



TOWN OF ASHLAND Special Town Meeting November 19, 2025

At the Special Town Meeting duly called and held in the Ashland High School, 165 East Union Street, Ashland, MA, on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 7:00 PM the following ARTICLES were voted on in a legal manner. There was a quorum present (25 Voters = quorum); 140 voters were present.

Tellers: Diane Brooks Ring
Martin Ring

Teller Oath: "Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent upon you to count all the sections in Town Meeting to the best of your ability and understanding agreeably to the rules and regulations of the Constitution and the laws of this Commonwealth?"

The Town Moderator, Adam B. Shuster, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Before he began the meeting, he took a few moments to explain what Town Meeting is all about.

The Moderator welcomed everyone and thanked them for being there. He read the list of preliminaries explaining the basics of how Town Meeting will operate.

He acknowledged the committee members and department heads sitting at the front of the auditorium. There were members of the School Committee; Select Board; Finance Committee; Town Counsel, Lisa Mead; Town Manager, Michael Herbert; Assistant Town Manager for Administration and Operations, Katherine Bird; Assistant Town Manager for Community Development and Affairs, Beth Reynolds; Treasurer/Collector/Finance Director, Cindy Cincotta and School Superintendent, Jim Adams. Sitting behind the Moderator was Town Clerk, Cindy Livingstone and Deputy Town Clerk, Christopher P. Sullivan.

Residents received a yellow index card when they checked in that evening and the Moderator instructed that they will not be able to vote without it.

He instructed that speakers would receive three minutes at the microphone during discussion of each article.

The Moderator made some announcements about upcoming events including the annual Thanksgiving Farmer's Market, the annual Holiday Stroll on December 6th with the day capping off with the annual tree lighting at 4:00. Illuminate Downtown Ashland on Saturday December 13th and the annual menorah lighting on Sunday December 14th at Montenegro Square.

We had two separate Special Town Meetings for the night (STM1 and STM2). STM1 includes 17 articles and was posted for 7:00pm and was already called to order. STM2 is the single-article warrant that was posted for 7:01pm.

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The Moderator let the voters know that the Moderator’ Motions were listed on page 4 in their handbook.

The Town Moderator noted the receipt of the return of the posting of the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting by the Constable.

Warrant Article Index

<u>Art #</u>	<u>STM1 Article Name</u>	<u>Article Sponsor</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Free Cash Appropriation	Town Manager/Finance Director	Passed
2	Budget Adjustment	Town Manager/Finance Director	Passed
3	Property Tax Exemption	BOA/SB/TM	Passed
4	CPC Funding: Creation of Nature’s Edge at Metrowest YMCA	CPC	Withdrawn
5	CPC Funding: Town Forest Survey work & Appraisal	CPC	Passed
6	CPC Funding: Town Forest Acquisition of 11 Acres of Land & Trail Improvements, Conservation	CPC	Withdrawn
7	CPC Funding: Field Data Collection & Invasive Vegetation Management at Beaverdam Brook Conservation Area	CPC	Passed
8	CPC Funding: High School Softball Field Playing Surface Dirt Replacement	CPC	Passed
9	Accept MGL Chapter 272 § 73A – Gravestone repair	Historical Commission	Passed
10	Accept MGL Chapter 138 § 12D - Liquor Licenses	Town Manager/Select Board	Passed
11	Bylaw: Update to In-law Bylaw	Planning Board	Withdrawn
12	Bylaw: Update Dog Kennel Bylaw	Town Clerk	Passed
13	Bylaw: Update Municipal Tax Payment Agreement	Town Manager/Finance Director	Passed
14	Accept Donnelly Gift Parcel	Select Board	Withdrawn
15	Acceptance of Conservation Restriction	Conservation Commission	Passed
16	Endorsement of Comprehensive Plan, Envision Ashland	Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	Passed
17	Citizen Petition: Elon Musk Resolution	Citizens Petition	Passed

<u>Art #</u>	<u>STM2 Article Name</u>	<u>Article Sponsor</u>	<u>Vote</u>
1	Accept Donnelly Gift Parcel	Select Board	Passed

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MOTION MADE: To approve the Moderator’s Motions 1, 2, 3 & 4 as printed in the handbook. A motion was made and there was a second.

MOTION PASSED

STM1 was suspended and STM2 was called to order and suspended. STM1 was reopened.

