

TOWN OF BLACKSTONE

WARRANT FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MAY 31, 2022 (7:30 PM)

Worcester, SS:

To either of the Constables of the Town of Blackstone in the County of Worcester.

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify the inhabitants of Precinct #1, Precinct #2 and Precinct #3 in the Town of Blackstone, qualified to vote in Town Affairs to meet in the Blackstone-Millville Regional Molony-Sullivan School Auditorium in said Town of Blackstone on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. then and there to act upon the articles of the Warrant.

ARTICLE 1. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Collector to use all means of collecting taxes that a Treasurer may use when appointed Collector or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of various obsolete and/or inoperative equipment, scrap materials, etc., or to auction or sell any excess equipment that may be on hand in any Town Department or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate such sums of money as may be deemed necessary to fix the salaries of all elected and appointed Town officers and to defray Town expenses for all departments, including the Reserve Fund, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023 and to determine how such sums of money should be raised, whether from the current tax levy, by transfer from available funds, by borrowing or otherwise, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the members of Boards and Committees of the Town of Blackstone to be compensated for their services and to set the amount of said compensation; said compensation set by town meeting to be paid in four (4) equal installments provided, however, that no such installment shall be paid a) to a member who has not attended at least 60% of the meetings of the respective Boards and Committees (excluding, however, any meetings not attended by such member due to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A) in the twelve (12) month period prior to March, June, September and December, as the case may be, if such member has been a member for twelve (12) or more months prior to each of said dates; or b) to a member who has not attended at least 60% of the meetings of the various Boards and Committees (excluding, however, any meetings not attended by such member due to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A) in the period prior to each of said dates if such member has not been a member for twelve (12) or more months prior to each of said dates, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the members of the Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee to be compensated for their services as such members and to set the amount of said compensation at \$1500.00 per member and \$1,800.00 for the Chairman, such compensation to be paid in three (3) equal installments in the months of July, November and March provided, however, that no such installment shall be paid a) to a member who has not attended at least 60% of the meetings of the District School Committee (excluding, however, any meetings not attended by such member due to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A) in the twelve (12) month period prior to July 1, November 1 or March 1, as the case may be, if such member has been a member for twelve (12) or more months prior to each of said dates; or b) to a member who has not attended at least 60% of the meetings of the District School Committee (excluding, however, any meetings not attended by such member due to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A) in the period prior to each of said dates, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money to overlay town streets and roads to be determined by the Board of Selectmen, or for the construction, reconstruction and improvement of public ways and street drainage systems and to determine how such sums may be raised, whether by advancement from Town Treasury, or by borrowing in anticipation of reimbursement by the Commonwealth, or otherwise, by the Treasurer, with approval of the Board of Selectmen, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts for the construction, reconstruction and improvements of public ways, street drainage systems and sidewalks throughout the Town, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to establish a revolving fund pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 44, Section 53 E ½ for the purpose of maintaining Library copiers, printers and facsimile printers and facsimile machines shall be deposited into said fund and expended under the direction of the Library Trustees up to the maximum amount of \$3,000 during Fiscal Year 2023 or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Library Trustees)

ARTICLE 9. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from free cash the sum of \$110,000 to fund implementation of the regulatory requirements of the Stormwater Permitting Program (MS4) which must be completed on a yearly basis or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (Funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 10. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by gift, purchase, or eminent domain an easement or easements for the purpose of construction, installation, maintenance and repair of municipal drainage, sewer water systems, and roadways, and to raise and appropriate or transfer from any available funds a sum of money to fund such acquisitions or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$120,000 to fund FY2023 expenses of the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund, as established by the vote under Article 29 of the May 28, 2019 Annual Town Meeting, pursuant to Mass General Law, Chapter 44, Section 53F 3/4, said appropriation to be funded by fees received pursuant to the Town's cable licensing agreement and cable franchise agreement, with the fund to begin operation for FY2022 effective July 1, 2023, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money in the amount of \$250,000 as the Town's investment into the SRBT Fund; all in consideration of the fact that the Town has established an Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund ("OPEB Trust Fund") in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 32B, Section 20 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended by Chapter 68, section 57 of the Acts of 2011 (the "Act"), and that, in accordance with said Act, the Town has designated the Town Treasurer/Collector to serve as custodian of the Town's OPEB Trust Fund relative to establishment of an Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund, or take other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE: 13 To see if the Town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$75,660 into the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund (OPEB Fund) of the Blackstone Millville Regional School District established under General Laws Chapter 32B, Section 20, said funds to be used only to pay some portion of health benefits for retirees from the Blackstone Millville Regional School District or take any other action relative thereto. (Majority vote required.)

