



**Minutes of May 4, 2015 Annual Town Meeting
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
County of Hampden, SS.
Town of Blandford**

At a legal meeting of the qualified voters of the **TOWN OF BLANDFORD**, held on May 4, 2015 at Blandford Town Hall, One Russell Stage Road, Blandford, Massachusetts, the following business was transacted:

Article 1: To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. C. 39, Sec. 15 that the Town Moderator be authorized to declare a two-thirds vote without a count when passage of an article requires a two-thirds vote by statute, provided, however, that if the vote is immediately questioned by seven or more voters, a count shall be taken, or take any other action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously; a procedural motion.

Article 2: To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of the Town Officials and act thereon; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$1,584,148 for the Gateway Regional School District for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article amended

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,611,292 for the Gateway Regional School District for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article passed as amended 86 yea to 28 nay.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$114,462 for the Vocational Education for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article amended

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$114,462 for the Vocational Education for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$36,000 for the transportation expenses for Vocational Education for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article amended

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$36,000 for the transportation expenses for Vocational Education for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously

- Article 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds \$1,760,000 for the Town's share of the costs of the construction, installation and start-up of a high-speed broadband network, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, such project to be carried out by the Town's Municipal Light Plant; acting as a member of the co-op; or to take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed 120 yea to 13 nay
- Article 7:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer and/or Tax Collector to enter into compensating balance agreements during Fiscal Year 2016 as permitted by M.G.L., Ch. 44, Sec. 53F; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 8:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016, in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L., Ch. 44, Sec. 4, and to issue a note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with M.G.L., Ch. 44, Sec. 17; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$25,000 for the Reserve Account; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$55,000 for the Stabilization Account; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 11:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 44, Sec. 53E ½, to authorize a revolving fund for the Fire Department for the purpose of depositing receipts received in connection with inspections and fees received from the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, to be expended for the purpose of paying costs and expenses related to the purchase of gear, equipment, and building maintenance, said sum not to exceed \$10,000 in FY16, said amount to be expended at the direction of the Fire Chief; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch.44, Sec. 53E ½, to authorize a revolving fund for the Council on Aging, for the purpose of depositing receipts received in connection with events that occur for the Council on Aging for the purpose of paying costs and expenses related to the purchase of items to benefit the Council, said sum not to exceed \$5,000 in FY16, said amount to be expended at the direction of the Chair of the Council on Aging; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 44, Sec. 53E ½, to authorize a revolving fund for the Electrical Inspector and Plumbing Inspector, for the purpose of depositing receipts received in connection with inspections and permits issued by such inspectors, to be expended for the purpose of paying salaries for the Electrical Inspector, and Plumbing Inspector, said sum not to exceed \$10,000 for each in FY16, said amount to be expended at the direction of the Board of Selectmen, or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously

- Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 44, Sec. 53E ½ to authorize a revolving fund for the Shepard Farm property, to be expended for the purpose of maintenance and improvements, into which will be credited fees and receipts generated through the programs undertaken at the Shepard Farm property, and to authorize the expenditure of such fund by the Shepard Farm Revolving Fund Committee, which shall consist of a representative from each of the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, and the Historical Commission; said sum not to exceed \$10,000 in FY16; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 44, Sec. 53E ½, to authorize a revolving fund for the Board of Health for the purpose of depositing receipts received in connection with Perk Tests from residents/new home owners for the purpose of paying salaries and costs relative to such program, said sum not to exceed \$10,000 in FY16, said amount to be expended at the direction of the Board of Health, or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 16:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 44, Sec. 53E ½, to authorize a revolving fund for the Board of Health for the purpose of depositing receipts received in connection with the sale of Transfer Station Trash Bags to residents, to be expended for the purpose of purchasing trash bags by the Board of Health, said sum not to exceed \$5,000 in FY16, said amount to be expended at the direction of the Board of Health, or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 17:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept all Federal and State grants available to the Town of Blandford; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 18:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept all Chapter 90 funds; or take any other action relative thereto.
Article passed unanimously
- Article 19:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,489,402 and transfer to defray the expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto. (See Proposed Departmental Budgets)
Article amended
- Article 19:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,489,898 to defray the expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto. (See Proposed Departmental Budgets)
Amendment 1: keep line 9 \$40,000 for town administrator/administrative assistant but fund for \$1
Amendment failed
Amendment 2: strike administrative assistant from the description of line 9
Amendment passed
Amendment 3: Change line 110 from \$3,005 to \$3,500
Amendment passed
Article passed as amended unanimously
- Article 20:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$ 523,973 from

Water Department Funds to operate the Water Department for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016; or take any other action relative thereto. (See Proposed Departmental Budgets)

Article passed unanimously

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$100,000 for the Building Stabilization Account; or take any other action relative thereto.
[Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.]

