



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Select Board
Glenda A. Hazard, Chair
Brian R. Keyes
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Town Administrator
Jeff Nutting
Interim Town Administrator

March 20, 2023

To: Select Board

From: Jeff Nutting, Interim TA

Subject: Proposed budget reductions and recommendation for an Override

I wanted you to have this information in advance of tonight's meeting. I will be presenting this plan at this afternoon's Department Head meeting, and to the Finance Committee and Select Board at tonight's meeting after the School Committee's presentation regarding their proposed budget reductions.

At your last meeting, the Board suggested we look at the impact of addressing the \$1,904,000 budget shortfall on a 60% School 40% Town basis. This would result in a reduction of the requested School Department budget of \$1,142,000 and the Town requested budget of \$762,000.

I have put forth for the Board's consideration a plan for these budget reductions, as well as a scenario for restoration of critical services with an Override of \$1,350,000 and the use of \$100,000 in Free Cash for the School budget.

The Restoration Plan still results in a reduction of the School Department's budget request by \$232,000 and the Town by \$220,000. In speaking with the School Superintendent, she is confident that she could make the proposed plan work and is prepared to support it.

In my opinion, a \$1,500,000 Override is too much to ask of the taxpayers. And, while the Town could make ends meet with at \$1,250,000 Override, the impact on School and Town operations would be significant unless we used more Free Cash to balance the budget.

If you chose the \$1,250,000 Override, we would need to provide the school \$160,000 in Free Cash for them to receive the same amount under a \$1,350,000 Override. In my opinion, this is too much Free Cash to use on an operating budget.

The list of Town operations that would be affected if a \$1,500,000 Override does not pass is a painful starting point for consideration, The Board needs to make their decision on what should be cut. I can tell you from looking over this budget for countless hours there is no place to get large amounts of money to balance the budget reduction of \$762,000.

I have not recommended cutting public safety budgets other than a 5% reduction in estimated overtime which I believe is manageable.

I looked at the Highway Department for a potential layoff but the lowest person on the seniority list is the mechanic. Cutting that position would severely impact the department's ability to operate and outsourcing that service would be very costly.

There is no room to cut the Town hall staff given their statutory obligations of the Assessors, Board of Health, Town Clerk, and Treasurer/Collector. Further, small cuts in staff would only result in minor savings.

Accordingly, I have put forth a recommendation to cut several budgets that add up to about \$248,000. The remaining cuts for \$503,000 would come from closing the Parks, COA and Library and then restoring all of those with an Override.

The Board does not have to debate the merits of these proposed cuts at tonight's meeting, but I am hopeful that all parties can reach a consensus on the amount of the Override.

The goal is to have the Select Board, School Committee and Finance Committee agree on a plan of action. That could be the plan I have put forward, or another plan that your Boards can all support. Within the next two weeks, we need you're the Select Board, School Committee and Finance Committee to agree on a game plan that will be presented to the voters.

Further, after discussing the election date with Town Clerk, we agree that the Select Board should consider May 23rd for the special election. That would allow both a budget reflecting currently available funds, as well as a contingent budget reflecting passage of a \$1,350,000 Override, to be voted at Town Meeting, with the Override put forth for voters' consideration the following week at the Special Election. If the Override succeeds and the contingent budget was approved at Town Meeting, that budget would take effect on July 1st. If the Override fails, the Town and School Department would have a little time to implement the effects of the required budget reductions.

This a very painful process, but I believe it lays out a straight-forward plan for the voters' consideration.

I am happy to answer any questions.

