



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING AGENDA

Monday, October 17, 2022

7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, An Act Relative to the Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on July 16, 2022, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation. No in person attendance by members of the public will be permitted.

To view or listen

- Live Stream link YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRdBrw3HeEAMB_KFKasrgXA
- Zoom webinar link: <https://town-northborough-ma-us.zoom.us/j/87454312394>
When prompted, enter Password 287806
- CATV Government Channels: Verizon Channel 30, Charter Channel 192
- Call 1-646-876-9923
When prompted, enter Meeting ID 874 5431 2394 and Password 287806

For Public Comment

Public Comment is allowed and encouraged during any agenda item. To offer comments at any time, please use the “raise hand” button in Zoom, or raise your hand if in person. The Chair will recognize you before any vote or before the agenda item is otherwise concluded.

*** Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person ***



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING AGENDA CONTINUED
Monday, October 17, 2022
7:00 p.m.

1. Public Comment.
2. [Approval of September 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes.](#)
3. [Complete Streets Presentation and Community Input Session.](#)
4. [Review and Discuss ARPA Requests.](#)
5. Reports.
6. [Execution of November 8, 2022 State Election Warrant.](#)
7. Any other business to come before the Board.
8. Public Comment.
9. Executive Session – Pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (Collective Bargaining – update on negotiations with Dispatchers, Patrol Officers, Police Sergeants and Fire Unions) (Litigation – update on SA Farms) due to the Chair's determination that a discussion regarding these matters in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the Board.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – September 26, 2022**

7:00 p.m. - Chairman's Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chairman Cohen stated that this Open Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was being conducted remotely consistent with the July 16, 2022 Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency and that all members of the Board of Selectmen are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

Chairman Cohen noted that the Order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. He added that ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. Chairman Cohen noted that this meeting will allow for Public Comment throughout the agenda. He indicated the various ways that the public may view or participate in this meeting as listed on the posted agenda.

Chairman Cohen confirmed that the following members and persons anticipated on the agenda were remotely present and could be heard.

Board of Selectmen

Mitch Cohen
Julianne Hirsh
Kristen Wixted
Jason Perreault
T. Scott Rogers

Others

John Coderre, Town Administrator
William Lyver, Police Chief
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Suzanne Cieslica of 8 Emerson Road expressed her support for the creation of a Temporary Traffic & Safety Committee, which will be considered later in the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 12, 2022 MEETING

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the September 12, 2022 meeting minutes; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"abstain"		

7:00 p.m. - CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING

To consider Pole Petition 30579396 from Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England for a new pole location on Pinehaven Drive.

National Grid is requesting approval to relocate Pole #10 on Pinehaven Drive approximately 9' +/- to the north along Pinehaven Drive and a new anchor to be installed 18' +/- directly behind the new pole. The relocation of this pole and the installation of a new guy anchor will provide improved support for pole #10.

As a result of the discussion from the Board's September 12th meeting, Town Engineer Fred Litchfield was present and indicated that he met at the site with Jeffrey Silva from National Grid and Ms. Mendelson, the abutter. Although the pole location has not changed, the guy wire anchor has been relocated slightly up hill from the previous spot and the wire extending from the pole to the anchor (approximately eighteen feet) is just east of the existing edge of pavement of the parking spot closest to Pinehaven Drive. Mr. Silva provided a schematic sketch verifying the angle of the anchor wire from the pole to the anchor, which was reviewed by himself and Ms. Mendelson. It was concluded that the sketch verifies adequate clearance above a car parked at the spot in question. The sketch that was reviewed is the same as the sketch provided with the original pole petition with a revised date of 9/20/2022 and a note indicating the anchor and guy are to be located approximately eighteen feet from the pole.

Ms. Mendelson was present and indicated that she is in agreement with the location of the guy anchor and is working with National Grid regarding the language in the necessary easement on her property.

There were no further comments from the public.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to close the public hearing on Pole Petition 30579396; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve Pole Petition 30579396 as submitted by Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England allowing utility pole #10 to be relocated approximately 9' +/- to the north along Pinehaven Drive and a new anchor to be installed 18' +/- directly behind the new pole subject to approval of an easement from the current landowner at 48 Pinehaven Drive; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

MORMAX CORPORATION D/B/A BJ'S WHOLESALE CLUB

Application for a Change of Manager for its All Alcoholic Package Store License for premises located at 6102 Shops Way.

Malika Harris introduced herself as the manager at BJ's Wholesale Club at 6102 Shops Way. She is experienced in the retail sale of alcohol and is TIPS certified. Her personal information has been reviewed by Lieutenant Brian Griffin, who has indicated that he has no concerns to report.

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to approve the application to change the manager as submitted by Mormax Corporation d/b/a BJ's Wholesale Club for their All Alcoholic Package Store License for premises located at 6102 Shops Way; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

CONSIDERATION OF OPEN MEETING LAW RESPONSE

For complaint filed against the Board of Selectmen regarding the September 12, 2022 meeting by Patrick Higgins and Associates from Northport Alabama.

Mr. Coderre indicated that this agenda item concerns an Open Meeting Law complaint dated September 15, 2022 regarding the Board's meeting of September 12, 2022. The complaint claims that there was a violation because certain information was not included on the agenda for the meeting. Two agenda items are listed as the basis for the violation: recommendation for appointments to the Board of Library Trustees, Scholarship Committee and Board of Registrars; and an executive session for collective bargaining strategy. The information in question is the names of persons to be considered for appointment, and the name of the union whose contract was scheduled for discussion.

Mr. Coderre explained the rules for this process as regulated by the Attorney General. When a complaint is received, the public body in question has fourteen business days to review the complaint; to take what the regulations call "remedial action" if the body finds such action to be appropriate; and to send a response to the person who submitted the complaint, with a description of any remedial action. A copy of the complaint must also be sent to the Attorney General, along with a description of any remedial action that is taken. He noted that tonight's meeting is within fourteen business days of receipt of the complaint.

After consultation with Town Counsel on the allegations in the complaint, Mr. Coderre recommended that the Board determine that there was a technical violation regarding the executive session agenda item, that there was no violation regarding the appointments agenda item, and that no remedial action is required.

Mr. Coderre stated that the law describes the requirements for the contents of an agenda posting as "the date, time and place of the meeting and a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting." He added that the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law Guide does advise that for a collective bargaining executive session the particular union should be identified unless doing so would compromise the position of the public body. In the future, the union information will be included for this type of agenda item.

In regard to the appointments item, Mr. Coderre indicated that the names of the persons being considered for appointment were included in the minutes of the Board's Interview Subcommittee Meeting on August 30, 2022. As those minutes were included in the agenda packet posted to the Town's website, the names were made available in advance of the meeting as part of the regular public notice process.

The only action requested in the complaint is that the Board “learn and comply with the open meeting law.” For the reasons described above, Mr. Coderre did not recommend any reconsideration of the actions taken at the September 12 meeting. The only future action would be including the applicable union name in notices for an executive session on collective bargaining.

Board members agreed that there was a technical violation regarding the contents of the executive session agenda item and that there was no violation in regard to the appointments item.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to find that, after review of the Open Meeting Law complaint regarding the agenda for the Board’s meeting of September 12, 2022, there was a technical violation regarding the contents of the executive session agenda item, that there was no other violation, and that no remedial measures with respect to the actions taken at the meeting are required; and further, that the Town Administrator report this vote to the person who filed the complaint – Patrick Higgins; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

SCOTT CHARPENTIER – DPW DIRECTOR

Consideration of fee schedule for snow removal and treatment on private ways.

Mr. Charpentier proposed to the Board that the base charge for plowing and treatment services of private ways and unaccepted streets which are 100% complete be increased from last year’s charge of \$215.00 to \$220.00 to cover the increased costs of labor, fuel and materials.

Residents of the private ways that received plowing and treatment services during the last Winter Season were notified of tonight’s consideration to increase the fees. No concerns were heard from any of the residents.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to set the fees for plowing and treatment of private ways less than 3,000 feet for the 2022/2023 winter season as follows: \$220.00 per storm per private way for plowing; \$220.00 per storm per private way for treatment; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

CONSIDER CREATION OF A TEMPORARY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman Cohen noted that he scheduled this agenda item in response to community members asking that a Traffic Safety Committee be created. He indicated that there does not seem to be any consistency amongst those communities that have a Committee for this purpose. He asked the Board to consider forming a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee to research the Committees that do exist and report back to the Board with a recommendation on whether a permanent committee is needed, and if so, recommend a model and charge for the Board’s

consideration. He suggested that this temporary committee's charge be limited to this purpose, adding that it would be dissolved upon delivering their recommendations to the Board. If the Board is in favor of this temporary committee, he asked that the Interview Committee focus on diversity in terms of the geography and interests around the whole town and not any single region of town.

