

# **WARRANT TOWN OF WEST GARDINER**

To: Raelyn E. Spencer  
Resident of West Gardiner in the County of Kennebec

## **GREETINGS:**

In the name of the State of Maine you are hereby required to notify and warn the voters of West Gardiner in said county, qualified by law to vote in Town Affairs, to meet at the West Gardiner Volunteer Fire Department in said Town on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 at 8:00 a.m. in the morning then and there to act on the following articles to wit:

**ARTICLE 1. To choose a Moderator to preside over said meeting.**

**John Clark – 3 votes**

**ARTICLE 2. To elect all Town officers required by law and previous vote of the Town to be chosen by secret ballot. Namely: Select Board, Assessor, Overseer – 3 Years, Road Commissioner – 3 Years, and RSU #11 School Board Member – 3 Years in accordance with provisions of Title 30, Section 2061 of the Revised Statutes of 1964 and acts additional thereto and amendatory thereof. The polls will be open at 8:00 a.m. in the morning and close at 12:00 noon.**

**Select Board, Assessor, Overseer – 3 Years**

<b>Berglund, Deirdre P.</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Couture, Gregory A.</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>McLaughlin, Christopher B.</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>Small, Erin A.</b>	<b>46</b>

**Road Commissioner – 3 Years**

<b>Hickey, Gary M.</b>	<b>441</b>
<b>Write In –</b>	
<b>Benner, Travis</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>McGee, Steve</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Prince, Randy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Peckham, Kyle</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Radley, Robert</b>	<b>2</b>

**RSU #11 School Board Member – 3 Years**

<b>Write In –</b>	
<b>Focht, Sean</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Merrill, Kate</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>McLaughlin, Chris</b>	<b>10</b>

Hickey, Tammy	2
McKenna, Cassandra	2
Radley, Robert	2

The Business Meeting will open at 1:30 p.m. in the afternoon, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at the West Gardiner Volunteer Fire Department then and there to act on the following articles to wit:

**Non-Residents approved to speak – Craig Hickman  
Dan Shagoury**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTS**

**ARTICLE 3.** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to spend up to 25% of the budgeted amount in each budget category of the current annual budget during the period from the beginning of the next fiscal year to the next annual town meeting or take any other action thereon.

**Motion to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as written**

**ARTICLE 4.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the payment of interest on tax anticipated loans.

Select Board Recommends: from Surplus

**Motion to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No Discussion**

**Article carries as written**

**ARTICLE 5.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the salaries of Town Officials or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 214,160.00 (23)	\$ 226,350.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Select Board	\$ 30,000.00 (23)	\$ 30,000.00 (24)
Administrative Assistant/Excise		
Tax Collector	\$ 58,000.00 (23)	\$ 58,000.00 (24)
Treasurer/Tax Collector	\$ 43,400.00 (23)	\$ 49,000.00 (24)
Clerical Help	\$ 41,410.00 (23)	\$ 43,000.00 (24)
Office Support	\$ 0.00 (23)	\$ 0.00 (24)
Fire Chief	\$ 8,000.00 (23)	\$ 8,000.00 (24)
Fire Department Officers	\$ 4,500.00 (23)	\$ 4,500.00 (24)
Fire Wardens	\$ 0.00 (23)	\$ 0.00 (24)

Animal Control Officer	\$ 6,500.00 (23)	\$ 6,500.00 (24)
Code Enforcement Officer	\$ 15,500.00 (23)	\$ 16,500.00 (24)
CEO Alternate	\$ 1,000.00 (23)	\$ 0.00 (24)
Ballot Clerks	\$ 2,000.00 (23)	\$ 7,000.00 (24)
E-911 Coordinator	\$ 3,850.00 (23)	\$ 3,850.00 (24)

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion as to why Treasurer/Tax Collector increased. Greg explained there was a carry forward from the prior year that brought it to \$49,000 from last year so no increase this year.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for Fire Fighters wages or take any other action thereon.**

**Fire Department recommends: \$ 0.00 (23) \$ 20,300.00 (24)**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion - Asked if this is a change from a volunteer department to a paid department? Chief Gross spoke about the crisis in Volunteer Fire Fighters in the country. The training requirements have changed. This article will pay fire fighters for calls and training, as there are 11 trainings a year held, in house.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Administrative Account and to authorize the Select Board to expand any receipts to the Administrative Account and carry any money forward into accounts as may be deemed necessary or take any other action thereon.**

**Select Board Recommends: \$ 45,000.00 (23) \$ 55,000.00 (24)**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No Discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the town website to be developed and maintained or take any other action thereon.**



**ARTICLE 11.** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to accept pre-payment on taxes not yet committed or take any other action thereon.

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 12.** To see if the Town will vote to set a rate of interest to be charged on unpaid taxes and set a date after which interest shall be charged or take any other action thereon.

**Select Board Recommends:** 4% per year starting October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 13.** To see if the Town will fix a date when taxes shall be due and payable.