He noted that articles 4, 6, 11 & 14 were being withdrawn. Article 6 was withdrawn due to legal delays on the part of the seller. Article 11 was withdrawn because it had not met the procedural requirements to come before TM and Article 14 was withdrawn because of a fatal drafting error that gave birth to STM2.

In addition, the petitioners of article 17 had asked to withdraw the article to allow for further discussion with the Select Board. Because this was a Citizens Petition, it could not simply be withdrawn. Therefore, a motion was made to dismiss.

Article 17: Citizen Petition: Musk Resolution
Sponsor: Citizen Petition

To see if the Town will approve a resolution requiring that agents of the Town of Ashland to the extent allowable by law, do no future business, including procurements, subsidies or other use of public monies to purchase goods or services from Tesla, SpaceX, X, Starlink, xAI, The Boring Company and any other Musk-owned or controlled business entity.

WHEREAS, Despite Elon Musk’s departure from the federal government, he retains the means and incentives to continue exerting influence on elections, elected officials, and government agencies. The basis of that influence is his personal wealth, derived from these companies.

WHEREAS, It is imperative that local governments take swift action to erode Musk’s influence by prohibiting any business arrangements, partnerships, or de facto endorsements that would further enrich or empower Musk to continue doing harm to the American public. Every public dollar invested in Tesla, or other Musk owned entities, or used to procure products and services or to subsidize Elon Musk’s business empire may be used later to undercut the welfare of the government and citizens of the Town of Ashland.

WHEREAS, Elon Musk has spread xenophobic and racist disinformation through the use of his social media company X and removed fact-checking and ethics screens from the X platform, actions which are counter to the values of the Town of Ashland.

WHEREAS, in his role at DOGE, Musk has been responsible for actions that many experts believe to be unconstitutional and illegal. DOGE’s acts have caused extensive harm and negatively impacted important programs affecting the citizens of Ashland.

NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Selectboard, Town Manager, School Committee and Superintendent of Schools shall ensure to the extent permitted by law, that no Town of Ashland departments shall procure products or services from any Musk-controlled business entity.

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2. The Selectboard, Town Manager, School Committee and Superintendent of Schools order that no Town of Ashland departments shall use the X Social Media platform for any official communications.
3. The Selectboard and Town Manager shall urge the County of Middlesex Pension Fund to not make any new investments in Tesla or other Musk-owned entities; and
4. The Selectboard and Town Manager shall urge the Middlesex County Pension Fund to sell any shares that it currently holds in Tesla stock or other Musk-owned entities.

Or act on anything related thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee did not recommend the passage of the article as it is not practicable or feasible

MOTION MADE: To withdraw this article.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 17: Passed unanimously

Article 1: Free Cash Transfer

Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash, an amount of funds, to be placed in the Stabilization Fund, OPEB Trust Fund, Special Education Special Purpose Stabilization Account, Capital Account, Capital Stabilization Account and/or General Fund or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommended the passage of Article 1.

Speaker: Michael Herbert, Town Manager

MOTION MADE: That the Town will transfer from Free Cash the following funds:

Account	Amount	Account Number
General Stabilization Fund	\$1,813,477	84980-49710
OPEB Trust Fund	\$302,246	88100-49710
SPED Stabilization Fund	\$210,000	84980-49715
Capital	\$696,738	01930-58000
Total	\$3,022,462	

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 1: Passed unanimously

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[Article 2: Budget Amendment](#)
[Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director](#)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate from available funds in the treasury a sum of money to be added to or to make adjustments to Article 4 of the May 2025 annual town meeting (fiscal year 2026 budget), or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommended the passage of Article 2.

Speaker: Michael Herbert, Town Manager

MOTION MADE: That the Town will raise and appropriate the following funds as noted in the table below in order to make adjustments to or add to the FY 2026 annual budget:

Account	Amount	Account Number
School Department	\$136,121	01429
Conservation Commission	\$20,000	01171
Inspection Services	\$20,000	01241
Treasurer-Collector	\$18,337	01145
Keefe Tech	(\$40,222)	01491
Total Budget Adjustment	\$154,236	

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 2: Passed unanimously

[Article 3: Property Tax Exemptions](#)
[Sponsor: Board of Assessors/Select Board/Town Manager](#)

To see if the Town will vote to adjust (the exemption amount and eligibility factors) for the property tax exemption for senior citizens under MGL Chapter 59, Section 5 Clause 41C½, to be effective for exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

The Finance Committee recommended the passage of Article 3.

