARNETT: Correct. John Arnett, director of finance. So the benefit of having some free cash or residual free cash is for future ability to move as we go into the fall town meeting -- or fall town meeting, upcoming town meeting.

Because there's added liquidity at the very baseline, so think about it almost like if people are evaluating your personal finances, how much is in the bank account, if you will.

1 So it talks about how much cash you have in the
2 background. So it helps the town as far as
3 credit agencies would see us.

4 So when we go out to bond, and they
5 would take -- let's say they would actually look
6 at that number and say, well, how much do you
7 have on hand is one of the metrics that they
8 use. So having a little bit larger bit of free
9 cash as we go out to bond helps keep us at that
10 Triple A rating or higher Triple A rating, as
11 well as others. So that's the benefit of
12 preserving free cash moving forward.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** And the benefit of
14 using it instead of bonding is that it's cheaper
15 in the long run?

16 **MR. ARNETT:** That is also correct.
17 So it's a give and take. It's a little bit of a
18 piece back and forth, and it goes through a long
19 discussion process to figure out where's a good
20 level to end at.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, sir. So
22 is that clearer? There are pros and cons to
23 switching something from free cash to bonding.
24 No questions?

1 So we're going to vote on Mary
2 Gilbert's amendment, and that is that these two
3 project do, indeed, be funded, but they be
4 funded by taking the money out of free cash
5 instead of borrowing.

6 Let's go to the clickers. All those
7 in favor -- whoops, is there a question? So
8 that motion has been made and seconded. All
9 those in favor of doing that, as Mrs. Gilbert
10 has recommended, please vote yes. If you don't
11 agree, vote no. Voting is open.

12 Voting is closed. Please show the
13 votes. 68 having voted in favor of the
14 amendment, and 166 voting against it, the
15 amendment fails. Is there any other discussion
16 on Article 4, because now we have to pass the
17 whole thing?

18 Hearing none, let's try this by
19 voice. The vote comes -- well, actually we need
20 two votes. Let's do this with clickers. The
21 projects that are being borrowed does require a
22 two-thirds vote, so we need two votes.

23 All those in favor of borrowing
24 \$5,025,000 for the projects shown on this sheet,

1 please click yes on your clicker. Vote no if
2 you don't agree. The vote is open.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Hold your point of
5 order. We're in the middle of a vote.

6 We've got the wrong one up. We're
7 voting on the bonding column. Was that your
8 point of order? I should have listened to you.
9 It's not always possible for people to see the
10 situations that would cause them to propose an
11 amendment, but this is one of the reasons why in
12 every case where it is possible, if you know
13 you're going to do it, if you give us the
14 wording ahead of time, this would all be pre-
15 populated. But sometimes in the course of
16 asking questions, you discover that you do want
17 to amend something, so that's fine, as well.

18 We're going to do this the old-
19 fashioned way. Here's the original motion, and
20 it's nothing you haven't already seen, but we
21 have to have the wording right. The bonding
22 attorneys are very particular about this.

23 So the motion is that the sum of
24 \$5,025,000 be borrowed to pay for Projects

1 Number 10 -- thank you for your patience. So
2 the reason we have to take two votes is because
3 any time we borrow money, that's a two-thirds
4 vote. To use free cash is just a majority vote,
5 so we have to do two votes.

6 So the first motion we're voting on
7 is to borrow money, per Article 4, and that
8 reads that the town borrow \$5,025,000 to pay for
9 the cost of items -- and these are the projects
10 on your sheet -- Items 9 through 12, 20 through
11 23, 35 through 38, 42 and 47, as shown on the
12 table. So you've had this. You've seen this.
13 So all I did is translate this table into those
14 words. Is that part clear?

15 So we're going to do the borrowing
16 first. If you're in favor of borrowing
17 \$5,025,000 for the projects that I just
18 enunciated, please vote yes. If not, vote no.

19 Voting is closed. 211 having voted
20 yes, 18 no, that is a two-thirds. The borrowing
21 is approved.

22 The second part of our escape (?)
23 from Article 4 reads that the town appropriate
24 1,366,000 -- no, that's not right, that's not

1 right -- that the town appropriate 1,266,501 for
2 Articles 6 through 8, 15 through 17, 24, 31
3 through 32, 39 through 41, 43 through 45, and 48
4 and 49, as is shown on this table. Are there
5 any questions? Let's try a voice vote. All in
6 favor, say aye.

7 (Aye.)

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
9 ayes have it. Thank you.

10 We'll now move to Article 8. Are
11 there any questions on Article 8? It's passed
12 because it requires a two-thirds quantum.
13 That's moderator talk for vote. Hearing no
14 questions, the vote comes on the original
15 motion. Let's try for unanimous. All those in
16 favor, say aye.

17 (Aye.)

18 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
19 ayes have it. It is a two-thirds vote.

20 Article 10 was passed from the floor,
21 I believe, sewer enterprise fund. Questions,
22 comments? Mr. Loporto.

23 **MR. LOPORTO:** Bob Loporto, P5.
24 There's an increase of \$4 million. I was

1 wondering if someone could just speak to that
2 increase.

3 **MR. ARNETT:** John Arnett, director of
4 finance. So you'll see a substantial change of
5 that \$4 million that is being referred to. That
6 is actually a federal mandate through the EPA.
7 In prior years, you would have seen this being
8 funded through free cash at the tune of -- it
9 has been increasing year over year from 200,
10 300, \$400,000.

11 This is the next phase in that
12 permitting process for stormwater. So that can
13 no longer be generated through free cash, as we
14 just had a basic discussion on. I would have
15 liked it completely out, and we would have zero
16 gone, and that's only for one year.

17 So this is an additional -- we've had
18 an open meeting on those fees before, but that's
19 what this is. That is -- it's an operational
20 expense mandated from the federal government
21 passed down to us that we have to pay. So
22 that's what this money is for.

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
24 Arnett. Are there any questions on Article 10?

1 Let's try for a voice vote. All those in favor,
2 say aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
5 ayes have it.

6 We move to Article 12. This is a
7 zoning bylaw, so first we call for the report of
8 the planning board. The Chair recognizes the
9 vice-chair, Jessica Porter.

10 **MS. PORTER:** Thank you. So we have
11 several planning and zoning articles on the
12 warrant this year. You've already dealt with
13 some of them in the consent agenda. But I just
14 wanted to introduce myself, Jessica Porter.
15 You're also going to be hearing tonight from our
16 chair, Mike Podolski, and our planning director,
17 Jeremy Rosenberger.

18 In terms of Article 12, the planning
19 board held a duly noticed public hearing on
20 March 22 and April 12 that included public
21 testimony on Article 12. On April 12, the
22 planning board voted unanimously, with a quorum
23 present, to recommend to town meeting that
24 Article 12 be so voted.

1 Article 12 will regulate and define
2 electric vehicle charging stations. The
3 planning board issued a report explaining the
4 recommendations on this and every other zoning
5 article on April 13, and you'll find that in the
6 back of your book. On Page A15 is where that
7 starts. And I'd be happy to answer any
8 questions you might have on Article 12.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Are there any
10 questions on Article 12? Ms. Hornblower.

11 **MS. HORNBLOWER:** Patricia Hornblower.
12 So I'm just a little bit confused about this
13 article. I've read it like 15 times. I talked
14 to a member of the planning board today because
15 I did have questions on it, because you're
16 talking about regulating stations. So I
17 understand completely that we do need a bylaw
18 that has to do with this type of vehicle because
19 it's going to be very much in our future.

20 But then you jump and you start
21 talking on the same page about the different
22 kinds of charges that they're going to have, and
23 as I spoke to -- I don't want to throw Mr.
24 Bethany under the bus. I did speak to him about

1 that, yes, but I want to have permits, and I
2 want people to have the wiring, and the wiring
3 inspector. So I get that part.

4 So we're jumping from one issue, then
5 we're going to another issue, and then it keeps
6 going down, and it goes to the special permits
7 and to all zoning districts, and then you go
8 from residential. So it's like so many
9 different things going on here. But then the
10 sentence that really got me was parking spaces
11 with EV charges would count toward the parking
12 requirement of a given development.

13 So right now, if you go to BJ's or
14 you go to Wegmans, and you have a place to park,
15 curbside parking, or if you're pregnant, which
16 would have been great 40 years ago for me when I
17 was waddling around town, and then you have
18 veterans, which I totally support, then you have
19 -- if you have a child -- now, I do understand
20 that those aren't mandated. Those are up to the
21 development, they're up to the restaurant,
22 they're up to anyone. It's not mandated, as
23 handicapped is.

24 But now, I asked, well, if I can't

1 find any parking or I have to drive way over
2 like University Station to find parking, what
3 happens to me? I'm not going to go park in one
4 of those EV's and come out with my gas guzzling
5 SUV and see what someone is going to do to me.

6 So I just don't understand the way
7 this article is written. There's like five
8 different things going on, and then you're
9 throwing in the parking, and I just don't
10 understand why it wasn't better defined.

11 **MS. PORTER:** So that parking aspect
12 was included because we wanted to make it clear
13 that if -- let's say a development would require
14 26 parking spaces, based on the number of units
15 if it was a residential development. We didn't
16 want to suggest that they had to have 26 regular
17 spaces, an additional two or three or whatever
18 the new building code is going to require for
19 electric vehicles. They still only need 26
20 stations -- the 26 parking places.

21 I will tell you at a municipal level,
22 the planning board actually talked about this
23 issue with the town recently and asked that any
24 town and municipal lots -- for instance, at town

1 hall and also at the Keystone lot, there are EV
2 charging stations that are open to everyone and
3 is not marked that it is EV charging only.

