Town of Richmond
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WD

2026 Pre-Warrant Hearing

February 11, 2026
Selectmen present: William Daniels, Douglas Bersaw and Andrew Wallace
Administration Present: Susan Harrington

Hearing opened at 7:03 pm

Chairman Daniels opened the hearing welcoming the public to the 2026 Pre-Warrant Hearing. After a brief explanation of the purpose of the hearing, Daniels began with Article 5.

Article 05. To see if the Town will vote to change the appointment of a Supervisor of the Checklist from a 6-year term to a 3-year term. Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)

Daniels explained 6 years is a long time for someone to commit to a term. The State changed the term requirements in 2025.

Article 06. To see if the Town will increase the Total Disabled Veteran's Tax Credit from $1,500 to $2,250. Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)

Reference HB 99, the State will no longer allow Veterans' Tax Credits to be stacked. The article is to ensure the Veteran's in Richmond keep their tax credits.

Article 07. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$ 359,833*** *for Town Administration. Recommended by the Selectmen.*

Please see the attached PowerPoint Presentation for complete breakdown of the Town Administration Operating Budget.

Pam Bielunis spoke for the Supervisors of the Checklist stating the increase in the Supervisors of the Checklist Operating Budget is because 2026 has more elections than 2025.

Further discussion regarding Article 07 included but not limited to: Assessing: Q. Can we contract with someone other than Avitar Associates of New England. A. Bersaw stated the companies in the field of assessing is very limited. Interest: Bersaw spoke regarding an operating budget line titled Interest. Bersaw explained the reimbursement flow between the Town and the State and how the Town has incurred interest on the bridge bond and the Tax Anticipation Notice needed for Richmond's portion of the Cheshire County Tax. Land Use: Dick Drew asked how the Land Use Budget was broken down, is there a line for training? Drew asked if a list exists. Bersaw responded there is a training line in the Land Use Budget, but there is not a list of members who have attended training.

Article 08. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$ 230,659*** *for Public Safety. Recommended by the Selectmen.*

Further discussion regarding Article 08 included but not limited to: Wallace commented the Police Operating Budget is down due to less hours in our current contract. The Fire Department/Richmond Rescue Operating Budget has increased due to the price in Mutual Aid. Dick Drew asked if the police hours are were sufficient, Bersaw answered yes, the Selectmen feel they are enough hours. Dick Drew asked if Richmond has a Zoning Compliance Officer. Bersaw responded the Selectmen are currently the Zoning Compliance Officers, the Selectmen have a rotation to share the responsibilities. Jerry Mills asked if the Board has run into any problems, Wallace commented about 1 or 2 properties with something small. Pam Bielunis asked about the rise in ambulance cost. Wallace commented in prior years funding was available, and no longer is. This is a more realistic price that we will continue to see in the future.

Article 9. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$ 454,021*** *for Highway, Streets and Sanitation. This appropriation shall be offset by revenue from the Highway Block Grant. Recommended by the Selectmen.*

Further discussion regarding Article 09 included but not limited to: Bersaw stated the revenue from the Highway Block Grant is usually around $55,000 to $60,000. Daniels commented on an upcoming meeting regarding the Winchester Transfer Station and a possible 3%+ increase over 3 years. Dick Drew commented on the Hazardous Waste Collection in Keene stating no attendants take names or the name of the town you are from.

Article 10. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$19,186*** *for Health and Welfare. Recommended by the Selectmen.*

Further discussion regarding Article 10 included but not limited to: Wallace explained the breakdown of this article. Welfare Administrator, Pam Bielunis, commented on the increase to the Community Organizations.

Article 11. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$ 52,560*** *for Culture and Recreation. Recommended by the Selectmen.*

Wallace explained the breakdown of Article 11 including an increase to the Library Operating Budget for an IT contract.

Article 12. *To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$10,000*** *to be added to the* ***Highway Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.*** *Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)*

No additional comments or questions regarding this Article.

Article 13. *To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$20,000*** *to be added to the* ***Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund.*** *Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)*

Further discussion regarding Article 13 included but not limited to: Wallace and Bersaw commented on replenishing this Fund due to upgrades on the Taylor Van Brocklin Building in 2025.

Article 14. *To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$10,000*** *to be added to the* ***Public Safety Radio & Communication Equipment Expendable Trust Fund.*** *Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)*

No additional comments or questions regarding this Article.

Article 15. *To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$25,000*** *to be added to the* ***Fire Department Equipment Expendable Trust Fund.*** *Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)*

No additional comments or questions regarding this Article.

Article 16. *To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of* ***$50,000*** *to be added to the* ***Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund.*** *Recommended by the Selectmen. (Majority vote required)*

No additional comments or questions regarding this Article.

Article 17. *To hear any reports of Agents, Committees, etc. heretofore chosen and to take any action thereon.*

No additional comments or questions regarding this Article.

Article 18. *To take any action that may legally come before the meeting.*

Bersaw stated there would be no road upgrades for 2026 due to the replacement of the Whipple Hill Bridge. Once the Whipple Hill Bridge project has been completed the Board will revisit road improvements.

The Selectmen closed the meeting stating their appreciation to the residents for their attendance.

Hearing adjourned at 7:42 pm
Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Harrington