

Highlights in this Issue

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TOWN MANAGER COLUMN

This year's budget preparation started in November of 2023 when all departments, committees and outside agencies were asked to submit their budget requests for the ensuing fiscal year with the goal of a flat or reduced budget. As with every year, we have continued to scrutinize every cost of town government in an effort to reduce and limit the costs of Town government.

The Select Board and Budget Committee are recommending a budget that increased from the previous year with an impact to the tax rate of approximately \$0.15. To reduce the impact on the tax rate, the Selectmen and Budget Committee are recommending utilization of reserve funds and undesignated fund balance and the Town expects to see additional tax revenue from real estate taxes to assist in offsetting the increase in the amount of taxation dollars needed for the budget.

As a result, the total budget being recommended is \$6,483,503.00 or a 6.72% increase from last year. Department heads made a huge effort to contain all costs while continuing the range of services provided by the Town. Labor costs as well as product cost have raised the budget this coming year. This has resulted in the operations side of the budget increasing by 6.64% from last year. The Capital Improvement side of the budget has increased 15.52%. The Town is well positioned for the increase in costs by having reserve funds to assist, however a taxation increase is unavoidable. The Town is also expecting higher revenues due to interest earnings and taxes due to buildings and improvements. The Town is also proposing to utilize undesignated fund balance to keep the level of taxation increase down.

The Town Meeting will be held on Saturday April 13, 2024. It will be a traditional Town Meeting with voting in the morning and business meeting in the afternoon. The meeting will be held at the Noble High School.

Contained in the pages of this newsletter are explanations of the 3 Referendum Questions; 2 on Zoning Ordinance Amendments and 1 on the Floodplain Management Ordinance. The newsletter also outlines the budget and highlights capital and major projects contained in the budget.

I encourage all citizens to review the information provided and vote whether these are in the best interest of the town as a whole. If you believe that it is, then vote YES. If you believe that this is not the best path for North Berwick, vote NO. Either way, these are important issues that should be decided by the entire town and all are encouraged to vote on Town Meeting day.

I encourage all citizens to review the newsletter in order to understand all the issues currently impacting the town. Please vote in the best interest of the Town and quality of life that we enjoy. *Dwayne*



**Town Meeting Highlights:
Referendum Questions and Elections
Noble High School
April 13, 2024
Polls Open 8am to 1pm**



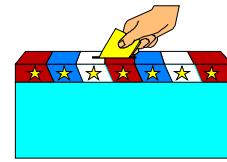
This year, the Town will open the polls at the Noble High School, 100 Noble Way, for referendum questions at 8:00 am with polls closing at 1:00 pm. If you cannot vote during this time frame, you are encouraged to get an absentee ballot from the Town Clerk so that you have the opportunity to have your vote counted. Absentee Ballots can be obtained by contacting Chris at 676-3353 x 1. The last day to request an absentee ballot is Tuesday, April 9, 2024.

Please remember that you can bring this newsletter in to assist you in your voting.

All the proposed changes can be obtained at the Town Office or on the town's website: www.townofnorthberwick.org.



ELECTIONS



The following positions will be elected this year prior to the annual Town Meeting. The Select Board encourage all registered voters to get out and vote.

**Select Board, Assessor, and
Overseer of the Poor:**

For 3 years (vote for two)
Mark Cahoon
Ryan Gosser
Jonathan Hall
Michael Johnson, Jr.

MSAD #60 School Director:

For 3 years (vote for one)
Roger Link, Jr.
Kathleen Stanton Whalen

Water District Trustee:

For 3 years (vote for two)
Nelson Begin
Anita Johnson

Sanitary District Trustee:

For 3 years (vote for one)
Daniel Burbank
Owen Thyng

Cemetery Trustee:

For 3 years (vote for one)
Ernest Houle

Cemetery Trustee:

For 1 year (vote for one)
Justin Griffin

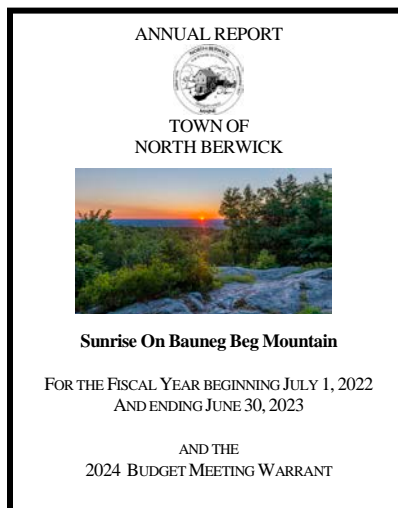
Budget Committee Member:

For 3 years (vote for not
more than four)
Stanley Cowan
Roger Guptill
Lynn Manley
Charles Noble
Kelly Rouillard
Carl Tabor

Meet The Candidates

**Wednesday, April 3, 2024
6:00pm
Community Center.**

Candidates will be available for residents to ask questions and learn more about them prior to the Election on Town Meeting Day.



