

AGENDA

FINANCE AND WARRANT COMMISSION FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024 and TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024 (if needed)

REMOTE MEETING – ZOOM WEBINAR

7:00 P.M.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, on March 29, 2023, Governor Maura Healey signed into law An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects. This Act includes an extension, until March 31, 2025, of the remote meeting provisions. This meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so by using the Webinar link below. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real-time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts, we will post on the Town website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive records of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

When: Feb 12, 2024 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

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- I. Call to Order at 7:00 P.M.
- II. Grant permission to Westwood Media Center to live stream and videotape the meeting.
Ask if anyone else wishes to record this meeting.
- III. Welcome all remote participants including members, presenters, and members of the public and press.
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance.
- V. **Member Roll-Call.**
- VI. Chair's Introductory Comments-
- VII. **Presenter(s):** Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Christopher Coleman [Town Administrator], Stephanie McManus [Asst. Town Administrator/Finance Director], Molly Kean [Asst. Town Administrator/ HR Director], Members of the Select Board–
 - a. FY25 Municipal Budget & FY25 Overall Budget
 - b. Update on ATM 2024 "Select Board" Warrant Articles
- VIII. **Presenter(s):** Tim Piwowar [WPS Superintendent], Lemma Jn-Baptiste [Director of Finance and Operations], Tony Mullin [School Committee Chair]– FY25 School Budget
- IX. Chair's update – Brief update from members on Subcommittee activity.
- X. Vice Chair's update – Report on Capital Budget Subcommittee meeting.
- XI. Other business that may properly come before the board not previously anticipated by the Chair-.
- XII. Old Business - Approval of 01.16.24 Minutes.
- XIII. Public and Press -.
- XIV. Adjournment – **Roll-Call Vote.**



FY25 Budget

Finance and Warrant Commission

February 12, 2024

Stephanie McManus
Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Director

FY25 Budget Presentation Overview

- Collaborative process for both Municipal and Overall Operating Budgets
 - Budget Steering Committee meetings
 - Working collaboratively with Municipal Department heads to present a well rounded budget that preserves high level services
- Proposed Municipal Budget
 - Review of services included in the proposed budget
 - Highlighted changes to salaries and expenses
 - History of increases
- Details on proposed Operating budget
- Proposed Overall Budget
 - Proposed budget is currently balanced
 - High level summary of proposed expenditures and revenue sources
- Next Steps



FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget

FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget Summary

What does the Municipal Budget Provide?

- High quality services that respond to all areas and all age groups throughout the Town.

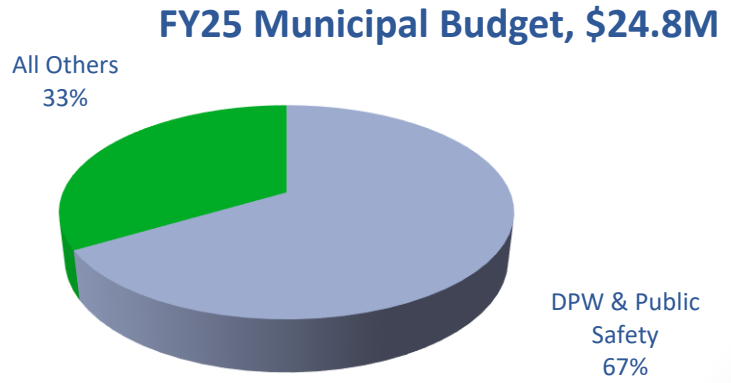
What Are the Components of the Municipal Budget?

- Majority of the budget is Public Safety and Public Works – 67% of the budget
- Police and Fire - 46% of the budget
- DPW services include maintenance of roads, fields and all buildings - 20% of the budget

- Programs and services for all ages in Town:
 - Council on Aging
 - Library
 - Recreation

- State required
 - Zoning, Health, Licensing, Veterans

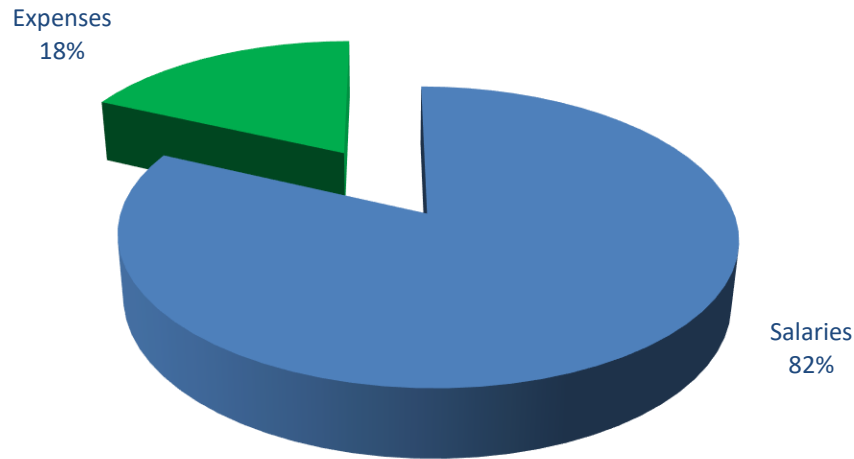
- Administrative Departments



FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget Summary

The municipal budget is salary driven.

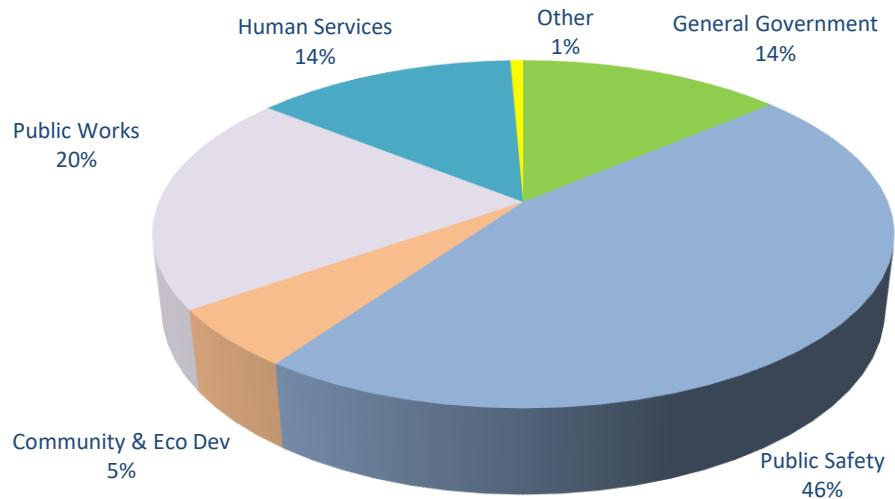
- The major portion of the municipal budget is spent on staffing
- Our primary service delivery is through our staff – police officers, firefighters and DPW workers providing direct services to our residents



FY24 Budget	Function	FY25 Proposed Budget	% of Total
\$19,055,180	Salaries	\$20,330,142	82%
\$4,628,557	Expenses	\$4,557,923	18%
\$23,683,737	Total	\$24,888,065	100%

FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget Updated

How is the municipal budget funding allocated among service areas?



	FY24 Budget	FY25 Proposed	\$ Increase	% Increase
General Government	\$3,223,745	\$3,421,939	\$198,194	6.1%
Public Safety	\$10,731,416	\$11,453,907	\$722,491	6.7%
Community & Eco Dev	\$1,354,965	\$1,358,707	\$3,742	0.3%
Public Works	\$4,906,996	\$5,099,740	\$192,744	3.9%
Human Services	\$3,300,115	\$3,387,272	\$87,157	2.6%
Other	\$166,500	\$166,500	\$0	0.0%
Total	\$23,683,737	\$24,888,065	\$1,204,328	5.1%

- Public Works and Public Safety have an increase in FY25 of \$1.2M, which is 79% of the total overall increase.

FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget Summary

What are the salary changes in the FY25 Budget?

Category	FY24 Budget	Proposed FY25 Budget	Difference	
			\$	%
Salaries	\$19,055,180	\$20,330,142	\$1,274,962	6.7%
Expenses	\$4,630,157	\$4,557,923	(\$72,234)	-1.6%
Total	\$23,685,337	\$24,888,065	\$1,202,728	5.1%

Approximately \$1.2M or 100% of the total increase is for salaries. We were able to offset a portion of this increase with reductions to overall expenses within General Government without reducing funding for the most critical services and program areas.

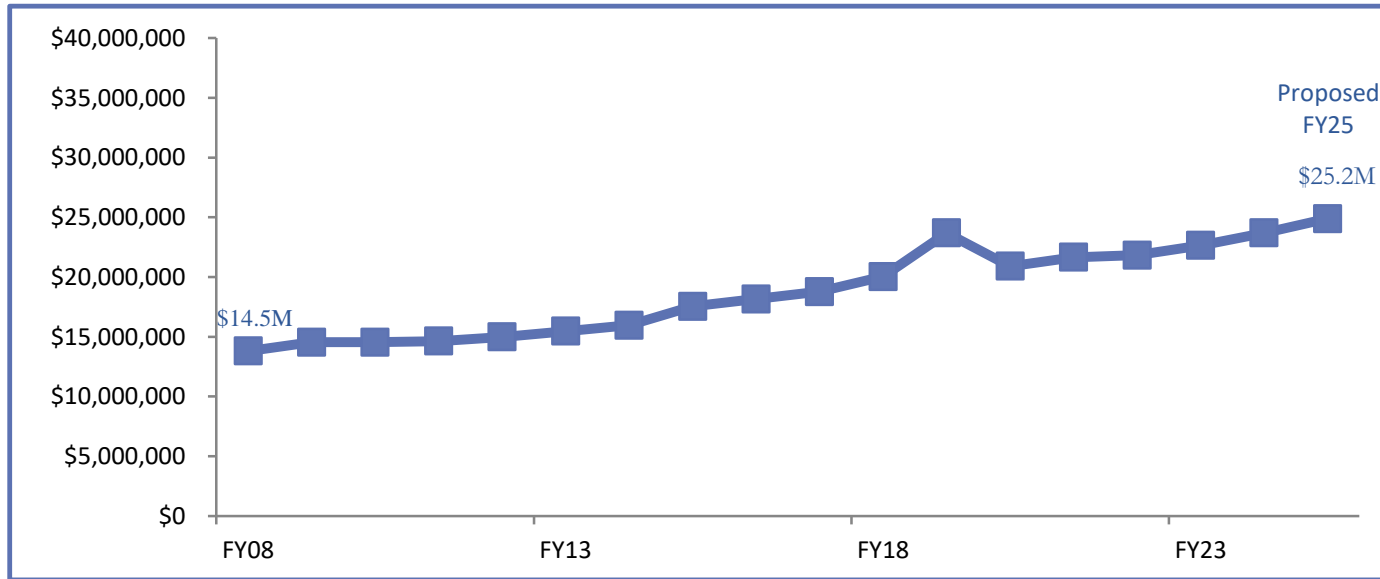
The salary increase includes the following major items:

Department	Item	Amount
All Departments	Salary contractual obligations, COLA/Step increases for all staff	\$769,400
Fire	Addition of 2 new firefighter positions, increased overtime budget to support increased staffing levels approved in FY24	\$250,000
DPW Maintenance	HVAC Technician – net change, offset by decrease to expenses	\$110,000
	Total	\$1,129,400

FY25 Proposed Municipal Budget Summary

How has the municipal budget increased over the last several years?

- The municipal base budget has had relatively moderate growth
- The Select Board strives for sustainable budget growth
- This year's budget includes an increase in Public Safety staffing
- In FY25 the current proposed municipal budget increase is 5.1%.



