

TOWN OF IPSWICH

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

May 12, 2009

Warrant Article Synopses

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ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

May 12, 2009

WARRANT ARTICLE SYNOPSES

ARTICLE 1 Consent Calendar

The first two items set the salaries for all elected officials as presented in the Town operating budget and designate the positions to be filled at the Town elections. The polls for this Town election will open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. This article authorizes payment-in-lieu-of-taxes of **\$275,000** to the Town from available funds in the Electric Light Department. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, this article authorizes the Board of Selectmen to appoint an Acting Town Manager during vacation, leave and the absence of the Town Manager with an exemption from the state conflict-of-interest law.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is a standard article that appears each year on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) from the Electric Light Department is determined according to a formula established by the Board of Selectmen acting as the Electric Light Commission at one-fourth cent (**\$.025**) for each kilowatt hour of electricity sold. The Electric Light Department PILOT payment provides additional revenue for the Town General Fund.

ARTICLE 2 Finance Committee Elections

SUMMARY:

The article calls for election of one Finance Committee member, to be elected by the Town Meeting. The Finance Committee recommends the election of Robert White for a term of three years.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.

ARTICLE 3 Prior Year Unpaid Bills

SUMMARY:

This is a stock article to pay any unpaid bills incurred in prior fiscal years and remaining unpaid. The following bills have been identified:

DEPARTMENT	VENDOR	AMOUNT	NOTES
Facilities Management	Verizon	\$582.00	Five unpaid bills from 2008
	Verizon	\$51.90	Visitor Center - 2008
	Verizon	\$26.47	Police Dept - 2007
Fire Department/Emergency Mgt.	Gall's	\$120.16	Uniform expense
	Northeast Hospital Corp	\$28.26	Injured on duty claim – town share
	Northeast Hospital Corp	\$99.29	Injured on duty claim – town share
Police	Ipswich Center, Inc.	\$108.75	Injured on duty claim – town share
	Total	\$1,016.83	

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

These unpaid bills will be paid from free cash; there is no impact on the tax rate.

ARTICLE 4

FY 2010 Municipal Operating Budget

SUMMARY:

The Fiscal 2010 operating budget for Town departments, level funded with FY 2008 according to the guideline set on December 9, 2008 by the Finance Committee is **\$12,798,554** plus **\$1,064,392** in excluded debt service for the Library addition, New Town Hall and the open space bond, for a total **\$13,862,946**. This budget is offset by **\$230,925** in non-tax revenues, leaving **\$13,632,021** net to be raised and appropriated.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The town budget of **\$13,862,946** represents an increase in spending of **.004%** over Fiscal 2009. The Town budget represents **38 %** of total General Fund spending.

ARTICLE 5 Town Budget Amendments

SUMMARY:

The following is a list of financial transfers amending the Fiscal 2009 operating budget:

			<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
Misc Exp	11931-5110	Mgmt Transfer	7,221.56	
Legal	11242-5312	Services		7,221.56
Reserve	11322-5730	Reserve Fund	12,054.00	
Veterans	15432-5772	Medical		12,054.00
Equip Maint.	14221-5115	Perm Wages	3,100.00	
	14221-5131	Overtime	1,010.06	
	14222-5215	Gasoline	40,000.00	
	14222-5216	Diesel Fuel	35,000.00	
	14222-5482	Tires	1,466.20	
	14222-5486	Sweeper Maint.	4,161.81	
Highway	14241-5115	Perm Wages	14,936.47	
	14241-5121	Temp PT	1,000.00	
	14241-5123	Other Pay	13,000.00	
	14241-5131	Overtime	5,000.00	
	14241-5141	Diff/Inc	2,231.20	
	14241-5197	Uniform Allow	455.00	
	14241-5198	CDL	1,500.00	
	14242-5214	Street Lights	5,000.00	
	14242-5241	Paint Lines	14,533.81	
	14242-5242	Road Treatment	49,482.21	
	14242-5408	Infras Activ	631.92	
	14242-5511	Training	110.00	
	14242-5532	Traffic Signs	1,277.01	
	14242-5534	Rails/Fences	4,484.59	
	14242-5711	Mileage	100.00	
	14242-5712	Meals/Lodging	1,100.00	
	14242-5713	License Reg	80.00	
	14242-5731	Assoc Dues	10.00	
Forestry	14251-5115	Perm Wages	11,479.24	
	14251-5121	Temp PT	5,944.00	
	14251-5123	Other Pay	3,527.63	
	14252-5731	Assoc Dues	105.00	
Sanitation	14312-5385	Sanit Coll	2,000.00	