3/27/23

Recap of FY 24 Budget Process

- **TA meets with Finance team to determine projected FY 24 revenues.**
- **TA meets with Departments Heads to review requested "Level Service" budgets.**
- **It is determined there is a deficit of \$2,000,000 +**
- **We held a community summit to explain the issues.**
- **We hold second community, and the TA proposes that a budget reduction plan would have the schools take 67% of the deficit and the town take 33% along with various override options to offset some of the reductions.**
- **The SB suggests the TA present a budget with a 60/40% split between the school and town. With updated information about State Aid and a reduction in the BVT request the deficit is now \$1,900,000.**
- **TA presents an adjusted budget showing the schools would need to cut \$1,142,000 and the Town \$762,000.**
- **The school presents the negative effect of reducing class offerings, programs, increased fees, etc. with a \$1,142,000 reduction in their proposed budget.**
- **The TA presents several reductions in Town budgets totaling \$762,000 that include closing the Council on Aging, Library and Parks.**
- **The TA also presents a plan for a \$1,350,000 override and the use of \$100,000 of Free Cash to restore most proposed school cuts as well as restoring the COA, Library and Parks. The cost of the override for the average taxpayer for the override only would be \$562 a year. Under this plan the schools budget requested would still be reduced by \$232,000 and the Town \$222,000**
- **The Finance Committee meets to discuss the situation and votes 4-1 to recommend to the Select Board an Override of \$1,200,000 with the use of \$250,000 in Free Cash to accomplish the same goal of restoring most proposed School/Town reductions. The difference is that the cost for the \$1,200,000 Override is \$497 v \$562 for the \$1,350,000 override or \$65 less. Their recommendation equates to about a weekly cost of just under \$10 a week in higher taxes for the average taxpayer with an assessed value of \$450,000. The higher use of Free Cash is worrisome.**
- **The SB votes for an Override of \$1,350,000 and the use of \$100,000 in Free Cash.**
- **Finance Committee endorses proposed budget and Override.**
- **SB endorses Budget and Override Plan.**

- **The Select Board voted on an Override amount and any use of Free Cash towards the deficit. They voted to set the Special election for May 23rd.**
- **Select Board endorses a plan to reduce the Towns budget by \$762,000 as well as a plan to restore budgets if the Override is successful.**
- **The Select Board, Finance Committee reconcile differences, if any, in the Override/Free Cash plan and budget issues**
- **A final budget is be presented at the Town Meeting with a contingent budget if Override is successful.**
- **The citizens vote at the annual town meeting on May 16th on a balanced budget that cuts \$1,900,000 and a contingent budget that restores ??? and the Override election is held on May 23rd.**

A Snapshot of Hopedale's Financial Position

April 2023

What is the schedule for the Town Election, Town Meetings and Special Election to be held at the High School?

The Annual Town Election is on May 9th from 7AM to 8PM. The Annual and Special Town Meetings are on May 16th at 7:00 PM. The Special Election is on May 23rd from 7AM to 8 PM.

Why will there be a Special Election on May 23rd?

The proposed annual budget has a gap between project revenues and projected expenses of almost \$1,866,000. In order to balance the budget, the recommendation is to reduce the School budget request by over \$1,000,000, close the Library, Senior Center, and Parks programs along with several other reductions in the requested budgets. The Special Election is to consider an Override of \$1,350,000 to restore funding to the School budget and keep the Library, Senior Center, and Parks open.

How are Hopedale's Annual Revenues Determined?

Property tax revenues are controlled by a 1980 law called Proposition 2 ½. Generally, it allows property tax revenues to growth by 2.5% per year. Along with other revenues, the average annual total increase in revenues is between 3% – 4% which, in Hopedale's case, is about \$700,000 - \$750,000 per year in additional revenues. The town's proposed Fiscal FY24 annual budget effective July 1 is about \$27,500,000. This is about a \$857,000 increase in revenues over this year's budget.

Why Is There a Gap Between Projected FY24 Revenue and Expenses?

Unfortunately, between the voters using Free Cash to balance this year's budget and the increase in the amount of funds needed to keep the same level of Town and School services for next year, projected FY24 expenses exceed revenues by almost \$1,900,000.

Hopedale is not unique in this matter. Communities across the Commonwealth have faced this issue over and over since 1980.

The other matter that has put Hopedale in this difficult financial position is the fact the town has been balancing its annual budget with "Free Cash". Simply put, these are funds that are left over from the year before. While using a small amount of Free Cash from time to time may be ok, overall, it is a poor financial practice.

Think of it this way. Your company gives you a bonus that you use to pay your utility bills, next year you don't get the bonus, but you still must pay your bills. In other words,

your yearly expenses exceed your yearly income so you did the best you could to get by using the bonus but now you face an even bigger problem. Something must give. You need to cut some expenses or earn extra income. Hopedale is in the same situation. We have been living off the "bonus" but now is the time to phase out this practice.

How Should Free Cash be Used?

