

**Board of Finance Special Meeting**  
**March 12, 2024 6 P.M**  
**Meeting Held Remotely**

**Call to order:** BOF Chairman Michael Imber called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. Also in attendance were Vice Chair Jeffrey Farr, Rone Baldwin, Theresa Brasco, Amy Gare, Jeffrey Goldstein, First Selectwoman Samantha Nestor, Town Administrator Karl Kilduff, Finance Director Rick Darling, Town of Weston Department Directors, Board and Commission members. Excused absence noted for BOF member Chris Bryant.

**Discussion concerning the Board of Selectmen's proposed operating, capital and debt service budgets for FY 2024-25.** First Selectwoman Nestor presented the proposed FY 25 operating, capital and debt service budget as approved by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Nestor discussed the current revaluation year with a 38.40% growth in the grand list. FY 25's overall budget is a net increase of 1.65%, a total budget of \$77, 156,121 as compared to the 2024 budget. Net increase and grand list growth would produce a mill rate of 24.28. Selectwoman Nestor discussed the focus of the budget being community safety and improvements through provision of essential services. The target areas are town infrastructure, facilities, safety initiatives, community, employees and schools. Challenges faced are setting a budget based on priorities as well as realizing external pressures and preparing for future needs. Fund balance for FY25 is projected to be 22.1%, which does not reflect the LMR grant. Fund balance history, forecasts, economic snapshots and grand list history was reviewed. Proposed budget is a 4.45% increase. Operating expense budget is \$16,053,436. 77% of expenditures are related to human capital - salaries, contractual wages, medical insurance, and DPW vehicle maintenance. Increase in operating budget does not reflect moving paving to the capital budget. FTE request from 72.32 to 77.7 was discussed as an increase. Capital Improvements/expenditures discussed - primarily in infrastructure and facilities, equipment replacement and public safety. Capital budget request for BOS and BOE totaling \$4,486,248 (minus \$266,000 in new reflected offsets). \$4.6 million is reflected for paving in the gross number offset by equal amount. Capital budget requests highlighted are the second installment of Fire Truck 7, road improvements, modular facility for town departments, sidewalks and facilities equipment. Selectwoman Nestor provided a detailed overview of funding for all capital projects relating to grants and matches. Total expenditures noted is 76% of the budget is BOE and 24% is TOW and debt service is 1%. Total net budget FY 24 to FY 25 is \$1,252.157 (1.65%). Town revenue outlook increases in investment income, building permits and town clerk fees. Decreases in delinquent taxes, and supplemental auto levy. Grand list growth and reval on impact of motor vehicle taxes discussed and 24.28 mill rate impact discussed.

Mr. Imber lead a review of each section of the budget and provided opportunity for questions and comments by BOF and answered by various departments:

Admin & Finance - increase due to new HR Mgr. Payroll Admin discussed vs. outsourcing.

General Administration - increase due to FTE, potential retirement payments for PD. OPEB funding discussed.

Information Systems - budget decreased due to one time IT related initiatives.

Elections/Registrars - increase due to early voting legislation mandates.

Tax Collector - request to increase tax collector and assistant tax collector to FT. Questions on the need for full time asked by BOF vs. temporary services to assist.

Land Use - increase reflects bldg inspector moving to FT, increase in Land Use Director hours.

PD - anticipated retirements discussed, increase for gasoline based on usage, training expenses.

VFD - decrease in medical exam expenses, increase in repairs to vehicles & equipment and admin. assistant expense. Long term projected capital budget items discussed for vehicles. Establishment of a sinking fund for fire trucks is not in the budget request. Fire engine 7 replacement is in the capital budget.

Fire Marshal - general supply increase due to office purchases being charged to individual depts.

Public Works - Admin Assistant and request for Facilities Mgr, increases in street sweeping svcs, drain cleaning. Road paving moved from operating to capital budget. Repairs to facilities, vehicles and equipment. Paving discussed and repairs discussed.

Human Services - changes discussed to the Human Services Department. Director of Human Svcs position which oversees Sr Center, social and youth services, request for youth and family social worker to full time, increase in caseworker to 30 hours a week. Increase in needs of youth, mental health svcs and seniors discussed.

Library - changes discussed for funding pt staffing positions, book truck purchases.

Capital Expenses -

Solid Waste - salaries and wages and addition of transfer station employee. HRRRA fees, haul away rates.

DPW & Facilities - Transportation Alternatives Sidewalk Project administered by the DOT, DPW plow truck, chipper truck, backhoe, tire balancing and snow removal machine. Solar enhancements & roof replacement at DPW discussed.

Building repairs for unanticipated repair and replacements at town hall, PD, Fire Dept, Dispatch.

Other items discussed, construction management for state/fed funded projects.

Discussion on Modular replacement for Annex - lengthy discussion on rental leases vs. rent to buy options. Options discussed for suitable space for town employees. Question on where to budget the lease payments.

Mr. Imber noted that the remainder of the budget items will be continued on the March 14, 2024 BOF Special meeting.

Adjournment. Mr. Imber asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mr. Baldwin, seconded by Ms. Gare. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:30pm.

Respectfully submitted, Shawn Amato Recording Secretary