

Town Meeting Guide



2024 Town Warrant
2024-25 Proposed Budget

Town of Merrimack, NH

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2024 Town Warrant
Town of Merrimack
 6 Baboosic Lake Road, Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054



The State of New Hampshire

To the inhabitants of the Town of Merrimack in the County of Hillsborough in said state, qualified to vote in town affairs:

You are hereby notified that the First Session (*Deliberative*) of the Annual Meeting of the Town of Merrimack will be held at the Mastricola Upper Elementary School’s All-Purpose Room on 26 Baboosic Lake Road in said Merrimack on Wednesday, March 13 2024 (snow date Friday, March 15, 2024), at 7:00 o’clock in the evening (pm) for explanation, discussion, and debate of each Warrant Article. Warrant Articles may be amended at this session per RSA 40:13, IV.

You are hereby notified that the Second Session (*Ballot Voting*) of the Annual Meeting of the Town of Merrimack will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 7:00 o’clock in the forenoon (am) for the choice of town officers elected by official ballot, to vote on questions required by law to be inserted on the Official Ballot, and to vote on all Warrant Articles from the First Session on Official Ballot per RSA 40:13, VII. The polling places for the election of town officers, and other actions required to be inserted on the ballot, will open on said date at 7:00 o’clock in the forenoon (am) and will not close earlier than 7:00 o’clock in the evening (pm).

The three aforementioned polling places will be as follows:
 James Mastricola Upper Elementary School All-Purpose Room, 26 Baboosic Lake Road
 St. John Neumann Church, 708 Milford Road (Route 101A)
 Merrimack Middle School, 31 Madeline Bennett Lane

Article 1

To choose all necessary town officers for the ensuing year.

- Three (3) Town Councilors 3-year term
- Two (2) Library Trustee for a 3-year term
- One (1) Ethics Committee Member for a 3-year term
- One (1) Trustee of Trust Funds for a 3-year term
- One (1) Town Clerk/ Tax Collector for a 3-year term
- One (1) Moderator for a 2-year term
- One (1) Supervisor of the Checklist for a 6-year term

Article 2

Shall the Town of Merrimack approve the charter amendment reprinted below?

PROPOSED AMENDMENT to Charter Article VI, Section 6-1 (B):

Conservation Commission. There shall be a Conservation Commission consisting of seven members. Six of these members shall be appointed by the Town Council for terms of three years, such terms to be staggered. One Town Council member shall be appointed annually to serve as an ex officio member **[and one student representative would be recommended by the School Board and appointed by the Town Council, this individual is not a voting member, nor a member for quorum purposes.]** There shall also be three alternate members appointed in the same manner as regular appointed members, except no more than one alternate appointed member's term shall expire in a single year. The Town Council shall fill any vacancy for the period of the unexpired term. The Conservation Commission shall have all the powers granted to conservation commissions by New Hampshire state law Effective April 1, 2024.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 3

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Sixty Six Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Eight Dollars (\$266,338)(gross budget) for the purpose of developing final design plans for the stormwater and infrastructure project for the Baboosic Lake (Pine Knoll Shores) Drainage Study, addressing roadway improvements, stormwater conveyance, treatment needs, and to include solutions that promote energy efficiency, water quality and flood resiliency in accordance with the 2017 or newer NH Small MS4 General Permit (“the Project”); and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$266,338 in bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33, as amended), and to authorize the Town Council to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Town Council to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available to be applied to the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or borrowed or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and further to authorize the Town Council to apply for, accept, and expend any funds or loan forgiveness through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). This Article is contingent upon approval of the loan application and the CWSRF program being able to provide 100% of the funding for the Project. It is anticipated that the Town will receive up to \$93,268 in loan forgiveness from the CWSRF program.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (3/5 ballot vote required)

Article 4

Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$39,778,556? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$38,484,241, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the Town Council may hold one (1) special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 5

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,250,000 to be added to the following Capital Reserve/Expendable Trust Funds previously established for the purposes for which they were created and to apportion the sum among the several funds as listed below:

Liability Trust Fund	10,000
Ambulance	250,000
Athletic Fields	5,000
Communications Equipment	55,000
Computer Equipment	95,000
Daniel Webster Highway	75,000
Fire Equipment	400,000
Highway Equipment	425,000
Library Building Maintenance Fund	75,000
Playground Equipment	5,000
Property Revaluation	20,000
Solid Waste Disposal	100,000
Traffic Signal Pre-emption	5,000
GIS	20,000
Road Infrastructure CRF	700,000
Total CRF	2,240,000
Milfoil	10,000
Total GENERAL FUND	2,250,000

These appropriations are **not** included in the total town operating budget warrant article 2.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 6

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$550,000 to be added to the Sewer Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund previously established with said amount to come from sewer fees and no amount to come from taxation.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 7

Shall the Town of Merrimack vote to approve the cost items included in a collective bargaining agreement reached between the Merrimack Town Council and the New England Police Benevolent Association (NEPBA), Local 12, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Wage and Benefit Costs Increase
2024-25	\$ 293,873
2025-26	170,465
2026-27	185,130

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$293,873 for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? This collective bargaining agreement covers the Police Officer, Sergeants and Detectives in the Police Department.

