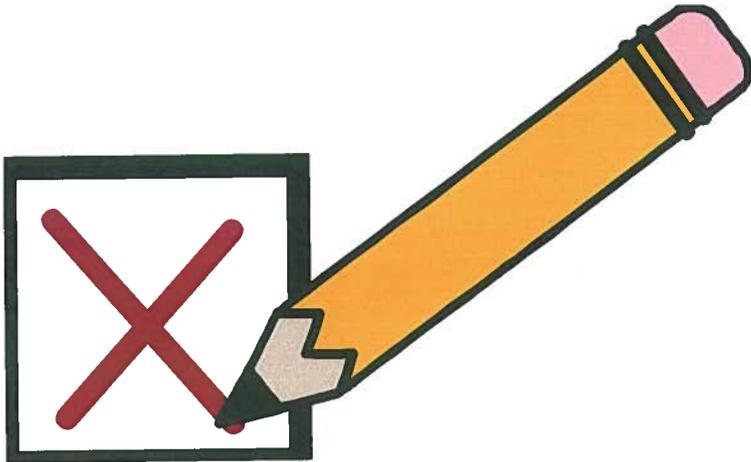


# **VOTER'S GUIDE TO** **2015 OFFICIAL BALLOT**



**Town of Merrimack**  
**April 14, 2015**



~ SAMPLE BALLOT ~

**ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION  
MERRIMACK, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
APRIL 14, 2015**

*Diane Trippett*  
TOWN CLERK

**INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS**

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice(s) like this: ●
- B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
- C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWN COUNCIL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than three (3)</p> <p>LON S. WOODS <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NANCY M. HARRINGTON <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>TOM KOENIG <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>MIKE MALZONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>JODY VAILLANCOURT <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ETHICS COMMITTEE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than two (2)</p> <p>ROD BUCKLEY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWN CLERK / TAX COLLECTOR</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than one (1)</p> <p>DIANE TRIPPETT <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWN COUNCILOR</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 1 year more than one (1)</p> <p>ALEXANDER PORADA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>TOM MAHON <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>LENETTE PETERSON <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LIBRARY TRUSTEE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than two (2)</p> <p>JENNIFER L. JOBIN <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TREASURER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than one (1)</p> <p>BRUCE W. MOREAU <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRUSTEE OF TRUST FUNDS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vote for not 3 years more than one (1)</p> <p>WILLIAM T. WILKES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Write-In) <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

**QUESTIONS**

**Article 2**  
 Shall the Town vote to 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 \$31,472,126. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$27,646,335, 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)

YES   
NO

**Article 3**  
 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 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees 93, Local 2986, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Wage Increase	Benefit Costs
2015-16	173,451	(138,429)

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$35,022, such sum representing the anticipated increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year? The passage of this article will result in employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement contributing 10% towards health and dental insurance premiums and changing their health care to \$20 office visit \$10/\$20/\$45 pharmacy co-pay. These savings have been factored into the estimated increases/decreases set forth above. This collective bargaining agreement covers the labors of the Public Works Department to include Highway, Waste Water, Solid Waste, and Equipment Maintenance Divisions. (Recommended by the Town Council 7-0-0)

YES   
NO

# 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

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Merrimack residents will have an opportunity to vote on the proposed budget and other Town matters on Tuesday, April 14, 2015, at the annual election to be held between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM. There is one polling place in Merrimack: James Masticola Upper Elementary School - All-Purpose Room at 26 Baboosic Lake Road.

The following information is provided as a public service to enable citizens to better understand the matters on which they will be voting. Additional information may be obtained by calling the Town Manager's Office at (603) 424-2331, or by visiting the Town's website at [www.merrimacknh.gov](http://www.merrimacknh.gov).

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## **ARTICLE 1**

### **Election of Public Officials**

To vote, completely fill in the box next to your choice on the ballot. Follow the directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the box.

## **ARTICLE 2**

### **Municipal Operating Budget**

The Municipal Operating Budget, which is the subject of Article 2, funds the general costs of operating all Town departments. The Municipal Operating Budget is summarized on the attached chart by department.

The recommended 2015-16 Municipal Operating Budget is \$31,472,126. Included in the Town Council's proposed budget are all of the capital reserve purchases (these purchases have been saved for over several years and are already funded through the CRF accounts), these are items that have historically been approved by the Town Council throughout the year. This change was implemented in the 2009-10 budget year.

