

**EXPLANATIONS OF ARTICLES FOR 2025 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
MARCH 1, 2025  
SOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**VOTING FOR TOWN OFFICIALS: 8 am to 12:15 pm**

**TOWN MEETING: 1:30 pm**

**NOMINATED CANDIDATES**

Selectman, 3-year term:	Elaine Aloes
Road Commissioner, 1-year term:	Jeffrey Cyr
MSAD # 74 School Board Director, 3-year term:	Robert Lindblom

The Selectmen's recommended municipal budget needed to be raised by taxation is \$1,276,483 which is \$58,320 more than in 2024 (4.8% increase). \$30,500 of that increase is for additional Capital Reserve funds for the town garage, sidewalks, and transfer station equipment reserves. After reducing this budget by State Revenue Sharing, KRDA funds, and available surplus the budget by taxation is \$595,651 which is \$47,410 less than last year. The Advisory Committee's recommendation is \$350 more than the Selectmen's.

**ARTICLE 3:** The Accounts Overage is over \$2,544.35. \$5,000 was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting to cover overage in town accounts. The following accounts were overdrawn and covered by this Accounts Overage: RSU 74 \$3.00; Street Lights \$2,416.15; and Fire Department \$5,125.20 for a total of \$7,544.35. We need town approval for the additional \$2,544.35 to be covered by surplus funds.

**ARTICLES 4 THRU 18:** Articles to raise money for various purposes. Our Budget Worksheet will be available at the Town Office and at the Town Meeting. Salaries have been increased due to the State Minimum Wage increase from \$14.15 to \$14.65 for 2025 and the 3.5% cost-of-living increase reported in December. Other items of note in that group are listed below.

**ARTICLE 4: GENERAL GOVERNMENT:** This year's budget request is the same as in 2024. The Treasurer and Deputy Clerk/Tax Collector positions are now being done by one person so there is a salary saving there. The Chair of Selectmen hours have been increased from 24 to 28 hours a week. We also had to add mandatory funding for the Paid Family & Medical Leave insurance for town employees. We moved electrical costs to Public Utilities.

**ARTICLES 5 & 6: PUBLIC WORKS & SANITATION:** Small increase to salaries & cost of supplies. We moved their electrical costs to Public Utilities.

**ARTICLE 7: LIBRARY:** Increase due to less reliance on investment funds. We moved their electrical costs to Public Utilities.

**ARTICLE 8: FIRE DEPARTMENT:** Increase due to the increased number of emergency calls the fire fighters are responding to because of our mutual aid agreements. Safety equipment upgrade costs are rising. Certification costs for our fire fighters and our equipment are rising. We moved their electrical costs to Public Utilities.

**ARTICLE 9: PUBLIC UTILITIES:** Increase because we moved all municipal electrical costs to Public Utilities.

**ARTICLE 10: SOCIAL SERVICES:** The Selectmen and the Advisory Committee have different recommendations regarding Sweetser Mental Health. Selectmen \$0 and Advisory Committee \$250

**ARTICLE 16: ORGANIZATION FEES:** The Selectmen and the Advisory Committee have different recommendations regarding Maine Public Radio. Selectmen \$0 and Advisory Committee \$100

**ARTICLE 19:** 2026 will be 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the United States. We want to form a committee and raise funds for a town celebration on the July 4, 2026. Please contact the Selectmen if you want to be on the committee.

**ARTICLE 20:** Ironbound Pond Association has requested a donation of \$3,000 to help with the maintenance of Ironbound Pond Road. It is a private road, but it has the Ironbound Pond public boat landing on it. It gets a lot of non-camp owner traffic because of this.

**ARTICLE 21:** This is a request to replace the town's electronic LED message sign with an upgraded LED electronic sign. The new sign will be easier to program and have more room for messages.

**ARTICLE 22:** We have been unable to hire an assessment firm to do the town's revaluation. The Selectmen/Assessors will take on this project and it will require a lot more work than is customary for the Assessors. We need to visit every property with buildings and measure and document the information of each building. Also, all the information will have to be inputted into our real estate assessment program. We want to use the revaluation reserve funds to cover the cost of the additional time involved in doing this.

**ARTICLE 23:** We want to purchase a glass crusher using Transfer Station Truck & Equipment Reserve funds. Removing glass from our waste stream will save money on our trash disposal fees.

**ARTICLE 24:** This will approve using FEMA funds to reimburse LRAP funds for the public work overages due to the 2023 rain flooding events.

**ARTICLES 25 & 26:** These are requests to use FEMA funds to purchase a mulcher attachment for our excavator to cut back our roadside brush and to buy a 20-ton equipment trailer to replace our 10-ton trailer.

**ARTICLE 27:** This will approve keeping the 2020 Ford 1-ton pick up truck. We had planned on selling it when we got the 2016 2-ton truck. However, it has proved to be very useful, and it will benefit the town to keep it.

**ARTICLES 28 & 29:** #28 will move the funds from the Rainy Day Fund to the Public Works Garage Reserve and close the Rainy Day Fund. #29 will move some of the FEMA funds to the Public Works Garage Reserve.

**ARTICLES 30 & 31:** We are considering renovating the current garage by removing the 2 cold bays on the brook side of the building. We will then rebuild the 2 bays longer and taller and remove the wall between the 2 cold garage bays and the 3 heated garage bays. Depending on what the estimated cost ends up being, we might decide not to do this and just go with replacement of the garage if we can get a grant. We will continue to apply for grants to renovate or replace the garage.

**ARTICLE 32:** This will approve giving grant funds and the snow groomer personal property tax reimbursement the town receives from the state to the Solon Snow Hawks.

**ARTICLE 33:** Due to a recent US Supreme Court case finding, the State of Maine passed new laws in 2024 regarding the municipal handling of foreclosed property. Towns can no longer keep excess funds when the property owner fails to pay the owed amount, and the town has to sell the foreclosed property. We now need to attempt to sell the property through a realtor at fair market value and return the excess funds to the former property owner. We need to update our ordinance because of the state law change.

**ARTICLE 34:** We currently have 2 licensed marijuana cultivation facilities in town which is the maximum allowed under our current ordinance. A third party has requested a cultivation facility license. The change will increase the number of cultivation facilities allowed to 3.

**ARTICLES 35 through 41:** These articles are either required by Maine law every year or are articles included every year for the reasons stated in the articles.