**Select Board Recommends:** July 1, 2024

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion – Greg spoke about looking at changing the Fiscal Year from 2/1 to 7/1. This will coincide with the school Budget voting in June. This will happen for a couple of years when it is moved a month at a time in which we will budget for 13 months at a time.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 14.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money to pay for tax abatements or take any other action thereon.

**Select Board Recommends:** From overlay

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 15.** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board on behalf of the Town to sell and dispose of any Real Estate acquired by the Town for non-payment of taxes thereon, with such terms as they may deem advisable and to execute Quit Claim Deeds for such property or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends: Sale by bid only after published notice in the local newspaper.

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 16.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money to pay its share of the cost of the Social Security plan as provided for in Chapter 395 of Public Laws of 1951.

Select Board Recommends: \$ 30,000.00 (23) \$ 35,000.00 (24) **Excise**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 17.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for Support of Poor or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends: \$ 3,000.00 (23) \$ 3,000.00 (24)

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 18.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the following Cemetery accounts or take any other action thereon:

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 33,400.00 (23)	\$ 33,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Care of Cemeteries	\$ 27,000.00 (23)	\$ 27,000.00 (24)
Cemetery Equipment	\$ 5,000.00 (23)	\$ 5,000.00 (24)
Decoration of Solider Graves	\$ 1,400.00 (23)	\$ 1,000.00 (24)

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 19.** To see if the Town will vote to accept a legacy from which interest is to be used for Perpetual Care for the following burial lots:

Duane Love	\$ 50.00
Sharon Millett	\$ 50.00
Julianna MacMaster	\$ 100.00
Donna Mathias	\$ 100.00
Timothy Thurlow	\$ 100.00
Richard McElhaney	\$ 100.00
Richard Bourque	\$ 100.00
Robert & Patricia Brayley	\$ 200.00
Keith & Kim Eaton	\$ 200.00
Gregory & Debra Couture	\$ 300.00
Cheryl Bailey	\$ 400.00

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 20.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Kennebec Valley Humane Society of Augusta (KVHS) or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 6,500.00 (23)	\$ 6,500.00 (24)
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**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 21.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the following West Gardiner Fire Department accounts or take any other action thereon:

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 57,000.00 (23)	\$ 65,705.00 (24)
Fire Department Operations	\$ 32,000.00 (23)	\$ 42,705.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Emergency Fire Truck Repair	\$ 10,000.00 (23)	\$ 5,000.00 (24)
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	\$ 10,000.00 (23)	\$ 9,000.00 (24)
SCBA & Associated Equipment	\$ 5,000.00 (23)	\$ 5,000.00 (24)
Match Grant Account	\$ 0.00 (23)	\$ 4,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 22.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of seven (7) payments for the Fire Truck loan or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 0.00 (23)	\$ 23,000.00 (24)
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**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 23.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for communications or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 55,000.00 (23)	\$ 58,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
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**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**







Discussion – Bob Weeks, TS Supervisor, spoke about the failing equipment and repairs that need to be done at the Transfer Station. The equipment is original from 1985 and is stretching out and cracking. We have replaced 1 rotophase so we are watching to see a change in the electrical change over in upcoming months. Bob stated if we put a “band-aid” on it, the cost could be \$37,000 with a total overhaul could be approximately \$100,000. Comment was also made about looking into replacing the buildings and equipment instead of repairing things.

The recycling committee needs to meet soon so they can address some issues that residents have at the transfer station.

A motion was made and 2<sup>nd</sup> to amend the article to also add \$50,000 for repairs.

Amended article carries.

**ARTICLE 30.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) of sixteen (16) payments on the new town garage or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 24,000.00 (23)	\$ 26,000.00 (24)
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Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.

No discussion.

Article carries as written.

**ARTICLE 31.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the following Highway Department Accounts or take any other action thereon:

Select Board Recommends:	\$ 402,000.00 (23)	\$ 411,500.00 (24)
Winter Roads	\$ 185,000.00 (23)	\$ 185,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Summer Roads	\$ 57,000.00 (23)	\$ 58,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Paving	\$ 120,000.00 (23)	\$ 120,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Mowing/Brush	\$ 5,000.00 (23)	\$ 3,500.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Highway Equipment	\$ 30,000.00 (23)	\$ 38,000.00 (24) <b>Excise</b>
Highway Building	\$ 5,000.00 (23)	\$ 7,000.00 (24)

Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**No discussion.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 32. Shall the Town of West Gardiner (1) approve a capital acquisition project consisting of the purchase of a one-ton pickup truck for use by the Town's highway department, and including transaction costs and other expenses reasonably related thereto; (2) appropriate the sum of \$90,000 to fund the project; (3) authorize the Town Treasurer and the Chair of the Select Board to issue general obligation securities of the Town (including temporary notes in anticipation of the sale thereof) in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$90,000 to fund the appropriation; and (4) delegate to the Treasurer and the Chair of the Select Board the authority and discretion to fix the dates, maturities, interest rates, denominations, calls for redemption (with or without premium), form, and other details of said securities, including authority to execute and deliver the securities on behalf of the Town?**

