

ARTICLE 16 ACCEPT M.G.L. c.71 §37M – CONSOLIDATE SCHOOL & TOWN FACILITY MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

To see if the Town will vote to accept M.G.L. c.71 §37M relative to the consolidation of the facility maintenance functions of the School Committee with those of the Town; or act on anything relative thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen.

(Majority vote required)

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORT: This article authorizes (but does not require or implement) the creation of a consolidated public facilities maintenance function between the Town and the Sudbury Public Schools (SPS) Committee, although it could also include the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School (LSRHS) Committee. This State statute permits such consolidation if it is accepted by a vote of the Town Meeting and a vote of the School Committee. At this time, no funding is being requested to create this new department or to hire a professional facilities manager, but acceptance of this statute allows the planning for such a future department to continue.

Over the course of the past 20 years, the citizens of Sudbury have supported over 50 million dollars (over 120 million if LSRHS is included) worth of renovation, expansion and new construction in the form of schools, office space, DPW garage and the Goodnow Library. Altogether, the Town and Sudbury Public Schools (SPS) manage 25 buildings, with 597,106 sq. ft., with an insured value of \$60,427,746. Current staffing for the Town is provided by approximately 20% of the Town's Building Inspector's time and 70% of the Building Supervisor/Electrical Inspector's time being devoted to managing the Town's buildings except for the Goodnow Library, managed by the Library Director, and the three fire stations which the Fire Chief oversees. SPS has one maintenance director for five schools. Particularly on the Town side, this arrangement is too decentralized, and relies on staff for who building maintenance is but one of many responsibilities they are juggling and not specifically their area of expertise.

Many other towns have already created consolidated public facilities departments, and are particularly pleased with the better decision making that occurs with a more centralized and dedicated approach to protecting the multi-million dollar investments that their taxpayers have made in their facilities. In particular, it is anticipated that savings in energy costs and in coordination of various contracts and purchases will likely offset the initial cost of setting up this new department.

As envisioned, when created, this new department will care for all Town and School-owned buildings under the control of the Town Manager and the Sudbury Public School Committee. This new department will establish appropriate services in support of the building users, foster continuous improvement in delivery of services, and establish and update a five-year facilities capital improvement plan in collaboration with the Permanent Building Committee, Town Manager, SPS School Superintendent and appropriate committees. This department will oversee all utilities of the Town and School buildings, including bidding for oil, natural gas and electrical utilities. The facilities director will work with the Town's Energy and Sustainability Green Ribbon Committee to develop and implement energy savings strategies for public buildings. The director will be responsible for developing and implementing a preventive maintenance program for all municipal and school buildings as well as manage all Town- owned rental buildings and houses. And, as noted before, this new department could be expanded to cover the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School District as well.

While discussion of consolidating facility management and maintenance has been going on for some time, this proposal emerged as the preferred model after the Town Manager and the Sudbury Public School Superintendent began work on a process project known as C.O.R.E. (consolidation/cooperation, outsourcing, regionalization and evaluation). Facilities management, maintenance and long-term planning was an area where both the Town and the School administration were convinced that improvements were needed; the current staffing model lacked the capacity to be strategic in thinking about how to manage the significant projects that would be needed in the future for the buildings and that working together would likely generate the most efficient and effective solution. A task force of representatives from both the Town departments and the schools

met, examined the current organization structure, operations, staff and expenditures for facility management, and focused particularly on energy costs and opportunities. Among their conclusions: facilities planning, operation and maintenance is now fragmented and decentralized and in need of a new focused priority from a trained, professional facilities manager; we need a comprehensive Preventive Maintenance Program in all buildings to extend the life of critical equipment and avoid costly repairs; we could likely achieve savings by centralizing actions such as purchase of supplies and materials, development of centralized service contracts for HVAC, alarm, and other equipment; centralized attention to energy-related projects is important to finding ways to reduce our utility costs and make our energy purchases as cost efficient as possible; and finally, the Town and Schools need to develop a strategic master planning process for the capital improvements the Town and school buildings would need in the future.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN POSITION: The Board of Selectmen unanimously supports this article.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.