

TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE

2024 TOWN  
MEETING  
MARCH 13-14

CAPTAIN SAMUEL  
DOUGLASS ACADEMY



# 2024 TOWN MEETING | MARCH 13-14

**Town Moderator** - Peter Webb

## **Selectboard**

Eddie Arnold – Chair

Brendan Denehy – Vice Chair

Steve Russo

Ed Perry

Brian Rater

## **Finance Committee**

Cindy LaCroix – Chair

Daniel Koenig – Secretary

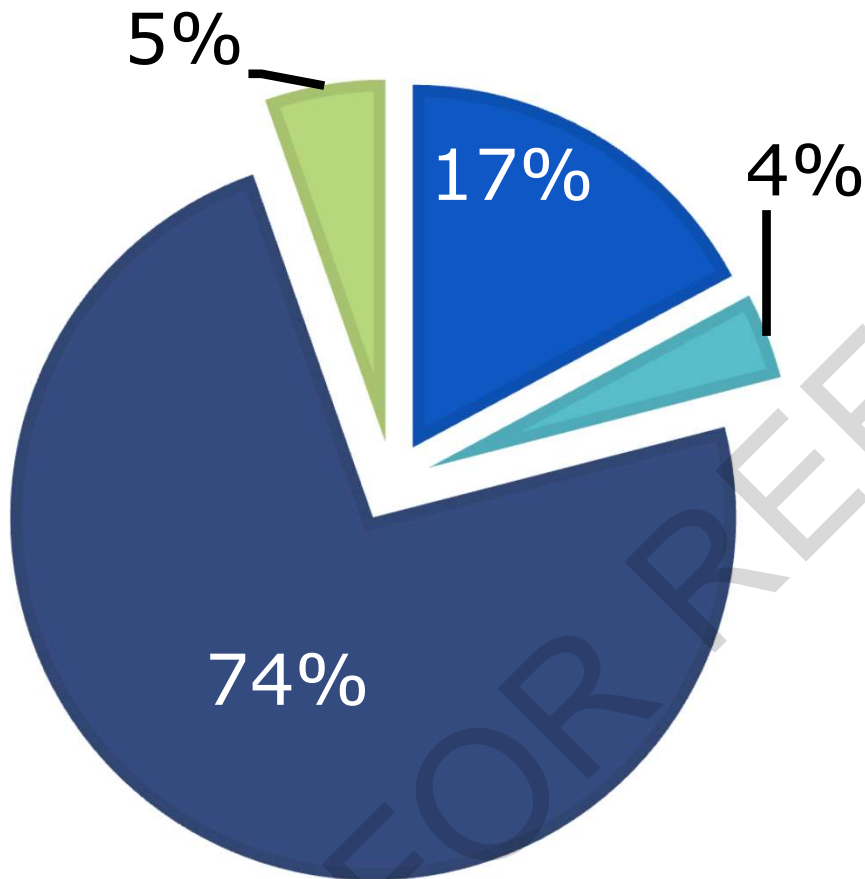
Graham Loff

# 2024 BUDGET SEASON

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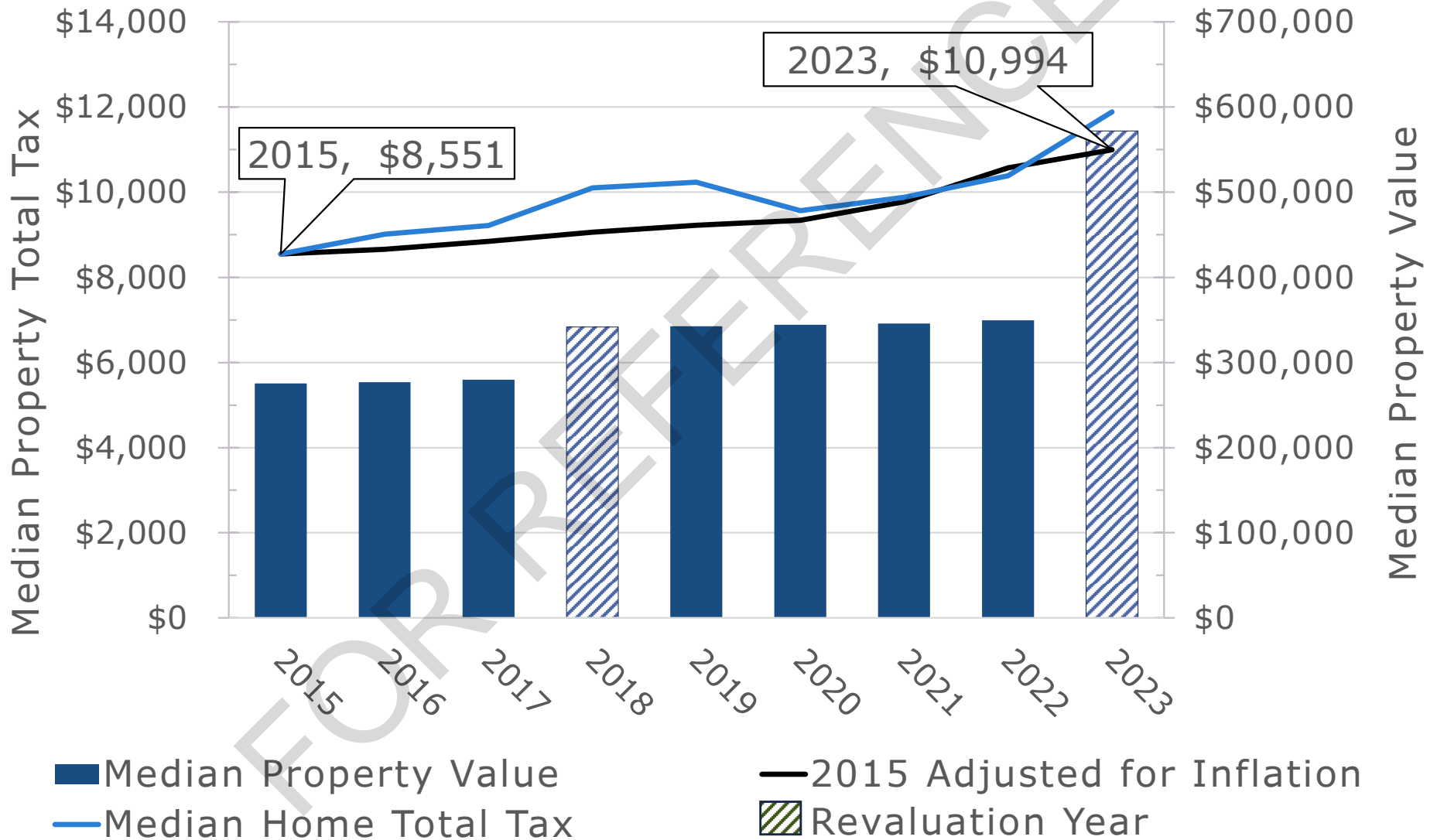
- Started in October 2023
- Worked closely with Department Heads and Finance Committee to keep costs down
- Public Budget Hearings held in mid-January 2024
- Some Warrant Article language changed after printing Town Reports and DRA review

