



Town of *Dracut*
MASSACHUSETTS

2025 Annual Town Meeting Vote

June 2, 2025

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING VOTE
TOWN OF DRACUT
JUNE 2, 2025**

The Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Dracut was held on Monday, June 2, 2025, at the Lester G. Richardson Center for the Performing Arts, Dracut High School, 1540 Lakeview Ave., Dracut, Massachusetts.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 PM, with a quorum certified by the Town Clerk.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of:

Geraldine Hapenny	01/10/2025	Retired School Employee
Thomas Tobin	01/10/2025	Retired School Teacher
Cecile Gagnon	02/15/2025	Retired Town Employee
Roberta Otremba	03/02/2025	Retired School Teacher
Noella Paquette	04/21/2025	Retired Town Employee
Theresa Carignan	05/06/2025	Retired Town Employee
Cynthia Clason	05/15/2025	Retired School Employee

Nichole Rosado, Valedictorian of Dracut High School Graduating Class of 2025, read the following Tercentennial Proclamation into the minutes:

In accordance with the provision set forth in Article #2 of the June 3rd, 2002 Annual Town Meeting, I hereby publicly proclaim that the time capsule buried on April 28th in the year 2002 at the Tercentennial Park, shown on the Assessors' Map 50 as Lot 202, 1310 Bridge Street, Dracut, Massachusetts, shall be opened and all items therein placed be displayed at a public ceremony to be held in the year Two Thousand One Hundred One (2101), and further that this proclamation will continue to be made each and every year at the Annual Town Meeting, and within the Annual Town Report for the next 76 years.

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Moderator Brian M. Flaherty presented the following declaration marking the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington and Concord:

It was around 2:00 in the morning, on Wednesday, April 19, 1775, when Capt. John Trull of Tewksbury fired three shots across the Merrimack River into Dracut. These shots were signals to Capt. Joseph Bradley Varnum of Dracut, warning him and the Dracut Minutemen who had been training for this very moment that “the Regulars were coming” for a weapons stash, 20 miles away in Concord.

Word quickly spread throughout Dracut that night and a collection of Dracut men - some rich, some poor, some young, some old - came together as one people and made the long 6 hour march towards Concord. They did not arrive in Concord until noon and missed the fighting at the Lexington town green and the Old North Bridge. But the Dracut men were a part of the march following the British soldiers back to Boston and many of those men took part in the ensuing siege of Boston. Two months later, three Dracut men would die at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Dracut's population at the time was 1,173 and of those, 439 men would fight in the Revolutionary War. These 439 sons of Dracut represented 39% of the town's population. No other city or town in the 13 colonies could claim a high participation rate of its residents – not Boston, not Philadelphia, not Charleston, no one.

This spring, Town meetings across our commonwealth are marking this 250th anniversary of the start of the Revolutionary War. Town Meeting is a fitting venue to honor and remember those who fought to preserve the very thing we are doing tonight – self-government. Town Meeting form of government in Massachusetts dates back to 1680 and is the purest form of democracy in our commonwealth, if not the world. And quite frankly, we almost lost it as Town Meetings and local government control had been suspended by the British Parliament in the aftermath of the Boston Tea Party.

Those 439 Dracut men put aside any differences they may have had and came together for a common cause. They did so because they loved their freedom, they loved their town, they loved their colony, and, undoubtedly, they loved one another. We thank these men for helping to preserve Town Meeting and let us honor their sacrifices tonight through our respectful and civil discussions, reminding the world that democracy, Greek for “people power”, is still the greatest form of government designed by man.

The National Anthem was performed by Dracut Community Chorus

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The following amendment was made and seconded from the floor:

"I move to suspend the agenda as presented in the Warrant and to amend said agenda to begin with Articles #27 & #28, Zoning Bylaw Amendments – MBTA communities District Overlay."

Submitted by Gerard Cassista

By Majority, the amendment passed.

