



# Town of West Newbury

## Select Board FY '24 Budget Policy Direction

*Approved December 5, 2022*

To insure the growing and continued financial health of the Town of West Newbury, provide the public with confidence that Town officials respect their responsibility for fiscal stewardship and demonstrate to taxpayers and bond rating agencies that the Town has thoughtfully prepared for its future, the Select Board present to our employees, Boards, Commissions and Committees the following guidance in preparing the FY24 budget.

1. We propose a FY24 operating budget that will limit the overall increase in the expense budget to no more than 2.5%, not including any school budget increases including related to the Pentucket Middle/High School override. If, in order to meet this budgetary goal, the proposed budget includes any changes in organizational structure, employee head count, hours of operation and/or budgeted level of service, these changes should be specified.
2. We will carry out a clear, transparent public process for finance committee and public review of the proposed FY24 budget, taking into account information from taxpayers, town officials, department heads, Boards/ Commissions/ Committees, and residents.
3. We propose to recommend that Town Meeting continue to draw-down the balance in the School Stabilization fund in FY24 based on a multi-year plan to mitigate the taxpayer impact of the Middle/High School project.
4. We propose that updates and revisions to the Capital Improvement Program be presented by the Town Manager in accordance with the timeline requirements in the Capital Improvements Committee Bylaw. We propose that the Capital Improvements Committee and the Town Manager evaluate whether an appropriation of \$500,000 from the operating budget into the Capital Stabilization Fund is an appropriate amount when taking into account FY24 and future years' anticipated capital funding needs.
5. We propose that the FY24 budget process identify which Town and/or Water capital project costs or other eligible expenses will be paid in full or in part through the Town's allocation of Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, with a priority on one-time capital projects and related expenses.
6. We propose that the Town Manager and Department Heads both continue to consider, and expand consideration of, potential opportunities to regionalize some town services, if this can be achieved at cost savings while maintaining or enhancing current levels of service, including exploring potential opportunities that may not be ready for implementation in time for FY24.
7. We propose that Department Heads and Boards/Commissions/Committees review, for programs and services that generate fees, the existing fee structures, their comparability to other municipalities in the region, and the sufficiency of projected fee revenues to cover or suitably offset the underlying town operating costs for such fee-supported programs and services.
8. We propose that the FY24 budget should take into account the estimated impacts, if any, of any newly effective requirements imposed by statute, bylaw, regulation or policy, and should specify the estimated impact of any such newly effective requirements. These estimates should take into account the anticipated impacts of any new statute, bylaw, regulation or policy that is known to affect FY24 or is proposed to take effect during FY24.
9. We propose that, for each section of the proposed budget, the proposed budget specify the individual(s) or the Board/Commission/Committee that will have authority to expend the budgeted funds.

Approved by the Select Board  
December 5, 2022