



42 Main Street
PO Box 83
Wilton, NH

**VOTER'S GUIDE
EXPLANATION OF TOWN WARRANT ARTICLES
YEAR 2019
TOWN MEETING VERSION**

To help voters have a clearer understanding of each topic, we have prepared the ensuing Voter's Guide for your consideration. This document is meant to explain the intent of each article and provide some background information on the topic.

If you have any questions that can be answered before the March 14th meeting you can submit your questions by email to the Town Administrator at wiltonta@wiltonnh.org.

The money articles have an overall estimated Tax impact per \$1,000 of property valuation. Please remember, this is just an estimate based on a current snapshot in time using information and revenue projections that are available today. We have provided this information here to give voters an idea of what the individual items will cost if approved by voters. Tax impact information listed in this Guide will not be listed on the ballot.

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS?

First, you must be registered to vote.

How do I register to vote?

1. You may apply to your Town Clerk's office. You will be required to fill out a standard voter registration form.
2. You may also register with your community's Supervisors of the Checklist. By law, the supervisors are required to meet on the Saturday 10 days prior to each election (Saturday, March 2, 2019). Check the local newspaper or call your clerk's office for the date and time of such meeting.
3. Qualified individuals may register to vote at the polling place on Election Day at all elections.

No matter when or where you register to vote, you will be required to fill out a standard voter registration form, and you will be asked to show proof of identity, age, citizenship, and domicile. These qualifications may be established by signing affidavit(s). Proof of identification is needed.

Further questions may be answered at SOS.NH.GOV or by contacting your local Town Clerk.

Second, at the Voting Session of Town Meeting on March 12, 2019, voters can come to the polls anytime between 8 am and 7 pm to vote on Town Officers and zoning ballot questions. Voters cannot make any changes to the ballot questions at the Voting Session. Voters only have the option to vote "YES" to be in favor of a ballot question or "NO" to be opposed to a ballot question. Proof of identification is needed on voting day.

The votes are tallied by hand and reported the same day as the polls are open.

Third, attend Town Meeting. Town Meeting is where warrant articles are voted on. Any warrant article may be amended at town meeting before the vote for that article takes place. Most articles require a simple majority for passage. Some articles, such as bond articles and changing the purpose of a capital reserve fund, require a supermajority for passage, i.e. a 3/5ths majority or 60%.

There are no provisions for absentee voting for Town Meeting. You must be present to vote.

HOW DO I VOLUNTEER FOR THE TOWN?

The Town relies upon volunteers to serve on the various boards, committees, and commissions as members and alternate members. Some of these positions are

elected, however some are appointed by the Select Board or members of the sitting board.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are we proposing to place money into capital reserve funds?

Capital reserve funds are in essence savings accounts for a particular purpose. Capital reserve funds are generally used for big ticket items. Without capital reserve funds, vehicles, equipment, new facilities or renovation of existing facilities would need to be funded through leases or the sale of municipal bonds. Borrowing money for these purposes can add additional costs in the form of interest payments over the period of the lease or bond until those instruments are paid off.

Both capital reserve funds and borrowing money spread the cost of what is being purchased over multiple years. This minimizes spikes in the tax rate. Capital reserve funds make those payments in advance of the purchase, while borrowing spreads out the cost in the future. Appropriations to capital reserve funds are invested and earn interest. The Trustees of the Trust Funds invest and manage these funds.

What is the unreserved fund balance?

The unreserved fund balance, also known as the unassigned fund balance, is composed of two sources. The first is the surplus funds or unused funds in the Town budget for each year. Unexpended funds from the budget are transferred to the unreserved fund balance. The second source is additional revenue above what was anticipated for any particular year. These funds are also transferred to the unreserved fund balance. The NH Department of Revenue Administration along with guidance from the Government Finance Officers Association recommends the unreserved fund balance should be between 5%, as a minimum, and a maximum of 17% of general fund operating revenues.

ZONING

WARRANT ARTICLES

Article #2 Adopt Downtown Commercial District

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance as Follows:

ADOPT a new zoning chapter Section 7A Downtown Commercial District to distinguish the already existing Downtown Commercial District area established in Section 7.0.2 from the Commercial District.

This provision exempts non-residential uses from off street parking requirements; it eliminates site plan review requirements for many commercial uses; and establishes set-back requirements to conform with the existing neighborhood.

AMEND Section 7, Commercial District to make it consistent with the proposed Section 7A: Downtown Commercial District, including removing references to the Downtown Commercial Ordinance and standardizing permitted use terminology between the two sections.

AMEND Section 16, Signs, Section 16.3 by deleting the phrase, “except for the Downtown Wilton area as defined in Section 8.0.1 d and e” and Section 16.5 by deleting the phrase “Section 8.0.1 d and e” and replacing it with “Section 7A.1.”

This amendment will update references to the existing Zoning Ordinance and provide consistency with the existing character of the district.

Recommended by the Planning Board: Yes

Explanatory Note: This amendment will update references to the existing Zoning Ordinance and provide consistency with the existing character of the district.