Speaker: Joe Magnani, Select Board Chair

MOTION MADE: That the Town vote to adjust (the exemption amount and eligibility factors) for the property tax exemption for senior citizens under MGL Chapter 59, Section 5 Clause 41C½ to 12%, to be effective for exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025

The motion was seconded.

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A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 3: Passed Unanimously

Article 4: Appropriate CPA Funds for the creation of Nature's Edge at Metrowest YMCA
Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$1,175,000 to enable the creation of Nature's Edge at Metrowest YMCA on the property along Memorial Drive to include accessible trails, outdoor teaching amphitheater and recreational fields and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$1,175,000 be transferred from the General Fund account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source and further that prior to the disbursement of any funds noted herein that the YMCA grant to the Town a public access easement in, over and upon the "Natures Edge" so called for public access to the improvements related to this project and to authorize the Board to negotiate and enter into said easement and any other document related thereto, or pass any vote or take any action thereon.

WITHDRAWN: No action required.

Article 5: Appropriate CPA Funds for Town Forest Survey work and Property Appraisal
Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$40,000 to enable survey work and property appraisals for potential land acquisition of parcels bordering the Town Forest and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$40,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source, or pass any vote or take any action thereon.

The Finance Committee recommends that the Town so vote.

Speaker: Aaron Ladd, Community Preservation Committee Chair

MOTION MADE: That the Town appropriate up to \$40,000 to enable survey work and property appraisals for potential land acquisition of parcels bordering the Town Forest and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$40,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 5: Passed unanimously

Article 6: Appropriate CPA Funds for the Negotiated Sum for the Acquisition of 11 Acres of Land and funds for Trail Improvements, Conservation Restrictions, and Property Transition to Forest Land
Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee

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To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up a sum of money for; 1. the purchase of 11 acres of land located at 41 Lincoln Road, referred to as the Collins property, which said amount shall be less than the appraised value and 2. for \$70,000 for trail improvements; said sum to be transferred from the General Fund account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2027 being returned to their funding source, and further to place the land in the care, custody and control of the Town Forest Committee for Town Forest purposes and to authorize the Select Board to enter into a conservation restriction on said property, or pass any vote or take any action thereon.

WITHDRAWN: No action required.

[Article 7: Appropriate CPA Funds for Field Data Collection and Invasive Vegetation Management at Beaverdam Brook Conservation Area](#)
[Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee](#)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$50,000 to complete field data collection and invasive vegetation management on the property along Pond Street referred to as Beaverdam brook conservation area and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$50,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source, or pass any vote or take any action thereon.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommended that the Town so vote.

Speaker: Aaron Ladd, Community Preservation Committee Chair

MOTION MADE: That the Town appropriate up to \$50,000 to complete field data collection and invasive vegetation management on the property along Pond Street referred to as Beaverdam brook conservation area and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$50,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 7: Passed unanimously

[Article 8: Appropriate CPA Funds for High School Softball Field Playing Surface Dirt Replacement](#)
[Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee](#)

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$25,000 for replacement of high school softball field playing surface dirt and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$25,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source, or pass any vote or take any action thereon.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommended that the Town so vote.

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Speaker: Aaron Ladd, Community Preservation Committee Chair

MOTION MADE: That the Town appropriate up to \$25,000 for replacement of high school softball field playing surface dirt and to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$25,000 be transferred from the Open Space account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of December 31, 2028 being returned to their funding source.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 8: Passed unanimously

Article 9: Accept MGL Chapter 272 § 73A
Sponsor: Historical Commission

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 272, § 73A in order to allow the Town to not prohibit the removal, in accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the state secretary, of a gravestone or other structure or thing which is placed or designed as a memorial for the dead, for the purpose of repair or reproduction thereof by community sponsored, educationally oriented, and professionally directed repair teams; or take any action relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee deferred its recommendation to Town Meeting.

Speaker: Makeda Keegan, Select Board Member

MOTION MADE: That the Town accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 272, § 73A.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 9: Passed unanimously

Article 10: Accept the Provisions of c. 138, § 12D Regarding the Municipalities Ability to Allow Transfer of On-Premises Wine and Malt Liquor Licenses to All-Alcohol Beverage Licenses.
Sponsor: Town Manager/Select Board

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of c. 138, §12D, which allows the Town to approve an on-premises wine & malt beverage license holder to trade in their existing license for a non-transferable on-premises all-alcohol beverage license; or take any other action relative thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town accept the provisions of c. 138, §12D.