Should this article fail to pass, the cost items approved by the 2020 Town Meeting for the New England Police Benevolent Association (NEPBA) Local 12 collective bargaining agreement for the term ending June 20, 2025 shall remain in place for fiscal year 2024-2025.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 8

Shall the Town of Merrimack vote to approve the cost items included in a collective bargaining agreement reached between the Merrimack Town Council and New England Police Benevolent Association, Local 112, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Wage and Benefit Costs Increase
2024-25	\$ 59,943
2025-26	38,868
2026-27	25,313
2027-28	22,089

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$59,943 for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? This collective bargaining agreement covers Dispatchers and Office Staff of the Police.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 9

Shall the Town of Merrimack vote to approve the cost items included in a collective bargaining agreement reached between the Merrimack Town Council and Teamsters, Local 633, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Wage and Benefit Costs Increase
2024-25	\$ 84,762
2025-26	54,232
2026-27	40,153

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$84,762 for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? \$44,556 towards the first year's payment to come from sewer fees from the Waste Water Enterprise Fund. This collective bargaining agreement covers supervisory and clerical employees of the Highway, Solid Waste Disposal, Wastewater Treatment, and Equipment Maintenance Divisions of the Public Works Department.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 10

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Town of Merrimack Community Choice Aggregation Plan, prepared by the Merrimack Electric Aggregation Committee/Community Choice Aggregation Committee (CCAC), and to further authorize the Town Council to develop and implement Merrimack Community Power, and to take all action in furtherance of the Town of Merrimack Community Choice Aggregation Plan, pursuant to RSA 53-E.

(Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0) (Majority vote required.)

Article 11 (By Petition)

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000,000 for the purpose of development of town owned land on Pearson Rd into a multiple use athletic field, for the use of Soccer, Football, Lacrosse, Baseball, Softball etc.? Reference: Tax Map 7C Lot 40-2

(By petition) (Recommended by the Town Council 2-5-0) (Majority vote required).

Article 12 (By Petition)

To see whether police officers shall be permitted to enforce federal immigration laws, comply with immigration detainer requests, or contact federal immigration authorities to conduct a background investigation on anyone arrested on evidence of any other crime. No school district nor town official shall establish “Sanctuary Cities” policies that prevent immigration laws from being enforced by any police officer nor federal immigration officer in the performance of their job. Four towns, Cheshire County, and the City of Manchester have enacted “Sanctuary City” policies for illegal immigrants without notifying the general public beforehand.

A yes vote is to stop our community from being turned into a “Sanctuary City.

(By petition) (Majority vote required).

ARTICLE 2

Charter Amendment

Conservation Commission.

There shall be a Conservation Commission consisting of seven members. Six of these members shall be appointed by the Town Council for terms of three years, such terms to be staggered. One Town Council member shall be appointed annually to serve as an ex officio member **[and one student representative would be recommended by the School Board and appointed by the Town Council, this individual is not a voting member, nor a member for quorum purposes.]** There shall also be three alternate members appointed in the same manner as regular appointed members, except no more than one alternate appointed member's term shall expire in a single year. The Town Council shall fill any vacancy for the period of the unexpired term. The Conservation Commission shall have all the powers granted to conservation commissions by New Hampshire state law Effective April 1, 2024.

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.00

ARTICLE 3

Pine Knoll Shores

The Town of Merrimack was awarded a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Loan of \$266,338 with principal forgiveness of up to \$93,268 on September 29, 2023 for the completion of the design phase of the Pine Knoll Shores development drainage and road infrastructure improvements. The development is located east of Baboosic Lake and encompasses the following public roadways: Baboosic Lake Road, Longa Road, Mayhew Road, Carter Road, Miriam Road, Richard Road, Rennie Road, Shore Drive, Thomas Road and Donald Road. Many of these roads are narrow, have poor pavement conditions and /or are gravel roads that have little or no stormwater controls. All of which lead to difficult travel conditions for residents, increased erosion, and poor water quality in Baboosic Lake.

The completed design builds upon the Planning Study approved by the Town in 2021 and completed in 2022. The completed design will allow the Town to further develop the project that will manage stormwater in the area and improve the water quality in Baboosic Lake. In addition to the water quality improvements, the road infrastructure will be greatly improved by the addition of drainage along the roads and paving of the road surfaces. Besides the benefit of the easier travel throughout the area, the roads will require significantly less annual maintenance in winter and spring.

