



**TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH
63 MAIN STREET
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
NORTHBOROUGH, MA 01532**

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

March 22, 2023

7:00 p.m.

-
1. Approval of Minutes
 - [March 1, 2023](#)
 - [March 8, 2023](#)
 2. [Fire Department FY2024 Budget Presentation](#)
 3. [Revised ARHS FY2024 Assessment and Athletic Complex Cost Estimate.](#)
 4. [FY2023 Reserve Fund Transfers](#)
 - Assabet Valley Assessment
 - Snow and Ice Overdraft
 - Treasurer's Office Tax Bill Printing
 5. Discussion regarding Committee Recommendations
 6. Next Meetings:
 - March 27, 2023 – Joint Budget Hearing with Board of Selectmen
 - March 29, 2023 – Committee Recommendations and Town Meeting Report
 7. Any other business to come before the Committee



APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

63 Main Street

Selectmen's Meeting Room

March 1, 2023

7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Brenckle
Janice Hight
Robert D'Amico
Tim Kaelin
Rick Nieber
Tony Poteete

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 22, 2023 MEETING

The approval of the February 22, 2023 meeting minutes will be postponed until the next meeting as they are not yet finalized.

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE PROJECT REQUESTS

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) member Jeff Leland was present. He indicated that for this year's Town Meeting, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is working from a budget of \$770,000 projected new revenue with State match + \$1,050,576 in the CPA reserve accounts. The CPC considered ten applications based on the customary criteria of: 1) Applicability to CPA guidelines and the goals described in the Northborough CPA procedural sheet; 2) Community support; 3) Affordability; and 4) Urgency to fund this year. The CPC also considered the potential future needs for CPA funds to support the White Cliffs re-use proposal or other projects resulting from the Downtown Revitalization study. Mr. Leland reviewed the following CPC warrant articles:

White Cliffs Bond Payment (\$188,000)

This is the 6th payment required for the bond on the White Cliffs purchase, and this also covers the requirement that at least 10% of new revenue be allocated toward Historic Preservation. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from new revenue.

CPA Administrative Expenses Account (\$38,500)

In accordance with the CPA legislation, the CPC may allocate up to 5% of new revenue to the administrative account for expenses such as legal fees, appraisals and consultant fees related to CPA projects. Unused amounts from a given year go back to the CPA Unreserved fund. The CPC voted 7-0 to allocate 5% of the projected \$770,000 new revenue.

Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (\$77,000)

Since there is no other application this year for Affordable Housing, the CPC voted 7-0 to allocate the required minimum of 10% of new revenue toward the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund.

Northborough Dog Park (\$347,500)

The CPC believes this application for the construction phase of this project is a top priority to bring to Town Meeting in 2023. This project also covers the minimum 10% allocation required for open space and recreation. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from new revenue.

Mr. Coderre reported that the Town of Northborough was awarded a Stanton Foundation Grant in the amount of \$25,000 for the purposes of obtaining required permits, producing final construction-ready design plans and associated bid specifications relative to this project. He added that he is cautiously optimistic that another \$200,000 Stanton Foundation Grant will be awarded for this project, which would be in addition to the \$347,500 in CPA funds.

Construction of ADA Accessible Trail at Senior Center (\$370,000)

The CPC believes this application for the construction phase of this project is a top priority to bring to Town Meeting in 2023. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this with \$119,000 from new revenue and \$251,000 from the Unreserved fund. Mr. Leland noted that the project will result in the construction of the Town's first ADA accessible trail.

First Parish Church Steeple Repairs (\$200,000)

The CPC felt that the scope of work and cost estimates for this project are not fully defined at this time, and that there is not the same urgency to fund the project this year compared to several other projects and obligations. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

Window Restoration and Preservation of Historical Society Building (\$71,300)

The CPC felt that there is not the same urgency to fund the project this year compared to several other projects and obligations. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

Funding the Historic Reserves Account (\$350,000)

In support of the CPC efforts to plan for future needs for CPA funding and allow flexibility across all categories of historic preservation, affordable housing, open space and recreation, the CPC feels it is wise to keep reserves in the Unreserved Fund at this time rather than allocating to just one fund. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny this application. Both the Committee's representative from the Historic District Commission (HDC) and the HDC Chair were in attendance. Both agreed with this decision.

Library Historic Marker (\$5,060)

The CPC has been supportive on prior projects for historic markers, as they contribute to enhancing the community and supporting the goals in the Master Plan and Historic Preservation Plan, all at relatively low cost. The CPC voted 5-2 to fund this from the Unreserved Fund.

Aqueduct Multi Use Trail Feasibility Study (\$100,000)

Although this project has strong community support and has been a priority for the Open Space Committee for several years, a recent communication from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) states that they will not allow pavement or stone dust surface improvements to the aqueduct at this time. Since the surface improvements are a major element of the proposed trail design study, the applicants withdrew this application.

ARHS Athletic Complex Project – Tennis Court Restorations (\$352,701)

The CPC felt that there is not the same level of urgency and community support to fund the project compared to several other projects and obligations. Also with the CPC's goal of maintaining adequate reserves for the potential needs for White Cliffs and the Downtown Revitalization project, the CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

Conservation Fund (\$77,000)

To plan for future needs for CPA funding and allow flexibility across all categories of historic preservation, affordable housing, open space and recreation, the CPC feels it is wise to keep reserves in the Unreserved Fund at this time rather than allocating to just one fund. In addition, the Conservation Fund currently has a balance of approx. \$664,000 from CPA funds approved at prior Town Meetings. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny this application. The Committee's representatives from the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission both agreed with this decision.

Mr. Coderre clarified that although Mr. Leland reviewed 12 projects that the CPC considered for funding, only 6 of them were approved and will be included on the Town Meeting Warrant. He noted that all CPC projects are funded without any additional tax impact. He also explained that CPA funding is limited to the protection and acquisition of open space, recreation, preservation of historic resources, and the creation of affordable housing.

Following a couple of questions from Committee members, Mr. Leland ended his presentation stating that if all of the CPC recommendations are approved at Town Meeting, the amount unallocated from projected new revenue would be \$0 and the amount remaining in the Unreserved Fund would be \$591,653. The Affordable Housing Reserve Fund would increase to \$279,863.

Committee members thanked Mr. Leland for his presentation on the CPC recommendations.

FINANCE OFFICE FY2024 BUDGET

Finance Director Jason Little and Treasurer/Collector Lisa Troast were present. Mr. Little indicated that the Finance Department includes the Treasurer/Collector Division, the Assessing Division and the Accounting Division.

Mr. Little noted that overall, the Finance Department's FY2024 budget is up \$62,954, or 7.8%. Increases contained in the Treasurer/Collector's budget reflect a change in where funds for postage of tax bills are budgeted. In order to more accurately reflect the costs of running the department, these funds have been relocated to the Treasurer/Collector's budget from the Public Buildings budget in FY2024. This accounts for approximately \$21,000 of the increase to the overall Finance Department budget.

Mr. Little indicated that the Treasurer/Collector's budget also reflects an increase of approximately \$10,000 for the inclusion of contractual services for an attorney to assist with handling Tax Title cases. Previously, funds for this purpose were budgeted in the Town Counsel line item. He added that another increase of \$10,000 is added to the Assessing Division for contractual services to provide for commercial appraisals to defend the Town's values at the State Appellate Tax Board (ATB).

Mr. Coderre noted his appreciation to Mr. Little for his hard work in bringing onboard highly qualified candidates Treasurer/Collector Lisa Troast and Principal Assessor Lee Keomanivong and especially for his efforts during the pandemic in complying with the Cares Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) reporting requirements. Mr. Little also shared his appreciation to Ms. Troast and Mr. Keomanivong.

UNDISTRIBUTED EXPENSES – FY2024 DEBT SERVICE BUDGET

Mr. Little indicated that for FY2024, the total Debt Service budget for the General Fund is \$2.14 million, an increase of \$197,767. The largest component of the Debt Service budget in FY2024 is for the Lincoln Street School, which is \$973,975, a decrease from the FY2017 peak of \$1,144,882. Since that project was completed on time and approximately \$1.38 million under budget, the surplus bond proceeds from this project were used to fund the next phase of the Fire Station building project approved at the 2019 Town Meeting. He added that in preparation for the Fire Station project, and other more significant building projects, issuance of debt for smaller capital projects has been curtailed to minimize the tax impact.

Mr. Coderre noted that Northborough's legal debt limit is \$181 million. As of June 2022, the Town's debt issuance is \$22 million, which on a percentage basis is below 5% of the operating budget and is well within the Town's internal debt policy. He added that the Town is well positioned to take on the next large building project, which will be the new Fire Station.

UNDISTRIBUTED EXPENSES – FY2024 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BUDGET

Mr. Little summarized the key increases in the Employee Benefits Budget for FY2024 as follows:

Worcester Regional Retirement Assessment

Mr. Little indicated that the Town participates in the Worcester Regional Retirement System. The Municipal Relief Act of 2010 extended the requirement for full funding of the pension system's liability to the year 2040, while the system's actual funding schedule targets full funding by 2036. He noted that the FY2024 General Fund increase of \$63,192 represents a 2.32% rise in retirement costs. This is much lower than the system-wide increase of approximately 10%, which is primarily due to implementation of the funding schedule designed to eliminate the unfunded pension liability by 2036. He added that Northborough's lower than average increase within the system is driven by actuarial factors, which include the ages of covered employees and retirees. Given the turnover in public safety positions, the newer staff costs have positively impacted the Town's FY2024 assessment.

Health Insurance

Mr. Little indicated that within the Health Insurance budget, the Town covers retirees. Through December, 2022 the Town offered a comprehensive Tufts Medicare Complement plan, for which the Town received notice from Tufts that it would discontinue the plan upon the January 2023 renewal. The Town successfully navigated all 50 retirees (in addition to 30 covered spouses) onto alternative plans, which resulted in cost savings for them and a FY2023 budget savings of approximately \$300,000 that carried over into FY2024.

Mr. Little noted that the Town underwent an RFP process with the Regional High School district and the Town of Southborough and awarded a contract to Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare (HPHC) for FY2023. Due to favorable claims data along with the larger group afforded by the Joint Purchasing Agreement (JPA), the new contract with HPHC resulted in a modest premium increase for FY2023 and FY2024.

Mr. Little indicated that the FY2024 Health Insurance budget was prepared using an estimated 5% increase effective with the Senior plan renewal on January 1, 2023. He added that although for FY2024, HPHC's premiums are still unknown at this time, the rates reflect an estimated increase of 7% over the prior year. However, the overall budget increase is estimated at 0%, due to enrollment trends and cost-saving changes made to the senior plans during FY2023.

Mr. Coderre reiterated that in order to maintain sustainable health insurance budgets over the years the Town has periodically made changes to plan design, employee contributions, carrier consolidation, and most recently forming the informal JPA. The overall effect has been an average health insurance budget increase of just 2.69% since FY2010.