4 And in general in the planning board,
5 when we talk to developments about their
6 parking, we actually are in a position to be
7 able to talk about not just that they have EV
8 stations, but also how they treat those, as well
9 as others; for instance, expectant mothers,
10 curbside pickup.

11 It's also an issue that I think in
12 general, based on experience of planning board
13 members, and also on your call today, that the
14 planning board has talked about actually at our
15 meeting at 6:00 tonight under new business
16 discussing more broadly.

17 So I will tell you this actually does
18 not suggest -- this allows people to put in EV
19 spaces. It does not require that those spaces
20 be marked EV only. I will tell you from a
21 personal perspective, I drive an EV car. I
22 think most of them are pretty friendly and
23 wouldn't actually do anything to your car.

24 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.

1 Porter. Further questions on Article 12? There
2 being none, the vote comes on the original
3 motion, which is that it be so voted. It does
4 require a two-thirds vote. Let's try for a
5 voice vote. All those in favor, say aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It is a
8 two-thirds vote.

9 Article 13, proposed amendment to the
10 zoning bylaws, report of the planning board.
11 Ms. Porter.

12 **MS. PORTER:** Thank you. I'm here
13 again. The planning board held a duly noticed
14 public hearing on March 22 and April 12 that
15 included public testimony on Article 13. On
16 April 12, the planning board voted unanimously,
17 with a quorum present, to recommend at town
18 meeting that Article 13 be so voted. Article 13
19 adds a definition of human occupancy to our
20 zoning bylaws, and I'd be happy to answer any
21 questions.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Questions on 13?
23 Yes, Ms. Carney.

24 **MS. CARNEY:** On Page 2 of the handout

1 -- well, actually it was mailed through the mail
2 from the planning board department -- under
3 Article 13, see, I'm confused about how we
4 decide how many stories there is to a building.
5 And I know within the last 12 to 18 months, the
6 zoning board, even though we have -- apparently
7 our bylaw says 45 feet, or pretty much four
8 stories, they voted to approve six stories, and
9 it's for a hotel coming right into town.

10 So maybe I don't understand how
11 they're defining what a story is, because that's
12 a big -- why bother having a requirement for
13 height restriction if you exceed it by 50
14 percent, and the planning board, of course,
15 allowed five, which is still over and above why
16 we have that restriction.

17 So here's the part I don't
18 understand. It says -- and this is where
19 Article 13 -- you go down to the paragraph just
20 about where it says the planning board
21 recommendation, and it's describing human
22 occupancy and how it impacts story, and it says,
23 "The portion of the building with more than one
24 half its height, measured from the finished

1 floor to the finished ceiling, below the grade
2 used exclusively for storage, mechanical
3 equipment, and utilities associated with
4 allowable use of said building" -- and it goes
5 on to say "shall not be considered a story."
6 What's that?

7 **MS. PORTER:** I wonder if commas would
8 be helpful there. So I think the grammarian in
9 me would say "finished ceiling, below the grade,
10 used exclusively for storage."

11 **MS. CARNEY:** Below what grade?

12 **MS. PORTER:** So we're talking about
13 basements, lower -- we're talking about lower
14 levels, basements that are used exclusively for
15 storage. So I think that we're missing a comma.
16 Did I catch that right?

17 **MS. CARNEY:** Well, I don't know the
18 comma is going to clear up my confusion here,
19 but -- I don't know, it impacts story, and I'm
20 concerned with what people are approving for
21 stories.

22 **MS. PORTER:** So this is specific to
23 the definition of human occupancy. Can I try to
24 answer your question around how it impacts

1 stories?

2 The planning board had a project in
3 front of us that wanted to have four stories
4 above ground, let's say, above grade and one
5 story below grade, and the story below grade was
6 only going to be used for storage.

7 **MS. CARNEY:** Storage.

8 **MS. PORTER:** Right. We needed to add
9 this definition to have clarification that that
10 would not be considered a five-story building,
11 that that would be considered a four-story
12 building. Because a story, as the planning
13 board was thinking about it -- and this caused
14 also, I think, some confusion at the building
15 department -- was kind of how to enforce it
16 consistently, that a story is something that
17 involves human occupancy. And this allows us to
18 clarify what's the difference between a story
19 and storage.

20 **MS. CARNEY:** So that's where the one
21 half of the height measured from floor to
22 ceiling comes in if, in fact, it's really not
23 only going to be used for all intents and
24 purposes storage and equipment?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

MS. PORTER: Right. Below grade.

MS. CARNEY: Right, below grade.

Thank you very much.

MS. PORTER: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions on Article 13? This requires a two-thirds vote. We can try for a unanimous. All those in favor, please say aye.

(Aye.)

THE MODERATOR: Opposed, no. The ayes have it. It's a two-thirds vote.

Article 14, proposed amendment to Dedham zoning map.

MS. PORTER: So I'm going to do the legal part first while I wait for the map to come up, and I do have a couple of slides. I know it's late. I'm going to go very fast. But this is a very important amendment, and so we want to make sure that everybody understands what they're voting on.

So the planning board held multiple meetings about Article 14, including a duly noticed public hearing on March 22 and April 12, that included public testimony on Article 14.

1 On April 12, the planning board voted
2 unanimously, with a quorum present, to recommend
3 to town meeting that Article 14 be so voted. As
4 part of our due diligence, the planning board
5 reviewed the legal requirements and location of
6 the overlay district proposed by Article 14,
7 which I'll be talking to you about shortly, and
8 determined that it is an eligible location and
9 requires a majority vote of town meeting.

10 We flagged this, both for legal
11 reasons, and also because most of the zoning
12 changes are actually a two-thirds vote. We want
13 to make sure you all understand this one is a
14 majority vote. So you will -- I'm going to try
15 to give you the highlights, but you'll also find
16 the detailed report with an FAQ beginning on
17 Page A17 of your appendix. I'm going to start
18 by showing you some maps and give you some
19 context.

20 You can see -- it's a little faint
21 maybe, depending where you are; there's also
22 maps in the back of your book -- but what you'll
23 see is a map of Dedham, and then there's a
24 highlighted circle kind of at the bottom, which

1 is basically an area around the Dedham corporate
2 center T station.

3 In 2020, Massachusetts established
4 the MBTA community zoning law to encourage more
5 and denser housing around subway, commuter rail,
6 and bus stations. This is a way to promote
7 economic development and to meet the
8 Commonwealth's housing shortage without
9 overloading our roads and highways.

10 Dedham spent two years studying this
11 legislation, including whether or not we should
12 even comply. That included joint meetings
13 between the select board and the planning board,
14 numerous meetings of town counsel, and engaging
15 Stantec Consultants to do an analysis of whether
16 Dedham could create a zoning district that would
17 meet the requirements of the law without
18 changing the character of our neighborhoods.

19 So here's what we are proposing: a
20 small overlay district around the Dedham
21 corporate commuter rail station, which is
22 already a multifamily housing neighborhood. On
23 the map that you see, that's within the pink
24 circle.

1 If you could advance the slide,
2 please. Great. So specifically, the zone would
3 be -- if you do the bump out -- so it's not even
4 the whole pink circle, and then we have a
5 blowout here, which I'll try to just not look at
6 it. So if I'm pointing in the wrong place, give
7 me a little bit of the benefit of the doubt.

8 So the specific area includes Legacy
9 Place, the Avens, and Jefferson Station
10 Apartment complexes, the MBTA commuter rail
11 parking lot, extra space storage, the Fairfield
12 Inn, and the parcel on Quabish Road across from
13 Whole Foods, which was recently approved for a
14 mixed use project.

15 I'm going to give you some
16 highlights, and then I'll be here for questions.
17 The first thing that you should know is it's
18 what's called an overlay district, which means
19 that it can be used to create housing if people
20 opt to do that, but it doesn't change the
21 underlying zoning in this area, which is
22 research, office, and development. So people
23 could still go in and build exactly what they
24 could build today, or they have the opportunity

1 to build housing.

2 The district also allows for housing
3 to be created without a special permit. So any
4 project would still have to go through site plan
5 review with the planning board, have to meet all
6 of the requirements around landscaping,
7 pedestrian and traffic circulation, setbacks,
8 massing, all of those standard practices. It
9 just would mean that they don't need a special
10 permit to create it.

11 Next, the district has to have the
12 ability to hold 1,569 housing units, but the
13 town is not required to build those units. So
14 we've identified an area that can hold that
15 number of units, but again, we're not required
16 to build that.

17 In some portions of the district,
18 you'll notice on the map some have dots really
19 close together, and some have dots that are
20 farther apart, and those represent a difference
21 in density. So the areas on the map that you
22 see with lots of dots, those could be built to a
23 density of 30 acres a unit -- or sorry, 30 units
24 an acre, which is similar to what we've seen out

1 in the Avens development.

2 Those areas where you see fewer dots
3 and more white space, those could be built to a
4 density of 15 units an acre, which is similar to
5 townhouses seen in some areas in town already.
6 One that I think of, because I had a friend who
7 lived there, is on Durham Road near the Manor.

8 The board created those low density
9 areas to respond to recent housing studies, and
10 I'm showing that we had a lack of smaller two-
11 and three-bedroom type housing that can be
12 attractive for older people to downsize into and
13 to attract new families who are just starting
14 out. And also because near the Robinwood Lane
15 neighborhood, we thought that would be a more
16 appropriate size development than something with
17 larger density or things that could currently be
18 built according to our bylaws.