Selectman Wixted noted that per her Selectman Facebook page there have been approximately thirty-one (31) separate posts from residents all over town in regard to traffic and pedestrian safety. Chairman Cohen suggested that in the event that a temporary committee is created that this information be used as a starting point.

Selectman Hirsh noted her support of such a committee and asked about its composition if created? Chairman Cohen responded that because it will be a temporary committee with a narrow scope, he envisions five citizens and a member of the Board of Selectman, along with some involvement from Town staff. Selectman Hirsh suggested a member of the Planning Board be included as well.

Selectman Rogers shared his concern with being asked to make a decision on something this evening without having the opportunity to review its actual charge and responsibilities beforehand. He added that the established mechanism in place right now is effective for reporting traffic and safety concerns and violations and suggested that the Town do more to educate the public about this resource. Currently, residents are able to report concerns and ask questions regarding traffic safety issues, signaling, signage, crosswalks, enforcement, and any other traffic related matters through a dedicated email located on the Town website – "Report a Transportation Safety Issue." Town staff reviews the information and responds back with any relevant information to address the concern. Traffic concerns and violations that require immediate attention should be called directly to the Police Department in real-time. Selectman Wixted stated that the reporting mechanism that is currently in place is not working and that to create a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee is one step in the right direction to help the residents with their traffic and safety concerns.

Chairman Cohen invited comments from the public. Comments in support of creating a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee were heard from the following residents:

Janeen Callaghan – 6 Stirrup Brook Lane
Christopher Deacetis – 15 Allen Street
Jack Wixted – 2 Stirrup Brook Lane
Jennifer Scalise – 206 South Street
Rachel Armstrong – 10 Hemlock Drive

Selectman Hirsh stated that the current mechanism for residents to provide input about traffic and safety might be working for Town staff but it is not satisfying the needs of the residents. She added that the benefit of creating a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee would be to help in prioritizing traffic safety issues.

Selectman Perreault shared his concern with taking action this evening without first having a clear description of the composition and charge of this committee.

Chairman Cohen noted that he wants to give the public a greater tool than what is already in place to report an issue and to have that issue resolved to their satisfaction. He suggested that the data from the existing reporting emails be collected and compiled for further review.

Selectman Rogers stressed the importance of using the resources that are already in place that will actually accomplish something now rather than stretch resources that are already overwhelmed by forming a temporary committee to determine if a permanent committee is needed. Selectman Hirsh agreed that the timing to address traffic safety issues is important and suggested that the committee's duration be reduced to three or six months instead of twelve.

Prior to Mr. Coderre sharing his thoughts, Chairman Cohen indicated that he would look to Mr. Coderre to make the determination as to who from Town staff would attend committee meetings and to what extent they would be expected to participate.

Mr. Coderre shared his concern with the limited resources available to this committee from his office and the Police, Planning, Engineering and Public Works Departments. He noted that Town staff is already stretched thin given the workload associated with the extraordinary number of significant initiatives including the Master Plan Implementation Committee, the White Cliffs Committee, the upcoming Fire Station Building Committee, Town Office Feasibility Study Committee as well as the prioritized initiatives such as Green Communities and the Complete Street Master Plan. Given the workload with these initiatives, he asked that the Board consider where a Traffic Safety Committee would fit in given all the other priorities. He noted that the Board began a goal setting process to look at all these projects and initiatives in a priority setting, but that the process was not completed.

There was no further discussion.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to create a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee. The Committee's charge will be to return with recommendations to form a permanent Traffic Safety Committee including membership and proposed charge in no more than six months' time. The temporary Traffic Safety Committee shall be disbanded upon conclusion or six months' time unless extended by the Board. Composition of the Committee will be five (5) residents, one member of the Board of Selectmen and one member of the Planning Board and staff as the Town Administrator deems important.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to amend the above motion to eliminate "and staff as the Town Administrator deems important as suggested by Chairman Cohen; Selectman Wixted seconded the amended motion.

Selectman Perreault expressed his concern with the language in the motion, specifically "with recommendations to form a permanent Traffic Safety Committee", when part of the charge of the temporary committee is to determine if a permanent committee is needed.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to create a Temporary Traffic Safety Committee. The Committee's charge will be to return with recommendations as to whether or not to form a permanent Traffic Safety Committee including membership and proposed charge in no more than six months' time. The Temporary Traffic Safety Committee shall be disbanded upon conclusion or six months' time unless extended by the Board. Composition of the Committee will be five (5) residents, one member of the Board of Selectmen and one member of the Planning Board; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion.

Selectman Perreault shared the concerns expressed by Mr. Coderre that the additional workload that is being placed on Town staff fails to take into account the priority of this effort compared to all of the other initiatives. Chairman Cohen agreed and hopes that the temporary committee will determine how to address traffic safety issues in the best and most efficient manner.

Following the above discussion, the roll call vote on the first amended motion was taken as follows:

Perreault	"abstain"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

The roll call vote on the second amended motion was taken as follows:

Perreault	"no"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"no"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

REPORTS

Kristen Wixted

- Thanked the volunteers and everyone who participated in the Applefest events.
- Thanked the Northborough Historical Society for their bake sale during Applefest and for letting the public use their bathrooms.
- Enjoyed the Solar Jazz Fest.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked all of the organizations involved with Applefest, especially the Applefest Committee, Boroughs Cares 4 Troops and the Rotary Club.
- Thanked former Selectman Leslie Rutan for providing the Board with the banner for the parade march.
- Extended condolences to the Niemi family on the sudden passing of their son.
- Noted that September 4th marked the 8th anniversary of the loss of Army Specialist Brian Arsenault. Extended his regards to the Arsenault family.

T. Scott Rogers

- Extended condolences to the Niemi family on the sudden passing of their son.
- Thanked the organizers, businesses and residents that planned and attended the Applefest events.

- Reported on the efforts of the Conservation Commission and thanked Conservation Agent Vinny Vignaly for his professionalism in conducting the public hearings.
- Noted that the Health Department is hosting booster and flu clinics.
- Encouraged residents to check out the Community Calendar for upcoming Wellness events.
- Reported on the efforts of the Groundwater Advisory Committee.
- Attended a recent webinar regarding planned improvements to Route 20 just past Northborough Crossing.

Julianne Hirsh

- Reported on the efforts of the Master Plan Implementation Committee. Encouraged residents to complete the survey regarding the Downtown Revitalization project.
- Reported on the efforts of the White Cliffs Committee.
- Thanked the donor who provided funding for the mural facing the Town Common. Thanked the Cultural Council, especially Craig and Suzanne Cox for their efforts in preparing the side of the building for this project.
- Thanked Representative Meghan Kilcoyne for securing \$50,000 to go towards a culvert repair in Northborough.
- Asked that those residents who interviewed for the Zoning Board of Appeals be contacted to see if they are still interested in being considered without having to participate in another interview.
- Thanked everyone who planned and participated in Applefest.

Mitch Cohen

- Enjoyed many of the Applefest events. Thanked Mr. Coderre, the Fire Chief and Police Chief for participating in the dunk tank.
- Thanked the donor who funded the mural project and the Cultural Council for their efforts in regard to this project. Noted how happy he was to be able to meet the artist as she was painting the mural.
- Noted that Amazon has hired a flagger to work 24/7 at their exit.
- Extended condolences to the Niemi family.
- Acknowledged the recent complaints regarding SA Farms. The Town continues to work with DEP on addressing this issue.
- Wished all Jewish residents a happy Rosh Hashanah.

John Coderre

- No report.

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED 1156

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1156; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Coderre provided an update on the RFP process for the old fire station property, stating that an issue regarding the boundary line was raised during the survey process that must be resolved. He is very anxious to move this project forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen invited comments from the public. There were none.

8:50 p.m. - EXECUTIVE SESSION

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session - pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 6 (Real Property – Acquisition of 10 Monroe Street) due to the Chair's determination that a discussion regarding this matter in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the Board; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Cohen announced that the Board will enter into Executive Session and will not return to the open meeting.