Town Reports

The Annual Town Report will be available for pickup at the Town Hall, Library and Transfer Station beginning Friday, April 5, 2024. Town Reports will also be available at Town Meeting and can be viewed on the Town's Website:

Townofnorthberwick.org/town-manager.

REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

Question #1: “Shall portions of an ordinance entitled “Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Comply with New State Housing Law” be enacted?”

DUE TO THE LENGTH OF THE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS, THE TOWN CANNOT PUBLISH THE CHANGES IN THE NEWSLETTER. A COMPLETE VERSION IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN’S WEBSITE AND AT TOWN HALL FOR REVIEW.

Overview: “An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions,” generally referred to by its legislative tracking name of LD 2003, was signed into law by Governor Mills on April 27, 2022. This law is designed to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers to housing production in Maine, while preserving local ability to create land use plans and protect sensitive environmental resources. LD 2003 is based on the recommendations of the legislative commission named in the title, though not all those recommendations are included in the enacted legislation.

The Law requires Maine municipalities to amend their Land Use Ordinance (Zoning) to comply with the new State requirements. The law has 4 main sections that require municipal action: Affordable Housing Developments - Creation of additional density requirements for Affordable Housing Developments; Residential Area Housing - Allowing more than one single family dwelling to be built upon a single lot; Accessory Dwelling Units - Allowing for an Accessory Dwelling Unit on any lot where a single family dwelling is located and Housing Goals and Fair Housing – local ordinances and regulations must be designed to affirmatively further the purposes of the Federal Fair Housing Act, as well as the Maine Human Rights Act, as part of meeting the housing goals..

Affordable Housing Development: North Berwick currently has an Affordable Housing section of our Zoning Ordinance; however, it does not meet the new State requirements. It is proposed to amend the Town’s ordinance to meet the State requirements by eliminating the town’s current Affordable Housing District, Village C Overlay District, and adopt the necessary language to allow for Affordable Housing Development within the Town’s Growth Areas and where multifamily dwellings are allowed under the Zoning Ordinance. The requirements that need to be met include the following:

- At least 51% of the development must be restricted affordable housing units which is defined at follows: For rentals, a household with an income at no more than 80% of the area median income for the community, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, must be able to afford more than half of the units in the development. That means that rent and certain other housing expenses will not require more than 30% of the household’s income. For homeownership projects, a household with an income at no more than 120% of the area median income for the community, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, must be able to afford more than half of the units in the development. That means that mortgage payments (including mortgage insurance) and certain other housing expenses will not require more than 30% of the household’s income.
- Be in a growth area which in North Berwick would be the Village A, Village B, Village Center, Commercial, Commercial II and Residential 1 Districts, or other areas served by water and sewer
- Be in an area in which multifamily dwellings are allowed
- Meet shoreland zoning requirements, meet minimum lot sizes if using subsurface waste disposal, and verify that water and sewer capacity is adequate for the development

- To take advantage of the 2.5 density bonus, a development must qualify as “affordable”. If eligible, the affordable housing development qualifies for the following exceptions to the zoning requirements in the community: 1. The number of units allowed will be 2.5 times the number allowed for a development not designated affordable 2. The off-street parking requirements may not exceed two spaces for every three units.
- The units that will be affordable at these levels must be restricted through a restrictive covenant that is enforceable by a party acceptable to the municipality (which could be the municipality) for at least 30 years, and that states that the units must be restricted in rent or sales prices accordingly.

Residential Housing: This section requires municipalities to allow multiple dwelling units on parcels where housing is allowed, provided evidence of sufficient water and wastewater capacity exists, beginning on July 1, 2024. Municipalities may not apply different dimensional requirements to lots with more than one housing unit on them than they would to a lot with one housing unit, with the exception that they may require a minimum lot area per dwelling unit. However, if the municipality chooses to require a minimum lot area per dwelling unit, the lot area required may not be less for the first unit than for subsequent units. The state created a matrix for the building of dwelling units on single lots.

The Town of North Berwick Zoning Ordinance, article 4.2.a, currently allows for more than one principal structure to be built on a single lot provided all dimensional requirements, minimum lot size and subdivision requirements are met. The Town is proposing to keep the Town’s current ordinance in effect and not adopt the confusing matrix created by the State law. North Berwick’s ordinance is more permissive, which is allowed under State of Maine Law.

Accessory Dwelling Unit: This section essentially allows any lot with a single-family dwelling in an area where housing is permitted to have one accessory dwelling unit (ADU) as well, effective July 1, 2024. That ADU can be within the existing home, attached to it, or in a new structure. Municipalities may also allow existing accessory structures to be converted into an ADU. An ADU allowed under this law is exempt from zoning density requirements. In reviewing an ADU, the setback and dimensional requirements for a single-family home continue to apply unless the municipality makes them more permissive for an ADU. For ADUs in an accessory structure, the setback and dimensional requirements for such a structure apply.