# 2023 TAX RATE | \$20.78

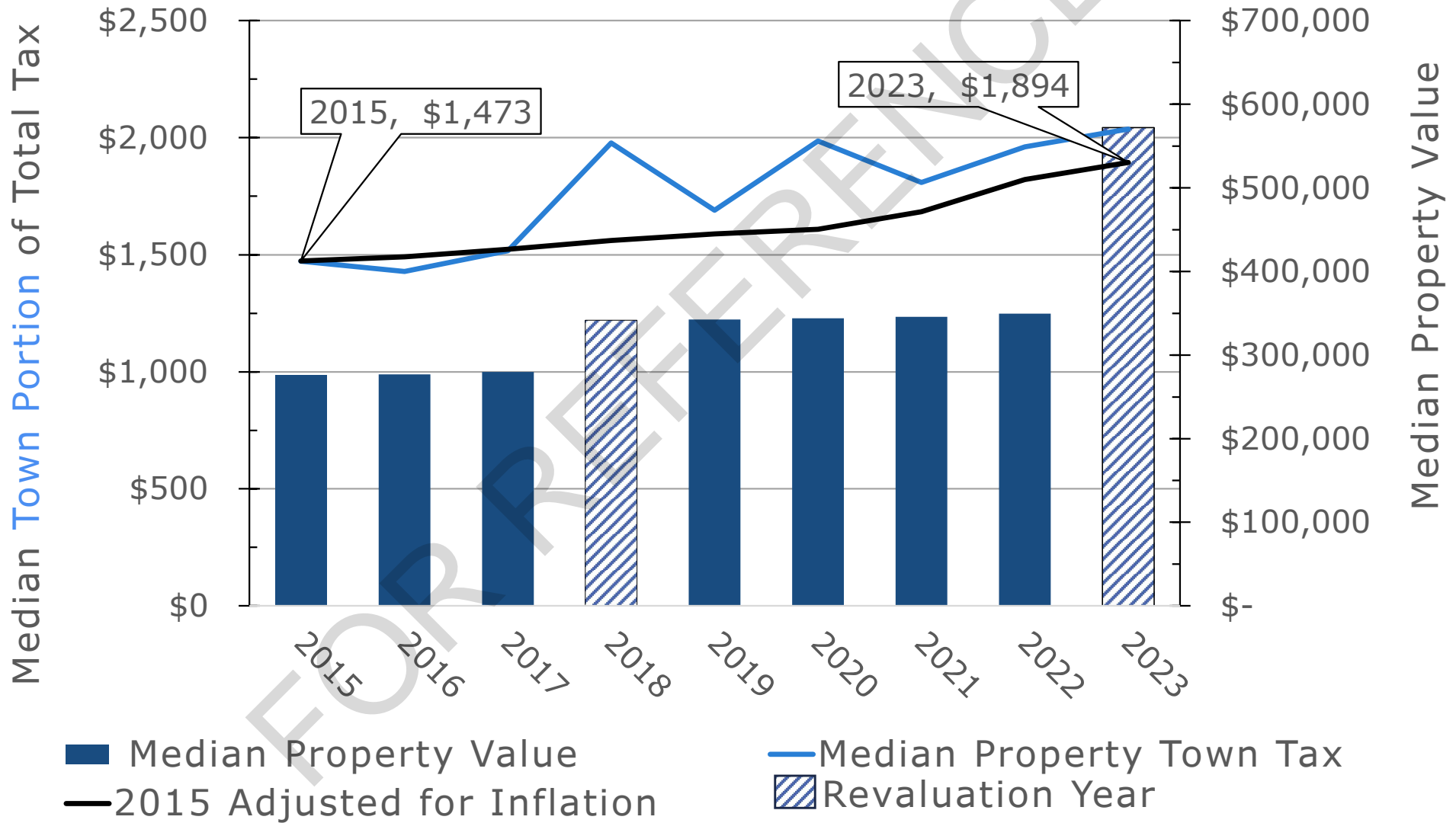


Category	Amount	% of Total Tax
Municipal	\$3.56	17%
County	\$0.80	4%
Local Education	\$15.30	74%
State Education	\$1.12	5%
TOTAL	\$20.78	

# ANNUAL CHANGES IN TOTAL TAX RATE



# ANNUAL CHANGES IN TOWN PORTION OF TOTAL TAX



# OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2024

*\*Budget amended after warrant and town report was issued.*

2023	2024*	Dollar Increase	Percent Increase
\$6,959,334	\$8,016,573	\$1,057,239	15.19%

Major Contributors to Budget Increase	Increase
Increase in Legal Budget	\$250,000
Fire Truck Payment	\$170,504
Generator – Fire Station	\$16,269
Generator – Safety Complex	\$73,000
HVAC – Safety Complex	\$11,500
New Hollis Communications Contract	\$88,193
Health Insurance	\$40,428
Radon Remediation at Town Hall	\$40,000
Asbestos Remediation due to Illegal Dumping	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$789,894</b>

# BUDGET & WARRANT ARTICLES TAX IMPACT COMPARISON

	Total Operating Budget + Warrant Articles	Town Portion Tax Impact	Per \$100,000 Assessed Value	Median Assessed Value (\$572,000)
Lower Impact	\$8,016,573	\$0.67	\$67.35	\$385.22
Higher Impact	\$8,710,592	\$1.28	\$128.08	\$732.63
Impact with ALL Articles (including 5)	\$8,030,592	\$0.75	\$74.70	\$427.28



# ARTICLE 1 | ELECTION OF TOWN OFFICERS

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**(By Ballot on March 12, 2024)** To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year.