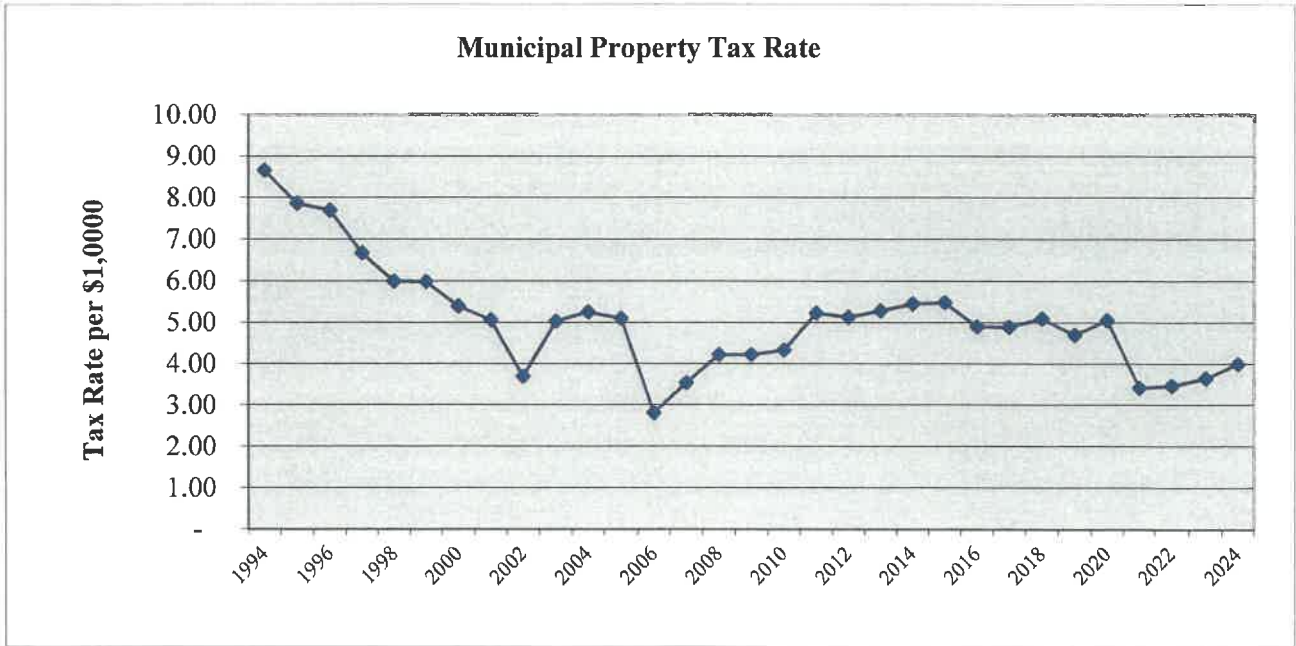
The balance of \$173,070 (\$266,338 – 93,268) will be paid from the Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.00

ARTICLE 4

Operating Budget

2024 Estimated Tax Rate (Operating Budget)		
	2024	2023
Appropriations	39,778,556	39,272,934
Estimated revenues	(20,026,368)	(19,852,864)
Tax overlay	350,000	311,638
General Fund surplus:		
Property Tax relief	(984,500)	(2,484,500)
Veterans exemptions	886,580	886,580
Property Tax levy	20,004,268	18,133,788
Valuation for state property tax rate	4,996,343.359	4,966,343.359
Municipal property tax rate	4.00	3.65



2024-25 TC Proposed Appropriations

	Total Expend.	CRF Deposits	Other Capital	Road/Sidewalk Infrastr.	Safer Grant Expend.	TM Operating Request
GENERAL FUND EXP.						
General Government	\$2,585,870	\$115,000				\$2,585,870
Assessing	\$398,321	\$20,000				\$398,321
Fire	\$8,612,181	\$650,000	\$71,000		\$573,333	\$7,967,848
Police	\$7,932,297		\$135,000			\$7,797,297
Communications	\$1,127,883	\$55,000				\$1,127,883
Code Enforcement	\$542,056		\$5,000			\$537,056
DPW Admin.	\$633,317					\$633,317
Highway	\$5,027,305	\$1,205,000		\$1,635,000		\$3,392,305
Solid Waste Disposal	\$1,971,200	\$100,000	\$25,000			\$1,946,200
Parks & Recreation	\$562,778	\$20,000				\$562,778
Library	\$1,243,654	\$75,000				\$1,243,654
Equipment Maint.	\$553,329					\$553,329
Buildings & Grounds	\$555,931		\$100,000			\$455,931
Community Development	\$639,528	\$10,000	\$75,000			\$564,528
Town Clerk/ Tax Collector	\$669,812					\$669,812
Welfare	\$203,094					\$203,094
Debt Service	\$236,241					\$236,241
GENERAL FUND	\$33,494,797	\$2,250,000	\$411,000	\$1,635,000	\$573,333	\$30,875,464
				**		
SELF SUPPORTING FUNDS EXP.						
Fire Protection	\$122,306					\$122,306
Outside Details	\$485,510					\$485,510
Library	\$17,200					\$17,200
Fire Outside Detail	\$12,795					\$12,795
Media	\$398,483		\$45,000			\$353,483
Wastewater	\$4,816,318		\$122,500			\$4,693,818
Wastewater Phase III	\$0					\$0
Wastewater CRF	\$0	\$550,000				\$0
Wastewater Debt	\$431,147					\$431,147
Pine Knoll Shores SRF	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal Self Sup. Funds	\$6,283,759	\$550,000	\$167,500	\$0	\$0	\$6,116,259
GRAND TOTAL EXP.	\$39,778,556	\$2,800,000	\$578,500	\$1,635,000	\$573,333	\$36,991,723
Grand Total	\$42,578,556					

