

To: Town Representatives and Town Meeting Members *ex officio*  
From: Bob Nason, Town Administrator  
Date: April 29, 2009  
Re: May 14, 2009 (FY09) Special Town Meeting Warrant

This memorandum conveys additional information about the articles that are proposed for the Special Town Meeting which is scheduled to immediately precede the May 14, 2009 (FY10) Annual Town Meeting. This memorandum and the special town meeting warrant are posted on the municipal web site, lee.ma.us.

**Article 1. Sign Officer Compensation**

Acting upon the Inspector of Buildings/Code Enforcement Officer's appeal of the Personnel Board's decision to deny his request for a stipend for his services as the Sign Officer, on May 22, 2008 the Personnel Relations Review Board voted to award him \$2,500 for his services this fiscal year (FY 2009 - July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009). Established at the May 14, 1998 Annual Town Meeting, the Personnel Relations Review Board consists of three members: a non-union, municipal employee of the Town, a member of the Personnel Board and an impartial person selected by the other members of the board. In reaching its decision the board found that Inspector of Buildings/Code Enforcement Officer's job description *...lacks clarity in regards to the Sign Officer designation*. The decision of the Personnel Relations Review Board is subject to appropriation, but otherwise final.

**Article 2. Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) Classification Plan**

Adopted by the Personnel Board, subject to Town Meeting approval, the Classification Plan succeeds the plan approved at the May 8, 2008 Special Town Meeting. The Classification Plan applies to non-union, municipal employees, who constitute less than 10% of the Town's employees. Most Town employees work for the school department and/or a collective bargaining agent represents them. The plan provides for salary/wage ranges for positions clustered by classification, and it is used for hiring new employees. When an effort to reach consensus on a town-wide wage freeze failed, the teachers' contracted, 2.25% cost of living adjustment became the basis for the proposed municipal wage increases, and the plan's salary ranges are increased accordingly. There are no new positions.

Enclosed is a copy of the April 27, 2009 Classification and Compensation and Plan for FY 2010. Developed by the Personnel Board, this consolidated plan provides you with a comprehensive look at non-union, municipal employee compensation. On the backside of the plan is a detailed explanation of how the spreadsheet is organized.

**Article 3. Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget Revision**

This article provides an additional appropriation from available funds for the Department of Public Works' Snow and Ice budget without which it will be in deficit at the end of

this fiscal year. The deficit is principally a result of the increased cost of salt and the amount of salt that was used to treat our roads this past winter, which was especially wet and cold. The cost of salt increased from \$50.97 per ton in the winter of 2007/2008 to \$69.36 per ton this past winter, an increase of 36%. The amount of salt used this past winter increased from approximately 2,000 tons during the winter of 2007/2008 to about 2,500 tons, an increase of 25%. These two factors increased our salt costs \$80,431 more than was budgeted. The FY10 budget request has been increased by \$25,511 or 7.7% to \$355,448, which is slightly higher than the new five year average expense of \$348,000.

**Article 4. Fiscal Year 2009 Ambulance Service Budget Revision**

At the request of the Ambulance Service Director, this article provides an additional appropriation from the ambulance receipts (which we estimated will amount to \$487,244 on May 14th) for the ambulance service operating budget without which it will be in deficit at the end of this fiscal year. A \$55 (23%) increase in the trip fee and a significant rise in the number of paramedic trips have doubled the expense from about \$60,000 in FY 2008 to an estimated \$120,000 for the current fiscal year.

**Article 5. Fiscal Year 2009 Sewer Department Operating Budget Funding**

At the request of the Department of Public Works, this article provides funds from the Available Sewer Surplus fund to bridge the gap between the amount of sewer receipts that we initially estimated and our current estimate which is 4.5% lower. Customers are lowering their sewer costs by conserving water, since sewer fees are based on metered water use. Demand for sewer services has further declined, because of the four paper mill closings. Consequently, the sewer surplus contribution to the current fiscal year sewer operating budget will increase from \$180,000 to \$266,269. After this additional transfer and without further appropriation, we estimate that the sewer surplus will amount to \$3,544,137 on June 30, 2009.

**Article 6. Fiscal Year 2009 Water Department Operating Budget Funding**

At the request of the Department of Public Works this article provides funds from the Available Water Surplus fund to bridge the gap between the amount of water receipts that we initially estimated and our current estimate which is slightly lower. Increased conservation and mill closings have reduced demand. After this transfer and without further appropriation, we estimate that the water surplus will amount to \$346,877 on June 30 2009.

**Article 7. Transfer of Proceeds from the Sale of Cemetery Lots to the Perpetual Care Account**

At the request of the Department of Public Works this article transfers half of the receipts from the sale of cemetery lots in the current fiscal year to the Fairmount Cemetery Perpetual Care Account. State law, Ch.114, S. 25, requires a Town Meeting vote to approve the transfer.