First is to remove the Downtown Commercial District from the Commercial District. Second is to create the new Downtown Commercial District. Third is to amend the Sign Ordinance to reflect these changes.

Be aware that this also changes the use of the property, which restricts the property owner from using the property for certain things.

Article #3 Amend Town Zoning Ordinance for Residential District

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance as Follows:

AMEND existing Section 5, Residential District, Section 5.5.4 Special Exceptions to incorporate the sentence, "The following will only be allowed as special exceptions by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. (See also Section 4.4)."

Recommended by the Planning Board: Yes

Explanatory Note: The purpose of this amendment is to introduce the Special Exception language in the Accessory Dwelling Unit Section, so it is the same language as the other Special Exceptions throughout the remainder of the Zoning Ordinance.

You are further notified to appear at the **Florence Rideout Elementary School Gymnasium** in said Wilton, **Thursday the 14th day of March 2019 at 7:00 P.M.** to act upon the following:

WARRANT ARTICLES

Article #4 Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended sum of Four Million Eight Hundred Fifty-Two Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$4,852,981) for the general municipal operation for the year 2019. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required.)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is the operating budget for the Town and does not include appropriations included in any other warrant articles. Residents should refer to the budget worksheet handouts prepared and presented at the Budget Committee Public Hearing on February 5, 2019 (attached to this Voter's Guide – look at Page 3 under Capital Outlay for tax impact).

Article #5 Lease Agreement for Highway Vehicle

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$29,000) for the purpose of making the second year lease payment (of the 7 year lease approved by warrant article #14 at the 2018 Town Meeting) on the Highway Department 2019 International 10-Wheel Dump Truck. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action relating thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$ 0.08

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is the second lease payment out of seven lease payments on the 2019 Highway Department's 10-Wheel Dump Truck. The seven year lease was approved at the 2018 Town Meeting. This vehicle is an essential piece of equipment for the Highway Department.

Article #6 Lease Payment on Police Cruiser

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$8,942) for the purpose of making the second year lease payment (of the 4 year lease approved by warrant article #13 at the 2018 Town Meeting) on the Police Department 2017 Cruiser. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action relating thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$ 0.02

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is the second year lease payment out of four lease payments on the 2017 Police Cruiser. The four year lease was approved at the 2018 Town Meeting.

Article #7 Purchase of New Highway Dept. Vehicle

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$160,000) for the purpose of purchasing a new 6-Wheel Truck and associated equipment for the Highway Department, and authorize the withdrawal of up to Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) from the Highway Vehicle/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. The balance of One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) is to come from general taxation, or to take any other action relating thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$ 0.34

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is to replace the Highway Department's 2003 6-Wheel Truck with associated equipment. This is a multi-purpose piece of equipment essential to the management of the roads in Town. This article would

also authorize up to \$35,000 to be withdrawn from the Highway Vehicle/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

Article #8 Purchase of New Police Cruiser

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Five Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$45,500) for the purpose of purchasing a new police cruiser and associated equipment, and authorize the withdrawal of up to Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) from the Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. The balance of Twenty Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$20,500) is to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.055

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is to replace the 2015 Police Cruiser which is scheduled for replacement in 2019 as outlined in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan. This article also authorizes the withdrawal of up to \$25,000 from the Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

Article #9 Purchasing New Lawn Mower

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eleven Thousand One Hundred Thirty Dollars (\$11,130) for the purpose of purchasing a new lawn mower and attachments for Cemetery/Parks and Recreation. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.03

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is to purchase a new lawn mower with accessories for the purpose of mowing the grass at the cemeteries and recreational areas. The purchase of this equipment will be put out to bid as per the Town's Bid Policy.

Article #10 Bridge Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) to be added to the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund

previously established. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.78

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is to continue contributing to the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund previously established where the balance in the fund is \$154,392. We have three Bridges in Town under consideration for repair/rehabilitation. An article follows for the King Brook Road Bridge but we must also concern ourselves with Stage Coach Road Bridge and Old County Farm Road Bridge. Stage Coach Road Bridge is on the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Bridge Aid Program for year 2021 and the Town is currently working with an approved Engineering firm as respects the scope and fee for the project. Old County Farm Road Bridge is in the process of being evaluated from an Engineering perspective. It is prudent to put funds away at this time noting that any of the Towns Bridges that are in the NHDOT Bridge Aid Program will be reimbursed 80% of the overall cost in phases up to the completion of the project.

Article #11 Construction of King Brook Road Bridge

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Four Hundred Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars (\$1,400,240) for the construction of King Brook Road Bridge (#074/050) as part of the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation State Bridge Aid Program. The State of New Hampshire State Bridge Aid Program will reimburse One Million One Hundred Twenty Thousand One Hundred Ninety-Two Dollars (\$1,120,192) and the balance of Two Hundred Eighty Thousand Forty-Eight Dollars (\$280,048) to come from the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund previously established, or to take any other action related thereto. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2023, whichever is sooner.

Est. tax impact \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is seeking funding for the construction/replacement of King Brook Road Bridge. The overall cost of the project is \$1,400,240. NHDOT will reimburse the Town \$1,120,192 with the balance of \$280,048 coming from the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund. With the passing of Article #10 this proposed funding will have no tax impact.