The open meeting ended at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

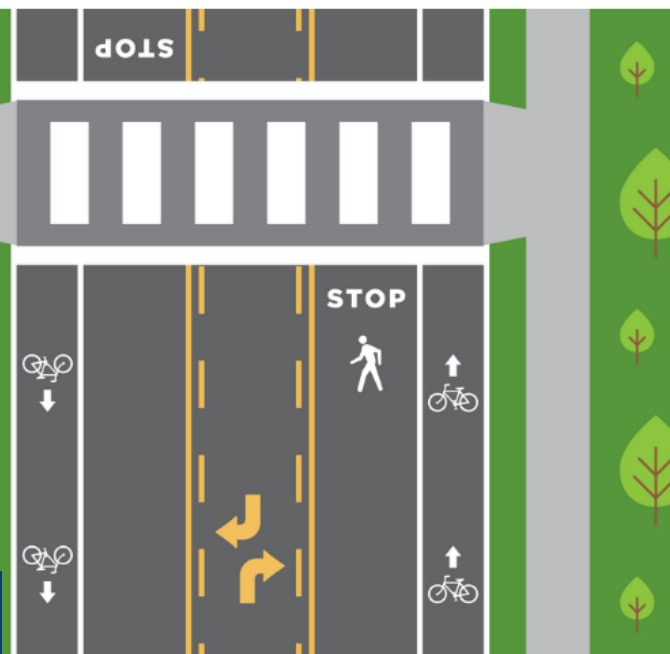
1. September 26, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. September 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Information Packet – Pole Petition 30579396
4. Information Packet – BJ's Wholesale Club Change of Manager
5. Information Packet – Open Meeting Law Complaint
6. Information packet – Snow Removal and Treatment Fee Schedule
7. Memorandum – Temporary Traffic and Safety Committee
8. Cemetery Deed

[RETURN TO AGENDA](#)

Before Complete Streets

After Complete Streets

NORTHBOROUGH COMPLETE STREETS PRIORITIZATION PROJECT



(Photo Source: Smart Growth America)

What are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are designed and operated to make travel safe, comfortable, convenient, and accessible for all travel modes - walking, biking, transit and vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities.

The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient.

Why is this Important?

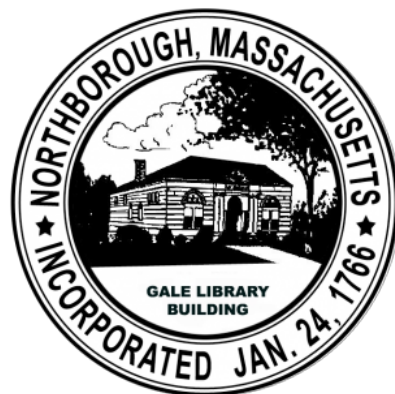
The Town received a grant from Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for technical assistance in developing a **Complete Streets Prioritization Plan**. Once the Prioritization Plan is accepted by MassDOT, the Town will be able to apply annually for up to \$500,000 in construction funding to implement projects through the MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program.

How Can You Help?

Join us remotely at the Town of Northborough Board of Selectmen Meeting on October 17th at 7:00 PM for a presentation and Community Input Session. Information on how to view, listen, and participate in the meeting will be posted on the Board of Selectmen Meeting Agenda, available on the Town Website.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AGENDA POSTING

[Click Here](#) to view the Board of Selectmen Agenda once posted.



**Woodard
& Curran**



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Town Hall Offices • 63 Main Street • Northborough, MA 01532 • 508-393-5040 x7 • 508-393-6996 Fax

October 13, 2022

John Coderre, Town Administrator
Town Hall Offices
63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532

Dear Mr. Coderre,

At the Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled for October 17, 2022, our consultant from Woodward & Curran, DPW Director Scott Charpentier and I will give a PowerPoint presentation updating the Board of Selectmen on our participation in the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) "Complete Streets Funding Program." The goal of this program is to support safe and accessible options for all modes of travel – walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles- for people of all ages and abilities. The following constitutes a status update of our participation in the program to date:

Completed

1. The Northborough Board of Selectmen (BOS) adopted the Town of Northborough Complete Streets Policy at their January 10, 2022 meeting. We were informed by MassDOT that they approved the policy on January 18, 2022 with a score of 91.
2. The Town was awarded a \$35,200 technical assistance grant from MassDOT on February 17, 2022 to aid in development of our Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. The Town executed a contract with Woodard & Curran to perform this work.

Underway

3. Public Works and the Planning staff are currently working with our consultant to prepare, via a public outreach campaign, our Complete Streets Prioritization Plan for Board of Selectmen and MassDOT acceptance. When complete, this plan will contain a list of projects, in order of local priority, that identifies sidewalk, bicycle, and accessible transportation connectivity and safety improvements, cost estimates, and a schedule for implementation of those projects.

In July, the Town Engineer, DPW Director and Planning Director met with staff from Woodard and Curran to review existing data, including maps, a Sidewalk Management Report and Road Safety Audit, for the purpose of identifying projects for inclusion in the Prioritization Plan. Ultimately, 24 projects were identified by staff.

In August, staff and our consultant prepared and distributed an on-line survey, which was available from August 15th through August 29th. 808 responses were ultimately collected and analyzed by the consultant.

On September 15th, Public Works and Planning staff presented the list of 24 projects to the Master Plan Implementation Committee and asked for their feedback. Committee members identified their top projects and asked for one sidewalk project to be added to the list. Please see the attached letter from Chairman Rick Leif for the results of that discussion.

The survey results, list of 25 projects and evaluation criteria will be presented at the October 17th Board of Selectmen meeting and attendees will be asked to provide feedback.

After the October 17th meeting, Public Works and Planning staff will work with our consultant to rank identified projects using the agreed-upon evaluation criteria. Projects that address multiple Complete Streets goals, are shovel ready and have the greatest likelihood of receiving Complete Streets Construction Grant funding and/or other state and federal grants will be ranked highest.

Once the Prioritization Plan is complete, the team will present the results to the Board of Selectmen for endorsement, with subsequent submission to MassDOT for final review and approval.

Next Step

4. Communities with a locally adopted Policy and MassDOT-approved Prioritization Plan are eligible to seek construction funding of up to \$500,000 within a 4-year timeframe to aid in plan implementation. Municipalities can submit multiple projects for potential funding, or only one project. We expect to submit the Prioritization Plan for MassDOT approval by the end of this calendar year, allowing us to initiate project design in advance of the next round of construction grant submissions which are expected to be due May 1, 2023. Projects may include new sidewalk construction to address gaps in the network, ADA upgrades to existing deteriorated sidewalks, ramps and pedestrian signals, roadway/intersection narrowing and installation of rapid flashing beacons to enhance safety, construction of bicycle lanes and shared-use lanes, installation of wayfinding signage, and transit improvements (i.e. bus shelters). Construction grants cannot be used for survey, land acquisition, or design services. These tasks must be funded through other means such as local appropriation (including ARPA) or Chapter 90.

I look forward to continuing the conversation about the Complete Streets Program on Monday evening and beyond. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Laurie Connors
Planning Director

Enclosure

CC: Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

Memo

Date: October 14, 2022
To: Board of Selectmen
From: Mitch Cohen, Chair
Subject: ARPA request list

Included in today's packet is a list of all ARPA requests, compiled by Vice Chair Julianne Hirsh. Thank you Julianne for going through all the data sources she could find, including prior meetings, our public input forum, and email requests over several months' time. If anyone thinks of anything previously requested that has been missed, we'll add it during the meeting.

The list is explicitly unordered, so as not to imply any prioritization or preference. Estimated costs are included when provided.

This will be our first meeting reviewing a lengthy set of data. During our meeting I'd like to very quickly go through the list, and informally gauge the Board's interest in proceeding with each item. Proceeding here means gathering additional data, such as costs, viability, and any long-term implications. Proceeding with an item will not mean funding. Not proceeding does not mean we can't reconsider the item later.

We will then determine next steps. My initial thoughts are to categorize potential items based on the items remaining and how the discussion takes place.

I've asked John to provide us with our current ARPA available funds, including our recently received share of Worcester County ARPA funds.

As part of beginning our review, we should decide if we will continue accepting requests.

Lastly, I will note the agenda item "Review and Discuss ARPA Requests" was chosen to make clear to the Public that we will not approve funds during this meeting. I hope that will happen soon, but we need to do this work first.

See you Monday!

ARPA - Unordered request list

Total

\$3,207,092.00

Project	Est. Cost
Family and Youth services	\$200,000
Downtown revitalization seed money	
Cable tv: hybrid meetings and update equipment	\$200,000
Friends of the senior center	\$9,000
White cliffs	
restrooms at Ellsworth Macafee	
Community meal program	\$40,000
Rail trail feasibility study	\$100,000
Plaques, benches	
Cultural Council	
Building repairs needed for example police station painting	
Sustainability/ green initiatives	
assistance to small business including things like outdoor seating and helping with foot traffic	\$500,000
Historical society: make up for lost revenue, money to improve the facility for teens and community groups to use	
Road improvements and maintenance	
Bring back Tuesday evening hours to senior center	
More programs for teens and adults	
Center for teens	
Proctor Roof	\$38,000
Fire engine replacement	\$800,000

Project	Est. Cost
improvement to Lincoln St , route 20 intersection	
Highway garage tight tank replacement	\$400,000
Sidewalk master plan phase 1	\$400,000
FY23 Operating budget Subsidy for OPEB	\$250,000
Assabet fence	\$20,000
pickleball alternates	\$18,000
Be Well	\$100,000
Covid Expense Reserve	\$132,092
Support volunteer groups and agencies	
Food pantry	
Helping Hands	
Support for families currently without homes	
Benevolent Fund	
Scholarships for activities	
Seniors: information and opportunitites	
Gift Cards from local businesses to go toward families	
Programming for senior center including memory care unit	
Recereation department	
Support for mental health	
Diversity and inclusion efforts	
Consultant for D and I	
Address education loss due to pandemic	
Arts and music in the schools	