	14312-5536	Shop Supplies	5,950.00	
SWTS	14322-5383	Oth Purch Svc	80.00	
Snow & Ice	14231-5131	OT		40,902.26
Snow & Ice	14232-5539	Other PW Supp		187,853.89
			248,031.71	248,031.71

The following is a list of financial transfers amending the Fiscal 2010 operating budget:

APPROPRIATION

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	
Free Cash	Assessors	\$39,000
Waterways Improvement Fund	Harbormaster	<u>\$30,564</u>
	Total:	\$69,564

FISCAL
IMPACT:

The transfers within the FY'09 budget are intended primarily to offset the deficit in the DPW snow and ice account; there is no impact on the tax rate.

The appropriations within the FY'10 budget are intended to 1) appropriate monies from the Waterways Improvement fund to support the Harbormaster budget; and 2) transfer funds from free cash to cover the remaining cost of state mandated revaluation of all real and personal property within the Town.

ARTICLE 6

FY 2010 School Operating Budget

SUMMARY:

The Fiscal 2010 School Department operating budget totaling **\$19,980,995** is presented according to the guideline set by the Finance Committee at its December 9, 2008 meeting. The FY'10 School Budget is offset by **\$142,500** in non-tax revenues, leaving **\$19,838,495** net to be raised and appropriated.

Funding for the FY'10 budget includes **\$2,550,997** under the Massachusetts Chapter 70 school aid program. This is the amount recommended by the Governor and may change during legislative consideration of the state budget.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The Ipswich School Department budget of **\$19,980,995** represents a **.0%** increase over Fiscal 2009. The School budget represents **62%** of total General Fund spending.

ARTICLE 7

High School/Middle School Debt Project

SUMMARY:

This article appropriates **\$2,542,513** in scheduled debt service for the High School/Middle School project. Debt service for the High School/Middle School project was excluded from the Proposition 2 ½ tax limitation in a Town election in 1996. The Massachusetts School Building Authority will reimburse the Town for **\$1,389,800** of the debt service for this project in FY'10

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The net cost to the taxpayer in FY'10 for the High School/Middle School project will be **\$1,152,713**. The net cost represents **\$0.42** on the tax rate. It will account for **\$211** of the average tax bill of **\$5,178** on the average house valued at **\$500,790**.

ARTICLE 8 **Wind Turbine Project Debt**

SUMMARY:

The School Department sought and received a low interest loan under the Clean Renewable Energy Bonds program (CREBs) of the Federal government to support construction of a wind turbine generator to reduce electricity costs in the public schools. The wind turbine generator is being constructed by the Electric Light Department at the end of Town Farm Road. The cost of the project is **\$4,242,000** million to be shared and supported by the **\$1.6** million CREBs loan from the School Department and a **\$2,642,000** million borrowing by the Electric Light Department. The length of the CREBs loan and interest rate is determined by the Internal Revenue Service. Currently, the CREBs loans are authorized for 15 years at 1.5% interest.

This article will enable the School Department to appropriate a sum of money for debt service payments and other costs related to the construction of the wind turbine generator.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There will be no impact upon the tax rate under the partnership negotiated by the Schools and the Electric Department. The wind turbine project is intended to reduce expenses for electrical power in the public schools. The School Department intends to cover the debt service payments for the CREBs loan through savings in energy costs. Savings will not be realized for the first two years, so an arrangement is being negotiated whereby the Electrical Light Department will cover debt service for the first two years and be repaid beginning in the third year of operation.