**ARTICLE #27
RECONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS ARTICLE ZONING BY LAW AMENDMENTS
MBTA COMMUNITIES OVERLAY DISTRICT (MBTA)**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 156, No 669) Article #27 failed.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Assistant Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen made no recommendation
Planning Board recommended approval

**ARTICLE #28
ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS
MBTA COMMUNITIES OVERLAY DISTRICT (MBTA)**

The following amendment was made and seconded from the floor:

"I move to refer Article #28, MBTA Communities Overlay District back to the Board of Selectmen."

By Majority, the amendment failed.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Assistant Town Manager/Community Development Director.

By Majority, Article #28 failed.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Assistant Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen made no recommendation
Planning Board recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #1
READING OF TOWN MEETING ARTICLES**

By Majority, the Town voted to waive the reading of the Town Meeting Articles as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #2
READING OF REPORTS**

By Majority, the Town voted to hear the report of the Town Accountant, the Board of Selectmen, and any other committee having a direction from previous Town Meetings.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #3
COMPENSATING BALANCE AGREEMENTS**

By Majority, the Town voted to authorize the Town Treasurer to enter into compensating balance agreements during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, as permitted by General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53F.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #4
SALARIES & COMPENSATION ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Due to the potential conflict of interest, the Moderator recused himself and passed the gavel to the Town Clerk, Jayne Boissonneault.

The following Amendment was made and seconded from the floor:

“I move to amend Article #4 by setting the School Committee stipends to zero.”

By Majority, the amendment failed.

Submitted by Rebecca Duda

By Majority, the Town voted to fix the salaries and compensation of all elective officers of the Town, as provided by General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 108, as amended, to be effective July 1, 2025, and to raise and appropriate the following sums of money under the various Town Departments.

Moderator:	\$ 550.00
Board of Selectmen:	\$ 2,000.00
School Committee:	\$ 2,000.00

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING VOTE
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**ARTICLE #5
FY2025 OPERATING BUDGETS**

Motion A:

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 648, No 75), the Town voted to transfer the sum of \$118,613, specifically \$32,000 from the Technology Stabilization Fund and \$86,613 from the Town Hall Stabilization Fund, to be used by the Board of Assessors to reduce the tax levy for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, to offset the cost of technicality and the Town Hall debt payments.

- \$32,000 from the Technology Stabilization Fund to offset the cost of technology equipment and upgrades.
- \$86,613 from the Town Hall Stabilization Fund

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

Motion B:

By Majority, the Town voted to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, the sum of one hundred thirty-two million, one hundred thirty-two thousand, one hundred and fifteen dollars (\$132,179,115) for the following necessary and expedient purposes of the Town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026;

General Government	\$4,991,448
Public Safety	\$11,879,290
Public Works	\$8,058,538
Education	\$69,871,780
Health & Human Services	\$805,633
Culture & Recreation	\$1,016,893
Debt, Insurance, and other Expenses	\$35,674,146

and that the Town transfer the following sums to meet, in part, appropriations made at this Town Meeting:

- \$10,600 from the Cemetery Sale of Lots Fund
- \$840,000 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund
- \$191,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund
- \$300,000 from the School Cafeteria Fund
- \$5000 from Conservation/Wetlands Protection Fund

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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The following amendment was made and seconded from the floor:

“I move to proceed to Article #23 and then return to original sequence.”

Submitted by Ivy Ngugi

By Majority, the amendment passed.

**ARTICLE #23
ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS
ACCESSORY USES – ANIMALS**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 54, No 639), Article #23 failed.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Assistant Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Planning Board recommended approval

**ARTICLE #6
TRANSFER OF FREE CASH**

By Majority, the Town voted to transfer from free cash the sum of \$3,833,571 to be used by the Board of Assessors to reduce the tax levy for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #7
APPROPRIATE FY2026 ENTERPRISE FUNDS BUDGETS**

By Majority, the Town voted to appropriate the following sums of money to operate the Kenwood Water Department, Sewer Department, and Stormwater Division of the Department of Public Works during fiscal year 2026 under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53F½:

Expense	Kenwood Water
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ 48,026
<i>Expenses</i>	\$ 2,361,550
NET	\$ 2,409,576

Said sums to be funded from Kenwood Water receipts, except that \$564,576 shall be funded from retained earnings.

