

2020 Annual Warrant

To David Welch, Constable
of the Town of Mercer
in the County of Somerset,

GREETINGS:

In the name of the State of Maine you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Mercer qualified to vote in town affairs to meet at the **Mercer Community Center** in said Town of Mercer on **Tuesday, the 3rd day of March, 2020**, at 8 o'clock a.m., to elect all Town Officials. The polls will open immediately after the election of a Moderator and will remain open until 8 o'clock p.m. The business meeting will then be held in the gym of the **Mercer Community Center** on **Saturday the 7th day of March, 2020** beginning at 6 o'clock pm.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a Moderator to preside at said meeting.

ARTICLE 2: To elect three Selectmen, Assessors, and Overseers of the Poor all for one year terms, a Trustee of Shaw Library for a five year term and a person to serve on the Planning Board for a three year term

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax levy limit of \$273,712 established for Mercer by state law, in the event that the municipal budget approved under the following articles results in a tax commitment greater than that limit.
Budget Committee recommends (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 4: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the salaries of Town Officers.

	Requested
1 st Selectman	4,000.00
2 nd Selectman	4,000.00
3 rd Selectman	4,000.00
Town Clerk	6,724.00
Tax Collector	12,419.00
Treasurer	11,158.00
Selectmen's Sec	2,040.00
Dep. Clerk/Collector	4,141.00
Registrar	500.00
Office Assistant/Deputy	<u>5,200.00</u>
	\$54,182.00

Budget Committee recommends (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 5: To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate to cover the Town's share of F.I.C.A. and Medicare costs of town salaries.

Budget Committee recommends .0765% from Taxes (Est. \$5,700) as required by law based on the total Town Payroll (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 6: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for selectpersons' emergency contingencies. Any and all use of the funds will be fully and explicitly reported to the 2020 annual report.

Budget Committee recommends \$10,000 from Surplus (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 7: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for annual dues of the Maine Municipal Association.

Budget Committee recommends \$1,786 from Surplus (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 8: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for General Liability and Property Insurance.

Budget Committee recommends \$12,700 from Taxes (5-1-0)

ARTICLE 9: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Liability Insurance for Public Officials plus Bonds.

Budget Committee recommends \$1,720 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 10: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for worker's comp insurance & unemployment for town employees.

Budget Committee recommends \$2,500 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 11: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Health Insurance coverage.

Budget Committee recommends \$14,938 from Taxes (5-1-0)

ARTICLE 12: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Town Office, Shaw Library, Municipal Center, and Town Expense.

Budget Committee makes no recommendation. (3-3-0)

\$40,000 from Taxes plus any revenues or donations generated by the center. Any remaining balance will be placed in municipal center capital reserve fund

ARTICLE 13: To see what sum of money the town will vote to raise and appropriate for annual maintenance & upgrades of the TRIO accounting & assessing program.

Budget Committee recommends \$7,900 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 14: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Assessing.

Budget Committee recommends \$9,000 from Taxes. Any remaining balance to be placed in the Assessing Re-Evaluation Fund (4-2-0)

ARTICLE 15: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Solid Waste Disposal, Recycling and Blue Bag purchase.

Budget Committee recommends \$23,000 from Taxes plus all Transfer Station revenue (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 16: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for the Planning Board.

Budget Committee recommends \$500 from Surplus (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 17: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for Animal Control.

Budget Committee recommends all dog account revenue plus \$4,100 from Surplus (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 18: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for Cemetery Care.

Budget Committee recommends \$5,500 from Surplus, plus fund interest (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 19: To see what action the Town will vote to authorize the Municipal Officers to dispose of the property and its contents known as the “Old Town Office” located at 75 Main Street, Mercer (Tax Map 11 Lot 10 & portion of Lot 8 & 9) further described as Book () & Page (). Property will be placed with a licensed Real Estate Auction Company as early as a May 2020 Auction without reserve and to execute such contracts, deeds and other instruments and to take such other actions as deemed necessary to effect the sale of such property.