ARTICLE 9

Capital Improvements Stabilization Fund Appropriation

SUMMARY:

The Town Meeting created the Capital Improvements Stabilization Fund in 2007. **\$300,000** from the sale of the old Town Hall was deposited into the fund, and the Selectmen stated that the first priority would be for improvements to public buildings.

The total amount of capital purchases funded through the Capital Improvements Stabilization Fund for FY 2010 will be **\$62,465**. The following items will be funded:

- 1) Convert Library boiler to natural gas ----- \$17,465
- 2) Convert the Police HQ from electric to natural gas----- \$45,000
- Total ----- \$62,465**

The replacement of the Library heating system will be partially funded through a **\$9,000** contribution by the Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library from the annual Library Incentive Grant/Municipal Equalization Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The Capital Improvements Stabilization Fund is not part of the General Fund, so there will be no impact on the tax rate. There is a current balance of **\$78,829** in the Fund. If the proposed items are funded, **\$16,364** will remain in the Fund.

ARTICLE 10 FY 2010 Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Budget

SUMMARY:

\$452,406 is appropriated for the Whittier RVT High School. This represents a decrease of **\$121,789** over the FY '09 assessment. The FY'10 Whittier budget recommendation was approved by Regional School Committee on March 14, 2009.

Enrollment of students from Ipswich decreased from **33** in 2008 to 27 in FY 2009. The Town's assessment constitutes **3.04%** of the total assessment for the Whittier School.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The proposed Whittier budget for Fiscal 2010 represents a **21.2%** decrease in the assessment for Ipswich over Fiscal 2009.

ARTICLE 11

FY 2010 Water and Sewer Budgets

SUMMARY:

The total Water Division budget for **FY'10** is set at **\$2,403,850**. The revenue estimates for the Water Division for **FY'10** include **\$2,314,514** in water user fees; **\$23,836** from the water surplus account; **\$43,500** from water liens; **\$22,000** in application fees and other miscellaneous revenues for total net revenues of **\$2,403,850**.

Capital projects funded within the Water Division budget include: 1) **\$10,000** for services & mains; 2) **\$10,000** for leak detection; 3) **\$10,000** for SCADA installations; 4) **\$75,000** for meters; 5) **\$7,500** for inspection & painting of tanks; 6) **\$8,000** for chemical tank inspection at the filtration plant; 7) **\$20,000** for improvements to Cedarview booster pump; 8) **\$7,500** for valve replacement for sediment basin for a total of **\$148,000**.

This article includes, as a second and separate portion, the **FY'10** Sewer Division budget. The Sewer Division budget totals **\$1,562,843**. Capital projects funded within the Sewer Division budget include; 1) **\$5,000** for meters; 2) **\$30,000** for vehicle replacement; and 3) **\$200,000** for engineering and design work for solids handling at the wastewater treatment plant for a total of **\$235,000**.

Revenue estimates for the Sewer Division for **FY'10** include: 1) **\$22,972** from sewer liens; 2) **\$8,000** in sewer betterment payments; 3) **\$458,500** in septage treatment fees, Agresource royalties, application fees and other miscellaneous revenues; and 4) **\$1,073,371** in sewer use fees, for a total of **\$1,562,843**.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Water and Sewer Division budgets are funded through user charges. There is no impact on the tax levy. The average cost to the homeowner will be about **\$640** per year for water service and (if connected) about **\$583** for sewer treatment service. These calculations are based on an average 12,000 cubic feet of water (90,000 gallons) consumption per year.

ARTICLE 12 Water Department Bond

SUMMARY:

This article would authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of **\$2,395,000**, to replace water mains on Washington Street (**\$814,220**) and North Main Street (**\$931,280**) and to fund capital improvements at the Water Treatment Plant (**\$649,500**). The work at the treatment plant is related to a new emergency generator at Mile Lane booster station and at Dow Reservoir - a new aeration system, dam appurtenances and a new screen/intake at the Dow gatehouse.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Assuming we borrow **\$2,395,000** for 20 years at 4.5% interest. In the first year, the cost on the average tax bill of **\$5,178** would be **\$51.73** in the first year and **\$28.45** in the twentieth year of the bond issue.