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Speaker: Brandi Kinsman, Select Board Vice Chair

MOTION MADE: That the Town accept the provisions of c. 138, §12D.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 10: Passed unanimously

[Article 11: Bylaw: Update to In-law Bylaw](#)
[Sponsor: Planning Board](#)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Ashland Zoning bylaw by adding a new section 7.8 as printed in the warrant.

WITHDRAWN: No action required.

[Article 12: Update Bylaw: Dog Kennel Bylaw](#)
[Sponsor: Town Clerk](#)

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter 87, Animal Control, section 87-8 of the Town of Ashland General Bylaws as printed in the warrant.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town so vote.

Speaker: Yolanda Greaves, Select Board Member

MOTION MADE: That the Town amend Chapter 87, Animal Control, section 87-8, 87-9, 87-12 and 87-21 of the Town of Ashland General Bylaws as set forth in Article 12 of this Warrant.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 12: Passed unanimously

[Article 13: Municipal Tax Payment Agreement Bylaw](#)
[Sponsor: Town Manager/Finance Director](#)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Ashland General bylaws by adding a new Chapter, 26-7 Municipal Tax Payment Agreements in accordance with accordance with General Laws Chapter 60, Section 62A as printed in the warrant.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town so vote.

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Speaker: Michael Herbert, Town Manager

MOTION MADE: That the Town amend the Town of Ashland General bylaws by adding a new Chapter, 26-7 Municipal Tax Payment Agreements in accordance with General Laws Chapter 60, Section 62A as set forth in Article 13 of this Warrant.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 13: Passed unanimously

Article 14: Accept Donnelly Gift Parcel

Sponsor: Select Board

To see if the Town will vote to purchase, take, accept as a gift or otherwise acquire, the land located at Myrtle St, Ashland, Massachusetts and as shown on the Town of Ashland Assessor's Map 50 Lot 12 including 1.050 acres more or less, for the purpose of accessing the expanding the Town Forest to be under the care, custody and control of the Town Forest Committee for Town Forest Purposes, and to authorize the Select Board to negotiate and execute any and all document necessary to effectuate same, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

WITHDRAWN: No action required.

Article 15: Acceptance of Conservation Restriction

Sponsor: Conservation Commission

To see if the Town will authorize the Conservation Commission to enter into a Conservation Restriction with Trustees of the Reservation for the land to be gifted to the Conservation Commission from Peter Zani for the land shown on Town of Ashland Assessor's Map Property addresses and IDs as follows: 0 Pond Street Rear: 014/022.0-0054-0000.0, 0 Pond Street Rear: 014/022.0-0055-0000.0, 0 Brackett Road Rear: 014/016.0-0153-0000.0 including 27 acres +/- and as shown on that plan by GCG dated 10/9/2025 and on file with the Town Clerk and to be a part of the area known as the Beaverdam Brook Conservation Area, or take any action related thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends the Town so vote.

Speaker: Becca Solomon, Conservation Agent

MOTION MADE: That the Town will authorize the Conservation Commission to enter into a Conservation Restriction with Trustees of the Reservation for the land to be gifted to the Conservation Commission from Peter Zani for the land generally shown on Town of Ashland Assessor's Map Property addresses and IDs as follows: 0 Pond Street Rear: 014/022.0-0054-0000.0, 0 Pond Street Rear: 014/022.0-0055-0000.0, 0 Brackett Road Rear: 014/016.0-0153-0000.0 up to 27 acres +/- and as generally shown on that plan, more or less, by GCG dated 10/9/2025 and on file with the Town Clerk and to be a part of the area known as the Beaverdam Brook Conservation Area.

The motion was seconded.

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A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 15: Passed unanimously

[Article 16: Endorsement of Comprehensive Plan, Envision Ashland](#)
[Sponsor: Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee](#)

To see if the Town will vote to accept the following Resolution to endorse the Town of Ashland's 2025 Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland.

Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland has been created with the input of Ashland residents, organizations, local government representatives, and Town administration;

And whereas, the Ashland Planning Board and Select Board has approved the 2025 Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland.

Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland, consisting of 23 goals and many specific strategies, in 4 different categories;

And whereas, the 2025 Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland has been posted on the Town of Ashland website under the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee website;

Now, therefore be it hereby resolved, that the Ashland Town Meeting endorses the 2025 Comprehensive Plan: Envision Ashland, as approved by the Ashland Planning Board and Select Board on October 23, 2025.

