



## ANNUAL TOWN MEETING May 15, 2023

The Annual Town Meeting was held on Monday, May 15, 2023, in the Richard H. Smith Town Hall Auditorium. Approximately 60 residents were in attendance including members of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. Representatives for Region #4 School District were also there. First Selectman Angus L. McDonald, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. due to technical difficulties. A motion to appoint Rick Daniels as moderator of the meeting was made by Duane Gates. The motion was seconded by Kate Cryder and was approved unanimously.

The moderator appointed Town Clerk Amy Winchell as clerk of the meeting; he then read the call of the meeting.

A motion to approve Item #1 was made by Lori Guerette and seconded by Miriam Morrissey.

**1) To approve the Town Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 in the amount of \$19,954,305.**

DISCUSSION: Board of Finance Chair, George Eckenroth, presented the budget FY 2023-2024 as approved at the Board of Finance meeting dated April 26, 2023.

Appropriated	Proposed	Change	
2022 - 2023	2023 -2024	Dollars	Percent
<b>Budget Revenue</b>			
\$18,400,323	\$19,180,006	\$779,684	4.2%
<b>Budget Expenditures</b>			
\$19,286,574	\$19,954,305	\$667,731	3.5%
<b>Excess of Revenues over Expenditures</b>			
	(\$774,299)		
<b>FY End Surplus</b>			
\$2,869,323	\$2,095,024	(\$774,299)	-27.0%
<b>Tax Rate</b>			
28.98	29.88	0.9	3.1%

Eckenroth noted the \$667,731 increase in the budget due in part to the 113% increase in education costs. Education makes up 69% of the total budget but the Board of Finance was able to reduce the Deep River Elementary School Board of Education request by \$24,000. He also noted that Region #4 has always returned a portion of their yearly surplus to the towns and did so this year however, going forward, they will be keeping any surplus money. We are currently in the middle of a formal salary review for Town employees and have reserved \$40,000 to be prepared for recommendations in the final report. He also noted a 7.5% increase

in medical insurance and 31% increase in the Firemen's Incentive Program (pension plan). American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will offset \$150,000 in Fire Department equipment purchases for this year's budget. A variety of other expenditures including, but not limited to, State mandated engineering costs to cap our landfill, payment to the Town of Essex for use of their pump-out boat, possible costs associated with state-wide early voting and our Ethics Commission legal fees, and Highway Department costs associated with salt and sand, tree removal and stormwater runoff all result in a \$292,470 increase in Town expenses. The Board of Finance anticipates increasing the mill rate 3.1% or 0.9 to 29.88. While this budget does show a \$774,299 shortfall, the reimbursement of the Region #4 surplus and utilization of our General Fund surplus will cover it. The Board of Finance anticipates a surplus of 10.5% for next June.

Mike Joia asked about the history of our General Fund surplus over the last 5-10 years. Eckenroth responded that since 2016 when the current First Selectman and he, as Chair of the Board of Finance, had been in place, that surplus had increased from 1% - 2% to 15%.

There being no further discussion, **Item #1 was unanimously approved by show of hands.**

A motion to approve Item #2 was made by Guerette and seconded by Greg Alexander.

- 2) **To authorize the Tax Collector to collect real estate taxes and personal property taxes in two semi-annual installments, the dates to be July 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024.**

**To authorize the Tax Collector to collect regular motor vehicle taxes in one installment, due and payable on July 1, 2023.**

**To authorize the Tax Collector to collect supplemental motor vehicle taxes in one installment, due and payable on January 1, 2024.**

**Any property tax due the Town of Deep River in an amount that does not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100) shall be due and payable in a single installment on July 1, 2023.**

There being no discussion, **Item #2 was unanimously approved by show of hands.**

A motion to adjourn was made by Alexander, with second by Jane Samuels. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

ATTEST: Amy M. Winchell, MCTC  
Town Clerk