

## 2020 Proposed Town Budget Breakdown and Explanations

### Transfer Station and accounting updates

Marj Roy, Town Administrator

There are many people involved in the Town budget process. It all begins in late fall when the Select Board meets with department heads to draft department budgets. Next comes the Budget Committee's process that starts with department head, Town precinct, and School District meetings.

As the process continues, the School District, the Town, and Town precincts present their proposed budgets to the Budget Committee. After public hearings for the Town and School District budgets, the Budget Committee deliberates and creates their proposed budget. It is the Budget Committee's recommendations that are presented to the voters at Town Meeting.

This article addresses the Select Board's proposed budget. There are some expenses in the Town budget that continue to increase, just as they do in our home budgets. These include electricity, telephones, information technology, fuel, and health insurance, to name a few.

The Police Department, Cemetery, and Recreation Committee budgets are down by a total of \$4,524.

The recycling building at the Transfer Station needs work. The heater is about 30 years old and has problems, and the roof needs to be shingled. There was discussion about a metal roof, but due to the pitch of the roof there is the potential for injury from sliding snow and ice.

Municipal accounting is quite different than private sector accounting. Fund accounting is used by municipalities and, as with everything else municipal, New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated (RSAs) are the guiding principles along with Generally Accepted

Accounting Principles.

Ten years ago, the Town was using QuickBooks for accounting. Even if set up properly, QuickBooks is not practical or efficient for fund accounting. As a matter of fact, while using QuickBooks, the Town's financial audit had to be suspended for one year because there was so much additional work that needed to be done to be compliant with the regulations mentioned above. The BMSI accounting software currently being used has become outdated and customer support will not be available in the very near future.

MTI, a New Hampshire-based company, has developed municipal fund accounting software strictly for New Hampshire towns and cities. The software developer and the business administrator of MTI came and met with our bookkeeper, a Select Board member, the chair of the Budget Committee, and me. In a three-hour presentation, they demonstrated the versatility, comprehensive capabilities, and the modules the software provides. We were able to negotiate favorable terms and are sure that department heads, committees, and boards, as well as employees, will be impressed with the capabilities available.

Some lines were increased, and some decreased in the Highway Department operating budget, resulting in an increase of \$2,890.

Everyone involved in the creation of the Town's annual budget has the best interest of the town in mind. We don't all agree about priorities, but we work hard to come to consensus about what is best for the town.

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, March 10, at 7 PM to attend Town Meeting at AE/MS. Your opinions and votes make a huge impact on what happens in our community.

### Budget from page 1

for the Andover School District for fiscal year 2020-21, including warrant articles, is \$5,837,386. This is up \$181,730 (3.2%) over last year.

The proposed budget includes significant increases in high school tuition (\$70,435); Special Education contractual services (\$21,500); Operations and Maintenance (\$59,528); and Collective Bargaining (\$76,263). Offsetting these increases is a reduction of \$48,820 due to retirement of Special Education teachers and administration.

### Andover Town Budget

The recommended net budget for the Town, including warrant articles, comes to \$2,299,611. This is up over 2019 by \$164,375 (7.7%).

Areas of increase include approxi-

mately \$76,000 for full-time employee health insurance; \$40,000 for computer technology; and \$9,700 for assessing. Departments showing decreases are Police (\$2,000) and Highway (\$7,100).