19 So I'm just going to summarize the
20 implications of your vote. I think I might have
21 skipped over my notes to talk, so I'm going to
22 make sure I get it now. So if Article 14
23 passes, we will be in compliance with state law
24 and eligible for many forms of grant funding, as

1 well as protected from any punitive actions that
2 the state might take to encourage communities to
3 comply.

4 If Article 14 fails, we could lose
5 access -- well, we will lose access to certain
6 types of grants the state has been very clear
7 about, and also open to punitive actions from
8 the state. I will say that when this first came
9 before us two years ago, there were serious
10 questions, I think, on the planning board, and
11 also on the select board about whether we should
12 comply.

13 Through a lot of work, we found a way
14 that we can comply that's I think very good for
15 Dedham, and as we've gone through this process,
16 we've also heard more and more signals from the
17 state that they intend to penalize communities
18 that do not comply. So with that, I'll take any
19 questions, if there are any.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Any questions on this
21 article? Because of state law, this article
22 requires a majority vote. There being no
23 questions, the vote comes on the original motion
24 that it be so voted. We can try for a voice

1 vote. All those in favor, say aye.

2 (Aye.)

3 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. That is
4 a majority vote.

5 Article 19. The Chair recognizes the
6 chairman of the planning board, Mr. Podolski.

7 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Good evening, town
8 meeting representatives. Mike Podolski,
9 chairman of the planning board.

10 I guess this a perfect time for us to
11 start to discuss the definition of a hotel.
12 We're all so wrapped about all our other
13 enthralling articles. However, we have good
14 news.

15 Quick history. Is our motion up? We
16 initially voted unanimously to support a
17 redefinition of the hotel, which is already in
18 our bylaw. However, at the mini town meeting a
19 week ago Monday night, we heard numerous
20 comments, very good comments, and suggestions as
21 to maybe we should revise our initial
22 definition, which is in your book, which we
23 voted to support.

24 So at 6:00 tonight, the planning

1 board met, and we voted 5-0 unanimously that
2 instead of moving to define hotel tonight, we
3 would instead have a new original motion in
4 which we are going to suggest that the article
5 be referred back to the planning board for
6 further study and report back.

7 We realized after listening to very
8 good public comment that perhaps we didn't give
9 this article as clean a look as we should have,
10 maybe because it was an article proposed by
11 citizens and not one of our own articles. So to
12 try to rectify that, we are now going to ask
13 that our new original motion be the one that you
14 vote on, which is to let's defer voting on the
15 definition of a hotel until a future town
16 meeting.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Are there any
18 questions for Mr. Podolski? Yes, Ms. Uppencamp.

19 **MS. UPPENKAMP:** Thank you. Molly
20 Uppencamp, Precinct 3.

21 So I guess part of this is a question
22 for Mr. Podolski and the planning board. In
23 hearing arguments at the mini, evaluating it,
24 and talking about it with many people, this

1 really seems like a solution without a problem.

2 The example you brought up at mini of
3 one time ten years ago when part of a hotel was
4 used as a college dormitory causing problems
5 seems like a very rare and isolated incident,
6 and that creating a zoning code and a fine and
7 everything for something that seems to not
8 really happen of people staying at hotels for
9 extended stays of over four months.

10 So while I appreciate that the
11 planning board heard some of those comments
12 before and has proposed a new original motion,
13 I, myself, am still intending to vote no on
14 this. I don't think it needs further study and
15 report. I think we can just say this is done
16 and move on.

17 So unless there's a specific problem,
18 that you think that we absolutely need to have
19 this limitation on hotel stays and the
20 imposition of a fine to solve, I am intending to
21 vote no. Thank you.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
23 Uppenkamp.

24 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Well, Mr. Moderator, I

1 don't know if you want -- but that motion is not
2 going to be before you yet tonight, unless you
3 do vote down our new original motion.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** The original motion
5 can always be amended. So someone would have to
6 propose an amendment that says that it be
7 indefinitely postponed, and then that would be
8 voted on.

9 **MR. PODOLSKI:** That's fine.

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Czazasty.

11 **MR. CZAZASTY:** Andrew Czazasty,
12 Precinct 7.

13 So first off, I want to thank Mr.
14 Brogan for agreeing to the motion to postpone
15 the first study, and I respect that the sponsor
16 realizes that the article needs some work. I'm
17 voting no on the new original motion. I'm going
18 to explain why.

19 So I'm really not in favor of this
20 article in any form, and the planning board can
21 amend this as much as they'd like, but I know
22 many others would just disagree with the
23 underlying proposal. I don't think I can vote
24 for any form of limiting how long someone can

1 stay in a hotel.

2 So even if the proposal comes back in
3 the fall with amendments for exceptions, there's
4 so many unique and valid situations that the
5 article will shut out. So if this article
6 creates so many exceptions, then I don't think
7 we should even make a rule at all. I think
8 there's no reason for the town to get involved
9 in this kind of stuff, and there's no reason for
10 this article to go in effect.

11 So I would say this body and the
12 planning board have more pertinent issues to
13 discuss, and I hope that if I vote no, we can
14 get rid of this article for good. So I urge all
15 of you to vote no on the substitute motion.

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
17 Czazasty. The Chair recognizes our town
18 counsel, Lauren Goldberg.

19 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Thank you, Mr.
20 Moderator. Lauren Goldberg.

21 So under zoning, there is a bar about
22 bringing back the same article within two years
23 if we vote no. And so that's why we instead
24 vote to refer to committee, because that way

1 there can be further discussion.

2 It doesn't mean that the planning
3 board has to bring an article back, and it
4 doesn't mean that there will definitely be
5 something on the warrant in the fall. It just
6 means we're not going to take action on it now.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Lauren.

8 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Could I add to that,
9 Mr. Moderator?

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, sir.

11 **MR. PODOLSKI:** So one of the reasons
12 that this matter came up was two reasons. One
13 is the planning board is supposed to try to be
14 proactive. And over the many years that I've
15 been on the board, it seems like we're always
16 operating reactively to a project that comes to
17 us. So for once, we're trying to anticipate
18 potential problems. We missed -- we swung and
19 missed on the first article here, so we're
20 saying let us go back and give it greater study.

21 But the second reason is we just
22 permitted, albeit about a year -- or over a year
23 ago now a hotel right on Eastern Avenue here.
24 And many of the conditions that are now in this

1 proposed article are a part of the certificate
2 of action for that hotel. So we're looking to
3 try to make it a standard across our -- we think
4 we have five hotels now -- for the entire town.

5 One of the things that was pointed
6 out at the mini was that we didn't do, shame on
7 us, a study of other towns to see how they
8 handle it. But just ignoring it and not -- to
9 me, a hotel is a place of temporary residence.
10 It's not a place where you go and live. And I
11 think that's what really is the heart of this
12 problem.

13 A hotel, to me, is a place where you
14 go when you're traveling and you stop for a
15 night or two, you're a businessman in town for a
16 trip, you're visiting relatives so you come and
17 stay at a hotel rather than go to the home of
18 the people. This is an attempt to say, look it,
19 if you live there more than 120 days, you're
20 getting into being a rooming house, as opposed
21 to a hotel. And that's really what the initial
22 intent of the article was.

23 Yes, we missed whether or not if
24 someone had a very bad casualty in their house,

1 and they were having it repaired, they should be
2 able to get an exception or an extension; if
3 there was a possibility of domestic violence,
4 that yes, they should be able to stay and get an
5 extension. But at some point in time, hotels
6 are not rooming houses. They're places of
7 temporary occupancy. And that really was the
8 purpose of the article initially, albeit it can
9 be made much better with better exemptions.

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Delloiacono.

11 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** Thank you, Mr.
12 Moderator, Mike. This doesn't eliminate what's
13 already on the books. Isn't there fines in
14 place? Would this article eliminate what fines
15 are in place for people that stay in hotels too
16 long?

17 **MR. PODOLSKI:** There's no fine for
18 it.

19 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** There's nothing in
20 place at all, so someone --

21 **MR. PODOLSKI:** There is a definition
22 of hotel in the bylaw, but no fines.

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Carmen, kind of
24 address your question out there, and then

1 we'll --

2 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** My apologies.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** -- and then we might
4 come back to that.

5 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** I do apologize. I
6 thought there was something in place already for
7 people to stay in hotels for extended -- over
8 the extended time. Is there not a law that you
9 can't stay there currently? If you're in a
10 hotel -- there's hotels up on Elm Street. I
11 know that they were occupying people for over
12 the amount of time.

13 This isn't something new. I thought
14 there was something on the books that actually
15 said that if there was someone in there longer
16 than the amount of time, they would be -- were
17 not allowed. Maybe it's just as simple as that,
18 it's not allowed. There is no fine in place.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Podolski.

20 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Mr. Moderator, I'm
21 going to ask if Kenneth Cimeno, the building
22 inspector for the town, could answer. My
23 understanding is there are no fines in place
24 right now for long-term stays in hotels.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Cimeno,
commissioner of buildings.

MR. CIMENO: Good evening. So under
the current definition of a motel or hotel, it's
"a building or buildings intended and designed
for transient overnight and extended occupancy
divided into separate units within the same
building, with or without public dining
facilities.