APPROPRIATIONS

			Increase	
General Fund Operating	2023-24	2024-25	(Decrease)	
General Government	\$2,213,608	\$2,585,870	\$372,262	16.82%
Assessing	\$370,658	\$398,321	\$27,663	7.46%
Fire	\$7,093,816	\$7,967,848	\$874,032	12.32%
Police	\$7,383,723	\$7,797,297	\$413,574	5.60%
Communications	\$1,095,274	\$1,127,883	\$32,609	2.98%
Code Enforcement	\$509,792	\$537,056	\$27,264	5.35%
DPW Admin.	\$640,310	\$633,317	(\$6,993)	-1.09%
Highway	\$3,256,768	\$3,392,305	\$135,537	4.16%
Solid Waste Disposal	\$1,877,198	\$1,946,200	\$69,002	3.68%
Parks & Recreation	\$529,484	\$562,778	\$33,294	6.29%
Library	\$1,172,212	\$1,243,654	\$71,442	6.09%
Equipment Maint.	\$518,157	\$553,329	\$35,172	6.79%
Buildings & Grounds	\$359,053	\$455,931	\$96,878	26.98%
Community Development	\$541,053	\$564,528	\$23,475	4.34%
Town Clerk/ Tax Collector	\$611,033	\$669,812	\$58,779	9.62%
Welfare	\$177,156	\$203,094	\$25,938	14.64%
Debt Service	\$244,146	\$236,241	(\$7,905)	-3.24%
Subtotal G/F Operating	\$28,593,441	\$30,875,464	\$2,282,023	8.0%
Other Capital	2023-24	2024-25	(Decrease)	
Blgs & Grounds - TH Sprinkler Sy	\$150,000	\$0	(\$150,000)	-100.00%
Blgs & Grounds - Church Parking I	\$92,424	\$0	(\$92,424)	-100.00%
Blgs & Grounds - Ext. Building Re	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000	0.00%
Community Devel. - Master Plan	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000	0.00%
Fire - Mobile Radios	\$54,000	\$56,000	\$2,000	3.70%
Fire - Turn Out Gear	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	0.00%
Code Enforcement - Comp./Softwa	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	0.00%
Highway - Updated Fuel Dist. Syst	\$1,400,000	\$0	(\$1,400,000)	-100.00%
Highway - Brine Storage Tank	\$25,000	\$0	(\$25,000)	-100.00%
Solid Waste - Office Trailer	\$95,000	\$25,000	(\$70,000)	-73.68%
Parks & Recreation - Beach Phase	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Police- Vehicles	\$150,000	\$135,000	(\$15,000)	-10.00%
Gen Govt - Voting Machines	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Subtotal Other Cap.	\$1,966,424	\$411,000	(\$1,555,424)	-79.10%
Road Infrastructure	\$1,960,000	\$1,635,000	(\$325,000)	-16.58%
GF Totals Before Safer Expend.	\$32,519,865	\$32,921,464	\$401,599	1.23%
Safer Grant	\$860,000	\$573,333	(\$286,667)	-33.33%
General Fund Totals	\$33,379,865	\$33,494,797	\$114,932	0.34%
Self Supporting Funds	2023-24	2024-25	(Decrease)	
Fire Protection	\$112,000	\$122,306	\$10,306	9.20%
Outside Details	\$486,279	\$485,510	(\$769)	-0.16%
Library	\$12,000	\$17,200	\$5,200	43.33%
Fire Outside Detail	\$12,795	\$12,795	\$0	0.00%
Media	\$386,675	\$398,483	\$11,808	3.05%
Wastewater	\$4,445,219	\$4,816,318	\$371,099	8.35%
Wastewater Debt	\$438,101	\$431,147	(\$6,954)	-1.59%
Subtotal Self Sup. Funds	\$5,893,069	\$6,283,759	\$390,690	6.63%