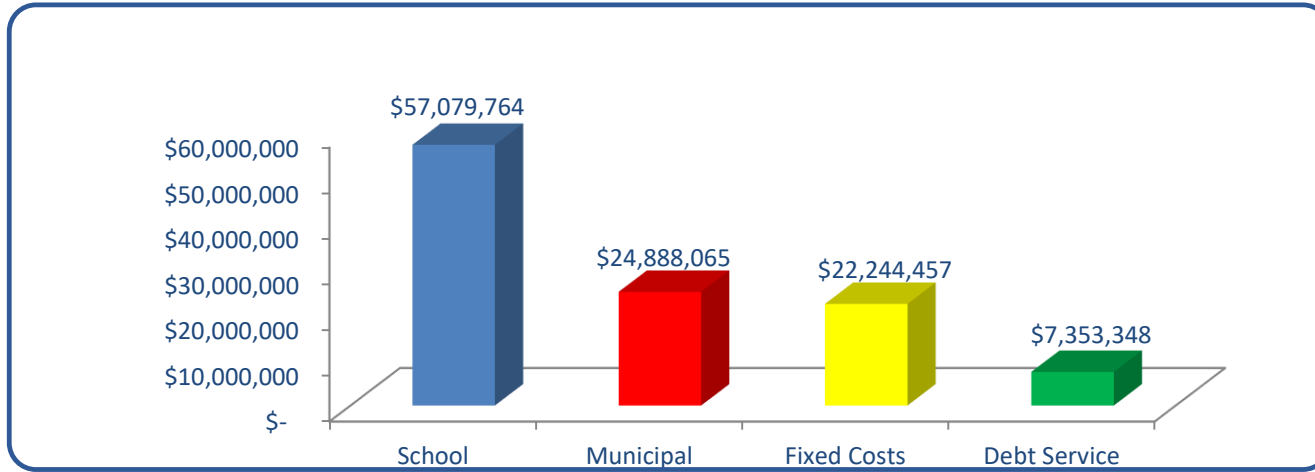
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Proposed FY25
Municipal Budget	3.1%	3.5%	3.57%	3.17%	3.74%	4.6%	5.1%



FY25 Proposed Operating Budget Details

Operating Budgets

- Town Meeting approves structurally sound budgets that provide for core services to community
- Strive for operating budget stability for school and municipal budgets



- Each 1% increase for school, municipal and fixed cost budgets is approximately:
 - School (Budget \$57M) - \$550k
 - Municipal (Budget \$24.8M) - \$236k
 - Fixed Costs (Budget \$22.2M) - \$213k

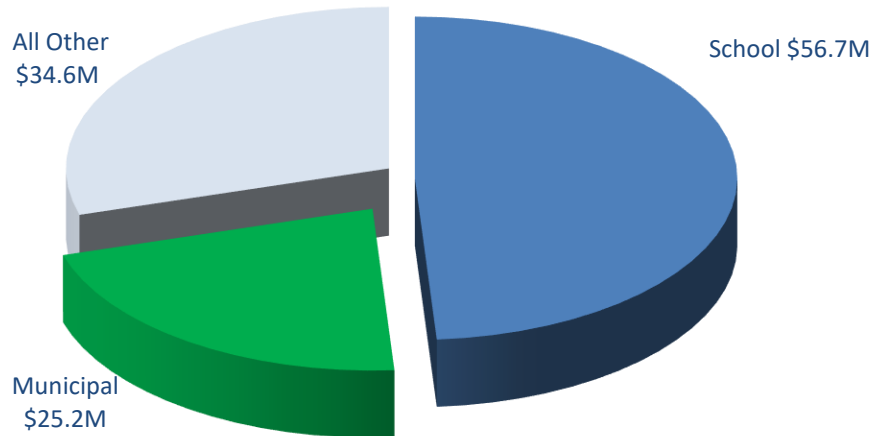
% Increase	Schools	Municipal	Fixed Costs
3%	\$1.65M	\$710k	\$638k
4%	\$2.2M	\$947k	\$851k
5%	\$2.75M	\$1.18M	\$1.06M

FY25 Proposed Operating Budget \$116M, 3.4% increase

FY25 Proposed Operating Budget

- ✓ Maintain high quality of services provided by Town and School departments

FY24 Budget	Category	FY25 Proposed	\$ Change FY25 v FY24	% Change FY25 v FY24
\$ 54,743,565	School Operating	\$ 56,763,603	\$ 2,020,038	3.7%
\$ 23,683,737	Municipal Operating	\$ 24,888,065	\$ 1,204,328	5.1%
\$ 169,054	Blue Hills Regional School	\$ 185,959	\$ 16,905	10.0%
\$ 126,367	Traffic Supervisors	\$ 130,202	\$ 3,835	3.0%
\$ 21,290,095	Fixed Costs	\$ 22,244,457	\$ 954,362	4.5%
\$ 7,709,245	Debt Service	\$ 7,353,348	\$ (355,897)	-4.6%
\$ 4,486,129	Sewer	\$ 4,474,095	\$ (12,034)	-0.3%
\$ 112,208,192	Total	\$ 116,039,729	\$ 3,831,537	3.4%



- Some items are still estimates, including: Health Insurance, Blue Hills Assessment and MWRA Assessment, to be updated.

A Look at Fixed Costs/Shared Costs – Proposed FY25 Budget

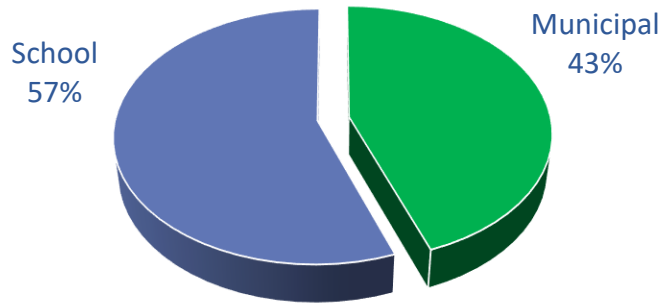
Fixed Costs – Employee Benefits Costs, Shared Costs/Trash/Reserve Accounts

- Fixed costs are approximately 20% of the Operating Budget

Budget Provides For	
Municipal and School Employee Benefits Costs	\$18,034,611
Municipal and School Insurance/Shared Accounts	\$1,480,078
Trash Services	\$1,910,000
Town Wide Reserves	<u>\$820,000</u>
Total FY25	\$22,244,457

	School	Municipal	Total
Fixed Employee Related Costs	\$10,245,460	\$7,789,151	\$18,034,611

Employee Benefit Related Costs



Fixed Costs – Projected Increases in FY25

Fixed Costs – current estimated increase to total fixed costs budget - approx. 4.5%

- Pension Assessment Updated (\$6.72M) increase of .6% over FY24
 - Received FY25 assessment from Norfolk County Retirement System

- Health Insurance (current \$8.35M) increase of 8.3% - Estimate only
 - Current estimate only
 - Group Insurance Commission (GIC) updates FY24 Information
 - Plan Description – February 2023 meeting
 - Final Rates – March 2023 meeting
 - Previous year’s actual increases have been:
 - FY20 5%, FY21 5%, FY22 5%, FY23 7%, FY24 5.7%

- Trash (current \$1.96M) estimated increase of 7.7%

- Other fixed cost increases
 - Comprehensive insurance, 5%
 - Medicare, 0%
 - Payroll tax, 5%

Increase

\$954k

Approx \$38K

Approx \$640K

Approx \$136K

Approx \$108K



FY25 Overall Proposed Budget

FY25 Overall Budget

- FY25 Proposed Overall Budget includes:
 - Projected Revenue Sources
 - Tax Levy
 - State Aid
 - Local Receipts
 - Sewer Enterprise Fund
 - Meals and Hotel Tax
 - Free Cash
 - Proposed Expenditures
 - Operating Budget (Appendix D)
 - Capital Articles
 - Stabilization Fund
 - OPEB Trust Fund
 - State and County Charges



FY25 Overall Proposed Budget Summary Updated

FY25 Proposed Budget is a comprehensive plan that provides for:

- ✓ Maintain high quality of services provided by Town and School
 - Continued stable and sustainable operating budget growth
 - School Budget 3.7%
 - Municipal Budget 5.1%
 - Fixed costs currently 4.5%
- ✓ Base Capital Budget
 - Municipal Capital Improvements - \$1,335,250 Funded with Free Cash
 - School Capital Improvements- \$1,017,000 Funded with Free Cash
- ✓ Supplemental Capital Budget – Funded with Meals/Hotels Tax/Other funding
 - Appropriation for additional capital as done in prior year
 - Town-wide Projects - \$550,000
 - Funded with Meals/Hotels Tax (current balance \$1.3M)
 - Pool – Acoustic Tiles
 - Municipal Buildings – Generator Upgrades and Replacements
 - Sewer Capital Improvements - \$750,000 Funded with Sewer retained earnings
 - Other Capital Improvements - \$120,000 Funded with Ambulance receipts
- ✓ Liabilities/Reserves
 - \$125K transfer from Free Cash to Stabilization Fund – keeps on target with financial policy
 - \$1.565M contributed to OPEB trust fund – keeps on target with required funding
- ✓ Borrowing
 - Capital Projects that would require borrowing:

• Fire Department Squad Vehicle	\$750,000
• High School Roof Restoration	\$2,500,000
• Conant Road Culvert Construction	\$1,500,000
- ✓ Overall Proposed Budget is currently balanced

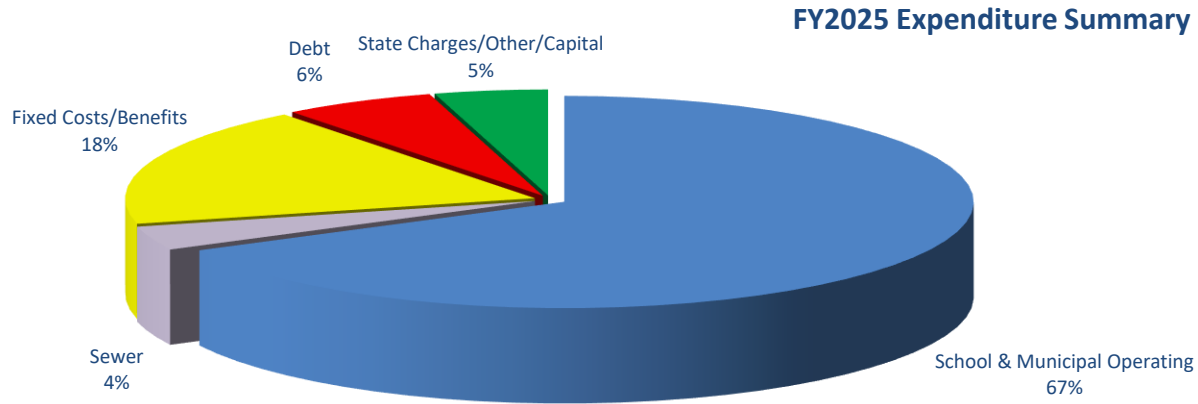
FY25 Total Expenditures Summary - \$122.8M, 1.5% Increase

FY2025 Proposed Expenditure Summary				
	FY2024	FY2025 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Total Operating	\$112,208,192	\$116,039,729	\$3,831,537	3.4%
Capital Articles	\$5,177,500	\$3,772,250	(\$1,405,250)	-27.1%
OPEB & Stabilization	\$1,665,000	\$1,690,000	\$25,000	1.5%
Prior Year/Other Articles	\$598,000	\$0	(\$598,000)	-100.0%
Other Amounts to be Raised	\$1,359,992	\$1,345,482	(\$14,510)	-1.1%
Total Expenditures	\$121,008,684	\$122,847,461	\$1,838,777	1.5%

There are five major categories of the Expenditure Budget:

- Operating budget – includes Municipal, Schools, Fixed Costs, Sewer and Debt
- Capital Articles – includes base Municipal, base School, Sewer, Additional, Borrowing
- OPEB and Stabilization – annual appropriations to reserve accounts in compliance with Financial Policies
- Prior Year/Other Articles – adjustments made to current fiscal year budget
 - All of these categories are appropriations made by Town Meeting action
- Other Amounts to be Raised – charges assessed by State and County

FY25 Proposed Expenditure Budget Summary - \$122.8M



FY2025 Proposed Expenditure Summary

	FY2024	FY2025 Projected	\$ Change	% Change
Operating Budget - School Categories	\$55,038,986	\$57,079,764	\$2,040,778	3.7%
Operating Budget - Municipal	\$23,683,737	\$24,888,065	\$1,204,328	5.1%
Benefits/Reserves/Insurance	\$21,290,095	\$22,244,457	\$954,362	4.5%
Sewer - Operating	\$4,486,129	\$4,474,095	(\$12,034)	-0.3%
Debt Service	\$7,709,245	\$7,353,348	(\$355,897)	-4.6%
Total Operating	\$112,208,192	\$116,039,729	\$3,831,537	3.4%
Capital Base Budget - School & Municipal	\$2,372,500	\$2,352,250	(\$20,250)	-0.9%
Capital - Sewer	\$1,260,000	\$750,000	(\$510,000)	-40.5%
Other Appropriations:				
To Stabilization	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$0	0.0%
Additional Capital	\$1,545,000	\$670,000	(\$875,000)	-56.6%
To OPEB Trust	\$1,540,000	\$1,565,000	\$25,000	1.6%
Prior Year/Other Articles	\$598,000	\$0	(\$598,000)	-100.0%
State Charges/Offsets/Overlay/Snow	\$1,359,992	\$1,345,482	(\$14,510)	-1.1%
Total Expenditures	\$121,008,684	\$122,847,461	\$1,838,777	1.5%

FY25 Proposed Capital Budget Articles

The Select Board has supported continued reinvestment in the Town's assets and infrastructure.