Project	Est. Cost
Education Foundation	
PTO's	
Cummuinty garden	
Downtown improvements	
Master plan kick start	
Trees	
Land purchase to facilitate economic development	
Dog park	
Mixed use trails	
Rail trail feasibility study	
crosswalk lights	
street lights	
climate emergency	
swap shop for recycling purposes	
town dump	
ventilation upgrades in public buildings	
Emergency preparedness for future pandemics, etc	
small business grants	
ecomonic development committee	
teen center	
recreation items such as sports equipment	
evaluation of small businesses	
job search/growth programs	

Project	Est. Cost
help businesses with advertising, marketing, etc	
incentive bonuses for jobs in small business	
gift card matching programs	
long term projections for businesses	
co-working space	
Evaluate White cliffs for community center, seniors, etc.	
fund pre-k	
solar panels on schools	
expand water, sewer, and water service to more parts of town	
eliminate garbage bags and increase recycling to once a week	
AEDS	
trail around Ellsworth Macafee	
clean up Bartlett Pond	



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532-1994
(508) 393-5040 Phone
(508) 393-6996 Fax

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John W. Coderre, Town Administrator

SUBJECT: ARPA Fund Update

DATE: October 14, 2022

It is my understanding that an ARPA compilation list is being prepared by Selectman Hirsh for discussion at your meeting on October 17th. Following please find the latest information regarding ARPA funds that have been received and committed to date. Also attached is another copy of the memo that was provided to the Board prior to the June 16, 2022 ARPA public input session. While there have been developments since that memo was prepared, I believe it still provides appropriate contextual information for discussion purposes.

As you are aware, we are beginning the Capital Budget and Operating Budget Planning processes for FY2024. I anticipate that new and updated projects and initiatives are likely to result from those comprehensive annual processes, so the Financial Planning Committee and Appropriations Committee will likely have significant input to come relative to ARPA priorities and proposed spending.



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

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ARPA FUNDING RECEIVED:

Municipal ARPA Disbursements

#1 6/14/2021	\$790,719
#2 7/6/2022	\$790,719
Municipal Subtotal	\$1,581,438

County ARPA Disbursements

#1 8/13/2021	\$1,467,373
#2 9/29/2022	\$1,467,373
County Subtotal	\$2,934,746

GRAND TOTAL ARPA RECEIVED \$4,516,184

ARPA FUNDS COMMITTED FROM \$4,516,184:

Proctor Roof	-\$38,000
Assabet Park Fence	-\$20,000
Pickle Ball Alt	-\$18,000
Be Well Northborough	-\$100,000
Housing Authority Project	-\$100,000
Subtotal voted by BOS 3/14/22	-\$276,000
<u>Housing Authority Project Cancelled</u>	<u>+\$100,000</u>

REMAINING ARPA FUNDS AVAILABLE \$4,340,183



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63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532-1994
(508) 393-5040 Phone
www.town.northborough.ma.us

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: John Coderre, Town Administrator
SUBJECT: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update
DATE: June 15, 2022

In preparation for our June 16th American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Listening/Input Session, I thought it might be helpful to provide the Board with an update regarding Northborough's ongoing and planned COVID response and recovery efforts. This information provides appropriate context for the discussions that will ensue following the planned listening session. For more detailed information regarding ARPA, interested readers are encouraged to visit the Town's dedicated [ARPA webpage](#) which includes helpful reference information, including this memo.

By way of background, on March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the \$1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) into law. The bill provides resources through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF) to local governments to respond to the public health emergency caused by COVID-19. Northborough is expected to receive \$4,516,183 of direct aid, administered by the US Department of the Treasury. The timeline for expending the funds calls for amounts to be fully obligated by December 31, 2024, and fully expended by December 31, 2026.

ARPA Overview Spending Categories and Rules:

The U.S Department of the Treasury released details on the ways funds can be used to address acute pandemic-response needs, fill revenue shortfalls among state and local governments, and support the communities and populations hardest-hit by the COVID-19 crisis. Information regarding eligible spending uses has been evolving since the bill was signed into law. On January 6, 2022, the U.S Treasury issued its Final Rule. The basic categories of funding eligibility are shown below.

ARPA Funding Categories



Support Public Health Response

Fund COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff



Replace Public Sector Revenue Loss

Use funds to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic



Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Make necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water and invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure



Address Negative Economic Impacts

Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector



Premium Pay for Essential Workers

Offer additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors



Broadband Infrastructure

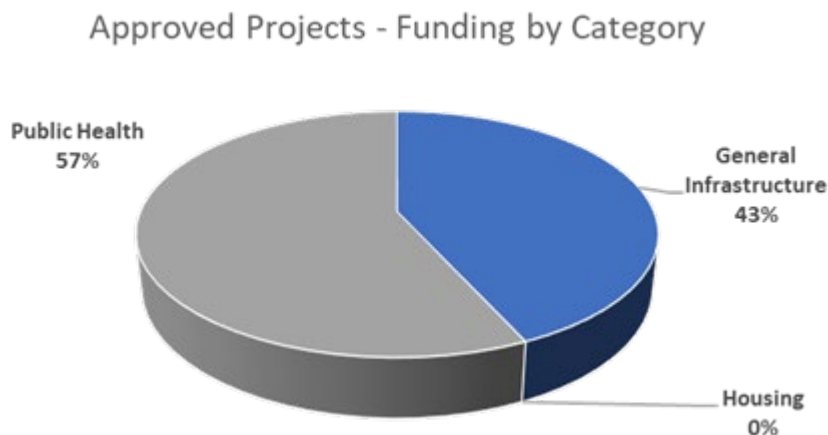
Make necessary investments to provide unserved or underserved locations with new or expanded broadband access

ARPA funds essentially function similarly to a grant and are to be spent based on available cash-on-hand, as opposed to reimbursement. Funds are set to be deposited in two tranches, the first of which has already been received. It is important to recognize that these funds are non-recurring in nature and should be generally treated similarly to free cash or other grant funds. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) strongly recommends that due to the temporary nature of ARPA funds, they should be applied to non-recurring expenses. GFOA further stresses that “Care should be taken to avoid creating new programs or add-ons to existing programs that require an ongoing financial commitment.”¹ Alternatively, GFOA stresses that investment in critical infrastructure is a well-suited use of ARPA funds given their non-recurring nature, as well as the ability to target strategically important long-term assets that provide benefits over many years. Additionally, GFOA provides detailed guidance on exercising patience in obligating these funds, as there are many Federal, State and other local partnership/grant opportunities that are offering funding for many of the same projects listed as allowable uses under ARPA.

Requests and Committed ARPA Funds:

At the March 14, 2022 meeting, the Board voted on time sensitive projects to be funded using \$176,000, or 3.9% of the ARPA allocation. Those projects and committed funding amounts are shown below. Following the allocations listed, there is a remaining balance of \$4,340,183.

Project	Cost Estimate
Proctor School Roof Drain Repairs	\$38,000
Assabet Park Fence	\$20,000
Pickleball Court Alternates	\$18,000
Be Well Northborough Initiatives	\$100,000
Affordable Housing (NAHC)	\$100,000 (No longer committed due to lack of State grant funding)
TOTAL	\$176,000

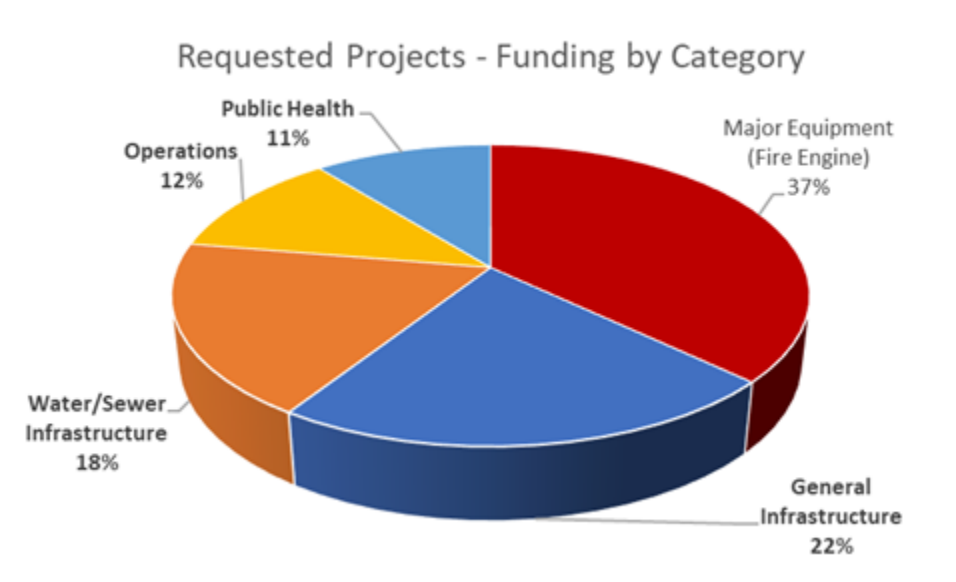


In addition to the approved projects above, staff also presented additional projects at the March 14, 2022 Board of Selectmen meeting that sought to address several immediate capital needs that would otherwise require appropriations or the issuance debt, which would directly impact taxpayers. Keeping the GFOA best practices and recommendations above in mind, most of the proposals consider reducing long-term infrastructure needs or major equipment replacements. In an effort to effectively manage the borrowing needs of the community in anticipation of a substantial fire station building project, and possible town

¹ “GFOA American Rescue Plan Act Guiding Principles”, <https://www.gfoa.org/american-rescue-plan-spending-guiding-principles>.

hall renovation, staff's recommendation was to leverage a portion of the ARPA funds to help address the backlog of projects from the Town's Six-year Capital Improvement Program. As previously discussed, the capital projects offered for consideration, such as the Fire Engine Replacement and the Sidewalk Repair Plan, are known needs that will require funding either with one-time ARPA grant funds or general tax dollars.