2024-25 BUDGET

Dept	Actual 2022-23	Budget 2023-24	Department 2024-25	Town Manager 2024-25	Council 2024-25	Increase (decrease)	
						Amount	%
01 General Government	2,300,342	2,213,608	2,583,159	2,634,105	2,585,870	372,262	16.82
02 Assessing	320,329	370,658	389,656	389,042	398,321	27,663	7.46
03 Fire	6,684,515	8,007,816	8,687,494	8,630,247	8,612,181	604,365	7.55
04 Police	6,872,582	7,533,723	7,985,208	7,911,313	7,932,297	398,574	5.29
05 Communications	899,611	1,095,274	1,150,420	1,127,883	1,127,883	32,609	2.98
06 Code Enforcement	473,008	509,792	576,551	521,479	542,056	32,264	6.33
07 Public Works Administration	452,519	640,310	622,637	622,637	633,317	(6,993)	(1.09)
08 Highway	3,570,900	6,641,768	5,102,970	5,022,695	5,027,305	(1,614,463)	(24.31)
09 Solid Waste Disposal	1,901,666	1,972,198	2,043,706	1,970,586	1,971,200	(998)	(0.05)
13 Parks & Recreation	552,591	529,484	702,560	656,701	562,778	33,294	6.29
15 Library	1,173,450	1,172,212	1,244,654	1,243,654	1,243,654	71,442	6.09
16 Equipment Maintenance	441,862	518,157	553,546	553,329	553,329	35,172	6.79
17 Buildings & Grounds	367,601	601,477	606,661	525,816	555,931	(45,546)	(7.57)
21 Community Development	494,952	541,053	712,256	712,231	639,528	98,475	18.20
24 Town Clerk/Tax Collector	521,588	611,033	651,770	651,770	669,812	58,779	9.62
25 Welfare	162,498	177,156	201,241	201,241	203,094	25,938	14.64
27 Debt Service	407,081	244,146	236,241	236,241	236,241	(7,905)	(3.24)
Sub Total	27,597,095	33,379,865	34,050,729	33,610,970	33,494,797	114,932	0.34%
20-03 Outside Detail - Fire	5,214	12,795	12,795	12,795	12,795	-	-
20-04 Outside Detail - Police	378,798	486,279	486,279	485,510	485,510	(769)	(0.16)
38-15 Library	5,794	12,000	17,200	17,200	17,200	5,200	43.33
45-45 Capital Project Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	27,986,902	33,890,939	34,567,003	34,126,475	34,010,302	119,363	0.35
10 Wastewater Treatment	3,916,624	4,445,219	4,806,872	4,807,699	4,816,318	371,099	8.35
27 Debt Service	445,055	438,101	431,147	431,147	431,147	(6,954)	(1.59)
43 WWTF Bond Phase III & IV	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sewer Fund Total	4,361,679	4,883,320	5,238,019	5,238,846	5,247,465	364,145	7.46
32 CATV Fund	343,584	386,675	392,637	392,428	398,483	11,808	3.05
33 Fire Protection Area Fund	118,794	112,000	122,306	122,306	122,306	10,306	9.20
Grand Total	32,810,958	39,272,934	40,319,964	39,880,055	39,778,556	505,622	1.29

Default Calculations		
	2023-24	2024-25
	<u>Voted Budget</u>	<u>Default Budget</u>
General Town operations and charges - Article 2	38,801,878	39,272,934
Union Contracts:		
IAFF Union (Article 5 2023-24)	154,367	106,788
AFSCME 93, Local 3657 (Article 6 2023-24)	153,941	76,059
AFSCME 93, Local 2986 (Article 7 2023-24)	162,748	130,167
NEPBA 112 (Article 6 2020-21)		-
NEPBA 12 (Article 7 2020-21)		164,351
Teamsters (Article 7 2022-23)		-
Union Contract Benefit Increases (decreases) {2024-25}		
Health Insurance		570,780
Workers Comp		(4,555)
One Time Purchases (2023-24)		
One Time Capital Expenses		(1,817,424)
Debt service:		
2023-24		(682,247)
2024-25	-	667,388
Total	39,272,934	38,484,241
2024-25 Default Tax Rate Comparison		
		<u>Est. Default</u>
		<u>2024 Tax Rate</u>
Default Appropriations		38,484,241
Estimated Default Revenues (see below)		(20,028,479)
Use of Fund balance		
Tax overlay		350,000
Veterans exemptions		886,580
Property tax levy		19,692,342
Valuation for property tax rate		4,996,343.359
Default property tax rate		3.94
Proposed Budget tax rate		4.00
Variance		(0.06)
Revenue comparison:		
2024-25 Revenue Proposed Budget	(21,012,979)	
Less:		
Use of Fund balance	984,500	
		(20,028,479)
Appropriation Comparison		
2024-25 Proposed Budget Comparison		39,778,556
Default Budget (from above)		38,484,241
Decrease in appropriations (default versus proposed budget)		(1,294,315)
Tax Rate variance Appropriations		(0.26)
Tax Rate variance Revenue (Use of Fund Balance)		0.20
Overall tax rate variance		(0.06)

Article 5

General Fund Deposits into Capital Reserve Funds

These are deposits into General Fund Capital Reserve Funds (CRF) that in prior years had been included into the operating Budget. In recent years there was a change to RSA 35-5 that states we need to have a separate warrant article from the operating budget for CRF deposits. The chart below shows a comparison from the 2023-24 budget to the 2024-25 proposed budget.

