

**Town of  
Reading  
Massachusetts**



**Special Town Meeting  
Report on the Warrant  
April 28, 2014**

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
APRIL 28, 2014  
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>Article</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Page #</u>
1	Reports	Board of Selectmen	2
2	Instructions	Board of Selectmen	2
3	Amend the Capital Improvement Program FY2014 – FY2023	Board of Selectmen	3
4	Authorize Additional Debt – School Early Childhood Center Project	Board of Selectmen	3
	<b><u>APPENDIX</u></b>		
	Conduct of Town Meeting		13
	Town Meeting Handout Guidelines		20

# COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

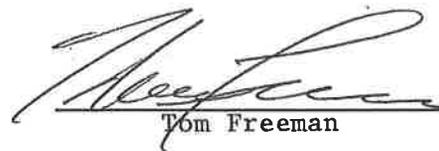
Middlesex, ss. Officer's Return, Reading:

By virtue of this Warrant, I, Tom Freeman on April 10, 2014 notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote on Town affairs, to meet at the place and at the time specified by posting attested copies of this Town Meeting Warrant in the following public places within the Town of Reading:

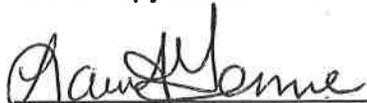
- Precinct 1 J. Warren Killam School, 333 Charles Street
- Precinct 2 Reading Police Station, 15 Union Street
- Precinct 3 Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street
- Precinct 4 Joshua Eaton School, 365 Summer Avenue
- Precinct 5 Reading Library, Local History Room, 64 Middlesex Avenue
- Precinct 6 Barrows School, 16 Edgemont Avenue
- Precinct 7 Birch Meadow School, 27 Arthur B Lord Drive
- Precinct 8 Wood End School, 85 Sunset Rock Lane
- Town Hall, 16 Lowell Street

The date of posting being not less than fourteen (14) days prior to April 28, 2014 the date set for the Town Meeting in this Warrant.

I also caused a posting of this Warrant to be published on the Town of Reading website on April 10, 2014.

  
Tom Freeman, Constable

A true copy Attest:

  
Laura Gemme, Town Clerk

# TOWN WARRANT



## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Middlesex, ss.

To any of the Constables of the Town of Reading, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet at the Reading Memorial High School **Performing Arts Center**, 62 Oakland Road, in said Reading, on Monday, April 28, 2014, at eight-thirty o'clock in the evening, at which time and place the following articles are to be acted upon and determined exclusively by Town Meeting Members in accordance with the provisions of the Reading Home Rule Charter.

**ARTICLE 1** To hear and act on the reports of the Board of Selectmen, Town Accountant, Treasurer-Collector, Board of Assessors, Director of Public Works, Town Clerk, Tree Warden, Board of Health, School Committee, Contributory Retirement Board, Library Trustees, Municipal Light Board, Finance Committee, Cemetery Trustees, Community Planning & Development Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Manager and any other Board or Special Committee.

Board of Selectmen

**Background:** This article appears on the Warrant for all Town Meetings. At this Special Town Meeting, no report(s) are anticipated.

**Finance Committee Report:** No report.

**Bylaw Committee Report:** No report.

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**ARTICLE 2** To choose all other necessary Town Officers and Special Committees and determine what instructions shall be given Town Officers and Special Committees, and to see what sum the Town will raise by borrowing or transfer from available funds, or otherwise, and appropriate for the purpose of funding Town Officers and Special Committees to carry out the instructions given to them, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

**Background:** This Article appears on the Warrant of all Town Meetings. There are no known Instructional Motions at this time. The Town Moderator requires that all proposed Instructional Motions be submitted to the Town Clerk in advance so that Town Meeting Members may be "warned" as to the subject of an Instructional Motion in advance of the motion being made. Instructional Motions are normally held until the end of all other business at Town Meeting.

**Finance Committee Report:** No report.

**Bylaw Committee Report:** No report.

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**ARTICLE 3** To see if the Town will vote to amend the FY2014 - FY2023 Capital Improvements Program as provided for in Section 7-7 of the Reading Home Rule Charter, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

**Background:** The following amendments are proposed to the FY2014 – FY2023 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) as previously approved at Annual Town Meeting in April 2013 and amended at both Subsequent Town Meeting in November 2013 and Special Town Meeting in February 2014. These amendments need to be included in the CIP in order for Town Meeting to consider funding them under Article 4 later at this Special Town Meeting. The blue pages showing these Capital Improvement Plans are included in this Warrant Report.

**General Fund**

**FY14: +\$485,000**

- ◆ \$485,000 School schematic design (Early Childhood Center project)

**FY15:**

- ◆ No changes made

**FY16 to FY23:**

- ◆ No changes made

**Finance Committee Report:** The Finance Committee recommends all of the proposed amendments to the FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Improvements Program by a vote of 6-0-0 at their meeting on April 9, 2014. Placing items in the Capital Improvement Program is a prerequisite but in itself does not authorize spending funds towards these items.

**Bylaw Committee Report:** No report.

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**ARTICLE 4** To see what additional sum the Town will raise by borrowing or transfer from available funds, or otherwise, and appropriate for the purpose of School schematic design for an Early Education Center Building Project, including the costs of consulting services, audits, plans, documents, cost estimates, bidding services and all related expenses incidental thereto and necessary in connection therewith, said sum to be expended by and under the direction of the School Committee and the Town Manager; and to see if the Town will authorize the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, or any other agency of the Town, to apply for a grant or grants to be used to defray the cost of all, or any part of, said improvements; and to authorize the School Committee and/or the Town Manager to enter into any and all contracts and agreements as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Article.

or take any other action with respect thereto.

