

**TOWN OF GOSHEN
JOHN JAMES MEMORIAL HALL**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Saturday, May 20, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m., a quorum being present and 72 voters signed in. The annual meeting was held in the John James Memorial Hall for the first time since 2019. The 2020-2022 annual town meetings were held under a tent in the field behind town offices, due to Covid-19 pandemic precautions.

Moderator Keith Wright recognized the Goshen residents who passed away since the last annual town meeting and asked for a moment of silence:

- David Pesuit
- Richard Durant Sr.
- Dana Smith
- Norene Roberts
- Richard Malinowski
- Virginia Otis
- Lois Bacon
- Michael Helbling
- Susan Smith
- James Wentzel Jr.
- Darlene Roberts
- Brian Tennyson
- Mary McCulloch

The moderator noted that the warrant was duly posted and returned and then dispensed with the formal reading of the warrant and moved to Article 1.

ARTICLE 1: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer to expend from the Capital Stabilization Account the sum of \$6,605.40 for the payment of the principal and interest on the 2019 Ford Super Duty F350 ¾ ton pickup truck.

Ford Super Duty F350 pickup truck	Principal	Interest	Total Payment
2019	\$6,278.90	\$326.50	\$6,605.40

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This is the 4th of 5 payments. This expenditure is a contractual payment for previously authorized & signed borrowing.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 2: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer to expend from the Capital Stabilization Account the sum of \$11,247.04 for the payment of the principal and interest on the 2019 Police Ford K8A Interceptor Utility AWD.

Police Ford K8A Interceptor Utility AWD	Principal	Interest	Total Payment
2019	\$10,691.10	\$555.94	\$11,247.04

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This is the 4th of 5 payments. This expenditure is a contractual payment for previously authorized signed borrowing.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 3: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer to expend from the Capital Stabilization Account the sum of \$25,955.50 for the payment of the principal and interest on the 2019 Mack single axle primary plow/dump truck.

Mack Primary Plow/Dump Truck	Principal	Interest	Total Payment
2019	\$22,000.00	\$3,955.50	\$25,955.50

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This is the 4th of 10 payments. This expenditure is a contractual payment for previously authorized & signed borrowing.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 4: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer to expend from the Capital Stabilization Account the sum of \$9,522.24 for the payment of the principal and interest on the Yanmar YT235 tractor.

Yanmar YT235 Tractor	Principal	Interest	Total Payment
2021	\$8,720.00	\$802.24	\$9,522.24

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This is the 2nd of 5 payments. This expenditure is a contractual payment for previously authorized borrowing & signed borrowing.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 5: Motion made and seconded to establish a Broadband Stabilization Account.

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: The funds in this account will be used to contribute to the Goshen MLP High Speed Internet Operations Enterprise Funds in years where there may be a deficit or to pay down broadband debt, or offset subscriber fees based on recommendations of the Goshen Finance Committee in consultation with the Select Board and MLP Board.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 6: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash, funds in the amount of \$117,437.28 to the Broadband Stabilization Account.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: These funds represent MLP High Speed Internet revenues available from the 1st year subscriber fees prior to the establishment of a Broadband Enterprise account.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 7: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$70,000 to the Capital Stabilization Account for repayment of amounts used for MLP High Speed Internet Expenses.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: As per article #12 on the June 12, 2021 ATM warrant, this amount was transferred from Free Cash to the MLP High Speed Internet Account to cover

broadband expenses in advance of subscription revenues. This amount would have otherwise been transferred to the Capital Stabilization Account.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 8: Motion made and seconded to transfer the sum of \$35.00 from Free Cash to the account known as “Bills of Prior Years” for the payment of an FY 2022 bill from the Massachusetts Municipal.

Note: A 4/5th vote is required at an ATM.

Note: This bill was received too late to be processed in FY22.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 9: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$2,000 to the COVID-19 Expense Account for expenses incurred in connection with the Federally Declared State of Emergency known as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: This article refers to expenses incurred during the pandemic in connection with COVID-19, but *NOT reimbursed* by FEMA or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts CARES Act Grant. The Town spent \$102,837.98 on Covid-19 Expenses. All but \$2,000.00 were reimbursed either by FEMA (\$ 9,029.33) or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts CARES Act, \$93,808.65.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 10: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$15,000, for the purpose of tree removal. And, to authorize the Select Board to expend such monies for this purpose.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: This is to proactively remove trees jeopardizing the Town’s right of way and to alleviate the frequency of utility & internet service interruptions. The work will be planned and overseen by the Tree Warden in coordination with the Highway Supervisor and MLP Manager.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 11: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$8,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing Fire Department Turnout Gear to meet state compliance guidelines, and, to authorize the Fire Chief to expend such monies from a turnout gear project account for this purpose.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: Turnout gear is required to be replaced every 10 years and includes jackets, pants, boots, helmets, hoods and gloves. Funds for a standard replacement of 2 full sets per year have been in the Fire Dept. budget. Due to inflationary pressures the amount in the budget did not cover boots and helmets. Funds from this article will provide for them.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 12: Motion made and seconded to establish a Cell Tower Stabilization Account.

