



To see if the Town will raise and appropriate such sums of money as may be needed to defray the expense of the Town for the 2020 Fiscal Year; or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town raise and appropriate \$6,716,894 for the General Fund budget for Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020).

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

	<b>General Government</b>	<b>FY2018 Actual Expenditures</b>	<b>FY2019 ATM Approves</b>	<b>FY2020 TA Recommendations</b>	<b>Dollar Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Percent Increase/Decrease</b>
1	Advertising	2,725	4,000	4,000	-	0.0%
2	Selectmen's Salaries	6,120	6,240	6,365	125	2.0%
3	Selectmen's Expenses	10,219	1,900	1,900	-	0.0%
4	Town Mtg. Expenses	3,496	6,000	6,000	-	0.0%
5	Town Admin. Salary	67,262	72,000	76,500	4,500	6.3%
6	Town Admin. Expense	1,225	1,400	2,200	800	57.1%
7	Staff Coverage	1,079	2,000	3,000	1,000	50.0%
8	Clerk of Committees	32,317	33,443	34,466	1,023	2.7%
9	Finance Committees	135	600	600	-	0.0%
10	Town Acct. Salary	23,793	24,363	24,850	487	2.0%
11	Payroll Service	4,695	5,000	5,100	100	2.0%
12	Town Accountant Exp.	390	400	400	-	0.0%
13	Assessors Salaries	45,906	63,622	65,000	1,378	2.2%
14	Assessors Expense	59,589	62,427	68,522	6,095	9.8%
15	Town Treasurer Sal.	44,229	45,114	46,456	1,342	3.0%
16	Town Treasurer Exp.	1,948	5,000	5,000	-	0.0%
17	Tax Collector Salary	55,182	56,498	57,852	1,354	2.4%
18	Assist. Collector Sal.	45,926	47,031	48,146	1,115	2.4%
19	Tax Collector Exp.	6,371	8,180	8,180	-	0.0%
20	Tax Title Expense	25,182	10,000	25,000	15,000	150.0%
21	Town Admin. Assist.	44,346	45,223	46,503	1,280	2.8%
22	Town Counsel	13,861	18,000	20,000	2,000	11.1%
23	Audit Expenses	12,500	18,500	18,500	-	0.0%
24	Postage	10,553	12,000	12,000	-	0.0%
25	Town Report	2,754	3,500	3,500	-	0.0%
26	Town Clerk Salary	28,055	28,616	29,188	572	2.0%
27	Town Clerk Expense	3,991	2,145	2,145	-	0.0%
28	Election-Registration	2,833	17,727	16,678	(1,049)	-5.9%
29	Conservation Comm.	15,832	19,894	19,894	-	0.0%
30	Planning Board Exp.	1,976	2,225	2,225	-	0.0%
31	ZBA	411	1,500	1,500	-	0.0%
32	Berkshire RPC	1,349	1,383	1,383	-	0.0%
33	Muni. Buildings Sal.	47,029	48,161	49,301	1,140	2.4%
34	Municipal Utilities	49,455	61,000	58,000	(3,000)	-4.9%
35	Municipal Building Exp.	53,968	54,975	31,975	(23,000)	-41.8%
36	Wired West	1,000	1,000	3,500	2,500	250.0%
37	Muni Building Repairs	9,451	12,000	35,000	23,000	191.7%
38	Software Maintenance	24,086	25,134	25,134	-	0.0%
39	Reserve Fund	-	35,000	50,000	15,000	42.9%
40	General Gov't Total	761,238	863,201	900,963	52,652	6.1%
41						
42	Public Safety					
43	PD Salaries	294,079	326,206	338,328	12,122	3.7%