In addition to the key budgets mentioned above, undistributed expenses for FY2024 include an OPEB Trust Fund contribution, life insurance, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation insurance; comprehensive building and liability insurance; non-appropriated expenses such as State Assessments and reserves for abatements; stabilization fund contribution; a reserve fund for extraordinary and unforeseen expenses; and various Town Meeting special warrant articles.

Lastly, Mr. Coderre noted that the Governor's House Budget forecasts a 2% increase in FY2024 State Aid. He added that the State Legislators will attend the March 13th Selectmen's Meeting to discuss the Town's legislative priorities. He encouraged Committee members to read the legislative priorities letter that was recently emailed to them and to watch the March 13th Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Little and Mr. Coderre responded to questions and comments from Committee members throughout the presentation.

REVIEW OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES

Mr. Coderre noted that a summary of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles was presented to the Board of Selectmen at its February 27th meeting. He reviewed the draft summary of the 51 warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. He noted that at this stage the initial draft of the Warrant often contains incomplete information and placeholders. He added that the Board of Selectmen will vote to close the warrant at its March 13th meeting. It will then be reviewed and finalized by Town Counsel and posted prior to Town Meeting.

Mr. Coderre referred to the draft Financial Planning Committee (FPC) report that was recently emailed to Committee members. He noted that historically, the FPC only provides recommendations regarding the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) articles that would otherwise qualify for inclusion in the Capital Budget, adding that the Appropriations Committee will provide recommendations on all capital and CPC articles because they are of a "financial nature."

Chairman Kaelin noted that the FPC report includes a statement recommending that the Board of Selectmen release ARPA funding for the Fire Engine and the Tight Tank. In response to a question by Chairman Kaelin, Mr. Coderre stated that the Appropriations Committee can include a similar statement in its report. He then reviewed the structure and content included in the Appropriations Committee report that will be finalized by the Committee at a future meeting.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Coderre indicated that Town Planner Laurie Connors will attend an upcoming Committee meeting to present her project update on downtown revitalization, economic development and MBTA zoning. He noted that the written downtown revitalization update from Ms. Connors was recently emailed to Committee members for their review.

Based upon the mediation session with the Joint Labor Mediation Committee (JLMC) and the Fire Union scheduled for March 8th, Mr. Coderre proposed to postpone discussion of the Fire Department budget until March 15th in case a settlement is reached. He also noted that the Governor just released her budget, which will likely result in a revised ARHS Operating Assessment. He added that the Finance Director has also requested a meeting to discuss potential FY2023 Reserve Fund Transfers due to some unexpected expenses, including a boiler failure at Town Offices that had to be replaced.

Lastly, given the mandatory Joint Budget Hearing between the Appropriations Committee and the Board of Selectmen on March 27th, Committee members agreed to meet on March 29th to vote on its recommendations for Town Meeting.

Wednesday 3/8/2023 7PM	Assabet Valley Regional Technical HS; Police Budget Presentation; Planning Director (downtown project update, Economic Development update, and MBTA Zoning)
Wednesday 3/15/23 7PM	Fire Budget Presentation; Finalized Health Insurance and Revised ARHS Assessment based upon Governor's Budget; Any Other Presentations, if needed; Reserve Fund Transfers FY2023; Discussion regarding Committee Recommendations
Monday 3/27/2023 7PM	Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen – Budget Hearing (Charter 6-5)
Wednesday 3/29/23	Finalize Committee Recommendations and Report
Monday 4/24/2023	6pm at ARHS Auditorium
June 2023	Wrap-Up; Year-end Transfers as needed

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hight moved the Committee vote to adjourn; Mr. Nieber seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. March 1, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. Information packet – CPC Project Requests
3. Information packet – Finance Office and Undistributed Expenses FY2024 Budget



APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

63 Main Street

Selectmen's Meeting Room

March 8, 2023

7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Brenckle
Janice Hight
Robert D'Amico
Tim Kaelin
Rick Nieber
Tony Poteete

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 22, 2023 MEETING

Mr. Brenckle moved the Committee vote to approve the February 22, 2023 meeting minutes; Ms. Hight seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

ASSABET VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL FY2024 BUDGET

School Superintendent Ernie Houle, Director of Business Operations Maria Silva and Assabet Regional School Committee Chair Virginia Simms George were present on behalf of Assabet Valley Technical High School (Assabet). Assabet is a vocational school composed of the member communities of Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough and Westborough.

Superintendent Houle noted the following FY2024 Budget Drivers:

- To close curricular gaps between increasing numbers of ELL and Students with Disabilities in order to maximize student impact.
- To meet the demands of students with increased needs in SEL, Mental Health and Special Education services.
- To maintain appropriate class sizes and co-taught ratios to create the best possible teaching and learning environment for students.
- With a continued increase in student interest and enrollment, maintain diversity in the Program of Studies offered.
- Due to inflationary costs, maintain appropriate funding for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs which require the purchase of consumables, equipment and curriculum.
- Meet all contractual obligations and move closer to pre-COVID staffing and service levels.

Superintendent Houle noted that Northborough enrollment at Assabet decreased from 68 to 64 students in FY2022. He also reviewed the enrollment trends for In-District versus Out-Of-District admissions.

Superintendent Houle reviewed the FY2024 Budget as follows:

- The total Operating Budget for FY2024 is \$23,475,499 (not including Capital), an overall increase of 12.5% over FY2023 or \$2,811,815.
- Staffing additions include one Librarian and one Elective Instructor. The FY2024 Budget also fulfills a requirement to move two full-time grant funded positions back into the Operational Budget.
- Total due for Northborough's FY2024 contribution for Transportation, Debt and OPEB is \$1,301,581.
- The District borrowed \$27 million in FY2016. The Capital Assessment is per the 3-year enrollment average at the time of project approval. Northborough's percentage average will remain for the lifetime of the capital debt assessment at 6.96%. A principal payment of \$1,100,000 and an interest payment of \$712,875 (savings of \$55K from last year) is due on July 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024.
- The District secured a \$2 million BAN which will have a principal payment of \$115,200 and an interest payment of approximately \$4,000 due in November of 2023.
- FY2024 Above Minimum Assessment Required is reduced overall by \$67,164 due to a 90% increase in Regional Transportation Reimbursement and the decrease in the Capital Debt Assessment.

Superintendent Houle reviewed the Net School Spending (NSS) and Foundation Budget for FY2022 and FY2023. The State requires that Northborough spend \$17,491,619, or 170.9%. The actual NSS for Northborough was \$29,887,564, or 194.7%.

Superintendent Houle informed the Committee that Northborough's FY2024 Minimum Local Contribution (MLC) is \$1,143,066, a decrease of \$6,984. At the request of a Committee member, Superintendent Houle explained the variables that affect the Minimum Local Contribution for each member community. Mr. Coderre noted that the MLC formula is based on wealth factors for each community and enrollment at each district. A discussion ensued about the frustration with the State's outdated Chapter 70 Formula which continues to be a top legislative priority.

Mr. Coderre indicated that there is a pending Appropriation Reserve Fund Transfer for the Assabet Valley Assessment for FY2023, which was short by \$31,365. Last year Governor Baker had advanced legislation that would have allowed districts to count COVID-19 grant funds toward the FY2022 MLC, however this legislation did not pass. In August of 2022, Assabet was notified that without this legislation, they did not meet the MLC requirement for FY2022 and should have added the shortfall to the FY2023 budget. The timing of this determination was well after the 2022 Town Meeting, which is why a transfer request will be forthcoming. He further explained that the proposed assessment for FY2024 is \$1,301,581, which is comprised of \$126,176 for debt and \$1,175,405 for operations. The percentage increase prior to a transfer is a 4.58% increase, while the addition of \$31,365 to FY2023's operating assessment would result in a FY2024 assessment increase of 1.74%.

Mr. D'Amico shared his frustration with having no control over the MLC formula. In response, Mr. Coderre stated that the Student Opportunity Act is diverting over 70% or \$468 million to a handful of districts, of which Northborough is not one. Because Northborough is a minimum aid

community the district receives just \$30 per student. Although the State Legislature temporarily increased this to \$60 per student, one of the top legislative priorities is that the per student amount be increased to \$100 in FY2024.

Lastly, Superintendent Houle reviewed the FY2024 proposed expenditures by function. He noted that Assabet switched to Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare due to Fallon Health leaving the commercial health offering. He added that as of FY2020 the responsibility for health care costs was shifted from 75% District and 25% Employee to 70% District and 30% Employee for new hires.

Superintendent Houle and Ms. Silva responded to questions and comments from Mr. Coderre and Committee members throughout the presentation.

Ms. Simms George and Superintendent Houle thanked Mr. Coderre for his professional guidance and support throughout the years and wished him the best in his future endeavors.

POLICE DEPARTMENT FY2024 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Police Chief Lyver reviewed the details of the FY2024 budget for the Police Department. He indicated that overall, the FY2024 Police Department Budget is increasing 5.21% or \$158,173. He explained that a Patrol Officer who had been on administrative leave for an extended period is anticipated to return in FY2024. Given the time that passed, the department was forced to backfill the position during the three-year vacancy. As a result, the FY2024 budget reflects an increase of one full-time Patrol Officer not previously budgeted for. Should any staff separate during FY2024, the staffing levels will be reassessed for possible reduction. The wages and benefits for that officer account for approximately \$90,000 of the \$158,061 increase. Without the inclusion of the additional officer, the FY2024 Police budget would increase just 2%.

Mr. Coderre noted that, similar to other departments, Police Station maintenance costs were also moved to the new Facilities Division of the DPW, which understates the overall budget increase.

Chief Lyver added that the departmental budget as presented includes contractual wage increases for Police Patrol and Non-Union personnel. However, the Sergeant's Contract has not yet been settled and costs to settle are contained in the FY2024 Personnel Board account.

Chief Lyver also presented the following FY2024 Capital Requests for the Police Department, which will be going to Town Meeting.

Police Cruiser Replacements - \$190,500

Chief Lyver indicated that this request seeks to replace 2 patrol vehicles and 1 detective vehicle in FY2024. Patrol vehicles are typically used for four years/100,000 miles, while detective and administrative vehicles have about a six to eight year/ 100,000 expected useful life. Included in the funding request is the cost of outfitting the vehicles with equipment, including radar, emergency warning lights, prisoner transport cages and radio consoles. Whenever possible, emergency equipment is moved from the old vehicles to the new ones.

Chief Lyver noted that FY2024 includes 3 vehicles in order to get back on the 3 vehicles one year, then 2 vehicles the next year schedule following postponement of a vehicle during the pandemic.

