

This is a detailed summary of the meeting held on Wednesday, October 8th, 2025, which will be a joint session of the **Board of Elections** and the **Finance Committee** (FinCom), and an initial meeting of a newly formed Finance Committee.

Peter Roach – Chairman

Susan Lorenz

Tracy Karolczuk

Thomas Araujo

Douglas White

Ron McKay

Jake Stebbins

**RECEIVED**

Town Clerk-Dighton, MA

NOV 12 2025

Time: 4:15PM

By: SC

### **Key Actions and Discussions**

#### **Elementary School Building Committee Appointment**

- **Resignation:** The Superintendent, Mr. Rooney, informed the board that **Donna Berto** is not seeking re-election in April and has resigned from the Dighton Elementary School building committee.
- **New Appointment:** The School Committee unanimously approved **Nicole Pavo** as the replacement<sup>2</sup>. Ms. Pavo was recommended because she is a School Committee member, a diligent volunteer with the Dighton PTO (raising thousands of dollars), and a parent in the school system, bringing valuable perspectives.
- **Action:** The board voted to accept Ms. Berto's resignation and to appoint Ms. Pavo to the Elementary School Building Committee.

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#### **Special Town Meeting Warrant Preparation**

The board took several "housekeeping" actions to prepare the warrant for the Special Town Meeting:

- **Late Article:** Town Council submitted a very late article, **Article 97**, regarding the **Pleasant Street Bridge** reconstruction.
- **Home Rule Petition:** The article is for a **Home Rule Petition** to take a small amount of **land out of conservation property** near the Pleasant Street park to be used for the bridge work. This was pushed forward because the bridge reconstruction is scheduled to be advertised in September 2026, making it critical to start the lengthy legislative Home Rule Petition process now.

- **Action:** Motions were made and approved to **reopen the special town meeting warrant, add the home rule petition article, close the warrant, and place all articles** on the warrant.

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## **Finance Committee Organization**

The board confirmed the Finance Committee membership and elected officers:

- **Chair:** Peter was elected Chair.
- **Clerk:** Ron was elected Clerk.
- **Capital Outlay Committee Representative:** Tracy was elected to represent the FinCom on the Capital Outlay Committee.
- **School Committee Representative:** Susan was elected to represent the FinCom at the School Committee.

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## **Reserve Fund Transfer Request**

- **Request:** The board reviewed a request to transfer **\$6,000** from the reserve fund to cover a bill for the **repair of fiber optic lines damaged by squirrels**. The work has already been completed.
- **Discussion:** A member questioned the labor hours on the bill, noting an apparent discrepancy in police detail hours (4 hours total, but listed as one line item), but the official confirmed \$6,000 was the total bill.
- **Action:** A motion to approve the **\$6,000 transfer** was made and approved.

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## **Special Town Meeting Articles and Funding Recommendations**

The board reviewed and made recommendations on several articles for the Special Town Meeting.

### **Free Cash and Stabilization Funds**

- The planned deposits to the **Stabilization Fund and Capital Stabilization Fund** were reduced from \$200,000 to **\$175,000 each**.

- This adjustment was necessary to find funds for a **patrol car** after it was discovered the purchase could not be covered by marijuana funds as originally intended. The official stated the goal was to ensure the town goes into Annual Town Meeting with a "good number" of at least **\$1 million in free cash**.

### Article Summaries and Recommendations

Article	Purpose	Amount	Funding Source	Recommendation
Article 2	To pay priority bills	\$1,168.00	Free Cash	Recommended
Article 3	To cover various personnel and budget shortages	Various	Raised and Appropriated	Recommended
Article 4	To frontload lease payments for Fire and Highway departments	Not specified	Not specified	Recommended
Article 7	For a new Fire Chief vehicle	\$106,000	Split: \$53,000 Free Cash & \$53,000 Ambulance Fund	Recommended
Article 14	To deposit into the Capital Stabilization Account	\$175,000	Not specified	Recommended

#### Details for Article 3 included:

- **Animal Control Officer (ACO): \$3,400** for a new contract that pays a 4-hour minimum overtime for holiday work.
- **Elections: \$4,500** to correct an unintentional vote-by-mail budget shortfall caused by a formula error.
- **Town Clerk:** Funds for two individuals who missed the addition for their **June 30th pay rate increase**.

- **Veterans Benefits: \$16,511** to cover expenses from an unanticipated veteran moving into town, which would otherwise cause the account to run a deficit by the end of June.

**Articles 8 and 9** related to police and school programs, including funding for a **DARE-type drug education program** that is going well and is sought to be expanded to the fourth-grade level.