44	PD Expense	24,879	16,679	18,880	2,201	13.2%
45	Emergency Mgmt Exp.	318	1,000	1,000	-	0.0%
46	Em. Mgmt. Training	-	1,000	1,000	-	0.0%
47	Constable Expense	-	300	300	-	0.0%
48	FD Chief Salary	4,165	4,248	7300	3052	71.0%
49	Firefighter Stipends	9,100	14,000	14,000	-	0.0%
50	FD Expenses	36,423	31,200	32,000	800	2.6%
51	E911 Communication	11,955	32,114	12,683	(19,431)	-60.5%
52	Building Insp. Sal.	52,596	53,654	55,160	1,506	2.8%
53	Building & Code Insp.Sal	1,428	2,215	2,215	-	0.0%
54	Animal Control Sal.	8,041	8,202	5,500	(2,702)	-32.9%
55	Animal Control Exp	676	2,500	2,500	-	0.0%
56	Harbor Master	1,166	1,455	1,474	19	1.3%
57	Demolition Fund	3,276	15,000	22,000	7,000	46.7%
58	Public Safety Total	448,101	509,773	511,372	4,566	0.9%
59						
60	Education					
61	CBRSD Assessment	2,041,390	2,134,973	2,308,156	173,183	8.1%
62	Vocational Tuition	176,759	167,560	175,000	7,440	4.4%
63	Vocational Transp.	40,521	65,000	70,000	5,000	7.7%
64	Education Total	2,258,671	2,367,533	2,553,156	185,623	7.8%
65						
66	Forestry					
67	Tree Account	7,560	15,000	15,300	300	2.0%
68	Forestry	500	500	500	-	0.0%
69	Forestry Total	8,060	15,500	15,800	300	1.9%
70						
71	Highway					
72	Salaries and Wages	204,454	226,765	230,897	4,132	1.8%
73	Summer Labor	-	-	16,800	16,800	-
74	Sal. & Wage Subtotal	204,454	226,765	247,697	20,932	9.2%
75	General Maintenance					
76	Mowing		1,500	-	(1,500)	--
77	Line Painting		10,690	10,900	210	2.0%
78	Gravel/Stone		50,000	50,000	-	0.0%
79	Hot Mix Patch		15,950	16,250	300	1.9%
80	Rental Equipment		1,650	2,000	350	21.2%
81	Signs		3,300	3,300	-	0.0%
82	Culverts		3,100	3,100	-	0.0%
83	Beaver Maintenance		2,850	2,850	-	0.0%
84	Guardrail		1,700	1,750	50	2.9%
85	Crack Seal		15,700	16,000	3,000	1.9%
86	Catch Basin Cleaning		4,800	4,900	100	2.1%
87	Sweeping		7,660	7,800	140	1.8%
88	Hand Tools		730	730	-	0.0%
89	Misc.		1,600	1,600	-	0.0%
90	Road Improvement		41,000	51,000	10,000	24.4%
91	General Maintenance Subtotal	204,454	162,230	172,180	9,950	6.1%
92	Machinery					
93	Inspections		1,000	1,000	-	0.0%
94	Tires		9,100	9,250	150	1.6%
95	Oil/Lubricants		3,500	3,550	50	1.4%
96	Repairs/Equipment		19,450	19,750	300	1.5%
97	Parts/Supplies		28,100	28,600	500	1.8%
98	Welding Supplies		2,000	2,000	-	0.0%
99	Radios		1,000	1,000	-	0.0%
100	Scanner Updates		850	850	-	0.0%

101	Fleet Software Maintenance/Updates		2,200	2,200	-	0.0%
102	Tools/Safety		3,075	3,075	-	0.0%
103	Machinery Subtotal	65,750	70,275	71,275	1,000	1.4%
104	Fuel					
105	Fuel		87,750	87,750	-	0.0%
106	Operator Contract		1,850	1,850	-	0.0%
107	Maintenance/Repair		2,900	1,500	(1,400)	-48.4%
108	DEF Fluid		2,000	2,000	-	0.0%
109	Reg. Compliance		-	2,000	2,000	-
110	Fuel System		-	400	400	-
111	Fuel Subtotal	70,972	94,500	95,500	1,000	1.1%
112	Highway Garage					
113	Legal Ads		900	500	(400)	-44.4%
114	Drug Testing		400	425	25	6.3%
115	License Reimbursement		600	600	-	0.0%
116	Repairs/Supplies		3,100	2,800	(300)	-9.7%
117	Berkshire County Purchasing		600	600	-	0.0%
118	Office Supplies		640	650	10	1.6%
119	Education & Training		1,600	1,600	-	0.0%
120	Meeting/Dues Expenses		600	600	-	0.0%
121	Compliance/First Aid		-	2,000	2,000	-
122	Safety Gear		2,550	5,800	3,250	127.5%
123	Highway Garage Subtotal	8,397	10,990	15,575	4,585	41.7%
124	Winter Roads					
125	Wages - B/G		3,921	-	(3,921)	--
126	Wages - Highway		148,613	152,534	3,921	2.6%
127	Sand		8,400	8,550	150	1.8%
128	Stone Chips		13,650	13,900	250	1.8%
129	Salt		47,900	48,850	950	2.0%
130	Plow Blades		4,300	4,375	75	1.7%
131	Cold Patch		1,200	1,200	-	0.0%
132	Parts		3,200	3,200	-	0.0%
133	Sander Chains		4,300	4,375	75	1.7%
134	Winter Roads Total	111,171	235,484	236,984	1,500	0.6%
135						
136	Highway Department Total	665,198	800,244	839,211	38,967	4.9%
137						
138	Streetlights	7,146	8,000	8,000	-	0.0%
139	Street Lights Total	7,146	8,000	8,000	-	0.0%
140						
141	Transfer Station					
142	Transfer Station Labor	28,784	31,230	31,885	655	2.1%
143						
144	Rental Compactor		3,600	7,200	3,600	100.0%
145	Rental Open Container (2)		2,700	2,700	-	0.0%
146	Trucking Compactor		8,750	8,750	-	0.0%
147	Trucking Open Container		7,500	7,500	-	0.0%
148	Trucking Cans & Bottles		5,775	5,775	-	0.0%
149	Trucking Scrap Metal		3,500	3,500	-	0.0%
150	Trucking Paper Cardboard		4,125	4,125	-	0.0%
151	Trucking Rigid Plastics		3,300	3,300	-	0.0%
152	Trucking Fuel Surcharge		1,400	1,400	-	0.0%
153	Disposal Solid Waste		26,400	27,600	1,200	4.5%