Expense	Dracut Sewer
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ 283,500
<i>Expenses</i>	\$ 7,979,821
NET	\$8,263,321

Said sums to be funded from sewer receipts, except that \$521,945 shall be funded from retained earnings.

Expense	Stormwater
<i>Personnel</i>	\$262,805
<i>Expenses</i>	\$ 161,000
NET	\$423,805

Said sums to be raised in the tax levy.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #8
AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE FROM PEG ACCESS & CABLE-RELATED FUND**

By Majority, the Town voted to appropriate \$480,000 from the PEG Access and Cable-Related Fund, to be expended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 under the direction of the Town Manager, to be used for necessary and expedient cable-related purposes, consistent with the Town's license agreement with Comcast and Dracut's Cable Access operation.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ARTICLE #9
APPROPRIATE AND TRANSFER FUNDS IN RECREATION REVOLVING
TO GENERAL FUND**

By Majority, the Town voted to appropriate the sum of \$45,000, from Dracut's Recreation Revolving Account receipts to fund expenses related to the Recreation Department Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #10
UNPAID BILLS**

By 4/5ths Majority (Yes 504, No 30), the Town voted to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of \$1,806 to pay any unpaid bills of the prior fiscal year including those outlined herein:

Vendor	Department	Amount
Encore Fire Protection	32125- Building Maint.	\$1,806

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ARTICLE #11
APPROPRIATE FOR THE FY2026 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
OPERATING BUDGET AND CPA PROJECTS**

By Majority, the Town voted to act on the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee on the FY2026 Community Preservation budget and, pursuant to the recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee, take the following actions:

That the Town reserve for appropriation the following amounts from estimated FY2026 receipts as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee:

1. \$141,260 for the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources;
2. \$141,260 for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing, and the rehabilitation and restoration of community housing acquired or created with CPA funds;
3. \$39,690 for Administrative Expenses and all other necessary and proper expenses of the Community Preservation Committee for FY2026; and
4. \$497,440 appropriated for CPA Debt Service and related costs.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #12
RESCIND PRIOR BORROWING**

By Majority, the Town voted to rescind the unused borrowing authority voted under previous Town Meeting articles as follows:

Project	Town Meeting	Article	Amount
Fire Engine	2022 ATM	14	\$1,340,000
CPA – 144 Greenmont Ave	2015 ATM	20	\$3,000,000
Solar Panels	2023 ATM	40	\$1,100,000

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ARTICLE #13
APPROPRIATION OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION
AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS**

By Majority, the Town voted to transfer from the Community Housing Reserve Fund within the Town of Dracut's Community Preservation Fund, the sum of \$3,000,000, to be used to supplement the Greenmont Senior Housing Project.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #14
APPROPRIATION OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION- LAND PURCHASE**

By Majority, the Town voted to appropriate Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand dollars (\$750,000.00), \$670,625 from the Open Space Reserve Balance and \$79,375 from the Undesignated Fund Balance, for open space purposes under the Community Preservation Program for the purchase of approximately 41 acres, formally known as the Brox Wood Lot, (Book 08408, Page 155) located at 461 Methuen Road as open space, including all related incidental costs; to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager; and further to direct the Board of Selectmen to grant a permanent conservation restriction on said property pursuant to G.L. c. 44B Section 12 and G.L. c. 184 Sections 31-33.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Community Preservation recommended approval

**ARTICLE #15
ESTABLISH AND AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE OF REVOLVING FUNDS UNDER
MASS. GEN. LAWS c. 44, § 53E ½**

By Majority, the Town voted pursuant to the provisions of G.L. Chapter 44, section 53 E1/2, as most recently amended, to amend the General Bylaws by inserting a new bylaw establishing various revolving funds, specifying the departmental receipts to be credited to each fund, the departmental purposes of programs for which each fund may be expended, and the entity authorized to expend each fund, such bylaws to provide as follows:

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ARTICLE #15 (Continued)

**ESTABLISH AND AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE OF REVOLVING FUNDS UNDER
MASS. GEN. LAWS c. 44, § 53E ½**

