

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Middlesex, ss. Officer's Return, Town of Reading:

By virtue of this Warrant, I Laura A Gemme, on October 24, 2025 notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote on Town affairs, to meet at the place and at the time specified by posting attested copies of this Town Meeting Warrant, in the following public places within the Town of Reading:

- Precinct 1 J. Warren Killam School, 333 Charles Street
- Precinct 2 Reading Police Station, 15 Union Street
- Precinct 3 Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street
- Precinct 4 Joshua Eaton School, 365 Summer Avenue
- Precinct 5 Reading Public Library, 64 Middlesex Avenue
- Precinct 6 Barrows School, 16 Edgemont Avenue
- Precinct 7 Birch Meadow School, 27 Arthur B Lord Drive
- Precinct 8 Wood End School, 85 Sunset Rock Lane
- Town Hall, 16 Lowell Street

The date of posting being not less than fourteen (14) days prior to November 10, 2025, the date set for Town Meeting in this Warrant.



~~Constable~~ Town Clerk

A true copy Attest:



Laura Gemme, Town Clerk



SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Middlesex, ss.

To any of the Constables of the Town of Reading, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Reading, qualified to vote in the Local Elections and Town affairs, to meet at the Reading Memorial High School Performing Arts Center, 62 Oakland Road, in said Reading on

MONDAY, the TENTH DAY of NOVEMBER A.D., 2025

at seven-thirty o'clock in the evening, at which time and place the following articles are to be acted upon and determined exclusively by Town Meeting Members in accordance with the provisions of the Reading Home Rule Charter.

ARTICLE 1 Reports

To hear and act on the reports of the Select Board, School Committee, Library Trustees, Municipal Light Board, Finance Committee, Bylaw Committee, Town Manager, Town Accountant and any other Town Official, Board or Committee.

ARTICLE 2 To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board, on behalf of the Town, to petition the General Court for passage of a special law, as set forth below; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court; and provided further that the Select Board is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition; or take any other action with respect thereto.

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF READING TO ESTABLISH A MEANS TESTED
SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. There shall be an exemption from the property tax for each qualifying parcel of real property classified as class 1 residential in the Town of Reading in an amount to be set annually

by the Select Board as provided in section 3. The exemption shall be applied only to the domicile of the taxpayer; provided, however, that for the purposes of this act, "parcel" shall mean a unit of real property as defined by the board of assessors under the deed for the property and shall include a condominium unit. The exemption provided for in this act shall be in addition to any and all other exemptions allowed by the General Laws.

SECTION 2. The board of assessors in the Town of Reading may deny an application if they find the applicant has excessive assets that place the applicant outside of the intended recipients of the exemption under this act. Real property shall qualify for the exemption under section 1 if:

- (i) the qualifying real property is owned and occupied by a person whose prior year's income would make the person eligible for the circuit breaker income tax credit under subsection (k) of section 6 of chapter 62 of the General Laws;
- (ii) the qualifying real property is owned by a single applicant not less than 65 years old at the close of the previous year or jointly by persons either of whom is not less than 65 years old at the close of the previous year and the other joint applicant is not less than 60 years old;
- (iii) the qualifying real property is owned and occupied by the applicant or joint applicants as their domicile;
- (iv) the applicant or at least 1 of the joint applicants has been domiciled and owned a home in the town for not less than 10 consecutive years before filing an application for the exemption;
- (v) the maximum assessed value of the qualifying real property is no greater than the prior year's maximum assessed value for qualification for the circuit breaker income tax credit under subsection (k) of section 6 of chapter 62 of the General Laws as adjusted annually by the department of revenue; and
- (vi) the board of assessors has approved the application.

SECTION 3. The Select Board of the Town of Reading, shall annually set the exemption amount under section 1 at 100 per cent of the amount of the circuit breaker income tax credit under subsection (k) of section 6 of chapter 62 of the General Laws for which the applicant qualified in the previous year. The total amount exempted by this act shall be allocated proportionally within the tax levy on all residential taxpayers.

SECTION 4. A person who seeks to qualify for the exemption under section 1 shall, before the deadline established by the board of assessors of the town of Reading, file an application, on a form to be adopted by the board, with supporting documentation relative to the applicant's income and assets as described in the application. The application shall be filed each year for which the applicant seeks the exemption.

SECTION 5. No exemption shall be granted under this act until the department of revenue certifies a residential tax rate for the applicable tax year where the total exemption amount is raised by a burden shift within the residential tax levy.

SECTION 6. This act shall expire 3 years after implementation of the exemption under this act.

Select Board

Background: This article is to petition the General Court for a 3-year extension of our current Senior Property Tax Exemption. The senior property tax exemption was first approved at a Special Town Meeting on September 12, 2016. The senior property tax exemption was renewed in 2019 and in 2022 following successful Town Meeting votes to authorize the Select Board to file corresponding Home Rule Petitions. At this Town Meeting, we are again asking to allow the Select Board to submit a Home Rule Petition to renew our exemption for another 3 years. Reading has been a model community for Senior Property Tax Exemption; our Assessor will present to Town Meeting his ongoing advocacy to make this exemption part of permanent law.