In order to comply with the new State Law, North Berwick has to amend it’s In-Law Apartment Standard and adopt the new ADU requirement as follows:

- ADUs are allowed with a permit in the zoning districts so designated in Table 4.2.
- No more than one (1) ADU shall be permitted on any lot containing one (1) or more single-family dwelling units, except that no ADU shall be permitted on a lot developed with an in-law accessory apartment.
- The ADU may be constructed within or attached to a single-family dwelling or accessory structure, or a separate accessory structure on the lot.
- If the ADU is within or attached to a single-family dwelling unit or an accessory structure, the ADU must meet the applicable minimum yard dimensions (front, side, and rear setbacks) contained in Table 4.3. If the ADU is a separate accessory structure or attached to an accessory structure, the ADU must meet the minimum setback requirements for accessory structures in Section 4.2.b.
- The floor area of the ADU shall not exceed 650 square feet and shall not be less than 190 square feet.
- The sanitation and potable water standards in Section 5.1.17 shall apply to the ADU.
- Notwithstanding any provision of this zoning ordinance to the contrary, the ADU is not subject to additional motor vehicle parking requirements beyond those applicable to the single-family dwelling units on the lot.
- Nothing in this Section 5.2.20 exempts an ADU from any other requirements of this zoning ordinance, including without limitation, any shoreland zoning requirements.

Housing Goals and Fair Housing: This section directs the Department of Economic & Community Development, in coordination with Maine Housing, to develop a statewide housing production goal and regional production goals based on that statewide goal. In doing so, the section instructs the Department to set benchmarks for meeting those goals, as well as to consider information provided by municipalities on current and potential housing development and permits. Section 7 outlines ways municipalities can play a role in achieving those state and regional goals. It states that municipalities must ensure that local ordinances and regulations are designed to affirmatively further the purposes of the Federal Fair Housing Act, as well as the Maine Human Rights Act, as part of meeting the housing goals. It also explicitly authorizes municipalities to establish and enforce regulations related to short-term rentals to help meet those goals.

To meet this requirement, the Town has to adopt language within the Purpose article of the Zoning Ordinance that complies with the State Law.

Other Amendments: In addition to these changes, there are a 9 new definitions and 4 definitions that need to be amended. The Zoning Map requires the elimination of the Village C overlay district and the land use tables are amended to meet all the requirements of the language changes.

One Questions that has been posed is:

What if the Town does not adopt these changes? The best answer to this question is that the Town would not be compliant with State Law and would be subject to various legal liabilities which the town could not defend itself. Basically, the Town would be open to lawsuits that the Town could not defend itself and we would probably lose those lawsuits as the Town is not in compliance with the State Law.

If the Ordinance changes are not adopted, the Select Board and Planning Board will continue to bring them back to the Town for approval so that the Town becomes compliant with the State Law.

Question #2: Shall portions of an ordinance entitled “Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments” be enacted as set forth in the proposed ordinance in Section 3.1: Definition, Solar Energy System?

Currently Reads:

Solar Energy System: A solar collection system used to capture, convert, and supply electrical energy or thermal power, and consisting of one (1) or more freestanding, ground, roof, or wall mounted, solar arrays or modules, or solar related equipment, intended to reduce consumption of utility and/or fuel-generated power.

- a. **Residential Solar System (RSS)** - Intended for residential uses where the power generated is utilized only for the single-family residential property upon which it is sited.
- b. **Commercial Solar System (CSS)** - Intended for a multifamily dwelling, multifamily dwelling above the ground floor of a mixed use development, mobile home park, convalescent, rest, or nursing home, residential care or congregate care facility, institutional use, recreational use, commercial or industrial use, or rural use, a CSS may be up to twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in surface area with a rated nameplate capacity of up to two-hundred-fifty (250) kilowatts (kW) The Planning Board may waive the size limits for surface area and nameplate capacity if the applicant demonstrates to the Board's satisfaction that the additional surface area and/or nameplate capacity is needed to meet the energy requirements for intended onsite use.
- c. **Utility Solar System (USS)** - Intended for off-site utility grid use, a USS is larger than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet in surface area with no limit on the rated nameplate capacity.

Proposed to Read:

Solar Energy System: A solar collection system used to capture, convert, and supply electrical energy or thermal power, and consisting of one (1) or more freestanding, ground, roof, or wall mounted, solar arrays or modules, or solar related equipment, intended to reduce consumption of utility and/or fuel-generated power.

- a. **Residential Solar System (RSS)** - Intended for residential uses where the power generated is utilized only for the single-family residential property upon which it is sited.
- b. **Commercial Solar System (CSS)** - Intended for a multifamily dwelling, multifamily dwelling above the ground floor of a mixed use development, mobile home park, convalescent, rest, or nursing home, residential care or congregate care facility, institutional use, recreational use, commercial or industrial use, **a collaboration of 2-10 single family dwellings**, or rural use **located within the boundaries of North Berwick**, a CSS may be up to twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in surface area with a rated nameplate capacity of up to two-hundred-fifty (250) kilowatts (kW) The Planning Board may waive the size limits for surface area, **up to 1 acre total**, and nameplate capacity if the applicant demonstrates to the Board's satisfaction that the additional surface area and/or nameplate capacity is needed to meet the energy requirements for intended onsite use.
- c. **Utility Solar System (USS)** - Intended for off-site utility grid use, a USS is larger than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet in surface area with no limit on the rated nameplate capacity.

