

Motion to amend the budget

Motion under Article 16, 4/23/21

I, John Lippitt, Precinct 7, do hereby move that the Capital budget, line C99, page 48 of the Warrant (detail on page 52), be decreased by \$110,000.

Discussion

- I propose deleting \$110,000 to postpone the purchase of tasers. I believe we need to fully explore and understand the implications of this purchase. My understanding is that the Reading Police Department (RPD) does not have policies, procedures, or training in place for the use of tasers. These should be in place before the purchase of these weapons is authorized. We and the RPD should have a clear understanding of when and how these tasers would be used before purchasing them. An Instructional Motion has been submitted to accompany this requested decrease in the budget to establish such an understanding.
- Given the recent enactment of the state's Police Reform Bill and its intent to provide greater civilian oversight of and transparency into police department functioning, the decision to purchase tasers should be made with broad community input and understanding.
- As requested in the accompanying Instructional Motion, a study should be conducted and shared with Town Meeting and the community elucidating the policies and procedures for use, benefits, risks, liabilities, and ongoing costs of having tasers in our community and assuring appropriate oversight of their use.