



## **A Primer for the 2019 Andover Town Meeting**

Andover Annual Town Meeting **begins Monday night, April 29th and continues Tuesday, April 30th.** It also has potential to extend to Monday, May 6th and Tuesday, May 7th. This year, a short Special Town Meeting (two warrant articles) will be included at the start of night 2 (April 30th).

Each night of Town Meeting begins at 7:00 pm at the Collins Center at Andover High School (80 Shawsheen Road).

Children are welcome to attend Town Meeting, and parents can still vote while sitting with them in the “non-voter” section. But also, the Andover Education Association (AEA) will be offering free child care onsite (Andover High) on April 29th. Andover Recreation will be providing child care for subsequent nights at \$5 per child with signup available at [AndoverRec.com](http://AndoverRec.com).

Town Meeting is convened annually to adopt an operating budget and to consider other matters such as zoning changes, town purchases, by-law additions and amendments. The business of each Town Meeting is contained in a document known as “the warrant,” which is mailed to all registered voters as part of the Finance Committee Report. The 2019 book will arrive at your house prior to Town Meeting, but you can view it on town website [here](#).

At Town Meeting, the Town Moderator will call warrant articles for vote until she feels it appropriate to close for the night (typically before 10:00pm), and the next night picks up where the previous night ended. Thus, it’s difficult to determine which articles will be voted on which night (though, being early in the warrant, the town and school budgets in article 4 are always voted the first night).

Every article at Town Meeting is important and will have an impact on the town, but these specific articles have particular bearing on Andover schools, community projects, or general interest:

<u><b>Article Number</b></u>	<u><b>Article Title</b></u>
Article 4	FY20 Budget
Article 5	FY20 Capital Projects
Article 11A	Grant Program Authorization
Article 11E	Contracts in Excess of Three Years
Article 11F	Accepting Easements
Article 16	FY2020 Revolving Accounts
Article 24	Senior Center at Punchard Renovation and Construction
Articles 26 & 27	Electronic Voting & Rental of Electronic Voting System
Article 37	Town and School Energy Efficiency Initiatives
Article 38	Major School Projects
Article 39	Public Safety Microwave Communications System
Article 42	Student Device Refresh
Articles 46, 47 & 48	Change from “Board of Selectmen” to “Select Board”
Article 55	Andover High Feasibility Study Committee
Article 60	Sanborn School Site Improvements
STM Article 1*	Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement
STM Article 2*	Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) on Town Playing Fields

\*This year, a short Special Town Meeting (two warrant articles) will be included at the start of night 2 (April 30th).

More information on each of these articles is summarized on the following pages.

## **Warrant Article Summary**

### **Article 4: FY20 Budget**

The operating budgets for each Town department, including the School Department, will be considered as separate line items under Article 4. The School Committee will propose and recommends approval of a budget of \$85,929,808, which represents an increase of \$3,419,150 or 4.14% over the FY19 school budget. The budget enables the district to expand the school day and moves textbook expenditures from a Capital Improvement Projects article to the annual School Department budget. This proposal has the unanimous support of the School Committee, Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

More than 100 pages of detail can be found in the Andover Public Schools FY20 Budget Book available at [www.aps1.net/budget](http://www.aps1.net/budget). For a summary of main budget drivers, see Appendix A of this document.

### **Article 5: FY20 Capital Projects**

This is the annual “pay-as-you-go” funding from FY20 tax dollars for a variety of Town and School projects. The total amount of this article is \$3,963,698 of which \$1,011,600 is intended for school capital projects and facility maintenance including: ADA & IEP compliance, restroom upgrades, electric upgrades, plumbing upgrades, carpet/flooring replacements, floor refinishing, window repairs, security system upgrades, smoke detector repairs, sidewalk repairs, high velocity fans for West Middle gymnasium, a scoreboard at Lovely Field and an Andover High traffic study. (See also SCH-2 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

### **Article 11: General Housekeeping Articles (11A to 11G)**

These are several general housekeeping items that Town Meeting is asked to approve every year by law. The School Committee only took a formal position of approval of Article 11A, 11E and 11F, which may or may not be taken as separate votes. *The School Committee recommends approval.*

**11A:** Grant Program Authorization article authorizes Town Officials to apply for and to accept Federal or State grants requiring Town Meeting approval that might become available during the coming fiscal year.

**11E:** Contracts in Excess of Three Years article allows the Town Manager or Superintendent to enter into contracts exceeding three years but no greater than five years. The School Committee has, in the past, used this flexibility in the negotiation of transportation contracts with optional term extensions.

**11F:** Accepting Easements article allows the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee to accept grants of easements for streets, water, drainage, sewer and utility purposes or any public purpose on terms and conditions the Board and the Committee deem in the best interests of the Town.

