

TOWN OF ACUSHNET



Transcript of Articles in the Warrant for the

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Monday, May 22, 2023

At 7:00 p.m.

Please bring this report to the meeting for use in the proceedings at the

ALBERT F. FORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

708 Middle Road

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Call to the Annual Town Meeting	3
Glossary of Terms	4
Finance Committee Report	6
Board of Selectmen Report	8
Index of Annual Town Meeting Articles	26
FY 24 Revenue Estimate	28
Maintenance Articles	29
Consent Agenda (Articles 4–10)	29
Revolving Fund Articles (Articles 11-12)	30
Reserve Funds Articles (Article 13–19)	31
Capital Budget Articles (Articles 20-26)	33
Operating Budget Article (Article 27)	36
Enterprise Funds Articles (Articles 28-29)	41
Miscellaneous Articles (Articles 30-35)	42
Bylaw / Zoning Articles (Articles 36-38)	44
Appendix 1, Soil Conservation Bylaw	46



WARRANT

Annual Town Meeting

Monday, May 22, 2023

At 7:00 o'clock in the evening at the

Albert F. Ford Middle School

708 Middle Road

Bristol, SS

To any of the Constables of the Town of Acushnet, in said County of Bristol, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Acushnet, who being qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet at the Albert F. Ford Middle School, 708 Middle Road, in said Acushnet, on Monday, the twenty-second day of May, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.; then and there to act upon the enclosed articles, to wit:

In case all articles in the foregoing Warrant shall not be acted upon at the Meeting called for on Monday, May 22, 2023, to meet in Adjourned Sessions at such time and place as the meeting shall determine.

This building is accessible to the handicapped and designated parking is provided. If requested, at least one week before the meeting, warrants with large print can be available. Please call the Town Clerk's office at least one week before the Town Meeting at 508-998-0200 x4215.

- IMPORTANT -

This Warrant contains Articles, explanations, recommendations, and appendices. Only the Articles are part of the "official" call to Town Meeting. The explanations and appendices are editorial, and the recommendations expressed are those of the Finance Committee. Only the Articles are part of the official town meeting warrant.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Appropriation: An authorization to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is granted by Town Meeting and is usually limited in time and amount as to when it may be expended. Any part of the general appropriation not spent or encumbered by June 30 automatically reverts to surplus, which may become Free Cash. A specific appropriation is carried forward from year to year until spent for the designated purpose or transferred by Town Meeting vote to another account.

Assessed Valuation: A valuation set upon real or personal property by the Board of Assessors as a basis for levying taxes.

Budget: A plan of financial operation consisting of an estimate of proposed expenditures for a given period and the means of financing them. The budget is voted in the spring at Town Meeting for the fiscal year that begins the following July 1st.

Capital Budget: A plan of proposed capital outlays and the means of financing them for the current year.

Cherry Sheet: An annual statement received from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue detailing estimated payments to the town for the next fiscal year and the estimated state and county government charges payable by the town. The Assessors in setting the tax rate use these amounts. The actual receipts and charges may vary from the estimates.

Community Preservation Act (CPA): The Town adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2004. This Act allows the town to collect up to a 3% surcharge (Acushnet has voted 1.5%) on property tax bills (the funds can be matched up to 100% by the state when funds are available), which creates the Community Preservation Fund, to use for Community Preservation purposes. Each year, the town must appropriate, or reserve (but not necessarily spend), 10% of the funds for each of the three Community Preservation purposes: Open Space, Historic Resources, and Community Housing. The remaining 70% of the funds can be appropriated or reserved used for any of the three purposes and for Recreation and for administration.

Debt Service: Payment of interest and repayment of principal to holders of the Town's debt instruments.

Fiscal Year: A 12-month period, commencing July 1 and ending June 30, to which the annual budget applies. Fiscal years are often denoted FYXX with the last two numbers representing the calendar year in which it ends, for example, FY19 is the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

Free Cash: Free cash is the portion of unreserved fund balance available for appropriation. It is not cash but rather is approximately the total of cash and receivables less current liabilities and earmarked reserves also reduced by reserves for uncollected taxes. This is also referred to as "available cash". The amount is certified annually by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

General Fund: The major town-owned fund which is created with town receipts and which is charged with expenditures payable from revenues.

Grant: A contribution of assets by one governmental unit or other organization to another. Typically, these contributions are made to local governments from the state and federal governments. Grants are usually made for specific purposes.

Line-Item Budget: A format of budgeting that organizes costs by type of expenditure such as expenses, equipment, and salaries.

Overlay: The amount set aside to allow for uncollected property taxes. An amount for the overlay is added to the appropriations and other charges. Overlay Surplus – see below.

Overlay Surplus: The unused amount of the overlay for prior years, which may be transferred, by a vote of the Town, to the reserve account or used for extraordinary items.

Property Tax Levy: The amount produced by multiplying the assessed valuation of property by the tax rate. The tax rate is expressed "per thousand dollars" of assessed valuation.

Reserve Fund: Money set aside by Town Meeting to be allocated by the Finance Committee for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.

Stabilization Fund: A special reserve funded by Town Meeting for future expenditures.

Tax Classification Tax Allocation: Before setting the tax rate each year, a classification hearing is held by the selectmen to determine the shares of the tax levy to be paid by each class of property in the community, and whether to allow an open space discount, residential exemption, or small commercial exemption. The Assessors provide information about the impact of these options at the hearing. The decisions of the Selectmen are reported to the Bureau of Accounts and are referred to as the "Classification Tax Allocation."

Terms associated with Proposition 2½:

Debt or Capital Exclusion: The Town can assess taxes in excess of the levy limit by voting a debt exclusion or capital outlay exclusion. This amount does not become a permanent part of the levy limit base but does allow the Town to assess taxes for a specific period in excess of the limit for payment of debt service costs or payment of capital expenditures.

Excess Levy Capacity: The difference between the Town's tax levy limit and its actual tax levy for the current year. It is the additional tax levy that could be raised without asking for an override.

New Growth: The amount of property tax revenue that the Town can add to its allowable tax levy as a result of new construction, alterations, subdivisions or change of use which increases the value of a parcel of land by more than certain amounts.

Override: An amount, voted by the Town, which is permanently added to the levy limit. A majority vote of the Selectmen allows an override question to be put on the ballot. Override questions must be presented in dollar terms and must specify the purpose of the override. Overrides require a majority vote of approval by the Town.

Tax Levy Limit: The maximum amount of the tax levy for a period under the restrictions of Proposition 2½. It is calculated as the prior year limit plus new growth plus 2.5% of the prior year levy limit.

TOWN OF ACUSHNET
FINANCE COMMITTEE
FY 24 TOWN MEETING MESSAGE

May 22nd, 2023

Town of Acushnet, MA
Ford Middle School
Annual Town Meeting

Dear Residents of Acushnet,

The role of the Finance Committee in Municipal Government is an important one and vital to a town regarding prudent management of its finances. The Finance Committee is essentially a “Fiscal Watchdog” for a municipality and works collaboratively with the Finance Department and Board of Selectmen to ensure fiscal responsibility amongst the various town departments. The primary role of the Finance Committee is to analyze departmental budgets and make recommendations based upon data provided by our departments which will help to ensure a balanced budget. Our Finance Committee members have a diverse level of business experience from both the private and public sectors who volunteer their time without compensation or benefits. We care about our Town and that is the main reason we serve.

Every year has its economic challenges with regards to providing a balanced budget for our Town while maintaining a quality level of services for our residents. There are always annual increases in fixed costs, some relative to contractual obligations, health insurance and utilities to name a few. Many of these expenditures are being adversely impacted by the high level of inflation still affecting our national economy. These factors, combined with yearly uncertainty in State Aid always present a challenge for our small town and emphasize the importance of sound conservative fiscal management of our town’s finances. Since last year’s Annual Town meeting our Finance department and Town

Administrators have worked diligently with various town departments to identify and rectify any areas of concern within a particular budget to ensure an accurate assessment.

Our town is heavily reliant on revenue generated from residential property tax since we only have a small commercial/industrial tax base, and this emphasizes the importance of controlling spending. The goal is to provide quality level of services and to keep our tax liability within the constraints of Proposition 2 and ½ without the need for any tax override to maintain our Operational Budget. We also need to maintain our various Stabilization funds that have been established since these funds are essentially emergency savings accounts to be utilized for any unforeseen expense. Unlike some other surrounding towns, we are proud of the fact that the Town of Acushnet did not have to ask the residents for a tax override to fund its Operational Budget. Going forward, sustainability will become more challenging in future years since the percentage of State Aid our town receives is not keeping pace with the increases in fixed mandated costs. This reiterates the ongoing need for sound conservative fiscal management of our finances.

To achieve this, all Departments need to continue to work collaboratively with our Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Finance Department and the Finance Committee to maintain fiscally responsible budgets. I would like to thank all the Finance Committee members who participated in this year's budgetary process as well as our Finance Department, Town Administrator and our Board of Selectmen who contribute many hours of their time to keep our town moving forward and in the right direction. Also, thank you to all our departments for understanding what is needed to present a balanced budget for our residents.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael R. Boucher
Finance Committee Chairman

TOWN OF ACUSHNET **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

FY 24 MUNICIPAL BUDGET MESSAGE

Greetings to the Citizens of Acushnet:

The Board of Selectmen is proud to present this balanced budget to the citizens of Acushnet. Over the past year, the Board of Selectmen has worked diligently to preserve essential municipal services while controlling costs to the taxpayers. In the FY23 Municipal Budget, the Board of Selectmen set the following goals and priorities:

GOALS

- *Control Tax Impacts and Comply with Mandates*
- *Limit New Positions and Control Employee Benefit Increases*
 - *Control “Budget Buster” Increases*
- *Increase Reserves and Mitigate Financial Fluctuations*
 - *Pay Down Debt and Maintain Bond Rating*
 - *Continue Planned Infrastructure Capital Projects*

Your Board of Selectmen is proud to state that these priorities and goals were achieved. To recapitulate what occurred last year, the FY23 Municipal Budget increased 3.53% from the previous year. Included in the budget for FY23 were continuing efforts to control the Joint Town/Education accounts, the maintenance of programmatic initiatives in the School Department, the maintenance of level services and efforts designed to restore the Town’s infrastructure. The School District’s FY23 increase was limited to an increase of 2.47% over its FY22’s budget. This increase reflected the School District’s effort to control expenses,

such as funding for “out of District” placements, transportation increases, and utility costs. While the School District’s increase was not as large as in the past, the total public education budget increased by 3.19%. The total increase in Town accounts for FY23 amounted to 3.98%. The Town’s Municipal Budget includes accounts that are joint School and Town accounts for insurance and pensions. These joint accounts, the Employee Benefits account and the General Insurance account, are traditionally the costliest and least controllable of all of the Town accounts.

In the FY24 Municipal Budget, the Board is continuing to meet the goals, noted above, by sustaining adequate funding of stabilization funds to maintain the Town’s bond rating, by accurately forecasting increases in mandated costs and employee benefits using data-driven analyses, by paying down the Town’s debt, by restructuring and controlling employee benefit increases, and by clearly and transparently communicating the town’s financial operational and capital priorities. The FY24 Municipal Budget increased 4.02% from the previous year. Included in the budget for FY24 were continuing efforts to control the Joint Town/Education accounts, the maintenance of programmatic initiatives in the School Department, the maintenance of level services and efforts designed to restore the Town’s infrastructure. This increase reflected the District’s effort to control expenses, such as funding for “out of District” placements, tuition costs, transportation/fuel increases, and utility costs. While the School District’s increase was not as large as in the past, the total public education budget increased by 3.28%. While the Town Departments’ total budget increased 3.72%, the FY24 increase in Town and Joint accounts (Debt, Pension, and Insurances) amounted to 4.87%. These joint accounts, the Employee Benefits account and the General Insurance account, are traditionally the costliest and least controllable of all of the Town accounts (7.77%). Beyond these joint accounts, the Town experienced substantial increases in software licensing costs, legal and engineering consultant expenses, and the restructuring of police overtime budgeting to transparently reflect more accurate expenses. In addition, increase rates charged for sewer (7.07%) and water (8.32%) caused those budgets to increase beyond preliminary targets.

FY 24 MUNICIPAL BUDGET MESSAGE

Municipal budgets are composed of five (5) basic elements; **1) Revenue, 2) Reserves, 3) Operational Budget, 4) Debt and 5) Capital Budget.** Revenue estimates set the limits for balancing the Operational Budget. Reserves are the Town’s savings accounts for unexpected or future expenses. The Operational Budget is the appropriated funds for the annual operation of the Town’s various departments. The Debt is the funding necessary to make the Town’s annual payments for various bonds, principal and interest. The Capital Budget is usually funded from “Free Cash” or CPC funds and is appropriated for capital projects or equipment with expected life cycles of more than 5 years.