If the above article is approved:

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the proceeds of the Sale of the Old Town Office once the sale is final. As recommended by the Municipal Officers, the proceeds to deposit $\frac{1}{4}$ in the Mercer Community Center Reserve Fund and the other $\frac{3}{4}$ to establish and deposit into a Summer Road Improvement Fund. All Funds to be expended from this fund must be approved by a town meeting vote.

Budget Committee recommends (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 21: To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the Town of Mercer Office of Emergency Management / CERT.

Budget Committee recommends \$1,500 from Taxes (4-1-1)

ARTICLE 22: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for the 2019 Town Audit.

Budget Committee recommends \$3,450 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 23: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for public safety. This will include fire protection provided by the Town of Norridgewock and traffic & street lights.

Budget Committee recommends \$39,100 from Taxes (5-0-1)

ARTICLE 24: To see what percentage the Town will vote to deduct on all taxes assessed in 2020 that are paid in full on or before the 30th day after the date of the mailing of the tax bills.

Budget Committee recommends 2% (4-2-0)

ARTICLE 25: To see what rate the Town will vote to charge and collect interest on all taxes assessed in 2020 that are unpaid 60 days after the date of the mailing of the tax bills.

Budget Committee recommends the 9% allowed by state law per annum (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$9,325 for Shaw Library.

Budget Committee recommends \$9,325 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 27: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Summer Road maintenance.

Budget Committee recommends \$60,000 from Taxes and \$20,000 from Town Forest Fund (4-1-1)

ARTICLE 28: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for paving.

Budget Committee makes no recommendation. (2-1-3)

All funds to come from 2020 LRAP, 20,000 from Taxes and \$10,000 from Surplus

ARTICLE 29: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for ditching.

Budget Committee does not recommend \$10,000 from Taxes (2-4-0)

ARTICLE 30: To see what sum of money the town will vote to raise and appropriate to improve a 1-mile section of Pond Road with ditching, culverts, geotextile, shim, gravel and grading.

Budget Committee recommends \$10,000 from Taxes and \$10,000 from State of Maine NPS Grant (\$20,000 total) (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 31: To see what sum of money the town will vote to raise and appropriate to replace the Bog Brook culvert (Boat Landing on Mercer/Smithfield Town Line).

Budget Committee recommends \$20,000 from Summer Roads, \$20,000 from State of Maine NPS Grant and \$20,000 from Town of Smithfield (\$60,000 total). (4-2-0)

ARTICLE 32: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Winter Road maintenance, including plowing, sanding and stockpiling sand and salt.

\$230,000. \$155,000 will come from Excise Tax, \$75,000 from Taxes plus any short fall to come from Surplus

Budget Committee recommends (5-1-0)

ARTICLE 33: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for General Assistance.

Budget Committee recommends \$17,500 from Surplus, plus all State reimbursements (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 34: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for charity. A minimum of 50% of this will be spent in the Town of Mercer.

Budget Committee recommends \$2,000 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 35: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Mercer Meeting House Association (Mercer Old Home Days) necessary repairs to the Mercer Meeting House and for use of Mercer Old Home Days festivities.

(Requested Amount \$1,000)

Selectmen Recommend \$500 from Taxes

Budget Committee recommends \$500 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 36: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for Mercer Historical Society, for the maintenance of the building and to keep its collections safe.

Budget Committee recommends \$500 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 37: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for various Youth Leagues.

Budget Committee recommends \$750 from Taxes (5-1-0)

ARTICLE 38: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate to supplement the three town scholarship awards.

Budget Committee recommends \$425 from Surplus -- \$200 for each high school award and \$25 for the elementary award (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 39: To see if the Town will vote to elect from the floor at this meeting, five individuals to serve as a Budget Committee. The committee will meet with the selectmen within 60 days for the purpose of electing a Chairperson.

ARTICLE 40: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for training costs of CEO and LPI.

Budget Committee recommends \$400 from Surplus (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 41: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for CEO compensation.