Although the appropriation amount requested for 2015-16 is less than what was approved in 2014-15, to compare the budget request one should reduce both budgets by the capital purchases. If these capital projects were not included in both budgets, the 2015-16 appropriation would be \$396,535 or 1.4% greater than in 2014-15.

Included in the 2015-16 budget are increases in several estimated revenues. Those revenue increases include:

- Rooms & Meals \$45,000
- Motor Vehicle Permits \$25,000
- Interest Income – Tax Liens \$20,000

## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

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- Current Use Change Tax \$50,000
- Insurance Rebate \$240,000

There were some revenues that decreased to offset the before mentioned increases. Those reductions are:

- Admin fees to other funds \$20,000
- Motor Vehicle Road Infrastructure Revenue \$10,000
- Misc. \$5,314

Included in the Council's 2015-16 budget is a commitment to increase capital funding. The Council has increased capital reserve funding from \$1,077,000 to \$1,446,000, a \$369,000 increase or 34.26%.

### *Personal Services Costs*

Five of the six union contracts are in effect and will expire on June 30, 2016. The only union that does not have a contract is AFSCME 93, Local 2986 (Public Works Employees). These employees will have no changes to wages or benefits until a new contract passes (see article 3).

There are no raises except for those unions that have steps in their contract. There is also no raise for the Town's non-union employees in this budget. However, on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 the five unions as well as non-union employees will be changing their health insurance plans to \$20 office visit co-pay and \$10/20/45 pharmacy co-pay which is an increase from either a \$5 or \$10 office co-pay, and \$0/15/15 or \$0/20/30 pharmacy co-pay. In addition these employees will be paying 10% of the premium for both Health and Dental insurance.

There are three additional part-time positions included in the Town Council's budget which are:

- Solid Waste Attendant
- Town Clerk/ Tax Collector Clerk
- Code Enforcement Secretary

In addition there are three new full-time positions:

- 2 Police Officers
- 1 Digital Services Librarian I (combined 2 part-time positions)

In summary, the 2015-16 proposed budget contains a net decrease for personnel costs and benefits of \$113,929, primarily the result of health insurance premiums cost decrease of \$312,177, and a decrease in compensated absences of \$19,897, which were offset by an increase in retirement costs of \$123,521, Overtime increase of \$58,510 and the remaining balance consists of benefit adjustments and the costs associated with the wage adjustments.