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 14. To see if the Town will vote to propose an amendment to the Blackstone Home Rule Charter for consideration by the voters of the Town in accordance with M.G.L. c. 41, § 1B to convert the office of Collector-Treasurer from an elected office to an appointed office by deleting the reference to the Collector-Treasurer in Article IV, Section 4-1A, and adding a reference for the Collector-Treasurer to Article V, Section C5-2A, (1), with a Term of Appointment of 3 years, or take any action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE. 15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, the sum of \$75,000 for the purpose of paying costs of a feasibility study for the location of the Blackstone Senior Center/Council on Aging or take any other action relative thereto. (Two-thirds vote is required to authorize borrowing/Funds through free cash)

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of \$34,000 to replace garage doors at the Department of Public Works or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 17. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$22,000 for software implementation, upgrades, and equipment for Tyler Technologies (MUNIS) or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 18. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$25,000 for software, upgrades, and all related costs associated with implementation of an Online Permitting/Licensing program or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 19. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money to complete the expansion of Fire Station #3 or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 20. To see if the Town will vote to change Clause 37 to Clause 37A regarding local property tax exemptions for Legally Blind Persons under M.G.L. c.59, § 5 Clauses 37 and 37A. The current Legally Blind Exemption is Clause 37 which allows an exemption amount of \$437.50, to individuals who meet specific occupancy and ownership requirements. If the Legally Blind Persons exemption is changed to 37A, the exemption amount will be raised to \$500.00. This warrant is a request, under local option, to change Clause 37 to Clause 37A, or take any other action related thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 21. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by gift, a perpetual right and easement (s) along, upon, above, under and across that strip of land located on the southerly side of Elm Street, Blackstone, Worcester County, Massachusetts, shown as “20 foot Wide Drainage Easement” as shown on plan entitled “Plan of Land 109-111 Elm Street, Blackstone, Mass., Scale: 1” – 40’, Date: November 19, 2021” by Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. 333 West Street, Milford, MA 01757, for the purpose of construction, installation, maintenance and repair of municipal drainage, or take any other action in relation thereto, the grant of said easement to the Town being a condition of the Variance Decision dated July 21, 2021, recorded with the Worcester South District Registry of Deeds in Book 66913, Page 150.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 22. To see if the Town will vote to accept the layout of Sycamore Lane as a public way, as shown on the plan entitled “Sycamore Park Estates, As-Built Plan and Profile of Sycamore Lane in Blackstone, MA, Scale: 40 Feet to an Inch (Horiz.), Scale: 4 Feet to an Inch (Vert.)” dated April 27, 2020, and prepared by Guerriere & Halnon, Inc., Engineering & Land Surveying, 333 West Street, Milford, MA 01757, which layout shall have been filed in the Office of the Town Clerk not later than seven days prior to the date of the vote hereunder and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by gift, purchase, eminent domain, or otherwise, and to accept a deed or deeds to the Town of a fee simple interest or easements in any land necessary for the laying out and acceptance of said way as so laid out, and, as necessary, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to assess betterments to the owners of the land abutting the way; provided, however, that the construction of said road is acceptable to the Planning Board and Superintendent of Public Works, and provided further that such acceptance shall remain subject to the condition that the Sycamore Park Estates Homeowners

Association shall be responsible for the maintenance of all of the components of the stormwater management system that are outside the street right-of-way in accordance with the long-term Operation and Maintenance Plan approved by the Planning Board, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen and Town officers to take all related actions necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this article or take any other action relating thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 23. To see if the town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$30,000 for the redesign and upgrade of the Town website or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 24. To see if the town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$35,000 for the purchase of a sport utility vehicle for the Senior Center or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 25. To see if the town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$10,000 for the purchase of Senior Center equipment and supplies or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 26. To see if the town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$232,000.00 for information technology upgrades, including replacement of servers, for all Town Departments, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 27. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$20,000 for furniture or repair and upgrades for municipal building or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 28. To see if the town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$40,000 to purchase and install an electronic card pass or token access system for Municipal Buildings or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen) (funded through free cash)

ARTICLE 29. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's General Bylaws, Chapter 162, § 162-4. Officers; elections; vacancies to add a new Paragraph E to read as follows:

E. There shall be a Director of the Council on Aging appointed by the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator shall hire all other staff positions for the Council on Aging. The Director shall be supervised by and shall report directly to, the Town Administrator.

or take any action in relation thereto

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 30. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Blackstone Home Rule Charter, Article V, Section C5-2A(1), to add the Director of the Council on Aging, or take any action in relation thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 31. To see if the Town will vote to amend General Bylaws, Part II, General Legislation, Chapter 123 Zoning, to add at the end of Section 123-3.A, a new sentence reading: "No Planning Board member may serve concurrently on the Blackstone Zoning Board of Appeals" such that Section 123-3.A as revised will read:

