

# COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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

By virtue of this Warrant, I Laura A Gemme, on March 20, 2026 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 April 7, 2026, the date set for Town Meeting in this Warrant.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

A true copy Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura Gemme, Town Clerk



## TOWN 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 in the following place designated for the eight precincts in said Town, namely:

**Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8**  
**Reading Memorial High School, Hawkes Field House, Oakland Road**

TUESDAY, the SEVENTH DAY OF APRIL, A.D., 2026  
from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to act on the following Articles, viz:

**ARTICLE 1** To elect by ballot the following Town Officers:

A Moderator for one year;  
Two members of the Board of Selectmen for three years;  
Two members of the Board of Library Trustees for three years;  
One member of the Municipal Light Board for three years;  
Two members of the School Committee for three years;

Sixty-eight Town Meeting Members shall be elected to represent each of the following precincts:

Precinct 1	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 2	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 2	One member for two years;
Precinct 3	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 3	One member for one year;
Precinct 4	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 4	One member for one year;
Precinct 5	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 6	Eight members for three years;
Precinct 6	One member for one year;
Precinct 7	Eight members for three years; and
Precinct 8	Eight members for three years

**QUESTION 1:** Shall this town approve the charter amendment proposed by the town meeting, as summarized below?

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

The proposed Charter amendment retains the representative Town Meeting form of government. Proposed changes include updates to conform more closely to existing state law; to reflect current municipal practice; and to simplify, clarify and modernize language. The proposed updates also include technical corrections.

Major changes include:

- The term "Majority Vote" would be defined to mean the "affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting provided that a quorum of the body is present."
- Publication of certain notices and public documents would also be made on the Town's website.
- Removal of Town Meeting members would only be allowed after a member has been provided the opportunity to be heard.
- The composition of the committee responsible for appointing members to the Finance and Bylaw Committees would be revised to include a member of the Finance or Bylaw Committee, respectively, who is not in their last year of service or seeking reappointment.
- The Town Meeting referendum petition process would be updated to: (i) further define the roles of the Board of Registrars and Select Board; (ii) require that a special election on the referendum be called within 35 days (or such longer period as may be required by law) after the Select Board issues a call for the election; and (iii) make it explicit that, if a referendum petition lacks the requisite number of signatures, the Town Meeting vote that is the subject of the petition shall become effective.
- The process to recall an elected official would be revised to require an affidavit signed by 2% of registered voters, including 25 voters from each precinct. The Charter would also require that the affidavit include a detailed statement alleging a breach of the officeholder's sworn responsibilities. The filing deadline for a recall petition would increase to 30 days following the date of the filing of the affidavit. Finally, recall petitions would require signature by at least 20% of the voters, provided, however, that not more than 20% of the signatures may be from voters registered in any one precinct.
- Provisions related to the removal of appointed board and committee members would be updated to: (i) define the phrase "appointing authority" to include the board or commission, Town Officer, or employee who exercises such appointment or removal power pursuant to law or otherwise obtained through delegation; and (ii) further clarify the notice and hearing timeline requirements.
- Town Counsel would be required to be in good standing and free of disciplinary actions.
- Membership on the Historical Commission and the Town Forest Committee would be set at 5 members.
- Provisions related to severance pay for the Town Manager would be removed. Qualification for appointment to the position would be amended to allow for candidates with three years of full-time paid experience as a City or Town Manager or Assistant City or Town Manager or with five years equivalent level of public or private sector experience. Additional amendments would clarify when the Select Board may appoint an Acting Town Manager.

- The Board of Selectmen would be renamed the "Select Board."
- The Ombudsman would be renamed the "Constituent Services Officer."
- Gender-neutral language would be used throughout.

