



TOWN OF HOPEDALE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

MAY 24, 2022

The inhabitants of the Town of Hopedale qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs met in the Dennett Auditorium of the Junior/Senior High School on Tuesday May 24, 2022. The meeting was called under the Warrant dated the 16th day of May 2022, which was posted in accordance with Town By-Laws. Moderator Eugene N. Phillips called the Annual Town meeting to order at 7:05 PM. There were one hundred (100) registered voters recorded as present [a quorum being fifty (50) registered voters].

Eugene N. Phillips, Moderator, welcomed all residents, lead the Town Meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance and held a moment of silence for all that have passed this year.

Privileges of the floor were extended to the following:

Thomas M. Daige, Fire Chief
Mark Giovanella, Police Chief
Brian Riley, Town Counsel
Diana Schindler, Town Administrator
Tricia Perry, Librarian
Karen Crebase, Superintendent of Schools
Chris Nadeau, Highway Superintendent
Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick Superintendent of BVT
Laurie Bartkus, Town Accountant

Eugene N. Phillips, Moderator, welcomed all newly elected officials. Mary Watson, Board of Health; Karlene Alger, Housing Authority; Fred Oldfield, Library Trustee; Marie Riddell, Library Trustee; Michael Ledone, Park Commissioner; Jimmy Khokhar, Planning Board; Chris Chase, Planning Board; Michael Costanza, Planning Board; George Lovewell, Road Commissioner; Jen Mckee, School Committee; Kate Guertin, School Committee; Lisa M. Pedroli, Town Clerk; Adam Anderson, Water & Sewer Commissioner; Bernie Stock, Select Board.

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to hear and act upon the report of the Select Board and other offices, departments, or committees of said town, or take any other action related thereto.

***Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair, voted to hear and act upon the FY21 report of the Select Board and other offices, departments, or committees of said town.
The motion was seconded and carried.***

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to G.L. c.44, §64 to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds such sums of money necessary for the purpose of paying outstanding bills from prior fiscal years, and/or take any other action related thereto.

***Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, voted pursuant to G.L. c.44, §64 to transfer from Professional & Technical-Sewer, the sum of \$1,267.60 to pay outstanding invoice dated 1/4/21 to Weston and Sampson Engineers, Inc. and from Computer – Professional & Technical, the sum of \$6.03 to pay outstanding invoice dated 2/9/2016 to Microsoft Corporation.
The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.***

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers as provided by M.G.L. Chapter 41, §108, and to raise and appropriate or transfer from the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation and/or other available funds, such sums as may be necessary to defray expenses of the Town Departments for FY 2023, as presented, or take any other related action thereto.

Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved to fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers (Town Clerk) as provided by M.G.L. Chapter 41, §108, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,452,420, transfer the sum of \$330,000 from Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation, transfer the sum of \$136,854 from Water Enterprise Receipts, transfer the sum of \$117,334 from Sewer Enterprise Receipts and transfer the sum of \$282,000 from Free Cash, to defray expenses of the Town Departments for FY 2023, as presented in the Omnibus Budget.

Christopher Hodgens, Finance Committee Chairman, addressed the residents with some opening remarks.

- Thank you all for joining us tonight.
- Despite the continuing hardships of the pandemic, with the cooperation of these departments and elected and appointed officials, we have been able to present Town Meeting with a carefully balanced budget.
- I want to publicly thank all the members of the Finance Committee for the effort they put into this budget. We had **20 public meetings** with robust debates. Members put in a total of over 360 collective hours. We ask tough questions for you. These are your friends and neighbors, and they do this difficult and challenging volunteer work for the love of the town.
- The budget document before you in the warrant is the result of critical analysis, negotiation, and compromise. It is a balanced budget - all expenditures are funded by revenue and receipts. There are budget cuts to personnel. There are no reductions in town services. In fact, there are some modest increases in spending.
- We take account of policy decisions of other boards, the needs of all town departments, and anticipated revenues. Most of all, we listen to the voters, and we hope that this budget ultimately reflects the will of voters. This is your budget. This is your government. I invite all of you to participate in the budget process next year so that your voice can be heard.