By using our "bonus" to pay our monthly bills we have not addressed other issues, specifically our capital needs. Just like at home things wear out. The roofs, vehicles, the parks, roads, and sidewalks, etc. all need to be replaced from time to time. Using Free Cash to replace some of these items is the sound financial approach used by communities across the Commonwealth. In a year we get a "bonus" (Free Cash) we can replace items. In a year we don't we can hold off but still pay our monthly bills.

What Will be the Result of this Change?

The Town Meeting must adopt a balanced budget. Unfortunately, either cuts must be made (Schools, Library, Council on Aging, Parks, other budgets) or there must be an increase in income (Override). There are no pleasant choices, but the long-term fiscal health of the community will be better served by either cutting expenses or increasing revenue.

Why Recommend Cutting the School Budget and Eliminating the Library, Council of Aging and Parks Departments?

Many of the positions in Town government are required by law. For example, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, Board of Health, Inspectors, along with the Boards and Committees. These all have very limited staff and further cuts will compromise their ability to correctly do their jobs. The Public Safety departments have minimal staffing as well. If we reduced the Fire Department budget by cutting positions, the revenue generated by the ambulance service would decline, offsetting the savings.

Reducing the Police Department budget would result in only one officer on the streets for some shifts, which is very dangerous for the public and the officer. Alternatively, shifts could be filled with overtime which, of course, is costly.

If we reduce personnel in the Highway Department, there are so few laborers already the only choice would be to lay off the mechanic. We would then have to outsource all repairs costing the town more money than we save and compromising the Department's ability to respond during snowstorms or other emergency events if equipment breaks down, as there would be no one on hand to perform repairs.

As a result, this leaves only a few budgets that can be reduced for the Town Meeting to approve a balanced budget.

Will the Voters Have any Choice in this Proposal?

Yes. The Annual Town Meeting on May 16th decides on the Fiscal Year 2024 annual budget. There will be two options presented. The first is a Balanced Budget that recommends reductions in the School, Library, Council on Aging, Parks, and many other budgets. There will also be a Contingent Budget presented that restores the Schools, Library, Council on Aging and Parks while leaving other proposed reductions in place to balance the budget.

If the Contingent Budget is approved by the Town Meeting it must also be approved via a Proposition 2½ Override by the voters at the Special Election on May 23rd. The Override question will request an additional \$1,350,000 of property taxes to maintain the School, Library, Council on Aging and Parks. If the Override is approved by the voters, the Contingent Budget will take effect on July 1. If the voters do not approve the Override, the Balanced Budget will take effect on July 1.

How Much Will my Property Taxes Increase if the Override is Approved?

The average home in Hopedale has an assessed value of about \$450,000. It is estimated that the override will increase the average property tax bill by \$562 a year. If your home has a lower or higher assessed value than \$450,000 then your tax increase would be adjusted accordingly. This estimate is for Override only and does not include the average annual increase in your tax bill.

Can the Town Institute Changes to Help Balance the Budget in the Future?

The Town can make some changes over time to help the situation, but it will not relieve the Town from facing this problem from time to time. There are some areas to be considered to help the long-term financial position of the town including:

- Adopting Fiscal Policies
- Formalizing the budget process
- Annually preparing a three-year fiscal forecast
- Annually preparing a clearly defined five-year capital plan.
- Negotiating a different share of health insurance cost between the employees/retirees and the Town
- Promoting commercial and industrial growth within the overall Master Plan

What is the bottom line?

The question for the voters at the Annual Town Meeting on May 16th and the Special Election on May 23rd is to decide is whether to cut expenses to balance the budget or increase revenues to continue to provide the same level of service that you enjoy today.

Background on the Proposed FY 24 Budget

This is a summary of the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Town Budget, focusing on projected Revenues and Expenses, the resulting budget shortfall and associated community impacts.

