



West Brookfield

FY 2025 - Town Budget Presentation

- ❖ Responsible Fiscal Management...
- ❖ Controlled Government Spending...
- ❖ Meeting the Needs of our Citizens...
- ❖ Building a Stronger Future...

Vision Statement



West Brookfield must be fiscally responsible, have a budget in place that meets the needs of its citizens, and the vision to look strategically at the long-term infrastructure of the community.

Goals and Objectives

- ❖ Develop a Balanced Town Budget - (The immediate need is an Override to accomplish this without a very damaging reduction of services)
- ❖ Modest improvements in current Town services.
- ❖ Work with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to improve funding to our school district. Enhance the quality of education for our children and ensure that citizens have confidence in the education provided to our students.
- ❖ Utilize Free Cash for one time Capital purchases and not for balancing the Annual Budget. Reduce the need to borrow for smaller capital purchases.
- ❖ Build a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. (*Accomplished*)
- ❖ Increase funding to our Stabilization Funds.
- ❖ Prepare the Town to meet the challenges of the future.

FY 25 Town Administrator Recommended Budget Includes Water Department

Expenses	FY 24 ATM BUDGET	FY 25 DEPT REQ	FY 25 TN ADMIN	%Total Budget
EXPENSES				
OPERATING PROGRAMS				
General Government	837,695	863,994	863,574	9.33%
Public Safety	981,206	1,023,832	1,019,551	11.01%
Education	4,873,421	4,966,388	4,966,388	53.64%
Public Works	823,451	840,605	840,105	9.07%
Library & Recreation	252,739	255,396	255,396	2.76%
Human Services	199,105	196,503	201,969	2.18%
Unclassified & Shared Costs	199,741	211,804	210,436	2.27%
Member Benefits & Insurance	779,295	831,620	831,620	8.98%
Debt Service	<u>119,976</u>	<u>70,248</u>	<u>70,248</u>	0.76%
SUB-TOTAL OPERATING	9,066,629	9,260,390	9,259,287	
Water				
Salaries	179,840	187,214	185,630	
Expenses	<u>279,216</u>	<u>296,353</u>	<u>288,784</u>	
Sub Total Water	459,056	483,567	474,414	