Board of Selectmen

**Background:** Over the last two and ½ years, the Reading Public Schools has been researching and identifying potential space options to address the programmatic changes that have occurred at the Pre-Kindergarten-5 level since 2005. The programmatic changes include an increase in the number of students who participate in tuition-based full day kindergarten, an increase in the number of special education programs in the district, and an increase in the RISE Preschool enrollment. These programmatic changes have resulted in a deficit of classroom space at each elementary school.

In September, 2012, the Reading School Committee voted to support publicly funded full day kindergarten for all students once additional classroom space became available. The support for full day kindergarten is based on solid research that students who participate in full day kindergarten programs show an increase in mathematics and literacy skills, a decrease in social and emotional issues, and a decrease in achievement gaps and special education referrals from their peers. In addition, there is growing support for publicly funded full day kindergarten for all students, locally, at the state level, and at the national level. Currently, 242 communities in Massachusetts support publicly funded full day kindergarten.

During the last two and half years, several different options have been reviewed by both the Reading School Committee and a nineteen member Early Childhood Working Group, consisting of parents, educators, town officials, and community members. These options have included, but are not limited to: renting additional space, purchasing and renovating an existing building, building additions to the five elementary schools, adding modular classrooms to the five elementary schools, adding space to the two middle schools and moving Grade 5 to the middle schools, and building either one larger early childhood center or two smaller early childhood centers. Several sites were examined by the working group as possible locations for building an early childhood center including Parker, Coolidge, Killam, Woburn Street (St. Agnes School), RMLD property (Ash Street), different recreational parks, two locations on Haverhill Street, town owned property on Oakland Road, the old Water Treatment Plant site, and the Fine and Performing Arts Center side parking lot at Reading Memorial High School. After a thorough analysis of each of the options, the Early Childhood Working Group recommended two to the Reading School Committee: building a pre-k and kindergarten early childhood center or building a pre-K and kindergarten early childhood center with the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices. Both options were recommended by the working group to be built on the Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at Reading Memorial High School.

On March 24, the Reading School Committee voted to request \$485,000 for a design study for an early childhood center option for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students on the Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at Reading Memorial High School. On April 9, the Board of Selectmen voted to request a Special Town Meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of funding the design study through the issuance of debt, rather than the use of cash reserves.

### **Need for Space**

Since 2005, when the fifth elementary school was built, there have been several programmatic changes at the preschool and elementary school level which have resulted in a classroom space deficit at each of our schools. They are as follows:

- 1. Increased parent demand for full day kindergarten-**Since the 2005-06 school year the percentage of students who are in tuition-based full day kindergarten has increased from 32% to 72% (currently projected for 2014-15 school year). This change has resulted in an increase in the use of classrooms for full day kindergarten from five in 2005-06 to twelve for the 2014-15 school year.

- 2. Increased need for special education programs at the elementary level and the corresponding need for additional special education space-**Since the 2005-06 school year, the number of classrooms dedicated to special education programs at our elementary schools has increased from one to six. Having strong special education programs in our schools is important so that our students who have learning disabilities can attend the Reading Public Schools with their peers. In addition, this decreases the number of students who are in out of district placements which affects the annual operating budget.

In addition to the increase in program need, we also are in need of additional special education learning center space. Recently, the Reading Public Schools had its Coordinated Program Review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and were cited for the lack of space for special education students. Each school should have two classrooms dedicated for learning centers and two classrooms dedicated to program space (K-2 and 3-5). In our elementary schools, on average, there are two spaces dedicated for learning centers and programs, instead of four.

- 3. Increased demand for Preschool-**The RISE Preschool is an integrated preschool experience for general education and special education students who are three and four years old. School districts are required by statute to provide special education services to any student who qualifies, beginning at age 3. In addition, schools with integrated programs must maintain **at least** a minimum of 51% general education students and 49% special education students in every classroom. Ideally, it would be a benefit to both general education and special education students to have a much higher percentage of general education students in every classroom so that all students can benefit from a strong inclusionary experience.