- With all of this in mind, if you call out a "hold" on a particular item because you want to increase funding, you must find a corresponding line item to decrease funding. That process will insure that we comply with our legal requirement to produce a balanced budget.
- I want to make one note about school funding because this question arises every year. The Hopedale Public Schools have a budget of \$13.4M. Only about ⅓ of that amount is directly funded by Hopedale taxpayers. The remainder is funded by state taxes paid by everyone in the Commonwealth.
- Keep in mind that Town Meeting cannot make changes to line items in the school budget. This is not intended to cut you out of the process. It is the law. Under Massachusetts General Laws chapter 71, section 34, Town Meeting only votes on the total school budget. Only our elected school committee can make adjustment to line items in the school budget. So, I encourage you to attend School Committee meetings if you have issues with particular school revenues or expenses.
- Thank you all for your attention. With the moderator's permission, I will now walk through the budget top sheet under the article presented.

The amount of \$26,452,420.00 in the original motion was incorrect. Moderator Phillips amended the motion to read as follows: moved to vote to fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers (Town Clerk) as provided by M.G.L. Chapter 41, §108, for a total appropriation of \$26,485,508, and to fund the appropriation as follows; transfer the sum of \$330,000 from Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation, transfer the sum of \$136,854 from Water Enterprise Receipts, transfer the sum of \$117,334 from Sewer Enterprise Receipts, transfer the sum of \$282,000 from Free Cash and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,619,321, to defray total expenses of the Town Departments for FY 2023, as presented in the Omnibus Budget.

The motion was seconded.

Christopher Hodgins read each line item in the FY23 budget which totaled \$26,485,508, residents placed holds on Reserve Fund, Assessors Salaries Permanent, Treasurer/Collector Salaries Permanent, Town Counsel, Town Clerk Salaries Elected/Permanent, Forestry Tree Planting expenses, Public Works Street Lightening, Health Officer expenses, Intergovernmental BVT, Miscellaneous Unemployment Compensation, Workers Comp premiums, and Liability Insurance. All items without holds were seconded and carried. Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair, made a motion to reduce the Reserve Fund from \$110,000.00 to \$35,000.00 and transfer \$75,000.00 to the Town Administrator Salaries budget for a Town Planner Position which was seconded and resulted in a standing count vote. The motion failed 41 to 42. After some discussion, budget items that were put on hold were seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds such sums of money to fund equipment and capital costs, or take any other related action thereto.

***Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair moved to pass over.
The motion was seconded and carried***

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote a sum of money to be authorized to fund the Water Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2023 from Water Enterprise receipts, or take any other related action thereto.

Edward Burt, Water and Sewer Commissioner, moved to appropriate the sum of \$1,514,174 to fund the Water Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2023 beginning July 1, 2022, from the Water Enterprise Fund in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c.44, §53F½, amount to be funded from the following sources:

User Fees	\$823,254
Assessments	\$459,817
Connection & Other Fees	\$139,108
<u>Retained Earnings</u>	<u>\$91,996</u>
Total Revenues	\$ 1,514,174

To be expended as follows:

Direct	
Salaries & Wages	\$331,840
Operating Expenses	\$536,900
Capital Outlay	\$50,000
Debt & Interest	\$358,580
<u>Emergency Reserve</u>	<u>\$100,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 1,377,320

Indirect	
Treasurer/Accounting Support	\$17,160
Retirement/Pension	\$37,271
Health Insurance	\$62,585
Workers Compensation	\$6,707
<u>Liability Insurance</u>	<u>\$13,131</u>
Subtotal	\$ 136,854

Total Expenditures **\$1,514,174**

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote a sum of money to be authorized to fund the Sewer Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2023 by Sewer Enterprise receipts, or take any other related action thereto.