Note: 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: The purpose of the Account is to accumulate funds to pay for potential future cell tower maintenance and related costs.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 13: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$29,322.54, to fund a Cell Tower Stabilization Account.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The \$29.3K amount was received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts upon the dissolution of the Hampshire County of Governments and the transfer of the cell tower to the Town of Goshen. It represents what was remaining in HCOG for the cell tower after 20 years.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 14: Motion made and seconded to transfer from Free Cash, the sum of \$5,000.00, to the OPEB Liability Trust Fund for the purpose of covering Other Post-Employment Benefits. And, to authorize the Treasurer (The OPEB trustee) to expend such monies for this purpose.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The OPEB Liability Trust Fund was approved by vote at the Annual Town Meeting of June 12, 2021, article 23. The liability is actuarially calculated, and is a standard governmental accounting best practice for recording unfunded future liabilities.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 15: Motion made and seconded to transfer, from Free Cash, the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of hiring a consultant to work with the appropriate committees and/or boards, to create a comprehensive book of General By-Laws and to update the Zoning By-laws, and to authorize the Select Board to expend such monies for this purpose.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The General By-laws exist in various places, such as the Town Meeting Minutes and Town Clerk's office. There is no central collection of the Town's By-laws.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 16: Motion made and seconded to transfer, from Free Cash the sum of \$600,080.18 to the Capital Stabilization Account.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 17: Motion made and seconded to transfer \$30,000 from the account known as Assessors Overlay Surplus to reduce the FY 2024 tax rate.

Note: Majority vote is required

Note: The Overlay Surplus account is required by the DOR to reserve for tax exemptions, abatements, and uncollected taxes. In that the Tax Collector has collected a lot of outstanding taxes we are allowed to reduce the amount in this overlay account.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 18: Motion made and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate \$3,669,315.38 to fund the FY 2024 Town budget and defray the charges from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for the maintenance and operation of the Town as shown in the

Finance Committee Report and Budget Recommendations for the Annual Town Meeting.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 19: Motion made and seconded to appropriate \$423,935.93 to fund the Goshen MLP Enterprise Fund budget for FY 2024 including Salaries and Benefits, Operation and Maintenance, and Debt Service and to fund said budget appropriation \$26,100 from a CAFII federal grant and the remaining \$397,835.93 by user fees.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The MLP budget is to be funded from MLP subscriber fees and \$26,100 from CAFII federal grant funds.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 20: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Select Board to set the compensation of Town employees and appointed officials as established in the Town’s personnel policies.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 21: Motion made and seconded to fix the salaries and hourly rates of all compensated elected officers of the Town for Fiscal Year 2024 as indicated by M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 108.

ELECTED POSITION	COMPENSATION
Moderator	\$ 200.00
Board of Assessors	\$ 2,520.00
Select Board, Clerk	\$ 3,500.00
Select Board, Vice Chair	\$ 5,500.00
Select Board, Chair	\$ 6,500.00
Town Clerk	\$ 19,100.00

Note: Majority vote is required.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 22: Motion made and seconded to rescind Article 23 adopted at the July 25, 2020 ATM which accepted provisions for M.G.L. Chapter 59 Section 21A concerning additional compensation for Certified Assessors or Assistant Assessors, and, in its place, adopt Chapter 59 Section 21 A^{1/2} concerning additional compensation for certified Assessors or the Assistant Assessor.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: This will in effect change the compensation for being certified from \$500 per annum to 10% of the regular salary.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 23: Motion made and seconded to advise the Select Board to approve removing the Town current tennis courts, which have fallen to disrepair, and reclaiming the area where the old courts are now located for use as a Town green or other landscaped public area in cooperation with the Open Space Committee research and plans that have been presented to the community in public meetings.

Note: Majority vote is required

Note: This is a non-binding advisory vote. A vote of Town Meeting is not required for this action but a positive vote may demonstrate community support for future grant funding to support open space projects.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 24: Motion made and seconded to vote to appropriate or reserve from the Community Preservation Act annual revenues, for community preservation projects, and other expenses, in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee as follows, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: These figures are based on the estimated FY2024 real estate tax Community Preservation Act surcharge commitments plus a 100% match from the state, allocated by a minimum of 10% percent to Historic Resources, 10% to Open Space, 10% to Community Housing, and a maximum of 5% to Administrative Expenses and the remainder to Budgeted Reserve (65%).