Intent: To clarify that a Commercial Solar System is for use of properties located within the boundaries of North Berwick and to add to the list of acceptable uses a collaborative of 2-10 single family dwellings to be consistent with the Maine PUC rules and regulations. This amendment also limits Commercial Solar Energy Systems to no more than 1 acre of surface area with Planning Board review and approval.

Question #3: Shall an Ordinance entitled “Floodplain Management Ordinance” be enacted?

DUE TO THE LENGTH OF THE ORDINANCE, IT CANNOT PUBLISH THE CHANGES IN THE NEWSLETTER. A COMPLETE VERSION IS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW ON THE TOWN’S WEBSITE AND TOWN HALL FOR REVIEW.

In January 2024, the town was notified by the Maine Floodplain Management Program that North Berwick was sent a Letter of Final Determination (LFD) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which sets the effective date of the new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) for York County for July 17, 2024. The LFD marks the beginning of a six-month time period for communities to update their local Floodplain Management Ordinances to reflect any changes since the last ordinance was adopted in 1996 and to incorporate the new map date. **North Berwick must adopt an updated Floodplain Management Ordinance which references the new map date on or before July 17, 2024, in order to avoid being immediately suspended from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).**

Participation in the NFIP provides protection to those members of North Berwick who may be affected by flooding. In addition, federal flood insurance is available to those who have federally backed mortgages in the floodplain. Another important benefit is your community’s eligibility for disaster funding and low interest loans when your county is in a declared disaster area. This is all possible by way of North Berwick’s commitment to adopt, administer, and enforce its floodplain ordinance and your commitment to regulate development within flood prone areas.

Adoption of the new maps prior to the final map date assures uninterrupted and continued participation in the NFIP. Since FEMA has very specific requirements regarding ordinance language, they sent the Town a proposed ordinance which the Select Board is encouraging residents to adopt to insure the Town’s compliance with the Flood Insurance Program.



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:



BUDGET COMMITTEE FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Budget Committee has deliberated over the budget requests of the various departments, committees and agencies seeking funding from the Town of North Berwick for the ensuing year. The Budget Committee met on five occasions during the month of January, February and March and has recommended the FY 2025 budget.

If the Budget Committee recommendations are followed, the total budget will increase by \$408,158.00 or a 6.72% increase, and the amount needed from Taxation to fund the budget will increase by \$150,111.00. Due to expected new valuation and increased revenues, it is anticipated that approval of this budget will have an impact on the tax rate, estimated around \$0.15 increase in the tax rate.

LD #1 Limitations

In January of 2005, the Maine Legislature passed a law which in effect caps the amount of taxes a Town may raise without a referendum vote. As part of every Tax Levy, the cap must be reviewed to ensure that the Town does not exceed the cap pursuant to the legislation. If the Budget Committee's recommendations are followed at Annual Town Meeting, the Town of North Berwick will continue to remain under the State of Maine property tax cap by \$2,533,262.00.

Below is the analysis of the LD#1 cap on the Town of North Berwick for FY2025:

Budget Committee Recommendations

Appropriations	\$6483,503.00
Available Resources	
Excise Tax	\$1,141,590.00
Fund Balance (Surplus)	\$414,045.00
Des. Surplus	\$35,000.00
Misc. Fees	\$478,030.00
State Revenue Sharing	\$438,125.00
Equipment Fund	\$106,770.00
State Road Aid	\$82,000.00
Enterprise Fund	\$177,705.00
ARPA/Grants	\$50,000.00
Other	\$32,000.00
Subtotal	\$3,560,238.00
Increase over FY2023	\$201,621.00

Tax Limitation Calculations

Tax Limit	\$6,093,500.00
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Proposed Expenditures

By Department

	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>% Inc(Dec)</u>
Highway	\$609,590.00	\$657,090.00	7.79%
Capital Imp.	\$781,183.00	\$900,102.00	15.52%
General Gov.	\$1,231,930.00	\$1,351,745.00	9.73%
Protection	\$2,491,889.00	\$2,601,237.00	4.39%
Library	\$303,241.00	\$340,570.00	12.31%
Parks and Rec.	\$146,580.00	\$151,610.00	3.43%
Health and Social	\$311,473.00	\$333,748.00	7.15%
Other	\$45,044.00	\$51,486.00	14.30%
Debt	\$95,915.00	\$95,915.00	0.00%
TOTAL	\$6,016,845.00	\$6,483,503.00	6.72%

Capital Improvement Budget

Highway	\$455,000.00	\$455,000.00	0.00%
Parks and Rec.	\$0.00	\$0.00	
General Gov.	\$75,000.00	\$5,000.00	-93.33%
Police	\$55,318.00	\$76,770.00	43.99%
Rescue	\$25,000.00	\$38,500.00	54.00%
Transfer Station	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Communications	\$0.00	\$62,250.00	
Fire	\$125,865.00	\$262,582.00	208.62%
TOTAL	\$781,183.00	\$900,102.00	15.52%