Police Station Painting - \$70,000

Chief Lyver indicated that this project consists of painting (staining) and minor repairs and carpentry to the exterior of the Police Station. The last time the exterior was painted was approximately 10 years ago through the Worcester County Sheriff's Inmate Community Service Program (ICSP), which provides free labor to municipalities and nonprofit organizations by nonviolent, non-sex offender inmates. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the ICSP has been suspended indefinitely. The estimated cost is based upon state-mandated prevailing wage rates, which typically adds 30% or more to the cost of small projects. The State's prevailing wage for a painter is \$75-\$80 per hour.

At the request of a Committee member, Chief Lyver shared his thoughts on the use of all electric versus hybrid police vehicles. He also explained why Northborough is hesitant to participate in a regional emergency dispatch system, noting his concern that the Police Department would lose local control once becoming a member of a regional organization. Lastly, Chief Lyver stated that the rule of thumb for the department's police vehicle replacement schedule is that you can add 25-30% more mileage on a patrol vehicle based on the constant idling. This is why it is so important to keep up with the replacement schedule.

PLANNING DIRECTOR LAURIE CONNORS

Economic Development Update

A complete economic development update on the industrial, commercial and residential projects was included in the Committee's meeting packet. Ms. Connors informed the Committee that the Planning Board just recently completed a site plan approval for the Algonquin High School Athletic Complex. She briefly reviewed the following notable industrial and commercial projects:

0 and 301 Bartlett Street

The 150,000 square foot warehouse was originally denied by the Planning Board. For the last couple of years it has been going through the appeal process. It was ultimately remanded back to the Planning Board. The public hearing for this project has been ongoing as the particulars of conditions are worked out for final approval.

180, 186 & 200 Bartlett Street

This was essentially a major renovation and change of use that was approved for the existing structures. The two existing buildings will be reused as a training center, contractor's yard and for trailer and small equipment maintenance. An existing automotive repair use will continue.

100 Bearfoot Road

Two building additions were approved and permitted with a combined 22,080 square feet of warehouse space and 4,800 square feet of office space, along with parking and associated improvements.

Ms. Connors reported that there is little happening with residential projects. Much of the residential development is single family homes along existing ways. One notable residential project is the Clark Woods Subdivision on Howard Street. They are wrapping up construction, but there are some issues with ponding, which might delay it for another year. There is also one duplex under construction at 87 Hudson Street.

Downtown Revitalization Update

Ms. Connors provided a status update on the Town's efforts to date regarding the downtown revitalization project as follows:

- Completed

Ms. Connors reminded Committee member that at the April 2022 Town Meeting, \$150,000 was allocated for the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) to conduct a design study of the downtown to help focus ideas and develop a clear vision for the area. In October 2022, the Town hired a consultant team led by Weston & Sampson Engineers to undertake the effort. The consultant team met monthly with the MPIC, soliciting information and updating them on work completed to date. The preliminary timeline for completion of the project was approximately 8 months.

Ms. Connors noted that the consultant prepared a short survey, which was distributed at Applefest and via the municipal website during the Fall of 2022, of which 636 survey responses were received and analyzed. The consultant team conducted interviews with key stakeholders that were identified by the MPIC and herself.

Ms. Connors reported that Community Meeting #1 was held at the High School in January 2023 and gathered public input about the types of uses and amenities people want to see in 4 distinct study areas. It was very well attended with between 70 and 80 participants. The consultant team held a second workshop with the downtown business community in February 2023. Business owners were asked to comment on their top goals for the project, the biggest challenges and opportunities facing downtown from a business perspective, the current business mix, and top things that they would like to change about the downtown.

- Underway

Ms. Connors indicated that the Town asked the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission to undertake traffic counts along Main Street, at the intersections of Church Street, Hudson Street and South Street. The consultant team will perform a capacity analysis of the intersections to determine the impact on traffic operations if the lanes along Main Street were reduced to provide room for bicycle facilities, wider sidewalks, and on-street parking. Depending upon the results of the capacity analysis, which should be completed this month, the Town and the consultant engineers may approach MassDOT about a future road project on Main Street in the area of the downtown.

She noted that two more community workshops are envisioned for Spring of 2023. Community Event #2 will highlight four redevelopment scenarios, development programs and capital budget data. Community event #3 will present the selected revitalization scenario and offer the public the opportunity to express thoughts and ask questions. The consultant team will then draft the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and Design Report, which shall include an implementation

strategy with suggested phasing of the project. Actions will be identified by priority, responsible party and preliminary cost. The Draft Plan will be posted on the municipal website for public comments. After the comment period ends, the consultant team will meet with the MPIC and town staff to review the comments and make decisions about potential revisions.

Ms. Connors advised the Committee that upon completion of the Final Report, the consultant team will give a final presentation to a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the MPIC, summarizing final results and recommendations.

- Next Steps

Ms. Connors noted that it is expected that project implementation will consist of zoning changes as well as infrastructure improvements (sidewalk widening and construction, crosswalk improvements, roadway layout modifications, drainage/water/sewer improvements, parking improvements, and a variety of streetscape improvements including installation of pedestrian-scale lighting, seating, landscaping, wayfinding signage, and public art). To minimize disruption to the downtown and the budget, the project will be divided into multiple years and phases.

Ms. Connors noted that municipal staff and the MPIC will work together to identify a Phase I project using as-yet undefined criteria. Potential criteria may include project need, project impact, redevelopment readiness (i.e. will coincide with redevelopment project on private property), availability of local funds to pay for design, and ability of the project to attract grant funding for construction. It is anticipated that just the design and permitting of a Phase I project will cost approximately \$250,000 and take one year to complete. She added that an important part of the design process will include public outreach. If American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant funds are used to fund the design of a Phase I project, it is likely that design can begin in the Fall of 2023 and wrap up in the Fall of 2024.

Ms. Connors informed the Committee that during the design process, municipal staff will identify and begin applying for grants for construction. Potential funding sources include the MassWorks Grant, Complete Streets Construction Grant, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant, Commonwealth Places Programs, and the Housing Choice Grant. In order to qualify for these programs, the Town must allocate local funds as a match prior to the grant application due dates. Ms. Connors anticipates needing a minimum of \$500,000 in local matching funds to fund a Phase I project costing approximately \$2 million.

Ms. Connors indicated that once design and permitting of the Phase I project is complete and funding has been secured, the Town will procure construction services from eligible contractors. To maximize interest and minimize costs, the goal will be to go out to bid in early January 2025 for a construction start in April 2025. It is anticipated that construction will take approximately nine months to complete, weather permitting, with submission of as-built plans anticipated in January 2026. This Phase I construction schedule coincides well with the ARPA funding schedule, which mandates that ARPA funds must be fully expended by December 31, 2026.

Lastly, she anticipates that the downtown revitalization project will consist of a total of 3-4 phases. Each phase will take approximately two years from the start of design to the completion of construction. Improvements made to Route 20 will need to be included on the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), which could take several years.

In response to a question regarding the use of ARPA funds for this initiative, Mr. Coderre confirmed that the ARPA funds need to be committed by 2024 and fully expended by December 2026. He added that this long-term project is going to have 5-10 years of different phases and the ARPA funding that Ms. Connors is referring to is to fund Phase 1 of the project, which is likely the only phase to occur during the availability of ARPA funding.

MBTA Zoning Update

Ms. Connors provided an update on the new guidelines for implementing and complying with the new regulations for Multi-family Zoning Districts issued by the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) communities are now required to have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right. She noted that the draft guidelines do not require the building of new units, but simply require communities to change the use and dimensional charts in their zoning bylaws to allow for multi-family housing by right, subject to site plan review instead of a special permit.

Ms. Connors indicated that Northborough is categorized as an MBTA-adjacent community because the Town does not have a transit station, but abuts a transit community. She explained in detail each of the following criteria that applies to Northborough:

- Minimum gross density of 15 units per acre

Ms. Connors explained the formula for determining the reasonable size and the minimum multi-family unit capacity, which for Northborough is 750 units. She added that the existing multi-family units within Avalon Bay, Whitney Place, and several others throughout town could count toward both units and density.

- Location of Multi-Family Districts

Ms. Connors noted that Multi-family districts should be located in an area with reasonable access to a transit station based on existing street patterns, pedestrian connections and bicycle lanes, or near an existing downtown or an area of underutilized/abandoned structures with redevelopment potential, which would support the downtown revitalization efforts nicely since the Town has some underutilized buildings downtown that could be converted into housing.

- No age restrictions and must be suitable for families with children

Ms. Connors informed the Committee that multi-family districts cannot include age restrictions or place limits or restrictions on the size of units, number of bedrooms, size of bedrooms or number of occupants.

She added that failure to comply with the multi-family zoning requirements would make Northborough ineligible for funds from the following:

- Housing Choice Grants
- Local Capital Projects Fund
- MassWorks Infrastructure Program
- DHCD may take non-compliance into consideration when making other discretionary grant awards

Ms. Connors noted that the MassWorks Infrastructure Program emphasizes the production of multi-family housing and job creation in appropriately located walkable, mixed-use districts like Downtown Northborough. She added that the MassWorks Grant Program could be a funding mechanism for Northborough's vision for a pedestrian-friendly downtown.

Ms. Connors indicated that the community must take certain steps to secure interim compliance including providing notice to DHCD and creating an action plan. The action plan was submitted this past January and the next deadline is to implement the action plan and adopt a zoning amendment by December 31, 2024. She noted that the Planning Board is aiming to put forth a zoning bylaw at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. She also reiterated that the Town is not obligated to provide multi-family units, as this is simply a zoning change that will provide for a developer to do so.

Ms. Connors responded to questions and comments from Committee members throughout the presentations.

MEETING SCHEDULE

March 15

Fire Department FY2024 Budget presentation; Health Insurance and the revised ARHS Assessment; FY2023 Reserve Fund transfers; and Committee recommendations to Town Meeting.

March 27

Joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen – Budget Hearing (Charter 6-5).

March 29

Finalize Committee Recommendations and Report.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hight moved the Committee vote to adjourn; Mr. Brenckle seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. March 8, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. Assabet Valley High School FY2024 Budget
3. Police Department FY2024 Budget
4. Planning Director Updates



Fire Department Mission Statement

"To promote and deliver life safety by providing efficient, professional, high quality, cost effective, and timely protective services including fire suppression, emergency medical services, fire prevention, disaster response management, public safety education, and code enforcement."