Appropriations From FY 2024 estimated revenues:

\$8,500 for Committee Administrative Expenses

Reserves From FY 2024 Estimated Revenues:

\$ 17,000 for Historic Resources Reserve

\$ 17,000 for Community Housing Reserve

\$ 17,000 for Open Space Reserve

\$110,000 for CPA Budget Reserve

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 25: Motion made and seconded to approve an appropriation of \$200,000 from the Open Space Reserve, as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), for the purpose of funding the Re-Imagine Goshen Center Project. This project proposes renovations to Memorial Park and the area occupied by the tennis courts. Project includes removal of the tennis court and installation of a pavilion where the tennis court currently is and removal of selected shrubs and trees, installation of a green surrounded by stonewalls and patio accommodating café tables, memorial stones, ADA compliant walkways and benches, ringed by flowering trees and shrubs.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The project is estimated to cost \$300,000. The remaining funding is expected to be covered by a \$50,000 State grant being submitted and \$50,000 in fundraising efforts.

Passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 26: Motion made and seconded to approve an appropriation of \$108,450, from the CPA undesignated fund balance, as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), to be used for Phase I of the restoration of the Williams–Boltwood House located at 2 Williams Drive in Goshen. This phase will include the creation of an historical structure report (HSR) which will be

supported by structural engineering, dendrochronology, and paint assessments, funds for roof repairs and the creation of a set of baseline architectural drawings. Said funds will come from the undesignated fund balance account. These sums will be placed into a special project account known as the Williams-Boltwood House Restoration Account. Project expenses will be paid from this account. Any unexpended funds shall be returned to the CPA account from which it was appropriated, after three years of the date of appropriation, unless extended for cause by approval of the CPC.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: The \$108,450 represents 90% of the estimated \$120,500 costs associated with this phase of the project. The remaining 10%, or \$12,050, will come from the Williams-Boltwood House Trust, through donations and fundraising efforts.

A motion was made to indefinitely postpone the article. That motion was seconded but then failed.

After much discussion, a motion was made to move the article. That motion was seconded and passed by requisite majority.

The original motion passed by requisite majority.

ARTICLE 27: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to expend out of the Capital Stabilization Account the sum of \$157,550, for the purchase of a 2024 Chevrolet Silverado 6500 HD, 4WD Model CK56403, outfitted for plowing for the Highway Department.

Note: A 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This vehicle will be used to plow the narrower roads in the town and for plowing when the snow is heavy and wet.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 28: Article 28 was moved as printed in the warrant and appropriate \$470,000, and to fund said appropriation, the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, be authorized to borrow \$470,000 for the purpose specified in Article 28, all pursuant to G.L. c44 §§7 or 8 or any other enabling authority, and issue bonds and notes therefor.

Note: A 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: The current vehicle is 30ft 7inches in length and holds 750 gallons of water. The proposed vehicle is 28ft 3inches in length and holds 2000 gallons of water.

Note: In the event the borrowing does not reach the total authorization, the excess borrowing amount will be rescinded.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 29: Motion made and seconded to vote to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to expend out of the Capital Stabilization Account \$60,000 for the down payment of the purchase of a 2024 Freightliner 1250 GPM Tanker Pumper, to replace the 1995 KME 1250 GPM fire.

Note: A 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: The current vehicle is 30ft 7inches in length and holds 750 gallons of water. The proposed vehicle is 28ft 3inches in length and holds 2000 gallons of water.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 30: Motion made and seconded to close out the Fire Vehicle Stabilization Account to the Capital Stabilization Account. The estimated balance in this Fire Vehicle Stabilization Account is \$2,885.58, however, provided that additional interest is accrued, the treasurer is authorized to close out the entire balance.

Note: A 2/3rds vote is required.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 31: Motion made and seconded that the Town vote pursuant to M.G.L. c.44, §53E½, as most recently amended, to set Fiscal Year 2024 spending limits for the Revolving Funds as follows.

Program or Purpose	FY 2024 Spending Limit
Highland Ambulance Fuel Reimbursement Account	\$12,000
Animal Control Revolving Fund	\$7,500
Board of Appeals Revolving Fund	\$6,000
Electrical Inspector Revolving Fund	\$5,000

Note: Majority vote is required.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 32: Motion made and seconded that the Town vote pursuant to M.G.L. c.268A, §21A to authorize the Board of Assessors, Board of Health, Finance Committee, Planning Board, Select Board, and the Tilton Town Supervisors to appoint their own members to positions under their respective jurisdictions and supervision as shall be established by Town Meeting.