FISCAL YEAR 2024 REVENUE ESTIMATES

“**Revenue Estimates**” are comprised of the Tax Levy which is revenue raised through real estate and personal property taxes and limited to a 2 ½% annual increase under Proposition 2 ½ plus “New Growth, and “*other revenues*” derived primarily from fees, receipts and state-funded local aid. Proposition 2 ½ provides for a limited increase in the tax levy of 2 ½ percent plus the amount of "New Growth" in the community, plus capital debt exclusions. New Growth is based on the valuation of certain new construction and other growth not the result of property revaluation. In past fiscal years, the Town of Acushnet has seen encouraging and accelerating “New Growth” through economic development. However, this encouraging “New Growth” has not continued into the present year. For FY 2024, the Town has seen a precipitous decline in its growth. In FY 24 the Principal Assessor estimates that “New Growth” for the Town will be in the area of \$250,000.00, a decrease of \$79,962. This decline in “New Growth” was in spite of permits and fees staying somewhat consistent year to year.

FISCAL YEAR	LEVY LIMIT	NEW GROWTH	LOCAL RECEIPTS	STATE AID (NET)
FY24	21,744,660	250,000	3,819,691	8,667,958

FY 23	20,970,400	329,962	3,687,247	7,998,192
FY 22	20,137,013	444,186	3,591,215	7,897,883
FY 21	19,212,514	734,390	3,247,442	7,813,634
FY 20	18,027,439	359,000	3,691,768	7,811,920
FY 19	17,237,501	220,611	3,851,111	7,750,6009

In spite of this downturn in New Growth, the FY24 budget continues to use reoccurring revenue and not “Free Cash” funding to maintain levels of service in public works, public safety, and education. “Free Cash” will only be used for capital projects, for one-time extraordinary expenses, and to maintain reserves. Because Free Cash is so reliant on previous years’ appropriations and expense spending, the amount of Free Cash available year to year is unpredictable. When the “total debt exclusions net of state aid and adjustments” is computed, the “Maximum Allowable Levy” for FY24 is \$22,175,695. Other sources of Revenue include “Local Receipts” and “Local Aid” as well as certain fund transfers from revolving funds and the Sewer Enterprise funds, and Free Cash. As stated above, Free Cash and these other sources of revenue are unpredictable and depend on economic factors not within the control of the Town or non-spending by the Town. From the table above, it is obvious that “Local Receipts” can fluctuate from year to year in varying amounts and were depressed during COVID (FY20 & FY21). Management has been conservative in estimating FY24 figures based on the actuals for prior years. Local receipts estimates are in line with conservative economic estimates. State aid estimates were based on the Governor’s recommendations. The Governor increased Chapter 70 school aid by over \$700,000.00. Unrestricted general government aid (UGGA) increased by only \$35,127.00. Traditionally, the Governor’s recommendations for Local Aid are less than the Legislature’s recommendations. Management is hopeful that trend will continue and Local Aid will increase during the legislative process. In FY23 the Legislature almost tripled the increase to UGGA from the Governor’s original figure. Local Education Aid was also increased by the Legislature in FY23. Management is confident that its FY24 estimate for Local Aid is very conservative.

The table below shows how little Massachusetts’ state aid to municipalities has changed during past years. In fact, during the COVID era, it remained unchanged. The only exception to this pattern is the Governor’s increase in Chapter 70 school aid for FY24.

Fiscal Year	General Govt. Aid	Ch. 70 (School) Aid
2024	\$1,791,498	\$7,170,330
2023	\$1,756,371	\$6,469,222
2022	\$1,666,386	\$6,397,702
2021	\$1,610,035	\$6,361,492
2020	\$1,610,035	\$6,361,492
2019	\$1,567,707	\$6,323,332

When all sources of revenue and receipts are conservatively estimated, management is confident that the total revenue available for FY24 will be adequate to deliver essential services.

TOTAL TAX LEVY	\$21,690,695
ESTIMATED STATE AID (NET OF ASSESSMENTS)	\$8,667,958
ESTIMATED LOCAL RECEIPTS	\$3,819,691
OTHER FUNDS	\$575,488
TOTAL AVAILABLE	\$34,753,832

FY23 STABILIZATION & OPEB TRUST ACCOUNTS

Prudent business practice advises that municipal government provide for additional funding for a number of reserve accounts to mitigate expense cost spikes in the future. Within

the FY24 Budget, the Board of Selectmen are proposing to transfer from Free Cash additional funding into:

- General Stabilization Fund\$150,000.00
 - Capital Expense Stabilization Fund..... \$100,000.00
 - Health Insurance Stabilization Fund..... \$100,000.00
 - Stormwater (MS4) Stabilization Fund.....\$ 25,000.00
 - Compensated Absences Fund.....\$ 25,000.00
 - OPEB Trust Fund.....\$100,000.00
- \$500,000.00**

OPEB TRUST FUND

Other Post-Employment Benefits (or OPEB) are benefits (other than pensions) that state and local governments provide to their retired employees, especially health insurance. The town has an OPEB Trust account to enable the Town to adopt “Best Practices” concerning its future OPEB liability and to comply with the requirements of GASB 45. The Board of Selectmen are recommending continued funding for the OPEB trust account. This will permit said monies to be invested and solely utilized for payments to defray the costs of the Town’s future OPEB liabilities. The Town benefits from having an OPEB Trust fund as it shows financial responsibility and stability to bond and credit rating agencies and reduces the future fiscal impact of “pay-as-you-go” systems on the operating budget. With this transfer of \$100,000, the balance in the OPEB Trust fund is \$985,144.26. The latest actuarial valuation of OPEB liability is \$21,653,297.

STABILIZATION FUNDS

As is evident from the table below, the Town has increased the Town’s unrestricted reserves to an advisable amount thus assisting the Town in the maintenance of the Town’s present bond rating of AA+. Rating agencies require municipalities to maintain a ratio between unrestricted reserves and operation budgets of at least 4.00% and at a maximum of 15.00%. While 10.0% is considered optimum, over 15.00% is looked upon as excessive. If the Town plans to go into the bond market for capital project in the future, it is critical that the Town maintains or improves its present bond rating of AA+. Achieving a mid-range ratio is commendable and should benefit the Town in the future. Since the Town has been using Free

Cash as a funding source for capital projects as well as reserve funds, management did not include Free Cash amounts in the computation of a total for unrestricted reserves. If, in the future, any Free Cash is carried over to other fiscal years as an unrestricted reserve, that amount could be included in computation of the ratio.

FISCAL YEAR	EXCESS IN OVERLAY	GENERAL STABILIZATION
FY24	TBD	\$3,550,795.31
FY23*	\$528,880.02	\$3,400,795.31
FY22	\$922,973.70	\$3,198,183.14
FY21	\$249,882.38	\$3,130,989.43
FY20	\$ 73,163.65	\$3,052,222.91
FY19	\$392,528.90	\$2,725,976.86

* As of December 31,2022

The Board of Selectmen is recommending that \$150,000 be transferred from Free Cash to the General Stabilization Fund. This transfer will maintain a balance in the account equal to % of the total projected general fund operating revenue for the next fiscal year as advised by the Bond Rating Agencies. With this transfer, the General Stabilization Fund will be at \$3,550,795.31 which will keep the unrestricted reserves balance at more than 4.0% and will show financial responsibility and stability to bond and credit rating agencies. The Board is also recommending a transfer of \$100,000 from Free Cash to the Capital Expense Stabilization Fund, a restricted, specific purpose, stabilization fund. This fund was created to defray future infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction costs as well as engineering and planning expenses. With this transfer, the Capital Expense (Infrastructure) Stabilization fund will be at \$ 750,000.00, thus assisting the Town in its efforts to provide for necessary repairs to the Town’s infrastructure systems and roads. This fund will also facilitate the Town in applying for state and federal grants for infrastructure repairs.

In FY23, the Board of Selectmen proposed and Town Meeting established (and funded) the following new restricted, specific purpose stabilization funds:

- Health Insurance Stabilization Fund..... \$200,000
- Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Fund.....\$ 50,000
- Storm water System Improvements/MS4 Compliance Fund..... \$ 50,000

In FY24 the Board of Selectmen are proposing additional funding to these restricted, specific purpose stabilization funds as follows:

- Health Insurance Stabilization Fund..... \$100,000
- Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Fund.....\$ 25,000
- Storm water System Improvements/MS4 Compliance Fund..... \$ 25,000

The Health Insurance Stabilization Fund will assist in funding increase costs in the Town’s share of employee/retiree health insurance. Health Insurance costs increased in FY23 at the rate of 14.5%. This is the result of a negative premium to cost ratio of over 120% for seven months. The Town’s Health Insurance consultant has predicted large future increase in health insurance costs if no changes are made. The Town’s health insurance consultant has confirmed the Town’s intention to test the marketplace through the Request for Proposals process. The Town has issued a Request for Proposals to find an economic alternative to the present situation. In the meantime, it continues to be prudent business practice to establish a health insurance stabilization account to assist in spreading out these costs.

Presently, the Town must fund compensated absences upon termination or retirement from the small Compensated Balances account or from the department’s operating budget. The Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Stabilization Fund will enable the Town to provide for accrued liabilities for compensated absences upon the termination of an employee’s employment from this dedicated Stabilization Fund, which can be funded and carried over year to year. This will allow the Town to proactively plan and save for retirement payments.

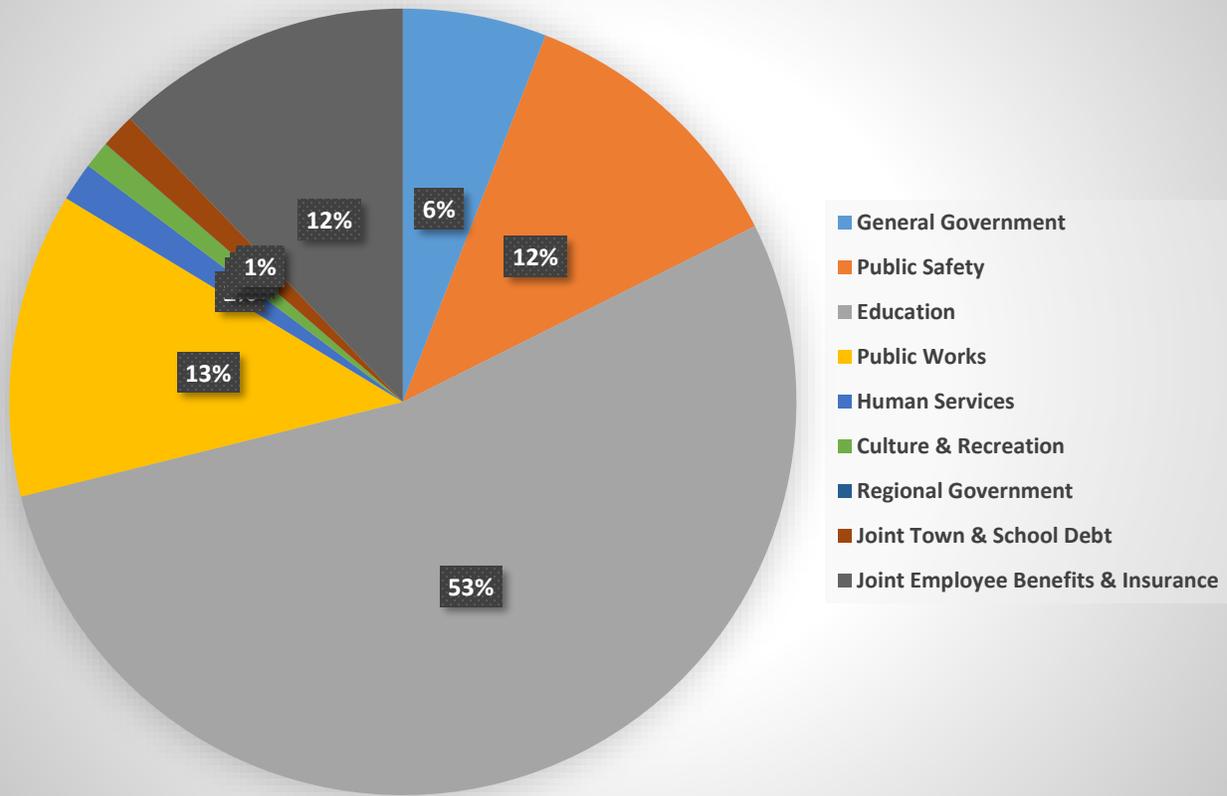
The EPA and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection have established Storm Water Management Standards aimed at encouraging recharge and preventing storm water discharges from causing or contributing to the pollution of the Town's surface waters and groundwaters. These standards include the removal of illicit discharges to storm water systems, and improving the operation and maintenance of these systems. Storm water runoff results from rainfall and snow melt and represents the single largest source responsible for water quality impairments in the Town's wetlands, rivers, lakes, ponds, and marine waters. These Storm Water Management Standards include environmentally sensitive site design and LID techniques to minimize impervious surface and land disturbance, source control and pollution prevention, construction period erosion and sedimentation control, and the long-term operation and maintenance of storm water management systems. To comply with these standards, the Town must continually perform inspections of existing systems and repair or update the systems that do not conform with the standards. The Board is proposing that the Town establish a reserve fund in the amount of \$50,000.00, for storm water management operations and the costs of services for compliance with the General Permit for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Storm Water System. This will allow the Town to save funds that will be needed for future engineering costs as well as repair or construction costs to the Town's Storm Water System.

