TOWN OF WORTHINGTON
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Saturday, May 2, 2026 9:30 AM
RH Conwell School Gymnasium

The R.H. Conwell School Chorus sang "America the Beautiful" and The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

The warrant having been duly posted and with a quorum of approximately 130 being present, Moderator Kevin O'Connor called the meeting to order at 9:32am. The following articles were then acted upon:

ARTICLE ONE: It was voted unanimously to choose all other Town officers as are not required by law to be elected by ballot:

Almoners of the Whiting Street Fund
Bruce Barshefsky, Diane Meehan, Janet Dimock
Field Drivers and Fence Viewers
Bart Niswonger, Kevin Porter, Darlene Millman
Surveyors of Wood and Timber
Keith Manley, Sam Powell, Clarence Witter

ARTICLE TWO: It was voted unanimously to accept the reports of the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Selectboard, Almoners of the Whiting Street Fund and other elected or appointed officers or committees of the Town.

ARTICLE THREE: It was voted unanimously but a few as amended to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$1,940,351.38** the total Worthington School District Budget for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027:

Worthington School District Appropriation	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Elementary	$1,185,990.14	**$1,211,339.00**		
OUD Tuition &Trans.	145,000.00	***See Acres of Opportunity***		
SPED Summer School	16,500.00	**15,000.00**		
Secondary	368,130.37	**636,012.38**		
Acres of Opportunity	NEW	**$78,000.00**		
Total	$1,715,620.51	**$1,940,351.38**		

ARTICLE FOUR: It was voted unanimously pursuant to the provisions of Section 53E ½ of Chapter 44 M.G.L. to re-authorize the amount of **$6,000.00** as the annual spending limit for the Conwell School Laptop Protection Plan revolving fund, such limit to be applicable for Fiscal Year 2027.

ARTICLE FIVE: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$366,217.00** for Vocational Education.

Vocational Education	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
	$366,217.10	**$366,217.00**		

ARTICLE SIX: It was voted unanimously to fix the salaries or compensation of all elected officers of the Town, as provided by MGL Chapter 41, Section 108 as amended, and to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$79,101.00** for these salaries and compensation to be as of July 1, 2026, as follows:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Selectboard, Chair	$3,677.00	**$3,780.00**		
Selectboard, Clerk	3,152.00	**3,240.00**		
Selectboard, Member	3,152.00	**3,240.00**		
Bd. of Health, Chair	2,240.00	**2,303.00**		
Bd. of Health, Clerk	2.240.00	**2,303.00**		
Bd. of Health, Mem.	2,240.00	**2,303.00**		

Moderator	100.00	**100.00**		
Town Clerk	18,911.00	**19,441.00**		
Assessors, Chair	7,594.00	**7,807.00**		
Assessors, Clerk	24,236.00	**24,915.00**		
Assessors, Member	6,924.00	**7,118.00**		
Tree Warden	2,522.00	**2,551.00**		
Total	$76,988.00	**$79,101.00**		

