

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council  
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager   
DATE: February 23, 2024  
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

The following information includes follow up from general items that were discussed at previous Council meetings as well as updates of a general nature from the departments or agencies. The items are organized by department and are intended to provide information on activities currently being undertaken by the Town's departments and those matters that are upcoming. Not all departments will be represented in each Report.

### **Clerk**

- As a reminder for the information of local voters, the Presidential Primaries will be held Tuesday April 2, 2024 at East Hampton High School from 6:00am to 8:00pm. Absentee ballots for the primaries will be available beginning Tuesday, March 12, 2024 in the Town Clerk's Office for voters who are registered in either the Democratic or Republican Party. The standard process applies for requesting, receiving and returning absentee ballots.
- Voters interested in the new early voting option are invited to an informational session regarding the early voting process being presented by the East Hampton Office of the Registrar of Voters on March 7 beginning at 6:30pm in the Town Hall. Early voting will be available for the Presidential Primaries on March 26, 27, 28 and 30 at the Town Hall from 10:00am to 6:00pm each day.

### **Library**

- The new teen space furniture has arrived, completing the area's transformation into a more welcoming and comfortable place for young adults to spend time.
- Strategic Planning workshops kicked off last week with a session for Library staff members to share their goals for the Library in the coming years. Upcoming workshops include one for the Library Advisory Board on March 4 and Community Conversations with the public at the Library on Saturday, March 2 (10:30am to 12:00pm), Friday, March 15 (11:00am to 12:30pm), and Tuesday, March 26 (6:30pm to 8:00pm).
- The Library is excited to host Ronny LeBlanc of Discovery+ and the Travel Channel on Tuesday, March 12 at 6:30pm. He will be presenting on paranormal hotspots in New England.

## **Police**

- During the month of January, the Department did not use Narcan, nor did it respond to any medical call in which a family member or other person had used it.

## **Public Works**

- The final design for the Wopowog culvert is nearing completion. The Army Corps of Engineers did not object to the Town's self-verification form related to the Corps' regulations, which means that the project may proceed as described in the self-verification process after final design and bidding. Additionally, a detailed application package is being completed for submission to the Town's Inland Wetlands and Waterways Agency (IWWA) for consideration at the IWWA's February 28 meeting. Final approval is expected at the March 27 IWWA meeting. Concurrently, the consulting engineer is preparing the project bid package to be released during the last week in February with a short return time frame. Bids will be received and reviewed in mid-March and will be presented to the Town Council for approval at its March 26 meeting. The contractor is expected to receive notice to proceed on April 1. The anticipated construction time for this project is 60 days which will place substantial completion on May 31.

## **Recreation**

- Playoffs for the Travel Basketball Program begin this weekend, February 24, and will run through the first week of March, which concludes the season. The recreational basketball program for grades 2 and 3 concludes this week, and grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will conclude on March 2.
- Summer program planning is in full swing, and staff anticipates registrations will open for the main summer camp programs on March 1 with many other programs being posted shortly after that date. Summer employment position postings will be out soon for Lifeguards, Gate Attendants, Camp Counselors and Assistant Camp Director.
- The annual Spring Candy Hunt is scheduled for March 26 at 5:30pm at the Center School field. This is a large event and staff again plans to have great turnout with many children and families in attendance.
- In coordination with the Conservation Lake Commission, an application was made to DEEP for funds under DEEP's grant programs for the control of aquatic invasive species seeking support for a lake-wide herbicidal treatment to address growths of the invasive plant Hydrilla, which was identified in Lake Pocotopaug. The variety of Hydrilla found

in Lake Pocotopaug is the same variety as that which is currently impacting the Connecticut River. The estimated cost for a lake wide herbicide treatment is approximately \$135,000 and the grant request is \$75,000.