Project	Category	Cost Estimate
Fire Engine Replacement	Major Equipment Replacement	\$ 800,000
Highway Garage Tight Tank	Water/Sewer Infrastructure	\$ 400,000
Proctor School Roof Drain Repairs	General Infrastructure	\$ 38,000
Master Plan - Sidewalk Plan Phase 1	General Infrastructure	\$ 400,000
Affordable Housing (NAHC)²	Housing	\$ 100,000
FY23 Operating Budget Subsidy for OPEB	Operations	\$ 250,000
Assabet Park Fence	General Infrastructure	\$ 20,000
Pickleball Alternates	General Infrastructure	\$ 18,000
Be Well Northborough Initiative	Public Health	\$ 100,000
COVID Expense Reserve	Public Health	\$ 132,092
	TOTAL	\$ 2,158,092



In addition to the projects that were proposed for consideration using the first half of the ARPA funding, it is anticipated that costs associated with the full Proctor School roof replacement would be considered in the second round, as well as projects and initiatives still to come from the Downtown Master Plan/Vision process. It is anticipated that the business community would be heavily involved in the Downtown process, which may lead to appropriate grant or incentive programs designed to enhance the overall economic vitality of the Town as a whole. A few of these additional projects are included here for purposes of discussion and possible consideration.

² The \$100,000 for the Affordable Housing Project was rescinded due to a lack of overall state grant funding for the project

Project	Explanation	Cost Estimate
Proctor Elementary School Flat Roof Replacement	On February 28 th the Board of Selectmen authorized the School Superintendent to file a Statement of Interest (SOI) with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) regarding replacement of the 40,000 square foot flat sections of the Proctor Elementary School roof. The Town previously replaced the peaked metal roof sections several years ago. The Town is seeking MSBA's assistance in paying for approximately 45% of the total project cost, which is estimated to be between \$1.5 and \$1.65 million. The school department received \$38,000 of ARPA funding in March of 2022 to make immediate repairs to the downspouts and drains in order to resolve some of the ponding water issues on the roof. It is anticipated that approximately \$880,000 in FY2024 ARPA funding would be needed to match MSBA's grant, if approved. Additional interim repair funds may also be needed to temporarily stabilize the roof so the Town could hold out for the MSBA grant. If unsuccessful in obtaining the MSBA grant, the Town may need to fund the full replacement cost.	\$880,000 (if MSBA grant received) to \$1.65 million
Hybrid Meeting Room Modifications	The Legislature extended the ability for communities to continue with remote meetings until December of 2023. In anticipation of that date, and to create a hybrid meeting space that incorporates in person participation, as well as remote participation, funding will need to be identified to complete modifications to the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall. The cost will depend on the scope of the project which has yet to be determined.	\$50,000 to \$100,000
Staffing Study	As the Town continues to grow and expand departmental services and responsibilities, it is important to ensure that adequate resources are being committed to allow successful execution of our stated priorities. During the recent pandemic, several departments experienced extended periods of overwhelming workload. The purpose of a comprehensive staffing study is to determine whether the Town is structured and staffed to effectively deliver services to the community, identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and evaluate the policies, procedures, and best practices used by the Town.	\$100,000
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan	In January of 2022, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, one of which was to conduct a DEI Strategic Plan. Should the Board choose to adopt that recommendation, funding will need to be identified to complete such study. To read the full	\$100,000

	recommendations of the Committee, please visit: https://www.town.northborough.ma.us/diversity-and-inclusion-committee .	
Master Plan Implementation Downtown Revitalization	April 2022 Town Meeting approved \$150,000 for a Downtown Master Plan/Visioning process, which will include input from staff, board and committee members, residents, and most importantly, business owners. The second phase of the project will be implementing the vision, which will likely include various capital investments, as well as partnership initiatives with downtown businesses.	TBD
White Cliffs Reuse	As the White Cliffs Reuse Committee continues its work in search of a permanent solution to restore the building, additional stabilization and/or preservation funding may be required to make the building attractive to a potential private partner. ARPA funds may also be used to leverage potential grants or private investment in the facility.	TBD
Board of Selectmen Strategic Plan	Strategic planning is a long-standing “best practice” in public finance. This is for good reason, as it is important to think strategically and long-term in a volatile and resource-constrained environment. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recently updated its criteria as part of the Distinguished Budget Award program, with new emphasis on strategic planning. The Board may wish to use ARPA funds to engage an independent third party to work with Town Officials to go through a formal strategic planning process.	TBD
Additional COVID Expense Reserve	Initial staff proposals included holding \$132,092 aside as a COVID expense reserve in anticipation of additional waves or variants that require direct action from the Town to address the needs of the community and Town operations. Given recent information (detailed below) from DESE, the Board should consider an additional reserve to address any unforeseen COVID expenses until funds need to be full obligated in December of 2024. Prior to that date, the Board may wish to reconsider the reserve, applying new information prior to full expenditure in December of 2026.	Unknown

As referenced above, town staff strongly recommends holding an additional reserve aside to address unknown future COVID-19 needs as we move through the phases of ARPA funding obligation and expenditure. The Town may not see any additional financial support from the State or Federal Government to address any new variants or waves that come following the initial delivery of both the CARES Act funding (now completed) and ARPA funding. It is critical that Northborough set aside

adequate funding to prepare for the possibility of needing additional resources, PPE, testing, or funding for vaccination clinics in the future.

On May 25, new COVID-19 guidance was released by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Among this guidance was an update for the COVID-19 Testing Program for the Summer and Fall of 2022. For Summer 2022, the state will continue to provide self-tests (at-home antigen tests) for symptomatic testing for school-based programs. CIC services (state testing services), software, and staffing will no longer be available. Schools and districts will need to provide staff for in-school testing throughout the summer.

Beginning in Fall 2022, the state will no longer be providing test kits or COVID testing services to schools starting in September. Districts can decide if they would like to continue testing for the school year and how that will work in their schools. However, DESE and DPH strongly recommend that schools and districts who plan to implement their own testing programs, only use it for symptomatic rapid testing. These test kits can be purchased through the statewide contract.

	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Fall 2022
Surveillance (both pooled and self-tests) & Test and Stay testing	Current program continues	No state program support	No state program support
Symptomatic testing	Current program continues	Schools will have access to state-provided self-tests for school-based summer programs	Schools can purchase self-tests through statewide contract
CIC Health Support (including managing consent forms)	Current program continues	CIC Health services no longer available through the state	CIC Health services no longer available through the state

In order to ensure that we have adequate funding to support a potential testing program at the schools in the Fall, the Town should hold a portion of the ARPA funds as a COVID expense reserve.

Review of Grant Funding and Programming to Address Effects of Covid-19

Shifting gears from the ARPA rules and potential projects, the balance of this memo provides a brief summary of the many programs, initiatives, and resources currently in place or planned as part of Northborough's ongoing COVID response and recovery.

In addition to ARPA funds, Town staff has leveraged significant grant funding from state and federal entities to address the mental health, public health, and overall wellness of the community. Many of the programs and grants detailed below are directly related to specific public health needs that have arisen out of the pandemic. These include additional mental health support and resources, programs to address food insecurity, as well as transportation assistance.