ARTICLE SEVEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$605,774.00** for the following Town charges:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Selectboard Expenses	$3,000.00	**$3,000.00**		
Assessors' Expenses	1,750.00	**1,750.00**		
Classified Advertising	2,500.00	**2,500.00**		
Tax Map Maintenance	2,000.00	**2,200.00**		
Assessors' Software Support	7,641.00	**8,099.00**		
Assessors' Revaluation	6,000.00	**30,500.00**		
Online Tax Maps	3,000.00	**3,000.00**		
Town Clerk's Expenses	1,700.00	**1,700.00**		
Election Expenses	1,012.00	**6,299.00**		
Registrars' Expense	50.00	**50.00**		
Tree Warden's Expenses	20,000.00	**20,000.00**		
Tax Collector	23,704.00	**24,852.00**		
Asst Tax Cltr/Asst Treas.	10,795.00	**11,311.00**		
Tax Collector's Expenses	4,300.00	**4,400.00**		
Tax Collector's Software	9,900.00	**10,385.00**		
Accounting Services	35,100.00	**35,700.00**		
Accounting Software	4,923.90	**6,309.00**		
Treasurer	23,704.00	**24,852.00**		
Treasurer's Expenses	4,700.00	**4,700.00**		
Treasurer's Software	1,756.00	**2,250.00**		
Town Payroll Service	4,500.00	**4,500.00**		
Executive Assistant	72,218.00	**75,733.00**		
Assistant Secretary	10,020.00	**10,988.00**		
Recording Secretary	7,000.00	**7,000.00**		
Bd. of Appeals Expense	600.00	**600.00**		
Conservation Comm. Exp.	700.00	**700.00**		
Historic Commission Exp	250.00	**250.00**		
Town Off. Maint. & Sup.	3,750.00	**4,000.00**		
Town Hall Maintenance	4,500.00	**5,000.00**		
Town Hall Custodial Services	3,000.00	**3,000.00**		
Town Telephone Exp.	23,000.00	**23,000.00**		
Town Building Heating	25,000.00	**25,000.00**		
War Memorial & Town Bldgs	300.00	**300.00**		
Conwell Bldg. Expenses	147,544.00	**150,266.00**		
IT/Comptr. Replenishmt plan	4,000.00	**4,000.00**		
Comptr. Maint. & Supplies	2,500.00	**2,500.00**		
Computer Maint. Labor	3,200.00	**3,200.00**		
Town Web Site	1,000.00	**1,000.00**		
Webmaster	2,000.00	**2,000.00**		
Planning Board Expenses	400.00	**400.00**		
P.V.P.C.	228.83	**235.00**		
Parks & Rec Comm. Exp.	4,145.00	**4,145.00**		
Founder's Day	0.00	**0.00**		
Finance Comm. Expense	165.00	**165.00**		
Town Reports	1,250.00	**1,250.00**		
Law Account Expense	15,000.00	**20,000.00**		
Tax Taking-Collector	1,200.00	**1,200.00**		
Tax Title Foreclosure Treas.	7,000.00	**7,000.00**		

Tax Title Foreclosure Maint.	3,000.00	**3,000.00**		
Audit Expenses	14,500.00	**16,500.00**		
Council on Aging	14,600.00	**14,600.00**		
COA Building Lease	10,181.00	**10,385.00**		
Total	$554,287.73	**$605,774.00**		

ARTICLE EIGHT: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$26,509.00** for the Worthington Library.

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Worthington Library	$25,247.25	**$26,509.00**		

ARTICLE NINE: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$21,295.00** for the following Town charges:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Maintenance of Cemeteries	$18,395.00	**$18,795.00**		
Cem. Commission Expense	500.00	**500.00**		
Grave Openings	3,400.00	**2,000.00**		
Total:	$22,295.00	**$21,295.00**		

ARTICLE TEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$853,579.00** for the following Town charges:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Hampshire Cty Retirement	$280,341.00	**$287,063.00**		
Unemployment Comp.	3,500.00	**3,500.00**		
Workers Compensation	17,089.00	**16,249.00**		
Group Insurance	389,936.94	**444,017.00**		
Insurance and Bonds	71,714.00	**72,750.00**		
Medicare	28,000.00	**30,000.00**		
Total:	$790,580.94	**$853,579.00**		

ARTICLE ELEVEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$229,786.00** for the following Town charges:

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Emergency Mgmt. Salary	$1,193.00	**$1,226.00**		
Emergency Mgmt. Expenses	0.00	**0.00**		
Reverse 911	3,375.00	**0.00**		
Animal Control Officer Salary	1,960.00	**2,015.00**		
Animal Control Officer. Exp.	350.00	**350.00**		
Hilltown Comm. Ambulance	66,011.08	**68,541.00**		
Town Constable	100.00	**100.00**		
Animal Inspector	818.00	**841.00**		
Building Commissioner	12,475.00	**13,081.00**		
Local Building Inspector	9,812.40	**10,290.00**		
Building Inspector's Expenses	2,000.00	**2,000.00**		
Online Permitting Software	$8,000.00	**$4,725.00**		
Plumbing Inspector	1,775.00	**1,825.00**		
Plumbing Inspector's Expense	500.00	**500.00**		
Wiring Inspector	4,014.00	**4,126.00**		
Wiring Inspector's Expense	120.00	**120.00**		
Assist. Wiring Insp. Expense	300.00	**300.00**		
Gas Inspector	1,395.00	**1,434.00**		
Board of Health Expenses	200.00	**200.00**		
Board of Health Agent	4,000.00	**4,000.00**		
Ctrl. Hamp. Veterans' Service	6,271.00	**6,663.00**		