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

### **1. TOTAL BOND INDEBTEDNESS**

- a. Bonds outstanding and unpaid: \$ 812,177.18**
- b. Bonds authorized and unissued (other than this loan): \$ -0-**
- c. Maximum amount to be issued if approved: \$ 90,000**

### **2. COSTS**

**At an estimated maximum interest rate of 6.5% for a six (6) year maturity, the estimated cost of this bond will be:**

**Principal \$ 90,000  
Interest \$ 18,928  
Total: \$ 108,928**

### **3.VALIDITY**

**The validity of the bonds and the voter's ratification of the bonds may not be affected by any error in the above estimates. If the actual amount of the total debt service varies from the estimates, the ratification by the voters nevertheless conclusive, and the validity of the bond issue is not affected by reason of the variance.**

*Raelyn E. Spencer* /s/

**Town Treasurer**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**



**Discussion – Why the large increase from last year? Greg explained we had carried forward from a prior year last year which we didn't need to appropriate as much for the payment.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 35. To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Friendly Neighbors Senior Citizens Club or take any other action thereon.**

**Select Board Recommends: \$ 5,600.00 (23) \$ 9,000.00 (24)**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion – Last year's caterer cannot do the dinners this year. Tammy Hickey, coordinator, got prices from a few caterer's.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 36. To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Cobbosseecontee Snowmobile Club or take any other action thereon.**

**Select Board Recommends: \$ 1,9260.00 (23) \$ TBD (24)**

**Amount amended due to typing error – should read \$ 1,926.00 (23)**

**Motion made to accept as amended due to typing error – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as amended.**

**ARTICLE 37. To see if the Town will vote or raise or appropriate a sum of money to recognize the West Gardiner Veterans to be added to the Veterans Monument or take any other action thereon.**

**Select Board Recommends: \$ 1,000.00 (23) \$ 5,000.00 (24)**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion was made as to why the \$4,000.00 increase from last year. There are approximately 25 names that need to be added to the monument for the new wars. The monument is updated thru the Vietnam War.**

**Article carries as written.**



**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 41.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Town Newsletter or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:                      \$ 3,600.00 (23)                      \$ 3,600.00 (24)

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 42.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the following requests or take any other action thereon.

Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed Request	\$ 12,200.00 (23)	\$ 14,300.00 (24)
Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI)	\$ 7,200.00 (23)	\$ 8,300.00 (24)
DASH (Diver Assisted Suction Harvester)	\$ 5,000.00 (23)	\$ 6,000.00 (24)

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 43.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Town Office Building in need of upgrades or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:                      \$ 10,000.00 (23)                      \$ 10,000.00 (24) **Excise**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 44.** To see if the Town will vote to raise or appropriate a sum of money for the Historical Society building or take any other action thereon.

Select Board Recommends:                      \$ 115,000.00 (23)                      \$ 80,000.00 (24) **Surplus**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Gary II spoke in opposition to this \$ 80,000.00 article for the Historical Society.**





**ARTICLE 47. To see if the Town will vote to accept the changes to the Caregiver Retail Store Licensing Ordinance.**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion was made that since this is an ordinance there can be no changes to the ordinance. One of the changes proposed was that the owner can leave the business to an heir if something should happen to them.**

**The town must either accept it as written or decline the ordinance all together.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 48. To see if the Town will vote to accept the change to the Medical Cannabis Cultivation Facilities Licensing Ordinance.**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion was made on what the main difference was from the original ordinance. The resident explained that it would allow the flowering canopy to be increased to 5,000 sq. feet.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 49. To see if the Town will vote to accept the change to the Minimum Lot Size Ordinance.**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion was made about what this change is about. It follows the State law that will be effective 7/1.**

**Article carries as written.**

**ARTICLE 50. To see if the Town will vote to change the vote for the Town's election from Saturday to the first Tuesday after the Annual Town Meeting, effective beginning in April 2025.**

**Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Discussion - What can we do to have more people attend Town Meeting? It was talked about that many, many, many years ago, Town meetings were held on a different day than voting was to allow people to attend. Other surrounding towns have voting on one day and town meetings on another day in the next week. Another aspect of allowing this is the**

planning of changing the fiscal year for the Town to coincide with the school budget year over the next few years. This will help with the budgeting process to be more precise.

Amendment made to the article to offer voting from 8 am – 8 pm, like a normal election day, which will allow more people to vote during the day.

Amendment approved.

Article carries as amended article.

**ARTICLE 51.** To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax leavy limit established for the Town of West Gardiner by State Law in the event that the municipal budget approved under the preceding articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax leavy limit or take any other action thereon. (By State Law, the vote on this article must be by written ballot.)

Motion made to accept as written – 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Due to the budget and increased amounts, voting by secret ballot had to happen.

Yes – 106

No – 26

Article passed as written.

Motion to adjourn meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.

The Registrar, Angela J Phillis, hereby gives notice that she will be at the polls for the purpose of correcting the list of voters from 8:00 a.m. in the morning until the polls are closed.

Given under our hands this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.

Gregory A. Couture /s/  
Gregory A. Couture

Gary M. Hickey /s/  
Gary M. Hickey II

Randall W. Macomber /s/  
Randall W. Macomber