FY24 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Knowing that future expenses will likely be growing at a rate that exceeds the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) (5.99%) and will definitely be growing at a rate that exceeds the annual rate of inflation based on Personal Consumption Expenditures Index (PCE) (3.3% in 2023), the total FY 24 Municipal Budget includes efforts to control the maintenance of programmatic funding in the School Department, the preservation of level services, and continuing initiatives designed to restore the Town's infrastructure, and payments of both long-term and short-term debt obligations. While Town management is presenting a conservative FY24 Operating Budget, factors beyond the control of the Town and the School District, contributed to total cost increases in the total Municipal Budget of 4.02%. Bristol County pension system costs increased by 6.38%. Employee benefits and insurances estimates increased by 15.61% with health insurance costs for active employees and retirees increasing by \$323,000.00 (20.16%). These extreme increases in health insurance are the result of the Town not being a member of a joint purchasing group and a massively negative loss ratio rating. The Town has since published a Request for Proposals for joining a health insurance joint purchasing group, some savings to be realized in FY24. The Municipal Budget includes not only the Town's Operating Budget and Joint Employee Benefits & Insurances, but also Debt payments, and Water Department operations. In addition, it should be noted that the Education Budget includes assessments for Old Colony Regional Vocational High School and Bristol County Agricultural High School, Fairhaven High School Tuition and transportation, New Bedford High School Tuition and transportation, and the Acushnet Schools Operating Budget. The assessments for Old Colony Regional Vocational High School and Bristol County Agricultural High School, and the High School Tuitions are based on formulas mandated by the Commonwealth or included in the Districts' agreements and their respective enrollments.

FY24 MUNICIPAL OPERATING BUDGET

Chart Title



GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 2,048,964.00	5.91%
PUBLIC SAFETY	\$ 4,061,874.00	11.72%
EDUCATION	\$ 18,545,091.00	53.49%
PUBLIC WORKS	\$ 4,346,979.00	12.54%
HUMAN SERVICES	\$ 552,043.00	1.59%
CULTURE & RECREATION	\$ 388,389.00	1.13%
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 3,693.00	0.01%
JOINT DEBT; TOWN & SCHOOLS	\$ 492,285.00	1.42%
JOINT EMPLOYEE BENEFITS & INSURANCE	\$ 4,227,335.00	12.19%
TOTAL	\$ 34,666,650.00	100.00%

The percentages listed reflect that portion of the total municipal budget that each functional category occupies. Education comprises 53.49% of the total. However, the total cost of

education includes \$18,545,091.00 plus \$1,827,141.00 in insurance and benefit costs for an actual total of \$20,372,232.00 which is 58.77% of the Municipal Budget.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS

The General Government accounts are increasing by 10.09%. Most General Government accounts are increasing by less than 2 ½%. There are various accounts within the General Government functional category that have substantially increased because of functional realignments from other accounts. For example, all of the custodian/custodial “line item” accounts were placed in the Town Buildings Departmental account. The postage costs for mailing tax bills were moved from the Town Buildings account to the Treasurers/Collector’s account. There is a major increase in the Technology Department budget. Approximately \$22,000 of this increase reflects software updates and increases in the cost of software licenses. However, an increase of over \$44,000 reflects the move in technology expenses from various departmental budgets to the central Technology Department account. This will, in the future, give the taxpayers a clearer view of how much Town government is budgeting for technology (N.B. This does not include the technology costs for the School Department.) In addition, there is also an increase in the Planning Department’s salary account which indicates the conversion of the salary for the Planner’s position to full-time market rate and the reduction in hours for the support staff position. Finally, there is a substantial increase in the Soil Board’s expense account (\$20,000) to allow for the hiring of engineering consultants to advise the Board on pending and future applications.

PUBLIC SAFETY ACCOUNTS

The increase in the Public Safety accounts principally is an effort to bring accuracy and truthfulness to the Police Department’s Overtime Line Item, an increase of \$65,356 from FY2023. In the past, the Police Overtime Line Item was purposefully underfunded in the Annual Budget, and then funded at the end of the year through transfers and reserve funds. The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee recognize that this budget subterfuge should never have been institutionalized. Therefore, in this year’s Municipal Budget and next

year's budget they are committed to fully fund the Police Overtime Line Item. The rest of the Public Safety account contain savings or are level funded.

PUBLIC EDUCATION ACCOUNTS

The Public Education accounts comprise 53.49% of the municipal operating budget for a total of \$18,545,091.00. While this might seem excessive, it is not. In fact, it is typical of most communities. Schools are a vibrant living part of a community. Schools are one of the few unifying institutions left in our modern world. Schools are the focal point for many community activities as well as a focal point for community pride. Support for education is essential for a growing vibrant community. Support for education and excellence in education is critical in attracting economic development to a community. The total Public Education budget increased by 2.78%. As stated above, the Acushnet School District's increase was limited to an increase of 2.46% over its FY23's budget, for a total budget of \$16,058,083.00. This increase was limited because of the District's effort to restrict total increases, especially in funding for "out of District" placements, transportation increases, and utility costs. It should be noted that High School tuition and transportation are a part of the Acushnet School District budget but the District has no control over these costs. Tuition for Fairhaven High School cost \$2,664,559.18 and for New Bedford High School \$198,038.73. High School transportation cost \$214,741.80 for Fairhaven HS and \$59,760.00 for New Bedford HS. High School tuition and transportation for Fairhaven HS and New Bedford HS which is driven by enrollment and contractual costs totals \$3,137,099.71. The Old Colony Regional Vocational H.S. budget increased by a "budget busting" 8.96% for a total budget of \$2,487,008. The Bristol County Agricultural H.S. assessment for FY24 decreased from \$156,343.22 to \$135,269.70. These two budgets are driven by enrollments and transportation as well as basic cost increases. When the total costs to budget for Town School District operations (\$12,920,984.00) are compared to the High School costs (\$5,759,377.00) and to the total Education budget (\$18,545,091.00), one notes that the Acushnet School District has

direct control over 69.7% of the total Education budget. Over 30% of the Town's education costs are mandated and controlled by other school districts.

PUBLIC WORKS ACCOUNTS

The minor increases in the Public Works accounts are the result of increased costs for contractual increases, fuel and equipment maintenance. The major increases in SEMASS services are the result of tonnage and contractual increases. There is no increase in the Snow and Ice Removal account, even though in other years it traditionally has operated in a deficit. The increase in the Street Lighting account is to provide for fixture replacement/repair, since under Town ownership it has become the Town's responsibility. With the installation of energy efficient equipment and in spite of increased energy costs management advises that no increase in the energy budget is necessary. Note: Some of the expenses of Public Works are spread through the Water Division and Sewer Enterprise accounts.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Most Human Services accounts are level funded. The decrease in the Council on Aging account is the result of transferring a custodial position to the Town Buildings account. The Council on Aging will continue to coordinate the very successful Elder Community Services Program.

CULTURAL AND RECREATION

The minor decrease in the Recreation Department account is the transfer of internet services to the Technology Department. The increase in the Parks Department is also a minor increase in contractual services. The decrease in the "Miscellaneous – Compensated Balance" line is based on the establishment of the Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Stabilization Fund which was created to defray the expenses resulting from contractually owed sick time and vacation buyouts. The increase in the Library Salary Line Item reflects the conversion of the Children's Room Tech 3 position to full-time and the transfer of the part-time custodian position to Town Buildings.

NON-DEPARTMENTAL ACCOUNTS

Joint Town/Education unclassified or non-departmental accounts are experiencing across-the-board increases, some of which greatly exceed the targeted amount under the Proposition 2 1/2% mandate. The Joint Employee Pension account increased by 6.09%. The Bristol County Retirement System assessment is increasing of \$102, 308.00 (6.38%). The Bristol County Retirement Board costs are estimated at an 80/20 split between Town and the School District. Teachers participate in a separate retirement system overseen by the State Treasurer. The Medicare line increased by 4.05%. The Joint Health/Dental Insurance overall health insurance costs increased by 20.16%. The actual increase for health insurance policies was over 16%. The FY24 estimate may have to be revisited in the future, as the Town is negotiating to join a health joint purchasing group. Post-65, Medicare retiree plan costs are being contained. Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation costs have been limited this year with minimal expected increase in premiums.

FY24 JOINT ACCOUNTS – SCHOOL & TOWN

		SCHOOL	%	TOWN	%	TOTAL
PENSIONS						
	Bristol Co. Retirement	341,347	20.00	1,365,388	80.00	1,706,735
	Medicare	139,657	59.81	93,843	40.19	233,500
INSURANCES						
	Workers Comp.	56,322	55.49	45,178	44.51	101,500
	Health/Dental	1,195,040	62.08	729,960	37.93	1,925,000
	IOD Police/Fire	0	0	31,800	100.0	31,800
	P&C Liability	74,125	38.85	116,675	61.15	190,800
	Unemployment	20,650	59.00	14,350	41.00	35,000
SUB-TOTAL		1,827,141	42.29	2,397,194	57.71	4,224,335
	Flexible Benefit Plan					3,000.00
TOTAL		1,827,141		2,397,194		4,227,335

DEBT

For FY24 the Town will be budgeting \$225,000 for repayment of Bond Principal and \$102,575 for repayment of Bond Interest for a total of \$327,575.00. The School District will be budgeting \$95,000 for repayment of Bond Principal and \$12,260 for repayment of Bond Interest for a total of \$107,260. Short term interest for the School Roof BAN is \$61,250.00. This project is wrapping up and will be going out to bond when the contractors have completed all of the “punch lists”. The Town and School aggregate debt service is \$8,774,380 for Bond Principal and \$2,413,078 for Bond Interest for a total of \$11,187,458. The “Par Value” of the “Debt Issues” include \$3,260,000 – Police Station, \$1,185,000 – Golf (multiple issues), \$282,000 – School Construction, \$2,924,466 – Water, and \$1,079,914 for Water Pollution Abatement. These amounts are far below the debt limit of the Town.

FY24 ENTERPRISE ACCOUNTS

In the Sewer Enterprise Fund Operational Budget, there is an increase of \$31,920 (4.91%) primarily for New Bedford Sewer Pumping increases. The Sewer Enterprise Debt Service increased \$25,489 (8.39%). The overall Sewer Enterprise increase was \$57,409.00 (5.66%). The Golf Enterprise Fund increased in the Salary account by \$68,990 (9.53%) and in the Expenses account by \$141,351 (22.08%). This increase was due to sharp increases in golf cart leases and equipment leases.

FY24 CAPITAL BUDGET

As noted previously, “Free Cash” is only used for capital projects, for one-time extraordinary expenses, and to maintain reserves. The amount of “Free Cash” available year to year is unpredictable because “Free Cash” is so reliant on prior years’ appropriations and spending. This year, the Commonwealth certified “Free Cash” at \$1,354,903.00. The Town has proposed using \$500,000.00 to fund FY24 contributions to various stabilization funds. Therefore \$854,903.00 is available for individual capital purchases. The Board is proposing that the Town fund various technology upgrades and expenditures for both the School District and the Town in the amount of \$255,000.00. The Board is also proposing that the Town fund the purchase of a 2023 Kenworth T-480, 2-Door Cab, Tandem Axle.

with a Cummins PX-9 (450HP) Engine and Allison 3000 EVS 5 speed transmission; water tank capacity of 3,000 gallons with a Hale 1,250 gpm pump fire truck in the amount of \$465,000.00. In addition, the Board is proposing that the initial funding for the YES (Youth Employment Service) Program in the amount of \$30,000.00 and for the Elders Community Services Program in the amount of \$20,000.00. The Board is recommending that the Town’s MS4 permit engineering cost, \$50,000.00, be funded from Free Cash. Finally, the Board is proposing \$1,000.00 for repairing/restoring historic signs and \$22,337.57 to pay prior years bills. The remaining balance of Free Cash is \$11,565.43.

FY24 CAPITAL CPC BUDGET

The following Capital Items are proposed to be funded from the CPC listed category funding sources. Specific funding sources will be included in the CPC Article’s motion.