FY 25 Town Budget

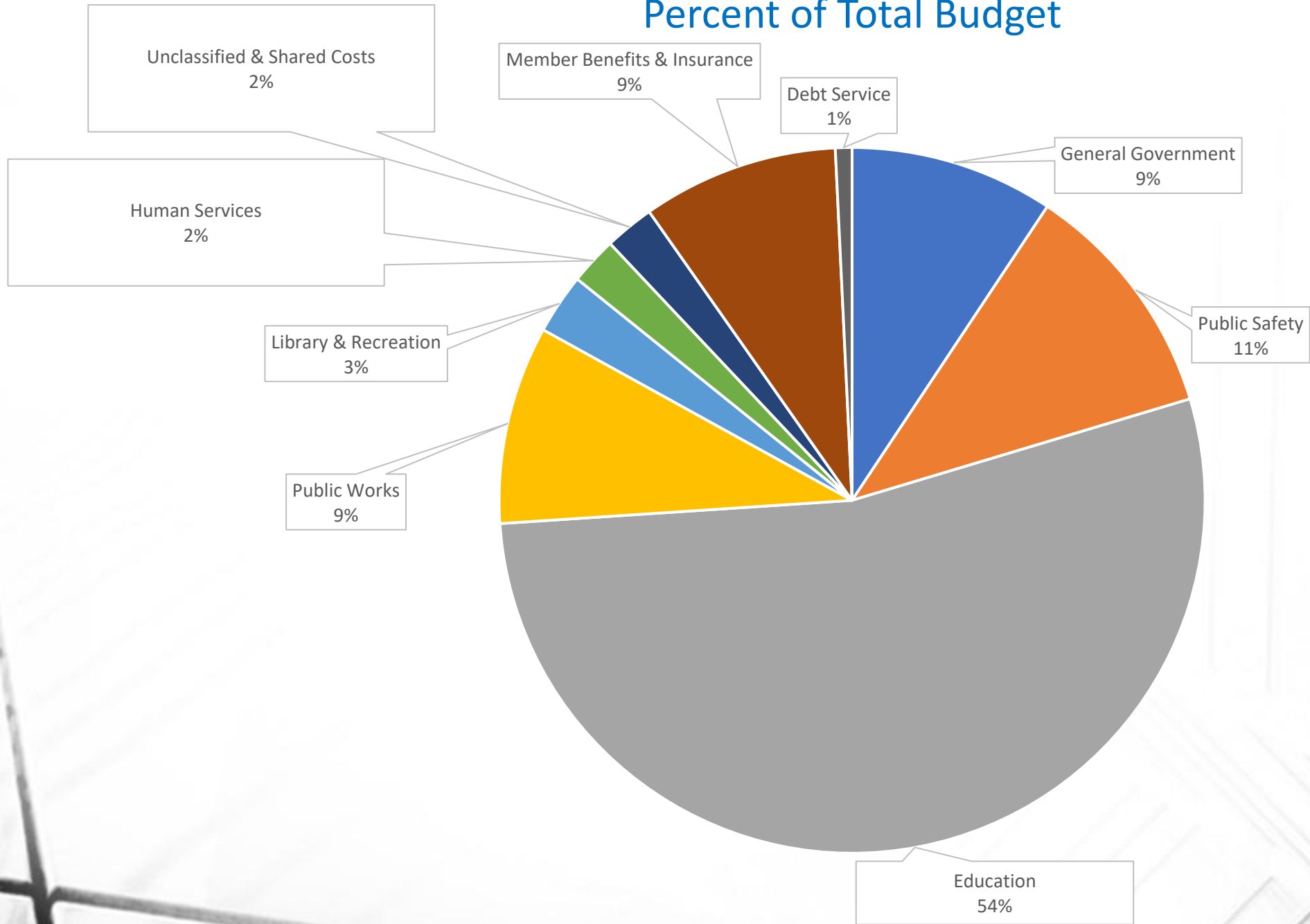
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Percent of Total Budget



■ General Government ■ Public Safety ■ Education ■ Public Works ■ Library & Recreation ■ Human Services ■ Unclassified & Shared Costs ■ Member Benefits & Insurance ■ Debt Service

West Brookfield State Funds – Town Revenues (Expected in later January)

FY 2025 Governors Proposal vs Actual FY 2024 (FY 25 Cherry Sheet - 1st step is Governors Budget late January followed by legislative approval)

	Final Budget	Final Budget	Final Cherry	
			Sheet	
	<u>FY 2023</u>	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>Diff. from FY24</u>
Chapter 70	\$328,719	\$328,719	\$	\$
UGGA	\$564,219	\$582,274	\$	\$
Veterans Benefits	\$29,620	\$21,830	\$	\$
Exemp: VBS and Elderly	\$22,464	\$3,505	\$	\$
State Owned Land	\$80,910	\$96,575	\$	\$
Public Libraries	<u>\$10,570</u>	<u>\$11,164</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
Total Cherry Sheet Receipts	\$1,036,502	\$1,044,067	\$	

FY 2025 Tax Levy and Impact – New Growth based upon last years number.

FY 2025 Projected Tax Levy			\$7,240,057
Minus FY 2024 End of Period Tax Levy Limit			\$7,063,460
Gross Increase at Projected Tax Levy			\$176,597
FY 2025 Excess Levy Capacity	\$27,130.29		
Less New Growth (Last Years New Growth number)			\$38,347
Increase after estimated New Growth			\$214,938

Comparison- Quaboag School District Budget % Increases to Town of West Brookfield Non-Education % increases in each.