The FY25 Budget:

- ✓ Continues high level of Capital Investment
 - Important to maintain Town and School buildings and infrastructure
 - Important to ensure safe and efficient capital equipment
 - Consistent investment through base capital
 - Continue efforts for additional funding beyond base for important projects

- ✓ Base Capital Budget
 - Municipal Capital Improvements - \$1,335,250 Funded with Free Cash
 - School Capital Improvements- \$1,017,000 Funded with Free Cash
 - Sewer Capital Improvements - \$750,000 Funded with Sewer retained earnings
 - Other Capital Improvements - \$120,000 Funded with Ambulance receipts

- ✓ Additional Capital Budget – Funded with Meals/Hotels Tax
 - Appropriation for additional capital as done in prior years
 - Additional Capital Improvements - \$550,000 Funded with Meals/Hotels Tax Revenue

- ✓ Additional Capital Articles with projects that would require borrowing

FY25 Capital Budget – Proposed Municipal Capital Article

Item	Amount	Funding Source
DPW - One Ton Dump Truck (Truck 11)	\$90,000	Free Cash
DPW - Asphalt Roller	\$80,000	Free Cash
Fire - Radio Upgrade and Replacement	\$28,000	Free Cash
Fire - Turnout Gear Purchase and Replacement	\$38,250	Free Cash
IT - End User Technology	\$75,000	Free Cash
Building - Building Division Motor Vehicle	\$50,000	Free Cash
Library - Library Technology	\$20,000	Free Cash
Library - Media Suite	\$100,000	Free Cash
Library - Meeting Room AV Upgrade	\$50,000	Free Cash
Police - Police Vehicles	\$285,000	Free Cash
Police - Safety Equipment	\$70,000	Free Cash
Police - Radio Telecom Infrastructure	\$89,000	Free Cash
Building - Facility Maintenance	\$150,000	Free Cash
Building - Energy Efficiency	\$50,000	Free Cash
Building - Facilities Vehicle	\$60,000	Free Cash
Building - ADA Improvements	\$100,000	Free Cash
Total	<u>\$1,335,250</u>	Free Cash

This Article is to be Funded with Free Cash
 This is the annual base capital for Municipal

FY25 Capital Budget – Proposed Schools Capital Article

Item	Amount	Funding Source
Technology	\$150,000	Free Cash
HVAC and Controls	\$200,000	Free Cash
Building Improvements	\$350,000	Free Cash
Roofing	\$250,000	Free Cash
Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment	\$67,000	Free Cash
	Total <u>\$1,017,000</u>	Free Cash

This Article is to be Funded with Free Cash
This is the annual base capital for Schools

FY25 Capital Budget – Proposed Other Capital Articles / Sewer

Sewer Capital Improvements

Item	Amount	Funding Source
Stormwater MS4	\$325,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
Inflow & Infiltration Assessment	\$125,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
Rapid View Camera Truck	\$300,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
Total	<u>\$750,000</u>	Sewer Retained Earnings

Other Capital Improvements - Ambulance

Item	Amount	Funding Source
Fire - Rescue Upgrade and Replacement	\$74,000	Ambulance Receipts
Fire - Lifepak Cardiac Monitor for Ambulance	\$46,000	Ambulance Receipts
Total	<u>\$120,000</u>	Ambulance Receipts

FY25 Capital Budget – Proposed Additional Capital

Item	Amount	Funding Source
Generator Upgrades and Replacements at Municipal Buildings	\$400,000	Meals/Hotels Tax Revenue
Recreation – Acoustic Tiles for Pool	\$150,000	Meals/Hotels Tax Revenue
	<u>Total</u> <u>\$550,000</u>	Meals/Hotels Tax Revenue

Funded by Meals/Hotels Revenue

FY25 Capital Budget – Borrowing Articles

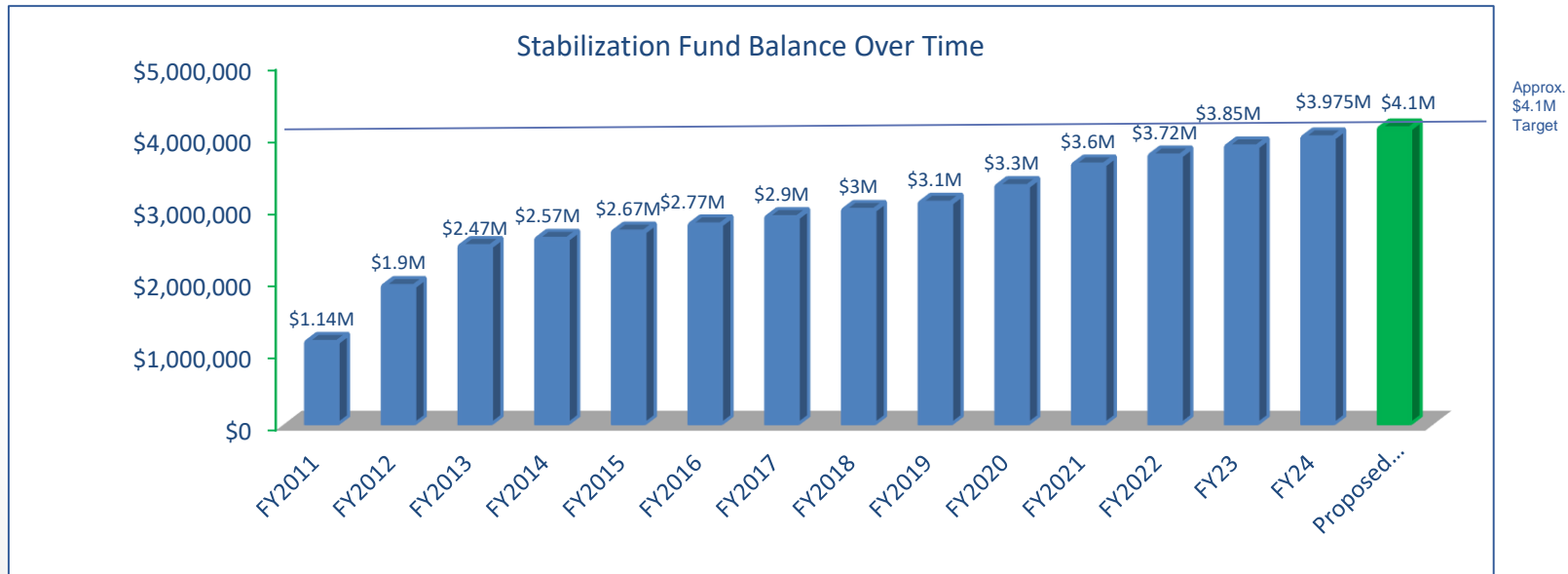
Item	Amount	Funding Source
Fire - Squad Truck Replacement	\$725,000	Would require borrowing
Schools - High School Roof Restoration	\$2,500,000	Would require borrowing
DPW – Conant Road Culvert Construction	\$1,500,000	Would Require Borrowing
	Total <u>\$4,725,000</u>	

These projects would be funded as a borrowing article.

- Conant Road Culvert is being proposed to move up a year in the capital 5 year plan – from FY26 to FY25
 - Reimbursable grant opportunity
- These three projects were voted by Select Board on 2/5/24 to become Budget Articles 11 through 13

Stabilization Fund – FY25 Appropriation \$125,000

- The Stabilization Fund is the Town’s main reserve account
- Protects the Town against emergencies
- Very important for credit rating (AAA)
- Can help mitigate budget disruptions such as economic decline
- Funded with Free Cash

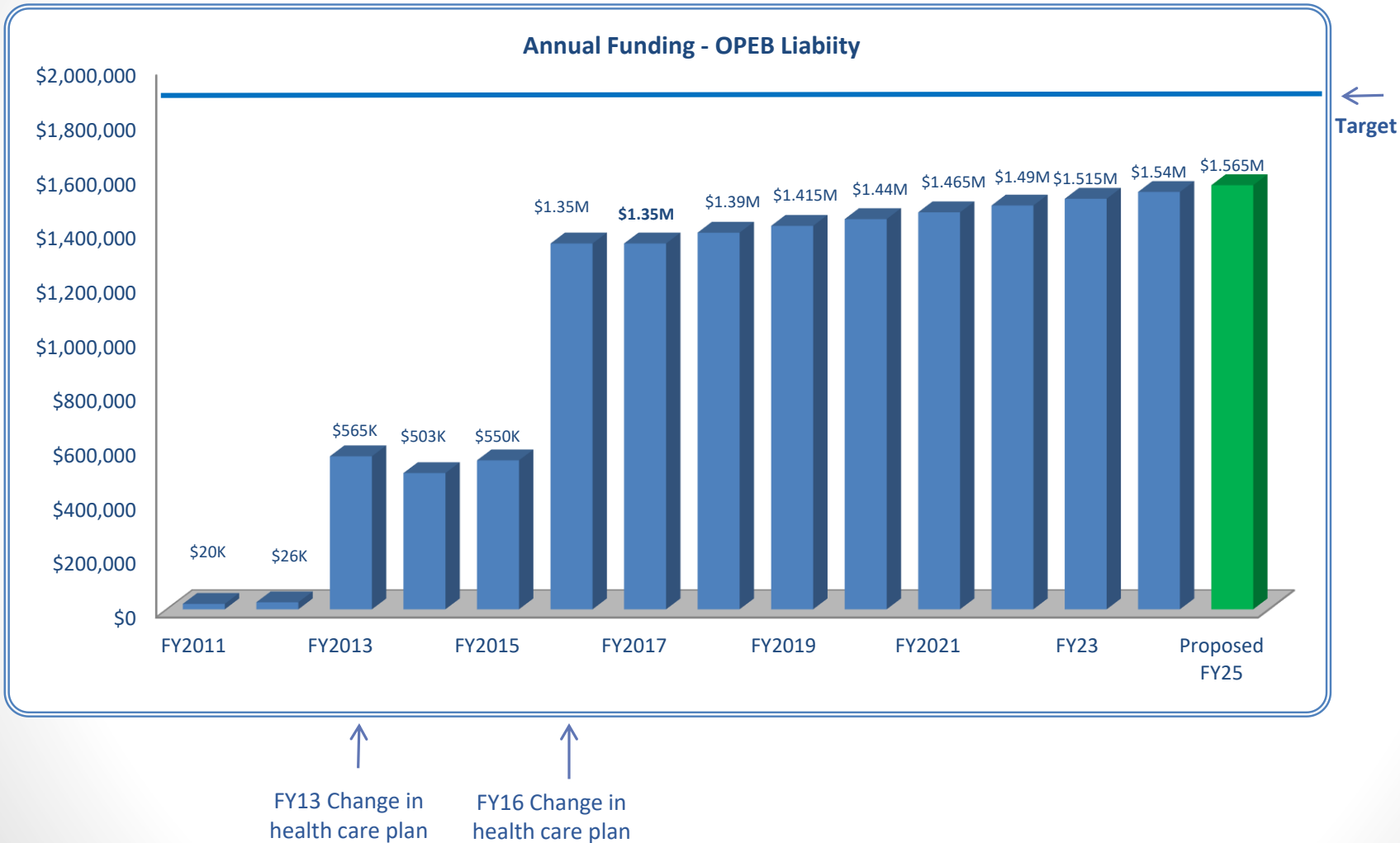


↑ ↑
Built with one
time revenue

← Small Annual Transfer →

OPEB Liability Trust Fund – FY25 Appropriation \$1,565,000

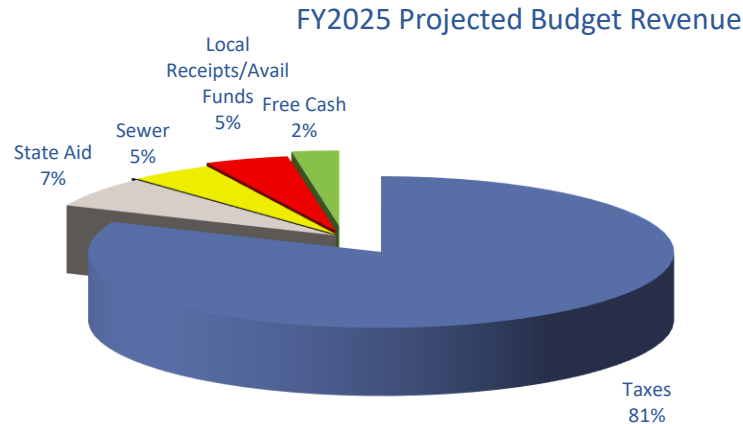
- On target with funding plan, \$25K additional per year
- Balance in trust fund account as of 12/23 is approximately \$21M