FOR REFERENCE

# ARTICLE 2 | ZONING AMENDMENTS

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**(By Ballot on March 12, 2024)** Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendments as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Brookline Zoning Ordinance?

FOR REFERENCE

# ARTICLE 3 | LAND PURCHASE

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## **By one hour Ballot at Town Meeting**

### **(3/5 ballot vote in the affirmative required to pass)**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$4,350,000 (Gross Budget) to acquire full ownership interest in two parcels of approximately 254.2 +/- acres jointly owned by George Deneault and Leonard Deneault of Nashua NH and shown on the town's tax maps as Map A, Lot 2 and Map B Lot 72 therein, for conservation purposes to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission pursuant to RSA 36-A ("the Project"). To authorize the Selectmen to apply for, accept, expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to be expended on the Project, to reduce the amount that must be bonded, or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes. \$375,000 of the Project costs are intended to come from the Conservation Fund.

# ARTICLE 3 | LAND PURCHASE – CONT'D

Further, to authorize the issuance of not more than \$3,975,000 of bonds or notes, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, (RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended), and, further, to authorize the Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof, and to take any other action they deem appropriate to effectuate the sale and/or issuance of said bonds or notes, subject, however, to the following limitations:

- No such bonds or notes shall be issued earlier than July 1, 2024; and,
- Any of such bonds or notes shall have appropriate terms and maturities such that no principal or interest payments shall become due and payable prior to January 1, 2025; and,
- No such bonds or notes shall be issued with a term of maturity of less than ten (10) years

This is a special warrant article and is not intended to lapse at the conclusion of calendar year 2024, but is intended to lapse at the conclusion of calendar year 2025, if no bonds or notes have been issued in that time frame.

**Selectboard does not recommend this article 2-3-0**  
**Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0**

YEAR 1 Tax impact \$0.32  
Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$32.29  
Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$184.70

# ARTICLE 4 | BOND STREET BRIDGE

## **By one hour Ballot at Town Meeting (3/5 ballot vote in the affirmative required to pass)**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,400,000 (gross budget) for the purpose of designing, permitting, and reconstructing the Bond Street Bridge, to include construction and any items incidental to and/or necessary for said construction, engineering fees, professional service fees, and cost of sale of the bonds (“the Project”), and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,200,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectboard to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; further to authorize the withdrawal on an additional \$100,000 from the Bond Street Bridge Engineering and Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund.

# ARTICLE 4 | BOND STREET BRIDGE – CONT'D

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To authorize the Selectboard to apply for, accept, expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to be expended on the Project, to reduce the amount that must be bonded, or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes. Said appropriation will be offset by 80% reimbursement of the gross budget from the State of New Hampshire Bridge Aid Program. The sum to be bonded will be repaid over 2 years.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

# ARTICLE 4 | BOND STREET BRIDGE

- Protect Historical Abutments
- Retain Current Aesthetics w/ Green Railings
- Improve Safety Features





# ARTICLE 4 | BOND STREET BRIDGE

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- NH State Bridge Aid Program (80% Match)
- Planning Began in 2016 with Capital Reserve Fund and Appropriation of \$167,000
- Construction Originally Estimated for 2026
- 2017 – Design Engineer Chosen; Construction Moved up to 2024
- 2023 – Construction Oversight Engineer Chosen
- 2023 – Went to Bid and Chose RS Audley to Construct the Bridge
- Total Gross Budget Includes \$100,000 Contingency



# ARTICLE 4 | BOND STREET BRIDGE

Current Town Funds held in Reserve as of 12/2023	\$124,701
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Scope	Cost	Brookline (20%)	State of NH (80%)
Preliminary Engineering	\$173,191.00	\$34,638.00	\$138,553.00
Construction including Construction Engineering Oversight	\$1,132,036.48	\$226,407.50	\$905,629.98
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>\$1,305,227.48</b>	<b>\$261,045.50</b>	<b>\$1,044,182.98</b>

\*Total does not include Contingency (\$100,000)

# ARTICLE 5 | USE OF UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT

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To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to **\$610,000** for the purpose of settling a lawsuit with Brookline Properties, LLC. Said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance with no monies to be raised from taxation. If approved, the 2024 town operating budget article will be reduced by this amount.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee does not recommend this article 0-3-0***