154	Disposal Bulky Waste		16,720	17,480	760	4.5%
155	Disposal Haz Mat		9,250	9,500	250	2.7%
156	Chemicals		300	300	-	0.0%
157	Permits		1,850	1,850	-	0.0%
158	MRF education		100	100	-	0.0%
159	Maintenance		1,500	1,500	-	0.0%
160	Inspections/Testing	-	2,500	2,500	-	0.0%
161	Total Expenses	91,778	99,270	105,080	5,810	5.9%
162	Transfer Station Total	120,562	130,500	136,965	6,465	5.0%
163						
164						
165	Solid Waste	8,167	8,328	3,200	(5,128)	-60.8%
166						
167						
168	Cemeteries					
169	Becket Ctr Cemetary	4,707	4,802	4,898	96	2.0%
170	North Cemetery	15,597	15,909	16,227	318	2.0%
171	West Cemetery	720	735	750	15	2.0%
172	Cemeteries Total	21,024	21,446	21,875	429	2.0%
173						
174	Health and Comm.Serv.					
175	BOH Salaries	1,351	9,364	9,500	136	1.5%
176	BOH Exp.	27,093	25,820	30,000	4,180	16.2%
177	Inspector of Animals	331	338	345	7	2.0%
178	Nursing Services	4,961	5,061	5,061	-	0.0%
179	Council on Aging	5,000	5,000	5,000	-	0.0%
180	Outreach	500	500	500	-	0.0%
181	Veterans Agent Sal.	2,098	2,140	2,140	-	0.0%
182	Veterans Benefits	47,248	37,200	37,200	-	0.0%
183	Veterans Agent Exp	-	100	100	-	0.0%
184	Health & Community Services Total	88,582	85,523	89,849	4,326	5.1%
185						
186	Library					
187	Library	47,868	49,065	50,292	1,227	2.5%
188	Children Holiday Party	500	500	500	-	0.0%
189	Library Total	48,368	49,565	50,792	1,227	2.5%
190						
191	Parks and Rec.					
192	Weed Ctrl Ctr Pond	1,500	2,500	2,500	-	0.0%
193	Parks and Rec.	27,139	30,610	30,610	-	0.0%
194	Parks & Recreation Total	28,639	33,110	33,110	-	0.0%
195						
196	Historical Comm.					
197	Historical Commission	921	2,017	2,017	-	0.0%
198	Historical Commission Total	921	2,017	2,017	-	0.0%
199						
200	Memorial Day					
201	Memorial/Veterans	1,301	1,500	1,500	-	0.0%
202	Memorial/Veterans Day Total	1,301	1,500	1,500	-	0.0%
203						
204	Benefits					
205	Health/Life Insurance	336,531	425,360	412,600	(12,760)	-3.0%
206	County Retirement	201,455	217,821	219,163	1,342	0.6%
207	Payroll Tax Acct.	22,581	26,604	27,136	532	2.0%
208	Unemployment Exp	-	5,000	5,000	-	0.0%

209	General Liability Ins.	107,593	118,814	118,814	-	0.0%
210	Benefits Total	668,160	793,599	782,713	(10,886)	-1.4%
211						
212						
213	<b>Total Operating Budget</b>	<b>5,134,140</b>	<b>5,689,839</b>	<b>5,950,523</b>	<b>278,542</b>	<b>4.6%</b>
214	<b>Debt Service</b>	<b>\$347,123</b>	<b>\$294,487</b>	<b>\$458,513</b>	<b>\$164,026</b>	<b>35.8%</b>
215	<b>Ambulance</b>	<b>\$270,574</b>	<b>300,574</b>	<b>290,000</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>
216	<b>Overall Budget</b>	<b>\$5,751,837</b>	<b>\$6,440,649</b>	<b>\$6,716,894</b>	<b>\$278,542</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

