

**TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016**



Town Council Budget Policy Statement

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this budget policy statement is to provide 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 2015-2016.

GENERAL STATEMENT

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

GUIDELINES

The Town Council is providing the following guidelines for the Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools and Town Departments in preparing their budgets for the coming fiscal year.

- Include residents and taxpayers in the budget process as early as possible through numerous communication media outlets such as our Town website, Citizen's Guides and local newspaper publications.
- 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 conditions.
- The Town Manager and the Board of Education will present their respective budgets at a Town Forum. Their budgets will be detailed and transparent.

PRIMARY GOALS

- 1) The fund balance shall not be used to lower the annual mill rate or pay for Town operating expenses.
- 2) The Council will continue to support the Town Manager in labor negotiations and efforts to realize efficiencies and to mitigate cost increases for taxpayers.
- 3) Support investment in the area of new technologies, updates to IT security, and costs associated with procedures for better fiscal and network controls.
- 4) Provide continued support to our Public works department to repair, improve and maintain the Town's roads, sidewalks, trees and infrastructure.

- 5) Provide permanent financial support to safeguard and ensure professional monitoring/testing of Lake Pocotopaug. Continue to fund efforts to protect, preserve, and improve the condition of Lake Pocotopaug and the Lake Watershed.
- 6) Ensure that Town social services and programs for seniors are funded to meet identified needs of the community.
- 7) Provide for the continued support of public safety services (i.e. Police/Volunteer Fire Departments) with regards to training and equipment.
- 8) Commit to funding the development of a Comprehensive Town Vision with the intent of identifying the community's aspirations for the next decade and beyond.
- 9) Implement Long-Term Capital Plan and incorporate the plan in fiscal year budgets wherever applicable.
- 10) Allocate such capital expenditures as necessary for the purchase of property for town use and or open space use when opportunities arise.
- 11) Commit to mitigating the impact of future debt on our taxpayers by continually replenishing and augmenting our debt sinking fund.

Approved by Town Council: December 9, 2014