# ARTICLE 5 | USE OF UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT

Operating Budget without this Article:

2023	2024	Percent Increase	Dollar Increase
\$6,959,334	\$8,016,573	15.19%	\$1,057,239

Operating Budget with this Article:

2023	2024	Percent Increase	Dollar Increase
\$6,959,334	\$7,406,573	6.43%	\$447,239

# ARTICLE 6 | FIRE DEPT CAPITAL RESERVE

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To see if the Town will raise and appropriate **\$70,000** towards the 2024 lease payment of the fire truck approved at the 2023 Town meeting and further to use **\$70,000** from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. If approved, the 2024 town operating budget article will be reduced by this amount.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

# ARTICLE 7 | OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$8,016,573 to defray town charges for the ensuing year and make appropriation of the same.

**Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0**

**Finance Committee recommends this article 2-1-0\***

*\*Finance Committee recommendation based on original budget value, not the lower budget value approved by Selectboard after the budget hearings.*

Tax impact \$0.68

Per \$100k Property Value = \$68.06

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$389.33

# MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO BUDGET INCREASE

	Increase
Increase in Legal Budget (if Art. 6 does not pass)	\$250,000
Fire Truck Payment	\$170,504
Generator – Fire Station	\$16,269
Generator – Safety Complex	\$73,000
HVAC – Safety Complex	\$11,500
New Hollis Communications Contract	\$88,193
Health Insurance	\$40,428
Radon Remediation at Town Hall	\$40,000
Asbestos Remediation due to Illegal Dumping	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$789,894</b>

# ARTICLE 8 | FIRE TRUCK CAPITAL RESERVE

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$50,000** to be deposited into the previously established Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a fire truck, or take any action relative thereto.

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 2-3-0***  
***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

Tax impact \$0.04

Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$4.38

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$25.03

# ARTICLE 9 | NEW PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$106,578** for the purpose of hiring two full-time Public Works employees for the Town of Brookline, or take any action relative thereto. Said sum includes \$66,733 in pay and \$39,845 in benefits for seven (7) months of 2024 (the 12-month annualized cost is \$181,299). If approved, the amount raised will be incorporated into the highway department salary and personnel administration budgets for accounting purposes.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 2-1-0***

Tax impact \$0.09

Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$9.33

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$53.35



# ARTICLE 9 | NEW PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES

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- Brookline has 109 public roadways (60 miles)
- 10-year plan for DPW is to build staff up to 9 Full-Time Employees
- We are in year 6 and current staff level is 3 Full-Time Employees
- Backlog of DPW work is growing significantly each year
- Goal is to get all roads to point of having regular maintenance to increase usable life span
- Still need additional equipment, but this year's focus is staffing

# ARTICLE 9 | NEW PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES

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## **Staffing Goal per 10-year plan:**

- ❑ Currently in year 6 of 10-year plan with 3 Full-Time Employees
  - Director (Qty 1)
  - Maintenance Personnel (Qty 3)
    - Focus on maintenance of roads, shoulders, trees, sidewalks, signs, cemeteries, culvert/bridge washing
  - Construction Personnel (Qty 3)
    - Focus on build-out of ditches, culverts, road box cutouts, etc., inspect infrastructure
  - Information/Legal Personnel (Qty 1)
    - Documenting/updating issues, address small issues, organize information, , issue legal notices, manage electronic sign, etc.
  - Mechanic (Qty 1)
    - Mechanic to service all town vehicles
- ❑ Additional: Facilities Manager

# ARTICLE 10 | NEW FULL-TIME ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$68,376** for the purpose of hiring a full-time Assistant Town Administrator for the Town of Brookline, or take any action relative thereto. Said sum includes \$46,669 in pay and \$21,707 in benefits for seven (7) months of 2024 (the 12-month annualized cost is \$117,213). If approved, the amount raised will be incorporated into the Executive salary and Personnel Administration budgets for accounting purposes.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee does not recommend this article 0-1-2***

Tax impact \$0.06

Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$5.98

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$34.23

# ARTICLE 10 | NEW FULL-TIME ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

- Town approved Town Administrator position in 2012
- Position's demands have increased significantly in 12 years:

2012	2024
15 Full-time Employees	25 Full-time Employees (w/ 2024 adds)
\$3.8M Budget	\$8M Budget
12 Trust Funds (\$250k)	20 Trust Funds (\$1M+)
	New Public Works Dept
	Facilities Management
	Melendy Pond Management
	ARPA Funds (and reporting)
	Selectboard Deliverables
	Infrastructure Projects

# ARTICLE 10 | NEW FULL-TIME ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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- Assistant Town Administrator's anticipated duties:
  - Manage Melendy Pond property
  - Manage town budget process and tracking
  - Coordinate Trust Funds with trustees
  - Manage facilities
  - Manage discrete projects as they arise
  - Serve as critical back-up for Town Administrator/succession planning
- Allows Town Administrator to focus on:
  - Selectboard deliverables
  - Human resources
  - Coordination with department heads
  - Capital/project planning
  - Information technology

# ARTICLE 11 | INCREASE FIRE DEPT ADMIN HOURS TO FULL-TIME

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To see is the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$31,244** for the purpose of expanding the Fire Dept. Administrative Assistant hours from 33 hours per week to 40 hours per week, or take any action relative thereto. Said sum includes \$6,519 in pay and \$24,725 in benefits and retirement for nine (9) months of 2024 (the 12-month total annualized cost is \$81,389).

***Selectboard recommends this article 3-2-0***

***Finance Committee does not recommend this article 0-2-1***

Tax impact \$0.03

Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$2.73

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$15.64

# ARTICLE 12 | POLICE AFSCME CONTRACT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Brookline Selectboard and Local 3657 of the American Federation of State, County, and the Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO Brookline Police Officer's Union which calls for the following increases in costs at current staffing levels and with 2024 pay increases effective April 1, 2024:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost Increase</u>
2024	\$22,729.20
2025	\$29,723.20
2026	\$11,752.00
2027	\$ 2,938.00

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***  
***Finance Committee recommends this article 2-0-1***

YEAR 1 Tax impact \$0.02  
Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$1.99  
Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$11.38

# ARTICLE 12 | POLICE AFSCME CONTRACT

Year # of Contract	Year	Cost Increase	% Salary Increase from Prior Year
1	2024	\$22,729.20	7%
2	2025	\$29,723.20	5%
3	2026	\$11,752.00	3%
4	2027	\$2,938.00	Negotiation year

- Add new seniority level – Master Patrol Officer Grade 4
- Increase detail rate from \$52.50/hr to \$62.50/hr
- Details now have 4-hour minimum and then blocks of 1-hour
- If there is an annual wage increase for non-union employees of the Town that exceeds the annual wage increase agreed upon in this contract by 3% or more, the Union reserves the right to call the Town to the table to negotiate wage increases for that year



# ARTICLE 13 | TOWN FACILITIES CAPITAL RESERVE

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000** to be deposited in the previously established Town Facilities Capital Reserve fund to defray the cost of repairs to town buildings or take any action relative thereto.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***  
***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

Tax impact \$0.03  
Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$2.63  
Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$15.02

# ARTICLE 14 | REDEFINE REVOLVING FUND

To see if the Town will vote to extend the purpose of the Brookline 250th Fund to read Town Celebrations Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, for the purpose of funding all town celebration events. All revenues received for this purpose from fees, charges, or donations will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the town's general fund balance. The treasurer shall have custody of all money in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created.

*\*Note: Article was amended by DRA after Selectboard and Finance Committee voted on recommendations for warrant articles.*

# ARTICLE 15 | REAPPRAISAL CAPITAL RESERVE

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$16,124** to be deposited into the previously established Reappraisal Capital Reserve fund for the costs of conducting the required town-wide revaluation every five (5) years or take any action relative thereto. It is anticipated that a revaluation will take place in 2028.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

Tax impact \$0.01

Per \$100k Prop. Value = \$1.41

Median Prop. Value (\$572k) = \$8.07

# ARTICLE 16 | COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Shall the Town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:80 through 72:83, commercial industrial construction exemption, to allow a new construction property tax exempt for commercial uses as the term is defined in RSA 72:80. The exemption shall apply only to the municipal and local school property taxes assessed by the municipality and shall exclude state education property taxes and county taxes. The exemption shall be as follows; 50% for the first year, 40% for the second year, 30% for the third year, 20% for the fourth year and 10% for the fifth year. Subsequent years will be assessed at the full rate. The schedule will be applied to all projects submitting a proper application during the exemption. And will remain in effect for a period of five (5) years from adoption.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 2-1-0***