PROJECT REQUEST DEPARTMENT	PURPOSE	Reserve Source of Funds	Amount	Community Preservation Committee Recommend	Finance Committee Recommend	Board of Selectmen Recommend
					Advise at Town Meeting	
Town Administrator	Administration	Undesignated	\$13,000	Yes		Yes
Recreation/Parks	Survey/Plans/Engineering – Pope Park Improvements	Open Space	\$10,000	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Long Plain Museum Fence Repair/Installation	Historic	\$7,640	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Flag Pole Perry Hill School Installation	Historic	\$269	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Parting Ways Bldg. Sign Repair/Replace	Historic	\$1,400	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Perry Hill Church Repairs & Flooring	Historic	\$15,000	Tabled		No Action
Buzzards Bay Coalition	Acushnet Forest Conservation Project	Undesignated	\$85,000	Yes		Yes

The Finance Committee will meet and issue their recommendations prior to Town Meeting

FY24 MUNICIPAL BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY 24 Budget is a balanced budget. The estimated revenue at time of presentment is \$34,753,832 and the Operational Budget is proposed at \$34,672,150. The Board of Selectmen acknowledges that these revenue estimates include best estimates based on data analysis for local receipts and the lower “Governor’s proposed Local Aid” amounts. However, the Board is confident in the Town’s future financial well-being based on the proposal before the Town Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen would like to thank the Finance Committee as well as the Finance Department and Town Administrator’s office for their work in this year’s budgetary process. The Board would, also, like to thank all of the Department managers for their work in preparing this budget. This has been a time-consuming effort for a number of dedicated employees and volunteers.

The Board of Selectmen would also like to thank the Acushnet School Committee, the School Superintendent, and the School District’s staff for their collaboration in this process. This was a difficult budget to prepare during these trying financial times.

Sincerely,

ACUSHNET BOARD OF SELECTMEN

David Wojnar
Chairman

Kevin Gaspar, Sr.

Robert Hinckley

INDEX OF ARTICLES FOR THE TOWN MEETING

Article	Purpose	Requested By	Page
1	Accept Town Reports	Selectmen	29
2	Current Year –Deficit	Selectmen	29
3	Prior Years Payments	Selectmen	29
	CONSENT AGENDA		
4	PEG Access / Cable Related Fund	Selectmen	29
5	Apply & Accept State and Federal Grants	Selectmen	29
6	Chapter 90 Authorization	Selectmen	29
7	Treasurer’s Authorization	Selectmen	30
8	Cemetery Board Authorization	Cemetery Board	30
9	Park & Recreation Board Authorization	Park & Recreation Comm.	30
10	Authorization to Sell Books	Library Trustees	30
	REVOLVING FUNDS ARTICLES		
11	Revolving Funds Authorization	Selectmen	30
12	Establish Soil Conservation Bd Rev. Fund	Selectmen	31
	STABILIZATION FUND ARTICLES		
13	Health Insurance Stabilization Fund Transfer	Selectmen	31
14	Compensated Absences Stabilization Fund Transfer	Selectmen	31
15	Stormwater System MS4 Permit Stabilization Fund Transfer	Selectmen	31
16	General Stabilization Fund Transfer	Selectmen	32
17	Capital Expense (Infrastructure) Stabilization Fund Transfer	Selectmen	32
18	OPEB Fund Transfer	Selectmen	32
19	School SPED Tuition Fund Transfer	School Committee	32
	CAPITAL/CPC BUDGET ARTICLES		
20	Capital Budget - Technology	Selectmen	33
21	Capital Budget - Firetruck	Selectmen	33
22	CPC Budget	CPC	34
23	Stormwater (MS4) Engineering	Selectmen	35
24	Historical Signs Repair/Replacement	Selectmen	35
25	Ambulance Procurement (Borrowing)	Selectmen	35
26	School Solar Array	School Committee	35
	FY 24 BUDGETS		
27	FY24 Operating Budget		36
28	Golf Enterprise Fund	Selectmen	41
29	Sewer Enterprise Fund	Selectmen	41
	MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES		
30	Elder Community Service Program	Selectmen	42
31	Youth Employment Service Program	Selectmen	42
32	Massachusetts Strategic Health Group	Selectmen	43
		continued	

33	Firefighter Contract	Selectmen	43
34	Call Deputy Chief Age Exemption	Selectmen	43
35	Old Colony Reg. Voc. Tech. H. S. Feasibility Study	Old Colony Reg. Voc. Tech. H. S.	44
36	Senior Real Estate Exemption	Assessors	44
37	Land Purchase – Right of First Refusal	Selectmen	44
	BYLAW & ZONING ARTICLES		
38	Town Election Bylaw	Town Clerk	44
39	Soil Removal Bylaw	Soil Bd. / Selectmen	44
App 1	Proposed Soil Removal Bylaw		46

FY 2024 REVENUE ESTIMATES

Revenue Sources	FY 2021 RECAP	FY 2022 RECAP	FY 2023 RECAP	FY 2024 Estimate	DELTA FY23-FY24
General Fund Operations Revenue Estimate:					
Fiscal Year Levy Limit	\$ 18,027,438.00	\$ 19,212,514.00	\$ 20,137,013.00	\$ 20,970,400.00	\$ 833,387.00
Fiscal Year 2.5% adjustment	\$ 450,686.00	\$ 480,313.00	\$ 503,425.00	\$ 524,260.00	\$ 20,835.00
Fiscal Year New Growth	\$ 734,390.00	\$ 444,186.00	\$ 329,962.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ (79,962.00)
LEGAL LEVY LIMIT	\$ 19,212,514.00	\$ 20,137,013.00	\$ 20,970,400.00	\$ 21,744,660.00	\$ 774,260.00
Add: Debt Exclusion	\$ 446,067.00	\$ 438,060.00	\$ 437,185.00	\$ 431,035.00	\$ (6,150.00)
Less: Unused Levy Capacity	\$ (391,435.00)	\$ (110,235.00)	\$ (128,553.36)	\$ (120,000.00)	\$ 8,553.36
ACTUAL LEVY	\$ 19,267,146.00	\$ 20,464,838.00	\$ 21,279,031.64	\$ 22,055,695.00	\$ 776,663.36
Less: FY Overlay (Allowance for Abatements/Exemptions)	\$ (453,617.00)	\$ (302,220.34)	\$ (127,318.90)	\$ (250,000.00)	\$ (122,681.10)
Less: Tax Title Certification					
Less: Other deficits			\$ (8,694.55)		\$ 8,694.55
Less: Solar Farm Revenue to Cap Exp Fund	\$ (73,000.00)	\$ (79,000.00)	\$ (92,000.00)	\$ (115,000.00)	\$ (23,000.00)
TOTAL ESTIMATED OPERATIONAL TAX LEVY	\$ 18,740,529.00	\$ 20,083,617.66	\$ 21,051,018.19	\$ 21,690,695.00	\$ 639,676.81
FY Cherry Sheet State Receipts					
Chapter 70	\$ 6,361,492.00	\$ 6,397,702.00	\$ 6,469,222.00	\$ 7,170,330.00	\$ 701,108.00
Charter Tuition Reimbursement	\$ 7,142.00		\$ 1,136.00	\$ 2,095.00	\$ 959.00
Unrestricted General Govt Aid	\$ 1,610,035.00	\$ 1,666,386.00	\$ 1,756,371.00	\$ 1,791,498.00	\$ 35,127.00
Veteran's Benefits	\$ 163,067.00	\$ 146,150.00	\$ 145,137.00	\$ 124,347.00	\$ (20,790.00)
Exemptions (Vets, Blind, Surviving Spouse)	\$ 55,706.00	\$ 46,270.00	\$ 40,978.00	\$ 44,467.00	\$ 3,489.00
State Owned Land	\$ 43.00	\$ 49.00	\$ 63.00	\$ 77.00	\$ 14.00
Plus: Public libraries	\$ 23,147.00	\$ 24,442.00	\$ 27,202.00	\$ 29,533.00	\$ 2,331.00
SUBTOTAL ESTIMATE STATE REVENUE	\$ 8,220,632.00	\$ 8,280,999.00	\$ 8,440,109.00	\$ 9,162,347.00	\$ 722,238.00
Less: Offsets - Public Libraries	\$ (23,147.00)	\$ (24,442.00)	\$ (27,202.00)	\$ (29,533.00)	\$ (2,331.00)
Less: Assessments	\$ (383,851.00)	\$ (358,674.00)	\$ (414,715.00)	\$ (464,856.00)	\$ (50,141.00)
SUBTOTAL OFFSETS/ASSESSMENTS	\$ (406,998.00)	\$ (383,116.00)	\$ (441,917.00)	\$ (494,389.00)	\$ 4,695.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED STATE AID (NET)	\$ 7,813,634.00	\$ 7,897,883.00	\$ 7,998,192.00	\$ 8,667,958.00	\$ 669,766.00
Local Receipts Revenues:					
Motor Vehicle	\$ 1,100,000.00	\$ 1,200,000.00	\$ 1,350,000.00	\$ 1,350,000.00	\$ -
Motor Vehicle (dedicated to Road paving line item)	\$ -	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -
Penalties & Interest on Taxes	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ -
Charges for Services - Water	\$ 1,769,442.00	\$ 1,813,215.00	\$ 1,781,247.00	\$ 1,888,191.00	\$ 106,944.00
Charges for Services - Solid Waste Fees	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -
Fees	\$ 32,500.00	\$ 32,500.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ -
Other Departmental Revenue	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -
Licenses & Permits	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 160,000.00	\$ 180,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Fines & Forfeits	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -
Investment Income	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 500.00
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED LOCAL RECEIPTS	\$ 3,247,442.00	\$ 3,591,215.00	\$ 3,687,247.00	\$ 3,819,691.00	\$ 132,444.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATION	\$ 29,801,605.00	\$ 31,572,715.66	\$ 32,736,457.19	\$ 34,178,344.00	\$ 1,441,886.81
EMS Receipts Reserved Fund	\$ 519,752.00	\$ 515,876.00	\$ 513,938.00	\$ 513,938.00	\$ -
Other Sources of Funds - Debt Premium F/B	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,550.00	\$ -
Water Surplus	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -
Free Cash to balance GF Budget	\$ 335,727.00			\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL ESTIMATED OTHER SOURCES OF OPERATIONAL FUNDS	\$ 917,029.00	\$ 577,426.00	\$ 575,488.00	\$ 575,488.00	\$ -
TOTAL ESTIMATED GENERAL FUND OPERATION REVENUE	\$ 31,635,663.00	\$ 32,727,567.66	\$ 33,311,945.19	\$ 34,753,832.00	\$ 1,441,886.81
		\$ 1,091,904.66	\$ 584,377.53		\$ 1,441,886.81
		FY21-FY22	FY22-FY23		FY23-FY24

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
FISCAL YEAR 2024 OPERATING BUDGET & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET
&
PUBLIC ACCESS BUDGET

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will accept the reports of its Officers, Boards, Departments, Committees, and Commissions, as printed in the 2022 Annual Report, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds a sum of monies, to fund deficit payments in various FY2023 accounts, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, transfer from free cash, or otherwise provide for a transfer from available funds of the total sum of \$22,337.57 to pay bills from the prior fiscal years, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by the Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Super Majority 9/10)

FISCAL YEAR 2024 CONSENT AGENDA

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund for the FY 2024 expenses of Public Access as follows,

<i>Salaries/Wages</i>	\$ 90,000.00
<i>General Expenses</i>	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
<i>Total:</i>	\$190,000.00

and that this total sum be raised from Cable Franchise Fees and Cable Related Revenues, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for state or federal grants, and to expend any monies received, as outlined in the appropriate grant application; or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to accept and expend any sum or sums of money that may be available from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) for Chapter 90 type construction, improvements, and/or reconstruction of public ways and associated equipment; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts relative thereto, and to appropriate said sum or sums in anticipation of reimbursement from the Commonwealth; or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the consent of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 44, §4, and to issue a note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with MGL, Chapter 44, §17, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Articles 4 – 7: Requested by Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the members of the Cemetery Board to perform work in the Cemeteries and to allow the Board of Selectmen to determine the compensation to be paid to said members; or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by the Cemetery Board) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the members of the Recreation Commission to perform work in the park and to allow the Board of Selectmen to determine the compensation to be paid to said members; or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by the Recreation Commission) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to allow the Board of Library Trustees to sell for the sum of \$1 the discarded books and periodicals of the Acushnet Public Library to the Friends of Acushnet Public Library, a non-profit library support group, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by the Board of Library Trustees) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: Under the consent agenda, annually recurring articles may be grouped together for passage. All of these articles appear each year in the warrant and include "housekeeping items".

FISCAL YEAR 2024 REVOLVING FUNDS ARTICLES

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, to set the limits on the total amounts that may be expended in Fiscal Year 2023 from each of the Town’s revolving funds established under the Acushnet General Bylaws Article XXI, Revolving Funds, as set forth below, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto. (Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Revolving Fund:	Authorized to Spend From Fund:	FY24 Maximum Amount Expendable:
Recycling	Public Works Department	\$10,000
Conservation	Conservation Commission	\$2,500.00
Parks and Recreation	Parks & Recreation Commissioners	\$ 12,500.00
Council on Aging	Council on Aging	\$ 30,000.00
Public Library	Public Library Trustees	\$6,000.00

(Requested by Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: MGL Chapter 44 mandates the reauthorization of maximum expendable amounts annually by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to create a new revolving fund pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, section 53 E ½ for the Soil Conservation Board into which monies received by the Town from Soil Conservation Board fees and revenues are deposited and from which the Soil Conservation Board shall be authorized to expend funds solely for the programs related to the table to the fees that will be collected, and, for such purposes, to amend the Town of Acushnet General Bylaws by inserting a new row in the table appearing in Article XXI of such bylaws, and further, to separately establish an annual expenditure limit of \$20,000 per fiscal year, or take any other action thereon, or in relation thereto.