### **Town Manager/Other**

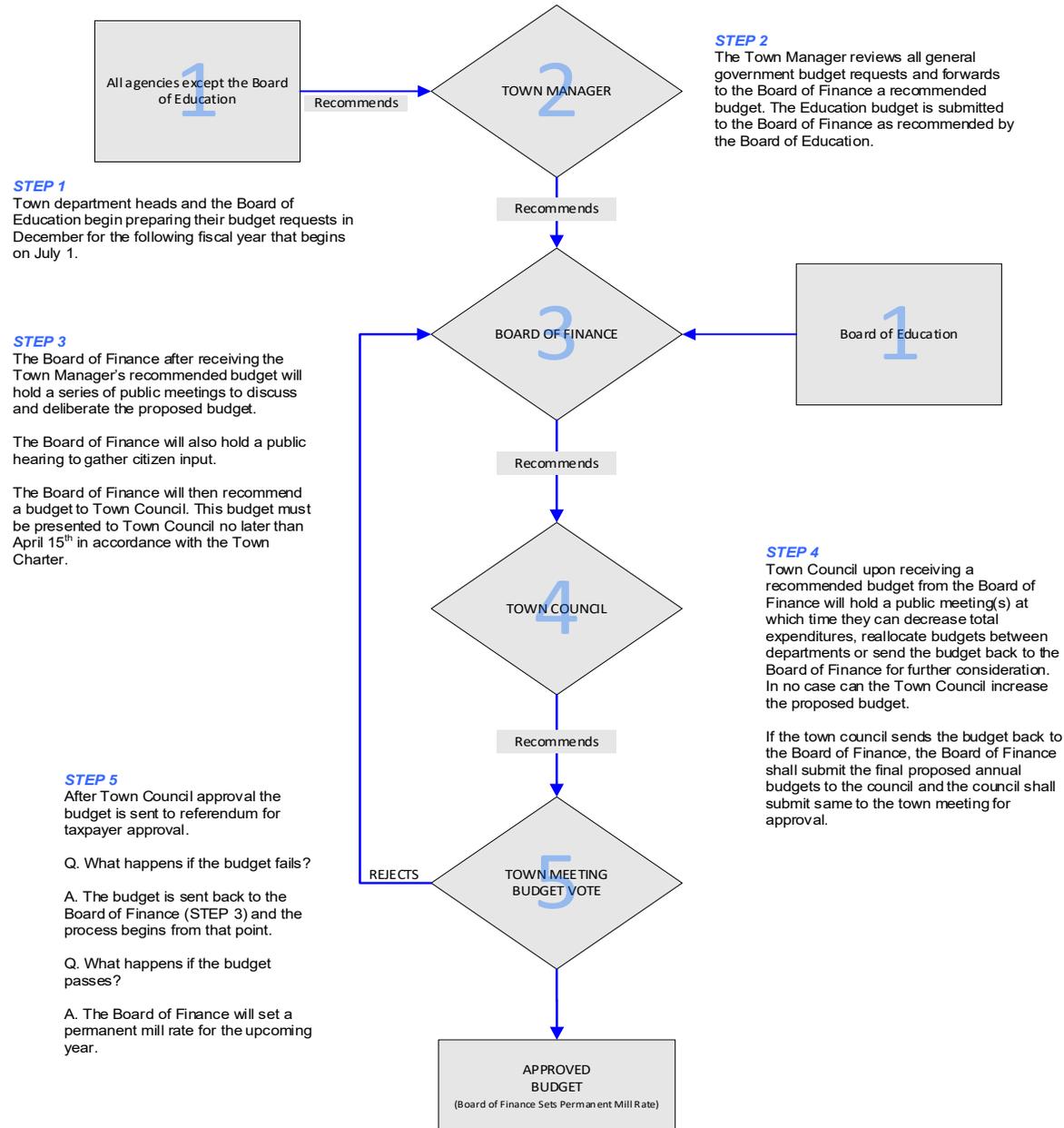
- For many years, the communities in the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (River COG) have worked together to provide a Household Hazardous Waste collection program for the participating municipalities. The RiverCOG, through its Household Hazardous Waste Committee on which the East Hampton Town Manager sits, is updating the agreement that outlines the program and provides the understanding of the municipalities regarding operation of the program. Once that agreement is approved by the RiverCOG membership, the Town Council will be asked to affirm its participation once again in the program and approval of the agreement. The annual program includes seven collections throughout the RiverCOG communities including one at the East Hampton Water Pollution Control Facility on Gildersleeve Drive on May 11. The program also provides four paper shredding events including one at the Town's Water Pollution Control Facility on May 4. Additional information can be found the RiverCOG website at [www.rivercog.org/household-hazardous-waste](http://www.rivercog.org/household-hazardous-waste)
  
- In follow up to the Tri-Board workshop held Thursday, February 22, staff and members of the Board of Finance and the Board of Education will be attending the Town Council listening sessions scheduled for, February 27, 4 to 6pm at Town Hall; February 28, 1 to 2:00pm at the Senior Center and March 5, 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Public Library. At each session, a short presentation on the draft budget will be given followed by an opportunity for the public to address members of the elected bodies regarding the public's opinions about the upcoming budget. Information regarding the current budget may be found on the Town's website under the Finance Department here: <https://www.easthamptonct.gov/finance/pages/2024-2025-budget>. Additionally, a new brochure outlining the budget development process and including important meeting dates has been developed and is included in this Report.