# ARTICLE 17 | ELDERLY EXEMPTION

Shall the Town vote to modify the income criteria for the Elderly Exemption (according to the provisions of RSA 72:39a) so the total annual income from all sources including retirement and social security cannot exceed \$47,500 for single persons and cannot exceed \$83,000 for a married couple.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

# ARTICLE 18 | CEMETERY TRUST FUND

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To see if the Town will vote to accept sales of Right to Inter into the town cemeteries and direct that such funds shall be deposited in the Cemetery Trust Funds for the maintenance of cemeteries.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

FOR REFERENCE

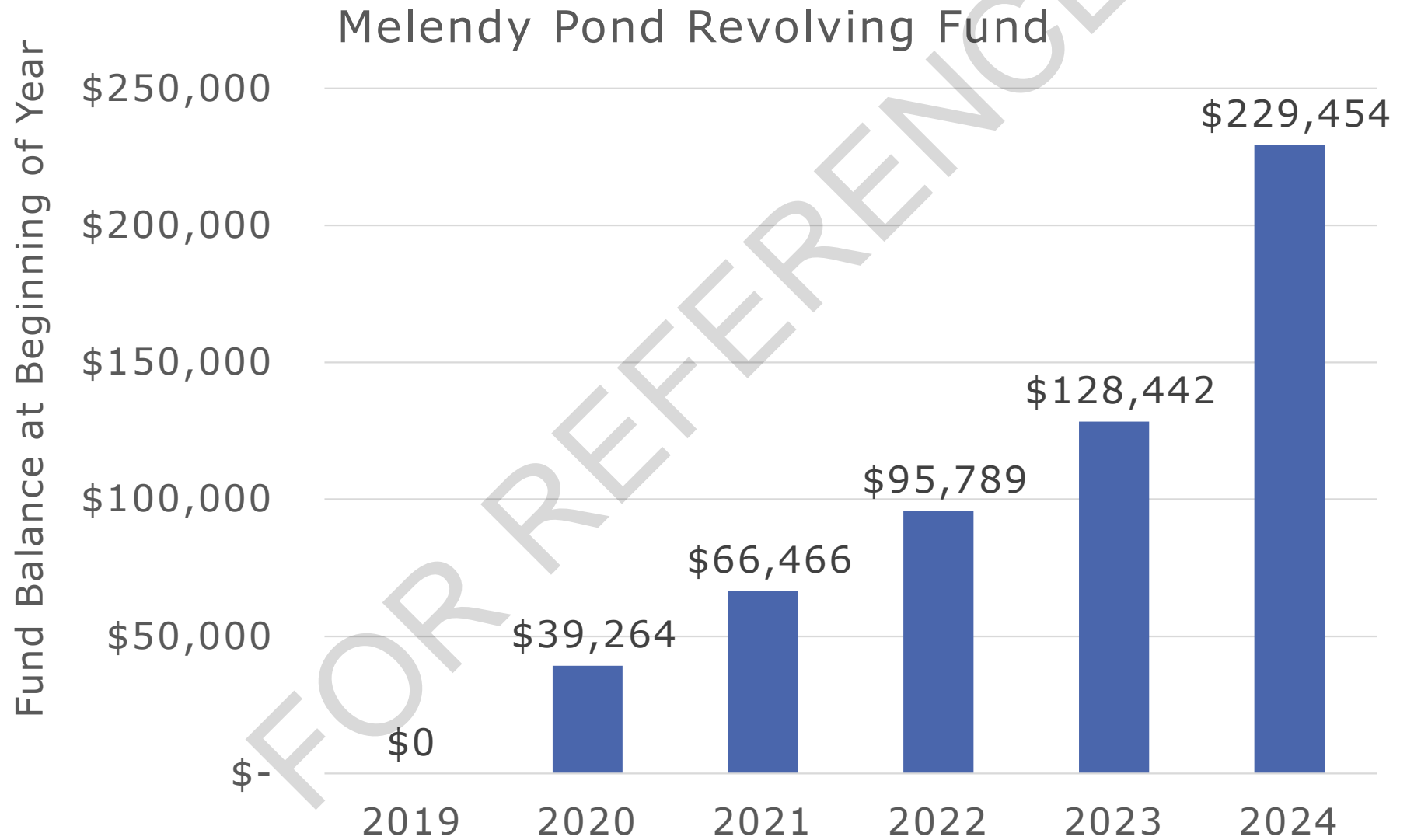
# ARTICLE 19 | MELENDY POND LEASE

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To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectboard, acting as the town's agents, to renew existing leases for Melendy Pond – Lot B-55 for a period of not more than 5-years ending on December 31, 2029; or take any action relative thereto.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

