

**2025 Spring Annual Town Meeting
Kennedy Middle School Auditorium
April 29, 2025, Second Session**

The second session of the 2025 Spring Town Meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by Town Moderator, Jeffrey Alderson, who declared a quorum present. The Moderator welcomed residents, taxpayers, town officials, Town Meeting Members and interested parties to the second session of 2025 Spring Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Alderson presented the official warrant, duly signed by the Select Board with the officer's return thereon to the Town Clerk to be entered into the Town's official record. The Moderator issued a statement on the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolutionary War. In closing, the Moderator asked that all recently elected or appointed members of Town Meeting stand to take the oath of office.

The Moderator invited Reverend Ian Mevorach of the Common Street Spiritual Center to the podium on the floor to deliver an Invocation for Town Meeting.

The Moderator asked the audience to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in recognition of all the men and women serving on our behalf throughout the world.

The Moderator introduced the officials present for the meeting: Andrew Ghobrial, Town Clerk; Todd Gillenwater, Finance Committee Chair; Cody Jacobs, Finance Committee Secretary; Karis North, Town Counsel; James Errickson, Town Administrator; and Kathryn Coughlin, Select Board Chair. Gloria Huang will operate the slides and Jeff Horan, a representative from Option Technologies, will operate the electronic voting system.

The Moderator reviewed the seating arrangement of the auditorium and the rules for this Town Meeting. The proceedings of Town Meetings shall be governed by *Town Meeting Time, third edition*, the Town of Natick Home Rule Charter, the Natick Bylaws and the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Moderator reviewed the general rules and procedures of Town Meeting. He indicated that all residents and taxpayers of the town, town officers and employees, whether or not residents, have the same right to speak as Town Meeting Members; however they do not have the right to submit motions for consideration at Town Meeting, nor vote on any matter before Town Meeting. Non-residents may only speak at Town Meeting after approval by Town Meeting Members. No person shall speak upon any debatable motion more than once when any other person desires to be heard, nor more than twice on the same question without permission of Town Meeting; and no person shall speak more than five (5) minutes at one time without permission of Town Meeting. All motions offered for the consideration of Town Meeting shall be in writing if required by the Moderator; and all motions involving the expenditure of money shall be in writing when required by any Town Meeting Member. Written motions shall be presented to the Moderator on prescribed forms.

Consistent with the Natick Bylaws, once a member is recognized, it has been the practice of Town Meeting Members to first ask a question(s), then propose a motion and/or debate the highest-ranking motion. Once a speaker is called upon by the moderator, the speaker's time will begin. Time expended asking questions will be considered part of the speaker's time, pursuant to the Natick Bylaws. Responses to the speaker's question will not be considered part of the speaker's requisite time. Each speaker will be limited to three questions, whether they are stated singularly or in a compound question, such will be responded to at the direction of the Moderator. Motions shall be made and have precedence as listed in the table entitled "Precedence of Motions," found in the Natick Bylaws, the Town Meeting Member Handbook and *Town Meeting Time, third edition*. The motion for the previous question shall not be entertained by the Moderator if three or more persons are seeking recognition, who have not previously spoken to the question.

Any person having a monetary or equitable interest in any matter under discussion at a Town Meeting, and any person employed by another having such an interest, shall disclose the fact of his/her interest or employment before speaking on the matter. ***These rules were accepted without objection.***

Regarding advance communications of amendments or alternate motions which may be presented at Town Meeting, the Moderator and the Clerk must receive draft motions in advance; 48 hours before Town Meeting is preferred to deliberate such. In addition, with complex motions, motions need to be provided via a document file format (Word or Google Docs), so that motions may be displayed on the stage screen. Finally, the Moderator, must accept as “in order” or rule “out of order” all motions. Therefore, complex motions that have not been reviewed by the Moderator and the Clerk (and in some cases town counsel) will likely cause a delay at Town Meeting, and/or may be - unilaterally ordered or - suggested that you folks postpone consideration of the current question for technical review.

Moved by Richard Sidney, seconded by Bill Gath to waive reading the text of all 2025 Spring Annual Town Meeting warrant articles; and move to waive reading of the text of motions, excluding amounts to be appropriated and sources of said amounts to be appropriated, when motions are provided in the text of the Recommendations of the Natick Finance Committee publications. ***The motion to waive the reading passed by a unanimous vote.***

Moved by David Krentzman and seconded by Richard Sidney that Article 15 (Community Preservation Act) be moved to the first order of business on Thursday, May 1, to allow the Community Preservation Committee Chairperson to attend in person. ***The motion to postpone Article 15 to a date certain passed by a majority vote (114/5/2).***

Moved by Paul Griesmer and seconded by Nancy Northgraves to advance the consideration of Article 25 to be heard immediately before Article 7. ***The motion to advance Article 25 to be heard immediately before Article 7 failed (33/89/3).***

Mr. Alderson reads a citation issued by Representative David P. Linsky to former Moderator Frank Foss into the record for his years of service to the Town of Natick.