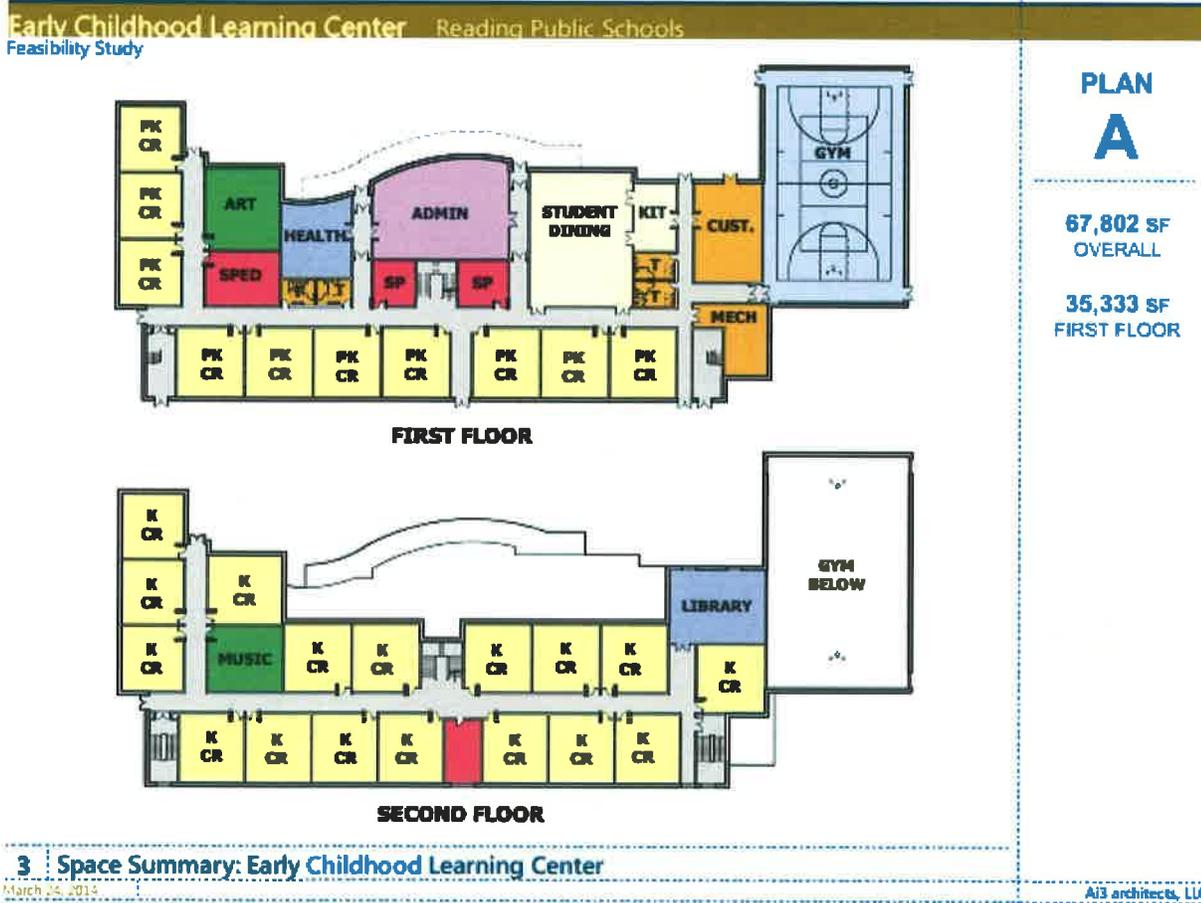
In 2005-06, the RISE Preschool consisted of four classrooms with 82 students (46 general education and 36 special education). Currently, RISE requires seven classrooms for its 112 students (66 general education and 46 special education). In 2011-12, an additional classroom was created by taking a therapy room and converting it into classroom space. In 2012-13, an additional two preschool classrooms were added using available space at Wood End. For the 2014-15 school year, we have a waiting list of 25 students because there is not sufficient classroom space. This has both an educational impact and a financial impact for the Reading Public Schools. Educationally, it is ideal that students attend the RISE Program because they begin their public schooling earlier with an aligned curriculum and dual certified teachers with Master's Degrees. From a financial standpoint, since the students on the waiting list are general education students, and would be paying tuition, the lost revenue due to the lack of preschool space is \$144,000.

- 4. Decrease in the number of dedicated art and music classrooms-**Because of the increased need for classroom space for full day kindergarten, preschool and special education programs, other educational programs have suffered. When the fifth elementary school was completed, there was a commitment at the time to have one dedicated art classroom and one dedicated music classroom at each elementary school. Unfortunately, there has been a decrease in art and music classrooms at the elementary level from ten in 2005-06 to seven currently.
- 5. No additional classroom space for enrollment "bubbles"-**Because we have a deficit of classroom space at our elementary schools, we do not have any additional classroom space to accommodate short-term enrollment increases. At times, there is an incoming grade that requires more classroom space than is available. If classroom space is not available, the result is in an increase in class size for that grade level.

**Early Childhood Center**

The conceptual proposal for the early childhood center includes the necessary educational space to provide publicly funded full day kindergarten for every student (approximately 323 students) and an integrated RISE Preschool program for up to 150 students. The current conceptual drawings (see below) include 17 kindergarten classrooms, 10 preschool classrooms, 1 cafeteria, 1 library, 1 art room, 1 music room, special education space, and a full size gymnasium, which will serve as community space during non-school hours. During the schematic design phase, these plans will be further developed into schematic drawings to give the community a more detailed picture and more developed cost estimate of the project.

If the early childhood center is built, the classroom space that will become available at each elementary school will be used for separate art and music classrooms, additional special education space to address learning center and program needs, additional capacity to address enrollment “bubbles”, and future programmatic needs that do not currently exist.