Because certain types of Charter amendments are beyond the power of Town Meeting and the local voters, implementation of the Town Meeting's proposal requires two separate processes. Only those sections that local voters have authority to consider are included in this Question. Those sections that are beyond the power of Town Meeting to recommend to the voters are being sent to the State Legislature in a request for a Special Act and are not included in this Question. The Special Act being sent to the State Legislature provides that the Special Act shall only take effect if the voters, at a local election, vote affirmatively on the Charter amendments proposed by the November 10, 2025 Special Town Meeting.

and to meet at the Reading Memorial High School, 62 Oakland Road, in said Reading on

MONDAY, the TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY of APRIL A.D., 2026

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 2** 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.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 3** To choose all other necessary Town Officers and Boards or Committees and determine what instructions shall be given to Town Officers and Boards or Committees, and to see what sum the Town will vote to appropriate by borrowing or transfer from available funds, or otherwise, for the purpose of funding Town Officers and Boards or Committees to carry out the instructions given to them, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 4** To see if the Town will vote to amend the FY 2026-36 Capital Improvements Program as provided for in Section 7-7 of the Reading Home Rule Charter and as previously amended, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 5** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2025, as adopted under Article 11 of the Annual Town Meeting of April 28, 2025 and amended under Article 4 of the Subsequent Town Meeting of November 10, 2025; and to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to be added to the amounts appropriated

under said Article, as amended, for the operation of the Town and its government, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Finance Committee

---

**ARTICLE 6** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to pay bills remaining unpaid from prior fiscal years for goods and services actually rendered to the Town, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 7** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money for the purpose of funding the irrevocable trust for "Other Post-Employment Benefits Liabilities", or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 8** To see if the Town will vote to (1) establish the limit on the total amount that may be expended from each revolving fund established by Article 6 of the Town of Reading General Bylaw pursuant to Section 53E½ of Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026; and (2) amend Section 6.5.2 of the General Bylaw, establishing the Inspection Revolving Fund, as shown below, with the deletions being struck through and additions being in bold;

#### 6.5.2 Inspection Revolving Fund

Funds held in the Inspection Revolving Fund shall be used for legal costs, oversight and inspection, plan review, property appraisals and appeals, public services general management, pedestrian safety improvements, records archiving, and other costs related to building, plumbing, wiring, gas, and other permits required for large construction projects and shall be expended by the Town Manager. Receipts credited to this fund shall include building, plumbing, wiring, gas and other permit fees for Johnson Woods, Eaton Lakeview (23-25 Lakeview Avenue and 128 Eaton Street), 258 Main Street, ~~25 Haven Street (Rite Aid)~~, ~~413 Main Street (McDonald's)~~, ~~431 Main Street (Chase Bank)~~, **346-348 Main Street**, and 459 Main Street (128 Tire) developments.

Or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 9** To see if the Town will vote to rescind a portion of certain authorizations to borrow, which were approved at prior town meetings, where the purposes of the borrowing have been completed, and/or it was unnecessary to borrow the full authorization; or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 10** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money for the operation of the Town and its government for Fiscal Year 2027, beginning July 1, 2026, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Finance Committee

---

**ARTICLE 11** To see if the Town will vote to dedicate a portion of 0 E of Haverhill Street (Assessor Parcel 035.0-0000-0133.0), said portion to be identified in more detail at Town Meeting, to active recreational purposes under M.G.L. Chapter 45, Section 3, and authorize the Town Manager to file on behalf of the Town any and all grants and reimbursements deemed necessary under the Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program (301 CMR 5.00) and further, authorize the Town Manager to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary on behalf of the Town to affect said project and its previously approved funding of \$1,500,000 from Article 14 of Subsequent Town Meeting 2025; or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 12** To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c. 138, § 33B, which authorizes the Select Board, acting as the Town's liquor licensing authority, to permit on premises licensees under G.L. c. 138, § 12, to sell alcoholic beverages between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon on Sundays, the last Monday in May and on Christmas day or on the day following when said day occurs on Sunday, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 13** To see if the Town will vote to (1) accept Sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, otherwise known as the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act, which establishes a special "Community Preservation Fund" that may be appropriated and spent for certain historic resources, community housing, and open space (including land for recreational use) purposes; (2) approve under Section 3(b) of G.L. c. 44B a property tax surcharge in an amount not to exceed 3% of the taxes assessed annually on real property, which will be dedicated to the Fund and be imposed starting with taxes assessed for fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2027; and (3) accept any or all of the exemptions from the surcharge permitted under Section 3(e) of G.L. c. 44B; to take any other action with respect thereto.