- 1. Public Health Excellence Grant for Shared Services:** In 2021, the Town was awarded a Department of Public Health Grant in the amount of \$950,000 over three years. In response, the Town created the Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health (GBPH), a public health partnership comprised of Northborough, Southborough, Westborough, and Boylston, to centrally deliver identified services through the grant. The grant provides 1.5 FTE contracted public health nurses to support the ongoing public health needs for all community members. Additionally, the grant supports a shared Health Inspector/Agent (Northborough employee) who provides routine food and housing inspections for Northborough, Boylston, and Southborough. The grant covers the cost of new food and housing inspectional software and equipment for all four towns. Lastly, this grant has supported the purchase of medical supplies including at-home COVID-19 tests.
- 2. Local Health Support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing:** In 2021, the Town was awarded a Department of Public Health Grant in the amount of \$320,00 over two years. This grant supports the towns of Northborough, Boylston, Southborough, and Westborough and provides 1 FTE contracted public health nurse and a part-time Epidemiologist (Northborough employee) to continue to monitor and provide data on COVID-19 and its variants. This grant was used to purchase medical supplies including at-home COVID-19 test kits, PPE, and nursing supplies to support a new home wellness check program.
- 3. Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health Home Wellness Check Program:** Starting this summer, GBPH public health nurses supported by the above-mentioned grants are providing free home wellness checks to residents in need. The Health Department is collaborating with the Senior Center and Fire Department to identify residents who may benefit from this voluntary program. Nurses conducting home wellness checks will assess health needs and connect residents to resources. The program is designed to address issues such as medical needs and isolation in response to COVID-19. Follow-up visits will be scheduled as needed.
- 4. MetroWest Health Foundation Youth Mental Health Grant:** Northborough Public Schools collaborated with the Health Department and was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the MetroWest Health Foundation in June of 2022, to expand mental health services to students. This grant will allow Northborough Public Schools to contract with Assabet Valley Collaborative's Family Success Partnership (FSP) to provide in-person licensed clinician hours at Northborough Public Schools. In addition, FSP will provide consultation and professional development services to support the staff at Northborough Public Schools, challenged with meeting the increasing mental health needs of students. To implement this new program, FSP will be contracted to provide 20 in-person hours weekly in the Northborough Public Schools during the academic year, with an anticipated start date of September 2022. <https://mwhealth.org/stories/1-7-million-in-grants-awarded-to-local-nonprofit-organizations>

5. **MetroWest Health Foundation COVID-19 Emergency Response Grant:** The Town was awarded a \$50,000 grant to support COVID-19 outreach, education, testing, and vaccination. This grant supports a temporary part-time Outreach Coordinator through the Health Department who is assisting with distribution of COVID-19 test kits, education and outreach, vaccination efforts and development of a community resource guide. Essential Protection Kits which include COVID-19 test kits, KN95 masks, surgical masks, sanitizers, and other information were distributed to all town residents who are receiving meals-on-wheels through Baypath Elder Services. Additionally, these kits were distributed through the Senior Center and the Northborough Food Pantry.
6. **Baypath Elder Services Grab and Go Produce Program:** Baypath Elder Services is directly funding a new fresh produce distribution program for residents aged 60 and older. This program will begin in July and continue through September. Baypath Elder Services is contracting with a local farm to deliver fresh, local produce every two weeks to the Senior Center. Senior Center staff and volunteers will assist with packing 25 bags of produce each week to distribute to residents who come to the Senior Center. The goal of this program is two-fold – provide fresh produce to seniors as well as encourage seniors to visit the senior center for social engagement opportunities.
7. **Baypath Elder Services Title IIIB Medical Transportation Aid:** The Northborough Senior Center has acquired grant funding to provide a taxi transportation option for seniors to healthcare facilities outside of the Central Massachusetts area. The funding will allow those with limited income and family resources to access transportation needed to reach healthcare appointments. This program is intended to augment the Town's existing transportation program which is funded by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) and managed through the Northborough Senior Center.
8. **Jail Diversion Clinician Grant Program:** For the past three years the police departments of Northborough, Westborough, and Southborough have partnered with the Advocates Jail Diversion Program. This Massachusetts Department of Mental Health grant funded position provides a master's level clinician to be imbedded within the three departments on a full-time basis, working out of the three stations on a rotating schedule. As the program name indicates, it is intended to divert persons in mental health crisis or substance use disorders from arrest, and the criminal justice system, to community-based support, resources, and treatment. Moving forward, Northborough and Southborough have partnered in a new DMH grant application for a shared clinician dedicated to just the two towns.
9. **INTERFACE Referral Service:** In 2021, the Town contracted with William James College's Interface Referral Service. Interface is a free, confidential service connecting residents and public-school students to mental health providers. Residents in need of mental health services are typically connected to a licensed clinician specializing in their area of concern within two weeks. Interface referred over fifty cases in FY2022 and connected children and adults in need with counseling services. This service delivery model has been very effective at connecting an unlimited number of residents with ongoing support and therapy, which allows Town resources to remain focused on short-term crisis intervention and resource referral assistance. For more details about Interface service, please visit <http://interface.williamjames.edu/>.

10. **Be Well Northborough Initiative:** Given the extensive resources dedicated to managing the COVID-19 emergency responses, the Town also wanted to address the more general underlying feelings of anxiety and isolation experienced by residents due to the extended nature of the pandemic. The result was the creation of the “Be Well Northborough” wellness initiative.

On March 14, \$100,000 in funding for the Be Well Northborough initiative was approved by the Board of Selectmen. Be Well Northborough is a collaborative health and wellness initiative aimed at helping our community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative is focused on curating new and existing health and wellness resources in our community through a shared community calendar and outreach activities with the goal of collaboratively engaging with the community to promote general health and wellness.

The Be Well Northborough Working Group was formed with the goal of collaborating across town departments to offer new programming and raise awareness of existing resources available that will help our community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and address issues such as social isolation, mental health, substance use, and overall wellness. The Be Well Northborough Working Group includes department heads from Police, Fire, Recreation, Family and Youth Services, Northborough Senior Center/Council on Aging, Health, Library, and Schools, as well as the Assistant Town Administrator/Diversity & Inclusion Committee staff liaison.

To date, the Be Well Northborough Initiative has funded and/or developed numerous programs and is currently in discussions with several additional community partners to discuss funding for future initiatives. For more information on planned programs, future initiatives, or to suggest a program, please visit: <https://www.town.northborough.ma.us/bewell> or visit our newly created Community Calendar at: <https://www.town.northborough.ma.us/>.

Local Business Resources and Support

Throughout the pandemic, local businesses have dealt with significant challenges in dealing with the effects of COVID-19, including everything from managing the constantly evolving safety measures, significantly reduced demand for services and supply chain issues, as well as changes to available workforce. The State of Massachusetts and Federal Government has been responsive to the needs of small businesses across the Commonwealth. Throughout the pandemic, the Town of Northborough worked closely with the 495 MetroWest Partnership and the Corridor 9 Chamber of Commerce to publicize and share information about these valuable resources. A summary of the key programs is included in an attachment to this memo. While many of the programs are now expired, some could potentially receive an additional round of funding.

Most of the programs detailed in the attachment resulted in direct financial assistance to businesses in the early stages of the pandemic, prior to detailed health data on the spread of the virus, the development of the vaccine, and the curb of the spread. As we move forward, most existing businesses no longer require the acute support provided at the start of the pandemic. Rather, they will likely be seeking long-term partnerships and infrastructure support to ensure that their businesses can fully recover and thrive. To that end, the Town has an important role to play in supporting the next phase of recovery, which we intend to achieve, in part, through a focus on a downtown revitalization initiative. Programs that support the general promotion of a healthy business environment, including wayfinding assistance, shared parking initiatives, walkability improvements, destination focal points, and programs that incentivize

businesses to make the kind of changes or aesthetic improvements to be identified during the upcoming Downtown Master Plan/Visioning process.

There has been a significant amount of State and Federal support provided for small and mid-size businesses through the pandemic. However, the Town recognizes that the availability of ARPA funding provides a unique opportunity to partner with businesses to create mutually beneficial outcomes. As you know, the Master Plan Implementation Committee has been meeting over the last several months and identified downtown revitalization as its top priority. Town Meeting approved \$150,000 in funding to begin the Downtown Visioning process, which will include input from staff, board and committee members, residents, and most importantly, business owners. Through that process, it is our goal to identify partnership opportunities with businesses and possible grant or loan programs to encourage improvements that reflect the agreed upon priorities of all community stakeholders.

Conclusion:

As you can see from the information provided, Northborough has done exceedingly well throughout the pandemic and emerged as a regional leader in addressing the critical public health impacts of COVID-19. As we look forward to continued recovery efforts, the proposed ARPA projects and initiatives outlined in this memo seek to restore cuts from prior years related to lost revenues, as well as use other dedicated grants and programs whenever possible in order to save ARPA funds for priorities not eligible for other federal and state assistance programs. Additionally, the Town seeks to follow GFOA best practices and Town's Fiscal Policies regarding use of one-time revenues to avoid creating new programs or add-ons to existing programs that require ongoing financial commitment. We recognize the Board's commitment to hearing public input on how ARPA funding can best serve the community. We welcome that input and look forward to establishing a path forward for obligating and expending the ARPA funds in the best interest of the community.

ATTACHMENT

The following programs have been available to businesses at various times during the pandemic.