The Moderator stated that he would not read each line item but rather, if there were to be any questions or discussion of any line item, a "Hold" should be placed on that line item. There will be a vote on all the line items that weren't placed on "Hold." After the initial vote there would be an opportunity for discussion on each line item placed on "Hold," and the Meeting would vote upon each. The Moderator stated that in the non-held line items, the figure voted upon would be the Finance Committee/ Selectmen recommended amount. The following line items had "Holds" placed upon them:

Line 36 (Wired West)

Line 51 (E911 Communication)

**Article 2** Was moved and seconded from the floor.

A vote on the motion exclusive of line items 36 (Wired West) and line item (E911 Communication) was taken by a show of hands and the motion on

**Article 2 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Line Item 36. Wired West:**

**Line Item 36** was moved and seconded. Robert Gross of the Broad Band Committee gave a brief presentation and update regarding the Broad Band Initiative. There was no further discussion. A vote was taken and

**Line Item 36 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Line Item 51. E911 COMMUNICATION:**

**Line Item 51** was moved and seconded. Selectmen William Elovirta explained that this line item was for leasing space on cell towers to facilitate radio communication in Becket for emergency services. A vote was taken and

**Line Item 51 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 3 DEBT SERVICE**

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$458,513 to fund debt service due in Fiscal Year 2020 for the following previously approved borrowings:

Becket Washington School	\$109,613	FY2025
Wahconah RHS Doors	\$5,548	FY2029
Wahconah Sidewalks	\$595	FY2022
Kittredge School MSBA Windows	\$306	FY2022
Craneville Roof	\$0	FY2023
Craneville Air Handler	\$0	FY2022
Wahconah RHS Feasibility Study	\$754	FY2022
District Security	\$990	FY2025
Dump Truck (Highway Department)	\$50,400.00	FY2021
Loader (Highway Department)	\$57,400.00	FY2020
Town Hall Roof	\$24,707.07	FY2020
Ambulance	\$88,349.50	FY2021







**MOTION:** Move that the Town transfer \$4,553.00 from Free Cash to the General fund to pay the outstanding fund balance of Fire Department Fees.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**4/5 Vote Required**

**Article 10** Was moved and seconded. There was a brief discussion with an explanation regarding the need for a 4/5 supermajority. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 10 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 11** \_\_\_\_\_ **AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT DRAINAGE**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$60,000.00 for the Town to install necessary drainage at the Ambulance department; or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town transfer \$60,000 from Free Cash to complete the drainage project at Fire Station #2/Ambulance Bay.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 11** Was moved and seconded. Christopher Swindlehurst stated that he felt that the cost was excessive. The Town Administrator gave an explanation that any excess would be returned to the General Fund. Laurel Burgwardt questioned why the original engineering plan didn't provide for drainage. There was further discussion. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 11 PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 12** \_\_\_\_\_ **TOWN HALL PARKING LOT**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$15,000.00 for the Town to patch and expand the Town Hall parking lot; or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town transfer \$15,000.00 from Free Cash for the Town to complete Town Hall parking lot repairs.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 12** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 12 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 13** \_\_\_\_\_ **TOWN HALL KITCHEN REPAIR**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$10,000.00 for the Town to make necessary repairs and improvements to the Town Hall kitchen; or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town transfer \$10,000.00 from Free Cash to Buildings and Grounds to make Town Hall Kitchen renovations.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 13** Was moved and seconded.

Laurel Burgwardt questioned where the figure to improve the Town Hall kitchen came from. Michael Lavery explained that the Board of Health told the Town that the kitchen had problems and that they needed to be fixed. David Shorey stated that the cost was derived from getting quotes from LP Adams for mid-grade cabinets. He noted that the base cabinets were rotting and moldy and couldn't be fixed. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 13 PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 14** \_\_\_\_\_ **PARKS AND RECREATION MAPLE STREET PARKING**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$4,381.82 for the Parks and Recreation to repair the Maple Street parking area; or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town transfer \$4,381.82 from Free Cash to Parks and Recreation to repair the Maple Street parking area.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Article 14** Was moved and seconded.

Cynthia DelPapa noted that the parking area was in a watershed area. William Elovirta explained that Parks and Recreation has already been in contact with the Conservation Agent who told Parks and Recreation what needed to be done with respect to moving forward with this project. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 14 PASSED.**

## **ARTICLE 15** \_\_\_\_\_ **LOCAL OPTION MEAL EXCISE TAX**

To see if the Town will vote to accept Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 64L, Section 2 (a) to impose a .75% meals tax on the sales of restaurant meals; or take any other action thereon.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town will accept Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 64L, Section 2(a) to impose a .75% meals tax on the sales of restaurant meals.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Article 15** Was moved and seconded.