A Revolving Fund	B Department, Board, Committee, Agency or Officer Authorized to Spend from Fund	C Fees, Charges or Other Receipts Credited to Fund	D Program or Activity Expenses Payable from Fund	E Restrictions or Conditions on Expenses Payable from Fund	F Other Requirements/ Reports	G Fiscal Years
Soil Conservation Board	Soil Conservation Board	Fees charged and received by Town Soil Conservation Board	Maintenance costs, supplies, equipment, and contracted services relating to the jurisdiction of the Soil Conservation Board	None	None	Fiscal Year 2024 and subsequent years

(Requested by Soil Conservation Board and Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: 2/3 Majority)

Reason: Soil Conservation Board fees and revenues would be separately held in this revolving account and used for recurring engineering and consultant services to protect the Town's interests.

FISCAL YEAR 2024 RESERVE AND STABILIZATION ACCOUNT ARTICLES

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 5B, of the Massachusetts General Laws, to fund the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund created for the purpose of paying for future costs associated with employee health insurance and Health Reimbursement Accounts, and to transfer from free cash the sum of \$100,000.00 to said stabilization fund, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: The Town has continued to have a negative premium to cost ratio as a result of many catastrophic cases. The health insurance provider continues to predict large future increases in health insurance costs. It is prudent business practice to establish a health insurance stabilization account to assist in spreading out these costs. The Town's health insurance consultant has also assisted the Town in issuing a Request for Quotes/Proposals from other providers including group purchasing entities to spread out future increases. The Town will be converting to purchasing through a group purchasing entity this fiscal year. With this transfer, the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund will be at \$301,529.14.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5B, to fund the Compensated Absences Stabilization Fund for the purpose of paying future liabilities for due any employee of the Town upon the termination of their employment and to authorize future payment of accrued liabilities for compensated absences due any employee of the Town upon the termination of the employee's employment from the stabilization fund for accrued liabilities for compensated absences, by transferring from free cash the sum of \$25,000.00 to said reserve fund, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: Municipal employees are eligible for payment of unused paid time off (sick and vacation). Currently this is the only funding source outside of the departmental operating budget for anticipated retirements payments. This fund allows the town to proactively plan for retirements. This will allow for the Town in the future

to provide for contractual retirement obligations outside of the operating budget. With this transfer, the Compensated Absences Stabilization Fund will be at \$75,367.02.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5B, to fund the Stormwater (MS4) Stabilization Fund for stormwater management operations and the costs of services for compliance with the General Permit for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Stormwater System, and by transferring from free cash the sum of \$25,000.00 to said Stormwater (MS4) Stabilization Fund, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: In order for the Town to provide for increasing costs to comply with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit including annual reporting and testing requirements, the Town has established and funded this Stabilization Fund to assist it in contracting with appropriate engineering and other consultants. With this transfer, the Stormwater (MS4) Stabilization Fund will be at \$75,367.06

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash the sum of \$150,000.00 to the General Stabilization Fund, or take any other action thereon.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: According to municipal finance “Best Practices”, the Town needs to maintain an amount equal to 4.00 % of the total projected general fund operating revenue for the next fiscal year in its unrestricted stabilization funds, the General Stabilization Fund, but less than 10 %. With this transfer, the General Stabilization Fund will be at \$3,500,795.31 which is 10.1% of projected 2024 revenues. Keeping the General Stabilization Fund balance at this level will assist the Town in maintaining its bond rating and showing financial responsibility and stability to bond and credit rating agencies.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash the sum of \$100,000.00 to the OPEB Trust account, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: The town has an OPEB Trust account was created to enable the Town to adopt “best Practices” and comply with the reporting requirements of GASB 45. This article continues funding the OPEB trust account and permits said monies to be invested and solely utilized for payments to defray the costs of the Town’s OPEB liabilities. The Town benefits from having an OPEB Trust fund as it shows financial responsibility and stability to bond and credit rating agencies and reduces the future fiscal impact of “pay-as-you-go” systems on the operating budget. With this transfer, the balance in the OPEB Trust fund is \$985,144.26.

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash the sum of \$100,000.00 to the Capital Expense Stabilization Fund, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: According to municipal finance “Best Practices”, the Town will add \$100,000.00 to Capital Expense (Infrastructure) Stabilization Fund to defray future infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction costs as well as engineering and planning expenses. With this transfer, the Capital Expense (Infrastructure) Stabilization fund will be at \$ 855,862.73, thus assisting the Town in maintaining its bond rating and showing financial responsibility and stability to bond and credit rating agencies

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 13E, or any amendments thereto, and in accordance with such law, to transfer funds potentially available from FY23 Acushnet School Department funds to the School Special Education Reserve Fund (the Reserve Fund), so that the Reserve Fund does not exceed two (2) percent of the annual net school spending of the school district. The Reserve Fund is to be utilized in the upcoming fiscal years, to pay, without further

appropriation, for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs of special education and recovery high school programs, out-of-district tuition or transportation, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
 (Requested by School Committee) (Required Vote: Majority).

Reason: *This will allow the Town to reserve for future special education purposes, amounts equivalent to receipts received from Fairhaven or New Bedford for out of district Special Education tuitions, or such other funds as mat be appropriate. The monies in this fund cannot be expended from the School Special Education Reserve Fund without the approval of both the School Committee and the board of Selectmen.*

FISCAL YEAR 2024 CAPITAL BUDGET

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from free cash a sum or sums of money for any or all of the following capital technology improvement projects and purchases, including in each case, all incidental and related expenses, and, further, to provide that each project or acquisition listed below shall be considered a special appropriation and may only be expended in the amount and for the express purpose listed, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
 (Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: *This article funds all of the technology updates needed by the Town and makes the School District eligible for 60/40 grant to update their technology.*

	DEPT	REQUEST	AMOUNT	REASON	RECOMMENDED FUNDING SOURCE
A	Technology	Network Phones and Security Cameras	\$20,000.00		Free Cash
B	Technology	Network Infrastructure	\$30,000.00		Free Cash
C	Technology	Hardware and Network Devices	\$5,900.00		Free Cash
D	Technology	WiFi Devices	\$5,600.00		Free Cash
E	Technology	Miscellaneous Network and Fiber Supplies and Materials	\$8,500.00		Free Cash
F	Police	Server, Hardware and Network Devices	\$30,000.00		Free Cash
G	Police	Updated / Associated Software	\$20,000.00		Free Cash
H	Police	Miscellaneous Network Supplies	\$10,000		Free Cash
I	School	Power Supply Units, Cables, & Heat Reduction	\$21,000		Free Cash
J	School	Transceiver & Cables	\$19,000		Free Cash
K	School	Network Equipment, Switches & Licenses	\$85,000		Free Cash
	TOTAL		\$255,000.00		FREE CASH

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash or otherwise provide the sum of \$465,000.00 for the capital improvement purchase of a tanker fire truck, preferably a 2023 Kenworth T-480, 2-Door Cab, Tandem Axle. with a Cummins PX-9 (450HP) Engine and Allison 3000 EVS 5 speed transmission; water tank capacity of 3,000 gallons with a Hale 1,250 gpm pump; a 3,000 gal folding portable tank, 1x 24' extension ladder, and 1 x 14' roof ladder with hooks, or if no longer available a fire truck that meets the Town's needs, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: This tanker fire truck will allow us to respond to the residents of the Town, primarily in the parts of town without fire hydrants, will more water capacity in a current, safer and more reliable apparatus. This truck is a massive upgrade over our current 37 years old, 1,800 gallon capacity unit.

ARTICLE 22 : To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from Fiscal Year 2024 Community Preservation Fund estimated annual revenues in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for FY 2024 committee administrative expenses, and required reserves, to fund the recommended community preservation projects and other expenses from the funding source, in the amount and for the purpose specified for each project as set forth in the Proposed Project Chart, with each item to be considered a special appropriation, and, further that appropriations hereunder marked with an asterisk shall be considered a grant to the private entity listed, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into such grant agreements upon such terms and conditions that it deems in the best interests of the Town, all as follows, or take any action thereon or in relation thereto:

Appropriations

From FY2024 estimated revenues for Committee Administrative Expenses \$ 13,000.00

Transfers to Reserves

From FY2023 estimated revenues for Historic Resources Reserve \$ 26,000.00

From FY2023 estimated revenues for Community Housing Reserve \$ 26,000.00

From FY2023 estimated revenues for Open Space Reserve \$ 26,000.00

\$ 78,000.00

PROPOSED PROJECT CHART

PROJECT REQUEST DEPARTMENT	PURPOSE	Reserve Source of Funds	Amount	Community Preservation Committee Recommend	Finance Committee Recommend	Board of Selectmen Recommend
Recreation/Parks	Survey/Plans/ Engineering – Pope Park Improvements	Open Space	\$10,000.00	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Long Plain Museum Fence Repair/Installation	Historic	\$7,640.00	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Flag Pole Perry Hill School Installation	Historic	\$269.00	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Parting Ways Bldg. Sign Repair/Replace	Historic	\$1,400.00	Yes		Yes
Historic Commission	Perry Hill Church Repairs & Flooring	Historic	\$15,000.00	Tabled		X
Buzzards Bay Coalition	Acushnet Forest Conservation Project	Undesignated *	\$85,000.00	Yes		Yes
			\$104,309.00			

Reason: *This article ensures that Acushnet's Community Preservation Accounts are compliant with the Community Preservation Act (CPA) which requires that a certain portion of the CPA funds be set aside for open space projects, community housing projects, and historical projects.*

(Proposed by the Community Preservation Committee)

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash or otherwise provide the sum of \$50,000.00 for the Board of Selectmen to fund engineering consultant services for compliance with the General Permit for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) mandated reporting and associated documents, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: *The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit permits most cities and towns in Massachusetts, to operate a municipal stormwater system. These stormwaters and drain systems are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permit program. The issuance of this permit means that residents, businesses, developers, and industrial facilities shall only discharge clean stormwater. The Town is responsible for ensuring that nothing enters the system that can pollute our streams, rivers, and lakes. The EPA has annual reporting and testing requirements that require municipalities to engage engineering firms and expert consultants to assist in complying with the MS4 requirements.*

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash or otherwise provide the sum of \$1,000.00 for the Historical Commission and Board of Selectmen to fund repair and maintenance of historical signs throughout the Town, or take any other action thereon, or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: *The Historical Commission and the Board of Selectmen are commencing a historical sign repair or replacement program throughout the Town to annually address the deteriorating condition of a number of the historical markers throughout the Town.*

ARTICLE 25: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, file for, accept, and expend grant(s) and/or matching funds provided by grants, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money not to exceed \$610,000.00 to purchase and equip an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance for the Acushnet Fire/EMS Department, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: 2/3 Majority (Borrowing))

Reason: *The current ambulances are 6 and 7 years old with the normal useful life of an emergency ambulance between 5-8 years. There is currently a two-year backlog from time of order to time of delivery, which will put our ambulance toward the outer limits of typical replacement timeline. Ordering the vehicle at this time will allow us to remain on schedule with our fleet.*

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease, power purchase, energy storage and potential PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) agreements with Solect Energy Development LLC for solar energy projects located at town and school properties, through the program created by PowerOptions, a non-profit corporation providing solutions to municipalities and other non-profits to reduce the cost, carbon, and complexity of energy, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.
(School Committee) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: *This will allow the School District to explore an opportunity to enter into a campus solar canopy project that could result in potential energy cost savings of over \$1,000,000 over a 25-year period, provide safety to employees who utilize the parking lots in which the canopies would cover, provide an outdoor classroom canopy/recreation area, and also help meet Massachusetts greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.*

FISCAL YEAR 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

ARTICLE 27: To see if the Town will vote, under the provisions of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 41, §108, or any amendments thereto, to fix the salaries of all elected officials and to fund collective bargaining agreements for Fiscal Year 2024, and raise and appropriate any sum or sums therefor, and further raise and appropriate any sum or sums of money for the maintenance of the several departments of the Town, and for other necessary charges, in accordance with the amount recommended by the Finance Committee as shown in the final column of the Warrant or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