Proposed Revenues

Taxation	\$3,378,127.00	\$3,528,238.00	4.44%
State Rev. Sharing	\$379,050.00	\$438,125.00	15.59%
Excise Tax	\$1,087,070.00	\$1,141,590.00	3.40%
Equipment Fund	\$170,460.00	\$106,770.00	8.60%
Misc. Fees:	\$366,500.00	\$478,030.00	30.43%
Road Block Grant:	\$69,500.00	\$82,000.00	17.14%
Enterprise Fund	\$152,750.00	\$177,705.00	16.34%
Designated Surplus	\$10,000.00	\$35,000.00	250.00%
ARPA/Grants	\$89,000.00	\$50,000.00	-78.00%
Other	\$0.00	\$32,000.00	
Undesignated Surplus	\$367,000.00	\$414,045.00	12.82%
TOTAL	\$6,016,845.00	\$6,483,503.00	6.72%

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The proposed budget for FY25 calls for a 6.72% increase in funding over FY24. Although this is a very large increase over last year's budget, the Town has seen an increase in available revenues and have significant reserves to assist in the increase in the budget. One of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic was the need to significantly increase wages for employees to keep our staff and provide them with wages that are competitive with other communities and labor market environment. The proposed budget represents an 6.64% increase in operational costs. The capital side of the budget is a increase of 15.52% in order to meet the Town's capital needs identified in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan. For a detailed line-item budget report, please visit the Town Manager tab on the town's website – townofnorthberwick.org

Financial Health of the Town:

The Town continues to maintain a healthy fiscal approach by maintaining a fund balance equal to more than 90 days of expenditures as recommended by our auditors as well as healthy fund balances within the Town's trusts and dedicated funds. In addition, department heads continue to develop budgets that provide the essential services requested by residents in the most effective way and at the lowest possible cost. The Town also produces a Capital Improvement Plan to provide a means for evaluating facility and infrastructure projects and the mechanism for reviewing operating budget projects. The five-year Capital Improvement Program is reviewed and revised yearly with ten-year projections included to anticipate and plan for projects involving public facility improvements and major equipment purchases. By planning and maintaining the town's infrastructure, facilities and equipment, it balances the needs and the Town's financial ability on both a short and long term basis.

Expenditures:

In terms of expenditures, the Town department heads have made a concerted effort to produce budgets that fund the services demanded by citizens at the lowest possible cost while still maintaining our capital equipment and providing competitive salaries and benefits for our employees. Significant increases in costs include the following:

Salaries and Benefits: This year, the Board of Selectmen has produced a budget that increases wages across all positions for our Town employees. After reviewing the labor market and where the Town ranked as to different positions, it was determined to increase wages and in some instances, provide additional wage increases to keep the town competitive in this tight labor market. Minimum COLA increase – 4%, Police Contract – 3.2%. Health premiums increased by 4.5%, however, new hires and employees opting to take insurance has also increased health insurance costs.

Insurances: The Town has had a few unexpected Worker's Compensation claims over the past 3 years that has increased our insurance costs by nearly \$30,000.00 a year. The Town's general liability and property insurance is estimated to increase \$4,000.00. FICA will increase approximately \$7,000.00 due to employee wage increase. In addition, the newly enacted Family Medical Leave Act is estimated to increase the Town's budget by \$10,000.00 in the next fiscal year.

Library: Increases in labor and operating costs will increase the budget by approximately \$37,000.00. The largest increase being due to the grant that assisting in obtaining additional staff has expired and the cost now revert back to the Library and Town for that personnel.

Capital Projects:

There are various pieces of equipment scheduled to be purchased over the next year and they are detailed within this newsletter. As voters will notice, costs for Capital Equipment continue to increase at an extremely rapid rate in this post COVID world. Lack of inventory and supplies have increased pricing and the availability of equipment.

Revenues: The town is anticipating receiving additional revenue from the miscellaneous fees as well as proposing to utilize reserve funds for the purchasing of equipment and property scheduled on the Capital Improvement Plan. BETE program collections are expected to remain constant due to the continued equipment improvements made by Pratt and Whitney and it is estimated that additional property tax revenue due to the increased residential building within the Town will increase. It is estimated that an additional \$178,250.00 in additional tax revenue and BETE reimbursements will be received.

Excise Tax: With the slowing economy, the Town is seeing its excise tax collection stay about the same after 10 years of increasing revenue. It is estimated at \$1,125,000.00

State Revenue Sharing: The State has committed to restoring the State Revenue Sharing to 5% of the collected sales tax back to the municipalities which will maintain this revenue source. Estimated at \$461,500.00.

Misc. Revenue: Increase in Code Enforcement Office fee collections will result in an increase in Misc. Fee revenue along with a better rate of return on the Town's investment resulting in an estimated increase of \$115,000.00.