Daniel Osman, Heather Anello, Town Clerk, George Roberts William Cavanaugh Rick Bowers, Michael Lavery, Gary Danko, Randy Johnson, Ann Spadafora and others spoke against this proposed tax. Daniel Parnell, and others spoke in favore of this proposed tax. William Elovirta stated that a resident asked why Becket wasn't taking advantage of this, and given the forecast of increased expenses the Selectmen and the Finance Committee decided to go foreward with this Article. Jeremy Dunn stated that the Town Meeting couldn't bind a future Town Meeting by earmarking funds, and noted that 75 cents on a \$100 dollar meal bill is not significant. A motion was made to call the question. The motion to call the question was seconded, there was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion to call the qestion passed unanimously. A vote was taken on Article 15 by a count of hands.

**Article 15 FAILED.**

## **ARTICLE 16** \_\_\_\_\_ **PAYMENT AGREEMENTS FOR PROPERTIES IN TAX TITLE**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's General Bylaws by adding a new Section 9 to Article 9, titled "Tax Title Payment Plans", to read as follows, and further to amend the Table of Contents to reflect said amendment, or take any other action thereon:

### SECTION 7. Tax Title Payment Plans

A. Pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 60, sec. 62A, the Treasurer shall have the authority to enter into a written payment agreement with any person(s) entitled to redeem ownership of parcels in tax title which have been taken by the Town for nonpayment of real estate taxes (the "Redeemer"). The payment agreement shall be executed on such terms and conditions for payment of the delinquent taxes, interest and any other costs, fees or charges associated with same, in accordance with G.L. c. 60, §62A and this bylaw. The Treasurer shall not refuse to enter into agreements with eligible taxpayers.

B. This bylaw shall apply to all taxpayers with parcels in all categories of real property subject to all other terms and conditions in this bylaw.

C. The following conditions must be met prior to the Town entering into all payment agreements:

1. The Town has not filed a petition in Land Court to foreclose the rights of redemption;  
and

2. All real estate taxes due for the current fiscal year assessed against the parcel, as well as any other fees and charges owed to the Town, are paid to date.

D. All payment agreements shall comply with the following minimum requirements:

1. The payment agreement must state the amount of the payment due from the Redeemer at the time of execution of the agreement, which must be a minimum of twenty-five (25%) or the total amount required to redeem the parcel at the inception of the agreement, including all principal, interest, fees, costs, and other charges, in the form of certified funds or cash.

2. The agreement shall have a maximum term of sixty (60) months (i.e., five (5) years). At the request of the Redeemer, the Treasurer is authorized to agree to a shorter term.

3. The agreement must state that all payments shall be made quarterly based on the Town's fiscal year and in the amounts and at the time provided in a payment schedule prepared by the Treasurer which shall be a part of said payment agreement.

E. During the term of the agreement the Treasurer may not bring an action to foreclose the tax title unless payments are not made in accordance with the schedule set out in the agreement or timely payments are not made on other amounts due to the Town that are a lien on the same parcel. The Treasurer is under no obligation to accept late payments. In the event that the Redeemer breaches a payment Agreement and the Treasurer has not foreclosed on the tax title, a subsequent payment Agreement shall not be made available for the same parcel(s).

F. The agreement may include a waiver of not more than fifty (50%) percent of the accrued interest on the amount of the tax title account. Interest shall continue to accrue, pursuant to the rate established by state law for tax title accounts, during the term of the payment Agreement.

G. The agreement shall not be assignable by the Redeemer. In the event of any sale or other transfer of any kind of the parcel(s) subject to an Agreement or any interest therein, in whole or part, all amounts owed to the Town, including the full amount of interest, fees and costs, shall become immediately due and payable.

H. The Treasurer may to agree to accelerated payments. In the event of any discrepancy between the Agreement and the bylaw, the bylaw shall control.

**Motion:** Move that the Town amend the Town of Becket General Bylaws, adding Article 9, Section 9, titled "Tax Title Payment Plans," and the Table of Contents as presented in Article 17 of the warrant for the May 11, 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 16** Was moved and seconded. There was a brief discussion of this Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 16 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **ARTICLE 17      SALE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the amount to be received by the Town upon the sale of the Town's Rescue #4 firetruck to be reimbursed to the Becket Volunteer Firefighters' Association which had paid to purchase the truck, or to take any other action related thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that Town will appropriate the amount to be received by the Town upon the sale of the Town's Rescue #4 firetruck to be reimbursed to the Becket Volunteer Firefighters' Association which had paid to purchase the truck, or to take any other action related thereto.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**  
**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 17** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion of this Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 17 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**