# 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

Chart 1

	2014-15	2015-16	Increase	
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Operating</b>	<b>Operating</b>	<b>(Decrease)</b>	
General Government	\$1,589,487	\$1,681,845	\$92,358	5.81%
Assessing	\$300,379	\$294,036	(\$6,343)	-2.11%
Fire	\$5,251,580	\$5,176,866	(\$74,714)	-1.42%
Police	\$5,510,301	\$5,623,976	\$113,675	2.06%
Communications	\$693,824	\$686,999	(\$6,825)	-0.98%
Code Enforcement	\$338,664	\$359,323	\$20,659	6.10%
DPW Admin.	\$371,191	\$371,138	(\$53)	-0.01%
Highway	\$2,447,827	\$2,468,958	\$21,131	0.86%
Solid Waste Disposal	\$1,203,940	\$1,244,394	\$40,454	3.36%
Parks & Recreation	\$354,825	\$346,113	(\$8,712)	-2.46%
Library	\$974,012	\$1,018,958	\$44,946	4.61%
Equipment Maint.	\$436,675	\$425,024	(\$11,651)	-2.67%
Buildings & Grounds	\$200,137	\$208,249	\$8,112	4.05%
Community Development	\$468,251	\$460,641	(\$7,610)	-1.63%
Town Clerk/ Tax Collector	\$463,769	\$476,735	\$12,966	2.80%
Welfare	\$154,940	\$155,057	\$117	0.08%
Debt Service	\$461,398	\$449,874	(\$11,524)	-2.50%
<b>Subtotal G/F Operating</b>	<b>\$21,221,200</b>	<b>\$21,448,186</b>	<b>\$226,986</b>	<b>1.07%</b>
<b>CRF Deposits</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>		
Gen. Govt.-Computers	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0	0.00%
Gen. Govt. - Millfoil	\$25,000	\$15,000	(\$10,000)	-40.00%
Assessing - Reval.	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0.00%
Fire- Ambulance	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$10,000	20.00%
Fire-Equipment	\$75,000	\$95,000	\$20,000	26.67%
Communications-EQUIPT.	\$25,000	\$146,000	\$121,000	484.00%
DPW EQUIPT.	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0	0.00%
DPW Roads & Bridges	\$400,000	\$600,000	\$200,000	50.00%
DPW- DW Highway	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.00%
Solid Waste- EQUIPT.	\$75,000	\$45,000	(\$30,000)	-40.00%
Traffic Signal Preemption	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	100.00%
GIS	\$10,000	\$65,000	\$55,000	550.00%
Library	\$17,000	\$10,000	(\$7,000)	-41.18%
<b>Subtotal CRF Deposits</b>	<b>\$1,077,000</b>	<b>\$1,446,000</b>	<b>\$369,000</b>	<b>34.26%</b>
<b>Other Capital</b>				
Gen Govt	\$12,500	\$0	(\$12,500)	-100.00%
Parks & recreation	\$8,500	\$40,400	\$31,900	375.29%
Highway	\$75,000	\$86,000	\$11,000	14.67%
Police- Vehicles	\$128,000	\$106,000	(\$22,000)	-17.19%
Library Bld repairs	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	100.00%
Bldg. & Grounds- Repairs	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$0	0.00%
<b>Subtotal Other Cap.</b>	<b>\$233,000</b>	<b>\$256,400</b>	<b>\$23,400</b>	<b>10.04%</b>
<b>Road Infrastructure</b>	<b>\$800,000</b>	<b>\$750,000</b>	<b>(\$50,000)</b>	
<b>CRF Expend.</b>	<b>\$3,636,000</b>	<b>\$2,722,334</b>	<b>(\$913,666)</b>	<b>-25.13%</b>
<b>General Fund Totals</b>	<b>\$26,967,200</b>	<b>\$26,622,920</b>	<b>(\$344,280)</b>	<b>-1.28%</b>
<b>Self Supporting Funds</b>				
Fire Protection	\$87,563	\$86,063	(\$1,500)	-1.71%
Day camp	\$175,212	\$174,199	(\$1,013)	-0.58%
Outside Details	\$380,912	\$422,133	\$41,221	10.82%
Library	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0	0.00%
EMS	\$4,500	\$7,095	\$2,595	57.67%
Media	\$270,933	\$267,351	(\$3,582)	-1.32%
Wastewater	\$3,364,805	\$3,527,244	\$162,439	4.83%
Wastewater Debt	\$734,632	\$361,621	(\$373,011)	-50.78%
<b>Subtotal Self Supporting</b>	<b>\$5,022,057</b>	<b>\$4,849,206</b>	<b>(\$172,851)</b>	<b>-3.44%</b>
<b>Grand Totals All Funds</b>	<b>\$31,989,257</b>	<b>\$31,472,126</b>	<b>(\$517,131)</b>	<b>-1.62%</b>

## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

### Capital Outlay

The Town of Merrimack uses capital reserve funds as a cost-effective method of financing the purchase or replacement of facilities, equipment and infrastructure. Consistent amounts have been included in annual budgets for transfer to these funds in past years and in the current budget submitted by the Town Council, so that sufficient monies are available when purchases or replacements are required. This spreads the related cost over the funding period, rather than requiring a large appropriation in the year of purchase or replacement, and thereby helps to stabilize property tax rates. Also, interest earned on monies held in capital reserve funds offsets a portion of the purchase or replacement cost and/or serves as a hedge against inflation. These capital reserve funds provide for the replacement of fire trucks, bridges, ambulances, police communication equipment, Highway Division trucks and heavy equipment, as well as for other major capital outlay needs.

The 2015-16 budget includes \$1,446,000 in Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) deposits while the current budget proposes \$2,907,334 in CRF withdrawals.