"If such hotel or motel has
independent cooking facilities, such as in the
Residence Inn" -- so like in the Residence Inn
in Dedham, they have independent cooking
facilities, along with the room itself, and this
is something that's currently allowed under our
bylaw -- "such unit shall not be occupied by any
guest for more than four continuous months" --
which means if someone is occupying that room
for more than four continuous months, it's a
violation of our zoning bylaw under the current
definition -- "nor may the guest reoccupy any
unit within 30 days of a continuous four-month
stay" -- which means that, again, if they were
-- if they came back within the 30-day period of

1 time, that would also be a violation of the
2 bylaw -- "nor may the guest stay more than six
3 months in any calendar year."

4 So again, these are all provisions to
5 prevent people from staying for long periods of
6 time in the current bylaw. "No occupants of
7 such hotel or motel may claim residency at such
8 location." So again, the bylaw currently states
9 that we should not -- they cannot claim
10 residency, as Dedham residents.

11 So this is the current definition as
12 it's currently written. These are all the
13 restrictions currently on the books. If you --
14 I think the planning board's intention was to
15 study this particular section of the bylaw and
16 maybe make some modifications to it. I believe
17 that's the intent of what they're trying to
18 convey tonight.

19 Because we have had some examples in
20 the past where we've had -- we had a situation
21 where there was a hurricane, I believe in Puerto
22 Rico, and a number of residents of Puerto Rico
23 stayed at the Residence Inn, and there may have
24 been other hotels, but I was aware of the

1 Residence Inn, and they were there for more than
2 four months.

3 Of course, the community came around
4 and supported that particular situation, and
5 there was no action taken by the building
6 department, whereas, again, it was something
7 that the community supported, and again, this
8 was both on a state level and on a federal
9 level. Both the state and federal government
10 wanted to have this situation happen.

11 So again, we have this bylaw.
12 There's been some situations where we've had
13 some potential problems. I've never had an
14 individual situation where an individual staying
15 at a hotel for more than four months -- I never
16 got a complaint about that. But theoretically,
17 you know, I could get a complaint about that,
18 but in my years of enforcement, we haven't
19 received any individual complaints.

20 But it's on the books. It's to
21 discourage, as Mr. Podolski was saying, long-
22 term occupancy of a hotel as a residence.
23 Again, that's the reason why they have the
24 resident provision in there also because they

1 don't want people to basically use the hotel as
2 a long-term, say, apartment or other type of
3 long-term rental.

4 So again, that's the current
5 definition on the books. I wanted to make sure
6 that people understood what the current
7 definition is. The planning board, again, wants
8 to study this, maybe make some modifications to
9 maybe change some of these provisions. But
10 again, I just wanted to make sure that people
11 were clear as to what the current definition is.

12 Does anybody have any questions about
13 what I just said, because it is confusing,
14 because it's zoning.

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Any questions for Mr.
16 Cimeno? Thank you.

17 **MR. CIMENO:** Thank you.

18 **MS. KRAUSS:** Shari Krauss, Precinct
19 6. I'm taking the opportunity to speak from the
20 podium, so thank you.

21 It's really important that we
22 understand as a community that there are many,
23 many reasons that might lead folks to need to
24 stay at a hotel, not as a desired residence, but

1 often reasons of personal devastation.

2 These folks -- Mr. Loporto, you
3 talked about the tragedy that led the groups of
4 refugees to our town, and that it was the will
5 of the people to support their continued
6 residency at our hotel space. Not everybody
7 who's in such a position has the self-advocacy,
8 has the voice, has the opportunity, has the
9 broad reach such that folks know how to go about
10 advocating for themselves in such dire
11 circumstances.

12 And so while it may be that for you,
13 Mr. Podolski, you get to use hotels as a
14 vacation spot, that you have that luxury, that
15 many of us may have that luxury, not all people
16 get to do that. So unless we're in the cast of
17 Melrose Place, you can just assume that a hotel
18 is not a desired residence, but that it may be a
19 place of need.

20 So I will be voting no on this
21 article, and thank you for the opportunity to
22 speak.

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Ms.
24 Zeiler.

1 **MS. ZEILER:** Thank you. Jean Zeiler,
2 Precinct 6.

3 If I understand this correctly, if we
4 vote for Article 19, the new recommendation, it
5 would go back to the planning board, and you
6 could study the entire language of the article
7 and actually achieve what people are looking for
8 here, which is to not limit -- could possibly
9 use that to not limit the stay, whereas if we
10 vote against this new article, we go back to the
11 old article, and if we vote no, we're going to
12 keep the definition that limits how long people
13 can stay.

14 So it seems to me that the planning
15 board's new original article is the better way
16 if we want to -- if some of us would like to not
17 have this limit on people.

18 **MR. PODOLSKY:** Your description is
19 accurate.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Procedurally, if the
21 original motion -- the original motion is to
22 study it. There is an amend -- Ms. Uppencamp,
23 did you move that?

24 **MS. UPPENCAMP:** (Inaudible.)

1 **THE MODERATOR:** Okay. If this fails,
2 then this article is dead. Neither vote changes
3 what the existing situation is, explained by the
4 building commissioner. So I understand it's a
5 little confusing to have a zoning bylaw, as the
6 building commissioner explained it, on the
7 books, and yet we're also debating this. It's
8 like parallel processes here. But if you send
9 it back to the planning board, the planning
10 board can study it. In fact, the planning board
11 doesn't need permission of town meeting to study
12 it. They can study it on their own. So I think
13 I'm going to defer to town counsel here. Thanks
14 for standing up.

15 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Thank you, Mr.
16 Moderator. I think the way the moderator
17 described it is accurate. I just wanted to
18 emphasize that the description of the article
19 talks about what the differences are.

20 This article, the first original
21 motion, was just to take that one line or one
22 half of a line that's in strike three (?) out of
23 the bylaw and to add the last sentence to the
24 bylaw. So if the original -- the first original

1 is voted, then we would still have this bylaw,
2 and it would be amended as it provides in the
3 actual article.

4 What the zoning -- what the planning
5 board has done -- has said -- they have said we
6 heard issues. We don't think this is ready for
7 prime time based on those issues, and so we're
8 going to ask you to not take action on it
9 tonight, to just skip it, with the understanding
10 that we may or may not bring it back in the
11 future. So there's no change to the limitation
12 on stays if we vote yes on this motion, the
13 original motion.

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Are there any
15 questions for Lauren Goldberg while we have her
16 here?

17 **MR. AKULA:** I have just a quick
18 clarification. James Akula, Precinct 4.

19 You said something earlier that I
20 didn't quite understand. If we do take action
21 on the amendment, as written, not on the new
22 motion, does that kill the opportunity for
23 something to come back in the fall? For
24 example, if we vote no on this, and then no on

1 this, so there's still the six-month, a year and
2 a four-month, blah, blah, blah, but there's no
3 actual penalty for it, so it's never come up
4 before, would that kill any chance of this
5 coming back for a little while, at least?

6 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Mr. Moderator?

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes.

8 **MS. GOLDBERG:** If we vote no on this,
9 and we're back to the planning board's main
10 motion, and that fails, then what we have is the
11 bylaw that already exists, and this exact
12 language couldn't come back for two years. It
13 doesn't mean that the planning board couldn't
14 come up with some other substantive amendment to
15 this.

16 **MR. AKULA:** That sounds to me like a
17 no on both, like kind of kill this dead. That's
18 why I'm probably going to try to vote no on
19 both.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Go ahead again, Ms.
21 Goldberg.

22 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Mr. Moderator, thank
23 you. So the only thing that voting no on this
24 does is get us back to the original main motion

1 that's printed in your book. If we vote no on
2 that, as well, then this exact language can't
3 come back for two years. But everything in this
4 bylaw that is in regular plain text is in the
5 bylaw already. So what it means is we'd have
6 just what we have in the bylaw now if people
7 vote no on both.

8 (Off the record discussion.)

9 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Well, hello, it is me
10 again. I just wanted to point out -- and the
11 moderator so kindly didn't embarrass me, which I
12 appreciate -- to remind me that this is the
13 original motion. So the motion that's in the
14 book is gone. It just doesn't exist.

15 So if you vote no on this, then
16 essentially, we have the bylaw that we have. If
17 you vote yes on this, then we can come back
18 within the next two years with something
19 substantively different. So this, saying yes
20 gives us the opportunity to look at it again
21 within the next couple of years.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Let me ask. Are any
23 of the proponents of this article here, ready to
24 speak and explain their motivation for us.

1 **MR. PODOLSKI:** I haven't seen them,
2 Mr. Moderator. Mr. Brogan appeared at our
3 meeting on May 10, and he was very much in favor
4 of us taking the --

5 **THE MODERATOR:** For the benefit of
6 new members, the ordinary process is is the
7 person who proposed the article gets to speak
8 first, and they kind of set the table -- this is
9 what we want to do, this is why we want to do it
10 -- and then we work off that. You either agree
11 with them, you want to amend what they proposed,
12 or you want to reject what they proposed. We're
13 in a little unusual situation here.

14 **MR. PODOLSKI:** And one proponent did
15 call one of the members of the board today and
16 said they were in favor of taking the article
17 back and trying to reword it. I don't believe
18 any of them are here tonight. This is not a
19 planning board warrant article. As I told you
20 earlier, this was brought by citizen petition.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, ma'am?

22 **MS. PENDLETON:** Christina Pendleton,
23 Precinct 7.

24 I've been here so long, I don't even

1 know if I -- anyway, I do feel like we're
2 talking in circles. I'm very much against this.
3 Whether we vote no once, vote no twice, do it in
4 two years -- I just agree completely with Mollie
5 that this is a problem that doesn't exist.