difference, and there was no change in personnel. Mr. Roberts noted that in 2010 this issue came before the Town Meeting under Article 25. Mr. Roberts noted that it was voted down. Mr. Roberts noted that the Tax Collector, Tax Assessor and Treasurer’s customers were the Town, and don’t have responsibilities similar to the Town Clerk. Mr. Roberts noted that on occasions there is a conflict between the Selectmen and the Town Clerk with respect to the duties of the Town Clerk. Mr. Roberts, as an example, alluded to the situation that arose when it came to his attention as Town Clerk that the Town was not complying with the enabling legislation for the Sherwood Forest Road Maintenance District (SFRMD). He observed since the SFRMD came into existence the Town had not been collecting SFRMD taxes from the residents of SFRMD that lived along Wells Road in the belief that because they lived along a road maintained by the Town, they weren’t part of the SFRMD. Mr. Roberts further explained that while he, as Town Clerk, doesn’t deal with taxes, he does have responsibilities with respect to voting in the Town of Becket, and issuing voter lists for the SFRMD that included the registered voters in Sherwood Forest that lived along Wells Road. He noted that because the Town of Becket was not collecting taxes from Sherwood Forest residents living along Wells Road, the Board of Selectmen had taken the position that those people were not members of the SFRMD, and that as a result, they couldn’t vote in the SFRMD annual meeting to elect officers of the District and set District policy. Mr. Roberts related that when the Town Clerk disagreed with the past practice of the Town with respect to issuing SFRMD voter lists, the Board of Selectmen adopted a written policy forbidding the Town Clerk from including residents who lived along Wells Road from being included in the SFRMD voter list. Mr. Roberts explained that upon receiving the Selectmen’s written policy, he corresponded with Town Counsel. Town Counsel issued a written legal opinion stating in relevant part, that the Sherwood Forest residents who lived along Wells Road were, in fact, members of the SFRMD and should be included in the SFRMD voter list, and further opined that the Town Clerk need not follow the Board of Selectmen’s written policy with regard to omitting Wells Road residents from the SFRMD voter’s list. Mr. Roberts noted that the Selectmen’s actions disenfranchised approximately 17 percent of the SFRMD eligible voters for over twenty years and also deprived the SFRMD of those voter’s road maintenance taxes for the same period of time. Mr. Roberts concluded with the observation that if he had been an appointed employee the Selectmen may have fired him for insubordination when he didn’t follow their written policy regarding the Wells Road voters. Mr. Roberts stated that he feels that it is important for the Town Clerk to have the autonomy to take at least limited corrective actions when the Town Clerk discovers something wrong; to say “no, this isn’t right,” to seek legal counsel, or some other appropriate response without fear of retaliation from the Board of Selectmen. Steven Rosenthal spoke against this Article. James Levy spoke against this Article, noting that we are here at this meeting operating under the assumption that we may rule ourselves. Mr. Levy noted that for a couple centuries residents have been voting for officers for officers to govern this community and be responsible to this community. He feels that participation and residents passing through these position leaning about our community, and serving our community has extraordinary value above and beyond voting. He encouraged the meeting to vote this Article down. David Leveque asked about the language “seek” of this Article. Town Counsel, Joel Bard explained that the Selectmen don’t have the authority to enact legislation, but can file an application to the Legislature for them to enact legislation to change the Town’s By-Laws. He acknowledged that it was routine for the Legislature to approve such applications.

A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 18 FAILED.**

**ARTICLE 19                    EXTENDED CONTRACT - RECYCLING**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select board to enter into a ten (10) year contract, commencing on July 1, 2020 with the qualified vendor selected by MassDEP through a competitive bid process for recycling processing services for the Town, subject to the Select board’s determination that the contract is in the best interests of the Town and subject to Town Meeting approval in the Spring of 2020 for funding for these services and/or take any vote or votes in relation thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that Town authorize the Select board to enter into a ten (10) year contract, commencing on July 1, 2020 with the qualified vendor selected by MassDEP through a competitive bid process for recycling processing services for the Town, subject to the Select board’s determination that the contract is in the best interests of the Town and subject to Town Meeting approval in the Spring of 2020 for funding for these services.

<b>Board of Selectmen:</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	<b>Majority Vote Required</b>
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	

**Article 19** Was moved and seconded. Several people expressed concern that a services contract for a 10 year term was too long. Highway Superintendent Christopher Bouchard explained the rational for entering into a contract of this type and duration. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 19 PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 20                    LOCAL OPTION (ROOM OCCUPANCY EXCISE)**

To see if the Town of Becket will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c. 64G, § 3A to impose a local option room occupancy excise at the rate of six percent (6%), or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town accept the provisions of G.L. c. 64G, § 3A to impose a local option room occupancy excise at the rate of six percent (6%), or take any other action relative thereto.