### Proposed Capital Purchases

CRF	2015-16 Projects	\$\$	
Computer Equipment	Licenses / Computer-server upgrades		35,000
Fire	SCBA Breathing Apparatus		82,334
Fire Ambulance	Ambulance		200,000
Road Infrastructure	Bridge replacement - Bean Road	320,000	
	Drainage Improvements	100,000	420,000
DW Highway	Paving Chamberlin Bridge to Reeds Ferry Lumber		400,000
Highway	6 Wheel dump truck, H-31	155,000	
	Front End Loader	<u>150,000</u>	<u>305,000</u>
<b>Total CRF Withdrawals</b>			<b>1,442,334</b>
	State Bridge Aid		1,280,000
<b>Total General Fund</b>			<b><u>2,722,334</u></b>
<b>Wastewater Fund</b>			
Sewer Infrastructure	F-250 4X4 pickup with plow (replace 2005 F-250)	35,000	
	Manhole/sewer line repair (AB flume and coating)	75,000	
	Bobcat Toolcat for X-country sewer maintenance	<u>75,000</u>	
<b>Total Wastewater Fund</b>			<b><u>185,000</u></b>
<b>Grand Total CRF Purchases</b>			<b><u>2,907,334</u></b>

## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

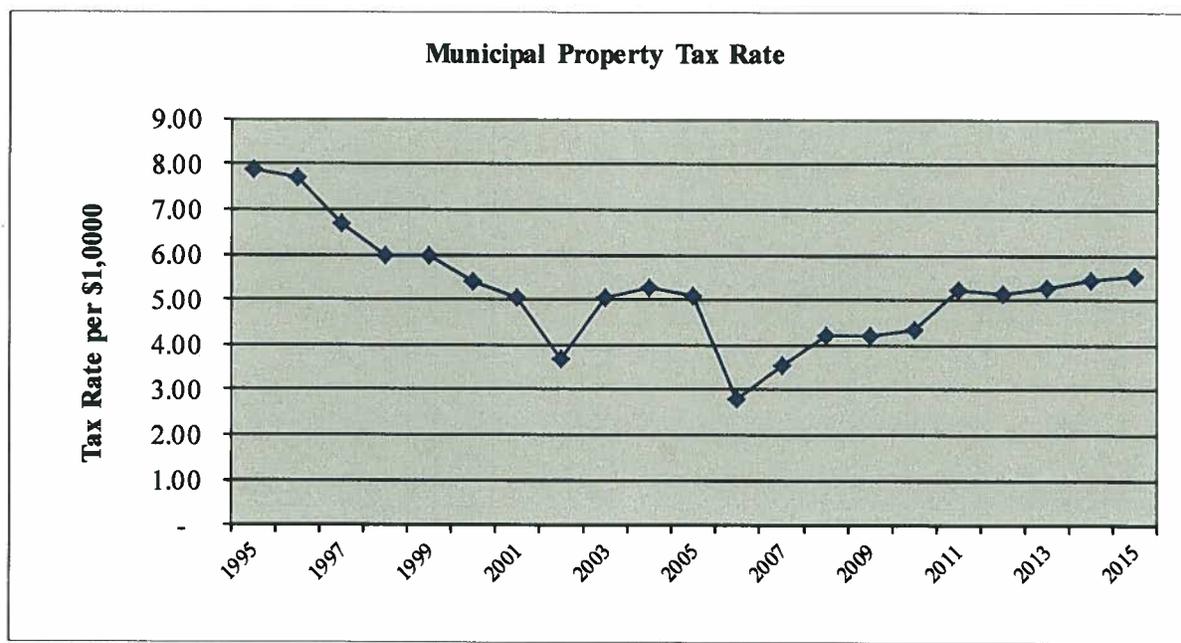
In addition, other proposed capital outlays of \$1,097,595 consist of the following:

Wasserman Park Improvements	25,000
Veterans Park Boat Ramp Repair	8,500
Highway- Roof Repair	75,000
Lawn Mower	11,000
Patrol Vehicles (3)	106,000
Misc Build Repairs	55,900
Misc Equipment	30,425
Computer Equipment	35,770
Road Paving	750,000
	<u>1,097,595</u>