Name	Year	Function	Amount	School % Increase from prior year	Town Budget Amount Less Quaboag Funding	Town % Increase from prior year	Free Cash Utilized	Increases in Renewable Revenues
Quaboag	2024	Education	\$4,561,623	6.03%	\$4,532,288	2.55%	\$380,163	\$303,491
Quaboag	2023	Education	\$4,302,022	12.4%	\$4,419,559	2.74%	\$256,184	\$311,679
Quaboag	2022	Education	\$3,825,315	2.7%	\$4,301,748	1.62%	\$329,939	\$187,437
Quaboag	2021	Education	\$3,724,746	5.22%	\$4,233,136	6.39%	\$342,464	\$293,691
Quaboag	2020	Education	\$3,529,895		\$3,978,882		\$261,811	

Quaboag Regional School District – Important Issues.

- ❖ The estimate used for this Preliminary Budget has a 2% increase. This is not a Department Request, but a **placeholder** put in by the Town Administrator based upon the goals of staying within Proposition 2 ½ and reducing our reliance on Free Cash to fund the Operating Budget.
- ❖ Currently the state has not given the town the amount of the Minimum Education Requirement. We do know that the increase over the last three years has been over 5%.
- ❖ Currently we do not know what amount the town will receive in Chapter 70 funds. (Late January – Gov's Budget)
- ❖ This item will need to be adjusted once the school district presents its budget and when we receive the state revenue amounts including Chapter 70.
- ❖ If the Town is going to continue to increase the school budget by over 2% an Override must be approved. We can no longer use Free Cash to supplement this budget.

DLS - State Funds to Quaboag Regional School District – FY 25 Cherry Sheet (Approx. January – May).

Budget Year	Chapter 70	Regional Transportation	Charter Tuition Reimburse	School Choice Receiving Tuition	Special Education	School Choice Sending Tuition	Charter School Sending Tuition	Total Receipts Net of Est. Charges
Final Cherry Sheet Budget FY 2025								
Final 2024	\$10,338,129	\$979,890	\$70,577	\$1,162,493	-0-	\$676,350	\$187,300	\$11,687,439
Final 2023	\$9,257,500	\$686,405	\$65,956	\$1,006,553	\$2,908	\$643,153	\$132,056	\$10,238,297
Final 2022	\$9,192,100	\$823,771	\$26,192	\$806,573	\$5,689	\$579,579	\$65,224	\$10,198,144
Final 2021	\$9,158,560	\$758,267	\$13,812	\$772,069	-0-	\$586,847	\$41,913	\$10,073,948
Final 2020	\$9,158,560	\$745,557	\$1,876	\$890,638	-0-	\$494,685	\$29,682	\$10,272,264

LEA District LEA Member City Or Town Foundation Enrollment Foundation Budget Minimum Contribution Chapter 70 Aid Required Net School Spending. Provided by DESE. FY 20 –FY24.

LEA	District	LEA	Member City Or Town	Foundation Enrollment	Foundation Budget	Minimum Contribution	Chapter 70 Aid	Required Net School Spending
FY20								
	778 Quaboag	311	Warren	742	8,695,074	2,477,091		
	778 Quaboag	324	West Brookfield	469	5,497,679	2,886,778		
	778 Quaboag	999	Total	1,211	14,192,752	5,363,869	9,158,560	14,522,429
FY21								
	778 Quaboag	311	Warren	713	8,569,211	2,592,121		
	778 Quaboag	324	West Brookfield	462	5,542,689	2,965,747		
	778 Quaboag	999	Total	1,175	14,111,901	5,557,868	9,158,560	14,716,428
FY22								
	778 Quaboag	311	Warren	662	8,507,475	2,682,996		
	778 Quaboag	324	West Brookfield	456	5,858,441	3,150,981		
	778 Quaboag	999	Total	1,118	14,365,916	5,833,977	9,192,100	15,026,077
FY23								
	778 Quaboag	311	Warren	652	9,105,385	2,773,132		
	778 Quaboag	324	West Brookfield	438	6,125,441	3,337,616		
	778 Quaboag	999	Total	1,090	15,230,825	6,110,748	9,257,500	15,368,248
FY24								
	778 Quaboag	311	Warren	651	9,824,100	2,886,067		
	778 Quaboag	324	West Brookfield	459	6,925,916	3,525,821		
	778 Quaboag	999	Total	1,110	16,750,017	6,411,888	10,338,129	16,750,017