DC

cc: Management Staff



# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON BUDGET FLOW CHART



## THE BUDGET

Each year, the budget process begins when the Town Council adopts a Budget Policy Statement. This document provides guidance to town staff as they develop their budgets. It also helps the Board of Finance in reviewing proposed budgets.

The annual budget is a comprehensive document. It presents both projected revenue estimates and anticipated expenses necessary to provide services to our citizens. It is a dynamic document meaning that it is always changing based on day-to-day realities.

**It is important to remember, the annual budget is required by our town charter.** The Town is obligated to provide services and pay its debts. Not approving the budget is not an option. It is the responsibility of taxpayers to carefully consider the budget presented and cast an informed vote at the annual budget referendum until an approved budget is passed. Broadly, the annual budget is made up of these components:

### REVENUES

- Property Taxes
- State & Local Grants
- Federal Grants
- Licenses, Fees & Permits
- Local Government Payments
- Investment Income

### EXPENSES

- Education
- Public Safety
- Public Works
- Culture & Recreation
- Health & Human Services
- Regulatory
- Administrative & Finance
- Debt Service

## The Capital Improvement Plan

As part of the annual budget process, the Town Manager and Finance Director also prepare a capital budget as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Each year the Town allocates funds to the capital and non-recurring expenditures fund to pay for the costs of items such as, infrastructure maintenance and improvements, equipment, vehicles and facilities improvements that have a useful life over more than one year. The CIP provides an effective means of preserving as well as adding to the physical assets of the town. It is also vital for a growing community like East Hampton to maintain the level of public safety, welfare and quality of life that taxpayers expect.

## The Budget Process

Town department heads and the Board of Education begin preparing their budget requests in December for the following fiscal year that begins on July 1.

The Town Manager reviews all general government budget requests and forwards to the Board of Finance a recommended budget. The Education budget, which is prepared by the Superintendent, is submitted to the Board of Finance as recommended by the Board of Education.

The Board of Finance, after receiving the Town Manager's and Board of Education recommended budgets, will hold a series of public meetings to discuss and deliberate the proposed budget. The Board of Finance will also hold a public hearing to gather citizen input. The Board of Finance will then recommend a budget to Town Council. This budget must be presented to Town Council no later than April 15 in accordance with the Town Charter.

Town Council, upon receiving a recommended budget from the Board of Finance, will hold a public meeting(s) at which time they can decrease total expenditures, reallocate funds between departments or send the budget back to the Board of Finance for further consideration. In no case can the Town Council increase the proposed budget. If the Town Council sends the budget back to the Board of Finance, the Board of Finance shall submit the final proposed annual budgets to the Council and the Council shall submit same to the town meeting for approval.

After Town Council approval the budget is sent to referendum for taxpayer approval.

**Q.** What happens if the budget fails?

**A.** The budget is sent back to the Board of Finance and the process begins from that point.

**Q.** What happens if the budget passes?

**A.** The Board of Finance will set a permanent mill rate for the upcoming year.

## Important Dates

**February 27, 2024, 4-6PM** | Town Council Budget Listening Session at Town Hall

**February 28, 2024, 1-2PM** | Town Council Budget Listening Session at the Senior Center

**March 5, 2024, 6-8PM** | Town Council Budget Listening Session at the Public Library Community Room

**March 16, 2024, 9-11AM** | Town Council Budget Listening Session at the Cranberry Bog

**March 18, 2024, 6:30PM** | Board of Finance Public Hearing Town and Board of Education Budget Presentation

**March 19, 2024, 4:00PM** | Board of Finance Budget Workshop

**March 20, 2024, 6:30PM** | Board of Finance Budget Workshop

**March 21, 2024, 6:30PM** | Board of Finance Budget Workshop

**March 27, 2024, 6:30PM** | Board of Finance Special Meeting – Budget Deliberations

**April 3, 2024, 6:30PM** | Board of Finance Special Meeting – Budget Deliberations

**April 9, 2024** | Board of Finance submits budget to the Town Council

*Note: All Board of Finance meetings will be held at Town Hall and via Zoom*

Can't make a meeting but want to get more information or provide input? Visit [WWW.EASTHAMPTONCT.GOV](http://WWW.EASTHAMPTONCT.GOV)

Scan the QR code to visit our budget page.

