

## Town Budget Reflects Improvements to Town Health and Safety

### Andover Select Board

This year's budget represents a big step forward in areas that will improve the health and safety of the residents of Andover. 2019 is the first full year of a new contract for emergency medical services (EMS) with the city of Franklin. Franklin will provide day time coverage 7 days a week for \$80,000 per year. While Andover will continue to maintain volunteer emergency medical services, more and more we do not have the response necessary for transportation and/or required level of care. The increase in this year's EMS line will be \$34,450.

We are also introducing a second full-time police officer in this budget. We have been fortunate to have experienced part-time officers in our community for many years, but we have been losing them to a much deserved retirement. We will be better served going forward with a second full-time officer to cover our community's growing need for coverage. The addition of a full-time officer for 9 months of 2019 will be reflected in the police labor, uniforms, retirement and insurance lines.

With more calls for emergency medical and police coverage and for overall safety on our 60 miles of road, keeping the roads in good travel condition is important. We need to spend money on road signage to help police and ambulance services find our homes quickly. Every year, many road signs disappear and they are expensive to replace. We've increased the lines for road signage, plowing and sanding, and winter materials. Total increase to the Highway Department is \$18,960. Road projects planned for 2019 include 1) engineering and permit to fix drainage on Currier Road; 2) engineering and repair to basin system on Shirley Ave; 3) removal of dangerous trees on Elbow Pond Rd, Maple St, Raccoon Hill and Chase Hill Roads.

In other departments, there have been both increases and decreases. For increases, the planning board is asking for an additional \$5,000 for a zoning enforcement deputy, which is required by the Zoning Ordinance. This person would be focused primarily on field checks and building permits. The cemetery committee is asking for an additional \$4,495 for grounds maintenance projects. The town is in the process of updating its hazard mitigation plan, which shows an increase of \$3,500 in the Emergency Operation Center budget. The final noticeable increase is for more in-depth testing at the old landfill on Monticello Drive. This is required every 5 years, and in-

creases the budget by \$4,500.

Decreases start with a reduction in town clerk/tax collector wages of \$7,605, based on actual hours and adjusted hourly rates. Assessing has gone down \$7,338, because some of this year's work is part of the new revaluation required every 5 years.

The biggest reduction of \$25,030 occurred in our health insurance when we changed providers. The rates are lower and we received credits from unemployment and property and liability insurance. Our new provider is Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield through HealthTrust.

The transfer station is down by \$2,157 as a result of switching from single stream to source separated recycling. We have done a lot of estimating because we made the switch late in the year on October 31. We will be looking at ways to increase our revenue in recyclables, but it takes help from the community to create a high quality product to market. Thanks to one and all for taking the extra time to clean and sort your recyclables.

\$3,000 was cut from the welfare budget.

The recreation committee reduced the ski program line by \$3,700 and will take the money from the revolving fund instead.

Lastly, the cable TV committee was able to reduce their line by \$6,000, as no new equipment is required this year.

The net increase to this year's operating budget is \$55,261. There is a decrease of \$30,476 in warrant articles to be funded by new taxation. The total difference is an increase of \$24,785, which is a 1.4% increase. This article is based on the Select Board's recommended budget, which is \$10,000 more than the Budget Committee has recommended. The difference is in the Highway Department Labor line.

## 2019-20 Andover School Budget Recommended

### Andover Budget Committee

At its January 23, 2019 deliberative session, the Andover Budget Committee unanimously voted to recommend to the voters at the Annual School Meeting on March 4, 2019 a proposed budget of \$5,655,656 (five million, six hundred fifty-five thousand, six hundred fifty-six dollars).

This represents an overall increase to the recommended budget over 2018-19 of \$179,119 or 3.27%.

It is our understanding that the School Board will finalize the Warrant for the Annual Meeting at their February Board Meeting and shall certify to the Andover Selectboard the amount to be raised by taxation.

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