FY25 Proposed Budget Revenue - \$122.8M, 1.5% Increase

There are eight major categories of the Revenue Budget:

FY2025 Projected Budget Revenue				
	FY2024	FY2025 Proj	\$ Change	% Change
Taxes	\$97,119,785	\$100,121,042	\$3,001,257	3.1%
State Aid	\$8,023,334	\$8,131,535	\$108,201	1.3%
Sewer Enterprise	\$6,188,863	\$5,685,452	(\$503,411)	-8.1%
Local Receipts	\$4,195,857	\$4,595,857	\$400,000	9.5%
Available Funds	\$434,325	\$434,325	\$0	0.0%
Available Funds - prior yr/other articles	\$650,000	\$120,000	(\$530,000)	-81.5%
Meals/Hotels Tax	\$1,100,000	\$550,000	(\$550,000)	-50.0%
Free Cash	\$3,295,500	\$3,209,250	(\$86,250)	-2.6%
Total	\$121,007,664	\$122,847,461	\$1,839,797	1.5%



Tax Revenue

FY25 Total Projected Revenue Budget - \$122.8M

- Taxes are approximately 82% of revenue - most important component of financial stability
- Proposition 2 ½
 - Limits total property taxes a community can raise – can increase 2.5% plus new growth
 - Calculation not applied to individual tax bills
 - Town Meeting can approve a debt exclusion which allows for additional property taxes to be levied in an amount equal to the debt service payments associated with the project
- For FY25, the projected property tax revenue supporting the overall budget is \$100.1M
 - Includes exempt debt

Tax Levy Calculation per Proposition 2 ½

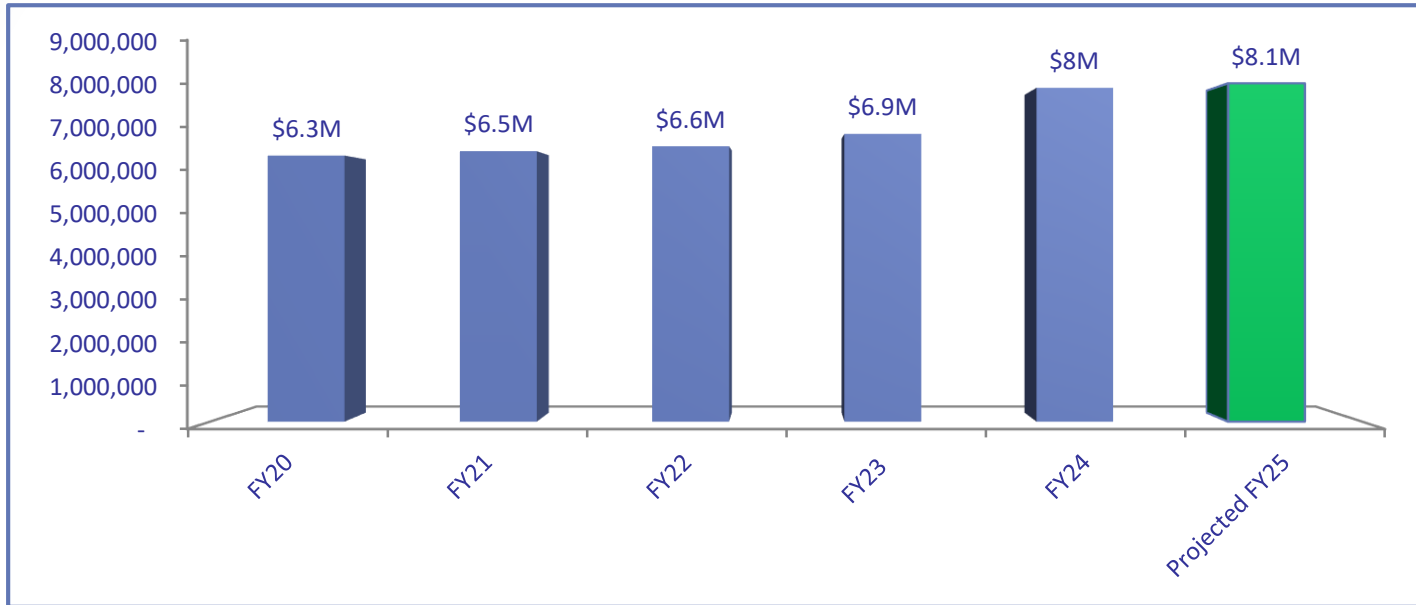
Tax Levy Calculation	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	Budget FY2025	
Prior Year Levy Limit	\$79,703,916	\$83,076,625	\$86,718,329	\$90,010,426	\$93,226,730	
Plus 2.5% Increase	\$1,992,598	\$2,076,916	\$2,167,958	\$2,250,261	\$2,330,668	Plus 2.5%
Plus New Growth	\$889,111	\$1,356,788	\$1,017,139	\$725,557	\$550,000	Estimated New growth
New Tax Levy University Station	\$491,000	\$208,000	\$107,000	\$52,746		Estimated Uni Station new growth
TIF*				\$187,740		Estimated one time TIF increase
General Overrides	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Tax Levy Limit	\$83,076,625	\$86,718,329	\$90,010,426	\$93,226,730	\$96,107,398	
Exempt Debt*	\$1,217,416	\$1,048,819	\$1,059,561	\$4,369,541	\$4,013,644	Exempt Debt
Levy Capacity	\$84,294,041	\$87,767,148	\$91,069,987	\$97,596,271	\$100,121,042	What we could tax
Actual Levy Assessed	\$83,468,800	\$86,593,963	\$90,274,411	\$97,119,785	TBD	What we do tax (Not finalized)
Excess Levy(Taxes not raised)	\$825,241	\$1,173,185	\$795,576	\$476,486	TBD	Unused Tax Levy (Not finalized)

- Exempt debt - This is the net principal and interest payment required each year for borrowing projects approved outside Proposition 2 1/2.
- New Growth - This represents taxes from new residential and commercial development
- No general override since 2007
- Exempt debt declines slightly in FY25, Elementary school bond payment schedule began in FY24

* One time new growth increase due to TIF transition year

Preliminary FY25 State Aid Revenue – Per Governor’s Budget

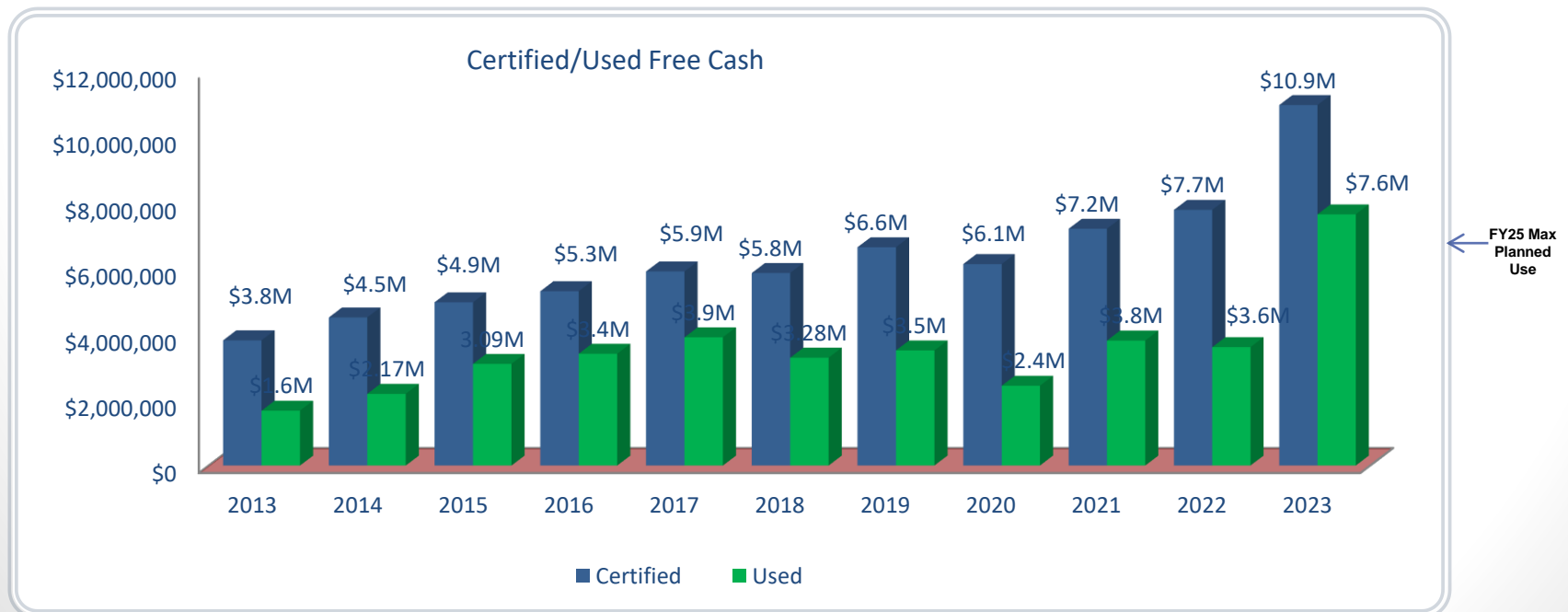
- State Aid is approximately 6.6% of the Total Revenue budget for FY25
- State aid steady– no mid year cuts or disruptions for several years, even with COVID.



	FY24	FY25	\$ Change	% Change
Chapter 70	\$ 7,092,497	\$7,156,166	\$63,669	0.9%
Municipal Unrestricted	\$872,165	\$898,330	\$26,165	3%
All Other	<u>\$58,672</u>	<u>\$77,039</u>	\$18,367	31%
Total Revenue	\$8,023,334	\$8,131,535	\$108,201	1.3%
State Charges	FY24	FY25	\$ Change	% Change
	\$811,877	\$808,339	(\$3,538)	-0.5%

Free Cash Certification

- Certified Free Cash as of June 30, 2023 is \$10,959,301.
- Disciplined use of free cash balance.
 - Not applied to operating budgets. Not using full allowance.
 - In line with Financial Policy, apply higher amounts to capital needs, not operating budget.
 - Good FY23 budget to actual results.
- \$2.1M of Free Cash was appropriated through Article 1 at January 2024 Special Town Meeting
- FY25 proposed budget is funded by \$3.2M of free cash :
 - \$2,352,200 for school and municipal capital
 - \$125,000 for Stabilization
 - \$732K for Reserves and Fixed costs



- Financial Policy target is approximately \$4.2M unallocated.