The Northborough Fire Department is charged with the protection of life and property from fire through direct fire suppression efforts, prevention, inspectional services, self-inspection programs, fire code enforcement and public fire education. The department also provides a Fire Investigation Unit of trained fire investigators to determine the cause and origin of fires. These department investigators work closely with the Town's Police Department, Fire District 14 Fire Investigation Unit, Office of the State Fire Marshal's Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit as well as the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

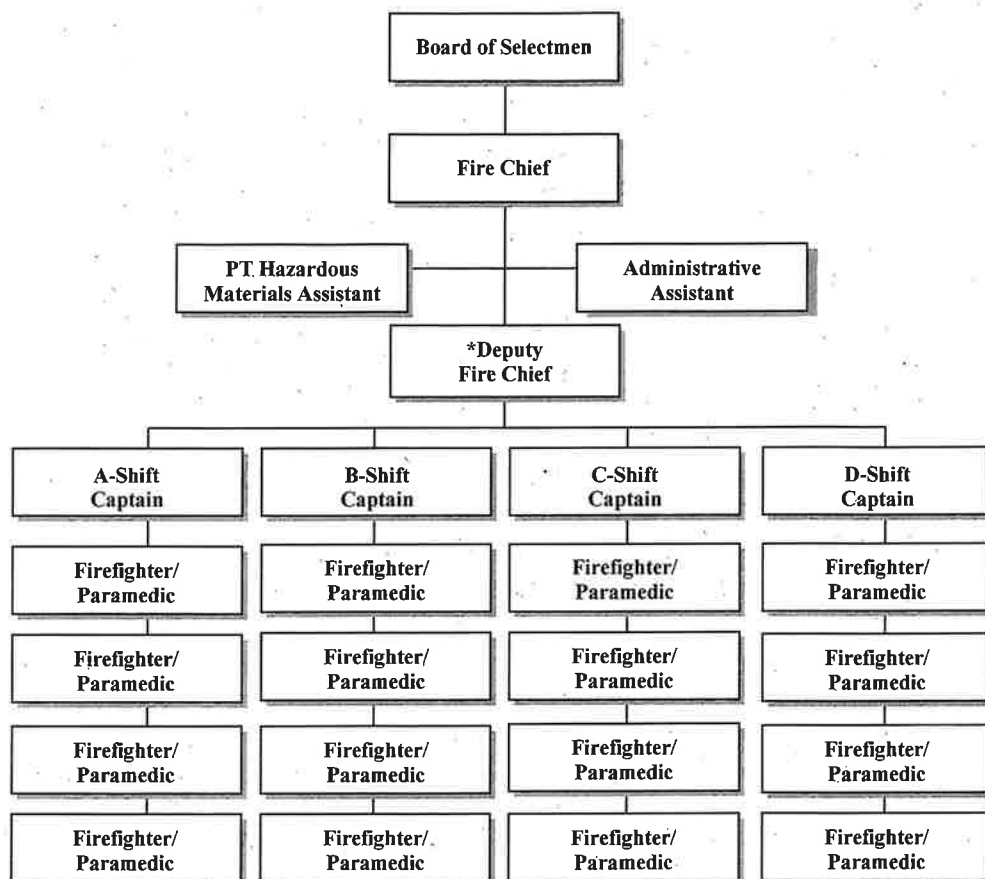
In keeping with the protection of life as its highest priority, the department is licensed by the state to operate its emergency medical ambulance service at the advance life support paramedic level. Through the department's Paramedics, Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (AEMT), and Basic Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT-B), the highest standard of pre-hospital emergency care is provided to those in need.

The department is also equipped to handle a wide variety of rescue services ranging from motor vehicle extrication to water and ice rescue. Fire and EMS mutual aid is coordinated through Massachusetts Fire District 14 with hazardous materials response and mitigation provided on a regional basis through the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Through an all-hazards approach to manmade and natural disasters, the department provides and prepares for a planned response and coordination effort by all town departments through the town's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and Hazardous Materials Plan approved by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). The department also plays the lead role for the framework of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).



Organizational Chart



Through a combination of career and on-call personnel, the department provides fire suppression/prevention, EMS and rescue services. Career Firefighters cover the fire station on a 24/7 basis with four shifts consisting of a Captain and four Firefighter/Paramedics.

*In FY2024, a new Deputy Fire Chief position is funded. In 2015, the Center for Public Safety Management completed a staffing study of the Fire Department in which it recommended the funding of a Deputy Chief to assist the Fire Chief with the overall management of the Fire Department. In 2017, Town Meeting approved the classification of a Deputy Fire Chief.

**Fire Services FY2023 Initiatives and Accomplishments**

1. Completed land purchases for construction of new fire station.
2. Achieved an EMS response time of 07:46 or less in alignment with the National Fire Protection Agency Standard 1710, 9 minutes for Advanced Life Support for 90% of incidents.
3. Completed purchase and setup of department SUV and pickup truck.
4. Completed analysis to convert from Verizon copper lines for radio communications to a digital communication system and completed the project.
5. Obtained a grant from FEMA to replace an inefficient station vehicle exhaust system with a new exhaust system that can be relocated to the new station. This new system will aid in reducing cancer causing elements in the station.
6. Received a grant from the Department of Fire Services to initiate the SAFE fire education program in schools.

Fire Department FY2024 Goals and Initiatives

1. Achieve an apparatus turnout time for fire responses of 80 seconds for 90% of calls as per National Fire Protection Agency Standard 1710.
2. Achieve a first engine arrival time of 240 seconds for 90% of responses with a minimum staffing of four personnel as per National Fire Protection Agency Standard 1710.
3. Complete work on design of new fire station and receive Town Meeting approval for construction of a new fire station.
4. Establish a more efficient Emergency Medical System training program while reducing the overall cost by 10%.



Significant Budget Changes or Initiatives

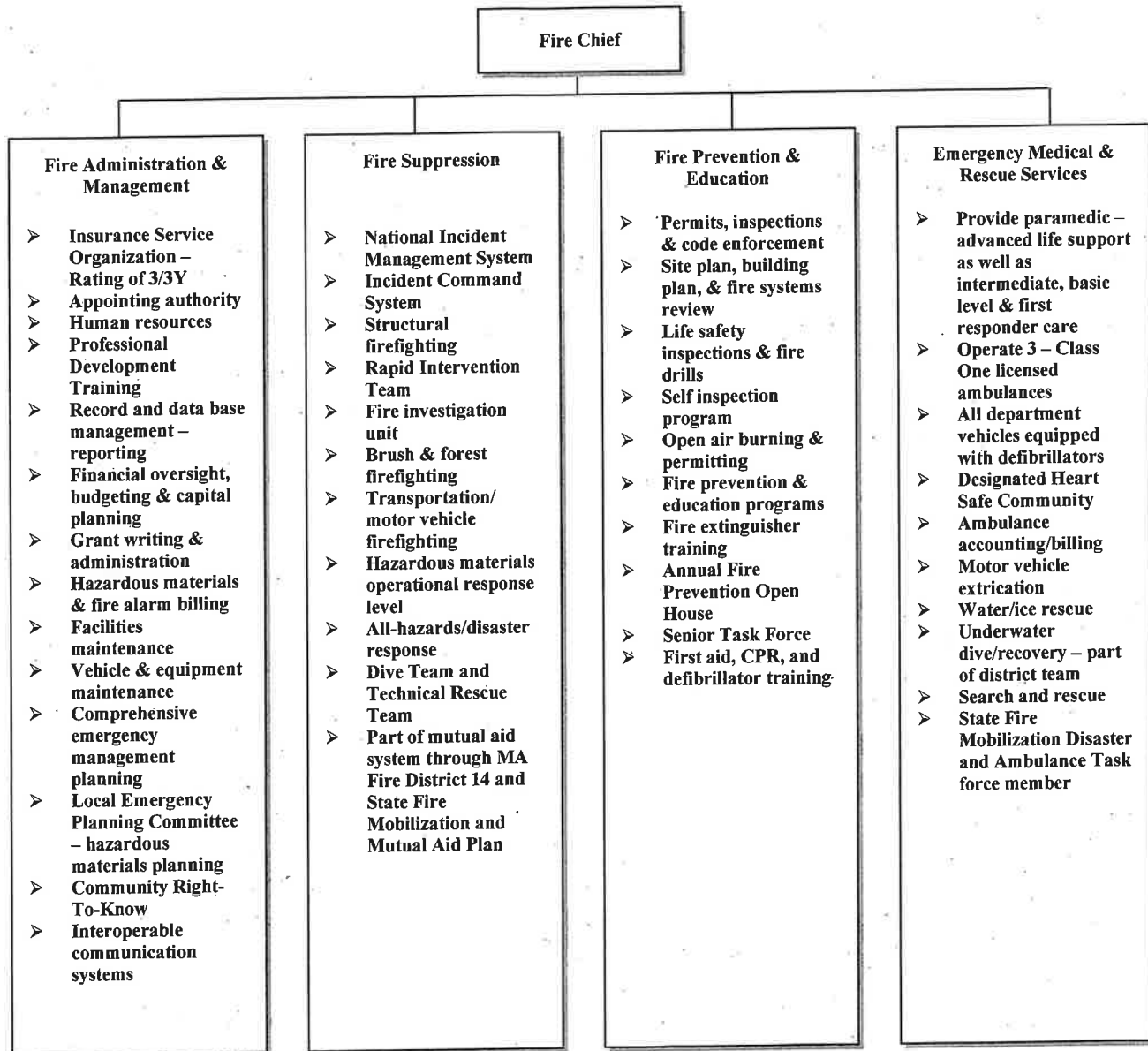
As presented, the FY2024 Fire Department Budget reflects an increase of \$217,931 or 9.8% in the General Fund appropriation. The departmental budget as presented includes contractual wage increases for all bargaining unit members. The FY2024 personnel budget includes the addition of a new Deputy Fire Chief, funded at the midpoint of Grade eight. Without the inclusion of the new Deputy Fire Chief position, the Fire Budget will increase \$100,931 or 4.5%.

In addition to the General Fund appropriation of \$2,445,137 (which is underwritten by a transfer of \$384,016 from the Fire Department Revolving Fund under Article 4 of the Town Meeting Warrant) the departmental budget also includes \$608,363 in planned expenses that are charged directly to the Fire Department Revolving Fund. The Fire Department Revolving Fund is supported primarily by fees for ambulance services.

The total FY2024 budget that supports the Fire/EMS services is \$3,053,500 (\$2,445,137 plus the Fire Department Revolving Fund direct charges of \$608,363).



