

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019

Town Council Budget Policy Statement

CHARTER - GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES

As specified in Section 2.4 of the Town of East Hampton Charter, "each year the council shall submit to the Board of Finance a policy statement outlining its annual budget goals and objectives for the ensuing fiscal year."

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this budget policy statement is to provide guidance from the Town Council to the Board of Finance during the creation and implementation of the annual Town of East Hampton Budget. Although not specifically named in the Charter, the intent of this Budget Policy Statement is to also provide guidance to the Town Manager and the Board of Education who are charged with proposing and presenting respective general government and education budget recommendations to the Board of Finance.

GENERAL STATEMENT

The Town of East Hampton's annual budget should consider the needs of our community and reflect the taxpayer's ability to pay for those needs.

GUIDELINES

- Include taxpayers in the budget process as early as possible utilizing Tri-Board meeting(s), public hearings, our Town website, local newspaper, town notices, Citizens Guide to Budget and meetings.
- The budgets presented should reflect the guidelines presented here as well as projected available revenue, anticipated State funding shortfalls and current economic conditions.
- The Town Manager and the Board of Education will present their respective budgets at a Town Forum. Their budget must include all proposed spending presented in a format that is easily read and understood by our citizens.
- The Town Manager's budget will incorporate the recommendations of the Capital Committee composed of representatives of the Town Council and Boards of Finance and Education.

2018-2019 BUDGET GOALS & FUTURE PLANNING

- The fund balance shall NOT be used to lower the annual mill rate or pay for Town operating expenses except to supplement revenue sources for shortfalls or reductions in State funding or other deemed emergencies.
- Every effort should be made to minimize new personnel for any department this fiscal year.
- The Public Works budget should include a plan to continue ongoing road repairs, sidewalks, trees, lake watershed protections and road improvements,
- General Government budget and the Board of Education should make every effort to only limit budget increases to meet contractual obligations.

- The Capital Committee should update the Town's long-term Capital Improvement Plan to ensure the future financial discipline and funding stability of the Town.
- Conservatively estimate state revenues to be prepared for shortfalls in state funding.
- Support updates to IT security.
- The Council for its part will:
 - continue to support the Town Manager's labor negotiation efforts to realize efficiencies and savings for taxpayer's.
 - seek out cost savings by pursuing regional sharing of services
 - work to identify opportunities to "share" services between and among Town departments and the Board of Education
 - support the implementation of those items from the Lake Pocotopaug 9 Point Plan that will preserve and improve the condition of the lake and its watershed with previously allocated funding or new initiatives where critical and aggressive pursuit of grant funding can be explored.
 - ensure social services and programs for seniors are adequately funded.
 - provide continued support of public safety services, training and equipment.
 - commit to continually replenishing and augmenting our mill rate stabilization fund and not appropriating such funds for non-designated uses.

Approved by Town Council: January 23, 2018