The Fine and Performing Arts parking lot at RMHS (see below) was chosen over several other sites using a matrix developed by the architect, AI3, and the Early Childhood Working Group. The matrix included 26 different evaluation criteria including:

- Education
  - Adequate Program and Classroom Space
  - Optimize educational resources (staffing and materials)
  - Allows for Innovative 21<sup>st</sup> Century Environment
  - Outdoor Play Space and educational opportunities
  - Increase educational opportunities for all Pre-Kindergarten-Kindergarten Age children
  - Relieve program space at other levels (i.e. elementary and high school)
  - Avoids disruption to current educational settings
  - Can be executed in a timely fashion
  
- Parents
  - Improvement to current or future learning environments
  - More convenient
  - Improves early childhood education
  
- Community
  - Provides additional indoor recreational space
  - Provides outdoor space
  - Provides other community benefits
  - Represents sustainable design options
  - Represents good community wide planning
  
- Site
  - Convenient for parents, teachers, and students
  - Capable of supporting adequate parking
  - Located in an area where abutters will be supported
  - Convenient for walkers
  - Capable of adequate bus and car circulation
  - Acceptable to local Town Departments
  - Minimize traffic impacts

The option below, also known as “Option 2”, had the highest score based on the categories above.



**PARKING SUMMARY**  
 265 new parking  
 141 replaced  
 124 New School Parking

**OPTION 2**

**Construction Cost:**  
 \$26,239,037

- North Parking (44)  
\$309,301\*
- West Parking (66)  
\$367,709\*
- Oakland Rd. Parking (103)  
\$1,489,600\*
- Play Area & Play Surface  
\$75,665\*
- Play Area Site work  
\$258,857\*
- \*Includes Mark-Ups



**Parking Analysis:**  
 141 Displaced  
 265 New  
 124 New School Spaces  
 A13 architects, LLC

**4 Option 2 Site Plan Rendering**

March 24, 2014

In the conceptual drawing above, additional parking has been added to offset the spaces lost due to the new building's location as well as the number of spots that would likely be required for staff and parents. This additional parking is created by adding to existing parking on site and the development of a new parking lot off of Oakland Road. At the request of town officials, additional parking does not include the use of the 96 available spaces on Oakland Road. These spaces will be used for overflow parking for community events and temporary parking for drop off/pickup.

**Design Study**

The estimated total cost of developing option 2 is 26.2 million dollars. This includes the development of additional parking sites and the renovation of the current RISE classroom space into classroom space for Reading Memorial High School. The amount of funding requested at Town Meeting will be \$485,000 for the schematic design phase that will result in design that is 15% complete. This \$485,000 is broken down in the following manner:

Item	Cost
Design Fee-Schematic Design	\$315,000*
OPM	\$50,000
OPM-(1) Independent Cost Estimate, if required	\$25,000
Geo-technical Investigations	\$30,000
Site Survey	\$30,000
Traffic Study	\$15,000
Environmental and Agency Approvals	\$20,000
<b>Total Budget for Schematic Design Funding</b>	<b>\$485,000</b>

In this proposal, schematic design documentation would provide a scope for the project with advancement of conceptual floor plans and site plans. However, because it is only a 15% completion of plans, the development of a project budget would require inclusion of design and construction contingencies to produce a conservative estimate for Town Meeting 2014 that accounts for ever changing economic and bid environments, as well as potential

Unknown factors associated with the project development approvals or site conditions. If the project were to continue to move forward beyond the design study, this project would require a vote of Town Meeting (likely in November, 2014) to approve a debt exclusion override election that would likely occur in early winter, 2015, with a potential Summer, 2015 bidding period, construction starting in the Fall, 2015, and building occupancy for September, 2017.

In our conversations with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) funding is not currently available for the construction of early childhood centers. In addition, MSBA ranks construction projects based upon need and because this project is caused primarily by programmatic changes and not enrollment changes or deteriorating building conditions; it is not likely to meet the priority threshold when compared to other projects in the Commonwealth.

#### **Operational Costs of Early Childhood Center**

One of the incentives that Massachusetts provides to encourage school districts to offer publicly funded full day kindergarten is the Chapter 70 funding formula. Currently, all of our students (except for a few students who attend full day kindergarten because it is required as part of their individualized education program) are counted as ½ day students in the Chapter 70 funding formula. If we are able to move to publicly funded full day kindergarten, each student would be counted as a full day student. In Reading, if we had 320 full day kindergarten students per year, the additional Chapter 70 funding per year would be approximately 1.1 million dollars. This amount would significantly offset the staff costs associated with full day kindergarten.

There will be additional operating costs associated with a new facility. Most staffing for RISE and full day Kindergarten already exist, however, we will need some additional full day kindergarten teachers

and paraeducators, a school nurse, custodial services, food service employees, and some incremental increases in specialists (art, music, Physical Education, OT, PT, speech and language services). Since a Preschool Director position already exists, an additional administrator position will not be needed. Because the proposed Early Childhood Center is geographically located near the center of Reading, increased bussing costs will be at a minimum. Additional non-personnel costs would include utilities (natural gas, electric, water and sewer). Because all Preschool and Kindergarten classes would be in the same location, there would be an economy of scale with materials and supplies and some personnel costs, which will result in savings.

### **Next Steps**

If funding for the design study is approved at Town Meeting, a School Building Committee will be developed for the sole purpose of overseeing design and construction of this project. The Reading School Committee voted at their March 24, 2014 School Committee Meeting to develop a School Building Committee with the following requirements:

#### **A. Purpose**

The ECECBC is charged with carrying out all phases of early childhood center building project including the Design Phases, Construction Phases for renovations, additions and/or construction of the new Early Childhood Education Center.