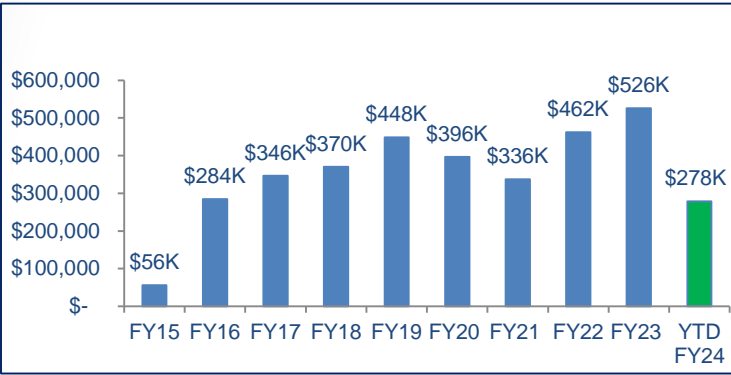
Meals and Hotels Tax

Use of Funds

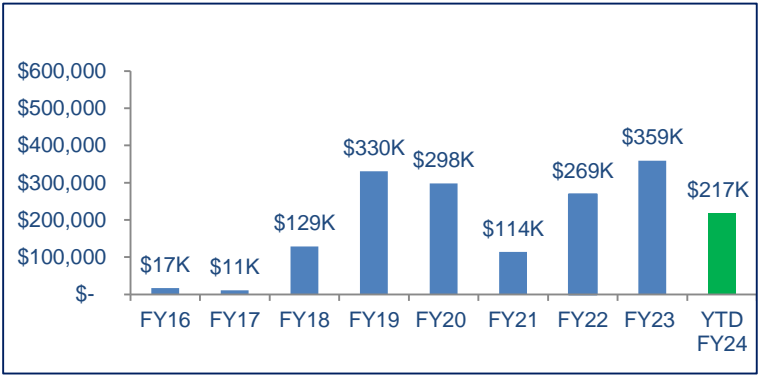
Any use of funds must be appropriated by Town Meeting. All use requires a 2/3 vote by Town Meeting, Funds have been used for capital projects.

- Proposal for May 2024 meeting includes usage of \$550K of funds
 - Generator upgrade and replacement at municipal buildings \$400K
 - Replacement of acoustic tiles at the town pool \$150K

Annual Meals Tax Revenue



Annual Hotels Tax Revenue



Balance in the Account

- The balance at December 31, 2023 is \$1.1M

History of Meals/Hotels Tax Account Balance
Fiscal Year End Balance



Next Steps in Budget Cycle

- February and March Meetings:
 - Continue update and review of FY25 revenue projections
 - FY25 State Aid Budget
 - Continue review of expenditures/other updates
 - Assessments (Blue Hills, MWRA)
 - Health Insurance
 - Continue to review capital budget articles
- Prepare Articles 1 and 2 FY24 Budget Supplements
 - Article 1: Transfers from one budget to another
 - Article 2: Supplement budget with additional funds (free cash)
 - Select Board will finalize mid March in advance of Finance Commission final public hearing in March
- Any updates will be presented to Finance and Warrant Commission in advance of Fincom Public Hearings





Select Board Article 13

Select Board 13 – Adoption of Fee Schedule for Sealing of Weights and Measures

On February 5, 2024, the Select Board voted to use one of the Miscellaneous Articles (Misc. #4) to create Select Board Article #13, Adoption of Fee Schedule for Sealing of Weights and Measures

Article Language :

To see if the Town will vote to approve a Fee Schedule for Sealing of Weight & Measures, as an alternative to the fee schedule set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 98, Section 56, to be phased in over a period of four (4) years beginning in Calendar Year 2024 and reaching full rates in Calendar Year 2027, as follows, or take any other action in relation thereto:

Select Board 13 – Adoption of Fee Schedule for Sealing of Weights and Measures

Fee Schedule for Sealing and Inspecting Weighing of Measuring Devices:

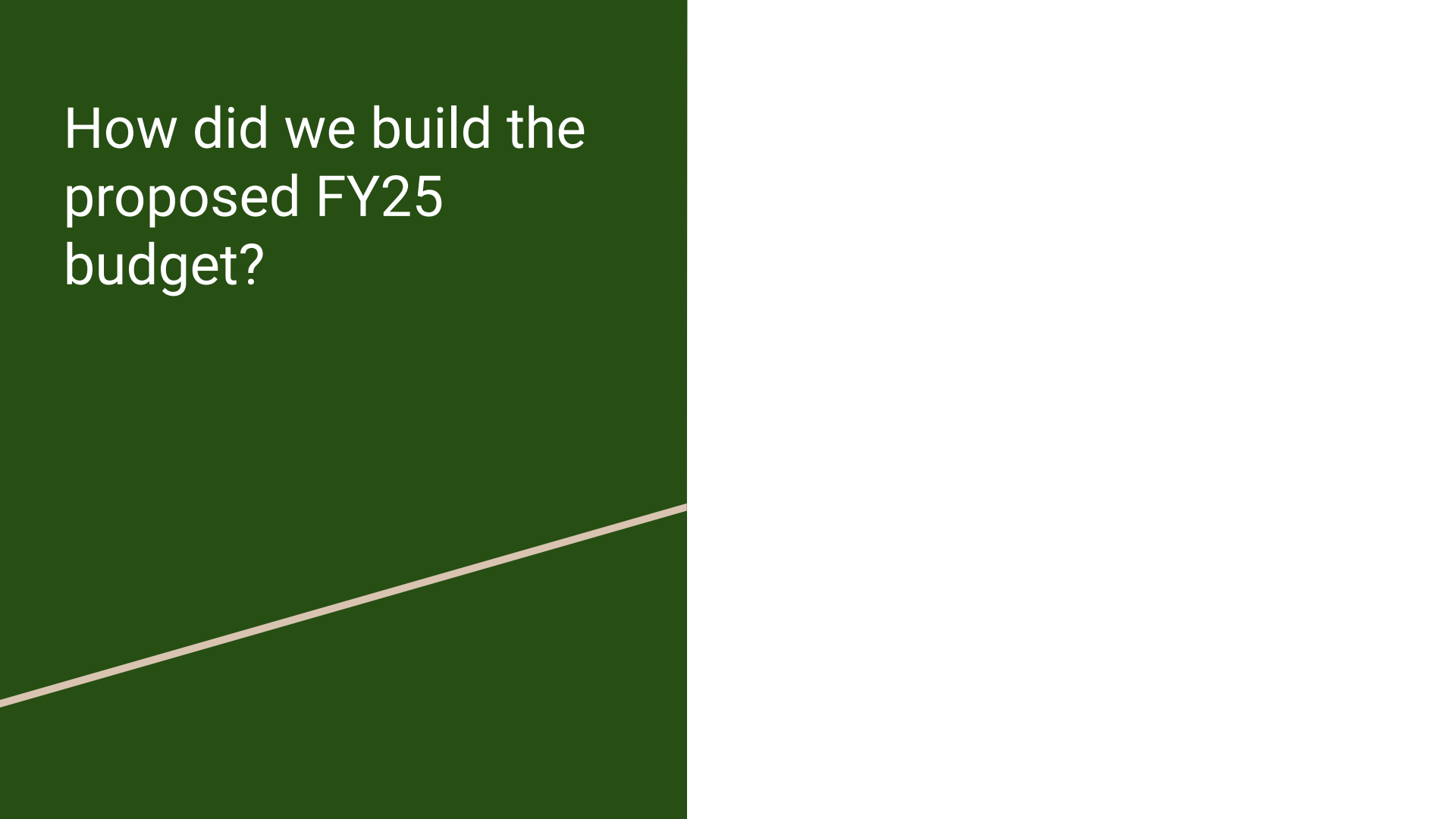
<u>Type of Device</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027 and Subsequent Years</u>
Scale 0-10lbs. (each)	\$6.67	\$10.00	\$13.33	\$20.00
Scale 10-100lbs. (each)	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$30.00
Apothecary Scale (each)	\$2.33	\$3.50	\$4.67	\$7.00
Taxi/Odometer (each)	\$8.33	\$12.50	\$16.67	\$25.00
Gas/Diesel Fueling Pump (each)	\$6.67	\$10.00	\$13.33	\$20.00
Tanker Vehicle (each)	\$50.00	\$75.00	\$100.01	\$150.00
Fabric (each)	\$3.33	\$5.00	\$6.67	\$10.00
Wire/Rope/Cordage (each)	\$3.33	\$5.00	\$6.67	\$10.00
Scanners 1-3 (total)	\$13.33	\$20.00	\$26.67	\$40.00
Scanners 4-11 (total)	\$26.66	\$40.00	\$53.34	\$80.00
Scanners 12+ (total)	\$41.66	\$62.50	\$83.34	\$125.00



Westwood Public Schools Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget

Westwood Finance and Warrant Commission
February 12, 2024

How did we build the
proposed FY25
budget?



How did we build the Fiscal Year 2025 budget?

At the October School Committee meeting, we shared that budget priorities will be informed by the following :

- District Goals and Strategic Priorities
 - Approved by the Committee in September
 - Highlighted Priority: Hire a Director of Human Resources
 - Supported by findings from District Equity Audit
- Findings of Superintendent's Entry Plan
 - Presented in November
- Other priorities identified by School Committee

How did we build the Fiscal Year 2025 budget?

At the October School Committee meeting, we also shared our annual budget drivers:

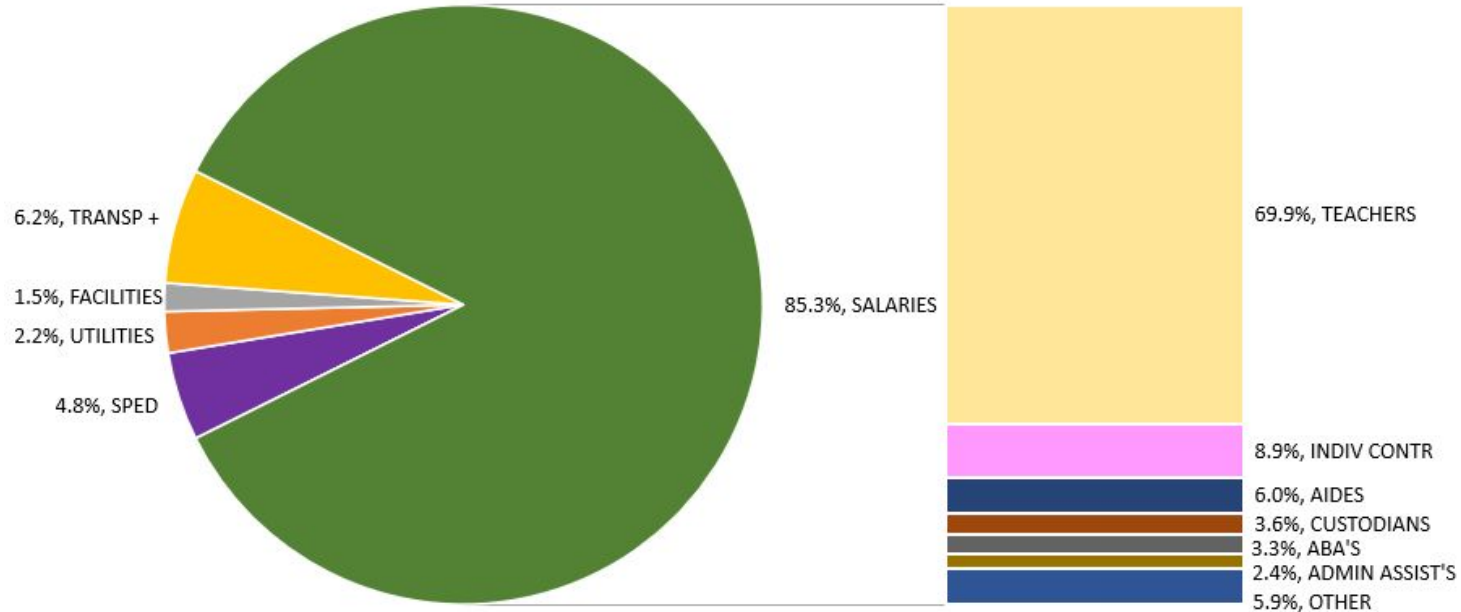
- Meet contractual **salary obligations**
- Meet other **inflation-impacted costs** (e.g., transportation, utilities)
- Maintain reasonable **class sizes**
- Address **special education** needs
- Continue to make progress on the **educational goals** articulated in the WPS *Strategy for District Improvement*

How did we build the Fiscal Year 2025 budget?