Senate President Karen Spilka reads and presents former Moderator Frank Foss with a citation for his 18 years as Town Moderator.

Moved by Judith Khun and seconded by Donna McKenzie that retired Town Clerk, Ms. Diane Packer read a resolution for the retired Moderator Mr. Frank Foss. ***The motion to allow retired Town Clerk Ms. Diane Packer to read a resolution for the retired Moderator Mr. Frank Foss passed by a majority vote.***

The resolution was moved by Richard Sidney and seconded by Carol Gloff. The resolution passed by a majority vote. Mr. Frank Foss offers thanks to Senate President Karen Spilka and Town Meeting. He speaks about advice he was given before being elected to Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 1 - Authorize the Select Board to Acquire, Obtain, Abandon or Relocate Easements:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board, during Fiscal Year 2026, to acquire on behalf of the Town any and all easements for any of the following purposes: roads, sidewalks, vehicular and/or pedestrian access or passage, drainage and utilities, provided however that such authorization pertains only to easements acquired at no cost to the Town; and, further, to authorize the Select Board, subsequent to a public hearing, during Fiscal Year 2026 to abandon or relocate easements acquired for any of the foregoing purposes; or otherwise act thereon.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Committee took the following action:	RECOMMENDATION:	Favorable
	QUANTUM OF VOTE:	13-0-0
	DATE VOTED:	March 4, 2025

MOTION (Requires Majority Vote)

Moved by Cody Jacobs, seconded by Todd Gillenwater that the Town vote to authorize the Select Board, during Fiscal Year 2026, to acquire on behalf of the Town any and all easements for any of the following purposes: roads, sidewalks, vehicular and/or pedestrian access or passage, drainage and utilities, provided however that such authorization pertains only to easements acquired at no cost to the Town; and, further, to authorize the Select Board, subsequent to a public hearing, during Fiscal Year 2026 to abandon or relocate easements acquired for any of the foregoing purposes. Town Administrator James Errickson spoke to this article.

The motion under Article 1 passed by a majority vote (125/1/0).

ARTICLE 2 – Committee Article:

To see if the Town will vote to hear and discuss the reports of town officers, boards, and committees; or otherwise act thereon.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Committee took the following action:	RECOMMENDATION:	No Action
	QUANTUM OF VOTE:	12-0-0
	DATE VOTED:	April 1, 2025

MOTION (Requires Majority Vote)

Moved no action by Cody Jacobs, Seconded by Todd Gillenwater. Town Administrator James Errickson spoke to this article.

The motion under Article 2 passed by a majority vote (119/5/3).

ARTICLE 3 – Omnibus Budget:

To determine what sum of money the Town will appropriate and raise, transfer from available funds for the operation of the government of the Town of Natick, including debt and interest, during Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025) and to provide for reserve funds for Fiscal Year 2025 and to see what budgets for Fiscal Year 2025 will be reduced to offset said additional appropriations;

To determine what sum of money the Town will appropriate and raise, or transfer from available funds for the operation of the government of the Town of Natick, including debt and interest, during Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026) and to provide for reserve funds for Fiscal Year 2026;

To determine what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or otherwise provide, for the maintenance and operation of the Morse Institute Library and the Bacon Free Library, for Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025);

To determine what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or otherwise provide, for the maintenance and operation of the Morse Institute Library and the Bacon Free Library, for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026); or otherwise act thereon.

James Errickson, Town Administrator, spoke to this budget for town services, schools and capital projects. Following, Director of Finance John Townsend, School Superintendent Melissa Spash and John Evans of the Keefe Tech Vocational School offered remarks concerning their specific budgets.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Committee took the following action:	RECOMMENDATION:	Favorable (All Motions)
	QUANTUM OF VOTE:	9-5-0 (Motion A) 14-0-0 (Motions B & C)
	DATE VOTED:	April 1, 2025

Article 3, Amended Motion A (Requires Majority Vote)

Moved by Kathryn Coughlin, seconded by Richard Sidney that Motion A under Article 3 be amended as follows:

- Replace the revenue source value for Free Cash from \$2,962,707 to \$3,462,707
- Delete the revenue source line for Overlay Surplus in the amount of \$500,000
- Amend the revenue source descriptions as follows, insert “and Capital” after “Operational” and add “(Tax Levy)” after Operational Override Fiscal Year 2026, so it reads “Operational and Capital Override Fiscal Year 2026 (Tax Levy)”

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Motion A: Requires Majority Vote

Move that the Town vote to appropriate the Grand Total Budget Amount shown below for the purpose of operating the departments, committees and boards of the Town, said funds are to be expended under the direction of the appropriate official or committees: School Committee; Directors of Libraries; Multi-member board or committee; Department Head; Collector/Treasurer; Comptroller; Finance Committee; Town Administrator; or Superintendent of Public Schools.

Education

Natick Public Schools

Salaries & Expenses \$95,491,904

Total Natick Public Schools: \$95,491,904

South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical Schools (Keefe Tech School)

Expense (Assessment) \$1,522,373

Total South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical Schools: \$1,522,373

(Keefe Tech School)

Morse Institute Library

Salaries \$2,318,375

Expenses \$430,325

Total Morse Institute Library: \$2,748,700

Bacon Free Library

Salaries \$210,837

Expenses \$38,799

Total Bacon Free Library: \$249,636

Total Budget Amount for Education: \$100,012,613

Motion continued on next page →

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Administrative Support

Select Board

Salaries	\$1,438,512
Expenses	\$886,174

Total Select Board:	\$2,324,686
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Town Report

Expenses	\$4,100
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Total Town Report:	\$4,100
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Finance

Salaries	\$1,661,100
Expenses	\$419,837

Total Finance:	\$2,080,937
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Community & Economic Development

Salaries	\$1,073,822
Expenses	\$86,500

Total Community & Economic Development:	\$1,160,322
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Weights & Measurers

Salaries	\$34,922
Expenses	\$990

Total Weights & Measurers:	\$35,912
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Information Technology

Salaries	\$535,306
Expenses	\$1,540,154

Total Information Technology:	\$2,075,460
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Town Clerk

Salaries	\$354,756
Expenses	\$53,896

Total Town Clerk:	\$408,652
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Board of Registrars

Salaries	\$40,600
Expenses	\$84,694

Total Board of Registrars:	\$125,294
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Legal

Expenses	\$671,400
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Total Legal:	\$671,400
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Total Budget Amount for Administrative Support:	\$8,886,763
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Motion continued on next page

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Committees & Commissions

Committees & Commissions

Expenses \$24,328

Total Committees & Commissions: **\$24,328**

Affordable Housing Trust

Expenses \$80,000

Total Affordable Housing Trust: **\$80,000**

Total Budget Amount for Committees & Commissions: **\$104,328**

Motion continued on next page →

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Public Safety

Emergency Management

Salaries	\$5,000
Expenses	\$40,820

Total Emergency Management: **\$45,820**

Parking Enforcement

Salaries	\$105,800
Expenses	\$82,700

Total Parking Enforcement: **\$188,500**

Police

Salaries	\$8,463,414
Expenses	\$373,718

Total Police: **\$8,837,132**

Fire

Salaries	\$10,872,665
Expenses	\$375,588

Total Fire: **\$11,248,253**

Total Budget Amount for Public Safety: **\$20,319,705**

Motion continued on next page →

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Health & Community Services

Community Services

Salaries	\$1,733,361
Expenses	\$495,613

Total Community Services: **\$2,228,974**

Board of Health

Salaries	\$654,630
Expenses	\$78,050

Total Board of Health: **\$732,680**

Total Budget Amount for Health & Community Services: **\$2,961,654**

Motion continued on next page →

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Public Works

Public Works

Salaries	\$5,016,241
Expenses	\$3,657,370
Municipal Energy	\$1,830,750
Snow & Ice	\$550,000

Total Public Works: **\$11,054,362**

Total Budget Amount for Public Works: **\$11,054,362**

Motion continued on next page →

Article 3, Motion A: Department Budgets

Shared Services

Employee Fringe

Other Personnel Services	\$22,688,052
Merit/Performance	\$421,506

Total Employee Fringe: **\$23,109,558**

Property & Liability Insurance

Expenses	\$1,226,075
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Total Property & Liability Insurance: **\$1,226,075**

Contributory Retirement

Pension Assessment	\$14,854,240
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Total Contributory Retirement: **\$14,854,240**

Non-Contributory Retirement

Pensions	\$20,000
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Total Non-Contributory Retirement: **\$20,000**