#### **B. Powers and Duties of Committee**

- Oversee and supervise the design and construction of the Early Childhood Education Center, including the designer selection process for the solicitation, evaluation and recommendation of a project designer, schematic design, design development, production of construction documents, public construction bidding, contract award recommendation and construction administration in compliance with the General Laws. All solicitations for designer services and invitations for bids for construction shall be coordinated with the designated procurement officer for the project to assure compliance with the applicable provisions of the General Laws. The Superintendent of Schools shall award and execute all designer services contracts and construction contracts.
- Review and report the financial requirements of all projects within its jurisdiction, or for which it may become responsible, and oversee the expenditure of funds in the course of execution of such projects.

#### **C. Membership**

- Superintendent of Schools
- One School Committee member
- School administrator responsible for procurement (MCPPO certified)
- School administrator responsible for building maintenance
- School principal
- One (1) teacher Associated with Early Childhood Education
- Three (3) community members with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience
- One "at-large" community member
- Town manager or designee
- Local budget official or member of local finance committee
- One (1) early childhood (Pre-kindergarten or Kindergarten) parent and One (1) RMHS Parent

D. Appointments

- School committee member to be appointed by the Chair of the School Committee
- School administrators, principal, teacher, and parents to be appointed by the Superintendent
- One community member appointed by the Board of Selectman
- One community member appointed by the School Committee
- One community member appointed by the Superintendent of Schools
- At large community member appointed by the School Committee
- Local budget official or member of local finance committee appointed by the Chair of the Finance Committee

E. Length of Term: Three (3) years

Once a School Building Committee is chosen, a procurement process will be put in place to hire an Owner's Project Manager and Architect.

**Conclusion**

There are several reasons to continue to move forward with this project. If this project is supported by the community it will do the following:

- Provide a comprehensive full day Kindergarten experience for all students
- Provide a solid educational foundation for all students in their early childhood years
- Provide the space necessary for a strong preschool program
- Create much needed instructional space at elementary schools and high school
- Continue to attract families to Reading
- Maintain strong property values for community

If approved at Town Meeting, the design funding will provide a set of schematic drawings and tighter cost estimates to inform Town Meeting and the Reading Community in the fall. Without this next step, enough information will not be available to make an informed decision on the full project.

**Finance Committee Report:** The Finance Committee recommends the subject matter of Article 4 by a vote of 6-0-0 at their meeting on April 9, 2014. This debt financing will preserve the ability to roll the \$485,000 into a larger scope building project as a future exclusion or override.

**Bylaw Committee Report:** No report

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and you are directed to serve this Warrant by posting an attested copy thereof in at least one (1) public place in each precinct of the Town not less than fourteen (14) days prior to April 28, 2014, or providing in a manner such as electronic submission, holding for pickup or mailing, an attested copy of said Warrant to each Town Meeting Member.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this Warrant with your doings thereon to the Town Clerk at or before the time appointed for said meeting.

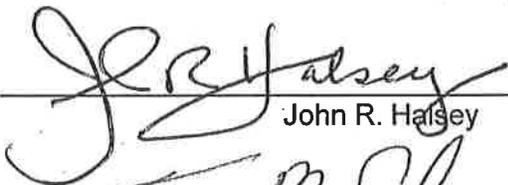
Given under our hands this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.



John Arena



Dan Ensminger



John R. Halsey



Kevin M. Sexton



Marsie West

SELECTMEN OF READING



Tom Freeman, Constable

## CONDUCT OF TOWN MEETING

Reading's Town Meeting is conducted in accordance with the rules set down in Article 2 of the Charter and the General Bylaws. Although Town Meeting Time Third Edition is the basic source, a Town Meeting Member need only be familiar with what is contained in the Charter. These notes are intended to outline the major points all Town Meeting Members should know, and which by knowing will make Town Meeting more understandable.

### Organization

- Town Meeting consists of 192 elected members, of which 97 constitute a quorum.
- There are two required sessions: The Annual Meeting in Spring which is primarily for fiscal matters and acceptance of the annual budget, and the Subsequent Meeting in November. Special Town Meetings may be called at any time that the need arises.
- There are three main committees which review certain Articles and advise Town Meeting of their recommendations:

Finance for all expenditures of funds,

Bylaw for all bylaw changes, and the

Community Planning and Development Commission for all zoning changes.

Their reports are given prior to discussing the motion.

### General Rules Of Procedure

- The Meeting is conducted through the Warrant Articles which are presented (moved) as motions. Only one motion may be on the floor at a time; however, the motion may be amended. Often two or more Articles which address the same subject may be discussed together; however, only one is formally on the floor, and each when moved is acted upon individually. Note that the vote on one may influence the others.
- Members who wish to speak shall rise, state their name and precinct in order to be recognized.
- A Member may speak for ten (10) minutes but permission must be asked to exceed this limit.
- Seven (7) Members can question a vote and call for a standing count, and twenty (20) can ask for a roll call vote; however, a roll call vote is seldom used because of the time it takes.

### Principal Motion Encountered At Town Meeting

The following motions are the principal ones used in most cases by Town Meeting to conduct its business. Experience shows that the Members should be familiar with these.

- **Adjourn:** Ends the sessions, can be moved at any time.
- **Recess:** Stops business for a short time, generally to resolve a procedural question or to obtain information.
- **Lay on the Table:** Stops debate with the intention generally of bringing the subject up again later. May also be used to defer action on an Article for which procedurally a negative vote is undesirable. Note that tabled motions die with adjournment.
- **Move the Previous Question:** Upon acceptance by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, stops all debate and brings the subject to a vote. This is generally the main motion, or the most recent

amendment, unless qualified by the mover. The reason for this as provided in Robert's Rules of Order is to allow for other amendments should they wish to be presented.