ARTICLE 13 Citizens Petition: Funding for the 375th Anniversary Celebration

SUMMARY:

The Committee for the 375th requests an appropriation of **\$50,000** in public funds to support a series of programs during the summer of 2009 to commemorate the 375th anniversary of the founding of Ipswich. If approved by Town Meeting, these funds would be transferred from free cash to the Ipswich Partnership, a 501(c) 3 nonprofit corporation.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Prior to Town Meeting, the Town had **\$439,000** in remaining free cash for FY 2009. The only available funding for this proposal would be from free cash.

ARTICLE 14 Capital Improvements Bond

SUMMARY:

This article would authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of **\$302,376** for the following capital purchases:

<u>Dept #</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Object Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
472	Facilities	5812	Town Hall Phase II Window Replacement	\$50,000
620	Recreation	5815	Bialek Park Play Structure Replacement	\$36,231
620	Recreation	5815	Renovation of 90' Baseball Diamond	<u>\$85,000</u>
				\$171,231

VEHICLES

CAR 1644	FORD	2006	Crown Vic (Patrol)	124,000 mi
Replace with	FORD	2009	Crown Vic (Patrol)	\$28,205
CAR 1648	FORD	2001	Crown Vic (Chief)	58,129 mi.
Replace with	FORD	2009	Ford Fusion	\$23,000
CAR 1646	FORD	2003	Expedition (Command)	95,419 mi.
Replace with	FORD	2009	Ford Escape Hybrid (4x4)	\$28,470
C2	FORD	1996	Explorer (Fire Prevention)	110,056 mi
Replace with	FORD	2009	Ford Escape Hybrid (4x4)	\$28,470
TM-1	FORD	1996	Taurus (TM & Health)	63,398 mi.
Replace with	FORD	2009	Ford Fusion	\$23,000
			TOTAL	\$131,145

The total cost of this bond issue will be **\$302,376**.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Assuming we borrow **\$302,376** for 5 years at 4.50% interest. In the first year, the cost would be **\$16.79** on the average tax bill of **\$5,178**. Each year the amount would decrease, until the last year when it would cost about **\$14.32** on the average tax bill.

ARTICLE 15 Pavement Management Program Bond

SUMMARY:

The Department of Public Works commissioned Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin, Inc., to develop a comprehensive program for pavement maintenance and rehabilitation with the goal of maximizing the value and life of the Town's street network. On a scale of 100, the VHB study found that pavement condition in Ipswich scored a 68.

VHB recommended a ten year program with the Town investing **\$1.1 million** per year from D.P.W. operating funds, Chapter 90 and bonding. To fully fund the first year, assuming **\$200,000** in the operating budget and **\$331,523** in Chapter 90, the Town would need to bond for **\$550,000** in Fiscal 2010

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Borrowing **\$550,000** for twenty years at 4.5% interest will add **\$11.88** to the first year tax bill and **\$6.53** to the fifteenth year tax bill.

ARTICLE 16 Appropriation for Chapter 90

SUMMARY:

Each year the state contributes funds to the cities and towns for street and road improvements under the "Chapter 90" program. The Patrick Administration announced that Ipswich will receive **\$331,523** under Chapter 90 for Fiscal 2009. Article 16 will accept Chapter 90 funding at **\$331,523** on a contingent basis.

These monies were used primarily to fund a variety of road and street improvements throughout the community.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Chapter 90 monies are provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the local fiscal impact will be zero.

