

ARTICLE 9:

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 23, Animals, for certain licenses and fines by deleting the strikethrough text and inserting the bold text as follows:

§23-11 Dog license.

Notwithstanding the provisions of MGL c.140, §§139 and 173, the fees for dog licenses shall be ~~-\$10~~ **\$15 for** altered males and spayed females and ~~\$20~~ **\$25** for unaltered males and unspayed females.

And,

§ 23-7. Unlicensed dogs; penalties.

The penalty for owning an unlicensed dog in the Town of Plymouth shall be ~~\$50~~ **\$75**, with each month of continued violation constituting a separate offense.

or take any other action relative thereto.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

RECOMMENDATION: Approval (Unanimous, 13-0-0).

The Advisory & Finance Committee recommends Town Meeting approve Article 9. Approval of this article would increase dog license fees for neutered dogs from \$10 to \$15 and for non-neutered dogs from \$20 to \$25 and increase the fine for owning an unlicensed dog from \$50 to \$75 per month.

2016 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING – ARTICLE 9

The following is a proposal for increased fees in the Town Clerk’s Office:

<u>Dog Licenses – Not Neutered</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Revenue</u>
Current (FY2016)	\$20	832	\$16,640
Proposed (FY2017)	\$25	832	\$20,800
Projected Revenue Increase			\$4,160

- Not Neutered Dog Licenses were raised from \$15 to \$20 in 2001.
- Increases in the cost of postage, dog tags, and staff pay have increased in the last decade and a half.

<u>Dog Licenses – Neutered</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Revenue</u>
Current (FY2016)	\$10	8,232	\$82,320
Proposed (FY2017)	\$15	8,232	\$123,480
Projected Revenue Increase			\$41,160

- Neutered Dog Licenses were raised from \$7 to \$10 in 2006.
- Increases in the cost of postage, dog tags, and staff pay have increased in the last decade.

Total Combined Projected Revenue Increase: \$45,320

Memorandum

To: Advisory and Finance Committee
From: Laurence R. Pizer, Town Clerk
Date: 2/17/2016
Re: Special Town Meeting, Article 9, Violations

The Town Clerk's Office proposes to increase the fine for Failure to License Dogs from \$50 to \$75.

This noncriminal violation is one tool to convince dog owners to protect public health by licensing their animals in a timely fashion. Before the fine is assessed, dog owners receive two letters inviting them to purchase a license, having provided their dogs with a rabies shot. In addition, persons receiving fines are entitled to a hearing before the Clerk Magistrate at District Court to judge whether excuses for late or incomplete licensing are compelling.

The experience of the Town Clerk's Office shows that almost half of the fines are issued to individuals who have received fines previously. I believe that the increase to \$75 will convince many of them that timely licensing is a better option than payment of fines.

It is the goal of the licensing process to protect public health by convincing dog owners to maintain up to date rabies inoculation protection and to show that that has occurred by licensing their dogs. We prefer to see fines as a potential tool to make licensing the preferred process.