***This article was published in the Tri Town Transcript in May 2017***

**Masconomet Capital Spending- May 2017 Town Warrants**

***Warrants Address Immediate Safety and Security Needs***

Masconomet’s new building and renovation project is no longer new. All facility systems and structures have a finite useful life and our facilities are starting to show their age. In recent years, the district has experienced increasing repair costs and challenges with acquiring parts for some outdated systems. Last year the School Committee commissioned Habeeb Associates to conduct a comprehensive capital facility assessment to better understand the current condition of our systems and help plan for capital costs moving forward.  The report identified a number of imminent safety and security systems issues that the School Committee is bringing forth to the towns for funding consideration in next year’s budget. These critical upgrades and interim repairs are presented as a bundle for funding consideration in each town’s upcoming budget cycle in the amount of $656,000. An explanation of this request follows.

**I. Communication Systems**

**Part A. VOIP Phone System, Core Switches & Firewall - $350,000**

The existing Masconomet phone system, installed during the high school building project in 2001, is the district’s most outdated and unreliable system. More and more often, the emergency calling features malfunction, which is a growing life safety concern. Phone systems available today use voice over IP (VOIP) technology, which would move the system off old building wiring onto the network. The network core switches are approaching end of life and need to be replaced. Finally, the Masconomet firewall is approaching end of life as well. It is the final piece of the puzzle that supports a safe, reliable network that will support VOIP.

**Part B. Paging System - $150,000**

The District paging and announcement system (PA) is tied to the timekeeping system

and together, they provide the overhead announcements, clocks, and bell schedule in the buildings. This system is integrated with the outdated phone system. A new PA system would use the same paging groups and speaker locations, but some dead zones would be filled in for better life safety coverage.

**II. Fire System Upgrade - $74,000**

Masconomet’s fire suppression system has been well maintained throughout the years; however, as with any technology, equipment becomes obsolete with new emerging technological advances. The Boxford Fire Chief has requested that the District replace the panels for the past several years to ensure communication is clear and accurate locations are transmitted when fire and safety incidents occur. Commensurate with upgrade of the panels and related components, repairs and replacements to the aging electrical power management system that supports the fire safety system will be performed.

**III. Security System Interim Upgrade, Interior Signage & Traffic Speed Zone Lights - $82,000**

Interim replacement and upgrade of selected components of the security system is needed to address chronic system failures. The upgrades would include replacing the server and adding a few cameras in targeted areas ($35,000). Existing interior signage needs to be revised so that finding classrooms and offices is simplified and guests and emergency responders can navigate efficiently and effectively within the facility ($30,000) and replacement and upgrade to solar powered traffic speed zone notification lights on Endicott Road to properly indicate 20mph speed zone during school hours is needed ($17,000).

**Funding Distribution**

Funding of the safety needs for Masconomet has been approved by the Masconomet School Committee and now needs approval from all three towns. Below is the allocation of the $656,000 request based on the current October 1 enrollments.

Boxford                        $191,167

Middleton                    $179,579

Topsfield                   $135,254

Masconomet             $150,000

Total                        $656,000

The funding proposal will be presented at each town’s May Town Meeting.