Article passed unanimously

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote, in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40, Sec. 5B, to create a Municipal Light Stabilization Fund for the purpose of future funding of projects to be undertaken through the Municipal Light Plant, including construction of high-speed broadband network; and to raise and appropriate a sum of \$12,000 for the Municipal Light Stabilization Fund; or take any other action relative thereto. [Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.]

Article passed unanimously

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote, in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40, Sec. 5B, to create a Water Stabilization fund for the purpose of funding future water system related projects; and to transfer a sum of \$132,000 from the approved retained earnings to the Water Stabilization Fund. Said amount represents the unspent balance of retained earnings after funds appropriated for repair of the water main freeze (approved by the vote taken under Article 1 of the March 16, 2015 Special Town Meeting), or take any other action relative thereto. [Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.]

Article passed unanimously

Article 24: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Blandford By-laws, Section IV, Town Counsel, by deleting text of said section in its entirety and inserting in place thereof the following:

A. Appointment of Town and Special Counsel: The Board of Selectmen is authorized on behalf of the Town to prosecute and defend matters in which the Town has an interest, or to appear in favor or opposed to matters involving the Town's interest, and employ a Town Counsel and such special counsel as may be needed for such purposes.

B. Duties of Town Counsel: Town Counsel shall be present at all Annual Town Meetings and may be available by telephone for all Special Town Meetings at the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

C. Authorization for Shared/Joint Legal Representation: The official duties of Town Counsel, or special counsel so appointed, shall include simultaneously representing the Town, other municipalities and/or public entities in matters in which the Town has a direct or substantial interest, including but not limited to administrative and judicial proceedings in which the Town is also a party or wishes to be a party. Such representation may be undertaken in each particular matter in which dual or common representation is contemplated only upon the express written permission of the Board of Selectmen and provided that Town Counsel or, as appropriate, special counsel, has complied with all applicable rules of professional responsibility. In granting such permission, the Board of Selectmen shall make a separate finding that such dual or common representation furthers the interests of the Town, including, for example, to facilitate the pooling of resources for a common purpose, development of regional and mutual interests, or preservation of scarce municipal funds.

Or to take action relative thereto

Article Tabled

Article 25: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following resolution, and further, to send notice of the same to its State Senator, State Representative, and Governor:
BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the voters of the Town of Blandford, Massachusetts at its 2015 Annual Town Meeting, hereby request the Board of Selectmen to file with the State Auditor a request for reimbursement for any and all unfunded mandates which are legally eligible for reimbursement, which mandates are imposed on the Town by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including but not limited to costs for Vocational Education Transportation.
Or to take action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously

Article 26: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following resolution, and further, to send notice of the same to its State Senator, State Representative, and Governor:

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the voters of the Town of Blandford, Massachusetts at its 2015 Annual Town Meeting hereby request the Gateway Regional School District School Committee to file, with the State Auditor a request for reimbursement for any and all unfunded mandates which are legally eligible for reimbursement, which are imposed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, including but not limited to costs for Student Transportation)

Or to take action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously

Article 27. To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following resolution, and further, to send notice of the same to its State Senator, State Representative, and Governor:

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the voters of the Town of Blandford, Massachusetts at its 2015 Annual Town Meeting hereby request the Gateway Regional School District School Committee to explore all possible options to protect the financial and educational sustainability of the Gateway Regional School District, including but not limited to exploring and recommending ways to: (1) Ensure the financial and educational sustainability of the Gateway Regional School District with quantifiable and measurable five and ten year operational and capital plans; (2) Ensure the quality of education be sustained at the highest level possible; (3) Make practical recommendations to the Member Towns of the Gateway Regional School District to achieve these goals on a short term and long term basis; and (4) Provide annual reports to the Member Towns on progress made to reach these stated goals and requests.

Or to take action relative thereto.

Article passed unanimously

A true copy
ATTEST:

Mary N. Kronholm, Town Clerk