### **Article 16: FY2020 Revolving Accounts**

This article authorizes a number of different revolving accounts including a School Department account for photocopy fees. *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

### **Article 24: Senior Center at Punchard Renovation and Construction**

This article would allocate \$4,500,000 (\$2,000,000 from Free Cash with the remaining \$2,500,000 to be borrowed) to renovate and expand the Senior Center at Punchard, including general construction, design and professional fees. This project dramatically improves functionality and ADA compliance and will provide the additional space necessary for current and expanded programming. The renovation includes the entire existing space, incorporates 21st century design standards, and adds 3,754 square feet of new senior center space. In addition, the new Senior Center at Punchard will house the Town’s Veteran Services Office. The Friends of the Senior Center are committed to fundraising an additional \$500,000 to support furniture and fixtures. (See also CS-1 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Articles 26 & 27: Electronic Voting & Rental of Electronic Voting System**

26: This article would change Town bylaws to specifically address the use of Electronic Devices as an option for any vote before Town Meeting. Currently, the bylaw defines a secret ballot as one that would require paper ballots be placed in a voting box. Since an electronic vote would be a secret/private vote, this addition would allow the option to the Moderator to count the votes through an electronic means. *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

27: This article would appropriate \$25,000 to pay for the rental of an electronic voting system for the use at Annual and Special Town Meetings for Fiscal Year 2020. *The School Committee did not take a formal position on this article.*

**Article 37: Town and School Energy Efficiency Initiatives**

This article will appropriate the sum of \$420,000 for the purpose of purchasing services and materials related to ongoing, annual Town and School energy efficiency initiatives. This year's request for Town initiatives will retrofit the first floor lighting at Memorial Hall Library to LED, install high efficiency condensing boilers at the Public Safety Center, and install an energy management system at the Building Operations shop on Red Spring Road. School Energy Initiatives will also continue the program to upgrade schools to VFD pumps and fans; insulate domestic hot water pipes; and upgrade pneumatic controls to direct digital controls (DDC) at Doherty Middle School. These improvements qualify for utility incentives of between \$30,000 and \$50,000 and will result in energy and operating cost savings of an estimated \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year. (See also P&F-7 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Article 38: Major School Projects**

This article would allocate \$920,000 to major school projects. Each year the School Department and the Department of Facilities work together to identify needs and develop a schedule for major repairs and improvements to school buildings and property. This year's requests will fund the installation of high velocity fans at Andover High School in the Field House and the Dunn gym; the installation of an accessible ramp to the bleachers at Lovely Field; the design for additional parking at Bancroft Elementary School; the design for air conditioning at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium; the design for replacement of the roof at Sanborn Elementary school; the design for air conditioning at South Elementary school; improvements to the play area at West Middle school; and improvements at High Plain/Wood Hill Middle school to include installation of air conditioning in the gymnasium, as well as renovations and resurfacing of the kindergarten and grades 1-5 playgrounds. (See also SCH-5 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Article 39: Public Safety Microwave Communications System**

This article would authorize the town to borrow \$300,000 for the design, purchase and installation of a town-wide public safety microwave communications system for the Andover Police Department and Andover Fire Rescue. When installed, this system will become the primary means of public safety communication throughout the Town and will provide full "no gap" coverage that will increase the safety of those first responders utilizing the system. (See also FR-2 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Article 42: Student Device Refresh**

This recurring article would appropriate \$372,870 from the town's Cable Fund to support of the student computer fleet and the Andover 1:1 student technology initiative. Funds from this article will be used for three main purposes. First, the district provides low cost computing devices, typically iPads and Chromebooks, to elementary students and this article pays for existing leases and to refresh devices for students in grades K-5. These devices are used during the class day and do not go home with students. Second, students in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

program where they are allowed to use a personal device during the school day to assist in instruction. Families, whose financial circumstances do not allow for access to such a device, are provided a suitable device for use at school and at home during the school year. Third, this provides refresh devices in specialized student programs such as engineering, music and graphics design, which require unique hardware or software. (See also IT-2 in the Capital Improvement Plan.) *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Articles 46, 47 & 48: Change from “Board of Selectmen” to “Select Board”**

These three articles are all required to change the title of the Board of Selectmen to Select Board. Each requires two-thirds approval by Town Meeting. *The School Committee did not take a formal position on these articles.*

46: Changes wording in the General Bylaws

47: Petitions the State Legislature to change the Town Charter

48: Changes wording in the Zoning Bylaws

**Article 55: Andover High School Feasibility Study Committee**

The Statement of Interest for Andover High School was not accepted by MSBA in December 2018. A new Statement of Interest has been submitted which will not be acted upon until December 2019. This article would authorize the expenditure of \$210,000 so that the Andover High School Facility Study Committee can continue its work by undertaking the following: a survey of the property with a wetlands delineation; geotechnical borings; a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment; a hazardous materials survey; and an Educational Program and Space Plan. This work will have to be undertaken with or without MSBA partnership prior to any future renovation or addition to the existing high school or construction of a new high school. It will not compromise our application to MSBA. *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Article 60: Sanborn School Site Improvements**

This article will reallocate \$319,000 previously authorized by Town Meeting (May 2015) for improvements at West Elementary to be spent on improvements at Sanborn Elementary instead. The Sanborn Elementary School has a problem with water infiltration flooding the basement. The transfer of this previously authorized borrowing will be used for the installation of perimeter drainage, which will interrupt and divert the ground water from reaching the foundation. Other surface drainage improvements will be constructed concurrently. (Meanwhile, the problems previously identified and funded for West Elementary are expected to be addressed through the current MSBA building project. *The School Committee recommends approval of this Article.*