Equipment Fund: The Town's Equipment fund will be utilized to offset costs for Fire Forestry Retrofit and Police Cruiser. The current balance of the fund stands at \$320,000.00

PAYT: The PAYT program continues to remain healthy with over \$307,716.91.00 fund balance. Although it is expected that year over year growth will transition to break even, mainly due to the newly signed Hauling agreement with Casella Waste, the need for a price increase in bag prices looks at least 4 years out. That will mean bag prices will remain the same for 15 - 17 years since last increase. The initial bag price lasted 13 years without an increase.

Undesignated Fund Balance: The Town's Undesignated Fund Balance has been maintained this past year and that allows for the town to utilize the funds for one-time capital projects without impacting the amount needed from taxation to fund governmental expenses. It is planned to utilize nearly \$320,000.00 to offset taxation increases.

ARPA: The Town is proposing to utilize the remaining from the Federal Government as part of the covid-19 relief package approved by Congress for the Communication project. Much of that has been approved for expenditure by last 2 Town Meeting, however, it is proposed to utilize the remaining \$50,000.00 to help offset phase 2 of the communication project.

Parks and Recreation Summer Camp

Parks and Recreation is excited for another fun-filled Summer Camp season from Last year we had such a blast and can't wait for another memorable summer!!

June 24 to August 9, 2024 (No Camp on July 4)

Monday – Friday

9am – 3pm

Grades K-8th



Registrations: Registrations begin March 21, 2024 or attend Registration nights on March 21, 2024 or April 25, 2024 (if needed) from 5:00-7:00 pm at the Community Center.

Cost: \$1,025.00 for North Berwick Residents and \$1,075.00 for Non-Residents. Deposit of \$50.00 must accompany the application and the deposit will be applied to total cost of camp. Payment of the total cost must be received by June, 2024. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Non-payment could result in the loss of your camper's spot at summer camp as camp is limited to 85 campers.

FY25 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Police Department:



Police Cruiser: This year, the police department is requesting a replacement cruiser. Once again, the Police Department is planning on purchasing an SUV. The Town currently maintains 6 SUV's in our fleet and we have found that the maintenance costs are significantly less than the standard cruiser even as the vehicles age. The SUV model also allows for the department to respond to emergencies in all types of weather. Due to one of the cruisers losing its transmission in January, the town is requesting permission to purchase the new cruiser prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

The increase in cost this year can be attributed to the overall increase in vehicles in the market place from the manufacturer. Estimated cost - \$56,770.00.

Rescue:



Ambulance: The Town is proposing to appropriate \$38,500.00 towards the purchase of a new Ambulance to replace the 2008 Ambulance. Last year, voters granted the Select Board the approval to enter into a contract for the purchase of a new ambulance in order to lock in a price and to lessen the time for receiving the vehicle as time delays and the ability to take possession of vehicles since Covid has become lengthy. The Town has contracted with Specialty Vehicles Inc. for new ambulance which is due sometime in early 2025. The estimated cost is \$375,554.00 and the Select Board is asking for approval to bond the purchase price over a 10 year time frame. It is estimated that the

town will borrow \$315,000.00 with an estimated bond rate of 4% resulting in a yearly payment of \$39,500.00 a year.

Fire Department:

This year there are seven CIP projects for the Fire Department:



Tanker: At the 2015 Town Meeting, the voters approved the purchase of a tanker that holds 3,000 gallons of water for utilization in the area of town currently not served by the hydrant system. This is the eighth payment on the 10-year bond to fund the purchase of the tanker



Extraction Tools: It is proposed to replace the 25 year-old gas powered extraction tools utilized by the Fire Department for vehicle extractions with battery powered extraction tools. The cost of these tools is \$41,545.00.

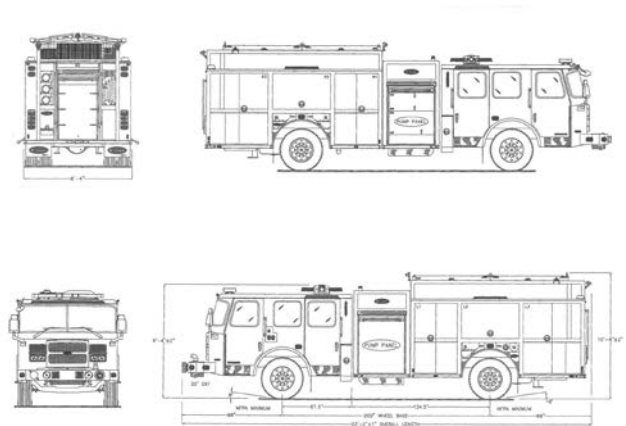




Fire Station Planning: Over the past years, the town has been appropriating \$50,000.00 a year for the planning of a new Fire Station. In December 2018, the Board of Selectmen in conjunction with the Planning Committee, entered into a contract with Port City Architecture to complete a feasibility study for the new facility to house both the Fire Department and Rescue Squad on land owned by the Town on Lebanon Road, incorporating the existing Rescue Squad Building into the design. This land

is geographically located in the center of the Town. Port City Architecture completed a feasibility study in the Summer/Fall of 2019. Conceptual Plans have been created of the proposed new Station and the town is meeting with potential design build contractors and our Architects to begin the process of determining final costs for project. The Town is proposing to appropriate \$50,000.000 to continue the process of planning for a new facility for the Fire Department and Rescue Squad. The Select Board has voted to move forward with this project and will be seeking grant opportunities to assist with the funding of the project currently estimated at around \$4.5 million and then bring the project to the voters for approval.