Debt Service

Expenses	\$14,406,527
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Total Debt Service: **\$14,406,527**

Reserve Fund- Finance Committee

Expenses	\$200,000
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Total Reserve Fund- Finance Committee: **\$200,000**

Facilities Management

Salaries	\$3,820,494
Expenses	\$922,380

Total Facilities Management: **\$4,742,874**

Total Budget Amount for Shared Services:

\$58,559,274

Grand Total Budget Amount for Motion A:

\$201,898,699

And that the above amount \$201,898,699 be raised from the following sources:

Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2026	\$148,811,273
Operational and Capital Override Fiscal Year 2026 (Tax Levy)	\$7,000,000
State Aid	\$17,989,215
Local Receipts	\$20,484,523
Free Cash	\$3,462,707
Golf Course Indirects	\$88,562
Water Sewer Indirects	\$3,894,683
<u>Other Available Funds</u>	\$167,736

Article 3 Motion A Summary Table

Department Budgets	
Education	\$100,012,613
Administrative Support	\$8,886,763
Committees & Commissions	\$104,328
Public Safety	\$20,319,705
Health & Community Services	\$2,961,654
Public Works	\$11,054,362
Shared Services	\$58,559,274
Total Budget Amount for Motion A	\$201,898,699
Funding Sources	
Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2026	\$148,811,273
Operational and Capital Override Fiscal Year 2026 (Tax Levy)	\$7,000,000
State Aid	\$17,989,215
Local Receipts	\$20,484,523
Free Cash	\$3,462,707
Golf Course Indirects	\$88,562
Water Sewer Indirects	\$3,894,683
Other Available Funds	\$167,736
Total Amount to be raised	\$201,898,699

The amendment under Article 3 Motion A passed by a majority vote (112/10/3).

The amended motion under Article 3 Motion A passed by a majority vote (116/7/0).

Article 3, Motion B: Enterprise Funds	
Motion B: Requires Majority Vote	
Move that the Town vote to appropriate the Total Budget Amount for the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund and The Sassamon Trace Golf Course Enterprise Fund shown below for the purpose of operating the Enterprise Funds shown under the associated categories and approve the Water Sewer Enterprise Fund and Sassamon Trace Golf Course Enterprise Fund indirect costs, said funds are to be expended under the direction of each Department Head or Director.	
<u>Water & Sewer Fund</u>	
Water & Sanitary Sewer Operations	
Salaries	\$2,833,670
Expenses	\$9,369,965
Total Water & Sanitary Sewer Operations:	\$12,203,635
Utility Billing	
Salaries	\$126,457
Expenses	\$69,000
Total Utility Billing:	\$195,457
Fringe Benefits	
Expenses	\$1,148,472
Total Fringe Benefits:	\$1,148,472
Water & Sewer Debt Service	
Principal	\$2,306,067
Interest	\$1,117,947
Total Water & Sewer Debt Service:	\$3,424,014

Water& Sewer Reserve Fund	
Expenses	\$200,000
Total Water& Sewer Reserve Fund:	\$200,000
Total Budget Amount for Water& SewerFund:	\$17,171,578
And that the above amount\$17,171,578 be raised from the following sources:	
Water Sewer User Fees	\$17,171,578

Article 3, Motion B: Enterprise Funds - Water & Sewer Indirect Costs	
<u>Water& Sewer Indirect Costs</u>	
Department Allocations	
Public Works Administration	\$268,521
Engineering	\$514,898
Equipment Maintenance	\$720,104
Highway, Sanitation, Recycling	\$338,199
Facilities	\$146,947
Public Safety	\$232,966
Finance	\$371,627
Town Administration	\$297,718
Community Development	\$150,969
Information Technology	\$195,340
Procurement	\$69,390
Human Resources	\$11,535
Legal Services	\$101,235
Property & Liability Insurance	\$459,778
Utilities	\$88,190
Vehicle Fuel	\$171,268
Sub-Total:	\$4,138,685
Water Sewer Staff Performing General Fund Functions	
GIS Services	\$(68,491)
W/S Admin. Asst.- DPW	\$(40,988)
W/S Admin. Asst.- Collector	\$(46,107)
Snow and Removal	\$(73,491)
Software Servicing	\$(14,925)
Sub-Total:	(\$244,002)

Total Water and Sewer Indirect Costs:

\$3,894,683

And that the sum of \$3,894,683 appropriated in the General Fund be raised from the following source:

