

2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Town of Essex

Warrant for Annual Town Meeting

Essex, ss:

To either of the Constables of the Town of Essex;

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Essex, qualified to vote as the laws direct, of the Annual Town Election to bring to ballot for the following officers:

- One Board of Assessor for an unexpired term of two years
- One Board of Assessor for three years
- One Moderator for three years
- One Board of Selectman for three years
- One Board of Health member for three years
- Two Constables for three years
- One Regional School Committee member for three years
- One Board of Library Trustee for three years
- One Planning Board member for five years

And to bring to ballot the following questions:

Shall the Town of Essex be allowed to assess an additional \$268,722 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of supplementing the Town of Essex operating budget for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty-six?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Shall the Town of Essex be allowed to assess an additional \$185,727 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of supplementing the Manchester Essex Regional School District assessment for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty-six?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

AND, to do this by vote on one ballot. The polls will be open on Monday, May 11, 2026 at 7:00 o'clock A.M. and will close at 8:00 o'clock P.M. at the Essex Public Safety Facility, 11 John Wise Avenue, Essex.

AND, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Essex, qualified to vote as the laws direct, to meet in said Essex at the Essex Elementary School, 12 Story Street, on Monday, May 4, 2026 at 6:45 p.m. and there and then to act on the following Articles, viz:

#### ARTICLE 1

To see if the Town will vote to determine the manner of electing or choosing all other Town Officers usually elected or chosen at the Annual Town Meeting and take any appropriate action to elect such officers.

#### ARTICLE 2

To hear and receive the Reports of the Town Officials and Committees, and also to consider and receive any Reports contained in the Annual Town Report; or take any other action relating thereto.

#### ARTICLE 3

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow the sum of \$268,722 for the purpose of supplementing the Town of Essex's fiscal year 2027 operating budget, provided that the amount authorized herein, if to be raised and appropriated, shall be contingent upon the vote at the Town election to assess additional real estate and personal property taxes in accordance with the provisions of Proposition 2 ½, so called; or take any other action relating thereto.

#### ARTICLE 4

To hear and act upon the Report of the Finance Committee and to vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the Town charges and expenditures for the ensuing year, and to authorize the Finance Committee to permit budget line item transfers within a department from salary lines to salary lines and from expense lines to expense lines; or take any other action relating thereto.

#### ARTICLE 5

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money to pay the Town's share of the operating and capital costs of the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School District for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2026; or take any other action relating thereto.

## ARTICLE 6

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow the sum of \$185,727 for the purpose of supplementing the Manchester Essex Regional School District's fiscal year 2027 assessment, provided that the amount authorized herein, if to be raised and appropriated, shall be contingent upon the vote at the Town election to assess additional real estate and personal property taxes in accordance with the provisions of Proposition 2 ½, so called; or take any other action relating thereto.

## ARTICLE 7

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Gross Operating and Maintenance Budget of the Manchester-Essex Regional School District, and raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the Town's assessment from the District - said sum to be calculated solely in accordance with the "Agreement Between the Towns of Essex and Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts with Respect to the Formation of a Regional School District", as most recently amended, by invoking and approving the provision found in paragraph four of Massachusetts General Laws chapter 71, section 16B allowing District members "to reallocate the sum of their required local contributions to the district in accordance with the regional agreement", for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty-six; or take any other action relating thereto.

## ARTICLE 8

To see if the Town will amend or revise the Wage and Salary scale for fiscal year 2027 in accordance with the recommendations of the Personnel Board Report, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk's office and on the Town's website at <https://www.essexma.org>, and is incorporated herein by reference; or take any other action relating thereto.

## ARTICLE 9

To see if the Town will vote to fix the salary and compensation of each of the elected officers of the Town as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 108, as amended, for fiscal year 2027 in accordance with the recommendations of the Personnel Board Report, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk's office and on the Town's website at <https://www.essexma.org>, and is incorporated herein by reference; or take any other action relating thereto.

## ARTICLE 10

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for the purpose of funding the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the remainder of fiscal year 2026; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 11

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for the purpose of funding the Sewer Enterprise Fund for fiscal year 2027, and to authorize the Finance Committee to permit budget line item transfers within a department from salary lines to salary lines and from expense lines to expense lines; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 12

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for the purpose of funding the Water Enterprise Fund for the remainder of fiscal year 2026; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 13

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for the purpose of funding the Water Enterprise Fund for fiscal year 2027, and to authorize the Finance Committee to permit budget line item transfers within a department from salary lines to salary lines and from expense lines to expense lines; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 14

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's Zoning Bylaw, Section 6-10.2.1: Membership and Organization as shown below, with additions shown in **bold**; or take any other action relating thereto.

SECTION 6-10: ADMINISTRATION AND REGULATIONS

6-10.2: Planning Board

6-10.2.1: Membership and Organization

The Planning Board shall consist of seven (7) duly-elected members as provided in M.G.L. c. 41A, § 81A, and two (2) appointed associate members as provided in M.G.L. c. 40A, §9. The term of office for members shall be five (5) years and the term of office for associate members shall be three (3) years. **The Planning Board shall designate and recommend individuals for appointment as associate members, and such appointment shall be made by majority vote of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen.** Associate members may be designated by the Chair to sit on the Board for the purposes of acting on a Special Permit application in the case of absence, inability to act, or conflict of interest, on the part of any member of the Planning Board or in the event of a vacancy on the Board.