Budget Committee recommends up to \$2,000 from Surplus, plus all application fees (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 42: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$2,000 for North Pond Association.

Budget Committee recommends \$2,000 from Taxes (4-2-0)

ARTICLE 43: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Mercer Rescue Capital Reserve Fund

Budget Committee recommends (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 44: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to appropriate for Town of Mercer Rescue

Budget Committee recommends \$5,240 from Surplus. Any remaining balance be placed in the Mercer Rescue Capital Reserve Fund. (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 45: To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise and appropriate to continue to fund the Mercer Road Emergency Fund.

Budget Committee recommends \$2,000 from Taxes (6-0-0)

ARTICLE 46: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Municipal Officers to close East Sandy River Road for the winter from the Transfer Station entrance to the snow plow turnaround for a period of years not to exceed 10 years. This authorization to continue in effect from year to year until amended or revoked by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 47: To see if the Town will authorize the Municipal Officers to enter into a contract for a period of not more than 5 years for the purpose of winter roads maintenance on such terms as they deem to be in the Town's best interest.

ARTICLE 48: To see if the town will vote to authorize the tax collector or treasurer to accept prepayments of taxes not yet committed, pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. § 506, the amount collected not to exceed the previous year's taxes. Interest on any prepayment will be zero percent. This authorization to continue in effect from year to year until amended or revoked by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 49: To see if the Town will vote to allow the Town Treasurer, after Municipal Officers approval, to file a waiver of automatic foreclosure at the Registry of Deeds, pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. section 944, on real estate that may be burdensome on the Town. This authorization to continue in effect from year to year until amended or revoked by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 50: To see if the Town will vote to prohibit a Municipal Officer from being an employee or an independent contractor for the Town of Mercer. This authorization to continue from year to year until amended or revoked by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 51: To see what action the Town will take, if any, to ensure that work conducted on behalf of the Town of Mercer in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) must have a written contract. This authorization to continue from year to year until amended or revoked by Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 52: To see what action the Town will take to implement a policy that any vendor, service provider, contractor or individual shall be accountable by an itemized invoice(s) or receipt of purchase prior to approval by the Municipal Officers and payment.

ARTICLE 53: To see if the Town will elect from the floor an exploratory committee to research town charters and present that research to the municipal officers and to town meeting in March 2021.

ARTICLE 54: To see if the Town will endorse a position on Climate Mitigation

Endorsement on Climate Action..

Whereas...

The costs of climate change — including destabilized weather patterns, rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and other serious impacts — now pose a substantial threat to the health, prosperity and security of Americans. The costs are real, they are growing, and they are already burdening businesses, taxpayers, municipal budgets and families. Our economy, infrastructure, public safety and health are directly at risk.

Prudent action now will be far less costly than the consequences of delayed response and will create a more stable business environment for our nation.

Therefore...

We urge Congress to support such action that will significantly reduce carbon emissions, create jobs, grow the economy, save lives and protect households from higher energy prices.

Background :

Few deny that Climate Change is affecting the World as we have known it. Glaciers retreating, ocean levels rising and warming, the frequency and severity of storms is greater. Some may still doubt that our burning fossil fuels plays a role in this warming, but the vast majority of climate scientists say there's no doubt about it. The rise in Global temperature matches the rise in use of fossil fuels, at a time when the Earth should be moving into another ice age. The seriousness of doing something about arresting the warming can't be overstated. Astounding as it sounds, if just Greenland's ice cap melts ocean levels will rise by over 20 feet.

But what can we do about it here in Mercer? On a personal level make your next car a more efficient one. Combine trips to town to drive less. Insulate your home; maybe put up some solar panels. But there is one more thing we can do as a community in Maine and that is assure our legislators in Washington that we are urging them to pass fair legislation that stimulates development of fossil fuel alternatives.

ARTICLE 55: Shall the Town adopt an ordinance entitled “Ordinance for the Recall of Elected Officials”? (Copy of the ordinance is posted below)

**TOWN OF MERCER
ORDINANCE FOR THE RECALL OF ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS**

SECTION 1. Applicability and Establishment

Any elected Official of the Town of Mercer may be recalled and removed from office as herein provided.