PROJECTED INCREASES IN FY 24 AVAILABLE REVENUES:

The following increases are projected in the three main revenues sources:

Property Taxes	\$604,000
State Aid – This amount varies based on the Legislature (Preliminary)	\$34,000
Local Receipts – From excise tax, fees, etc.	<u>\$119,000</u>
Sub-Total FY 24 increase in new revenue	\$757,000
Proposed use of Free Cash for FY 24 budget	<u>\$100,000</u>
Total Additional Available Revenue for FY 24	\$857,000

This represents an increase in Revenues of 3.1% from FY 23

PROJECTED INCREASES IN FY 24 EXPENSES:

The expenses associated with the following budgets are referred to as “fixed costs,” costs that are, typically, legally, or contractually mandated:

	FY 23	FY 24	Change
Blackstone Valley Tech	\$730,214	\$1,008,525	\$278,311
Debt and Interest	\$326,264	\$345,123	\$18,859
Pension	\$1,318,475	\$1,383,382	\$64,907
Unclassified, Insurance	\$4,560,841	\$4,720,000	<u>\$159,159</u>

Increase in Fixed Costs \$521,236

Thus, of the \$857,000 in projected additional revenue, only \$335,764 is available for all other Town departments. Yet, anticipated budget increases – just to maintain existing services and staffing levels – far exceed this amount:

	FY23	FY 24 Level	Change FY23 to FY 24
FY 24 BUDGET			
GENERAL GOVERN	\$1,199,027	\$1,358,153	\$159,126
PUBLIC SAFETY	\$3,325,540	\$3,679,867	\$354,327
HOPEDALE SCHOOL SYSTEM	\$13,398,523	\$13,970,866	\$572,343

PUBLIC WORKS	\$1,016,326	\$1,176,431	\$160,105
HUMAN SERVICES	\$926,361	\$932,921	\$6,560
CULTURE & RECREATION	\$417,424	\$404,404	<u>(\$13,020)</u>
			\$1,239,441

Please note that in the FY 24 Level Service budget above, no new employees are proposed except in the water department which is self-funding. Personnel cost increases result from agreed-upon collective bargaining agreements and/or wage increases in the small number of non-union employees. Further, the expense budgets reflect only anticipated cost increases in goods and services.

The FY 24 Level budget increase of \$1,237,441, minus the available revenues of \$335,764, leaves a budget gap of over \$900,000. Further, since the Town used about \$800,000 in Free Cash to balance the FY 23 budget, the actual FY 24 budget deficit is more than \$1,800,000 (less the use of \$100,000 in Free Cash) for a projected deficit of \$1,766,800.

To close this deficit and achieve a Balanced Budget, the following budget reductions will be recommended at the Town Meeting:

FY 24 BUDGET	FY 24 Level	FY 24 Balanced	Difference
GENERAL GOV.	\$1,356,153	\$1,266,288	(\$89,865)
PUBLIC SAFETY	\$3,679,867	\$3,639,362	(\$40,505)
EDUCATION	\$13,970,866	\$12,928,866	(\$1,042,000)
PUBLIC WORKS	\$1,176,431	\$1,093,051	(\$83,380)
HUMAN SERVICES	\$932,921	\$803,330	(\$129,591)
CULTURE & REC	\$404,404	\$22,945	<u>(\$381,459)</u>
			(\$1,766,800)

This balanced budget would have the following impacts on the community:

- School: Loss of teachers, sports programs, transportation services, and more
- Library: The Library would be closed
- Council on Aging: The Senior Center would be closed.
- Parks Department: No summer programs

Two FY 24 budgets will be presented at the May 16 Annual Town Meeting – one for a balanced budget as outlined above and the other a Contingent budget that will go

into effect only if approved at the Town Meeting and a Proposition 2½ Override of \$1,350,000 at the Special Election on May 23rd.

The Town Meeting will make the final decision regarding both budgets, and must approve a balanced budget; that is, a budget that does not exceed FY 24 projected revenues. They will also decide if they wish to approve a contingent budget that would increase the tax revenues by \$1,350,000.

If the contingent budget is approved at the Town Meeting and by the voters at the Special Election, then the contingent budget will go into effect July 1, 2023, as follows:

- The Library budget restored, and Library remains open.
- The Council on Aging budget restored, and COA remains open.
- The Parks Department budget restored, and programs continue.
- The School Department budget increased by \$810,000.

If the Override is not approved the balanced budget goes into effect on July 1, 2023.

Please exercise your right to vote at the Town meeting and both Elections. It is your government and your choice.