### Andover Fire District

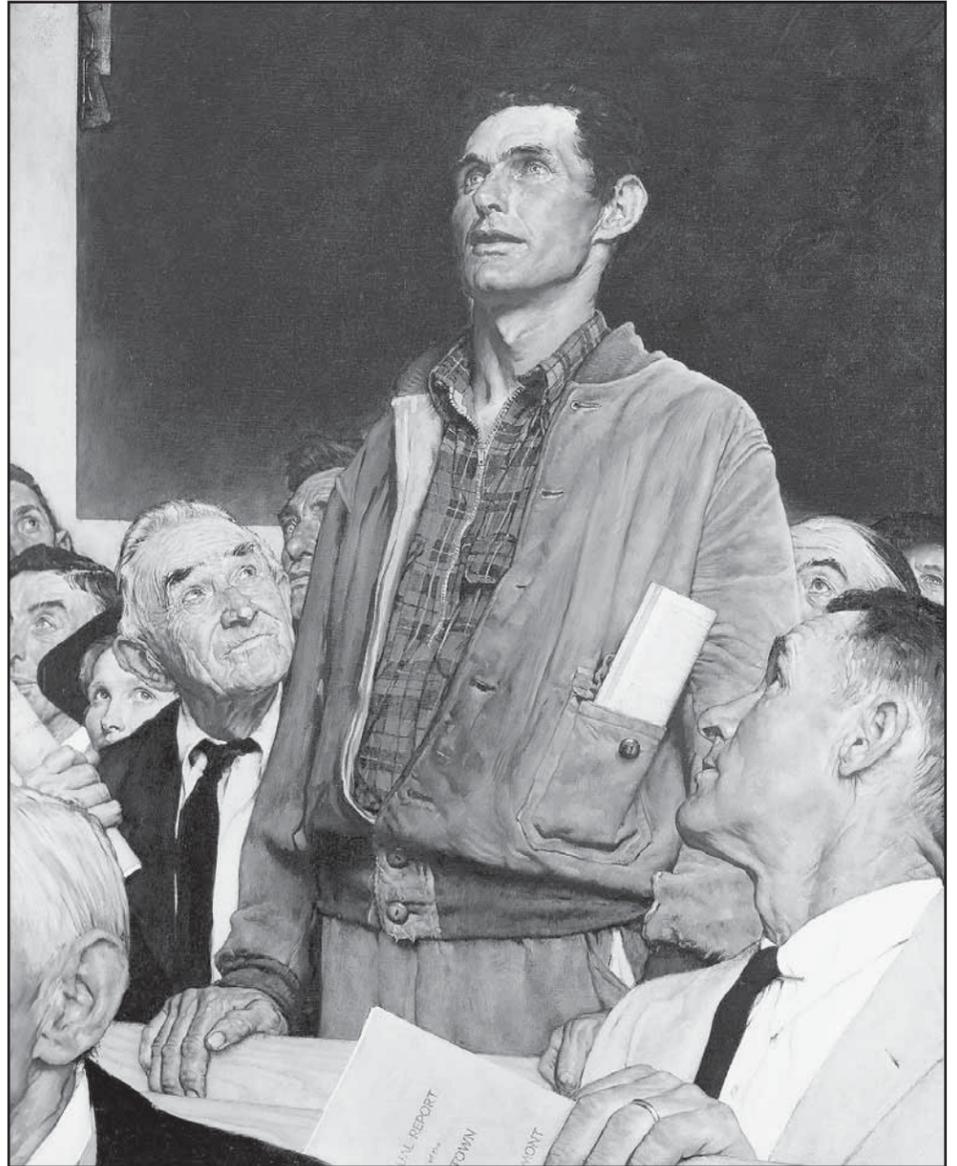
The recommended 2020 budget for the Andover Fire District is \$162,788, up \$25,348 over the previous year. A major component of this increase is the purchase of a vehicle for \$20,000.

### Annual Meetings

The meetings at which these budgets will be discussed and voted upon are:

- School District Meeting: Monday, March 2, at 7 PM
- Town Meeting: Tuesday, March 10, at 7 PM
- Fire District Meeting: Tuesday, March 17, at 7:30 PM

# TOWN MEETINGS SPECIAL EDITION



**N**orman Rockwell's famous *Freedom of Speech* painting, reproduced in the *Picturing America* collection at AE/MS, reminds us of the importance of participating in our annual meetings this month.

Norman Rockwell (1894-1978), *Freedom of Speech*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, February 20, 1943. Oil on canvas, 45 3/4" x 35 1/2". The Norman Rockwell Art Collection Trust, from the permanent collection of the Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, Massachusetts NRM.org © 1943 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Publishing, Indianapolis, Ind. All rights reserved. CurtisPublishing.com.

### Beacon staff

This month, voters in Andover are called upon to make important decisions that will influence our taxes and guide our Town government for the coming year. We'll elect a dozen of our neighbors to positions in Town and School District governing bodies, and we'll close the books on 2019 with the annual Town Report.

This month's *Beacon* coverage of this very important season includes:

- Where to pick up your Town Report 2019 (see below)
- A summary of the proposed budgets (page 1)
- Profiles of local candidates (page 9)
- Requirements to pass a bond issue (page 10)
- Town Moderator's guidelines for Town Meeting (page 10)
- Town Meeting check-in policy (page 11)
- The Town Warrant (page 11)
- The School District Warrant (page 12)

### Important Dates

Here are the dates you need to keep in mind in order to participate fully in this important time of year:

**Saturday, February 29:** Supervisor of the Checklist available to correct the checklist and register new voters, Town Hall, 11 to 11:30 AM.

**Monday, March 2:** Andover School District Meeting, AE/MS Gym, 7 PM.

**Tuesday, March 10:** Voting, AE/MS Gym, 11 AM to 7 PM. Register to vote with valid ID.

**Tuesday, March 10:** Andover Town Meeting, AE/MS Gym, 7 PM.

**Monday, March 16:** Andover Village District Meeting, Andover Town Hall, 7 PM.

**Tuesday, March 17:** Andover Fire District Meeting, East Andover Fire Station, 7:30 PM.

For more info, contact 735-5332 or TAdminAndover-NH.gov.

**Andover Town Report**  
The 2019 Town Report will be available by March 3, 2020  
Reports can be picked up at Town Offices, Libraries, Transfer Station, School, and at Town Meeting

Check AndoverBeacon.com!

The latest news is posted at AndoverBeacon.com every day!