Establishment. There is hereby established a Board of Appeals which shall consist of five members and two alternate members, who shall be appointed by the Selectmen and shall act in all matters under this chapter in the manner prescribed by Chapters 40A, 40B and 41 of the General Laws. No Planning Board member may serve concurrently on the Blackstone Zoning Board of Appeals.

and to amend Charter Article IV, Section C.4-1 to add a new Paragraph C reading "No Planning Board member may serve concurrently on the Blackstone Zoning Board of Appeals" or take any other action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 32. To see if the Town will vote to amend General Bylaws by adding a new Chapter 96, "Marijuana Establishments and Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers", or take any other action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 33. To see if the Town will vote to amend General Bylaws by adding a new Chapter 96, Section 96-1, contingent upon approval of the voters of the town at the annual Town election in accordance with M.G.L. c. 94G, § 3(e), as follows:

§ 96-1: "The number of Marijuana Retailers in the Town of Blackstone, as defined under 935 CMR 500.002 shall not exceed three."

or take any other action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 34. To see if the Town will vote, contingent upon approval of the voters of the town at the annual Town election in accordance with M.G.L. c. 94G, § 3(e), to add a new Chapter 96, Section 96-2, as follows:

§ 96-2: "The number of Marijuana Cultivators in the Town of Blackstone, as defined under 935 CMR 500.002, shall not exceed two."

to or take any other action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

ARTICLE 35. To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money to the stabilization fund or take any other action in relation thereto.

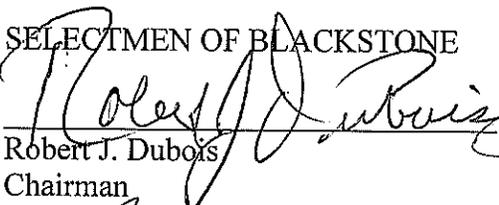
(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

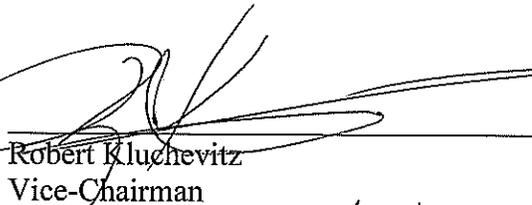
Hereof, fail not and make do return of this Warrant with doings thereon to the Town Clerk at or before the time of said meeting.

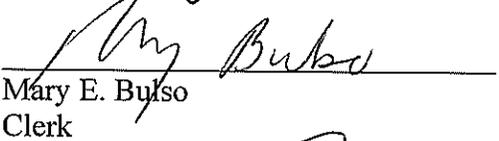
And you are directed to serve this warrant by posting up true and attested copies thereof in each of the following names and places in Blackstone seven (7) days at least before the day fixed for such meeting at the Municipal Center on St. Paul Street and at the Fire Station on Rathbun Street and the A.F. Maloney School on Lincoln Street and by publication no less than seven (7) days before the days fixed for such meeting in that newspaper having the largest circulation in the Town.

Given under our hands this 22nd day of March 2022.

SELECTMEN OF BLACKSTONE


Robert J. Dubois
Chairman

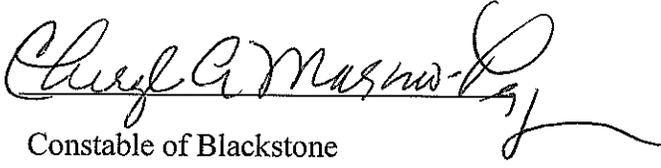

Robert Kluchevitz
Vice-Chairman


Mary E. Bulso
Clerk


Ryan Chamberland
Member

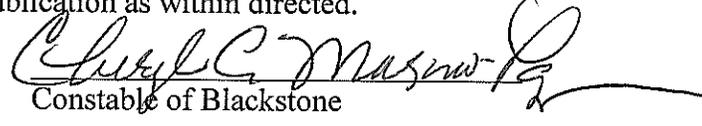

Tanya Polak
Member

A true copy attest:

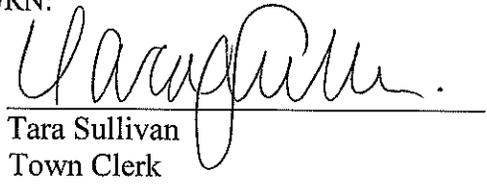

Constable of Blackstone

Worcester, SS:

Pursuant to the foregoing Warrant, I have this 23rd day of March 2022 notified the inhabitants of Precinct #1, Precinct #2 and Precinct #3 in the Town of Blackstone by posting up true and attested copies of the within warrant at the within named places and by publication as within directed.


Constable of Blackstone

A TRUE COPY OF THE WARRANT AND RETURN:


Tara Sullivan
Town Clerk