Ad Hoc Community Preservation Act Study Committee

---

**ARTICLE 14** To see if the Town will vote to establish a special purpose stabilization fund for unified sports by taking the following actions:

1. Create, pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 5B, a new special purpose stabilization fund to be called the School Department Adaptive Programming Stabilization Fund, for the purpose of supporting the provision of adaptive programming with the School Department by providing funding for coaches, athletic trainers, support staff, officials and referees,

transportation, equipment expenses, and any other expenses intended to support the program, with said funds to be expended by the School Department upon appropriation by Town Meeting, and pursuant to the fourth paragraph of G.L. c. 40, § 5B, dedicate at least 25 percent, but no more than 100 percent, of the rental payments received from the lease of the Burbank Ice Arena to said School Department Adaptive Programming Stabilization Fund, effective for the fiscal year 2027 beginning on July 1, 2026; and

2. Create, pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 5B, a new special purpose stabilization fund to be called the Recreation Department Adaptive and Therapeutic Programming Stabilization Fund, for the purpose of supporting the provision of adaptive and therapeutic programming within the Town by providing funding for instructors, coaches, trainers, support staff, transportation, equipment expenses, and any other expenses intended to support adaptive and therapeutic programs, said funds to be expended by the Recreational Department upon appropriation by Town Meeting, and pursuant to the fourth paragraph of G.L. c. 40, § 5B, dedicate at least 25 percent, but no more than 100 percent, of the rental payments received from the lease of the Burbank Ice Arena to said Recreation Department Adaptive and Therapeutic Programming Stabilization Fund, effective for the fiscal year 2027 beginning on July 1, 2026

or take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 15** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to fund the Parker Turf Field project, which project includes the design, installation, and improvement of the Parker Turf Field, including, but not limited to, the full replacement of the turf field, installation of new bleachers, upgrades to ADA-compliant access, improvements to and new site amenities, and all costs incidental and related thereto, or take any other action relative thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 16** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, transfer from available funds or otherwise provide a sum or sums of money to pay for the Joseph Way Sewer Station and Brewer Lane Sewer project, which project includes, but is not limited to, the design, improvement, and installation of new pump stations, gravity sewer, electrical, SCADA, and pavement, and all costs incidental and related to thereto, or take any other action with respect thereto.

Select Board

---

**ARTICLE 17** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Reading General Bylaws Article 8.8 Animal Control to comply with recent amendments to G.L. Chapter 140, known as "Ollie's Law", or take any other action with respect thereto.

Bylaw Committee

---

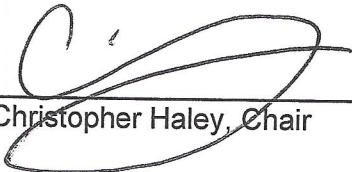
**ARTICLE 18** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Section 2-6 of the Reading Home Rule Charter, to declare the seats of certain Town Meeting Members to be vacant and remove certain described persons from their position as Town Meeting Members for failure to take the oath of office within 30 days following the notice of election or for failure to attend one-half or more of the Town Meeting sessions during the previous year, or take any other action with respect thereto.

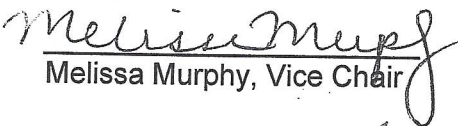
Select Board

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 April 27, 2026, 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 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

  
Christopher Haley, Chair

  
Melissa Murphy, Vice Chair

  
Karen Rose-Gillis, Secretary

  
Carlo Bacci, Member

  
Karen Gately Herrick, Member

SELECT BOARD OF READING

  
Town Clerk