ARTICLE 17

Revolving Funds: Council on Aging; Health Department; Historical Commission; Facilities Department & Shellfish Department

SUMMARY:

The article will continue authorization of certain revolving funds under the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½. Fees collected by departments under this article are deposited into special, revolving accounts that are separate from the General Fund of the Town. Revolving fund monies must be expended for purposes directly related to the mission of their respective departments. The following revolving funds are hereby created:

- 1) A **Council on Aging Revolving Fund** to finance fee-based, special trips and functions for senior citizens. There is a **\$100,000** limit on COA Revolving Fund expenditures during the fiscal year. The Council on Aging requests a **\$100,000** limit because the department is sponsoring more trips for seniors to ever more distant places.
- 2) A **Health Department Revolving Fund**. The source of this fund is Health Department inspection fees. The fund is used to underwrite additional, administrative help in the Health Department and to pay related expenditures. No more than **\$7,000** may be expended by the Health Department Revolving Fund in FY'10.
- 3) A new **Health Department Public Health Revolving Fund** is created, funded through Medicare Part B reimbursements, to cover the costs of administering influenza and pneumococcal vaccines. No more than **\$10,000** may be expended by the Health Department from monies transferred into the Public Health revolving fund during the fiscal year.
- 4) An **Historical Commission Revolving Fund** is re-authorized. This fund will pay for preservation of town records and the purchase of expendable supplies. No more than **\$5,000** may be expended by the Historical Commission from monies transferred into this fund in FY'10. The source of funds is the sale of publications, such as replicas of the Declaration of Independence and other historical documents.
- 5) A **Facilities Department Revolving Fund** is created to pay for custodial services associated with the use of the gymnasium and other Town Hall facilities by outside organizations and for special events sponsored by municipal departments. No more than \$10,000 may be expended from the Facilities Department Revolving Fund from monies transferred into the fund during the fiscal year.
- 6) The **Shellfish Department Revolving Fund**. In Fiscal 2005, the Town authorized a surcharge of **\$50** on shellfish licenses with an understanding that all such funds would be spent on improvements to the shellfish resources of the Town. At the Special Town Meeting in October 2005, the Town created a revolving fund where the **\$50** license surcharge fees are deposited. Before any funds are expended from the shellfish fund, a plan and budget must be submitted to and approved by the Town Manager. No more than **\$15,000** may be expended from the Shellfish Revolving Fund during Fiscal 2010.

FISCAL

IMPACT:

Revolving funds operate outside the General Fund of the Town, and as such, they do not impact the local tax rate

ARTICLE 18

Committee Reports

SUMMARY:

Standing Committees of the Town report at the Annual Town Meeting on their activities during the past year. Sometimes laced with some humor, these reports provide a breather from action on the other business of the meeting.

The Standing Committees of the Town include the Historic District Study Committee; the Commuter Rail Committee; Ipswich Coalition on Youth; Hall-Haskell Committee; the Open Space & Recreation Committee and the *Ad Hoc* Committee examining the Feoffees of the Grammar School. These committees were established by the Town Meeting and are entitled to report.

Other committees have been established by the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager and by citizen groups. Reports of Selectmen committees are carried in the Town Report, and the Moderator feels that this is sufficient. However, any committee not established by Town Meeting may offer a verbal report under this article with prior permission of the Moderator.

The list of functioning committees not established by Town Meeting includes: Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee; the Agricultural Steering Committee; Council on Aging; The Athletic Playing Fields Study Committee; the Audit Committee; the Bridge Advisory Committee; the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Protection; the Cable TV Advisory Board; the Community Development Plan Implementation Task Force; the Coastal Pollution Control Committee; the Deer Management Committee; the Eight Towns and the Bay Committee; the Emergency Management Committee; the Fair Housing Committee; the Government Study Committee; the Ipswich Bay Circuit Trail Committee; the Mosquito Control Advisory Board; the Parking Committee; the Recreation Committee; the Public Safety Facilities Committee; the Recycling Committee; the Sandy Point Advisory Committee; the Shellfish Sub-Committee; the Shade Tree and Beautification Committee; the Storm Water Committee and the Waterways Advisory Board.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The reports themselves have no fiscal impact. Committees established by the Town Meeting have a right to make a report. Other committees, established by the Selectmen or Town Manager require permission of the Moderator before making a report.