1. **Economic Injury Disaster Loan:** An Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) can provide up to \$2 million to small businesses impacted by the coronavirus shutdown. Principal and interest payments on the EIDL can be deferred for the first year. Program sunset in December of 2021.
2. **Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF):** The American Rescue Plan Act established the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF) to provide funding to help restaurants and other eligible businesses remain open. This program provided restaurants with funding equal to their pandemic-related revenue loss up to \$10 million per business, and no more than \$5 million per physical location. Recipients were not required to repay the funding if funds are used for eligible uses no later than March 11, 2023. Eligible entities must have experienced pandemic-related revenue loss, and included restaurants; food stands, food trucks, and food carts; caterers; cars, saloons, lounges, and taverns; and snack and nonalcoholic beverage bars. Some additional businesses were eligible if onsite sales to the public comprised at least 33% of gross receipts, including bakeries; brewpubs, tasting rooms, taprooms; breweries and/or microbreweries; wineries and distilleries; and inns. SBA began accepting applications for RRF on May 3, 2021. SBA announced the closure of the program on July 2, 2021, as funds were depleted; \$72.2 billion of funds were requested of the \$28.6 billion program.
3. **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP):** The PPP provided a short-term loan to cover certain payroll costs, mortgage interest, rent, and utilities. The maximum loan amount was generally 2.5 times the average of your last 12 months of certain payroll costs, up to \$10 million. Payroll costs were capped at \$100,000 per employee. The interest rate on already distributed loans is 1%. These loans were originally due in two years, but subsequent legislation amending the PPP extended the loan term for loans made on or after June 5, 2020, to five years. Program sunset in May of 2021.
4. **Shuttered Venue Operator's Grant (SVOG):** The SVOG was established by Congress to provide over \$16 billion in grants to shuttered venues. Depending on when an entity started operating, they may be eligible for grants equal to 45% of their 2019 gross earned revenue or \$10 million, whichever is less. Eligible entities for an SVOG include live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, museum operators, motion picture theatre operators or owners, and talent representatives. The funds may be used to cover expenses such as payroll costs, rent payments, utility payments. Program sunset in August of 2021.
5. **Small Business Administration Debt Relief:** In April 2020, SBA offered Debt Relief to certain small businesses holding 7(a) loans. Under this relief, the SBA paid the principal and interest for six months beginning March 27, 2020 for qualified new and current holders of 7(a) loans. Businesses who already held a covered 7(a) SBA loan or received a 7(a) SBA loan were eligible to apply prior to September 27, 2020. Awarded relief was applied to covered loans beginning with payments due after March 27, 2020. This debt relief was available only to 7(a) loans and not to loans made under the Paycheck Protection Program, 504 loans, or microloans.

6. **Main Street Lending Program:** The Main Street Lending Program (MSLP) was established by the Treasury Department with \$75 billion from the CARES Act to enhance access to credit for small and medium-sized businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic which were in sound financial condition prior to the pandemic. The program was designed to help credit flow to medium-sized and small businesses that had been in good financial condition but needed loans to subsist until they have recovered from, or adapted to, the impacts of the pandemic. The program offered 4-year loans, with floating rates, and principal and interest payments deferred during the first year to assist businesses facing temporary cash flow interruptions. The loans ranged in size from \$500,000 to \$200 million. Main Street loans were not eligible to be forgiven. The loans were underwritten and approved by eligible lenders.
7. **2020 Small Business Recovery Loan Fund:** In March 2020, the Baker-Polito Administration announced a \$10 million loan fund to provide financial relief to small businesses affected by COVID-19. The \$10 million Small Business Recovery Loan Fund provided emergency capital up to \$75,000 to Massachusetts-based businesses impacted by COVID-19 with under 50 full- and part-time employees, including nonprofits. Loans were immediately available to eligible businesses with no payments due for the first 6 months
8. **CMRPC Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program:** In June 2020, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) administered a grant assistance program to small businesses in Central Massachusetts impacted by the closure and losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant program was funded by the Attorney General's Office, through the Small Business Relief Partnership Grant Program. CMRPC was awarded \$45,000 to distribute funds to small businesses in Central Massachusetts.
9. **Hire Now Employer Training Grant Program:** HireNow provides funding to eligible Massachusetts employers who hire and retain Massachusetts residents. Funding is awarded at a flat rate of \$4,000 for each eligible newly hired employee. The goal of HireNow is to address hiring challenges experienced by Massachusetts employers because of the COVID-19 pandemic. HireNow provides resources to enable Massachusetts employers to broaden their recruiting practices to include workers who do not meet traditional qualifications but can fulfill job requirements with additional training upon hire. Employers are encouraged to rethink hiring practices, minimum qualifications, and onboarding processes to consider candidates with qualification that may differ from traditional standards to increase staffing levels in a tight labor market. Employers may be approved for up to \$400,000 or 100 eligible newly hired employees. The program is not currently accepting new applications for new employer registrations, but the Commonwealth is committed to reopening the program if additional funding is made available.
10. **2020-2021 Small Business Grant Relief Program:** Applications for a \$668 million state program to provide financial assistance to Massachusetts small businesses were open until January 15, 2021. Eligible businesses could receive up to \$75,000, capped at up to 3 months of operating expenses, as evidenced by 2019 Federal Tax Returns. Eligible uses of the funds included employee payroll and benefit costs, mortgage interest, rent, utilities, and interest on other debt obligations.
11. **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance:** As of April 2020, claimants were able to file for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). PUA was available to self-employed individuals, including gig workers, freelancers, and independent contractors; those seeking part-time employment; claimants that had an insufficient work history to qualify for benefits; and

claimants that had been laid off from churches and religious institutions who were not eligible for benefits under state law.

In addition to grant and loan programs made available to businesses throughout the Commonwealth, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has provided resources and guidance on several tax credits that businesses may take advantage of to mitigate the financial impacts of COVID-19.

- 12. Employee Retention Tax Credit:** The IRS will give a tax credit to eligible businesses that continue to employ their workers. The credit is applied against the Social Security payroll tax. For wages paid after March 12, 2020 and before January 1, 2021, the credit is equal to 50% of qualified wages paid during the time period and is capped at \$5000 per employee. For wages paid after January 1, 2021, the credit is equal to 70% of qualified wages paid and is capped at \$7000 per employee. If the credit exceeds the Social Security portion of the payroll tax, the excess amount can be paid to the business directly. The credit is not available on salaries paid to business owners or their relatives and the same wages claimed under the credit cannot be used to qualify for PPP loan forgiveness.
- 13. Coronavirus-Related Paid Leave for Workers and Tax Credits for Small-and Mid-Size Businesses:** The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), enacted March 18, 2020, gives all American businesses with fewer than 500 employees funds to provide their employees with paid leave, either for the employee's own health needs or to care for family members. The COVID-related Tax Relief Act of 2020, enacted December 27, 2020, amended and extended the tax credits (and the availability of advance payments of the tax credits) for paid sick and family leave under the FFCRA. Business owners may get immediate access to the credit by reducing the employment tax deposits you are otherwise required to make. If your employment tax deposits are not sufficient to cover the credit, you may request an advance payment from the IRS. The ARPA further amended and extended the tax credits (and the availability of advance payments of the tax credits) for paid sick and family leave.
- 14. Federal Tax Credits for Vaccinations:** A federal tax credit was made available to small and medium-sized businesses to fully offset the cost of paid leave for employees to get vaccinated and recover from any after-effects of vaccination. Funded through the American Rescue Plan, the tax credit offset the cost for businesses and nonprofits with fewer than 500 employees for up to 80 hours, limited to \$511 per day of paid sick leave offered between April 1 and September 30, 2021. The paid leave credits under the ARP were tax credits against the employer's share of the Medicare tax. The tax credits were refundable, meaning the employer was entitled to payment of the full amount of the credits if it exceeded the employer's share of the Medicare tax.

For more information on tax relief for businesses, please visit: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-tax-relief-for-businesses-and-tax-exempt-entities>. This information is not intended to be tax advice and we recommend consulting a tax preparer or accountant prior to applying for any of the programs above.

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**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH**

WARRANT FOR 2022 STATE ELECTION

WORCESTER, SS.

To the Constables of the Town of NORTHBOROUGH

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Northborough who are qualified to vote in Elections to vote at:

Precinct 1	Melican Middle School	145 Lincoln St
Precinct 2	Melican Middle School	145 Lincoln St
Precinct 3	Melican Middle School	145 Lincoln St
Precinct 4	Melican Middle School	145 Lincoln St

on **TUESDAY, THE EIGHTH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2022**, from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. for the following purpose:

To cast their votes in the State Election for the candidates for the following offices:

GOVERNOR	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
ATTORNEY GENERAL	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
SECRETARY OF STATE.....	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
TREASURER	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
AUDITOR	FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS.	SECOND DISTRICT
COUNCILLOR.....	SEVENTH DISTRICT
SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT	FIRST WORCESTER DISTRICT
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT	TWELFTH WORCESTER DISTRICT
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT.....	NINETEENTH WORCESTER DISTRICT
DISTRICT ATTORNEY	MIDDLE DISTRICT
SHERIFF	WORCESTER COUNTY

QUESTION 1: PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Do you approve of the adoption of an amendment to the constitution summarized below, which was approved by the General Court in joint sessions of the two houses on June 12, 2019 (yeas 147 – nays 48); and again on June 9, 2021 (yeas 159 – nays 41)?