To be eligible for the Reading property tax exemption, the senior:

- (1) has filed and been deemed eligible for a prior year Schedule CB (Circuit Breaker) for the purpose of state income taxes; and
- (2) has owned property in Reading for at least ten previous consecutive years; and
- (3) applies annually to the Board of Assessors for the exemption; and
- (4) the co-applicant be at least 60 years of age

2016-2019

The CB state income tax break serves as the basis for determining the local property tax relief. In the first iteration of the Senior Property Tax Exemption program, the Select Board annually, at their Tax Classification Hearing (usually in October, to be effective the following July), set the exemption between 50% and 200% of the Schedule CB income tax relief. The exact % multiplier was determined by how many seniors qualify for the exemption, and the total amount of senior tax relief desired by the Board.

Over the first three years of the program, an average of 180 applicants received a total tax break of \$4,900 (over \$1,600 annually). The default cost of these tax savings fell entirely to the remainder of the residential class. The Select Board split the commercial/industrial/personal property tax rate from the residential one for the first time in Reading, so that all classes of taxpayers shared in the cost of this Senior Tax Relief program.

2019–2022

In the second iteration of the Senior Property Tax Exemption Program, the Home Rule Petition changed the 50% to 200% annual range to be voted by the Select Board at a fixed 150%. The Board agreed to request this change, as a higher % had the undesirable effect of making some taxpayers ineligible in the following year, and a lower % was simply not enough financial assistance. No other changes were requested to the original program.

2023–2026

In the third iteration of the Senior Property Tax Exemption fixed the exemption at 100% (section 3 above) due to increases in the circuit breaker. No other changes were requested to the original program.

2027-2030

In the fourth extension, the Town proposes no changes to the program.

	Applicants	Granted	Factor	Max Amt	Shifted
FY 2022	188	176	1.5x	\$1,695	\$270,300
FY 2021	238	229	1.5x	\$1,725	\$352,255.50
FY 2020	186	182	1.5x	\$1,650	\$259,409

TOTAL	612	587			\$881,964.50
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Finance Committee Report: To be delivered at Town Meeting.

Bylaw Committee Report: To be delivered at Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 3 To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8J to establish a commission on disability or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

Background: If the statute is accepted, disability commissions are empowered by G.L. c. 40, § 8J to (1) research local problems of people with disabilities; (2) advise and assist municipal officials and employees in ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations that affect people with disabilities; (3) coordinate or carry out programs designed to meet the problems of people with disabilities in coordination with programs of the Massachusetts office on disability; (4) review and make recommendations about policies, procedures, services, activities and facilities of departments, boards and agencies of municipalities as they affect people with disabilities; (5) provide information, referrals, guidance and technical assistance to individuals, public agencies, businesses and organizations in all matters pertaining to disability; and (6) coordinate activities of other local groups organized for similar purposes. State law empowers the Town Manager to appoint between 5 and 13 members to Commission, a majority of which shall be people with disabilities. Additionally, one member must be a member of the immediate family of a person with a disability, and one member must be either an elected or appointed official of the Town.

Finance Committee Report: No report.

Bylaw Committee Report: To be delivered at Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 4 To see if the Town will vote to rescind, reallocate, and transfer \$198,681.73 or any other sum of money, from previously approved appropriations, for the purpose of paying any and all costs associated with the Killam School Building Project, or any other Town project, as itemized and described below:

Original Project	Original Town Meeting Approval	Amount to be Reallocated	New Purposes
Police Station Renovation	10/18/21	\$1,302.63	Killam School Building Project
Energy Improvements II	10/18/21	\$17,977.73	Killam School Building Project
Parker Roof	4/26/21	\$42,447.62	Killam School Building Project
Building Security Project	4/22/19	\$13,996.56	Killam School Building Project
Turf II Improvements	4/22/19	\$882.00	Killam School Building Project

RMHS Turf/Track	4/26/21	\$13.29	Killam School Building Project
BM Field Lighting Design	4/27/15	\$28,349.21	Killam School Building Project
Library Renovations	1/28/13	\$93,712.69	Killam School Building Project
Total:		\$198,681.73	

or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

Background: The chart above details the amount remaining from completed capital projects funded by debt. When a project is financed with debt, the remainder can only be transferred to another project with similar or greater borrowing terms. The two building projects qualify to receive the transfer from these projects. Article 5 of the Subsequent Town Meeting Warrant of November 10, 2025 sought to transfer \$95,910,61 to the Killam project and \$102,771.12 to the Reading Center for Active Living project. Transferring these balances will not increase the budgets of the projects but will reduce the borrowing needed for these projects.

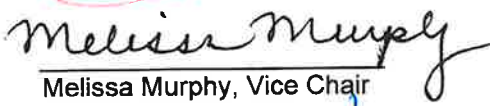
However, at their meeting on October 15, 2025, the Finance Committee recommended reallocating all of these available balances to the Killam School project, as to minimize interest on the longer-term borrowing.

and you are directed to serve this Warrant by posting an attested copy thereof in at least one (1) public place in each precinct of the Town not less than fourteen (14) days prior to November 10, 2025, or providing in a manner such as electronic submission, holding for pickup or mailing, an attested copy of said Warrant to each Town Meeting Member.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this Warrant with your doings thereon to the Town Clerk at or before the time appointed for said meeting.


Given under our hands this 21st day of October, 2025.


Christopher Haley, Chair


Melissa Murphy, Vice Chair


Karen Rose-Gillis, Secretary


Carlo Bacci, Member


Karen Gately Herrick, Member

SELECT BOARD OF READING


Town Clerk, Constable