May 1, 2023

Dear Finance Committee

Debt Plan- This would be my proposed debt plan going forward. I do not know the exact interest rates (Numbers estimated and rounded).). Once you know the Free Cash in the Fall you can consider the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Pay off the current School BAN with Free Cash in Fall | \$169,000 |
| 2. Pay off Dept Equipment BAN with Free Cash in Fall | \$112,000 |
| 3. Pay of the Highway share of Vactor Truck with Free Cash in Fall | \$133,000 |
| 4. Pay towards ambulance with Free Cash in Fall | \$113,000 again in FY 25 and pay off in FY 26 – Delivery 18 months. |
| 5. Pay off Leaf Vac with Free Cash in Fall of FY 24 or 25 | \$218,000 – depends on how much Free Cash you have. |
| 6. I am not sure we are buying the Street Lights | |
| If we do not buy them, we should pay off the interest this Fall. | |
| If we do the cost is now \$382,000. We have only authorized \$268,000. | |
| I am still gathering information but should be decided in time for Fall STM | |
| 7. High School Roof – Interest only in FY 25 depending on when it is completed. Annual Payments for FY 26 | \$145,000 for 20 years |
| 8. Parks – This should be passed over at this point. | \$360K for 20 years - Suggest Debt Excluded |
| 9. We do not know the outcome of the RR land purchase? | \$312K for 20 years - Suggest Debt Excluded |
- If the Town stops using Free Cash to balance the annual budget, then managing the capital plan and debt will be easier. The next five-year capital plan can lay out a proposed plan for paying cash and borrowing for needed items. The Town should have a fiscal policy on how much debt you want to have every year.

BAN – Borrowing in Anticipation. This is a short term note generally used prior to a long-term Bond. Similar to a construction loan before you take out a home mortgage.

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
<u>114 - TOWN MODERATOR</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$200	\$200	\$0	
<u>122 - SELECTMEN</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$5,850	\$5,850	\$0	
Expenses	\$5,440	\$3,190	\$3,190	
Total	\$11,290	\$9,040	\$3,190	
<u>123 - ADMINISTRATOR</u>				
Wages	\$163,998	\$275,000	\$200,000	\$20,000
Expense	\$85,437	\$27,000	\$27,000	
Total	\$249,435	\$302,000	\$227,000	
<u>131 - FINANCE COMMITTEE</u>				
Salary Appointed Officials	\$4,140	\$4,140	\$0	
Expenses	\$250	\$250	\$250	
Total	\$4,390	\$4,390	\$250	
<u>132 - RESERVE FUND</u>				
RESERVE FUND	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	
	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	
<u>135 - ACCOUNTANT</u>				
Wages	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Expense	\$117,690	\$118,890	\$118,890	
Total	\$117,690	\$118,890	\$118,890	
<u>141 - ASSESSORS</u>				
Salary Appointed Officials	\$0	\$1,665	\$0	
Wages	\$98,584	\$105,114	\$103,449	
Total Wages	\$98,584	\$105,114	\$103,449	
Expense	\$29,558	\$29,300	\$29,300	
Total	\$128,142	\$134,414	\$132,749	
<u>145 - TREASURER/COLLECTOR</u>				
Wages	\$196,421	\$201,463	\$201,463	
Expenses	\$35,792	\$61,125	\$61,125	
Total	\$232,213	\$262,588	\$262,588	
<u>151 - TOWN COUNSEL</u>				
Expenses	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	
Total	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	
<u>158 - TAX TITLE</u>				
Tax Title	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Total	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	
<u>161 - TOWN CLERK</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$69,000	\$72,450	\$72,450	
Wages	\$21,006	\$23,056	\$23,056	
Total Wages	\$91,006	\$95,506	\$95,506	