The Planning Board shall annually elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk, and Vice-Clerk from its membership.

; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 15

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Bylaws by revising Section 4-4A.4, as follows:

4-4A.4 Mooring permits will be issued effective April 1st in the year of issue and will be valid until ~~March~~ **December** 31st of the ~~following~~ **same** year.

; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 16

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Bylaws by adding a new Section 4-4A.8 RIVER USE FEE, as follows:

4-4A.8.1 RIVER USE FEE. No person shall use or allow another to use any vessel either privately trailered and launched at any Town landing or stored in the Town of Essex at a commercial dockage, ready-to-deploy style storage, valet services, seasonal private launch passes, or other means of berthing in the tidal waters in the jurisdiction of the Town of Essex, unless they first annually pay a River Use Fee to the Town in the amount of \$5.00 per foot based upon the length overall (LOA) of a vessel (12 ft. minimum) and display a River Use Sticker issued by the Harbormaster. The stickers will be valid from April 1<sup>st</sup> until December 31<sup>st</sup>.

4-4A.8.2 EXCEPTIONS. Persons who have paid a mooring fee, a transient mooring fee, a rowing craft storage fee, or a non-resident launch fee to the Town of Essex for any given year shall not be obligated to pay the River Use Fee during that year but must still display a Harbormaster issued River Use Sticker indicating their other paid fee category.

4-4A.8.3 PENALTIES. This bylaw may be enforced by the Harbormaster through the non-criminal disposition method of disposition as provided in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 21D and the Town's non-criminal disposition by-law. If noncriminal disposition is elected, then the non-criminal fine for each such violation shall be \$25 (1st offense), \$50 (2<sup>nd</sup> offense), \$100 (3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent offenses). Each day will constitute a separate offense.

4-4A.8.4 The Harbormaster may enforce this Regulation by the removal of vessels not showing a River Use Sticker, to the extent permitted by law, or enjoin violations thereof through an action at law or in equity and the election of one remedy by the Harbormaster shall not preclude enforcement through other lawful means.

; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 17

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum or sums of money to purchase or to lease-purchase, which may be for a period of more than three years, a fully-equipped mini excavator for the Highway, Cemetery, and Water Departments to replace a Department of Public Works' existing backhoe, and anything incidental thereto; and further, to authorize the Board of Public Works to enter into any necessary agreements to effectuate the purposes of this vote and to dispose of the old backhoe by sale or trade; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 18

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for work order tracking and asset management software, and anything incidental thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 19

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money to purchase and install security cameras at the Town Water Tower, and anything incidental thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 20

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money as a match for Federal funding for design and construction for water main replacement work; or anything incidental or related thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 21

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money to design, engineer and construct repairs, upgrades, improvements and/or replacements to any aspect of the municipal sewer system, including but not limited to replacement of grinder pumps and related equipment, and anything incidental or related thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 22

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money to design and construct a road from Apple Street to the Town's DPW facility over the Town-owned parcel known as 30 Apple Street, including but not limited to site and wetlands surveys, equipment rental, materials; and anything incidental or related thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 23

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from the Community Preservation Fund, including fiscal year 2026 estimated annual revenues, a sum or sums of money for Community Preservation projects or purposes, including, acquisition, creation and preservation of open space; acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of land for recreational use; acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources; acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing (including a possible appropriation or transfer to the Essex Affordable Housing Trust); and for the rehabilitation and restoration of open space or community housing acquired under the Community Preservation Act; all as may be recommended by the Community Preservation Committee; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 24

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money for the updating of the operating system running on the Town's virtual servers hosted by the Town of Danvers, and anything incidental thereto; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 25

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to be used to defray operational expenses of the various Town departments for the remainder of fiscal year 2026; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 26

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to be used to replenish the Finance Committee's Reserve Fund for the remainder of fiscal year 2026; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 27

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum or sums of money for the payment of unpaid bills from past fiscal years; or take any other action relating thereto.

ARTICLE 28

To see if the Town will vote to repeal or rescind the vote of Article 21 of the Annual Town Meeting of May 2, 2011 by which the Town adopted the Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Zoning Bylaw as Section 6-14 of the Town's Zoning Bylaw (subsequently renumbered as and currently existing as Section 6-8 of the Town's Zoning Bylaw) and to delete said Section 6-8 from the Town's Zoning Bylaw; said repeal or rescission shall not apply to any application properly filed before the passage of this article at the May 2026 Annual Town Meeting; or take any other action related thereto.

And you are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies; one at the Post Office, one at the Town Hall, and one at the Essex Elementary School, in said Essex, seven days at least before the time for holding said meeting.

Given under our hand this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, two thousand twenty-six.

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Alva Ingaharro, Chairman

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Peter D. Phippen

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Ann O. Cameron

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF ESSEX

Return of the Warrant:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have served this warrant by posting attested copies thereof – one at the Post Office; one at the Town Hall; and, one at the Essex Elementary School in said Essex; at least seven days before the time for holding said meeting.

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Constable