

Town Meeting Budget Overview

The Wallingford Selectboard has proposed a Fiscal Year 2023 budget of \$1,345,779.05, up just \$53,765. It would require \$992,507.06 to be raised in taxes. Using the 2021 Grand List, the municipal tax rate would increase slightly from \$0.3926 to \$0.4059. That is just an estimate as the tax rate would be calculated using the 2022 Grand List this summer.

Notable differences between the FY'22 and FY'23 budgets:

REVENUE

~line item #4503 Ordinance Fines – dropped from \$17,000 in FY'22 to \$7,500 in the FY'23 budget based on reducing Sheriff patrols to 20 hours per week starting July 1.

~line item #4514 Transfer Station Fees – expected to increase from \$20,000 to \$25,000 based on actual fees collected this past year.

~line item #4523 the Town will collect \$992,037 in Property Taxes for the FY'23 budget compared to \$894,739 in FY'22.

~ The Selectboard anticipates Elfin Lake will open this summer and budgeted income for fees on line #4547 to be \$6,000 and income from concessions on line #4547 to be \$2,200. Those line items were both zero in FY'22.

~ The revenue line item 4554 for Wallingford Day and the expense line item 5816 for Wallingford Day are both zero in FY'23. The Wallingford Day group has approximately \$6,600 in donations to cover expenses for the annual event this summer. The Selectboard anticipates adding funds to the budget in future years for Wallingford Day.

EXPENSES

~**Administration** budget is up \$30,825.

The Selectboard reviewed a Wage and Benefit Compensation Report issued by Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns. It was determined Wallingford's assistant town clerk/treasurer line 5009 and the town administrator line 5004 were either last or second from the bottom of the wage scale in comparison to the same positions in municipalities from across the state. The Board made salary adjustments to bring Wallingford pay rates in line with other municipalities. Road crew salaries were adjusted last September upon the hiring of a new employee. Those wages adjustments are reflected on line 5006. Selectboard stipends on line 5001 increased slightly to bring compensation in line with Selectboard pay from around the county.

~**Insurance** line 5025 decreased \$18,250:

Four out of five employees are now utilizing single health insurance plans, which is a big savings for the Town. Blue Cross Blue Shield also dropped rates by 6 percent for 2022.

~**Town Government Operations** – Increased \$18,099

Increases include Elections line 5112, which is up \$2,350 with a Primary and General Election this year. Paper costs have skyrocketed so the Town Report line 5113 is up \$650. Legal line 5115 is back up to \$5,000 after a year at \$2,500. We anticipate some legal expenses associated with a tax-exempt request that may be heading to court. Transfer Station expenses on line 5150 are up \$5,000 based on actual expenses, and Rutland County Tax line 5155 assessed by the county to the Town will increase \$4,630.

~**Appropriations** – up \$7,300.

After a year off, most non-profit funding requests are back in the budget.

~**Highway** – Up \$47,290.

- We increased the winter salt line item 5319 by \$10,000 and we increased the gravel line 5323 by \$22,500 in anticipation of higher per ton rates.
- The paving line 5325 went from \$50,000 to \$65,000. We had hoped to use the FY'21 carryover in the amount of \$43,000 to reduce that line while spending the same amount on paving. However, a major mechanical issue with the 2014 Kenworth will require the carryover to be used for repairs and the purchase of a 2014 International from the Town of Clarendon to use while waiting for parts for the Kenworth. We couldn't be down a plow truck in January for an anticipated 6 weeks or more.
- The Dodge Ram was paid off so line 5340 was reduced from \$21,000 to \$1,500.

~**Public Safety** – dropped by \$40,200.

- Rutland County Sheriff patrols will be reduced from 40 to 20 hours per week so line #5406 Special Police Office was decreased accordingly.

~**Capital Expenses** were nearly level-funded.

~**Recreation Expenses** decreased \$10,900 mainly due to Wallingford Day line 5816 going to zero as the group organizing the event has \$6,600 in donations for this summer. The Board anticipates putting money in future budgets for Wallingford Day.