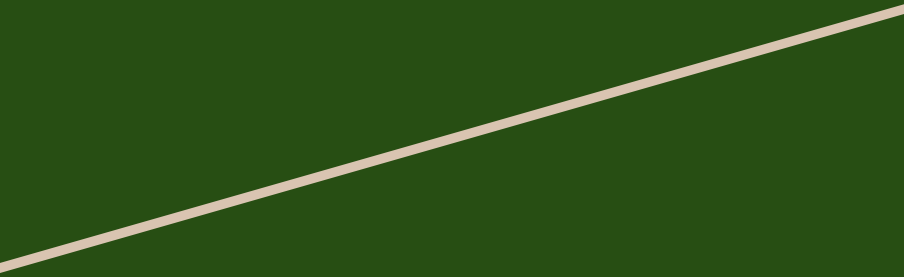
- Entry plan identified significant strengths:
 - High levels of student achievement
 - High quality teaching, administrative, and support staff
 - Robust levels of community support
- Given the existing strengths in the district, the FY25 budget is built upon:
 - Financial resources required to maintain existing educational and personnel infrastructure
 - Strategic additions and reductions aligned with goals and strategic priorities in the WPS Strategy for District Improvement

How did we build the Fiscal Year 2025 budget?

- Education is a “people business”, with 85% of budget dedicated to salaries:



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Cost Drivers

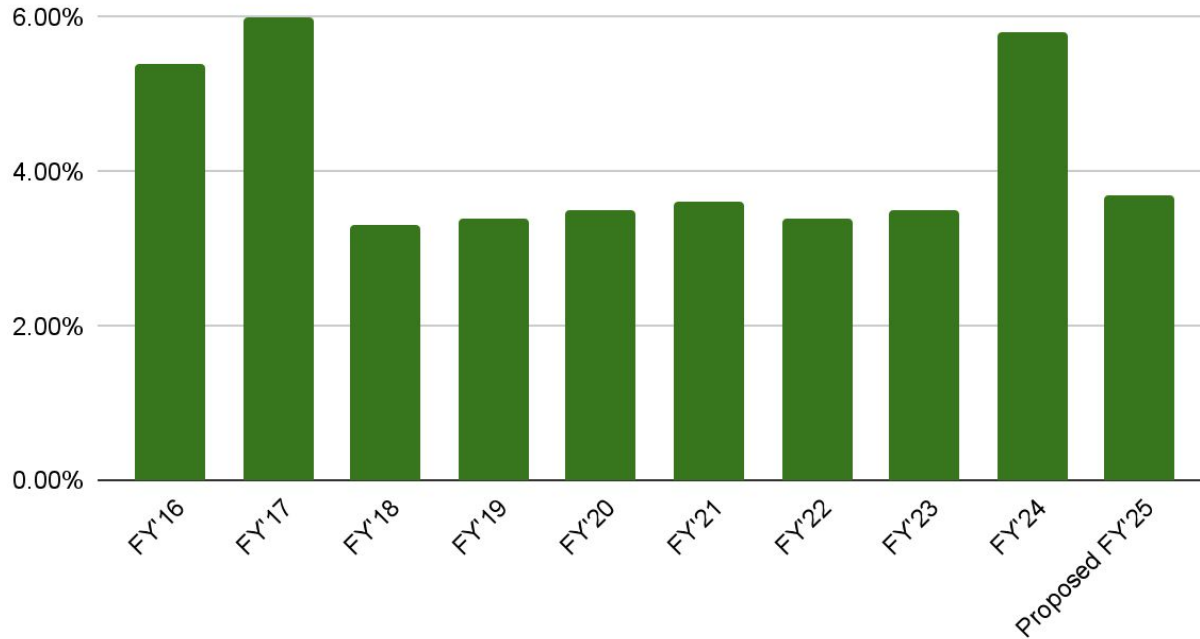
- Biggest cost driver is contractual salary obligations
 - Greater clarity in FY25 as most contracts are settled through the end of FY25
- Cost escalation in other areas:
 - Transportation
 - Special Education
 - Both non-salary (tuition) and salary (non-discretionary service additions)
- The financial impact of a level services budget for FY25 is a 3.77% increase over FY24

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request

- This is a 3.69% increase over FY24 - below the level services percentage of 3.77%
 - This increase is more consistent with typical budget growth rates from FY18-FY23
- This budget request allows us to make programmatic changes consistent with our strategic priorities for continuous improvement, while maintaining our fiscal responsibility to the community
- The School Committee approved budget for FY25 is **\$56,763,603.**

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request

WPS Operating Budget % Increases



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request

FY24 Budget		\$54,743,565
Net increase for salaries for existing personnel		\$1,825,243
Changes with Pine Hill Consolidation	(4.0 FTE)	(\$268,000)
Other Staffing Changes	4.7 FTE	\$351,900
Net increase to various non-salary accounts		\$110,895
Total Change	0.7 FTE	\$2,020,038
FY25 School Committee Approved Budget		\$56,763,603

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request - Major Categories

Major Budget Category	Voted FY24 Budget	Proposed FY25 Budget	Incremental Change (\$)	Incremental Change as %
Total Salaries	\$46,497,322	\$48,406,465	\$1,909,143	4.11%
Non-Salary				
Special Education	\$2,625,520	\$2,711,168	\$85,648	3.26%
Utilities	\$1,287,182	\$1,262,182	(\$25,000)	(1.94%)
Facilities	\$864,335	\$864,335	-	-
All other non-salary	\$3,469,206	\$3,519,453	\$50,247	1.45%
TOTAL	\$54,743,565	\$56,763,603	\$2,020,038	3.69%

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request - All Funds

Major Budget Category	Voted FY24 Budget	Proposed FY25 Budget	Incremental Change (\$)	Incremental Change as %
Total Salaries	\$48,564,995	\$50,499,222	\$1,934,227	3.98%
Non-Salary				
Special Education	\$3,730,097	\$3,786,279	\$56,182	1.51%
Utilities	\$1,391,182	\$1,344,682	(\$46,500)	(3.34%)
Facilities	\$864,335	\$904,335	\$40,000	4.63%
All other non-salary	\$4,265,621	\$4,214,550	(\$51,071)	(1.20%)
TOTAL	\$58,816,230	\$60,749,068	\$1,932,838	3.29%

Enrollment Considerations



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Enrollment Considerations

- No significant change in FY25 enrollment at high school or middle school
- Elementary enrollment has begun to rise since its low point in 2020-2021
 - Increase of 72 students in the last two years
- Challenges with use of census data to predict incoming kindergarten enrollment
 - 2023-2024 school year provided a dramatic break in previous trends

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Enrollment Considerations

Kindergarten Enrollment Difference Between Actual and Census Data by Year

	Eligible K Students in Town Census	Enrolled K Students (as of Oct. 1 report)	Difference (Actual to Census)
2019-2020	185	206	21
2020-2021	174	203	29
2021-2022	181	201	20
2022-2023	177	197	20
2023-2024	157	225	68

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Enrollment Considerations

- In building 2024-2025 Kindergarten enrollment projections, we proceed conservatively to avoid the need for post-budget staffing additions
 - Assumption that FY25 Kindergarten enrollment is level with FY24
- Number of classroom sections in each building relies on guidelines for elementary class sizes:
 - 18-22 students in Grades K-3
 - 18-24 students in Grades 4-5
- Projected enrollment for FY25 shows no net change from FY24 in the number of elementary classroom sections
 - Shift of one section from Downey to Martha Jones

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Enrollment Considerations

FY25 Enrollment and Classroom Sections by School/Grade Level

	Downey	Martha Jones	Pine Hill	Sheehan
Grade K	48 (2.5)	56 (3)	69 (4)	55 (3)
Grade 1	48 (2.5)	56 (3)	69 (4)	55 (3)
Grade 2	50 (3)	39 (2)	72 (4)	43 (2)
Grade 3	48 (3)	43 (2)	87 (4)	47 (3)
Grade 4	47 (2)	58 (3)	77 (4)	53 (3)
Grade 5	43 (2)	35 (2)	65 (3)	45 (2)
TOTAL	284 (15)	287 (15)	439 (23)	298 (16)

Pine Hill Consolidation and Elementary Specials



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Pine Hill Consolidation

- A significant factor in developing the FY25 budget were costs savings realized through the consolidation of Hanlon and Deerfield into Pine Hill
- Due to the overall increase in elementary enrollment in the district, anticipated reductions in classroom sections at Pine Hill were not able to be actualized as budget savings
- Cost savings were identified in other areas:
 - Administrative costs
 - Strategic programmatic redesign possible due to consolidation
 - Total reduction of 4.0 FTE and \$268,000 in savings

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Pine Hill Consolidation

<i>Changes with Pine Hill Consolidation</i>	
Reduce Pine Hill Assistant Principal (12 month to 10 month)	(\$10,000)
Reduce 0.2 FTE ES Special Education Department Head	(\$10,500)
Reduce 1.0 FTE Administrative Assistant at Pine Hill	(\$67,000)
Reduce 1.0 FTE Building-Based substitute from ES	(\$34,000)
Reduce 1.0 FTE Speech Language Pathologist Assistant	(\$69,000)
Add 1.0 FTE ES Adjustment Counselor at Pine Hill	\$85,000
Reduce 1.0 FTE Psychologist at Pine Hill	(\$98,900)
Reduce 1.0 FTE ES Music Teacher	(\$96,300)
Reduce 0.8 FTE ES Art Teacher	(\$52,300)
Add 1.0 FTE ES Instructional Technology Specialist (ITC)	\$85,000

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Pine Hill Consolidation

- Administrative Cost Savings:
 - Reduction of Assistant Principal at Pine Hill from 12 months to 10 months
 - Reduction of 0.2 FTE Special Education Department Head
 - Reduction of 1.0 FTE Administrative Assistant
- Programmatic Consolidation Savings:
 - Reduction of 1.0 FTE Building-Based Substitute at Elementary Schools
 - Reduction of 1.0 FTE Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)
- Redesign to Increase Proactive Mental Health and SEL Supports:
 - Reduction of 1.0 FTE Psychologist
 - Addition of 1.0 FTE Adjustment Counselor

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

- Reviewing the structure and variety of offerings for elementary specials has been a strategic priority for the district since 2021
 - Implementation tabled due to ongoing curriculum reviews and budgetary impact
- Digital Literacy/Computer Science (DLCS) review identifies need to expand DLCS offerings in elementary school
 - Draft report was released on February 8
 - Current elementary offering is in Grade 3 only
- Continued district commitment to provide high quality instruction in Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Library, and Physical Education

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

Current Elementary Specials (2023-2024)

Grade K	Art	Music	Library	PE	PE
Grade 1	Art	Music	Library	PE	Art/PE
Grade 2	Art	Music	Library	PE	Art
Grade 3	Art	Music	Library	PE	DLCS
Grade 4	Art	Music	Library	PE	Inst Music
Grade 5	Art	Music	Library	PE	Chorus/Drama

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

Proposed Elementary Specials (2024-2025)

Grade K	Art	Music	Library	PE	PE
Grade 1	Art	Music	Library	PE	PE
Grade 2	Art	Music	Library	PE	DLCS
Grade 3	Art	Music	Library	PE	DLCS
Grade 4	Art	Music/ Inst Music	Library	PE	DLCS
Grade 5	Art	Music/Chorus/ Drama	Library	PE	DLCS

