



Special Town Meeting, October 7, 2024

A Message from the Maynard Select Board

Welcome to Town Meeting! We're glad you could join us this evening to help decide on legislation for our Town. Maynard faces challenges shared by communities across Massachusetts trying to maintain quality services during a statewide housing shortage. To help Town Meeting voters learn more about upcoming plans, the Select Board invites you to review this summary of upcoming decisions and how they may impact our budget in the next few years. We're hoping this overview is helpful as you join discussions about the future of Maynard.

Since the Annual Town Meeting last spring, we have held two joint meetings of Maynard's Select Board, Finance Committee, School Committee, and Capital Planning Committee. These discussions bring an opportunity for all groups to hear from each other, provide feedback on major projects, advocate for priorities, and explore potential solutions. The results of these conversations are embedded into the planning process for Town Meeting articles. We hope this summary of both current and upcoming plans provides helpful context as you participate in tonight's meeting.

Debt Exclusions

- The final elements of the Fire Station, including its training areas, have been completed, and the Fire Station Building Committee has been discharged after successfully finishing their purpose.
- The Green Meadow School is moving through detailed design phase, with construction anticipated to begin next year. The tax impacts of the new school will be applied to January's statements.
- Tonight the School Committee is seeking support from Town Meeting for a debt exclusion to fund borrowing to construct new bleachers, a press box, snack bar, and bathroom facilities on Alumni Field. If tonight's warrant article passes, the Select Board may, within 90 days, hold an election on the issue, which requires a 2/3rds majority of votes to pass. A recent Select Board vote to place the issue on the upcoming November Presidential ballot was 3-2, failing to meet the 2/3rds requirement to be approved by the Select Board.

Operational Overrides

- A Senior Center Focus Group has performed detailed assessments of nearby Senior Centers and reviewed proposals for spaces to lease in Maynard, and last week presented an update to the Select Board. The Board is looking forward to hearing the results of the Senior needs assessment from the Council on Aging (COA) at our next meeting. It is likely the amount proposed for the lease of a larger space would require an operational override.
- The School Committee has been using reserve funding to maintain their current fiscal year's operations, and is considering an operational override at Annual Town Meeting next spring.

Enterprise Funds

- The Well 4A and Treatment Plant Project is nearing completion, serving as the first phase of a long-term plan to address Maynard's water capacity issues. Phase 2, development of a new well at Rockland Ave, will then begin. These projects are funded from the water enterprise fund, which is separate from the general fund that is supported primarily from tax collections.
- Tonight the Solid Waste and Recycling Task Force is recommending establishment of an Enterprise Fund to help modernize trash collection services and reduce the impact of rising prices.
- Another Enterprise Fund is being considered for improved stormwater management systems needed to replace aging infrastructure, prevent pollutants from entering the Assabet River, improve street drainage, and comply with federal and state regulations.

Town Property

- The former Coolige School on Bancroft Street has been sold to a developer, which will use historic tax credits to rehabilitate the property and provide affordable housing while maintaining the façade of the building and preserving the sledding hill. Construction is anticipated to finish next summer.
- The Town is working towards the sale of the former Fire Station at 1 Summer Street and anticipates rehabilitation of the property for housing.
- A Request for Proposals has been processed for the sale of the former location of ArtSpace at the former Fowler School on Summer Street, following an assessment of potential future uses for the building.

Other Projects

- A feasibility study to assess the current conditions of the aging Public Works garage on Winter Street is expected to be completed by the close of 2024, and will guide plans for improvements, or else replacement, of the facility.
- A developer has submitted an application to a quasi-public entity, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), that will allow them to circumvent our normal permitting procedures to construct a 200 unit residential project. The Select Board and Town staff are preparing comments to MHP on the developer's proposal. We would like to thank those who have submitted public comments on the plans.

The Maynard Select Board works continuously throughout the year to engage with town staff, design teams, residents, developers, and other town bodies on these projects. We strive to balance the need to provide effective services while keeping Maynard affordable. Many hours are spent by staff and volunteer groups planning, analyzing, deliberating, and presenting project plans to keep Maynard moving forward. We look forward to hearing from you tonight and in the months to come on these issues.

Approved by unanimous vote (5-0) at Select Board meeting held Tuesday, October 1, 2024