

LWV Public Forum on 2026 Annual Town Meeting 2026-04-29 18:32(GMT-4:00)

Key Outcomes

The League of Women Voters hosted a pre-town meeting forum to explain voting procedures and answer questions on warrant articles. All consent calendar and abbreviated procedure articles received no substantive questions, suggesting strong community understanding. Five major articles were presented: water supply infrastructure (\$38.6M), 25 Holiday Road site study (\$200K), rail trail easements, and two liquor license expansions. [1](#) [2](#) [3](#)

Decisions Made

- **Consent calendar display:** Town will display the consent calendar motion on overhead screens at town meeting and provide handouts listing all articles [4](#) [5](#)
- **Article 19 removal:** Community Preservation Committee project appropriations (Article 19, page 61) removed from abbreviated presentation procedure and will be presented traditionally [6](#)
- **Non-high-tech timing:** Meeting will use manual one-minute warnings instead of digital timer due to technical difficulties [7](#)

Voting Procedures Explained

Consent Calendar:

- Groups non-contentious articles for single vote without debate [8](#)
- Two calendars this year: Articles 4-8 (first) and Articles 11-14 (second) [9](#) [10](#)
- Marked with double dagger (‡) in warrant table of contents [8](#)
- Any serious question or opposition removes article to traditional debate [8](#)

Abbreviated Presentation Procedure:

- Proponent waives right to be heard, no debate or opposition 11
- Mover reads motion, notes differences from warrant, immediate vote 8
- Marked with asterisk (*) in warrant 8
- Can be moved to traditional process if discussion warranted 8

Article 15: Water Supply Infrastructure (\$38.6M)

Funding request: \$38.6M for Happy Hollow Water Treatment Facility construction and permanent MWRA connection 12

Critical timeline:

- 2029 EPA deadline: New 4 parts per trillion PFAS standards take effect 13
- Current status: None of Wayland's permitted water supplies will comply 13
- Risk: Without action, town faces 2021-style bottled water distribution scenario 13

System failures:

- Current temporary PFAS filtering system failed multiple times this fiscal year 13
- Emergency MWRA connection activated 3 times already (expensive option) 14
- Equipment beyond useful design life, parts no longer manufactured 15

Financial impact:

- \$7M MWRA entrance fee waiver at stake (time-sensitive) 16 17
- Over \$3.3M in design funds already approved 16
- Voting no forfeits waiver; future costs increase by entry fee plus construction inflation 15

Solution design:

- Dual-source system: Permanent granulated activated carbon facility at Happy Hollow plus permanent MWRA connection for peak demand support 14
- Moves treatment out of flood zone 14
- Castle Road pumping station for MWRA water distribution 14

Consequences of failure: Catastrophic challenges in providing adequate town water supply; inability to secure safe, compliant water by 2029 15

Article 16: 25 Holiday Road Site Study (\$200K)

Property background:

- 13.7-acre town-owned parcel between Routes 27 and 126 near North Cemetery 18
- Acquired 1956 for school purposes; remains under School Committee custody 18
- No development in 70 years 18
- 2017 RAP Committee recommended reuse for market and affordable housing 18

Study scope: Jointly sponsored by Select Board and School Committee to explore potential uses including active/passive recreation, town/school use, or affordable and market-rate housing development 18 19

Housing approach:

- Single-family lots consistent with existing R40 zoning 19
- Possibly clustered townhouse units with remaining land as open space 19
- **Not** pursuing multifamily housing approaching Alta Oxbow height/density 19 20

Due diligence activities funded:

- Phase 1 environmental assessment 21
- Site survey and preliminary engineering (utilities, stormwater) 21
- Geotechnical analysis (soil bearing capacity, groundwater, wastewater) 21
- Wetlands assessment and Zone 1/Zone 2 capture zone implications (Baldwin Pond wells) 22
- Conceptual site planning for reuse alternatives 22
- Traffic impact analysis with mitigation recommendations 22
- Revenue/expense analysis for various reuse options 22
- Permitting approach exploration (as-of-right, conservation cluster, Chapter 40B local initiative) 22
- Market value appraisal and legal fees 20 22

Governance: Select Board will appoint 25 Holiday Road Visioning Committee including School Committee and neighborhood representation 20

