

# Town of Great Barrington

2023 Special Town Meeting  
6:00 PM at Monument Mountain Regional High School

## WARRANT

Monday October 23, 2023



### SELECTBOARD

Stephen C. Bannon, Chair  
Leigh S. Davis  
Eric F. Gabriel  
Garfield C. Reed  
Benjamin P. Elliott

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Philip Orenstein, Chair  
Anne O'Dwyer  
Richard Geiler  
Milena Cerna  
Madonna Meagher

[www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)

Special Town Meeting, October 23, 2023  
Index of Warrant Articles

1. Establishment of an eight town regional school district to be known as the Southern Berkshire Hills Regional School District.
2. Community Preservation Act Projects
3. Citizen Petition- Redesign of the Mason Public Library Grounds

WARRANT  
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING 2023

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BERKSHIRE, SS

To Paul E. Storti, Chief of Police of the Town of Great Barrington, in said Berkshire County,

GREETINGS:

You are hereby required to notify and warn the Inhabitants of said town, qualified to vote in town affairs, to meet at the Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 6:00 P.M., then and there to act on the following:

**ARTICLE 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EIGHT TOWN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of sections sixteen to sixteen I, inclusive, of chapter seventy-one of the General Laws providing for the establishment of an eight town regional school district, together with the towns of Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough, Sheffield, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, to be known as the Southern Berkshire Hills Regional School District (the “New District”). The New District would be formed and governed in accordance with the proposed agreement filed by the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board with the Select Board (the “8 Town Regional Agreement”) (a copy of which is available for inspection at Town Hall and on the website 8towns.org).

Formation of the New District is subject to voter approval in each of the eight towns who is a party to the 8 Town Regional Agreement. As provided in the 8 Town Regional Agreement, full operation of the New District and dissolution of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (the “SBRSD”) and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District (the “BHRSD”) shall be further subject to:

- (i) voter approval, in accordance with applicable law and the terms of the 8 Town Regional Agreement, of the debt required to construct a new high school for the New District on the Great Barrington campus of the current BHRSD; and
- (ii) enactment of special legislation permitting (a) the transfer of the buildings and other assets of each of the SBRSD and the BHRSD to the New District on the date the New District becomes fully operational (at the end of the transition period specified in the 8 Town Regional Agreement); and (b) the dissolution of the SBRSD and the BHRSD on that same date without further action by any public body.

A summary of the steps that would follow an affirmative vote on this warrant article by the voters of Great Barrington and the other seven towns who are parties to the 8 Town Regional Agreement is attached for informational purposes to this Warrant.

**ARTICLE 2: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROJECTS**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from available Community Preservation Funds the following amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee with each item to be considered a separate appropriation; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Project	Total Appropriation
<i>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</i>	
1 Construct, Inc.: Emergency family housing	\$92,400
<i>HISTORIC RESOURCES</i>	
2 Town, Ramsdell Library	\$50,000
<i>OPEN SPACE &amp; RECREATION</i>	
3 Community Land Trust: River Run Farm	\$300,000
TOTAL	\$442,400

*Recommended by the Community Preservation Committee*


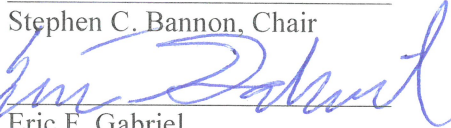
**ARTICLE 3:**

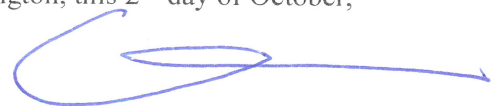
By Petition:

We are petitioning the town of Great Barrington to put to a VOTE whether the VOTERS want a redesign of the Mason Public library grounds.

**HEREOF FAIL NOT**, and of this Warrant and your doings thereon, make due return to the Clerk of said Town at or before the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands and the seal of the Town of Great Barrington, this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of October, 2023.

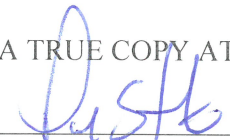
  
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Stephen C. Bannon, Chair  
  
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Eric F. Gabriel

  
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Leigh S. Davis  
  
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Garfield C. Reed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin P. Elliott

**Selectboard of the Town of Great Barrington**

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul E. Storti, Chief of Police  
Town of Great Barrington

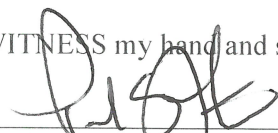
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BERKSHIRE, SS.

I hereby certify that I have served the foregoing warrant by posting duly attested copies thereof in the following places in the Town of Great Barrington, namely:

The vestibule of the Town Hall Building and the Post Office in the Town of Great Barrington, the Post Office in the Village of Housatonic, Mason Library in the Town of Great Barrington, and the Ramsdell Library in the Village of Housatonic, Fourteen days, at least before the time of holding the within mentioned Town Meeting.

WITNESS my hand and seal this 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2023.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul E. Storti, Chief of Police  
Town of Great Barrington

**Summary of steps for formation and operation  
of the Southern Berkshire Hills Regional School District**

A new eight town regional school district, to be known as the Southern Berkshire Hills Regional School District (the “New District”), would be formed after an affirmative vote by the majority of voters in each of the towns of Great Barrington, Sheffield, New Marlborough, Stockbridge, Monterey, West Stockbridge, Egremont and Alford upon approval of the proposed eight town regional agreement (the “8 Town Regional Agreement”) by the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Following such approval, the eight towns would appoint members of an appointed transition committee in accordance with the terms of the 8 Town Regional Agreement. This appointed transition committee would be replaced by a district-wide elected transition committee (with residency requirements as provided in the 8 Town Regional Agreement) at the next biennial election to be held in November 2024.

Following its formation, the New District would not become fully operational, and the existing regional districts would not dissolve, until the following additional conditions are met, all as provided in the 8 Town Regional Agreement:

1. Voter approval of the debt required to construct a new high school for the combined district on the Great Barrington campus of the current BHRSD in accordance with applicable law and the terms of the 8 Town Regional Agreement; and
2. Passage of special legislation permitting (a) the transfer of the buildings and other assets (and liabilities) of each of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District (BHRSD) on the date the transition period ends and the New District becomes fully operational; and (b) the dissolution of the SBRSD and the BHRSD on that same date without further action by any public body.

Should either of those conditions not be satisfied by the date specified in the 8 Town Regional Agreement, the 8 Town Regional Agreement would terminate, the New District would dissolve, and the BHRSD and the SBRSD would continue to operate separately.