6 But I did want to say one thing. In
7 case this does move forward -- you know, I asked
8 that a couple of things be considered last week,
9 and something else that just occurred to me
10 tonight in the course of the discussion is if
11 there are families staying in hotels -- which
12 just for people who might not know, I work with
13 families in need, and this is a very, very
14 common occurrence that for many reasons families
15 are placed in motels, hotels -- if those
16 families have children, and they're not allowed
17 to be considered Dedham residents, where do they
18 go to school while they're here.

19 So I guess that's a question about
20 the current bylaw, and it's just something that
21 I hope will be considered when we do revisit
22 this topic, because as in any situation, I don't
23 think kids should suffer the consequences,
24 especially since it doesn't appear we have a

1 problem.

2 And I would actually love as a last
3 point to -- I'd love for us to explore a bylaw
4 that says if you brought a motion that is taking
5 up all of this time and discussion, and you're
6 not here, that we don't talk about it if nobody
7 for the proponent is here. It just doesn't seem
8 to make sense, respectfully.

9 I'm happy to stay here until
10 whenever, but if we're discussing something that
11 no one in this room thinks is a problem, and
12 we've spent all this time, it seems like a waste
13 of everybody's energy. Thank you.

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
15 Pendleton. Ms. Martin.

16 **MS. MARTIN:** Maryann Martin, Precinct
17 5.

18 I actually love the idea of going
19 back and looking at it further, because I think
20 this is incredibly complex, and I don't think
21 it's as simple as either you embrace families or
22 you don't or you hate or you love. I think it's
23 really complex.

24 I think this is a wonderful

1 opportunity for us to look at things, like
2 what's the definition of a tenant versus a guest
3 in a hotel. Because I know if people are,
4 quote, "tenants," and they're not those families
5 in need, just the bad apples, it might be hard
6 for the hotel to evict a tenant, whereas they
7 can probably kick out a guest.

8 There's like all those little nuances
9 that I think really have to be looked at before
10 we embrace going with our current bylaw, which,
11 as Ken explained, it is what it is, no more than
12 30 days -- I mean, four months, can't come back
13 within 30 days. Those are the rules on some of
14 them. But I think it's worth a deep dive. I
15 don't think we all have the answers, and I don't
16 think any of us feel good about a family living
17 in a hotel, but we don't want them homeless.

18 I think that everyone in this room
19 has empathy for anyone in those situations.
20 Let's just make sure it's in the best interest
21 of the family, the hotel, and the rest of us,
22 the school system, everything. Take it all in,
23 and maybe come back with a better, tighter,
24 cleaner we're all on board article. That's it.

1 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
2 Martin. Yes, sir?

3 **MR. LANGMEAD:** Josh Langmead,
4 Precinct 5. I move the vote.

5 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. So the
6 question takes a two-thirds vote. Let's try for
7 a voice vote. All those in favor of stopping
8 debate and voting, say yes.

9 (Yes.)

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

11 (Nein)

12 **THE MODERATOR:** So we come on the --
13 there is no amendment to the original motion on
14 the table. We have an original motion, which is
15 a new original motion, new in the sense it's
16 different from the one in the book. The
17 original motion is always the original motion.
18 Even if it was the fourth version of it, it's
19 still the original motion.

20 So what you're voting on, yes or no,
21 is does this issue get referred back to the
22 planning board for further study. Is that
23 clear? A yes vote is yes, send it back. A no
24 vote is don't send it back.

1 By the way, the planning board
2 doesn't need our permission to study anything,
3 so if we vote this down, it doesn't mean they
4 can't or won't come back. So don't start the
5 conspiracy theories on that if that happens.
6 All those in favor of the original motion, that
7 this be referred back to the planning board --
8 we're going to do this on the clicker. Hey, I
9 didn't last this long, trying to guess these
10 votes, believe me.

11 The vote is open. You're voting on
12 the original motion, yes, if you want to send
13 this back to the planning board; no, if you do
14 not.

15 Voting is closed. 129 have voted to
16 send it back to study, 102 have voted against,
17 so we refer it back to the planning board at
18 this time. Thank you.

19 Article 20. There is an original
20 motion, but there is a substitute motion, as
21 proposed by Mr. McDermott. Mr. McDermott.

22 **MR. MCDERMOTT:** Thank you, Mr.
23 Moderator. William Shaw McDermott, Bridge
24 Street in District 1. And I have somebody

1 helping me. My computer crashed. We're using
2 hers. Her name is Ann McDermott. She's an alum
3 of Riverdale School and has recently moved
4 backed to Dedham in our house with her two-year-
5 old, her husband, and her 14-year-old dog, so
6 she's good to go.

7 Thank you very much for considering
8 Article 20 at this late hour, and I'll try to
9 keep this as brief as I can. This article asks
10 town meeting to favor a moratorium of limited
11 scope and duration in order to allow the
12 planning board to study the effects of large
13 scale developments on traffic and water. And we
14 did so here by substitute motion, which in
15 working with town counsel, I substituted the
16 word "favors" in Paragraph 4 for the word
17 "imposes" so that we would -- if this were
18 adopted tonight, you would favor the moratorium
19 that I describe.

20 First, this is a voluntary, not a
21 mandatory moratorium; secondly, it applies only
22 to large scale residential developments; third,
23 applies only to the issuance, the issuance of
24 special permits; and fourth is only one year in

1 duration.

2 To be clear as to what the word
3 "moratorium" means because there may be some
4 confusion in the description given, I give you
5 the Merriam Webster's definition on the screen,
6 and it says what it says. And I'd just ask you
7 to understand that my view is that a moratorium
8 is not a ban, as described in the materials you
9 have, and it was not intended to be such. And
10 as I said in public statements, it was not such,
11 and it definitionally and legally is not such,
12 that which I propose.

13 Going on to the broader point, I'm
14 very grateful for the feedback I've received
15 from across the town and the consideration the
16 planning board gave to this. I've worked with
17 them, as you all know, or many of you know, for
18 many years, and I applaud them for many of the
19 initiatives they indicated tonight. And I've
20 received this from many corners of the town, and
21 I want to thank you for all those comments.

22 Some have asked why I did not ask for
23 a more comprehensive moratorium on all classes
24 of development. Some have asked why I did not

1 ask for a mandatory moratorium in the form of a
2 zoning amendment, as town meeting has approved
3 relative to, for example, mixed use housing
4 recently and other matters.

5 The answer is that I wanted to thread
6 this needle to find a goldilocks just right
7 solution to allow the planning board to continue
8 their work as needed, but to elevate this to the
9 top of their agenda to indicate the urgent need
10 to study the effects of large scale developments
11 on traffic and water.

12 The timing is propitious. The 2030
13 master plan committee, in which I served for a
14 period over two years, having been the chair of
15 the master plan committee and the update
16 committee previously, in previous iterations,
17 has submitted a draft to the planning board, and
18 the board will be working through the balance of
19 the year on the draft. These are topics of
20 immediate concern to the general public and
21 deserve reflection.

22 Indeed, the word "traffic" appeared
23 in every quadrant -- as appears in every
24 quadrant of the town was the number one issue

1 identified in focus groups in the 2020 and 2022
2 study period and drafting process.

3 And water has gained attention and
4 concern with each passing year, and even on this
5 very day, this very day, when the Dedham-
6 Westwood Water District announced a Level 1
7 water restriction, and if we're using recent
8 past as a prologue for the future, we can expect
9 that restrictions advance will ensue for a long
10 period of time, perhaps as in past years,
11 through to October.

12 Now, the drivers of the needed
13 discussion are long-term trends of development
14 and population, and here are some data. You
15 will see here on the screen the data that relate
16 to land use and developable acres that in 1980,
17 when I was a Dedham voter, there were 2,000
18 undeveloped acres at that time for potential for
19 development.

20 By 2001, that number shrunk, all
21 acres considered, to 834.50 acres, and on
22 forward to today, after the approval of the
23 planned residential development on Lowder Street
24 in West Dedham and other such developments in

1 West Dedham, is down to approximately, and I
2 approximate -- I asked for an exact figure that
3 I haven't gotten yet -- approximately 160 acres
4 all in.

5 And today, by contrast to 2001, where
6 701 of those potentially developable acres were
7 SRA, which is basically West Dedham, is down now
8 to about 65 acres there, and in the rest of the
9 town, there is approximately 36.80 acres in SRB
10 and 17.50 acres in general residence. So
11 roughly in equivalence of the number of acres in
12 SRA, less Dedham and the available acreage for
13 development in the rest of town, and there are
14 some, of course, commercial numbers, which are
15 referred to in the column on the rest. That
16 indicates to you an amazing set of developments
17 over that period of time and accelerated even to
18 the present.

19 Now, looking to the general
20 population in Dedham, you will see here a 60-
21 year sort of study of that, and these are from
22 the U.S. census data, except for the last
23 column, which is an estimate for the rural
24 population review. And you see that Dedham has

1 approximately the same number of people today
2 that it did in 1970.

3 And in Westwood, which is highly
4 material for purposes of your consideration
5 tonight, in 1970, Westwood had 12,750 people.
6 Today it has over, apparently in 2023, 17,000
7 people and was estimated to be a population of
8 19,500. We also include some student
9 population data just to show you how even though
10 a smaller town, Westwood, has a greater student
11 population above the overall population of
12 schools and in Westwood.

13 All of these are perhaps indicative
14 of certain demographic factors that are a little
15 different in Westwood than in Dedham. But these
16 data suggest these things: traffic congestion
17 north, south, east, and west of Dedham, like
18 death and taxes, may be a part of our future.
19 Five exits on Route 95 and already approved
20 developments in both Dedham and Westwood say so.