West Brookfield Minimum Education Requirement

West Brookfield	Minimum Education Requirement	Dollar Increase Year to Year	% Increase from prior year	Total Chapter 70 Aid Warren and West Brookfield
FY 20	\$2,886,778			\$9,158,560
FY 21	\$2,965,745	\$78,967	2.74%	\$9,158,560
FY 22	\$3,150,981	\$185,236	6.25%	\$9,192,100
FY 23	\$3,337,616	\$186,635	5.92%	\$9,257,500
FY 24	\$3,525,821	\$188,205	5.64%	\$10,338,129
FY 25 Estimate				

Question – How can the Town stay within Prop 2 1/2 when the State Minimum Education Requirement goes up by over 5% on 54% of our town budget with little New Growth?

PATHFINDER VOCATIONAL FY 2023 & FY 2024 ACTUAL

FY23 Total Students (7 Actual Students):					FY24 Total Students (8 Actual Students):				
Student	Grade	Tuition \$	SPED Increment \$	Total Cost \$	Student	Grade	Tuition \$	SPED Increment \$	Total Cost \$
Student 1	10	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 1	9	\$ 20,546	\$ 4,563.00	\$ 25,109.00
Student 2	10	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 2	9	\$ 20,546		\$ 20,546.00
Student 3	10	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 3	9	\$ 20,546		\$ 20,546.00
Student 4	10	\$ 19,622	\$ 2,966.00	\$ 22,588.00	Student 4	9	\$ 20,546	\$ -	\$ 20,546.00
Student 5	12	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 5	9	\$ 20,546		\$ 20,546.00
Student 6	12	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 6	11	\$ 20,546	\$ 1,521.00	\$ 22,067.00
Student 7	12	\$ 19,622		\$ 19,622.00	Student 7	11	\$ 20,546		\$ 20,546.00
					Student 8	11	\$ 20,546		\$ 20,546.00
Sub Total:				\$ 140,320.00	Sub Total:				\$ 170,452.00
Transportation:				\$ 5,871.00	Transportation:				\$ 6,800.00
Total Tuition (Actual) and Transportation (Actual):				\$ 146,191.00	Total Tuition (Actual) and Transportation (Estimated):				\$ 177,252.00
Actual DESE Determined Tuition					Actual DESE Determined Tuition				

PATHFINDER VOCATIONAL FY 2025 ESTIMATE

FY25 Total Students (Estimate 12 Students):

Student	Grade	Tuition \$	SPED Increment \$	Total Cost \$
Student 1	9	\$ 21,471	\$ 4,653.00	\$ 26,123.57
Student 2	9	\$ 21,471	\$ -	\$ 21,470.57
Student 3	10	\$ 21,471	\$ 4,653.00	\$ 26,123.57
Student 4	10	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Student 5	10	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Student 6	10	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Student 7	10	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Student 8	12	\$ 21,471	\$ 1,521.00	\$ 22,991.57
Student 9	12	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Student 10	12	\$ 21,471		\$ 21,470.57
Sub Total:				\$ 225,532.70
Transportation:				\$ 7,500.00
Total Tuition (Estimated) and Transportation (Estimated):				\$ 233,032.70
Estimated DESE Determined Tuition and SPED Increment				

Vocational Schools - FY 25 Budget Estimate. Tantasqua & Pathfinder

Tantasqua Tuition 3 Students	Tantasqua Transportation	Pathfinder Tuition 10 Students	Pathfinder Transportation
\$55,500	\$25,000	\$225,533	\$7,500

Total Tuition	Total Transportation
\$281,033	\$32,500

Total Cost
\$313,533

Estimates given by: Tantasqua Business Manager Kristen Leo, Pathfinder Business Manager Greg Falcone

Note – The Transportation Cost for Tantasqua is to bring a bus directly into West Brookfield. Pathfinder students must go to a bus stop within Pathfinders District.