- **Amend:** Offers changes to the main motion. Must be in accordance with the motion and may not substantially alter the intent of the motion. In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, only one primary and one secondary motion will be allowed on the floor at one time, unless specifically accepted by the Moderator.
- **Indefinitely Postpone:** Disposes of the Article without a yes or no vote.
- **Take from the Table:** Brings back a motion which was previously laid on the table.
- **Main Motion:** The means by which a subject is brought before the Meeting.

#### **The Following Motions May Be Used By A Member For The Purpose Noted:**

- **Question of Privilege:** Sometimes used to offer a resolution. Should not be used to "steal" the floor.
- **Point of Order:** To raise a question concerning the conduct of the Meeting.
- **Point of Information:** To ask for information relevant to the business at hand.

#### **Multiple Motions Subsequent (Multiple) Motions**

If the subsequent motion to be offered, as distinct from an amendment made during debate, includes material which has previously been put to a vote and defeated, it will be viewed by the Moderator as reconsideration and will not be accepted. If the subsequent motion contains distinctly new material which is within the scope of the Warrant Article, then it will be accepted. An example of this latter situation is successive line items of an omnibus budget moved as a block.

#### **Subject To The Following Considerations**

- The maker of any proposed multiple motion shall make their intent known, and the content of the motion to be offered shall be conveyed to the Moderator - prior to the initial calling of the Warrant Article.
- Once an affirmative vote has been taken on the motion then on the floor - no further subsequent alternative motions will be accepted. (Obviously does not apply to the budget, for example.)
- Also - There can only be one motion on the floor at any one time. You have the ability to offer amendments to the motion that is on the floor. You also have the ability to move for reconsideration.

#### **Town Of Reading Bylaw - Article 2 Town Meeting**

##### **2.1 General**

###### **2.1.1 Date of Annual Town Election**

The Annual Town Meeting shall be held on the third Tuesday preceding the fourth Monday in April of each year for the election of Town Officers and for such other matters as required by law to be determined by ballot. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Selectmen may schedule the commencement of the Annual Town Meeting for the same date designated as the date to hold any Federal or State election.

###### **2.1.2 Hours of Election**

The polls for the Annual Town Meeting shall be opened at 7:00 AM and shall remain open until 8:00 PM.

**2.1.3 Annual Town Meeting Business Sessions**

All business of the Annual Town Meeting, except the election of such Town officers and the determination of such matters are required by law to be elected or determined by ballot, shall be considered at an adjournment of such meeting to be held at 7:30 PM on the fourth Monday in April, except if this day shall fall on a legal holiday, in which case the meeting shall be held on the following day or at a further adjournment thereof.

**2.1.4 Subsequent Town Meeting**

A Special Town Meeting called the Subsequent Town Meeting shall be held on the second Monday in November, except if this day shall fall on a legal holiday, in which case the meeting shall be held on the following day. The Subsequent Town Meeting shall consider and act on all business as may properly come before it except the adoption of the annual operating budget.

**2.1.5 Adjourned Town Meeting Sessions**

Adjourned sessions of every Annual Town Meeting after the first such adjourned session provided for in Section 2.1.3 of this Article and all sessions of every Subsequent Town Meeting, shall be held on the following Thursday at 7:30 PM and then on the following Monday at 7:30 PM, and on consecutive Mondays and Thursdays unless a resolution to adjourn to another time is adopted by a majority vote of Town Meeting Members present and voting.

**2.1.6 Posting of the Warrant**

The Board of Selectmen shall give notice of the Annual, Subsequent or any Special Town Meeting at least fourteen (14) days prior to the time of holding said meeting by causing an attested copy of the warrant calling the same to be posted in one (1) or more public places in each precinct of the Town, and either causing such attested copy to be published in a local newspaper or providing in a manner such as electronic submission, holding for pickup, or mailing, an attested copy of said warrant to each Town Meeting Member.

**2.1.7 Closing of the Warrant**

All Articles for the Annual Town Meeting shall be submitted to the Board of Selectmen not later than 8:00 PM on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday preceding the date of election of Town officers, unless this day is a holiday in which case the following day shall be substituted. All articles for the Subsequent Town Meeting shall be submitted to the Board of Selectmen not later than 8:00 PM on the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday preceding the Subsequent Town Meeting in which action is to be taken, unless this day is a holiday in which case the following day shall be substituted.

**2.1.8 Delivery of the Warrant**

The Board of Selectmen, after drawing a Warrant for a Town Meeting, shall immediately deliver a copy of such Warrant to each member of the Finance Committee, the Community Planning and Development Commission, the Bylaw Committee and the Moderator.