Or to act in any manner relating thereto.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Finance Committee recommended the Town vote in favor of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan but their recommendation is not a promise of funding.

Speaker: Yolanda Greaves, Select Board Member

MOTION MADE: That the Town accepts the resolution as set forth in Article 16 of the Warrant.

The motion was seconded.

A simple majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 16: Passed unanimously

There being no further business on STM1 a motion was made to dissolve STM1. STM1 was dissolved at 7:46 PM STM2 was reopened.

[Article 1: Accept Donnelly Gift Parcel](#)
[Sponsor: Select Board](#)

To see if the Town will vote to purchase, take, accept as a gift or otherwise acquire, the land located at 0

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Oregon Road, Ashland, Massachusetts, further described in deeds recorded in the Middlesex Registry of Deeds in Book 20737, Page 75 and as shown on a Plan recorded as Plan 1158 of 1961, and as shown on the Town of Ashland Assessor's Map 05 Lot 0005 including 14.26 acres more or less, for the purpose of expanding the Town Forest, to be under the care, custody and control of the Town Forest Committee for Town Forest purposes, meaning and intending to dedicate this land as Article 97 Land so called under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to authorize the Select Board to negotiate and execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate same, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

The Finance Committee recommends the Town so vote.

Speaker: Rob St. Germain, Town Forest Committee

MOTION MADE: That the Town authorize the Select Board to purchase, take, accept as a gift or otherwise acquire, the land located at 0 Oregon Road, Ashland, Massachusetts, further described in deeds recorded in the

Middlesex Registry of Deeds in Book 20737, Page 75 and as shown on a Plan recorded as Plan 1158 of 1961, and as shown on the Town of Ashland Assessor's Map 05 Lot 0005 including 14.26 acres more or less, for the purpose of expanding the Town Forest, to be under the care, custody and control of the Town Forest Committee for Town Forest purposes, meaning and intending to dedicate this land as Article 97 Land so called under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to authorize the Select Board to negotiate and execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate same.

The motion was seconded.

A 2/3 majority is required.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 1: Passed unanimously

There was no further business and a motion was made to dissolve STM2. It was so voted.

Special Town Meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.

True Copy Attest:

Cynthia T. Livingstone, Town Clerk

TOWN MEETING VOCABULARY

Abatement	A reduction or elimination of a real or personal property tax, motor vehicle excise, a fee, charge, or special assessment imposed.
Available Funds	Balances in the various fund types that represent non-recurring revenue sources. Examples include free cash, stabilization funds, overlay surplus, and enterprise retained earnings.
Bond	A means to raise money through the issuance of debt.
Bond Authorization	The action of town meeting authorizing the executive branch to raise money through the sale of bonds in a specific amount and for a specific purpose. Once authorized, issuance is by the treasurer upon signature of the selectmen.
Cherry Sheet	An annual statement from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue detailing estimated reimbursements and charges to the Town. Its name derives from the fact that it was once written on cherry colored paper. In this manner the Town receives its share of various state funds and aid accounts, and is charged its share of running state government. Although the Cherry Sheet is required to be distributed by the first of March of each year, in actuality it is sent after the Legislature has passed the budget, which may not occur until June or July.
Citizens' Petitions	10 citizens for an Annual Town Meeting or 100 citizens for a Special Town Meeting may submit a petition requesting that a specific article be included in the next Town Meeting warrant for consideration. 200 citizens may submit a petition calling the Board of Selectmen to set a Town Meeting within 45 days.
Community Preservation Act	Permits towns accepting its provisions to establish a restricted fund from which monies can be appropriated only for a) the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space; b) the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources; and c) the acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use; d) the creation, preservation and support of community housing; and e) the rehabilitation and restoration of open space, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.
Community Preservation Fund.	A special revenue fund established to receive all monies collected to support the community preservation program, including but not limited to, tax surcharge receipts, proceeds from borrowings, and funds received from the State.
Debt Exclusion	A community may vote at an election to exclude debt service payments for a particular capital project from the levy limit. The amount necessary to cover each year's principal & interest is added to the levy limit for the life of the debts.
Enterprise Fund	An enterprise fund is a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for municipal services for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services.