2024-25 Proposed Capital Reserve Deposits

	2023-24	EST. 2024-25	<u>\$\$ Diff</u>	<u>% Diff</u>
Liability Trust Fund	10,000	10,000	-	0.00%
Ambulance	115,000	250,000	135,000	117.39%
Athletic Fields	5,000	5,000	-	-
Communications Equipment	100,000	55,000	(45,000)	-45.00%
Computer Equipment	35,000	95,000	60,000	171.43%
Daniel Webster Highway	50,000	75,000	25,000	50.00%
Fire Equipment	400,000	400,000	-	0.00%
Highway Equipment	425,000	425,000	-	0.00%
Library Building Maintenance Fund	75,000	75,000	-	0.00%
Playground Equipment	-	5,000	5,000	100.00%
Property Revaluation	17,250	20,000	2,750	15.94%
Solid Waste Disposal	100,000	100,000	-	0.00%
Traffic Signal Pre-emption	5,000	5,000	-	0.00%
GIS	5,000	20,000	15,000	300.00%
Road Infrastructure CRF	595,000	700,000	105,000	17.65%
Total CRF	1,937,250	2,240,000	302,750	15.63%
			-	
Milfoil	10,000	10,000	-	0.00%
Total GENERAL FUND	1,947,250	2,250,000	302,750	15.55%

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.45

Article 6

Sewer Fund Deposits into Capital Reserve Funds

Funding for Article 4 comes from sewer user fees, NOT TAXES.

Like Article 3, Article 4 is the Sewer Fund (Waste Water Treatment Plant) deposits into the Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) that in prior years had been included into the operating Budget. In recent years there was a change to RSA 35-5 that states we need to have a separate warrant article from the operating budget for CRF deposits. The chart below shows a comparison from the 2023-24 budget to the 2024-25 proposed budget.

	2023-24	EST. 2024-25	<u>\$\$ Diff</u>	<u>% Diff</u>
Sewer Infrastructure Improvements	<u>550,000</u>	<u>550,000</u>	-	0.00%

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.00

Article 7

NEPBA, Local 12, Collective Bargaining Agreement Police Officers, Detectives and Sergeants

The following shows the items agreed to:

1. Duration:

3-year contract – July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027

2. Wages:

Year 1 New wage scale Patrol 2% /4% between steps

All other positions 2% between steps

3% plus a wage adjustment as well as a reduction in longevity

Year 2: 3% plus a wage adjustment No Longevity

Year 3: 3 % plus wage adjustment No Longevity

- 3. Life Insurance:** – Benefit changes for employee increased from \$10,000 to 1 times annual salary, spouse increased from \$1,000 to \$10,000, and children benefit increased from \$500 to \$5,000.

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.06

Article 8

NEPBA, Local 112, Collective Bargaining Agreement Dispatchers, and Police Office Staff

The following shows the items agreed to:

1. **Duration:**

4-year contract – July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2028

2. **Wages:**

Year 1

Dispatchers 3% plus \$1.20 adjustment and added 5 and 10 year steps

Records Clerk 3%

Prosecutors Secretary 3% plus \$1 adjustment

Year 2

Dispatchers 3% plus \$.75 adjustment

Records Clerk and Prosecutors Secretary 3%

Year 3:

Dispatchers 3%

Records Clerk and Prosecutors Secretary 3% plus \$.50

Year 4

Dispatchers, Records Clerk and Prosecutors Secretary 3%

3. **Article XI (Wages and Salaries), Paragraph 7 – Shift Differential**

a. Increase Shift Differential by \$0.25/hr.

b. Include PT Dispatcher

4. **ARTICLE XII: WAGES AND SALARIES**

a. Training Stipend: Increase by \$0.50/ hr.

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.01

Article 9

Teamster, Local 633, Collective Bargaining Agreement DPW Supervisors and Secretaries (Highway, Solid Waste, Equipment Maintenance and Wastewater)

The following shows the items agreed to:

1. **Duration:**

3-year contract – July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027

2. **Wages:**

Year 1:

Implement a step wage scale. Added 3% to top of scale and then 2.5% in-between steps. Place each employee on scale and move 1 step.