21 Demands on water usage will continue
22 to increase in both Dedham and Westwood. The
23 demands in the Dedham aquifer, both for the
24 Bridge Street wells and the Fowl Meadow wells,

1 need vigil attention, as does the trajectory --
2 and importantly so, the trajectory of reliance
3 on MWRA water supply, which is costly to town
4 residents.

5 The Westwood population growth and
6 development strategies are not in Dedham's
7 control and are part of our -- but are a part of
8 our problem. But intelligent land use planning
9 is within our control, for which we need better
10 understanding and metrics of traffic and water.

11 On top of all of this, the U.S. EPA
12 has announced a demanding regulation for PFAS
13 pollution calculations, lowering that number per
14 trillion to four parts per trillion, which will
15 cause temporary or permanent restrictions on
16 water supply. The planning board has suggested
17 we do not have the resources to do this work,
18 and that is not so. The slide on traffic
19 studies that follow show the following, that
20 one, we have received a United States Department
21 Transportation grant of \$207,841.44.

22 Importantly, that is really dedicated
23 and should be considered so for safety purposes.
24 However, it does say, as you will read in the

1 bolded language, that it will also include
2 studies of major and minor collector roadways.
3 We have mitigation funds, including just
4 recently \$100,000 from Lowder Street planned
5 residential development developers, and then we
6 have, may I just emphasize this, all previous
7 traffic studies. The planning board did
8 acknowledge to me in discussions that yes, there
9 are a myriad of traffic studies, and I assume
10 nobody has thrown the studies away, and the data
11 is available.

12 And I'd just ask you to consider when
13 thinking about the issue of cost, we're in the
14 era of big data. It doesn't mean we have to go
15 up. We do everything we've already done.
16 Mercifully, courtesy of all those things that
17 are going to make Massachusetts a leader in this
18 country, for better or worse in our artificial
19 intelligence, and for the best big data, we got
20 big data and at a very modest cost. If such is
21 necessary, we can get somebody to write
22 appropriate programs for that.

23 Let me just turn to the subject of
24 water. And on water, today, as I said, was the

1 recurrence of repeated cycles of water
2 restrictions and bans. The question that comes
3 from Samuel Taylor-Coleridge, which you all
4 remember from the Dedham Schools, water, water
5 everywhere, not a drop to drink. Is that the
6 right question from the rhyme of the ancient
7 mariner? No, it isn't.

8 We are not in danger of not having
9 drinking water and others in the house. However
10 -- but we must take care and understand the
11 effects of development on the protection of our
12 aquifer and the cost of supply for the Dedham-
13 Westwood water district and the Massachusetts
14 Water Authority. So I would just say in
15 closing --

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Point of
17 order --

18 **THE MODERATOR:** Excuse me. A point
19 of order cannot interrupt a speaker.

20 **MR. MCDERMOTT:** In closing, some may
21 say or think this article is inspired by
22 concerns about development pressures in West
23 Dedham. That is an old and shop worn
24 perspective. Thirty years ago, when my wife

1 Hope was here, and I led an effort with others
2 across the town to preserve the land known as
3 Wilson Mountain Reservation from an 850,000-
4 square-foot mall, that was not our concern.

5 It was not 20 years ago a concern
6 when a group of us led an effort across the
7 town, many of whom are in this hall today, to
8 block a 570 proposed unit development proposed
9 -- I've got a picture of it right here in the
10 brochure we sent out -- for the Readville Yards.
11 We did it then. And 20 years ago, we proposed,
12 against some opposition, the initiation of a
13 master plan proposal.

14 And more recently, just seemingly ten
15 years ago, but it was perhaps slightly fewer, we
16 proposed, with some opposition from town
17 leadership, the idea of doing the town acquiring
18 the Ames Schoolhouse for the town and creating a
19 joint safety and fire department and converting
20 the police station into a town green. We did
21 all that, and I think that reflected our
22 interest for the entire town.

23 So I am asking you if you would
24 support the substitute motion that I have

1 proposed by a yes vote, and it is according to
2 town counsel by majority, and get us onto the
3 track of doing a serious study of traffic and
4 water as a consequence of the developments that
5 we have in this town. Thank you.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
7 McDermott. Point of order out there?

8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Duly noted. I will
10 tell you that we give a little bit of leeway to
11 the proponent of an article. I will work out a
12 system with my good friend, the timekeeper, to
13 keep me a little closer appraised. Mr.
14 Podolski.

15 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Thank you, Mr.
16 Moderator, town meeting representatives. As was
17 stated in your warrant book that you received,
18 the planning board voted to indefinitely
19 postpone this article, and in light of the
20 substitute motion that's been made by the
21 proponent of the article, it's time now for us
22 to tell you why we did this.

23 Mr. McDermott was provided with two
24 nights of hearings, albeit the second night of

1 hearing, he had to leave to go to the airport.
2 But he's known a long time that the board does
3 not necessarily -- is not in favor of this type
4 of moratorium. Whether the words are "favor" or
5 "imposed," it doesn't matter to the planning
6 board.

7 There's a number of reasons that were
8 discussed in the public hearings with Mr.
9 McDermott. First of all, the expense of a town-
10 wide study is unknowable at this time. We don't
11 know how we would ever study all of the
12 entrances and exits that come into and out of
13 this town and do it in a year and do it for less
14 than \$500,000.

15 I beg to differ with Mr. McDermott
16 that any traffic studies that were done more
17 than five years ago are irrelevant [sic]. They
18 don't mean anything in today's Dedham. The town
19 has changed. There's much more development in
20 this town. We have to do new studies to make
21 them accurate. So to say we could base our
22 conclusions on some kind of a study that was
23 done a few years ago is just not -- it's
24 incorrect.

1 The time and expense of a
2 comprehensive study of water -- at our hearing
3 on this article -- one of the hearings, we had
4 the Dedham-Westwood Water District come in. The
5 director was there. They had done a projection
6 on their supplies of water. They say they're
7 good through 2030. Obviously, more development,
8 more consumption of water, but that certainly
9 doesn't mean that we don't have enough to
10 undertake the continuing development in the
11 town.

12 And we also now have the hookup to
13 the MWRA so that in the event of a drought, such
14 as last year, and water supplies get too low, we
15 can now call on MWRA hookup to keep our supplies
16 adequate.

17 The board is right now in the midst
18 of reviewing the master plan, which Shaw alluded
19 to, and that master plan was -- and we're about
20 to finish up with our comments on it -- was done
21 over a two-year period. Twenty-five residents
22 of the town contributed, including Shaw.
23 Nowhere in that master plan does it propose a
24 town-wide study on traffic, and nowhere in that

1 plan does it propose implementation -- it does
2 propose implementation for droughts, but it
3 doesn't certainly base it on development in the
4 town.

5 We consulted with the Dedham-Westwood
6 Water District, and they say they have plenty
7 for now. The board does not want to set
8 unrealistic expectations that we could secure
9 funding for and complete a comprehensive water
10 and traffic study in one year. That's almost
11 impossible to do, and we can't ask our staff to
12 do that. It has to be done by knowledgeable
13 experts, groups that do traffic studies, groups
14 that do hydrological studies. That's the only
15 way you're going to get an accurate report.

16 And finally, we did consult with town
17 counsel about the standards, the legal standards
18 of whether this is an appropriate mechanism
19 brought by the petitioner for bringing a
20 temporary moratorium on the premises that are
21 described in the article. And for that, I'm
22 going to ask that town counsel come up and
23 comment on the moratorium substance itself, with
24 the Moderator's permission.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

THE MODERATOR: Yes. Ms. Goldberg.

MS. GOLDBERG: Thank you, Mr.

Moderator. So I think it's fair to say that with the change that's been recommended to say the town favors, this is just a sense of the meaning. And basically, as Shaw indicated, that's something that we had talked about a bit earlier when we were talking about his moratorium article, and that is that you have to have very good reasons to impose a moratorium, and you have to be able to demonstrate that.

And so here in Dedham, obviously water and traffic are a big and important issue, but not as compared to -- not in direct relationship to this proposal. So it was our feeling that even -- that this one would not have been likely to be approved by the attorney general as a bylaw amendment for that very reason, and that even if it was that it would be subject to challenge, based on the content of the proposal.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Mr.

Podolski.

1 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Thank you. For the
2 reasons previously stated, and based upon town
3 counsel's opinion that the articles proposed
4 probably won't meet the legal standard, we
5 request that you vote no on this substitute
6 motion. Thank you.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Further questions or
8 discussion? Mr. McDermott.

9 **MR. MCDERMOTT:** Just to be clear, I
10 think this article, by using the word "favors,"
11 does not impose a moratorium. It gives the
12 planning board the opportunity to use that
13 thing, that mechanism, and that is -- we've
14 concurred on that, and therefore, it will not be
15 subject to attorney general review, and will not
16 be subject to challenge.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
18 McDermott. Mr. Czazasty.

19 **MR. CZAZASTY:** Andrew Czazasty,
20 Precinct 7. I just have a question about
21 procedure. So if we vote yes on the substitute
22 motion, then that's that, and if we vote no,
23 that means we go back to the original motion of
24 indefinite postponement, correct?

1 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, that's right.

2 **MR. CZAZASTY:** That's confusing. Am
3 I allowed to still speak?

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Sure.

5 **MR. CZAZASTY:** So I have to be
6 against this substitute motion and in favor of
7 the recommendation to indefinite postponement.
8 I know Mr. McDermott has great intentions, but I
9 don't believe a moratorium on a new development
10 is in the best interest of the town for a
11 housing shortage, and if we implement this
12 moratorium, then I believe we're seriously
13 limiting our options for solving the crisis.