SECTION 2. Petitions for Recall

- a. Recall shall be initiated by petition.
- b. The petition for recall must contain only signatures of the registered voters of the Town of Mercer, equal to twenty percent (20%) of the number of votes cast in Mercer in the last Gubernatorial election.
- c. The petition shall be addressed to those members of the Board of Selectmen having no interest in the subject matter of the petition, but the petition shall in every case, be filed with the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk.
- d. The petition shall state the name and office, or offices, of the person whose removal is being sought.
- e. If recall of more than one official is being sought there shall be a separate petition for each official whose removal is being sought.
- f. Each page of the petition shall be ruled, and each line shall provide a space for the voters' signatures, address and printed name.
- g. All pages of a single petition shall be filed as one document. The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk shall not file the petition until at least one person supplies contact information on behalf of the petitioners.

SECTION 3. Clerk’s Certification

Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the petition the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk shall certify the signatures contained on the petition and shall determine if the petition meets all of the requirements as set forth in Section 2 of this Ordinance. Should the petition be found insufficient, the petition will be retained in the Town Clerk’s Office and the person who filed the petition will be notified.

SECTION 4. Calling the Recall Election

- a. If the petition is certified by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk to be sufficient, he or she will submit the same with his or her certification to the Board of Selectmen at their next regular meeting and shall notify the official or officials whose removal is being sought of such action.
- b. The Board of Selectmen upon receipt of the certified petition shall within ten (10) days’ time of receipt order an election by secret ballot, pursuant to 30-A MRSA S2528, to be held sixty (60) days thereafter.
- c. No petition for recall will be accepted during the first ninety (90) days or during the last ninety (90) days if a multi-year term.
- d. Once a recall petition has been called and failed, no recall may be filed within ninety (90) days after such vote.

SECTION 5. Ballots for Recall Election

Unless the official, or officials, whose removal is being sought have resigned within ten (10) days of receipt of the petition by the Board of Selectmen, the ballots shall be printed and shall read “SHALL _____ BE RECALLED FROM THE OFFICE OF _____?” (with the name of the official whose recall is being sought inserted in the blank space). If the petition seeks the recall of a person from more than one office, each office must be named.

SECTION 6. Result of the Election

In an event of an affirmative vote for removal, such vote shall take effect the day following the day of voting.

SECTION 7. Vacancies to be Filled

Any vacancy resulting from the removal from office under this ordinance shall be filled in accordance with the provisions contained in the Maine State Statutes.

Adopted at Annual Town Meeting _____

Given under our hands this ___ day of March, 20__

Board of Selectmen

ARTICLE 56: To see if the Town will vote to increase the length of the terms of the Municipal Officers from a 1 year term to 3 year staggered terms, to be phased in, beginning at the 2021 Town Meeting. The initial term of the three Municipal Officers elected in 2021 shall be 3 years- 1st Selectmen, 2 years- 2nd Selectmen and 1 year- 3rd Selectmen. Thereafter each position which is due to expire shall be filled by election for a 3 year term.

The Selectmen of Mercer hereby give notice that the Registrar of Voters will be on duty at the Town Office on Tuesday March 3, 2020, the said day of voting, from 8 o'clock a.m. until the polls are closed and on Saturday March 7, 2020, the said day of business meeting, from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of correcting the list of eligible voters.

Given under our hands this 23rd day of January, 2020.

Vernon E. Worthen II

Gary D. Mosher

Norman G. Redlevske

Citizens Return:

I certify that I have notified the voters of the Town of Mercer of the time and place of the town meeting by posting an attested copy of the within warrant at Mercer Town Office & Community Center, Christy's Country Store, Mercer Shaw Library, all being conspicuous public places within the Town of Mercer, on February ____, 2020, which is at least 7 days prior to the day of said meeting.

Dated at Mercer, Maine this ____th day of February, 2020.

David Welch, Constable