Program or Purpose	Representative of Board Authorized to Spend	Department Receipts
Council on Aging Revolving Fund	Council on Aging Board	Fees and charges from residents participating and programs and activities.
Library Revolving Fund	Library Board of Trustees	Fees and charges from late book fines, material rental fees and room rental fees.
Recreation Revolving Fund	Recreation Commission	Fees for participation in programs and activities sponsored by the Recreation Department.
Town Flag Revolving Fund	Veterans Officer	Fees and donations
Veterans Concessions Revolving Fund	Recreation Commission	Fees and charges related to operations and activities associated with Veterans Park

Expenditures from each revolving fund set forth herein shall be subject to the limitation established annually by Town Meeting or any increase therein as may be authorized in accordance with G.L. Chapter 44, section 53 E1/2.

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ARTICLE #15 (Continued)

**ESTABLISH AND AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE OF REVOLVING FUNDS UNDER
MASS. GEN. LAWS c. 44, § 53E ½**

And, further, to set FY2026 spending limits for such revolving funds as follows:

Program or Purpose	Use	Proposed Amount
Council on Aging	Programs, trips & senior center needs	\$20,000
Recreation	Programs, events & sports scholarships, camps, etc.	\$225,000
EV Charging	Purchase of energy and energy conservation efforts.	\$150,000
Solar Panels	Expenses related to solar	\$500,000
Town Flag Program	Flags for veterans, celebrations and other materials	\$300
Library	Materials, supplies, and programs for library	\$15,000
Veterans Field Concessions	Programs & events held at Veterans Park	\$6,000

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #16
AMEND FY2025 OPERATING, ENTERPRISE AND CPA BUDGETS**

By Majority, the Town voted to transfer from Retained Earnings the sum of \$100,000 in supplementary appropriations, to be used in conjunction with money appropriated under Article 7 of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, to be used to cover expenditures associated with water service contracts during the current fiscal year.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #17
EASEMENT – 144 Greenmont Avenue/1530 Bridge Street**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 352, No 57), the Town voted to authorize the Board of Selectmen to grant, on behalf of the Town, easements to public utility companies for the purpose of installing and maintain utility company infrastructure on property located at 144 Greenmont Avenue and 1530 Bridge Street, Dracut (as recorded with the Registry in Book 32840, Page 275), inclusive of the rights and privileges as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Asst Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #18
SELECTMEN TO ACCEPT EASEMENTS**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 286, No 127), the Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to acquire on behalf of the Town, easements for the following purposes: roads, sidewalks, vehicular, bicycle or pedestrian access or passage, water, drainage, sewer, fiber-optic cable, electricity and other utilities, where such easements are acquired at no cost to the Town and are required pursuant to a land use permit, site plan review, agreement for utility or drainage, agreement for construction, use, operation and maintenance of infrastructure, or memorandum of understanding.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Asst Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #19
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION BYLAW AMENDMENT**

By Majority, the Town voted to amend Chapter 20, § 20.1 (a) of the Town Bylaws by striking the word 'four' and the section number '6' in section §20.1 (a)(6) and replacing it with the word 'three' and section number '7'; and to add a new subsection '6' which reads, "one member of the Open Space Committee as established by the Town of Dracut and as designated by the Committee as follows:

CHAPTER 20 - COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

20.1 ESTABLISHMENT; APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS; MEMBERSHIP; TERMS OF OFFICE There is hereby established a Community Preservation Committee, consisting of nine (9) voting members, pursuant to the provisions of MGL, Ch.44B, Sec.5, whose purpose is to make recommendations to the Town Meeting for community preservation. The composition of the Committee, the appointing authority and the terms of office for the Committee Members shall be:

EXISTING LANGUAGE:

A. Membership

- (1) One member of the Conservation Commission established under Section 8C of Chapter 40 as designated by the Commission;
- (2) One member of the Recreation Commission established under Section 2 of Chapter 45 as designated by the Commission;
- (3) One member of the Historical Commission established under Section 8D of Chapter 40 as designated by the Commission;
- (4) One member of the Planning Board established under Section 81A of Chapter 41 as designated by the Board;
- (5) One member of the Housing Authority established under Section 3 of Chapter 121B as designated by the Authority;
- (6) Four members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, all of whom must be Town Residents

