



## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### TOWN OF STOUGHTON

### SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

NORFOLK, SS

To any constable in the Town of Stoughton:

Greetings: In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Stoughton, qualified to vote on Town affairs, to meet at:

**STOUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
232 PEARL STREET, STOUGHTON**

**ON MONDAY THE THIRD DAY of FEBRUARY 2025**

**At (7:03) seven o'clock in the evening**, at which time and place the following articles are to be acted upon and determined exclusively by the Town Meeting Members in accordance with the provisions of the Town of Stoughton Charter.

### **Article 1 - Elementary School Building Project**

To see if the Town of Stoughton will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds in the Treasury, if any, and/or borrow a sufficient sum of money for the purpose of designing, constructing, originally equipping and furnishing a new K-5 elementary school and undertaking any and all related site development on Town-owned property located off Park Street in Stoughton, shown as Parcel Nos. 077-002-0, 065-133-0, 076-006-0 and 076-021-0 on the Town of Stoughton Assessors' Map, to replace the existing South Elementary School, and all incidental and related expenses (the "Project"), pursuant to a construction contract procured in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 149, or a contract utilizing construction management at risk delivery method in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 149A, as determined by the South Elementary School Building Committee, which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50-years, and for which the Town may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended under the direction of the South Elementary School Building Committee; to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. c. 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority; that the Town of Stoughton acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the Town of Stoughton incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA, shall be the sole responsibility of the Town of Stoughton; provided further, that any grant that the Town of Stoughton may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the

lesser of (1) Sixty-five and 98/100 percent (65.98%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA; provided that any appropriation hereunder shall be subject to and contingent upon an affirmative vote of the Town to exempt the amounts required for the payment of interest and principal on said borrowing from the limitations on taxes imposed by M.G.L. c. 59, §21C (Proposition 2½); and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the Town of Stoughton and the MSBA; and provided further that the appropriation hereunder shall be exempt from the “Funding Approval Sunset” bylaw of the Town authorized under Article 70 of the May 1, 2023 Annual Town Meeting; or take any other action relative thereto.

Inserted by: Select Board

Requested by: Elementary School Building Committee

Date: December 17, 2024

Estimated Cost: \$113,157,888

PROPOSED MOTION: That the Town of Stoughton appropriate the amount of One Hundred Twelve Million One Hundred Fifty-seven Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-eight (\$112,157,888) Dollars, which is in addition to the One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) that was appropriated for Feasibility Study costs on December 8, 2021 (Special Town Meeting, Article 5) and supplemented on May 17, 2023 (Annual Town Meeting, Article 67), for the purpose of designing, constructing, originally equipping and furnishing a new K-5 elementary school and undertaking any and all related site development on Town-owned property located off Park Street in Stoughton, shown as Parcel Nos. 077-002-0, 065-133-0, 076-006-0 and 076-021-0 on the Town of Stoughton Assessors’ Map, to replace the existing South Elementary School, and all incidental and related expenses (the “Project”), pursuant to a construction contract procured in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 149, or a contract utilizing construction management at risk delivery method in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 149A, as determined by the South Elementary School Building Committee, which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50-years, and for which the Town may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended under the direction of the South Elementary School Building Committee; to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. c. 44, or pursuant to an other enabling authority; that the Town of Stoughton acknowledges that the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the Town of Stoughton incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA, shall be the sole responsibility of the Town of Stoughton; provided further, that any grant that the Town of Stoughton may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of Sixty-five and 98/100 percent (65.98%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA; provided that any appropriation hereunder shall be subject to and contingent upon an affirmative vote of the Town to exempt the amounts required for the payment of interest and principal on said borrowing from the limitations on taxes imposed by M.G.L. c. 59, §21C (Proposition 2½); and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the Town of Stoughton and the MSBA;

and provided further that the appropriation hereunder shall be exempt from the “Funding Approval Sunset” bylaw of the Town authorized under Article 70 of the May 1, 2023 Annual Town Meeting and/or any amendments, revisions or replacements thereto including, but not limited to, Article 1 of the November 18, 2024 Special Town Meeting.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Voted 9-5-0 to Recommend to Town Meeting Article 1 as written in the Warrant.

NOTE: Those against the article voted NO because the project is too expensive and requires students to lose a neighborhood school (Wilkins) in West Stoughton.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS:** Motion to Recommend Approval of Article 1 to Town meeting passed 6-0.

**MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS:** Motion to Recommend Approval of Article 1 to Town meeting passed 6-0.