West Brookfield – Special Town Meeting Utilization of Free Cash for FY 24 -Certified FY2021 - \$1,034,689

Article Number	Article Purpose	Article Amount	Free Cash
1	Supplemental Appropriations	37,721.99	37,721.99
2	Unpaid Bills	14,444.98	14,444.98
3	Unemployment Fund	5,000.00	5,000.00
4	Other Post Employment Funds	100,000.00	100,000.00
5	Stabilization Fund	200,000.00	200,000.00
Total Special Town Meeting			\$357,166.97

West Brookfield – Annual Town Meeting Utilization of Free Cash for FY 24 - **Certified FY2021** - \$1,034,689

Article Number	Article Purpose	Article Amount	Free Cash
5	Operating Budget (Town)	4,117,732	260,188
5	Debt Budget (General)	119,976	119,976
Subtotal Free Cash Article 5			\$380,164
10	Town Road Maintenance	50,000	50,000
11	Replace Police Tasers (6)	25,535	25,535
12	Replace Police Command Vehicle	54,000	54,000
13	Repairs to Private Roads	10,000	10,000
TOTAL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING VOTE:			\$519,699

As Amended at Town Meeting added \$49,087

FY 2021 Certified Free Cash	1,034,689
June 2023 STM	(357,167)
June 2023 ATM	(519,699)
Balance	\$157,823

West Brookfield State Chapter 90 funds

Chapter 90 funds are for capital improvement such as road construction, preservation and improvement projects. These projects create or extend the life of capital facilities.

Fiscal Year	Apportionment Amount
2025	Not available until March-May
2024	\$229,904
2023	\$230,548
2022	\$231,924.
2021	232,470
2020	233,044
2019	\$233,357
2018	\$233,938
2017	\$236,200
2016	\$233,794
2015	\$350,975
2014	\$234,429

West Brookfield - Expenses- Increases Beyond Our Control

	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Difference	FY 2025 % Inc/Dec
Insurances:						
Group Health and Dental Insurance	*Estimate \$381,625	355,000	303,207	380,000	\$26,625	
Group Life Insurance	*Estimate \$250	500	173	500	(250)	
Liability Insurance	*Estimate \$192,756	182,300	181,425	171,482	\$10,456	
Medicare and Unemployment	*Estimate \$30,000	30,000	26,941	30,000	0	
Worcester County Retirement	*Estimate \$419,745	393,795	367,845	367,845	\$25,950	
Debt	\$70,248	114,000	114,000	114,000	(43,752)	
Total	*\$1,094,624	\$1,075,595	\$993,591	\$1,063,827	\$19,029	