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
PROFESSIONAL AND TECH	\$1,276	\$1,300	\$1,300	
TRAVEL/DUES/SEMINARS	\$3,425	\$3,425	\$3,425	
Expense	\$4,701	\$4,725	\$4,725	
Total	\$95,707	\$100,231	\$100,231	
<u>162 - ELECTIONS</u>				
Wages	\$12,158	\$12,158	\$12,158	
Expense	\$7,082	\$7,082	\$7,082	
Total	\$19,240	\$19,240	\$19,240	
<u>163 - REGISTRATION</u>				
Wages	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	
Expense	\$3,675	\$4,000	\$4,000	
Total	\$5,275	\$5,600	\$5,600	
<u>166 - PARKING CLERK</u>				
Wages	\$600	\$600	\$600	
Expenses	\$291	\$200	\$200	
Total	\$891	\$800	\$800	
<u>171 - CONSERVATION COMM</u>				
Salary Appointed Officials	\$1,150	\$2,340	\$0	
Wages	\$1,150	\$3,590	\$1,250	
Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	
Total	\$1,150	\$3,590	\$6,250	
<u>175 - PLANNING BOARD</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$3,330	\$3,330	\$0	
Wages	\$79,506	\$5,830	\$2,500	
Expenses	\$923	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Total	\$80,429	\$6,830	\$3,500	
<u>176 - ZONING BOARD</u>				
Salary Appointed Officials	\$2,340	\$2,340	\$0	
Wages	\$1,372	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Expenses	\$1,999	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Total	\$5,711	\$7,840	\$5,500	
<u>IT DEPARTMENT</u>				
Expenses	\$59,174	\$69,300	\$69,300	
Total	\$59,174	\$69,300	\$69,300	
<u>192 - PUBLIC BLD - ALL</u>				
Expenses	\$75,090	\$200,200	\$200,200	
Total	\$75,090	\$200,200	\$200,200	
<u>100 - GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>	\$1,199,027	\$1,358,153	\$1,268,288	

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
<u>200 - POLICE</u>				
Wages	\$1,279,293	\$1,367,272	\$1,359,772	
Expenses	\$196,812	\$215,316	\$215,316	
Total	\$1,475,105	\$1,582,588	\$1,575,088	
<u>215 - DISPATCH</u>				
Wages	\$339,255	\$362,892	\$362,892	
Expense	\$28,515	\$28,515	\$28,515	
Total	\$367,770	\$391,407	\$391,407	
<u>220 - FIRE</u>				
Wages	\$1,081,489	\$1,225,282	\$1,210,677	
Expense	\$301,890	\$333,970	\$333,970	
Total	\$1,383,379	\$1,559,252	\$1,544,647	
<u>241 - BUILDING INSPECTOR</u>				
Wages	\$59,283	\$63,135	\$63,135	
Expenses	\$3,626	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Total	\$62,909	\$66,135	\$66,135	
<u>243 - PLUMBING INSPECTOR</u>				
Wages	\$7,275	\$8,750	\$8,750	
Expenses	\$196	\$300	\$300	
Total	\$7,471	\$9,050	\$9,050	
<u>245 - ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR</u>				
Wages	\$8,275	\$9,750	\$9,750	
Expenses	\$490	\$300	\$300	
Total	\$8,765	\$10,050	\$10,050	
<u>247 - WEIGHTS & MEASURES</u>				
Wages	\$750	\$750	\$750	
Total	\$750	\$750	\$750	
<u>291 - CIVIL DEFENSE (EMS)</u>				
Wages	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	
Expenses	\$5,700	\$6,900	\$6,900	
Total	\$10,700	\$11,900	\$11,900	
<u>292 -Animal Control</u>				
Expenses	\$0	\$28,735	\$28,735	
Total	\$0	\$28,735	\$28,735	
<u>294 - FORESTRY-TREES</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$900	\$900	\$0	
Expenses	\$7,154	\$19,100	\$1,600	
Total	\$8,054	\$20,000	\$1,600	