**2.2 Conduct of Town Meeting**

**2.2.1 In the conduct of all Town Meetings, the following rules shall be observed**

**Rule 1** A majority of Town Meeting Members shall constitute a quorum for doing business.

- Rule 2** All articles on the warrant shall be taken up in the order of their arrangement in the warrant unless otherwise decided by a majority vote of the members present and voting.
- Rule 3** Prior to debate on each article in a warrant involving the expenditure of money, the Finance Committee shall advise Town Meeting as to its recommendations and the reasons therefore.
- Rule 4** Prior to a debate on each article in a warrant involving changes in the bylaw or Charter, petitions for a special act, or local acceptance by Town Meeting of a State statute, the Bylaw Committee shall advise Town Meeting as to its recommendations and reasons therefore.
- Rule 5** Every person shall stand when speaking as they are able, shall respectfully address the Moderator, shall not speak until recognized by the Moderator, shall state his name and precinct, shall confine himself to the question under debate and shall avoid all personalities.
- Rule 6** No person shall be privileged to speak or make a motion until after he has been recognized by the Moderator.
- Rule 7** No Town Meeting Member or other person shall speak on any question more than ten (10) minutes without first obtaining the permission of the meeting.
- Rule 8** Any non-Town Meeting Member may speak at a Town Meeting having first identified himself to the Moderator. A proponent of an article may speak on such article only after first identifying himself to the Moderator and obtaining permission of Town Meeting to speak. No non-Town Meeting Member shall speak on any question more than five (5) minutes without first obtaining the permission of the Meeting. Non-Town Meeting Members shall be given the privilege of speaking at Town Meeting only after all Town Meeting Members who desire to speak upon the question under consideration have first been given an opportunity to do so.
- Rule 9** Members of official bodies and Town officials who are not Town Meeting Members shall have the same right to speak, but not to vote, as Town Meeting Members on all matters relating to their official bodies.
- Rule 10** No speaker at a Town Meeting shall be interrupted except by a Member making a point of order or privileged motion or by the Moderator.
- Rule 11** Any person having a monetary or equitable interest in any matter under discussion at a Town Meeting, and any person employed by another having such an interest, shall disclose the fact of his interest or his employer's interest before speaking thereon.
- Rule 12** The Moderator shall decide all questions of order subject to appeal to the meeting, the question on which appeal shall be taken before any other.
- Rule 13** When a question is put, the vote on all matters shall be taken by a show of hands, and the Moderator shall declare the vote as it appears to him. If the Moderator is unable to decide the vote by the show of hands, or if his decision is immediately questioned by seven (7) or more Members, or if the Moderator determines that a counted vote is required such as for a debt issue or Home Rule Petition, he shall determine the question by ordering a standing vote, and he

shall appoint tellers to make and return the count directly to him. On request of not less than twenty (20) members, a vote shall be taken by roll call.

**Rule 14** All original main motions having to do with the expenditure of money shall be presented in writing, and all other motions shall be in writing if so directed by the Moderator.

**Rule 15** No motion shall be received and put until it is seconded. No motion made and seconded shall be withdrawn if any Member objects. No amendment not relevant to the subject of the original motion shall be entertained.

**Rule 16** When a question is under debate, no motion shall be in order except:

- to adjourn,
- to lay on the table or pass over,
- to postpone for a certain time,
- to commit,
- to amend,
- to postpone indefinitely, or
- to fix a time for terminating debate and putting the question, and the aforesaid several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they stand arranged in this rule.

**Rule 17** Motions to adjourn (except when balloting for offices and when votes are being taken) shall always be first in order. Motions to adjourn, to move the question, to lay on the table and to take from the table shall be decided without debate.

**Rule 18** The previous question shall be put in the following form or in some other form having the same meaning: "Shall the main question now be put" and until this question is decided all debate on the main question shall be suspended. If the previous question is adopted, the sense of the meeting shall immediately be taken upon any pending amendments in the order inverse to that in which they were moved, except that the largest sum or the longest time shall be put first and finally upon the main question.

**Rule 19** The duties of the Moderator and the conduct and method of proceeding at all Town Meetings, not prescribed by law or by rules set forth in this article, shall be determined by rules of practice set forth in "Town Meeting Time Third Edition" except that to lay on the table shall require a majority vote.

### **2.2.2 Attendance by Officials**

It shall be the duty of every official body, by a member thereof, to be in attendance at all Town Meetings for the information thereof while any subject matter is under consideration affecting such official body.

### **2.2.3 Appointment of Committees**

All committees authorized by Town Meeting shall be appointed by the Moderator unless otherwise ordered by a vote of the Members present and voting. All committees shall report as directed by Town Meeting. If no report is made within a year after the appointment, the committee shall be discharged unless, in the meantime, Town Meeting grants an extension of time. When the final report of a committee is placed in the hands of the Moderator, it shall be deemed to be received, and a vote to accept the same shall discharge the committee but shall not be equivalent to a vote to adopt it.

### **2.2.4 Motion to Reconsider**

**2.2.4.1 Notice to Reconsider**

A motion to reconsider any vote must be made before the final adjournment of the meeting at which the vote was passed but such motion to reconsider shall not be made at an adjourned meeting unless the mover has given notice of his intention to make such a motion, either at the session of the meeting at which the vote was passed or by written notice to the Town Clerk within twenty-four (24) hours after the adjournment of such session. When such motion is made at the session of the meeting at which the vote was passed, said motion shall be accepted by the Moderator but consideration thereof shall be postponed to become the first item to be considered at the next session, unless all remaining articles have been disposed of, in which case reconsideration shall be considered before final adjournment. There can be no reconsideration of a vote once reconsidered or after a vote not to reconsider. Reconsideration may be ordered by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present. Arguments for or against reconsideration may include discussion of the motion being reconsidered providing such discussion consists only of relevant facts or arguments not previously presented by any speaker.

