Westwood Finance Commission

2008 Annual Town Meeting
Warrant Article Summary

Schedule of Public Hearings

February 25, 26
March 24, 25
7:30 P.M.
Thurston Middle School Cafeteria

In the event of severe weather, please check the Town of Westwood web site at www.townhall.westwood.ma.us for weather related postponement information.
Dear Residents,

The Finance Commission is in the process of reviewing both the budget and the warrant articles that will be presented at the Annual Town Meeting in May. The Commission will vote on these matters and present written recommendations prior to Town Meeting. We have been meeting with various Town employees and officials, but the most important input we receive comes directly from the residents of the Town. We urge you to attend our public hearings so that we may listen to your concerns. In addition, these public hearings present one of the best forums to get your opinions known by other Town residents and the press, prior to Town Meeting.

The Town continues to face significant financial challenges. The FY09 budget again shows that the increases in fixed costs will consume most increases in revenue, leaving limited revenue to fund increases in the school and municipal operating budgets.

These are important matters that will directly affect both your tax bill and the quality of life in Westwood in the future. Please come to our hearings on February 25, 26, and March 24 and 25. The Finance Commission considers all articles in the warrant for every Town Meeting and reports to the residents in print before each Town Meeting its advice, estimates, and recommendations for consideration by you – the Town Meeting. We take our responsibilities seriously and therefore encourage you to attend these hearings and become knowledgeable about the questions on which you will be asked to vote at Town Meeting on Monday, May 5, 2008.

What Goes On at the Hearings?

February 25, 26, 2008

These initial hearings allow the sponsors of specific articles to present their proposed articles. The meetings provide an opportunity for public response which can influence changes, if necessary, in the final wording which appears on the warrant for Town Meeting.

Following public input, the Finance Commission may vote their recommendation(s) at this hearing or may do so at any of their regular meetings held during the month of March.
March 24, 25, 2008

Final costs will be available on all articles. Again, public participation is encouraged. Discussion will continue, if necessary, on articles presented at the February public hearing.

The Finance Commission will vote its recommendations on remaining articles at the completion of the March 25 public hearing.

Schedule for February 25, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.

1. Increase the number of seniors in Property Tax Work Off Program from 75 to 100 participants. (Council on Aging)

Planning Board Articles

2. Zoning amendment – establish a special permit to allow for a boundary fence (or a fence in combination with a wall) to exceed six feet in height.
4. Zoning amendment – amend the definition of “fast order food establishment” and delete the definition of “fast order food”.
5. Zoning amendment – change the special permit granting authority for the earth material movement special permit for projects that are also subject to the Major Business Development or Planned Development Area special permits and site plan review from the Board of Appeals to the Planning Board.
6. Zoning amendment – include a minimum lot size for Senior Residential Developments.
7. Zoning amendment – allow for the voluntary demolition and reconstruction of non-conforming residential structures by right in certain circumstances.
8. Zoning amendment – specify that single unit cross-polar antennae is required only on major wireless communications facilities.
11. Purchase and installation of modular classrooms. (School Committee)

FY09 Budget Discussion

The Town’s budget is voted as a warrant article at Town Meeting. The School Committee and Board of Selectmen will provide brief updates on their FY09 budgets.
Schedule for February 26, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.

1. Amend zoning map by adding four parcels to existing Local Business B.
   (Petitioner: Edward Richardson, 69 Webster Street)
2. Disposition of Town property – parking lot on Washington Street.
   (Petitioner: Edward Richardson, 69 Webster Street)

**Board of Selectmen Articles**

3. FY09 budget – Westwood Station.
5. Appropriation – school capital improvements – Westwood Station.
6. Road improvement.
8. Town facility improvement study – land acquisition.
9. Town facility improvement study – design.
10. Health care – Chapter 32B, adopt Section 18 – retiree health insurance.
12. Town Bylaw - excavation and trench safety regulation.
13. Tax increment financing (TIF) – economic development incentive program project.
15. Town Bylaw governing post construction stormwater standard.
17. Reauthorize the Cable Technology Advisory Board.
18. Westwood Station – eminent domain.
20. Westwood Station – zoning bylaw amendments.
23. Westwood Station – municipal mitigation payment.
27. Miscellaneous (2).
Schedule for March 24, 25, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.

In addition to the following articles, discussion will continue, if necessary, on articles presented at the earlier public hearings. The Finance Commission will vote its final recommendations on remaining articles at the completion of this hearing.

Board of Selectmen Articles

1. Supplemental FY08 appropriations.
2. Supplemental FY08 appropriations.
4. Unpaid prior year’s bills.
5. FY09 Town salary and expense budgets.
6. FY09 budget – Westwood Station.
7. Municipal capital equipment/improvements.
8. Sewer capital improvements.
10. Reserved article(s) for outstanding issues that may arise prior to Town Meeting.

Questions? Comments? Contact us:
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Please Note:

The Town of Westwood accommodates the needs of all physically challenged or disabled people by reasonable means in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact the Finance Commission office at (781)320-1029 to make your request known.