

**Budget from page 1**

where expenditures will be cut.

Combining the newly approved operating budget with the amounts previously voted for the various warrant articles brings the total amount appropriated to \$1.74 million. Omitting pass-through expenses that come with their own funding and do not impact taxes, the total net budget is \$1.25 million. This is down by 10.4% (\$146,108) from the net budget for 2009 of \$1.40 million.

The School District Meeting voted to approve the Budget Committee's recommended budget of \$4.251 million for the 2010-11 school year. This is down 1.1% (\$45,890) below the appropriated budget for 2009-10 of \$4.297

million. A proposed amendment to reduce the total budget to an even \$4 million was defeated 23 to 71.

The Andover Fire Department voted a net appropriation of \$69,275, and the East Andover Fire Department is expected to vote a net appropriation of \$55,313 during its annual meeting scheduled for April 13. The total increase in appropriations for the two districts for 2010 over 2009 amounts to less than \$4,000.

The total appropriations voted to fund 2010 operations at the various annual meetings comes to \$5.63 million. This is

a reduction by almost \$200,000 (or 3.2%) below the \$5.82-million 2009 total.

One would expect that making such a significant reduction in appropriations would result in a similar reduction in the tax bill. However, the other side of the coin is the amount of revenues available

Appropriations (Net of Pass-Through Items)				
Department	2009	2010 (est.)	Change	
School	\$4,297,020	\$4,251,130	-\$45,890	-1.1%
Town	\$1,399,161	\$1,253,053	-\$146,108	-10.4%
Fire				
Andover	\$69,847	\$69,275	-\$572	-0.8%
E. Andover	\$51,033	\$55,313	\$4,280	8.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,817,061</b>	<b>\$5,628,771</b>	<b>-\$188,290</b>	<b>-3.2%</b>
Tax Rates				
School	\$12.42	\$12.75	\$0.33	2.7%
Town	\$2.30	\$2.40	\$0.10	4.3%
Fire				
Andover	\$0.65	\$0.64	-\$0.01	-1.5%
E. Andover	\$0.33	\$0.36	\$0.03	9.1%
County	\$2.68	\$2.68	---	---
Total Tax Rates				
Andover	\$18.05	\$18.47	\$0.42	2.3%
E. Andover	\$17.73	\$18.19	\$0.46	2.6%
Tax on a \$200,000 Property				
Andover	\$3,610	\$3,694	\$84	2.3%
E. Andover	\$3,546	\$3,638	\$92	2.6%

to offset taxes.

The latest estimate by the town administrator is that the anticipated revenues available this year will be down some \$175,000 from last year. This shortfall is partly due to the likelihood that the shared revenues expected from the State will be significantly less this year. Given this expectation, the present estimate of the Town's tax rate for 2010 is \$2.40 per thousand of valuation. Last year this rate was \$2.30.

Estimating the School tax rate is always uncertain, since the amount of

unexpended surplus to be returned is not known until the end of the school year. If it is assumed (prudently) that there will be no surplus available from the present year (ending on June 30) to reduce taxes for next year, the School tax rate is estimated to be \$12.75, up \$0.33 or 2.7% over last year.

However, if it is assumed (optimistically) that the surplus available from 2010 is the same as the previous year (\$128,023), then the School tax rate would be \$12.27, down \$0.15 or -1.2% from last year. So the School rate could be somewhere between \$12.27 and \$12.75, depending on the amount of surplus returned from this year.

As shown in the adjacent chart, the anticipated total tax rate for 2010 is approximately \$18.35, up about 2.5% over the total 2009 tax rate of \$17.80. This assumes that there will be no unexpended surplus available from school operations, and that the Merrimack County charge of \$2.68 remains the same this year. With the optimistic assumption that the school surplus will be equal to the previous year, the total tax rate would be \$18.02, only slightly above last year's \$17.80.

Note that the School budget represents about 69% of the total tax bill. The Town budget accounts for about 13%, the fire departments about 3%, and Merrimack County about 15%.

The increase in the tax bill for a typical property valued at \$200,000 will be about \$90, as seen in the chart.

**Meeting from page 1**

Here are some highlights from the rest of the meeting.

**Warrant Article 1**

**Election of Officers.** In the Selectman race, Don Gross (467 votes) defeated Jim Danforth (90) and Howard Wilson (50).

For Budget Committee, incumbents Jeff Newcomb (383) and Bill Keyser (341) were both returned to office over Peter Zak (231).

For School Board, Charlie McCrave (317) and Katie Keyser (311) defeated Herbie Bonk (201) and Michelle Dudek (190).

For Road Agent, incumbent Jon Champagne (388) defeated write-in candidate Jim Henderson (201).

For School District Moderator, Bill Bardsley (61 write-in votes) bested Ed Becker (31 write-in votes).

Here are the unopposed candidates and the offices they were elected to:

- Shirley Currier, Town Treasurer
- Marj Roy, Town Clerk and Tax Collector
- Alex Estin (write-in), Trustee of Trust Funds
- Sandra Graves, Library Trustee
- Janet Moore, Library Trustee
- Christie Coll, School District Clerk

• Shirley Currier, School District Treasurer

**Warrant Article 2**

**A Zoning Ordinance amendment to accommodate small wind energy systems.** This article was on the ballot item and passed 483 to 51 in a ballot vote. Toby Locke expressed displeasure at not being able to discuss ballot items during Town Meeting.

**Warrant Articles 3 and 4**

**To make ambulance service a Town department (Article 3) and to create a revolving fund (Article 4) to receive donations and memorial contributions for ambulance services.**

Moderator Ed Becker asked that Articles 3 and 4 be moved and seconded together so they could be discussed together.

Jake Johnson (Selectman) and John Kinney (president of the Andover Rescue Squad) explained that the Andover Rescue Squad (ARS) would become a Town department, with revenue from billing going in the general fund and revenue from donations and memorial donations going into the special revolving fund that Article 4 would establish. The Board of Selectmen would have oversight of the special revolving fund. Jake and John explained the history of

See Meeting on page 4

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**Houses Are Growing – Smaller**

**For many people their next house will be smaller than their current one. At a recent International Builders Show visitors told the exhibitors what they wanted in their next home. Smaller is in. Smaller is less expensive to heat; smaller is easier to clean.**

**Smaller can include many features. Large kitchens that are open to the main family living area are attractive to many people. A home office or study is high on many lists – many people prefer having office space over having a formal dining room.**

**A main floor master suite is a must feature for many people. Mature people who don't want to climb up and down stairs is one group who likes first floor master suites, but this feature is gaining popularity with other people.**

**Three-car garages are becoming more popular. Two cars used to be standard; now many homes have three-car garages in which the third bay is used for additional storage and not automobiles**

**The small house can have the features you need for the way you live. Check with your local REALTOR to find the house with the features you want in a smaller house.**

*Art Urie*



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