Fire Programs and Services



**FIRE DEPARTMENT****Personnel Summary**

Position	FY 2020 FTE	FY 2021 FTE	FY 2022 FTE	FY 2023 FTE	FY 2024 FTE
Fire Chief	1	1	1	1	1
Deputy Fire Chief	0	0	0	0	1
Fire Captain	4	4	4	4	4
Firefighter / EMT Basic	1	1	1	0	0
Firefighter / EMT Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Firefighter / Paramedic	15	15	15	16	16
Administrative Assistant	1	1	1	1	1
Hazardous Materials Assistant	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48
Call Firefighters	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.37	0.37
Total Full-time Equivalent	23.18	23.18	23.18	22.85	23.85

- Current Fire Department staffing is comprised of 22 full-time career members consisting of a Fire Chief, four Captain/EMT's, and sixteen Firefighter/Paramedics and one Administrative Assistant. Northborough Firefighters provide fire suppression, fire prevention/code enforcement and emergency medical ambulance transportation. Over the course of the last several years the Department has set a standard to hire only Firefighter/Paramedics. This is to allow the department to provide the highest-level pre-hospital care on each of the four, rotating twenty-four-hour work shifts.
- In addition to the full-time professional Firefighters, there are currently 3 active Call Firefighters that work as needed. During FY2023 Call Firefighter wages average \$26.00/hr. The Call wages budget is \$20,000. This results in approximately 0.37 FTEs ($\$20,000 / \$26.00 = 769.23$ hrs. per year / 52 weeks = 14.79 hrs. per week / 40hrs. per week = .37 FTE). Variations in the FTE calculation for Call Firefighters is attributable to the number of active call personnel during any given year.
- The department employs a 19 hour per week (.48 FTE) Hazardous Materials Assistant who also assists with ambulance billing.
- In FY2024, the Department added a full-time Deputy Fire Chief. In 2015, the Center for Public Safety Management completed a staffing study of the Fire Department in which it recommended the funding of a Deputy Chief to assist the Fire Chief with the overall management of the Fire Department. In 2017, Town Meeting approved the classification of a Deputy Fire Chief.

Section 3-14

Fire Department



FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2023	FY2024
ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	SIX MONTHS	PROPOSED

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel Services

51100 Fire Chief's Salary	125,723	129,910	132,724	140,285	62,762	144,991
*51105 Deputy Fire Chief	0	0	0	0	0	117,000
51110 Administrative Salary	61,292	62,285	63,517	65,437	30,037	67,142
51115 Part-time Admin Salary	0	0	0	0		0
51120 Firefighters Salaries	1,256,277	1,270,337	1,285,633	1,335,609	618,272	1,411,096
51132 Hazardous Materials Assistant	13,662	10,320	10,300	25,543	5,100	26,212
51230 Call Firefighter Wages	14,318	3,897	4,191	20,000	1,578	20,000
51300 Overtime	219,020	170,192	164,844	165,000	148,006	165,000
51410 Longevity Pay	9,600	8,400	8,600	9,400	9,400	8,800
51420 Fire Holiday Pay	53,034	53,002	59,463	55,949	25,229	65,379
51460 Educational Incentive	134,121	134,617	146,451	154,550	61,272	175,200
51930 In-service Training	35,636	72,163	52,364	47,572	23,039	48,895
SUBTOTAL	1,922,683	1,915,123	1,928,087	2,019,345	984,694	2,249,715

*Included in the FY2024 Fire Budget is the funding of a full-time Deputy Fire Chief position. This position was recommended in 2015 following the completion of a staffing analysis of the Fire Department, and the position was classified and approved by Town Meeting in 2017. In FY2024, the position has been funded at the midpoint of grade eight, at \$117,000.



Fire Department

Section 3-15

	FY2020 ACTUAL	FY2021 ACTUAL	FY2022 ACTUAL	FY2023 BUDGETED	FY2023 SIX MONTHS	FY2024 PROPOSED
FIRE DEPARTMENT						
Expenses						
52110 Utilities	25,416	28,013	32,250	26,550	11,709	30,400
52410 Vehicle Maintenance	18,438	27,136	50,705	21,250	5,385	26,250
52415 Equipment Maintenance	11,482	6,755	8,088	12,925	212	20,425
52800 Contractual Services	1,863	8,766	25,085	24,200	13,573	14,000
53110 Printing	2,199	1,261	1,451	1,000	611	1,000
53190 Training Expenses	4,809	2,780	7,403	9,000	1,125	9,000
53210 Fire Prevention Education	572	0	688	1,000	452	1,000
53410 Telephone	3,720	3,691	3,720	3,720	2,295	3,720
53420 Postage	0	19	16	400	20	400
53720 Computer Services	26,278	13,662	31,451	10,613	6,482	10,613
54290 Office Supplies	378	164	119	1,000	512	1,000
54490 Building Maintenance	11,316	11,924	21,775	20,000	9,993	0
54590 Custodial Supplies	2,007	2,590	2,163	2,000	1,449	2,500
55130 Uniforms	18,816	16,226	18,618	22,500	5,611	22,500
55990 Materials & Supplies	12,199	10,308	15,838	12,750	5,545	13,250
57110 Travel / Mileage	83	44	82	390	17	390
57310 Dues	4,280	4,830	4,505	4,164	3,750	4,575
57320 Subscriptions	1,370	1,375	1,377	1,445	1,584	1,445
57340 Meetings	90	0	0	604	0	604
57360 NFPA 1500 Compliance	1,129	1,648	300	2,350	0	2,350
58530 Capital Outlay	9,915	5,209	25,730	30,000	3,249	30,000
SUBTOTAL	156,360	146,402	251,365	207,861	73,575	195,422
*TOTAL: FIRE	2,079,042	2,061,526	2,179,452	2,227,206	1,058,269	2,445,137

* In addition to the General Fund appropriation of \$2,445,137 (which is underwritten by a transfer of \$384,016 from the Fire Department Revolving Fund under Article 4 of the Town Meeting Warrant) the departmental budget also includes \$608,363 in planned expenses that are charged directly to the Fire Department Revolving Fund. The Fire Department Revolving Fund is supported primarily by fees for ambulance services. The total FY2024 budget that supports the Fire/EMS services is \$3,053,500 (\$2,445,137 plus the Fire Department Revolving Fund direct charges of \$608,363).

Section 3-16

Fire Department



	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2023	FY2024
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	SIX MONTHS	PROPOSED
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS						
Personnel Services						
51130 Stipend for EP Director	0	0	5,000	5,000	2,318	5,000
51130 Stipend for Shelter Coordinator	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000
SUBTOTAL	0	0	5,000	6,000	2,318	6,000
Expenses						
52690 Equipment Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0
53410 Telephone	0	0	0	0	0	0
55980 Field Supplies	110	408	0	1,000	0	1,000
58690 New Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	110	408	0	1,000	0	1,000
TOTAL: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS	110	408	5,000	7,000	2,318	7,000

The Northborough Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a Northborough committee established through the Federal Emergency Planning and Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986. Local, State and Federal members work together to formulate emergency planning for hazardous materials within Northborough, exercise the plan annually, maintain training for hazardous materials emergencies and provide information on hazardous materials to the public.

The Fire Chief is the Emergency Preparedness Director for the Town and coordinates the LEPC. Membership in the LEPC includes State and Local Elected Officials, Hospitals, Firefighters, Environmental Groups, Law Enforcement Personnel, News Media, Emergency Management Officials, Community Groups, Public Health Officials, Transportation Resources and Hazardous Materials Facilities. This committee maintains the Town of Northborough Hazardous Materials Plan. Input from all the groups within the LEPC membership is incorporated into hazardous materials planning.

The Northborough LEPC is a fully certified stand-alone Local Emergency Planning Committee by the Massachusetts State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). Re-Certification was last issued in 2020 and is valid for a five-year period.

During FY2013 an Emergency Shelter Coordinator position was created, and a stipend was added to the budget, which is continued in FY2023. In FY2022 the Emergency Preparedness Director Stipend was returned to the budget to recognize the efforts required to perform that role.



NORTHBOROUGH FIRE DEPARTMENT

David Parenti, Fire Chief/EMD
11 Pierce Street
Northborough MA 01532
508-393-1537



Monday, November 28, 2022

John Coderre, Town Administrator
63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532

RE: Supplemental Budget Request

As directed in the budget manual instructions, I am submitting a separate supplemental budget request to fill the position of Deputy Fire Chief.

The Center for Public Safety Management study published in October of 2015 recommended the funding of a Deputy Chiefs' position to assist the Fire Chief with overall management of the fire department, as well as assisting with fire prevention and life safety programs.

As we discussed, with Captain Fred Hurst rapidly approaching retirement in April of 2023, this position becomes even more critical to fill. Captain Hurst, as you know, is our current fire prevention code enforcement officer. This is a critical position in the department and the duties assigned to Captain Hurst will transfer to the Deputy Chief.

At the 2017 Town Meeting, Article 36, was passed and it included the following:

Classification of a Deputy Fire Chief Position: This amendment seeks to add a new Deputy Fire Chief position, classified as a Grade H by the Personnel Board, to Schedule A (Classification of Positions by Occupational Groups and Assignment to Compensation Grades).

In my years of experience, I have found having another non-union management position to be invaluable. The position would provide a clear second in charge for the department and assist with succession planning.

My recommendation is to start the position at the middle to higher end of the pay scale. The higher wage would most likely attract a better pool of external candidates.


Respectfully in Safety and Service,

Chief David L. Parenti MPA, EFO, CFO

**Town of Northborough
Capital Improvement Program Summary
Fiscal Years 2024-2029**

PROJECTS BY DEPARTMENT	Page #	Source of Funds	Six-Year Total	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Fire									
Engine 1 Replacement		2/6	900,000	900,000					
Fire Station Addition/Renovation		2	18,500,000		18,500,000				
Rescue 1 Replacement		2/6	970,000		970,000				
Ambulance Replacement		5	450,000			450,000			
Squad 4 Replacement		2/6	300,000					300,000	
Tower 1 Replacement		2/6	1,900,000						1,900,000
Fire Subtotal			\$23,020,000	\$900,000	\$19,470,000	\$450,000	\$0	\$300,000	\$1,900,000

PROJECT DETAIL SHEET

Project Title: ENGINE 1 REPLACEMENT		Category: Equipment Replacement						
Department: Fire								
<p><u>Description and Justification:</u></p> <p>This request seeks to replace a 2005 Engine 1. At the time of replacement it will have exceeded its expected useful life, including approximately 10 years of front-line service, 5 years back up service and 5 years reserve. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) requires Northborough to maintain 3 pumping apparatus in order to sustain its current ISO rating, which residential and commercial fire insurance rates are based upon. Engine 1 is currently the back-up reserve pumper. The 2016 Engine 2 will become the reserve back-up pumper once the new replacement is purchased and takes over as the new front-line pumper. Due to ongoing maintenance and mechanical issues, it is proposed that this apparatus be replaced in FY2024 using available funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Due to supply chain disruptions it may take up to two years for delivery following placement of the order.</p>								
								
RECOMMENDED FINANCING								
	Source of Funds	Total Six -Year Cost	Estimated Expenditures by Fiscal Year					
			FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
A. Feasibility Study								
B. Design								
C. Land Acquisition								
D. Construction								
E. Furnishings/Equipment								
F. Departmental Equipment	6	\$900,000	\$900,000					
G. Contingency								
H. Other								
TOTAL		\$900,000	\$900,000					
<p><u>Source of Funds Legend</u></p> <p>(1) Operating Revenues (3) State Aid (5) EMS Revolving Fund Fees (7) Sewer Enterprise Fund Fees</p> <p>(2) Municipal GO Bonds (4) Trust Funds (6) Free Cash / Other (8) Water Enterprise Fund Fees</p>								