<b>Board of Selectmen:</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	<b>Majority Vote Required</b>
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	
<b>Planning Board:</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	

**Article 20** Was moved and seconded. Linda Bacon of Canterbury Farm Bed and Breakfast spoke in opposition to Article 20, noting that they already pay 5.7% in room occupancy taxes to the State. She also notes that the Article doesn't mention short term rentals such as Airbnb. Town Counsel, Joel Bard noted that this tax would also apply to short term rentals because that law dealing with room occupancy excise taxes was amended earlier this year to include short term rentals, noting that if the Town adopted this Article the tax would therefor apply to short term rentals such as Airbnb. Robert Healey spoke in favor of this Article noting that he and his wife operated the Chambery Inn in Lee. He observed that this tax was unpopular in Lee when it was first proposed, but that the revenue it generated monies of which 10% is set aside to promote the Town. He stated that the funds were used to put up flower baskets on Main Street, and create and staff visitor centers in Lee. He noted that all rentals in town, including Airbnb's will have to pay taxes to the state, and if we don't opt for our portion we will get nothing back. Mr. Healey noted that as of the time of the Town Meeting there were 98 listings for Airbnb in Becket. Robert Grace spoke against this Article. He noted that he and his wife rented short term through Airbnb and it helped pay the mortgage, and relied heavily on the vacation rentals. He fears that this tax might impact the limited volume of his rentals. Mr. Grace noted that this tax would also make Becket look less friendly. Meredyth Babcock spoke in favor of promoting the town and questioned whether the 6% tax was a hard figure or if there was some flexibility in the amount of the tax. Linda Bacon suggested that before imposing taxes on lodgings, the Town should level the playing field with all lodgings, and require licensing, and inspections before imposing taxes. Dave Krawet spoke in opposition to this Article. Ann Spadafora addressed the issue of cost of inspections. She noted that at the Cape the combined state and local occupancy tax was approximately 12.5% and that would be renters were balking at the increased cost, and the sellers were asking that real estate agents accept lower commissions for their work. She thinks that if this Article passes, some accommodation needs to be made to differentiate between those that buy up properties to rent them out through Airbnb, and those who just rent out a few bedrooms in their home. Mr. Roberts notes that the hoteliers in Becket are burdened enough with state taxes, property taxes and the other costs of operation. Mr. Roberts speculated that many of the Airbnb's in town are likely second home owners. He noted that second home owners use local real estate agents, tradesmen and the like contributing to the local economy. He noted that second home owners also pay property taxes at the same rate as full time residents but don't use services, and don't have kids in local schools. He agreed that there was no reason that lodgings shouldn't be inspected for safety and health, but suggested that inspection fees would be more palatable than a tax. Mr. Roberts urged the meeting to vote against this Article. Selectman Michael Lavery proposed amending this Article to lower the proposed tax from 6% to 3.3%. The motion to amend was seconded. Linda Bacon spoke against the Article even at the lower rate, and observed that those providing lodgings used local contractors and contributed to the local economy in other ways. Mr. Grace and Mr. Krawet spoke against the Article even at the lower rate. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the amendment passed by 41 in favor of the amendment and 11 against. Mr. Swindlehurst received clarification that all Airbnb and traditional lodgings would be paying the same state lodging excise tax rate, and that even if this Article is voted down this year, the town would not be prohibited from considering it again in the future. Ann Krawet spoke in opposition to this Article.

A vote was taken on Article 20 as amended by a count of hands.

**Article 20 FAILED.**

**ARTICLE 21                    FY 2020 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AUTHORIZATION**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from Community Preservation Fiscal Year 2020 estimated annual revenues the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for Committee administrative expenses, community preservation projects and other expenses in Fiscal Year 2020, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation, all as set forth below:

Appropriations:  
Committee Administrative Expenses     \$500

Reserves:

Historical Resources Reserve	\$4,259
Community Housing Reserve	\$4,259
Open Space Reserve	\$4,259
Undesignated Reserve	\$29,316

**Sponsored by the Community Preservation Committee**

**MOTION:** Moved that the Town appropriate or reserve from Fiscal 2020 Community Preservation estimated annual revenues the amounts set forth in Article 22 of the Warrant for the May 11, 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

**Board of Selectmen:** Recommended

**Majority Vote Required**

**CPA Committee:** Recommended

**Finance Committee:** Recommended

**Article 21** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion of this Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 21 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 22** USE OF STABILIZATION TO OFFSET DEBT PAYMENTS

To see if the Town will transfer from stabilization a sum of money, \$185,000, to reduce the tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2020, or take any other action relative thereto.

**MOTION:** Move that the Town will vote to transfer from stabilization a sum of money, \$185,000, to reduce the tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2020, or take any other action relative thereto.

