

**SELECT BOARD POLICY
FOR TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES
[OTHER THAN PETITIONED ARTICLES]**

The Select Board makes the following findings:

1. Identification and discussion with the Town Manager and Board of proposed warrant articles will help ensure that the matter is, or will be, ready for consideration and so promote more effective and efficient sessions of Town Meeting; and
2. The Town Meeting standing committees and Representatives should be supplied with information in support of warrant articles together with transmittal of the warrant to the Moderator and Committee on Finance and Taxation.

Therefore, the Board adopts the following policy for timing and content of requests from Town Staff, Boards, and Committees to insert articles into warrants for the Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meetings. All submissions to the Board shall be in electronic form:

1. **Goals of this Policy.** This policy is intended to provide the Board with sufficient, timely information to insert into the warrant for any Town Meeting those matters that are, or will be, ready for Town Meeting to consider and to forward to the Moderator and/or Town Meeting committees that information in order to assist and expedite consideration of them.
2. **Scope of this Policy.** This policy shall apply to requests by Staff, Boards, and Committees to insert articles into any warrant for Annual and Special Town Meetings. Citizens are welcome to request the Board to insert an article into a Town Meeting warrant and are encouraged to follow the steps in this Policy. This Policy does not apply to petitioned articles.
3. **Exclusions from this Policy.** This policy shall not apply to warrant articles for approval of collective bargaining agreements or tax incentive financing (“TIF”) agreements.
4. **Text of Proposed Warrant Articles.** Proposals should include proposed text for an article with the expectation that legal requirements and technical terms will be addressed by Town Counsel. Final text for all warrant articles that the Board votes to insert into a Town Meeting warrant will be drafted by Town Counsel along with suggested motions for Town Meeting to vote on them.
5. **Steps for Insertion of Warrant Articles.** Anyone seeking insertion of an article by the Board is encouraged to make an initial presentation for preliminary review and guidance, followed by a complete submission that the Board will rely on to make its decision. Proposals are encouraged to be made as far ahead of any scheduled or anticipated Town Meeting as possible, but will be considered at any time subject to the deadlines described in Paragraph 6 below:

Initial presentation – A general description of an anticipated article with the reasons, possible funding sources, summary of the project schedule (if applicable), and anticipated staffing needs. For bylaw changes, a redlined text of the existing and proposed bylaw should be included. Citations should be provided for any other bylaws, or any statutes or regulations, related to the proposal.

Complete submission – A complete submission should provide information that the Board and Town Meeting should have for fair consideration of the proposal. These will ordinarily include:

- A short narrative explaining the purposes of the article
- Supporting materials such as reports by staff and/or consultants
- For bylaw changes, a redlined text of the existing and proposed bylaw
- Copies of statutes or regulations that authorize or pertain to the article
- Drawings for proposed improvements to land or facilities
- Cost estimates and the basis for them
- Funding sources and availability
- Overview of project management including
 - Anticipated project timetable
 - Identification of responsible Town Officials and/or Department(s)
 - Identification of required local, state, or federal approvals
- Minutes from each meeting of a Board or Committee which has considered as well as voted on the proposed article¹

Zoning articles. Insertion of articles concerning the Zoning Bylaw are governed by G.L. c. 40A, s. 5. Any person may make an initial presentation for insertion of a zoning article directly to the Board, which shall refer the matter to the Planning Board as provided by the statute. Complete submissions from the Planning Board for articles affecting the Zoning Bylaw will ordinarily not be considered unless the Planning Board has completed public hearings as required by G.L. c. 40A, s. 5.

6. Deadlines. Initial presentations and complete submissions will be received at any time, subject to the following deadlines for Town Staff, Boards, and Committees:

Initial presentation. December 1 for the next Annual Town Meeting.

Complete submissions. December 31 for the next Annual Town Meeting

¹ If minutes are not yet available, the package should include the agenda(s) for meetings when the matter was considered by the Board or Committee and a written statement by the chair or clerk of the Board or Committee with details of any vote(s) taken.

7. Annual Budget Process:

August 15	Town Manager's Five-Year Operating and Capital Budget Plans to Select Board
October 15	Budget Directives from Select Board to Town Manager for next fiscal year
November 15	Initial annual budget projection to Select Board
December 1	First draft of annual capital budget to Select Board. Capital requests not appearing in the Five-Year Capital Budget will be considered only in the event of emergency or as the public interest requires to meet an unforeseen need.
December 15	Second projection for annual budget to Select Board
December 31	Town Manager's operating budget to Select Board per Charter
January 15	Town Manager's final capital requests to Select Board
Third Tuesday of January	Deadline for Select Board to Vote Operating Budget, Submit to Committee on Finance and Taxation

6. Transmittal to Town Meeting. Electronic copies of the complete submissions for each article shall be transmitted to the Moderator and Chair of the Committee on Finance and Taxation promptly after a warrant is closed.