The Public Schools of
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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
53 PARKERVILLE ROAD – SOUTHBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS 01772
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GREGORY L. MARTINEAU
Superintendent of Schools

KEITH T. LAVOIE
Assistant Superintendent of Operations

STEFANIE K. REINHORN, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

MEMORANDUM

To: Northborough Appropriations Committee

From: Gregory L. Martineau, Superintendent of Schools

Date: March 22, 2023

Re: FY2024 Regional Assessment

I am writing to provide you with an update on the assessment for the Northborough-Southborough Regional School District's FY2024 Budget. When I presented to the Northborough Appropriations Committee on February 22, 2023, the figures provided were based on our projections utilizing FY2023 state figures. The following day, February 23, 2023, Governor Maura Healy released her projected state aid figures for municipalities and regional school districts. The FY2024 H1 figures have resulted in the following changes to our predictions:

- Chapter 70 funding increased by \$37,350 from FY23 to FY24
- Northborough's MLC increased by \$85,904 from \$8,072,316 in FY23 to \$8,158,220 in FY24
- Southborough's MLC increased by \$40,106 from \$5,134,573 in FY23 to \$5,174,679 in FY24
- Regional Transportation Aid decreased by \$116,747, which increased Northborough's assessment by \$71,473 and Southborough's assessment by \$45,274

Overall, the impact on Northborough's non-exempt assessment is an increase of \$57,368, or 4.58%, from FY23 to FY24. Southborough's non-exempt assessment increased by \$22,029, or 4.16%, from FY23 to FY24. As outlined in my FY2024 Enrollment and Budget Analysis memo on November 16, 2022, we projected a 5.54% increase in Northborough's assessment.

The District will review assessment figures once the final FY2024 state budget figures are finalized. As has been the case in previous years, the School Committee will vote on revised assessment figures if those final amounts impact the assessments to the two towns.

Rebecca Pellegrino and I are available to answer any questions the Appropriations Committee may have regarding these updated figures.

cc: John Coderre, Town Administrator
Jason Little, Finance Director
Becca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator
Rebecca Pellegrino, Director of Finance

**NORTHBOROUGH-SOUTHBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
FY2024 BUDGET & ASSESSMENTS**

			Northborough 61.22%	Southborough 38.78%
Step 1				
FY2024 Proposed Budget		\$ 26,590,346.00		
Less: Transportation Budget	\$ 1,252,100.00			
SPED Transportation Budget	\$ 427,526.00	\$ 1,679,626.00		
Less: Fixed Charges		\$ -		
Net School Spending		\$ 24,910,720.00		
Less: Revenues		\$ 20,000.00		
Subtotals		\$ 24,890,720.00		
Less: Chapter 70 Aid (H1)		\$ 3,324,874.00		
Less State Ward Reimbursement		\$ -		
Net Budget		\$ 21,565,846.00		
Step 2				
Minimum Local Contributions (H1)		\$ 13,332,899.00	\$ 8,158,220.00	\$ 5,174,679.00
Step 3				
Difference between MLC and Contributions		\$ 8,232,947.00		
Apportion Percentage			61.22%	38.78%
Step 4				
Apportion Agreement by Amount		\$ 8,232,947.00	\$ 5,040,210.15	\$ 3,192,736.85
Step 5				
FY24 Transportation Budget	\$ 1,679,626.00			
Less: Aid to Transportation (H1)	\$ 640,930.00			
Less: Aid to Transportation	\$ -	\$ 1,038,696.00	\$ 635,889.69	\$ 402,806.31
Step 6				
Other Operational Cost	\$ -			
Less: Revenues	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Step 7				
Debt Payments Not Exempt from Prop 2 1/2		\$ -		\$ -
Step 8				
Total Assessments, MLC plus apportionments		\$ 22,604,542.00	\$ 13,834,319.84	\$ 8,770,222.16
Step 9				
Excess and Deficiency		\$ 675,000.00	\$ 413,235.00	\$ 261,765.00
Transportation Aid from Revolving Fund		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FY24 Assessment Not Exempt from Prop 2 1/2		\$ 21,929,542.00	\$ 13,421,084.84	\$ 8,508,457.16
Step 10				
Debt Payments Exempt from Prop 2 1/2		\$ 1,045,250.00	\$ 651,454.41	\$ 393,795.59
Total FY2024 Assessments		\$ 22,974,792.00	\$ 14,072,539.26	\$ 8,902,253.12



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532-1994
(508) 393-5040 Phone
(508) 393-6996 Fax

MEMORANDUM

TO: Appropriations Committee

FROM: Town Administrator

SUBJECT: Updated Cost Estimates for ARHS Athletic Complex Project

DATE: March 22, 2023

Attached please find two communications from the School Department regarding the proposed Athletic Complex project at ARHS. The first is a memo from the Superintendent explaining the updated cost estimates associated with the project. The second is the official notification dated March 16, 2023 of the project vote by the Regional School Committee.

Based upon the most recent bid level cost estimate, the overall project cost went from \$7,539,899 to \$7,960,393, and Northborough's share went from \$4,699,259 to \$4,961,333, which is an increase of \$262,074. As is typical with capital projects the final costs will not be known until construction is complete and bonds are issued. Included in the attached presentation from February 15th is an estimated debt schedule.

John W. Coderre

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GREGORY L. MARTINEAU
Superintendent of Schools

KEITH T. LAVOIE
Assistant Superintendent of Operations

STEFANIE K. REINHORN, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

MEMORANDUM

To: Northborough Financial Planning Committee

From: Gregory L. Martineau, Superintendent of Schools

Date: March 1, 2023

Re: Algonquin Athletic Complex Project Update

I am writing to provide you with an update on the cost estimates for the Algonquin Regional High School's Athletic Complex project. When I presented to the Northborough Financial Planning Committee on February 9, 2023, the figures provided were based on the 90% Cost Estimate as of October 20, 2022.

On February 13, 2023, Gale Associates provided the District with the Bid Level Cost Estimates based on the Athletic Complex Project Committee's continued work to finalize the project plans in anticipation of the project bid phase. [Updated cost information](#) was presented to the Northborough-Southborough Regional School Committee at its February 15, 2023 meeting. The Bid Level Cost Estimates include new estimates for the renovation of the amenities building.

The Athletic Complex Project bid package was issued on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, and bids will be opened on Friday, March 10, 2023 at 2:00 PM. The District will have complete costs once bids have been received and a contractor has been selected. The final bid award is contingent upon approval at the Northborough and Southborough town meetings.

The Northborough-Southborough Regional School Committee will be discussing and voting on the Algonquin Regional High School's Athletic Complex project at its March 15, 2023, meeting. If approved by the Committee, a letter outlining the committee's authorization, the amount authorized, and the project scope will be sent to the Towns of Northborough and Southborough.

My team and I are available to answer any questions that the Financial Planning Committee may have in light of these updated cost estimates.

cc: John Coderre, Town Administrator
Keith Lavoie, Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Jason Little, Finance Director
Becca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator
Rebecca Pellegrino, Director of Finance

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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
53 PARKERVILLE ROAD – SOUTHBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS 01772
TELEPHONE (508) 486-5115 FAX (508) 486-5123 www.nsboro.k12.ma.us

GREGORY L. MARTINEAU
Superintendent of Schools

KEITH T. LAVOIE
Assistant Superintendent of Operations

STEFANIE K. REINHORN, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

March 16, 2023

Mitch Cohen, Chair
Northborough Board of Selectmen
12 Whitney Street
Northborough, MA 01532

Sent via certified mail

Dear Mr. Cohen:

Pursuant to the agreement establishing the Northborough-Southborough Regional School District and the provisions of Section 16(d) of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, I hereby notify you that the following is a true copy of the vote passed by the Regional District School Committee at a meeting held on March 15, 2023:

That the Northborough-Southborough Regional School District (the "District") hereby appropriates the amount of \$7,960,393 to pay costs of renovating and making extraordinary repairs and other improvements to the District's athletic facilities, including, but not limited to: replacing the current football field and junior varsity practice field with turf fields, replacing the existing track, replacing the existing tennis courts, replacing the existing bleachers and press box to ensure compliance with ADA requirements, construction of a new outdoor amphitheater, the renovation of the amenities building, and for the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto. To meet this appropriation the District is authorized to borrow said amount, under and pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 16(d) of the General Laws, and the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. No amounts shall be borrowed or expended pursuant to this vote unless the meetings in each of the towns of Northborough and Southborough have affirmatively voted to approve the debt authorized by this vote.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Howland, Secretary
Northborough-Southborough Regional District School Committee

cc: John Coderre, Northborough Town Administrator
Jason Little, Finance Director/Town Accountant
Gregory Martineau, Superintendent of Schools
Rebecca Pellegrino, Director of Finance
Christine Tague, Northborough-Southborough Regional School District Treasurer



ALGONQUIN ATHLETIC COMPLEX

A Community Investment

**Northborough-Southborough Regional School District
School Committee Presentation**

February 15, 2023

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Areas of Concern

Beyond Useful Life

Stadium Field:

- Not renovated with school in 2004
- ONLY top dressed/over-seeded
- Soil is heavily impacted
- Related: need to 'rest' grass fields preclude access for some teams

Track:

- Reconstructed in 1994
- Top surface recoated in 2009
- Heavy patching and puddling
- Does not meet MIAA standards for hosting track meets

Tennis Courts:

- Installed in 2004
- Significant cracking
- Cannot be patched effectively
- Resurfaced once already

Multipurpose fields:

- Soil is heavily impacted
- Related: need to 'rest' grass fields preclude access for some teams

Health & Safety

- Grandstand and access to pressbox not ADA compliant
- Amenities building restrooms not ADA compliant
- Lighting is insufficient and does not meet new safety standards



THE PLAN: An Overview

- **Replace:**
 - Track
 - Stadium field - with turf
 - Multi-purpose field - with turf
 - Grandstand - with ADA-compliant seating
 - Stadium lights - with LED
 - Tennis courts
- **Renovate:**
 - Amenities Building - adding ADA-compliant restrooms
- **Install:**
 - Amphitheater
 - Lacrosse wall



MASTER PLAN



LACROSSE WALL

POLE VAULT

HIGH JUMP AREA

SURFACED D-AREA WITH URETHANE TRACK SURFACING

PAVED BITUMINOUS WALKWAY

ADA ACCESSIBLE RAMP FOR BLEACHERS ACCESS

NEW 122B SEAT GRANDSTAND WITH PRESS BOX

NEW TENNIS COURTS

115' RADIUS 6 LANE OVAL TRACK WITH 6 LANE STRAIGHTAWAY
SCOREBOARD

LIGHT POLE BASES AND CONDUIT FOR FUTURE LIGHTING

SHOT PUT

DISCUS PAD AND CAGE

JAVELIN THROW

ATHLETIC LIGHTING (TYP.)