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With an enterprise fund, all costs of service delivery--direct, indirect, and capital costs—are identified. This allows the community to recover total service costs through user fees if it chooses. Enterprise accounting also enables communities to reserve the "surplus" or net assets unrestricted generated by the operation of the enterprise rather than closing it out to the general fund at year-end. We have sewer, water and trash enterprise accounts.

Exemption	Established by statute, it is a discharge from the obligation to pay all or a portion of a property tax. The exemption is available to particular categories of property or persons upon the timely submission and approval of an application to the assessors. Properties exempt from taxation include hospitals, schools, houses of worship, and cultural institutions. Persons who may qualify for exemptions include disabled veterans, blind individuals, surviving spouses, and seniors.
Fiscal Year	The Fiscal Year starts July 1 st of each year and ends June 30 th the following year.
Free Cash	Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates shown on the tax recapitulation sheet, and unspent amounts in budget line-items. Unpaid property taxes and certain deficits reduce the amount that can be certified as free cash. The calculation of free cash is based on the balance sheet as of June 30, which is submitted by the community's accountant. This amount is certified annually by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue and thereafter is available for appropriation by a Town Meeting.
Levy Limit	The amount of property taxes that can be raised in accordance with Proposition 2½ formulas. The levy may be raised by 2½% plus new construction.
Local Receipts	Income derived by the Town from Motor Vehicle excise taxes, fees, licenses and permits, penalties & interest on taxes, etc.
New Construction	New growth and increases to property independent of market inflation are added to the levy limit in addition to the 2½% inflation increase allowed under Proposition 2½.
Omnibus Budget	For convenience, all recommended appropriations for operating expenses of the various Town departments and boards are gathered together in one article called the Omnibus Budget. The period covered by the Omnibus Budget is the upcoming Fiscal Year, and money not spent during this period reverts to Free Cash. No department or board can overspend its budget.
Overlay	An account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year. The overlay reserve need not be funded by the normal appropriation process, but rather is raised on the tax rate recapitulation sheet.
Override	A vote by a community at an election to permanently increase the levy limit. An override question on the election ballot must state a purpose for the override and the dollar amount.
Raise and Appropriate	A type of funding for Town expenditures voted at Town Meetings. The funds are raised through taxes, local receipts, and state reimbursements. Funds raised and

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- appropriated in warrant articles are available until a time set by the article or until voted out by a subsequent Town Meeting.
- Reserve Fund** A fund, established by each Town Meeting, for extraordinary or unforeseen expenses in the upcoming fiscal year. The Finance Committee alone may transfer money from this fund, thus eliminating the need for frequent Special Town Meetings. The fund may not exceed 5% of the preceding year’s tax levy.
- Revolving Account** Allows a community to raise revenues from a specific service and use those revenues without appropriation to support the service.
- Stabilization Fund** A fund designed to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. It retains its own investment income. A two-thirds vote is required on any vote relative to this Fund. This fund serves as the Town’s primary “rainy day” fund.

**Town of Ashland
Selected Town Meeting Procedures**

Amending an Article: Any time after a main motion has been made and seconded, but before being voted on, it is possible to amend the main motion using the following procedures:

1. Proceed to a microphone and wait to be recognized by the Moderator.
2. Announce your intent to amend the motion verbally and submit a copy of the amended motion in writing to the Moderator. The motion to amend must include your name as sponsor. Any increase in appropriation must include a funding source.
3. The Moderator will ask for a second to the motion to amend.
4. If passed, the motion to amend will be opened for discussion and then must be voted on by Town Meeting separately from the main motion.
5. A simple majority is required to pass a motion to amend.
6. More than one motion to amend can be made to a main article, but each must be presented and voted on one at a time. A motion to amend must be made before the main motion is voted on.
7. After all motions to amend are voted, the main motion (or as amended) must be voted on.

Necessary Majorities *

Unless noted otherwise, a simple majority is required to pass a motion.

A 2/3 majority is required for all borrowing, land acquisitions or transfers and all zoning by-laws.

A 4/5 majority is required at Annual Town Meeting for unpaid bills of prior fiscal years.

A 9/10 majority is required at Special Town Meetings for unpaid bills of prior years.

Only votes cast will be counted in determining the percentage of votes in favor of a motion. If there are 170 voters present and 100 vote yes, 50 vote no and 20 do not vote, the results shall be interpreted as 100

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yes votes out of 150 votes or 66.67% in favor.

* Please note that these vote majorities are for example only and there may be other types of votes which fall under each of the categories listed above.