School alignment: Work useful if School Committee pursues site for new elementary school as part of K-8 facilities master planning (Massachusetts School Building Authority would require similar due diligence) [19](#) [21](#)

Funding caveat: Appropriation for research only; future project requires separate town meeting approval and board/committee review [19](#)

Article 21: Rail Trail Easements

Project scope: Massachusetts Central Rail Trail completion from Wayland Depot to Sudbury-Wayland town line, connecting with recently paved Sudbury rail trail [23](#) [24](#)

Current status: 4.7-mile segment from Wayland Library to Jones Road in Waltham completed 2019 [23](#)

Construction timeline: Work anticipated complete by end of 2027 [24](#)

Easements requested:

- Permanent easement (nominal fee under \$100) from NP Wayland LLC (Wayland Town Center owners) for land running through their property [24](#) [25](#)
- Temporary construction easements on ~17,847 square feet near Wayland Depot (5-year duration, project expected complete sooner) [24](#) [25](#)
- State seeks easements; town acquiring from NP Wayland LLC on state's behalf (NP Wayland LLC agreeable) [24](#) [25](#)

Construction work: Installation of bridge over Sudbury River just west of Russell's Gardens [24](#)

Costs: Commonwealth pays construction and legal fees; town requested assurance of reimbursement for non-town property easements (state handling those directly) [26](#)

Documentation: Handout with MassDOT plans available at town meeting; link in warrant for advance review [25](#)

Article 17: Additional Liquor Licenses

Request: Home rule petition to General Court for 10 additional liquor licenses (on-premise consumption only) [27](#)

Current status: 14 licenses issued; all allocated [27](#)

Rationale: Full-service restaurants require liquor licenses; availability makes town attractive to new businesses 28

Recent example: Terrain (Whole Foods location) received last two full liquor licenses, prompting this request 29

Scope: Strictly for on-premise consumption (restaurants); does not include liquor stores 28 30

Process: Town meeting authorization required to file home rule petition with state legislature (state controls municipal license numbers) 27

Article 31: Wine/Malt License Conversion

Authority: Accept MGL Chapter 138, Section 12D enabling conversion of wine or malt license to full liquor license 31

Current holder: Mel's Commonwealth Cafe (only wine/malt license in Wayland) 31

Application: Would apply to future licenses if issued 31

Article 38: Cryptocurrency ATM Ban

Purpose: Ban location/use of cryptocurrency ATMs in Wayland 31

Rationale: Prevent abuse through scam calls (relative in jail, check didn't clear) directing victims to crypto ATMs where funds become virtually untraceable once deposited 31 32

Technical and Logistics

Recording: Meeting recorded by Zoom; will be shared on WACAM, League of Women Voters, and town websites 2 33

Attendance: Forum exceeded expectations with strong participation from town officials and residents 34

Town meeting details: Monday, 6:30 PM start 32

Action Items

- Miranda Jones: Confirm with town staff whether consent calendar articles will be displayed on overhead screens at town meeting [4](#) [35](#)
- Miranda Jones: Send recording to Sue Fly Cup (League webmaster), WACAM, Mark, and Maya [33](#) [35](#)
- Bill Whitney: Prepare list of all 14 current liquor license holders for town meeting presentation [30](#)
- Mary: Forward Sue Fly Cup's email to Miranda for recording distribution [33](#)

Questions Answered

Q: Will anything be displayed on screen at town meeting?

A: Handouts will show the two consent calendars and which articles are on them. The consent calendar motion will be displayed on overhead projector. Town will confirm whether individual articles will also be displayed. [4](#) [5](#) [36](#)

Q: Should private wells have more regulation since water comes from same aquifer?

A: Private wells draw from shallow aquifer (~60 feet deep) while public wells draw from aquifer ~800-900 feet deep—different sources. Private wells overseen by Wayland Health Department with no interaction with public groundwater wells. [37](#)

Q: Might higher water fees lead to more private wells?

A: Not practical or economical. Commonwealth cross-connection control regulations prohibit or strictly limit private well use for drinking water. Private wells would also require significant PFAS filtering since contamination is ubiquitous across Wayland. [37](#) [38](#)

Q: Who are the 14 current liquor license holders?

A: Bill Whitney will provide complete list at town meeting (strictly on-premise consumption establishments). [30](#)