

ARTICLE 10:

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for special legislation to establish an “Environmental Affairs Fund” as follows; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Board of Selectmen approve amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, and authorizing the Board of Selectmen to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition:

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF PLYMOUTH TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL FUND

Section 1. Notwithstanding section 53 of chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, the town of Plymouth may establish an “environmental affairs fund” into which shall be deposited revenues received pursuant to renewable energy payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreements. Any income derived from the investment or reinvestment of the special fund shall remain with and become part of the special fund. The special fund shall be available for appropriation by town meeting to meet costs related to environmental projects including but not limited to design and engineering, mitigation, land acquisition, water quality assessments, stormwater control improvement, river restoration, or as a local grant match to other state and/or federal related environmental grant opportunities.

Section 2. The town treasurer/collector shall be the custodian of the special fund and shall make an accounting of the special fund to each annual town meeting.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

RECOMMENDATION: Not Approve (Unanimous, 0-13-0).

The Advisory & Finance Committee recommends Town Meeting not approve Article 10. Town Meeting approval of this article requests the Board of Selectmen seek special legislation to permit the Town to earmark renewable energy generation PILOT receipts (e.g., solar farms) for various environmental projects. The Committee believes that the concept is a good one, but questions the timing of the proposal given the challenges the community is facing at the present time since the proposal would earmark funds for special use at a time when operating budgets have become constrained by several variables. The Committee also believes it may be premature for the Town to commit all of its renewable energy PILOT receipts to a special fund given the early stage development of these PILOT arrangements.



TOWN OF PLYMOUTH

11 Lincoln Street
Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360

FAX: (508) 830-4140

Board of Selectmen
Town Manager
(508) 747-1620 ext. 100

Human Resources
(508) 747-1620 ext. 101

To: Advisory and Finance Committee
Cc: Melissa Arrighi, Town Manager
From: Derek S. Brindisi, Assistant Town Manager
Date: February 4, 2016
Re: **Article 10- ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS FUND**

Selectman Mahoney moved at a previous Board of Selectmen meeting that the Town establish a special fund utilizing revenues generated from payment-in-lieu-of –taxes (PILOT) agreements with various renewable energy firms. Under the authority of the Town Manager, the Fund will be managed by the Department of Marine and Environmental Affairs for the purposes of various environmental projects to include mitigation, land acquisition, water quality assessments, stormwater improvement and river restoration. Additionally this Fund may be used for a grant match for potential environmental related funding opportunities. Below is a draft of the Special Act.

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF PLYMOUTH TO ESTABLISH AN “ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS FUND”

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 53 of chapter 44, or any other general or special law to the contrary, the Town of Plymouth is hereby authorized to establish in the town treasury a special fund to be known as the “Environmental Affairs Fund” into which account shall be deposited certain revenues derived from PILOT agreements for renewable energy as received annually by the Town and as accepted by the Plymouth Town Meeting April 2nd 2016.

SECTION 2. The revenue generated from renewable energy PILOT agreements shall be designated in their entirety to costs related to environmental projects to include mitigation, land acquisition, water quality assessments, stormwater improvement, river restoration, or as a local grant match to other State and/or federal related environmental grant opportunities. Said revenue shall be expended upon annual appropriation of Town Meeting for the designated purposes.

SECTION 3. The Town Manager shall be empowered to expend from the Environmental Affairs Fund those funds appropriated by Town Meeting for the designated purposes.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

