

# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON – FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012

## Town Council Budget Policy Statement

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### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this budget policy statement is to provide suggestions and guidance to the Town Manager, Board of Finance, and Board of Education during the creation and implementation of the Town of East Hampton Budget for fiscal year 2011-2012.

### GENERAL STATEMENT

The overall position of the Town Council is to provide the residents of East Hampton with fiscal leadership. Our goal is to always plan for the future while managing the needs of today. We can not provide all things to all people, but rather seek to manage wants, needs, opportunities and necessities.

We ask that when all responsible budget departments plan their spending requests for the upcoming fiscal year, they always consider the needs of the residents first and foremost.

### TRI-BOARD MEETINGS

Throughout this budget process, the Chairs of the Town Council, Board of Finance and Board of Education collaboratively plan to conduct a number of Tri-Board meetings. The initial meeting for this fiscal budget season was held on November 18<sup>th</sup> in the East Hampton High School Library. Future meetings will be scheduled and posted on the Town website. We ask that all elected members of these boards commit to attending these meetings to provide open communication and discussion regarding budget issues for this upcoming fiscal year.

### GUIDELINES

To this end, we provide the following guidelines for the creation of the Town East Hampton Budget for fiscal year 2011- 2012:

1. Provide a formal guideline to the Town Manager and all department heads when creating their budgets to pursue a "zero increase" or possibly a reduction in spending in all departments.
2. Include residents and taxpayers in the budget process as early as possible through numerous communication media outlets such as our Town website and local newspaper publications and ensure the budget process is presented in an easy-to-understand format.
3. Create a budget that will work within the available revenues and State funding shortfalls that are expected or anticipated for the next fiscal year, taking into account the current economic condition regionally and nationally.
4. All projected revenues and expenditures during the fiscal year shall be internally tested and reported by the Finance Director on a quarterly basis to the Town Council, Town Manager, and the Board of Finance.
5. Should any line item be reduced or eliminated from any Town Manager (submitted) budget prior to its submission to public meeting and then vote, the Town Manager and the Finance Director, in conjunction with the Superintendent of Schools, if applicable, shall prepare a written report for the Town Council, Board of Finance and Board of Education (if applicable) evaluating the short and long term impact on municipal services or initiatives of such proposed budget reduction.

## PRIMARY GOALS

- 1) Support and coordinate with the State, surrounding towns or other organizations, efforts to regionalize and leverage residential and municipal services where appropriate in areas such as use of municipal equipment, vehicle purchase, transfer station, energy purchase, etc.
- 2) Commitment to work with interim Town Manager, Board of Finance and Board of Education to find a way to fund the State-mandated improvements required in Science and Technology at East Hampton High School.
- 3) Commitment to Lake Pocotopaug and the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed Area. All precious natural resources should be protected and all plans and projects with this goal should be considered a priority.
- 4) Support expenditures and resource allocation for appropriate economic development that is consistent with the character of the Town, as is necessary and appropriate, as well as the allocation of municipal resources required for any development including fiscal-positive commercial tax-deferrals.
- 5) Ensure that Town social services and programs for seniors are funded to meet the needs of the community.
- 6) As part of our land-use environmental policy, allocate such capital expenditures as necessary for the purchase of property for town and/or open space use when opportunities arise.
- 7) Incorporate long-term capital project considerations in fiscal year budgets.
- 8) The fund balance shall not to be used to artificially balance the budget.