SUMMARY

This proposed constitutional amendment would establish an additional 4% state income tax on that portion of annual taxable income in excess of \$1 million. This income level would be adjusted annually, by the same method used for federal income-tax brackets, to reflect increases in the cost of living. Revenues from this tax would be used, subject to appropriation by the state Legislature, for public education, public colleges and universities; and for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges, and public transportation. The proposed amendment would apply to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2023.

A YES VOTE would amend the state Constitution to impose an additional 4% tax on that portion of incomes over one million dollars to be used, subject to appropriation by the state Legislature, on education and transportation.

A NO VOTE would make no change in the state Constitution relative to income tax.

QUESTION 2: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives on or before May 3, 2022?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would direct the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Division of Insurance to approve or disapprove the rates of dental benefit plans and would require that a dental insurance carrier meet an annual aggregate medical loss ratio for its covered dental benefit plans of 83 percent. The medical loss ratio would measure the amount of premium dollars a dental insurance carrier spends on its members' dental expenses and quality improvements, as opposed to administrative expenses. If a carrier's annual aggregate medical loss ratio is less than 83 percent, the carrier would be required to refund the excess premiums to its covered individuals and groups. The proposed law would allow the Commissioner to waive or adjust the refunds only if it is determined that issuing refunds would result in financial impairment for the carrier.

The proposed law would apply to dental benefit plans regardless of whether they are issued directly by a carrier, through the connector, or through an intermediary. The proposed law would not apply to dental benefit plans issued, delivered, or renewed to a self-insured group or where the carrier is acting as a third-party administrator.

The proposed law would require the carriers offering dental benefit plans to submit information about their current and projected medical loss ratio, administrative expenses, and other financial information to the Commissioner. Each carrier would be required to submit an annual comprehensive financial statement to the Division of Insurance, itemized by market group size and line of business. A carrier that also provides administrative services to one or more self-insured groups would also be required to file an appendix to their annual financial statement with information about its self-insured business. The proposed law would impose a late penalty on a carrier that does not file its annual report on or before April 1.

The Division would be required to make the submitted data public, to issue an annual summary to certain legislative committees, and to exchange the data with the Health Policy Commission. The Commissioner would be required to adopt standards requiring the registration of persons or entities not otherwise licensed or registered by the Commissioner and criteria for the standardized reporting and uniform allocation methodologies among carriers.

The proposed law would allow the Commissioner to approve dental benefit policies for the purpose of being offered to individuals or groups. The Commissioner would be required to adopt regulations to determine eligibility criteria.

The proposed law would require carriers to file group product base rates and any changes to group rating factors that are to be effective on January 1 of each year on or before July 1 of the preceding year. The Commissioner would be required to disapprove any proposed changes to base rates that are excessive, inadequate, or unreasonable in relation to the benefits charged. The Commissioner would also be required to disapprove any change to group rating factors that is discriminatory or not actuarially sound.

The proposed law sets forth criteria that, if met, would require the Commissioner to presumptively disapprove a carrier's rate, including if the aggregate medical loss ratio for all dental benefit plans offered by a carrier is less than 83 percent.

The proposed law would establish procedures to be followed if a proposed rate is presumptively disapproved or if the Commissioner disapproves a rate.

The proposed law would require the Division to hold a hearing if a carrier reports a risk-based capital ratio on a combined entity basis that exceeds 700 percent in its annual report.

The proposed law would require the Commissioner to promulgate regulations consistent with its provisions by October 1, 2023. The proposed law would apply to all dental benefit plans issued, made effective, delivered, or renewed on or after January 1, 2024.

A YES VOTE would regulate dental insurance rates, including by requiring companies to spend at least 83% of premiums on member dental expenses and quality improvements instead of administrative expenses, and by making other changes to dental insurance regulations.

A NO VOTE would make no change in the law relative to the regulations that apply to dental insurance companies.

QUESTION 3: LAW PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives on or before May 3, 2022?

SUMMARY

This proposed law would increase the statewide limits on the combined number of licenses for the sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption (including licenses for “all alcoholic beverages” and for “wines and malt beverages”) that any one retailer could own or control: from 9 to 12 licenses in 2023; to 15 licenses in 2027; and to 18 licenses in 2031.

Beginning in 2023, the proposed law would set a maximum number of “all alcoholic beverages” licenses that any one retailer could own or control at 7 licenses unless a retailer currently holds more than 7 such licenses.

The proposed law would require retailers to conduct the sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption through face-to-face transactions and would prohibit automated or self-checkout sales of alcoholic beverages by such retailers.

The proposed law would alter the calculation of the fine that the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission may accept in lieu of suspending any license issued under the State Liquor Control Act. The proposed law would modify the formula for calculating such fee from being based on the gross profits on the sale of alcoholic beverages to being based on the gross profits on all retail sales.

The proposed law would also add out-of-state motor vehicle licenses to the list of the forms of identification that any holder of a license issued under the State Liquor Control Act, or their agent or employee, may choose to reasonably rely on for proof of a person's identity and age.

A YES VOTE would increase the number of licenses a retailer could have for the sale of alcoholic beverages to be consumed off premises, limit the number of “all-alcoholic beverages” licenses that a retailer could acquire, restrict use of self-checkout, and require retailers to accept customers’ out-of-state identification.

A NO VOTE would make no change in the laws governing the retail sale of alcoholic beverages.

QUESTION 4: REFERENDUM ON AN EXISTING LAW

Do you approve of a law summarized below, which was approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate on May 26, 2022?

SUMMARY

This law allows Massachusetts residents who cannot provide proof of lawful presence in the United States to obtain a standard driver's license or learner's permit if they meet all the other qualifications for a standard license or learner's permit, including a road test and insurance, and provide proof of their identity, date of birth, and residency. The law provides that, when processing an application for such a license or learner's permit or motor vehicle registration, the registrar of motor vehicles may not ask about or create a record of the citizenship or immigration status of the applicant, except as otherwise required by law. This law does not allow people who cannot provide proof of lawful presence in the United States to obtain a REAL ID.

To prove identity and date of birth, the law requires an applicant to present at least two documents, one from each of the following categories: (1) a valid unexpired foreign passport or a valid unexpired Consular Identification document; and (2) a valid unexpired driver's license from any United States state or territory, an original or certified copy of a birth certificate, a valid unexpired foreign national identification card, a valid unexpired foreign driver's license, or a marriage certificate or divorce decree issued by any state or territory of the United States. One of the documents presented by an applicant must include a photograph and one must include a date of birth. Any documents not in English must be accompanied by a certified translation. The registrar may review any documents issued by another country to determine whether they may be used as proof of identity or date of birth.

The law requires that applicants for a driver's license or learner's permit shall attest, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that their license has not been suspended or revoked in any other state, country, or jurisdiction.

The law specifies that information provided by or relating to any applicant or license-holder will not be a public record and shall not be disclosed, except as required by federal law or as authorized by Attorney General regulations, and except for purposes of motor vehicle insurance.

The law directs the registrar of motor vehicles to make regulations regarding the documents required of United States citizens and others who provide proof of lawful presence with their license application.

The law also requires the registrar and the Secretary of the Commonwealth to establish procedures and regulations to ensure that an applicant for a standard driver's license or learner's permit who does not provide proof of lawful presence will not be automatically registered to vote.

The law takes effect on July 1, 2023.

A YES VOTE would keep in place the law, which would allow Massachusetts residents who cannot provide proof of lawful presence in the United States to obtain a driver's license or permit if they meet the other requirements for doing so.

A NO VOTE would repeal this law.

Hereof fail not and make return of this warrant with your doings thereon at the time and place of said voting. Given under our hands this 17th day of OCTOBER 2022.

Mitchell S. Cohen, Chair

Julianne S. Hirsh, Vice Chair

Kristen P. Wixted, Clerk

Jason J. Perreault

T. Scott Rogers

Selectmen of: NORTHBOROUGH

Constable's or designee Return of Service: I have served the Warrant for the November State Election by posting copies of the same at the following places:

Municipal Office Building, U.S. Post Office, Northborough Public Library, Melican Middle School.

Constable or designee

_____, 2022
(month and day)

Warrant must be posted by **November 1st, 2022**, (at least *seven days prior* to the **November 8, 2022**, State Election).

ATTEST: _____

Andrew T. Dowd, Town Clerk

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