



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Meeting was held remotely via a posted Zoom link
January 10, 2022

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. This means that members of the public body as well as members of the public may access this meeting via virtual means. The meeting may also be accessed remotely via contact provided below. When required by law or allowed by the Chair, persons wishing to provide public comment or otherwise participate in the meeting, may do so by accessing the meeting remotely, as noted above. Additionally, the meeting may be broadcast at a later date via the town YouTube channel and Boxford Cable Television.

I. Call to Order: Chair Che Elwell called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Karen Dow, Jon Guido, Karen Duval, Tim O'Malley and David Larson present; Mike Hartmann joined at 7:05. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Beth Willis, Town Clerk; Neal Hovey, Police Chief; Kevin Harutunian, Town Administrator; and Dick Gandt, Select Board member. Members of the public present: none. All votes at the meeting were taken by roll call due to the remote nature of the meeting.

II. Review any meeting minutes: 1/3/22 minutes: motion to approve by J. Guido, seconded by D. Larson. Voted in favor by roll call 6-0.

III. Omnibus Review:

- Discussion of significant differences between budgeted and actual expenditures in recent past years. Some is the result of federal and state COVID grants offsetting some operating costs. Some is hiring freezes due to COVID-related uncertainties. Examine on a case-by-case basis.
- Library FY23 budget at guidelines is below the state-mandated Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) level (2.5% increase of the average of the last 3 years), due to the upcoming retirement of the Director and changes in experienced department heads. Request will be to exceed the "Other" guideline with one-time expenditures to meet MAR.
- First draft of Elementary Schools budget shows a 7.1% increase in the local appropriation. Propose to use half of the ESSER III funds, about \$130k more than the ESSER II funds used in the FY22 budget. The ESSER funds have a time limit in which they must be spent. Expecting to still charge tuition for 5-day kindergarten, although at a lower rate than FY22.
- Town Administrator proposes to adjust the non-represented pay grid with a cost-of-living adjustment, with no movement on steps. Working on

an examination of the personnel by-laws with a consultant and internal review committee. Also planning to do a new salary comparison; last was about 8 years ago. The union contracts settled in the last two years have typically had 1.5-2% increases each year.

- For department visits, expect to have Library in 1/24 (with outgoing and incoming Directors). Also expect to have Police, Fire and Elementary Schools in. Would be nice to have someone from Essex County Retirement Board in, or the Town Treasurer.

IV. Federal Grants updates (ARPA): D. Larson provided an overview of discussions being held by the ARPA study group, considering possible uses, what qualifies as “eligible”. Almost \$2M is expected to come to Topsfield in two installments, with all funds to be committed by 12/31/24 and expended by 12/31/26.

V. Capital Planning: List of capital items for FY23 and beyond presented by K. Harutunian, with suggested funding sources for the FY23 items.

VI. Any Other Business:

- No model update.
- Boxford and Middleton guidance for Masco similar to ours.
- Landfill may need to be tested for PFAS 2-4 times/year.
- K. Harutunian holding “open house” via Zoom on capital items (1/19 at 5 pm) and the budget (1/27 at 5:30 pm).
- K. Dow shared graphs comparing district per-pupil education costs vs. district size across the state, and among selected districts.

VII. Next meetings: 1/24/22 at 7 pm: Library, Water (tentative). 1/31/22 at 7 pm: will attempt to schedule several other departments.

VIII. A motion was made by Karen Dow to adjourn at 8:57 PM, seconded by Karen Duval and voted in favor 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Dow

Attachments:

- ARPA presentation
- Town Administrator’s Capital Planning list
- Graphs of district per-pupil expenditures versus district size, for both the entire state and selected districts

American Recovery Plan Act of 2021

"ARPA"

- March, 2021 \$1.9 Trillion - Includes \$362 B in support for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial fiscal recovery funds
- Recovery funding for small towns are funded by the US Treasury but administered through the states.
- **Topsfield \$1.985 – approx \$1M June, 2021, and \$1M March, 2022**
- **Additional Funding**
 - School Emergency Relief Fund III (ESSER III) - \$687K Topsfield, \$1.351M MASCO
 - MA state earmarks - \$100K to Topsfield for way fare signs
- Dec 31, 2024 funds must be committed
- Dec 31, 2026 funds must be spent
- Can only be used for “eligible” Projects
- US Treasury and MA DLS, continue to issue guidance. “Interim Final Rules” on eligible use of grant funds

1/10/2022

First Draft

American Recovery Plan Act of 2021 "ARPA"

Categories of Eligible Uses:

- 1. Address the public health expenditures and/or negative economic impacts**, by funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff; including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector;
- 2. Replace lost public sector revenue**, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic;
- 3. Provide premium pay for essential workers**, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors; and,
- 4. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure**, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and storm water infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

American Recovery Plan Act of 2021 "ARPA"

General Points

- Unlike CARES, the government will not preapprove uses
 - Detailed reporting required for use of funds
 - Treasury can audit projects for eligibility and "claw back" funds
 - Funds do not need to be appropriated at Town Meeting
 - Funds *cannot be used* to restore stabilization funds, pension funds, debt service, borrowing costs, or as a match for federal grants.
 - **Final Rules** just released by Treasury. Under review for impacts by ARPA group
- "The final rule delivers broader flexibility and greater simplicity in the program, ..."