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**ARTICLE #19 (Continued)
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION BYLAW AMENDMENT**

NEW LANGUAGE: (proposed change appears in bold print)

- (1) One member of the Conservation Commission established under Section 8C of Chapter 40 as designated by the Commission;
- (2) One member of the Recreation Commission established under Section 2 of Chapter 45 as designated by the Commission;
- (3) One member of the Historical Commission established under Section 8D of Chapter 40 as designated by the Commission;
- (4) One member of the Planning Board established under Section 81A of Chapter 41 as designated by the Board;
- (5) One member of the Housing Authority established under Section 3 of Chapter 121B as designated by the Authority;
- (6) One member of the Open Space Committee established by the Town of Dracut and as designated by the Committee; and**
- (7) Three members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, all of whom must be Town Residents.**

Submitted by Tony Archinski, Selectman
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #20
EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN PARTS OF CH.135 OF
MA SPECIAL ACTS OF 2024**

By Majority, the Town voted to exempt itself in accordance with the terms of Chapter 135 of the Massachusetts Special Acts of 2024, specifically Section 124(k)(2)(i), of 'An Act Modernizing Firearm Statute,' so called, whereby permitting licensed firearm owners to legally carry their personal firearms within municipal administrative buildings and facilities, excluding schools and school events held on school property.

Submitted by Josh Taylor, Selectman
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

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**ARTICLE #21
ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS
FLOODPLAIN AND FLOODWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 320, No 39), the Town voted to remove the text within Section 5.1 Floodplain and Floodway Overlay District of the Dracut Zoning Bylaw and replace it with the Section 5.1 Floodplain and Floodway Overlay District as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Asst Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Planning Board recommended approval

**ARTICLE #22
ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS**

By Majority, the Town voted to amend the Zoning Bylaw by replacing Section 7.4 Accessory Dwelling Units in its entirety, amending Section 3.3 Table of Permitted Uses, and adding new Definitions to Section 9 as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Alison Manugian, Asst Town Manager/Community Development Director
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Planning Board recommended approval

**ARTICLE #23
(was taken out of order following Article #5, see Pg. 8 above)**

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**ARTICLE #24
ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS**

By Majority, the Town voted to amend the Town Bylaw Chapter 2, Sections 4 & 5 to provide alternative means of publishing legal notices for public hearings as printed in the warrant, except the text “as outlined within MGL c.40A, s.11”.

Submitted by Kate Hodges, Town Manager
Board of Selectmen recommended approval

**ARTICLE #25
INCREASE SEWER DEPARTMENT INSPECTION FEE RATE**

By Majority, the Town vote to increase the Sewer Department Inspection Fee rate from \$22/hour to \$50/hour with a two (2) hour minimum. This request is directly related to increased wages and operating costs since the existing Inspection Fee was set in 2012.

Submitted by Dracut Sewer Commission
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ARTICLE #26
INCREASE SEWER DEPARTMENT IMPACT FEE RATE**

By Majority, Article #26 failed.

Submitted by Dracut Sewer Commission
Board of Selectmen recommended approval
Finance Committee recommended approval

**ARTICLES #27 & #28
(were taken out of order prior to Article #1, see Pg. 1 above)**

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**ARTICLE #29
ZONING DESIGNATION – 10 DINLEY STREET**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes, 302, No 39), the Town vote to approve Article #29 Zoning Designation – 10 Dinley Street as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Attorney Joseph Clermont
No recommendation by Board of Selectmen
Planning Board recommended approval

**ARTICLE #30
ZONING DESIGNATION – 14 DINLEY STREET**

By 2/3rds Majority (Yes 302, No 25), the Town voted to approve Article #30 Zoning Designation – 14 Dinley Street as printed in the warrant.

Submitted by Attorney Joseph Clermont
No recommendation by Board of Selectmen
Planning Board recommended approval

A motion was made and seconded from the floor to dissolve the June 2, 2025 Annual Town Meeting at 11:53 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Jayne Boissonneault, Town Clerk