Pumper: Voters approved the replacement of the 1993 Fire Pumper with a new E-One Typhoon Pumper which is similar to the pumper purchased by the Town 10 years ago. Voters approved the utilization of \$275,000.00 from Pumper Reserve Fund and a \$15,000.00 prepayment credit to be used toward the \$665,000.00 purchase price and financed the remaining \$375,000.00 through a 10 year lease agreement. This kept yearly payments to \$44,388.77 and within the budget frame work. Due to supply chain interruptions that have delayed the construction of the pumper, the pumper has been ordered and the Town expects to receive the pumper in the later part of 2024.



SCBA: In 2023, voter approved the bonding for the upgraded SCBA equipment for the Fire Department. This project was completed last year and the town's first payment on the bond is \$36,150.00. The project came in under budget by \$25,000.00 and those funds are proposed to assist in the first year's payment.

Station Repairs: There are 2 projects proposed for the upcoming year: 1) Central Station - Wash and remove mold and mildew from the exterior of the building. Scrape, spot prime and repaint the trim and apply one coat of masonry sealer to the bricks. 2) Substation - Wash and remove mold and mildew from the exterior of the building. Scrape, spot prime and repaint the trim and apply one coat of natural stain to the cedar shakes. Estimated cost is \$17,200.00



ROAD PROJECTS

FY2025 PROPOSED ROAD CIP

BOND PAYMENT At the Last Town Meeting, voters approved a \$1,000,000.00 bond to assist with the maintenance of the Town's Road network. The Town was able to complete all the Road work proposed and still stay under budget by approximately \$250,000.00. It is proposed to use those remaining funds and the \$450,000.00 appropriation to complete with this year's proposed slate of road improvements.

Payment for the Boad is \$136,250.00

The following projects are scheduled to occur in FY25:

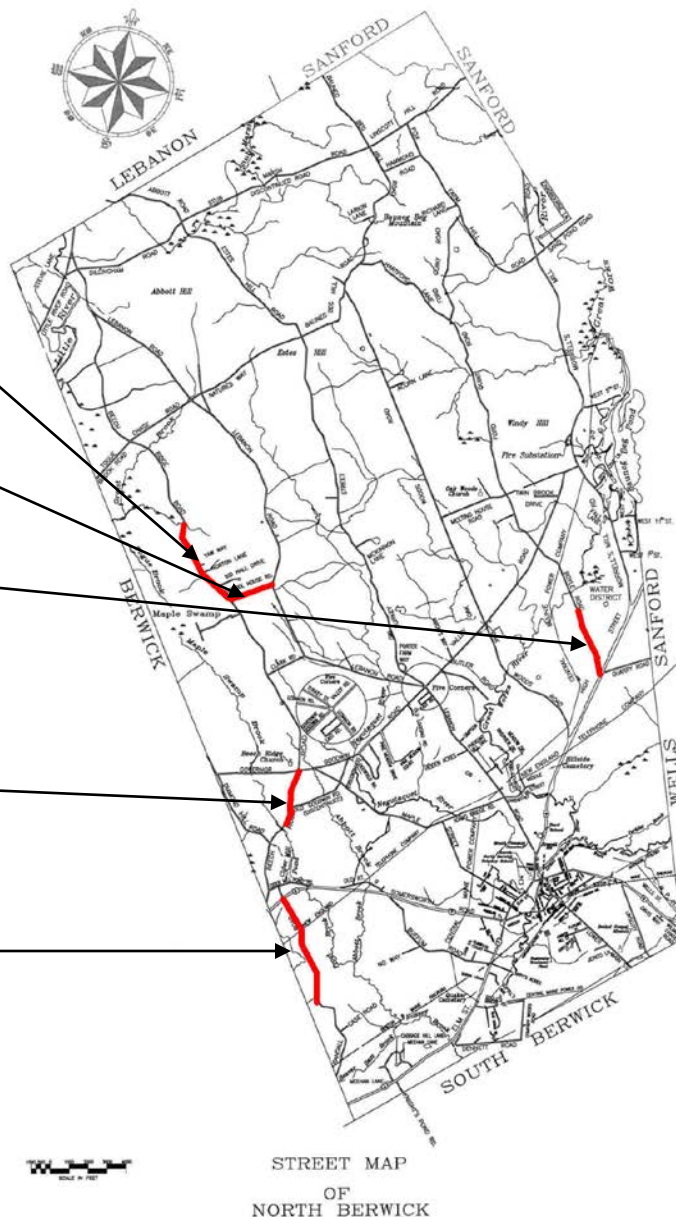
Beech Ridge Road – Shim and Overlay from School House Road to end of Lower Section, 2,153 feet.. - Estimated Cost: \$60,500.00.