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

- In the redesign of elementary specials:
 - DLCS is expanded to all students in Grades 2-5 weekly
 - Students in all grades maintain a weekly class in Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Library, and Physical Education
 - Students in Grades K-1 have a Physical Education class twice each week
- Instrumental Music/General Music:
 - In Grade 4, students/families will be provided with a choice of either instrumental music or general music
 - Provides future opportunity to introduce strings program to ES
 - No change in Grade 5 instrumental music structure

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

- In addition to the programmatic changes to specials, the structural redesign also provide the opportunity to increase common preparation time for elementary classroom teachers
 - Minimum of three times/week for all grades
 - Every day for Grades 4-5
- Internal staff will provide weekly music, physical education, and library instruction for students in Westwood Integrated Preschool

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Elementary Specials

- These changes allow us to meet our strategic goals while also realizing a net savings in the FY25 budget
 - Addition of 1.0 FTE Instruction Technology Coach (ITC)
 - Reduction of 1.0 FTE Music Teacher
 - Reduction of 0.8 FTE Art Teacher

Other Staffing Changes



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Other Staffing Changes

Reduce 0.5 FTE MS Instructional Technology Specialist (ITC)	(\$62,000)
Establish four (4) MS Technology Facilitator Stipends	\$16,000
Reduce 0.6FTE Technology Support Specialist by reconfiguring two positions	(\$29,500)
Add 1.0 FTE MS Library/Media Specialist	\$85,000
Add 1.0 FTE Human Resources Director	\$125,000
Add 1.0 FTE HS BRIDGE Program Teacher	\$85,000
Add 0.5 FTE MS Speech Language Pathologist	\$42,500
Add 0.3 FTE MS Occupational Therapist	\$25,500
Add 2.0 FTE Special Education Instruction Assistants (IAs)	\$59,600
Add Stipends for SEL Team Leaders	\$4,800

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Technology Staffing

- Reduction of 0.5 FTE MS Instructional Technology Coach
- Establish four (4) MS Technology Facilitator Stipends
 - Replacement of stand-alone ITC position for all classrooms in middle school with stipends for technology team leaders at each grade level and in Art
 - Benefit in effectiveness from grade-level peers with knowledge of curriculum
- Reduce 0.6 FTE Technology Support Specialist by reconfiguring two positions
 - Continuation of successful FY24 pilot of centralized technology support

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Strategic Additions

- Add 1.0 FTE Human Resources Director
 - Has been a consistent priority of the district
 - Need corroborated by recent equity audit
 - Need is more critical in the post-pandemic work climate
 - Significant increase in staff turnover, particularly among support staff
 - Aligned with district strategic priority to recruit, hire, and develop more diverse staff to better mirror student population
 - Role will include a significant focus on district communications strategy

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Strategic Additions

- Add 1.0 FTE MS Library/Media Specialist
 - Restoration of position eliminated in Fiscal Year 2021
 - Critical position to support students' informational literacy development
 - Need identified through recent Library curriculum review
- Add 1.0 FTE HS BRIDGE Program Teacher
 - Allows for creation of a therapeutic "BRIDGE" program at WHS
 - Support at-risk and high-need students to re-engage with school
 - Clinical support and trauma-informed instruction across academic content
 - Investment that could potential decreased special education referrals and future out-of-district placements

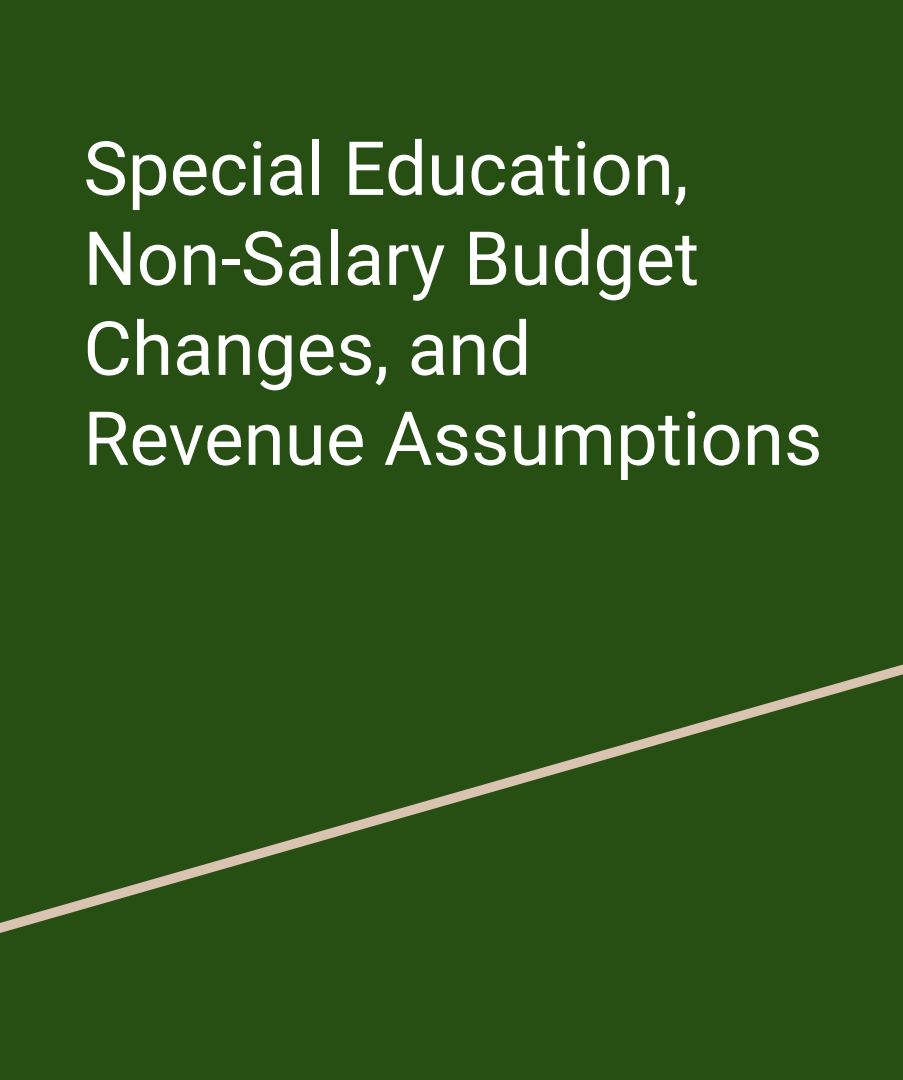
Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Strategic Additions

- Add 0.5 FTE MS Speech Language Pathologist
- Add 0.3 FTE MS Occupational Therapist
- Add 2.0 FTE Special Education Instruction Assistants (IAs)

These are non-discretionary additions responsive to the requirements of IEPs
Increase at middle school due to large cohort moving from ES to MS

- Add Stipends for SEL Team Leaders
 - District commitment to support students' social-emotional learning
 - Advisory stipends currently exist at MS; expands to SEL Team Leaders in ES

Special Education, Non-Salary Budget Changes, and Revenue Assumptions



Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Special Education

- The most variable part of any district budget is special education costs
- Westwood has created several district-wide programs that allows us to educate almost all of our students in-district
 - In FY24, less than 1% of students attended out-of-district SPED placements
- Operational Services Division (OSD) has set a 4.69% increase in tuition costs for FY25
 - On top of 14% increase in FY24
 - Prior to FY24, typical increase was 2-3%
- The FY25 budget contains a net decrease in tuition, but an increase in transportation
 - Reduction in residential tuitions; increase in day tuitions

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Special Education

Tuition	FY24	FY25	Difference
Residential Tuition	\$539,402	\$145,805	(\$393,597)
Day Tuition	\$1,093,120	\$1,538,058	\$444,938
Collaborative Tuition	\$649,168	\$401,426	(\$247,742)
Tuition Total	\$2,281,690	\$2,085,289	(\$196,401)
Transportation	FY24	FY25	Difference
Out-of-District SPED Transportation	\$461,229	\$596,470	\$135,241
In-District SPED Transportation	\$373,774	\$491,116	\$117,342
Transportation Total	\$835,003	\$1,087,586	\$252,583

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Non-Salary Budget Changes

- Increase in Special Education Tuition and Transportation: \$85,648
 - Net impact of tuition, transportation, and Circuit Breaker offset
- Increase in Yellow Bus Transportation: \$42,247
 - Contractual increase for third year of contract with Connolly Bus
- Increase in Professional Development Providers: \$8,000
- Decrease in Electricity due to Solar Revenue: (\$25,000)
 - Increase in offset from solar agreement

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget - Revenue Assumptions

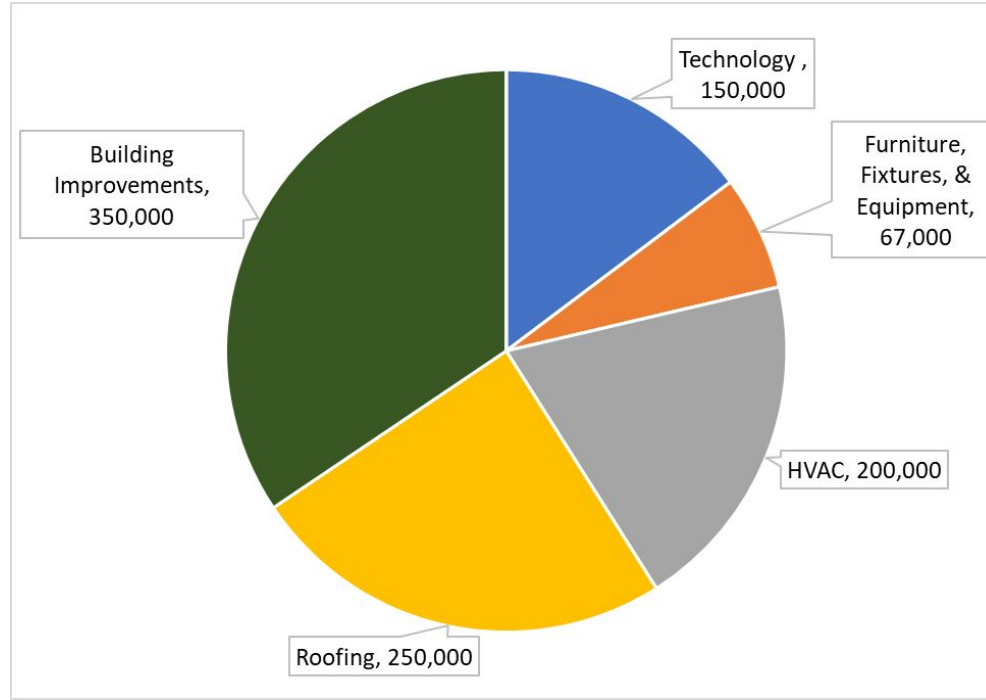
- Circuit Breaker
 - Offset based on previous year's receipts
 - FY25 offset is \$29,466 lower than FY24
- User Fees
 - Proposed 3% increase to Bus Fees, Athletic Fees, and Preschool Tuition
- Solar Revenue
 - Increase of \$25,000 offset based on actuals for power purchasing agreement

Capital Budget



FY25 Capital Budget

- FY25 Capital Budget level-funded at \$1.017M from FY24



FY25 Capital Budget

- Technology:
 - Replacement of Chromebooks for students in Grades 6 and 9
 - New Macbooks for high school teachers
 - 3.5 year refresh cycle for Chromebooks; 5 year cycle for teacher laptops
- Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment:
 - Regular replacement cycle
 - With opening in Pine Hill, allows for investment in other buildings

FY25 Capital Budget

- Building Improvements/HVAC:
 - District recently conducted a condition assessment of mechanical, fire, and electrical systems
 - Recommended equipment replacement and upgrades (e.g., fire and electrical panels, rooftop HVAC units, chillers)
- Roofing:
 - Infrared roof moisture study conducted last year
 - Prioritization of Sheehan non-sloped roof with available funds in roofing reserve
 - Restoration project needed at WHS to extend life
 - Estimated cost of \$2.5 million requested through TM borrowing article