*Estimates based upon discussions with providers

Override Question

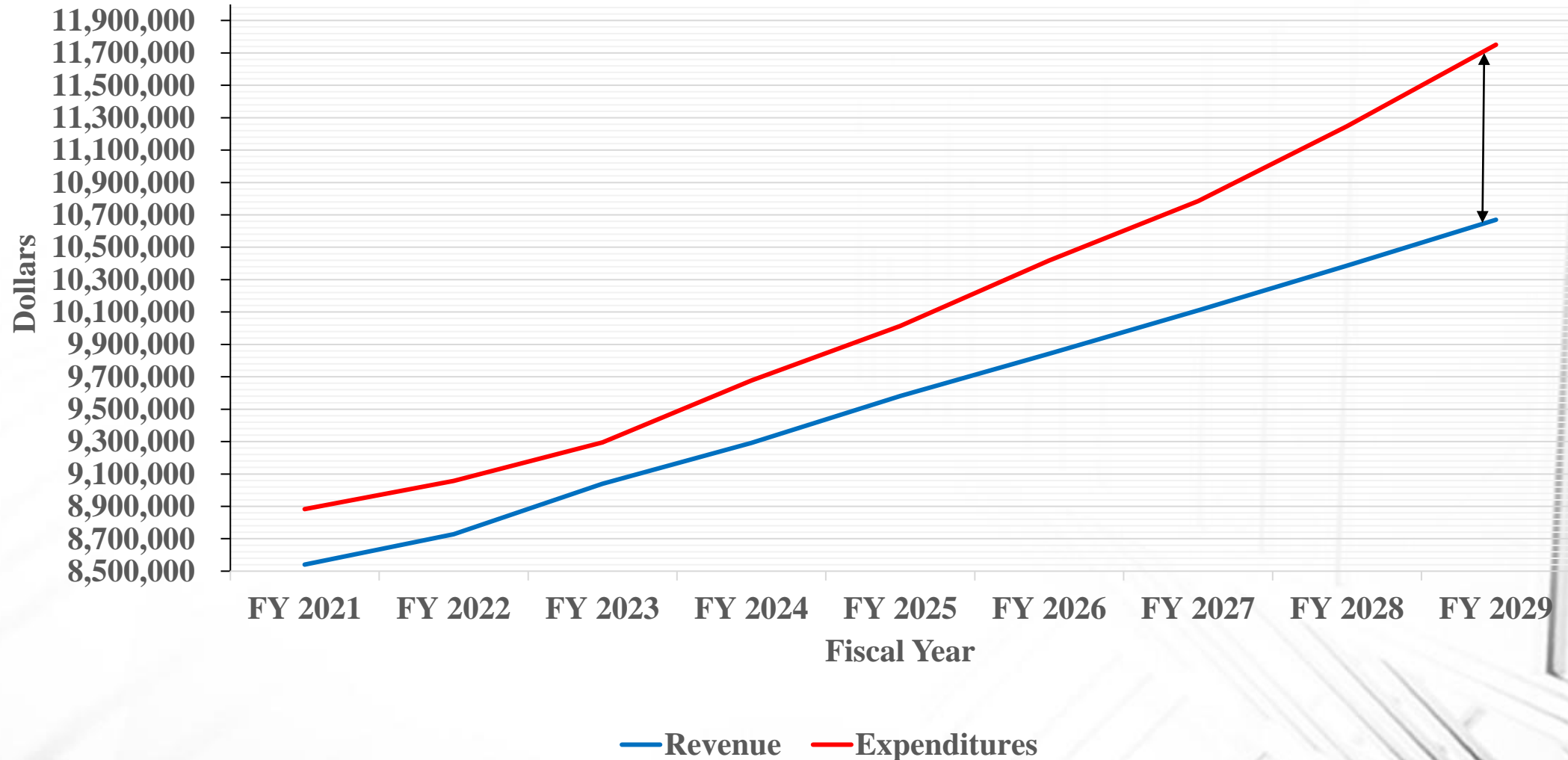
- Shall the Town of West Brookfield be allowed to assess an additional \$1,000,000, in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of providing for the general administrative costs of operating the police department, fire department and other town departments, and to pay assessments issued by the Quaboag Regional Middle/High School, the Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, and the Tantasqua Regional School District, including funding for an additional police officer position, to pay for salary adjustments for certain Town employees pursuant to a study to be conducted by the Collins Center of University of Massachusetts Boston, and to provide ambulance services for the Town, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024.
- YES NO

Why does the Town of West Brookfield need an Override to be approved by voters?

