

Notice to Town Meeting Voters:

From: Maynard Select Board

RE: Statement from Select Board in response to Article 7 on the Warrant for Annual Town Meeting 2023

The Select Board joins the Finance Committee in opposition to Article 7 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. We are unified in our belief that the article will have significant unintended consequences on the financial status of the town.

We recognize the reasons this article has been brought to Town Meeting. We share the Article Sponsor's strong desire to support our schools. Every child in Maynard deserves the best education we can afford to provide. We have consistently given what we can to the schools without sacrificing our commitments to other town departments and will continue to do so in the future.

However, should the article pass, the budget would be out of balance by approximately half a million dollars, and the town will have a limited number of options to re-balance the budget.

First, we could ask the voters to raise taxes. We are already planning to ask Town Meeting for an override to fund a new Green Meadow School in the Fall of 2023. Any override increases tax bills for residents, and we want to limit the total financial burden on Maynard taxpayers.

Second, we could reduce the budget allocation for other departments. The schools represent over 60% of our budget, so cuts would be concentrated on the remaining 40%. The \$515,842 request from the article would require significant cuts, causing disruption to the level of services the town currently provides for residents.

Third, we could balance the budget through a reallocation of Free Cash. Using Free Cash means cutting important line items in this year's allocation as listed in Article 4. This would only be a temporary solution, there is no guarantee future Free Cash numbers could sustainably support the new spending. We would eventually need to reconsider either a tax increase or cuts to other departments.

Finally, we could transfer funds out of our stabilization fund. Again, this would only be a temporary solution, as the amount requested by the article is greater than the amount we are adding to that fund. Again, either a tax increase or cuts would be needed to sustainably balance the budget in the long run. In the meantime, we will have reduced the town's ability to respond to emergencies. In addition, stabilization fund depletion puts the town's bond rating at potential risk. A decreased bond rating would increase the town's borrowing costs, which would increase the amount needed to fund items such as the Green Meadow project or a Senior Center.

The budget submitted to Town meeting today represents a year's worth of work by many dedicated town staff and volunteers. All town departments, including the schools, carefully consider how best to provide cost effective services for residents. Public input is welcome at multiple forums throughout the year including meetings of the Select Board, Finance Committee, and Budget Subcommittee. We continuously seek and implement ways to improve the budget process. The Select Board believes it would be unwise to disrupt the deliberate planning and difficult choices that have been made to deliver this budget without considering the full financial picture. We recommend voting no on Article 7.