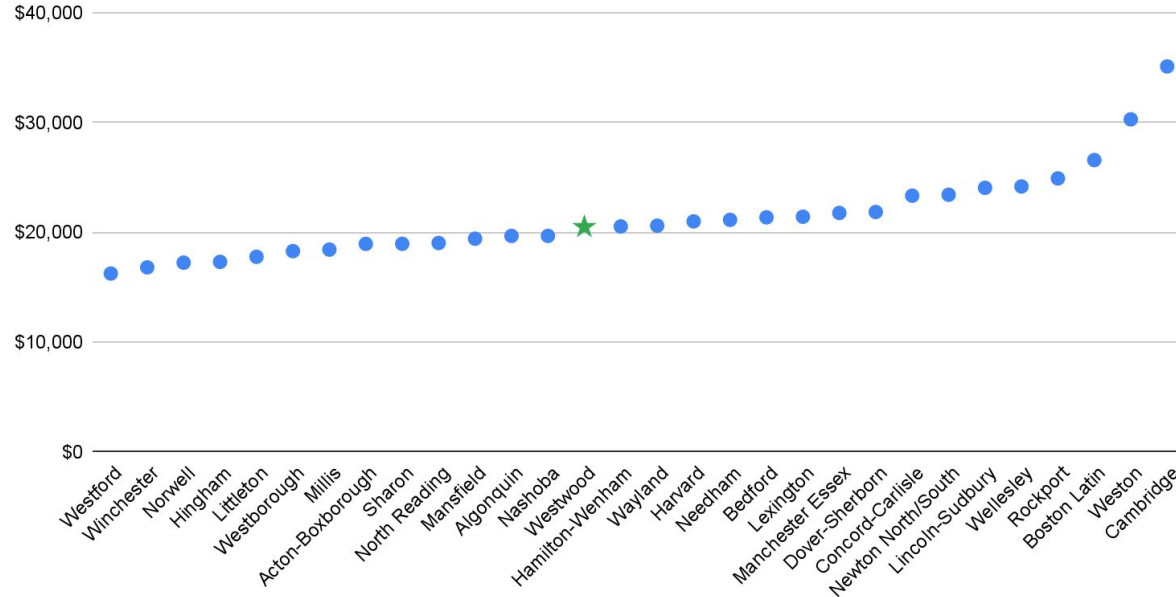
Comparisons and Future Priorities



How does Westwood's Per-Pupil Spending Compare?

Boston Magazine's Top Public High Schools (2023)

FY'21 Per Pupil Spending (most recent data available)



Future Priorities

- Creation of Additional Preschool Classroom
- High School Wellness Teacher
- Elementary Health Teachers
- District Data Analyst
- ELL Teacher
- WHS Science Teacher
- WHS School to Career Counselor

Future priorities will also be informed through the development of the new district vision and strategy, as well as the creation of a new master facilities plan

Westwood Finance and Warrant Commission
JANUARY 16, 2024 MEETING
ZOOM WEBINAR
7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Finance Commission Chairperson George Hertz called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. He then read the Open Meeting Law pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023.

Finance and Warrant Commission members who were present: William Bruce Jr., James Ferraro, Lauren FitzPatrick, Mike Gay, George Hertz, Caitlyn Jurczak, George Laham, George Maroun, Christopher Poreda, Sean Weller, and Alexander Yale.

Chairperson Hertz then granted permission to Westwood Media Center to live stream and record the meeting. He also asked if anyone else would like to record this meeting.

He then welcomed all participants, members, presenters and members of public and press to the FinCom January 16, 2024 Meeting.

Afterwards, Chairperson Hertz led members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Finance Commission administrator, Ms. Wong then called the ROLL.

Members were provided with the final agenda and all other related materials prior to the meeting.

Prior to the evening's presentations, Chairperson Hertz made some introductory comments:

- He went over the procedures for the night: FinCom members can ask questions after Ms. McManus presents all of the Select Board budget warrant articles. Then when the Charter Review and Planning Board warrant articles are presented, members will have the opportunity to ask questions after each one since some of the articles may be new information for some of the members.

Evening's Presentations:

- Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Christopher Coleman [Town Administrator], Stephanie McManus [Asst. Town Administrator/Finance Director], Nora Loughnane [Director of Community and Economic Development], Pat Ahearn [Town Council], Members of the Select Board- Summary Review of 2024 ATM 'Select Board' Warrant Articles

Chairperson Hertz introduced the evening's first presentation. Ms. Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Mr. Christopher Coleman [Town Administrator], Ms. Stephanie McManus [Asst. Town Administrator/Finance Director], Ms. Nora Loughnane [Director of the Community and Economic Development], Mr. Pat Ahearn [Town Council], and Members of the Select Board were

present. Ms. Cummings called the Select Board's meeting to order at 7:05PM. Then, Ms. McManus introduced the budget warrant articles and mentioned she will present them more in detail at FinCom's February 12th meeting. Ms. McManus also pointed out that she presented on a number of capital related articles at the Select Board's January 8th meeting. Members of the FinCom can view her presentation on [Westwood Media Center](#). Additionally, Ms. McManus confirmed that she scheduled some of the subcommittee meetings with Ms. Wong. Next, Ms. Cummings presented Select Board Articles # 1-3 (Street Acceptance). Ms. Loughnane presented Select Board Article # 4: General ByLaw Amendment (Chapter 184) related to dog leash requirements. Then Ms. Loughnane spent time answering members' questions.

- Paul Fitzgerald [Charter Review Committee Co-Chair], Members & Ex Officio Members of the Charter Review Committee- Summary Review of 2024 ATM "Select Board" Warrant Articles #5-12

Chairperson Hertz introduced the evening's next presentation. Mr. Paul Fitzgerald [Charter Review Committee Co-Chair], Ms. Nancy Hyde, Ms. Dottie Powers, Mr. John Loughnane [Members of the Charter Review Committee], Mr. Christopher Coleman and Mr. Pat Ahearn [Ex Officio members of the Charter Review Committee] were present. Mr. Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 7:20PM for the Charter Review Committee. He then gave a brief overview distinguishing the articles the Charter Review Committee is bringing forth to the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Fitzgerald introduced eight warrant articles recommended by the Charter Review Committee. After each article, members asked questions.

For Select Board Article # 6, some members wanted more clarity on the Town Clerk's position and why that position is being appointed by the Town Administrator and not the Select Board. Ms. Powers gave an overview what her role as Town Clerk entails. Another member requested more data be presented to the Commission: a.) # of towns that have appointed versus elected Town Clerks and b.) who is responsible for appointing the appointed Town Clerk position at other towns. Mr. Gotti mentioned that there may be a presentation from the Division of Local Services that can provide more data relative to the information that the Finance Commission is looking for. Ms. Hyde is going to check if the presentation has any data on the Town Clerk's position. Chairperson Hertz suggested that the Charter Review Committee have this data ready before their Public Hearing on February 13th since the Public may have similar questions to what FinCom members asked tonight.

For Select Board Article # 7, some members were concerned about the recommended change in the number of the members appointed for the Commission as it may affect the voting of the warrant articles before the Town Meeting. Town Council stated that they will provide data on the number of

Finance Commission members for other towns at a future meeting. Then, Chairperson Hertz commented that he strongly believes that the Commission should have a set goal of 15 members. He expressed that there is a benefit of having a larger group so that residents have a wider aspect of what's going on in the town. Lastly, Ms. Hyde stated that the Select Board will most likely form a group to review the ByLaws and make sure they synchronize with any changes that get approved in this process for the Charter.

Chairperson Hertz thanked the Charter Review Committee for their presentation and complimented on their time and tremendous amount of effort in getting the Charter cleaned up. He then asked if the Charter Review Committee could share the detailed version of the recommended changes (red-line version) with the Commission. Mr. Fitzgerald and Ms. Hyde stated the detailed version will be presented to the Commission before FinCom's Public Hearing. Ms. Hyde also informed that members of the Public can attend the Charter Review Committee's Public Hearing on February 13th to hear more about the articles and engage in their discussions.

The Charter Review Committee adjourned their meeting, at 8:28PM.

Before Ms. Cummings proceeded with the miscellaneous articles, she thanked the Charter Review Committee for their substantial work. She mentioned there are currently ten miscellaneous articles as placeholders. The Select Board is working on some issues and is expecting to move two of the articles to the warrant at their next meeting. Moreover, Ms. Cummings expects that they may not need most of the miscellaneous articles and will update the Commission. Lastly, Ms Cummings said she is not aware of any petition articles at this time. As for the two miscellaneous articles moving to the warrant, the Select Board will be discussing borrowing articles on Capital Items (School and Fire Department equipment).

The Select Board adjourned their meeting at 8:30PM.

- Nora Loughnane [Director of Community and Economic Development], Elijah Romulus [Town Planner], Ellen Larkin Rollings [Planning Board Chair], and Amanda Wolfe [Housing and Land Use Planner]- Summary Review of Proposed 2024 ATM "Planning Board" Warrant Articles# 1-7

The Chair introduced the evening's final presentation. Ms. Nora Loughnane [Director of Community & Economic Development], Mr. Elijah Romulus [Town Planner], Ms. Ellen Larkin Rollings [Planning Board Chair] and Ms. Amanda Wolfe [Housing and Land Use Planner] were present. Ms. Loughnane mentioned that many of the slides from tonight's presentation are from the December 6th meeting. Ms. Loughnane went over the MBTA Communities Law and Westwood's current zoning districts that allow multi-family use. Based on the MBTA Community Guidelines, the Planning Board is planning to make changes to Westwood's MUMFROD districts to capture more of their

existing units. Ms. Loughnane showed examples of what the density is for some of the Westwood condominiums/apartments. After Ms. Loughnane presented Planning Board Warrant Article # 1, Vice Chair Poreda applauded Ms. Loughnane for her efforts in getting Westwood in compliance with the state regulations. Ms. Loughnane presented the remaining six Planning Board warrant articles. Members asked questions after each Planning Board Article was presented.

For Planning Board Article # 6, if the Planning Board finds that no errors need to be corrected for the ByLaws then this article will be removed. Planning Board Article # 7 is still at the drafting stage as the Planning Board is reviewing whether the Board of Health's recently adopted regulations are sufficient to address concerns relating to temporary constructions dumpsters at non-residential and multi-family residential locations. If the regulations are sufficient then Planning Board Article # 7 will be removed as well. At the end of the presentation, Ms. Loughnane mentioned that the Planning Board will have their Public Hearing on January 30th at 7PM on Zoom. Zoom details are available on the town website. Chairperson thanked Ms. Loughnane for her very thorough presentation.

Chair's update:

Chairperson Hertz reminded members that each subcommittee should start scheduling their meetings with the respective department related to their subcommittee. He also reminded members that the Special Town Meeting is tomorrow night.

Public and Press:

The Chair asked if there any questions or comments from the public or press. Ms. Wong read a resident's comment from the Q&A box. The resident expressed her opinion on how the Town Clerk is being appointed. She also felt that the Town Clerk's position should probably be elected on an annual basis. Chairperson Hertz thanked the resident for her comments and stated it contributed to the Commission's healthy discussion.

Old Business:

Members were asked to review and approve the meeting minutes for December 06, 2023. Before a motion took place, Vice Chair Poreda noticed that there needs to be a small revision to the meeting minutes. The word MUMFROD should be all capitalized. Ms. Wong will make the final revision. Then a motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL CALL took place. Eight members approved the minute and three members abstained. Three members were absent.

Member Discussion:

One member asked if the next meeting going forward are all going to be in person. The Chair responded that in person meetings will be for the Public Hearings and when the Commission needs to vote. The member also urged the Chair to request from the presenters to give FinCom a draft ahead

of time so that the Commission can have a better visual of what the recommended changes are to offer better comments. Lastly, the member asked if it would be better to move the meetings to in person to coordinate the department meetings. Chairperson Hertz will put some thought into moving meetings to in person but he wanted to reach a reasonable balance to accommodate to members' work schedules.

Another member wanted to know who will follow up with the requested backup data from other towns. Chairperson Hertz and Vice Chair Poreda will review the meeting minutes first and then work with Ms. Wong on retrieving the requested data.

The Chair thanked members for attending and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL CALL vote was taken unanimously in favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:12PM

For a complete video of the 1/16/24 FinCom Meeting please see the following link:
<https://westwoodmediacenter.tv/>