School House Road – Shim and Overlay entire Road, 4,350 feet.. - Estimated Cost: \$120,000.00.

Boyle Road – Shim and Overlay from Route 4 approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ length of the road towards Valley, 3,650 feet. - Estimated Cost: \$105,000.00.

Beech Ridge Road – Shim and Overlay from Governor Goodwin Road to Noble High School, 2,180 feet. - Estimated Cost: \$62,500.00.

Randall Road: Reconstruct the first 1000 feet and Shim and Overlay from Route 9 to corner, 5,250 feet. - Estimated Cost: \$205,000.00.





ADOPT A CEMETERY PROGRAM



The Adopt a Cemetery program is designed to save taxpayers money by not having to hire companies and individuals to maintain the Veteran's cemeteries in the Community. The program is designed where individuals, families or organizations can adopt a cemetery and maintain that cemetery between May and October of every year. State Law dictates that "municipality in which said burying ground is located shall keep in good condition and repair, all graves, headstones, monuments or markers designating the burial place of said Revolutionary soldiers or sailors or soldiers or sailors who served in the United States Army, Navy or Marine Corps in any war and shall keep the grass suitably cut and trimmed on those graves from May 1st to September 30th of each year."

All those interested in this program are asked to send in the form prior to April 15, 2024.

**TOWN OF NORTH BERWICK
2024 ADOPT-A-CEMETERY PROGRAM**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Organization (if applicable): _____

I wish to _____ Adopt Cemetery # _____

_____ Willing to have the Town assign a cemetery

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Map available at the Town Office)

Whitehouse Murray(#4), Frost(#5), Gup till (#7), Grant-Hayes (#9), Libby-Hanson (#12), Dillingham(#14), Stackpole(#15), Brackett(#20), Pray (#21), Hurd(#22), Rogers (#23), Fenderson(#25), Remick(#26), Hurd-Staple(#27), Fernald(#28), Libby(#29), Hanscom-Brackett(#30), Goodwin(#32), Abbott(#33), Nowell(#34), Chadbourne (#37), Nowell(#40), Junkins (#47), Weymouth(#54), Johnson-Nutter(#56), Fernald (#57), Clark(#58), Stillings(#59), Hall(#60), Brackett(#67), Hanscom(#70), Abbott(#73), Staples(#77), Staple-Hurd(#78), Young(#88), Randall(#98), Hubbard(#99), Twombly(#104), Chadbourne(#107), Hill(#109), Hartford-Gup till(#120), Quint(#124), Ford-Goodwin(#129), Allen (#130), Ford (#131), Billings(#136), Ford(#138), Morrill(#143), Grant(#147), Cutts(#155), Weymouth(#159), Hammond(#161), Applebee(#164), Hurd(#166), Nunn-Merrill(#167), Weymouth(#174), Ricker (#181), Abbott (#183), Breton (#186), Chadbourne(#187)and Wood(#188).

TAX CLUB

The Select Board is pleased to announce the continuation of the Tax Club for the 2025 Fiscal Year. The Tax Club allows property owners to pay their property taxes over the course of the year through a payment book that the Town will issue after taxes have been committed and a Tax Club application has been completed.

The Tax Club works very similar to a Christmas Club Account in that your tax bill is evenly divided over a ten (10) month period starting in September and ending June 15. The start date of September is used due to the setting of commitment by the Board to determine the

actual taxes owed by the property owner. The payments are made without any interest charges accruing so long as the payments are received in accordance with the term of the agreement. If the property owner does not keep up with payments, then all interest that would have been due must be paid in full.

Any property owner who would like additional information or would like to join the tax club should fill out the following application and drop it off at the Town Office.



TOWN OF NORTH BERWICK TAX CLUB



RULES AND REGULATIONS: The Tax Club of the Town of North Berwick will be conducted on a payment plan approved by the Town and the individual taxpayer not to exceed 10 months in duration. Taxpayers must make payments according to the Tax Club coupon book issued to them no later than the 15th day of the month in order to qualify for the "No Interest" benefit.

Payments will be made at the Tax Collector's Office, Town of North Berwick, 21 Main Street, North Berwick, Maine 03906 or mailed to the Tax Collector's Office, Town of North Berwick, P.O. Box 422, North Berwick, Maine 03906.

Payments received after the due date will be subject to paying all back interest and fees if applicable.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

_____ Account Number: _____

Map: _____ Lot: _____

I have read the above and do hereby agree to join the Town of North Berwick Tax Club.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Witnessed: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY TOWN

Fiscal Year: 20____ Tax Bill: \$_____

Number of Payments: _____

Amount per Payment: \$_____

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024
ELECTIONS & REFERENDUM QUESTIONS – 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

BUSINESS MEETING – BEGINS AT 1:30 PM

NOBLE HIGH SCHOOL

GET OUT AND VOTE!!!

Town of North Berwick
21 Main Street
P.O. Box 422
North Berwick, Maine 03906

www.townofnorthberwick.com

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