ARTICLE 19 Public Consumption of Marijuana

SUMMARY:

Through a statewide ballot question in November 2008, the voters replaced the state's criminal penalties for possession of an ounce or less of marijuana with civil penalties enforced through citations.

Offenders are now subject to forfeiture of the drug and a **\$100** fine - for those under 18, the **\$100** fine would be contingent on their completing within a year a drug awareness program with a community service component. Otherwise, the fine could increase to as high as **\$1,000**.

This by-law proposal focuses on consumption of marijuana (tetrahydrocannabinol) and would make use of the drug in public places and on passenger conveyances operated by a common carrier a violation punishable by a fine of up to **\$300** for repeat violations. Enforcement would be through a noncriminal citation.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Enactment of this by-law will have no impact upon the tax rate.

ARTICLE 20 Acceptance of State Legislation: Military Leave

SUMMARY:

The Chief of Police has requested that the Town accept two local option provisions in state statutes that govern military leave for town employees. MGL Chapter 33, Section 59 provides that any employee of a town which, by vote of its inhabitants at a town meeting accepts this section, during his annual tour of duty of not exceeding 34 days in any state fiscal year as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, will receive pay without loss of his ordinary remuneration as an employee of the town and shall also be entitled to the same leaves of absence or vacation with pay given to other like employees or officials.

Secondly, MGL Chapter 182, Section 77 of the Legislative Acts of 2008 is also a local option provision. If accepted by Town Meeting, Section 77 provides that any employee town, including an employee of the school district, who has been granted a military leave of absence because the employee is a member of the army national guard, the air national guard or a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States called to active service in the armed forces of the United States after September 11, 2001, shall be entitled to receive pay at his regular base salary as a public employee, and shall not lose any seniority or any accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime.

An employee eligible under this section shall be paid his regular base salary as such a public employee for each pay period of such military leave of absence after September 11, 2001, reduced by any amount received from the United States as pay or allowance for military service performed during the same pay period, excluding overtime pay, shift differential pay, hazardous duty pay or any other additional compensation. For the purposes of this section, the words "active service" shall not include active duty for training in the army national guard or air national guard or as a reservist in the armed forces of the United States.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is only one known employee of the Town of Ipswich who would be covered under these provisions of the law so the financial impact will be minimal. The fiscal impact will obviously be greater should more town employees choose service in the U.S. military or reserves.

ARTICLE 21

Acceptance of State Legislation: Post Employment Benefits Trust Fund

SUMMARY:

M.G.L. Chapter 32B governs group health insurance for active and retired employees of local governments. A new local option section, Section 20, permits cities and towns to set up a special trust fund to be called, the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Liability Trust Fund, for appropriations made to cover the unfunded actuarial liability for health care and other post-employment benefits for retirees. Reimbursements received by a local government from the federal Medicare program for covering retiree drug costs (Medicare Part D) may be credited to this fund as well. Acceptance is by vote of the town meeting in a town. Previous to this statute, municipalities had to obtain a special act to create an OPEB trust fund. Ipswich did petition for a special act to create a local OPEB in 2008. The special act has not been approved and would be unnecessary should the Town Meeting accept this local option legislation.

Section 20 establishes an OPEB trust fund that would operate in the same manner as that proposed in a special act in 2008. The Town would retain an actuary to establish a funding schedule. The schedule must be reviewed and approved by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission's (PERAC) actuary. In addition, the schedule must be reviewed every three years by the Town Manager, and any update must be reviewed by PERAC's actuary as well. The Town is not required to make appropriations into the fund according to the schedule, but all appropriations will be held in trust for OPEB obligations.

The Town Treasurer is the custodian of the trust fund. Investment of trust fund monies by the Town Treasurer must be consistent with the prudent person standard set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 203C for private trust funds. Interest earned on the investment of trust fund monies belongs to the fund.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

There is no immediate impact on the tax rate. However, over time the funding of the Town's OPEB liability will greatly reduce the cost of post employment health care and other benefits to the taxpayer.