Edward Burt, Water and Sewer Commissioner, moved to appropriate the sum of \$1,643,545 to fund the WWTP/Sewer Department Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023 beginning July 1, 2022, from the WWTP/Sewer Enterprise Fund in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c.44, §53F½, amount to be funded from the following sources:

User Fees	\$889,127
Assessments	\$579,984
Connection & Other Fees	\$ 27,100
Retained Earnings	\$147,333
Total Revenues	\$1,643,545

To be expended as follows:

Direct	
Salaries & Wages	\$367,380
Expenses	\$505,900
Capital Outlay	\$150,000
Debt & Interest	\$427,931
Emergency Reserve	\$75,000
Subtotal	\$1,526,211

Indirect	
Treasurer/Accounting Support	\$17,160
Retirement/Pension	\$40,057
Health Insurance	\$45,852

Workers Compensation	\$5,490
<u>Liability Insurance</u>	<u>\$8,774</u>
Subtotal	\$117,334

Total Expenditures **\$1,643,545**

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$4,750,000.00 for the work necessary to construct DEP required Water Treatment upgrades necessary to remove PFAS contaminants for the town water supplies, and all incidental and related expenses, in accordance with Chapter 568 of the Acts of 1948; and further vote that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount pursuant to Chapter 44 of the General Laws or other enabling authority, and further that the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (the "Trust") established pursuant to Chapter 29C of the General Laws, and in connection therewith to enter into one or more loan agreements and/or security agreements with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to any loan or loans obtained through the Trust, and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; and

That the Select Board is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary to carry out the project, and to take any other action related thereto.

Edward Burt, Water and Sewer Commissioner, moved to appropriate the sum of \$4,750,000 for the work necessary to construct DEP-required water treatment upgrades necessary to remove PFAS contaminants from the Town water supplies, and all incidental and related expenses, in accordance with Chapter 568 of the Acts of 1948; and further vote, that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount pursuant to Chapter 44 of the General Laws or other enabling authority, and further that the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (the "Trust") established pursuant to Chapter 29C of the General Laws, and in connection therewith to enter into one or more loan agreements and/or security agreements with the Trust and otherwise to contract with the Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection with respect to any loan or loans obtained through the Trust, and for any federal or state aid available for the project or for the financing thereof; and that the Select Board is authorized to enter into a project regulatory agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, to expend all funds available for the project and to take any other action necessary to carry out the project.

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$300,000 to pay for the design of DEP required treatment upgrades for the removal of PFAS from the town water supply, and all incidental and related expenses, and as funding therefor, to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds (including Water Department retained earnings) or authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow said sum in accordance with M.G.L. c.44. §§7 or 8 or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor, or to take any other action related thereto.

Edward Burt, Water and Sewer Commissioner, moved to appropriate the sum of \$300,000 to pay for the design of DEP required treatment upgrades for the removal of PFAS from the town water supply, and all incidental and related expenses, and as funding therefor, to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow said sum in accordance with M.G.L. c.44. §§7 or 8 or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds and notes therefor.

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9: Move the Town vote to amend the Code of the Town of Hopedale, Part I, Administration Legislation, Chapter 137, Personnel, to update the Classification and Compensation plan for non-union, non-contractual Town employees, excluding employees of the School Department, by increasing by a percentage, the annual salary assigned to each position as adopted in Article 9 of the May 20, 2014 Annual Town Meeting.

Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, moved to amend the Code of the Town of Hopedale, Part I, Administration Legislation, Chapter 137, Personnel, to update the Classification and Compensation plan for non-union, non-contractual Town employees, excluding employees of the School Department, by increasing by 5% the annual salary assigned to each position as adopted in Article 9 of the May 20, 2014 Annual Town Meeting.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Public Safety Dispatchers MCOP Local 164 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, or take any other action relative thereto.

Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved to approve the cost items of the collective bargaining agreement between the Town and Hopedale Public Safety Dispatchers MCOP Local 164 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, the funds for which were previously appropriated in Article 3.
The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Highway Water and Sewer on behalf of the Public Employees Local Union 272 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, or take any other action relative thereto.

Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair, moved to approve the cost items of the collective bargaining agreement between the Town and Hopedale Highway Water and Sewer on behalf of the Public Employees Local Union 272 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, the funds for which were previously appropriated in Article 3.
The motion was seconded and carried

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Clerical Staff on behalf of the Public Employees Local Union 272 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, or take any other action relative thereto.

Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, moved to approve the cost items of the collective bargaining agreement between the Town and Hopedale Clerical Staff on behalf of the Public Employees Local Union 272 covering the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, the funds for which were previously appropriated in Article 3.
The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Fire Fighters IAFF Local 2225 covering the period of July 1, 20XX through June 30, 20XX, or take any other action relative thereto.

Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved to pass over.
The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Call Firefighters Association covering the period of July 1, 20XX through June 30, 20XX, or take any other action relative thereto.

Glenda Hazard, Select Board, moved to approve the cost items of the collective bargaining agreement between the Town and Hopedale Call Firefighters Association covering the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025, the funds for which were previously appropriated in Article 3.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 15: Move the Town vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of monies into and/or out of the Stabilization Fund as provided under M.G.L. c. 40, §5B.

Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, moved to pass over.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to approve annual spending limits for FY23 for revolving funds established in the Town Bylaws, in accordance with M.G.L. c.44, s.53E½, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022:

<u>Revolving Fund</u>	<u>FY23 Spending Limit</u>
Recycling Center	\$ 8,000
Animal Control	\$ 23,500
School Transportation	\$ 100,000
Inspectional Services	\$ 25,000
Senior Van Program	\$ 10,000
COA Programs	\$ 10,000
Library Revolving	\$ 3,000
School Computer Repair	\$ 10,000

And further to amend Chapter 159 of the Town Bylaws, "Revolving Funds," by revising Column H of §159-1 to read as follows:

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Funds
School Computer Repairs	School Committee	Charges collected for damaged school computer equipment	Repair of computer equipment

or take any other action relative thereto.

Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved to approve annual spending limits for FY23 for Revolving Funds established in Chapter 159 of the Town Bylaws, in accordance with M.G.L. c.44, s.53E½, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022:

<u>Revolving Fund</u>	<u>FY23 Spending Limit</u>
Recycling Center	\$ 8,000
Animal Control	\$ 23,500
School Transportation	\$ 100,000
Inspectional Services	\$ 25,000
Senior Van Program	\$ 10,000
COA Programs	\$ 10,000
Library Revolving	\$ 3,000
School Computer Repair	\$ 10,000

And further to amend Chapter 159 of the Town Bylaws, "Revolving Funds," by revising Column H of §159-1 to read as follows:

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of Funds
School Computer Repairs	School Committee	Charges collected for damaged school computer equipment	Repair of computer equipment

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of money in anticipation of Chapter 90 State reimbursement funds, or such additional amount as is anticipated to be so provided, for the purpose of providing road paving/improvement projects, and further authorize the Select Board to accept and expend such sum or any other sum that is or may be provided to the Town in accordance with M.G.L. c. 90 or any other state or federal road program for road repairs, or take any other action relative thereto.

Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair, moved to authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of money in anticipation of Chapter 90 State reimbursement funds, or such additional amount as is anticipated to be so provided, for the purpose of providing road paving/improvement projects, and further authorize the Select Board to accept and expend such sum or any other sum that is or may be provided to the Town in accordance with M.G.L. c. 90 or any other state or federal road program for road repairs.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town of Hopedale will vote to increase the availability of tax exemptions to senior citizens owning real property pursuant to G. L. Ch. 59 § 5, Clause 41C, as authorized under Section 51 of Chapter 184 of the Acts of 2002 of the General Court, by approving an increase in the value of the tax exemption, from \$786.63 to \$841.70, or take any other action relative thereto.

Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, moved to increase the availability of tax exemptions to senior citizens owning real property pursuant to G. L. Ch. 59 § 5, Clause 41C, as authorized under Section 51 of Chapter 184 of the Acts of 2002 of the General Court, by approving an increase in the value of the tax exemption, from \$786.63 to \$841.70.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town of Hopedale will vote to increase the availability of tax exemptions to surviving spouse, minor child, elderly person owning real property pursuant to G. L. Ch. 59 § 5, Clause 17D, by approving an increase in the value of the tax exemption, from \$263.77 to \$282.23, or take any other action relative thereto.

Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved to increase the availability of tax exemptions to surviving spouse, minor child, elderly person owning real property pursuant to G. L. Ch. 59 § 5, Clause 17D, by approving an increase in the value of the tax exemption, from \$263.77 to \$282.23.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Code of the Town of Hopedale, Part I, Administration Legislation, by amending Chapter 35, Sec 1, paragraph A, titled, "Membership of the Committee", by rescinding line (5), which states "one member of the Open Space Committee as designated by said Committee," and inserting in its place the following: "One member of the Planning Board as designated by said Board.", or take any other action relative thereto.

Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair, moved to amend the Code of the Town of Hopedale, Part I, Administration Legislation, by amending Chapter 35, Sec 1, paragraph A, titled, "Membership of the Committee", by rescinding line (5), which states "one member of the Open Space Committee as designated by said Committee," and inserting in its place the following: "One member of the Planning Board as designated by said Board."

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will, upon recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, appropriate from the Community Preservation Act Fund, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44B, such sums of money as it determines necessary for the expenses and charges for operation of the Community Preservation Committee, all for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023, inclusive; or take any other action related thereto.

Brian R. Keyes, Select Board, moved to appropriate from the Community Preservation Act Fund, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44B, the sum of \$2,500 for the expenses and charges for operation of the Community Preservation Committee, for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023, inclusive.

The motion was seconded and carried.

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote, upon recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, to appropriate from the Community Preservation Act Fund, a sum of money for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the Community Preservation Act, M.G.L., Chapter 44B, Section 6, for the purposes of Open Space, Community Housing (Affordable) and

Historic Resources (Preservation) and to meet this appropriation, transfer a sum of money from the Community Preservation Fund(s); or take any other action related thereto.

***Bernard J. Stock, Select Board, moved pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44B, Section 6, to appropriate from the Community Preservation Act Fund, the sum of \$11,000 (10%) to be reserved for the purpose of Open Space (including Recreational Land), the sum of \$11,000 (10%) to be reserved for Community Housing (Affordable), and the sum of \$11,000 (10%) to be reserved for Historic Resources (Preservation) and to meet this appropriation, transfer said sums of money from the Community Preservation Fund(s).
The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.***

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw: Section 12. 12, Non-Medical Marijuana Retailers, to prohibit the issuance of Special Permits allowing the physical locating and operation of Retail Marijuana Establishments, as defined under G.L. c94G 1, on a parcel which is within one thousand (1000) feet (to be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the property line in question to the nearest point of the property line where the Retail Marijuana Establishment is or will be located) of a parcel occupied by another licensed Retail Marijuana Establishment, or act on anything relating thereto?

Submitted by: Citizen's Petition

***No one from the Citizen's Petition was present for the article, Eugene Phillips, Moderator, moved to pass over this article.
The motion was seconded and carried.***

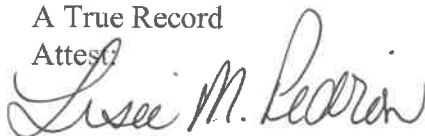
ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to reinstate Stipends, stipends were removed a few years ago from several positions at this time, in fact, all positions. At this time, stipends should be reinstated to all previous positions that received them in the past at the preexisting rate, or act on anything relating thereto?

***Louis Costanza made a motion to vote to reinstate Stipends, stipends were removed a few years ago from several positions at this time, in fact, all positions. At this time, stipends should be reinstated to all previous positions that received them in the past at the preexisting rate, or act on anything relating thereto? The motion was seconded, after discussion the main motion was amended to reinstate stipends in the amount of \$22,610 from free cash to the appropriate department line.
The motion was seconded and carried.***

Eugene Phillips thanked the town residents and town officials for their attendance. A motion to dissolve the Warrant was made and seconded. Meeting was dissolved at 9:50 PM.

A True Record

Attest



Lisa M. Pedroli, Town Clerk