1/10/2022

First Draft

Work in Process, status as of 12/21/21

Potential ARPA Fund Uses

Admin/Misc
Employee Recognition
Administration of the ARPA Funds - consultant
Revenue loss off-set
Auditor to calculate lost revenue
OPEB contribution
Non-profits that have struggled due to higher demand from COVID. Example, Top Cupboard Food Pantry(Trinity)

Capital Items
Proctor school windows, improve ventilation and energy efficiency. NET cost after matching funds
Police Department Generator
Fire Department Generator
Town Wide Culvert Assessment
Phase 2 Municipal Fiber install loop redundancy
Phase 3, Fiber optics, connect to Danvers
Master Plan: If needed this will supplement a \$100,000 grant the Town recently received from the Department of Housing and Economic Development
Water Tower Replacement (partial contribution towards the cost)
Fire Department Pumper Truck - (partial contribution towards the cost)

Work in Process, status as of 12/21/21

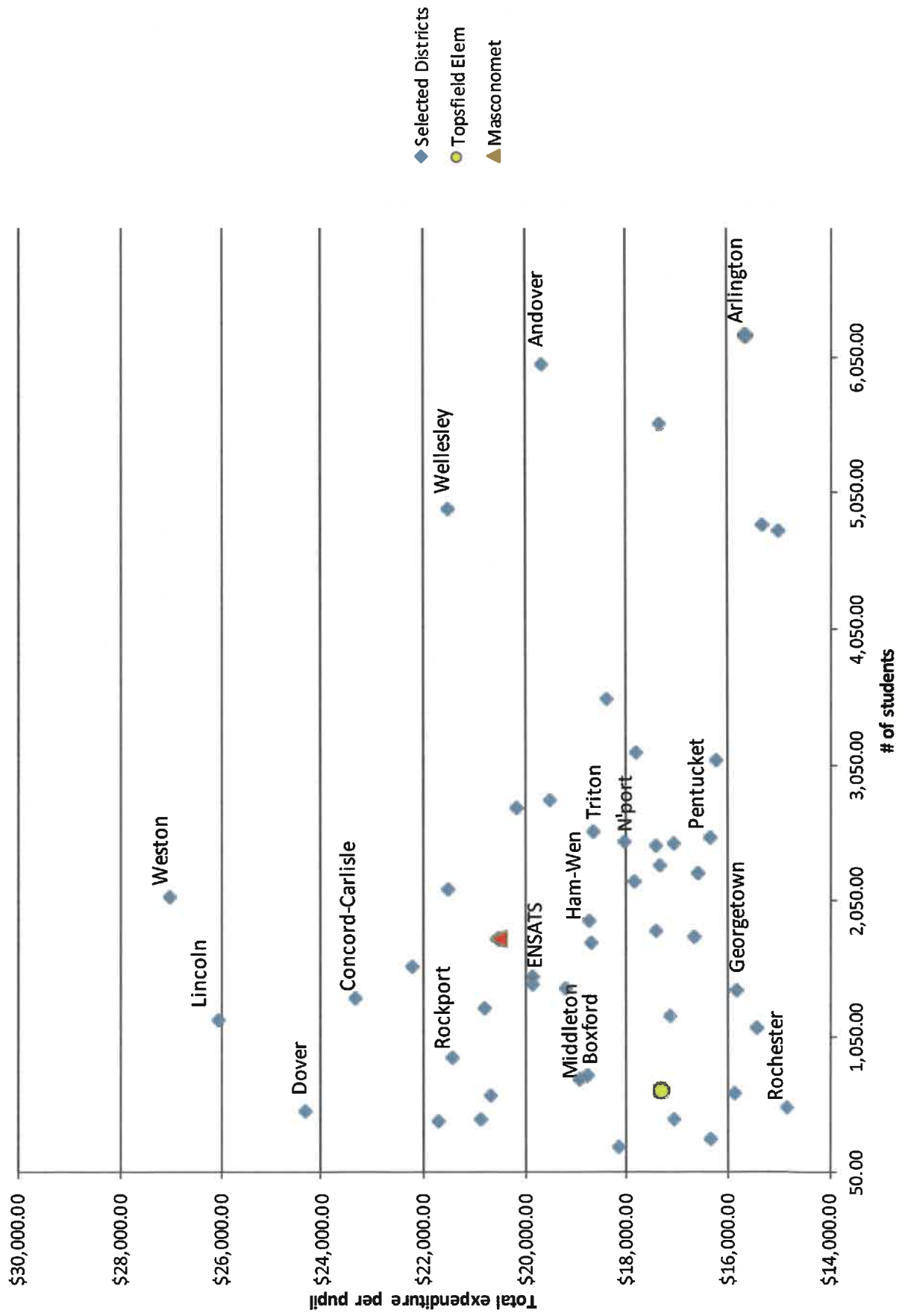
Infrastructure Improvements/Additions
Design of downtown pocket park, (public outdoor facilities to respond to Covid)
Parks and recreation, capital projects / Survey will identify what the community is looking for
Sidewalks added to 3 critical locations with water crossings : Bare Hill, Ipswich Rd To Klock Park on North St, Surrey lane to Boxford line
Tri-town contribution to a large MASCO capital project
Burying of utilities in the Downtown Area