- ❖ The Town has been utilizing one time revenue to balance the Operating Budget. (Free Cash) This has been explained each year to Town Meeting and citizens were notified that this would catch up with us. You can not use one time savings to pay for continuous costs.
- ❖ Cost increases have risen faster than our revenues. Key issue - The State Minimum Education Requirement has gone up over 5% on 54% of the Towns Operating Budget. (Education)
- ❖ Fixed expenses such as Health Insurance has risen 5% and Worcester Contributory Retirement Costs have risen 8%.

Cost of Override is \$146.74 each quarter or \$1.60 per day for the average single - family home assessed at a value of \$336,413. Properties valued higher may result in a higher amount. Properties lower valued may result in a lower amount.

Town of West Brookfield Trending Revenues vs Expenditures



Source – Advisory Committee Financial Advisor

Five-Year Projection Assumptions Expenditures

State & County Assessments	3.23%
General Government	2.00%
Public Safety	2.00%
Education - Regional School District	5.00%
Education - Vocational Training	5.00%
Public Works	2.00%
Health & Human Services	2.00%
Culture & Recreation	2.00%
Health Insurance	5.00%
Worcester Contributory Retirement	8.00%
Liability & Property Insurance	5.00%
Abatements & Exemptions	2.50%

Source – Advisory Committee Financial Advisor

Stabilization Fund – Town Savings Account

Municipality	Schedule A Fiscal Year	Stabilization Fund Balance	Operating Budget (Includes Water)	Stabilization Fund as % of Budget
West Brookfield	2025	\$1,225,895	\$9,733,701	12.59%
West Brookfield	2024	\$1,225,895	\$9,525,685	12.87%
West Brookfield	2023	\$1,225,895		
West Brookfield	2022	\$1,010,234		
West Brookfield	2021	\$419,531		

According to Unibank Fiscal Advisory Service - Massachusetts communities typically have a goal of around 8-10% for their reserves. Stabilization would be included as part of their reserves.

2024 Beginning Balance \$1,225,895

2023 Ending Balance \$1,225,895 including the \$200k from free cash funded at ATM 5/2023

2022 Ending Balance \$1,010,234 including the \$600k from ATM 5/2023

2021 Ending Balance \$419,531

Certified Free Cash

Municipality	Fiscal Year	Certified Free Cash	Operating Budget	Certified Free Cash as a % of the Budget
West Brookfield	2017	927,080	20,633,137	4.49%
West Brookfield	2018	888,378	21,321,153	4.17%
West Brookfield	2019	624,571	22,475,077	2.78%
West Brookfield	2020	1,543,000	22,807,609	6.77%
West Brookfield	2021	505,783	23,206,330	2.18%

Five-Year Capital Plan

This is the first year of our new Five-Year Capital Plan which has been developed for the purpose of giving the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Capital Improvement Committee, Department Heads, and the citizens of our community an understanding of the long-term capital needs of the community. The amounts in the plan are estimates, and, as projects or purchases move forward, detailed estimates and bid information will need to be obtained.

Citizens should understand that these plans are fluid and will change as the needs of the community change. Department Heads will make decisions as specific needs arise.

I am very pleased this year that we are developing a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan and have created a Capital Improvement Committee. The next step is to have an evaluation of all town buildings and to add that information into the plan. Together we need to find funding to accomplish our goals and objectives.

The Future - Next steps.....

Town Departments

Keep town budgets balanced without using Free Cash.

Provide additional funding to all Town departments to maintain current Town services.

Provide operating budget funding for Other Post Employment Benefits liability.

Free Cash and Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan

- Free Cash should be **utilized for one time Capital Projects**. This over the long-term is saving taxpayers money from not having to borrow. This process also protects and can improve our bond rating. Continue to implement our plan within available resources.
- Borrowing for large Capital projects such as equipment and infrastructure must be considered.

West Brookfield - Building A Better Future For All Citizens