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
<u>295 - FORESTRY-DUTCH ELM</u>				
Expenses	\$637	\$0	\$0	
Total	\$637		\$0	
<u>200 - PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL</u>	\$3,325,540	\$3,679,867	\$3,639,362	
<u>300 - EDUCATION</u>				
Hopedale Schools	\$13,398,523	\$13,970,866	\$12,928,866	\$810,000
BVT School	\$730,214	\$1,008,525	\$1,008,525	
Total	\$14,128,737	\$14,979,391	\$13,937,391	
Total - EDUCATION	\$14,128,737	\$14,979,391	\$13,937,391	
<u>422 - HIGHWAY</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$1,980	\$1,980	\$0	
Wages	\$498,494	\$525,052	\$523,072	
Expenses	\$289,482	\$388,629	\$337,629	
Total	\$787,976	\$913,681	\$860,701	
<u>423 - SNOW REMOVAL</u>				
Wages	\$20,000	\$21,000	\$20,000	
Expenses	\$105,000	\$134,400	\$105,000	
Total	\$125,000	\$155,400	\$125,000	
<u>424 - STREET LIGHTING</u>				
Expenses	\$65,000	\$69,000	\$69,000	
Total	\$65,000	\$69,000	\$69,000	
<u>491 - CEMETERY</u>				
Expenses	\$3,350	\$3,350	\$3,350	
Total	\$3,350	\$3,350	\$3,350	
<u>400 - PUBLIC WORKS</u>	\$1,016,326	\$1,176,431	\$1,093,051	
<u>511 - PUBLIC HEALTH</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$1,665	\$1,665	\$0	
Wages	\$66,410	\$66,770	\$66,770	
Expense	\$684,670	\$693,825	\$693,825	
Total	\$751,080	\$760,595	\$760,595	
<u>541 - COUNCIL ON AGING</u>				
Wages	\$100,303	\$105,348	\$0	\$110,578
Expenses	\$24,843	\$24,843	\$0	\$24,843
Total	\$125,146	\$130,191	\$0	\$135,421
<u>543 - VETERANS</u>				
Wages	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,600	
Expenses	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Veterans's Benefits	\$44,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	
Total	\$50,000	\$42,000	\$42,600	

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
<u>549 - COMM ON DISABILITIES</u>				
Expenses	\$135	\$135	\$135	
Total	\$135	\$135	\$135	
<u>500 - HUMAN SERVICES</u>	\$926,361	\$932,921	\$803,330	
<u>610 - LIBRARY</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$1,440	\$1,440		
Wages	\$199,288	\$208,582		\$215,582
Expenses	\$120,283	\$105,402	\$0	\$105,402
Total	\$321,011	\$315,424	\$0	\$320,984
<u>650 - PARKS</u>				
Salaries Elected Officials	\$1,440	\$1,440		
Wages	\$26,400	\$26,400		\$26,400
Expenses	\$56,616	\$49,195	\$12,000	\$37,195
Total	\$84,456	\$77,035	\$12,000	\$63,595
<u>691 - HISTORICAL COMMITTEE</u>				
Expenses	\$2,484	\$1,600	\$1,600	
Total	\$2,484	\$1,600	\$1,600	
<u>692 - MEMORIAL DAY</u>				
Expenses	\$245	\$245	\$245	
Total	\$245	\$245	\$245	
<u>693 - HIST COMM-RED SHOP</u>				
Expense	\$5,465	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Total	\$5,465	\$4,000	\$3,000	
<u>699 - CULTURAL COUNCIL</u>				
Cultural (Band concerts)	\$3,763	\$4,000	\$4,000	
Expenses		\$2,100	\$2,100	
Total	\$3,763	\$6,100	\$6,100	
<u>600 - CULTURE & RECREATION</u>	\$417,424	\$404,404	\$22,945	
<u>710 - PRINCIPAL OF DEBT</u>				
Total - Principal	\$240,750	\$243,728	\$243,728	
<u>715 - INTEREST ON DEBT</u>				
Total - Interest	\$85,514	\$101,395	\$101,395	
<u>700 - DEBT AND INTEREST</u>	\$326,264	\$345,123	\$345,123	
<u>PENSIONS</u>				
Total	\$1,316,665	\$1,381,525	\$1,381,525	

Annual Town Budget 5/16/2023	1 FY23 Budget	2 FY 24 Level Ser	3 "Non-Contingent" Appropriation FY 24	4 "Contingent" Appropriation FY 24
<u>847 - CMRPD</u>				
Total	\$1,810	\$1,857	\$1,857	
<u>850 - STABILIZATION FUND</u>				
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<u>800 - INTERGOVERNMENTAL</u>	\$1,318,475	\$1,383,382	\$1,383,382	
<u>912 - WORKERS COMP</u>				
Total	\$141,000	\$164,000	\$164,000	
<u>913- UNEMPLOYMENT</u>				
Total	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	
<u>914 - MEDICARE</u>				
Total	\$241,260	\$251,000	\$251,000	
<u>915 - HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE</u>				
Total	\$3,982,581	\$4,100,000	\$4,080,000	
<u>945 - LIABILITY INSURANCE</u>				
Total	\$166,000	\$175,000	\$175,000	
<u>900 - UNCLASSIFIED</u>	\$4,560,841	\$4,720,000	\$4,700,000	
Total Requests	\$26,292,634	\$28,979,672	\$27,192,872	28,542,872
Estimated Revenues		\$27,193,688	\$27,193,688	28,543,688
Difference	\$26,555,855	(\$1,785,984)	\$816	\$816

