

**Annual Town Meeting - May 8, 2023**  
**Wastewater / Water Quality Warrant Articles**

**Article 16 - Fund CWRMP Implementation - Phase III “Lakes & Ponds” Sewer Study Area Design/Project Management (Fin Comm 8-0-1)**

**Article 17 - Fund Additional Costs for Phase I Downtown Area Sewer Collection System, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Effluent Disposal System (Fin Comm 6-0-0)**

**Article 18 - Fund Additional Costs for Phase II Meetinghouse Pond Area Sewer Collection System Construction (Fin Comm 6-0-0 but Article Indefinitely Postponed at Town Meeting)**

**Article 42 - Fund CWRMP Fresh & Saltwater Ponds Adaptive Management (Fin Comm 9-0-0)**

**On Behalf of the Finance Committee: Lynn Bruneau**

OK. Here’s a little quiz for you to see if you’ve been paying attention over the past few years. When was the last time that there wasn’t something about wastewater planning or funding in the Warrant for an Annual Town Meeting? How long have you lived here? How long have you been coming to Town Meeting? Based on a quick review of info on the Town Clerk’s website - it looks like 2008 was the last time that there was nothing in the Warrant about wastewater planning or funding

We’ve made a lot of progress since then - and we’ve learned a lot - about wastewater planning and funding and funding sources - and communication. With opportunities for improvement on several fronts - including communication - especially about end user costs - but that’s not the focus for my comments today.

As I’ve done before - I want to talk once in support of several Articles - the wastewater / water quality “bundle” - Articles 16, 17, 18 and 42 - starting backwards:

Article 42 would provide funding for the annual costs for monitoring the oyster project at Lonnie’s Pond and for monitoring water quality at Cedar Pond and other Town estuaries and ponds. The oyster project at Lonnie’s pond is proving to the State that in the right environment, growing oysters can be used as part of a de-nitrification program.

Article 18 will be “postponed indefinitely” when we get to it with good news at the recent bid opening - with bids coming in under estimated costs. Thus additional funds will not be needed for the Meetinghouse Pond sewer project. Construction s/ begin this fall.

Article 17 - additional funding is needed to close-out the Downtown sewer project - Phase 1 of the Town’s sewer efforts. Added costs due primarily to the pandemic and supply chain issues and related delays - with increased costs for certain key component parts. This adds \$275k to the now-completed \$35.3M project - less than 1%. Downtown property owners have begun to connect to the system (the Library and Stop & Shop were among the first connectors) and septage haulers have begun to haul septage to the new treatment plant.

Article 16 is the initial funding for Phase 3 - the so-called "Lakes and Ponds" phase. As explained, the Article has been amended to ask for \$2.438M for the preliminary design and project management for the area adjacent to Lonnie's Pond and Crystal and Pilgrim Lakes as show on the map in your Warrant (pg 77). The objective is to remove additional nitrogen from the Pleasant Bay and Nauset Harbor watersheds as required. Project design would be scheduled for 2025 and construction in 2026-2028, after completion of the Meetinghouse Pond sewer project

The intent of sewer project planning going forward is to keep an eye on costs and financing - and debt drop-off - while we work toward water quality objectives established by the State authorities - and agreed to locally in recognition of the importance of our "Blue Economy". There's more - more detailed - information about these projects on the Town website.

Meanwhile - please join the Select Board and the Finance Committee in voting to support these Warrant Articles - in support of water quality in the Town of Orleans.

Thank you!