DEPARTMENT		FISCAL 2023	FISCAL 2024	FISCAL 2024
		Appropriation	Bd of Selectmen	Finance Com
GENERAL GOVERNMENT				
1110	RESERVE FUND			
	Expense Total	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
1113	TOWN MEETING/ELECTIONS			
	Expense Total	\$14,280.00	\$18,764.00	\$18,764.00
1114	MODERATOR			
	Salary Total	\$725.00	\$725.00	\$725.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$150.00</u>	<u>\$150.00</u>	<u>\$150.00</u>
	Moderator Total	\$875.00	\$875.00	\$875.00
1122	SELECTMEN			
	Salary Total	\$251,591.00	\$252,608.00	\$252,608.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$26,800.00</u>	<u>\$18,300.00</u>	<u>\$18,300.00</u>
	Selectmen Total	\$278,391.00	\$270,908.00	\$270,908.00
1131	FINANCE COMMITTEE			
	Salary Total	\$3,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$400.00</u>	<u>\$400.00</u>	<u>\$400.00</u>
	Finance Committee Total	\$3,900.00	\$2,900	\$2,900
1135	ACCOUNTANT			
	Salary Total	\$166,417.00	\$173,919.00	\$173,919.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$52,150.00</u>	<u>\$49,150.00</u>	<u>\$49,150.00</u>
	Accountant Total	\$218,567.00	\$223,069.00	\$223,069.00
1141	ASSESSORS			
	Salary Total	\$118,595.00	\$120,669.00	\$120,669.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$61,620.00</u>	<u>\$61,960.00</u>	<u>\$61,960.00</u>
	Assessors Total	\$180,215.00	\$182,629.00	\$182,629.00
1145	TREASURER/COLLECTOR			
	Salary Total	\$178,837.00	\$202,237.00	\$202,237.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$52,800.00</u>	<u>\$57,800.00</u>	<u>\$57,800.00</u>
	Treasurer/Collector Total	\$231,637.00	\$260,037.00	\$260,037.00
1151	TOWN COUNSEL			
	Legal Expenses	<u>\$84,500.00</u>	<u>\$107,000.00</u>	<u>\$107,000.00</u>
	Town Counsel Total	\$84,500.00	\$107,000.00	\$107,000.00

1155	TECHNOLOGY			
	Salary Total	\$20,300.00	\$31,600.00	\$31,600.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$121,800.00</u>	<u>\$186,325.00</u>	<u>\$186,325.00</u>
	Technology Total	\$142,100.00	\$217,925.00	\$217,925.00
1161	TOWN CLERK			
	Salary Total	\$138,225.00	\$146,208.00	\$146,208.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$4,552</u>	<u>\$5,101.00</u>	<u>\$5,101.00</u>
	Town Clerk Total	\$142,777.00	\$151,309.00	\$151,309.00
1163	BOARD OF REGISTRARS			
	Salary Total	\$13,060.00	\$12,929.00	\$12,929.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$11,994.00</u>	<u>\$12,050.00</u>	<u>\$12,050.00</u>
	Board of Registrars Total	\$25,054.00	\$24,979.00	\$24,979.00
1171	CONSERVATION COMM.			
	Salary Total	\$59,525.00	\$59,152.00	\$59,152.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$25,000.00</u>	<u>\$2,000.00</u>	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
	Conservation Comm. Total	\$84,525.00	\$61,152.00	\$61,152.00
1172	SOIL BOARD			
	Salary Total	\$1,900.00	\$700.00	\$700.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$200.00</u>	<u>\$20,800.00</u>	<u>\$20,800.00</u>
	Soil Board Total	\$2,100.00	\$21,500.00	\$21,500.00
1175	PLANNING BOARD			
	Salary Total	\$73,300.00	\$84,758.00	\$84,758.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$6,000.00</u>	<u>\$6,000.00</u>	<u>\$6,000.00</u>
	Planning Board Total	\$79,300.00	\$90,758.00	\$90,758.00
1176	BOARD OF APPEALS			
	Salary Total	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$3,150.00</u>	<u>\$3,150.00</u>	<u>\$3,150.00</u>
	Board of Appeals Total	\$6,150.00	\$6,150.00	\$6,150.00
1192	TOWN BUILDINGS			
	Salary Total	\$106,323.00	\$163,759.00	\$163,759.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$110,500.00</u>	<u>\$95,250.00</u>	<u>\$95,250.00</u>
	Town Buildings Total	\$216,823.00	\$259,009.00	\$259,009.00
10.09%	GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL	\$1,861,194.00	\$2,048,964.00	\$2,048,964.00
PUBLIC SAFETY				
2210	POLICE DEPARTMENT			
	Salary Total	\$2,298,500.00	\$2,348,714.00	\$2,348,714.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$361,510.00</u>	<u>\$364,360.00</u>	<u>\$364,360.00</u>
	Police Dept. Total	\$2,660,010.00	\$2,713,074.00	\$2,713,074.00
2220	FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT			
	Salary Total	\$910,733.00	\$902,496.00	\$902,496.00
	Expense Total	<u>\$206,419.00</u>	<u>\$208,490.00</u>	<u>\$208,490.00</u>
	Fire Department Total	\$1,117,152.00	\$1,110,986.00	\$1,110,986.00
2241	INSPECTIONAL SERVICES			
	Salary Total	\$134,889.00	\$124,287.00	\$124,287.00

	Expense Total	\$28,840.00	\$19,950.00	\$19,950.00
	Building Dept. Total	\$163,729.00	\$144,237.00	\$144,237.00
2244	SEALER; WEIGHTS/MEASURES			
	Salary Total	\$1,169.00	\$1,169.00	\$1,169.00
	Weights & Measures Total	\$1,169.00	\$1,169.00	\$1,169.00
2291	EMERGENCY MGT			
	Salary Total	\$3,799.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
	Expense Total	\$14,850.00	\$12,400.00	\$12,400.00
	Emergency Management Total	\$18,649.00	\$16,400.00	\$16,400.00
2292	ANIMAL CONTROL			
	Salary Total	\$50,168.00	\$50,268.00	\$50,268.00
	Expense Total	\$6,740.00	\$6,740.00	\$6,740.00
	Animal Control Total	\$56,908.00	\$57,008.00	\$57,008.00
2294	FORESTRY			
	Salary Total	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
	Expense Total	\$16,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00
	Forestry Total	\$17,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$19,000.00
0.68%	PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL	\$4,034,617.00	\$4,061,874.00	\$4,061,874.00
EDUCATION				
3320	OLD COLONY REGIONAL	\$2,282,455.00	\$2,487,008.00	\$2,487,008.00
3325	ACUSHNET SCHOOL DEPT.	\$15,673,070.00	\$16,058,083.00	\$16,058,083.00
3.28%	EDUCATION TOTAL	\$17,955,525.00	\$18,545,091.00	\$18,545,091.00
PUBLIC WORKS				
4422	PUBLIC WORKS - HIGHWAY			
	Salary Total	\$418,076.00	\$421,813.00	\$421,813.00
	Expense Total	\$570,700.00	\$584,400.00	\$584,400.00
	Public Works-Highway Total	\$988,776.00	\$1,006,213.00	\$1,006,213.00
4423	SNOW & ICE			
	Expense Total	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00
	Snow & Ice - Total	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00
4424	STREET LIGHTING			
	Expense Total	\$20,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
	Street Lighting - Total	\$20,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
4431	SEMASS			
	Salary Total	\$39,963.00	\$42,798.00	\$42,798.00
	Expense Total	\$1,122,523.00	\$1,207,988.00	\$1,207,988.00
	SEMASS- Total	\$1,162,486.00	\$1,250,786.00	\$1,250,786.00
4491	CEMETERY			
	Salary Total	\$5,464.00	\$5,464.00	\$5,464.00
	Expense Total	\$1,325.00	\$1,325.00	\$1,325.00

	Cemetery- Total		\$6,789.00	\$6,789.00	\$6,789.00
4451	WATER RESERVE FUND				
	Expense Total		<u>\$60,000.00</u>	<u>\$60,000.00</u>	<u>\$60,000.00</u>
	Water Reserve Fund-Total		\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
4450	PUBLIC WORKS - WATER				
	Salary Total		\$199,955.00	\$205,919	\$205,919
	Expense Total		<u>\$1,374,300.00</u>	<u>\$1,475,280</u>	<u>\$1,475,280</u>
	Public Works-Water Total		\$1,574,255.00	\$1,681,199.00	\$1,681,199.00
7450	WATER DEBT SERVICE				
	Expense Total		<u>\$206,992.00</u>	<u>\$206,992.00</u>	<u>\$206,992.00</u>
	Water Fund Debt Total		\$206,992.00	\$206,992.00	\$206,992.00
5.27%	PUBLIC WORKS TOTAL		\$4,129,298.00	\$4,346,979.00	\$4,346,979.00
HUMAN SERVICES					
5510	BOARD OF HEALTH				
	Salary Total		\$170,646.00	\$173,589.00	\$173,589.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$29,375.00</u>	<u>\$29,375.00</u>	<u>\$29,375.00</u>
	Board of Health Total		\$200,021.00	\$202,964.00	\$202,964.00
5541	COUNCIL ON AGING				
	Salary Total		\$140,374.00	\$110,862.00	\$110,862.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$22,740.00</u>	<u>\$21,000.00</u>	<u>\$21,000.00</u>
	Council on Aging Total		\$163,114.00	\$131,862.00	\$131,862.00
5543	VETERANS				
	Salary Total		\$20,772.00	\$20,772.00	\$20,772.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$196,445.00</u>	<u>\$196,445.00</u>	<u>\$196,445.00</u>
	Veterans Total		\$217,217.00	\$217,217.00	\$217,217.00
-5.13%	HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL		\$580,352.00	\$552,043.00	\$552,043.00
CULTURE & RECREATION					
6610	LIBRARY				
	Salary Total		\$224,542.00	\$238,211.00	\$238,211.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$63,237.00</u>	<u>\$61,558.00</u>	<u>\$61,558.00</u>
	Library Total		\$287,779.00	\$299,769.00	\$299,769.00
6630	RECREATION				
	Salary Total		10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$13,893.00</u>	<u>\$12,850.00</u>	<u>\$12,850.00</u>
	Recreation Total		\$23,893.00	\$22,850.00	\$22,850.00
6650	PARKS DEPARTMENT				
	Salary Total		\$29,000.00	\$29,000.00	\$29,000.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$19,667.00</u>	<u>\$20,967.00</u>	<u>\$20,967.00</u>
	Parks Dept. Total		\$48,667.00	\$49,967.00	\$49,967.00
6691	HISTORICAL COMMISSION				
	Expense Total		<u>\$7,000.00</u>	<u>\$7,800.00</u>	<u>\$7,800.00</u>
	Historical Comm. Total		\$7,000.00	\$7,800.00	\$7,800.00

2699	MISCELLANEOUS				
	Salary Total		\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
	Expense Total		<u>\$11,973.00</u>	<u>\$8,500.00</u>	<u>\$8,500.00</u>
	Miscellaneous Total		\$21,973.00	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00
1.17%	CULTURE/RECREATION TOTAL		\$389,312.00	\$393,886.00	\$393,886.00
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSE					
850	Regional Government Expense		<u>\$3,610.00</u>	<u>\$3,693.00</u>	<u>\$3,693.00</u>
	Reg Govt Expense Total		\$3,610.00	\$3,693.00	\$3,693.00
	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL		\$3,610.00	\$3,693.00	\$3,693.00
DEBT SERVICE					
7710	DEBT - PRINCIPAL				
	Expense Total		<u>\$372,000.00</u>	<u>\$320,000.00</u>	<u>\$320,000.00</u>
	Debt-Principal Total		\$372,000.00	\$320,000.00	\$320,000.00
	LONG TERM DEBT INTEREST				
	Expense Total		<u>\$125,673.00</u>	<u>\$111,035.00</u>	<u>\$111,035.00</u>
	Long Term Debt-Interest Total		\$125,673.00	\$111,035.00	\$111,035.00
	SHORT TERM DEBT INTEREST				
	Expense Total		<u>\$74,404.00</u>	<u>\$61,250.00</u>	<u>\$61,250.00</u>
	Short Term Debt – Interest Total		\$74,404.00	\$61,250.00	\$61,250.00
-16.19%	DEBT SERVICE TOTAL		\$572,077.00	\$492,285.00	\$492,285.00
NON_DEPARTMENTAL (JOINT) ACCOUNTS					
1911	PENSIONS				
	Expense Total		<u>\$1,828,836.00</u>	<u>\$1,940,235.00</u>	<u>\$1,940,235.00</u>
	Pensions Total		\$1,828,836.00	\$1,940,235.00	\$1,940,235.00
1914	INSURANCE				
	Expense Total		<u>\$1,978,300.00</u>	<u>\$2,287,100.00</u>	<u>\$2,287,100.00</u>
	Pensions Total		\$1,978,300.00	\$2,287,100.00	\$2,287,100.00
11.04%	NON_DEPARTMENTAL TOTAL		\$3,807,136.00	\$4,227,335.00	\$4,227,335.00
4.02%	GENERAL FUND TOTAL		\$33,333,121.00	\$34,672,150.00	\$34,672,150.00

ARTICLE 28: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money to operate the Golf Club Enterprise Fund for FY 2024 as shown below:

<i>Reserve Fund</i>	\$ 100,000.00
<i>Salaries</i>	\$ 689,246.00
<i>Operation & Maintenance</i>	\$ 781,597.00
<i>Debt Service</i>	<u>\$ 340,900.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,911,743.00

And this sum to be raised as follows:

<i>Golf Center Revenue</i>	\$1,811,743.00
<i>Golf Retained Earnings</i>	<u>\$ 100,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,911,743.00

Or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by Golf Committee and the Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

ARTICLE 29: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money to operate the Sewer Enterprise Fund as shown below:

<i>Reserve Fund</i>	\$ 60,000.00
<i>Salaries</i>	\$ 80,729.00
<i>Operations & Maintenance</i>	\$ 601,170.00
<i>Debt Service</i>	<u>\$ 329,176.00</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,071,075.00

And this to be raised as follows:

<i>Sewer Revenues</i>	\$ 691,789.00
<i>Sewer Retained Earnings</i>	<u>\$ 389,176.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,080,965.00

Or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Requested by Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

FISCAL YEAR 2024 MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

ARTICLE 30: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from free cash the sum of \$20,000 to fund the Elders Community Service Program created in accordance with G.L. c.59, §5K, and, to provide that the hourly wage to be paid for services under this program is the applicable hourly minimum wage, or take any action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen and Council-On-Aging) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: The Senior Tax Work-off program is a very successful program that is designed to provide financial and social benefits to both senior homeowners and town government. This Senior Tax Work-off program is designed to assist seniors in mitigating the squeeze between increasing property values, increasing property taxes, and a fixed income by providing a method to reduce their property taxes by (up to) \$1,500.00.