***ACTION: Yes 110, No 28, Abstain 0. Article passes by the necessary simple majority. Electronic voting. Voted on February 3, 2025.***

## **Article 2 - Petitioned Article**

To see if the Town will adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION ASKING TOWN MEETING TO SUPPORT A RECOMMENDATION TO THE SELECTBOARD FOR BUILDING A NEW SOUTH SCHOOL PROJECT FOR UP TO 300 STUDENT ENROLLMENT USING DEBT SERVICE INSIDE THE BUDGET

WHEREAS, After a ballot initiative for debt exclusion fails from votes counted in April 2025, the Town of Stoughton requires a reasonable school that can be funded within the Town's Operating Budget; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That the Town of Stoughton calls for action by current policy boards, both School and Selectboard to remove the South Elementary School Building Committee in the event a ballot initiative to use debt exclusion funds should fail on April 1, 2025; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Stoughton calls for the Selectboard to approve a financial plan to replace the existing South Elementary School that restricts borrowing to debt service inside the operating budget; and/or Free Cash or act on anything relative thereto.

Petitioner: David Lurie, 18 Robinette Rd.

**MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS:** Motion to **DISAPPROVE** Article 2 to Town meeting passed 5-1.

## Article 2 FAILED.

Motion by Carolyn Campbell to lay it on the table, seconded by Lindsey Weber.

***ACTION: Yes 85, No 25, Abstain 0. Article passes by the necessary simple majority. Electronic voting. Voted on February 3, 2025.***

## Article 3 - Petitioned Article

To see if the Town will adopt the following resolution:

ASKING TOWN MEETING TO REQUEST THE TOWN MANAGER THROUGH THE SELECTBOARD ADOPT GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (GFOA) PROCEDURES FOR PRESENTING ANNUALLY THE STOUGHTON FINANCIAL CONDITIONS USING A CURRENT FINANCIAL POLICIES MANUAL

Whereas, Capital Project Articles are put before Town Meeting without a clear picture of how it relates to the goals and overall financial outlook of the Town,

Whereas, Town Meeting members have been restricted from discussing how a capital spending Article impacts our budget,

Whereas, Town of Stoughton will become eligible for more grants and improved bond ratings by entities outside of Stoughton,

Whereas, future debt exclusions will have more widespread acceptance by voters who have gained greater confidence in the projects that have been designed prudently.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

To ask the Town of Stoughton to request the Town Manager through the Select Board to present financial reports and budgets as prescribed by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) set forth in the presentation by Association of Town Finance Committees dated November 2, 2024 titled "GFOA Distinguished Budget Award: A Guide to Best Practices" or act on anything relative thereto.

Petitioner: Lisa Lyons, 104 Curtis Ave.

**MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS:** Motion to **DISAPPROVE** Article 2 to Town meeting passed 6-0.

## Article 3 FAILED.

Motion by Carolyn Campbell to lay it on the table, seconded by Cynthia Walsh.

***ACTION: Yes 89, No 35, Abstain 0. Article passes by the necessary simple majority. Electronic voting. Voted on February 3, 2025.***

## Article 4 - Petitioned Article

To see if the Town will adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION ASKING TOWN MEETING TO SUPPORT A RECOMMENDATION TO THE MODERATOR FOR ALLOWING ALL TOWN FINANCE QUESTIONS AND PRO-CON DEBATE DURING ARTICLE DELIBERATIONS

WHEREAS, Town Meeting Representatives have been consistently prevented from asking how an article relates to the operating budget, combined capital plan, capital projects and/or sources of revenue; and,

WHEREAS, Town Meeting Representatives are continually told the relationship of financial revenue, and/or, spending are not relevant to an article, preventing Town Meeting Representatives from seeing or learning a complete picture of the Town's finances which hinder comprehensive decision making; and,

WHEREAS, Preventing Town Meeting Representatives from asking how an article is related to our Town finances demonstrates a lack of transparency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That the Moderator allows Town Meeting Representatives during Town Meetings to ask questions and complete their pro-con debate on Articles, within their allotted time, that contribute to the overall finances of the Town as relevant regardless of how explicit to Town finances the motion is stated; or act on anything relative thereto.

Petitioner: Lisa Lyons, 104 Curtis Ave.

**MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS:** Motion to **DISAPPROVE** Article 4 to Town meeting passed 6-0.

**Article 4 FAILED.**

Motion by Carolyn Campbell to lay it on the table, seconded by Sean Carr.

***ACTION: Yes 87, No 30, Abstain 1. Article passes by the necessary simple majority. Electronic voting. Voted on February 3, 2025.***

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m..

A true Copy Attest:

Rogeria Medeiros Kowalczykowski, CMC, Town Clerk