### Projected Tax Rate

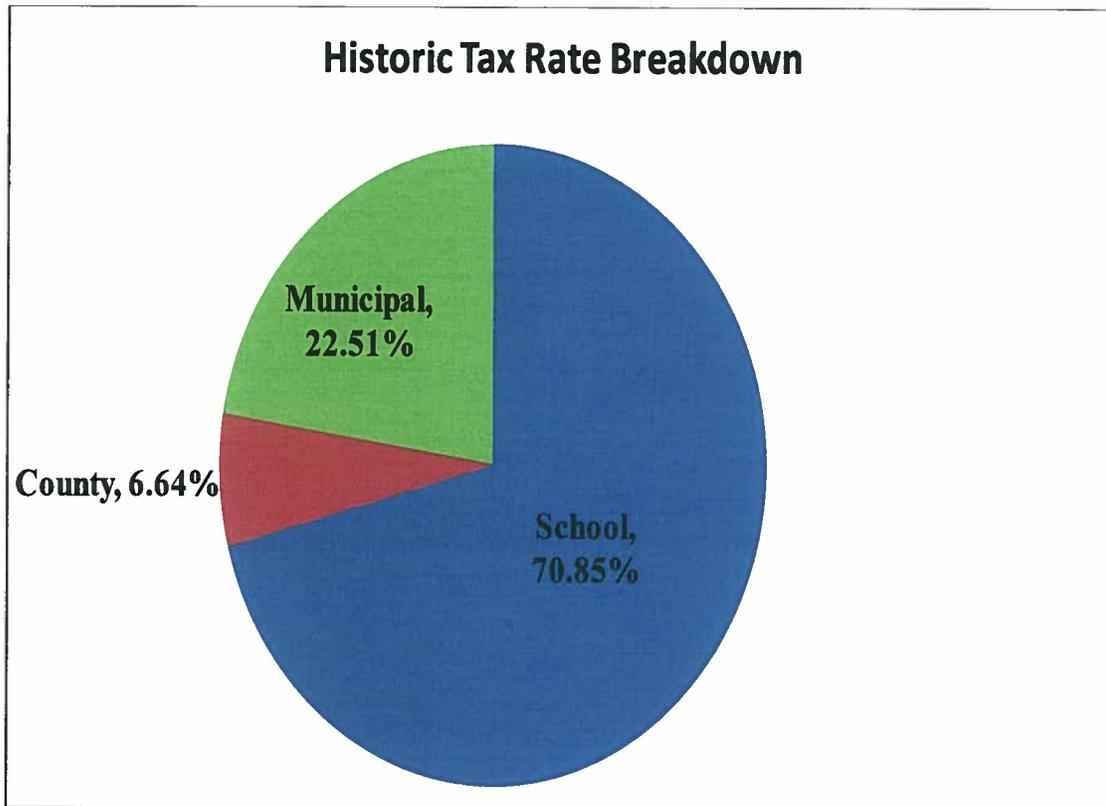
Based on the recommended budget (Article 2) and current estimates of 2015 net assessed valuations and 2015-16 non-tax revenues, the municipal portion of the 2015 property tax rate is expected to be \$5.54, which correlates to a tax bill of \$554 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation.

This budget represents an increase of \$.08 or 1.5% compared to the 2014 rate. However, this projection includes only the impact of Article 2 and not any of the other Articles.



## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

The chart below is a historic representation of how your tax bill is broken down.



### Debt Service

There are four outstanding bond issues: 2002 Greens Pond Land Acquisition Bonds - \$810,000 principal balance; 2007 Drainage Improvement Bond - \$1,040,000 principal balance; 2008 Interceptor Bond - \$334,936 principal balance; and 2009 Dewatering Upgrade Bond - \$1,844,279 principal balance. Debt service costs for 2015-16 represent a decrease of \$384,535 and consist of the following:

2002 Greens Pond Land Acquisition Bonds	\$291,723
2007 Drainage Bond	158,150
2008 Interceptor Bond	62,321
2009 Dewatering Upgrade	299,300
Contingency for tax anticipation notes	<u>1</u>
Total	\$ 811,495

### Default Budget

If the proposed budget of \$31,472,136 in Article 2 should fail, an appropriation of \$27,646,335 (Chart 3) would automatically become effective in accordance with New Hampshire Statutes. The Town Council would then be responsible for either holding a special meeting at which a revised Municipal Operating Budget appropriation would be considered, or developing a revised Municipal Operating Budget within this amount.

## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

In 2009-10, the Town made a change to the way it presents the Appropriation Article to the taxpayers. A decision was made to include all the Capital Reserve Fund purchases in the budget so the voter had a chance to vote on the complete appropriations for the Town. When calculating the default budget, these items have to be backed out of the appropriations for prior years. To compute the default budget, the Department of Revenue Administration has given specific guidelines for Towns and Schools to use: begin with the prior year operating warrant article, add in any previously approved warrant articles that may affect the current year budget (such as collective bargaining agreements), subtract any one time purchases (such as capital expenditures), then net the difference in debt payments to come up with the default budget.