**2.2.4.2 Federal or State Law Affecting Reconsideration**

The foregoing provisions relating to motions to reconsider shall not apply to any such motion made by the Board of Selectmen and authorized by the Moderator as necessary for the reconsideration of actions previously taken by Town Meeting by reason of State or Federal action or inaction or other circumstances not within the control of the Town or Town Meeting. In the event such a motion to reconsider is made and authorized, said motion may be made at any time before the final adjournment of the meeting at which the vote was passed, said motion may be made even if the vote was already reconsidered or was the subject of a vote not to reconsider, and reconsideration may be ordered by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present.

**2.2.4.3 Posting and Advertising**

Notice of every vote to be reconsidered at an adjourned Town Meeting shall be posted by the Town Clerk in one (1) or more public places in each precinct of the Town as soon as possible after adjournment, and he shall, if practicable, at least one day before the time of the next following session of said adjourned meeting, publish such notice in some newspaper published in the Town. Said notice shall include the vote to be reconsidered and the place and time of the next following session of said adjourned meeting. The foregoing notice provisions shall not apply when a motion to reconsider any Town Meeting action is made publicly at Town Meeting before the adjournment of any session of any adjourned Town Meeting.

**2.2.5 State of the Town**

The Selectmen shall, at each Annual Town Meeting, give to the Members information on the "State of the Town."

**2.2.6 Annual Precinct Meeting**

Town Meeting Members and Town Meeting Members-elect from each precinct shall hold an annual precinct meeting after the annual Town election but before the convening of the business sessions of the Annual Town Meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be the election of a Chairman and a Clerk and to conduct whatever business may be appropriate. Chairmen shall serve no more than six (6) consecutive years in that

position. Additional precinct meetings may be called by the Chairman or by a petition of six (6) Town Meeting Members of the precinct.

## **2.2.7 Removal of Town Meeting Members**

### **2.2.7.1 Notice of Attendance**

The Town Clerk shall mail, within thirty (30) days after the adjournment *sine die* of the Annual Town Meeting, to every Town Meeting Member who has attended less than one-half of Town Meeting sessions since the most recent Annual Town Election, a record of his attendance and a copy of Section 2-6 of the Charter.

### **2.2.7.2 Precinct Recommendation**

All Precinct meeting held prior to consideration by Town Meeting of the warrant article pursuant to Section 2-6 of the Charter. Town Meeting Members of each precinct shall adopt a recommendation to Town Meeting on whether each member from the precinct listed in the warrant per Section 2-6 of the Charter should be removed from Town Meeting. The Chairman of each precinct or his designee shall make such recommendations along with supporting evidence and rationale to Town Meeting.

### **2.2.7.3 Grouped by Precinct**

The names of the Members subject to removal in accordance with Section 2-6 of the Charter shall be grouped by precinct in the warrant article required by said section.

## **2.2.8 Meetings During Town Meeting**

No appointed or elected board, committee, commission or other entity of Town government shall schedule or conduct any hearing, meeting or other function during any hours in which an Annual, Subsequent or Special Town Meeting is in session or is scheduled to be in session. Any such board, committee or commission which schedules or holds a meeting or hearing on the same calendar day, but at a time prior to a session of Town Meeting, shall adjourn or recess not less than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled session of Town Meeting.

Any board, committee or commission may, at the opening of any session of Town Meeting, present to that Town Meeting an instructional motion requesting an exemption from this bylaw and asking that Town Meeting permit it to meet at a date and hour at which a future session of Town Meeting is scheduled, and may present reasons for Town Meeting to give such permission. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any board, committee or commission which meets the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23B concerning emergency meetings may, upon meeting such requirements, conduct such a meeting or hearing at a time scheduled for a Town Meeting.

## **2.2.9 Rules Committee**

The members of the Rules Committee, established under Section 2-12 of the Charter, shall hold an annual meeting within thirty (30) days after the adjournment of the Annual Town Meeting for the purpose of electing a Chairman and a Clerk and to conduct whatever business may be appropriate. Additional Rules Committee meetings may be called by the Chairman.

In the absence of a Chairman, the Moderator shall convene a meeting of the Rules Committee within sixty (60) days after a vacancy for the purpose of electing a new Chairman.



**Town of Reading  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867-2685**

**FAX: (781) 942-9070  
Website: [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov)**

**TOWN CLERK  
(781) 942-9050**

## **Town Meeting Handout Guidelines**

To ensure that all Town Meeting members have access to the same information, distributed in the same manner, please follow the below listed guidelines for handout materials:

Materials that are prepared by a Town Board / Committee / Town Department must include the following:

- Article name and number
- Name of Town Board / Committee / Commission or Town Department
- Date the document was created
- Contact Information
- Approval of Town Clerk's Office

Materials that are prepared by petitioners or other voters must include the following:

- Article name and number
- Contact information of person who created handout
- Date the document was created
- Approval of Town Clerk's Office

All handouts:

- Must contain facts only unless specifically stating "This is the opinion of \_\_\_\_"
- Should be on white paper only
- Should be double-sided copies if more than one page
- May be distributed only by giving adequate copies for all Town Meeting members (192) to the Town Clerk or designee by 6:30 PM on the night in which the subject article will be discussed
- All handouts not approved will be removed and recycled
- All handouts not distributed must be picked up at the end of each night or they will be recycled at the end of each night.

All PowerPoint Presentations:

- Must consult with the Town Clerk before the meeting
- Provide a copy before the meeting
- All presentations will be given using the Town of Reading laptop computer

February of 2010