# ARTICLE 19 | MELENDY POND LEASE





# ARTICLE 20 | AMBULANCE SERVICE EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

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To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,200** to be deposited into the Ambulance Service Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. The Selectboard and Ambulance Chief have already been voted agents to expend from this fund (1998 - Warrant Article #6).

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 2-0-1***

# ARTICLE 21 | DISCONTINUE RADIO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

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To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the Radio Capital Reserve Fund. Said funds, with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred into the general fund.

***Selectboard recommends this article 5-0-0***

***Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0***

FOR REFERENCE

# ARTICLE 22 | PREPAYMENT OF TAXES

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To see if the Town will authorize the Tax Collector to accept the prepayment of taxes pursuant to RSA 80:52-a. Taxpayers shall be allowed to prepay taxes no more than two years in advance of the due date of the taxes. No interest shall accrue to the taxpayer on any prepayment, nor shall any interest be paid to the taxpayer on any prepayment which is later subject to rebate or refund.

*Note: Article was added after Selectboard and Finance Committee voted on recommendations for warrant articles.*

# ARTICLE 23 | ADOPT SB2 (BY PETITION)

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**By one hour Ballot at Meeting  
(3/5 ballot vote in the affirmative required to pass)**

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB 2) to allow official ballot voting on all issues before the town of Brookline on the second Tuesday of March?

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 0-5-0***

# ARTICLE 24 | ESTABLISH A BUDGET COMMITTEE (BY PETITION)

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**By one hour Ballot at Meeting  
(Simple majority ballot vote in the affirmative  
required to pass)**

To see if the town shall adopt the provisions of RSA 32:14 to establish a municipal budget committee.

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 0-5-0  
Finance Committee does not recommend this article 0-1-2***

# ARTICLE 25 | BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS (BY PETITION)

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To see if the municipal budget committee shall consist of 5 members-at-large per RSA 32:15 I(a), shall be elected per RSA 32:15 III, and initial members shall be elected to one-year terms by means other than official ballot per RSA 32:15 III.

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 0-5-0***

# ARTICLE 26 | ADOPT PARTISAN OFFICIAL BALLOT SYSTEM (BY PETITION)

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To see if the town shall adopt a partisan official ballot system for the election of town officers pursuant to RSA 669:12.

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 0-5-0***

# ARTICLE 27 | IMPLEMENT A TAX CAP (BY PETITION)

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**By one hour Ballot at Meeting  
(3/5 ballot vote in the affirmative required to pass)**

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5-b, and implement a tax cap whereby the governing body (or budget committee) shall not submit a recommended budget that increases the amount to be raised by local taxes, based on the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised, by more than 2.5%?

***Selectboard does not recommend this article 0-5-0***

***Finance Committee does not recommend this article 0-2-1***



# ARTICLE 28 | TAX IMPACT NOTATION ON WARRANT ARTICLES (BY PETITION)

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Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5 V-b, requiring that the annual budget and all special warrant articles having a tax impact, as determined by the selectboard, shall contain a notation stating the estimated tax impact of the article? The determination of the estimated tax impact shall be subject to approval by the governing body.

***Selectboard recommends this article 3-2-0***

# ARTICLE 29 | ADOPT PAPER BALLOT & HAND COUNTING BALLOTS (BY PETITION)

Shall the following provisions pertaining to elections be adopted? All voting shall be by paper ballot and all ballots shall be hand counted only, rather than by use of optical scanning or any other types of programmable electronic counting devices. This shall constitute a return to hand counting ballots and the immediate discontinuance of all electronic voting machines and electronic devices authorized for use by trial in RSA 656:40.

*Note: Article was added after Selectboard and Finance Committee voted on recommendations for warrant articles.*

# ARTICLE 30 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

FOR REFERENCE

THANK  
YOU