Water Dept Budget	FY 23	FY 24 Level	FY 24 Request	FY 24 Recomm
Salaries Elected Officials	\$ 900	\$ 900		
Wages Permanent	\$ 281,340	\$ 314,902	\$ 314,902	\$ 314,902
Overtime	\$ 49,600	\$ 56,000	\$ 56,000	\$ 56,000
Subtotal - Wages	\$ 331,840	\$ 371,802	\$ 370,902	\$ 370,902
Other Personal Services	\$ 92,960	\$ 72,960	\$ 72,960	\$ 72,960
Energy	\$ 85,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 112,000
Energy Heat Fuel	\$ 15,500	\$ 18,200	\$ 18,200	\$ 18,200
Professional and Technical	\$ 76,000	\$ 76,000	\$ 76,000	\$ 76,000
Legal	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Testing/Regulations	\$ 12,150	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
Telephone	\$ 6,090	\$ 6,090	\$ 6,090	\$ 6,090
Postage	\$ 5,200	\$ 5,200	\$ 5,200	\$ 5,200
Police Details	\$ 3,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,100
Chemicals	\$ 89,000	\$ 94,000	\$ 94,000	\$ 94,000
Office Supplies	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800
Building Repairs and Maintenan	\$ 60,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
Vehicle Expense	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600
In State Travel/Dues/Seminar	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600
Greene street well cleaning	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
Subtotal - Expense	\$ 536,900	\$ 566,550	\$ 566,550	\$ 566,550
Reserve fund	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Capital Projects	\$ 50,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 44,000
Indirects	\$ 136,854	\$ 169,605	\$ 169,605	\$ 169,605
DEBT - Principal	\$ 284,845	\$ 253,783	\$ 253,783	\$ 253,783
DEBT - Interest	\$ 73,736	\$ 82,045	\$ 82,045	\$ 82,045
Subtotal	\$ 358,580	\$ 335,829	\$ 335,829	\$ 335,829
	\$ 1,514,174	\$ 1,587,786	\$ 1,586,886	\$ 1,586,886

SEWER DEPT	FY23 Budget	FY 24 level	FY 24 Request	FY 24 Recomm
Salaries Elected Officials	900	900	0	0
Wages	331,980	378,007	378,007	378,007
Overtime	34,500	35,000	35,000	35,000
Sub-Total -Wages	367,380	413,907	413,007	413,007
Other Services	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Energy	90,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
Professional and Technical	57,000	57,000	57,000	57,000
Testing/Regulations	17,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
Legal	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Telephone	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Postage	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200
Sludge Removal	131,000	158,000	158,000	158,000
Police Details	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Chemicals	109,200	115,000	115,000	115,000
Building Repairs and Maintenance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Vehicle Expense	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
In State Travel/Dues/Seminars	3,500	5,000	5,000	5,000
Subtotal - Expense	505,900	589,200	589,200	589,200
Reserve Fund - Sewer	75,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Capital Projects	150,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Indirects	117,334	142,996	142,996	142,996
Sewer Bond Principal	301,124	306,038	306,038	306,038
Sewer Bond Interest	126,807	118,142	118,142	118,142
	427,931	424,181	424,181	424,181
Grand Total	1,643,545	1,680,284	1,679,384	1,679,384

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
ARTICLE 8
CAPITAL ITEMS
(Select Board)**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds such sums of money to fund equipment and capital costs, or take any other action related thereto.

MOTION: Move that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the following sums for the following purposes:

Pond/Causeway Restoration Study	\$160,000
Fire Station Door Repairs	\$ 25,000
Town Park Retaining Wall Design	\$ 80,000
HVAC and Building Improvements (Jr-Sr HS)	\$135,000

Commentary: The Town's capital requests exceed \$1,000,000. These recommended capital items are the highest priorities to make repairs to existing infrastructure. The other requests can be considered in the Fall or at the next Annual Town Meeting. It is critical that the Town adequately fund its capital needs on an ongoing basis.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS FAVORABLE ACTION