Article #12 Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the Fire Department Vehicle/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.13

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is a continued contribution into the Fire Department Vehicle/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The Fire Department is seeking to replace the 1987 Engine 1 in 2023 which has a current estimated cost of \$500,000.

Article #13 Fire Department Air Packs Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the Fire Department Air Packs Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.13

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This is a continued contribution into the Fire Department Air Packs Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Article #14 LED Street Lights

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-One Thousand Four Hundred Twenty-Two Dollars (\$41,422) for the purpose of installing energy efficient LED street lights to replace the existing public street lighting. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.11

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is for the replacement of street lights with energy efficient LED lighting. This appropriation may be partially offset by a rebate from Eversource. If approved, this installation may produce annual cost savings in the region of 40% and may well result in a full return on investment within three years.

Article #15 Stipend to Select Board

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Six Hundred Dollars (\$5,600) for the purpose of increasing the stipend paid to the Select Board. If this article passes the total stipend paid each year will be \$12,500, to be allocated in the following manner Chair - \$4,500, 2 Select Board members \$4,000 each. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.02

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: No

Explanatory Note: This article is for the stipend increase of the three person Wilton Select Board. Currently each Select Board member receives a stipend of \$2,300 annually.

Article #16 Town Clerk/Tax Collector

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Thousand Two Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars (\$6,252) for the purpose of increasing the Town Clerk/Tax Collector annual salary to \$68,767 per year. Monies to come from general taxation, or to take any other action related thereto. (Majority vote required.)

Est. tax impact \$0.02

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is for the increase in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector salary from \$62,515 to \$68,767 annually.

Article #17 Scanning

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for document scanning and imaging services and the purchase of related equipment. The sum to come from undesignated fund balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. This represents the funds from article #25 approved at the March 2018 Town Meeting which were not spent. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2021, whichever is sooner.

Est. tax impact \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: Yes

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article is basically to extend the time period for initiating Document Scanning in Town Government. Funds that were approved at Town Meeting in 2018 that were not spent were encumbered in December 2018. However those encumbered funds must be spent in 2019 and the Town is not ready to begin this process. Therefore the Town is asking to withdraw funds from the Undesignated Fund Balance which will be replaced with those encumbered for this purpose, allowing more time to complete this project. No impact on taxation.

Article #18 Increase Elderly Exemptions

To see if the Town will vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for elderly exemption from property tax in the Town of Wilton, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years of age, \$40,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years of age, \$55,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$75,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married to each other for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$35,000, if single, or if married, a combined net income of less than \$45,000; and own net assets, if single or married, not in excess of \$70,000 excluding the value of the person's residence. (Majority vote required.)

Explanatory Note: This article is to modify the provisions in the Statute for the Elderly Exemptions and to increase accordingly.

Article #19 Increase Total Disability on Veterans

To see if the Town will vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:35 to increase to \$4,000 the optional property tax credit for a qualifying Service-Connected Total Disability on residential property. (Majority vote required.)

Explanatory Note: This article is to modify the provisions of the Statute to increase the property tax credit for qualifying Veterans who are totally disabled.

Article #20 Taxation of Farm Structures

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 79-F "Taxation of Farm Structures and Land Under Farm Structures". (Majority vote required.)

Explanatory Note: This RSA was created to encourage the preservation of productive farms and associated structures. In essence it allows a property owner with a barn or agricultural building contiguous to a minimum of 10 acres, both of which are actively being used for agricultural purposes, a tax reduction.

The building may be assessed for no more than their replacement cost less depreciation and the land under the qualifying structure at no more than 10 percent of its market value.

Article #21 Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive

To see if the Town will vote to modify the provisions of Chapter 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive, previously adopted by Article #10 at the March 2017 Town Meeting, by changing the substantial rehabilitation period to 5 years.

Explanatory Note: Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive under RSA 79-E was approved at Town meeting in 2017. This article will modify the provision to change the rehabilitation period from three to five years.

Article #22 Courtroom Streaming of Meetings

To see if the Town will vote to adopt a policy to have all meetings of Boards, Committees and Commissions that are held in the Courtroom of the Wilton Town Hall to be video recorded in order that these meetings can be “live streamed” for public viewing.

Explanatory Note: Currently all Select Board meetings held in the Courtroom of the Wilton Town Offices are “Live Streamed” for transparency purposes. This has enabled residents who are unable to attend Select Board meetings to see how their elected officials are running Town Government. If residents feel that other Boards and Committees who hold their meetings in the Courtroom should also be live streamed then this policy should be adopted.

Article #23 Designation of Scenic Road

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town of Wilton to designate West End Highway in its entirety, running from Temple Road to Rte.101, as well as to designate Town Farm Road, running from Temple Road and ending at the present driveway on the lot identified on the Wilton Tax Maps as E-O42, as a Scenic Road in accordance with RSA 231:157 or to take any action related thereto.

Recommended by the Heritage Commission: Yes

Explanatory Note: This article was prepared and recommended by the Heritage Commission who are responsible for the designation of Scenic Roads.