Water Sewer User Fees

\$3,894,638

Article 3, Motion B: Enterprise Funds

Sassamon Trace Golf Enterprise

Sassamon Trace Golf Operations

Salaries	\$453,121
Expenses	\$296,911

Total Sassamon Trace Golf Operations: **\$750,032**

Sassamon Trace Golf Fringe Benefits

Other Personnel Services	\$79,986
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Total Sassamon Trace Golf Fringe Benefits: **\$79,986**

Sassamon Trace Golf Debt Service

Principal	\$50,000
Interest	\$9,687
Lease Payment	\$99,583

Total Sassamon Trace Golf Debt Service: **\$159,270**

Sassamon Trace Golf Reserve Fund

Expenses	\$20,000
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Total Sassamon Trace Golf Reserve Fund: **\$20,000**

Total Budget Amount for Sassamon Trace Golf Enterprise: **\$1,009,288**

And that the above amount \$1,009,288 be raised from the following sources:

Golf User Fees	\$1,009,288
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Article 3, Motion B: Enterprise Funds - Sassamon Trace Golf Indirect Costs

Sassamon Trace Golf Indirect Costs

Department Allocations

Public Works Administration	\$1,344
Equipment Maintenance	\$3,591
Highway, Sanitation, Recycling	\$9,019
Community Services	\$24,137
Land Facilities and Natural Resources	\$4,039
Public Safety	\$4,660
Finance	\$12,376
Town Administration	\$3,971
Procurement	\$398
Human Resources	\$1,923
Legal Services	\$1,688
Property & Liability Insurance	\$12,261
Utilities	\$6,300
Vehicle Fuel	\$2,855

Total Sassamon Trace Golf Indirect Costs: **\$88,562**

And that the sum of \$88,562 appropriated in the General Fund be raised from the following source:

Golf User Fees \$88,562

Article 3 Motion B Summary Table

Funds	
Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund	\$17,171,578
Water & Sewer Indirects	\$3,894,683
Sassamon Trace Golf Enterprise Fund	\$1,009,288
Sassamon Trace Golf Indirects	\$88,562
Total Budget Amount for Motion B	\$22,164,111
Funding Sources	
Water & Sewer User Fees	\$21,066,261
Golf User Fees	\$1,097,850
Total Amount to be raised	\$22,164,111

Article 3, Motion B: Requires Majority Vote

Moved by Cody Jacobs, seconded by Todd Gillenwater that the Town vote to appropriate the Total Budget Amount for the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund and The Sassamon Trace Golf Course Enterprise Fund shown below for the purpose of operating the Enterprise Funds shown under the associated categories and approve the Water Sewer Enterprise Fund and Sassamon Trace Golf Course Enterprise Fund indirect costs, said funds are to be expended under the direction of each Department Head or Director.

The motion under Article 3 Motion B passed by a majority vote (117/2/0).

Article 3, Motion C

Move that the Town vote to increase the appropriation voted by the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 3 by the sum of \$65,000 to supplement the Sassamon Trace Golf Enterprise budget as voted under Article 3 Motion B of the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting by **adding \$65,000 to Sassamon Trace Golf Operations Expenses.**

With the above budget supplement to be raised from the following source: Golf Retained Earnings for Fiscal Year 2025 - \$65,000

MOTION (Requires Majority Vote)

Moved by Cody Jacobs, seconded by Todd Gillenwater that the Town vote to increase the appropriation voted by the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 3 by the sum of \$65,000 to supplement the Sassamon Trace Golf Enterprise budget as voted under Article 3 Motion B of the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting by **adding \$65,000 to Sassamon Trace Golf Operations Expenses.**

With the above budget supplement to be raised from the following source: Golf Retained Earnings for Fiscal Year 2025 - \$65,000

The motion under Article 3 Motion C passed by a majority vote (107/2/1).

ARTICLE 4 – Rescind Authorized, Unissued Debt:

To see if the Town will vote to rescind the authorization for unissued debt that has been determined is no longer needed for the completion of various projects; or otherwise act thereon. Finance Director/Deputy Town Administrator John Townsend spoke on this article.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Committee took the following action:	RECOMMENDATION:	No Action
	QUANTUM OF VOTE:	12-0-0
	DATE VOTED:	March 11, 2025

MOTION (Requires a Majority Vote)

Moved by Cody Jacobs, seconded by Todd Gillenwater that the Town take NO ACTION on Article 4.

The motion under Article 4 passed by a majority vote (100/4/1).

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 until Thursday May 1 at 7:30 PM.

A record of the Second Session of
2025 Spring Annual Town Meeting
April 29, 2025

Andrew Ghobrial