



Town of Topsfield Finance Committee

Attached are the Topsfield Finance Committee Budget Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2013. Current information indicates that economic factors which form our budgetary situation, most critically funding from the Commonwealth, will be similar (although hopefully not quite as dire) as those which impacted the last few Fiscal Year budgets. In that light, our budget methodology will be consistent with that used for the past few years.

It is our hope that we have “reached the corner” in this difficult economic cycle. That is not to say by any measure that we have “turned the corner” to a more stable economy. Clearly, it remains a time to be prudent, thoughtful and cautious.

Purpose of Guidelines

Finance Committee Guidelines are established to *initiate* the annual Town Budget process in a consistent and reasonable manner. Based upon information that is preliminary at best, they generally target a balanced budget without overrides, given the economic nature and involved fiscal policies of the year. They are not a guarantee of Finance Committee recommendation of funding at any specific level, as a balanced budget must be brought to Town Meeting.

Character of Budget

Once again, this will be a budget process targeting maintenance of essential Town Services. No new programs or new government will be considered.

Methodology

This Town Budget will be constructed using the same method as the last few years. We are requesting that each Department Budget be formed in accordance with its respective Guidelines. Should essential services of that Department remain unfunded they should then be listed and described on the attached Schedule.

Questions

Please address Budget questions to your Finance Committee Liaison(s).
As always, your participation in this process is sincerely appreciated.
Thank you.

Mark B. Lyons, Chair

FY 2013 Department Budget Guidelines
November 14th, 2011

ESSENTIAL SERVICES BUDGET

I. General Government

A. Total of Salary & Wages

As per collective bargaining, other contractual obligations and the recommendation of the Town Administrator, as applicable.

B. Other

2.0% increase.

C. Ongoing Financial Programs, such as automobile leasing

To be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

D. Fuel and Electricity

Budget requests to be based on review of FY 2011 actual and FY 2012 projection of year to date actual.

II. Capital Items

Not to exceed \$250,000 Town wide.

III. Elementary Schools

2.0% increase.

IV. Masconomet

Discussions for joint three Town Finance Committee guidelines in process.

V. No New Programs. No New Government.

ATTACH SCHEDULE OF UNFUNDED ESSENTIAL SERVICES

I. Attach Schedule

Detail all essential services items, whether salary, wages or other not included in submitted essential services budget. Include the "Budget line" for each item.

II. Attach Narrative

Describe the programmatic impact of those essential services items that were not included in submitted budget.