

The **Andover Beacon**
Our Hometown Newspaper

AndoverBeacon.com April 2016 735-6099

Town and School Meetings Pass Total Net Budget of \$7 Million

9.3% increase in taxes possible

Ed Hiller, Budget Committee

The 2016 annual meetings of the Town of Andover, the Andover School District and the two Andover Fire Precincts voted to raise and appropriate their budgets for the coming year. The total appropriations (net of pass-throughs) are \$7,031,656, up by \$478,610 (7.3%) from last year.

Estimating the resulting tax bill requires estimating the revenues and surplus funds available to offset taxes. Assuming that these amounts are the same as last year, the total amount to be raised by taxes for 2016 would increase approximately 9.3% over 2015.

For a property evaluated at \$200,000, the 2016 tax bill would be approximately \$382 higher than last year's tax bill.

Estimating Tax Bills is Difficult

While the budgets for 2016 are now set, they only reflect the "expense" side of the very complicated equation that will determine the 2016 tax bills in late fall. And the budgets only cover

Andover expenses; a portion of our tax bill, the Merrimack County expense, is unknown at this point.

The other side of the equation that will ultimately determine our tax bills in the fall is the "revenue" side. Almost none of the revenue items are decided

Appropriations (Net of Pass-Through Items)				
Department	2015	2016	Change	
School	\$4,774,465	\$4,900,864	\$126,399	2.6%
Town	\$1,650,169	\$1,999,727	\$349,558	21.2%
Fire	\$128,412	\$131,065	\$2,653	2.1%
Total	\$6,553,046	\$7,031,656	\$478,610	7.3%
Tax Rates ('15 actual, '16 estimated)				
School	\$12.99	\$13.50	\$0.51	3.9%
Town	\$4.07	\$5.46	\$1.39	34.2%
Fire				
Andover	\$0.65	\$0.66	\$0.01	1.5%
E. Andover	\$0.38	\$0.39	\$0.01	2.6%
County	\$2.82	\$2.82	\$0.00	0.0%
Total Tax Rates				
Andover	\$20.53	\$22.44	\$1.91	9.3%
E. Andover	\$20.26	\$22.17	\$1.91	9.4%
Tax on a \$200,000 Property ('15 actual, '16 estimated)				
Andover	\$4,106	\$4,488	\$382	9.3%
E. Andover	\$4,052	\$4,434	\$382	9.4%

yet for 2016; some or all of them will come in higher or lower this year than they did last year. Here are some of the currently unknown revenue items that will impact our 2016 tax bills:

Revenue from fees collected by Transfer Station, Planning Board, Zoning Code Administrator, etc.

See Budget on page 2



Saturday, March 26 was Andover's third annual St. Baldrick's event, organized again this year by Proctor Academy students as part of the school's spring Project Period. As of Monday, March 28, dozens of "shaves" had inspired the community to donate over \$16,000 to help researchers find cures for childhood cancer. To donate, visit StBaldricks.org and search for "Proctor Academy." Pictured here are Meghan Barton and Mary Meier of New Horizons Hairstylists hard at work on the Andover Fire Department's Andy Guptill and Glenn Haley. Photo: Charlie Darling

BEACON FUNDRAISING UPDATE

We need to raise \$2,398 from 37 local donors by April 30 just to match where we were last year at that time. If we don't, we could wind up 33% behind last year - a dangerous position for the Beacon to be in!

The Andover Beacon is published by Community Publishing of Andover, a 501(c)(3) charitable trust, so donations are tax deductible.



Herbie Barton (standing, right) addresses Town Meeting on March 8, 2016. Photo: Larry Chase

Selectmen's Thoughts on the Annual Town Meeting

Democracy at work in a small town

Andover Board of Selectmen

I hope that the "high energy and emotions" we experienced at our recent Town Meeting was cathartic in the sense that we can all see that if people speak out on an issue, they have the power to make a difference. Everyone who wanted to speak to the Noise Ordinance warrant article was given his or her time at the microphone, and the article was subsequently voted down.

This was certainly an example of democracy at work at the small town level.

Two days later, however, Andover, Hillsboro, and Salisbury were featured unfavorably in the editorial of the Concord Monitor:

"... Throughout the area, the traditional sounds of congenial town meetings were drowned out by angry voices and bitter accusations (Andover, Hillsboro, and Salisbury were noted) ... While we don't expect civility to make a comeback overnight, there is an obvious path forward. It involves listening

to opposing viewpoints dispassionately, calmly assessing the argument's merits and shortcomings, and offering a thoughtful response in a measured tone. The person with whom you disagree shouldn't be seen as a threat but a neighbor with a different perspective."

I was disappointed to see Andover featured in a negative light, and I hope that we can turn around and have a more congenial and respectful Town Meeting next year.

And now, on to business.

The Andover Selectmen welcome Dave Blinn as our newest member. Dave was sworn in on March 10, and he will cover the remaining year of a three-year term. We look forward to getting to know Dave and working with him as we begin a new year.

We say goodbye to Duncan Coolidge, who worked diligently during his term to resurrect a much-needed Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Duncan plans to continue his work in other town organizations, such as the Andover Lions Club and the Andover Community Association. Thank you,

See Selectmen on page 3

Old-Time Family Country Dance

Saturday, April 2, from 6:30 to 9 PM

Andover Elementary/Middle School Gym

No RSVP and no experience required

For details, e-mail AndoverCommunity03216@gmail.com.

With Caller
Dudley
Laufman

Refreshments &
Light supper
items offered
for sale

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