14 In addition, I don't see the reason
15 for a town-wide traffic study. Completing it in
16 one year is unrealistic and also unnecessary.
17 We have specific streets that need traffic
18 studies, and I believe it's best to do this case
19 by case instead of having a giant study that may
20 include streets that aren't problematic.

21 And additionally, I really don't see
22 why a traffic study would require a development
23 moratorium. And the same goes for studying the
24 water usage. I mean, studying water

1 availability is a valid concern, put a freeze on
2 new development, and I don't believe it's
3 necessary for such a study. So for those
4 reasons, I would urge members to vote no on the
5 substitute motion, but yes on the original
6 motion to indefinitely postpone.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
8 Czazasty. Ms. Gilbert.

9 **MS. GILBERT:** Mary Gilbert, Precinct
10 4. Move the question.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Always a crowd
12 pleaser. Move the question. I was talking to
13 the town clerk. I don't know that we can think
14 of more than one or two times in our time to
15 move the question has failed.

16 The town meeting has a good sense of
17 when the rhythm has rhythmmed out, and also,
18 people have the courtesy not to prematurely try
19 to move the question, which is a tactic that,
20 you know, could theoretically be adopted in
21 order to kind of cut people off from speaking.

22 So with that little history lesson,
23 the vote comes on moving the question. It
24 requires a two-thirds vote. All those in favor,

1 please say aye.

2 (Aye.)

3 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It is a
4 two-thirds vote.

5 So we are first voting on the
6 amendment. The amendment is that the word
7 "favor" be substituted for the word "impose,"
8 which has the effect of turning it into a sense
9 of the meeting, as opposed to a strict bylaw
10 change. Any questions on that?

11 If you're in favor of substituting
12 the word "favor" and making it a sense of the
13 meeting, you can vote yes. We're going to do
14 the clicker for this one, and hit green on your
15 voting device. If you're opposed, vote no. The
16 voting is open.

17 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

18 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, that goes first,
19 and if that passes, then that's it. If that --
20 I mean if it fails, we then have to move -- we
21 have to have something resolved. So if the
22 amendment fails, then we vote on the motion not
23 amended.

24 **MR. MAHER:** A no vote on this then

1 goes to the original (inaudible)?

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, that's correct.
3 Why don't you go to the microphone. Other
4 people might be interested in your question.

5 **MR. MAHER:** (Inaudible.)

6 **THE MODERATOR:** You're right, Mr.
7 Maher. I'm trying to remember that almost half
8 of this audience is at their first or second
9 town meeting, so your point is taken. I
10 understand, sir.

11 **MR. AKULA:** This is James Akula,
12 Precinct 4. So if we vote yes on this and
13 change it to "favor," then the amendment passes
14 with the word "favor"?

15 **THE MODERATOR:** If you vote yes on
16 this, the amendment is inserted, and then we
17 would vote on the original motion as amended.

18 **MR. AKULA:** So even if it's a yes and
19 then no?

20 **THE MODERATOR:** You could, you could.
21 I'm not sure why you would, but you could. Mr.
22 Maher is correct. The one exception that I make
23 -- and this happened at a previous town meeting,
24 as well. When I told my tellers -- we don't

1 have tellers this evening -- or when I can sense
2 like rumbling, that people aren't sure what a
3 yes and no is, for me, that stops the train.

4 So rules of procedure are very, very
5 important, but if people don't know what they're
6 voting on, that's a larger issue than strict
7 adherence, as long as we don't allow speeches
8 that would talk in favor or opposed. When
9 people are saying just tell me what I'm voting
10 on, I do take that as a point of order, even if
11 it's in the middle of a vote.

12 So the vote is open on the amendment.
13 So are you in favor of Mr. McDermott's amendment
14 to substitute the word "favor" instead of
15 "impose," turning it into a sense of the meeting
16 versus a true bylaw change.

17 The vote is closed. 32 people having
18 voted in favor of the amendment, and 196
19 opposed, the amendment fails. Now we go back to
20 vote on the original motion, which is that it be
21 indefinitely postponed. All those in favor --
22 we went back and forth on whether this required
23 a report of the planning board, but I think
24 people -- you had a hearing on it, and you had a

1 quorum present. Thank you, sir.

2 Using, again, your voting clickers,
3 if you are in favor of indefinite postponement
4 of Article 20 -- remember it does not have the
5 word "favor" in it -- please so indicate on your
6 -- oh, they're going to put it up on the screen,
7 I guess. Because the motion is indefinite
8 postponement, it's only a simple majority. The
9 vote is open.

10 The vote is closed. 212 having voted
11 in the affirmative, and nine in the negative,
12 the motion to indefinitely postpone carries.

13 We move to Article 21, which calls --

14 **MR. BROPHY:** Point of order.

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, sir.

16 **MR. BROPHY:** Matt Brophy, Precinct 2.
17 Motion to adjourn.

18 **THE MODERATOR:** You're out of order,
19 Matt, you're out of order.

20 **MR. BROPHY:** Withdrawn.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you.

22 **MR. BROPHY:** Why am I out of order?

23 **THE MODERATOR:** I was just going to
24 explain that. I'm exercising a little bit of

1 the broad powers that the Dedham bylaw and Mass.
2 General Law gives to the moderator, which is
3 we've only got a couple of articles left, guys.
4 If you want to go home, you can go home, but
5 we're all back here next Monday night, because
6 nothing we have voted on has any effect until we
7 dissolve the meeting, and we cannot dissolve the
8 meeting until we have considered every article,
9 either accepted it, amended it, or passed it. I
10 think I read that right.

11 Article 21, creation of a special
12 purpose stabilization fund. Are you speaking on
13 this? No, okay. Any questions on the article?
14 It requires a two-thirds vote. There doesn't
15 seem to be anybody wanting to talk about it.
16 Let's try for a voice vote. All in favor, say
17 aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
20 ayes have it. Thank you.

21 Article 22, rescind prior authorized
22 debt. You got a short explanation earlier.

23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible.)

24 **THE MODERATOR:** I'm sorry. It was a

1 two-thirds vote. I have to say the words.

2 Thank you.

3 Article 22, rescinding prior
4 authorized -- questions?

5 **ANN ?:** (Inaudible.)

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Ann's
7 good, the rest of you good? Okay. This is a
8 majority vote. Let's try a voice vote. All
9 those in favor, please say aye.

10 (Aye.)

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
12 ayes have it.

13 Article 23 on Page 36. It's a two-
14 thirds vote to pass this. It involves
15 borrowing. Questions? The vote comes on the
16 original motion, two-thirds vote. Let's try for
17 a voice. All in favor, say aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It is a
20 two-thirds vote.

21 Article 27 -- 26, sorry. I think
22 this was passed from the floor. Questions,
23 discussion on Article 26 on Page 39? There
24 being none, the vote comes on the original

1 motion that it be so voted. All in favor, say
2 aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

5 (No.)

6 **THE MODERATOR:** The ayes have it.
7 Article 27, also on Page 39. Discussion? Ms.
8 Martin.

9 **MS. MARTIN:** Maryann Martin, Precinct
10 5.

11 I'm really not even too sure who I'm
12 asking this question to. So when I first saw
13 this article, I thought it was kind of silly,
14 and then I was sitting at the FINCOM debate, and
15 Mr. Butler got up and made a brilliant
16 presentation, and it seemed like we have lots of
17 opportunities for grants to get the job done
18 without tapping the town for more money.

19 Mr. Goodwin had said during that
20 meeting that without -- if this article was to
21 pass, we still would have the right funds for a,
22 quote, "park." So I'm just -- I'd like to see
23 us get everything we want to get, but I love the
24 idea of not paying for it. So if anyone has

1 insight into that, if Mr. Butler is here. I
2 just thought he did a great job.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** The proponents of
4 this article are not here, right?

5 **MS. MARTIN:** They're not. I just
6 happened to witness the discussion, and I just
7 thought it was brilliant when Mr. Butler got up
8 and said basically on the committee we've got
9 the following grants going out, and it looked
10 like we were going to get everything we wanted
11 without having to tap the town.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Your interpretation
13 of Mr. Butler's presentation was that we don't
14 need any bonded money?

15 **MS. MARTIN:** It sounded like he was
16 supporting Mr. Brogan's article without really
17 supporting it.

18 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Goodwin? Ms.
19 Duncan.

20 **MS. DUNCAN:** Meg Duncan, Precinct 1.
21 I love the town green project. I think it's
22 been one of the best projects we've worked on,
23 and I take an opposite view, Maryann, that any
24 additional grant money I think should be used to

1 expand and use better materials, maybe even do
2 Phase 2 at the same time as Phase 1 so we could
3 have the best park possible. I'm totally
4 against this idea to rescind any funding.
5 Thanks.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** The original motion
7 is that this not happen. So remember if you
8 don't want it to happen, you're voting yes when
9 we get to voting. Mr. Maher.

10 **MR. MAHER:** Jim Maher, Precinct 5.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Go ahead, Mr. Maher,
12 and then Mr. Goodwin. You were there. Go
13 ahead, sir.

14 **MR. MAHER:** First off, I voted in
15 favor of the town green, and I will still vote
16 in favor of the town green. But when I
17 allocated \$2.55 million, I expect that any grant
18 money that comes in cuts into that \$2.5 million
19 so that we're providing a \$2.5 million park.
20 And if we're going to expend any money over that
21 2.5, it has to come before town meeting, even if
22 it's grant money.