Strategic Investments	
Shopping center leveraged upgrade. If we used \$500K and owner put in \$2M, something serious could be done. Topsfield improves façade	
Downtown upgrades with matching funds. Ex former Cumberland Farms	
Downtown?? Build out old highway garage for full \$2M. Sign LT contract with restaurant first. We contribute capital in return for rental stream ???	
Planning / Support	
Economic Development Planner	
Farmer’s Market Coordinator	

Massachusetts FY20 per pupil expenditures



Massachusetts FY20: selected districts





Town of Topsfield - Capital Improvement Planning Document
Five Year Overview: Fiscal Years 2023 - 2027

FY23 FUNDING STRATEGY FOR CURRENT BUDGET

Department	Board / Commission	Project Title	Priority Code	5 YEAR TOTAL	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FREE CASH	RAISE & APPROPRIATE	STM TNFRS	Grants / ARPA / St. Earmark	DEBT / BORROWING	CEM TRUST FUNDS	WATER ENTERPRISE	CHAPTER 90	OTHER	TOTAL	
		DPW Parking/Storgae Bays		50,000		50,000														-
		Replace Bobcat Skid Steer Small Loader		45,000			45,000													-
		Replace 2014 Dump Truck with Plow		145,000			145,000													-
		Replace 2016 Sander and Plow		160,000				160,000												-
		Replace John Deer Boom Mower		120,000					120,000											-
		Total for Highway Department:		862,600	192,600	200,000	190,000	160,000	120,000	98,600.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,000.00	192,600.00
Park & Cemetery	Select Board	Replace John Deere Zero Turn Mower		55,000	10,000	10,500	11,000	11,500	12,000	10,000.00										10,000.00
		Pine Grove Cem roadways + Water line		160,000	160,000									160,000.00						160,000.00
		Replace 2010 Pick-up Truck w/Plow		60,000	60,000						60,000.00									60,000.00
		Cemetery Lot Extension Study and Prep		40,000	40,000									40,000.00						40,000.00
		Replace 2013 Pick-up Truck		50,000		50,000														-
		Replace 1996 Tractor		75,000				75,000												-
		Replace 2005 Tractor		75,000					75,000											-
Total for Park & Cemetery Department:				515,000	270,000	60,500	11,000	86,500	87,000	70,000.00	-	-	-	-	200,000.00	-	-	-	270,000.00	
Council On Aging	Select Board	Replace COA Bus		125,000			125,000													-
				-																-
Total for COA Department:				125,000	-	-	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Library Department	Library Trustees	Roof Specification		30,000	30,000					30,000.00										30,000.00
		New Water Fountains		7,200	7,200						7,200.00									7,200.00
		Roof Replacement		150,000		150,000														-
		Replace Chiller		50,000			50,000													-
		Total for Library Department:				237,200	37,200	150,000	50,000	-	-	30,000.00	7,200.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total for TOWN:				7,715,400	1,341,800	1,186,000	3,869,000	455,500	863,100	354,600	7,200	41,000	645,000	-	200,000	-	-	20,000	1,341,800	
Water Enterprise	Select Board	Billing Software		25,000	25,000												25,000.00			25,000.00
		Replace Vehicle Lifts (Heavy Duty)		3,700	3,700												3,700.00			3,700.00
		Vehicle Lifts (Light Duty)		1,700	1,700												1,700.00			1,700.00
		Water Storage Tank Replacement		2,300,000	500,000	1,800,000							500,000.00							500,000.00
		Water Treatment Upgrades		9,000,000		400,000	8,600,000													-
		Water Meter Replacement		60,000		60,000														-
		Water Rate Study		20,000		20,000														-
		Pump Station and Well Rehab		2,250,000		250,000	2,000,000													-
		Fixed Rate Metering Upgrade		100,000				100,000												-
		Water Main Replacement		1,000,000					1,000,000											-
		Utility Pickup Truck Replacements		80,000					80,000											-
Total for Water Enterprise:				14,840,400	530,400	2,530,000	10,600,000	100,000	1,080,000	-	-	-	500,000.00	-	-	30,400.00	-	-	530,400.00	
TOTAL CAPITAL PLAN:				22,555,800	1,872,200	3,716,000	14,469,000	555,500	1,943,100	354,600.00	7,200.00	41,000.00	1,145,000.00	-	200,000.00	30,400.00	-	20,000.00	1,872,200.00	