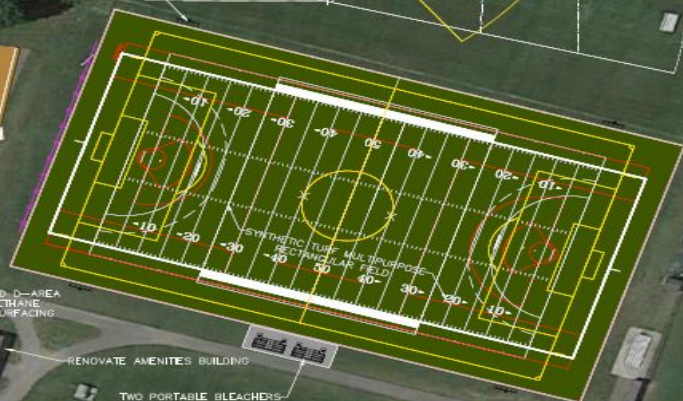
LONG JUMP / TRIPLE JUMP

SURFACED D-AREA WITH URETHANE TRACK SURFACING

RENOVATE ALENITES BUILDING

TWO PORTABLE BLEACHERS

NEW AMPHITHEATER





Gale Associates, Inc.
140 LEBY HOLLOW DRIVE, SUITE 100
NORTH BORO, MA 01532
TEL: 508/335-5457
WWW.GALE.COM

THESE PLANS WERE PREPARED BY THE UNDERSIGNED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, ARCHITECT, OR PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, AND ARE TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PROJECT AND SITE SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED HEREON.

PERMIT SET

PROJECT: ATHLETIC CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS
ALCONQUIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
33 BARRETT STREET
NORTH BORO, MA 01532
SHEET: NORTH BORO & SOUTHBORO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SOUTHBORO, MA 01772

1 01/25/2023 ON-SITE/CONCRETE WORK

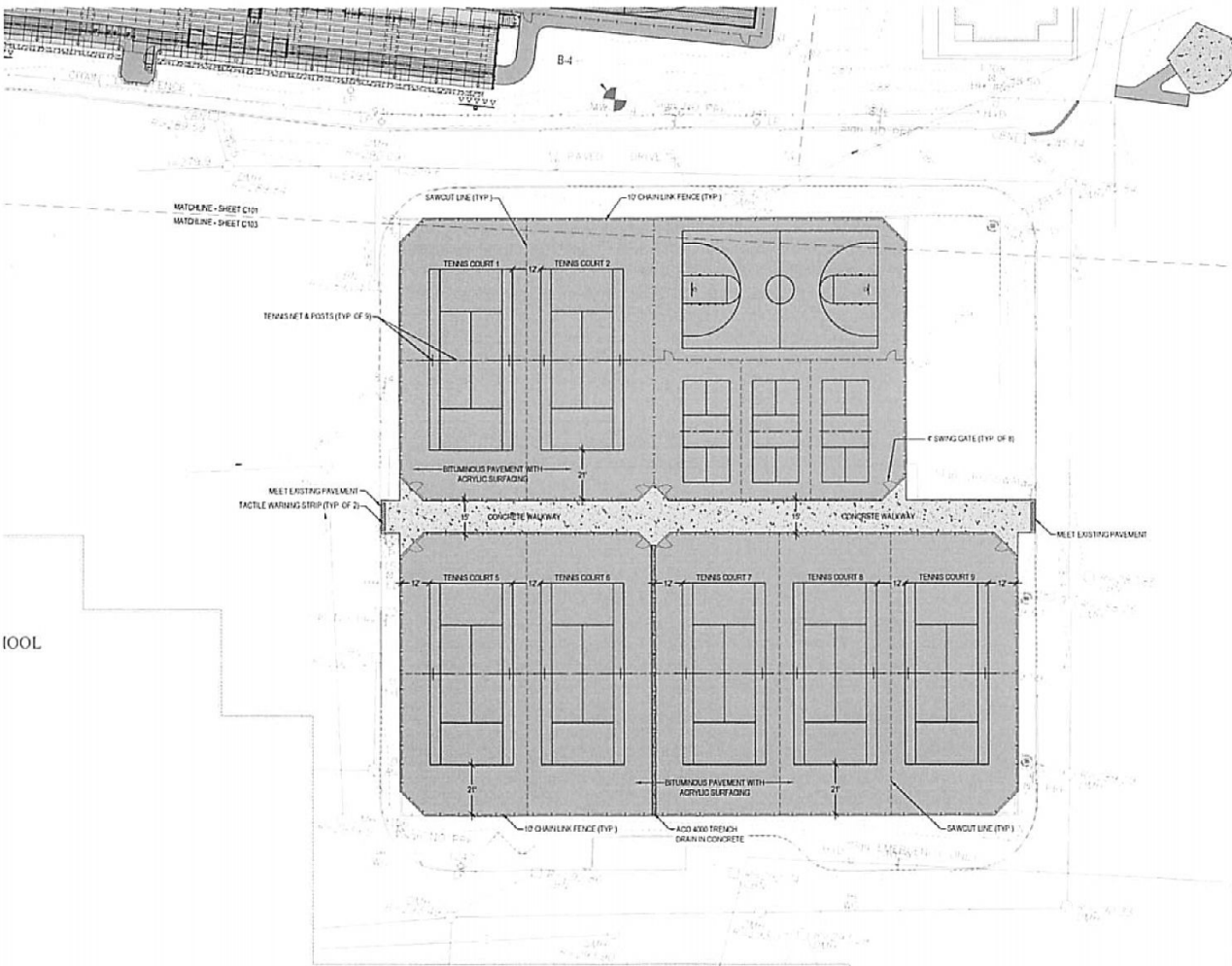
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GRAPHIC SCALE
1" = 10'

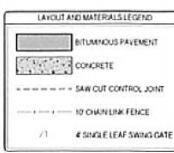
LAYOUT AND MATERIALS PLAN
TENNIS COURTS

DRAWING NO.
C103

11 OF 18



LAYOUT AND MATERIALS NOTES:
1 LOAM AND SEED ALL DISTURBED AREAS



[illegible]

Consultants:

Stamp & Signature

Project Title



Drawing Title

BUILDING ELEVATIONS

Project No: 22030 00

Scale: 10" = 1'-0"

Drawn By: MF

Checked By: SC

Approved By: SC

Use:

Drawing No:

A201





A COMMUNITY ASSET



Who benefits?

- ARHS Student-Athletes:
 - Modern facilities
 - Increased Field Access (3X)
- ARHS Students: Physical Education classes
- Residents:
 - Track: running & walking
 - Tennis and Pickleball/Basketball courts
- Performing artists, musicians, and community groups
- Northborough and Southborough Recreation
- Northborough and Southborough youth sports participants and organizations

Cost Estimate Update - February 2023

General Conditions & Site Preparation	\$ 828,923
Track, Stadium Field, Stadium Lights, & Amenities Building Renovation	\$3,718,470
Tennis Courts w/ Basketball/Pickleball	\$ 584,063
Multipurpose Field w/ Lights & Amphitheater	\$ 1,802,450
Contingency - 12%	\$ 832,069
Sub Total	\$7,765,975
Amenities Building Design & Construction Period Services	\$ 194,418
Grand Total	\$7,960,393

WHAT'S THE COST?

Total Estimated Project Cost	\$7,960,393
-------------------------------------	--------------------

Northborough %	62.33%
<i>Northborough Estimated Project Cost</i>	<i>\$4,961,333</i>

Southborough %	37.67%
<i>Southborough Estimated Project Cost</i>	<i>\$2,999,060</i>

Project Financing

UniBank Fiscal Advisory Services, Inc.

2/15/2023

Fiscal Year	Outstanding	Athletic Complex			Grand Total
		Principal	Interest	Total	
2024	\$ 1,045,250.00			\$ -	\$ 1,045,250.00
2025	\$ 1,042,250.00		\$ 278,613.76	\$ 278,613.76	\$ 1,320,863.76
2026	\$ 1,047,250.00		\$ 540,643.36	\$ 540,643.36	\$ 1,587,893.36
2027	\$ 1,044,750.00	\$ 535,393.00	\$ 298,514.74	\$ 833,907.74	\$ 1,878,657.74
2028		\$ 560,000.00	\$ 278,437.50	\$ 838,437.50	\$ 838,437.50
2029		\$ 580,000.00	\$ 257,437.50	\$ 837,437.50	\$ 837,437.50
2030		\$ 600,000.00	\$ 235,687.50	\$ 835,687.50	\$ 835,687.50
2031		\$ 625,000.00	\$ 213,187.50	\$ 838,187.50	\$ 838,187.50
2032		\$ 645,000.00	\$ 189,750.00	\$ 834,750.00	\$ 834,750.00
2033		\$ 670,000.00	\$ 165,562.50	\$ 835,562.50	\$ 835,562.50
2034		\$ 695,000.00	\$ 140,437.50	\$ 835,437.50	\$ 835,437.50
2035		\$ 720,000.00	\$ 114,375.00	\$ 834,375.00	\$ 834,375.00
2036		\$ 750,000.00	\$ 87,375.00	\$ 837,375.00	\$ 837,375.00
2037		\$ 775,000.00	\$ 59,250.00	\$ 834,250.00	\$ 834,250.00
2038		\$ 805,000.00	\$ 30,187.50	\$ 835,187.50	\$ 835,187.50
	<u>\$ 4,179,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 7,960,393.00</u>	<u>\$ 2,889,459.35</u>	<u>\$ 10,849,852.35</u>	<u>\$ 15,029,352.35</u>

Project Financing - Northborough

UniBank Fiscal Advisory Services, Inc.