Veteran's Aid	12,000.00	**7,500.00**		
Disposal Works	73,125.00	**76,000.00**		
Disposal Attendant	14,864.00	**14,525.00**		
Hilltown Resource Mgt. Coop.	7,411.75	**7,264.00**		
Streetlights	1,400.00	**2,160.00**		
Total:	$233,470.23	**$229,786.00**		

ARTICLE TWELVE: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate **$74,961.00** for the following Town charges:

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Fire Dept. Operating Exps.	$30,000.00	**$32,000.00**		
Fire Department Fuel	2,500.00	**3,000.00**		
Clerical	6,671.00	**5,829.00**		
Fire Chief Salary	8,863.00	**11,614.00**		
Fire Dept. Grant Writer	1,477.00	**1,518.00**		
Code Inspection Comp.	2,000.00	**2,000.00**		
Fire Dept. Call Comp.	16,800.00	**19,000.00**		
Total	$68,311.00	**$74,961.00**		

ARTICLE THIRTEEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate **$142,496.00** for the following Town charges:

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
Police Dept. Expenses	$21,550.00	**27,000.00**		
Police Chief Salary	89,918.00	**94,765.00**		
Police Dept FT Wages	0.00	**0.00**		
Police Dept PT Wages	20,000.00	**5,000.00**		
Police Clerical Wages	13,341.00	**13,990.00**		
IMC Software Maint.	991.00	**991.00**		
CJIS Yearly Maintenance	750.00	**750.00**		
Total	$146,550.00	**$142,496.00**		

ARTICLE FOURTEEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$653,465.00** for the following Town charges:

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

	FY2026 Adopted	**FY2027 Adopted**		
General Highway Maint.	$40,000.00	**$40,000.00**		
Road Sweeping	6,500.00	**6,500.00**		
Town Mowing	12,000.00	**12,400.00**		
Winter Highway Maint.	110,000.00	**110,000.00**		
Wtr. HWY Overtime Wages	11,850.00	**15,000.00**		
Highway Dept. Wages	213,657.00	**211,120.00**		
Highway Wages Clerical	6,671.00	**6,995.00**		
Highway Superintendent	90,397.00	**94,765.00**		
Hwy.Supt. Add'l Wtr. Comp.	2,500.00	**2,500.00**		
Garage Maintenance	15,000.00	**15,000.00**		
Machinery Maintenance	30,000.00	**40,000.00**		
Highway/Police Fuel	33,500.00	**45,000.00**		
Superintendent's Expense	600.00	**600.00**		
FRCOG Group Purchasing	3,415.00	**3,585.00**		
Secondary Rd. Improvemts.	50,000.00	**50,000.00**		
Total:	$626,090.00	**653,465.00**		

ARTICLE FIFTEEN: It was voted unanimously to transfer from the General Stabilization Fund the sum of **$12,000.00** to hire a professional consultant to perform a peer review of the previous design study for reconstruction or renovation of the Town Highway Garage including evaluation of the current site and

other sites owned by the Town or sites that could be acquired and providing recommendations for overall cost savings and preliminary cost estimates for their recommendations.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN: It was voted unanimously but one to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$59,868.78** from the General Stabilization Fund to purchase a new Kubota Utility Cab Tractor for the Highway Department.

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$5,000.00** from the General Stabilization Fund to purchase a new AG25C Compressed Gas Welder for the Highway Department.

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$7,290.91** from the General Stabilization Fund to purchase and install a Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) storage system **($2,263.50)**, and a bulk oil container system **($5,027.41)** for use in the Town Garage.

ARTICLE NINETEEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$10,000.00** to establish a Reserve Fund to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures, as provided by M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 6, as amended.

ARTICLE TWENTY: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate as available funds the total sum of **$421,849.15** from Chapter 90 funds or any other amounts from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for highway construction and/or maintenance.

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$520,194.00** from Free Cash to the General Stabilization Fund.