Note: Majority vote is required.

Note: Due to the continuing need to find and fill roles with qualified and available individuals in small towns, this article allows these elected Boards or Committees to appoint their own members to subordinate positions, if necessary.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 33: Motion made and seconded to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to expend out of the Capital Stabilization Account \$60,000 to replace the drain, reclaim the asphalt and resurface the driveway at the Town Offices.

Note: A 2/3rds vote is required.

Note: This is intended to address the water problem in the Police Station and repair the drains that are cracked and sinking.

Passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 34: This is a citizen's petition submitted and certified by three Registrars of voters of the Town of Goshen.

Resolution in Support of Changing the State Flag and Seal of Massachusetts

Whereas the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is replete with instances of conflict between the European Colonists and the Native Nations of the region, who first extended the hand of friendship to the Colonists on their shores in 1620, and helped them to survive starvation during the settlers' first winters on their land;

Whereas members of the Native Nation for whom the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is named were ambushed and killed by Myles Standish, first commander of the Plymouth Colony at Wessagussett (now Weymouth) in April of 1623, barely two years after the Pilgrims arrived;

Whereas the Colonial broadsword held by a white hand above the head of the Indigenous person on the Massachusetts Flag and Seal is modeled after Myles Standish's own broadsword, borrowed for that purpose from the Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth by the illustrator Edmund Garrett in 1884;

Whereas the belt binding the Native's cloak on the Flag and Seal is modeled after a belt worn by Metacomet, known to the English as King Philip, who was among the Indigenous leaders that resorted to a mutually destructive war in 1675-6 in defense of Native lands against Colonial encroachment;

Whereas the proportion of the body of the Indigenous person on the Flag and Seal were taken from the skeleton of an Indigenous person unearthed in Winthrop, the bow modeled after a bow taken from an Indigenous man shot and killed by a colonist in Sudbury in 1665, and the facial features taken from a photograph of an Ojibwe chief from Great Falls, Montana, considered by the illustrator to be a 'fine specimen of an Indian,' though not from Massachusetts;

Whereas the history of relations between Massachusetts since Colonial times and the Native Nations who continue to live within its borders include the forced internment of thousands of so-called 'praying Indians' on Deer Island in Boston Harbor, where they died by the hundreds of exposure in the winter of 1675, the enslavement of Indigenous people in Boston, Bermuda, and the Caribbean Islands, the offering of 40 pounds sterling as bounty for the scalps of Indigenous men, women and children in Massachusetts beginning in 1686, increased to 100 pounds sterling for the scalps of Indigenous adult males by 1722, half that amount for Indigenous women and children.

Whereas Indigenous people were legally prohibited from even stepping foot into Boston from 1675 until 2004, when that Colonial law was finally repealed;

Whereas the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Colonists at Plymouth Plantation, which gave rise to the long chain of genocidal wars and deliberate government policies of cultural destruction against Native Nations of this continent, occurred in the year 2020, affording every citizen of the Commonwealth a chance to reflect upon this history and come to an appreciation of the need for better relations between the descendants of the Colonial immigrants and the Native Nations of the Commonwealth;

Whereas the land area now know as the Town of Goshen, shares a rich history with modern tribal nations such as the Mohicans and the Abenaki, who inhabited this area lying before the first colonial settlers arrived in 1761;

Now, therefore, **Be It Resolved**, that the Town of Goshen hereby adopts this resolution in support of the work of the Special Commission on the official Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth, established by a Resolve of the General Court in 2021 and appointed by the Governor to recommend changes in the current flag and seal of Massachusetts and **in support of a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth** that may better reflect our aspiration for harmonious and respectful relations between all people who now call Massachusetts home. The town clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution to Sen. Nick Collins and Rep. Antonio Cabral, who serve as co-chairs of the Joint Committee on State Administration and to Sen. Paul Mark and Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa, with the request that they continue their strong support for the work of the aforementioned Special Commission and advocate for a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth.

Passed by requisite majority.

Julie Cavacco, Acting Librarian, invited residents to see the library display on stage and vote for whether or not they liked the library card design she came up with.

Bill O'Riordan of Goshen Historical Society invited interested residents to attend the next meeting on June 8th.

Melanie Lamere of the Williams-Boltwood House Trust, Inc. invited residents to their annual Memorial Day tag sale.

There being no other business to come before the Town, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 12:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen M. Estelle
Town Clerk