**Special Town Meeting Article 1\*: Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement**

This article will approve a Tax Increment Financing agreement with Vicor Corporation for 400 Federal Street in Andover. The agreement would exempt real estate taxes for Vicor at this location to a maximum of \$1,610,961 over six years, and Vicor would commit constructing a manufacturing facility (approximately 87,000 sq ft at a cost of \$33.5 million) and creating new jobs (40) at this location. More detail can be found on the town website: <https://andoverma.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=271> *The School Committee did not take a formal position on this article.*

**Special Town Meeting Article 2\*: Automatic External Defibrillators on Town Playing Fields**

This article will appropriate \$50,000 to pay for the cost associated with purchasing 10 Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) and the related accessories/services/compliance program for the town playing fields. *The School Committee did not take a formal position on this article.*

\*This year, a short Special Town Meeting (two warrant articles) will be included at the start of night 2 (April 30th).

## **Appendix A: Summary of Important School Budget Components**

The School Committee will present a fiscal year 2020 school budget of \$85,929,808 for voter approval at Town Meeting. This budget is the culmination of many hours of work and public discussions. We appreciate the feedback provided by the community. As a summary, the FY20 school budget includes these important components:

**Meets contractual obligations and provides level services.** The baseline for the FY20 school budget allows the district to meet contractual obligations; comply with all state, local and federal mandates and regulations; and maintain the same level of services to Andover students that were provided in the previous year.

**Invests in additional student learning time.** Each of the past several school budgets have allowed focused investment in a critical strategic area. For FY20, this area of focus is on instructional time for our students. This investment was achieved through collective bargaining and is reflected in agreements with several personnel unions, including the Andover Education Association. The increase in the length of school day provides additional instructional time daily at each of the elementary, middle and high school levels. Over the course of a student's kindergarten-to-12th grade career in Andover Public Schools, this added learning is equivalent to more than a half-year of school for each student.

**Provides support in critical compliance and educational areas.** The budget includes funds to add special education support for the middle school BRIDGE autism program, nursing coverage due to the expiration of a long-standing grant, minor expansion of two existing Andover High programs (AVID and VHS), a limited pilot of a learning management system, and additional substitute per diem and performing arts program stipends.

**Completes move of textbooks from CIP to operating budget.** Textbooks and curriculum materials have been traditionally paid out of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which created unfortunate tradeoffs between textbooks and school maintenance. A two-year proposal was developed in conjunction with the Town Manager and Finance Committee to move this expenditure to the school operating budget. The FY20 budget adds \$220,000 to the operating budget to complete the second year of this transition.

**Incorporates increased state aid for education.** After more than two decades, extensive study, and numerous statewide efforts, the formula used by the state for public school funding is changing. FY20 brings the first of a multi-year plan of adjustments. For some districts, the updated Chapter 70 state aid formula has, to date, provided only a minimal \$20 per student increase. For Andover, the FY20 increase is currently proposed at \$147 per student, which will significantly and positively impact our district. Andover Chapter 70 aid is estimated to increase by \$858,482 or 8.1% over FY19 to \$11,454,144.

Initial FY20 budget proposals were not able to address a number of significant unmet needs. Fortunately, the increase in Chapter 70 aid will now enable the school department to invest in some of these areas. Because the final budget recommendation was determined only shortly before the writing of this letter, \$250,000 of the Chapter 70 increase included in the FY20 budget has not yet been apportioned to specific initiatives by the School Committee. This work will be completed prior to Town Meeting.

**Continues full-day kindergarten tuition reduction.** The School Committee remains committed to bringing down and eventually eliminating tuition for full-day kindergarten, and has made a downward rate adjustment for the third year in a row. Funds from the full-day kindergarten revolving account will be used to reduce tuition by \$200 per student. An additional \$75,000 from the FY20 operating budget will be

put toward full-day kindergarten services and/or additional tuition reduction. The Committee also expects school and town leadership to refine a full-day kindergarten tuition elimination plan, which we anticipate can be accelerated as Andover continues to benefit from the revised state aid formula.

**Uses Special Education Circuit Breaker Reserve Funds.** Andover receives reimbursement from the state for some out-of-district special education expenses. These funds are kept in a Circuit Breaker Reserve account and can be spent only on out-of-district special education expenses. In FY20, \$239,813 of this reserve will be spent on out-of-district expenses that otherwise would have been paid from the school operating budget. Even after this expenditure, the Circuit Breaker Reserve will maintain a balance of approximately \$500,000 to accommodate any unanticipated additional out-of-district expenses.

**Transfers information technology staff to town operations.** Per agreement between the Superintendent and Town Manager, and at the recommendation of Andover's Chief Information Officer, information technology staff will be moved from the school department and organizationally consolidated into one town department. Correspondingly, the salary for these individuals, totaling \$313,000, will be moved from the school operating budget to the town operating budget.

More than 100 pages of detail on the school budget can be found in the Andover Public Schools FY20 Budget Book available at: [www.aps1.net/budget](http://www.aps1.net/budget).