

# Town Budget Process

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According to the Town Charter, it shall be the duty of the First Selectman to compile preliminary estimates for the annual budget. While the First Selectmen has the authority to alter the budget requests for other town agencies, *the Town Charter includes the following exception for the Board of Education's budget request:*

The head of each agency of the Town supported wholly or in part from Town funds, or for which a specific Town appropriation is made, shall on or before January 14<sup>th</sup>, *except the Board of Education which shall on or before February 3<sup>rd</sup>*, file with the First Selectman on forms provided by him, a detailed estimate of the expenditures to be made by his office or agency and the revenue, other than tax revenues, to be collected thereby in the ensuing fiscal year. Such estimates shall be accompanied by a statement setting forth, in narrative or such other form as the First Selectman may prescribe, a program or programs showing services, activities and work accomplished during the current year and to be accomplished during the ensuing year.

*"Itemized expenditures for each office or agency for the last completed fiscal year and expenditures for the current fiscal year and expenditures for the current fiscal year prior to the time of preparing the estimates, total expenditures as estimated for the current fiscal year, and the First Selectman's recommendations for the ensuing fiscal year for all items except those of the Board of Education which he shall transmit to the Selectman as submitted to him by such board."*

The three-member Board of Selectmen shall review the preliminary budget prepared by or for the First Selectman *and that of the Board of Education*. The proposed Selectman's budget, including such alterations or changes deemed necessary by the Board of Selectmen, shall be presented to the Board of Finance not later than February 25<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, *they shall also present to the Board of Finance the budget proposal of the Board of Education, but such alterations or changes to it as are desired by the Board of Selectmen shall be in the form of recommendations only.*

After the Board of Finance has received from the Board of Selectmen the recommended appropriations of the Board of Selectmen and *the Board of Education*,

- (a) the Board of Finance shall hold one or more public hearings at least two weeks before the date of the Annual Town Budget Meeting, at which any elector or taxpayer may have an opportunity to be heard regarding the recommended appropriations for the ensuing fiscal year. At least ten days in advance of any such public hearing, the Board of Finance shall cause to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town a notice of such public hearing, together with the amount of the proposed appropriations of the Board of Selectmen and, *the proposed appropriations of the Board of Education*, in condensed form. Sufficient copies of said proposed appropriations shall be made available for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk and at the public hearing.

- (b) After said hearings ***the Board of Finance shall make such revisions to the proposed appropriations as submitted by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education*** as said Board of Finance deems advisable and shall thereafter recommend said proposed appropriations, as amended, if amended, to the Annual Town Budget Meeting.
- (c) The Notice and Call of the Annual Town Budget Meeting shall be published at least five days prior to such Meeting in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town and by posting such Notice and Call in a public place. Such published and posted Notice and Call shall be accompanied by a separate tabulation in condensed form of the proposed appropriations as recommended by the Board of Finance for the ensuing fiscal year.
- (d) Said proposed appropriations as tabulated shall be in more detail than, but shall not be inconsistent with the Notice and Call of the Annual Town Budget Meeting, and it shall be the responsibility of the Town Clerk to see that these requirements are complied with. Sufficient copies of said proposed appropriations as recommended by the Board of Finance and as tabulated shall be made available for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk at least five days prior to the Meeting and at the Annual Town Budget Meeting.

Any other budget information which is distributed to voters at the Annual Town Budget Meeting shall not be inconsistent with the Notice and Call of said Meeting and shall be in the same sequence.

- (e) The Notice and Call of the Annual Town Meeting, (1) shall list the line items which the said Meeting is legally entitled to amend, namely, the proposed individual agency appropriations of the Board of Selectmen's budget, ***the proposed Board of Education's budget as one line item***, the proposed Contingency Fund and the proposed Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-recurring Expenditures, and the proposed allocations among Town agencies of any Federal revenue-sharing receipts and the proposed Total Annual Town Budget; all as recommended by the Board of Finance for the ensuing fiscal year; and (2) shall state the proposed rate of taxation, indicating the portion attributable to uncollectible taxes, as recommended by the Board of Finance for the ensuing fiscal year; and (3) in its preamble shall state who is legally entitled to vote in the Annual Town Budget Meeting in the same terms as are used in the Weston Town Charter; and (4) shall contain any other information required by the General Statutes or the Weston Town Charter. Sufficient copies of said Notice and Call shall be made available for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk and at the Annual Town Budget Meeting.

In the event that the Annual Town Budget has not been adopted by July 1 of any year, the budget appropriations of the previous year shall serve as an interim budget to allow for the continued operation of Town services.

The district's budget is approved in accordance with timetables specified in statutes and the town charter. Budget workshops are conducted in public, and citizens have an opportunity to express their opinions prior to the adoption of the budget.