Town of Topsfield - Capital Improvement Planning Document
Five Year Overview: Fiscal Years 2023 - 2027

FY23 FUNDING STRATEGY FOR CURRENT BUDGET

Department	Board / Commission	Project Title	Priority Code	5 YEAR TOTAL	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FREE CASH	RAISE & APPROPRIATE	STM TNFRS	Grants / ARPA / St. Earmark	DEBT / BORROWING	CEM TRUST FUNDS	WATER ENTERPRISE	CHAPTER 90	OTHER	TOTAL	
Town Administrator	Select Board	Facilities Repair and Main. Fund		125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000.00			100,000.00							25,000.00
		Downtown Wayfinding Signage		100,000	100,000								200,000.00							100,000.00
		Municipal Fiber, Phase 2		200,000	200,000								200,000.00							200,000.00
		Municipal Fiber, Phase 3		100,000	100,000								100,000.00							100,000.00
		Master Plan		130,000	130,000								30,000.00	100,000.00						130,000.00
		Town Hall Security Cameras		20,000		20,000														-
		Scanner for Record Doc Mngt		30,000			30,000													-
Total for Town Administrator:				705,000	555,000	45,000	55,000	25,000	25,000	25,000.00	-	30,000.00	500,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	555,000.00	
Town Clerk	Select Board	Ballet Tabulators		30,000		30,000														-
																			-	
Total for Town Clerk:				30,000	-	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Police Department	Select Board	Police Cruiser		391,600	71,000	74,500	78,000	82,000	86,100	71,000.00										71,000.00
		Cruiser Radios		22,000	11,000	11,000						11,000.00								11,000.00
		Generator		50,000	50,000								50,000.00							50,000.00
		Air Conditioner 2nd and 3rd Floor		25,000			25,000													-
		Computer Server		25,000				25,000												-
		New Roof		232,000				12,000	220,000											
Total for Police Department:				745,600	132,000	85,500	103,000	119,000	306,100	71,000.00	-	11,000.00	50,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	132,000.00
Fire Department	Select Board	Replace Boiler		55,000	55,000								55,000.00							55,000.00
		Generator		40,000	40,000								40,000.00							40,000.00
		Replace Ambulance 1		300,000		300,000														-
		Replace Engine 2 - Pumper		750,000			750,000													-
		Replace Squad 1 - Pick-Up Truck		65,000				65,000												-
		Replace Ambulance 2		325,000					325,000											
Total for Fire Department:				1,535,000	95,000	300,000	750,000	65,000	325,000	-	-	-	95,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	95,000.00
Elementary Schools	School Committee	Steward/Proctor Floors		180,000	60,000	60,000	60,000			60,000.00										60,000.00
		Steward - Master Clock Replacement		35,000		35,000														-
		Proctor - Master Clock replacement		35,000		35,000														-
		Steward - ADA Feasibility Study		520,000		20,000	500,000													-
		Proctor - ADA Feasibility Study		520,000		20,000	500,000													-
		Proctor - Window Replacement		1,675,000		175,000	1,500,000													-
		Steward - Technology Infrastructure		75,000		75,000														-
		Proctor - Technology Infrastructure		75,000		75,000														-
Total for Elementary Schools:				150,000	60,000	345,000	2,710,000	-	-	60,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,000.00	
Highway Department	Select Board	Replace 2014 Pickup Truck		50,000	50,000					50,000.00										50,000.00
		Replace Vehicle Lifts (Heavy Duty)		33,300	33,300					33,300.00										33,300.00
		Vehicle Lifts (Light Duty)		15,300	15,300					15,300.00										15,300.00
		Culvert and Bridge Study		74,000	74,000								74,000.00							74,000.00
		Old Highway Garage Repairs		20,000	20,000													20,000.00	20,000.00	
		Replace 2012 Dump Truck w/ Plow		150,000		150,000														