ARTICLE 22 Lease/Purchase of Voice over Fiber Telecommunications System for the Town

SUMMARY:

The Facilities Department is requesting approval of a five year lease/purchase agreement for the procurement and installation of an office communications system that will take advantage of the Town's newly installed fiber optic network. This system would be inclusive of new equipment and software for the Town Hall, Police Station, Public Library, Utilities Building, Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Animal Control, Fire Department and the Cemetery & Parks Building. The Town will have a completely unified communications system with centrally managed voicemail. The lease will include all maintenance costs.

The lease expense is **\$3,165** per month. The proposed changeover will reduce telecommunications expenses slightly for the five year lease. After the fifth year, the Town will own the system and the **\$3,165** monthly charge will cease in favor of a maintenance and access charge of approximately **\$500**. The change to Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) communications equipment will eliminate the present Verizon Centrax bill which averages **\$3,200** per month.

The Facilities Department is looking forward to an overall cost savings with this lease/purchase.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

Minimal. This proposal will generate a small savings of **\$35** per month in charges for telephone service. After five years, the savings will be approximately **\$2,800** per month

ARTICLE 23 Special Act: Amending Chapter 5 of the Acts of 1765

SUMMARY:

This Special Act, sponsored by the Finance Committee, would amend a statute enacted in 1765 specifying the method of appointing the Feoffees of the Grammar School. The proposed legislation would establish a new board of Feoffees with two members appointed by the School Committee, two members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, two members appointed by the Finance Committee and one member appointed by the Town Meeting.

The proposed legislation would also prohibit members of the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, School Superintendent and Town Manager from becoming Feoffees.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

None.

ARTICLE 24 Renaming a Portion of Soffron Lane to “Brewery Place”

SUMMARY:

The Mercury Brewing Company recently purchased the vacant industrial building at 2 Soffron Lane and is in the process of converting it into a brewery and brew pub. To facilitate their product marketing, they have requested that the Town rename the portion of Soffron Lane located between the easterly and westerly legs of Brown Square from its current name to “Brewery Place”. Because the Brewery parcel is the only property deriving its street address from that portion of Soffron Lane, no other property owners on Soffron Lane would be required to change their addresses.

Police Chief Gavin Keenan and Fire Chief Art Howe have both indicated in writing that they have no issue with the proposed change, provided that adequate signage is installed to make it clear that Brewery Place extends between the easterly and westerly legs of Brown Square, and that beyond that point the street name would remain Soffron Lane.

It should be noted that there is precedence for renaming a public way in Ipswich to mark a significant land use which fronts upon that street. Prior to 1992, Soffron Lane was known as “Brown Square Extension.” In 1992, it was renamed Soffron Lane, presumably in recognition of the Soffron Brothers Shellfish Company, which operated at 2 Soffron Lane until the late 1990s. Because Soffron Lane will continue to exist as the address for all occupants of the street other than the brewery, the recognition of the Soffron Brothers Company through the street name will continue as well.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

None. The relatively minor costs associated with the installation of signage will be paid for by Mercury Brewing.

ARTICLE 25

Increasing Demand Payment for Delinquent Taxes

SUMMARY:

Section 15 of Chapter 60 of Massachusetts General Laws provides that Town Meeting can authorize an increase in the fee charged by the Town Treasurer/Collector for a demand notice for nonpayment of taxes from five dollars (\$5.00) to fifteen dollars (\$15.00). This fee is added to the tax obligation.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

There is no impact upon the tax rate. An increase to fifteen dollars will better compensate the Treasurer/Collector's office for the administrative cost of processing a demand notice for nonpayment of taxes.

ARTICLE 26

Reconsideration

SUMMARY:

This article will permit the Town Meeting to reconsider any and all previous articles raising and appropriating money which have a direct impact on the tax levy for the next fiscal year. The purpose is to finalize a budget to be balanced and in compliance with the levy limit provisions of Proposition 2½, so that certification of the FY 2010 tax rate can be completed successfully.

**FISCAL
IMPACT:**

The impact will not be known until all other money articles have been acted upon.