23 So let's stay with our park where
24 we're already in the planning stages, we're

1 already in the development stages of it. If we
2 do receive grants -- are successful in receiving
3 grants, that should knock down the \$2.5 million
4 so there isn't an impact on the overall cost.
5 Thank you.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Goodwin.

7 **MR. GOODWIN:** Thank you, Mr.
8 Moderator, and thank you everyone who has asked
9 questions about this.

10 So just to clarify, we have \$2.55
11 million that's been appropriated by town
12 meeting, and then we have, in fact, already
13 issued the debt for that. So again, just to
14 clarify, I am supportive of the motion here in
15 the book that it be indefinitely postponed
16 because any other motion would be actually to
17 abandon the project, and then we would have to
18 go through this complicated process of
19 reassigning this debt to another project in
20 town, so you would not actually be lessening the
21 amount of the debt burden that the residents are
22 experiencing.

23 We are on a path, as was mentioned
24 previously, a design path, to bring a design to

1 the select board on May 24, the current path,
2 which is to bring forward a design, a concept, a
3 cost estimate, and continue on that, all the
4 while pursuing grants. And, of course, we are
5 pursuing a lot of grants to help defray the cost
6 and to enhance the park, if possible, as well.

7 So I think we're in the middle of a
8 process. I would really appreciate it if we
9 could continue on that process, and that would
10 be my ask of town meeting. Thank you.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Ms. Gilbert.

12 **MR. GILBERT:** Mary Gilbert, Precinct
13 4.

14 Just a point of clarification. I
15 know that the bonding on that 2.55 is actually
16 1.7 and change; is that correct?

17 **MR. GOODWIN:** The bonding on the
18 original 2.55 is 1.7 because we repurposed 784
19 and change from the ECEC, which was also bonded
20 proceeds. So we currently have debt issued
21 funds in the amount of 2.55 million on hand.

22 **MS. GILBERT:** Right, but in the
23 previous meeting, as you had mentioned, there
24 was 700,000 and change applied to the town

1 green, so you put out to debt 1.7. So we're
2 already at 2.55?

3 **MR. GOODWIN:** We are at 2.55 of debt
4 for the town green currently.

5 **MS. GILBERT:** So if you get
6 additional grants, I think some of the comment
7 was would that lower the debt?

8 **MR. GOODWIN:** And I think that's to
9 be seen, depending on the amount of the concept
10 and the estimates that we have come in and what
11 the grant is for exactly.

12 **MS. GILBERT:** Right. So again,
13 you've pulled back some -- was it Article 22
14 were some unissued debt? You said we're going
15 to pull that back.

16 **MR. GOODWIN:** That was unissued debt
17 that we chose to instead fund those projects
18 with free cash.

19 **MS. GILBERT:** With free cash, right.
20 So again, when I read -- and I perhaps have been
21 a little dense on this, and I apologize -- it's
22 1.7 that was put out to bond in fiscal year '23,
23 just in March, this past March?

24 **MR. GOODWIN:** Combined with the ECEC

1 money, we have 2.55 of debt on this project.

2 **MS. GILBERT:** I understand that, but
3 that previous debt was another year, the ECEC
4 money. What you put out to bond in March was
5 1.7 million?

6 **MR. GOODWIN:** That's correct.

7 **MS. GILBERT:** So there's still
8 unissued debt, is there not, on the 2.5 that we
9 voted a year ago on -- so there's still a little
10 room to add to what you need to do?

11 **MR. GOODWIN:** Although if you follow
12 that to its logical conclusion, then we would
13 have \$3.2 million of the total project, which I
14 would have to ask counsel to ask on that,
15 because my understanding is that town meeting
16 gave us \$2.55 million of debt, no matter how
17 that debt was obtained, whether it was from the
18 ECEC or via the recent issuance. But again, I'd
19 have to defer to counsel on that.

20 **MS. GILBERT:** Well, that's my
21 understanding, too. So the price on that
22 project is 2.55. You've already issued debt. I
23 originally spoke against the article. I think
24 2.55 -- if that's what we're going to spend, I

1 don't want to see us spend any more. I think
2 it's excessive, but we'll see. I think 2.55,
3 that's sort of what I believe it should be, and
4 I am supportive of indefinitely postponing this
5 article.

6 **MR. GOODWIN:** Thank you.

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. McGee.

8 **MR. LOWDER:** Bert Lowder, Precinct 6.
9 I'd like to move the motion.

10 **THE MODERATOR:** We know this by now.
11 Move the question takes two-thirds vote. Let's
12 try for a voice. All those in favor of stopping
13 debate and moving to the voting -- that's called
14 move the question -- please say aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
17 ayes have it. It is a two-thirds vote to move
18 the question.

19 Now what is before you is the
20 original motion that this idea of rescinding the
21 authorization not happen, that it be
22 indefinitely postponed. A yes vote is a vote to
23 indefinitely postpone the rescission of the
24 debt. So is that clear? Let's try for a voice.

1 This is -- I'm sorry, yes?

2 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Help me
3 understand again. Yes means keep this in?

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Yeah. Here's the
5 shortcut. Always look at what the
6 recommendation says. Don't look at the article.
7 Look at the recommendation. The recommendation
8 is forget about it. So if you want to
9 indefinitely postpone it, vote yes. Believe me,
10 that's a common thing. Let's try by voice. All
11 those in favor of indefinitely postponing,
12 please say aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It's
15 unanimous.

16 From town green, leaf blowers,
17 Article 28 on Page 40. The original motion is
18 that this proposal, which is proposed by some
19 town meeting members that it be indefinitely
20 postponed. Jean Zeiler.

21 **MS. ZEILER:** Thank you. Jean Zeiler
22 Precinct 6.

23 My name is on this article, and I
24 just want to say that the sponsors of the

1 article took heed of comments at mini town
2 meeting that were very valid concerns about this
3 article. So I'm not standing here to oppose the
4 finance and warrant recommendation. I actually
5 support it at this point.

6 We do hope this article -- we're able
7 to bring it back because there also was a lot of
8 comments in favor of some of the concepts of the
9 article, so anybody who has knowledge about any
10 of this, you're welcome to join us to discuss
11 it, so maybe we can bring it back.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
13 Zeiler. Anybody else wishing to discuss this,
14 considering that both the proponents and the
15 opponents agree? Does anybody want to discuss?
16 So the motion before you is that it be
17 indefinitely postponed. All those in favor,
18 please say aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

21 (Nay.)

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Sorry, the ayes have
23 it.

24 Article 30 on Page 44, amendment to

1 the general bylaws concerning purchasing. The
2 recommendation of the finance committee that it
3 be so voted. Discussion, questions? Hearing
4 none, the vote comes on the original motion that
5 it be so voted. All in favor, please say aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
8 ayes have it.

9 Article 32 on Page 45. Mr. McDonald.

10 **MR. MCDONALD:** I realize that we are
11 the only thing that's standing between you and
12 walking out that door. So we haven't said
13 anything all night long, so that means we have a
14 lot of time.

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Get that clock going,
16 Joe.

17 **MR. MCDONALD:** Well, since we're the
18 proponent, does that mean I get more time?

19 **THE MODERATOR:** You're the proponent
20 of an amendment.

21 **MR. MCDONALD:** I'm only kidding.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. McDermott is --

23 **MR. MCDONALD:** Mr. McDermott is, I'll
24 just comment, is a very distinguished member of

1 our community who has done a ton of work for a
2 lot, and I know there was some question, that he
3 deserves all the time he needs in order to
4 explain something. He has definitely earned
5 that within this body.

6 So a substitute motion tonight on
7 Article 32 from the select board. We had a
8 discussion in our meeting the other night, and
9 the feeling was that it was a valid request with
10 a couple of amendments. And what we wish to
11 provide in our substitute motion is that instead
12 of the town moderator and the town manager, we
13 put the town clerk, and instead of a cell
14 number, put the word "telephone," and, of
15 course, in order for elected and appointed town
16 boards and committees to transmit meeting
17 notices.

18 We all know that during the pandemic
19 when we had remote town meetings, you had to
20 provide your email address, and there was only a
21 small number of town meeting members that we had
22 to accommodate at the town hall in order to do
23 it.

24 So our substitute motion is let's get

1 the town clerk -- town meeting members to give
2 what you have already given to your district
3 chair to the town clerk so that during the year
4 when there's many announcements and documents,
5 we shouldn't be sending it just during town
6 meeting, throughout the year. So hopefully
7 you'll agree with the substitute motion, and we
8 can start filling the inboxes. Thank you.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Discussion on the
10 amendment? Mr. McDermott.

11 **MR. MCDERMOTT:** Just for clarity, I
12 support the amendment.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, sir. No
14 further discussion, then, the vote comes on the
15 substitute motion. You should have a handout,
16 and as well as explained by Mr. McDonald, chair
17 of the select board. It's up on the board. So
18 using your voting devices, please indicate your
19 acceptance or your rejection of the substitute
20 motion.

21 203 members having voted in the
22 affirmative, and 17 in the negative -- oh, Mr.
23 McDermott -- the substitute motion, which does,
24 indeed, substitute for the indefinite

C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

NORFOLK, ss.

I, ARLENE R. BOYER, a Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify:

That the proceedings herein was recorded by me and transcribed by me; and that such transcript is a true record of the proceedings, to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and notarial seal this 3rd day of June 2023.

Arlene R. Boyer, CVR
Notary Public

My Commission Expires
November 21, 2025