**Board of Selectmen:** Recommended

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Finance Committee:** Recommended

**Article 22** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion of this Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 22 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 23** CITIZEN PETITION: PLASTIC BAG BAN

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Becket Bylaws by adding the following language to Article 17, Section 24 of the Town of Becket Town Betterment Bylaws:

**MOTION:** Move that the Town amend the Town of Becket Bylaws by adding the following language to Article 17, Section 24 of the Town of Becket Town Betterment Bylaws:

**Section 24. Thin-Film Plastic Bags**

Reduction of Retail Use

A. Purpose and Intent.

The purpose of this bylaw is to reduce the use of thin-film plastic checkout bags by all retail and grocery stores in the Town of Becket. The production and use of thin-film plastic checkout bags have significant impacts on the environment, including, but not limited to: contributing to the potential death of aquatic animals and other wildlife through ingestion and entanglement; contributing to pollution of the land environment; creating a burden to solid waste collection and recycling facilities; clogging storm drainage systems; and requiring the use of millions of barrels of crude oil nationally for their production.

B. Definitions

- i. Checkout bag: A carryout bag provided by a store to a customer at the point of sale. Check out bags shall not include bags, whether plastic or not, in which loose produce or products are placed by the consumer to deliver such items to the point of sale or checkout area of the store.

- ii. Thin-film plastic bags: Typically with plastic handles, these are bags with a thickness of 4 Mil or less and are intended for transport of purchased products.
- iii. Grocery store: A retail establishment where more than fifty percent of the gross floor area is devoted to the sale of food products for home preparation or consumption, which typically also offers home care and personal care products.
- iv. Retail store: An establishment that offers the sale and display of merchandise within a building.
- v. Reusable checkout bag: A bag, with stitched-on handles, capable of at least 175 uses; which can carry 25 pounds over a distance of 300 feet, and is made of plastic (greater than 4 Mil thick), cloth, fabric or other machine-washable materials.

C. Use Regulations

- i. Thin-film plastic bags shall not be distributed, used, or sold for checkout at any retail or grocery store within the town of Becket. Retail establishment shall mean any business facility that sells goods directly to the consumer including but not limited to grocery stores, pharmacies, liquor stores, "mini-marts," and retail vendors selling clothing, food, and household or personal items.
- ii. Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable or biodegradable shopping bags to stores. Retail or grocery stores are strongly encouraged to provide reusable checkout bags with or without charge to customers.
- iii. Thin film plastic bags that are used to contain dry cleaning, newspapers, produce, meat, bulk foods, wet items, and other similar merchandise, typically without handles, are still permissible.

D. Enforcement and Penalties

Violations of this section shall be enforced by non-criminal disposition in the manner provided in MGL Chapter 40, Section 21D by the Board of Selectmen. The fine schedule shall be, First offense: Warning; second offense: \$25.00; third and each successive offense: \$50.00.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 23** Was moved and seconded. Michael Lavery moved to amend by adding to section 24 C subsection:

**"iv "Said by-law to become effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020."**

Several voters spoke in favor of the Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands, and the amendment passed unanimously. A vote was taken on Article 23 as amended by a show of hands

**Article 23 as amended PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ARTICLE 24 \_\_\_\_\_ INDIAN LAKES ASSOCIATION DUES**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Free Cash the sum of \$1,350 for the Indian Lakes Association dues owed for property owned by the Town.

**Motion:** Move that the Town vote to appropriate from Free Cash the sum of \$1,350 for the Indian Lakes Association dues owed for the property owned by the Town.

**Board of Selectmen: Recommended**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Finance Committee: Recommended**

**Article 24** Was moved and seconded. The Moderator noted that there was an error in the Warrant on this Article as a 4/5<sup>th</sup> majority is needed because this is a debt from a prior year. A vote was taken by a count of hands and there were 42 votes in favor and 1 vote against the Article.

**Article 24 PASSED by a 4/5th Majority.**

**ARTICLE 25 \_\_\_\_\_ EASEMENTS RELATED TO THE ATHENAEUM**

To see if the Town will vote to accept easements from Becket Athenaeum, or the current owner of 3367 Main Street, Becket (Map 206, Lot 105) for the following purposes (a) a sewer line, and related appurtenances, for the benefit of the Becket Athenaeum; and (b) a water line, and related appurtenances, for the benefit of Town property, being the Becket Arts Center ( Map 206, Lot 106) and









presented in Article 32 of the warrant for the May 11, 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

**Article 32** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion of this Article. James Levy of the Planning Board gave the Planning Board's recommendation for this Article. A vote was taken by a count of hands.

**Article 32 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn to the Annual Town Election which will be held one week from today on May 18, 2015, starting at 10:00 a.m. A vote was taken and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m. The checkers were Election Workers Charles Francis, Alvin Blake, Ruth Rosenthal and Ann Krawet.

Respectfully submitted,

George E. Roberts

Town Clerk

A true copy, Attest:

*Seal:*

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George E. Roberts, Town Clerk