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO: It was voted unanimously to Authorize the Selectboard to enter into contracts with the Massachusetts Highway Department for construction and/or maintenance of public highways for the Fiscal Year 2027, and further to authorize the Selectboard on behalf of the Town to accept any money from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for highway construction and/or maintenance.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THREE: It was voted unanimously to Authorize the Selectboard to apply for Massachusetts State or Federal grant programs and to further Authorize the Selectboard to expend monies received through such programs following a public hearing.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FOUR: It was voted unanimously to amend the General By-Law by adding the following section:

Section XVII Closing of Town Ways and Bridges

During any period in which a Town owned highway or bridge has been posted by the Worthington Highway Department as being unfit for travel because of prevailing road conditions, no vehicle weighing in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds, with the exception of school buses, emergency vehicles, vehicles making delivery of materials essential to normal daily services to existing occupied dwellings, such as but not limited to home heating fuel and utility services, or vehicles normally used by residents for ingress or egress to their dwelling, shall be allowed use of such way.

Any exceptions shall require written authorization by the Worthington Highway Superintendent. Any authorization granted by the Highway Superintendent shall include a clause holding the Town harmless for any and all liability or expense resulting from said use of Town highway or bridge and shall provide that the individual or business authorized to use such way shall be financially responsible for the expeditious repair, or reimbursement to the Town for the cost to repair, for any and all damages incurred to such Town ways during the course of these activities.

Determination of requirements for repair shall be made by the Worthington Highway Superintendent, and shall include a time limit within which repairs must be completed or reimbursement for costs of such repairs received by the Town of Worthington. Any appeal of said determination of the Highway Superintendent must be made to the Worthington Selectboard within ten (10) days of the date of issue of the determination by the Highway Superintendent.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FIVE: It was voted unanimously to accept, for the following boards, committees or commissions holding adjudicatory hearings in the Town, the provisions of M.G.L. c. 39, §23D (known as the Mullin Rule), which provides that a member of a board, committee, or commission holding an adjudicatory hearing shall not be disqualified from voting in the matter solely due to the member's absence from one session of such hearing, provided that certain conditions as established by said statute are met. Boards and Committees affected: Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Appeals and Selectboard.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SIX: It was voted unanimously pursuant to General Laws Chapter 268A, Section 21A, to authorize the Selectboard to designate one of its members to serve as Town Webmaster.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN: It was voted unanimously to Raise and Appropriate the sum of **$400.00** to pay a FY2025 bill for Highway Department Flagger Courses through UMASS Transportation.

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The following article is proposed by a Citizens' Petition and was named Twenty-Seven.Five by the Moderator

We, the undersigned registered voters of the Town of Worthington, hereby submit this article for inclusion on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN.FIVE: It was voted by a majority to instruct the Select Board to obtain an independent legal opinion, separate from current Town Counsel, regarding the Town's authority and responsibilities in the review and permitting of current and future large-scale ground-mounted solar and battery energy storage system (BESS) installations, including long-term governance and enforcement.

Articles for FY2026 Business

ARTICLE TWENTY-EIGHT: It was voted unanimously to amend the General By-Law, Section XVI – Revolving Funds, Conwell School Laptop Protection Plan, Revenue Source by deleting "School Committee Laptop fees" and replacing it with "all receipts for student fees and computer buyback programs and the sale of used laptops".

ARTICLE TWENTY-NINE: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$38,416.56** from the General Stabilization Fund to fund FY2026 deficit spending in the following appropriations:

- Winter Highway Supplies: **$25,143.42**
- Winter Highway Overtime Wages: **$6,363.11**
- Highway Super. Additional Winter Compensation: **$6,910.03**

ARTICLE THIRTY: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$12,800.00** from the General Stabilization Fund to the FY2026 Law Expense Account to pay outstanding invoices.

ARTICLE THIRTY-ONE: It was voted unanimously to Appropriate and Transfer the sum of **$16,000.00** from the General Stabilization Fund to a newly created FY2026 OPEB Actuarial and Fixed Assets Account to bring the Town into compliance with GASB 34 and GASB 75, in preparation for potential borrowing for the repair and/or replacement of the Highway Garage.

Meeting was dissolved at 11:24am.

Respectfully submitted,
Katrin Kaminsky, Town Clerk