Year 2: 3% - wage adjustment

Year 3: 3% - wage adjustment

3. **Disability Insurance:** – Change from 60% without a cap to 70%, but with \$700/week cap

4. **Clothing Allowance:** Increase boot allowance from \$200 to \$300. Include Secretary/Scale Operator in boot allowance

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.01

Article 10

Community Choice Aggregation Plan

What is a Community Choice Aggregation Program?

- A CCA Program is an optional buying group organized by a municipality to benefit electric consumers in the community.
- The Program enters into electricity supply contracts for all “Eligible Consumers”
- Eligible Consumers are residential and business consumers currently receiving default service from their utility (Eversource).
- Eligible Consumers are automatically enrolled, unless they opt-out.
- Consumers currently under contract directly with third-party suppliers will not be enrolled in the program. Option to opt-in later, if they wish.

Benefits of Community Choice Aggregation

- Choice: No longer “stuck” with electric utility default rates
- Leverage: Community buying power; larger buying group attracts robust participation from leading suppliers
- Price Stability: Ability to secure long-term rates and avoid market price volatility
- Optionality:
 - Opt-out anytime without penalty
 - Opt-in at a later time
- Public Oversight: Electricity supplier and consultant accountable to town officials
- Local Control: Operate program based on community priorities and preferences
- Product Options:
 - Define a standard product
 - Offer one or more other opt-in products, e.g., greater renewable power content
 - Program offerings may change over time as new market opportunities develop

- Self-funded:
 - No burden on municipal staff or local budgets
 - No costs imposed on non-participating consumers
 - Program administration outsourced to town consultant

Important Elements

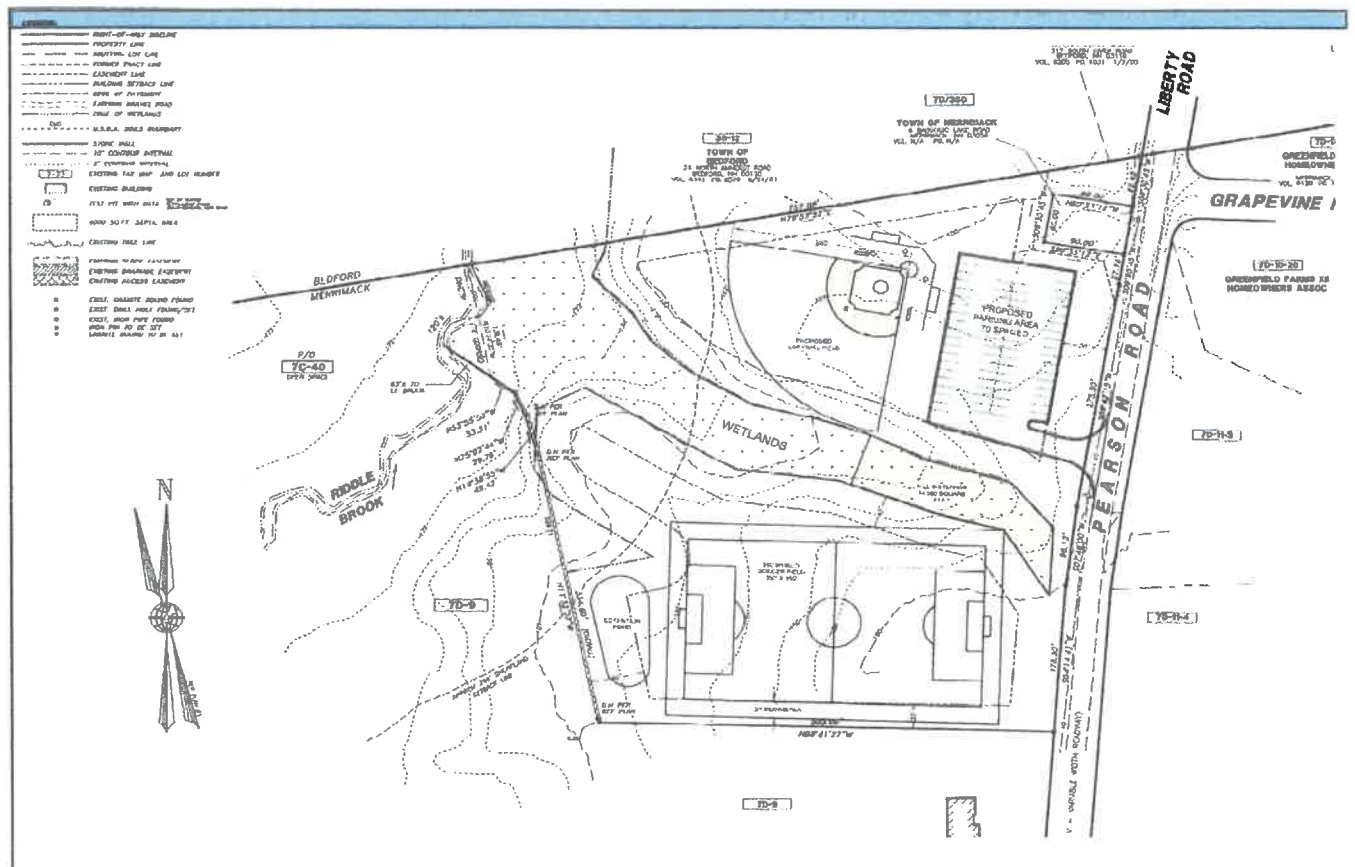
- **Choice** – Consumers may:
 - opt-out of the Program and continue receiving supply from utility
 - leave subsequent to launch without penalty
 - opt into the Program after initial launch
- **Who keeps my lights on?** – Utility will continue to be responsible for maintaining service to your home; if you lose power, you still contact your utility
- **Billing** – You will continue to receive a single bill from your utility; the only change is a separate line item for Program supply replacing utility default service
- **Customer Service – who do I contact?**
 - **Utility:** power outage, metering, billing, payments, start/stop service
 - **Program consultant:** issues regarding opting in or opting out
- **Utility Services** – Utility services unaffected (budget billing, electronic payment, payment arrangements, energy assistance, energy efficiency programs)
- **Are Savings Guaranteed?** - The goal is to deliver savings over the life of the Program compared to utility default service. However, such savings and future savings cannot be guaranteed