In calculating the 2015-16 default budget, the difference between the default budget and the current operating budget (\$31,472,136) is \$3,825,801. However, in making an apples to apples comparison as shown on Chart 3, one time capital expenditures are backed out, thus making the default budget \$918,457 less than the 2015-16 proposed operating budget. ***One important point to remember is that the \$2,907,334 in capital purchases for 2015-16 is fully offset by revenues which the Town has saved for in the Capital Reserve Funds.*** Chart 4 is a comparison of tax rates.

Chart 3 - Default Calculations		
	2014-15	2015-16
	Voted	Default
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
General Town operations and charges - Article 3	31,979,257	31,979,257
NEPBA 112 collective bargaining agreement - Article 3 (2013-14)		(13,559)
Teamsters collective bargaining agreement - Article 4 (2013-14)		(18,221)
NEPBA 12 collective bargaining agreement - Article 5 (2013-14)		(28,833)
AFSCME 3657 collective bargaining agreement - Article 6 (2013-14)		(27,839)
IAFF 2904 collective bargaining agreement - Article 7 (2013-14)		(56,529)
Union Contract Benefit Increases (decreases)		
Health		(153,103)
NHRS		92,671
Other Insurance Benefits (Dental, Life, STD, WC and unemployment)		(31,974)
One Time Purchases		
One time CRF purchases		(3,711,000)
Debt service:		
2014-15		(1,196,030)
2015-16	-	811,495
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,979,257</b>	<b>27,646,335</b>

## 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

<b>Chart 4 2015-16 Default Tax Rate Comparison</b>			
		Est. Default	
		<u>2015 Tax Rate</u>	
Default Appropriations		27,646,335	
Estimated Default Revenues (see below)		(13,280,127)	
Tax overlay		325,000	
Veterans exemptions		<u>704,000</u>	
Property tax levy		15,395,208	
Valuation for state property tax rate		2,945,686.660	
Default property tax rate		5.23	
Proposed Budget tax rate		5.54	
Variance			<b>(0.31)</b>
<b>Revenue comparison:</b>			
2015-16 revenue Proposed Budget	(16,187,461)		
Less: Capital revenue			
General Fund	2,722,334		
WWTF	<u>185,000</u>		
		(13,280,127)	
<b>Appropriation Comparison</b>			
2015-16 Proposed Budget Comparison	31,472,126		
Less: Capital revenue			
General Fund	(2,722,334)		
WWTF	<u>(185,000)</u>	28,564,792	
Default Budget (from above)		<u>27,646,335</u>	
Decrease in appropriations (default verse proposed budget)		(918,457)	
Tax Rate variance Appropriations (918,457 divided by 2,945,686.660)			<b>(0.31)</b>
Tax Rate variance Revenue		<u>-</u>	
Overall tax rate variance			<b>(0.31)</b>

# 2015 Proposed Warrant Article

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## ARTICLE 3

### American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees 93, Local 2986, Collective Bargaining Agreement

By approving Article 3, the Town would ratify the proposed collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Merrimack and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees 93, Local 2986, and the approved wage and benefit adjustments contained therein for a one year ending on June 30, 2016. Included are a \$1,500 one-time wage adjustment and creation of a 20-year step. This agreement increases employee contributions to the HMO health and dental insurance premium cost sharing to 10% of the premium. Beginning on July 1, 2015, the Office Visit copay changes from \$5 to \$20 and the Pharmacy copay changes from \$0/15/15, \$0/1/1 to \$10/20/45. The associated cost has been estimated at \$35,022.

The following is a breakdown of the AFSCME 2986 Contract cost

	Cost	
Wages	\$72,834	
Steps	\$97,411	
20 Year Step	\$3,206	
Health/Dental Insurance Savings	\$(138,429)	
Total Cost		\$35,022

This agreement covers the laborers of the Public Works Department to include Highway, Waste Water, Solid Waste, and Equipment Maintenance Divisions.

*Estimated 2015 Property Tax Bill Impact: Per \$1,000 of Assessed Valuation*

*- LESS THAN \$0.01*

# VOTE