2/15/2023

Northborough

Assessed Valuation \$ 3,888,243,959

Average SF House \$ 579,799

Fiscal Year	Debt Service			Member Towns - Northborough			
	Outstanding	Athletic Complex	Grand Total	Enrollment %	Assessment	Tax Rate	Average House
2023	\$ 1,046,250.00		\$ 1,046,250.00	62.33%	\$ 652,127.63	\$ 0.17	\$ 97.24
2024	\$ 1,045,250.00	\$ -	\$ 1,045,250.00	59.78%	\$ 624,848.86	\$ 0.16	\$ 93.17
2025	\$ 1,042,250.00	\$ 278,613.76	\$ 1,320,863.76	59.05%	\$ 779,906.99	\$ 0.20	\$ 116.30
2026	\$ 1,047,250.00	\$ 540,643.36	\$ 1,587,893.36	58.71%	\$ 932,196.10	\$ 0.24	\$ 139.01
2027	\$ 1,044,750.00	\$ 833,907.74	\$ 1,878,657.74	58.03%	\$ 1,090,103.97	\$ 0.28	\$ 162.55
2028		\$ 838,437.50	\$ 838,437.50	58.03%	\$ 486,533.68	\$ 0.13	\$ 72.55
2029		\$ 837,437.50	\$ 837,437.50	58.03%	\$ 485,953.40	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.46
2030		\$ 835,687.50	\$ 835,687.50	58.03%	\$ 484,937.90	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.31
2031		\$ 838,187.50	\$ 838,187.50	58.03%	\$ 486,388.61	\$ 0.13	\$ 72.53
2032		\$ 834,750.00	\$ 834,750.00	58.03%	\$ 484,393.88	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.23
2033		\$ 835,562.50	\$ 835,562.50	58.03%	\$ 484,865.36	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.30
2034		\$ 835,437.50	\$ 835,437.50	58.03%	\$ 484,792.83	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.29
2035		\$ 834,375.00	\$ 834,375.00	58.03%	\$ 484,176.27	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.20
2036		\$ 837,375.00	\$ 837,375.00	58.03%	\$ 485,917.13	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.46
2037		\$ 834,250.00	\$ 834,250.00	58.03%	\$ 484,103.74	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.19
2038		\$ 835,187.50	\$ 835,187.50	58.03%	\$ 484,647.75	\$ 0.12	\$ 72.27
	<u>\$ 4,179,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 10,849,852.35</u>	<u>\$ 15,029,352.35</u>				

Project Financing - Southborough

UniBank Fiscal Advisory Services, Inc.

Southborough

2/15/2023

Assessed Valuation \$ 3,241,019,768
Average SF House \$ 803,549

Fiscal Year	Debt Service			Member Towns - Southborough				
	Outstanding	Athletic Complex	Grand Total	Enrollment %	Assessment	Tax Rate	Average House	
2023	\$ 1,046,250.00		\$ 1,046,250.00	37.67%	\$ 394,122.38	\$ 0.12	\$	97.72
2024	\$ 1,045,250.00	\$ -	\$ 1,045,250.00	40.22%	\$ 420,401.14	\$ 0.13	\$	104.23
2025	\$ 1,042,250.00	\$ 278,613.76	\$ 1,320,863.76	40.95%	\$ 540,956.76	\$ 0.17	\$	134.12
2026	\$ 1,047,250.00	\$ 540,643.36	\$ 1,587,893.36	41.29%	\$ 655,697.26	\$ 0.20	\$	162.57
2027	\$ 1,044,750.00	\$ 833,907.74	\$ 1,878,657.74	41.97%	\$ 788,553.77	\$ 0.24	\$	195.51
2028		\$ 838,437.50	\$ 838,437.50	41.97%	\$ 351,903.82	\$ 0.11	\$	87.25
2029		\$ 837,437.50	\$ 837,437.50	41.97%	\$ 351,484.10	\$ 0.11	\$	87.14
2030		\$ 835,687.50	\$ 835,687.50	41.97%	\$ 350,749.60	\$ 0.11	\$	86.96
2031		\$ 838,187.50	\$ 838,187.50	41.97%	\$ 351,798.89	\$ 0.11	\$	87.22
2032		\$ 834,750.00	\$ 834,750.00	41.97%	\$ 350,356.12	\$ 0.11	\$	86.86
2033		\$ 835,562.50	\$ 835,562.50	41.97%	\$ 350,697.14	\$ 0.11	\$	86.95
2034		\$ 835,437.50	\$ 835,437.50	41.97%	\$ 350,644.67	\$ 0.11	\$	86.94
2035		\$ 834,375.00	\$ 834,375.00	41.97%	\$ 350,198.73	\$ 0.11	\$	86.83
2036		\$ 837,375.00	\$ 837,375.00	41.97%	\$ 351,457.87	\$ 0.11	\$	87.14
2037		\$ 834,250.00	\$ 834,250.00	41.97%	\$ 350,146.26	\$ 0.11	\$	86.81
2038		\$ 835,187.50	\$ 835,187.50	41.97%	\$ 350,539.75	\$ 0.11	\$	86.91
	<u>\$ 4,179,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 10,849,852.35</u>	<u>\$ 15,029,352.35</u>					

School Committee Vote: Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Actions	Key Dates
Step 1: Vote to Appropriate ($\frac{2}{3}$ of Regional School Committee Members)	March 15, 2023
Step 2: Notify select boards within two (2) days from the date the vote was authorized	By March 17, 2023
Step 3: Allow for 60 days before debt is incurred, or	By May 17, 2023
Step 4: Conduct Town Meeting for the purpose of expressing disapproval of the amount of debt authorized by the Regional School Committee. (Majority vote of voters present)* *If not brought forward to voters for the purpose of expressing disapproval of the amount of debt authorized by the Regional School Committee, the District is authorized to incur the School Committee debt after the expiration of 60-days.	March 25, 2023 (Southborough) April 24, 2023 (Northborough) or *May 17, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION

GONKPLEX

[HOME](#)

[CURRENT STADIUM](#)

[THE PLAN](#)

[FAQ](#)

[COMMUNITY FEEDBACK](#)

[MORE](#) ▾

THE GONKPLEX

The Algonquin Athletic Complex, or "Gonkplex", is a proposed renovation to our aging & out of compliance athletic facilities

Visit gonkplex.org



Town of Northborough

Finance Department

63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532
Phone: (508) 393-5004
Fax: (508) 393-6996

MEMORANDUM

To: Appropriations Committee
From: Jason Little, Finance Director
CC: Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator, Treasurer/Collector
Date: March 20, 2023
Re: Pending Appropriation Reserve Fund Transfers

The Appropriations Committee is scheduled to take up some mid-year transfer requests at its next meeting (March 22, 2023). This memo is designed to provide some background on the three requests that will be included within the agenda item this week.

The first transfer relates to the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School assessment for FY2023, and this situation was discussed in detail at your meeting of March 8, 2023 during the Assabet Valley presentation. You may recall from the meeting that the Town learned in September, via the letter from the District, a copy of which is included in this packet, that the FY2022 budget for Assabet was short of required Minimum Local Contributions (MLC) and this amount was added to member towns' assessments for FY2023 by the Assabet School Committee. So, the appropriation made at Northborough's 2022 Annual Town Meeting to cover Assabet's assessment in FY2023 is short by \$31,365, and this is the amount sought in the transfer from the Reserve.

The second transfer request relates to the Treasurer/Collector's budget, and is in the amount of \$4,600. At the end of FY2022 following 2022 Annual Town Meeting, the Town was notified by its bill printer, Globe Direct, that it was shutting down operations due to supply chain issues and escalated expenses. After obtaining quotes, the decision was made to engage Kelley & Ryan as the Town's new bill printer. Kelley & Ryan currently serves as the Town's Deputy Collector. Their competitive quote was twenty-four cents higher per piece than was budgeted for Globe Direct's services within the Treasurer/Collector's budget. At roughly 19,000 real estate and personal property bills per year, the increase amounts to approximately \$4,600. Additionally, Kelley & Ryan have been engaged to handle printing of the Water/Sewer utility bills following the printer's exit from the market, however the increased cost of printing utility bills will be accommodated within the Water/Sewer Enterprise Funds.

The third transfer request in the amount of \$46,000 is to cover an existing overage in the Snow & Ice budget, and this will serve to close the deficit through the end of the fiscal year, provided there are no further weather events requiring snow and ice removal. As you may know, Snow & Ice is one of the only cases where the budget can lawfully be over-expended with the deficit being raised in the next years tax rate if not covered by year-end through transfers or other means. Also, rather than rolling a deficit forward into a new fiscal year the Town has regularly covered Snow & Ice expenses which exceed the annual budget within the same fiscal year through transfers, so this request will serve to cover such expenses to date in FY2023. Again, if there are further weather events then further transfers may need to be made to this budget following the meeting this week.

I am planning to be in attendance at your meeting in case you have any questions about the three transfers requested, which total \$81,965. Note that the balance in the Reserve Fund is \$175,000 before any transfers are processed, and should the three transfers be approved then \$93,035 will remain. I would recommend the following motion be made by a committee member at the meeting:

I move to approve the three Appropriations Committee Reserve Fund transfer requests, totaling \$81,965, as presented in the Finance Director's March 20, 2023 memo, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 6.

Thank you!

Ernest F. Houle
Superintendent-Director

Mark R. Hollick
Principal

Maria C. Silva
Director of Business Operations

ASSABET

RECEIVED

DO. MORE.

SEP 12 2022

September 7, 2022

TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH
TREASURER/COLLECTOR

RE: FY22 Minimum Local Contribution (MLC) Assessment Revision

Dear **John Coderre**,

I hope that this communication finds you doing well and that you have had an enjoyable summer with a chance for some rest and relaxation. As you may recall, in January 2021, because of the ongoing COVID-19 Global Pandemic and in an effort to assist cities and towns budgets, Governor Baker had made a recommendation to the MA State Legislature to allow cities and towns to elect to use a percentage of ESSER II funds that regionals school districts had received to offset the city/towns upcoming FY22 Minimum Local Contribution (MLC) assessment. Unfortunately, this recommendation was never enacted by the MA State Legislature in the final conference committee FY22 Budget that was ultimately signed by Governor Baker.

With that being said, in August 2021, the Assabet Valley RVSD School Committee made a decision to uphold the percentage reduction of the MLC assessment by utilizing Out-Of-District Tuition funds as a replacement to the ESSER II funding that was originally suggested, which was reflected on the FY22 invoices. **Northborough** portion of **\$31,365** was used to reduce the MLC assessment for FY22.

On Monday, August 15, 2022 we met with Jay Sullivan and his staff of the Finance Division of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as we were looking to file our Schedule 19 of the FY22 End of the Year Audit. It was during this meeting that we had been told that we had not properly assessed our seven member city/towns their Minimum Local Contribution (MLC) for FY22. Simply put, the issue herein lies with Assabet Valley RVSD allowing the "ESSER II funds concept" to discount MLC for FY22.

Unfortunately, as a result of our meeting with MA DESE we have been notified that we do not have the ability to arbitrarily offset the MLC assessment of our seven member city/towns with the use of Out-Of District Tuition. In addition, we also cannot reduce the state required MLC assessment that each of our seven member city/towns are required to pay based on the M.G.L. c. 70 S6: Statutory Assessment Method.

In closing, DESE/DOR advised us that we are allowed to deduct the FY22 MLC shortfall adjustment that is due from the FY21 E&D 5% overage. This adjustment will be reflected to each member city/town on the first quarter FY23 assessment invoices.

Please feel free to reach out to our Director of Business Operations, Maria Silva with any questions.

Best,



Ernest F. Houle
Superintendent-Director