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.00

Article 11

Pearson Road Ball Fields By Petition

The picture below is of the proposed fields off of Pearson Road. The Conceptual plan shows the full size soccer field and a softball field. Also sketched is a parking lot, a detention basin and an approximate area of filling of the wetlands that will be needed to fill in to be able to accommodate the fields. There are many variables that will come into play to determine the exact area that will need to be filled in.



- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.20

Article 12

Sanctuary City By Petition

To see whether police officers shall be permitted to enforce federal immigration laws, comply with immigration detainer requests, or contact federal immigration authorities to conduct a background investigation on anyone arrested on evidence of any other crime. No school district nor town official shall establish “Sanctuary Cities” policies that prevent immigration laws from being enforced by any police officer nor federal immigration officer in the performance of their job. Four towns, Cheshire County, and the City of Manchester have enacted “Sanctuary City” policies for illegal immigrants without notifying the general public beforehand.

A yes vote is to stop our community from being turned into a “Sanctuary City.

- Estimated Tax Rate Impact \$.00

Tax Rate Summary:

Article 2	Charter Amendment	\$0.00
Article 3	SRF Bond	\$0.00
Article 4	Operating Budget	\$4.00
Article 5&6	Deposits into CRF	\$0.45
Article 7	NEPBA Local 12 Collective Bargaining Agreement	\$0.06
Article 8	NEPBA Local 112 Collective Bargaining Agreement	\$0.01
Article 9	Teamsters Local 633 Collective Bargaining Agreement	\$0.01
Article 10	Community Choice Aggregation	\$0.00
Article 11	Petition Article “Pearson Rd Ballfields”	\$0.20
Article 12	Petition Article “Sanctuary City”	\$0.00
Projected 2024 Tax Rate		\$4.73
2023 Tax Rate		\$4.05

In summary if all the 2024 Warrant Articles pass the Tax Rate for the Municipality’s portion is estimated to be an increase of \$0.68 over the 2023 Tax Rate.

IMPORTANT TOWN MEETING INFORMATION

Merrimack operates under the Official Ballot Law. If you have any questions, please call the Town Council's Office at 424-2331.

Session I: Deliberative Meeting

This meeting is very important!!! It is not merely a public hearing; it is a session where every money article, and most others, can be amended. For example, a warrant article for \$50,000 can be amended to read \$1 or \$250,000. Similarly, an article on the town warrant can be amended to alter its purpose and effect so long as the amendment does not delete the entire subject matter of the article. Yes, even petitioned warrant articles can be amended at this session.

It is the results of this meeting that will be on the Official Ballot, not the recommendations of the Town Council.

Town Meeting Deliberative Session:

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Mastricola Upper Elementary School
All-Purpose Room.

Session II: Ballot Vote

Any voter will be able to vote for all warrant articles, as amended at Session I. Please be aware that, since the entire text of any proposed ordinances will appear on the ballot, the ballot may be quite long. Sample ballots will be available before Session II. Absentee ballots will be available for this session for those who qualify. If the budget fails, the governing body may call a special meeting to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only (not other warrant articles). This would entail Session I and Session II, just as before. If the operating budget is again defeated, the default budget becomes the official budget for the year.

Town Meeting Voting Session:

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Voting 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m.

Locations- James Mastricola Upper Elementary School All-Purpose

Room, 26 Baboosic Lake Road

St. John Neumann Church, 708

Milford Road (Route 101A)

Merrimack Middle School, 31

Madeline Bennett Lane