ARTICLE 31: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from free cash the sum of \$30,000.00 to fund a Youth Employment Service Program for the purpose of providing a payment for services rendered for the departments, boards and committees of the municipality by resident youth; said program shall be subject to the following conditions, in addition to any and all eligibility requirements promulgated by the Board of Selectmen, after receiving the recommendations of the Recreation Commission Chair, DPW Superintendent, and Chair of the Golf Management and Operational Committee: (a) participation in the program shall be limited to residents of the Town; (b) program participants shall receive compensation at a rate of \$15.00 an hour for each hour of service rendered for a total not to exceed \$4,000.00 in any calendar year; (c) the Treasurer/Tax Collector shall comply with the wage, tax and payroll deduction requirements of the state Department of Revenue and the federal Internal Revenue Service; and (e) program participants who meet the eligibility guidelines established for the program by the Board of Selectmen shall be selected for participation in the program on a first-come-first-served basis, or take any other action thereon.

(Board of Selectmen and Park / Recreation Commission) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: The YES (Youth Employment Service) program is a new program designed to be a companion program to the very successful Senior Tax Work-off program. This program is designed to instill work ethic, while providing financial and social benefits to resident youths.

ARTICLE 32: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash or otherwise provide for a payment of the sum of \$100,000.00 to pay for costs associated with joining this employee health insurance purchasing group, Massachusetts Strategic Health Group, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Majority)

Reason: The Town is seeking to join an employee health insurance purchasing group to save health insurance premiums. Under the current arrangement, the Town has continued to have a negative premium to cost ratio as a result of many catastrophic cases. The Town's present health insurance provider predicting large in health insurance costs, greater than 30%. The Town's health insurance consultant has issued a Request for Quotes/Proposals from other providers including various group purchasing entities to spread out future increases. The Town is converting to purchasing through a group purchasing entity this fiscal year. This funding will be the Town's initial contribution to the group's Reserve Trust Fund.

ARTICLE 33: To see if the Town will vote to fund the cost items contained for the first two years of a three-year collective bargaining agreement (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025) between the Acushnet Fire Fighters Local #3281 IAFF, PFFM, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

(Proposed by the Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: *The new Collective Bargaining Agreement includes a salary adjustment of 0% in the first year, 2.00% in the second year, and 2.00% in the third year with a “signing bonus” paid by ARPA funds (\$12,000.00). It also includes a realignment of the salary grid to reflect comparability and parity with the other Town salary plans.*

ARTICLE 34: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to file a Home Rule Petition to continue the employment of Call Fire Deputy Chief beyond the mandatory retirement age, provided that the General Court may make clerical and editorial changes of form only to the bill unless the Board of Selectmen approves the amendments to the bill prior to enactment by the General Court, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to approve such amendments that are within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto.

Language of the Home Rule Petition

An Act authorizing the town of Acushnet to continue the employment of Call Deputy Fire Chief.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Call Fire Deputy Chief of the Town of Acushnet, may continue to serve in that position until reaching the date of his voluntary retirement or the date he is relieved of his duties by the Town of Acushnet Board of Selectmen, whichever occurs first; provided, however, that he is mentally and physically capable of performing the duties of his office. The Board of Selectmen may, at the Town's own expense, require that said Call Fire Deputy Chief be examined annually by a physician designated by the Town, to determine such physical and mental capability to perform the duties of his office.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: *State law mandates that call firefighters must retire at 65 years of age. The law also provides for an exception to this mandate if the firefighter is physically and mentally able to continue to perform the duties of a firefighter. This Home Rule Petition is the mechanism that cities and towns must use to access the exception to the mandatory retirement.*

ARTICLE 35: To see if the Town will vote to approve the \$500,000 indebtedness authorized by the Regional District School Committee of the Old Colony Regional Vocational-Technical High School District to pay costs of a feasibility study relating to the possible renovation and/or construction of the District High School, located at 476 North Avenue, Rochester, Massachusetts, including all costs incidental and related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereon or in relation thereto.

Reason: The total amount appropriated by the Regional District for this purpose is \$1,000,000, which will be reduced to the extent of any grants received by the District from the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The District is using \$500,000 of its reserves as well as requesting Town approval to borrow the remainder. Each community will have to approve the indebtedness.

ARTICLE 36: To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59 Section 5 Clause 41C, to increase the gross receipts limit to \$20,000 if single and \$30,000 if married, and increase the whole estate limit to \$40,000 if single and \$55,000 if married, to be effective for exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2023, or take any other action relative thereon or in relation thereto. (Board of Assessors) (Required Vote: Simple Majority)

Reason: The Board of Assessors is requesting that the Town modifies the real estate exemption criteria for qualifying seniors 70 and older who own and occupy real property. The exemption would be changed by increasing the gross receipts and whole estate criteria. The criteria currently used was voted and accepted at the June 5, 1989 Town Meeting (Article 12). An increased number of seniors would benefit from this change. The Board of Assessors voted 2 to 0 on 3/15/23 to submit this article.

ARTICLE 37: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire all or a portion of the lands identified as Lots 14 and 15 on Acushnet Assessors Map 3, and more particularly described in the deed recorded with the Bristol South Registry of Deeds in Book 1745, Page 676, and to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow a sum of money to fund such acquisition and any and all costs incidental or related thereto, including, without limitation, title investigations, closing costs, payment of a purchase deposit, attorney's fees, and transfer expenses, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into any and all agreements and take any and all actions necessary or appropriate to carry out the foregoing transaction, or to take any other action relative thereon or in relation thereto.

(Board of Selectmen) (Required Vote: 2/3 Majority)

FISCAL YEAR 2024 BYLAW AND ZONING ARTICLES

ARTICLE 38: To see if the Town will vote to amend the bylaws of the Town by deleting the current language of Article 1, Section 2.2 and inserting the following language, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto:

“Article 1, Section 2.2 The annual election of officers shall be held on the fourth Tuesday in April or at such other time as shall be determined by a vote of the Town, or take any other action relative thereto.”

(Town Clerk) (Required Vote: 2/3 Majority)

Reason: Currently, Article 1, Section 2.2 reads “The annual election of officers shall be held on the first Saturday following the annual town meeting or at such other time as shall be determined by vote of the Town.” It is the intent of the town Clerk to move

ARTICLE 39: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article VI of the Town of Acushnet General Bylaws by amending the current cross-lined highlighted language of Article V1, and by inserting in its place the highlighted language in Appendix I, which Appendix is incorporated herein, or take any other action thereon or in relation thereto:

See Appendix I for amended language.

(Board of Selectmen and Soil Conservation Board) (Required Vote: Two-thirds (2/3) majority)

CONSTABLES:

In addition, you are directed to serve the above warrant by posting up an attested copy thereof at the Acushnet Town Hall, Parting Ways Town Office Building, Acushnet Post Office, Acushnet Public Library, Acushnet Council on Aging, Acushnet Elementary School, Ford Middle School in said Town of Acushnet and in addition at available public places, Jason's Variety and Scuttlebutts Variety, in seven days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

Given under our Hands this 24th day of April, Two Thousand Twenty-Three.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

David Wojnar, Chairman

Kevin Gaspar, Sr.

Robert Hinckley

Bristol SS

Town of Acushnet

I have served the above warrant by posting up attested copies, as directed by vote of the Town at least seven (7) days before time of holding said meeting.

Date & Time: May 2023 @ _____

A TRUE COPY ATTEST - TOWN CLERK:

CONSTABLE:

Pamela Labonte

APPENDIX 1

Article VI

SOIL CONSERVATION FOR THE TOWN OF ACUSHNET

Section 1

The Town By-Laws shall be amended to establish a Soil Conservation Board in the Town of Acushnet for the purpose of exercising the powers and duties hereunder.

- A. The members of the Board shall consist of the Board of Selectmen.
- B. In the event that a vacancy shall occur on the Board, the Board from which such representative comes, shall select a representative to fill such vacancy by a majority vote of the Board at any meeting at which a quorum is present in the same manner as which the original representative was selected.
- C. Organization
 - 1. A quorum for the conduct of any and all business shall be two (2) members.
 - 2. The affirmative vote of at least two (2) members shall be required for the recommendation to grant, modify, revoke or remove any permit authorized hereunder.
 - 3. The members shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman, the latter to serve in the absence of the chairman.
 - 4. The Board may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the Board. The secretary shall keep a true record of the proceedings of the Board, which shall be a public record.
 - 5. The Board shall file a copy of all its official actions with the Town of Acushnet Clerk and Board of Selectmen as required by law.
 - 6. The Board may appoint an enforcement officer who need not be a member of the Board. The enforcement officer shall keep a record of all duties performed and inspections made.

Section 2

Definitions

- A. For the purpose of this ~~By~~-law, “earth” shall include soil, loam, sand, gravel, clay, rock, bedrock or other allied products.
- B. For the purpose of this ~~By~~-law, the “enforcement officer” shall be the inspector or inspectors appointed by the Soil Conservation Board to carry out these duties.
- C. For the purpose of this ~~By~~-law, “Board” shall mean the Soil Conservation Board.
- D. For the purpose of this ~~By~~-law, “petitioner” shall be the person or persons making application to remove earth from a property in the Town.
- E. For the purpose of this ~~By~~-law, “parcel” or “parcel of land” shall mean a lot showing on the then current Assessors’ Plat Plans.
- F. As used in this ~~By~~-law, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated.

BULK MATERIAL is stone, sand, gravel, soil, aggregate material less than twelve inches in length or diameter, and other organic or inorganic particulate matter.

DISTURBED SURFACE AREA means a portion of the earth's surface which has been physically moved, uncovered, destabilized, or otherwise modified from its undisturbed natural soil condition. This definition excludes those areas which have: (a) been restored to a natural state, such that the vegetative ground cover and soil characteristics are similar to adjacent or nearby natural conditions; (b) been paved or otherwise covered by a permanent structure; or (c) sustained a vegetative ground cover of at least 70 percent of the native cover for a particular area for at least 30 days.

DUST SUPPRESSANTS are water, hygroscopic materials, or non-toxic chemical stabilizers used as a treatment material to reduce fugitive dust emissions.

EARTH-MOVING ACTIVITIES means the use of any equipment for any activity where soil is being moved or uncovered, and shall include, but not be limited to the following: grading, earth cutting and filling operations, loading or unloading of dirt or bulk materials, adding to or removing from open storage piles of bulk materials, quarry operations, weed abatement through disking, and soil mulching.

DUST CONTROL SUPERVISOR means a person with the authority to expeditiously employ sufficient dust mitigation measures to ensure compliance with this ~~By-law~~regulation and any permit or condition issued thereunder.

HIGH WIND CONDITIONS means that instantaneous wind speeds exceed 20 miles per hour.

LARGE OPERATIONS means any active operations on property which contains 50 or more acres of disturbed surface area; or any soil removal operation with a soil

removal throughput volume of 15,000 cubic yards during the most recent 365-day period.

FILL means soil, sediments, rocks/stones, or other organic or inorganic material obtained off-site that is used to fill holes, pits or depressions; create mounds; or otherwise artificially change the grade or elevation of real property.

SOIL REMOVAL means the use of any equipment for any activity where soil is being moved or uncovered, and shall include, but not be limited to the following: grading, earth cutting and filling operations, loading or unloading of dirt or bulk materials, adding to or removing from open storage piles of bulk materials, landfill operations, weed abatement through disking, and soil mulching.

OPEN STORAGE PILE is any accumulation of bulk material, which is not fully enclosed, covered or chemically stabilized, and which attains a height of three feet or more and a total surface area of 150 or more square feet.

PROPERTY LINE means the boundaries of an area in which either a person causing the emission or a person allowing the emission has the legal use or possession of the property.

WATER TABLE means the spring high water table established from a test pit or piezometer and the level related to a permanent monument on the property.

Section 3

Earth Removal Procedure

- A. No Large Operation as defined above, earth shall be ~~removed~~ allowed on ~~from~~ any parcel of land within the Town- ~~except~~ [JTBI][U2] as hereafter provided, and only in accordance with a written permit issued by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~. The Board ~~of Selectmen~~ may grant a permit for such removal and for temporary structure accessory thereto, in accordance with the procedure hereafter set forth for special permits. No permit for removal shall be granted unless the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ finds that such removal (subject to the conditions imposed by the permit) will not be contrary to the best interests of the Town, and no removal operations subsequently conducted under such permit shall continue if contrary to such interests. For this purpose, removal of earth material shall be considered contrary to the best interest of the Town which (1) will be injurious or dangerous to the public health or safety, (2) will produce noise, dust, or other effects observable at or beyond the lot lines in amounts seriously objectionable or detrimental to the normal use of adjacent property, (3) will result in transportation of materials on ways giving access to the land in question which will cause traffic congestion or hazards, (4) will result in transportation which will cause undue injury to the roadway surfaces, (5) will result in change in topography and cover which will be disadvantageous to the most appropriate use of land on which the operation is conducted, or (6) will have a material adverse effect on the health or safety of persons living in the neighborhood, or on the use of amenities of adjacent land. (7) Will result in transportation of materials in excess of the Federal truck weight limits of 80,000 pounds.

B. Any Large Operation~~person~~ wishing to remove such material from a property in the Town shall file a formal application with the Board, which application shall include the following specific information and supporting documentation:

1. The location of the proposed excavation, including Assessors' Plat and Lot numbers
2. The legal name and address of the owner of the property involved.
3. The legal name and address of the petitioner, which address shall be used by the Board for all correspondence hereunder.
4. Names and addresses of all abutting property owners, including those across any streets.
5. The proposed method of performance security to be used or a performance bond of \$10,000.00 per acre of excavation will be required to secure a permit.
6. A plan and representative profiles of the area covering the permit prepared by a Registered Professional Engineer, from which final grades may be established. Topographical plans depicting existing and proposed grades. A reclamation plan prepared by a Professional Engineer with all associated costs and requirements to complete the reclamation of the entire property.
7. Copies of the information outlined in the above articles shall be filed with the Town Clerk.
8. In approving the issuance of a permit, the Board ~~shall~~may impose reasonable conditions, especially designed to safeguard the neighborhood and the town, including the as followings:
 - a. The finished leveling and grading shall be indicated on approved plans indicated and submitted to the Board.
 - b. The placing of swales, basins, check dams, topsoil and planting of vegetation necessary to control erosion.
 - c. The duration of the removal operation.
 - d. The construction of necessary fencing and other protections against nuisances. Boulders may be used for this purpose; boulders not used for this purpose must be disposed of as required by sub-paragraph (i) hereunder.
 - e. Method of removal.
 - f. Hours of operation.
 - g. Routes of travel and number of trips for transportation of material.

- h. Control of temporary or permanent drainage, discharge and compliance with Article IX of the town ~~h~~By-laws.
- i. Disposition of boulders and tree stumps. Boulders may be buried below grade. Stumps may not be buried below the normal grade.
- j. Set and maintain permanent monuments at each property corner.
- k. At the conclusion of every day's operation, the vertical bank shall be caved in to a slope no greater than a 2 to 1 vertical slope to protect public safety.

- l. All Large Operation soil removal activities that exist as of the effective date of this ~~regulation~~By-law must apply for a permit within sixty (60) days of such effective date.

For all active operations or large operations requiring a permit under this Regulation~~By-law~~, the Board may consult, at the applicant's expense, and pursuant to G.L. c. 44, § 53G, a Professional Engineer and/or Licensed Site Professional (LSP) registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, approved of or chosen by the Board. Said Engineer or LSP, if retained by the Board, shall assist the Board with analysis of the proposed soil removal activities so that the Board may determine whether such project may result in the removal of contaminated soil or whether such project may otherwise impact the public health safety or welfare or the environment.

Any appeal of the Board's selection of a Professional Engineer and/or Licensed Site Professional (LSP) may be filed pursuant to G.L. c. 44, § 53G.

The Board's hearing may be continued as may be necessary to receive any and all applicable and relevant evidence. In all cases, it shall be the Applicant's burden to demonstrate that the proposed soil removal will not adversely impact the public and or be contrary to the benefit of the town. The Board may deny a permit if the Applicant fails to supply adequate materials to evaluate the project or if the soil removal activities will adversely impact the public and or be contrary to the interests of the town.

- C. No permit for the removal of earth shall be issued by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~, except as provided in Section 4 below, until a public hearing has been held by the Board, notice of which shall have been given by them at least fourteen days in advance, in a paper of general circulation, published not less than weekly, in the Town of Acushnet, the posting of copies thereon on municipal bulletin boards and the mailing of copies thereof to the abutting property owners and abutters to abutters within three-hundred feet (300'), including those across any streets and a recommendation has been received in writing from said Board.

- D. Any permit issued hereunder shall automatically expire upon the completion of the earth removal project for which it was issued or at the expiration of one year from the date of issue, or upon revocation for cause by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~, whichever shall first occur.
- E. Approval of the renewal of a permit for a period not in excess of one year may be made by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ without hearing if the Board ~~of Selectmen~~, after a report from the inspector, finds that all conditions of this By-law and permit then applicable have been complied with and that the work has been carried on continuously and in good faith.
- F. The removal of earth pursuant to any permit granted hereunder shall be deemed a permitted use under Section 4 of the Zoning By-law.

Section 4

Exceptions

- A. No permit shall be required for the following purposes:
 - 1. Repealed May 10, 2021.
 - 2. As part of a cemetery operation.
 - 3. When such earth removal is necessary in connection with the construction of a building being built in accord with a permit issued by the Building Inspector. The amount to be removed to be limited to the volume of earth necessary to construct the structure authorized by the permit.
 - 4. Repealed May 10, 2021.
- B. The Board ~~of Selectmen~~, without a public hearing, may approve permits without requiring compliance with conditions set forth in Section 3, B1 – B8, for the removal from the site of earth for the following purposes:
 - 1. Where necessary as part of farm, garden or nursery activities.
 - 2. When incidental to landscaping or similar activities for which building or zoning permits are not required.
- C. Repealed May 10, 2021.
- D. The Board, or its authorized agent, may waive strict compliance with any requirement of this Bylaw or the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder, where such action is:
 - (1) allowed by federal, state and local statutes and/or regulations;
 - (2) in the public interest; and
 - (3) not inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this Bylaw.

Any person seeking a waiver must submit a written waiver request. Such a request shall be

accompanied by an explanation or documentation supporting the waiver request and demonstrating that strict application of the Bylaw does not further the purposes or objectives of this Bylaw.

If in the opinion of the Board or its authorized agent, additional time or information is required for review of a waiver request, the Board may continue a hearing to a date certain announced at the hearing. In the event the applicant objects to a continuance, or fails to provide requested information, the waiver request shall be denied

Section 5

Specific Limitations

- A. No permit for the removal of earth shall be approved by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ except upon the condition that a drainage layer of not less than eighteen inches (18) in depth, with a permeability of 10^{-5} and a cover of topsoil of not less than 4 inches in depth shall be replaced or allowed to remain, except that it shall be no greater than the depth of the topsoil, if any, shown on submitted plans, and except where, due to construction of roads, buildings or other permanent physical features, such provision is impractical.
- B. Every permit granted under this ~~By-law~~ shall be valid for a period not to exceed one year. Requests for renewal must be submitted no later than the end of the 10th month following issuance, with decisions on renewal to issue within thirty days of such request. Renewals shall be granted based upon compliance with the terms of the underlying permit. Any expansion or material modification of the underlying soil removal activities, as may be determined by the Board's ~~Agent~~, shall require a new hearing.

Section 6

General Limitations

- A. No permit for the removal of earth shall be approved by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ if the work extends within two hundred (200) feet of a public road unless the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ is satisfied that such removal will not undermine the way.
- B. No permit shall be issued for the removal of earth within one hundred (100) feet of a dwelling foundation or existing leaching field unless the Board is satisfied that such removal will not interfere with the dwelling or septic system.
- C. No permit shall be issued for the removal of earth within twenty (20) feet plus a sufficient distance to provide a 2 horizontal to 1 vertical foot slope from an abutting owner, unless the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ finds after a report from the inspector that a closer distance would not be detrimental to the site or if a closer dimension is not objectionable to the abutting property owner. In the case of two abutting gravel operations, if it is agreeable to both parties, there shall be no lot line restrictions.

- D. The required bond or the method of performance security will be used to enforce performance of conditions imposed by this By-law or under this section.

Section 7

Fees

- A. The Board ~~of Selectmen~~ shall establish such fees as it shall find necessary for the administration of this By-law, including but not limited to for the issuance of the original permit, renewal permits, semi-annual inspections, complaint inspections and special inspections.
- B. Any fees received hereunder shall be transmitted to the Town Treasurer.
- C. The Town Treasurer shall pay all charges or bills, properly authorized by the Board charged with the administration of this By-law.

Section 8

General Administration

- A. The Board or Enforcement Officer may enter upon the premises involved to inspect and ensure proper conduct of the work. ~~(These words must be incorporated in permit and appear thereon.)~~
 - 1. The inspector or the Board shall be required to notify the owner or petitioner before making any inspections.
- C. The Board ~~or inspector~~ may retain a civil engineer to inspect the site and to do such engineering as is necessary to determine conformity with plans and conditions of the permit and such necessary costs for engineering shall be borne by the Town.
- C. Prior to the anniversary date of the permit, each petitioner shall specify the number of cubic yards of material to be taken out of his/her pit the following year. At the end of the year, he/she shall file a statement of how many cubic yards have been removed during that preceding year. Annual removal shall not exceed the amount permitted at the beginning of the year unless the Board ~~of Selectmen, on the advice of their Enforcement Officer,~~ determines there will be no adverse effect to the Town.
- D. A permit shall be issued only after full payment of all annual fees and charges and receipt of a bond or other approved financial assurance.

Section 9

Violations

- A. If the Enforcement Officer or Board concludes that there has been a violation of this By-law, he or she shall hand deliver or send to the person in charge or permit holder, by certified mail,

return receipt requested, to the address stated on the initial application, or any other manner provided for by law, a notice ordering a cessation of the improper activities.

- B. If a permit holder or other offender persists in such violation, the ~~inspector~~Enforcement Officer or Board officer/board ~~may~~shall seek the imposition of the penalties authorized by paragraph 17, of Section 21D of Chapter 40, G.L., through appropriate legal action; and the penalty for removing earth in violation of this By-law shall be a fine of not more than two-hundred dollars (\$200) for the first offense after such warning; not more than three-hundred dollars (\$300) for the second offense; and not more than three hundred dollars (\$300) for any subsequent offense. Each day or part thereof shall constitute a separate offense.
- C. If the offender persists with the violation, a permit issued under the By-law may be revoked, by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~, after notice and hearing.

Section 10

Any permit issued by the Board ~~of Selectmen~~ shall be accompanied by a copy of the following:

Bond must be filed in amount indicated on list of stipulations attached to permit.

Any soil or loam shall, in connection with removing sand and gravel under this permit, be stockpiled on the premises in accordance with a stockpile plan approved by the Board.

As soon as practicable, and in accordance with good conservation practices not to exceed 90 days, all stripped areas shall be graded and covered with a drainage layer, top soil and loam, graded and vegetated in a proper soil conserving manner.

As soon as practicable, and in accordance with good conservation practices, not to exceed 10 days, as soon, as the loam is restored, it shall be planted with a suitable cover crop approved by the Board to prevent erosion of the surface.

The operations to be conducted under this permit are to be carried on in such a way as not to interfere with the natural flow of any stream, intermittent or otherwise running through the premises.

No earth shall be removed within four feet of spring high water table. This elevation shall be established from a test pit or piezometer and the level related to a permanent monument on the property. This information shall show on the topographic plan.

Boulders that are dug up during this operation must be taken from the land or buried as per Article III (B) (I).

No mounds of loam, fill, silt, waste, gravel, stones, brush, sand, etc. are to be left at the completion of this operation, or upon the termination of this permit.

At the completion of the operation, or upon the termination of this permit, any uncovered portions of the pit shall be sloped and reclaimed as provided in the paragraphs above.

All work shall be performed in the following manner:

If applicable, aAfter the operation has proceeded 600 feet, the operator shall slope, grade, and reseed the initial 300 feet before or during the period when he begins work on the following 300 feet. Thereafter, he shall proceed to advance his operations at integral distances of 300 feet while he simultaneously grades, slopes, loams and reseeds the previous integral distance of 300 feet.

The conveyance of the property covered by this license by the licensees, or either of them, shall result in the termination of the right to remove any further earth, sand rock and gravel under this permit and the premises shall be restored as above provided. This termination shall not be effective if prior to such conveyance as bond conditioned upon the full performance of all the terms and conditions of this license and with sureties satisfactory to the Soil Conservation Board of Acushnet shall be filed with such Board.

Section 11

Validity

The validity of any section or provision of this By-law shall not invalidate any other section or provision thereof.

On this date:

Voted: