

You are invited to attend:

Warrant Briefing

Thursday, May 23rd, 2024

at 7:00 PM

Viewing Options:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87139033576>

Zoom meeting ID: 871 3903 3576

Live broadcast: Belmont **Ch 8 (Comcast); Ch 28 (Verizon)**
Livestream or on-demand: belmontmedia.org/watch/govtv

Opportunity to ask questions about:

Warrant Articles

prior to

**Annual Town Meeting – Segment B
May 29th**

**Town Officials and Department Heads
will be present to provide information**

Geoffrey Lubien

Chair of the Warrant Committee will preside

**Cosponsored by: the Warrant Committee
and the**



Index of Warrant Articles

Article #

- 1 REPORTS
- 2 AUTHORIZATION TO REPRESENT THE TOWN'S LEGAL INTERESTS
- 3 AMEND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND EROSION CONTROL GENERAL BYLAW
- 4 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - RESTAURANT PARKING
- 5 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 4, INTENSITY REGULATIONS
- 6 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 1, GENERAL, SUBSECTIONS 1.4 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS AND 1.5 NONCONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS

- 7 FY2025 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE BUDGET & PROJECTS

BUDGETARY & FINANCIAL ARTICLES

- 8 APPROPRIATE FOR PRIOR YEAR BILLS
- 9 AMEND FY2024 OPERATING, ENTERPRISE AND CPA BUDGETS
- 10 APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORIZED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS
- 11 SALARIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS
- 12 MWRA I/I FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PHASE XI
- 13 ENTERPRISE FUNDS FOR WATER, SEWER AND STORMWATER SERVICES
- 14 ESTABLISH EXPENDITURE LIMITATION FOR REVOLVING FUNDS
- 16 ESTABLISH AN OVERRIDE MITIGATION GENERAL STABILIZATION FUND
- 17 TRANSFERS TO STABILIZATION FUNDS
- 18 UPDATES TO OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDING ACCOUNTING
- 19 ADOPT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS INSURANCE FUND
- 20 APPROVE 5-YEAR TERM FOR POLICE TASER LEASE
- 21 APPROPRIATION OF FY2025 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES
- 22 APPROPRIATE FOR CHENERY BOILER REPLACEMENT
- 23 APPROPRIATION TO OTHER POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB) STABILIZATION FUND
- 24 FY2025 BUDGET APPROPRIATION AND AUTHORIZATION TO TRANSFER BALANCES TO FUND THE FY2025 BUDGET



**TOWN OF BELMONT
WARRANT FOR 2024 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
April 29, 2024
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Middlesex, ss.

To any of the Constables of the Town of Belmont in said County:

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are required to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the Town of Belmont, qualified as the law requires to vote in elections and Town Affairs, to convene on **MONDAY, April 29, 2024, at 7:00 P.M.**, in person at the Belmont High School Auditorium, and to notify and warn the Town Meeting Members to meet and act at said time and place on the following Articles.

Interested members of the public may see and hear the proceedings by tuning in to the Belmont Media Center's live broadcast of the proceedings on Belmont cable television (Comcast channel 8, Verizon channel 28) or by live-streaming at www.belmontmedia.org.

Town Meeting Members and other participants approved by the Moderator who wish to address the meeting are encouraged to appear in person. Registered voters who wish to address the meeting as approved by the Moderator may appear in person.

ARTICLE 1

REPORTS

To hear the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers, any Committee heretofore appointed and to act thereon.

This article accepts the reports of Town departments appearing in the Annual Town Report and allows the Select Board and other Town officers, boards and committees to report orally to the Town Meeting on appropriate matters not otherwise appearing on the Warrant. This article stays "on the table" throughout the Town Meeting to allow Town officials and committees to report at the call of the Moderator.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 2 AUTHORIZATION TO REPRESENT THE TOWN'S LEGAL INTERESTS

To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to bring and defend actions for and against the Town, to submit any such claims to arbitration and to enter into settlement on account of the same on behalf of the Town, as and when they deem it for the best interest of the Town, or in any way act thereon.

This is a standard article that authorizes the Select Board to represent the Town's legal interests and to settle legal claims.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 3 AMEND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND EROSION CONTROL GENERAL BYLAW

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws § 60-325 "Stormwater Management and Erosion Control" to correctly specify the department, division, or administrative unit of the Town that will administer § 60-325, and to correct certain punctuation, as follows:

A. Insert a new definition in § 60-325.B to follow the definition of Construction Site:

Department: in this § 60-325, the term "Department" shall mean to the Town of Belmont Department of Public Works—Engineering Division, or such other department, division, or administrative unit of the Town that the Select Board designates from time to time to administer all or any portion of § 60-325 of the General Bylaws.

B. Delete the definition "OCD" in § 60-325.B.

C. Amend § 60-325 by replacing all references to "Office of Community Development" and "OCD" with the term "Department."

D. In the definition of Alteration in § 60-325.B, correct the punctuation by deleting the comma after the word "activity."

This article will update the General Bylaws to name the newly reorganized Engineering Division within the Department of Public Works as the Department responsible for enforcing the Stormwater Management and Erosion Control bylaw.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 4

AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - RESTAURANT PARKING

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-law by replacing the existing Section 5.1.2

d) Restaurant Parking:

~~d) Restaurant: one parking space per 2 persons seating capacity. For purposes of calculating parking requirements, up to 20 outdoor seasonal seats shall not count in total seating capacity.~~

with the following:

d) Restaurant: one parking space per 4 persons seating capacity. For purposes of calculating parking requirements, up to 20 outdoor seasonal seats shall not count in total seating capacity.

1. Creditable parking: the following spaces may be credited towards meeting these requirements:

i. All on-site spaces;

ii. In all Business Districts: legal on-street parking spaces, within 600 feet of any entrance to the restaurant, in any Business District; and;

iii. Parking spaces located on another parcel, pursuant to Section 5.1.3(a).

2. Special Permit for reduction in parking requirement:

i. Applicants may seek a Special Permit from the Board of Appeals to reduce the number of spaces below the number required by this Section 5.1.2(d).

ii. The Board of Appeals may consider, in addition to the Special Permit criteria of Section 7.4.3, whether:

• Feasible alternatives for providing necessary parking, including off-site parking, exist; and

• Any special circumstances making a reduced number of spaces adequate for all parking needs.

iii. Where a Special Permit is required under this Section 5.1.3(d)(2), no Design and Site Plan review pursuant to Section 7.3 is necessary from the Planning Board.

Or take any action relative thereto.

This article modifies restaurant parking requirements as a result of the new restaurant use requirements passed in fall 2023. Specifically, the new language reduces the parking requirements for restaurants from 1 space per 2 person seating capacity to 1 space per 4 person seating capacity. It also provides a multi-element means for determining whether appropriate parking is available to the restaurant by allowing them to add: on-site current or planned parking, on-street parking within a certain distance to the restaurant, and potential leased off-street spaces, if available. If a combination of these three sources does not add up to the new required number, then the applicant may seek relief via special permit with the ZBA.

Submitted by the Planning Board

The Select Board and Planning Board will report on this Article.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 5 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 4, INTENSITY REGULATIONS

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-law by:

1. In Section 4.1, Replacing "~~Office of Community Development~~" with "Office of Planning and Building".

This amendment simply updates the current name of the department.

2. Amending Section 4.2.2.A.2 by replacing "~~the Single Residence B and C~~" with "Residential".

Because this provision is the same for all residential districts, this amendment reflects that.

3. Replacing existing Section 4.2.2.A., subsections 3, 4, and 5 in their entirety with the following:

3. For a building in a Single Residence A or D District, the minimum front setback shall be the least of:

- a. The minimum lot setback requirement listed in Section 4.2.2;
- b. 30% of the depth of the lot; or
- c. The average of the setbacks of the buildings on the lots contiguous thereto on either side. For purposes of determining the average setbacks of the contiguous lots, a vacant lot, a lot occupied by a building set back more than the required minimum, or an intersecting street shall be counted as though occupied by a building set back at the minimum as listed in Table 4.2.2.

However, in no case shall a front yard setback in the SR-A and SR-D district be less than 16'.

This amendment cleans up this subsection 3, removes B and C districts, and provides a numbered list rather than a comma delimited sentence.

4. For a building in a Single Residence B or C District, the minimum front setback shall be the least of:

- a. The minimum lot setback requirement listed in Section 4.2.2;
- b. 25% of the depth of the lot; or
- c. The average of the setbacks of the buildings on the lots contiguous thereto on either side. For purposes of determining the average setbacks of the contiguous lots, a vacant lot, a lot occupied by a building set back more than the required minimum, or an intersecting street shall be counted as though occupied by a building set back at the minimum as listed in Table 4.2.2.

However, in no case shall a front yard setback in the B and C district be less than 16'.

This amendment cleans up this subsection 4, makes it the same as 3 but for B and C, and slightly increases the setback from 15' to 16' to be consistent with subsection 3.

5. For a building in a GR District, the minimum front setback shall be the least of:
 - a. The minimum lot setback requirement listed in Section 4.2.2;
 - b. 20% of the depth of the lot; or
 - c. The average of the setbacks of the buildings on the lots contiguous thereto on either side. For purposes of determining the average setbacks of the contiguous lots, a vacant lot, a lot occupied by a building set back more than the required minimum, or an intersecting street shall be counted as though occupied by a building set back at the minimum as listed in Table 4.2.2.

However, in no case shall a front yard setback in the GR district be less than 10'.

This amendment cleans up this subsection 5, makes the language for GR consistent with prior sections on A-D and B-C.

4. Amending Section 4.2.2.A.7 by replacing "the SR-residential" with "Residential".

This amendment simply modifies reference to single residential to read Residential, which is the same thing but more clear language for the public.

5. Replacing the text of Section 4.3.3, Unenclosed Steps and Similar Projections, as written with the following:

The provisions of Section 4.2 shall not apply to:

- 1) Unenclosed steps, unroofed porches, ramps for the handicapped or other similar features which are not more than three feet high above the adjacent grade and which do not project more than four feet from the foundation wall and in no event are closer than 4 feet to a lot side lot line and 10 feet to a lot rear lot line.
- 2) Permanent coverings, such as roofs or awnings, affixed to the first story of a dwelling, covering entrances and exits to and from a dwelling, and projecting no more than 5' from the face of the building and no more than 4' horizontally from the outer edges of the door panels, except that no such covering shall extend more than 2' beyond the footprint of the structure and encroach into a side yard.

The language from this subsection is retained in full and makes up subsection 1 and subsection 2 is new language added that refers to exceptions made for permanent coverings over entry doors.

6. Adding the following sentence to the end of Section 4.3.5.c.2: "However, the Board of Appeals may grant a Special Permit for an exemption from this section for corner lots."

The language notes that ZBA make grant an exception to these restrictions in the case of a corner lot since these lots have two front yards and are challenging for the siting of primary and accessory buildings.

7. In Section 4.3.6, replacing "the regulations" with "the setback regulations".

This proposed amendment clarifies that the regulations in 4.3.5 referred to here are specifically setback regulations and this is being clarified.

Or take any action relative thereto.

Submitted by the Planning Board

The Select Board and Planning Board will report on this Article.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 6 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 1, GENERAL, SUBSECTIONS 1.4 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS AND 1.5 NONCONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-law by:

1. Amending the definition of "Family" in Section 1.4 by inserting "or a group," after "employees".

This amendment adds reference to a group as part of definition of family which aligns with state law and is consistent with other provisions in the Bylaw.

2. Amending or adding the following definitions in Section 1.4 as follows:

Floor Area, Gross - The sum of the horizontal areas of the several floors of all buildings on the same lot, measured from the exterior face of exterior walls or from the center lines of walls separating two attached buildings, including basements and any interior parking and loading areas, but not including cellars, or areas having less than ~~six~~ seven feet floor-to-ceiling height.

This proposed amendment provides additional clarity to the definition in the case of attached buildings. It also changes the excluded area height from 6 to 7 feet.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) – The ratio of gross floor area to the ~~lot~~ area of the lot. In determining gross floor area for these purposes only, any building area having floor-to-ceiling height in excess of 15 feet shall be counted twice. FAR does not apply to residential dwellings.

This proposed amendment rewords reference to the "lot" and provides an exception for residential dwellings.

Grade - The average of the ground level adjoining the building at all exterior walls based upon the existing contour lines. Contour lines shall be illustrated on a plan and shall be established prior to any filling or earth moving/removal activities. Except that for an attached garage with slab on grade, the grade shall not be raised more than 12 inches to allow for proper drainage. Attached garages with slab on grade do not count to any grade calculation. The slab shall serve as the grade.

This proposed amendment provides clarification regarding limitation on raising of grade plus an additional note that attached garages with slab on grade do not count related to a grade calculation.

Open Space - Any open area on a lot, without any building or structure, except patios, unbuilt-on-containing landscape materials, and pedestrian walks, patios, recreational facilities-but excluding driveways and parking spaces.

This proposed amendment clarifies the definition of open space and specifically excludes recreational facilities.

Pergola - A detached open shade structure which is incidental to the use of the principal structure on the same lot, and which is not to be used as storage.

This proposed amendment adds a new definition for the term "Pergola" which is found elsewhere in the Bylaw.

3. Amending the definition of "Setback" in Section 1.4 by replacing "street or property line" with "street right-of-way line or property line".

This proposed amendment clarifies that "street line" is clarified to refer to the public right-of-way line.

4. Amending the definition of "Structure" in Section 1.4 by inserting "pergolas," after "swimming pools,".

This proposed amendment adds the term "pergola" to the definition of structure (p.1-13).

5. Amending Section 1.5.4.A.1 by replacing "~~preexisting non-conforming structures that result in additional gross floor area may be extended or altered with a Special Permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals~~" with "preexisting non-conforming structures may be extended or altered so as to increase their gross floor area with a Special Permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals".

This proposed amendment simply shifts the same language to after the action verbs (extended or altered) from before, where it is now.

6. Replacing references to Section 1.5.4.C with reference to Section 1.5.4.B in Section 1.5.4.B and all of its subsections.
7. Replacing references to Section 1.5.4.B with reference to Section 1.5.4.C in Section 1.5.4.C and all of its subsections.

These proposed amendments correct typographical errors in these sections.

8. Striking the words "~~of the damage and completed within three (3) years~~" from Section 1.5.5.

This proposed amendment simply removes the time period in which repairs to a damaged structure must be completed.

This is an annual article to request funds to pay bills after the close of the fiscal year in which the goods were received or the services performed and for which no money was encumbered.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 9 AMEND FY2024 OPERATING, ENTERPRISE AND CPA BUDGETS

To see if the Town will vote to make supplementary appropriations, to be used in conjunction with money appropriated under Articles 11, 13, and 22 of the warrant for the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, to be used during the current fiscal year, or make any other adjustments to the current fiscal year budgets and appropriations that may be necessary; to determine whether the money shall be provided by transfer from available funds including the Community Preservation Fund; or in any way act thereon.

This is an annual article to permit adjustments to current fiscal year (FY2024) appropriations.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 10 APPROPRIATE FOR AUTHORIZED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

To see if the Town will vote to make supplementary appropriations to be used in conjunction with sums appropriated in prior years for the installation or construction of water mains, sewers and sewerage systems, drains, streets, buildings, recreational facilities or other capital improvements and equipment that have heretofore been authorized; determine whether the money shall be provided by the tax levy, by transfer from the balances in other articles, by transfer from available funds, including enterprise funds and the Community Preservation Fund, by borrowing, or by any combination of these methods; or in any way act thereon.

This is an annual article to request funds to supplement existing appropriations for certain capital projects in light of revised cost estimates that exceed such appropriations.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board, Warrant Committee and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 11

SALARIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

To see if the Town will vote to fix the salary and compensation of each and all the elected officers of the Town, appropriate a sum of money for that purpose, determine how the same shall be raised, or in any way act thereon.

Elected Officials of the Town	FY2024 Salary	FY2025 Salary	Change
Town Moderator	\$ 450	\$ 450	\$—
Chair of the Select Board	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$—
Select Board (2)	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	\$— (each)
Town Clerk	\$ 106,556	\$ 108,687	\$2,131
Chair of the Board of Assessors	\$ 3,030	\$ 3,030	\$—
Assessors (2)	\$ 2,200	\$ 2,200	\$— (each)

This is a standard article to comply with the provision in M.G.L. c. 41, §108 requiring the compensation levels of all elected officers to be fixed at the Annual Town Meeting, and to appropriate the funds necessary for FY2025. Please note that Town Meeting will establish and appropriate the compensation of other municipal employees under Article 24.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 12

MWRA I/I FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PHASE XI

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money to allow the Town Engineer and the Department of Public Works Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Division to participate in the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's Infiltration/Inflow Local Financial Assistance Program for the purpose of designing and constructing improvements to the sanitary sewer and storm drain system to mitigate the impacts of infiltration/inflow in the sanitary sewer system; said sum to be raised by borrowing under the program as follows,

Phase	Term	Amount
11	10 years	\$260,000.00

or take any other action relative thereto.

This article seeks Town Meeting authorization to borrow funds at a 0% rate of interest from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority in connection with their Infiltration/Inflow Local Financial Assistance Program. Funds for repayment of the loan would be raised through sewer user fees.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board, Warrant Committee and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee will report on this Article.

Two-thirds vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 13 ENTERPRISE FUNDS FOR WATER, SEWER AND STORMWATER SERVICES

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money from the accounts classified as an "Enterprise Fund", pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53F½ of the General Laws for water service, and for sewer and stormwater service; or in any way act thereon.

This is a standard article to appropriate funds to support the operations of the Town's water and sewer functions from enterprise funds that receive revenues from user fees. Enterprise funds are entirely self-supporting from user fees and do not receive any funding from property taxes.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board, Warrant Committee, and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 14 ESTABLISH EXPENDITURE LIMITATION FOR REVOLVING FUNDS

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53E½, of the General Laws, to establish expenditure limitations for FY2025 for the revolving funds authorized in § 50-220 of the Town Bylaws;

Fund Title	Entity/Dept.	Spending Limits
Senior Programs	Council on Aging	\$ 150,000
Art Gallery	Belmont Cultural Council	\$ 15,000
Rock Meadow Maintenance	Conservation Commission	\$ 15,000
Copying/Lost Books	Library Trustees	\$ 15,000
Stormwater Improvements	Community Development	\$ 100,000
MLK Day Breakfast	Human Rights Commission	\$ 5,000
Non-School Property Maintenance	Facilities	\$ 60,000
Stormwater Consulting	Community Development	\$ 50,000
Recreation	Recreation Department	\$ 1,280,000
Total		\$ 1,940,000

or in any way act thereon.

This is a standard article that sets a limit on the amount of fee revenue that can be expended from the various revolving funds listed in §50-220 of the Town Bylaws during the upcoming fiscal year.

- A. Senior Programs Fund: funds derived from Council on Aging course and program fees, charges or other receipts to be expended by the Council on Aging to fund courses and programs for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- B. Art Gallery Fund: funds derived from commissions on art sales, to be expended by the Belmont Cultural Council for gallery exhibits and event expenses, including administrative costs and part-time wages, for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- C. Rock Meadow Restoration and Maintenance Fund: funds derived from rental fees from garden plots, to be expended by the Conservation Commission for costs associated with the restoration and maintenance of the Rock Meadow conservation area, including part-time wages, for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- D. Library Lost Book and Copying Fund: funds derived from lost book fees and fees for printing and copying, to be expended by the Board of Library Trustees for the replacement of lost books and for copier and printer supplies and maintenance for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- E. Stormwater Improvement Fund: funds derived from payments made in lieu of on-site stormwater facilities, under the Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Bylaw, to be expended by the Director of the Office of Community Development for design, construction, and maintenance of public or shared stormwater facilities, for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- F. Martin Luther King Day Breakfast Fund: funds derived from ticket sales for the annual Martin Luther King Day Breakfast, to be expended by the Human Rights Commission for event expenses for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- G. Non-School Property Maintenance Fund: funds derived from the rental of Town properties not under the control of the School Department, to be expended by the Select Board for the maintenance and repair of such properties.*
- H. Stormwater Consulting Fund: funds derived from consultant fees paid by applicants for stormwater permits, to be expended by the Director of the Office of Community Development for peer review consultant services for Fiscal Year 2018 and subsequent years.*
- I. Recreation Revolving Fund: funds derived from recreation programs and activities to be expended by the Director of the Recreation Department for costs associated with recreation programs, including part-time wages, for FY2025 and subsequent years.*

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 19

ADOPT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS INSURANCE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of General Laws Chapter 40, Section 13 to establish a municipal buildings insurance fund to fund insurance deductible payments, or in any way act thereon.

This article would establish a special revenue fund to allow the Town to pool funding that might be remaining in one year to offset future expenses. In addition, a small balance remaining from insurance proceeds is proposed to transfer to the fund.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 20

APPROVE 5-YEAR TERM FOR POLICE TASER LEASE

To see if the Town will vote to approve a contract for a 5-year lease for up to 49 Tasers for the Police Department, or in any way act thereon.

This article would allow the Police Department to enter into a contract for 5 years to lease Tasers for its uniformed officers. The current limit in Massachusetts General Laws is 3 years. The Police currently have 10 Tasers which were purchased using grant funds. They have found them to be a useful deescalation strategy. This approach will allow the Police Department to build the cost for Tasers into their operating budget.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 21

APPROPRIATION OF FY2025 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

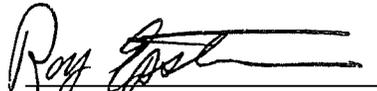
To see if the Town will vote to appropriate sums of money to purchase public safety equipment, computer equipment (including consulting work), public works equipment and furnishings and equipment for Town facilities, construct public ways, and for building and facility and public works construction, major maintenance and alterations (including design work); to determine whether these appropriations shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise, or in any way act thereon.

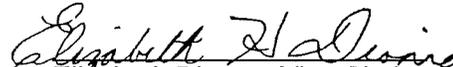
This is a standard article to appropriate funds for capital budget expenditures. While the article is general as to the categories of capital expenditures, the motion will be explicit. The

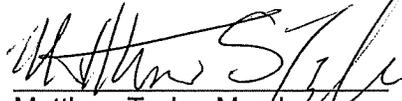


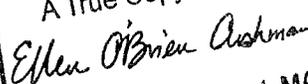
Given under our hands this **5th** day of **April, 2024**

BELMONT SELECT BOARD


Roy Epstein, Chair


Elizabeth Dionne, Vice Chair


Matthew Taylor, Member

A True Copy, Attest

Town Clerk of Belmont, MA



MOTIONS
2024 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
April 29, 2024
Draft as of May 23~~31~~, 2024
(Subject to Change)

PRELIMINARY MOTION

ORDER OF THE ARTICLES

MOVED: That the Town Meeting hear the motions in the following order:
1, ~~7, 11, 12, 16, 17A, 8~~, 19, ~~23, 8, 9, 10~~, 24, 21, 22, ~~17B~~23, 13, 14, ~~16, 17~~, 18, 20,
9, 10
(Majority vote.)

ARTICLE 1

REPORTS

MOVED: That the report of the Select Board and other Town Officers, any Committee heretofore appointed be accepted.

MOVED: That Article 1 be laid on the table.

MOVED: Article 1 be taken from the table.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 8

APPROPRIATE FOR PRIOR YEAR BILLS

MOVED: That a total of **\$1,266.38** be appropriated from FY2024 Non-Recurring Revenues to fund a utility bill at the Facilities Department for services rendered in a prior year.

The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 9

AMEND FY2024 OPERATING, ENTERPRISE AND CPA BUDGETS

MOVED: To indefinitely postpone article 9.

ARTICLE 18**UPDATES TO OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDING ACCOUNTING**

MOVED: A. That the Town revoke the Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund, established via Article 18 at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, and the dedication of the Statewide Opioid Settlements contained therein.

MOVED: B. That the Town appropriate **\$107,020.37** to the Opioid Settlement Special Revenue Fund from the Undesignated Fund Balance (Free Cash), which represents the amounts received in FY2023 from the proceeds of the Statewide Opioid Settlement.

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this article.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 19**ADOPT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS INSURANCE FUND**

MOVED: A. That the Town accept the provisions of General Laws Chapter 40, Section 13 to establish a municipal buildings insurance fund to fund insurance deductible payments.

B. That **\$25,968.50** be appropriated from the Insurance Proceeds special revenue fund to the Municipal Buildings Insurance Fund for insurance deductible payments.

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 20**APPROVE 5-YEAR TERM FOR POLICE TASER LEASE**

MOVED: That the Town ~~approve a contract for a 5-year lease for Tasers~~authorize the police department to enter into a five year lease for the ~~Police Department~~acquisition of tasers.

The Select Board and the Warrant Committee will report on this article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 21**APPROPRIATION OF FY2025 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES**

MOVED: A. That the following sums be appropriated for the purchase of Public Safety Equipment, Site Improvements, Public Works Equipment, Equipment for Town Facilities, and consulting services in connection therewith, to construct public ways, and for Building and Facility and Public Works Construction; and for Major Maintenance and Alterations (including design work), said sums to be expended under the direction of the Select Board:

MOVED: Department of Public Works

Street Tree Planting	\$	50,000
DPW Parks Equipment	\$	106,800
DPW Highway Equipment	\$	54,508
Total Department of Public Works		\$ 211,308

MOVED: Facilities Department

Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement - Design	\$	200,000
Video Camera Improvements - Town	\$	137,000
Gym Resurfacing	\$	25,000
School Envelope Repairs	\$	335,000
Total Facilities Department		\$ 697,000

MOVED: Fire Department

Ambulance Replacement	\$	110,000
Total Fire Department		\$ 110,000

MOVED: Police Department

Replace Police Portable Radios	\$	155,000
Total Police Department		\$ 155,000

MOVED: Information Technology Department

Network Redundancy Restoration	\$	50,000
Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	\$	175,000
Total Information Technology Department		\$ 225,000

MOVED: Board of Assessors

Replace CAMA Database	\$	125,000
Total Board of Assessors		\$ 125,000

MOVED: Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee

Project Bid Reserve	\$	50,000
Total Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee		\$ 50,000
Total Capital Authorizations		\$ 1,573,308

MOVED: That to meet the foregoing appropriations, **\$91,316** shall be transferred from the Capital Endowment Fund, **\$246,196** shall be transferred from the Capital Projects Fund (Turnbacks), and to raise and appropriate the remaining amount of **\$1,235,796**, for a total appropriation of **\$1,573,308**.

ARTICLE 24**FY2025 BUDGET APPROPRIATION AND AUTHORIZATION TO
TRANSFER BALANCES TO FUND THE FY2025 BUDGET**

MOVED: That the following amounts be raised and appropriated for the Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget or from general revenues from the Town:

MOVED:	A. General Government	\$ 5,708,750
MOVED:	B. Employee Benefits, Retirement Expenses	\$ 9,873,396
MOVED:	C. Employee Benefits, Other Reserves, including \$31,793 pursuant to G.L. Ch. 40, section 13	\$ 17,392,662
MOVED:	D. Public Facilities	\$ 7,573,801
MOVED:	E. Public Safety	\$ 14,482,995
MOVED:	F. Belmont Public Schools	\$ 66,885,704
MOVED:	G. Vocational Education	\$ 234,580
MOVED:	H. Public Services	\$ 9,753,750
MOVED:	I. Human Services	\$ 3,430,649
MOVED:	J. Principal Debt and Interest	\$ 15,511,944

MOVED: That the Town transfer the following sums to meet, in part, appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget appropriations made at this Town Meeting:

from Belmont Municipal Light Department (PILOT Payment)	\$ 650,000
from Undesignated Fund Balance (Free Cash)	\$ 2,559,636
from Parking Meters Receipts	\$ 30,000
from Water Revenues for indirect costs	\$ 246,442
from Sewer Revenues for indirect costs	\$ 273,783
from Perpetual Care Fund, Interest Earnings for Cemetery operations	\$ 25,000

The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

Town of Belmont, Massachusetts



Fiscal Year 2025

FY2025 Final Recommended Budget & Financing Plan

May 16, 2024

This page intentionally left blank.





TOWN OF BELMONT
OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
455 CONCORD AVENUE
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

townadministrator@belmont-ma.gov

455 CONCORD AVENUE
BELMONT, MA 02478
PHONE (617) 993-2610
FAX (617) 993-2611

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
PATRICE GARVIN

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
JENNIFER HEWITT

May 16, 2024

Dear Town Meeting Members –

Please find attached an extract of the FY2025 Budget Book to aid in your review of the financial articles for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. Please note that the Override Budget for FY2025, as published on February 2, 2024, remains the main reference document. Minimal changes have been made, in consultation with the Select Board, and reflect the following –

Capital – The capital process was still underway in February, and has since been solidified.

- Revenue available for discretionary capital increased due to identified capital turnbacks (\$246,196) and a reduction in funding dedicated to OPEB (\$112,331), offset by lower available funding from the Capital Endowment (\$16,445 reduction), for a net increase of \$342,082.
- The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee recommends that \$578,842 of the amount set-aside for discretionary capital should instead be transferred to the Capital Stabilization Fund for use in FY2026 and beyond for large anticipated projects.
- The list of recommended capital and CPA projects is included in Program 8000 of the attached budget document for ease of reference in reviewing articles 7, 21, and 22.

Enterprise – The Select Board reviewed the Water and Sewer enterprise budgets and approved a rate increase for FY2025 at their April 8, 2024 meeting. Copies of the Water and Sewer budgets were not included in the February budget, and are included here for reference in reviewing article 13.

Other Budget Adjustments – Minimal additional changes have been identified which necessitated changes from February. These are –

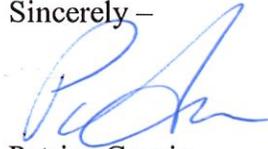
- IT Realignment – Due to anticipated staff retirements, the Police IT network is anticipated to merge with the overall Town network in FY2025. The associated personnel costs (\$72,739) are transferred from the Police Department to Information Technology.
- School Personnel Changes and Related Benefits – Belmont Public Schools recognized some needed staffing realignments which resulted in a net decrease of one benefitted position. This resulted in a shift of \$18,000 from Health Insurance to School Payroll. As planned, we will revisit the MOU for managing Shared Services in the coming months.

The budget packet includes the following sections, replicated from February, and reflecting the changes noted above. The intent is to make the budget more accessible for Town Meeting members, and we welcome further feedback as we strive to enhance our overall budget presentation.

- Overview – One-page summary of revenues and expenses
- Program Summary – Four page summary of expenses by department
- Revenue Executive Summary – Four page summary of anticipated revenues, with description of each main revenue category, summary table of historical and projected revenues, and detail for use of Free Cash.
- Enterprise Budgets – Water and Sewer
- Capital Budget – Detailed project descriptions for Discretionary and Non-Discretionary capital and CPA projects.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the Town of Belmont. We look forward to a vibrant Town Meeting discussion.

Sincerely –



Patrice Garvin
Town Administrator

Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Estimated	FY2025 Projected
Property Tax Levy	\$ 99,431,844	\$ 102,786,493	\$ 106,234,041	\$ 118,236,512
Levy for Exempt Debt	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,143,693	\$ 14,077,401
Total Tax Levy	\$ 111,719,939	\$ 116,505,822	\$ 119,377,734	\$ 132,313,914
State Aid	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,857,194	\$ 14,608,481	\$ 14,773,408
Local Receipts	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 10,800,033	\$ 10,057,902	\$ 8,215,549
Available Funds	\$ 7,854,694	\$ 8,577,788	\$ 11,548,320	\$ 8,226,055
Revenue Offsets	\$ (2,831,921)	\$ (2,919,157)	\$ (3,102,985)	\$ (3,147,380)
Enterprise Receipts	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487	\$ 1,170,225
Total Revenues	\$ 139,952,664	\$ 147,209,680	\$ 153,431,939	\$ 161,551,770

Spending	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Budget
Belmont Public Schools	\$ 55,259,786	\$ 56,852,294	\$ 63,486,981	\$ 66,885,704
Regional Schools	\$ 1,124,430	\$ 886,383	\$ 746,956	\$ 234,580
Total Education	\$ 56,384,216	\$ 57,738,677	\$ 64,233,937	\$ 67,120,284
General Government	\$ 4,510,315	\$ 5,309,726	\$ 5,219,752	\$ 5,708,750
Public Safety	\$ 12,921,617	\$ 14,219,725	\$ 14,160,201	\$ 14,482,995
Public Services	\$ 9,317,830	\$ 9,711,335	\$ 10,574,116	\$ 9,753,750
Health and Human Services	\$ 3,053,356	\$ 3,233,233	\$ 3,351,359	\$ 3,430,649
Total Municipal Government	\$ 29,803,118	\$ 32,474,019	\$ 33,305,428	\$ 33,376,144
Facilities	\$ 5,739,210	\$ 6,527,027	\$ 7,519,388	\$ 7,573,801
Pension Assessment	\$ 9,662,058	\$ 10,077,954	\$ 10,041,821	\$ 9,873,396
Employee Benefits	\$ 14,001,343	\$ 14,819,363	\$ 15,619,670	\$ 16,065,937
Debt Service	\$ 14,579,196	\$ 15,170,502	\$ 14,642,053	\$ 15,511,944
Other Shared	\$ 435,877	\$ 362,197	\$ 1,172,376	\$ 1,326,725
Total Shared Services	\$ 44,417,683	\$ 46,957,043	\$ 48,995,308	\$ 50,351,803
Capital - Streets	\$ 1,812,460	\$ 1,857,772	\$ 1,904,216	\$ 1,951,821
Capital - Sidewalks	\$ 231,801	\$ 237,730	\$ 243,673	\$ 499,765
Capital - Discretionary	\$ 1,757,682	\$ 3,787,495	\$ 1,791,681	\$ 3,173,308
Total Capital	\$ 3,801,943	\$ 5,882,997	\$ 3,939,570	\$ 5,624,894
Other Warrant Articles (OPEB, Stabilization Funds)	\$ 50,000	\$ 579,275	\$ 2,957,695	\$ 5,078,645
Total Spending	\$ 134,456,960	\$ 143,632,011	\$ 153,431,938	\$ 161,551,770
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	N/A	N/A	\$ —	\$ —

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 1000: General Government								
1100	Assessors Compensation	\$198,009	\$222,793	\$264,180	\$277,521	\$289,754	\$12,233	4.4%
1100	Assessors Expenses	\$152,607	\$101,282	\$103,777	\$147,500	\$172,500	\$25,000	16.9%
	<i>Subtotal 1100 Assessors</i>	<i>\$350,616</i>	<i>\$324,075</i>	<i>\$367,957</i>	<i>\$425,021</i>	<i>\$462,254</i>	<i>\$37,233</i>	<i>8.8%</i>
1200	Compensation	\$211,922	\$243,923	\$212,677	\$213,664	\$222,019	\$8,355	3.9%
1200	Human Resources Expenses	\$28,791	\$37,089	\$68,839	\$80,450	\$80,450	\$—	—%
1250	Salary Reserve	\$39,899	\$406,299	\$750,450	\$360,949	\$571,980	\$211,031	58.5%
	<i>Subtotal 1200 Human Resources</i>	<i>\$280,612</i>	<i>\$687,311</i>	<i>\$1,031,966</i>	<i>\$655,063</i>	<i>\$874,449</i>	<i>\$219,386</i>	<i>33.5%</i>
1300	IT Compensation	\$391,560	\$342,744	\$394,488	\$433,569	\$524,773	\$91,204	21.0%
1300	IT Expenses	\$537,123	\$757,202	\$956,928	\$980,375	\$1,093,600	\$113,225	11.5%
	<i>Subtotal 1300 IT</i>	<i>\$928,683</i>	<i>\$1,099,946</i>	<i>\$1,351,415</i>	<i>\$1,413,944</i>	<i>\$1,618,373</i>	<i>\$204,429</i>	<i>14.5%</i>
1400	Compensation	\$254,069	\$293,774	\$291,593	\$358,431	\$354,795	\$(3,636)	(1.0)%
1400	Town Accountant Expenses	\$66,600	\$74,621	\$61,873	\$84,600	\$75,930	\$(8,670)	(10.2)%
	<i>Subtotal 1400 Town Accountant</i>	<i>\$320,669</i>	<i>\$368,394</i>	<i>\$353,466</i>	<i>\$443,031</i>	<i>\$430,725</i>	<i>\$(12,306)</i>	<i>(2.8)%</i>
1500	Town Administration Compensation	\$575,361	\$508,807	\$610,987	\$620,057	\$678,248	\$58,191	9.4%
1500	Town Administration Expenses	\$347,762	\$497,827	\$458,191	\$505,040	\$505,040	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 1500 Town Administration</i>	<i>\$923,123</i>	<i>\$1,006,633</i>	<i>\$1,069,177</i>	<i>\$1,125,097</i>	<i>\$1,183,288</i>	<i>\$58,191</i>	<i>5.2%</i>
1600	Town Clerk Compensation	\$336,901	\$327,688	\$383,914	\$391,716	\$409,383	\$17,666	4.5%
1600	Town Clerk Expenses	\$94,400	\$82,805	\$108,280	\$116,445	\$145,085	\$28,640	24.6%
	<i>Subtotal 1600 Town Clerk</i>	<i>\$431,301</i>	<i>\$410,494</i>	<i>\$492,194</i>	<i>\$508,161</i>	<i>\$554,468</i>	<i>\$46,306</i>	<i>9.1%</i>
1700	Treasurer Compensation	\$475,344	\$479,753	\$400,578	\$435,837	\$397,294	\$(38,543)	(8.8)%
1700	Treasurer Expenses	\$120,589	\$133,709	\$242,971	\$213,600	\$187,900	\$(25,700)	(12.0)%
	<i>Subtotal 1700 Treasurer</i>	<i>\$595,933</i>	<i>\$613,462</i>	<i>\$643,549</i>	<i>\$649,437</i>	<i>\$585,194</i>	<i>\$(64,243)</i>	<i>(9.9)%</i>
	Total General Government	\$3,830,936	\$4,510,315	\$5,309,726	\$5,219,752	\$5,708,750	\$488,998	9.4%

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 2000: Shared Services								
2110	Pension	\$8,728,097	\$9,662,058	\$10,077,954	\$10,041,821	\$9,873,396	\$(168,425)	(1.7)%
2200	Retiree Health Insurance	\$3,285,759	\$3,529,448	\$3,492,220	\$3,338,181	\$3,532,575	\$194,394	5.8%
2201	Employee Health Insurance	\$9,049,834	\$9,146,575	\$9,886,314	\$10,515,468	\$10,841,911	\$326,443	3.1%
2210	Life Insurance	\$10,234	\$11,077	\$16,721	\$19,425	\$19,425	\$—	—%
2220	Medicare	\$875,330	\$908,544	\$1,065,047	\$1,097,497	\$1,149,397	\$51,900	4.7%
2310	Unemployment	\$142,423	\$62,279	\$76,169	\$193,700	\$90,000	\$(103,700)	(53.5)%
2320	Workers Compensation	\$315,529	\$343,420	\$282,892	\$455,399	\$432,629	\$(22,770)	(5.0)%
	<i>Subtotal Employee Benefits</i>	<i>\$22,407,207</i>	<i>\$23,663,401</i>	<i>\$24,897,317</i>	<i>\$25,661,491</i>	<i>\$25,939,333</i>	<i>\$277,842</i>	<i>1.1%</i>
2400	Liability Insurance	\$511,161	\$435,877	\$350,167	\$744,730	\$794,932	\$50,202	6.7%
2410	Deductible Reserves	\$—	\$—	\$12,030	\$27,646	\$31,793	\$4,147	15.0%
	<i>Subtotal Liability Insurance</i>	<i>\$511,161</i>	<i>\$435,877</i>	<i>\$362,197</i>	<i>\$772,376</i>	<i>\$826,725</i>	<i>\$54,349</i>	<i>7.0%</i>
2450	Warrant Committee Reserve	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$100,000	25.0%
	<i>Subtotal WC Reserve</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>25.0%</i>
2500	Facilities Compensation	\$1,603,030	\$1,789,467	\$1,699,333	\$2,293,029	\$2,401,262	\$108,233	4.7%
2500	Facilities Expenses	\$3,637,039	\$3,949,743	\$4,827,695	\$5,226,359	\$5,172,539	\$(53,820)	(1.0)%
	<i>Subtotal 2500 Facilities</i>	<i>\$5,240,068</i>	<i>\$5,739,210</i>	<i>\$6,527,027</i>	<i>\$7,519,388</i>	<i>\$7,573,801</i>	<i>\$54,413</i>	<i>0.7%</i>
	Total Shared Services	\$28,158,436	\$29,838,488	\$31,786,541	\$34,353,255	\$34,839,859	\$486,604	1.4%
Program 3000: Public Safety								
3000	Compensation	\$16,258	\$15,667	\$15,744	\$16,200	\$16,200	\$—	—%
3000	Emergency Mgmt Expenses	\$7,944	\$6,262	\$7,122	\$7,944	\$7,944	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 3000 Emergency Mgmt</i>	<i>\$24,202</i>	<i>\$21,929</i>	<i>\$22,866</i>	<i>\$24,144</i>	<i>\$24,144</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>—%</i>
3100	Fire Compensation	\$5,196,516	\$5,445,810	\$5,492,448	\$5,734,377	\$5,909,051	\$174,674	3.0%
3100	Fire Expenses	\$504,023	\$488,621	\$587,183	\$655,850	\$701,650	\$45,800	7.0%
	<i>Subtotal 3100 Fire</i>	<i>\$5,700,539</i>	<i>\$5,934,431</i>	<i>\$6,079,631</i>	<i>\$6,390,227</i>	<i>\$6,610,701</i>	<i>\$220,474</i>	<i>3.5%</i>
3200	Police Compensation	\$5,978,535	\$6,258,108	\$7,288,012	\$6,864,199	\$6,873,634	\$9,435	0.1%
3200	Police Expenses	\$524,815	\$707,148	\$829,216	\$881,630	\$974,515	\$92,885	10.5%
	<i>Subtotal 3200 Police</i>	<i>\$6,503,351</i>	<i>\$6,965,256</i>	<i>\$8,117,229</i>	<i>\$7,745,829</i>	<i>\$7,848,149</i>	<i>\$102,320</i>	<i>1.3%</i>
	Total Public Safety	\$12,228,092	\$12,921,617	\$14,219,725	\$14,160,201	\$14,482,995	\$322,794	2.3%

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 4000: Education								
4100	Belmont Public Schools Compensation	\$9,395,499	\$11,507,974	\$46,017,121	\$48,194,771	\$50,905,478	\$2,710,707	5.6%
4100	Belmont Public Schools Expenses	\$42,194,418	\$43,751,812	\$10,835,173	\$15,292,210	\$15,980,226	\$688,016	4.5%
	<i>Subtotal 4100 Belmont Public Schools</i>	<i>\$51,589,917</i>	<i>\$55,259,786</i>	<i>\$56,852,294</i>	<i>\$63,486,981</i>	<i>\$66,885,704</i>	<i>\$3,398,723</i>	<i>5.4%</i>
4200	Regional Schools	\$1,391,511	\$1,124,430	\$886,383	\$746,956	\$234,580	\$(512,376)	(68.6)%
	<i>Subtotal 4200 Regional School Expenses</i>	<i>\$1,391,511</i>	<i>\$1,124,430</i>	<i>\$886,383</i>	<i>\$746,956</i>	<i>\$234,580</i>	<i>\$(512,376)</i>	<i>(68.6)%</i>
	Total Education	\$52,981,428	\$56,384,216	\$57,738,677	\$64,233,937	\$67,120,284	\$2,886,347	4.5%
Program 5000: Public Services								
5100	Planning and Building Compensation	\$734,527	\$719,783	\$768,642	\$849,892	\$656,995	\$(192,897)	(22.7)%
5100	Planning and Building Expenses	\$127,211	\$161,892	\$75,668	\$129,130	\$84,615	\$(44,515)	(34.5)%
	<i>Subtotal 5100 Planning and Building</i>	<i>\$861,738</i>	<i>\$881,675</i>	<i>\$844,310</i>	<i>\$979,022</i>	<i>\$741,610</i>	<i>\$(237,412)</i>	<i>(24.2)%</i>
5200	Public Works Compensation	\$1,950,188	\$2,022,462	\$2,094,539	\$2,312,492	\$2,709,357	\$396,865	17.2%
5200	Public Works Expenses	\$5,044,225	\$5,419,332	\$5,236,793	\$5,758,173	\$5,979,385	\$221,212	3.8%
	<i>Subtotal 5200 Public Works</i>	<i>\$6,994,413</i>	<i>\$7,441,794</i>	<i>\$7,331,332</i>	<i>\$8,070,665</i>	<i>\$8,688,742</i>	<i>\$618,077</i>	<i>7.7%</i>
5300	Recreation Compensation	\$380,922	\$592,637	\$819,886	\$844,439	\$323,398	\$(521,041)	(61.7)%
5300	Recreation Expenses	\$169,974	\$401,724	\$715,806	\$679,990	\$—	\$(679,990)	(100)%
	<i>Subtotal 5300 Recreation</i>	<i>\$550,896</i>	<i>\$994,361</i>	<i>\$1,535,693</i>	<i>\$1,524,429</i>	<i>\$323,398</i>	<i>\$(1,201,031)</i>	<i>(78.8)%</i>
	Total Public Services	\$8,407,046	\$9,317,830	\$9,711,335	\$10,574,116	\$9,753,750	\$(820,365)	(7.8)%
Program 6000: Human Services								
6100	Library Compensation	\$1,359,268	\$1,430,861	\$1,573,631	\$1,665,057	\$1,732,944	\$67,888	4.1%
6100	Library Expenses	\$613,522	\$685,935	\$654,608	\$683,337	\$658,858	\$(24,479)	(3.6)%
	<i>Subtotal 6100 Library</i>	<i>\$1,972,789</i>	<i>\$2,116,796</i>	<i>\$2,228,240</i>	<i>\$2,348,394</i>	<i>\$2,391,802</i>	<i>\$43,409</i>	<i>1.8%</i>
6200	Council on Aging Compensation	\$365,934	\$378,117	\$379,625	\$369,079	\$385,086	\$16,007	4.3%
6200	Council on Aging Expenses	\$20,793	\$24,361	\$19,305	\$36,775	\$37,000	\$225	0.6%
	<i>Subtotal 6200 Council on Aging</i>	<i>\$386,727</i>	<i>\$402,478</i>	<i>\$398,931</i>	<i>\$405,854</i>	<i>\$422,086</i>	<i>\$16,232</i>	<i>4.0%</i>

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
6300	Health Compensation	\$401,094	\$419,580	\$509,700	\$449,951	\$468,272	\$18,321	4.1%
6300	Health Expenses	\$121,125	\$114,501	\$96,363	\$147,161	\$148,489	\$1,328	0.9%
	<i>Subtotal 6300 Health</i>	<i>\$522,219</i>	<i>\$534,082</i>	<i>\$606,062</i>	<i>\$597,112</i>	<i>\$616,761</i>	<i>\$19,649</i>	<i>3.3%</i>
	Total Human Services	\$2,881,736	\$3,053,356	\$3,233,233	\$3,351,359	\$3,430,649	\$79,290	2.4%
Program 7000: Debt Service								
7000	Within Levy Debt Service	\$1,639,620	\$1,458,739	\$1,438,989	\$1,415,039	\$1,157,939	\$(257,100)	(18.2)%
7000	Exempt Debt Service	\$13,084,646	\$13,029,464	\$13,731,513	\$13,154,514	\$14,281,505	\$1,126,991	8.6%
7000	Short-term Borrowing Costs	\$—	\$90,993	\$—	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 7000 Debt Service</i>	<i>\$14,724,266</i>	<i>\$14,579,196</i>	<i>\$15,170,502</i>	<i>\$14,642,053</i>	<i>\$15,511,944</i>	<i>\$869,891</i>	<i>5.9%</i>
	Total Debt Service	\$14,724,266	\$14,579,196	\$15,170,502	\$14,642,053	\$15,511,944	\$869,891	5.9%
Capital Expenditures								
8000	Capital - Streets	\$—	\$1,812,460	\$1,857,772	\$1,904,216	\$1,951,821	\$47,605	2.5%
8000	Capital - Sidewalks	\$226,147	\$231,801	\$237,730	\$243,673	\$499,765	\$256,092	105%
8000	Discretionary Capital	\$950,268	\$1,757,682	\$3,787,495	\$1,791,681	\$3,173,308	\$1,381,627	77.1%
	<i>Subtotal 8000 Capital Expenditures</i>	<i>\$1,176,415</i>	<i>\$3,801,943</i>	<i>\$5,882,997</i>	<i>\$3,939,570</i>	<i>\$5,624,894</i>	<i>\$1,685,324</i>	<i>42.8%</i>
	Total Capital Expenditures	\$1,176,415	\$3,801,943	\$5,882,997	\$3,939,570	\$5,624,894	\$1,685,324	42.8%
Other Articles								
	OPEB Contribution	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$579,275	\$552,695	\$440,364	\$(112,331)	(20.3)%
	Capital Stabilization Fund	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$727,500	\$578,842	\$(148,658)	(20)%
	General Stabilization Fund	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$1,677,500	\$—	\$(1,677,500)	(100)%
	Override Mitigation Fund	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$4,059,439	\$4,059,439	—%
	<i>Subtotal Other Articles</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$579,275</i>	<i>\$2,957,695</i>	<i>\$5,078,645</i>	<i>\$2,120,950</i>	<i>71.7%</i>
	Total Other Articles	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$579,275	\$2,957,695	\$5,078,645	\$2,120,950	71.7%
Grand Total		\$124,438,354	\$134,456,960	\$143,632,011	\$153,431,938	\$161,551,770	\$8,119,832	5.3%

This page intentionally left blank.



Revenue Executive Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

This revenue projection is based on the most current data available; as new information arises, the projections may be revised. The summary below presents Total General Fund Operating Revenues, and Net General Fund Revenues.

- Total General Fund Operating Revenues are from annually recurring and non-recurring revenue sources, including transfers from special revenue funds, and Specialized Stabilization Funds.
- Net General Fund Revenues are Total General Fund Revenues less revenues recommended to be set-aside to fund designated expenses.

In FY2025, Total General Fund Operating Revenues are projected to increase by approximately \$8.12 million, or 5.29%. Net General Fund Revenues, those available to support school and municipal operating budgets, are projected to increase by \$4.69 million, or 3.20%.

General Fund Revenue Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Estimated	FY2025 Projected	FY2024-25 Change	
						\$	%
Property Tax Levy (Table 1A)	\$ 95,854,621	\$ 99,431,844	\$102,786,493	\$106,234,041	\$ 118,236,512	\$12,002,472	11.30 %
Tax Levy, Exempt Debt (Table 1B)	\$ 13,638,294	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,143,693	\$ 14,077,401	\$ 933,708	7.10 %
Combined Property Tax Levy	\$109,492,915	\$ 111,719,939	\$116,505,822	\$119,377,734	\$132,313,914	\$12,936,180	10.84 %
State Aid (Table 2)	\$ 12,253,713	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,857,194	\$ 14,608,481	\$ 14,773,408	\$ 164,927	1.13 %
Local Receipts (Table 3)	\$ 8,092,290	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 10,800,033	\$ 10,057,902	\$ 8,215,549	\$(1,842,353)	(18.32)%
Available Funds (Table 4)	\$ 4,357,563	\$ 7,854,694	\$ 8,577,788	\$ 11,548,320	\$ 8,226,055	\$(3,322,265)	(28.77)%
Revenue Offsets (Table 5)	\$(2,838,733)	\$(2,831,921)	\$(2,919,157)	\$(3,102,985)	\$(3,147,380)	\$ (44,395)	1.43 %
Enterprise Receipts (Table 6)	\$ 2,833,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487	\$ 1,170,225	\$ 227,738	24.16 %
Total General Fund Operating Revenues	\$134,190,748	\$139,952,664	\$147,209,680	\$153,431,939	\$ 161,551,770	\$ 8,119,831	5.29 %
Less - Revenues Set-Aside for Designated Purposes	\$ 1,226,415	\$ 3,851,943	\$ 6,462,272	\$ 6,694,286	\$ 10,124,697	\$ 3,430,411	51.24 %
Net General Fund Revenues	\$132,964,333	\$136,100,721	\$140,747,408	\$146,737,653	\$151,427,073	\$4,689,420	3.20 %

Detailed Description:

Property Tax Levy: The FY2025 property tax levy is projected to increase approximately \$12.00 million, or 11.3%, including \$8.4 million from the approved operating Override. The projected levy is a function of the FY2024 levy limit increased by 2.5% per Proposition 2½, plus an increment for new growth. FY2025 new growth will be a function of construction activity for the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. FY2025 new growth is projected at \$860,000 based on a review of historical new growth data and recommendations from the Board of Assessors.

Tax Levy - Exempt Debt: When voters approve a debt exclusion for a capital project, the debt service for those projects is tracked separately from the base tax levy. For FY2025, debt service is projected to increase by \$933,708 or 7.10%, primarily due to the initial payments for the first round of debt issued for the new library and skating rink.

State Aid: In recent years, Local Aid has seen minimal increases, with a notable exceptions in FY2023 and FY2024 due to robust state revenues. At this point, an overall State Aid increase of \$164,927 or 1.13% is projected for FY2025, which reflects the initial figures included in the Governor’s budget released on January 24th. Final figures are likely to be known in late June 2024 when the Legislature adopts, and the Governor signs, the FY2025 State budget.

Local Receipts: FY2025 projections for each category of receipt are based on the history of actual collections and projections of 3- and 5-year historical averages. Main areas for adjustment include -

- Recreation program revenue will move out of the General Fund to a new Revolving Fund that will begin in FY2025 and will support a similar level of spending,
- Investment Income has benefited from interest rate increases since mid-2022. In November 2023, Town Meeting transferred an extra \$1 million in FY2024 investment income revenues to stabilization funds. For FY2025, increases to base interest income are projected, but are limited to \$500,000, which is a level that is deemed recurring. Any revenue received above this level should be used for one-time expenses.
- The Town received the first proceeds from Cannabis excise in Fall 2023. FY2025 includes a total of \$20,000 in Other Excise for Cannabis.

Available Funds: In determining an override value for April 2024, town leaders developed a model for projecting the impact of the override over the next three years. That led to a multi-pronged strategy of 1) confirming the recurring amount of Free Cash to be used in the operating budget going forward for both the operating budget and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) (\$3,000,000), 2) identifying an amount to be set aside from Free Cash into an Override Mitigation General Stabilization Fund (\$3,129,439), and 3) developing a strategy for drawing down that fund over the coming years.

An additional \$1,500,000 in Free Cash is dedicated to capital, with the intent to offset most if not all of the cost to replace the boilers at the Chenery which have reached the end of their useful life. There is a growing recognition that one-time funds should be used for one-time purposes such as capital projects.

Revenue Offsets: Revenue Offsets are projected to increase by approximately \$44,395 or 1.43%. Revenue Offsets represent the set-aside of a portion of projected revenues legally required for particular purposes, including:

- (1) cherry sheet assessments - estimated charges to be levied by the Commonwealth to cover the costs of state and regional services provided to the Town, based on preliminary state budget information; and
- (2) the Assessor's Overlay account which covers the cost of abatements and exemptions granted to property taxpayers.

Enterprise Receipts: This category of revenue represents transfers from the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds and the Belmont Municipal Light Department to the General Fund to cover General Fund expenditures that support the operations of the water, sewer and light departments. In FY2024, Finance staff conducted a detailed review of the water and sewer indirect charges which resulted in a decrease in indirect transfers, which were mostly offset by water and sewer making higher direct contributions for other budget items. This analysis was updated in FY2025 and will be updated in future years to ensure that indirect charges are kept in sync with actual budget situations.

Revenue Summary							
	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Estimated	FY2025 Projected	FY2024-25 Change \$	%
Table 1A: Property Tax Levy							
Tax Levy	\$ 92,590,155	\$ 96,008,913	\$ 99,443,942	\$102,870,712	\$106,318,549	\$ 3,447,837	3.35%
Prop. 2.5%	\$ 2,314,754	\$ 2,400,223	\$ 2,486,099	\$ 2,571,768	\$ 2,657,964	\$ 86,196	3.35%
New Growth	\$ 1,104,005	\$ 1,034,806	\$ 940,671	\$ 876,069	\$ 860,000	\$ (16,069)	(1.83)%
Override/Excess Levy Capacity	\$ (154,293)	\$ (12,099)	\$ (84,219)	\$ (84,508)	\$ 8,400,000	\$ 8,484,508	---
Subtotal	\$ 95,854,621	\$ 99,431,844	\$102,786,493	\$106,234,041	\$118,236,512	\$12,002,472	11.30%
Table 1B: Tax Levy - Exempt Debt							
Exempt Debt	\$ 13,638,294	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,143,693	\$ 14,077,401	\$ 933,708	7.10%
Subtotal - Combined Tax Levy	\$109,492,915	\$111,719,939	\$116,505,822	\$119,377,734	\$132,313,914	\$12,936,180	10.84%
Table 2: State Aid							
Chapter 70	\$ 9,755,929	\$ 9,891,949	\$ 10,158,889	\$ 11,784,535	\$ 11,920,165	\$ 135,630	1.15%
Reimb. - Charter Sch./Voc. Transp.	\$ 28,381	\$ 43,318	\$ 66,832	\$ 91,662	\$ 34,317	\$ (57,345)	(62.56)%
Unrestricted General Govt. Aid	\$ 2,397,629	\$ 2,481,546	\$ 2,615,549	\$ 2,699,247	\$ 2,780,224	\$ 80,977	3.00%
Veterans' Benefits & Exemptions	\$ 71,774	\$ 37,196	\$ 15,924	\$ 33,037	\$ 38,702	\$ 5,665	17.15%
Subtotal	\$ 12,253,713	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,857,194	\$ 14,608,481	\$ 14,773,408	\$ 164,927	1.13%
Table 3: Local Receipts							
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax	\$ 3,315,051	\$ 3,647,472	\$ 3,657,004	\$ 3,650,000	\$ 3,650,000	\$ ---	---
Other Excise	\$ 198,767	\$ 328,822	\$ 324,660	\$ 325,000	\$ 345,000	\$ 20,000	6.15%
Penalties & Interest	\$ 357,437	\$ 515,182	\$ 245,001	\$ 330,000	\$ 330,000	\$ ---	---
PILOT's	\$ 35,063	\$ 36,092	\$ 37,059	\$ 36,000	\$ 48,000	\$ 12,000	33.33%
Rentals	\$ 1,530	\$ 6,800	\$ 13,531	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500	\$ ---	---
Departmental-Schools	\$ 153,506	\$ 378,935	\$ 150,213	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ ---	---
Departmental-Municipal	\$ 1,955,817	\$ 2,626,950	\$ 3,093,947	\$ 2,809,006	\$ 1,666,175	\$ (1,142,831)	(40.68)%
Licenses & Permits	\$ 1,322,274	\$ 1,556,574	\$ 1,645,498	\$ 1,353,072	\$ 1,371,550	\$ 18,478	1.37%
Fines & Forfeits	\$ 181,101	\$ 200,020	\$ 264,872	\$ 199,324	\$ 199,324	\$ ---	---
Investment Income	\$ 436,171	\$ 156,917	\$ 1,119,249	\$ 1,250,000	\$ 500,000	\$ (750,000)	(60.00)%
Miscellaneous Non-Recurring	\$ 135,575	\$ 114,179	\$ 248,997	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	---
Subtotal	\$ 8,092,290	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 10,800,033	\$ 10,057,902	\$ 8,215,549	\$(1,842,353)	(18.32)%
Table 4: Available Funds							
Parking	\$ 90,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ ---	---
Capital Endowment Fund	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 107,761	\$ 91,316	\$ (16,445)	(15.26)%
Capital Projects Fund - Prior Auth.	\$ 25,000	\$ 260,000	\$ 545,121	\$ 179,029	\$ 246,196	\$ 67,167	37.52%
Free Cash - Operating Budget	\$ 3,792,665	\$ 7,113,925	\$ 5,380,478	\$ 9,693,014	\$ 2,559,636	\$ (7,133,378)	(73.59)%
Free Cash - OPEB Contribution	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 579,275	\$ 552,695	\$ 440,364	\$ (112,331)	(20.32)%
Free Cash - Capital Projects	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ 649,699	\$ ---	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	---
Free Cash - General Stabilization	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ 950,000	\$ ---	\$ (950,000)	(100.00)%
Free Cash - Override Mitigation	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ 3,129,439	\$ 3,129,439	---
Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 25,000	\$ 27,193	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ ---	---
Sale of Town-Owned Property	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ 1,042,722	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	---
Overlay Surplus	\$ 235,000	\$ 235,000	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	---
American Rescue Plan Act	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ 163,303	\$ ---	\$ ---	\$ ---	---
Bond/BAN Premium Amortization	\$ 14,898	\$ 13,576	\$ 12,190	\$ 10,821	\$ 204,104	\$ 193,283	1786.14%
Subtotal	\$ 4,357,563	\$ 7,854,694	\$ 8,577,788	\$ 11,548,320	\$ 8,226,055	\$(3,322,265)	(28.77)%
Table 5: Revenue Offsets							
Cherry Sheet Assessments	\$ (1,976,233)	\$ (1,982,588)	\$ (2,089,526)	\$ (2,284,535)	\$ (2,307,380)	\$ (22,845)	1.00%
Overlay (Abatements)	\$ (862,500)	\$ (849,333)	\$ (829,631)	\$ (818,450)	\$ (840,000)	\$ (21,550)	2.63%
Subtotal	\$ (2,838,733)	\$ (2,831,921)	\$ (2,919,157)	\$ (3,102,985)	\$ (3,147,380)	\$ (44,395)	1.43%
Table 6: Enterprise Receipts							
Water	\$ 664,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 244,166	\$ 246,442	\$ 2,276	0.93%
Wastewater (Sewer)	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 248,321	\$ 273,783	\$ 25,462	10.25%
Belmont Municipal Light Dept.	\$ 1,650,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 200,000	44.44%
Subtotal	\$ 2,833,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487	\$ 1,170,225	\$ 227,738	24.16%
Gross General Fund Revenues	\$134,190,748	\$139,952,664	\$147,209,680	\$153,431,939	\$161,551,770	\$ 8,119,831	5.29%
Revenues Set Aside for Designated Expenses	\$ 1,226,415	\$ 3,851,943	\$ 6,462,272	\$ 6,694,286	\$ 10,124,697	\$ 3,430,411	51.24%
Net General Fund Revenues Available for Appropriation	\$132,964,333	\$136,100,721	\$140,747,408	\$146,737,653	\$151,427,073	\$ 4,689,420	3.20%

Revenues Set Aside for Designated Expenses: This represents components of Gross General Fund Revenues that are set aside for designated purposes under the proposed Override budget. The proposed purposes are shown in the table below.

Expense Item		Financing Sources		Total	Notes
		Tax Levy	Free Cash		
1	Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)		\$ 440,364	\$ 440,364	Annual contribution to fund the liability for retiree benefits.
2	Pavement Management Program	\$ 1,951,821		\$ 1,951,821	Dedicated funding from prior overrides which grows 2.5% per year.
3	Sidewalk Replacements	\$ 499,765		\$ 499,765	Dedicated funding from prior overrides, plus an additional \$250,000 requested in 2024
4	Discretionary Capital	\$ 1,673,308	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 3,173,308	Capital projects which are authorized by Town Meeting separate from the Operating Budget.
5	Override Mitigation Fund	\$ 930,000	\$ 3,129,439	\$ 4,059,439	Dedication of portion of Override and Free Cash to establish fund for future budget needs
6	Subtotal	\$ 5,054,894	\$ 5,069,803	\$ 10,124,697	
7	Revenue to Support Operating Budget		\$ 2,559,636	\$ 2,559,636	Town Leaders have reached consensus that \$3M in Free Cash is regularly replenished and can be used for the Operating Budget and OPEB
8	Dedicated Opioid Funding		\$ 107,020	\$ 107,020	Opioid Settlement funding embedded in Free Cash
9	Grand Total	\$ 5,054,894	\$ 7,736,459	\$ 12,684,333	
10	Planned Carry Forward		\$ 4,138,078		

Program Overview

The Public Works Water Division maintains the water distribution system to deliver reliable, safe drinking water to the community in adequate quantities for domestic and business use as well as for public safety firefighting. In addition, the Water Division is responsible for compliance with the USEPA Safe Drinking Water Act and Mass DEP regulations.

The Water Division performs all maintenance and repair functions for the Town's 93 miles of water main pipes and 2,743 gate valves in the water distribution system, 825 fire hydrants, and 7,745 individual water service pipes on both a scheduled and emergency basis maintaining a 24-7-365 emergency response capability. Staff also support the Water Advisory Board.

FY2023-24 Achievements

- Continued the 28th year of a 30-year Water Main System Improvement Plan. In FY24, the work underway is Knox St. (at Park Ave. on Knox-Bellington St.), Cushing Ave (Common St – Oak Ave) and Chandler St (Lexington St – Watertown Line).
- Finalized new SMART water meter system town-wide and converted to monthly billing. Smart meters will allow our customers to be more knowledgeable consumers by having immediate access to consumption history.
- Continued annual water system Leak Detection Program, in which a total of 15 leaks were identified and repaired. These repairs help the Water Department reduce unaccounted for water loss. Our unaccounted for water loss for calendar year 2023 was 14% which is almost at the MWRA goal. MWRA's benchmark is for unaccounted for water to be 12% or under.
- Continued efforts in the state mandated annual water system "Cross Connection Control Program" with an

internal program utilizing our DPW staff. Using Water Division staff to conduct all surveys as well as the semi-annual testing of backflow devices. This represents a continued budgeted savings of approximately \$15,000 annually.

- Continued annual Hydrant Flushing Program. This program involves 825 hydrants and ensures all Town owned fire hydrants are in full functioning order. This also helps to minimize taste and odor complaints, dislodge biofilm, remove colored water and reduce turbidity.
- Continued weekly Water Quality Testing. (8 pre-approved sites.).
- Continued annual Lead and Copper Sampling is repetitively conducted at 17 Department of Environmental Protection approved sampling sites to assure compliance with water quality regulations.

For a more extensive list of activity please refer to the [Public Works section of the Belmont Annual Report](#).

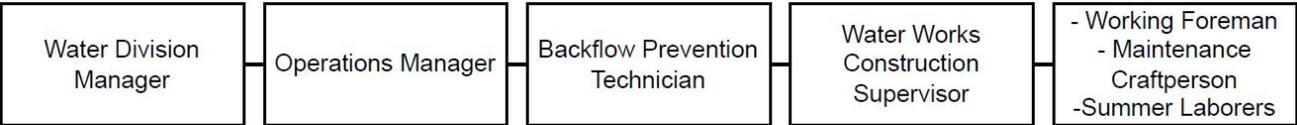
5200 - Public Works Water Division

FY2025 Goals

- Continue to provide management for the administrative functions of water supply, distribution, maintenance, metering, billing and improvement for the water distribution system.
- Continue the implementation of new Water Sewer Billing software.
- Consult with Weston & Sampson Engineers on design of the Water Main Capital Improvement Program.
- Continue to provide resources for water distribution system maintenance, metering, billing and improvement for the water distribution system.
- Continue to initiate Isolation Water Valve Exercising Pilot Program.
- Continue employee training. (Cross Connection Control and Survey , Licensed Water Operators)

Staffing and Structure

The Water Division is made up of 13 full-time employees and 2 summer laborers. The Water division manager oversees the Water operation and distribution.



Position Classification	FTE							
	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Division Manager	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Administrative Assistant IIII	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Operations Manager	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Waterworks Construction Supervisor	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maintenance Craftsperson	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Working Foreman	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Backflow Prevention Technician*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Seasonal Help	0.33	0.33	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Total	12.33	12.33	12.30	12.30	12.30	12.30	12.30	13.30

*The Backflow Prevention was added in the FY2025 budget

5200 - Public Works Water Division

Budget Recommendations

The FY2025 budget request for the Water Division is \$7,997,017, which is an increase of \$112,047 or 1.42% from the FY2024 budget.

Expenses are \$6,291,631, a decrease of \$(17,442) or (0.28)%. This increase reflects increases in items such as hydrant replacement and billing, offset by decreases in cash capital, debt service and the MWRA assessment.

Compensation and Benefits is \$1,705,387, an increase of \$129,489 or 8.22% due to the addition of a Backflow Prevention Technician and contractual increases.

The MWRA Assessment is decreasing by \$(13,250) or (0.40)% and reflects the preliminary rates for FY2024. Final rates will not be known until late June 2024.

Water Division Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$ 1,349,519	\$ 1,393,960	\$ 1,304,336	\$ 1,575,897	\$ 1,705,387	\$ 129,489	8.22 %
Expenses	\$ 5,388,001	\$ 5,459,406	\$ 6,080,742	\$ 6,309,073	\$ 6,291,631	\$ (17,442)	(0.28)%
Total 5250 Water Division	\$ 6,737,520	\$ 6,853,367	\$ 7,385,078	\$ 7,884,970	\$ 7,997,017	\$ 112,047	1.42 %

Division Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Total 5251 Water Dept. Operating	\$ 2,022,476	\$ 1,928,161	\$ 2,250,268	\$ 2,615,807	\$ 2,842,207	\$ 226,399	8.66 %
Total 5253 MWRA Assessment	\$ 3,040,437	\$ 3,321,668	\$ 3,134,847	\$ 3,279,924	\$ 3,266,674	\$ (13,250)	(0.40)%
Total 5254 Debt Service	\$ 925,867	\$ 867,038	\$ 804,188	\$ 794,488	\$ 784,538	\$ (9,950)	(1.25)%
Cash Capital	\$ 77,750	\$ 210,000	\$ 669,275	\$ 940,100	\$ 848,803	\$ (91,297)	(9.71)%
Indirect Expenses	\$ 664,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 244,166	\$ 246,442	\$ 2,276	0.93 %
OPEB Contribution	\$ 6,990	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 10,485	\$ 8,354	\$ (2,131)	(20.32)%
Total 5250 Water Division	\$ 6,737,520	\$ 6,853,367	\$ 7,385,078	\$ 7,884,970	\$ 7,997,017	\$ 112,047	1.42 %

5200 - Public Works Water Division

Water Dept. Operating Budget Detail

			FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent	
			Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change	
Org	Object	Description								
Compensation	6504501	511000	Full-Time Salaries	\$ 754,350	\$ 763,351	\$ 815,319	\$ 867,971	\$ 963,262	\$ 95,291	11.0%
	6504501	511100	Part-Time Salaries	\$ 3,875	\$ 22,468	\$ 43,006	\$ 16,770	\$ 16,770	\$ —	—%
	6504501	513000	Overtime	\$ 174,405	\$ 158,595	\$ 110,334	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ —	—%
	6504501	514000	On-Call Pay	\$ 37,684	\$ 39,581	\$ 43,250	\$ 47,755	\$ 47,755	\$ —	—%
	6504501	514001	Personal Day Paid in lieu time	\$ 827	\$ 421	\$ 1,715	\$ 2,495	\$ 2,495	\$ —	—%
	6504501	514400	Meal Allowance	\$ 360	\$ 320	\$ 120	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	—%
	6504501	514800	Longevity	\$ 7,850	\$ 7,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 8,425	\$ 8,475	\$ 50	0.6%
	6504501	515200	Availability Stipend	\$ 6,227	\$ 6,136	\$ 6,175	\$ 6,760	\$ 6,760	\$ —	—%
	6504501	515500	CDL Stipend	\$ 10,120	\$ 9,455	\$ 9,365	\$ 10,400	\$ 11,700	\$ 1,300	12.5%
	6504501	519001	Working Out of Grade	\$ 3,671	\$ 1,658	\$ 806	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ —	—%
	6504501	519900	Uniform Allowance	\$ 8,389	\$ 7,090	\$ 7,842	\$ 7,910	\$ 8,200	\$ 290	3.7%
	Subtotal Compensation			\$1,007,758	\$1,016,574	\$1,044,432	\$1,120,486	\$ 1,217,417	\$ 96,931	8.7%
Benefits	6504501	517000	Health Insurance	\$ 124,810	\$ 128,555	\$ —	\$ 169,440	\$ 211,360	\$ 41,920	24.7%
	6504501	517101	Health Insurance Retirees	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 50,193	\$ 76,185	\$ 25,992	51.8%
	6504501	517200	Workers Compensation	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 39,045	\$ 20,000	\$ (19,045)	-48.8%
	6504501	517800	Medicare	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 14,632	\$ 15,925	\$ 1,293	8.8%
	6504501	518000	Retirement Fund	\$ 216,950	\$ 248,832	\$ 259,904	\$ 182,101	\$ 164,500	\$ (17,601)	-9.7%
	Subtotal Benefits			\$ 341,760	\$ 377,387	\$ 259,904	\$ 455,411	\$ 487,969	\$ 32,558	7.1%

5200 - Public Works Water Division

Water Dept. Operating Budget Detail

Org	Object	Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
			Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
6504502	524100	Repair & Maint Backflow Prev	\$ —	\$ 170	\$ 90	\$ 2,735	\$ 2,735	\$ —	—%
6504502	524300	Repair & Maint Bldg/Grounds	\$ 3,000	\$ 13,950	\$ 38,379	\$ 9,310	\$ 9,310	\$ —	—%
6504502	524301	Repair Contractual Services	\$ 2,330	\$ 1,205	\$ 3,567	\$ 1,795	\$ 1,795	\$ —	—%
6504502	524400	Repair & Maint. Vehicles	\$ 21,411	\$ 16,119	\$ 100,800	\$ 27,850	\$ 27,850	\$ —	—%
6504502	524500	Repair & Maint. Office Equip.	\$ 170	\$ 135	\$ 329	\$ 2,490	\$ 2,490	\$ —	—%
6504502	524502	Wat Munis Tyler Tech Maint	\$ 20,648	\$ 21,267	\$ 47,392	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	—%
6504502	529700	Soil Removal & Brush Disposal	\$ 12,415	\$ 10,875	\$ 24,045	\$ 46,350	\$ 48,670	\$ 2,320	5.0%
6504502	530000	Prof. and Tech Services	\$ 12,560	\$ 2,215	\$ 500	\$ 8,200	\$ 38,200	\$ 30,000	365.9%
6504502	530007	Leak Detection MWRA	\$ 18,484	\$ 14,370	\$ 14,250	\$ 17,510	\$ 17,510	\$ —	—%
6504502	530700	Laboratory	\$ 120	\$ 610	\$ 420	\$ 720	\$ 720	\$ —	—%
6504502	530800	Meter Reading	\$ 279,849	\$ 160,254	\$ 312,266	\$ 340,000	\$ 360,000	\$ 20,000	5.9%
6504502	530900	Contract Patch	\$ 51,458	\$ 120,211	\$ 186,000	\$ 191,760	\$ 201,350	\$ 9,590	5.0%
6504502	531600	Police Details	\$ 12,027	\$ 2,726	\$ 1,500	\$ 4,420	\$ 4,420	\$ —	—%
6504502	531700	Employee Training	\$ 725	\$ 1,357	\$ —	\$ 4,245	\$ 4,245	\$ —	—%
6504502	531900	Advertising	\$ 500	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 545	\$ 545	\$ —	—%
6504502	534100	Telephone	\$ 2,424	\$ 2,184	\$ 3,249	\$ 4,690	\$ 4,690	\$ —	—%
6504502	534500	Postage	\$ 162	\$ 359	\$ 216	\$ 320	\$ 320	\$ —	—%
6504502	534700	Printing	\$ 106	\$ —	\$ 255	\$ 530	\$ 530	\$ —	—%
6504502	534800	Prof Services - GIS Maint	\$ 10,448	\$ 9,600	\$ 20,070	\$ 21,630	\$ 21,630	\$ —	—%
6504502	538300	Emergency Tree Damage	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 5,360	\$ 5,360	\$ —	—%
6504502	538500	Reserve Fund	\$ 16,084	\$ 1,728	\$ 23,470	\$ 83,835	\$ 83,835	\$ —	—%
6504502	569500	Safe Drinking Water Assessment	\$ 7,092	\$ 6,685	\$ 7,193	\$ 8,240	\$ 8,240	\$ —	—%
6504502	571000	In-State Travel	\$ 17	\$ 92	\$ —	\$ 1,515	\$ 1,515	\$ —	—%
6504502	573000	Dues and Membership	\$ 1,022	\$ 906	\$ 2,683	\$ 5,305	\$ 5,305	\$ —	—%
6504502	573100	Licenses & Certifications	\$ 389	\$ 558	\$ 186	\$ 930	\$ 930	\$ —	—%
6504502	573400	Street Opening Permits	\$ 3,400	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Contract Services			\$ 476,841	\$ 387,576	\$ 786,858	\$ 795,285	\$ 857,195	\$ 61,910	7.8%

5200 - Public Works Water Division

Water Dept. Operating Budget Detail

			FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
Org	Object	Description	Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
6504502	542100	Office Supplies	\$ 3,415	\$ 4,016	\$ 2,272	\$ 3,490	\$ 3,490	\$ —	—%
6504502	542200	Computer Supplies	\$ 880	\$ 960	\$ 2,670	\$ 1,815	\$ 1,815	\$ —	—%
6504502	545000	Custodial Supplies	\$ 2,952	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 785	\$ 785	\$ —	—%
6504502	549000	Food Supplies	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 430	\$ 430	\$ —	—%
6504502	553100	Public Works Supplies	\$ 115,892	\$ 66,170	\$ 81,419	\$ 90,465	\$ 90,465	\$ —	—%
6504502	553101	Hydrants & Supplies	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	—%
6504502	553400	Sidewalk Repairs	\$ 34,405	\$ 16,620	\$ 28,155	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000	\$ —	—%
6504502	553500	Water Meters	\$ —	\$ 20	\$ —	\$ 13,735	\$ 13,735	\$ —	—%
6504502	553600	Water Repair Supplies	\$ 1,143	\$ 12,911	\$ —	\$ 51,745	\$ 51,745	\$ —	—%
6504502	558900	Other Expense	\$ 220	\$ 112	\$ 638	\$ 740	\$ 740	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Supplies			\$ 158,906	\$ 100,808	\$ 115,155	\$ 192,205	\$ 227,205	\$ 35,000	18.2%
Expenses									
6504602	522800	Natural Gas	\$ 12,892	\$ 12,093	\$ 13,572	\$ 13,150	\$ 13,150	\$ —	—%
6504602	522900	Electricity	\$ 13,790	\$ 23,045	\$ 17,280	\$ 14,995	\$ 14,995	\$ —	—%
6504602	548900	Gasoline	\$ 6,582	\$ 7,581	\$ 9,432	\$ 7,725	\$ 7,725	\$ —	—%
6504602	548901	Diesel Fuel	\$ 3,947	\$ 3,098	\$ 3,635	\$ 16,550	\$ 16,550	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Utilities			\$ 37,211	\$ 45,816	\$ 43,919	\$ 52,420	\$ 52,420	\$ —	—%
6504503	585200	Equipment and Wiring	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Minor Capital (Outlay)			\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Expenses			\$ 672,958	\$ 534,201	\$ 945,932	\$1,039,910	\$ 1,136,820	\$ 96,910	9.3%
Total 5251 Water Dept. Operating			\$2,022,476	\$1,928,161	\$2,250,268	\$2,615,807	\$ 2,842,207	\$ 226,399	8.7%

5200 - Public Works Water Division

Water MWRA Assessment Budget Detail

Expenses	Org	Object	Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
				Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
	6504502	569400	MWRA Assessment	\$3,040,437	\$3,321,668	\$3,134,847	\$3,279,924	\$ 3,266,674	\$ (13,250)	(0.4)%
	Subtotal Contract Services			\$3,040,437	\$3,321,668	\$3,134,847	\$3,279,924	\$ 3,266,674	\$ (13,250)	(0.4)%
	Subtotal Expenses			\$3,040,437	\$3,321,668	\$3,134,847	\$3,279,924	\$ 3,266,674	\$ (13,250)	(0.4)%
	Total 5253 MWRA Assessment			\$3,040,437	\$3,321,668	\$3,134,847	\$3,279,924	\$ 3,266,674	\$ (13,250)	(0.4)%

Water Debt Service Budget Detail

Expenses	Org	Object	Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
				Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
	6504102	591005	MWRA 0% Loan Principal	\$ 596,579	\$ 547,700	\$ 497,700	\$ 497,700	\$ 497,700	\$ —	0.0 %
	6507102	591231	Water Main Principal - \$761K	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ —	0.0 %
	6507512	591231	Water Main Interest - \$761K	\$ 17,913	\$ 16,463	\$ 15,013	\$ 13,563	\$ 11,863	\$ (1,700)	-12.5 %
	6507102	591245	Water Main Principal - \$2.05M	\$ 105,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 105,000	\$ —	0.0 %
	6507512	591245	Water Main Interest - \$2.05M	\$ 74,475	\$ 69,225	\$ 66,075	\$ 60,825	\$ 55,575	\$ (5,250)	-8.6 %
	6504102	591403	MWRA Loan Principal	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ —	0.0 %
	6504512	591403	MWRA Loan Interest	\$ 26,900	\$ 23,650	\$ 20,400	\$ 17,400	\$ 14,400	\$ (3,000)	-17.2 %
	Subtotal Debt Service			\$ 925,867	\$ 867,038	\$ 804,188	\$ 794,488	\$ 784,538	\$ (9,950)	(1.3)%
	Subtotal Expenses			\$ 925,867	\$ 867,038	\$ 804,188	\$ 794,488	\$ 784,538	\$ (9,950)	(1.3)%
	Total 5254 Debt Service			\$ 925,867	\$ 867,038	\$ 804,188	\$ 794,488	\$ 784,538	\$ (9,950)	(1.3)%

Program Overview

The Sewer Division is responsible for the maintenance, construction and repair of the sanitary sewer system. This includes 76 miles of main lines, 2,365 manholes, 6,700 service lines to buildings on both public and private ways and three pumping stations. This program is funded by user fees which are based on 100% of metered water consumption. Rates are set annually by the Select Board.

This Division provides services for the collection, transportation and treatment of wastewater for public

health in conformance with Federal and State laws and regulations.

The Sewer Division is also responsible for the maintenance, construction and repair of the storm drain system. This includes 54 miles of main lines, one pumping station and 2,000 catch basins. Local brooks, streams and water bodies receive waters for the storm drain system and the Sewer Division provides maintenance of these resources. This program is funded as part of the sanitary sewer user fee.

FY2023-24 Achievements

- In 2022, 25 individual building connections were videoed to determine the condition and priority for repair. As a part of our ongoing maintenance program 10 sanitary sewer lines were repaired. The Highway Division responded to 201 building service pipeline blockages during the year.
- The annual cleaning of approximately 1,990 stormwater catch basins was completed during the spring by a private contractor. The Sewer Division also repaired 10 catch basins.

For a more extensive list of activity please refer to the [Public Works section of the Belmont Annual Report](#).

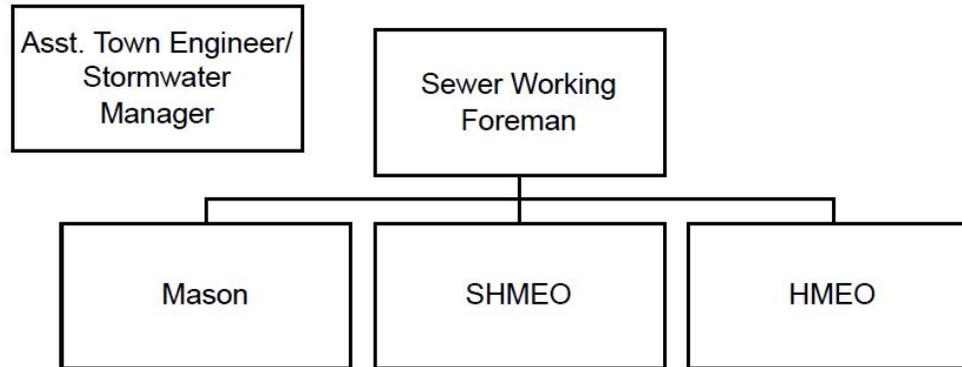
FY2025 Goals

- Provide for the collection and transportation of stormwater in conformance with Federal and State law and regulation to minimize flooding for public safety and convenience.
- The proposed revision of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) "MS-4" permits which is expected to significantly increase the regulation of municipal stormwater discharge into receiving waters. There is concern that these expanded regulations will challenge the Town's ability to fund required engineering investigations and the resulting structural improvements to the stormwater system. One option to fund these expenses would be a user-based enterprise fund. The DPW has been researching the creation of a potential Stormwater Utility Enterprise fund.

Staffing and Structure

The Sewer Division is made up of 13 full-time employees. In FY2024, a Stormwater Manager was added to respond to increasing demands of state and federal stormwater

requirements. The Assistant DPW Director of Operations oversees the Sewer operations.



Position Classification	FTE							
	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Asst. Town Engineer/ Stormwater Manager*	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Working Foreman	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
SHMEO/Laborer	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mason	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
HMEO/Laborer	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Total	12	12	12	12	12	12	13	13

Notes

*The Asst. Town Engineer Stormwater Manager was added in FY2024 to help oversee the increasing demands of state and federal stormwater requirements.

5200 - Public Works Sewer Division

Budget Recommendations

The FY2025 budget request for the Sewer Division is \$10,449,565, which is an increase of \$654,533 or 6.68% from the FY2024 budget.

Compensation and Benefits is \$1,436,959, an increase of \$7,634 or 0.53% which is relatively low due to turnover in the department.

Expenses are \$9,012,606, an increase of \$646,899 or 7.73%. The largest contributor to this change is an increase in cash capital items, which were constrained in FY2024 due to a

low fund balance. The FY2025 capital requests reflect the an increase of \$100,000 for sewer line work, a new \$250,000 item for stormwater interventions, and replacement of a dump truck and staff vehicle. There are only modest increases in operating expenses.

While the MWRA Assessment is the largest cost center for Sewer, the preliminary rates for FY2025 reflect a decrease of \$(14,591) or (0.25)%. Final rates will not be known until late June 2024.

Sewer Division Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$ 1,384,494	\$ 922,946	\$ 767,535	\$ 1,429,325	\$ 1,436,959	\$ 7,634	0.53 %
Expenses	\$8,438,604	\$ 8,262,413	\$9,793,824	\$8,365,707	\$ 9,012,606	\$ 646,899	7.73 %
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$9,823,099	\$ 9,185,359	\$10,561,359	\$9,795,033	\$ 10,449,565	\$ 654,533	6.68 %

Division Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Total 5261 Sewer & Stormwater Operating	\$ 1,845,808	\$ 1,389,770	\$ 1,458,688	\$ 2,187,718	\$ 2,217,430	\$ 29,712	1.36 %
Total 5262 MWRA Assessment	\$5,332,639	\$ 5,482,714	\$ 5,677,771	\$ 5,750,128	\$ 5,735,537	\$ (14,591)	(0.25)%
Total 5263 Debt Service	\$ 908,340	\$ 925,124	\$ 915,700	\$ 903,338	\$ 902,901	\$ (437)	(0.05)%
Cash Capital	\$ 1,213,200	\$ 864,250	\$ 1,985,700	\$ 700,000	\$ 1,315,510	\$ 615,510	87.93 %
Indirect Expenses	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 248,321	\$ 273,783	\$ 25,462	10.25 %
OPEB Contribution	\$ 4,112	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,527	\$ 4,404	\$ (1,123)	(20.32)%
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$9,823,099	\$ 9,185,359	\$10,561,359	\$9,795,033	\$ 10,449,565	\$ 654,533	6.68 %

5200 - Public Works Sewer Division

Sewer and Stormwater Operating Budget Detail

			FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent	
Org	Object	Description	Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change	
Compensation	6604401	511000	Full-Time Salaries	\$ 658,617	\$ 637,936	\$ 643,132	\$ 843,989	\$ 853,470	\$ 9,481	1.1%
	6604401	513000	Overtime	\$ 77,256	\$ 75,756	\$ 83,748	\$ 83,385	\$ 83,385	\$ —	—%
	6604401	514000	On-Call Pay	\$ 11,526	\$ 12,419	\$ 12,626	\$ 16,445	\$ 16,445	\$ —	—%
	6604401	514001	Personal Day Paid in lieu time	\$ 1,951	\$ 553	\$ 857	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ —	—%
	6604401	514400	Meal Allowance	\$ 10	\$ —	\$ 10	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ —	—%
	6604401	514800	Longevity	\$ 5,050	\$ 5,050	\$ 5,050	\$ 6,350	\$ 5,850	\$ (500)	-7.9%
	6604401	515500	CDL Stipend	\$ 15,120	\$ 9,870	\$ 11,740	\$ 15,600	\$ 15,600	\$ —	—%
	6604401	515600	AFSCME Trainer Stipend	\$ 1,004	\$ 1,004	\$ 1,004	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ —	—%
	6604401	519001	Working Out of Grade	\$ 1,447	\$ 1,640	\$ 1,169	\$ 1,795	\$ 1,795	\$ —	—%
	6604401	519900	Uniform Allowance	\$ 9,772	\$ 8,063	\$ 8,200	\$ 9,840	\$ 9,840	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Compensation			\$ 781,752	\$ 752,292	\$ 767,535	\$ 981,104	\$ 990,085	\$ 8,981	0.9%	
Benefits	6604401	517000	Health Insurance	\$ 165,683	\$ 170,654	\$ —	\$ 228,429	\$ 243,815	\$ 15,386	6.7%
	6604401	517101	Health Insurance Retirees	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 54,415	\$ 59,662	\$ 5,247	9.6%
	6604401	517200	Workers Compensation	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 40,326	\$ 20,000	\$ (20,326)	-50.4%
	6604401	517800	Medicare	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 15,590	\$ 13,730	\$ (1,860)	-11.9%
	6604401	517900	Life Insurance	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 200	\$ —	\$ (200)	-100.0%
	6604401	518000	Retirement Fund	\$ 437,059	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 109,261	\$ 109,667	\$ 406	0.4%
Subtotal Benefits			\$ 602,742	\$ 170,654	\$ —	\$ 448,221	\$ 446,874	\$ (1,347)	-0.3%	

5200 - Public Works Sewer Division

Sewer and Stormwater Operating Budget Detail

Org	Object	Description	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
6604402	524502	Wat Munis Tyler Tech Maint	\$ 20,648	\$ 21,267	\$ —	\$ 47,392	\$ 52,250	\$ 4,858	10.3%
6604402	527300	Rental of Construction Equip	\$ 60,615	\$ 56,172	\$ 65,165	\$ 65,165	\$ 65,165	\$ —	—%
6604402	529700	Soil Removal & Brush Disposal	\$ 9,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 58,591	\$ 70,000	\$ 73,500	\$ 3,500	5.0%
6604402	530000	Prof. and Tech Services	\$ 500	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 4,925	\$ 6,222	\$ 1,297	26.3%
6604402	530002	Contractor Labor	\$ 8,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,665	\$ 8,665	\$ —	—%
6604402	530006	Storm Water Regulation	\$ 12,552	\$ 25,286	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,500	\$ 51,500	\$ —	—%
6604402	530900	Contract Patch	\$ 74,905	\$ 77,155	\$ 92,561	\$ 92,561	\$ 97,190	\$ 4,629	5.0%
6604402	531600	Police Details	\$ 3,046	\$ 839	\$ 3,643	\$ 8,010	\$ 8,010	\$ —	—%
6604402	534100	Telephone	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 1,900	\$ 2,500	\$ 600	31.6%
6604402	538200	Outside Labor	\$ 107,749	\$ 56,834	\$ 89,818	\$ 118,175	\$ 125,369	\$ 7,194	6.1%
6604402	538300	Emergency Tree Damage	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 71,149	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ —	—%
6604402	573400	Street Opening Permits	\$ 375	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 10,200	\$ 10,200	\$ —	—%
6604402	578500	Reserve Fund	\$ 48,196	\$ 90,930	\$ 125,774	\$ 130,050	\$ 130,050	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Contract Services			\$ 356,034	\$ 362,083	\$ 566,201	\$ 628,543	\$ 650,621	\$ 22,078	3.5%
6604402	553100	Public Works Supplies	\$ 102,000	\$ 100,363	\$ 121,003	\$ 122,070	\$ 122,070	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Supplies			\$ 102,000	\$ 100,363	\$ 121,003	\$ 122,070	\$ 122,070	\$ —	—%
6604402	522900	Electricity	\$ 3,280	\$ 4,379	\$ 3,950	\$ 7,780	\$ 7,780	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Minor Capital (Outlay)			\$ 3,280	\$ 4,379	\$ 3,950	\$ 7,780	\$ 7,780	\$ —	—%
Subtotal Expenses			\$ 461,314	\$ 466,825	\$ 691,153	\$ 758,393	\$ 780,471	\$ 22,078	2.9%
Total 5261 Sewer & Stormwater Operating			\$1,845,808	\$1,389,770	\$1,458,688	\$2,187,718	\$ 2,217,430	\$ 29,712	1.4%

5200 - Public Works Sewer Division

Sewer MWRA Assessment Budget Detail

Expenses	Org	Object	Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
				Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
	6604402	569400	MWRA Assessment	\$5,332,639	\$5,482,714	\$5,677,771	\$5,750,128	\$ 5,735,537	\$ (14,591)	(0.3)%
				\$5,332,639	\$5,482,714	\$5,677,771	\$5,750,128	\$ 5,735,537	\$ (14,591)	(0.3)%
	Subtotal Expenses			\$5,332,639	\$5,482,714	\$5,677,771	\$5,750,128	\$ 5,735,537	\$ (14,591)	(0.3)%
	Total 5262 MWRA Assessment			\$5,332,639	\$5,482,714	\$5,677,771	\$5,750,128	\$ 5,735,537	\$ (14,591)	(0.3)%

Sewer Debt Service Budget Detail

Expenses	Org	Object	Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Dollar	Percent
				Actual	Actual	Actual	Approp.	Recommended	Change	Change
	6607102	591221	Water Pollution Abatement Loan - Interest	\$ 429,645	\$ 438,438	\$ 447,411	\$ 456,568	\$ 465,914	\$ 9,346	2.0 %
	6607512	591221	Water Pollution Abatement Loan - Principal	\$ 104,322	\$ 95,641	\$ 86,783	\$ 77,743	\$ 68,518	\$ (9,225)	-11.9 %
	6607102	591227	Clean Water Trust Loan - Principal	\$ 103,597	\$ 105,848	\$ 108,149	\$ 110,499	\$ 112,901	\$ 2,402	2.2 %
	6607512	591243	Clean Water Trust Loan - Interest	\$ 36,283	\$ 34,211	\$ 32,094	\$ 29,931	\$ 27,721	\$ (2,210)	-7.4 %
	6607102	591238	Sewer & Stormwater Loan - Principal	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 120,000	\$ (5,000)	-4.0 %
	6607512	591238	Sewer & Stormwater Loan - Interest	\$ 23,577	\$ 19,677	\$ 15,777	\$ 12,027	\$ 8,277	\$ (3,750)	-31.2 %
	6607102	591404	MWRA 0% Loan - \$246K	\$ 49,170	\$ 49,170	\$ 49,170	\$ 49,170	\$ 49,170	\$ —	— %
	6607102	591405	MWRA 0% Loan - \$212K	\$ 21,200	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,400	\$ 42,400	\$ —	— %
	6607512	558900	Fees - WPAT and MA Clean Water Trust	\$ 10,545	\$ 9,739	\$ 8,916	\$ —	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	— %
	Subtotal Debt Service			\$ 908,340	\$ 925,124	\$ 915,700	\$ 903,338	\$ 902,901	\$ (437)	— %
	Subtotal Expenses			\$ 908,340	\$ 925,124	\$ 915,700	\$ 903,338	\$ 902,901	\$ (437)	— %
	Total 5263 Debt Service			\$ 908,340	\$ 925,124	\$ 915,700	\$ 903,338	\$ 902,901	\$ (437)	— %

8000 - Recommended Capital Investments

Town of Belmont, MA

Appropriation Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Capital - Streets	\$ —	\$ 1,812,460	\$ 1,857,772	\$ 1,904,216	\$ 1,951,821	\$ 47,605	2.50 %
Capital - Sidewalks	\$ 226,147	\$ 231,801	\$ 237,730	\$ 243,673	\$ 499,765	\$ 256,092	105.10 %
Discretionary Capital	\$ 950,268	\$ 1,757,682	\$ 3,787,495	\$ 1,791,681	\$ 3,173,308	\$ 1,381,627	77.11 %
Total Capital Investments	\$ 1,176,415	\$ 3,801,943	\$ 5,882,997	\$ 3,939,570	\$ 5,624,894	\$ 1,685,324	42.78 %



Program Overview

The Belmont Capital plan consists of Non-Discretionary, Discretionary and Enterprise capital projects.

- Non-Discretionary projects are for the Pavement Management Program and Sidewalk Maintenance, both of which were funded by voters via operating overrides in prior years. Funding grows by 2.5% each year, in parallel with Proposition 2½ growth.
- For FY2025, an additional \$250,000 was included in the override request dedicated to Sidewalk Maintenance.
- Discretionary capital funds were set-aside through an earlier override, and also grow by 2.5% each year.

FY2023-24 Achievements

- The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee, began meeting in October 2022.
- Passed two debt exclusions, one for the new Belmont Public Library and the second for the new Belmont Skating Rink.
- Completed a Townwide tree inventory including tree health assessment and a tree management plan.

FY2025 Goals

- Complete an initial long-term capital plan.
- Identify additional sources of funding to support capital investments.

Staffing and Structure

Staff from Town Administration support the work of the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee. Departments

- A subset of discretionary projects have previously been funded by within levy debt issuances. As those obligations are paid down, the funding is transferred back to the Capital budget.
- Both Water and Sewer Enterprise also have capital investments in their respective systems, which are funded from user charges.
- The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) reviews annual requests from Town departments for capital projects.

- A Townwide sidewalk assessment is underway, scheduled for publication and review in late Spring 2024 which will update the sidewalk replacement list.
- Completed a Townwide pavement assessment, which will allow the Town to revisit its pavement management priorities.

- Complete a building assessment for all Town-owned buildings.

work with the CCBC as needed to submit capital requests, respond to questions, and implement the projects.

8000 - Recommended Capital Investments

Town of Belmont, MA

Budget Recommendations

The FY2025 budget request for Capital Investments is \$5,624,894, which is an increase of \$1,685,324 or 42.78% from the FY2024 budget. Separately, a total of \$578,842 is recommended for transfer to the Capital Stabilization Fund, which is expected to support significant capital requests for the Chenery School in FY2026.

- The continued transfer of reductions in Within Levy debt service payments as prior capital projects are paid off, which amounts to \$257,100 in FY2025;
- Inclusion of \$250,000 for Sidewalk Maintenance from the override request; and
- Dedication of \$1,500,000 in Free Cash to offset large capital needs at the Chenery.

The increase is attributable to four main areas -

- The annual increase of 2.5% for the Non-Discretionary and Discretionary capital items;

Capital Budget Summary

Appropriation Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Capital - Streets	\$ —	\$ 1,812,460	\$ 1,857,772	\$ 1,904,216	\$ 1,951,821	\$ 47,605	2.50 %
Capital - Sidewalks	\$ 226,147	\$ 231,801	\$ 237,730	\$ 243,673	\$ 499,765	\$ 256,092	105.10 %
Discretionary Capital	\$ 950,268	\$ 1,757,682	\$ 3,787,495	\$ 1,791,681	\$ 3,173,308	\$ 1,381,627	77.11 %
Total 8000 Capital	\$ 1,176,415	\$ 3,801,943	\$ 5,882,997	\$ 3,939,570	\$ 5,624,894	\$ 1,685,324	42.78 %

Capital Project Summary	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Capital - Streets	\$ —	\$ 1,812,460	\$ 1,857,772	\$ 1,904,216	\$ 1,951,821	\$ 47,605	2.50 %
Capital - Sidewalks	\$ 226,147	\$ 231,801	\$ 237,730	\$ 243,673	\$ 499,765	\$ 256,092	105.10 %
<i>Non-Discretionary Capital</i>	\$ 226,147	\$ 2,044,261	\$ 2,095,502	\$ 2,147,889	\$ 2,451,586	\$ 303,697	14.14 %
Discretionary Capital - Tax Levy	\$ 925,268	\$ 1,497,682	\$ 1,549,953	\$ 1,588,702	\$ 1,170,012	\$ (418,690)	(26.35)%
Discretionary Capital - Debt Service				\$ 23,950	\$ 257,100	\$ 233,150	973.49 %
Discretionary Capital - Free Cash				\$ —	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	— %
Discretionary Capital - Turnbacks	\$ 25,000	\$ 260,000	\$ 545,121	\$ 179,029	\$ 246,196	\$ 67,167	37.52 %
<i>Discretionary Capital</i>	\$ 950,268	\$ 1,757,682	\$ 3,787,495	\$ 1,791,681	\$ 3,173,308	\$ 1,381,627	77.11 %
Total 8000 Capital	\$ 1,176,415	\$ 3,801,943	\$ 5,882,997	\$ 3,939,570	\$ 5,624,894	\$ 1,685,324	42.78 %

8000 - Recommended Capital Investments

Town of Belmont, MA

	Department	Project Description	Recommendation	Override	Tax Levy	Free Cash	Ent. Debt	Enterprise
1	Engineering	Pavement Management Program	\$ 1,951,821	\$ 1,951,821				
2	Public Works	Sidewalk Maintenance	\$ 499,770	\$ 499,770				
3	Public Works	Street Tree Planting	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000			
4	Public Works	DPW Parks Equipment	\$ 106,800		\$ 106,800			
5	Public Works	DPW Highway Equipment	\$ 54,508		\$ 54,508			
6	Water Dept.	Water Main Replacement	\$ 1,080,000				\$ 352,000	\$ 728,000
7	Water Dept.	Water Enterprise Equipment	\$ 120,803					\$ 120,803
8	Sewer Dept.	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	\$ 800,000					\$ 800,000
9	Sewer Dept.	Stormwater Repairs	\$ 250,000					\$ 250,000
10	Sewer Dept.	Sewer Enterprise Equipment	\$ 265,510					\$ 265,510
11	Facilities	Chenery Boiler Replacement	\$ 1,600,000		\$ 100,000	\$ 1,500,000		
12	Facilities	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement - Design	\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000			
13	Facilities	Video Camera Improvements - Town	\$ 137,000		\$ 137,000			
14	Facilities	Gym Resurfacing	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000			
15	Facilities	School Envelope Repairs	\$ 335,000		\$ 335,000			
16	Fire Dept.	Ambulance Replacement	\$ 110,000		\$ 110,000			
17	Police Dept.	Replace Police Portable Radios	\$ 155,000		\$ 155,000			
18	IT Dept.	Network Redundancy Restoration	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000			
19	IT Dept.	Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	\$ 175,000		\$ 175,000			
20	Assessors	Replace CAMA Database	\$ 125,000		\$ 125,000			
21	CCBC	Project Bid Reserve	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000			
Total Project Costs			\$ 8,141,212	\$ 2,451,591	\$1,673,308	\$1,500,000	\$ 352,000	\$2,164,313

Capital Projects Funded via Dedicated Override Funds

1. **Pavement Management Program - \$1,951,821 (Tax Levy, Dedicated Override funding):** Reflects annual pavement management program funded from dedicated override funding, adjusted by 2.5% per year. In addition to the dedicated local funding, state Chapter 90 funding is applied to this purpose. In FY2025, \$547,276 is projected to be available from Chapter 90 funding. In addition, the state has started allocating funds from the Fair Share Amendment. Belmont has received \$261,324 from an initial allotment.

General Fund Capital Projects

Public Works

3. **Street Tree Planting - \$50,000 (Tax Levy):** Trees are an under-recognized element of Belmont's overall infrastructure. The Town commissioned a Street Tree assessment which was published in April 2023 ([view here](#)) and will inform where the DPW will focus its tree maintenance efforts, as well as investments in new plantings to replace removed trees and areas where there are gaps in the tree canopy.

4. **DPW Parks Equipment - \$106,800 (Tax Levy):** The DPW Parks Division relies on numerous apparatus to maintain the playgrounds, fields, swimming pool, medians, and other locations around Belmont. A replacement plan for the equipment was developed years ago to ensure that staff had the right tools to be efficient in their tasks, while ensuring the Town was maximizing the useful life. For FY2025, the current schedule would replace a large (19,000 GVW) dump truck, which will also be available during snow storms.

2. **Sidewalk Maintenance - \$499,770 (Tax Levy, Dedicated Override funding):** Sidewalk repair is one of the most common requests from residents and businesses. The Department of Public Works has received countless requests for repair, and has diligently been working through them. The additional \$250,000 from the April 2024 Override vote will certainly help, which is included in this request. So will the results of a sidewalk assessment which will inform the project prioritization going forward. This program was originally funded via an override and grows by 2.5% per year.

5. **DPW Highway Equipment - \$54,508 (Tax Levy):** While the DPW Highway Division operates year-round in many capacities, one of its most recognizable roles is snow removal, and staff work to ensure sufficient equipment and supplies are available when needed. The equipment replacement plan for FY2025 would convert an existing piece of equipment for use during snow operations.

Enterprise Fund Capital Projects

Water Department

6. **Water Main Replacement - \$1,080,000 (Water User Fees/MWRA Loan):** Ongoing water main replacement program which typically addresses 5,000 linear feet of pipe each year. The division has been able to take advantage of zero-interest loans from the MWRA to support its efforts. In addition, a 30-year program to replace unlined mains is nearing completion, and staff have begun planning for the next phase of work.
7. **Water Enterprise Equipment - \$120,803 (Water User Fees):** In FY2025, the water division is requesting a Closed Utility 4WD Truck that will carry supplies for staff deployed to service calls, including meter repairs, backflow prevention work, and pressure tests.

Sewer Department

8. **Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation - \$800,000 (Sewer User Fees):** Reflects annual sewer and stormwater infrastructure evaluation, maintenance, and rehabilitation program, typically conducted in conjunction with the work done for the pavement management program and EPA/DEP mandated work.
9. **Stormwater Repairs - \$250,000 (Sewer User Fees):** Federal and state regulations around stormwater continue to grow, requiring ever increasing local interventions, necessitating a dedicated capital request to highlight the investments being made. These funds will be used for interventions specific to stormwater such as culverts and catch basins.

10. **Sewer Enterprise Equipment - \$265,510 (Sewer User Fees):** The next vehicles on the Sewer Division's equipment replacement schedule are an Emergency Electric Service Van and a large Dump Truck (40,000 GVW). The van is used for service calls for various reasons, including clean-outs, tree root remediation and emergency responses. The dump truck is a workhorse for the division, used extensively in day-to-day operations and also during snow season.

General Fund Capital Projects, cont.

Facilities Department

11. **Chenery Boiler Replacement - \$1,600,000 (\$100,000 Tax Levy, \$1,500,000 Free Cash):** The Chenery Middle School was first opened in September 1997, and its core mechanical infrastructure needs to be refurbished. This is the first of three anticipated projects and would replace the natural gas boilers. The Facilities Department commissioned a study in 2023 to review options for replacing the boilers with non-fossil fuel technology. Staff continue to review options that work within the available capital budget and do not overly stress the utility budget. The \$1.6M request would replace the 30 existing units with 6 high-efficiency natural gas boilers. Electric boilers would cost \$350,000 more to install, and would cost approximately \$500,000 more to run in the short-term than the natural gas equivalent. Staff are investigating whether installing a mix of gas and electric boilers would make sense - both economically and environmentally.

12. **Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement - Design - \$200,000 (Tax Levy):** Once the boilers are replaced, the Chenery's 17 rooftop HVAC units will need to be updated, followed by a new roof. This request would engage engineering services to design both items and prepare a more detailed construction cost estimate for a request at the 2025 Annual Town Meeting.
13. **Video Camera Improvements - Town - \$137,000 (Tax Levy):** The current video security system used for municipal buildings is aging. The clarity, versatility, and dependability has declined and the main recording device has been maxed out and cannot be expanded. When cameras are replaced, the system works but does not have the best capability. The camera systems at school buildings have been fully updated, this request is the first of two phases to replace municipal equipment.
14. **Gym Resurfacing - \$25,000 (Tax Levy):** The current gym floor at the Winn Brook school is showing signs of wear. The surface is slippery and can cause avoidable injury during competitive sports or running type activity. Based on usage, gym floors should be replaced every 15-20 years. A request for the Burbank school is anticipated for FY2026.
15. **School Envelope Repairs - \$335,000 (Tax Levy):** There are sections of the Winn Brook that have water infiltration during rain events. In 2023, once side of the building was repointed, and that addressed the problem. This request is to repoint the remaining sections to complete the job. If any funds remain, they will be used for the Butler School.

Fire Department

16. **Ambulance Replacement - \$110,000 (Tax Levy):** An ambulance will be ordered once full funding has been authorized; this is the third year in the next 5-year replacement cycle. In July 2023, a new ambulance was delivered and the former frontline vehicle was placed in reserve status. Each ambulance has a 10-year total service period within the department. In order to provide life-saving service the fire department must operate safe and functional apparatus, including ambulances. These vehicles are under extreme use, including transporting patients to hospitals in Boston daily. As an ambulance approaches the 5-year mark, it typically requires more intensive repairs and maintenance. This has an obvious financial impact, but also places the ambulance out of service for ever-increasing periods of time.

Police Department

17. **Replace Police Portable Radios - \$155,000 (Tax Levy):** This is the second phase of a request to replace 75 portable radios for the department. The police department issues radios to each officer as well as to the animal control officer, street traffic control officers and parking control officers. The FY2024 funding was sufficient for 44 radios; the request for FY2025 has been reduced to reflect the same pricing for the remaining 31 units. The radios currently in use were purchased in FY2016 and will have 9 years of use in FY2025, recommended replacement is around 7 years.

Information Technology Department

18. Network Redundancy Restoration - \$50,000 (Tax Levy):

The Town of Belmont shares a network between municipal and school operations. As such, there are connections across Town. If any of those connections are broken, the entire network goes down. A redundant network had been built in the past, but recent construction damaged the connections in several areas, reverting the network back to a single point of failure design. This project is anticipated to be phased over three years, and would begin in FY2025. The Town has applied for a competitive state grant, which may offset future capital requests.

19. Enhance Town Network - Police Addition - \$175,000 (Tax Levy):

In an effort to consolidate municipal services, the Police Department will transition to the Town's information technology network during FY2025. Many functions will likely be able to be absorbed, but some updates to equipment and other tools will undoubtedly be needed. This request is meant as a hedge against those unanticipated needs to allow for a seamless transition, particularly in recognition of the sensitive nature of the work done by the Police Department.

Board of Assessors

20. Replace CAMA Database - \$125,000 (Tax Levy): The Belmont Board of Assessors currently contracts with J.F. Ryan Associates to use their computer assisted mass appraisal (CAMA) system to manage the Belmont property tax assessment process. In a report from the Division of Local Services issued in August 2011, and again in a report from the Collins Center issued in June 2022, recommendations were made to upgrade the CAMA system. This request will implement that recommendation.

Town Administration

21. Project Bid Reserve - \$50,000 (Tax Levy): Given the short construction window in school buildings, and the fluidity of the construction market, it is recommended to establish a Bid Reserve. The intent is to apply the Bid Reserve funding to a capital project approved by Town Meeting where bid results exceed available funds, subject to approval by the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee.

8000 - Recommended FY2025 CPA Projects

Town of Belmont, MA

Community Preservation Committee Projects

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will likely recommend five (5) projects to Town Meeting for FY2025 funding. Each of these projects was evaluated by the CPC in light of the articulated criteria for eligibility and appropriateness under the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

The projects have been presented at a CPC public hearing held on November 8, 2023 and at its regularly scheduled

meeting on February 14, 2024. The projects will also be presented at Select Board meetings in May 2024; and at the Warrant Committee’s regularly scheduled meeting on May 15, 2024.

More information about these projects and the Belmont CPC can be found on the Town website here: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee>.

<u>Project Sponsor</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>			<u>Funding Category</u>
		<u>Base Project</u>	<u>Bid Reserve*</u>	<u>Total**</u>	
Recreation Department	Chenery Park Design and Engineering	\$ 300,000	\$ —	\$ 300,000	Recreation
Recreation Department	Chenery Park Funding	\$ 1,000,000	\$ —	\$ 1,000,000	Community Housing
Belmont Housing Trust	Fund to Support New Affordable Housing	\$ 275,000	\$ —	\$ 275,000	Community Housing
Belmont Woman’s Club	Homer House Exterior Paint Restoration	\$ 99,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 120,000	Historic Preservation
Engineering Department	Belmont Community Path Phase 1 - Right of Way Acquisition	\$ 160,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 192,000	Recreation

*The Bid Reserve is a new element that is being introduced in FY2025. Many recent projects have suffered from public bids coming in higher than expected and therefore delaying projects for a year or more. The bid reserve is an attempt to prevent this from happening while at the same time ensuring that leftover bid reserve funding will be returned to the CPA Fund balance if it isn’t used.

**The totals above were printed in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, but may be reduced when the Segment B motions are published.

Community Preservation Act Projects

1. **Chenery Park Design and Engineering - \$300,000:** This project will fund a conceptual design and engineering for the Chenery Parks complex. It will include public meetings, community engagement, and project design.
2. **Chenery Park Funding - \$1,000,000:** This project will set aside funding for the Chenery Park Complex Construction phase. The estimated cost of this project is \$3,000,000. In anticipation of this high project cost the applicant would like to set aside funding in preparation for the project. It is assumed that the rest of the funding will be requested in the FY2026 funding cycle.
3. **Fund to Support New Affordable Housing - \$275,000:** The purpose of this project is to create more affordable housing in town. The Housing Trust is establishing regular funding rounds for developers to apply for in order to create more affordable homes and/or more deeply affordable homes in new developments.
4. **Homer House Exterior Paint Restoration - \$120,000:** This project is necessary to preserve the integrity of the Homer House structure, to prevent interior water damage, and to prevent exterior rotting of the wood. This goal of this painting project is to restore the structure to its original condition and preserve the historic nature of the Homer House. The total includes \$21,000 as a bid reserve that would be used if bids come in higher than anticipated, but would be returned to the fund more quickly if not needed.
5. **Belmont Community Path Phase 1 - Right of Way Acquisition - \$192,000:** The goal of this request is to provide funds to secure temporary or permanent easements require to construct the Belmont Community - Path Phase 1. This funding would make Belmont eligible for the MassTrails Grant program. The program limits awards to \$500,000 and requires a minimum community match of 20%. CPA funds in the amount of \$160,000 represents 25% of the estimated total of \$635,000. The total includes \$32,000 as a reserve that would be used if costs come in higher than anticipated, but would be returned to the fund more quickly if not needed.



Warrant Committee Report Town of Belmont FY 2025 Budget

May 2024

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Overview of FY25 Budget Process and Key Decisions	4
Overview of FY25 General Fund Revenues and Expenses	6
Risks in the FY25 Budget	11
Risks in the FY26 Budget	12
Longer-term Issues	12
Belmont Fiscal Compact Guiding Principles	14
Departmental Budgets	15
Education	15
<i>School Department Overview</i>	15
<i>Enrollment</i>	18
<i>Special Instruction</i>	21
<i>Departmental Staffing</i>	30
<i>Transportation</i>	33
<i>Budget Risks, Future Outlook, Recommendations</i>	35
Shared Services	37
<i>Facilities Department</i>	37
<i>Health Insurance</i>	40
<i>Pension</i>	41
<i>Other Post-Employment Benefits (“OPEB”)</i>	44
<i>Debt</i>	44
Public Services	45
<i>Planning and Building</i>	45
<i>Department of Public Works</i>	47
<i>Recreation</i>	52
Public Safety	54
<i>Fire Department</i>	54
<i>Police Department</i>	56
General Government	58
<i>Town Clerk</i>	58
<i>Town Administration</i>	58
<i>Human Resources</i>	59
<i>Information Technology</i>	59
<i>Town Accountant</i>	60
<i>Town Treasurer</i>	60
<i>Board of Assessors</i>	61
Human Services	62
<i>Council on Aging</i>	62
<i>Library</i>	63
<i>Health Department</i>	64
Note	65

2023-24 Warrant Committee Members

William Anderson
Tom Caputo
Fitzie Cowing
Sue Croy
Deepak Garg
Anne Helgen
Geoffrey Lubien (Chair)
Conor McEachern (Secretary)
Robert McLaughlin
Melissa Morley
Lynn Peterson Read
Paul Rickter (Vice Chair)
Matthew Taylor (Through March 2024)
Marie Warner
Jack Weis

Ex officio

Meghan Moriarty (Chair, School Committee)
Roy Epstein (Chair, Select Board)

Executive Summary

Report of the Belmont Warrant Committee to Town Meeting May 2024

Authorization: *As prescribed by the Town of Belmont’s Bylaws, it is the duty of the Warrant Committee to consider for all town meetings all articles in the Warrant that involve an appropriation of money and to report thereon to Town Meeting. The Warrant Committee is specifically charged with recommending a budget to Town Meeting and such recommendations are contained herein.*

Warrant Committee Purpose and Duties

The Warrant Committee (many towns use the label “Finance Committee”) consists of up to seventeen members appointed by the Town Moderator for staggered three-year terms. One representative from the Select Board and one from the School Committee serve as ex-officio members. The Warrant Committee elects its officers: Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Town By-Laws give the Warrant Committee responsibility for reporting and making recommendations to Town Meeting on any article that involves the appropriation of money. The most significant is the annual Town budget where the Warrant Committee, representing Town Meeting, will present its annual budgetary and capital positions to Town Meeting. The Warrant Committee also reports on any matter that in the Committee’s judgment significantly impacts the Town’s financial interest. In addition, the Warrant Committee reviews and approves all requests for transfers from the Reserve Fund. Established by Town Meeting, the \$500,000 Reserve Fund is designed for unbudgeted, emergency expenditures that arise during the year.

The Warrant Committee has also developed high level concepts to guide the Committee through meeting its responsibilities to the Town specified in the Town By-Laws for the Warrant Committee. The following are these concepts:

- Balance the level of community services with our dependence on residential property tax revenue.
- Maintain and adhere to the Town's Comprehensive Financial Policies.
- Plan sustainable budgets with a multi-year focus.
- Advise Town Meeting on the budget and other matters that affect the financial interests of the Town.

Overview of FY25 Budget Process and Key Decisions

Beginning in the fall of 2023 and through the winter of 2024, there were four FY25 Budget Summits that resulted in further refinement for an improved budgeting process. Below represents the process followed, where early on it was clear that a significant override was necessary to just maintain the level of services provided in FY24:

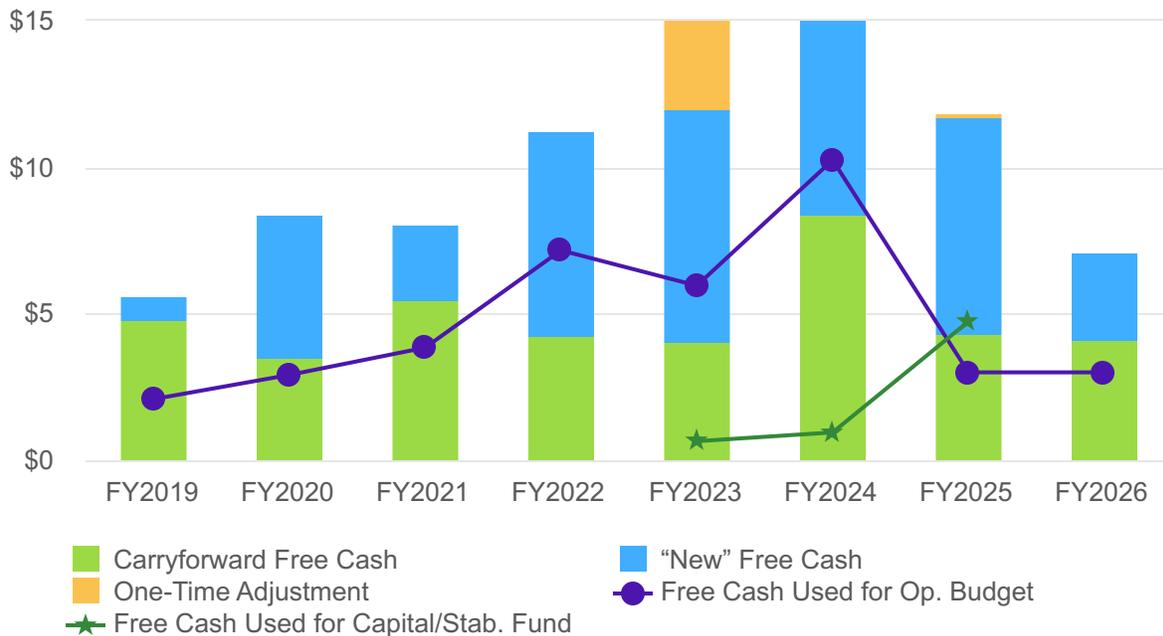
- Host a series of Budget Summits with increasingly precise revenue projections. Discussions to inform later iterations.
- Develop budget projections for “core services” that are funded first – refined alongside revenues.

- Identify remaining revenue that the Town Administrator and School Superintendent use to inform their recommended budgets given determined needs.
- Determine and agree to the level of one-time funding (or lack thereof) and potential override amounts used to supplement revenues.
- Create two sets of budgets for both the municipal and school budgets: one for a successful override in April 2024 and one if the override was not successful.
- Review multi-year budget forecasts and the impact of one-time funds, reserve balances, successful or unsuccessful override for FY25 and projected future budget challenges.

In the Fall of 2023, there was significant attention and analysis on the continued use of one-time funds (which, when received, flows to Free Cash for Town Meeting to appropriate later) and a multi-year financial outlook that indicated a sizable operating override (\$7.5 million) would be needed for the FY25 budget to maintain the current level of services with no reductions in employees for both the municipality and the schools. Eventually, the Select Board put on the ballot an \$8.4 million override that included additional investment in sidewalks (\$250,000) and the remainder (\$650,000) for the schools to invest in bringing more special education services in district and updating its outdated curriculum.

A detailed analysis was also done to determine that the amount of one-time funds to be utilized from one year to the next should be increased from \$2 million to \$3 million based on expected annual department budget turnbacks and excess revenue. This is a significant reduction in one-time funds that had been used over the last several budget cycles, which ranged from \$5-\$10 million, see Chart 1. Going forward, any additional one-time funds received above the \$3 million that will be used in the operating budget will be used for capital projects or appropriated to either a General or Capital Stabilization Fund.

Chart 1: Free Cash Experience in Recent Fiscal Years and Projected



Overview of FY25 General Fund Revenues and Expenses

The FY25 recommended General Fund budget is \$161.32 million, up \$8.49 million or 5.6% from FY24 Table 1.¹ The majority of the increase comes from the School operating budget of \$3.98 million, or a 6.3% increase, with the municipal General Fund portion of the operating budget increasing \$0.70 million, or about 0.2%. Shared Services is \$50.37 million, up \$1.37 million, a 2.8% increase. The FY25 budget is supported by the successful approval by the voters of a \$8.4 million proposition 2½ override which, combined with the normal 2.5% increase in the tax level and a new growth estimate of \$860,000, results in a \$12 million or 11.3% increase in the overall property tax level, see Table 2. Based on the recent analysis mentioned previously, \$3 million of Free Cash is recommended to support the operating budget. The remaining Free Cash usage will be addressed in a later section.

Table 1: Summary of FY25 General Fund Budget vs. FY24 (\$ million). Compares the recommended FY25 General Fund budget expenditures to corresponding data for FY24. This FY25 budget is as of May 15, 2024, and is subject to minor adjustments before the June Town Meeting. FY24 budgets for each department will be discussed in detail in this report.

¹ The General Fund budget does not include expenditures budgeted under the Enterprise Accounts (i.e., water and sewer), the Belmont Housing Trust, or Belmont Light.

Table 1: Expenses	FY2025 Projected	FY2024 Estimated	\$ Change	% Change
Belmont Public Schools	\$66.89	\$62.89	\$4.00	6.4 %
Regional Schools	\$0.23	\$0.75	-\$0.51	(68.6)%
Total Education	\$67.12	\$63.63	\$3.49	5.5 %
General Government	\$5.64	\$5.22	\$0.42	8.0 %
Public Safety	\$14.56	\$14.16	\$0.40	2.8 %
Public Services	\$9.75	\$10.57	-\$0.82	(7.8)%
Health and Human Services	\$3.43	\$3.35	\$0.08	2.4 %
Total Municipal Government	\$33.38	\$33.31	\$0.07	0.2 %
Facilities	\$7.57	\$7.52	\$0.05	0.7 %
Pension Assessment	\$9.87	\$10.04	-\$0.17	(1.7)%
Employee Benefits	\$16.07	\$15.62	\$0.45	2.9 %
Debt Service	\$15.51	\$14.64	\$0.87	5.9 %
Other Shared	\$1.33	\$1.17	\$0.15	13.2 %
Total Shared Services	\$50.35	\$49.00	\$1.36	2.8 %
Capital - Streets	\$1.95	\$1.90	\$0.05	2.5 %
Capital - Sidewalks	\$0.50	\$0.24	\$0.26	105.1 %
Capital - Discretionary	\$3.41	\$1.79	\$1.62	90.3 %
Total Capital	\$5.86	\$3.94	\$1.92	48.8 %
Other Warrant Articles (OPEB, Stabilization Funds)	\$4.61	\$2.96	\$1.65	55.9 %
Total Spending	\$161.32	\$152.83	\$8.49	5.6 %
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.0

Note: Data does not include expenses budgeted in Enterprise Funds including Belmont Light. Calculations reflect rounding.

Table 2: FY25 Expected General Fund Revenues vs. FY23 Revenues (\$ million)

Revenues	FY2025 Projected	FY2024 Estimated	\$ Change	% Change
Property Tax Levy	\$118.24	\$106.23	\$12.00	11.3 %
Levy for Exempt Debt	\$14.08	\$13.14	\$0.93	7.1 %
Total Tax Levy	\$132.31	\$119.38	\$12.94	10.8 %
State Aid	\$14.77	\$14.61	\$0.16	1.1 %
Local Receipts	\$8.22	\$10.06	-\$1.84	(18.3)%
Available Funds	\$8.00	\$11.55	-\$3.55	(30.8)%
Revenue Offsets	-\$3.15	-\$3.10	-\$0.04	1.4 %
Enterprise Receipts	\$1.17	\$0.94	\$0.23	24.2 %
Total Revenues	\$161.32	\$153.43	\$7.89	5.1 %

As shown in Table 1, the FY25 General Fund budget is 5.6% higher than in FY24. The school operating expenditures funded by the General Fund are expected to increase by 6.4%. It is important to note, however, that in addition to the General Fund, the Belmont Public Schools also draw revenue from grants and revolving funds and remaining Covid funds as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: FY25 Total Belmont Public School Budget (\$ million)

<i>Belmont Public Schools</i>	FY25	FY24	\$ Change	% Change
General Fund	\$66.89	\$62.89	\$4.00	6.4 %
Grants & Revolving, Other	\$9.01	\$7.73	\$1.28	16.5 %
Covid Funds	\$1.00	\$0.97	\$0.04	4.1 %
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	\$76.90	\$71.59	\$5.32	7.4 %

Enterprise Funds

Belmont maintains separate Water Enterprise and Sewer Enterprise Funds. The Enterprise Funds receive revenues from rates charged for these services that are used to fund expenses incurred in the operation and upkeep of the Town’s water and sewer system, including storm water management. The total expenditures for the Enterprise Funds are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Enterprise Funds Expenditure Summary (\$ million)

	FY25	FY24	\$ Change	% Change
Water	\$7.99	\$7.88	\$0.11	1.4 %
Sewer	\$10.45	\$9.80	\$0.65	6.6 %
Total Enterprise Funds	\$18.44	\$17.68	\$0.76	4.3 %

Use of One-Time Funds

Please note that the previous fiscal year’s free cash cannot be appropriated until it is certified by the Department of Revenue, which normally occurs in the month of October of the current fiscal year. As a result of this timing, the free cash used in the current fiscal year’s appropriation is from the amount certified from two fiscal periods before. Thus, the amount of free cash used in the FY24 budget was certified in FY22. The only exception would be if there was an appropriation of free cash made at a fall Special Town Meeting after the certification of the previous fiscal year where the previous fiscal year’s free cash can be allocated to the current fiscal year.

As a result of the successful operating override in April 2024 of \$8.4 million, the use of unreserved fund balances or “Free Cash” for the FY25 operating budget is \$3 million, down significantly (-70.7%) from the \$10.2 million used in FY24. The use of \$3 million is in line with the new policy of only using this amount for the operating budget with any addition free cash allocated to capital projects and stabilization funds. All allocations are contingent on sufficient Free Cash reserves that comply with the Town’s Financial Policy of 3-5% of the previous year’s operating budget. the Warrant Committee has consistently shared its concerns over the continued reliance on significant one-time funds to balance the budget and strongly recommends that this new policy be adhered to ensure the past does not repeat itself.

The Free Cash balance at the end of FY23 (June 30, 2023) was certified, at \$11.8 million. While down from the prior year this represented another year of elevated Free Cash due to challenges filling open positions - especially on the municipal side – and conservative fiscal management as well as other revenues greater than budgeted, such as ambulance receipts and building permits. Table 5 includes the breakdown of the factors that contributed to the significant balance at the end of FY23.

FY23 started off with a more modest Free Cash carry-forward balance of \$4.36 million because a significant portion was used for the operation budget in FY24 (over \$9 million) and \$950,00 was transferred to General Stabilization. The municipal and school departments' expenses shifted during the pandemic and many costs were covered by federal grants (like ARPA funds) resulting in higher turnbacks. Also, with many municipal vacancies due to turnover and a challenging job market, most municipal departments did not spend their full FY23 budgets. The Town Accountant continues to focus on identifying unneeded prior-year purchase orders which will never get to a \$0 balance but will continue to lessen.

Table 5: Free Cash Sources (Millions) Fiscal Year-end

Category	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Carryforward	\$4.03	\$4.13	\$7.84	\$4.36
Excess Revenues	\$0.94	\$3.84	\$1.49	\$2.12
Town Salaries	\$1.16	\$1.71	\$0.55	\$0.46
Town Expenses	\$0.71	\$1.18	\$1.25	\$1.11
Town Benefits	\$0.10	\$0.82	\$0.84	\$0.25
Subtotal Town	\$1.97	\$3.72	\$2.64	\$1.82
School Salaries	\$1.27	\$1.32	\$0.65	\$0.17
School Expenses	-\$0.80	\$0.88	-\$0.36	-\$0.43
School Benefits	\$0.35	\$0.19	\$0.40	\$0.62
Subtotal School	\$0.82	\$2.39	\$0.69	\$0.35
Facilities	\$0.52	\$0.40	\$0.47	\$0.18
Debt Service	\$0.16	\$0.76	\$0.19	\$0.07
Prior Year Encumbrances	\$1.01	\$0.79	\$0.65	\$1.15
Other Misc. Factors	\$1.80	-\$1.00	\$1.58	\$1.81
Total Free Cash	\$11.24	\$15.03	\$15.55	\$11.87

Table 6: Overall Free Cash Appropriation for FY25 (Millions)

Fiscal Year	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Free Cash Available	\$8.11	\$11.24	\$15.03	\$15.55	\$11.87
Operating Budget	\$3.79	\$7.11	\$5.38	\$9.69	\$2.56
OPEB	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.58	\$0.55	\$0.44
General Stabilization				\$0.95	
Opioid Settlement \$					\$0.11
Capital Project - Chenery Boilers					\$1.50
Override Offset					\$3.13
Fuel Tanks			\$0.65		
Total Uses	\$3.84	\$7.16	\$6.61	\$11.20	\$7.74
Remaining Balance	\$4.26	\$4.08	\$8.42	\$4.36	\$4.14

The amount of free cash available in FY25 is \$11.87 million which is the amount of certified free cash at the end of FY23 with most of this balance driven by carryforward of remaining previous balances and staff vacancies. The allocation of this balance for FY25 is as follows:

- Operating Budget & OPEB – This reflects the recently decided policy to dedicate \$3M in total Free Cash operating budget (\$2.56 million) and Other Post Employee Benefits OPEB (\$.44 million) for a total of \$3 million.
- Opioid Settlement – This is the FY2023 Opioid Settlement embedded in Free Cash – must be transferred to Opioid fund per the settlement agreement.
- Capital Stabilization – This is for the replacement of the Chenery boilers to take place during the summer of 2025.
- Override Offset – As part of the financial planning of a successful override, the Warrant Committee, supported by the Select Board and School Committee, suggested weaning off the use of excessive amounts of free cash above the recommended recurring \$3 million in order to supplement the operating budget in FY26 and FY27. An override mitigation fund will be established in June 2024 Town Meeting and the \$3.13 million will be allocated to this Fund along with excess revenues from the override of \$.96 million for a total of \$4.09 million to be used in the FY26 and FY27 operating budgets and possibly beyond.
- For FY25 the total allocation of free cash is \$7.74 million and the remaining balance of \$4.14 million will remain which is within the 3-5% of the previous year's operating budget per the guideline of the Town's financial policies.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

On May 10, 2021, the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (aka ARPA, see Fact Sheet here). Belmont was appropriated \$7.8 million for combined municipal and school expenses and \$1.0 million from the 'Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund III' to abet school costs. Earlier in the process it was unclear if Belmont would be able to use all the \$7.8 million. However, through outreach by the Town Administrator and other Town officials, the Massachusetts Congressional Office, on behalf of Belmont and towns like Belmont, were able to secure the utilization of the full allocation from the State Treasury Department.

According to the Treasury announcement, local governments like Belmont will receive Recovery and Relief funding through the state government; funding was released in two tranches, with 50% provided beginning in May 2021 and the balance delivered 12 months later. The funding eligibility period is March 2021 to December 2024 and the funds do not need to be appropriated by Town Meeting but allocated by the vote of the Select Board December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

At this point, Belmont's Town leaders have allocated most of the ARPA funds with only \$141,954 remaining. Table 6 shows the appropriations that have been made. These one-time funds will not be available for future years, and this will put additional budgetary pressures on the municipal and school budgets in FY26 and beyond. The funding for nine ARPA positions at the schools will be ending at the end of FY25. These positions are being carried over from FY24 to support student academic and mental health recovery. The budget for these positions for FY24 was \$965,160 and will increase in FY25 to \$1,004,369. The School Department has indicated that it would like to keep these positions for FY26 and beyond but will need to be funded from other sources with the exhausting of the ARPA fund. This will put added pressure on an already stretched budget projection.

Table 7: ARPA Funds

State ARPA Fund Allotment	\$7,806,251
Allocated by Select Board - Completed Projects	
FY2021-22 COVID Response Activities	\$202,783
FY2023 COVID Stipends	\$269,000
Pre-Construction Work for Rink	\$350,000
BMHS PV Project	\$1,290,633
FY2023 Operating Budget Support	\$981,989
CCBC - Security Projects (Schools)	\$245,000
Salt Shed - DPW Yard	\$490,533
White Field House - Demolish via BMHS	\$346,554
	<u>\$4,176,492</u>
Allocated by Select Board - Open Projects	
DPW Yard Fuel Tanks	\$466,187
CCBC - Repairs Butler School	\$892,214
Grove Street Project Bid Results	\$70,000
Updated website implementation	\$44,755
Market Analysis & Fiscal Analysis	\$75,000
FY24 Town Operating	\$63,648
FY24-25 Schools Operating	\$1,876,000
	<u>\$3,487,804</u>
Combined Total	\$7,664,297
Remaining Balance	\$141,954

Risks in the FY25 Budget

By law, Belmont must operate with a balanced budget. If actual spending appears likely to exceed the total budget by year end, either spending must be reduced or reserves such as Free Cash must be utilized.

FY24 Schools Budget. As of May 2024, the School Department is estimating a potential deficit of \$1.3-\$1.5 million in the operating budget due primarily to higher than expected out-of-district special education costs. There are mitigation plans in place but there could be spill-over impact for FY25 that would put further pressure on the school budget.

COVID / ARPA Funds. Most of the Covid relief and ARPA funds have been allocated. Thus, these funds are no longer available to help cover one-time and recurring costs nor any additional unforeseen financial pressure on the municipal and/or school departments.

Facilities/Capital. As reported in recent years, it is apparent that Town facilities have not received required maintenance on a timely schedule and there is still a significant backlog. Therefore, the risk of unexpected needs for repairs in FY25 and beyond remains significantly high. Also, significant investment is needed at the Chenery with the \$1.6 million replacement of the boilers in FY25, the roof and the HVAC system in FY26 (with a current estimate of \$5.4 million), all three have reached the end of their useful life. Per the analysis of the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) a total of \$39 million is needed for capital maintenance and improvement over FY26-FY29.

Compensation costs. Most of the unions' contracts of the municipal and school departments are settled and the outcome of these negotiations, especially on the school side, has a significant impact on FY25 and future budgets with significant rollover costs. The increasing Full-Time Employee (FTE) numbers in the schools is a concern and is unsustainable if current trends continue.

Healthcare costs. Belmont self-insures its municipal employees and retirees for healthcare. If health insurance costs rise more than the budgeted 4.0% due to people returning to their normal healthcare routines with the pandemic ending, there could be more pressure on the Town Health Insurance Trust Fund to cover any overages.

Risks in the FY26 Budget

Schools & ARPA. The ARPA funded positions of \$1,004,369 at the schools will end at the end of FY25. The School Department has indicated that it would like to keep these positions for FY26 and beyond but will need to be funded from other sources as the ARPA fund becomes extinct. This will put added pressure on an already stretched budget projection.

Schools & Union Contracts. The current teachers' union contract will expire in August of 2025. Given the current environment and recent events in other towns and municipalities, the results of negotiations could have a significant impact on the school budget and put additional pressure on balancing a budget where expenses significantly outpace reoccurring revenues.

Longer-term Issues

Even with a successful \$8.4 million override in April 2024, the underlying structural deficit still exists. The override has provided the town with a reprieve to the structural deficit but only for the short term. Unless expense growth is brought in line with revenue growth the Town could face another significant shortfall as early as FY28 of an estimated \$5.06 million and \$7.31 million in FY29 [Table 7]. The only way to avoid another sizable override in the not-too-distant future is to curtail expenses and expand our tax base. On the revenue side it will take a steadfast commitment to increase commercial development through zoning reform and business development promotion – which will take time. More urgently, it will be increasingly critical that expenses are aligned with the growth in recurring revenues – especially with regard to the school budget, which is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.5% over the next five years while the municipal spending is projected to increase at 2.0%, for a total expense growth of 3.7%.

Table – 8 Warrant Committee Multi-year Outlook (Millions)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	24-'29
Revenue Budget	Actual	Estimated	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	CAGR*
Property Tax Levy	\$102.79	\$106.32	\$109.84	\$113.44	\$117.14	\$120.97	\$124.92	3.3 %
State Aid	\$12.86	\$14.61	\$14.77	\$14.96	\$15.15	\$15.35	\$15.55	1.3 %
Other Revenue Sources	\$9.64	\$7.98	\$6.37	\$6.40	\$6.43	\$6.46	\$6.50	(4.0)%
Use of Free Cash for OPEB	\$0.55	\$0.55	\$0.55	\$0.55	\$0.55	\$0.55	\$0.55	— %
Use of Free Cash / Reserves	\$5.41	\$9.70	\$2.45	\$2.45	\$2.45	\$2.45	\$2.45	(24.1)%
Total Available Revenue	\$131.24	\$139.15	\$133.98	\$137.80	\$141.72	\$145.78	\$149.97	1.5 %
Expense Budget	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	24-'27
	Actual	Estimated	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	CAGR
Schools	\$55.90	\$63.49	\$67.04	\$70.83	\$74.80	\$78.62	\$82.85	5.5 %
Municipal	\$32.47	\$33.31	\$33.38	\$34.21	\$35.06	\$35.94	\$36.84	2.0 %
Shared Services	\$33.05	\$37.11	\$35.54	\$36.78	\$38.06	\$39.40	\$40.78	1.9 %
Capital	\$5.08	\$5.25	\$5.59	\$5.71	\$5.83	\$5.95	\$6.08	3.0 %
Total Expense	\$126.50	\$139.15	\$141.54	\$147.53	\$153.76	\$159.91	\$166.55	3.7 %
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	\$4.74	\$0.00	-\$7.57	-\$9.73	-\$12.03	-\$14.13	-\$16.58	
Approach to Closing Deficit			FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	25-'29
			Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected	CAGR*
Override Increase to Tax Levy			\$8.40	\$8.61	\$8.83	\$9.05	\$9.27	3 %
Override Mitigation Fund			\$0.00	\$1.17	\$3.26	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit) with Override			\$0.83	\$0.05	\$0.05	-\$5.08	-\$7.31	

* CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate

As mentioned earlier in this Report, even with a successful override the long-term structural deficit remains. The override has only provided some temporary breathing room for Belmont to get its financial house in order. Based on this fiscal outlook, the Warrant Committee is leading the development of a Fiscal Compact with the residents of Belmont to address our underlying fiscal challenges, an initiative which many other towns have implemented. The Committee established guiding principles for a Fiscal Compact that a newly formed advisory group will follow toward the development of a formal Fiscal Compact in the spring and summer of 2024, ahead of the FY26 budgeting process. The following are those principles for the advisory group which has representatives from the Select Board, Town Administration, School Administration, Warrant Committee and School Committee.

Belmont Fiscal Compact Guiding Principles

To strengthen our long-term fiscal planning, effectively balance the needs of all residents and minimize future tax increases, a Fiscal Compact Advisory Group will be established to develop a long-term fiscal strategy to help guide current and future town leaders. The guiding principles and commitments below are aimed at setting a foundation for advisory working group members to further refine and develop a more formal fiscal compact with taxpayers. The Fiscal Compact will be completed in advance of the Fall FY26 budget summits.

- No additional Proposition 2½ override request for at least three years after a successful override.
- Reduce annual expense growth rates to bring expenditures in closer alignment with revenue.
- Develop policies to spur revenue and growth, diversify our tax base and promote economic development and business growth.
- Reduce the reliance on one-time sources to fund the operating budget and place excess Free Cash generated each year by turnbacks or excess revenue into specific stabilization funds and capital projects.
- Protect against future fiscal shocks by maintaining adequate financial reserves and a strong bond rating.
- Pursue key initiatives to reduce ongoing expenses and generate operating efficiencies through enhancements in municipal and school organizational structures.
- Bolster Town services, including replacing the aging school curriculum and expanding discretionary capital.
- Provide transparent budgeting and formalize multi-year financial planning, including the potential creation of a long-term financial planning committee with representation from town boards/committees, town and school administration, and town residents with a goal of achieving financial stability and sustainability.
- Develop new senior economic tax relief programs (to the extent permitted by Massachusetts Law).

The Warrant Committee looks forward to working collaboratively with the Select Board, School Committee, and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee to strengthen the budget process and address longer-term challenges. The goal is to use this framework to ensure that budgets are balanced with limited use of one-time funds and operating overrides to create a fiscal environment of stability and sustainability that will allow for all of Belmont's residents to benefit from the services the Town provides.

Departmental Budgets

Education

School Department Overview

Budget by Source of Funds	FY25		Change from FY24			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Total Operating Budget	in \$	in %	share of total \$ change	FY25	Change from FY24
General Fund Operating Budget	66,885,704	87 %	3,998,723	6 %	85 %	547.2	7.6
Grants & Revolving Funds	9,013,703	12 %	679,792	8 %	14 %	34.5	1.0
COVID Relief Funds	1,004,369	1 %	39,209	4 %	1 %	9.0	0.0
Total - All Sources	76,903,776	100 %	4,717,724	7 %	100 %	590.7	8.6

The School Department expenditure budget is funded by three sources: the General Fund, funded by the Town of Belmont; grants, from Federal and State Sources; and Revolving Funds, from fee-based programs. In this report, all funding sources are shown in order to provide a complete picture of school finances. However, of the three funding sources, the General Fund is only one voted by Town Meeting and the only one funded by Belmont’s property tax levy.

FY25 budgeted General Fund expenditures total \$66,885,704, an increase of 6.4%, or \$3,998,723, over FY24. When Grant and Revolving fund expenditures are included, the FY25 budget is 6.6% higher than FY24, at \$75,899,407. Including the remaining non-recurring COVID-relief funding, the total Department expenditure budget is increasing by 6.5%, to \$76,903,776.

The remaining \$1.0M COVID relief funds are non-recurring and must be fully spent by December 31, 2025. Once these funds are spent, the related services need to be funded either by a further increase in taxpayer dollars or by reductions in other budget lines. Otherwise, the services will need to cease.

While the School Department’s FY25 General Fund budgeted expenditures are increasing by **6.4%**, the Town of Belmont’s projected net General Fund revenue available for appropriation is increasing by only **4.5%**. This includes the use of \$2.4m of Free Cash, but absent that amount, the Town’s projected net General Fund revenue would increase by just **2.8%**.²

In addition to the Department’s 6.4% (\$4.0m) FY25 increase in expenditures, in its FY24 Q2 reforecast the School Department was projecting a \$1.3m budget deficit for the current FY24 fiscal year.³ This deficit was driven by unbudgeted expenditures in Special Education (SPED) contract services (\$650,000), SPED transportation (\$300,000), and district-wide non-salary expenditures (\$389,000). This deficit, some of which results from decisions made post appropriation, has been reduced by an infusion of one-time state funds as described in the Special Instruction section, but the challenges raised by unanticipated spending remain. Also, certain FY25 line items are budgeted lower than the most recent re-forecasted FY24 full year expenditures. While the department believes that there are defensible reasons for assuming that certain FY25 expenses will be lower than FY24, the Education Subcommittee has some concern that those assumptions increase the risk that actual spending in FY25 could exceed the budgeted amounts for those line items.

² Town Administrator’s Preliminary Budget Recommendation, February 2, 2024, pg. II-25

³ Belmont Public Schools FY24 Budget Update, February 15, 2024.

General Fund Budget by Program Category

Program Category	FY25		Change from FY24			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Total Operating Budget	in \$	in %	share of total \$ change	FY25	Change from FY24
Regular Instruction⁴	28,925,549	43.3 %	1,322,136	4.8 %	33 %	277.9	2.3
Special Instruction⁵	24,112,132	36.1 %	1,520,939	6.7 %	38 %	162.7	3.7
Student & Instructional Services⁶	8,903,531	13.3 %	1,229,651	16.0 %	31 %	56.5	2.4
Leadership & Administration⁷	4,650,768	7.0 %	250,449	5.7 %	6 %	50.1	(0.7)
Contract Allowance & Fringe Benefits⁸	293,724	0.4 %	(324,452)	(52.5)%	(8)%	0	0
Total General Fund Expenditures Budget	66,885,704	100 %	3,998,723	6.4 %	100 %	547.2	7.6

The table above shows the major program categories funded by the General Fund. Separately, Grants and Revolving Funds (excluding one-time COVID) utilized in the FY25 budget total \$9,013,173, \$679,792 more than FY24. These funds represent 11.7% of total budgeted expenditures and are an important additional funding source.

The FY25 General Fund budget 6.4% increase is accounted for across Special Instruction, Regular Instruction, Student and Instructional Services, and Leadership and Administration:

- Regular Instruction represents approximately 43.2% of the total General Fund Budget and is increasing by 4.8%, or \$1,322,136. Contributing to this increase is the net addition of 2.3 FTEs and annual step-and-lane salary increases for teachers and other staff. Also, the Department is budgeting a shift of 15 FTE from Elementary grades 1-4 to the various programs in grades 5-12 to support the 4th grade relocation to the Chenery Upper Elementary School (CUE) and the changes in enrollment by grade. Overall, Regular Instruction budgeted average salaries are increasing by 4.3%.
- Special Instruction represents the cost of out-of-district SPED tuitions and transportation, in-district SPED educators and accompanying services, and the English Language Education and Early Childhood Education programs. Collectively these programs represent \$24,112,132 (36%) of the total General Fund budget and \$1,520,939 (38%) of the \$3,980,723 total General Fund increase.
 - Out-of-District expenditure increases totaling \$734,261, driven by anticipated private and collaborative tuition increases and out of district transportation, account for 48% of the \$1,520,939 SPED increase. As discussed in the Special Instruction section, this increase is driven by the ongoing rise since the COVID-19 pandemic in the number of students being placed in out-of-district settings as well as increases in tuition rates.
 - In-District special instruction expenditure increases totaling \$492,701, driven by step and lane compensation increases and the proposed hiring of 2.5 additional FTEs, account for 32% of the \$1,520,939 FY24 Special Instruction increase.
 - English Language Education and Early Childhood Education increases totaling \$294,607 account for the remaining 19% of the \$1,520,939 FY25 Special Education increase and are driven mainly by annual salary increases and the addition of 1.2 FTE in the English Language

⁴ Core academic education for Grades K-12. Includes physical education, fine arts, music, etc.

⁵ Special Education (including some pre-K) and English Language Learning.

⁶ Guidance/Health/Psychological Services, Library/Technology, Curriculum/Staff Development, Food Services, Transportation, Athletics & Student Activities, METCO.

⁷ Allowance for future union contract increases.

⁸ District-wide Administration, Individual School Administration, Legal.

Education program (2.8 FTE were added to this category in the FY24 budget, for total of 4.0 additional FTE across these two budget years).

- Student & Instructional Services represents approximately 13.3% of the FY25 General Fund budget and is increasing by \$1,229,651, or 16.0%. The primary driver is a \$594,000, or 67%, total increase in regular day transportation to \$1,485,000. This includes \$304,744 for additional buses to modify routes for the 4th grade reconfiguration. Busing cost is shared between the General Fund and the Bus Fee Revolving fund (\$968,157, or 65%, and \$516,843, or 35%, respectively, in FY25). In FY24, the General Fund absorbed 68% of this total cost. Of the total \$594,000 cost increase, the General Fund is absorbing \$358,744, or 60%.

In addition to Transportation, these program costs are increasing by a total of \$822,374 in FY25: K-12 Guidance \$295,702, including 2.4 FTE; Substitutes \$135,000; Health Services \$120,955; Athletics and Intramurals \$83,589; Curriculum Development \$77,059; and Staff Development, Technology & A.V., Library, and Student Activities, collectively, \$66,564.

- Leadership & Administration represents 7.0% of the FY25 General Fund budget and consists of the Leadership and Administration staff located across the individual school buildings and the District Central office (Principals, Assistant Principals, the Superintendent’s Office, other administrative staff, etc.). This program line budget is increasing by \$250,499, or 5.7%, in FY25. This increase represents primarily the addition of an Assistant Finance Director in FY24 (reallocated from another position at a higher rate of salary) and compensation increases for administration and clerical staff across the district. Finally, the Central Administration component includes approximately \$342,000 for the central purchasing of supplies and services for the district. Whenever possible the district consolidates supply purchases centrally to achieve savings from volume and pricing efficiencies.

The following table shows the district’s expenditures by major functional category. Overall, salaries comprise approximately 82% of total costs; classroom teacher salaries are 50.8% of the total and are rising by \$1.7m, or 5.1%, over 2024, under the terms of the existing union contract.

General Fund Budget by Function

Function	FY25		Change from FY24			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of GF Budget	in \$	in %	share of total \$ change	FY25	Change from FY24
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	34,010,742	50.8 %	1,665,323	5.1 %	42 %	322.3	3.8
Other Teaching Services	6,201,848	9.3 %	152,967	2.5 %	4 %	110.7	0.7
Instructional Leadership	5,232,533	7.8 %	395,105	8.2 %	10 %	65.4	1.2
Pupil Services	4,828,055	7.2 %	793,775	19.7 %	20 %	10.8	0.0
Guidance, Counseling & Testing	2,751,665	4.1 %	416,415	17.8 %	10 %	24.6	2.5
Administration	1,890,578	2.8 %	(86,854)	(4.4)%	(2)%	10.8	0.1
Total Salaries	54,915,421	82.1 %	3,336,731	24.3 %	83 %	544.5	8.2
Materials, Equipment & Technology	2,002,127	3.0 %	79,607	4.1 %	2 %	0.6	-0.6
All Other	790,398	1.2 %	81,970	11.6 %	2 %	2.0	0.0
Total In-District	57,707,946	86.3 %	3,498,308	6.5 %	87 %	547.2	7.6
Payments to Out-of-District Schools	9,177,758	13.7 %	500,415	5.8 %	13 %	0.0	0.0
Total General Fund	66,885,704	100.0 %	3,998,723	6.4 %	100 %	547.2	7.6

Enrollment

In the years before COVID-19, total enrollment in the Belmont Public Schools steadily increased from year to year, and those enrollment increases were a cost driver for the town and school budgets. In 2020 and 2021, likely due to the pandemic, district-wide enrollment declined, though those declines were mostly in the elementary grades. Since 2021, district-wide enrollment has grown modestly, but total enrollment is still down 279 students from its high in FY20 and K-4 enrollment continues to decline. K-4 enrollment has declined every year since 2020 and is down 17% (313 students) in the past five years (and down 10% in the past ten years). Meanwhile, 9-12 enrollment is the highest it's been in at least the last ten years.

The table below shows the changes in enrollment in grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 over the past ten years.

10-Year Enrollment Change by Grade Cohort

Year	Grade K-4	Grade 5-8	Grade 9-12	K-12 Total	Change from Prior Year
FY24	1514	1379	1462	4355	34
FY23	1586	1371	1364	4321	36
FY22	1594	1362	1329	4285	(87)
FY21	1653	1410	1309	4372	(262)
FY20	1827	1489	1318	4634	73
FY19	1825	1428	1308	4561	34
FY18	1812	1421	1294	4527	122
FY17	1784	1357	1264	4405	104
FY16	1733	1323	1245	4301	81
FY15	1699	1285	1236	4220	83
FY14	1686	1268	1183	4137	143
Five Year					
#	(311)	(49)	154	(206)	
%	(17.04)%	(3.43)%	11.77 %	(4.52)%	
Ten Year					
#	(172)	111	279	218	
%	(10.20)%	8.75 %	23.58 %	5.27 %	
<i>Enrollment is measured as of October 1st of each Fiscal Year.</i>					
<i>Source: MA DESE Enrollment by Grade Reports</i>					

This pattern of growth in the higher grades and declining numbers in the lower grades creates a dynamic where each year a larger number of high school seniors graduate than new students enter Kindergarten. Unless this dynamic changes, total enrollments are likely to decline in future years.

When compared to 11 peer districts, Belmont's overall 5-year decline matches a pattern of lower enrollments in elementary grades, although Belmont's decline exceeds peer districts. The table below shows a general pattern in the peer districts where declines in K-4 enrollment are greater than the declines (or small increases) in overall enrollment.

Comparison of K-4 Enrollment Changes in Comparable Districts

District	K-4			K-12		
	FY19	FY24	% Change	FY19	FY24	% Change
Acton-Boxborough	1849	1716	(7.19)%	5466	4990	(8.71)%
Arlington	2656	2376	(10.54)%	5843	5918	1.28 %
Belmont	1825	1514	(17.04)%	4561	4355	(4.52)%
Brookline	3117	2599	(16.62)%	7604	6783	(10.80)%
Burlington	1442	1382	(4.16)%	3427	3421	(0.18)%
Hopkinton	1309	1541	17.72 %	3616	4091	13.14 %
Lexington	2489	2129	(14.46)%	7190	6729	(6.41)%
Melrose	1576	1507	(4.38)%	3655	3667	0.33 %
Sharon	1278	1178	(7.82)%	3539	3405	(3.79)%
Watertown	1078	1063	(1.39)%	2484	2585	4.07 %
Westborough	1427	1367	(4.20)%	3798	3749	(1.29)%
Westford	1667	1471	(11.76)%	4953	4381	(11.55)%
Winchester	1707	1506	(11.78)%	4568	4259	(6.76)%

*Enrollment is measured as of October 1st of each Fiscal Year.
Source: MA DESE Enrollment by Grade Reports*

Demographic trends affecting Belmont school enrollment were the subject of a report⁹ by McKibben Demographic Research that was commissioned by the Belmont Public Schools and presented in April 2024. That report projects a 3.9% decline in BPS enrollment over the next five years and a further 0.8% decline in the five years after that. These projected declines are attributed to a higher percentage of “empty nest” households than in the past and a lower “replacement” factor; that is, the number of elementary students is not expected to replace the number of graduating students due to lower birth rates. Both of these are national trends.

Special Instruction – Enrollment

Special Instruction covers three categories:

- Special Education (SPED) K-12 for Students with Disabilities (SWD)
- English Language Education (ELE)
- Early Childhood Education Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)

Special Education

The total number of students requiring SPED services has grown by 38% in the past five years and 75% in the past ten years. This increase has been most pronounced since the start of the COVID-19 era, when the percentage of SPED students grew from about 10% to the current 15% of total students.

⁹ McKibben Report: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Qvckbv2L49WMhMqgkQ2Ss7AjqdSr5ZX>

The number of students receiving SPED services out of district (OOD) has increased significantly in the past two years. Between FY14 and FY20, the number of OOD students averaged around 95. However, that number grew to 130 in FY23 and, while fluctuating in FY24, the number was at 130 in April 2024.¹⁰

The table below shows the changes in Special Education and OOD enrollment over the past ten years.

10-Year Special Education Enrollment Change

Year	All Special Education Students		Out-of-District Special Education Students	
	Number	% of All Students	Number	% of SPED Students
FY24	688	15.1 %	125	18.2 %
FY23	645	14.3 %	130	20.2 %
FY22	604	13.5 %	102	16.9 %
FY21	540	12.0 %	96	17.8 %
FY20	513	10.7 %	95	18.5 %
FY19	498	10.6 %	93	18.7 %
FY18	486	10.4 %	107	22.0 %
FY17	458	10.0 %	104	22.7 %
FY16	444	10.0 %	98	22.0 %
FY15	405	9.3 %	93	22.1 %
FY14	394	9.2 %	83	23.0 %
5-Year Change				
#	190		32	
%	38.2 %		34.4 %	
10-Year Change				
#	294		42	
%	74.6 %		50.6 %	
Enrollment is measured as of October 1st of each Fiscal Year.				
Source: MA DESE Enrollment by Selected Populations Reports, Belmont Public Schools				

Note: Reflects Belmont Public Schools and DESE numbers. In FY24, the School Department began to include additional placements in its presentations which are not counted in by DESE. The FY24 number used by the district is 142 and includes placements in non-accredited schools and/or where the district pays a portion of the tuition. For consistency in comparing year to year, the table above uses the FY24 125 number that was reported to DESE. The OOD tuition budget amounts include payment for all of these placements.

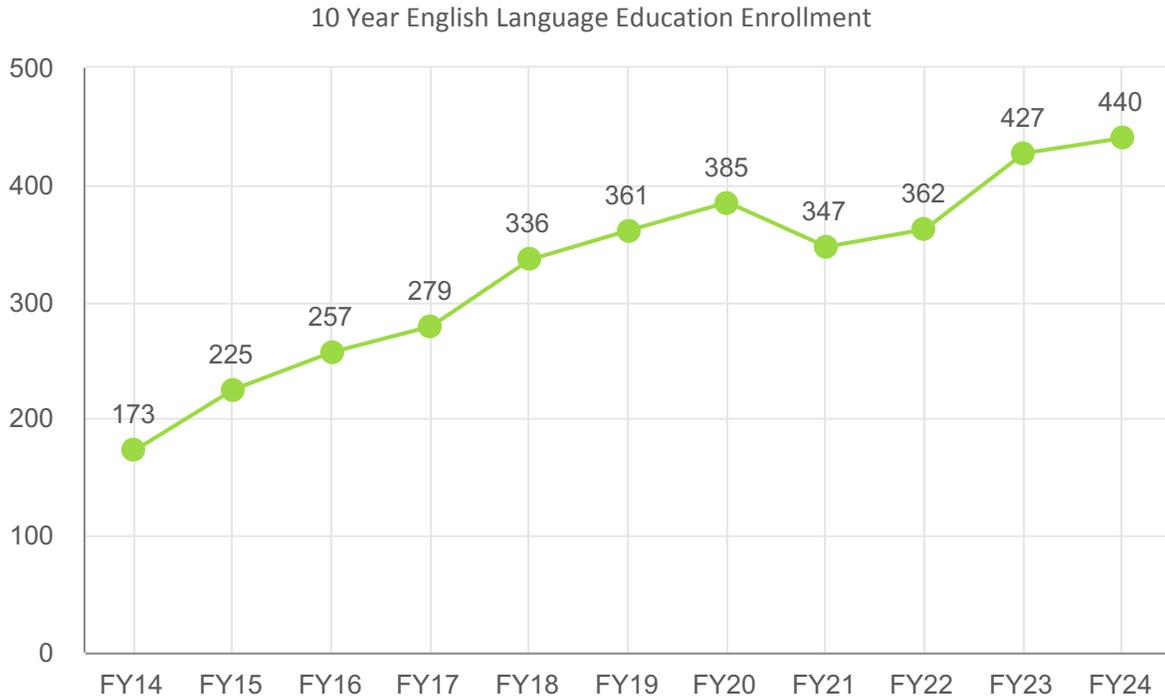
English Language Education

English Language Education (ELE) services are provided to students whose primary language is not English and who are not yet able to do regular classroom work in English. The number of ELE students in

¹⁰ Belmont Public Schools Enrollment, April 1, 2024, which is generally consistent with MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) numbers. In FY24, the School Department began referencing a total number of OOD students that includes students at non-accredited schools and settlements (a legal process which may result in partial payment of out placements by the School Department).

the Belmont Public Schools has increased considerably in the past ten years, growing from 4% to 10% of total students and more than doubling from 173 to 440.

The chart below shows the changes in ELE enrollment over the past ten years. In FY21 and FY22, the COVID-19 pandemic affected international travel and visas, which likely reduced the ELE numbers in these years.



Enrollment is measured as of October 1st of each Fiscal Year.

Source: MA DESE Enrollment by Selected Populations Reports, Belmont Public Schools

Special Instruction

Special Instruction (SI) expenditures include all English Language Education (ELE), Early Childhood Education (Pre-K), and Special Education (SPED) expenditures. All Belmont children are legally entitled to educational services provided by the Belmont Public Schools, regardless of the level of services needed. As previously noted, the total SI FY25 General Fund budget is \$24.1m, a 6.7% increase over the FY24 budget, of which SPED represents 89.6%. Students with Disabilities (SWD) receive SPED services either in-district, through regular and in-house specialized instruction and support services, or out-of-district (OOD) in specialized schools. As shown below, 78.0% of the increase in the FY25 SI budget consists of SPED in-district and OOD expenditures. These are described in detail below.

**FY 24-25 General Fund Special Instruction Budget
(Includes SPED, ELE and Early Education (Pre-K))**

	FY25		Change from FY24			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Total SI Budget	In \$	In %	Share of Total \$ Change	FY25	Change from FY24
Special Instruction Components							
Special Education (SPED)	21,631,161	89.7 %	1,226,332	5.6 %	78 %	134.2	1.9
English Language Education	1,821,551	7.6 %	261,294	16.7 %	17 %	17	1.2
Early Childhood Ed. (Pre-K)	659,420	2.7 %	33,313	5.3 %	2 %	10.9	0
Total Special Instruction (SI)	24,112,132	100 %	1,520,939	6.7 %	100 %	162.7	3.7
Special Education Components							
In-District Expenditures							
Teachers, Aides & Admin	8,133,683	33.7 %	524,066	6.9 %	34 %	132.2	2.5
Psych & Behavioral Therapy	1,264,197	5.2 %	82,444	7.0 %	5 %	2.6	0
Program Srvcs, Tutors & Supls.	1,009,590	4.2 %	(114,439)	(10.2)%	(8)%	N/A	N/A
Total In-District	10,407,470	43.2 %	492,071	5.0 %	32 %	134.8	2.5
Out-of-District Expenditures							
Private Tuitions	4,341,097	18.0 %	183,997	4.4 %	12 %	N/A	N/A
Collaborative Tuitions	4,836,661	20.1 %	316,418	7.0 %	21 %	N/A	N/A
Total Out-of-District Tuitions	9,177,758	38.1 %	500,415	5.8 %	33 %	N/A	N/A
Transportation	2,045,933	8.5 %	233,846	12.9 %	15 %	N/A	N/A
Total Out-of-District	11,223,691	46.5 %	734,261	7.0 %	48 %	N/A	N/A
<i>Note: Budgeted OOD expenditures include \$600,000 intended to recapitalized reserves and exclude \$600,000 to be appropriated to the SPED Reserve fund. The total General Fund OOD tuition budget before appropriation is \$9,277,300.</i>							
<i>Source: FY24 Budget as of May 7, 2024</i>							

English Language Education (ELE)

FY25 ELE expenditures are budgeted at \$1.8m, an 16.5% increase from FY24. As noted earlier, the district’s EL cohort continues to grow, outpacing general enrollment trends. The FY25 budget used for this report reflects the additional 1.2 FTE funded by reallocating budget dollars from elementary and special services salary lines to address mandated needs to support the growing number of EL students.

Early Childhood Education (Pre-School)

FY24 Pre-K expenditures are budgeted to increase by \$33,313 or 5.3%, reflecting contractual compensation obligations. Pre-K enrollment has increased by 11 students to a total of 76 between October 1, 2023 and May 1, 2024.

Special Education Costs

Special Education (SPED) expenditures include all SPED teachers, aides, occupational therapists, tutors, and contracted and other services for over 600 students with a wide variety of individual learning, behavioral, physical, developmental, social, emotional, and other specialized educational needs. For many students, these needs are met within the district. The SPED budget also includes mandated SPED transportation and out-of-district (OOD) tuitions for students whose needs cannot be met by the Belmont school system.

SPED expenditures represent a significant driver of General Fund budget growth, due to the high number of OOD placements and students receiving in-district services, as well as the rising costs of providing these in-district and OOD services. SPED represents 32.3% of the overall General Fund budget in FY25. FY25 SPED expenditures are budgeted to be \$21.6m, an increase \$1.1m or 5.6% compared to FY24). Since the pandemic began, the number of students requiring mandated services has grown significantly and many of these needs have been met in-district with additional resources. Between FY20 and FY25, the School Department will have added a total of 33 General Fund and grant-funded SPED FTEs (this does not including ARPA or IDEA funded positions), including SPED teachers and aides, specialized positions such as behavioral therapists, SPED Chairs, a SPED Evaluation Team Leader and transition room staffing, as well as increased out-sourced specialized services.

For FY25, in-district expenditures are budgeted to increase by 5.0% (\$492,071). The district has added 5.67 total SPED FTEs including 3.5 FTEs to address increased in-district needs and 2.0 funded by Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds previously used for OOD tuitions. In FY25, the district anticipates reorganizing the SPED staffing model to build in-district programming for specific cohorts. The new staffing for these programs includes an Evaluation Team Leader, two Professional staffers, and several aides. These positions represent the district's estimate of the staffing needed to build an in-district program, with specific roles to be identified later once the programming is identified.

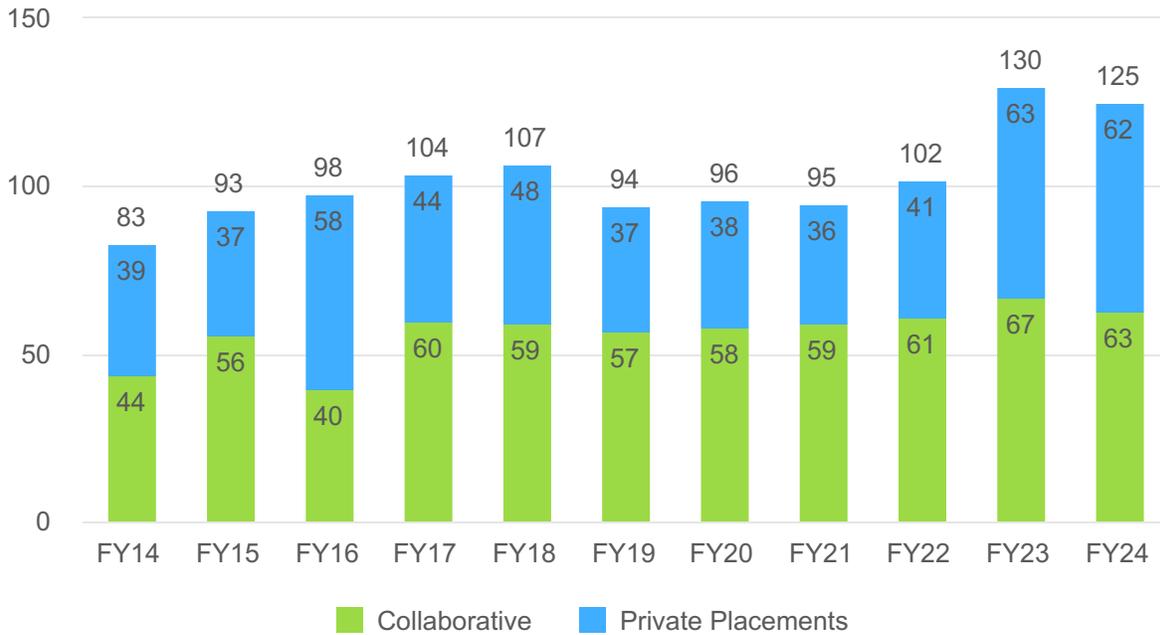
OOD tuitions and transportation together represent 52% of SPED costs in FY25. OOD expenditures are described in more detail below and OOD transportation costs are discussed in further detail later in the Education section.

Out-of-District (OOD) Expenditures

The School Department is responsible for the OOD tuitions, transportation, and other costs for Students with Disabilities (SWD) whose needs cannot be met in-district. Out-of-district schools include collaboratives (such as LABBB, a five-town collaborative school for SWD, of which Belmont is a member), as well as private day and residential schools that provide expanded and specific services for SWD. The cost of these OOD programs varies by student, depending on the type of placement and the individual's needs, and is typically significantly higher than the costs for students served in-district.

Since the pandemic, the district has experienced an unprecedented number of SWD whose needs cannot be met in-district. The increase in placements is shown in the graph below. In FY24, the School Department began to include additional placements which are not included by DESE and have not been previously reported. These include placements in non-accredited schools and/or where the district pays a portion of the tuition. As can be seen in the chart below, virtually all of these placements are in private schools. The OOD tuition budget amount has always and will continue to include tuition payments for all placements.

OOD Placements By Type



Note: Reflects Belmont Public Schools and DESE numbers. In FY24, the School Department began to include additional placements in its presentations which are not counted in by DESE. The FY24 number used by the district is 142 and includes placements in non-accredited schools and/or where the district pays a portion of the tuition. The OOD tuition budget amounts include payment for all of these placements.
Source: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Belmont Public School Monthly Enrollment Sheets as of Oct 1st of each fiscal year.

In concert with the high number of placements, OOD tuition costs also rose to an unprecedented level in FY23 and continue to increase at a rapid rate. The School Department’s forecast as of December 2023 indicates that FY24 OOD tuitions, including those funded by grants, are expected to total \$12.2m, a \$1.7m (15.9%) increase over FY23 OOD actual tuitions (which were \$2.1m higher than FY22). (A more recent forecast projects \$12.4m in FY24 tuitions). The FY24 December forecast is \$567,270 above the FY24 budget of \$11.6m.¹¹ The original FY24 budget included state-approved increases in specialized school tuitions ranging from 5% to 14%, as well as \$607,605 intended to replenish reserves.

Total FY25 OOD tuitions are budgeted at \$12.7m or 9.6% higher than FY24 budgeted tuitions, and 4.5% higher than recently forecasted FY24 tuitions. The General Fund portion of OOD tuitions will increase by 5.8% to \$9.2m.

A recent review of OOD placements in Belmont appears to have a higher percentage and number of OOD placements relative to its peer districts, as shown in the table below.

¹¹ The FY24 General Fund OOD budget included \$607,605 budgeted to replenish reserves by allowing this amount to be carried forward in the Circuit Breaker accounts.

Students with Disabilities (SWD) and Out of District (OOD) Peer District Comparison

District	FY23 Total Enrollment	FY23 In-district Enrollment	FY19 SWD	FY23 SWD	SWD as % In-Distr	SWD 5-Yr % Increase	FY23 OOD	OOD as % of SWD	OOD as % of Tot Enr	% Low Income	% EL
Acton	5,917	5,133	892	803	15 %	(10)%	64	8 %	1 %	11 %	6 %
Boxborough	6,047	5,987	936	1,000	17 %	7 %	60	6 %	1 %	11 %	5 %
Arlington	4,507	4,378	498	645	14 %	30 %	129	20 %	3 %	11 %	10 %
Belmont	7,116	7,060	1,248	1,279	18 %	2 %	56	4 %	1 %	14 %	11 %
Brookline	3,486	3,412	95	569	16 %	15 %	73	13 %	2 %	18 %	7 %
Burlington	4,196	4,163	464	566	13 %	22 %	33	6 %	1 %	7 %	6 %
Hopkinton	6,938	6,845	1,036	1,018	15 %	(2)%	93	9 %	1 %	8 %	9 %
Lexington	3,895	3,849	575	647	17 %	13 %	46	7 %	1 %	16 %	5 %
Melrose	5,594	5,525	967	1,018	18 %	5 %	68	7 %	1 %	8 %	3 %
Needham	3,591	3,542	513	579	16 %	13 %	48	8 %	1 %	12 %	3 %
Sharon	2,699	2,662	568	508	19 %	(11)%	37	7 %	1 %	36 %	17 %
Watertown	4,219	4,158	805	728	17 %	(10)%	61	8 %	1 %	8 %	3 %
Wellesley	3,861	3,830	587	595	15 %	1 %	31	5 %	1 %	16 %	11 %
Westborough	4,392	4,333	811	697	16 %	(14)%	57	8 %	1 %	7 %	3 %
Winchester	Average	4,765	4,654	731	770			56			

*Note: SWD includes both in-district and out-of-district students.
Source: DESE RADAR Special Education, District Trends and Students w/Disabilities tabs.*

As one of her first actions, the Superintendent initiated a review of SPED services to determine whether there are opportunities to restructure and build new programs for certain OOD cohorts that could be better served by in-district specialized classes and programs. The administration and families understand that students benefit from programs that integrate them into their community. Providing in-district services allows students to go to school with their siblings and neighbors and participate in local after-school activities. To this end, a review of SPED services was initiated early in the 2024-25 school year and completed in March 2025. Although the specific programs have yet to be identified, the School Department has added 5.0 SPED FTEs in FY25 (for a total of approximately \$350,000)¹² to staff potential in-district programming. Specific roles for these incremental FTEs will be determined once the programs have been structured. The investment in staff and specialized programs is expected, over time, to reduce the number of OOD placements, tuitions, and transportation and reduce contracted specialized services costs. However, the School Department does not expect an immediate return of current OOD students in FY25 but is hopeful that the programming will provide in-district alternatives to OOD placements when students need additional services.

The School Department has budgeted FY25 OOD tuitions at \$12.7m or 9.6% higher than FY24 budgeted tuitions and the General Fund portion of OOD tuitions at \$9.2m, a 5.8% increase. This includes an increase in reserves by \$414,487. The FY25 budget reflects a School Department decision in February to reduce the overall tuition budget and General Fund portion by \$309,509 from prior draft budgets to fund additional SPED positions.

Prior to receiving news about an influx of one-time state funds, the carryforward reserves were projected to be reduced to as little as \$300,000. The School Department is currently in the process of re-forecasting both the projected FY24 OOD tuitions and available outside funding. The amount of OOD

¹² As detailed elsewhere, not all of these 5 FTEs are reflected in the 2/8/24 BPS SPED budget.

reserves is particularly important given the tuition increases in the past several years. While the district is expecting to create in-district programs in FY25, school administration does not anticipate that such programming will result in an immediate material reduction in OOD enrollments and OOD tuitions in FY25. The Education Subcommittee is concerned that the small budgeted increase in FY25 OOD tuitions may understate actual FY25 tuitions, especially in light of the most recent FY24 reforecast. Combined with changes to the reserve levels (discussed below) this puts the School Department's FY25 General Fund budget at risk with less cushion or flexibility than the department has had in recent years for a budget line item that is notoriously volatile.

OOD Tuition Funding Sources

OOD placements are funded by the General Fund (GF), federal IDEA funds, state-administered Circuit Breaker (CB) grants, and LABBB credits (representing surpluses returned to member towns). Circuit Breaker and IDEA amounts not spent in the prior year can be carried forward to the following year and can provide a buffer for unanticipated changes in OOD expenditures that occur during the year. LABBB credits must be spent in the fiscal year they are received. Typically, the district draws down the General Fund OOD tuition amount first and then charges additional tuitions against CB and IDEA grant funds. Any amount not charged to the grant funds is carried forward as a buffer against unanticipated changes in OOD tuitions in the following year.

**Out-of-District Tuition Expenses by Placement Type and Funding Source
(\$ in 000's)**

								Change FY24 Budget - FY25 Budget	
	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Q2 Forecast	FY25 Budget	\$	%
Tuition Expenses by Placement Type:									
LABBB Collaborative	3,420.4	4,026.0	3,805.4	4,285.1	4,573.0	N/A	4,786.1	213.1	4.7 %
MA Public	63.1	---	32.9	32.9	47.3	N/A	50.6	3.3	7.0 %
Private	4,213.7	4,016.1	4,401.4	6,038.2	6,811.0	N/A	7,692.2	881.2	12.9 %
Out-of-State	144.0	33.6	129.8	135.0	158.4	N/A	169.5	11.1	7.0 %
Total Out-of-District Tuitions	7,841.1	8,075.6	8,370.0	10,491.2	11,589.7	12,156.9	12,698.4	1,108.7	9.6 %
Tuition Expenses by Funding Source:									
General Fund ¹³	4,593.6	3,362.8	6,029.6	4,838.9	8,677.3	8,677.3	9,177.8	500.5	5.8 %
General Fund SPED Reserve Fund	---	---	---	672.9	---	---	---	---	---
Federal IDEA Grants	623.1	1,694.8	788.7	770.3	782.4	697.3	674.5	(107.9)	(13.8)%
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,847.1	3,018.1	1,384.9	3,840.3	2,030.0	2,782.3	2,846.1	816.1	40.2 %
LABBB Credits	777.3	---	166.3	118.8	100.0	—	—	---	---
Warrant Committee Reserve				250.0					
Total Funding Sources	7,841.1	8,075.6	8,369.5	10,491.2	11,589.7	12,156.9	12,698.4	1,108.7	9.6 %

Source: Belmont Public Schools Budgets

OOD Reserves

OOD reserves represent unspent federal, state and other funds that are designated to fund OOD tuitions and can be spent over the course of two years. Accumulation of reserves is based on several factors, including the difference in actual-to-budgeted tuitions, the amount of grant funding, the lag in receipt of state Circuit Breaker (CB) funding relative to eligible OOD expenditures, and unpredictable LABBB credits. The School Department follows the state recommendation to roll over (“carry forward”) into the next fiscal year any excess of available General Fund and grant funds not needed to pay tuition costs. This practice helps bridge the gap in state CB tuition reimbursements and allows the School Department to absorb unanticipated and unbudgeted new placements that occur after the budget has been approved.

The importance of OOD reserves was demonstrated in FY23, when the district experienced an unprecedented 30% increase in OOD placements and in increase in corresponding tuitions that exceeded the budgeted amount by almost \$1.7m. The district was able to fund all but approximately \$150,000 with reserves and \$181,960 in extraordinary relief CB funds, albeit severely reducing the amount of cushion for FY24. The district was provided with \$250,000 in Warrant Committee reserves, but this allocation was turned back as free cash to the town and a year-end balance of \$205,879 was achieved by using other year-end available funds.

¹³ FY24 Q2 year-end forecast as of 2/8/24

In June 2023, Town Meeting appropriated \$1,207,605 to the School Department's General Fund to recapitalize OOD reserves that were projected to be completely depleted in FY23. Of this, the School Department appropriated \$600,000 to refund the SPED Reserve Fund which had been fully depleted. The balance of \$607,605 represented an allocation of OOD tuitions that would allow Circuit Breaker funds received in FY24 to remain unspent and carried over into FY25. The combination of these two components resulted in budgeted FY24 year-end reserves of \$1,207,605. Since the FY24 budget was approved, FY23 actual reserves were \$205,879, and an additional \$409,768 in unbudgeted CB funds were realized. These additions resulted in a total of \$1.8m in potential OOD funding sources, but these are offset by \$207,866 in reductions: \$107,866 in IDEA grants reallocated from tuitions to fund SPED positions and the elimination of \$100,000 in budgeted LABBB credits due to no LABBB credits being issued this year. This net of \$1.6m will be used to fund the mid-year increase of \$567,270 in expected FY24 tuitions. As a result, a revised forecast prepared in February projected FY24 year-end reserves at \$1,048,116, as shown in the chart.

As previously noted, the School Department presented FY24 Q2 numbers, which forecast a \$1.3m deficit for FY24. Part of the mitigation strategy expressed at that time was to increase the use of the Circuit Breaker funding and use the \$600,000 in the SPED reserve to cover deficits in SPED contract and transportation spending.¹⁴ This, combined with the \$200,000 increase in FY24 tuitions since the published budget book would reduce the FYE 24 reserves from the \$1 million shown in the budget to around \$150,000—significantly lower than needed, especially given the lack of cushion in the FY25 OOD budget (detailed below).

In early May, the School Department announced that DESE was providing two sources of additional OOD CB funding in FY24: 1) extraordinary relief funds and 2) "reserve relief" funds. Extraordinary relief funds are required to be spent this fiscal year. Reserve relief funds can be spent this fiscal year or next fiscal year. Reserve relief is essentially a "prepayment" of FY25 CB funds and will be deducted from FY25 CB allocations.

The increase in funds is a result of advocacy by intense lobbying from school districts and administrators to assist in funding the 14% increase in private school tuitions instituted by the state for FY24. In FY24 Belmont Public Schools will receive \$600,000 in FY24 extraordinary relief and \$458,000 in reserve relief. for a total of \$1,058,000. These one-time funds are expected to be used to address the SPED spending deficits and other expenditures in FY24, rather than using the SPED reserve. As a result, the current estimate of FY24 reserves as of this report is expected to be around \$1 million.

The intersection of available funds, expenditures, and reserves determines the amount appropriated in the General Fund for OOD tuitions and the amount of cushion available for unanticipated and unbudgeted costs. In FY24, the town added \$1.2m late in the budget season to replenish reserves depleted in FY23, a year in which OOD placements skyrocketed. If not for recently announced one-time additional funds from the state, the School Department was anticipating turning to the Town again for additional monies, this time to replace reserves used to fund SPED and other General Fund spending deficits.

For the FY25 budget documents, the School Department has publicly been using an estimate for FY24 year-end tuitions from December 2023 that was based on 2-3 months of the school year and included some possible placements without anticipating any returning students. OOD tuitions can change dramatically over a short period of time, as experienced in FY23 and again this fiscal year. If the current estimate of FY24 tuitions is lower than \$12.4m, reserves increase by that amount, which can change the outlook for FY25 significantly. Conversely, a further increase in tuitions will result in lower reserves at year-end and affect the cushion available in FY25.

¹⁴ While allowable under state rules, this would represent the first time that SPED reserves were to be used to fund expenditures other than tuitions.

Out-of-District Reserve Balances by Funding Source (\$ in 000's)

	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Q2 Forecast	FY25 Budget	FY25B v. FY24B
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balances:								
Belmont General Fund	---	---	---	---	---	---		
General Fund SPED Reserve Fund	---	673	673	673	600	600	600	---
Federal IDEA Grants	261	660	---	11	---	23	---	---
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,854	1,823	627	1,502	---	183	448	448
LABBB Credits	175	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total Prior Year Reserve Balance	2,291	3,156	1,300	2,186	600	806	1,048	448
Plus: Current Year Allocation:								
Belmont General Fund ¹⁵	5,266	3,935	6,030	4,731	8,677	8,677	9,178	500
Warrant Committee Reserve	---	---	---	250	---	---	---	
General Fund SPED Reserve Fund	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
Federal IDEA Grants	972	1,035	799	782	782	675	675	(108)
MA State Circuit Breaker ¹⁶	1,823	1,822	2,260	2,339	2,638	3,047	3,261	623
MA State Circuit Breaker Extraordinary Relief	---	---	---	182	---	---	---	---
LABBB Credits	602	---	166	119	100	---	---	(100)
Total Current Year Allocation	8,664	6,792	9,255	8,403	12,097	12,399	13,113	1,016
Total Available Revenues	10,955	9,948	10,555	10,589	12,697	13,205	14,161	1,464
Less: Current Year Expenditures:								
Belmont General Fund	4,594	3,363	6,030	4,839	8,677	8,677	9,178	500
General Fund SPED Reserve Fund	---	---	---	673	---	---	---	---
Warrant Committee Reserve	---	---	---	250	---	---	---	---
Federal IDEA Grants	623	1,695	789	770	782	697	675	(108)
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,847	3,018	1,385	3,840	2,030	2,782	2,846	816
LABBB Credits	777	---	166	119	100	---	---	(100)
Total Current Year Expenditures	7,841	8,076	8,370	10,491	11,590	12,157	12,698	1,109
Ending Carry-Forward Balances:¹⁷								
General Fund SPED Reserve Fund	673	673	673	—	600	600	600	---
Federal IDEA Grants	611	---	11	23	---	---	---	---
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,830	627	1,502	183	608	448	863	255
Total Ending Carry-Forward Balances	3,114	1,300	2,186	206	1,208	1,048	1,463	255

¹⁵ The BPS currently expects to use most or all of the funding sources, including the SPED Reserve, in FY24 to fund General Fund unbudgeted tuitions & deficits in SPED contractual & transportation accounts. As a result, FY24 reserves are expected to be significantly lower than shown here & projected FY25 reserves will be negatively impacted.

¹⁶ Budgeted General Fund dollars cannot be carried over and must be turned back to the town. LABBB credits must be spent in the year they are received.

¹⁷ FY24 forecast as of 2/08/24

Departmental Staffing

This section shows how staffing will change in FY25, including positions added, shifts to respond to changes in enrollment and the move of the 4th grade to the Chenery Upper Elementary School (CUE), and how some positions will be in their last year of COVID funding. Note that in FY24, Building & Operations and Contract Allowances & Fringe Benefits were moved from the School Department (SD) budget to the Town's budget under Shared Services. Therefore, the FTEs in these departments are not included in this section.

Total Staffing Changes in FY25

Total staffing, including grant-funded positions, are budgeted to increase by 8.63 FTEs from 582.06 in FY24 to 590.70 FTEs in FY25. The new positions are: 5 Special Education FTEs (2 teachers, 2 aides, 1 administrator) and 2.6 FTEs English Language Learners (ELL). Therefore the General Fund FTEs are budgeted to increase by 7.61, with an additional 1.02 FTEs funded by grants/revolving funds.

This number of new FTEs does not include the additional 5.6 FTEs that have been reallocated from areas where the positions are no longer needed, nor does it include 35 other reallocated FTEs as of the May 7, 2024 budget adjustment. Some are from accounts that were underutilized in the budget during FY24, and will be carried over into FY25.

Total Staffing by Funding Source

	FY24 FTE	FY25 FTE	Change in FTE
General Fund	539.57	547.18	7.61
Grants and Revolving Funds	33.50	34.52	1.02
TOTAL RECURRING SOURCES	573.06	581.70	8.63
COVID Funds	9.00	9.00	0.00
TOTAL ALL SOURCES	582.06	590.70	8.63

Positions Added in FY25

- The School Department increases staffing in the FY25 budget with the intent of improving access within the district to specialized instruction for students with identified special needs. For FY25, the district is adding 5 FTEs to create and implement in-district programming for specific cohorts of SWD. Four of the added FTEs will work directly with students: two Special Education staff and two Special Education Professional Aides. The fifth will be an Evaluation Team Leader. The specific positions will be identified once the programs have been developed.
- The FTE Evaluation Team Leader (Unit B) is being added in anticipation of the 4th grade move to the CUE, to provide oversight to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team and ensure efficient and effective delivery of services to students with special needs. The Evaluation Team Leader will supervise and support the teaching staff and serve as a contact for families.

FTEs can be divided among the following categories where yearly changes can be noted:

FTEs by Program

	FY 24 FTE	FY 25 FTE	Change in FTE
Regular Instruction			
General Fund	275.65	277.94	2.29
Grants & Revolving Funds	1.05	1.05	0.00
Total Regular Instruction	276.71	278.99	2.29
Special Instruction			
General Fund	159.05	162.72	3.67
Grants & Revolving Funds	4.00	6.00	2.00
Total Special Instruction	163.05	168.72	5.67
Student & Instructional Services			
General Fund	54.09	56.45	2.36
Grants & Revolving Funds	28.14	27.27	(0.88)
Total Student & Instructional Services	82.23	83.72	1.48
Leadership & Administration			
General Fund	50.76	50.06	(0.70)
Grants & Revolving Funds	0.30	0.20	(0.10)
Total Leadership & Administration	51.06	50.26	(0.80)
COVID Grant	9.00	9.00	0.00
TOTALS	582.06	590.70	8.63

Regular Instruction FTEs (Academics, Fine Arts, Art, Music, Physical Education, Health Education, Theatre Arts, Technology, and World Languages) are increasing by 2.29 FTEs. Special Instruction (ELL, Early Childhood Education, and Special Education) is growing by 5.67 FTEs. Students & Instructional Services is increasing by 1.48 FTEs (includes Athletics, Library, Technology, Food Service, Health Services, Guidance, Psychological Services, METCO, Substitutes, Staff and Curriculum Development). These increases are the 8.63 FTEs that will be added in the FY25 budget.

Staffing Reallocations Due to Shifts in Enrollment

In fall FY24, the School Department recognized continued declining enrollment at the elementary level which warranted a reallocation of 4.0 FTEs to other departments within the school system with increased needs. FTEs will be shifted to the Belmont Middle School (BMS) and Belmont High School (BHS), where enrollment is steady or slightly increasing. These 4 FTEs represent \$493,000 (plus \$90,000 in benefits assumed by Shared Services) in funds that have been reallocated to 5.6 FTEs, in FY25, as shown below.

FTE Reallocations

Existing Positions	FY24 FTE	\$ Salary Savings	New/Reallocated Position	FY25 FTE	\$ Salary Cost
1.0 Grade 1 Teacher	1	80,000	1.0 ELE Teacher	1	80,000
1.0 Grade 1 Teacher	1	80,000	1.0 BMS/BHS Reading Teacher	1	80,000
2.0 Grade 4 Teachers	2	160,000	2.0 Grade 6 Teachers	2	160,000
TOTALS	4			4	

An additional \$146,000 was identified in an underutilized Special Education service account (shown in the table below) that will be used for small increases in Special Education staff equal to 1.60 FTEs in FY25. With this increase of 1.60 FTEs and the 4 reallocated FTEs, the increase in reallocated staff results in 5.6 FTEs reallocated positions for FY25.

Reallocation of Special Education Third-Party Services Salary

Reallocation Source	FY24 FTE	\$ Salary Savings	Reallocated Positions	FY25 FTE	\$ Salary Cost	Net Cost
\$146,000 from Special Education Services Salary	0	146,000	0.2 BHS Learning Center teacher; 0.2 BHS Psychologist; 0.2 ESL Teacher; 1.0 Special Education Teacher	1.6	128,000	0

On May 7, the School Committee approved a budget that contains approximately 35 educator reassignments. This includes specialists and other professionals who will be redeployed to the K-3 elementary schools, or reassigned to the upper level schools since they will not be needed full-time in the elementary schools. Of note, three Special Education FTEs from the elementary schools will be reallocated to the CUE to serve the incoming new grade level of students. These changes minimize staffing additions due to the reconfiguration and are budget and FTE neutral. Additionally, one extra position needed for the CUE is filled through reallocation, with the salary supplemented with turnover savings. That position is unknown at this time.

Changes Due to Moving of 4th Grade to Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE)

In FY25, 17 FTEs will move out of the elementary schools due to the move of the 4th grade to the CUE. These FTE changes include 14 4th grade classroom teachers moving to the CUE plus 3 FTEs being reallocated to BMS/BHS due to declining enrollment at the elementary level. Two 4th grade teachers moving to the CUE will not be needed to teach 4th grade once all the 4th graders are housed in one building and will be reallocated to the 6th grade. The chart below shows the number of classrooms that will no longer be needed in the elementary schools for FY25.

Reconfiguration Changes for Elementary Classrooms

Elementary School	FY24 FTE	FY25 FTE	Change in FTE	4th Grade to CUE
Burbank	17	12	(5)	3
Butler	15	13	(2)	2
Wellington	22	16	(6)	5
Winnbrook	19	15	(4)	4
TOTALS	73	56	(17)	14

Note that the budget presented in February 2024 shows the number of Special Education FTEs in all elementary schools remaining unchanged from FY24 to FY25. This is despite the fact that the 4th grade will no longer be in the elementary buildings, nor will the 4th graders who receive Special Education services. However, in the most recent budget presented on May 7, 2024 some of the staff have been reallocated to the CUE and BHS.

Proposed Use of ARPA Funds in FY25

The funding for nine COVID relief funded (ARPA) positions will be ending at the end of FY25. These positions are being carried over from FY24 to support student academic and mental health recovery. The budget for these positions for FY24 was \$965,160 and will increase in FY25 to \$1,004,369. These nine positions will require a different funding source at the end of FY25 if any of them continue to be a priority of the school department:

- 2 Elementary Math Specialists
- 2 CUE Social Workers
- 2 BHS Social Workers
- 1 Transition Room Educator
- 1.6 District-Wide Nurse
- 0.4 Elementary Assistant Principal

Unbudgeted Hiring

The student population served by the School Department is constantly changing and the evaluation of the need for individual students to receive special services is on-going. Consequently, the Department often concludes that it needs to hire additional staff during the year when those positions were not included in the budget approved by Town Meeting. In most instances, these additions are done to provide mandated services that could not necessarily have been anticipated when the budget was created.

Transportation

Transportation services are provided in-district to certain students attending Belmont schools, as well as out-of-district to students attending out-of-district SPED programs.

In-District Transportation

The district is required by the state to provide transportation to any student in Grades K-6 who lives more than two miles from the school they attend. The district also offers students in Grades K-6 who live

less than two miles from school and students in Grades 7-12 (regardless of how far they live from BMS/BHS) the option to take the bus for an annual fee of \$450.

As shown in the table below, over the past 10 years (but excluding FY21 when schools were largely closed as a result of the COVID pandemic), bus ridership has ranged from 724 students to 869 students and has averaged 789 students. Between FY15 and FY20, ridership increased in conjunction with increases in total student enrollment, but has essentially been flat over the past two years. For FY24, the 781 students signed up to ride the bus represent 18% of the total K-12 student population.

Historic Bus Ridership

Fiscal Year	Ridership
FY15	741
FY16	746
FY17	806
FY18	807
FY19	840
FY20	869
FY21	452
FY22	724
FY23	789
FY24	781

For FY25, projected in-district transportation costs total \$1,485,000, which represents only about 2% of the department’s total \$76 million budget. However, the total FY25 in-district transportation budget is increasing by \$594,000 (66.7%) over the FY24 budget, which represents about 12.5% of the total \$4.8 million increase in the total School Department budget. About 80% of the total increase is attributable to the planned addition of five buses required to meet scheduling constraints and required route reconfigurations associated with the movement of 4th grade students from the four individual elementary schools to the CUE.

Like various other non-academic services that the district provides (such as extracurricular activities), bus transportation costs are paid through a combination of General Fund dollars and user fees, which are paid into the transportation revolving fund. As shown in the table below, in FY23, revolving fund revenues covered \$201,000, or 22%, of the department’s total busing costs, down in both dollars and percentages from FY22, when revolving fund revenues covered \$264,000 and 32% of the total costs. The FY24 School Department budget projected that busing fees would cover \$282,000, or 32%, of the total busing costs. For FY25, the department is projecting that busing fees will cover \$517,000, or about 35%, of the total transportation budget. That amount represents an increase of 84% over the busing revolving fund fees included in the FY24 budget. Total busing fees collected in FY24 are currently expected to be roughly comparable to those collected in FY23, and the impact of the new school reconfiguration on total ridership is not yet known. Consequently, the department’s projected increased utilization of revolving funds in FY25 is coming primarily from a greater reliance on previously accumulated reserves in the revolving fund.

In-District Busing Costs by Funding Source

	FY22 Actual		FY23 Actual		FY24 Budget		FY25 Budget		Change FY24 - FY25	
	\$	% Total	\$	% Total	\$	% Total	\$	% Total	\$	% Change
General Fund	551,000	67.6 %	703,000	77.7 %	609,413	68.4 %	968,157	65.2 %	358,744	58.9 %
Revolving Fund	263,968	32.4 %	201,389	22.3 %	281,587	31.6 %	516,843	34.8 %	235,256	83.5 %
Total	814,968		904,389		891,000		1,485,000		594,000	66.7 %

Out-of-District Transportation

Transportation for out-of-district SPED students is mandated by the state and costs are accounted for within the Special Education budget. These costs have typically been covered entirely by the General Fund, although state Circuit Breaker funds can be used for this purpose as well. Forecasting out-of-district SPED transportation costs is challenging because the transportation routes and vehicles are shared across towns. So, Belmont’s costs depend not only on the number of students it sends to out-of-district programs and where those programs are, but it also depends on the number of students that surrounding towns send to those programs as well and Belmont’s share of the total ridership on individual routes.

In FY25, the School Department is projecting out-of-district SPED transportation costs of \$2.0 million, which represents about 16.1% of the projected FY25 out-of-district special education budget and 8.0% of the entire combined in-district and out-of-district SPED budget. The FY25 budget is up \$234,000, or 14%, from the FY24 budget. However, that percentage increase creates a misleading picture of the true increase in this budget category in FY25 because the FY23 actual expenses came in slightly higher than the FY24 budget. Moreover, for FY24, the School Department’s most recent projections are that actual out-of-district SPED transportation costs are going to be about \$2.1 million, or \$300,000 over budget. Consequently, the \$1.9 million FY25 SPED transportation budget is actually \$200,000 less than the most recent forecast of actual FY24 expenses. The Warrant Committee has concerns about whether the budgeted amount is adequate, a concern that is apparently shared by the department.

Budget Risks, Future Outlook, Recommendations

Budget Risks in FY25

- The district is currently forecasting a FY24 year-end deficit of \$1.3 million, which it expects to cover with an unexpected one-time increase in state funds. The district’s FY25 special education budget, particularly the OOD budget, does not have much cushion for unanticipated and unbudgeted OOD placements and unexpected increases in transportation or contractual services. This creates a higher than normal risk that the district could face serious budget pressure in FY25.
- FY24 in-district special education spending is currently projected to exceed the FY24 budget by about \$400,000. Unanticipated increased demand for in-district special education services in FY25 can lead to unbudgeted hiring and/or the need for higher spending on contract services.
- Out-of-district tuitions in both FY23 and FY24 have exceeded the budgeted estimates. Given out-of-district tuition costs that can run \$75,000-\$100,000 or more per student, relatively small increases in out-of-district enrollment can have material impacts on the budget.
- The combination of higher-than-expected in-district and out-of-district SPED costs has put pressure on the district’s accumulated non-General Fund reserves, leaving less cushion to absorb negative variances in the future than the district has had in recent years.

Outlook for FY26 and Beyond

- The “step & lane” structure of teacher contracts results in departmental wage growth that exceeds the 2.5% revenue growth rate permitted by-right under Proposition 2½. However, that step & lane contract structure is a feature of all teacher contracts in Massachusetts, so Belmont must operate within that framework in order to compete with other towns for quality teachers.
- The union contracts for teachers, aides and administrators expire at the end of FY25 and negotiations on new contracts will likely begin during FY25. Depending on the outcome of these negotiations, there could be even more pressure on the department’s salary expenses.
- Enrollment trends will impact future staffing patterns and required budgets. The recent McKibben report shows flat to declining enrollment beyond FY25, which indicates that the assumptions originally used for the reconfiguration of space and the staffing models developed during a time of increasing enrollment may need to be revisited. The School Department and School Committee will need to take these changes into consideration when hiring. Going forward, if enrollment at the elementary level continues to decline, fewer FTEs would be needed. And if that enrollment decline continues into the upper levels, reductions in FTEs at those levels may be needed as well.
- The increases among special populations such as English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities will impact future staffing patterns and required budgets. Additionally, if the department prioritizes providing services within the district for students with special needs, staff will need to be hired to provide in-district programming, partially offsetting some of the savings from reducing out-of-district costs. But overall, prioritizing having staff to provide in-district programs would have benefits for the students and likely be more cost-effective.
- The last remaining COVID-relief funding (ARPA) – which currently covers 9 FTEs – runs out after FY25. The positions funded with those dollars were intended to be temporary. If the School Department and School Committee determine that the needs being addressed by those positions continue beyond the expiration of the current funding, additional dollars will need to be identified to fund those positions. To the extent that the General Fund is looked at as a source for those funds, that will put additional strain on the General Fund budget.

Recommendations

- The three-year budget projections made during the preparations for the April 2024 operating override indicate that if the future growth in school spending continues at its current rate, a substantial operating override will likely be needed in the next four or five years. If school spending grows at a more sustainable level, the next operating override could be smaller and delayed for several additional years. The School Department should continue to search for creative ways to use resources efficiently to reduce the recent rate of growth in spending. Moreover, other towns (notably Arlington, which is very similar to Belmont in per pupil spending) have had success setting targets for the growth in school and municipal spending. Belmont leaders should work together to negotiate reasonable percentage increase targets to use for future budgets.
- The School Department should develop a more robust system for forecasting OOD tuitions in real time. Because OOD tuitions are a large and volatile portion of the school budget, they deserve in depth and up to date analysis so that risks to the School Department (and Town) budget can be properly assessed. A model for forecasting should include calculating projected OOD enrollments, where students are placed, and tuition rates at those placements. Reviewing best practices of other districts should reveal good examples to follow.
- The School Department should reevaluate current in-district student busing schedules, including negotiating school starting times, to achieve efficiency and cost reductions in transportation. In FY25, the move of the fourth grade to the CUE has led to significant increases in both the

number of school buses needed and the size of the in-district transportation budget. While in the short-term, the increase in the number of buses may have been the most prudent and least disruptive course of action, an evaluation of bus routes and school starting times might result in changes that realize material savings in the budget.

Shared Services

Shared Services was a new approach to revenue allocation beginning in FY24. The Shared Services are operational necessities: financial obligations, operational essentials, and core services that are shared among the Town and Schools. The Town funds these commitments and services from available revenue before allocating funds for Town and School operations.

Facilities Department

The Facilities Department is responsible for the maintenance, capital investments, and operation of all of the schools and most town buildings.

Administration

The office continues to manage over 2,500 work orders a year, as well as over a dozen specific service contracts, including fire alarms, HVAC, elevators, and cleaning. Facilities manages the utility contracts for almost all the town buildings, representing 25% of the overall Facilities budget. Staff supports space rentals at the Beech Street Center, Town Hall Auditorium, and Schools. All postage and mailing needs are carried out by this department. Facilities is tasked with making sure all building code and regulatory inspections are scheduled and any deficiencies are addressed. Quarterly, semi-annual, and annual maintenance is planned and checked for completeness, so our infrastructure meets its intended useful life expectancy. The Facilities Department works closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety, Department of Public Health, and the Department of Labor Services, as well as the EPA and OSHA. The Facilities Department is directly responsible for all bidding and solicitations associated with contract services, building and cleaning materials. Lastly, Facilities processes approximately 3,200 invoices annually for goods and services.

Operations

The Facilities Department manages a number of working trades that triage the daily calls and work orders. They fix what they are capable of and contract out the more complex or specialty items. The Town continues to support and monitor sophisticated and specialized equipment all over Belmont. Behind the scenes, our Systems Manager oversees building access controls, lighting controls, security cameras, and heating and air conditioning managements systems. The Facilities Department is vigilant about energy efficiency. Over the past few years, the Facilities Department has updated old boilers, installed energy efficient pumps and motors, managed heat pump systems, installed energy management controls, solar panels, and LED lighting, and re-commissioned buildings. In 2023, the Facilities Department added our first electric van to our fleet for maintenance staff use. The dedicated maintenance staff consists of one HVAC technician, one electrician, one plumber, one carpenter, five maintenance workers and 20 custodial workers. Management staff share the responsibility of being on-call 24/7 each week to ensure public and infrastructure safety.

Capital Projects

There are two levels of capital projects in which Facilities plays a role - large construction/renovation projects managed by citizen building committees and capital projects approved by the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee or Community Preservation Committee.

Currently, The Facilities Department is wrapping up the High School and Middle School Building project, but there is still a lot of coordination with close-out documents, punch list items, and training for new systems.

The new Library and Rink Projects are underway and require collaboration with the numerous stakeholders of both projects, and attendance at numerous building committee meetings.

FY2023-24 Achievements

- Installed a new Kalwall System at the Butler School Gym.
- Installed new exterior and interior video cameras at the Butler, Burbank, and Winn Brook Schools.
- Installed new security vestibules at the Butler, Burbank, and Winn Brook Schools.
- Started the recommissioning of the heating and cooling system at the Wellington School.
- Installed a new Public Address system at the Butler School.
- Installed a new Fire Alarm and Public Address System at the Winn Brook School.
- Resurfaced the gym floor at the Butler School.
- Major restoration and replacement of slate on the Town Hall roof.
- Painted the wood structure at the Burbank School.
- Painted the wood trim and doors at the School Administration Building.
- Benton Library Chimney rebuilt; roof repairs pending.
- Completed the building envelope repairs at the Leonard Street Fire Substation.
- Removed the modular classrooms at the Chenery Middle School.
- Work alongside the Historic District Commission to support a comprehensive building envelope study at the Town Hall, Homer Building, and School Administration Building.
- Changed all the exterior lights at Burbank School to LED.
- Installed solar film on the windows at the Burbank School to reduce heat infiltration.
- Replaced the old boilers at the Butler and Winn Brook schools with more efficient models.

FY2025 Goals

- Develop a plan to rebuild the retaining wall next to the Town Hall Concord Street entrance that failed in spring 2023.
- Upgrade the exterior and interior cameras at the Chenery and Wellington schools.
- Repoint and replace the slate roof at the Butler Elementary School.
- Refinish the gym floors at the Winn Brook school.
- Start a comprehensive building assessment of the town and school buildings.
- Replace the boilers at the Chenery Middle School.

- Begin the design and engineering of a new roof and rooftop HVAC units at the Chenery School.
- Install new paddle fans in the classrooms at the Winn Brook School.
- Support the Town’s implementation of the new Skating Rink.

Facilities Department Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 Budget	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Compensation	\$ 1,789,467	\$ 1,699,333	\$ 2,293,029	\$ 2,401,262	\$ 108,233	4.72 %
Expenses	\$ 3,949,743	\$ 4,827,695	\$ 5,226,359	\$ 5,172,539	\$ (53,820)	(1.03)%
Total Facilities	\$ 5,739,210	\$ 6,527,028	\$ 7,519,388	\$ 7,573,801	\$ 54,413	0.72 %

Division Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 Budget	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Facilities - Town	\$ 973,971	\$ 1,266,058	\$ 1,347,880	\$ 1,367,075	\$ 19,195	1.42 %
Facilities - School	\$ 4,210,552	\$ 4,582,443	\$ 5,385,974	\$ 5,317,505	\$ (68,469)	(1.27)%
Facilities - Admin	\$ 554,686	\$ 678,527	\$ 785,534	\$ 889,222	\$ 103,688	13.20 %
Total Facilities	\$ 5,739,209	\$ 6,527,028	\$ 7,519,388	\$ 7,573,802	\$ 54,414	0.72 %

Staffing and Structure

The Director of Facilities reports to the Public Facilities Board which consists of the Town Administrator and Superintendent of Schools. The Director oversees all aspects of the Facilities Department with concentrations on Capital Projects, resolution of major maintenance challenges and oversight of any related construction projects. The Director is a member of the Belmont Middle and High School (BMHS) Building Committee, and liaison for the Town Administrator to the Library and Rink Building Committees.

Due to the overwhelming increase in annual projects and planned capital projects, Facilities is requesting the addition of a Project Manager in FY2025 to provide day-to- day oversight of these projects along with energy analysis and reporting. This role will the Director of Facilities more time to focus on larger project needs and capital planning.

The Facilities Manager oversees all Town and School maintenance workers and custodians. He also manages all inspections and regulatory compliance.

The Systems Manager oversees all HVAC operations, BMHS controls, lighting controls, and energy conservation measures. The HVAC technician, electrician, plumber, and carpenter respond to maintenance issues as they arise.

Salaries for school custodians and maintenance workers will be transitioned to the Facilities budget in FY2024.

The Facilities Supervisor is responsible for coordinating outside contractors, procurement of goods and services, and file/plan management. The Administrative Assistant manages department payroll, contracts and invoices, among other functions.

Budget Recommendations

The Facilities budget increase is \$54,413 or 0.72% from the FY2024 budget.

Compensation is \$2,401,262, an increase of \$108,233 or 4.72% due to contractually obligated cost of living adjustments, and addition of a new Project Manager.

Expenses are \$5,172,539, which is a decrease of \$(53,820) or (1.03)% due to recognizing more than \$200,000 in electricity savings from the new solar panels at the high school, offset by increases in other areas, notably cleaning service contracts. The Town recently terminated its custodial services contract due to quality concerns and has initiated a one-year contract with a new vendor. The cost of the new vendor will result in an 11% increase in custodial costs (approximately \$150,000 additional cost not currently reflected in the FY25 budget).

Health Insurance

Health Insurance Budget Detail

Description	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Approp.	FY2025 Budget	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Town Retiree Health Insurance	\$ 1,757,729	\$1,765,215	\$ 1,549,991	\$ 1,683,501	\$ 133,510	8.6 %
School Retiree Health Insurance	\$ 1,771,720	\$1,727,005	\$ 1,788,190	\$ 1,849,074	\$ 60,884	3.4 %
Total Retiree Health Insurance	\$ 3,529,448	\$3,492,220	\$ 3,338,181	\$ 3,532,575	\$ 194,394	5.8 %
Town Employee Health Insurance	\$ 2,838,755	\$3,332,213	\$ 3,254,049	\$ 3,336,038	\$ 81,989	2.5 %
School Employee Health Insurance	\$ 6,307,820	\$6,554,102	\$ 7,261,419	\$ 7,523,873	\$ 262,454	3.6 %
Total Employee Health Insurance	\$ 9,146,575	\$9,886,314	\$10,515,468	\$ 10,859,911	\$ 344,443	3.3 %

Employee and Retiree Health Insurance Description

Belmont health insurance costs for Town and School employees and retirees are self-insured and paid annually through Belmont’s Health Insurance Trust. The Trust was created to manage the inherent volatility that exists year-to-year in healthcare utilization and spending. The Trust balance is replenished each year through a combination of employee premium payments (monthly payroll deductions) and the Town’s contribution from the General Fund budget. Employee contributions cover 20—25% of the total premium costs, depending on the negotiated union contract or employment agreement and in some cases, the tenure of the employee, and the Town’s General Fund covers the balance. For example, the contract for the teachers requires that the Town cover 80% of the total premium costs and the employee is responsible for 20%.

Because the Town self-insures, the Health Insurance Trust pays the true healthcare expenses experienced by our Town and School employees and retirees each year. To minimize catastrophic risk, the Town pays from the Trust for reinsurance to protect against excessive costs for any individual/family. Any healthcare claims above that reinsurance limit result in reinsurance recoveries deposited back into the Trust. The Town’s healthcare plan administration is outsourced to Harvard Pilgrim and renegotiated annually.

Healthcare premiums for Belmont employees are set each fiscal year for the HMO/PPO plans managed by Harvard Pilgrim, and each calendar year for Medicare supplement plans. Health insurance premiums

are adjusted annually, in consultation with the Town’s healthcare consultant, based on historical and recent healthcare claims and industry trends. The Select Board has approved a premium increase of 4% for FY25. The Town has been able to maintain a close to 4% increase in premiums through the use of funds from the Health Insurance Trust. Note that while health care utilization and premium increases were low following the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget reflects the return to typical health care utilization and spending as well as anticipated employee plan elections and premium increases.

FY25 Health Insurance Budget

Beginning in FY24, Shared Services includes employee benefits expenses including health insurance, Medicare, workers compensation, and unemployment. This Shared Services approach is designed to increase transparency and consistency in budget analysis.

The FY25 budget request for Town and Schools Employee Health Insurance is \$10,859,911, which is an increase of \$344,443 (3.3%) from the prior year. The FY25 budget request for Town and Schools Retiree Health Insurance is \$3,532,575, which is an increase of \$194,394 (5.8%) from the prior year.

Considerations for Future Health Insurance Expense Management

An alternative to Belmont’s healthcare cost self-insurance is for the Town to join the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission (GIC). Established by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1955, the GIC was formed to provide and administer health insurance and other benefits to state employees and retirees. In 2007, the Legislature added provisions to allow cities and towns to also join the GIC as a means of reducing the rate of growth in municipal healthcare expenditures by accessing GIC’s economies of scale and broad risk base.

The GIC currently provides health insurance coverage to over 460,000 state and municipal employees, retirees, and their dependents, in nearby communities such as Arlington, Bedford, Brookline, Hingham, Lexington, Somerville, Sudbury, Watertown, and Weston.¹⁸ Participants in the GIC program can choose from a diverse set of health insurance plans offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and Tufts Health Plan. Premium growth in GIC has been approximately 9% in recent years.¹⁹

Belmont has considered joining the GIC as a potential cost mitigation strategy in an environment of increasing self-insurance healthcare expenses. Massachusetts Law includes provisions for Towns like Belmont to opt in to the GIC, but the process can take several years and must be enabled by negotiations with impacted employee and retiree union groups. Analyses to inform the costs and benefits of moving to the GIC will be important for the Town to consider over the course of FY25 given the preparation and process required to join GIC. Note also, that the Town would need to consider and negotiate the dissolution of the Health Insurance Trust in the case of joining GIC.

Pension

Most Belmont employees (teachers have a separate state system) are eligible for statutory pensions which are provided by the Belmont Retirement System (“BRS”). All the benefits are guaranteed and appropriations representing the Town’s contributions towards those pensions are set aside from the Town’s revenue before funds are made available for other operating expenses.

The investments gained 10.4% in the 2023 calendar year²⁰, with the fund’s market value increasing from \$148.7M to \$158.1M. BRS net returns exceeded its 7.00% assumed rate of investment return, while returning about 0.5% less than PRIM in 2023. This continued a long-term trend where BRS has higher

¹⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/gic-participating-municipalities>

¹⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2024-gic-public-information-sessions-presentation/download>

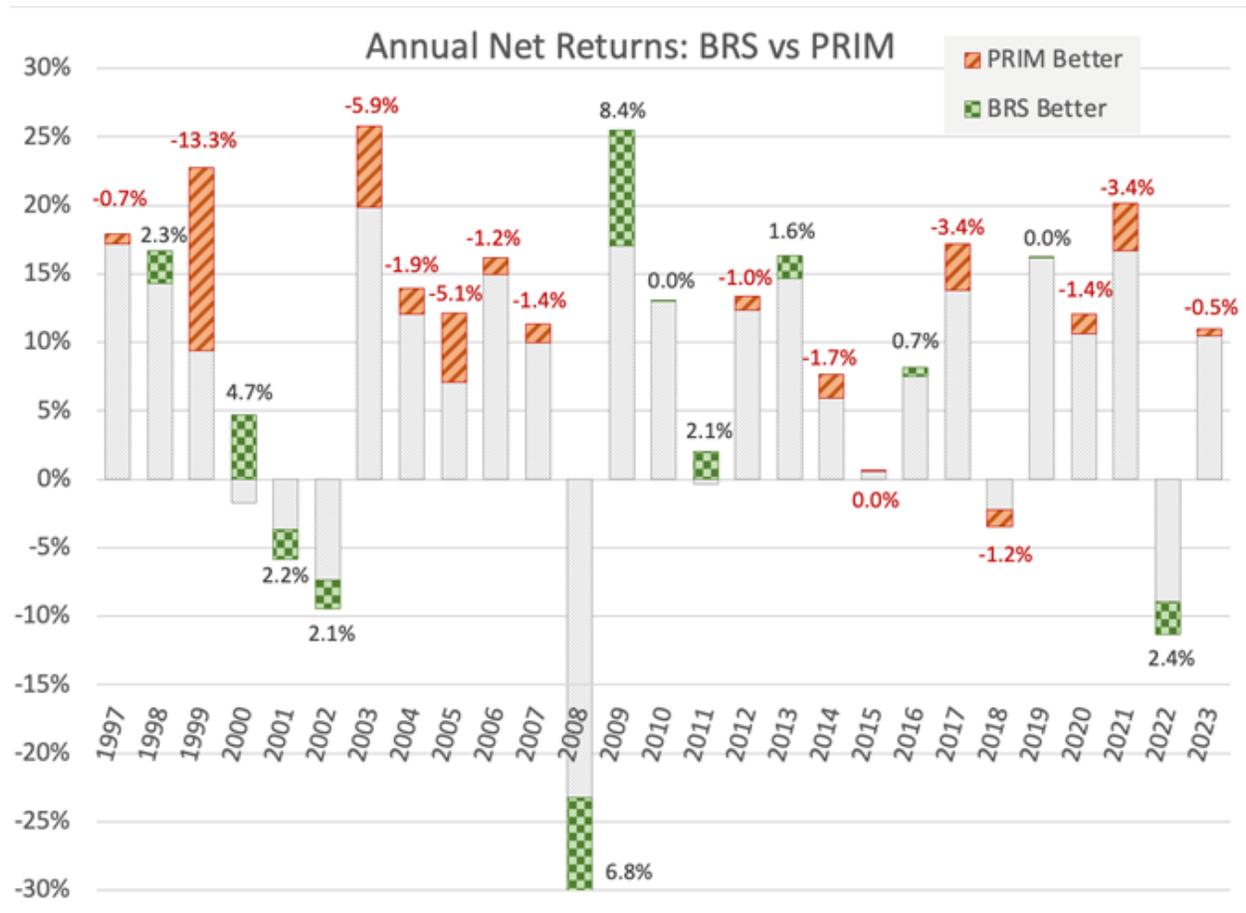
²⁰ Source: 2023 12 - Belmont Flash Asset Allocation for Segal.pdf

expenses and lower returns relative to the Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (“PRIM”), especially when the market is up. BRS has been about 50% invested with PRIM, and in March 2024 voted to move nearly all other investments over to PRIM as well.

As of the most recent actuarial valuation, BRS is about 70% funded. For FY25, the Town will contribute about \$10M²¹ from its operating budget, of which about \$7M is catch-up payments on the unfunded balance.

After FY25, the Town’s contributions will grow by about 2.5% each year. BRS is currently projected to reach full funding in FY2031, and in FY2032 the Town’s annual pension contribution are projected to be about \$3.3M each year. An updated audit will be completed in 2024, and the BRS board will decide an updated payment schedule.

In 2023, payment to retirees and beneficiaries were approved in the total amount of \$13,256,443.88.



Governance

²¹ FY25 Town Administrator’s Preliminary Budget https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhli12826/f/uploads/fy2025_town_administrators_preliminary_budget_recommendation_-_02-02-2024.pdf 23rd page “Page I-19”

The BRS is a separate and autonomous legal entity and not a municipal department of Belmont. BRS is regulated by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (“PERAC”), and regularly goes through financial audits and separate actuarial valuations.

BRS is managed by a 5-person board of two representatives elected by members of the System, the town accountant, one Select Board appointee, and a 5th member chosen by the other four.

Board approves significant investment reform

According to PERAC’s most recent Comparative Analysis Report, issued in 2023, Belmont’s expense ratio is .57% and PRIM’s is .53%. The average of all retirement boards is .55%.²²

Prior to 2024, about half of the BRS investments were invested with PRIM. On March 5th, 2024, the Board voted to move what assets it can over to PRIM. Less than 10% of the assets cannot be moved to PRIM yet, including \$6.5M²³ in commitments. The BRS board will continue to direct investments. Investing fully with PRIM and reducing BRS time and expense spent on reviewing and managing investments would fulfill a long-standing recommendation from the Warrant Committee. See the FY24 Warrant Committee pension section for a detailed write up of historical investment performance, fees and operating overhead.²⁴ Note that the Retirement Board also issued a response to that report.

Historical Investment Returns

Higher investment fees and administrative costs make it more difficult for BRS to match or beat PRIM’s net returns in the long run. In the last ten years, BRS’s net investment returns have been approximately equal, or trailed PRIM eight times, and in six of the last seven years. The chart below highlights the gap between BRS and PRIM: over-performance (green checkered boxes) and under-performance (orange stripes).

BRS makes some progress reducing administrative overhead

Operating costs are funded solely from investment returns, not from contributions from the Town nor from members of the System, and without any additional appropriation from the Town. BRS 2023 and 2024 Operating Expense budget is approximately 0.0025% of the Systems’s assets.

BRS has made some progress on operating reforms, with legal and travel expenses significantly lower than the historical and budgeted amounts that raised questions in prior Warrant Committee reports. For FY24, BRS has reduced the legal expense budget to \$20K, and actual travel expenses were just \$2.5K. BRS operating expenses are still elevated and the Warrant Committee hopes the BRS board will further streamline expenses.

Warrant Committee Recommendations

We commend the BRS for adopting initial reforms and recommend continued review and modernization to simplify operations, reduce expenses, and ease the annual financial burden on Belmont taxpayers. We recommend the BRS:

1. Maintain or extend the funding schedule as permitted by PERAC and state law to help the Town control operating expense growth.

²² <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2022-comparative-analysis-report/download>

²³ Source: http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/my_uploads/2024/03/Belmont-Mar-2024-RB-Meeting.pdf, slides 4-5

²⁴ FY24 Warrant Committee Report <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/warrant-committee/files/fy2024-warrant-committee-report>

2. Continue reducing operating overhead, expenses, and fees, especially as investment operations are transitioned to PRIM. This includes limiting meeting attendance and other billed hours by legal counsel unless necessary .
3. Develop clear by-laws and procedures reflecting best-practices and procedures. The Warrant Committee understands that the Board is in the process of codifying its existing policies and adopting new policies consistent with the February 2024 Best Governance Practices for Public Retirement Systems promulgated by the National Conference of Public Retirement Systems (NCPERS).

Other Post-Employment Benefits (“OPEB”)

The Town provides its employees, including those of the school department, with healthcare and life insurance retirement benefits, known as Other Post-Employment Benefits (“OPEB”). OPEB are managed and overseen by the Town, paying current benefits out of this year’s budget (“pay-as-you-go”), while making small contributions to an underfunded “OPEB Trust Fund” for future obligations. The Trust is overseen by the Town Treasurer while its investments are managed by an outside manager.

For FY25, the combined budgeted cost of health insurance, life-insurance, Medicare, and contribution to the OPEB Trust is \$5.2 million or 3.8% higher than the prior fiscal year. Retiree health insurance is increasing 5.8% in '25 reflecting a larger number of non-Medicare retirees, whose benefits are more expensive and a premium increase of 4%.

As of the June 30th, 2023 financial statements, the OPEB Trust Fund held about \$7.2 million toward a liability of about \$99 million, a funding ratio of 6.7%. It is important to note that the OPEB liability is inherently more volatile than the liability for pension benefits as healthcare costs and inflation, benefits utilization, plan design and federal health policy changes, can have a significant impact on predicting future expenses. The town has contributed \$552,695 in each of the last two fiscal years into the Trust Fund. The goal is to make steady annual contributions into the fund until after the pension system is fully funded, when additional resources will be available to increase contributions more meaningfully into the Trust.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the current OPEB funding policy outlined in the town’s Comprehensive Financial Policies be reviewed and possibly updated to reflect funding levels that balance our desire to pre-fund the OPEB liability with available resources.

Debt

The town currently has approximately \$281 million of debt outstanding (including \$35.68 million of bond anticipation notes issued for initial rink and library construction costs), consisting of \$204 million for schools (72% of total debt), \$64 million for general government (22%) and \$12 million (4%) for water & sewer projects. The amount of long-term debt outstanding has been increasing, driven most recently by debt issued to fund the new middle/high school, and will grow further once long-term debt for the library (\$34.5 million) and rink (\$28.6 million) are issued.

Debt service in fiscal year '25 is budgeted at \$15.51 million, which is up \$869,891 or 5.94%. Debt service will comprise 9.6% of total expenditures and will consist of \$14.28 million of debt service (or 92%) that has been voted exempt from Proposition 2 ½ levy limitations (debt exclusion debt) and funded with dedicated property tax revenues with the remainder (\$1.15 million) funded within Proposition 2 ½ limitations (non-debt exclusion debt). Exempt debt service is increasing \$1.1 million while our non-debt exclusion debt is decreasing by \$257,100.

To assist in funding its capital plan, the Town will often issue “replacement” non-exempt debt after the prior non-exempt debt has matured. The Warrant Committee is supportive of this prudent debt management policy. The Town’s water and sewer enterprise funds also issue debt to support their

capital projects; this debt is “self-supporting” and is serviced by the user fees paid to the Town enterprises.

During fiscal year 2023 voters approved two debt exclusions, one for the construction of a new library and the other for a new skating rink. Bond anticipation notes were issued during Fiscal 2024 to provide initial project funding. These notes will eventually be permanently financed through a longer-term borrowing.

The town’s debt service costs are broken down below by exempt and non-exempt debt service and does not include the impact of the recently approved debt exclusions.

Town’s Bond Rating

The Town is currently rated Aaa & AAA by Moody’s and S&P, the highest ratings achievable. These ratings reflect the strength of the town overall financial profile and takes into consideration the health the town’s tax base, its financial position, governance practices and the community’s fixed cost burden (combined debt, pension and OPEB costs and liabilities). The town’s bond rating impacts the interest paid on bonded debt with a higher rating resulting in lower interest costs. The town’s rating was recently affirmed with the issuance of the recent bond anticipation notes in October 2023. The Warrant Committee supports the maintenance a strong bond rating through prudent financial planning and sound fiscal stewardship.

Public Services

Belmont Public Services Departments include Community Development, the Department of Public Works, and the Recreation Department.

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	FY25 FTE	Change from FY24
Planning and Building	\$ 979,022	\$ 741,610	\$ (237,412)	(24.2)%	7.375	-1.88
Department of Public Works	\$ 8,070,665	\$ 8,688,742	\$ 618,077	7.7 %	27.34	2.78
Recreation	\$ 1,524,429	\$ 323,398	\$(1,201,031)	(78.8)%	14.75	0
Total	\$ 10,574,116	\$ 9,753,750	\$ (820,366)	(7.8)%	49.465	0.9

A structural change in Public Services in 2024 created the Engineering Division within Public Works. Engineering functions were formerly managed within Community Development. Community Development no longer exists, and relevant functions have been assumed by Planning and Building, covered immediately below.

Planning and Building

The Office of Planning and Building is a newly formed office within Public Services. Planning and Building is a leaner version of the Office of Community Development. The office focuses on Building, Permitting and Planning, with Engineering now a division of Public Works. Two part-time administrators have been blended into an Administrative Coordinator position, further streamlining the staffing structure.

The Office of Planning and Building has two divisions with the following primary responsibilities: – *Building and Permitting* and *Planning*.

Building and Permitting Reviews permit applications and issues building permits and other land use permits. Investigates and followup on building code, zoning and general bylaw violations. Conducts inspections required for various certificates. Reviews and issues plumbing and gas permits.

Building and Inspection Services performs building code duties including permit review and inspections. This division also enforces local zoning and general bylaws, as well as state codes and regulations such as accessibility regulations. Much of what this division does is mandated by state law.

Building staffing includes the Inspector of Buildings, (new title, not a new role) an Inspection and Enforcement Officer, an Administrative Assistant III, and part-time Code Enforcement Officer, Plumbing & Gas Inspector, and Wiring Inspector. The Plumbing & Gas and Wiring Inspectors were previously shared with Watertown but became part-time, in-house positions in Spring 2022.

Planning Provides professional planning services, project-related services, and public services to residents, committees/ boards, developers, and others concerned about the Town's physical development.

The Planning Division handles land use, economic development, zoning, and planning issues for the Town. The Division provides professional "in-house" planning services, project-related services including review and discussions of preliminary and final development plans; staff to support permanent and temporary committees including the Planning Board; and public services through direct interaction with residents, developers, property owners and other interested parties.

Planning staff include the department Director and Town Planner, a Staff Planner, and an Administrative Coordinator for the Department, and Minutes Taker for the Planning Board, ZBA, and other committees as may be needed.

The FY2025 budget request for Planning and Building is \$741,610, which is a decrease of \$(237,412) or (24.25)% from the FY2024 budget.

Compensation is \$656,995, a decrease of \$(192,897) or (22.70)% due to moving the Town Engineer and Conservation Commission Agent to Public Works as well as eliminating the part-time Administrative Assistant II position.

Expenses are \$84,615, a decrease of \$(44,515) or (34.47)% due to moving Engineering costs to Public Works.

FY2025 Goals

There are two major initiatives to be undertaken by Planning and Building. The first is development of a comprehensive **Master Plan** for Belmont. This effort, which will draw upon multiple funding sources, will layout a cohesive plan for the growth of future Belmont. The master Plan will help inform future zoning bylaw rewrites.

The second major initiative is a **Market and Fiscal Analysis**, to be launched in FY2024. This Analysis, conducted by outside consultants and involving town committees and staff, will inform what commercial development growth to pursue that will be most successful in Belmont. The market analysis will inform and help optimize future land use, public housing and commercial development in Belmont.

- Key amendments to Restaurant Zoning Bylaw and consider strategic amendments to other Bylaw provisions.
- MBTA Communities Zoning - Have a full set of Zoning Bylaw Amendments ready for Fall 2024 Town Meeting that will Comply with MBTA 3A requirements and be aligned with town goals and needs.
- Community Preservation - Secure CPC funding to secure money for much needed repairs to the School Department.
- Committee Vacancies - Work with the Select Board to recruit new members to Committees that have vacancies.

- Staff Vacancies - Fill vacated roles in the Planning Division for Staff Planner and Minutes Taker.
- Inspector Ongoing Training - Enhance the proficiency of the local inspector in reviewing building and zoning applications through continuous training and support.
- Efficiency - Develop additional guidelines to expedite the processing of applications for building permits and certificates of occupancy.
- Responsiveness - Formulate more guidelines to improve responsiveness to General By-Law code enforcement.
- Advance Key Special Projects – Evaluate opportunity to initiate comprehensive plan, market/fiscal impact analysis, and zoning bylaw reform projects.
- Provide Support to Other Town Boards and Committees – The planning Division provides some technical and administrative assistance, as time allows, to the Historic Districts Commission, The Housing Trust, and the Economic Development Committee.
- Research and Analysis – The Planning Division provides as-needed research and analysis services for other departments and the administration for special programs and projects.

Uncertainties and Future Considerations

- Will MBTA Housing plan pass in Town Meeting (November 2024), and will it pass state review?
- New Energy Code inspection and enforcement are untested.
- Fiscal impact of MBTA Housing is not known, but the plan is slated to be done by August, to supply that information to Town Meeting.
- A future consideration is the addition of a Coordinator of Economic Development, who would report to the Director of Planning and Building. This role is not in the FY25 staffing as of this writing.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is composed of multiple divisions.

DPW staffing is increasing in FY25, due to the move of the Engineering Division from Community Development (now Planning and Building). Additional new hires will include an Assistant Town Engineer and a Storm Water Supervisor. There are also four open roles to be filled, down from a high of nine open positions. There were several staff retirements in FY2024, and those positions are being recruited and filled.

RECRUITING: Recruiting employees with a Commercial Driving Licenses (CDL) remains a challenge. Three new employees recently hired do not currently have these licenses, and are training to secure them at a cost of \$5k to \$8K per license. The CDL is required to drive and operate heavy equipment.

In response to recruiting challenges and persistent open, unfilled positions, the town conducted a peer town comparable salary study. After consultation with the unions, the level and starting salary of new hires was adjusted. With more competitive compensation, four new hires recently joined Public Works and filled budgeted, open positions.

Engineering

The Engineering staff includes the Town Engineer and a recently hired Resident Engineer. Recruiting is ongoing for an Assistant Town Engineer. The new hire FTE Storm Manager in the Water and Sewer Enterprise will report to the Town Engineer. The increase in FY2025 budget represents these increases in staff, plus the restructuring of Engineering to Public Works.

Highway Division

This budget covers sidewalk and road repair; line painting, street lighting, snow and ice removal; fleet maintenance; maintenance, construction and repair of the sewer system; and maintenance of deltas, islands and public spaces.

Changes in the budget from FY 2024 to FY2025 are due to department restructuring and moving Street and Trench Operator (STOP) to the Engineering Division.

With the passage of the override, additional funds are allocated to sidewalk repair, with repair priorities determined with the input of a consultant retained in FY2024.

There were no additional funds designated for roadways repair with the passage of the override in April 2024. \$1.9 million is allocated for roadway repairs from an earlier override but is not adequate to perform all repairs.

Forestry

In January 2024 Belmont appointed a new part-time Tree Warden. In addition, the town contracts with an outside tree service firm. The budget increase of 17.4% from FY2024 to FY2025 is due to the part-time salary of the tree warden, plus an increase in the fees paid to the outside firm for removal and planting of trees.

Parks and Cemetery

The 3% increase in budget from FY2024 to FY2025 is due to contractual COLA (Cost of Living adjustments). There is no change in FTEs in this division from last fiscal year.

Collection and Disposal

Salaries are level-funded from FY2024 to FY2025. The budget increase of 4.29% from FY2024 to FY2025 is due to rising costs of recycling and collection.

Solid waste and recycling contracts present a persistent challenge with ever-increasing fees and new regulations on recycling adding to costs.

SPECIAL DISPOSAL SERVICES: Extra costs are incurred with resident requests for disposal of mattresses and bulky items. The whole town bears the burden of these costs, which benefit only a few residents requesting the services.

As recommended in FY2024, the Subcommittee recommends that the fees for these services be reviewed and increased with the intent to make these services cost-neutral, if possible.

Per Jay Marcotte, department head, there are approximately 1,200 mattresses picked up annually; a fee of \$50.00 per mattress would generate \$60,000, adequate to cover the cost of this specially requested service. Also, per Mr. Marcotte, there are approximately 2,300 bulky items picked up annually, at extra charges from Waste Management. A fee of \$35.00 to \$40.00 per item would generate approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 to cover the expense for this extra service.

Budget Risks and Considerations in FY2025

- Recruiting and staffing has improved, but there remain open positions in landscaping, notably around Claypit Pond and the school grounds. Looking to contracting services to fill this gap.
- Inadequate funding to address all sidewalks needing repair, plus rising cost of concrete for replace-in-kind.
- Increasing costs of solid waste and recycling service, plus new regulations add cost to maintain compliance.
- Reporting requirements and compliance to address and report sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) to DPA, DEP and Health Department.
- New storm water regulations, notably phosphorous detection and filtering, which will impact the new rink and library.

Water and Sewer Enterprise report will be delivered later, as this budget was not finalized until earlier this month. Meeting with the Department head has been conducted, and the report is being written.

Public Services Summary

Public Works - Water & Sewer Enterprise Budgets

The Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds are a component of the Department of Public works. Enterprise Funds are distinct from other Town departments as they are intended to be self-sustaining by charging separate user fees to customers. This section will provide a brief discussion of the Water and Sewer Funds' operations and costs, and changes in billing rates proposed for FY25.

Public Works Water Division

The Water Division maintains Belmont's water distribution system, delivers adequate and safe drinking water to the community, assures compliance with the USEPA Safe Drinking Water Act and Mass DEP regulations, and provides water for public safety firefighting. The Water Department maintains Belmont's 93 miles of water main pipes and valves, 825 fire hydrants, 7,745 water service pipes, and provides around the clock emergency service.

The Water Division is also responsible for compliance with USEPA and Mass DEP regulations. These regulations place a significant, growing, and costly burden on the Division.

- The FY25 Water Department budget is \$7,999,148, up 1.5%, or \$114,178, from FY24. The increase is driven by an 8.2% increase in compensation totaling \$129,489 from contractual increases and the addition of one FTE in the newly created Backflow Prevention Technician role. The Division's FY25 budget employs 13.3 FTEs; prior to this total FTEs had been held to 12.3 FTE for the past 8 years.
- Overall, the Division's day to day operating budget, which includes compensation, is **(\$15,311) lower** than FY24 reflecting the ongoing success in reducing other operating costs to offset needed compensation increases.
- The single largest budgeted expenditure is the MWRA assessment, totaling \$3,326,667, a decrease of (0.4%), or \$(13,250) from FY 24, based on preliminary FY24 rates. Final rates are not known until June 2024.
- The Division's capital budget for replacement of water mains and other infrastructure decreases by (\$91,297) in FY25. The Division funds capital improvements with cash raised through water charges and with annual low-cost borrowings.

- Indirect charges are essentially flat for FY25, a benefit provided by an FY24 updated analysis of services and charges. These represent amounts charged to the Division budget by other Town departments that provide administrative support.
- The Water Division Budget is shown here:

Water Division Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 TA rec.	% Change	% Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$1,393,960	\$1,304,336	\$1,575,897	\$1,705,387	\$129,489	8.22%
Expenses	\$5,459,406	\$6,080,742	\$6,309,073	\$6,293,762	\$(15,311)	(0.24)%
Total 5250 Water Division	\$6,853,366	\$7,385,078	\$7,884,970	\$7,999,149	\$114,178	1.45%

Division Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 TA rec.	\$ Change	% Change
Total 5251 Water Dept. Operating	\$1,928,161	\$2,250,268	\$2,615,807	\$2,842,207	\$226,399	8.66%
Total 5253 MWRA Assessment	\$3,321,668	\$3,134,847	\$3,279,924	\$3,266,674	\$(13,250)	(0.40)%
Total 5254 Debt Service	\$867,038	\$804,188	\$794,488	\$784,538	\$(9,950)	(1.25)%
Cash Capital	\$210,000	\$669,275	\$940,100	\$848,803	\$(91,297)	(9.71)%
Indirect Expenses	\$519,000	\$519,000	\$244,166	\$246,442	\$2,276	0.93%
OPEB Contribution	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$10,485	\$10,485	\$—	—%
Total 5250 Water Division	\$6,853,367	\$7,385,078	\$7,884,970	\$7,999,149	\$114,178	1.45%

Public Works Sewer Division

The Division maintains Belmont’s sanitary sewer system consisting of 76 miles of sewer mains, 2,365 manholes, 6,700 service lines to buildings, and three pumping stations. The Division also constructs, maintains and repairs Belmont’s storm water drain system consisting of 54 miles of main lines, 2,000 catch basins and one stormwater pumping station. Storm water drains into local brooks, streams and other bodies of water and the Sewer Division provides for the maintenance of these resources.

- The FY24 Sewer Department budget is \$10,450,688, an increase of \$655,656, or 6.7%, from FY24. The increase is driven primarily by \$615,510 for expenditures deferred from FY24, when the budget was constrained. In FY25, incremental capital expenditures include \$100,000 for sewer line work, \$250,000 for stormwater interventions, and the replacement of a dump truck and staff vehicle.
- Budgeted FTEs are flat compared to FY24, at 13 employees.
- The single largest sewer division cost is the MWRA assessment, totaling \$5,735,537, a slight decrease of (0.25%) from FY24, based on preliminary assessment rates. Actual FY25 rates will not be known until late June 2024.
- As described above, the Division’s capital budget for replacement of sewer mains and other infrastructure increases by \$615,510, or 87.9%, in FY25. The Division funds capital improvements with cash raised through user fees and low interest borrowings.
- Consistent with the Water Division, Sewer indirect charges are essentially flat for FY25, a benefit provided by an FY24 updated analysis of services and charges. These represent amounts charged to the Division budget by other Town departments that provide administrative support.
- The Sewer Division Budget is shown here:

Sewer Division Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 TA rec.	\$ Change	% Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$922,946	\$767,535	\$1,429,325	\$1,436,959	\$7,634	0.53%
Expenses	\$8,262,413	\$9,793,824	\$8,365,707	\$9,013,729	\$648,022	7.75%
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$9,185,359	\$10,561,359	\$9,795,032	\$10,450,688	\$655,656	6.69%

Division Summary	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Approx.	FY25 TA rec.	\$ Change	% Change
Total 5261 Sewer & Stormwater Operating	\$1,389,770	\$1,458,688	\$2,187,718	\$2,217,430	\$29,712	1.36%
Total 5262 MWRA Assessment	\$5,482,714	\$5,677,771	\$5,750,128	\$5,735,537	\$(14,591)	(0.25)%
Total 5263 Debt Service	\$925,124	\$915,700	\$903,338	\$902,901	\$(437)	0.05%
Cash Capital	\$864,250	\$1,985,700	\$700,000	\$1,315,510	\$615,510	87.93%
Indirect Expenses	\$519,000	\$519,000	\$248,321	\$273,783	\$25,462	10.25%
OPEB Contribution	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$5,527	\$5,527	\$—	—%
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$9,185,358	\$10,561,359	\$9,795,032	\$10,450,688	\$655,656	6.69%

Proposed FY24 Water and Sewer Rates

Historically, Belmont’s Water and Sewer rates have been among the highest in Massachusetts, topping out at #1 until FY 2019. To manage public perception, Belmont held water and sewer rates flat starting in 2019, leading to our recent position at 7th highest in the state. Town Administration believed this was unsustainable and commissioned a water and sewer rate study to guide the FY24 budget. This study was updated for FY25 with revised 5-year estimates. The purpose of the study was to analyze the water and sewer Enterprise Funds’ financial condition and propose a new rate structure to ensure the long-term financial stability of the funds.

The study generally found that the cost of operations and maintenance and infrastructure improvements will continue to increase through 2029, but at a slower rate than shown by the FY2024 study. Total water fund expenditures are projected to grow from \$8.0M in FY25 to \$9.02M in FY29. Likewise, sewer fund expenditures are expected to grow from \$10.4M in FY24 to \$11.3M in FY29. Given these estimates, the study recommends FY25 Water rate increases be reduced from 4% to 3%, and Sewer rates increases be maintained at 8% for FY25.

The study recommends the following rate increases:

	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Water Rates	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Sewer Rates	8.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

With these rates in place, both the water and sewer funds are expected to maintain adequate cash flow over the period while funding reserve balances to at least the targeted level of 90 days’ worth of operating and maintenance expenditures, on average.

FY 2025 Changes and Uncertainties

The Division plans to hire a full-time Storm Water Supervisor. This increase in staffing is needed to comply with ever-changing requirements and MassDEP mandates, inspections and reporting. For example, every establishment with public interaction must meet new backflow and phosphorous monitoring requirements. An uncertainty in FY 2025 and future years is the impact of new environmental mandates.

There will always be uncertainties regarding unexpected storm water projects such as the storm water enhancement in the Trapelo Road Project. A reserve fund needs to be maintained for these unexpected and unplanned projects.

While water consumption is down, fees still increase. This can be challenging to explain to residents and businesses.

Recreation

MISSION: The main goal of the Recreation Department is to provide a broad range of recreational activities and events for town residents of all ages and abilities while implementing the following goals: revise summer camp to work with the schools; locate safe spaces for more programming; expand program offerings related to the Youth Commission and enhance the role of the Youth Coordinator; support the Town’s implementation of the new ice rink; and work with the Town as the Department transitions to the revolving fund for Recreation programs beginning in FY25.

FY25 Structure and Staffing Changes:

General Fund: The FY25 General Fund budget will fund compensation for the Recreation Department Administration: Director, Assistant Director, and two Program Coordinators. This request of \$323,398 is a decrease of \$1,201,031 (78.79%) because of the creation of a new Revolving Fund for all other expenses.

Recreation Revolving Fund: The FY25 Revolving Fund budget is \$1,279,115 (part-time and seasonal employees and all expenses for programs.)

The May 3, 2023 Town Meeting granted approval for a Recreation Revolving Fund. This will allow all activities to be paid for not using the General Fund. During FY 24 the Recreation Department began plans for transferring program expenses and compensation for seasonal and part-time staff to this fund. This will allow more flexibility as revenues that are generated from fees will cover the costs of the programs. The positions covered with the Revolving Fund include: Office Manager; Administrative Assistant; Seasonal Employees for Fall Winter Program, Spring Programs, Special Needs Programs

(S.P.O.R.T), Summer Pool Programs, and Summer Sports Programs . Custodial services are covered by the building in which the programs take place unless they are on weekends or off-hours, in which case custodians will be paid out of the Revolving Fund. All expenses to run programs will come from the Revolving Fund, which begins with fees coming in starting Spring 2024 for the Summer Programs.

A major change going forward is that the new rink/sports complex and its programs will be run by a separate revolving fund of its own, under the supervision of the Town Administrator, not the Recreation Department.

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

The recreation staffing of 4 FTEs reflects a decrease of 14.5 FTE due to seasonal and part-time staff being moved to the Revolving Fund . It is assumed that there will be no operating expenses for the rink, which eliminated \$243,000 from the FY24 budget. Eliminated also are \$175,000 in ice recreation fees from revenue. The recommended budget for school ice sports relocation is unknown at this time, as the rink will likely not be open for high school hockey programs during the FY25 winter sports season.

	FY25 Budget	Change from FY24	% Change	FY25 FTEs	FTE Change
Total Budget	\$ 323,398	\$ (1,201,031)	(78.79)%	4	-14.75

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Recommended	\$ Change	% Change	FY FTEs
Total Compensation	\$ 844,439	\$ 323,398	\$ (521,041)	(61.70)%	4
Expenses	\$ 679,990	\$ —	\$ (679,990)	(100.00)%	0
Total Budget	\$ 323,398	\$ 323,398	\$ (1,201,031)	(78.79)%	

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Recommended	\$ Change	% Change	FY FTEs
Recreation Programs	\$ —	\$ 1,279,115	\$ 1,279,115	— %	4
Combined Total Revolving Fund	\$ 1,524,429	\$ 1,602,513	\$ 78,087	5.12 %	

BUDGET RISKS/UNCERTAINTIES in FY25

- Access to space for programs continues to be challenging
- Finding part-time trained staff and supervisors for seasonal programs
- The S.P.O.R.T. program has grown since the pandemic and finding qualified and dependable staff to support the program is difficult. Donations cover the costs, it’s finding staff with the “right fit” is challenging.

RINK

The old rink has been demolished and the new building is not within the Recreation budget. When it opens in late FY25 or early FY26, the rink/sports facilities complex will be under the Facilities department, with a Rink Manager hired to set up program and manage the facility. Full and part-time staffers will all be under the Town Administrator in the General Fund.

OUTLOOK FOR FY25 and BEYOND

The Recreation Director is optimistic that fiscally, the future looks promising for the Recreation Department now that it has completed organization of full-time staff administration and created the Revolving Fund to cover expenses other than administration still in the General Fund. The Revolving Fund is expected to promote growth of programs at no cost to the town. Securing qualified and dependable part-time staffing is an on-going challenge.

Public Safety

Belmont Public Safety...

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	FY25 FTE	Change from FY24
Fire Department	\$ 6,390,227	\$ 6,610,701	\$ 220,474	3.5 %	55.49	0
Police Department	\$ 7,745,829	\$ 7,920,888	\$ 175,059	2.3 %	70.375	0
BEMA	\$ 24,144	\$ 24,144	\$ —	— %		
Total	\$ 14,160,200	\$ 14,555,733	\$ 395,533	2.8 %	125.865	0

Fire Department

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

- After a 6.89% increase in FY24 driven by compensation increases tied to new union contracts, the overall Fire Department budget in FY25 will increase at a moderated 3.45%.
- The FY25 budgeted amount for salaries is up \$174,674 (3.05%). The Fire Department headcount remains unchanged at 55.5 FTEs for FY25. Department headcount has been largely flat since FY15 with the exception of a budgeted reduction of one firefighter in FY22, following the failed April 2021 override.
- Budgeted expenses are up \$45,800 (6.98%) in FY25 due primarily to an increase in ambulance use which has resulted in a corresponding increase in ambulance billing services expenses and the need for ambulance supplies.
- The department generates revenue for the Town through the reimbursement of ambulance transport services. FY24 revenue is projected to be \$1.2M (\$879,526 received as of April 2024), representing a projected 5.2% increase over FY23. This recent revenue expansion through reimbursable ambulance transport continues to be a department focus and represents an opportunity for modest additional revenue growth in FY25, though conservative revenue projects in FY25 hold the revenue flat at \$1.2 M.
- There are currently two vacancies in the Fire Department as of May 2024. The department has identified one candidate for hire who is currently deployed with the military and should be available in the fall. The department is actively working to fill the second vacancy. In general, Chief DeStefano believes that hiring through Civil Service in the Belmont Fire Department is working.
- Historical vacancies in FY24 and long-term disability have resulted in FY24 overtime running over budget with an offsetting impact in reduced salary expenses. With a department that is moving toward being fully staffed as we enter FY25, the overtime budget of \$655,041 for FY25 is projected to be flat as compared to last year.

Impact of Proposed FY25 Budget on Department Operations

- In FY24, the department has seen some employee turnover driven by compensation, lifestyle convenience, and uncertainty of long-term departmental funding. Firefighter salaries are generally similar to many comparable communities, but there are opportunities for firefighters to make more money in some higher-paying towns or cities. Employee turnover continues to be

a concern for the department, and one that can have impact on departmental effectiveness and budgets.

- Employee turnover in FY24, combined with FMLA and military service staffing gap, has forced the department to rely upon Overtime to meet staffing needs and respond to calls for service in the community.
- The Fire Chief is keen to introduce additional community engagement programs but the FY25 “level services” does not provide much in the way of additional funding for investment. Specifically, the broader rollout of the EMS bike unit, home safety inspections, and additional community outreach programs (e.g. CPR courses) are examples of programs that were not fully funded in the FY25 budgets. The Fire Chief continues to implement limited versions of these programs, to the degree possible, by leveraging modest funding and stepped-up commitments from the Fire Department staff.
- Incidents requiring Fire Department response have continued to steadily climb since COVID (2020: 2,678 incidents; 2021: 3,280 incidents; 2022: 3,869 incidents; 2023: 4,053). The frequency of calls for service increased 4.8% last year. EMS and Fire Alarm calls are some of the biggest drivers of incident growth. This steady growth puts strains on personnel and existing budgets which have only increased moderately in recent years.
- The Department expects to be able to meet its obligation to respond to the public safety needs of the Town, assuming no change to its current staffing model.

Budget Risks in FY25 and Later Years; Impact on Town Services

- Firefighter turnover has increased in the last year, and such turnover can be costly in both overtime, hiring expenses, and training.
- Overtime – driven by turnover, FMLA leaves, disability, and military service – continues to be a concern for the FY25 budget, but with immediate vacancies nearly filled, FY25 overtime levels could remain within budget.
- Steady increases in incidence response since 2020 are putting strains on personnel and department resources.
- The continued use of Civil Service is presenting less urgent challenges in ensuring a qualified pool of applicants for open roles.
- Growing challenges exist regarding requisite training to keep pace with emerging trends in fire, emergency medical services, and hazardous materials response. Examples include training and equipment to address electric vehicle accidents and fires.

Outlook/Recommendations for FY25 and Beyond

- The department should monitor recent trends in employee attrition, and work to address the key drivers to the degree possible.

Police Department

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

- The FY 25 budget for the Police Department is essentially a level service budget, reflecting a modest increase of \$175,059 or 2.26% from FY 2024.
- The budgeted amount for salaries is increasing 1.20%. First Responder pay is the largest increase under collective bargaining agreements. Other increases include required cost of living adjustments.
- The rise in salaries will be somewhat offset by unfilled positions, long term injury, and recent retirements including some high-ranking officers. At the same time, continued vacancies result in above budgeted overtime. The Department has spent 125% of the patrol overtime budget several months before the end of FY24.
- The department in implementing non-Civil Service hiring to alleviate delays in hiring, and negotiations are ongoing as required for the department's exit from civil service. The department has issued a Policy on Recruiting and Selection of Police Officers and Civilian (non-sworn) Employees effective April 25, 2024, and a position has been posted outside the Civil Service system. It was also noted that neighboring Watertown is also coming out of civil service.
- The 10.54% increase in expenses is due in large part to increased costs of vehicle repair and a need to replace Taser equipment, which is a strong tool in de-escalation. The Department's current Taser equipment was purchased with a private donation but the hardware has a 5-year recommended useful life, and the department must contract for software to enable logging functions and periodic upgrades to the hardware.

Budget Risks in FY25 and Later Years; Impact on Town Services

- The Police Department's grant-funded Social Worker is one of its most effective programs but is not built into the operating budget. The Social Worker accompanies patrol officers and helps the Department address mental health issues, direct residents to alternate services, and divert incidents away from arrest and transports to emergency rooms. These diversions are more constructive for citizens and are less costly for the department, and the Social Worker monitors these diversions and savings. There is risk that this grant will not be renewed by the state in the future and the Town will lose the Social Worker's services unless the town is willing fund the position within the operation budget.
- Another budget area of pressing concern is Technical Services. Due to separation of the Police Department's servers and equipment from the Town's IT Department, the Police Department depends on a civilian employee of the Department, to work with the Town's IT Director to service many specialized and constantly evolving public safety IT services and equipment. The Department has a pressing need to update long-outdated technologies and to add dedicated IT technicians to the Public Safety staff. A recent IT audit determined that two positions are needed who could service both the Police and Fire departments. This transition will require adding these positions to the Public Safety budget. The Town Administrator plans to address IT needs in FY25 across Town departments, including the Police Department.
- Maintenance of the Department's vehicle fleet is slowing due to budget interruptions in the replacement cycle and increased costs of repair and replacement. The Department purchases Ford Interceptor Hybrid vehicles with 80% specialized parts, and each vehicle gets further specialized outfitting from a contractor. Usually the Department replaces three vehicles per year, but due to recent budget constraints, fewer vehicles were replaced and the Department is behind by four vehicles. Even vehicles that have been purchased are delayed by supply chain problems. The heavy usage of Department vehicles means these delays increase the risk of damage and affect Department readiness.

Outlook/Recommendations for FY25 and Beyond

- It will be important to build more resources for the Social Worker, tech services, and fleet maintenance into the Police Department budget.
- In addition, a long-term plan to increase participation in mutual aid would bring savings to the Department. The Department benefits from mutual aid programs including Northeast Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council, which provides aid from almost 70 communities in unplanned situations where extra officers are needed, such as school threat assessments. The Department receives more value than it gives in mutual aid. However, finding increased opportunities for mutual aid, including regionalization of dispatch services, will require some investment and long-term planning to gain projected savings.

General Government

General Government Departments are responsible for the administrative, financial, legal, and management functions of the Town. They are Town Clerk, Town Administration, Human Resources, Information Technology, Town Accountant, Town Treasurer, and Assessors' Office.

The FY25 budget numbers for the seven General Government Departments are listed in the table below. The details about each department are included in the sections that follow.

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	FY25 FTE	Change from FY24
Town Clerk	\$ 508,161	\$ 554,468	\$ 46,306	9.1 %	4.5	0
Town Administration	\$ 1,125,097	\$ 1,183,288	\$ 58,191	5.2 %	6.6	1
Human Resources	\$ 655,063	\$ 874,449	\$ 219,386	33.5 %	2.75	0
Information Technology	\$ 1,413,944	\$ 1,545,634	\$ 131,690	9.3 %	5.3	0
Town Accountant	\$ 443,031	\$ 430,725	\$ (12,306)	(2.8)%	4	0
Town Treasurer	\$ 649,437	\$ 585,194	\$ (64,243)	(9.9)%	5	-1.5
Board of Assessors	\$ 425,021	\$ 462,254	\$ 37,233	8.8 %	3.6	0
Total	\$ 5,219,754	\$ 5,636,012	\$ 416,257	8.0 %	31.75	-0.5

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's Office consists of (i) the Town Clerk, (ii) an Assistant Town Clerk; and (iii) two Administrative Assistants, for a total of 4.0 FTEs. Carried within the Town Clerk's Office for budgeting purposes is the Town Moderator and the four-person Board of Registrars which constitute the other .5 FTEs and the scores of Election Workers.

Much of the 9.11% increase in the budget is driven by the fact that FY2025 will have three elections (State Primary, the Presidential and the Town elections). The elections have become more expensive with the State-mandated vote-by-mail and in-person early voting. Early Voting and Early Vote by Mail, which were initially deemed unfunded state mandates, are now substantially reimbursed by the State.

In addition to the Clerk's Office's well-known recordkeeping functions and pet licensing, the Town Clerk's Office is the point of contact for public records requests. There are approximately 100 public records requests each month and the Town, because of the size of our population is required to provide two hours of free labor in responding before the costs can be passed on to the party requesting the records. Fortunately, with the computer-assisted response available and with the support from all Town staff, the Clerk's Office has kept up the pace of responding to public records requests with no infractions in the last few years.

The Clerk's Office reports great satisfaction with its new computerized polling books and voting tabulation technology.

Town Administration

In FY24 the Town Administrator filled key positions including Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Assistant Town Accountant, Human Resources Director and Planning Director and promoted from within a new Town Accountant. These professionals bring valuable experience and expertise that has already begun to bear fruit; in particular, the reorganized Finance team, under Assistant Town Administrator and Finance Director Jennifer Hewitt, has worked collaboratively to streamline and update systems, improve processes, and enhance employee satisfaction. Through a reorganization of the financial team, the Town

Administrator had consolidated positions and reduced FY25 General Government staffing by 1.5 FTEs. Other major accomplishments include managing the second year of a new tool for operating and capital budget management and preparing two budgets for the two possible outcomes of the April 2024 override vote. The Town Administrator's office applied for and received new grants to fund town needs, including \$1 million in federal funds for Phase II of the Community Path design, \$432,000 in a Complete Streets grant from MassDOT to address crosswalks along Concord Ave, and \$98,000 in grant funds to enhance technological connections for Seniors at the COA. In addition, the Town was granted \$50,000 in state monies for shade trees, and other annual grants totaling more than \$100,000. Since COVID, the office had added the scheduling and management for 700-750 zoom calls per year to its workload.

The Town Administrator's FY25 budget will increase by \$58,191 or 5.17%, reflecting the addition of a rink manager mid-year. Year-over-year salaries, excluding the rink manager, are budgeted to increase 0.7%. Expenses are budgeted at the same level as FY24. In FY25, the Town Administrator's office will continue to review and implement structural change recommended by the Structural Change Impact Group and Collins Center Report, review existing and potential new revenue streams and continue to improve communication with residents. The office will be transitioning to an updated website using a small allocation of ARPA funds to cover the implementation costs.

The primary risk to the Town Administrator's budget is unanticipated legal fees. Over the past several years, the Town's legal fees have escalated to \$387,500 as the Town sought legal advice to resolve conflicts among property owners and residents, such as the Beatrice Road 40-B project and the Belmont Hill parking lot, as well as various other resident concerns. Legal costs can vary significantly depending on the number and type of issues that arise, and residents should be aware of the impact these issues can have on the Town budget.

Human Resources

In the past year, Kelli King has been hired as the new director of the Human Resources (HR) department. The focus of the HR department is on administration of staff benefits, labor relations, pay and position classification, and recruitment and retention.

Negotiations with municipal employee unions are a continual focus of the work of the HR department. At this writing, seven union contracts are up for renewal during FY25. In addition, the department continues to implement recommended changes in the wage and classification study that was completed in late 2022, and is working on revisions to the employee handbook.

In FY25, the HR department budget is increasing by 33.5% (\$655k to \$874k). Almost all of this increase is associated with salary reserve, which represents potential salary and cost of living adjustments for a number of public employee union contracts that could be settled during this fiscal year. Without the salary reserve increase, the HR budget would be increasing by 2.84%.

Note that half of the salary of one HR staff member (the HR Generalist) is paid from the Health Insurance Trust Fund.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) department continues to devote about 90% of its time and efforts on protecting the town network from cyber threats, which have become increasingly sophisticated. Efforts to maintain security include staff training and fake phishing emails to maintain awareness. The cost of upgrades to equipment and software to detect and thwart attacks is one of the main drivers of the 9.3% increase in the IT department budget.

The department has been able to continue licensing Microsoft Office for staff on a non-subscription basis in FY25, though the expectation is that Microsoft will soon move to requiring subscriptions. The expectation is that when Microsoft implements a mandatory subscription model, the cost of software will increase by about \$98k per year.

Other notable topics in IT include a planned upgrade of the phone system, which is expected to reduce costs; and continued work on the fiber network, adding a redundant loop to the existing network and managing changes to the network due to the library demolition and construction.

Town Accountant

Since assuming the job a year ago, the Town Accountant has been updating and streamlining accounting procedures and processes to improve efficiency and accessibility of information across the administration. In late FY23, the Town Accountant's office absorbed payroll processing from the Treasurer's office and upgraded the payroll clerk position to Payroll Manager. Over the past year, payroll has transitioned from central data entry to departmental inputs and electronic pay advices have been introduced for Town employees. In August 2023, the department moved the former Wednesday pay day, which resulted in paying employees in advance of their workweek to Friday in order to line up properly with days worked. As a result, payroll complaints from employees have been all but eliminated. The Town Accountant reports that the FY23 implementation of the Tyler Content Manager, which hosts scanned invoices and allows review in real time, has reduced mounds of paperwork, and made retrieving documentation much more efficient for all departments. The finance team has instituted monthly meetings to train departmental employees and answer any questions that might arise with these new processes.

The FY25 Town Accountant's budget will decrease by (2.8%), to \$430,725. Salaries will decrease by (1%) due to staff exchange, and expenses will decrease by (10.3%) as FY25 does not include costs related to the biennial OPEB actuarial report. In 2024, the Town Accountant, in conjunction with HR and IT, has implemented Employee Self Service (ESS), which allows employees to log into a personal account to review pay stubs, access W-2s, change withholdings, update addresses, etc. This effort will continue into FY25 and is expected to create additional efficiencies and improve employee satisfaction.

The Town Accountant expects to put in a \$50,000 capital request in FY27 to review and update the Chart of Accounts in MUNIS, which organizes the Town's financial transactions. Belmont's Chart of Accounts has not been reviewed in decades and is expected to result in a cleaner, more streamlined system.

Town Treasurer

FY2025 represents the first budget presented under the newly appointed Treasurer. Already substantial savings have been realized. The FTEs have been reduced from 6.5 to 5.0 due to the elimination of the Admin Assistant and Office Assistant positions. The present Treasurer is an experienced professional capable of performing all the functions of her staff. She has reinforced and enhanced coordination between her office and the Town Accountant's office.

The new Treasurer has achieved efficiencies through some basic process improvements, including a new bill printing contract, transitioning pay advices from pre-printed perforated stock to basic copy paper and emailed pay advices, and requesting check stock from banks rather than self-printing, all of which result in a total annualized savings of \$17,003. That savings, coupled with the \$59,160 savings from reorganizing the administrative staff, resulted in a total combined savings of \$76,163, or 11.8% of the FY24 budget.

In addition, the Treasurer initiated a review of bank accounts and increased interest earning by shifting funds to higher yield accounts allowable under strict state regulations. This, in addition to a higher interest rate environment, has resulted in more than \$1 million in increased investment income.

As collector of taxes, the Treasurer reports only 20 delinquent tax payers.

The Treasurer in coordination with the Town Administration in light of the present high interest rates has deferred the permanent bond financing of the new construction of the Library and the Skating Rink by issuing short-term bond anticipation notes (BANs).

Board of Assessors

In April, town residents voted to change from an elected to an appointed Board of Assessors. The Select Board will determine whom to appoint as each elected office holder reaches the end of their elected term. The first such appointment will occur once the recount has been certified.

During FY24, the Town transitioned to a new deputy treasurer vendor, which coordinates distribution of motor vehicle excise bills. This change has resulted in a more streamlined bill review and generation process, which is overseen by the Assessors, with motor vehicle excise bills being distributed one week earlier than in past years.

The FY25 Assessor's budget will increase by 6.76% over FY24. Salaries will increase 4.4% in line with contractual obligations. Expenses will increase by \$25,000 due to costs incurred during a recertification year. Every five years the Massachusetts Department of Revenue recertifies the Town's assessed values, a process that typically lasts an entire year and increases the level of inspections, reporting, and time and effort required of the Assessor's Office.

The new growth figure for FY25 is expected to be \$860,000, largely driven by residential additions and renovations.

The Abatements and Exemptions reserve is \$840,000, which is approximately 1% of total property tax revenue. The reserve accounts for new growth valuations that might create additional abatement requests. Property tax work-off programs for Belmont senior homeowners are also charged to this account. The State recently increased the allowable amount to be earned through senior tax work off programs from \$1,500 to \$2,000, which the Select Board adopted in March 2024.

In line with the Collins Center report, the Assessor's Office has submitted a capital request of \$125,000 to replace the current CAMA system, which is at the end of its useful life. The department plans to transition to one of two vendors which are used by 95% of Massachusetts municipalities and is expected to create numerous efficiencies, including the ability of departments to access needed information on a more timely basis. The new system will be installed after the revaluation and transitioned over FY25.

Abatement requests have varied in recent years. (FY24 abatement requests were due this year on February 1, 2024.) A requested abatement from the Belmont Golf Club is currently in litigation.

Abatement Requests 2020-2024

Year	# of requests
2020	556
2021	408
2022	148
2023	139
2024	181

FY25 Recommendations

In line with Collins Center recommendation 2.1.2, a comprehensive PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program should be developed by the Select Board and Town Administration for the Town's non-profit landowners.

The Town should continue to pursue business-friendly policies and a rewrite of zoning bylaws, with the goal of increasing the percentage of annual property tax receipts from commercial sources.

The Select Board should file a home rule petition with the state legislature to request an exemption from the 75% tax break under MGL Ch.61B, as applied to golf courses, as voted in the affirmative by Belmont Town Meeting.

Human Services

FY25 Budget Changes from FY24

	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	FY25 FTE	Change from FY24
Council on Aging	\$ 405,854	\$ 422,086	\$ 16,232	4.0 %	6.37	0
Library	\$ 2,348,394	\$ 2,391,802	\$ 43,409	1.8 %	26.75	0.5
Health Department	\$ 597,112	\$ 616,761	\$ 19,649	3.3 %	5.37	-0.9
Total	\$ 3,351,360	\$ 3,430,649	\$ 79,290	2.4 %	38.49	-0.4

Council on Aging

The Belmont Council on Aging (COA) serves the town and our seniors through a variety of programs, including social services; lunch and nutrition; wellness and exercise; learning; and arts and entertainment programs. These services also provide valuable socialization for Belmont’s seniors.

The FY2025 budget represents a 4.00% increase from FY 2024. This increase is due to contractual and COLA adjustments to compensation, as well as an increase from 35 to 40 hours for the transportation coordinator.

Structural and FTE Changes in COA

Since December 21, 2023 the COA Director role has been filled by Brandon Fitts, Director of Recreation. In FY 2024 an Assistant Director and Volunteer Director was hired. An ARPA-funded part-time Social Worker was eliminated due to lack of demand for social services, which are being met by the part-time social worker on staff. With the passing of the override, that Social Worker will be funded and maintained to serve the needs of Belmont seniors.

In FY 2023 Volunteers contributed 6,367 hours of service to the COA and Senior Programs. This includes Seniors in the Work-Off tax relief program, interns, and other volunteers.

Grants and Other Funding Sources

Grants and Additional Funding will cover the compensation for one full-time and one part-time (.25) driver. In addition, a Media Specialist is grant-funded in FY2025. Regional Transportation fees, donations from Friends of the COA, and program fees from participants are additional sources of funding.

FY25 Grants

STATE EOEA Grant – Annual Formula Grant based on Census	\$ 94,542
STATE EOEA Misc Expenses – Annual State grant based on service statistics	\$ 26,241
STATE MDFA Tax & Livery Grant – Transportation Grant	\$ 16,341
FEDERAL HYBRID Grant – One time technology grant for programming	\$ 98,774

Program Overview

The temporary relocation of Belmont Library to the Beech Street Center caused some overcrowding issues when initially implemented. Those have been largely resolved, and the increased traffic in the Beech Street Center is seen as a net positive impact.

There have been several facility issues at the Center, some existing for years. These maintenance and repair problems are being addressed and include kitchen repairs - sinks and a freezer not functioning. Some problems addressed also impacted accessibility, such as lowering soap dispensers in the restrooms and repairing sidewalks.

The COA Served 1601 seniors in FY2023 (unique, non-duplicated individuals), 1531 of whom were Belmont residents. In FY2024, to date, the COA has served 1616 unduplicated seniors with congregate dining, health and wellness, and general information services, as well as programs off-site and transportation to medical and other appointments.

The Beech Street Center is rented out after hours and on weekends. Almost every weekend in February, March and April 2024 was rented. Fee increases for rentals will be considered, as are rental and usage fees for all town properties.

Future Considerations and Recommendations

The COA continues its efforts to bring needed services to Belmont's seniors. Rebuilding after COVID continues, and plans for FY2025 include:

- More outreach to inform and engage this important population. Per the most recent US census data, 17.6% of Belmont residents, or approximately 4,750 seniors, are over age 65. Per the Belmont census data, approximately 28% of Belmont residents are over age 60. (The Belmont census may be subject to inaccuracies due to non-returned census forms).
- Return to the Springwell warm, plated meals program, suspended since COVID. The lunch program is currently grab and go, which addresses nutritional needs, but does not provide any opportunity to socialize.
- Expand the volunteer opportunities for seniors. The COA relies upon the contribution made by volunteers to support programs.
- Modernize processes, including offering the option of credit card payments, updating the website and additional email outreach.
- More outreach and programs for "Junior Seniors", the younger segment of Belmont's Senior population.
- Additional trips to cultural and entertainment events.
- Support seniors living at Sherman Gardens during redevelopment.
- Continue to develop and enhance virtual and hybrid programs around relevant topics such as Medicare, Social Security, food insecurity, scams and solo aging.

Library

The Library has four main program areas: Public Services, which includes Circulation, Adult/Reference, Young Adult and Children's Services, all directly serving patrons; and three areas supporting those services, Technical Services, Plant Operations and Administration.

Budget By Program

Program	Budget \$	% Change
Administration	\$ 315,230	20.87 %
Public Services	\$ 1,462,358	0.09 %
Technical	\$ 437,774	11.79 %
Plant Operations	\$ 176,440	(24.88)%
Total	\$ 2,391,802	1.85 %

The old Library building has been demolished, and the new building being constructed on the existing site is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2025. During construction, Library Services are being operated out of the Beech Street Center, the Benton Library and the Chenery School.

Belmont Public Library continues to be one of the top circulating public libraries in the Commonwealth even compared to cities and town much larger than Belmont. Last year the Library experienced a 26% increase in foot traffic and the digital circulation has grown 42% in the last five years.

The Administration expenses have increased by 20.87% in FY25 driven by the additional position of an Assistant Director. This position was created largely with existing funds by a reallocation of staffing expenses. The 11.79% increase for the Technical Services includes funds for a new website and increased amount for in-house technology support.

The small overall increase in the budget for FY25 is deceiving. With no plant to operate during FY25, the Plant Operation expenses are down by 24.88%. Obviously, as we face FY26, the new building will be online and likely require more expenses than incurred in FY24, which were \$234,871. Hopefully, the Library efficiency in the new building with solar panels contributing to electrical needs and updated technology for self-checkouts and material handling will result in some operational savings.

Health Department

The Health Department’s responsibilities include disease control, enforcement of state and local sanitary codes and health regulations, health permitting, animal control, and veterans’ services.

Health Department Budget by Program

Program	Budget \$	% Change
Health Administration including Environmental Health and Disease Control	\$ 428,448	69.47 %
Veterans’ Services	\$ 111,226	18.03 %
Animal Care & Control	\$ 77,086	12.50 %
Total	\$ 616,761	100.00 %

The department’s budget increase of 3.29% results from contracted salary increases for part-time staff and increases for contract services, including food-service inspections and mosquito control.

In FY24 the Health Department’s workload remained high in relation to staffing. The department continued catching up with post-Covid enforcement of sanitary standards in food services, using primarily contract inspectors due to lack of staff. Inspections of rental housing increased, driven by increased cost of living and high rents resulting in demand for better living conditions. The caseload increased for the Animal Control Officer due to frequent requests from adjacent towns for mutual aid; responses to rats and other nuisance animals; and “pandemic puppies” resulting in higher enforcement of leash laws and developing workable off-leash programs in parks that are already in high demand. The

department also provides flu and Covid vaccines to Belmont's senior population, which developed a trust in the Department's response to the pandemic and now depends on the combined clinics.

One-time federal COVID monies funded a temporary Public Health Agent, who was able to free the staff for inspectional services. The Agent also issued seasonal safety messages, kept statistics on rat infestations, tracked Covid cases, and conducted outreach for the Department on food safety inspections and veterans' issues.

However, with the end of the one-time federal funding, the Agent now works for a regional group of four health departments. Belmont receives support from this group but the Agent can only devote two (2) days per week to Belmont.

The low number of department staff results in contracting out for fundamental services such as restaurant inspections.

The Department has no full-time Public Health Nurse but shares a Nurse regionally with the Towns of Arlington and Brookline and the City of Newton. This Nurse works 14 hours (two days) per week for Belmont and is a Belmont employee. The Department's Veterans Agent also works part-time. There is high demand on the part-time Social Worker to address food insecurity, hoarding, and other complex housing conditions. Overall, the workload of the Health Department remains higher than it was before the pandemic.

Due to the above factors, "level funding" of the Health Department does NOT maintain level services, due to increased costs for contract inspectors and rising salaries in a staff that is stretched very thin.

The Department sought and received grants from other sources, including Massachusetts Department of Public Health to share regional services such as epidemiologists for tracking communicable disease. However, Belmont's low staffing means Belmont cannot contribute shared services on an equitable basis with the other towns in the shared services agreement. The Department lacks the staff to draft grant proposals for more funding.

Note

This report is a collaborative report that reflects many hours of work by all members of the Warrant Committee with assistance from the Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator / Finance Director, the Town Treasurer, the Town Clerk, the School Committee, School Superintendent and Finance Director, and each of the department heads. The Chair of the Warrant Committee takes responsibility for the content of this report. We welcome all feedback that could help make the report more useful to Town Meeting Members. Please email any comments to warrcommpublic@belmont-ma.gov.



FY24 Budget

A Presentation of the
FY25 Warrant Committee Report to
Belmont Town Meeting
June 3, 2024





Warrant Committee Report

- Warrant Committee Purpose and Duties
- Collins Center Report Recommendations
June 2022 - May 2024 Status Update
- Overview of FY25 Budget Process
- Overview of Recommended FY25 General Fund Budget
- Use of One-Time Funds: American Rescue Plan (ARPA), Undesignated Fund Balance (Free Cash) and Excess Revenues from the Override
- Risks for FY25 & FY26 Budgets
- Longer-Term Concerns



Warrant Committee Purpose and Duties

- The Warrant Committee (many towns use the label “Finance Committee”) consists of up to seventeen members, **15 appointed** by the Town Moderator for staggered three-year terms. One representative from the Select Board and one from the School Committee serve as ex-officio members.
- The Warrant Committee elects its officers: Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.
- The **Town By-Laws** give the Warrant Committee responsibility for reporting and making recommendations to Town Meeting on any article that involves the appropriation of money.
- The most significant is the annual Town budget where the Warrant Committee, representing Town Meeting, will present its annual budgetary and capital positions to Town Meeting in the Annual Warrant Committee Report.
- The Warrant Committee also reports on any matter that in the Committee’s judgment significantly impacts the Town’s financial interest.
- In addition, the Warrant Committee reviews and approves all requests for transfers from the Reserve Fund. Established by Town Meeting, the **\$500,000 Reserve Fund** is designed for unbudgeted, emergency expenditures that arise during the year.



High Level Concepts to Guide the Committee

The Warrant Committee has also developed **high level concepts** to guide the Committee through meeting its responsibilities to the Town specified in the **Town By-Laws** for the Warrant Committee. The following are these concepts:

- Balance the level of community services with our dependence on residential property tax revenue.
- Maintain and adhere to the Town's Comprehensive Financial Policies.
- Plan sustainable budgets with a multi-year focus.
- Advise Town Meeting on the budget and other matters that affect the financial interests of the Town.



Collins Center Report Recommendations

June 2022 - May 2024 Status Update

Financial			
Recommendation	Description	Status as of May 2024	Progress
1.3.2	The Town should appoint a Finance Director to lead the Financial Management Team.	Hired May 2022	Done
1.1	Follow DLS guidelines and established best practices during the annual budget process, which includes reaching consensus on all financial forecasts.	FY2024 and FY2025 Budget Summits focused on Revenue as basis for budget development	Done
1.3.1	The Town should formalize a Financial Management Team in accordance with best practices established by DLS.	Progress has been made with transition from Elected to Appointed Treasurer and Board of Assessors.	Underway
2.3	The Town should develop a strategy to build permanent reserves.	Summer 2024 Project - Finance Director	Planned
2.5	The Town should refocus on planning and economic development in order to attract an appropriate level of commercial and/or industrial activity in order to expand levy capacity and relieve the tax burden on residential taxpayers.	Market and Fiscal Impact Analysis projects are underway - Planning Dept.	Underway
2.1.2	The Town should develop other sources of revenue, including PILOT agreements and a comprehensive review of municipal fees and local receipts.	Summer 2024 Project - Finance Director	Ongoing
2.2	The Town should develop a comprehensive strategy to restructure departments, services, employee benefits, fixed and variable expenses, and wages.	Town has restructured Public Works and Community Development, currently considering IT updates.	Ongoing
2.6	The Town should coordinate training programs across finance-related departments and, where relevant, boards and committees.	Townwide DEI training held in March 2024. Finance Team has started monthly meetings with all admin staff to ensure consistent policies and procedures	Ongoing
2.7	The Town should invest in upgrading its CAMA system.	Capital request for FY2025	Planned
2.1.1	The Town should significantly reduce or otherwise end its reliance on free cash and other non-recurring revenues to balance the operating budget and eliminate its structural deficit.	Significant focus of Override discussion. Plan for Override Mitigation fund - need for constrained spending growth going forward.	Ongoing
Powers and Duties			
Recommendation	Description	Status as of May 2024	Progress
1.7	The Town should conduct a classification and compensation study to ensure all relevant positions are up to date.	Implementation pending union discussions.	Ongoing
2.4	The capital plan should be developed by the Town Administrator in conjunction with department leaders and be vetted by the Capital Committee before submission to the Select Board and Warrant Committee.	TA staff have supported Capital Committee for FY2024 and FY2025 projects. What more to say??	Ongoing
1.6.1	The Audit Committee should be appointed by the Moderator to provide a check on the finance officers.	Determined this will not be pursued.	Rejected
1.5	The Town should clearly define and strengthen the powers and duties of the Select Board and Town Administrator through Select Board policy, bylaws, and/or special legislation.		TBD
1.2	The Town should create an organization that is more centralized through Select Board policy, bylaws, special legislation, or Massachusetts General Law.		TBD
1.6.2	The Capital Committee should be appointed by the Select Board and be charged with working alongside the Financial Management Team.	New CCBC is appointed by Moderator. Will not revisit at this point.	Rejected
Appointed Vs. Elected			
Recommendation	Description	Status as of May 2024	Progress
1.4.2	The Town should transition to an appointed Treasurer/Collector who is an integral member of the Financial Management Team.	Done.	Done
1.4.1	The town should seek special legislation to replace all relevant elected non- policymaking boards, committees, and positions with appointed ones, including the Treasurer/Collector and Board of Assessors.	Treasurer and Assessors done. Unclear if further transitions necessary.	TBD
1.8	The Board of Assessors should be appointed and the full-time Assessing Administrator should fill a Board seat.	Done. Transition will take place over next two years.	Done



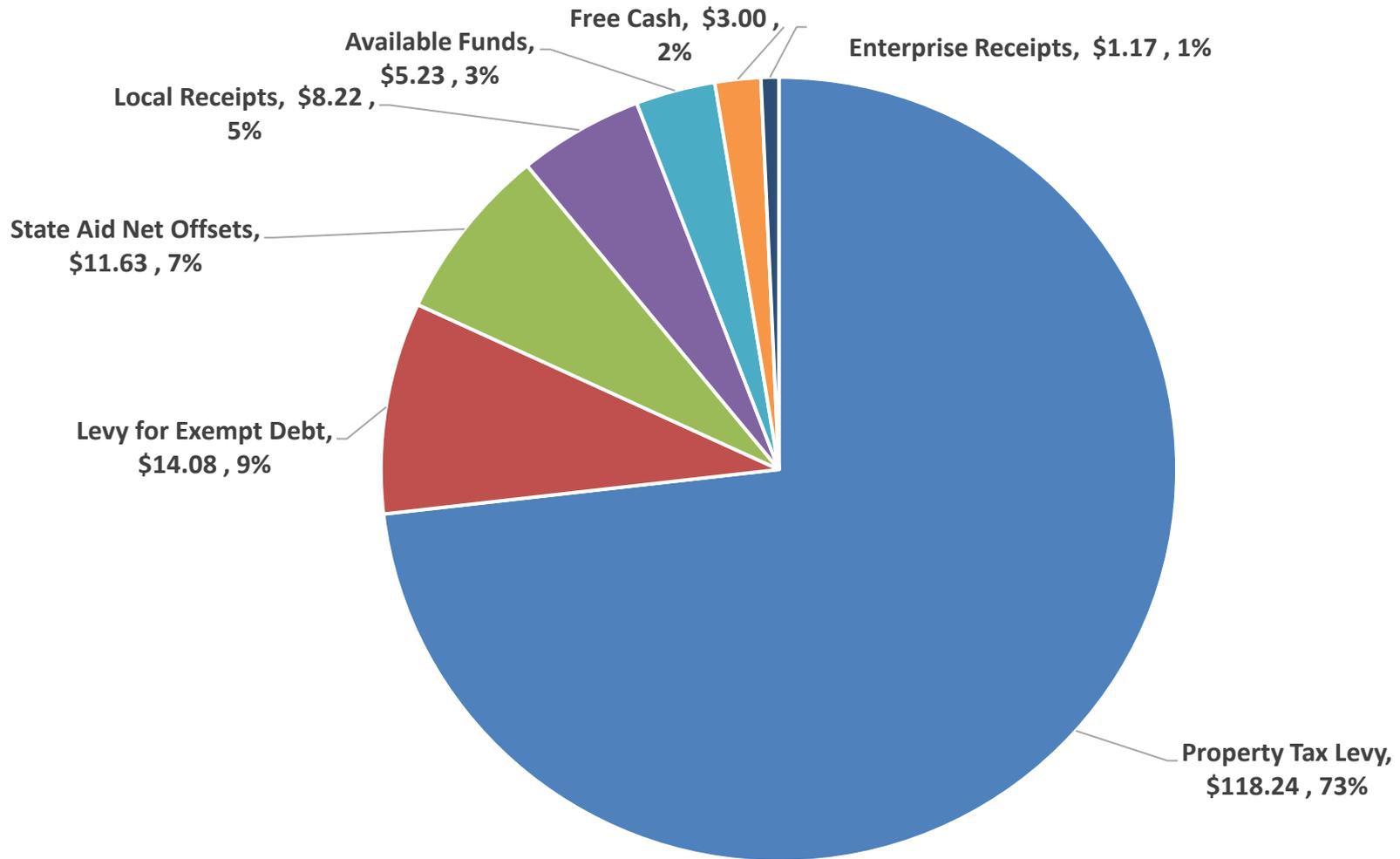
Overview of FY25 Budget Process

- **Host a series of Budget Summits** with increasingly precise revenue projections. Discussions to inform later iterations.
- **Develop budget projections for “core services”** that are funded first – refined alongside revenues.
- **Identify remaining revenue** that the Town Administrator and School Superintendent use to inform their recommended budgets given determined needs.
- **Determine and agree** to the level of one-time funding (or lack thereof) and potential override amounts used to supplement revenues.
- **Create two sets of budgets** for both the municipal and school budgets: one for a successful override and one if the override was not successful.
- **Review multi-year budget forecasts** and the impact of one-time funds, reserve balances, successful or unsuccessful override for FY25 and projected future budget challenges.

And now.... Town Meeting votes to approve FY25 budget, but first...



FY25 SOURCES OF REVENUE \$161.55 MILLION



\$ Millions, rounded Percent of Total



Expected FY25 General Fund Revenues

Notes:

Revenues	FY2025 Projected	FY2024 Estimated	\$ Change	% Change
Property Tax Levy	\$118.24	\$106.23	\$12.00	11.3%
Levy for Exempt Debt	\$14.08	\$13.14	\$0.93	7.1%
Total Tax Levy	\$132.31	\$119.38	\$12.94	10.8%
State Aid	\$14.77	\$14.61	\$0.16	1.1%
Local Receipts	\$8.22	\$10.06	-\$1.84	-18.3%
Available Funds	\$5.67	\$1.86	\$3.81	204.8%
Free Cash	\$2.56	\$9.69	-\$7.13	-73.6%
Revenue Offsets	-\$3.15	-\$3.10	-\$0.04	1.4%
Enterprise Receipts	\$1.17	\$0.94	\$0.23	24.2%
Total Revenues	\$161.55	\$153.43	\$8.12	5.3%

- The FY25 budget is supported by the successful approval by the voters of a \$8.4 million proposition 2½ override
- Combined with the normal 2.5% increase in the tax level and a new growth estimate of \$860,000 results in a \$12 million or 11.3% increase in the overall property tax level
- Local receipts are down due to Recreation Department moving to a Revolving Fund
- Available Funds increase is driven by one-time use of Free Cash to fund the Chenery boiler project and transfer into an Override Mitigation Fund.
- Free Cash to be used in the operating budget decreases by 73.6% from FY24 due to the override and policy change
- Total Revenues increasing 5.3%; driven by the successful override

\$ Millions, rounded



FY25 Budget Overview

FY25 General Fund Budget vs. FY24

Notes:

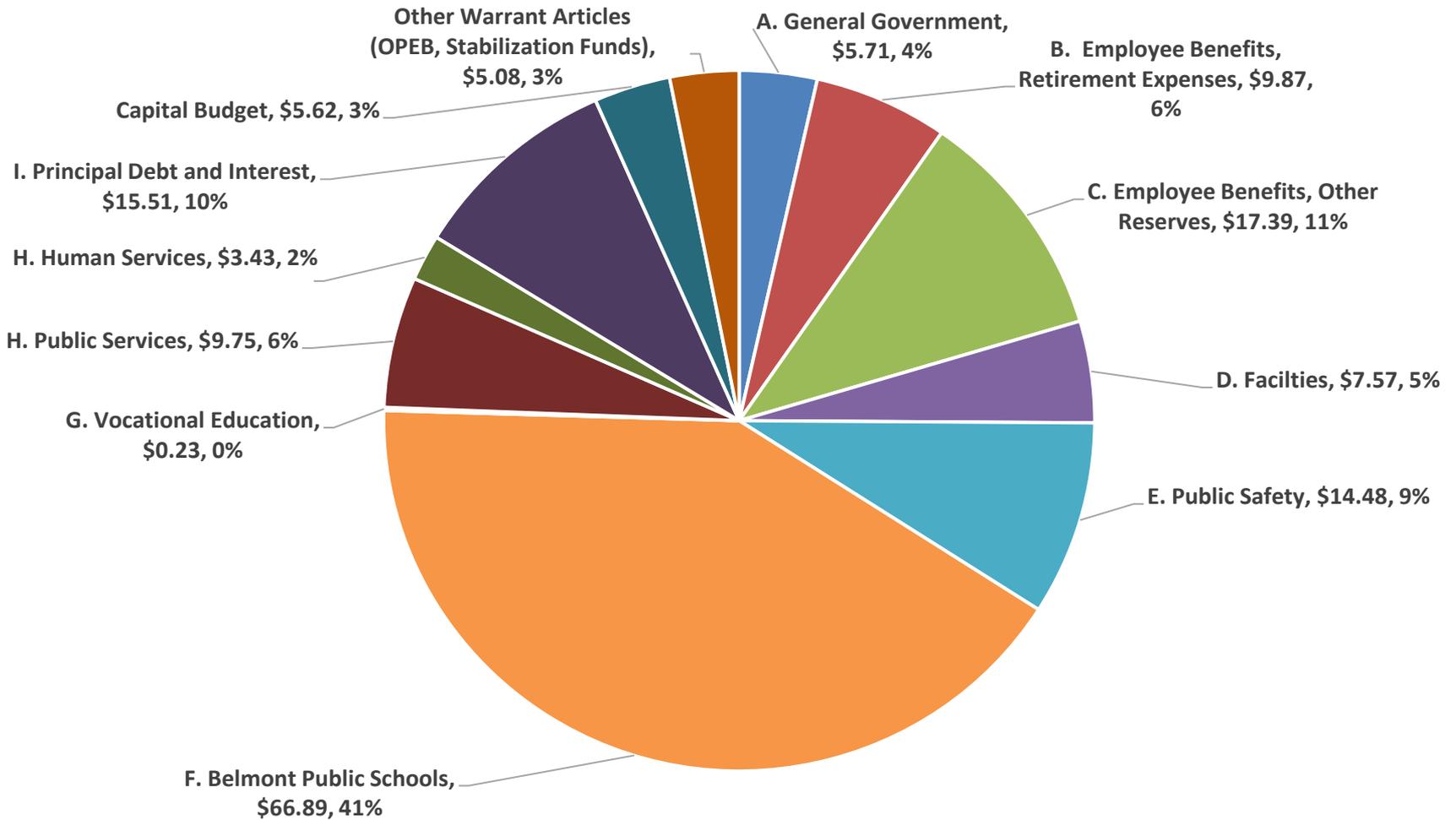
Spending	FY2025 Projected	FY2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Belmont Public Schools	\$66.89	\$62.89	\$4.0	6.4%
General Government	\$5.71	\$5.22	\$0.49	9.4%
Public Safety	\$14.48	\$14.16	\$0.32	2.3%
Public Services	\$9.75	\$10.57	-\$0.82	-7.8%
Health and Human Services	\$3.43	\$3.35	\$0.08	2.4%
Total Municipal Government	\$33.38	\$33.31	\$0.07	0.2%
Regional Schools	\$0.23	\$0.75	-\$0.51	-68.6%
Facilities	\$7.57	\$7.52	\$0.05	0.7%
Pension Assessment	\$9.87	\$10.04	-\$0.17	-1.7%
Employee Benefits	\$16.07	\$15.62	\$0.45	2.9%
Debt Service	\$15.51	\$14.64	\$0.87	5.9%
Other Shared	\$1.33	\$1.17	\$0.15	13.2%
Total Shared Services	\$50.59	\$49.74	\$0.84	1.7%
Capital - Streets	\$1.95	\$1.90	\$0.05	2.5%
Capital - Sidewalks	\$0.50	\$0.24	\$0.26	105.1%
Capital - Discretionary	\$3.17	\$1.79	\$1.38	77.1%
Total Capital	\$5.62	\$3.94	\$1.69	-42.8%
Other Warrant Articles (OPEB, Stabilization Funds)	\$5.08	\$2.96	\$2.12	71.7%
Total Spending	\$161.55	\$152.83	\$8.72	5.7%
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

- FY25 General Fund budget 5.7% higher
- School General Fund operating budget expected to increase by 6.4% with investment in in-district special education services
- General Government is up due to a shift in technology costs with the transition of the Police Department to the Town network
- Increase in Debt Services payments represents the beginning of the Rink and Library funding
- Increase in sidewalk funding is the result of the override
- FY25 Discretionary Capital up due to one-time funding of \$1.6 million for the Chenery boilers

(\$ Millions, rounded)



FY25 Budget (\$161.55 million) by Article,



\$ Millions, rounded Percent of Total



Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

ARPA Funds

State ARPA Fund Allotment \$7,806,251

Allocated by Select Board - Completed Projects

FY2021-22 COVID Response Activities	\$202,783
FY2023 COVID Stipends	\$269,000
Pre-Construction Work for Rink	\$350,000
BMHS PV Project	\$1,290,633
FY2023 Operating Budget Support	\$981,989
CCBC - Security Projects (Schools)	\$245,000
Salt Shed - DPW Yard	\$490,533
White Field House - Demolish via BMHS	\$346,554
	<hr/>
	\$4,176,492

Allocated by Select Board - Open Projects

DPW Yard Fuel Tanks	\$466,187
CCBC - Repairs Butler School	\$892,214
Grove Street Project Bid Results	\$70,000
Updated website implementation	\$44,755
Market Analysis & Fiscal Analysis	\$75,000
FY24 Town Operating	\$63,648
FY24-25 Schools Operating	\$1,876,000
	<hr/>
	\$3,487,804
Combined Total	\$7,664,297
Remaining Balance	\$141,954

- Most of the ARPA funds have been allocated; only \$141,954 and must be allocated by December 31st, 2024.
- These one-time funds will not be available for future years, putting additional budgetary pressures on the Municipal and School budgets in FY26 and beyond
- The funding for nine ARPA positions at the schools will be ending at the end of FY25.



Update: Undesignated Fund Balance (Free Cash) Sources

Free Cash Sources

(Millions)

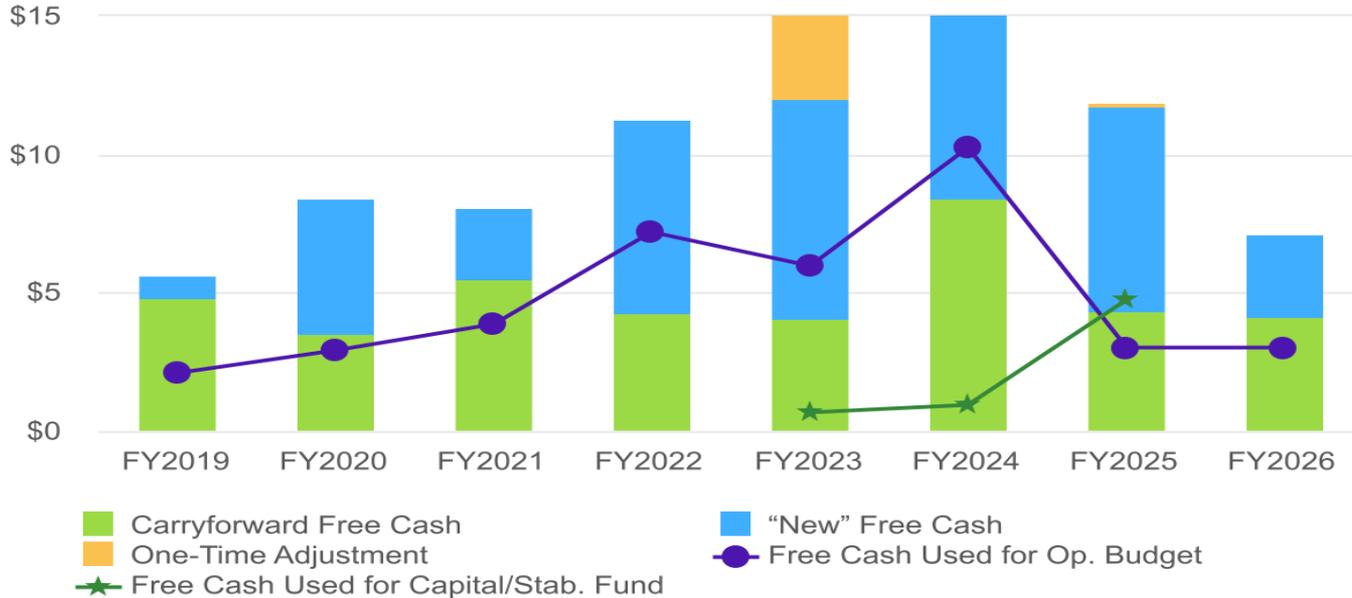
Category	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Carryforward	4.03	4.13	7.84	4.36
Excess Revenues	0.94	3.84	1.49	2.12
Town Salaries	1.16	1.71	0.55	0.46
Town Expenses	0.71	1.18	1.25	1.11
Town Benefits	0.10	0.82	0.84	0.25
Subtotal Town	1.97	3.72	2.64	1.82
School Salaries	1.27	1.32	0.65	0.17
School Expenses	(0.80)	0.88	(0.36)	(0.43)
School Benefits	0.35	0.19	0.40	0.62
Subtotal School	0.82	2.39	0.69	0.35
Facilities	0.52	0.40	0.47	0.18
Debt Service	0.16	0.76	0.19	0.07
Prior Year	1.01	0.79	0.65	1.15
Encumbrances				
Other Misc. Factors	1.80	(1.00)	1.58	1.81
Total Free Cash	11.24	15.03	15.55	11.87

- The Free Cash balance at the end of FY23 (July 1, 2023), are at \$11.87 million.
- While down from the prior year this represented another year of elevated Free Cash due to:
 - Challenges filling open positions - especially on the municipal side
 - Conservative fiscal management as well as increases in revenues greater than anticipated from ambulance receipts, building permits and interest income



Free Cash Use in the Operating Budget Going Forward

Chart 1: Free Cash Experience in Recent Fiscal Years and Projected



- A detailed analysis was also done to determine that the amount of one-time funds(Free Cash) to be utilized from one year to the next for the operating budget should be **\$3 million**.
- This is a significant reduction in one-time funds that had been used over the last several budget cycles, which ranged from **\$5-\$10 million**.
- Going forward, any additional one-time funds received **above** the \$3 million that will be used in the operating budget will be used for capital projects or appropriated to either a General or Capital Stabilization Fund.
- All allocations are contingent on sufficient Free Cash reserves that comply with the Town's Financial Policy of **3-5%** of the previous year's operating budget.



Overall Free Cash Appropriation for FY25

For FY25 the total allocation of free cash is **\$7.74 million** and the remaining balance of **\$4.14 million** will remain which is in within the **3-5%** of the previous year's operating budget per the guideline of the Town's financial policies

Fiscal Year	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Free Cash Available (Millions)	\$8.11	\$11.24	\$15.03	\$15.55	\$11.87
Operating Budget	\$3.79	\$7.11	\$5.38	\$9.69	\$2.56
OPEB	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.58	\$0.55	\$0.44
General Stabilization				\$0.95	
Opioid Settlement					\$0.11
Capital Stabilization					\$1.50
Override Offset					\$3.13
Fuel Tanks			\$0.65		
Total Uses	\$3.84	\$7.16	\$6.61	\$11.20	\$7.74
Remaining Balance	\$4.26	\$4.08	\$8.42	\$4.36	\$4.14

- **Operating Budget & OPEB** – This reflects the recently decided policy to dedicate \$3M in total Free Cash operating budget (\$2.56 million) and Other Post Employee Benefits OPEB (\$.44 million)
- **Opioid Settlement** – This is the FY2023 Opioid Settlement embedded in Free Cash – must be transferred to Opioid fund per Massachusetts Settlement Agreement.
- **Capital Stabilization** – This is for the replacement of the Chenery boilers to take place during the summer of 2025.
- **Override Offset** – An override mitigation fund will be established in June 2024 Town Meeting and the \$3.13 million will be allocated to this Fund along with excess revenues from the override of \$.93 million for a total of \$4.06 million to be used in the FY26 and FY27 operating budgets and possibly beyond.



Risks for FY25 Budget

FY24 Schools Budget. As of May 2024, the School Department is estimating a potential deficit of **\$1.3-\$1.5 million** in the operating budget. There are mitigation plans in place including Emergency Circuit Breaker funding but there could be spill-over impact for FY25.

Covid / ARPA Funds. Most of the Covid relief and ARPA funds have been appropriated. Thus, these funds are no longer available to help cover one-time and recurring costs nor any additional unforeseen financial pressure on the municipal and/or school departments.

Facilities/Capital. As reported in recent years, it is apparent that Town facilities have not received required maintenance on a timely schedule and there is still a significant backlog. Therefore, the risk of unexpected needs for repairs in FY25 and beyond remains significantly high.



Risks for FY26 Budget and Beyond

Schools & ARPA. The ARPA funded positions of **\$1,004,369** at the schools will end at the end of FY25. The School Department has indicated that it would like to keep these positions for FY26 and beyond but will need to be funded from other sources as the ARPA will be done. This will put added pressure on an already stretched budget projection.

Schools & Union Contracts. The current teachers' union contract will expire in August of 2025. Given the current environment and recent events in other towns and municipalities, the results of negotiations could have a significant impact on the school budget and put additional pressure on balancing a budget where expenses significantly outpace recurring revenues.

Facilities/Capital. The Chenery roof and the rooftop HVAC units have reached the end of their useful life and will need to be replaced in FY26 with a current estimate of \$5.4 - \$7.0 million. Combined with other capital needs there is funding gap of about \$10 million for FY26 and FY27.



Longer-Term Concerns: Underlying Structural Deficit Still Exists

Revenue Budget (\$M)	FY23 Actual	FY24 Estimated	FY25 Projected	FY26 Projected	FY27 Projected	FY28 Projected	FY29 Projected	24-'29 CAGR*
Total Available Revenue	\$131.24	\$139.15	\$133.98	\$137.80	\$141.72	\$145.78	\$149.97	1.5%
Expense Budget (\$M)	FY23 Actual	FY24 Estimated	FY25 Projected	FY26 Projected	FY27 Projected	FY28 Projected	FY29 Projected	24-'27 CAGR
Schools	\$55.90	\$63.49	\$67.04	\$70.83	\$74.80	\$78.62	\$82.85	5.5%
Municipal	\$32.47	\$33.31	\$33.38	\$34.21	\$35.06	\$35.94	\$36.84	2.0%
Shared Services	\$33.05	\$37.11	\$35.54	\$36.78	\$38.06	\$39.40	\$40.78	1.9%
Capital	\$5.08	\$5.25	\$5.59	\$5.71	\$5.83	\$5.95	\$6.08	3.0%
Total Expense	\$126.50	\$139.15	\$141.54	\$147.53	\$153.76	\$159.91	\$166.55	3.7%
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	\$4.74	\$0.00	(\$7.57)	(\$9.73)	(\$12.03)	(\$14.13)	(\$16.58)	
Approach to Closing Deficit (\$M)			FY25 Projected	FY26 Projected	FY27 Projected	FY28 Projected	FY29 Projected	25-'29 CAGR*
Override Increase to Tax Levy			\$8.40	\$8.61	\$8.83	\$9.05	\$9.27	2.5%
Override Mitigation Fund			\$0.00	\$1.17	\$3.26	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit) with Override			\$0.83	\$0.05	\$0.05	(\$5.08)	(\$7.31)	
* CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate								

- Even with a successful \$8.4 million override the underlying structural deficit still exists.
- The override has provided the town with a reprieve to the structural deficit but only for the short term.
- Unless expense growth is brought in line with revenue growth the Town could face another significant shortfall as early as **FY28** of an estimated **\$5.06** million and **\$7.31** million in **FY29**.
- The only way to avoid another sizable override in the not-too-distant future is to curtail expenses within available revenues.



Fiscal Compact For Belmont

- The Warrant Committee is leading the development of a Fiscal Compact with the residents of Belmont to address our underlying fiscal challenges, an initiative which many other towns have implemented.
- The goal is to strengthen Belmont's long-term fiscal planning, effectively balance the needs of all residents and minimize future tax increases.
- The Committee established guiding principles for a Fiscal Compact that a newly formed advisory group will follow toward the development of a formal Fiscal Compact during the summer and early fall, ahead of the FY26 budgeting process.



Guiding Principles for Fiscal Compact

The following are some of those guiding principles for the advisory group which consists of representatives from the Select Board, Town Administration, School Administration, Warrant Committee and School Committee. The Fiscal Compact will be completed in advance of the Fall FY26 budget summits.

- No additional Proposition 2½ override request for at least three years after a successful override.
- Reduce annual expense growth rates to bring expenditures in closer alignment with revenue.
- Develop policies to spur revenue and growth, diversify our tax base and promote economic development and business growth.
- Reduce the reliance on one-time sources to fund the operating budget and place excess Free Cash generated each year by turnbacks or excess revenue into specific stabilization funds and capital projects.
- Protect against future fiscal shocks by maintaining adequate financial reserves and a strong bond rating.



Thank You



REPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
2024 Town Meeting
May/June 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction Town Meeting Votes (Summary Table)

CCBC Composition and FY25 Priorities

Funding Sources for Capital Projects (Summary Table)

Discretionary Funding -Operating Budget

Dedicated Funding

Debt within Levy

Enterprise Funds

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Community Preservation Act

Earmarks and Miscellaneous Funding Sources

Kendall Fund

FY25 Capital Budget Recommendation

Capital Budget Process

Capital Project Evaluation

Capital Stabilization Fund

FY25 Capital Budget – Key Projects and Summary Table

Capital Budget Years 2-5 (FY26-FY29)

Key Projects and Summary Table

Potential Capital Needs in Years 6-10 (FY30-FY34)

Recent Debt Exclusion Projects

CCBC Policy and Process Work for Year Two (Preparation for FY26 Budget)

Adopted Town Policies

Update on FY24 Capital Projects

Conclusions

Acknowledgements

Appendix

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a ten-year, five-year capital plan and a one-year capital plan for FY25 of \$11.2 million (including all sources). We are presenting the seeds of a 30-year plan. The one-year budget covers projects supported by a range of funding sources.

The CCBC has two “headlines” for Town Meeting in this report:

1. Critically, the CCBC recommends that the Town make a deposit of \$578,842 into the Capital Stabilization Fund in lieu of funding some lower ranked or less ripe projects. This deposit is in recognition of the significant capital projects that are forth coming in FY26 and FY27, especially the Chenery Rooftop HVAC project. The CCBC will strive to continue a practice of identifying funds to save for the Town’s multi-year capital needs through the tool of the Capital Stabilization Fund.
2. The capital needs of the Town for FY26 and FY27 are significantly more than presently identified and saved funds, with a projected gap of about \$5-6 million. The Town will likely need to explore the use of certain reserves to meet these needs (e.g. Kendall Fund and others) as well as inlevy debt. The CCBC urges Town Meeting to keep this rapidly approaching funding gap in mind as it evaluates the full array of decisions coming before it in 2024.

Town Meeting Votes – Spring 2024

The CCBC seeks to incorporate the full range of the Town’s capital needs and funds in its scrutiny and review. However, the CCBC is advisory to Town Meeting and the Select Board. In addition, the CCBC notes that the spring 2024 Town Meeting will only vote on the following:

1. FY25 projects funded with “discretionary” funds. These 12 projects are in a motion in Article 21. (DPW, Facilities, Fire, Police, IT, Assessors and Bid Reserve)
2. FY25 projects funded with funds that are dedicated to specific purposes. (These are sometimes known as “nondiscretionary.”) These two projects are also in a motion in Article 21. (roads and sidewalks)
3. FY25 projects for Enterprise Funds (water and sewer) are voted in Article 13
4. FY25 contribution to the Capital Stabilization Fund is part of Article 17, along with deposits to other funds.

Town Meeting is not voting on any projects presented in the CCBC Report that are beyond FY25. Rather information on projects in years FY26 and later is provided to Town Meeting as background and contextual information to help inform its deliberations.

See the table below for a cross walk to the Articles on which Town Meeting will vote in spring 2024.

CROSS WALK TO ARTICLES FOR VOTES		
		FY25
Article 13	Enterprise Funds (water/ sewer)	\$2,516,313
Article 21	Discretionary Funded Projects	\$1,573,308
Article 21	Dedicated aka Nondiscretionary Funded Projects	\$2,451,591
Article 22	Chenery Boilers	\$1,600,000
	Free Cash	\$1,500,000
	Discretionary	\$100,000
	Total Town Meeting Project Votes FY25	\$8,141,212
Article 17	Capital Stabilization Fund Deposit	\$578,842
	Grand Total FY25 Votes	\$8,720,054

Genesis and Progress of the CCBC

The CCBC was formed in 2022 to provide a comprehensive and long-term perspective on the capital asset needs of Belmont. The CCBC builds and expands on the long, successful role that the former Capital Budget Committee played in Belmont town government. The Appendix to this Report summarizes the related history of this evolution. The spring 2024 CCBC report evidences some progress toward the Committee’s goal a long-term capital plan for the Town, but the Committee has considerable distance to travel before we have a true long term capital plan for the Town.

CCBC

The CCBC consists of the following appointees (see table): five members appointed by the Moderator (Brusch/Burgess-Cox/Doyle/Link/Pikcilingis) and one each from the Select Board, School Committee, Warrant Committee, and Energy Committee.

Name	Appointing Authority	Term Expiration
Claus Becker	Select Board (Energy Committee Designee)	6/30/2024
Patricia Bursch	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Susan Burgess-Cox (Vice Chair)	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Christine Doyle (Chair)	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Deepak Garg	Select Board (Warrant Committee Designee)	6/30/2024
Lawrence Link	Town Moderator	6/30/2025
Aaron Pikcilingis	Town Moderator	6/30/2026
Matt Taylor	Select Board (Select Board Designee)	6/30/2025
Jung Yueh	Select Board (School Committee Designee)	
David Blazon (non-voting)	Select Board (Superintendent of Schools Designee)	
Jennifer Hewitt (non-voting)	Select Board (Town Administrator Designee)	

CCBC Priorities

During its second year of operations, the CCBC worked on several priorities it set forth last year. The Committee made progress on some priorities, but we still have progress yet to be made on other priorities.

1. Develop a capital plan for years 6 – 30. *The CCBC has made progress, but the Committee has considerable work remaining. The forthcoming building assessment will be a key element to meeting this important milestone.*
2. Integrate project ranking criteria into department heads' preparation of capital project requests. *The CCBC's ranking criteria have been incorporated into the Town's capital budget request materials.*
3. Incorporate results of Building Inventory and Assessment, as well as CPC asset inventories, into capital plan. *The CCBC will move forward on this when the building assessment is completed.*
4. Integrate review of potential regional and private roles for capital needs into Town staff project requests and into CCBC review of projects. *The CCBC has started this effort, but more work is needed.*
5. Establish early communication with CPC and improved integration of CPC projects into the capital plan. *The CCBC had improved communication with the CPC partly as one of our committee members is also a member of the CPC and was able to keep the CCBC updated.*
6. Expand and improve review of Enterprise Fund capital requests and capital funding capacity, including understanding of recent outside report on Enterprise funds. *The CCBC needs to address this effort in the upcoming year.*
7. Monitor activity of the Structural Change Implementation Group and consider incorporation of recommendations. *The CCBC has one member assigned to the SCIG.*
8. Understand the Town's maintenance processes and investments. *The CCBC needs to address this effort in the upcoming year.*

Funding Sources for Capital Projects

The FY25 capital budget recommendation includes funding from about six sources. See the table below. The funding sources for FY25 are presented to Town Meeting for final approval. In contrast, the funding sources for FY26-34 are estimates based on current information. These funding sources and the amounts available in years 2-10 will certainly change. Please note that throughout this report projects are shaded by funding source based on this legend.

LEGEND FOR TABLE COLORS	
Enterprise Funds	Green
Dedicated (Nondiscretionary)	Light Red
State Funds	Light Pink
CPA	Light Blue
Reserves of any type	Turquoise

FUNDING FY25-FY34	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034	Total	
1 Available Discretionary Funding (w/ CEC)	2,005,954	2,149,470	2,300,457	2,363,718	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	25,209,265	
1A Allocation from Cap Endowment Fund	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	913,160	
2 Reserves (Free Cash/CSF/Landfill Fund)	1,500,000	1,341,342									2,841,342	
3 Landfill Fund/Kendall Fund		3,710,450									3,710,450	
4 Total Turnbacks	246,196	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	2,159,709	
5 Streets/Sidewalks - Dedicated	2,451,591	2,512,881	2,575,702	2,640,094	2,706,096	2,759,957	2,815,164	2,871,751	2,929,753	2,989,205	27,252,194	
6 Enterprise	2,516,313	2,926,322	2,972,630	3,063,745	3,381,600	2,972,122	3,063,284	3,090,676	3,114,285	3,124,393	30,225,371	
7 Roadways - Ch. 90 State Grant	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	5,400,000	
8 Roadways - Complete St+FairShare	678,333	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	2,895,249	
9 CPA Property Tax Funds	1,300,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	10,300,000	
10 Within Levy Bond Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Funding Available	11,238,387	14,639,402	9,847,726	10,066,494	10,818,244	10,462,626	10,608,995	10,692,975	10,774,586	10,844,146	-	109,993,579

Discretionary Funds from Operating Budget

Each year the Town allocates from the operating budget for so-called “discretionary capital spending.” The “floor” amount is increased each year by 2.5%. In FY25 the discretionary capital spending from the operating budget is proposed as \$1,910,068 (which includes \$91,316 from the Capital Endowment Fund), \$112,331 from an OPEB recalculation, \$1.5 million from free cash, and \$246,196 from turnbacks.

Capital Endowment Fund

The Capital Endowment Fund (CEF) was created by a special legislative act in 1995 and seeded with the proceeds of the sale of the Town’s community antenna television system and miscellaneous other contributions. The funds are invested and managed by the Town Treasurer, with the advice of the Capital Endowment Committee. The investment earnings of the Fund each year are available to fund the Town’s capital needs. These earnings may be appropriated for any lawful purpose consistent with the special act. In addition, principal of the fund may be appropriated with a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting. For FY25, \$91,316 is available to fund projects. The CEF has a balance of about \$5.2 million.

Turnbacks

The funds from the annual operating budget for capital are supplemented by “turnbacks” from the prior year’s completed capital projects. Turnbacks vary widely by year. For FY25, turnbacks are estimated at \$246,196. In years 2 -10 turnbacks are estimated at the average of FY24 and FY25.

Dedicated Funds (a.k.a. “Nondiscretionary” Funds)

In addition to the discretionary capital funds, the town has funds committed by state statute or local authorization to specifically defined capital projects. The limitations on these dedicated funds are based on Town policy, state laws and prior override votes, primarily utilized for: road and sidewalk repair and community preservation. Without these additional funding sources, Belmont would not be able to preserve valuable public assets.

Funding for Road and Sidewalk Repair (Prior Overrides and Chapter 90)

Funding for roads and sidewalks (transportation capital) comes from state, federal, and local override sources. In 2001, 2015, and 2024, voters approved overrides in the amounts of \$3 million and \$4.5 million and \$8.4 million, respectively. These overrides included capital dedications to roads and sidewalks. Each year, operating override funds increase by 2 ½ %. The road funding related to overrides of 2001 and 2015 is about \$2 million per year, increasing annually by 2.5%.

The Town has significantly expanded its sidewalk funding over the past year. In FY25 \$499,770 is available for sidewalks and these funds derive from operating overrides. In the 2015 override, \$200,000 was dedicated exclusively to sidewalk needs. In the 2024 operating override, \$250,000 was also dedicated to sidewalk needs. (The CCBC notes that capital funds generated by an operating override are not technically required to be committed to a certain capital purpose beyond the first year of the override. However, it has been Belmont's practice to honor the capital commitments made at the time an operating override is passed.)

Belmont, like all municipalities, is apportioned funds through Chapter 90 Program funding (MGL c.90 & 6C) **for the purpose of improvements and investments in local transportation networks**. The amount of funding a municipality receives is based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%) Chapter 90 funds have averaged \$540,000 for the past 10 years. Most of the transportation network projects are planned over more than one fiscal year, to allow optimal construction during warm weather months. Small sidewalk repairs and road work are performed by the Department of Public Works (DPW). Additional funds are available periodically through unique federal programs and through MassDOT grant programs – Belmont joined the Complete Streets Program in 2019. The CCBC notes that while Belmont has traditionally used most of its Chapter 90 funding for roads, these funds are also permitted to be used for sidewalks.

For FY25 Belmont was awarded its first funds from the “Mass Fair Share” tax amendment. The Town received \$246,324 and the Select Board elected to use it for road repairs. Belmont joined the Complete Streets Program in 2019 and in February 2024 we received an award of \$432,009.27 for Concord Ave. crosswalks.

Note regarding 2024 Operating Override

The CCBC notes that in its discussions with the Select Board leading up to the operating override election in April 2024, the CCBC recommended that any capital portion of an operating override be dedicated to capital needs related to the town's building envelopes and systems. The CCBC recommendation was based on the Committee's knowledge of the very substantial needs forthcoming for the Town's buildings (likely more than \$20 million over the coming ten years). The CCBC voted on its recommendation at two meetings and reported out to the Select Board and the Warrant Committee. The Select Board set aside the CCBC's recommendation and instead moved forward a \$250,000 capital piece of the 2024 operating override dedicated solely to sidewalks.

Debt Within Levy

Debt can be issued by the Town either in connection with a voted debt exclusion or within the regular operating budget. Debt that is issued for projects that have not been approved via a debt exclusion is considered “within levy debt” and the associated debt service is paid from the regular operating budget. Recent capital projects that have been funded through “within levy debt” include a new pumper truck for the Fire Department (approved in spring 2023) and the recent improvements to the Police Station and the DPW building.

Enterprise Funds for Water and Sewer Services

The Town's Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds can only be spent on items and projects related to water and sewer work. Enterprise funds provide a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for municipal services for which a fee is charged. Under enterprise accounting, the revenues and expenditures of the service are segregated into a separate fund with its own financial statements, rather than commingled with revenues and expenditures of all other government activities. Enterprise accounting allows a community to demonstrate to the public the total cost of providing a service. All costs (direct, indirect and debt service) are covered by rate revenues received from water and sewer usage. The Director of Public Works is responsible for the management of the water and sewer enterprises. Water and sewer user rates are set by the Select Board acting as the Enterprise Funds' Boards. Town policy states that water and sewer capital projects shall be financed from enterprise revenues and grants.

The Town Enterprise Funds also access loan funds through the wholesale MWRA. These are typically 0% loans, but they must be repaid with Enterprise Funds rate revenues.

ARPA

Belmont received more than \$7.8 million in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The federal parameters for ARPA funds require them to be fully expended by December 31, 2026. In spring 2023 the CCBC recommended, and the Select Board voted to allocate \$892,214 to building envelope work at the Butler School, and \$245,000 for enhancing security cameras at the Schools. Apart from consultations with the CCBC, the Select Board deployed ARPA funds for several capital projects.

These additional investments include \$1.29 million for solar panels at the High School, \$350,000 for Rink design work, \$490,533 to replace the DPW Salt Shed, \$346,554 to demolish the White Field House, \$466,187 to replace the DPW Yard fuel tanks, and \$70,000 to cover higher bid results for the Grove Street project. Overall, more than \$4 million of the total received by the Town was used for capital needs, which will benefit residents for many years to come.

About \$142,000 of ARPA funds remain. The Town is actively engaged in considering their use as they must be "committed" prior to December 31, 2024.

Community Preservation Act

In 2011, the Town of Belmont adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA). This allows the town to dedicate revenue from a surcharge on property taxes and matching contributions from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund to a local community preservation fund. The State match varies by year but has typically been in the 15% - 25% range. CPA funds can only be spent on projects that fall into the three categories: open space and recreation, affordable housing, and historic preservation. The town's adoption of the CPA diverts several capital expenses from discretionary capital funds. CPA revenue from fiscal year 2024 was \$1,940,072. For more detail on CPA revenue, expenditures, and past, current, and proposed projects, please see the Community Preservation Committee webpage on the Belmont town site and the annual CPA report.

Earmarks and Other Miscellaneous State Funding

Occasionally the Town receives State funding that is either earmarked for specific projects or is tied to a more general project category. In recent years, the Town has received more than \$2.68 million in state and federal grants for the following capital-related projects –

- \$1,000,000 in federal funding for design of the second phase of the Community Path
- \$432,009 in Complete Streets funding for the crosswalks on Concord Avenue
- \$350,000 for the Library project
- \$350,000 for the Rink project
- \$300,000 for the study and design of safety improvements near Grove Street and Huron Avenue
- \$150,000 for tree maintenance
- \$ 50,000 for sidewalk repair and maintenance
- \$ 50,000 for culvert repairs

(Several earmarks in connection with the Belmont Housing Authority and the Town operating budget are not referenced here. In addition we have not included “state bond authorizations” as such authorizations can often take decades to come to fruition.)

Regarding the above referenced earmark for \$300,000 for planning and design work on Grove Street including the intersection with Huron Avenue, a public forum was held earlier in 2024, and the Town Engineer continues to work on this plan with outside consultants. Funding for the reconstruction of roadway, bike lanes, crosswalk and signaling is estimated at \$3,000,000 and Commonwealth TIP or bond authorizations are the most likely source of funds.

Beyond earmarks, the Town utilizes funds from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to help fund school projects such as the Belmont Middle and High School as well as the Wellington School.

Occasionally the Town receives proceeds from the sale of property and assets. Generally these funds have been dedicated to the Town’s capital needs. Under the proposal to the 2023 Town Meeting for the repurposing of the Capital Stabilization Fund, proceeds of these assets would be required to be deposited in the Capital Stabilization Fund, an important codification of the typical Town practice.

Town Reserves – Kendall Fund

The Town’s “Kendall Fund” has a balance of \$2.1 million from approximately \$4.9 million in insurance proceeds from the demise of the Kendall School in about 1999. The Town has had a long-time practice of using these funds for preliminary design plans on projects. The CCBC is supportive of this long-time practice and recommends that the Town formalize this practice as a policy to preserve these funds in support of the Town’s capital needs. In the current capital plan, the Kendall Fund is proposed as the source for \$300,000 in FY26 for the preliminary design of a replacement public works facility.

FY25 Capital Budget Recommendations

Capital Budget Process

The capital budget process begins with the Town’s finance office asking Department leaders to submit capital requests during the summer. The Town finance office reviews the requests and obtains clarifications from department leaders. The CCBC then receives the capital requests and meets with Department Heads. During this past year many aspects of the operating and capital budget process were strongly impacted by the

considerable extra work required of Town staff to prepare extensive budget alternatives related to the evaluation and preparation for a potential operating override. This meant that several aspects of capital budget timing were somewhat altered and delayed. This year the CCBC received the Department capital requests in January 2024. The Committee is expecting to receive them earlier next year. The content of the capital request form is an important starting point for the capital process and the CCBC needs to continue to work with the finance office to incorporate some CCBC recommendations that will facilitate easier assessment of certain aspects of the more effective delivery of the Town's capital needs.

Capital Project Evaluation

The CCBC once again used the project ranking methodology it developed ahead of FY24 to evaluate proposed capital projects for FY25. This methodology is informed by a set of project evaluation criteria and relative criteria weightings.

Each proposed project was evaluated on five criteria: 1) Impact to health, safety and security of citizens, employees, or property; 2) maintenance and preservation of capital assets such as major repairs of buildings, replacement of vehicles and equipment, park and play area renovations; 3) urgency, work deemed by departments that must be done within a certain time frame; 4) improvement of productivity, or relief of an overburdened asset; and 5) strategic alignment, e.g., environment concerns, disciplined budgeting/spending policies.

The evaluation process, in which each committee member ranked each project request on these five measures, produced a relative ranking of projects. This relative ranking was one component of the project screening process and served as a guide to the CCBC's discussions and ultimate recommendations for project funding.

Projects mandated by the requirements of an outside funding source do not need to go through the same ranking evaluation process, as these projects will need to be completed regardless of project ranking result.

Capital Stabilization Fund

The CCBC is very supportive of the Town building reserves for larger capital projects that require multi-year planning and whose cost exceeds the discretionary capital funds available in any one year. The CCBC regards this as part of our mission upon the passage of the bylaw that created the Committee. A capital reserve allows the Town to spread the burden of funding larger capital projects over several years and permits reinvestment in capital assets in a more timely manner. To this end, the CCBC recommends the deposit for \$578,842 of FY25 resources into the Capital Stabilization Fund. This will mark the first deposit into the fund through the annual budget process. The CSF was created in spring 2023 and has a balance of \$765,735 and that would rise to \$1,344,577 if Town Meeting approves this recommended deposit. See the chart below for the current composition of the Fund.

As a reminder, funds from the following sources are required to be deposited in the Capital Stabilization Fund: sale of surplus property, refunds, rebates and reimbursements from energy efficiency projects, solar installations, and other capital investments. This list of required deposit sources does not preclude the Town from depositing additional funds from other sources into the Fund.

Also of note is a recent state law change that requires a majority vote of Town Meeting if the stabilization funding is used for the intended purpose of the fund(i.e. capital projects). This is a lower threshold than the prior two-thirds majority vote, which remains in place for general purpose stabilization funds.

Capital Stabilization Fund	
Funding Source	Amount
Transfer at Fall 2023 Special town Meeting	727,500
Library surplus item sale in January 2024	2,960
Sale of Chenery Modulars in August 2023	35,000
Interest earnings TYD	276
Subtotal fund balance	765,735
Addition to CSF in FY25	578,842
Total Capital Stabilization Fund	1,344,577

FY25 Capital Budget

The FY25 capital budget presented by the CCBC contains town projects totaling about \$11.2 million, including all funding sources. Of this total, Town Meeting is asked to vote on projects totaling about \$8.7 million through the capital warrant articles. (During Segment B Town Meeting will vote on CPC articles, one of which funds a central Town asset (Chenery park and fields) totaling \$1.3 million.) See table on page 13 for a list of all FY25 projects arrayed with their funding sources.

Certain capital projects recommended for FY25 are highlighted briefly below.

Chenery Upper Elementary School Boiler Replacement Project estimated \$1.6 million

This is a major capital investment to replace the aging heating system at the Chenery School. The existing system consists of 30 gas-fired boilers, all of which are approaching their expected life span.

The CCBC spent significant time evaluating options for this replacement effort before reaching the decision to recommend the replacement of the heating system with new high efficiency gas-fired boilers in FY25.

The CCBC determined that this solution is the best option available when balancing factors of cost, schedule, and environmental impact, even though the new system does not make meaningful progress in support of the Town’s adopted decarbonization goals. This result was reached after consultation with the School Committee, the Energy Committee, an engineering consulting company engaged by the Town (Guardian) and the Town’s Facilities Dept.

The Facilities Dept. asked the consulting engineers (Guardian) to consider electrification in addition to gas-only replacement. Guardian presented several options ranging from simple replacement with gas-fired boilers, to electric boilers, to full geothermal heat pumps. Capital investment costs increase significantly with the addition of more design complexity and carbon-reduction benefits. The more expensive systems were less expensive to run, depending on the assumptions related to the cost of gas and electricity. Despite the higher investment in a fully electrical system, Guardian projected significantly higher incremental commodity costs based on its assumptions for gas and electric rates.

The CCBC examined the possibility of a partial boiler replacement since it is very likely that the failure of some boilers does not assure the failure of all boilers. But the engineers indicated that a prolonged very cold period could lead to cascading boiler failure.

Cost differences of at least \$600,000 would be incurred for electing even the lowest level of electric boiler capacity to couple with gas boilers, plus the commensurate expenses for major electrical, software and conduit piping upgrades, versus opting for a simple replacement of gas boilers. All these costs and the complexity of a hybrid system concerned the CCBC given the Town's large capital requests already documented for the next five

years. Key unknown costs are Belmont Light's assessment of electrical sub-station requirements and the cost of reserving the electric capacity for Chenery needs.

In addition, the CCBC examined delaying the boiler replacement, but we were advised that the heating system must be replaced before the HVAC system on the roof is replaced, and that the roof cannot wait due to serious leaks that threaten to cause costly repairs if not address in the near term. The leaks have impinged on school operations in the past and have the potential to raise safety concerns.

These two major sequencing and timing factors add risk in that there is very little cushion, timewise, to execute the boiler project and bring the school on-line for the 2025-2026 school year, as well as any additional delays in completing the planning and replacement of the critical roof, HVAC and heat pump project by the 2026-2027 school year.

In summary, after much consideration, the committee has concluded that the cost of adapting the older building envelope to modern heating technology is cost-prohibitive, in addition to jeopardizing the roof replacement timeline. The Committee also notes that the high efficiency gas boilers that will be installed are far more efficient in terms of gas consumption than the current system that will be taken off-line.

CCBC recognizes that the Town has an opportunity to advance its climate goals in the context of the anticipated Chenery Roof & HVAC project, which immediately follows the boiler replacement. The committee has requested that the design of the Chenery roof include options that it will support heat pumps, solar PV and/or solar hot water. Those options would help offset the school's energy consumption and partially balance the impact of the replacement gas boilers.

The committee notes that a timely inventory and assessment of town building needs will allow for less constrained decision-making in the future, which in turn facilitates planning time to consider the design and cost-effectiveness of efficient carbon-reduction systems. An example of this could be the future replacement of the heating system at Town Hall.

The committee would like to note the cooperation and assistance of Jennifer Hewitt and Dave Blazon as the Committee sought to optimize the heating solution, given the various constraints.

Roads and Sidewalks

Belmont has about 97 miles of sidewalks and in the last several years maintenance of the sidewalks has increased after several decades of significant underinvestment. DPW's backlog comprises over 1,000 sidewalk repair requests. As mentioned above in the Funding section of this report, the pace of sidewalk repairs should improve given the additional funding. The "Sidewalk Assessment" funded by Town Meeting as part of the FY24 capital budget is providing updated conditions and costs to support the DPW's work. The Sidewalk Assessment and the continued investment in sidewalks supports the Transportation Advisory Committee's goal to establish "safe transit corridors" around Town, which in turn should help reduce school-related traffic congestion. The Sidewalk Assessment draft report has been received by the Town, and DPW is in the process of reviewing it and working with the consultant.

With the passage of the 2024 operating override, the funds available to repairs on the Town's sidewalks is doubled to about \$500,000 annually, increased 2.5% each year going forward. Over the next five years allocations will total approximately \$2.6 million.

Department of Public Works (DPW) oversees a complex, three-year planning and execution cycle for resurfacing streets. This involves full design/engineering and regulation and safety compliance as well as coordination with all utilities, private companies, neighborhoods and town entities. The bidding process cannot commence prior to completion of those tasks. The DPW has produced “Road Condition” reports over the past 20 years, based on periodic evaluations of all roads in town and their respective needs. DPW is now working on creating a new Road Condition Index which will be a part of the FY25 Pavement Management Program.

The prior road overrides of 2001 and 2015 yield an approximately \$2 million annual allocation increasing 2.5% each year. DPS will now use a GIS-based budgeting and scheduling system which will be incorporated with the sidewalk work of the department.

Enterprise Fund Projects (as a group)

The water and sewer enterprise funds maintain the “retail” portion of the Town’s water and sewer service. The projects proposed for FY24 include replacement of 5,000 feet of water pipe, purchase of a Vactor truck for sewer breaks, inventory of water assets, and hydraulic model development. The Town staff engaged a leading utility consultant, Raftelis, to review the financial and capital needs of the enterprise funds. The final presentation is here.

<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/town-administration/files/2023-04-10-fy2024-water-and-sewer-rate-study>

This important study demonstrates that the health of our retail water and sewer systems requires additional capital investment over several years, and additional rate revenue to support that investment. The CCBC will be using this study as a guide for future enterprise fund capital investment.

The table below presents the capital projects funded in FY25 and arrays them by the funding sources summarized earlier on page 5. The projects are color-coded based on the same legend provided on page 4 above.

Capital Project Summary Funding - FY2025			As of May 16, 2024						
Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FUNDING SOURCES					CPA w/	Total
			(Operating Budget)	Enterprise	Dedicated	Reserves			
		TOTAL	Discretionary	Water/Sewer	Roads/Sidewalk	(Free Cash/ CSF)	State	Town Assets	
Public Works									
DPW-25-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	499,770			499,770				499,770
DPW-25-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000						50,000
DPW-25-03	DPW Highway Equipment	54,508	54,508						54,508
DPW-25-04	DPW Parks Equipment	106,800	106,800						106,800
DPW-25-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DPW-25-07	Grove Street Cemetery Repaving	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Department of Public Works	711,078	211,308	-	499,770	-	-	-	711,078
Public Works - Engineering									
ENG-25-01	Pavement Management Program	1,951,821			1,951,821				1,951,821
ENG-25-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENG-25-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENG-25-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000					540,000		540,000
ENG-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	-					-		-
ENG-25-ZZ	Mass Fair Share Roads	246,324					246,324		246,324
ENG-25-AA	Complete Streets Concord Crosswalks	432,009					432,009		432,009
	Subtotal Community Development	3,170,154	-	-	1,951,821	-	1,218,333	-	3,170,154
Facilities									
FAC-25-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	1,600,000	100,000	-	-	1,500,000	-	-	1,600,000
FAC-25-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	137,000	137,000	-	-	-	-	-	137,000
FAC-25-07	New Public Works Facility	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FAC-25-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement	200,000	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	200,000
FAC-25-09	Gym resurfacing	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
FAC-25-10	School Envelope Repairs	335,000	335,000	-	-	-	-	-	335,000
	Subtotal Facilities	2,297,000	797,000	-	-	1,500,000	-	-	2,297,000
Fire									
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	110,000	110,000						110,000
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-25-06	Breathing Apparatus Fill Station	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Fire	110,000	110,000	-	-	-	-	-	110,000
Police									
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	155,000	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	155,000
PD-24-03	Replace Fiber Multiplexers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-04	Townwide Base Radio Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-05	Replace CAD and RMS Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-06	Replace Police Domain Controllers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-07	Replace Call Logging Recorder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Police	155,000	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	155,000
Information Technology									
IT-25-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT-25-02	Network Redundancy Restoration	50,000	50,000						50,000
IT-XX	Hybrid ATM - Chenery Auditorium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT-YY	Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	175,000	175,000						175,000
	Subtotal Information Technology	225,000	225,000	-	-	-	-	-	225,000
General Government									
GG-25-01	Replace CAMA Database	125,000	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
GG-25-02	Update MUNIS General Ledger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-03	Turf for Rink	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-04	Belmont Comprehensive Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-05	Recreation Master Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal General Gov't	125,000	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds									
ENT-25-01	Water Main Replacement	1,080,000		1,080,000					1,080,000
ENT-25-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	800,000		800,000					800,000
ENT-25-03	Water Enterprise Equipment	120,803		120,803					120,803
ENT-25-04	Sewer Enterprise Equipment	265,510		265,510					265,510
ENT-25-05	Stormwater Repairs	250,000		250,000					250,000
	Subtotal Enterprise Funds	2,516,313	-	2,516,313	-	-	-	-	2,516,313
CCBC-XX	Project Bid Reserve Contribution	50,000	50,000						50,000
CCBC-YY	Capital Stabilization Fund Contribution	578,842	578,842						578,842
	Subtotal Reserve Deposits	628,842	628,842	-	-	-	-	-	628,842
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets									
CPA-Town	Chenery Fields	1,300,000						1,300,000	1,300,000
	Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets	1,300,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,300,000	1,300,000
	Capital Funds Total All Department	11,238,387	2,252,150	2,516,313	2,451,591	1,500,000	1,218,333	1,300,000	11,238,387

Capital Budget Years 2 - 5 (FY26 – FY29)

The CCBC is presenting a draft capital plan for years 2- 5 (i.e. FY26 – FY29). This draft plan includes about 33 projects and spending of about \$65 million. However, the draft capital plan for FY26 – FY29 is **NOT COMPLETE**. The projects and funding sources for FY26 – FY29 will continue to evolve. It will also be informed by the Building Assessment that was approved at the last Town Meeting. The table on page 16 summarizes projects for FY26 – FY29.

The CCBC has highlighted certain potential projects below that will likely arise in years FY26 - FY29.

Chenery School Rooftop HVAC – likely FY26 estimated \$5.4 million

This is an extensive capital investment to replace the 28-year-old flat roof and the HVAC systems. After several years of major repairs, and continued leaks and interior damage, a professional assessment indicates both have reached the end of their useful lives. Further delays will only result, at best, in more expensive repairs, but not necessarily preclude failure or safety issues. This is a critical investment in support of Belmont’s transition plan to create an “Upper Elementary School” facility and the further improvement in serious space issues in our schools. Consideration during the planning should be given to structural support necessary if solar panel arrays are determined an appropriate investment for energy efficiencies. The CCBC has included an estimated additional \$1.65 million in FY28 for a potential solar project on the Chenery roof.

Former Incinerator Site – perhaps FY27 estimated \$5 million

In 2010, the Commonwealth confirmed a regulatory capping of the Town’s former incinerator site, and mandated this project be completed by 2025. Approximately \$5 million was recently estimated to properly design and execute an environmentally sound cap on this former industrial site. In addition, an estimated \$31,500 will eventually be needed in the operating budget for annual post-closure monitoring and maintenance inspections, again as required by the Commonwealth. The Town has set aside approximately \$3.7 million in a landfill closure fund and existing project authorizations, but that leaves a funding gap of about \$1.3 million. The Town may bring an update regarding the site to the fall Town Meeting.

Town-wide Radio Replacement - likely FY27-28 estimated \$800,000

Split between FY27 and FY28, the Town’s emergency and other departments anticipate complete replacement of the radio transmitters and receivers for all Town-based radios. This includes the main antenna site as well as the remote locations. The rough estimate for this technology approximates \$800,000 in today’s dollars which could easily reach \$1 million by the time of installation. For budgeting purposes, the cost would be split over two fiscal years.

Ladder Truck – perhaps FY28 estimated \$1.65 million

Belmont Fire Dept rotates its primary ladder truck to reserve status after 15 years of service, which next occurs in 2028. That 2014 vehicle will then allow for approximately 15 more years of “backup” coverage during maintenance of the front-line apparatus or during major incidents. The full life therefore spans approximately 30 years.

Various DPW, Cemetery, Parks Equipment

The long hours of operation eventually require replacement of heavily utilized equipment throughout the Town. While well-maintained and repaired, a critical point is reached for each piece — depended upon for daily and emergency use — whereby replacement makes the best and safest option in fulfilling Town functionality. The Town's practice is to "rotate" any usable equipment to less onerous duties, first, but to sell/turn in retiring equipment as a savings against the cost of the new item.

Town Hall Retaining Wall Replacement

The retaining wall adjacent to Town Hall is compromised and must be replaced in the next three years at a cost of perhaps \$1 million. (This project is likely eligible for CPA funding.)

Capital Project Summary - FY2025 - 2034											AS OF MAY 17, 2024			
Proj. ID	Project Description	Estimated from Department Review					Forecast using averages & historical experience					TBD	Total	
		FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034			
Public Works														
DPW-25-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	499,770	512,264	525,070	538,196	551,651	551,651	551,651	551,651	551,651	-	5,385,206		
DPW-25-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	500,000		
DPW-25-03	DPW Highway Equipment	54,508	72,888	154,503	175,570	119,083	115,310	127,471	138,387	135,164	127,083	1,219,968		
DPW-25-04	DPW Parks Equipment	106,800	64,140	49,030	-	-	43,994	31,433	24,891	20,064	24,076	364,428		
DPW-25-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	-	106,800	-	-	-	21,360	25,632	9,398	11,278	13,534	188,002		
DPW-25-07	Grove Street Cemetery Repaving	-	-	500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500,000		
Subtotal Department of Public Works		711,078	806,092	1,278,603	763,766	720,734	782,315	786,187	774,328	768,157	766,344	8,157,605		
Public Works - Engineering														
ENG-25-01	Pavement Management Program	1,951,821	2,000,617	2,050,632	2,101,898	2,154,445	2,208,306	2,263,513	2,320,100	2,378,102	2,437,554	21,866,988		
ENG-25-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	5,021,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,021,000		
ENG-25-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,300,000		
ENG-25-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	5,400,000		
ENG-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
ENG-25-ZZ	Mass Fair Share Roads	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	-		
ENG-25-AA	Complete Streets Concord Crosswalks	432,009	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal Community Development		3,170,154	7,807,941	2,836,956	2,888,222	2,940,769	2,994,630	3,049,837	3,106,424	3,164,426	3,223,878	33,000,000		
Facilities														
FAC-24-01		-	-	-	-	-	AWAITING BUILDING ASSESSMENT					-	-	
FAC-25-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	1,600,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,600,000		
FAC-25-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	137,000	146,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	283,000		
FAC-25-07	New Public Works Facility	-	300,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,300,000		
FAC-25-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement & Solar	200,000	5,200,000	-	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,050,000		
FAC-25-09	Gym resurfacing	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
FAC-25-10	School Envelope Repairs	335,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	335,000		
Subtotal Facilities		2,297,000	5,671,000	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,000,000		
Fire														
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	1,100,000		
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-	-	48,690	-	-	-	48,690	-	-	97,380		
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	175,000	85,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260,000		
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000		
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-	-	-	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,650,000		
FD-25-06	Breathing Apparatus Fill Station	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	225,000		
Subtotal Fire		110,000	360,000	195,000	158,690	1,760,000	185,000	110,000	158,690	110,000	185,000	1,000,000		
Police														
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	155,000		
PD-24-03	Replace Fiber Multiplexers	-	215,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	215,000		
PD-24-04	Townwide Base Radio Replacement	-	-	-	400,000	400,000	-	-	-	-	-	800,000		
PD-24-05	Replace CAD and RMS Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
PD-24-06	Replace Police Domain Controllers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
PD-24-07	Replace Call Logging Recorder	-	-	26,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26,000		
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	42,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42,000		
Subtotal Police		155,000	257,000	26,000	400,000	400,000	247,600	266,120	267,944	316,333	299,599	2,635,596		
Information Technology														
IT-25-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-	60,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,000		
IT-25-02	Network Redundancy Restoration	50,000	125,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	325,000		
IT-25-xx	Hybrid ATM - Chenery Auditorium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
IT-25-xx	Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	175,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	175,000		
Subtotal Information Technology		225,000	125,000	210,000	186,667	173,889	190,185	183,580	182,551	185,439	183,857	1,846,168		
General Government														
GG-25-01	Replace CAMA Database	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125,000		
GG-25-02	Update MUNIS General Ledger	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
GG-25-03	Turf for Rink	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000		
GG-25-04	Belmont Comprehensive Plan	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000		
GG-25-05	Recreation Master Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal General Gov't		125,000	300,000	50,000	-	-	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	950,000		
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds														
ENT-25-01	Water Main Replacement	1,080,000	1,166,400	1,259,700	1,360,500	1,460,500	1,265,420	1,302,504	1,329,725	1,343,730	1,340,376	12,908,854		
ENT-25-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	800,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	1,040,000	1,068,000	1,081,600	1,077,920	10,287,520		
ENT-25-03	Water Enterprise Equipment	120,803	314,662	106,105	72,145	165,000	155,747	162,736	132,347	137,595	150,685	1,517,844		
ENT-25-04	Sewer Enterprise Equipment	265,510	270,240	306,825	206,100	206,100	250,955	248,044	243,805	230,961	235,933	2,464,272		
ENT-25-05	Stormwater Repairs	250,000	275,000	300,000	325,000	350,000	300,000	310,000	317,000	320,400	319,480	3,066,880		
Subtotal Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds		2,516,313	2,926,322	2,972,630	3,063,745	3,381,600	2,972,122	3,063,284	3,090,676	3,114,285	3,124,393	30,225,371		
CCBC-XX	Project Bid Reserve Contribution	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
CCBC-YY	Capital Stabilization Fund Contribution	578,842	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	578,842		
Subtotal Reserve Deposits		628,842	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	628,842		
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets														
FAC-CPA-01	Town Hall Historic Study Implementation	-	1,000,000	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500,000		
FAC-CPA-XX	Retaining Wall	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000		
REC-CPA-01	Chenery Fields	1,300,000	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,300,000		
REC-CPA-02	PQ Field	-	200,000	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200,000		
REC-CPA-03	Harris Field (eligible for partial CPA funding)	-	-	1,600,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,600,000		
REC-CPA-04	Underwood Hill	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-05	Grove St. lower field/playground	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-06	West of Harris Field	-	-	-	-	125,000	1,250,000	-	-	-	-	1,375,000		
REC-CPA-07	Town Field renewal	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-08	Winn Brook Fields	-	-	-	-	150,000	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	1,650,000		
REC-xxxx-XX	Wellington Turf (eligible for partial CPA funding)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets		1,300,000	4,200,000	5,100,000	-	575,000	5,750,000	-	-	-	-	16,925,000		
Capital Projects Total All Department		11,238,387	22,453,355	12,669,189	9,111,090	9,951,992	13,216,852	7,554,008	7,675,614	7,753,640	7,878,072	26,300,000		
											132,906,950			

Potential Capital Needs in Years 6-10

The CCBC will expand its work in the coming year to include projected capital needs for years 6-30. In advance of that work, several potential projects expected to fall within that timeframe are listed below. This is NOT a complete list, and the anticipated completion of a town-wide building assessment will result in additional projects and changes to the projects listed below.

White Field House, West of Harris Fields

The High School/Middle School Building Project originally included the White Field House and the “West of Harris Fields” projects; however, the projects were deferred for project planning, timeline, and budgetary reasons.

In conjunction with the Belmont Rink project, the White Field House has been razed and hazardous material was removed in spring of 2024 at a cost of about \$346,00, funded using ARPA funds.

The fields west of Harris Field require leveling, re-sodding and possible drainage work, and will require a thoughtful effort to properly scope their future uses, then complete design and construction work to realize those uses. There are no reliable cost estimates or timing for this work, especially as the scope for future uses of this space have not yet been defined.

Indoor Multi-Sport Surfaces at Rink

The New Rink’s Indoor Surface refers to the “multi-sport” aspect of the New Rink project that would facilitate the full potential of the new Rink facility for indoor activities during non-ice months. This was not part of the debt exclusion. No reliable cost estimates or timing for the multi-sport surface project at this time.

Harris Field Turf Replacement

The current surface was installed in 2014¹ at a cost of \$960,000. The expected useful life of artificial surfaces typically spans 8-12 years. Necessary repairs or replacement depend on the total amount and intensity of use, maintenance, and quality of the original surface, materials and installation. Thus, by 2025, Belmont should anticipate major expenses, at a minimum to refurbish, if not completely replace, this resource so critical to Belmont sports at our schools and in the broader community. Currently planning presumes replacement of the turf and not a return to grass.

Department of Public Works Facility

The successful addition and renovations of the existing DPW facilities in 2021-2022 provided, by design, a 10-year window to plan and fund a full replacement of the primary home in which the Town’s “all-hours” DPW team works, eats, and sometime sleeps and showers. The CCBC estimates that plans for designing and constructing a replacement facility should be incorporated into the Town’s capital budget by 2032, with the design phase starting earlier. During the intervening years, and with more details available in the anticipated building assessment report, the town should begin scoping out this project to enable better planning and cost estimation .

Artificial Turf, Wellington School

The playground and field area at Wellington is now nearly 12 years old and will also need replacement in the next 10-15 years. Originally installed in 2011, the useful life of artificial surfaces typically spans 8-12 years. The Activitas assessment completed in 2022 stated that Wellington’s turf field “...may require resurfacing,” noting

that its “carpet fibers are compacted” and, at the time, provided a cost estimate of \$75,000 - \$100,000. Their assessment suggested this be work be completed in the ensuing 1-5 years from 2022.

Recent Debt Exclusion Projects

Library

In November 2022, Belmont residents passed an exclusionary bond vote to underwrite the estimated \$39.5 million cost to construct a new Library. The voters approved an approximately \$34.5 million debt exclusion as a significant \$5 million in private fundraising, foundation grants and other funds offset the Town’s borrowing needs by nearly 15%. The Library Board spent over five years refining the project plans. That lengthy preparation periodic was rewarded recently when the Library Building Committee received construction bids below the proposed project budget. The project remains on a timetable that includes construction from 2024 until fall 2025 with occupancy of the new library in fall 2025.

Rink

The Town voted twice (November 2022 and April 2023) on a debt exclusion in connection with the replacement of the Town’s ice rink. The second debt exclusion passed in April 2023, at a reduced estimated cost of \$29.9 million. The Belmont Municipal Skating Rink Building Committee was given permission in spring of 2023 to go forward with full design and to award the construction of the Skating Rink on Concord Ave. The appropriation to the Committee was \$29.9 million with \$1.3 million from outside sources (\$350,000 from state earmarks (State funded earmarks should not be designated as “fundraising”), \$1 million from Belmont Savings Bank Foundation, and under \$100,000 from private donors). The remainder of \$28.6 million will be applied to the taxpayers under the debt exclusion voted for this project.

During FY 24 the Rink Committee worked with the designer, Construction Manager, and Owner's Project Manager to finalize the design and to bid the project. When the final estimate for construction was completed in the winter of 2024, that estimate showed that the project as planned was approximately \$34.5 million or \$4.5 million over the budget.

In April 2024 the Building Committee began engaging in a value engineering effort to reduce the cost of the project. As of May 16, 2024, the Committee has developed two options: 1) provide some of the building/program scope that had been presented in April of 2023 and find additional funding sources, or 2) reduce the building/scope of the programming to meet the voted budget. The Building Committee will be having meetings with the Select Board, the Warrant Committee, the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee and the public at large with a goal of taking a proposal to a Special Town Meeting in June 2024.

Belmont Middle and High School

The new Belmont Middle and High School opened in two stages with the largest portion opening in Sept 2021, and the east section opening in September 2023 and three new playing fields in Sept 2023. The 2200 photovoltaic panels arrays covering the flat roof were completed in December 2023, and after commissioning, went "live" in March 2024. The building houses Grade seven through twelve, approximately 2100 students.

The project close-out process is well underway. This usually takes about six to twelve months after construction is completed, and once done the project will be submitted to the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA). for a full audit and final reimbursement to the town. The MSBA process usually takes at least a year.

CCBC Policy and Process Work for Year Two (Preparation of FY26 Budget)

Over the course of FY24, the CCBC has committed to make additional policy and process progress on fulfilling its mission as outlined in its bylaw. The CCBC is committed to identifying and implementing approaches that will provide long-term financial stability and ensure we manage, maintain, and update our capital assets, and establishing more predictable cost cycles.

During its third year, CCBC will work on at least the following priorities:

1. Proceed with unfinished FY24 initiatives as listed at beginning of this Report.
2. Work with Town Staff on recommended policies to guide the use of various Town reserve funds that have traditionally been related to the Town's capital funding.
3. Build out a more coordinated calendar with the Town staff as the staff revises and evolves its budget processes
4. Build out the capital needs for years 6 – 30 more robustly using the forthcoming building assessment.
5. Reach out to the Belmont Light Department to understand more deeply its policy and business approach to the changing needs of the Town's building systems.
6. Work with the Department of Public Works to understand the adequacy of capital reserves in the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds.

The Committee identified some policy changes to move Belmont toward its management, financial planning, and other Town policy goals. The Committee looks forward to working with the Select Board and town staff on these policy areas.

1. A portion of the Town's FY23 operating budget dedicated to the support of "in levy debt service" for funding the Town's capital needs each year in the future, either to fund capital projects directly or to support additional exempt debt that could be issued in the future.
2. Funds from the operating budget dedicated to capital needs each year have a "floor" with this base increasing by 2.5% in each subsequent year to make a new "floor."
3. A portion of Free Cash be dedicated to capital each year, starting with at least \$50,000 for the FY25 capital budget. \$1.5 million of free cash has been dedicated to the Chenery boiler project.
4. The CCBC recommends that all proceeds of the Town's sale of capital assets be committed to the funding of future capital needs. This would include the sale of used equipment, property assets, and other capital.
5. Proceeds of rebates and credits related to capital assets will be committed to future capital needs. This could include rebates related to lighting, solar, non-combustion engine vehicles and assets, and other such items.
6. Turnbacks from capital projects be returned directly to the capital budget, not the operating budget.
7. The Town will seek grant, state & federal funding to support capital improvements to key infrastructure like water, sewer, and schools. The Town's efforts in this regard should evaluate the comprehensive benefit of such external funds and not focus primarily on the short-term operating cost of securing these funds.

Structural Change Implementation Committee and the CCBC

To promote coordination among the Town’s key budgetary and financial committees, a member of CCBC sits on the Structural Change Implementation Committee (SCIC).

This past year, SCIC developed a prioritized list from the original and extensive work of the Structural Change Impact Group, however, nearly all of them addressed certain Town governance or operational activities and none directly impacted capital projects or investment in Town assets, with one exception: “Best Use of Town-owned Properties” (#36). This item was not addressed during the year, but it will be taken up again in FY25.

Adopted Town Policies

The CCBC is in the process of assessing the several Town policies that relate to the capital needs and capital funding. These include policies such as the Town’s Comprehensive Financial Management Policies (“Financial Policies”) and the Climate Action Plan-related policies.

The CCBC is aware that the Select Board and the town staff are reassessing several financial policies including those that relate to capital investment indicators. The CCBC looks forward to working with the Select Board and town staff as appropriate on revised financial policies.

Update on FY24 Capital Projects in Process

A chart below summarizes this status of the Town’s FY24 approved Capital Projects. The Town has completed several projects; other projects are in various stages of progress (under construction or evaluating bids). Most of the projects for which the Town is finalizing project specifications or has recently awarded contracts relate to improvements or repairs to school buildings. Some projects can only be done in the summer months to prevent disruption during the school year.

Building Assessment Project

One of the foundational responsibilities of the CCBC under its bylaw is to help to ensure that the Town builds and maintains a “comprehensive inventory of capital assets.” In FY24 the CCBC recommended, and Town Meeting supported, the funding of a building assessment by an outside party to assist with developing this inventory. This building assessment is just beginning. The CCBC will not be able to use the building assessment until the fall of 2025. The CCBC and the Town staff will use the results of this assessment to guide the selection and prioritization of future capital projects. The CCBC has indicated that it would like the building assessment to consider the Town’s strategic priorities, such as its Climate Plan, in the review. Finally, the CCBC notes that the building assessment is a key component of advancing the development of a 30-year capital plan for the town.

Bid Reserve Update

In FY23, the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) recommended the Town create a Bid Reserve Fund to address disruptions in the stability of construction pricing. This Bid Reserve Fund was intended to prevent potential disruption that might occur in connection with discrepancies with project cost estimates. While town officials diligently work to obtain accurate estimates, bids for projects might come in above estimates. The bid reserve mitigates the likelihood of needing to rebid projects that would require additional approval from Town Meeting. The Bid Reserve was used once during FY23 for a safety system project at Winn Brook School. The Town has

approximately \$93,738 in this bid reserve fund. For FY26, the CCBC is recommending appropriation of an additional \$50,000 toward the Bid Reserve

FY24 Project Status

The table below summarizes the status of various projects approved at the spring 2023 Town Meeting.

Dept	Description	Budget	Status
DPW	FY24 Art 20 (c) Sidewalk Repai	243,680	Fully expended
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Cemetery Equipment	78,270	Equipment has been ordered
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Street Tree Planting	50,000	More than 100 trees will be planted in April 2024.
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Parks Equip	244,625	Equipment has been ordered
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Sidewalk Assessment	50,000	Assessment underway; completion projected March 2024
Engineering	FY24 Pavement Management	1,904,216	
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Butler Gym Floor	25,000	Confirmed to repurpose at 2024 ATM.
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Electric Van	55,000	Waiting on Ford for inventory
Facilities	FY24 Art 20(a) Butler School	607,786	Going out to bid next month
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Building Assessment	100,000	Staff working on identifying a vendor.
Facilities	FY24 STM Security Cameras	160,000	Half completed, should be done by July
Fire	FY24 ATM Fire Pumper Truck	910,000	Truck is on order; anticipated delivery end of 2024.
Fire	FY24 ATM Ambulance Replace	80,000	Next Ambulance targeted for purchase in FY28
Police	FY24 Art 20 Portable Radios	216,000	44 radios ordered March 2024

Conclusion

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a five-year capital plan of \$65 million and a one-year capital plan for FY25 of \$8.7 million. The one-year budget covers about 26 projects supported by a range of funding sources. Town Meeting is asked to vote for on the Articles detailed on page 3.

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank all the Town employees and volunteers for their continued effort and dedication to the wellbeing of our town. Department leaders adapted to a new system and our new focus on longer time periods; they took time out of their schedules to meet with us and to address questions and in many cases to obtain further information. We thank them for their flexibility and support. Special thanks go out to the Town Administrator’s office and Jennifer Hewitt for tireless support of the Committee’s work. David Blazon, Director of Facilities Department has also been a critical resource in the CCBC’s work.

APPENDIX

Town Meeting created the CCBC through the adoption of General Bylaw amendment in the Town Meeting of June 2023. A distillation of the CCBC charge, as presented in the bylaw, is below:

. The Committee shall prepare ... a Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan.The Plan shall include one-year, five-year, and thirty-year components..... The Plan for one year and five years shall include recommendations for sources of funds the Town can utilize to pay for Capital Projects.....The Committee shall coordinate with the Town Administrator to implement the Plan in accordance with the Town's Comprehensive Financial Policies and other governing plans of the Town adopted by the Select Board, as they may be amended from time to time. The Committee shall create procedures to be used by the Town and the Committee to review and prioritize Capital Project requests and ensure that full life-cycle costs and potential funding sources are identified for each Capital Project, including the establishment and updating of a comprehensive inventory of capital assets, and including coordination with related Town committees.

The Bylaw was sponsored by the “Long Term Capital Planning Committee,” (LTCPC) a temporary committee that was created by the Select Board in 2019 and that concluded its work in 2022. (The COVID pandemic extended the work of the temporary committee longer than was initially planned.) The summary recommendations of the LTCPC are presented below:

- 1. The Town should have one capital committee rather than two capital committees.*
- 2. The Town’s capital planning process should incorporate all funding sources explicitly into the capital budgeting process.*
- 3. The Town’s capital planning process should include a long-term time frame.*
- 4. The Town’s capital planning process should incorporate project ranking and screening criteria for capital projects.*
- 5. The capital planning process should consider capital needs of \$25,000 and higher. Expenditures below that level should be incorporated into the operating budget.*
- 6. The Town needs an inventory of its capital assets that it updates periodically and that informs the capital budget.*
- 7. The Town needs as larger capital committee with a broader mandate and that includes the Energy Committee.*

The CCBC is working toward incorporating all the recommendations of the LTCPC into the CCBC’s work.

BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FY25 BUDGET (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025)



BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meghan Moriarty, *Chair*
Amy Zuccarello, *Secretary*
Amy Checkoway
Matthew Kraft
Jeff Liberty
Jung Yueh

BPS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Jill Geiser
- *Superintendent*
Lucia Sullivan
- *Assistant Superintendent*
Anthony DiCologero
- *Director of Finance, Business, & Operations*
Michael McAllister
- *Director of Human Capital*
Chon'tel Washington
- *Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*
Ken Kramer
- *Director of Student Services*
Matt Kuzmeskas
- *Director of Technology*

A letter from the School Committee

Dear Town Meeting Members and Residents of the Belmont Community,

I want to extend my gratitude to everyone who supported the override. Your commitment and belief in the positive changes this will bring to our students are truly appreciated. This collective effort will enable the School Department to maintain services and follow-through with key initiatives to respond to identified needs.

At the same time, I want to acknowledge and respect the perspectives of those who did not support the override. Your concerns about fiscal responsibility are valid and important. I assure you that we will manage these new resources with utmost care and transparency, ensuring that every dollar is spent wisely and effectively.

To that end, the Belmont School Committee is presenting the same FY25 budget to Town Meeting that it submitted to the Town as an override budget and that was endorsed by the majority of Belmont voters in April 2024. This budget “maintains a well-rounded education of rigorous academics, strong performing arts, and high participation in athletics, extra-curricular experiences, and community services, ensuring access for all students” per the School Department budget objectives from Fall 2023. It fills gaps in curricular and instructional programming by supporting both a new math curriculum for Fall 2024 and the creation of additional in-district special education programming to meet the needs of more Belmont students. These investments in the new curriculum and new in-district special education programming should help to curb future growth in the School Department budget.

This budget looks to do more with what we have. While we are maintaining services, we are being efficient with our staffing model by responding to changes in enrollment. In order to get the right people in the right seats serving our students, we have reinvested dollars in positions where the students will be next year, rather than maintaining positions that would not be needed. It supports a staffing model that calls for team models and shared positions in an effort to make the School Department’s organizational structure more efficient. And, it maintains the shared services organizational structure with the Town towards enhancing operational efficiencies.

Throughout the budget development process, the School Committee engaged in difficult deliberations over student needs and additional positions identified by district leadership. In the end, the FY25 budget stays true to the override budget and the Fiscal Compact Guiding Principles that were presented to the Belmont community during the override.

Our goal is to build a stronger school district while being prudent stewards of the public funds entrusted to us. Thank you again for your support and for your continued engagement in making our schools better places for all of our students, educators, staff, community partners and volunteers.

Meg Moriarty
School Committee, Chair

A letter from the BPS Superintendent

Dear Town Meeting Members and Residents of the Belmont Community,

I am pleased to present you the FY25 budget. This document provides an overview of the budget and detailed budget documents and charts along with insight into how decisions are made to adjust resources to meet the needs of our students. We provide this information so that the community can be confident that our budget ensures a high-quality education for students, while also maintaining a sense of fiscal responsibility and stewardship for the town's resources.

During the budget development process, we carefully assessed student needs for a budget that supports student learning at the highest level possible. We looked to where we can reallocate resources to align with the needs of students, and where there were efficiencies to maximize the use of our resources. Belmont is a high academically achieving district, and we rely on the resources afforded by our budget to continue the work of our educators in supporting our students' learning, growth, and development. This past year, we opened a new Middle School, to join the High School on the BMHS Campus. This state-of-the-art facility affords our students incredible learning opportunities that are designed to prepare them for their futures. The Belmont community came together in partnership to invest in this building, making a clear statement about the importance of education in our community. This fall 2024, we will implement the last phase of this project with the grade 4 students moving to the Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE), resulting in our newly configured schools.

I started my superintendency in Belmont with an entry plan to understand the district and hear from many stakeholders about community priorities. I presented my entry findings report to the School Committee in December 2023 where I identified strengths as well as areas for growth. The budget priorities this year emerged from those findings and encompass resources that are responsive to the needs of our students.

- Academic Excellence - High Quality Literacy and Math Curriculum
- Early Targeted Instruction and Supports
- Special Education: In-District Programming - Specialized Instruction

Framed by these priorities, we approached the FY25 budget development process with the goal of using resources efficiently and with care to build a school system that responds to the needs of students.

This has been a complex budget year and I appreciate the collective efforts of the School Committee, Select Board, Warrant Committee, and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee, to work through that complexity to ensure our community is supported by a responsive budget, while maintaining a high level of fiscal stewardship for the town. I am also thankful for the collaboration with our leadership team and BPS staff as we work through the budget process. Finally, with the understanding of the financial impact the budget has on the residents, my gratitude goes out to the Belmont community for the continued support and emphasis on the education of our students. It is through the strength of our community that we can provide first-rate educational experiences students deserve. Thank you.

Jill Geiser, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What are the assumptions and objectives of the FY25 budget?	5
What are the revenue assumptions in FY25?	6
What is the FY25 School Department level service budget?	10
What are the major budget drivers in a level service budget?	16
What are the investments that will be made in FY25 and what resources are needed?	22
What is the total FY25 Budget?	24
How is the grade 4 transition to the CUE reflected in the budget?	26
What are the adjustments to shared services?	28
How does FY24 inform FY25 budgeting?	29
What are the BPS approved budgets for the past several years?	29
How does Belmont's per pupil spending and programming compare to other districts?	31
What is the budget of each school?	32

What are the assumptions and objectives of the FY25 budget?

Budget Objectives

- Meet existing contractual obligations.
- Maintain a well-rounded education of rigorous academics, strong performing arts, and high participation in athletics, extra-curricular experiences, and community services, ensuring access for all students.
- Respond to identified gaps in curricular and instructional programming across all areas of learning - academic, social-emotional, and behavioral - and develop a system that responds to those gaps with the aim of providing a high-quality educational experience for all students.
- In alignment with strategic planning, use budgetary resources to develop a school system that is responsive to the needs of students.
- Plan and prepare for the transition of the grade four students from the elementary schools to the CUE.
- Support the continuous learning of our staff through professional development and team collaboration.
- Review changes in fees for FY24 to determine if these should be maintained in FY25.

Budget Assumptions

- The starting point for the budget process is the school general fund budget for FY24, which is \$62,886,981. FY24 budget does not include the shared services number that was migrated to the Town.
 - A level services budget for FY25 will include a certain percentage increase from FY24 after accounting for COLA and step increases as well as inflation.
 - The general fund will be supplemented by grants and revolving accounts, which will be approximately the same in FY25 as they were in FY24.
 - The non-salary budget will be reviewed to optimize alignment with student needs and district priorities, to the extent permitted by funding.
 - Notwithstanding the review of fee changes implemented for FY24, user fees are expected to remain the same for FY25.
 - State Circuit Breaker and IDEA allocations will be used strategically, in accordance with the School Department's Multi-Year Out-of-District Tuition Funding Plan.
 - There are staffing changes related to the transition of grade four from the elementary schools to the Chenery Upper Elementary School (CUE).
 - A review of programming across the district suggests enhancements, including any budget implications, needed to strengthen how the district serves all students.
-

What are the revenue assumptions in FY25?

General Fund

The general fund is the district's primary funding source and is funded through state aid (Chapter 70) and local contribution. The calculation of the state aid starts with the Foundation Budget for the school district, then identifies the local capacity to contribute to this budget (required district contribution), and fills in the remaining amount with state aid (Chapter 70 aid). The combined total of local contribution and state aid is the required net school spending amount. The anticipated state aid for Belmont in FY25 is \$11,920,165 as of January 24, 2024¹. Please note that this is still subject to change.

State Aid Summary for Belmont from MA Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education

Aid Calculation FY25		Comparison to FY24			
		FY24	FY25	Change	Pct Chg
Prior Year Aid					
1 Chapter 70 FY24	11,784,535				
Foundation Aid					
2 Foundation budget FY25	59,519,672	57,423,976	59,519,672	2,095,696	3.65%
3 Required district contribution FY25	47,889,465	45,639,441	47,889,465	2,250,024	4.93%
4 Foundation aid (2 - 3)	11,630,207	11,784,535	11,920,165	135,630	1.15%
5 Increase over FY24 (4 - 1)	0			2,385,634	4.15%
Minimum Aid					
6 Minimum \$30 per pupil increase	135,630				
7 Minimum aid amount (if line 6 - line 5 > 0, then line 6 - line 5, otherwise 0)	135,630				
Subtotal					
8 Sum of 1,5,7	11,920,165				
Minimum Aid Adjustment					
9 Minimum aid adjustment	11,920,165				
10 Aid adjustment increment (if line 9 - line 8 > 0, then line 9 - line 8, otherwise 0)	0				
Non-Operating District Reduction to Foundation					
11 Reduction to foundation	0				
Hold Harmless Aid					
12 Hold harmless aid	0				
FY25 Chapter 70 Aid					
13 Sum of 1,5,7,10, 12 minus 11	11,920,165				

Year	CTO Aid	Required District Contribution	Foundation Budget
FY20	~40,000,000	~15,000,000	~55,000,000
FY21	~40,000,000	~15,000,000	~55,000,000
FY22	~40,000,000	~15,000,000	~55,000,000
FY23	~40,000,000	~15,000,000	~55,000,000
FY24	~40,000,000	~15,000,000	~55,000,000

Note on Minimum Aid Adjustment on lines 9 and 10:
The minimum aid adjustment is the sum of (a) the greater of foundation aid or base aid determined based on the FY21 base and incremental rates, inflated to FY24, and (b) foundation enrollment multiplied by \$30. The aid adjustment increment (line 10) is the line 9 amount less the line 8 amount if the difference is positive. Otherwise, the increment is zero.

The \$11,920,165 is combined with the local contribution, which comes from the local taxes of residents of the Town of Belmont, to comprise the revenue sources for the school budget. The passage of the Proposition 2 ½ override will generate revenue for the general fund that will allow the School Department to maintain its current level of service and to add resources to develop needed programming.

¹ This State Aid amount is subject to change.

Circuit Breaker Offset

The revenue assumptions include an \$220,000 increase to the Circuit Breaker offset raising it from \$3,040,000 (received in FY24) to \$3,260,000 (estimate for FY25). The Circuit Breaker account was put into effect by the state in 2004 to help defray the expense to local school districts for providing legally mandated special education supports and services to students with disabilities. The program reimburses local school districts for a portion of their “excess” costs above a certain threshold for educating high-needs students. (The threshold for eligibility is set by the state each year and currently is approximately \$51,000) Each year, BPS receives a Circuit Breaker reimbursement for prior year costs.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidance states that school districts should keep up to one year’s worth of circuit breaker on any given year. This year for FY24 we carried approximately \$180,000 in Circuit Breaker. The FY25 budget includes a carryover balance of approximately \$400,000, which is approximately \$2,600,000 less than what DESE guidance states we should have in Circuit Breaker. This year’s allocation of \$3,000,000 (based on FY23 expenditures) is used for expenses beyond the general fund, with the remaining funds contributing to the carryover Circuit Breaker balance. With this in mind, the FY25 budget was developed to increase the carryover of Circuit Breaker in line with DESE guidance.

Based on actual expenditures in FY24, Belmont was one of over 100 school districts that received additional Circuit Breaker funding in the form of “relief” payments. These payments will be received in May 2024; and for Belmont, the payment amounts total approximately \$1,058,000. The district plans to spend the \$1,058,000 in FY24 to support the school general fund budget. Of this amount, approximately \$600,000 is Extraordinary Relief, which must be expended in FY24. The remaining approximate \$458,000 is Reserve Relief, which is an advance on the Circuit Breaker allocation to be received in FY25. To the extent that the \$458,000 will need to be utilized in FY24, it will reduce the remaining Circuit Breaker allocation to be received in FY25 by up to that amount. As a result, the net Circuit Breaker allocation to be received may be approximately \$2,800,000 (\$3,260,000-\$458,000).

DESE Guidance on Circuit Breaker can be found in the following web page: [Primer on Financial Aspects of Special Education](#)

User Fees

The revenue assumptions also include maintaining our current level of fees, which are kept in various revolving accounts. All fee-based programs are supported by a combination of the general fund and user fees. Some of the district programs rely more heavily on the general fund whereas others on the revolving account revenue.

Revolving Accounts FY24 and FY25

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
FOOD SERVICE	FEES	School breakfast, lunch	Salaries, food, supplies	21.36	1,704,351	21.36	2,017,869
LOST BOOKS	FEES		Textbooks	-	-	-	-
BHS ATHLETIC REVOLVING	FEES	HS athletic program	Stipends, contract serv. supplies, transportation	-	588,800	-	564,796
TUITION - STUDENTS	FEES	Pre-K	Salaries, supplies	2.75	318,569	2.75	321,950
SUMMER SCHOOL	FEES	Student enrichment activities	Stipends, supplies	-	65,000	-	74,803
SCHOOL BUILDING RENTALS	FEES	Building maintenance	Salaries, maint. & repair of school buildings	0.30	221,081	0.20	184,092
BUSING FEES	FEES	Busing	Contract services	-	281,587	-	516,843
BELMONT AGAINST RACISM	DONATIONS	Equity	Contract services, supplies	-	15,000	-	15,000
BHS FINE & PERM ARTS REV	FEES	VPA	Stipends, supplies	-	67,450	-	69,124
BHS CLUB ACTIVITIES	FEES	Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	25,600	-	5,226
CUE FINE ARTS, CLUB ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS	FEES	Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	7,210	-	13,430
BMS FINE ARTS, CLUB ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS		Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	72,340	-	56,177
TOTAL				24.41	3,366,988	24.31	3,839,310

Grants

The district receives state and federal grants to supplement the general fund to support programming for populations of students. This chart shows the grants received in FY24 and their allocations, and the anticipated FY25 allocations (FY25 allocations are not confirmed until the summer). These are recurring grants that support different areas and that have specific guidelines attached to each the district must follow.

Recurring Grants FY24 and FY25

Grant Name	Funding Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
TITLE IV A (309)	Federal	Student SEL & Activities	Stipends, non-salary exp	-	10,060	-	10,000
IDEA (240)	Federal	SPED	OOD tuitions, prof. devel.	1.00	1,061,071	3.00	1,192,803
TITLE II A (140)	Federal	Elem. Curriculum	Salaries	0.44	55,134	0.44	55,052
TITLE III (180)	Federal	ELE	Stipends, supplies, software, memberships	-	57,570	-	71,217
EARLY CHILDHOOD (262)	Federal	Pre-K	Salaries	0.25	30,383	0.25	31,348
TITLE I (305)	Federal	Reading support	Salaries	1.05	130,402	1.05	135,726
METCO (317)	State	METCO	Salaries, busing, supplies, memberships	5.84	817,353	4.97	787,098
CIRCUIT BREAKER	State	SPED	OOD tuitions	-	2,029,950	-	2,846,149
DPH CSHS GRANT	State	Nursing	Prof. devel. supplies	-	40,000	-	10,000
TOTAL RECURRING GRANTS				8.58	4,231,923	9.71	5,139,393

The past couple of years, the district received one-time grant funds in response to COVID to supplement the general fund. While most of these COVID relief funds have expired and are expended (e.g. ESSER), the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds carry over into FY25. We currently have salaries of 9 positions that are supported by these ARPA funds, which will expire at the end of FY25. In order to retain these positions, the district would need to either reallocate funds from another area of the budget or would need to procure additional funding.

One-Time Grants FY24 and FY25

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Town APRA Fund, Allcated by SB to SC/SD	Federal	COVID Recovery	Salaries to support student academic and mental health recovery	9.00	965,160	9.00	1,004,369
SUBTOTAL - FY22 GRANTS				9.00	965,160	9.00	1,004,369

The other funding sources come from the LABBB credit, the shared Information Technology (IT) support with the Town, and the special education reserve fund. The IT support is the cost associated with the district's IT staff doing work for Town departments. That reserve fund was a one-time infusion in FY24 and will remain in reserve funding for FY25.

Other Funding Sources FY24 and FY25

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
LABBB OOD TUITION CREDIT		SPED	OOD tuitions	-	100,000	-	-
TOWN TRANSFER-SHARED IT SUPPORT		Technology	Salaries	0.50	35,000	0.50	35,000
SPED RESERVE FUND		SPED	OOD tuitions, transportation	-	600,000	-	-
TOTAL				0.50	735,000	0.50	35,000

The total of all funding sources is \$76,903,776 to include grants, revolving accounts, and other funding sources beyond the general fund, which is \$66,885,704 (The GF amount reflects 90K for benefits for new staff already migrated to the Town Shared Services Budget).

Summary of All Funding Sources FY24 and FY25

	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25	CHANGE	CHANGE
	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	\$	%
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$		
GENERAL FUND	539.57	62,886,981	547.18	66,885,704*	3,998,723	6.36%
TOTAL GRANTS - RECURRING	8.58	4,231,923	9.71	5,139,393	907,470	21.44%
TOTAL GRANTS - COVID/ONE-TIME	9.00	965,160	9.00	1,004,369	39,209	4.06%
TOTAL GRANTS	17.58	5,197,083	18.71	6,143,762	946,679	18.22%
TOTAL REVOLVING	24.41	3,366,988	24.31	3,839,310	472,322	14.03%
TOTAL OTHER	0.50	135,000	0.50	35,000	(100,000)	-74.07%
SUBTOTAL: ALL NON-GENERAL FUND SOURCES	42.50	8,699,071	43.52	10,018,072	1,319,001	15.16%
GRAND TOTAL: ALL SOURCES	582.06	71,586,052	590.70	76,903,776	5,317,724	7.43%

*Total reflects 90K in Benefits already migrated to Shared Services.

LABBB Credit

Belmont is a member district of LABBB Special Education Collaborative (“LABBB”). LABBB offers programs to service students with special needs from its member districts, for which districts pay a fee. LABBB may also service students from non-member districts, which pay a higher rate than member districts. Under certain circumstances, LABBB may decide to provide financial relief to its member districts by issuing a credit to each respective member district. During the following year, each member district must identify specific LABBB tuition invoices to be applied to its member credit, so that the credit is fully expended within the year for which the credit is awarded. Determination of the issuance of and the amount of any member credit is determined by LABBB annually. No member credit has been awarded to member districts for FY24.

LABBB Credit	Actual						Budgeted	Projected	
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	281,819	175,227	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	175,566	602,088	-	166,339	118,813	-	-	-	-
Less: Expenditures	282,158	777,315	-	166,339	118,813	-	-	-	-
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	175,227	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

What is the FY25 School Department level service budget?

The FY25 level services budget starts with a rollover from FY24 to FY25 of \$65,954,522. The rollover shows the cost of FY24 resources in FY25. The rollover includes increased costs associated with cost of living adjustments, step salary increases, inflation, and increases in special education costs. With these increased costs, the rollover answers the question “what will FY24 staff and non-salary resources cost in FY25?”

FY25 Rollover (Rolling Forward FY24 to FY25)

Category	FY24	FY24	Roll-Forward	Roll-Forward	Roll-Forward		
	FTE	\$	FY25	FY25	Change: FY24 VS. FY25		
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$	FTE	\$	%(\$)
Salary & wages: Base	539.57	46,089,702	540.02	48,412,804	0.45	2,323,102	5.04%
Non-Base/Temp Salaries		1,486,893		1,643,786		156,893	10.55%
COLA & Steps/Degrees Incr.		618,176		268,724		-349,452	-56.53%
Sub-tot: Sal. & Wages	539.57	48,194,771	540.02	50,325,314	0.45	2,130,543	4.42%
Benefits for New Staff		0		0	0.00	0	0.00%
Special Educ. Tuitions		8,677,343		9,284,758		607,415	7.00%
Special Educ - Transp.		1,812,087		1,938,933		126,846	7.00%
Special Educ - Contr. Svcs.		1,328,967		1,421,995		93,028	7.00%
Dept. Operating Expenses		2,599,608		2,702,462		102,854	3.96%
Equipment		274,205		281,060		6,855	2.50%
Totals	539.57	62,886,981	540.02	65,954,522	0.45	3,067,541	4.88%

The FY25 rollover budget of \$65,954,522 is a 4.88% increase from FY24. The increase of 5.04% for the base salary and wages comes from the step and lane increases for staff, cost of living adjustments, and increases in non-union contracts. The increases in equipment and operating expenses account for inflation. The special education increases account for future needs for special education services.

This rollover amount does **not** include the following non-recurring expenses:

- One-time contractual payments and wages for retired administrators
- One-time salary for Transition Director position
- One-time costs associated with 7th and 8th grade moving to BMS
- \$600,000 that was transferred into the Special Education Reserve Fund by the School Committee in June 2023
- One-time FY24 state earmarked funds of \$400,000
- Intra-year positions added in FY24 after the budget was approved by Town Meeting. These positions are added in response to mandated services.

FY25 Reallocations

Part of the budget development process is identifying reallocations that can be made to respond to changing student needs. These reallocations are budget neutral but may impact the FTE count, depending on the reallocation. The relocations are important in the budget process because they allow the district to move positions to where they are needed, rather than relying solely on adding positions. This helps to answer the question, “What efficiencies can be identified in the level service budget?”

The “Phase 1 Reallocations” chart shows positions reallocated to equivalent positions (e.g. teacher position reallocated from one grade level to another due to enrollment changes). There is one reallocation in this chart that results in additional FTE.

Phase 1 Reallocations

Reallocate From	FTE	\$ Salary or Expense Savings	\$ Benefits Savings	\$ Total Savings	Reallocate To	FTE	\$ Salary or Expense Cost	\$ Benefits Cost	\$ Total Cost	Impact Statement	Net Cost/ (Savings)
1.0 Grade 1 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	1.0 ELE Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	Mandated Services	0
1.0 Grade 1 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	1.0 Reading Teacher @ BMS/BHS	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	Mandated Services	0
1.0 Grade 4 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	1.0 Grade 6 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	Enrollment	0
1.0 Grade 4 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	1.0 Grade 6 Teacher	1.00	80,000	18,000	98,000	Enrollment	0
\$146,000 from Special Education Services Salary	0.00	146,000	0	146,000	0.2 Learning Center Teacher @ BHS 0.2 Psychologist @ BHS 0.2 ESL Teacher 1 Special Education Teacher	1.60	128,000	18,000	146,000	Mandated Services	0
Central Office non-salary accounts		45,000		45,000	CUE non-salary accounts		45,000		45,000	Gr. 4 move to CUE in FY25	0
Totals	4.00	511,000	72,000	583,000		5.60	493,000	90,000	583,000		0

The “Phase 2 Reallocations” chart shows a strategy used to add needed positions without increasing the FTE count or the total budget amount. Here, support staff positions (Unit D) are reallocated to teaching positions (Unit A) and supplemented with turnover savings. When staff retire or resign, there is often a difference in salary between the person who is leaving and the new hire for that position. That is the turnover savings used to supplement the salaries of these positions.

Phase 2 Reallocations

The first and second tables show reallocations of positions in order to add needed positions, as well as what the needed positions are. The third table shows the net change in the FTEs and dollars. (Please see the explanation of these positions below.)

Reallocate From	FTE	\$ Salary or Expense Savngs	\$ Benefits Savings	\$ Total Savings
Utilization of turnover savings for known separations	0.00	100,000	0	100,000
CUE Building Sub	1.00	30,000	18,000	48,000
Support position TBD	1.00	30,000	18,000	48,000
Totals	2.00	160,000	36,000	196,000

Reallocate To	FTE	\$ Salary or Expense Cost	\$ Benefits Cost	\$ Total Cost	Impact Statement
Health CUE	0.60	48,000	18,000	66,000	To align with instructional schedule
Tech Ed CUE	0.40	32,000	0	32,000	To align with instructional schedule
Counselor Position, METCO offset	0.80	98,000	0	98,000	To align with DESE requirements
Totals	1.80	178,000	18,000	196,000	

	FTE	\$ Salary or Expense (Savings) /Cost	\$ Benefits (Savings) /Cost	\$ Total Cost
Net Cost/ (Savings)	(0.20)	18,000	(18,000)	-

1.0 Grade 1 Classroom Teaching Position to 1.0 ESL Teaching Position

1.0 Grade 1 Classroom Teaching Position to 1.0 Reading Teaching Position

- These reallocations are driven by enrollment. In grade 1, there are 14 sections for the current enrollment. Next year’s rising grade 1 enrollment will be about 250 students, which can be accommodated with 12 sections. At the same time, the district’s EL population has increased significantly, requiring an additional 1.2 ESL teachers. Also, the need for reading services at the middle school remains, and the ability of the district to provide those services was impacted by the elimination of that position last year. This

reallocation involves moving 1.0 grade 1 classroom teaching position to 1.0 ESL and 1.0 grade 1 classroom teaching position to 1.0 reading teacher at BMS.

2.0 Grade 4 Classroom Teaching positions to 2.0 Grade 6 Classroom Teaching positions

- This reallocation is driven by enrollment. In grade 4, there are 16 sections for the current enrollment. Next year's rising grade 4 enrollment will be about 300 students, which can be accommodated with 14 sections. At the same time, the rising grade 6, which currently has 12 sections, will have an enrollment of approximately 350 students in FY25, requiring an additional 2 sections. This reallocation involves moving two grade 4 classroom teaching positions to grade 6, which creates a half team (2 sections) in grade 6 in addition to the three existing 4-section teams.

\$146,000 from Special Education Services Salary to Multiple Staff Positions

- This reallocation is driven by mandated services. The Special Education Services Salary is used to provide compensation for staff that complete work outside the contractual day. This is largely due to large caseloads and increased workloads where some staff are unable to complete work in the course of the regular work day. At the same time, there are increased mandated services that require additional staffing to ensure compliance with services. This reallocation involves taking \$130,00 from the Special Education Services salary line item to fund the following positions:
 - 0.2 Learning Center Teacher
 - 0.2 Psychologist @ BHS
 - 0.2 ESL Teacher
 - 1.0 Special Education Teacher @ BHS

\$45,000 from Central Office Non-Salary Account to CUE Non-Salary Account

- This allocation is driven by the CUE transition. When grade 4 moves to the CUE for FY25, these funds will be moved from the central office non-salary account to that of the CUE. This is part of the larger transition that started with FY24, where non-salary accounts need to be resized based on the shifting enrollments.

1.0 Building Substitute to 0.6 Health and 0.4 Tech Engineering Teacher at CUE

- The grade 4 transition to the CUE involves the redeployment of many staff positions, to adjust to lower enrollment in the elementary schools (ES)s and higher enrollment at the CUE, with minimal impact on the budget. Specifically, about 35 staff were moved from the ESs to the CUE, to follow the approximately 360 4th graders transitioning to the CUE, and between ESs as specialist staff (Art, Music, PE, etc.) will be shared across schools. Although we are able to minimize the additional staffing needed for this transition, there is a staffing gap that we need to fill through the FY25 budget. The CUE needs a 0.4 FTE Tech Engineering Teacher and a 0.6 FTE Health Teacher in order to ensure these classes are staffed with teachers, who are able to provide instruction in these subject areas.

0.8 Counselor Salary from METCO Grant to General Fund

- Through the METCO program, we receive a grant allocation for resources to support our METCO students. These resources are critical to ensuring our METCO students have access and are able to benefit from the full range of programming that BPS has to offer. Currently, the district uses the METCO grant to fund a counseling position. To ensure our funding is consistent with grant guidelines, which says that grant funds need to support resources that serve METCO students, we need to reallocate some of this counseling salary to the general fund. Since counselors serve METCO students along with other students, we can charge some of the salary to the METCO grant, but not all.

FY25 Needed Increases

In FY25, there are needed increases as part of level services. This goes beyond the rollover to identify the resources needed to maintain the same level of service from FY24 to FY25. This answers the question, “In order to have the same level of service from FY24 to FY25, what else is needed?”

FY25 Level-Service: Needed Increases			
Description	FTE	\$	Notes
Transportation - 5 Buses for BHS/BMS Routes	0.00	304,744	Increase in buses needed for BMS & BHS students to ride the same routes while providing services for an increased number of students at CUE from FY24
Legal Services - Costs for CBA Negotiations	0.00	24,153	Legal expenses for negotiation of labor contracts expiring at the end of FY25
Grade 4 Reconfiguration Move	0.00	100,000	Working estimate for costs to relocate gr. 4 to CUE: Moving furniture, equipment, staff materials, etc.
Grant/GF Cost share	0.76	89,164	Increase fractional FTEs to GF for staff charged to state & federal grants, based on actual salaries and FY24 grant allocations
Total	0.76	518,061	

Transportation

- With the transition of grade 4 students to the CUE, 5 additional buses are needed to ensure the district is able to provide the same level of transportation. This increase accounts for the potential change in mandated service, where students who lived closer to their elementary schools may now be eligible for transportation if they live further than 2 miles from the CUE.

Legal Services

- The district will start collective bargaining negotiations in FY25, which will require an increase in legal services.

Grade 4 Move to the CUE

- This increase is to support the move of materials, equipment, and supplies from elementary schools to the CUE. This would support contracting out with a company to move between schools, and compensating professional staff for time needed to pack classroom supplies and materials.

Grant / General Fund Cost Share

- This increase is to account for the increasing salaries of positions supported by federal and state grants. The salaries increase, but the grant allocations do not increase at the same rate. The amount of this increase is based on salaries and FY24 grant allocations.

FY25 Level Service Summary

The FY25 level service budget comes to **\$66,472,583**, which includes the rollover with the reallocations of staff and increases in specific budget line items.

FY25 Level Service Summary

	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	CHANGE: FY24 VS. FY25		
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25	FTE	\$	%(\$)
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$			
Salary & wages: Base	539.57	46,089,702	542.18	48,677,968	2.61	2,588,266	5.62%
Non-Base/Temp Salaries	-	1,486,893	-	1,593,786	-	106,893	7.19%
COLA & Steps/Degrees Incr.	-	618,176	-	293,724	-	(324,452)	-52.49%
Enrollment Increases	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Sub-tot: Sal. & Wages	539.57	48,194,771	542.18	50,565,478	2.61	2,370,707	4.92%
Benefits for New Employees	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Other Employee Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Special Educ. Tuitions	-	8,677,343	-	9,177,758	-	500,415	5.77%
Special Educ - Transp.	-	1,812,087	-	2,045,933	-	233,846	12.90%
Special Educ - Contr. Svcs.	-	1,328,967	-	1,275,995	-	(52,972)	-3.99%
Dept. Operating Expenses	-	2,599,608	-	3,036,953	-	437,345	16.82%
Equipment	-	274,205	-	370,466	-	96,261	35.11%
Totals	539.57	62,886,981	542.18	66,472,583	2.61	3,585,602	5.70%

What are the major budget drivers in a level service budget?

The Belmont Public Schools is committed to providing a high-quality education for all of our students. When developing a budget, there are several considerations to ensure the financial investment reflects the community’s priorities and values.

Salaries

The BPS budget is primarily about people. Students’ daily experience is most powerfully influenced by the quality of instruction by teachers and staff. It is the collective effort of all staff positions that hold up the school system as a whole in order to bring high-quality education to

Belmont students, resulting in high student achievement. Step and lane increases as well as COLA account for the percentage increase in base salary, which for the level service, is 5.62%. This comprises the base salaries in the rollover budget described above and the additional FTEs identified in the reallocations and needed increases. The FY25 budget shows a 4.92% increase in total salary and wages from FY24.

The BPS has collective bargaining agreements with five bargaining units, all of whom provide valuable services for students' educational experiences. The district is in year 2 of 3-year contracts for four of the collective bargaining contracts (Units, A, B, C, and D) and is entering into negotiations with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME - Custodians) unit this year. Next year (FY25), the district will enter into negotiations for Units A (Teachers), B (Administrators), C (Clerical), and D (Aides) for contracts that expire August 2025.

Transportation

This year (FY24), the district is in year one of a three-year contract with the transportation company. There is a cost increase for transportation for FY25 of 5.8%. This includes an increase of \$30 per bus per day. In addition, \$304,744 is needed for additional buses due to changing routes when grade 4 moves to the Chenery Upper Elementary. This will also enable students attending BMS and BHS to ride the same bus routes together to the campus. This is the final stage of reconfiguration, whose planning began with the BMHS building project. The transportation for special education increases by 12.9% in FY25. This reflects current year projections, as informed by our current and anticipated cohort of students being transported.

Special Education

During the 2022-2023 school year, the percentage of students with disabilities (SWDs) was 14.3% of the student population, an increase of 4% over the previous four years. With that came an increase of out-of-district placements along with a 14% increase in private special education tuition for FY24. These factors have led to a need for more funding for special education services. This year, as our special education population has continued to increase to 15.1%, we continue to account for those services in our budget. At the same time, through a review of special education resources, the district is able to identify resources that can be reallocated (see "FY25 Reallocations" above) to respond to students' changing needs.

For FY25, the district sees a 9.57% increase in the total out-of-district budget, from all funding sources, over FY24. Based on guidance for implementing mandated positions through the IDEA grant, the district has moved some of the tuition expenses to the General Fund from the grant. The \$600,000 in the special education reserve account was allocated there by approval of the School Committee in spring 2023 and will carry over into FY25.

Earlier in the budget process, the level service budget increased from the draft 1 (presented at Summit II) to the draft 2 budget (presented at Summit III) to account for anticipated out-of-district

placements. However, with the allocated revenue for FY25, the district could not budget for both the forecast of OOD placements and additional staffing, so it was decided to budget those funds to support staff for in-district programming. (See investments below.)

Out-of-District Tuition Expenses by Type and Funding Source FY21 - FY25

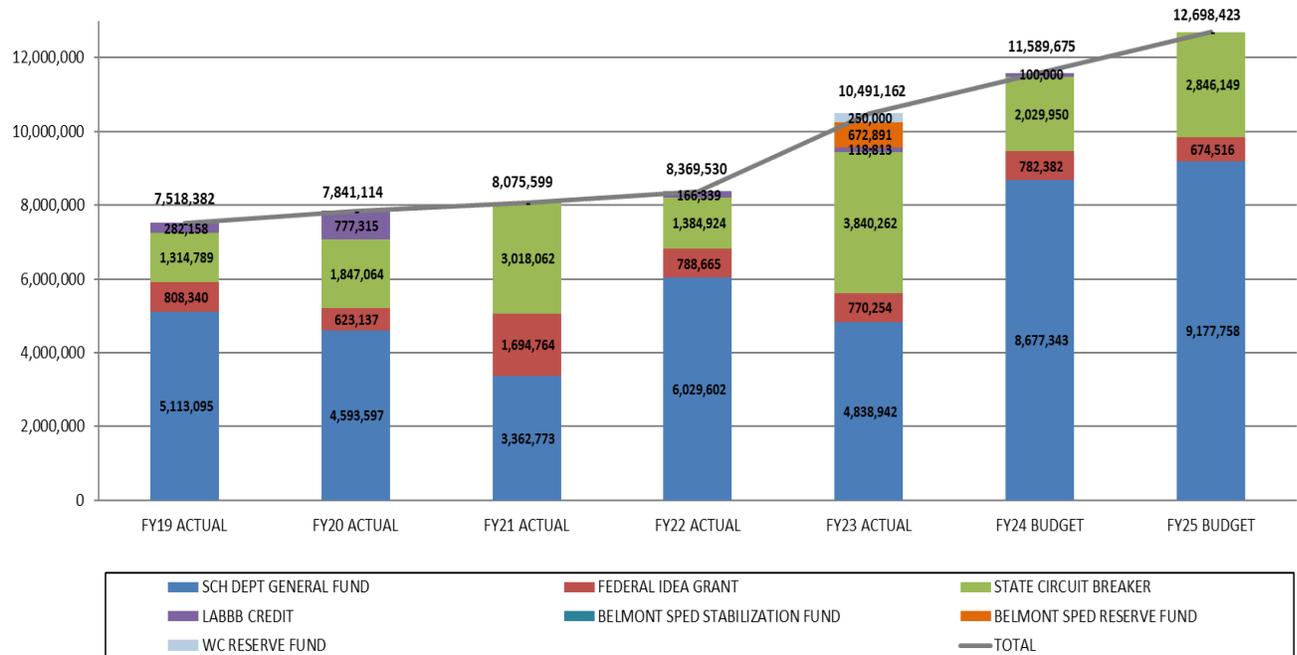
	FY21 Budget	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	Change FY24 - FY25	
							\$	%
Out-of-District Tuition Expenses:								
LABBB Collaborative	3,510,954	4,025,955	3,805,442	4,285,053	4,572,993	4,786,103	213,110	4.66%
MA Public	147,453	-	32,890	32,890	47,250	50,558	3,308	7.00%
Private Tuitions	4,634,460	4,016,063	4,401,397	6,038,184	6,811,018	7,692,259	881,241	12.94%
Out-of-State Tuitions	276,734	33,581	129,800	135,035	158,414	169,503	11,089	7.00%
Total Out-of-District Tuitions	8,569,601	8,075,599	8,369,530	10,491,162	11,589,675	12,698,423	1,108,748	9.57%
Funding Sources:								
General Fund	3,935,141	3,362,773	6,029,602	5,088,942	8,677,343	9,177,758	500,415	5.77%
General Sped Fund Reserve	-	-	-	672,891	-	-	-	0.00%
Federal IDEA Grants	1,898,587	1,694,764	788,665	770,254	782,382	674,516	(107,866)	-13.79%
MA State Circuit Breaker	2,735,873	3,018,062	1,384,924	3,840,262	2,029,950	2,846,149	816,199	40.21%
LABBB Credits	-	-	166,339	118,813	100,000	-	(100,000)	-100.00%
Total Funding Sources	8,569,601	8,075,599	8,369,530	10,491,162	11,589,675	12,698,423	1,108,748	9.57%

The next two charts give a historical glance at out-of-district expenditures since FY19. It was during and the time following COVID that the district has seen a dramatic increase in Students with Disabilities for all services, and out-of-district service in particular. From FY19 to FY23 actuals, the district saw a 39% increase in OOD expenses, and from FY23 actuals, there is a 17% increase in anticipated expenses for FY25.

Out-of-District Tuition Expenditures by Funding Source FY19 - FY25

FUNDING SOURCE	FY19 ACTUAL	FY20 ACTUAL	FY21 ACTUAL	FY22 ACTUAL	FY23 ACTUAL	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 BUDGET
SCH DEPT GENERAL FUND	5,113,095	4,593,597	3,362,773	6,029,602	4,838,942	8,677,343	9,177,758
FEDERAL IDEA GRANT	808,340	623,137	1,694,764	788,665	770,254	782,382	674,516
STATE CIRCUIT BREAKER	1,314,789	1,847,064	3,018,062	1,384,924	3,840,262	2,029,950	2,846,149
LABBB CREDIT	282,158	777,315	-	166,339	118,813	100,000	-
BELMONT SPED STABILIZATION FUND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BELMONT SPED RESERVE FUND	-	-	-	-	672,891	-	-
WC RESERVE FUND	-	-	-	-	250,000	-	-
TOTAL	7,518,382	7,841,114	8,075,599	8,369,530	10,491,162	11,589,675	12,698,423

Out-of-District Tuition Expenditure by Funding Source FY19 - FY25



The carryover balances are used to respond to unanticipated expenses during the course of the school year. Special education expenses are constantly in flux as students' needs change throughout the year. The Budget is based on anticipated needs with the understanding that significant increases or decreases in expenses may occur from what was originally planned. No other part of the budget has this level of volatility. The carryover balances are the reserve funding needed to ensure that the district can absorb costs associated with unanticipated increases in special education during the course of the school year. In this way, this district plans to use these funds to respond to such unanticipated costs.

Carryover Balances FY21 - FY25

The chart below shows the historical and anticipated carryover balances for Out-of-District (OOD) tuition funding for all funding sources. The balances were relied upon more heavily in FY23; and the district hopes to begin rebuilding a sufficient balance over the next several years.

The receipt and use of FY24 Circuit Breaker relief funds in FY24 are not expected to change the amount of carryover balances from FY24 into FY25. As of May 2024, the district expects to expend all of the \$1,058,000 in relief payments in FY24.

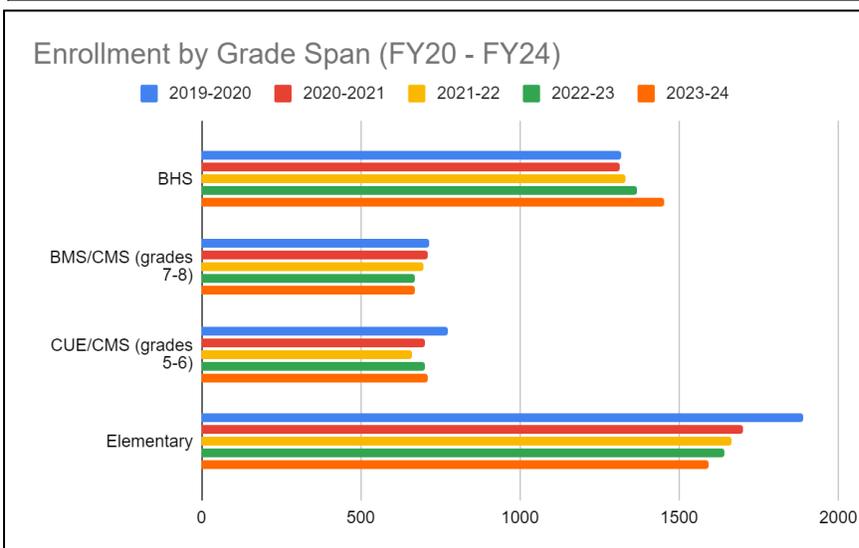
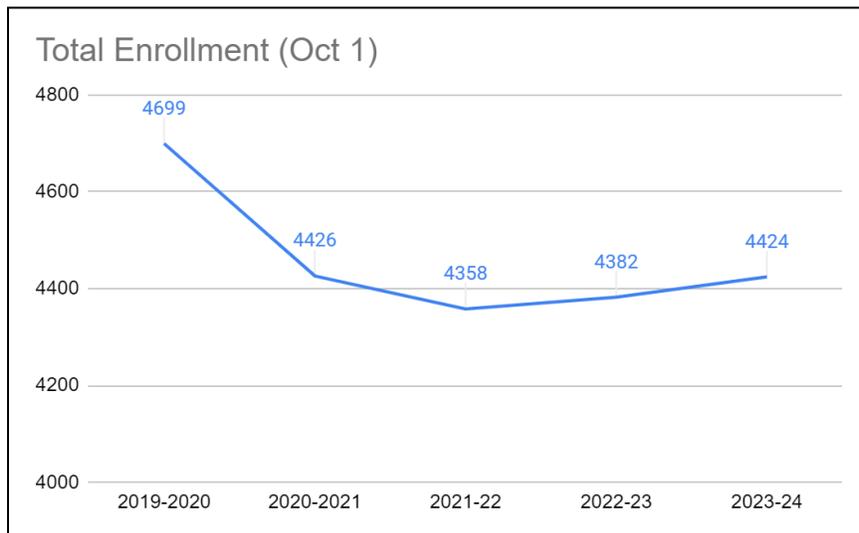
Out-of-District Reserve Balances by Funding Source FY21-FY25

	FY 21 Actual	FY 22 Actual	FY 23 Actual	FY 24 Proj.	FY 25 Budget
Federal IDEA Grants:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	659,635	-	10,631	22,759	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	1,035,129	799,296	782,382	674,516	674,516
Less: Current Year Expenditures	1,694,764	788,665	770,254	697,275	674,516
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	(0)	10,631	22,759	-	-
MA State Circuit Breaker:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	1,822,990	627,109	1,502,200	183,120	448,116
Plus: Current Year Allocation	1,822,181	2,260,015	2,339,222	3,047,323	3,260,636
Plus: Current Year Extraordinary Relief	-	-	181,960	600,341	-
Plus: Current Year Reserve Relief				458,003	
Less: Current Year Expenditures	3,018,062	1,384,924	3,840,262	3,840,671	2,846,149
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	627,109	1,502,200	183,120	448,116	862,603
LABBB Credits:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	0	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	-	166,339	118,813	-	-
Less: Current Year Expenditures	0	166,339	118,813	-	-
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	-	-	-	-	-
Belmont General Fund:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	-	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	3,935,141	6,029,602	4,731,082	8,677,343	9,177,758
Less: Current Year Expenditures	3,362,773	6,029,602	4,838,943	8,677,343	9,177,758
Subtotal	572,368	-	(107,861)	-	-
	Turnback to theTown		Absorbed by GF Spending Freeze		
Warrant Committee Reserve Fund:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	-	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation			250,000		
Less: Current Year Expenditures			250,000		
Subtotal	-	-	-	-	-
Belmont Sped Reserve Fund:					
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	672,891	672,891	672,891	-	600,000
Plus: Current Year Allocation	-	-	-	600,000	-
Less: Current Year Expenditures	-	-	672,891	-	-
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	672,891	672,891	-	600,000	600,000
Combined Carry-Forward Balances	1,300,000	2,185,722	205,879	1,048,116	1,462,603

Enrollment

During COVID, there was a significant decrease in enrollment. Prior to that, the enrollment peaked in 2019-2020 at 4699 students, then decreased to 4,358 students in 2021-2022, before beginning a slow increase to 4,424 students as of October 1, 2023. Since the fall, enrollment has continued to increase to the current enrollment on April 1, 2024 of 4,443 students. Emerging is a shift in enrollment from elementary to secondary, which is reflected in the reallocations outlined in the level service budget. There, elementary positions are moved to secondary positions to account for these enrollment shifts.

The district decided to contract out with McKibben Demographic Research, LLC to provide an enrollment forecast for the district. The last time the district had an enrollment forecast was in 2018, by the same provider. Since then, significant disruptions to population movement and school enrollment occurred due to COVID, making those 2018 forecasts outdated. Therefore, in seeking updated enrollment information, the district was able to acquire a forecast to provide a view of future years enrollment trends for long-term planning. This is helpful to know if the district can anticipate significant increases or decreases. The report itself indicated that due to population trends, school enrollment is forecasted to decline by about 171 students over the next 5 years. Of note is that this is less than the 341 dramatic decrease during 2 years of COVID from 2019-2020 to 2021-2022.



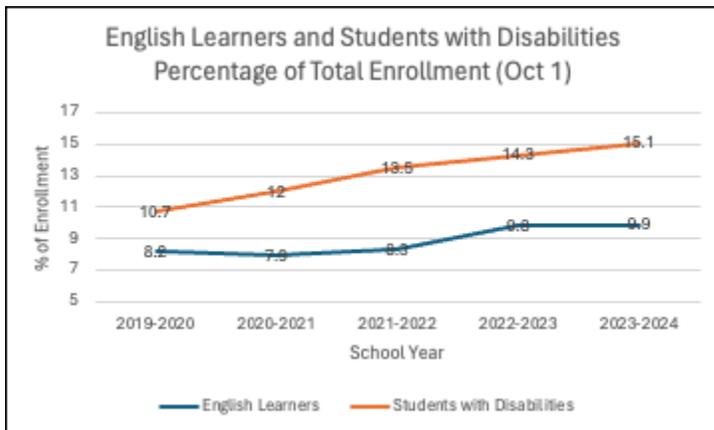
Enrollment by Grade Span (FY20 - FY24)					
	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
BHS	1318	1313	1330	1368	1453
BMS/CMS (grades 7-8)	717	711	698	668	672
CUE/CMS (grades 5-6)	773	702	663	702	712
Elementary	1891	1700	1667	1644	1594

In addition to total enrollment, our English Learner population has also increased. In 2019-2020 the EL population was 8.2% of total enrollment. During COVID, the EL population decreased to 7.9% in 2020-2021, before increasing over the following few years to 9.9% as of October 1, 2023. It was due to this increase that the district has added EL staffing, in order to provide the mandated services.

Similarly, the Students with Disabilities population increased steadily over the past five years, but did not see a decrease during COVID. Where in 2019-2022, SWDs comprised 10.7% of the student population, in 2023-2024 that percentage is now 15.1%. With this increase comes mandated services through students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Examining the enrollment of these populations is important in determining mandated services for students. Future budget planning takes into account increases in ELs and SWDs, beyond general enrollment trends. The district will continue to assess enrollment patterns to ensure staff is allocated appropriately to respond to shifts in those patterns.

October 1 SIMS Data



	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
English Learners	8.2%	7.9%	8.3%	9.8%	9.9%
Students with Disabilities	10.7%	12.0%	13.5%	14.3%	15.1%

What are the investments that will be made in FY25 and what resources are needed?

Through the budget process, the district identified resources that are needed to make important investments in the system. The purpose of these investments is to make the system stronger in terms of how it serves students. These resources allows the district to build special educational programming in order to rely less on out-of-district placements and to provide high-quality curriculum for our teachers and students.

Program Improvements and Enhancements

Salary	FTE	\$ (Salary + Benefits)
1.0 Evaluation Team Leader (Unit B) @ CUE	1.00	138,000
2.0 Special Education Professional Staff	2.00	196,000
2.0 Professional Aides (Special Education)	2.00	96,000

Non-Salary		\$
Math / Special Education Curriculum + Training	N/A	73,121
Total Salary + Non-Salary		503,121

1.0 Evaluation Team Leader

- This position provides needed support to the special education services and programming at the CUE. With grade 4 moving to the CUE, increasing the enrollment, and with this being a critical time in students' development and learning, an Evaluation Team Leader brings oversight to the IEP team process and to how services are delivered in the building. This position allows the district to ensure efficiency of resources by overseeing the scheduling process that would ensure efficient allocation of staff while ensuring effective delivery of services. As an administrative role, this position evaluates, supervises, and supports the professional learning of teaching staff and is a school-based point of contact for families.

2.0 Special Education Staff and 2.0 Special Education Professional Aides

- This year, the district completed a review of student services. This review examined the programming and made recommendations for sub-separate, in-district programming that would lead to a lower reliance on Out-Of-District placements to serve Belmont students. At the same time, through the budget process, the district analyzed and presented a lower cost of in-district programming compared to costs associated with Out-Of-District tuitions. That analysis showed that with a \$322,000 investment in special education staff for one program serving up to 12 students, the district would need to serve 3 to 5 students in order to match the out-of-tuition costs. As the number of students increases in the program, the in-district costs remain, providing more stability and predictability in program costs, compared to the volatility of out-of-district tuition. The district is in the process of planning for programming, including the addition of this special education staffing, and will be ready for implementation Fall 2024.

Math Curriculum

- The math curriculum currently used at the elementary and middle school levels is outdated and needs to be replaced. The last math curriculum adoption was in 2013. Math instruction has evolved over time, giving attention to math reasoning and conceptual understanding, in addition to math operations and fluency, and the district

needs a curriculum that can support this high level of instruction. New math curriculum will be brought in for the 2024-2025 school year in order to provide a math program that is more effective at supporting differentiated instruction and providing the level of rigor we need for all students. Beyond next year, the district will examine the literacy program with the aim of strengthening the curriculum, using the curriculum budget.

What is the total FY25 Budget?

The total FY25 General Fund Budget is \$66,885,704 which comprises \$66,472,583 in level services and \$503,121 in investments. Note that the \$503,121 includes a net \$90,000 in benefits. The FY25 Draft 3 Budget reflects this amount already migrated to the Town Shared Services Budget.

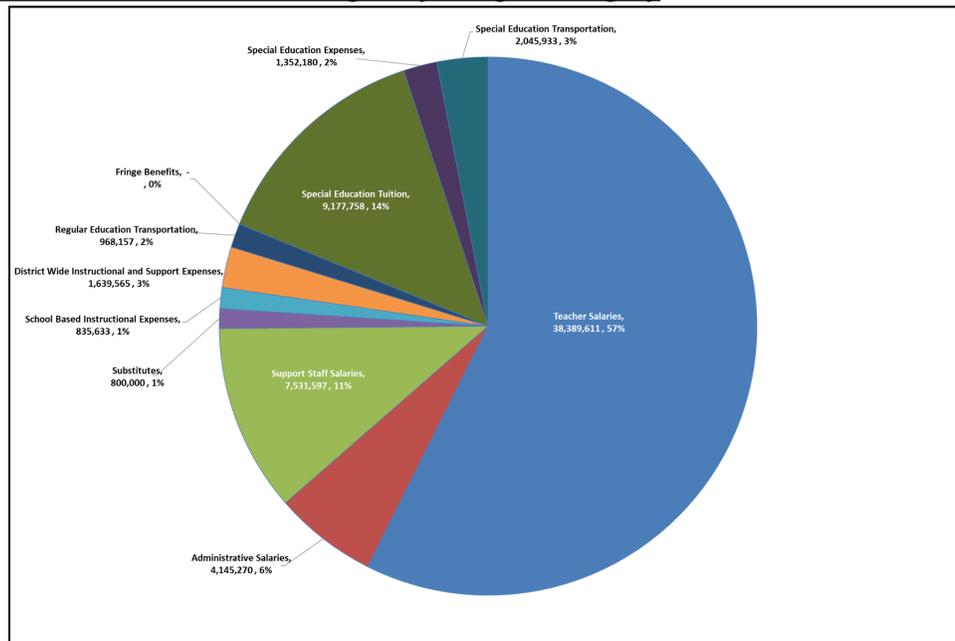
FY24 - FY25 General Fund Budget by Cost Center

	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	CHANGE: FY24 VS. FY25		
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25	FTE	\$	%(\$)
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$			
Salary & wages: Base	539.57	46,089,702	547.18	49,017,968	7.61	2,928,266	6.35%
Non-Base/Temp Salaries	-	1,486,893	-	1,593,786	-	106,893	7.19%
COLA & Steps/Degrees Incr.	-	618,176	-	293,724	-	(324,452)	-52.49%
Enrollment Increases	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Sub-tot: Sal. & Wages	539.57	48,194,771	547.18	50,905,478	7.61	2,710,707	5.62%
Benefits for New Employees	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Special Educ. Tuitions	-	8,677,343	-	9,177,758	-	500,415	5.77%
Special Educ - Transp.	-	1,812,087	-	2,045,933	-	233,846	12.90%
Special Educ - Contr. Svcs.	-	1,328,967	-	1,275,995	-	(52,972)	-3.99%
Dept. Operating Expenses	-	2,599,608	-	3,110,074	-	510,466	19.64%
Equipment	-	274,205	-	370,466	-	96,261	35.11%
Totals	539.57	62,886,981	547.18	66,885,704*	7.61	3,998,723	6.36%

*Total reflects 90K in Benefits already migrated to Shared Services. (Please see Shared Services explanation below).

As reflected in this pie chart, teacher Salaries, which support the teachers who deliver instruction and services to students, comprise 57% of our general fund. Yet, the work of teaching and learning happens with the support of other roles, namely administrators, clerical, custodial, food services, professional aides, and other support staff. Total staff salaries comprise 74% of the budget.

Pie Chart of FY25 General Fund Budget, by Budget Category



The total budget, including other funding sources, is \$76,903,776.

FY25 Total Funding Sources

	FY24 BUDGET FTE	FY24 BUDGET \$	FY25 BUDGET FTE	FY25 BUDGET \$	CHANGE \$	CHANGE %
GENERAL FUND	539.57	62,886,981	547.18	66,885,704*	3,998,723	6.36%
TOTAL GRANTS - RECURRING	8.58	4,231,923	9.71	5,139,393	907,470	21.44%
TOTAL GRANTS - COVID/ONE-TIME	9.00	965,160	9.00	1,004,369	39,209	4.06%
TOTAL GRANTS	17.58	5,197,083	18.71	6,143,762	946,679	18.22%
TOTAL REVOLVING	24.41	3,366,988	24.31	3,839,310	472,322	14.03%
TOTAL OTHER	0.50	135,000	0.50	35,000	(100,000)	-74.07%
SUBTOTAL: ALL NON-GENERAL FUND SOURCES	42.50	8,699,071	43.52	10,018,072	1,319,001	15.16%
GRAND TOTAL: ALL SOURCES	582.06	71,586,052	590.70	76,903,776	5,317,724	7.43%

*Total reflects 90K in Benefits already migrated to Shared Services.

How is the grade 4 transition to the CUE reflected in the budget?

FY25 brings the last phase of reconfiguration. This project commenced with the building project for the new high school and middle school campus and reconfiguration of grade levels to result in the following reconfiguration:

Elementary School (Burbank, Butler, Wellington, Winn Brook): K - 3 (PreK at Wellington)
Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE): 4 - 6
Belmont Middle School (BMS): 7 - 8
Belmont High School (BHS): 9 - 12

By September 2024, grade 4 will be moved to the CUE. For staff, this involves the reassignment of grade 4 classroom teacher positions to the CUE as well as specialist, special education, service providers, and support staff positions. Over the past few months, the district has been working to reassign staff and move many positions in response to the shifting enrollments across schools. As part of the district effort to maximize resources in the district, the transition process intended to minimize the need to add staffing to the district budget. Therefore, the reassignments and movement of positions are budget-neutral at an aggregate level. The FY25 School Budget, approved by the School Committee on May 7, 2024, reflects the implementation of these changes.

The budget by program chart below shows what is budgeted for each program area of the district in FY25 and the change from FY24. This summary includes the many positions that have been reassigned across elementary schools as the grade 4 students move to the Chenery Upper Elementary in the fall. It also reflects the regrouping of grade levels with 1-3 as elementary and the departments as 4-12. These groupings are identified for FY25. The district may adjust these in the FY26 budget to reflect the upper elementary school in addition to the other grade configurations. The numerous increases and decreases shown in this chart across schools and departments reflect the large number of staffing reassignments and movement that is taking place for this transition.

FY25 Budget Summary by Program

	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	CHANGE: FY24 VS FY25		
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25	FTE	\$	%(\$)
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$			
REGULAR INSTRUCTION							
1 English, Grades 5-12	28.30	2,832,821	32.20	3,222,937	3.90	390,116	13.77%
2 Reading, Grades K-8	9.43	1,099,217	12.08	1,367,169	2.65	267,952	24.38%
3A-D Elementary, grades 1-3	59.29	5,856,338	40.84	4,303,481	(18.45)	(1,552,847)	-26.52%
4 Fine Arts Supervisory	1.05	124,891	1.05	128,934	-	4,043	3.24%
5 Art, Grades 1-12	12.10	1,314,701	11.40	1,329,521	(0.70)	14,820	1.13%
6 Music, Grades K-12	12.75	1,350,649	14.23	1,633,301	1.48	282,652	20.93%
7 Theater Arts, Grades 7-12	1.00	133,977	1.00	138,056	-	4,079	3.04%
8 Kindergarten	26.85	1,962,359	25.85	1,922,306	(1.00)	(40,053)	-2.04%
9 Mathematics, Grades 4-12	30.88	3,045,200	35.74	3,648,812	4.86	603,612	19.82%
10 Physical Education, Grades K-12	11.59	1,220,432	11.45	1,208,888	(0.14)	(11,544)	-0.95%
11 Science, Grades 4-12	29.00	3,022,737	33.75	3,582,341	4.75	559,604	18.51%
12 Health Education, Grades 6-12	4.96	498,108	5.70	590,598	0.74	92,490	18.57%
13 Technology Education, Grades 6-12	4.35	384,660	4.00	364,461	(0.35)	(20,199)	-5.25%
14 Social Studies, Grades 4-12	27.90	3,039,897	32.65	3,618,473	4.75	578,576	19.03%
15 World Languages, Grades 4-12	16.20	1,717,426	16.00	1,866,261	(0.20)	148,835	8.67%
SUBTOTAL	275.65	27,603,413	277.94	28,925,549	2.29	1,322,136	4.79%
SPECIAL INSTRUCTION							
20 ELL	15.80	1,560,257	17.00	1,821,551	1.20	261,294	16.75%
21 Early Childhood Education Pre-Kind.	10.88	626,107	10.88	659,420	0.00	33,313	5.32%
22 Special Education, Grades K-12	132.37	20,404,829	134.84	21,631,161	2.47	1,226,332	6.01%
SUBTOTAL	159.05	22,591,193	162.72	24,112,132	3.67	1,520,939	6.73%
STUDENT & INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES							
30 Athletics & Intramurals, Grades 5-12	0.70	508,926	0.70	592,515	-	83,589	16.42%
31 Student Activities, Grades 4-12	0.25	118,776	0.25	120,183	-	1,407	1.18%
32 Food Service	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
33 Guidance, Grades K-12	14.54	1,470,252	16.80	1,844,487	2.26	374,235	25.45%
34 Psychological Services, Grades Pre-K-12	8.63	913,461	8.83	956,966	0.20	43,505	4.76%
35 Health Services, Grades Pre-K - 12	9.80	988,512	9.80	1,109,467	-	120,955	12.24%
36 Library	5.59	287,993	5.49	298,041	(0.10)	10,048	3.49%
37 Technology & Audio Visual	10.50	1,563,227	10.50	1,591,649	-	28,422	1.82%
38 Curriculum Development	1.00	206,632	1.00	283,691	-	77,059	37.29%
39 Staff Development	1.00	311,688	1.00	338,375	-	26,687	8.56%
40 Substitutes	2.08	695,000	2.08	800,000	0.00	105,000	15.11%
41 METCO	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
52 Regular-Day Transportation	-	609,413	-	968,157	-	358,744	58.87%
SUBTOTAL	54.09	7,673,880	56.45	8,903,531	2.36	1,229,651	16.02%
LEADERSHIP & ADMINISTRATION							
60A-F Building Administration	40.06	2,788,111	39.26	2,880,520	(0.80)	92,409	3.31%
61 Central Administration	10.70	1,441,258	10.80	1,571,985	0.10	130,737	9.07%
62 Legal Services	-	158,021	-	185,000	-	26,979	17.07%
63 School Committee	-	12,929	-	13,253	-	324	2.51%
SUBTOTAL	50.76	4,400,319	50.06	4,650,768	(0.70)	250,449	5.69%
CONTRACT ALLOWANCE & FRINGE BENEFITS							
70 Contractual Allowance	-	618,176	-	293,724	-	(324,452)	-52.49%
71 Fringe Benefits	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
SUBTOTAL	-	618,176	-	293,724	-	-324,452	-52.49%
GRAND TOTAL	539.57	62,886,981	547.18	66,885,704	7.61	3,998,723	6.36%

What are the adjustments to shared services?

Beginning in FY24, fringe costs for School employees are reflected within the Town-wide Shared Services Budget. Fringe costs for budgeted changes in School staffing are first calculated as part of the available revenue for Schools. That amount is then migrated to the School line items within the Shared Services Budget. The table below shows the fringe amounts for each of the scenarios referenced in this presentation and the resulting net School general fund budget.

Earlier in the FY25 Budget development process, the School Department identified six additional benefits-eligible positions for FY25 (five hired from the increased allocation and one from reallocating within the existing FY25 allocation). Using \$18,000 as the placeholder cost for benefits per new position, the cost is \$108,000 (\$18,000 X 6). Mechanically, this amount is ultimately reduced from the FY25 School Budget and “migrated” to increase the Town Shared Services budget, from which fringe benefits for School employees are paid.

Based on the updated changes needed in the April 23 presentation to the SC, the district has added one more benefits-eligible teaching position. In order to identify the funds within the FY25 School Budget for these changes, the district identified two support positions to eliminate, both of which are full-time, benefits-eligible positions.

The result is a net decrease of one benefits-eligible position from the original six added for FY25 (6 new + 1 additional new - 2 existing = 5 net new). The School Budget reflects the reduction for the net one fewer benefits-eligible positions (at a cost of \$18,000) as a decrease to the amount needed to be migrated to the Shared Services Budget from \$108,000 to \$90,000. The \$18,000 was added to the net FY25 School Budget as part of salaries, related to the new position. Please see the Phase 2 Reallocation Charts shown above.

	Draft 2 Budget 2/9/24	Adj. 5/7/24	Draft 3 Budget 5/7/24
Total School GF Budget	66,975,704	-	66,975,704
<u>Adj. for Shared Services:</u>			
Benefits (Subtract from School Budget)*	(108,000)	18,000	(90,000)
Net School GF Budget	66,867,704	18,000	66,885,704
			-
*Description of changes (18K/position)	Benefits for 6 new positions	Net reduction of 1 benefits-eligible position	Net 5 additional benefits-eligible positions

How does FY24 inform FY25 budgeting?

This past year, the School Department has faced a projected deficit, due to expenditures that exceed what was budgeted for FY24. The primary areas where these overages appeared were substitutes, special education contracted services and transportation, and technology. Some of this is due to reductions made in years prior and to shifts in mandated services that went beyond the amount budgeted as well as unanticipated costs in FY24.

A few steps have been taken for the FY25 budget in response to these overages in FY24.

- Increased the substitute budget line to the funding level prior to last year’s reduction, \$800,000
- Additional special education staffing to mitigate the reliance on contracted services (See Reallocations and Investments above)
- Pursuing an updated fee structure for rentals and technology

What are the BPS approved budgets for the past several years?

This chart looks at the budgets over the past few years. Since FY19, there has been wide fluctuation in the budgeted amount due to the variability of available revenue. Generally speaking, where one year the district saw an increase/decrease, that was followed by an equivalent decrease/increase the following year.

General Fund Budget History FY19 - FY25

Fiscal Year	\$	% Change
FY19	56,985,592	
FY20	60,649,451	6.4%
FY21	61,485,641	1.4%
FY22	66,205,558	7.7%
FY23	66,982,926	1.2%
FY24	62,886,981	-6.1%
FY25	66,885,704	6.4%

Of note in the general fund budget history, for the FY24 Budget, approximately \$1,400,000 in School custodian salaries (20.3 FTEs) and approximately \$10,300,000 in benefits for all School employees were migrated to the Town-wide Shared Services Budget. This is accounted for in the 6.1% decrease in the budget.

Detailed General Fund Budget History FY19 - FY25

	FY19 BUDGET	FY19 ACTUAL	FY20 BUDGET	FY20 ACTUAL	FY21 BUDGET	FY21 ACTUAL	FY22 BUDGET	FY22 ACTUAL	FY23 BUDGET	FY23 ACTUAL	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 BUDGET
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Teacher Salaries	28,146,434	27,832,534	29,732,334	29,133,537	30,069,651	30,496,600	31,617,698	32,578,232	33,611,141	33,483,768	35,839,861	38,389,611
Administrative Salaries	3,399,436	3,439,876	3,659,711	3,609,594	4,583,022	3,580,892	4,875,151	3,652,038	3,878,097	4,072,905	4,261,573	4,145,270
Support Staff Salaries	6,393,908	6,488,912	6,888,003	6,901,561	7,437,161	6,936,118	7,775,541	7,771,443	8,232,187	7,894,624	7,359,337	7,531,597
Substitutes	772,959	680,219	930,000	454,744	850,000	616,680	950,000	647,766	850,000	930,247	695,000	800,000
School Based Instructional Expenses	705,303	744,516	843,814	577,160	840,699	652,633	703,848	466,535	873,699	538,413	805,764	835,633
District Wide Instructional and Support Expenses	1,325,015	1,701,766	1,374,900	2,360,402	1,373,483	1,796,951	1,389,279	1,845,044	1,385,701	1,488,114	1,422,358	1,639,565
Regular Education Transportation	339,000	339,000	421,440	760,440	496,473	419,680	551,000	551,000	578,000	703,000	609,413	968,157
Fringe Benefits	8,225,645	8,024,489	8,921,328	8,572,677	9,111,308	8,919,220	9,421,192	9,021,303	9,828,455	9,211,491	-	-
Special Education Tuition	5,113,095	5,113,095	5,266,488	4,593,597	3,935,141	3,362,773	6,029,602	6,029,602	4,731,082	5,088,942	8,677,343	9,177,758
Special Education Expenses	1,272,804	1,145,898	1,229,000	901,175	1,309,500	1,119,330	1,309,500	1,340,661	1,321,025	1,647,388	1,404,245	1,352,180
Special Education Transportation	1,291,993	1,360,365	1,382,433	1,294,456	1,479,203	1,193,321	1,582,747	1,612,246	1,693,539	1,819,070	1,812,087	2,045,933
Totals	56,985,592	56,870,671	60,649,451	59,159,344	61,485,641	59,094,196	66,205,558	65,515,870	66,982,926	66,877,962	62,886,981	66,885,704
Annual Change: Budget-to-Budget \$			3,663,859		836,190		4,719,917		777,368		(4,095,945)	3,998,723
Annual Change: Budget-to-Budget %			6.4%		1.4%		7.7%		1.2%		-6.1%	6.4%
Same Year Budget vs. Actuals \$ Difference	114,921		1,490,107		2,391,445		689,688		104,964			
Same Year Budget vs. Actuals % Difference	0.2%		2.5%		3.9%		1.0%		0.2%			

FTE Staffing by Budget Category, Job Function, and Funding Source

Budget Category	FY21		FY22		FY23		FY24		FY25
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Q2 Actual	Budget
Regular Instruction	282.99	282.25	277.17	278.86	280.06	279.96	276.71	279.95	278.99
Special Instruction	143.45	146.98	147.98	151.19	153.19	158.25	163.05	161.97	168.72
Student & Operational Services	80.46	81.26	80.01	82.13	82.07	81.23	82.23	84.92	83.72
Operations	19.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	-	-	-
Leadership & Administration	44.76	44.20	45.20	47.95	48.95	49.06	51.06	49.26	50.26
COVID/One-time Grants	3.00	3.00	23.00	13.35	22.00	14.84	9.00	9.00	9.00
Total	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06	585.11	590.70
Job Function									
Administrator	29.65	29.45	29.95	30.45	30.45	30.85	30.85	30.65	31.65
Professional	353.16	354.96	359.96	360.36	365.96	365.76	372.32	377.36	381.72
Secretarial/Clerical	28.51	28.48	28.48	28.57	28.57	28.57	30.57	29.83	29.83
Other	162.64	165.10	175.26	174.40	181.59	178.47	148.32	147.26	147.49
Stipends	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tutoring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06	585.11	590.70
Funding Source									
General Fund	515.49	519.54	536.70	543.53	548.73	555.32	539.57	539.87	547.18
Grants	11.29	10.85	30.85	23.92	31.50	23.42	17.58	20.42	18.71
Revolving Funds	46.69	47.10	25.60	25.83	25.83	24.41	24.41	24.31	24.31
Other	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Total	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06	585.11	590.70

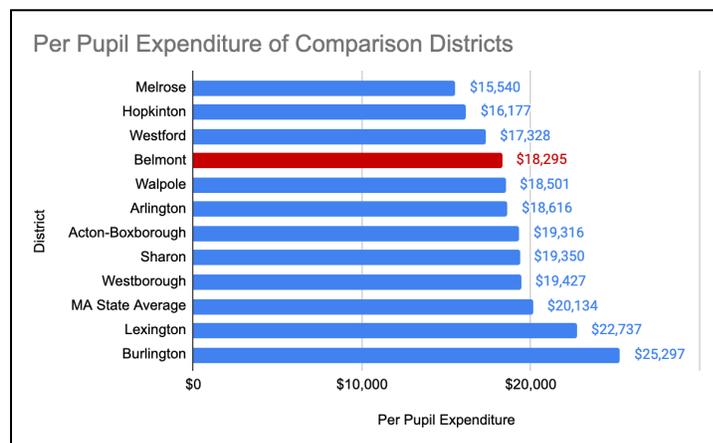
As noted above, in FY24 custodial salaries moved to the Town budget, which is reflected here showing the 20.3 FTE custodial salaries removed from the budget from FY23 to FY24.

Salary Expenses by Budget Category, Job Function, and Funding Source

	FY21		FY22		FY23		FY24	FY25	Change FY24 - FY25	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget	\$	%(\$)
Budget Category										
Regular Instruction	25,066,895	23,979,295	25,723,083	25,442,267	26,324,421	26,156,387	27,531,507	28,651,017	1,119,510	4.07%
Special Instruction	9,010,748	8,749,961	9,616,697	9,460,378	10,183,676	9,724,923	11,315,461	12,296,062	980,601	8.67%
Student & Operational Services	7,019,331	6,522,380	7,173,669	6,941,485	7,275,628	7,664,966	7,641,451	8,187,317	545,866	7.14%
Operations	1,217,704	1,083,561	1,266,949	1,251,054	1,305,358	1,121,184	30,381	10,054	(20,327)	-66.91%
Leadership & Administration	3,416,654	3,234,116	3,414,403	3,537,913	3,614,018	3,823,593	3,844,513	3,969,638	125,125	3.25%
COVID/One-time Grants	343,153	334,867	1,267,925	1,005,503	1,176,025	324,318	896,721	926,446	29,725	3.31%
Total	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,725	47,638,600	49,879,125	48,815,371	51,260,034	54,040,535	2,780,501	5.42%
Job Function										
Administrator	3,975,738	3,874,297	3,991,540	3,956,026	3,998,195	4,402,304	4,503,170	4,505,648	2,478	0.06%
Professional	33,494,911	32,324,208	35,166,548	34,774,616	36,314,040	35,396,538	38,322,134	40,996,939	2,674,805	6.98%
Secretarial/Clerical	1,565,284	1,487,137	1,619,760	1,526,479	1,593,815	1,540,016	1,673,566	1,712,000	38,434	2.30%
Other	5,749,958	5,336,116	6,256,397	6,230,472	6,532,331	6,334,182	5,365,969	5,458,485	92,516	1.72%
Stipends	728,594	546,482	868,482	723,585	860,744	780,867	815,195	787,463	(27,732)	-3.40%
Tutoring	560,000	335,940	560,000	427,423	580,000	361,464	580,000	580,000	-	0.00%
Total	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,727	47,638,600	49,879,125	48,815,371	51,260,034	54,040,535	2,780,501	5.42%
Funding Source										
General Fund	42,978,834	41,652,375	45,257,390	44,687,248	46,610,425	46,419,644	48,194,771	50,905,478	2,710,707	5.62%
Grants	984,695	973,646	1,892,670	1,851,295	2,019,203	1,109,024	1,731,000	1,914,572	183,572	10.60%
Revolving Funds	2,075,956	1,243,159	1,277,667	1,065,057	1,214,497	1,276,703	1,299,263	1,185,485	(113,778)	-8.78%
Other	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	10,000	35,000	35,000	-	0.00%
Total	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,727	47,638,600	49,879,125	48,815,371	51,260,034	54,040,535	2,780,501	5.42%

How does Belmont’s per pupil spending and programming compare to other districts?

Belmont tends to fall at the lower end of per pupil expenditure relative to comparable districts. This chart shows that when compared to DART districts (districts identified by the DESE as having comparable characteristics to Belmont), Belmont’s \$18,295 per pupil expenditure is the 4th lowest PPE in this group of districts and less than the Massachusetts state average of \$20,134.



What is the budget of each school?

The following charts show what is budgeted for each school, including salary and non-salary items, across departments to provide comprehensive programming for students. Under each school, staff is identified by department and by role.

BURBANK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-3				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	133,385	1.00	142,546
Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	60,882	1.00	62,410
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.00	194,267	2.00	204,956
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	3.00	304,766	2.00	201,048
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	14.00	1,396,914	9.00	910,662
Special Ed. Teachers	4.60	402,270	3.60	339,758
Art Teachers	1.25	132,527	0.50	39,631
Music Teachers	1.25	115,437	0.60	62,043
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	117,842	0.90	78,123
Reading Teacher	1.00	121,042	1.00	124,188
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	26.10	2,590,798	17.60	1,755,453
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	119,842	0.50	61,544
Psychologists	1.00	117,842	1.00	120,788
Nurses	1.00	109,857	1.00	112,603
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	347,541	2.50	294,935
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	2.75	92,967	2.75	92,576
Regular Ed. Aides	0.29	11,037	-	-
Special Ed. Aides	10.40	362,265	9.26	336,243
Library Aide	0.51	16,530	0.65	24,556
METCO Aide	0.93	31,520	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	14.88	514,319	12.66	453,375
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.80	49,640	1.31	37,128
Lunch Aides	2.07	34,236	2.04	33,075
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	3.87	83,876	3.35	70,203
TOTAL SALARY	49.86	3,730,801	38.11	2,778,922
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		5,431		441
Supplies		49,756		41,123
Other Expenses		1,500		1,500
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		56,687		43,064
GRAND TOTAL	49.86	3,787,488	38.11	2,821,986

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

BUTLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-3				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	131,325	1.00	138,531
Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	56,584	1.00	60,748
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.00	187,909	2.00	199,279
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	3.00	337,528	3.00	348,459
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	12.00	1,219,962	9.00	989,714
Special Ed. Teachers	4.80	460,724	3.80	414,647
Art Teachers	0.70	59,573	0.50	40,000
Music Teachers	0.95	98,341	0.60	62,604
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	101,676	0.70	72,897
Reading Teacher	2.00	229,570	2.10	246,825
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	24.45	2,507,374	19.70	2,175,146
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	85,410	0.50	61,544
Psychologists	1.00	68,911	1.00	73,658
Nurses	1.00	99,007	1.00	101,482
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	253,328	2.50	236,684
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	2.75	92,717	2.75	96,693
Regular Ed. Aides	-	-	0.92	34,403
Special Ed. Aides	7.43	250,491	7.34	260,593
Library Aide	0.28	10,962	0.42	15,950
METCO Aide	0.92	45,020	-	47,926
TOTAL AIDES	11.38	399,190	11.43	455,565
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.98	57,061	1.01	31,897
Lunch Aides	2.54	41,175	2.54	41,175
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	4.52	98,236	3.55	73,072
TOTAL SALARY	45.35	3,446,037	39.18	3,139,746
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		2,431		441
Supplies		39,218		41,051
Other Expenses		1,500		1,500
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		43,149		42,992
GRAND TOTAL	45.35	3,489,186	39.18	3,182,738

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

WELLINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES PRE K-3				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators (Including Pre-K)	2.60	308,279	2.60	316,202
Secretarial/Clerical	1.98	76,171	1.98	80,019
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	4.58	384,450	4.58	396,221
TEACHERS				
Preschool Teachers	5.80	600,190	5.80	629,695
Kindergarten Teachers	4.00	476,325	4.00	458,058
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	18.00	1,683,876	11.00	1,125,221
Special Ed. Teachers	5.00	482,906	5.00	508,499
Art Teachers	0.75	55,496	0.70	55,138
Music Teachers	1.85	182,399	1.50	137,857
Physical Education Teachers	1.54	150,765	1.00	111,999
Reading Teachers	3.00	350,852	3.46	416,710
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	39.94	3,982,809	32.46	3,443,177
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.40	146,340	1.00	116,522
Psychologists	1.48	157,035	1.00	109,067
Nurses	1.40	130,031	1.40	144,701
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	4.28	433,406	3.40	370,290
AIDES				
Preschool Aides	7.08	255,803	7.08	267,518
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	3.67	126,789	3.67	131,097
Regular Ed. Aides	-	-	0.92	27,165
Special Ed. Aides	15.85	549,213	14.98	540,637
Library Aide	1.07	37,176	0.70	26,366
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	27.67	968,981	27.35	992,783
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.37	39,520	1.37	34,279
Lunch Aides	2.50	40,500	2.50	40,500
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	3.87	80,020	3.87	74,779
TOTAL SALARY	80.34	5,849,666	71.66	5,277,250
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		5,431		441
Supplies		64,501		72,409
Other Expenses		2,000		2,000
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		71,932		74,850
GRAND TOTAL	80.34	5,921,598	71.66	5,352,100

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

WINN BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-3				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	138,006	1.00	142,546
Secretarial/Clerical	1.58	64,756	1.65	70,914
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.58	202,762	2.65	213,460
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	4.00	399,665	4.00	456,418
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	15.00	1,392,089	10.00	1,055,007
Special Ed. Teachers	4.60	446,041	3.80	392,979
Art Teachers	0.80	54,630	0.70	78,400
Music Teachers	1.25	90,710	0.10	11,200
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	101,676	0.80	83,310
Reading Teacher	1.50	170,636	1.50	181,568
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	28.15	2,655,447	20.90	2,258,882
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	111,568	1.00	115,200
Psychologists	1.00	117,842	1.00	120,788
Nurses	1.00	100,842	1.00	103,363
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	330,252	3.00	339,351
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	3.67	128,509	3.67	135,064
Regular Ed. Aides	-	-	-	-
Special Ed. Aides	13.95	474,316	11.07	326,423
Library Aide	0.74	26,894	0.72	26,961
METCO Aide	-	-	0.92	31,655
TOTAL AIDES	18.36	629,719	16.38	520,103
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.66	48,394	1.66	48,584
Lunch Aides	1.70	27,540	1.70	27,540
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	3.36	75,934	3.36	76,124
TOTAL SALARY	55.45	3,894,114	46.29	3,407,920
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		2,931		441
Supplies		49,614		53,276
Other Expenses		2,000		2,000
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		54,545		55,717
GRAND TOTAL	55.45	3,948,659	46.29	3,463,637

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

CHENERY UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES 4-6				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	2.00	251,120	2.00	260,714
Secretarial/Clerical	3.00	161,318	3.00	148,146
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	5.00	412,438	5.00	408,860
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	8.00	710,295	12.50	1,259,308
World Language Teachers	-	-	-	-
Math Teachers (includes Math Coaches)	8.00	778,557	12.00	1,177,696
Health Ed. Teachers	0.60	79,268	1.20	116,938
Science Teachers	7.00	641,901	11.00	1,050,707
Technology Ed. Teachers	0.60	49,703	1.00	64,143
Social Studies Teachers	7.00	689,406	11.50	1,164,337
Special Ed. Teachers	7.96	696,005	13.00	1,224,202
Art Teachers	2.60	274,410	3.00	351,909
Music Teachers	2.60	310,429	5.00	553,005
Physical Education Teachers	2.60	265,438	2.60	241,224
Reading Teachers	2.20	247,528	3.20	333,717
TOTAL TEACHERS	49.16	4,742,940	76.00	7,537,186
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	1.00	111,268	1.00	114,000
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	5.00	508,670	5.00	523,541
Psychologists	1.00	117,842	1.00	120,788
Nurses	1.00	109,268	2.00	228,222
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	8.00	847,048	9.00	986,551
AIDES				
Special Ed. Aides	18.00	617,737	17.20	558,939
Library Aide	1.00	31,316	1.00	36,579
METCO Aide	1.13	40,328	0.92	44,943
TOTAL AIDES	20.13	689,381	19.12	640,461
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	3.37	103,389	3.87	115,287
Lunch Aides	-	4,716	-	8,469
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	3.37	108,105	3.87	123,756
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	3,750	-	3,750
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	6,212	-	12,252
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	9,962	-	16,002
TOTAL SALARY	85.66	6,809,874	112.99	9,712,816
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		19,922		24,728
Supplies		77,045		123,199
Other Expenses		7,058		12,297
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		104,025		160,224
GRAND TOTAL	85.66	6,913,899	112.99	9,873,040

*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.

BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADES 7-8				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
<u>SALARY</u>	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	2.00	266,598	2.00	283,223
Secretarial/Clerical	3.00	112,394	3.00	123,758
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	5.00	378,992	5.00	406,981
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	6.00	588,061	6.00	592,006
World Language Teachers	5.00	574,528	7.80	909,658
Math Teachers (includes Math Coaches)	7.00	636,913	7.50	702,407
Health Ed. Teachers	2.00	186,728	2.00	226,521
Science Teachers	6.00	670,389	6.50	727,350
Technology Ed. Teachers	2.00	186,268	2.00	198,618
Social Studies Teachers	6.00	701,024	6.00	720,396
Special Ed. Teachers	8.00	799,808	7.20	753,722
Art Teachers	2.00	231,384	2.00	237,120
Music Teachers	1.70	181,072	2.70	300,570
Physical Education Teachers	2.00	237,684	2.00	243,576
Reading Teachers	-	-	1.00	80,000
TOTAL TEACHERS	47.70	4,993,859	52.70	5,691,944
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	111,728	3.00	358,398
Psychologists	1.32	113,719	1.80	169,851
Nurses	2.40	236,117	1.40	147,608
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	4.72	461,564	6.20	675,857
AIDES				
Special Ed. Aides	7.00	227,946	12.00	429,989
Library Aide	-	-	-	-
METCO Aide	-	-	1.13	41,341
TOTAL AIDES	7.00	227,946	13.13	471,330
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	-	-	-	-
Pianist	0.62	21,180	-	21,180
Lunch Aides	-	3,753	-	-
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	0.62	24,933	-	21,180
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	3,750	-	3,750
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	80,472	-	64,309
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	84,222	-	68,059
TOTAL SALARY	65.04	6,171,516	77.03	7,335,351
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		12,323		12,572
Supplies		89,298		92,495
Other Expenses		14,919		14,080
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		116,540		119,147
GRAND TOTAL	65.04	6,288,056	77.03	7,454,498

*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES 9-12				
	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	4.00	512,448	4.00	530,356
Secretarial/Clerical	3.00	170,833	3.00	172,189
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	7.00	683,281	7.00	702,545
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	12.80	1,355,260	12.20	1,158,229
World Language Teachers	10.20	1,032,183	7.20	842,664
Math Teachers	13.55	1,360,458	13.80	1,451,778
Health Ed. Teachers	2.36	226,709	2.50	240,403
Science Teachers	13.95	1,462,122	14.20	1,523,138
Technology Ed. Teachers	1.75	140,666	1.00	91,837
Social Studies Teachers	13.35	1,476,979	13.60	1,527,917
Special Ed. Teachers	9.30	1,015,396	13.10	1,360,834
Art Teachers	4.00	446,143	4.00	463,766
Music Teachers	1.90	239,799	3.10	373,617
Theater Arts Teachers	1.00	110,065	1.00	115,056
Physical Education Teachers	2.00	199,045	3.00	328,623
Transition Room Educators	1.00	116,992	1.00	119,860
Reading Teachers	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	87.16	9,181,817	89.70	9,597,722
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	9.00	876,673	9.80	1,020,096
Psychologists	1.83	220,270	2.03	242,026
Nurses	2.00	184,681	2.00	235,925
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	12.83	1,281,624	13.83	1,498,047
AIDES & SUPPORT STAFF				
Special Ed. Aides	5.89	198,838	5.89	210,828
Library Aide	1.00	36,433	1.00	37,079
Music Accompanist	0.63	19,535	0.63	19,535
Guidance Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	60,882	1.00	62,410
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	8.52	315,688	8.52	329,852
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	9.19	253,203	10.15	283,032
Campus Monitors	4.08	129,746	3.25	107,191
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	13.27	382,949	13.40	390,223
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	31,500	-	31,500
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	504,877	-	479,277
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	536,377	-	510,777
TOTAL SALARY	128.78	12,381,736	132.44	13,029,166
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		275,170	-	275,117
Supplies		365,096	-	381,070
Other Expenses		411,158	-	446,988
Tuition		-	-	-
Transportation		-	-	-
Sped Expenses		-	-	-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		1,051,424		1,103,175
GRAND TOTAL	128.78	13,433,160	132.44	14,132,341
*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.				



TOWN OF BELMONT
 OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
 455 CONCORD AVENUE
 BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

townadministrator@belmont-ma.gov

455 CONCORD AVENUE
 BELMONT, MA 02478
 PHONE (617) 993-2610
 FAX (617) 993-2611

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
 PATRICE GARVIN

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
 JENNIFER HEWITT

TO: Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator
FROM: Jennifer Hewitt, ATA/Finance Director
DATE: May 23, 2024
RE: Background Information on Three Warrant Articles

In advance of Segment B of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, the following information should provide some helpful context to inform the discussion on Articles 14, 18 and 19.

ARTICLE 14 – ESTABLISH EXPENDITURE LIMITATION FOR REVOLVING FUNDS

Belmont’s bylaws authorize 9 revolving funds. Those funds can retain specified revenues and spend them up to the ceiling established by Town Meeting via this article. If there is no available balance, spending cannot occur. The table below shows the FY2024 activity for the FY2024 revolving funds. Note that the Non-School Property Maintenance Fund is at its limit; staff will be requesting that the Select Board and Warrant Committee vote to increase the spending limit in an upcoming meeting.

Revolving Fund	Commission	FY24 Ceiling - Art. 14	6/30/2023	FY24, as of 3/31/24			Available to Spend Under Ceiling
			Beginning Balance	Receipts	Spending	Balance Available	
Senior Programs	Council on Aging	\$150,000	\$48,751.14	\$59,316.30	\$51,224.98	\$56,842.46	\$98,775.02
Art Gallery	Belmont Cultural Council	\$15,000	\$4,321.71	\$645.13	\$270.00	\$4,696.84	\$14,730.00
Rock Meadow Maint	Conservation Commission	\$15,000	\$17,070.28	\$9,230.00	\$5,745.26	\$20,555.02	\$9,254.74
Copying/Lost Books	Board of Library Trustees	\$15,000	\$7,012.15	\$4,665.65	\$9,204.22	\$2,473.58	\$5,795.78
Stormwater Improvements	Community Development	\$100,000	\$15,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$15,200.00	\$100,000.00
MLK Day Breakfast	Human Rights Commission	\$5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Non-School Prop. Maint. Fund	Recreation	\$60,000	\$28,687.33	\$50,478.00	\$58,327.31	\$20,838.02	\$1,672.69
Stormwater Consulting	Community Development	\$50,000	\$108.97	\$ -	\$ -	\$108.97	\$50,000.00
Combined Totals		\$410,000	\$121,151.58	\$124,335.08	\$124,771.77	\$120,714.89	\$280,228.23

ARTICLE 18 – UPDATES TO OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDING ACCOUNTING

We are bringing what we hope will be our last warrant article relating to the Opioid Settlement funds. As you may recall, the Town signed on to a statewide settlement agreement with Opioid manufacturers and distributors and will receive approximately \$922,500 over 18 years. There are some upfront payments, which will then level off into an average of \$50,000 per year. The agreement is very strict about how the funds may be spent, and we have to report annually on their use.

In Spring 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) recommended that we establish an Opioid Stabilization Fund, and dedicate settlement funds to it. Town Meeting approved that at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, and appropriated the \$107,020.37 received in FY2023 to the Stabilization Fund. Unfortunately, DOR did not recognize that appropriation as valid, so the \$107,020.37 was added to our Free Cash, and will need to be separated so we don't violate the settlement agreement.

In late 2023, state finance law changed to allow the settlement funds to be deposited into a special revenue fund where funds can be spent without further appropriation, subject to oversight by the chief executive. DOR recommends that we repeal the Opioid Stabilization Fund which requires ongoing Town Meeting appropriations, and can be difficult to manage for such a small amount of funding. In doing so, the special revenue fund will automatically apply, and the Town will be able to more nimbly meet its obligations under the settlement agreement.

Article 18 includes two motions for action by Town Meeting –

- A. Revoke the Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund created at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, and the funding dedication included in the language. This will eliminate the fund and establish the special revenue fund per state finance law.
- B. Appropriate the \$107,020.37 embedded in Free Cash to the Opioid Settlement Special Revenue Fund, thereby ensuring that the funds aren't spent on another purpose that isn't consistent with the settlement.

Note – Fall 2023 Special Town Meeting appropriated \$18,500 from FY2024 settlement receipts. That appropriation will be swept into the special revenue fund if the items above are approved.

ARTICLE 19 – ADOPT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS INSURANCE FUND

The insurance costs are increasing for everyone as the industry adapts to ever-increasing losses worldwide. The Town is not immune to this. One way to mitigate the increases is to adjust our deductibles, but only if the Town is prepared to pay the higher level. This request is forward-looking, with a goal of building up a fund balance and slowly increasing the annual deductible reserve appropriation. This will give the Town the option to increase deductibles in the future if deemed prudent.

This anticipates a three-step implementation –

1. Adopt MGL Ch. 40, section 13 to establish a Municipal Buildings Insurance Fund.

Here is the relevant text from [MGL Ch. 40:13](#) –

Section 13. A town which at a meeting, or a city which by its city council accepts this section, or has in like manner accepted corresponding provisions of earlier laws, may appropriate an amount not exceeding in any one year one twentieth of one per cent of its equalized valuation as defined in section one of chapter forty-four to establish and maintain a municipal buildings insurance fund from which any municipal buildings or other municipal property damaged or destroyed or lost by fire, lightning, vandalism, burglary, theft or otherwise, may be repaired, rebuilt or replaced by other buildings or property to be used in place thereof; but no money shall be appropriated for such purpose while the fund equals or exceeds one per cent of such equalized valuation.

2. Appropriate \$25,968.50 from the Insurance Proceeds special revenue fund into the Municipal Buildings Insurance Fund.

This amount is intended as seed funding to jump start the new fund. The Town Accountant is authorized to deposit insurance proceeds into a special revenue fund that departments then use to repair the insured vehicles, buildings or other town assets. Over the years, a small balance has built up, which would otherwise be transferred to the General Fund and be added to Free Cash at the end of the year.

3. Appropriate the FY2025 Deductible Reserve budget (\$31,793 within Article 24C) to the Municipal Buildings Insurance Fund established in #1. This same approach would be followed in future budgets. Any deductibles paid in FY2025 and beyond would be paid from the Municipal Buildings Insurance Fund, with any balance remaining with the fund and available to spend without further appropriation.

Historical Spending on Deductibles

FY	Budget	Payments	#	Remaining	% Used
FY2021	\$24,246	\$26,759	6	\$(2,513)	110%
FY2022	\$26,186	\$22,029	12	\$4,157	84%
FY2023	\$26,972	\$12,030	5	\$14,942	45%
FY2024	\$27,646	\$21,976	10	\$5,670	79%
FY2025	\$31,793				

Belmont Annual Town Meeting 2024

Report from the Community Preservation Committee

Index

CPC Introductory Letter.....pg. 3

Overview of CPA in Belmont.....pg. 4

FY 2025 CPA Project Summary.....pg. 7

FY 2025 Project Application Summaries.....pg. 8

Final Reports.....pg. 9

Progress Reports on Prior Year Projects.....pg. 12

Fund Balance.....pg. 32



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Elizabeth Harmer Dionne, Board of Parks Commissioners Appointee
 Vice-Chair: Margaret Velie, Conservation Commission Appointee
 Secretary: Juliet Jenkins, Select Board Appointee
 Carol Berberian, Planning Board Appointee
 Aaron Pikilingis, Select Board Appointee
 Anne Marie Mahoney, Select Board Appointee
 Jacqueline Appel, Historic District Commission Appointee
 Gloria Leipzig, Housing Authority Appointee
 David Lind, Recreation Commission Appointee

May 16, 2024

Dear Town Meeting Member,

The enclosed information summarizes the status of CPA projects previously approved by Town Meeting and describes the five (5) projects which Belmont's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is recommending to Town Meeting for funding under the State's Community Preservation Act (CPA) in FY2025. Detailed project descriptions and expense summaries for all Town Meeting approved projects can be found on the CPC webpage on the Town of Belmont website: <http://www.belmont-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee>. These applications constitute a binding commitment to the Town, and project sponsors cannot repurpose CPA funds or substantially deviate from their written applications without Town Meeting approval.

Town Meeting has the final vote on approving and appropriating funds for these recommended projects. According to CPA legislation, Town Meeting actions on CPC-recommended projects are limited to those listed below.

- Town Meeting may approve, reduce or reject recommended project funding amounts.
- Town Meeting may reserve all or part of the amount recommended for a specific project to the applicable reserve (open space/recreation, historic resources, community housing).
- Town Meeting may not increase the funding amounts recommended by the CPC or initiate appropriations from Belmont's Community Preservation Fund.

This is the eleventh year the CPC will make funding recommendations to Town Meeting, and we welcome your questions and suggestions. Please contact CPC Clerk Matt Haskell at mhaskell@belmont-ma.gov or call our hotline at (617) 993-2774. If you need a paper copy of this packet, please contact Matt Haskell (mhaskell@belmont-ma.gov) to receive one.

We look forward to discussing these recommendations with you at Town Meeting.

Elizabeth Harmer Dionne, Chair

Overview of the CPA in Belmont

Recommended Community Preservation Act Funding for FY2025

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is recommending five (5) projects for FY2025 funding. Described in the following pages, each of these projects was evaluated by the CPC in light of the articulated criteria for eligibility and appropriateness under the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The projects have been presented at a CPC public hearing held on November 8, 2023 and its regularly scheduled meeting on January 10, 2024; at the Select Board's regularly scheduled meetings on May 13 and 20, 2024; and at the Warrant Committee's regularly scheduled meeting on May 15, 2024. In addition, the five projects will be presented at the League of Women Voters Warrant Briefing.

Community Preservation Act

The CPA is a state statute which individual communities in the Commonwealth may choose to adopt. Belmont adopted the statute at the state election held November 2, 2010. CPA communities impose a surcharge on their own property taxes of up to 3%, and funds raised from the surcharge are restricted to use for projects in four categories: community housing, historic resources, open space and recreational land (as a subset of open space). To support expenditures in these areas, the state provides a partial match of the funds raised by the community surcharges.

Belmont elected a 1.5% surcharge on both residential and commercial taxpayers. Mindful of the burden on homeowners, however, the Town also adopted provisions which exempt the first \$100,000 of residential property values from the surcharge and grant a total exemption from the surcharge to lower-income residents who may apply for it through the Assessors Office. In FY2023, the annual surcharge averaged \$244.94 per Belmont single-family household. Belmont currently generates approximately \$1.8 million of CPA funding annually. CPA funds are restricted to their statutory uses and are not available to meet other needs or potential shortfalls in the Town's annual operating or capital budget.

The State CPA Trust Fund (which provides the match to towns that have adopted the CPA) is funded by registry of deed fees, which suffered as more communities adopted the CPA. In 2019 the state legislature approved an increase in certain registry fees to bolster the State CPA Trust Fund. However, lower levels of real estate activity have reduced fee revenues at the state's Registries of Deeds, such that the state Department of Revenue has given guidance that the proposed state match for FY2025 is 14.4% (typically paid in the November following the close of the Town's fiscal year on June 30).

In FY2023, Belmont's CPA surcharge generated **\$1,577,130**. The FY2023 match (generated based on prior year receipts) for Belmont was **\$567,936**. Total CPA funding received in 2023 was **\$2,270,801**. As noted in the official statistics maintained by the Community Preservation Coalition, the Town's receipts from the Trust Fund have ranged from a high of \$641,403 in 2021 (43.84% match) to a low of \$189,960 in 2018 (17.2% match). As noted above, the state match is

paid after the end of the state's fiscal year on June 30, so the Town actually receives and accounts for it during the subsequent fiscal year.

https://www.communitypreservation.org/cpc-report?report_src=bbzvidkqgla=dr&rid=183

Since inception, Belmont's CPA Fund has received **\$4,132,727** in state matching funds. The Town CPA surcharge has generated **\$14,043,899** through FY 2023. To date the Town's combined state and local CPA Fund receipts total **\$18,176,626**.

Community Preservation Committee

The CPA requires each adopting community to appoint a Community Preservation Committee. Belmont's CPC consists of nine members, of whom three are appointed by the Select Board as at-large members and six are appointed by the following boards and commissions:

1. the Conservation Commission,
2. the Historic District Commission,
3. the Housing Authority,
4. the Parks Commission (the Select Board in Belmont),
5. the Planning Board, and
6. the Recreation Commission.

All currently serving members are listed in the Introductory Letter on page 3 of this Report.

The CPC is responsible for reviewing applications for funding under the CPA and recommending to Town Meeting expenditures of CPA funds on those projects it approves each year. All recommendations to Town Meeting by the CPC are made within the framework of Belmont's **Community Preservation Plan**, which was originally approved by the CPC on August 14, 2013. Each summer the CPC updates the Community Preservation Plan for the following fiscal year, a process in which the public is welcome to participate. The Plan was last updated in August 2023, following Belmont's 2023 Annual Town Meeting. The most current version of the Plan is posted on the town website at:

<http://www.belmont-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee>

Each year's updated Community Preservation Plan reflects the CPC's experience in helping projects reach a successful conclusion and maximizing the benefits of CPA funding. As a result, the CPC is particularly focused on comprehensive, efficient long-term planning and leveraging CPA funds through state and federal grants. Questions posed to project applicants in the Preliminary and Final Application Forms (as set out in the Community Preservation Plan) promote high-quality projects that are thoughtfully integrated into the Town as a whole and which will maintain their value over time.

CPA funds have made a tremendous positive difference in the quality of life of Belmont's residents. Detailed charts beginning on pages 7, 13, 17, 21, and 25 of the CPA Plan list the many

Community Preservation Committee

projects previously funded by Town Meeting at the recommendation of the CPC. These projects include rebuilding the Underwood Pool; rebuilding of most of the Town's playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playing fields; ongoing culling of invasive species from open space; significant and ongoing restoration to the historic, municipal buildings in Town Center, the Police Station, the Benton Library, and Homer House; restoration of the Town Clock; preservation of municipal records; ongoing planning regarding preservation and expansion of the Town's community housing stock; and funding the significant design work and right-of-way easements necessary to access state and federal funding for Phases 1 and 2 of the Community Path.

With careful planning, construction schedules, and rigorous accounting of project turn-backs, there have been sufficient CPA funds for all CPC-recommended projects to date. However, prioritizing CPA expenditures will become necessary going forward, as the Town contemplates increasingly expensive projects.

This year, for the first time ever, the CPC asked the Town's Finance Director to create a five-year projection of anticipated CPA Fund expenses and revenues. We currently face a significant gap between the estimated cost of desired projects and our ability to fully fund them. The CPC does not have a formal policy for reserving CPA funds, but project sponsors may come forward to request such reservations as they anticipate significant financial need.

Town Meeting can authorize the CPC to spend up to 5% of the local surcharge for administrative costs, including funding studies or design work related to CPA-eligible projects. On June 30, 2022, Activitas, Inc., submitted a Recreational Studies Inventory funded by CPA administrative funds. This comprehensive study of the Town's playing fields and outdoor recreation facilities will guide recreation priorities and spending for years to come. In FY2024 the CPC awarded further funding to have this Inventory updated and expect that update to be made available before Fall of 2024.

<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee/pages/6-cpc-funded-studies>

The CPC also funded a similar conditions study with the Historic District Commission and Facilities Department, which will create an inventory of current and future CPA-eligible projects for the Town's historic assets. At this time that study encompasses only the Town Hall Complex (Town Hall, Homer Building, and School Administration Building). That study is also available at the above link. Further funding could be awarded for an additional historical conditions study for Belmont's other historic structures, including the historic elementary schools.

These two studies will be important tools for Belmont's Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (adopted by Town Meeting in April 2022), as it creates a master list of Belmont's capital needs. Careful stewardship of CPA funds can ensure preservation of current assets, while simultaneously facilitating valuable aspects of Belmont's future.

FY 2024 CPA Project Summary

<u>No.</u>	<u>Project Title</u>	<u>CPA Category</u>	<u>Project Sponsor</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>
1	Chenery Park Complex, Design and Engineering	Recreation	Brandon Fitts CTRS, CPRP, Director of Recreation, Friends of Chenery Park	\$300,000
2	Chenery Park Complex Funding	Recreation	Brandon Fitts CTRS, CPRP, Director of Recreation, Friends of Chenery Park	\$1,000,000
3	Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing	Community Housing	Belmont Housing Trust	\$275,000
4	Homer House Exterior Paint Project	Historic Preservation	Wendy Murphy, President Belmont Woman's Club	\$120,000
5	Belmont Community Path Phase I Right of Way Acquisition	Recreation	Glenn Clancy, Town Engineer	\$192,000
	TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED			\$1,887,000

TOWN OF BELMONT
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC)
FY2025 Recommended Projects to Town Meeting

Total FY2025 Requested Funding Amount: \$1,887,000

Open Space/ Recreation:

- Chenery Park Design and Engineering - \$300,000: This project will fund a conceptual design and engineering for the Chenery Parks complex. It will include public meetings, community engagement, and project design.
- Chenery Park Funding - \$1,000,000: This project will set aside funding for the Chenery Park Complex Construction phase. The estimated cost of this project is \$3,000,000. In anticipation of this high project cost the applicant would like to set aside funding in preparation for the project. It is assumed that the rest of the funding will be requested in the FY2026 funding cycle.
- Community Path Phase 1 – Right of Way Acquisition - \$192,000 – Off-Cycle: The goal of this request is to provide funds to secure temporarily or permanently easements require to construct the Belmont Community - Path Phase 1. This funding would make Belmont eligible for the MassTrails Grant program. The program limits awards to \$500,000 and requires a minimum community match of 20%. CPA funds in the amount of \$160,000 represents 25% of the estimated total of \$635,000. The total includes \$32,000 as a reserve that would be used if costs come in higher than anticipated, but would be returned to the fund more quickly if not needed.

Housing:

- Fund to Support New Affordable Housing - \$275,000: The purpose of this project is to create more affordable housing in town. The Housing Trust is establishing regular funding rounds for developers to apply for in order to create more affordable homes and/or more deeply affordable homes in new developments.

Historic:

- Homer House Exterior Paint Restoration - \$120,000: This project is necessary to preserve the integrity of the Homer House structure, to prevent interior water damage, and to prevent exterior rotting of the wood. This goal of this painting project is to restore the structure to its original condition and preserve the historic nature of the Homer House. The total includes \$21,000 as a bid reserve that would be used if bids come in higher than anticipated, but would be returned to the fund more quickly if not needed.

Further descriptions of each project are available in the Final CPC application on the Town website linked here: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee/pages/1-fy25-final-cpa-applications>

Final Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Tennis Court Expansion-Winn Brook School	
CPA Category:	Open Space/ Recreation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2022	\$190,000
 CPA Spending to Date:	 FY2022	 \$188,567
 Submission Date:	 May 3, 2024	

Project Description

The construction phase of this project will add a fifth tennis court to the existing four tennis courts at Winn Brook Elementary School.

Original Goals and Objectives

This project began with the evaluation of the community need to add a 5th and/or 6th tennis court to the existing tennis court structure at Winn Brook. After confirming the need the project moved into the design and engineering of the expansion. Finally, work was done to construct an additional court to the existing tennis court complex at Winn Brook Park.

Current Status

The project went out to bid in the Fall of 2021. Three companies submitted bids for the project. Per the public bid opening on January 27, 2022, for the Winn Brook Elementary School Tennis Court Renovations, Vermont Recreational Surfacing & Fencing, Inc. is the apparent low bidder at \$139,991.00. Add Alternate 1 (to install wind screening on the school side fencing) is \$2,815.00 and Add Alternate 2 (to resurface the existing court to match the new court surfacing) is \$14,500.00. The project began construction in June 2022 with a completion date of May 2023.

Final Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Town Field Playground & Court Restoration	
CPA Category:	Open Space/ Recreation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2021	\$680,624
	FY2023	\$343,409
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2021	\$680,624
	FY2023	\$239,800

Submission Date: **May 3, 2024**

Project Description

Town Field playground and courts are located at the intersection of Beech and Waverley Streets. It is a highly utilized recreational space for both children and adults and was in severe disrepair. The area being revitalized includes the previous Town Field playground, four pickleball courts, one basketball court, and the tennis wall. This project began in 2016 with conversations among neighbors and community members. We held several public meetings, worked closely with the DPW and Recreation Department, and privately raised \$27,000 to offset CPC and Town costs.

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to rehabilitate the Town Field playground and courts. Key components include improved safety, fun, and applicability to a wider audience (ages and abilities).

Current Status

Construction began in September of 2022 and was completed and final payment was made in December of 2023. The existing trees have been protected and are still standing, and additional landscaping (including shade trees) were planted during a weather-appropriate time after the construction had been completed.

Final Report for Town Meeting

Project: Restoration of Belmont's Historic Tower Clock
CPA Category: Historic Preservation
Original CPA Grant: FY2023 \$26,100
CPA Spending to Date: FY2023 \$20,321
Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description/ Original Goals and Objectives

The clock in the tower of the First Church in Belmont Unitarian Universalist was purchased at the direction of Town Meeting in 1889 and installed in the new church building in time for its dedication in 1890. At this time, the clock does not operate. The movement is totally serviceable. It is in need of overhaul and cleaning. In recent years, numerous Commonwealth municipalities have used CPA funds for work on religious buildings including their towers and clocks in the towers. This project provides funds for renovating the clock and installing electrically powered winding equipment.

Current Status

This project was completed in April of 2024 and a small group of committee members and Town officials completed a walkthrough on April 23, 2024.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: Payson Park Revitalization
CPA Category: Open Space/ Recreation
Original CPA Grant:

FY2022	\$ 35,000
FY2023	\$1,190,530

CPA Spending to Date:

FY2022	\$ 35,000
FY2023	\$ 984,447

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

This project is the 2nd phase of a two-phase plan in revitalizing Payson Park to improve safety and access. Working with the Department of Public Works, this 2nd phase seeks final design and construction administration costs to implement the design plan of the landscape architectural design firm, Activitas, Inc. This proposal will mainly keep the original design of the park with the replacement of all deteriorating features.

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this CPA project is to revitalize Payson Park for improved safety and access by repairing its grounds and replacing aging playground equipment to make it a vital, safe, fun place for multi-ages to enjoy. Replacing the stairwells and paving the pathways will make it accessible to all. It will be fully ADA compliant.

Current Status

The Payson Park project will be completed before July 2024. However, the Park will need to remain off-limits as the seeds will need uninterrupted time for growth to ensure a stable base for the grass. The timeline on the grass is partially weather dependent, but the consultant is optimistic to have the park reopened for October.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Assessment and Project Redevelopment of Sherman Gardens	
CPA Category:	Community Housing	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2018	\$173,200
	FY2023	\$400,000
	FY2024	\$400,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2018	\$157,181
	FY2023	\$ 65,749
	FY2024	\$ 0
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

This project seeks development funding to support the redevelopment and expansion of Sherman Gardens. There have been three CPA allocations for this purpose made in fiscal years 2018 (\$173,200), 2022 (\$400,000), and 2023 (\$400,000). These awards provided funding for consulting, feasibility analysis, architectural, and engineering work at Sherman Gardens. Predevelopment efforts are proceeding well, with a feasibility report prepared by Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) delivered to BHA in December 2022.

Original Goals and Objectives

These funds support design activities required for zoning approval, which will make the project shovel-ready. Both a zoning approval and the Town's ongoing financial commitment will enhance BHA's ability to leverage funding from other entities, such as Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities (EOHLC).

Current Status

An architect, Leonardi Aray, was originally selected to complete this feasibility study. The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) took over management of the Belmont Housing Authority in June 2020. In 2021, the CHA's Planning and Development team was also selected as development consultant to the BHA after the termination of their contract with Leonardi Aray. Since they began their engagement with the BHA, the CHA's Planning and Development team and one of the design teams they have under contract have been finalizing the Sherman Gardens feasibility study under an assumption to redevelop the existing buildings while increasing accessibility, maintaining neighborhood character, and increasing the number of units on site. As they finalize the feasibility scenarios, they are planning to engage Sherman Gardens residents and the BHA board to present their recommendations.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: Belmont Cemetery Preservation and Master Plan
CPA Category: Historic Preservation
Original CPA Grant: FY2023 \$60,000

CPA Spending to Date: FY2023 \$29,898

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

A qualified consulting firm will be hired to research, prepare and present a comprehensive preservation and restoration master plan with treatment recommendations. It is anticipated that implementation phase recommendation(s) could qualify for CPA funding in FY24 and beyond.

Original Goals and Objectives

To hire a qualified consulting firm to research, prepare and present a comprehensive preservation and restoration master plan with treatment recommendations consisting of both narrative and graphic elements for Belmont Cemetery. This would include the hardscape items as well as the landscape elements. One of the expected deliverables of the plan would be to develop a list of projects and activities, with associated timing and funding estimates, descriptions that would be grouped into phases for the DPW and the Cemetery Commission to implement using a variety of funding resources. The Belmont Cemetery is a fully functioning cemetery, comprised of 17 acres of land, historic wrought iron gates and fencing, gravestones, landscape elements.

Current Status

This project is being completed by Kyle Zick Landscaping Architecture, Inc. At this time, they have completed their historic research of the site, they have done base mapping of the area, and completed analysis on proper preservation of this historic site. They are currently working on preparing a report that can be used by the community to better understand the site as well as give preservation treatment recommendations and a list of projects for the Belmont Cemetery that should be undertaken.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Feasibility for the Redevelopment and Creation of New Affordable Housing Units at Belmont Village	
CPA Category:	Community Housing	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2021	\$173,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2021	\$88,433.38
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

Belmont Village is a 100-unit family state public housing property located in 25 four-unit residential buildings on approximately 9 acres, owned and managed by the Belmont Housing Authority (BHA). The intent of this project was to review the site's physical characteristics and zoning regulations, assessing neighborhood features that should be considered as part of the design, and producing site layout and massing options that meet stated goals for the redevelopment.

Original Goals and Objectives

Initial goals for this Redevelopment Feasibility Study are to:

1. Assess the opportunities for redevelopment of the existing 100 units for family/disabled households, improving livability, unit layout and functionality; optimizing space utilization and substantially improving energy and water efficiency. Options to maintain a portion of the existing buildings should also be considered.
2. Create new housing units, with the potential of adding new homeownership units.
3. Optimize the site by incorporating other uses that are complementary to the residential complex and contribute to the abutting area.
4. Provide common open space for community interaction.
5. Incorporate sustainable design principles and Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, to minimize operating costs and improve habitability.

Current Status

Since the 2021 award of CPA, the Belmont Village Feasibility Study has progressed towards a number of options for redevelopment, under the joint supervision of the BHA, its development consultant the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), and their design team. The design team is putting together a number of redevelopment and site layout scenarios to optimize the Belmont Village property, to fit in with the surrounding neighborhood character, and to provide improved programmed community and outdoor spaces for resident use. The design team has also procured a traffic study to understand the amount of traffic that the site roadways will be able to accommodate under a redevelopment scenario.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Benton Library Building Envelope Study	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2023	\$20,000
 CPA Spending to Date:	 FY2023	 \$ 6,000
 Submission Date:	 May 3, 2024	

Project Description

The Friends of the Benton Library is requesting funds to do a building envelope study of the Benton Library building. We care about this building and want to make sure it gets the care and attention it deserves. The Benton Library is located at 75 Oakley Road in Belmont, MA. The building is owned by the Town of Belmont and licensed for use as a library to the Friends of the Benton Library, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. The library is run by volunteers and supported by donations.

Original Goals and Objectives

The project goal is to identify and define the needs of the Benton Library building. Given that the chimney collapsed in February of 2022, we feel some urgency to make sure there aren't any other hidden problems. Ultimately, the objective will be to perform any necessary repairs.

Current Status

With the work on the Benton Library Chimney coming to completion, the vendor Building Conservation Associates (BCA) is now able to begin reviewing the remainder of the building. BCA will provide an exterior conditions assessment, treatment recommendations, identify priorities and phasing options for future project relating to the historic Benton Library building. BCA will also provide current estimates of probable costs for those projects.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: Benton Library Chimney Repair
CPA Category: Historic Preservation
Original CPA Grant: FY2023 \$150,000

CPA Spending to Date: FY2023 \$116,706

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

The Friends of the Benton Library, Inc. requested funds to rebuild the chimney and repair the Everett C. Benton Library building. The fieldstone chimney collapsed on February 10, 2022 causing some damage to the building. The Benton Library is located at 75 Oakley Road in Belmont, MA. The building is owned by the Town of Belmont and licensed for use as a library to the Friends of the Benton Library, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. The library is run by volunteers and supported by donations.

Original Goals and Objectives

The project includes rebuilding the chimney, an important part of the historical integrity of the building. It will repair roofing boards and shingles, install a new chimney liner, fix a rafter and some interior moulding, and rebuild the bulkhead door. The project also includes re-shingling the roof, removing the non-functioning and historically inappropriate ventilation fans, and possibly some additional repointing.

Current Status

The contractor Galvin and Sons Masonry was hired to complete this work. The work to repair the chimney and affected roof area is now complete and will undergo a final review before the final payment is issued to the contractor.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Clay Pit Pond: Preservation and Restoration of Vegetation	
CPA Category:	Open Space	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2020	\$20,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2020	\$12,597
Submission Date:	December 2, 2019	

Project Description

Restore the vegetative buffer on the banks of the pond by removing non-native vegetation per the Landscape Plan for historic Clay Pit Pond Park.

Original Goals and Objectives

The project proposes the preservation and restoration of the vegetation currently surrounding the Pond. Existing thickets at the perimeter of the waterway are dominated by nonnative and invasive vegetation which seasonally obscure much of the scenic value of the Pond. In addition to limiting viewing of the waterbody, the density of the vines and thicket preclude access to the waterbody by all but the most intrepid. Historic activities, such as fishing, if they exist at all, are limited to a few poorly defined openings in the vegetation. The implementation of the proposed restoration and management of the invasive and non native vegetation will restore the historic views and vistas incorporated into the original Underwood landscaping plans.

Current Status

This FY '20 project was to be conducted over three years. While treatment of non-native and invasive plants has begun, delays in the completion of the treatment program are attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as conflicts with work ongoing at the Belmont High School. An extension to the CPA grant to December 2023 was received.

The contractor conducted initial clearing and cutting of non-native and invasive woody plants, with a follow up treatment of hand pulling and herbicide application in the fall of 2021. Work is expected to continue in the upcoming year. Tasks include continued removal of vegetation, particularly on the school side of Clay Pit Pond, and the continued monitoring and treatment of regrowth on the Concord Avenue portion of the park.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: FY2019 Community Path Alexander Ave. Underpass
 FY2020 Community Path Phase 1B Design
 (Brighton St. to Clark St. bridge)
 FY2022 Community Path Right of Way Acquisition
 FY2023 Community Path Phase II – 25% Design
 FY2024 Community Path Phase I Design

CPA Category: Open Space/ Recreation

Year	Original CPA Grant	CPA Spending to Date
FY2019	\$400,000	\$378,860
FY2020	\$1,000,000	\$673,894
FY2022	\$200,000	\$200,000
FY2023	\$200,000	\$108,000
FY2024	\$335,868	\$335,868

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description/Original Goals and Objectives

As the Town of Belmont considers alternative modes of transportation, a pedestrian and bicycle connection along the MBTA rail corridor would serve as a vital connector to walking and biking routes in Town. The Alexander Avenue Underpass will provide a connection to and from the Community Path to the Winn Brook neighborhood and will serve middle and high school students looking to walk to campus.

Additionally, an underpass at this location will offer Winn Brook residents a more direct option to walk and bike to the Underwood Pool, Belmont Memorial Library, US Post Office, and the Intergenerational Path at Clay Pit Pond. The addition of a bicycle and pedestrian rail crossing at this location will help reduce parking along Concord Avenue and, more importantly, traffic at the historical bridge in Belmont Center.

Finally, construction of a pedestrian and bicycle connection near Alexander Avenue and Belmont High School was also identified as a specific recommendation in the 2010-2020 Belmont Comprehensive Plan.

Current Status

The path is programmed for construction in FY2026 and will be paid for under the state and federal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Though construction costs are covered, any cost for design or to acquire the use of private property, both temporarily or permanently, is the responsibility of the municipality receiving the TIP funding. The Community Path has utilized CPA funding and leveraged state grants to try to ease the burdens of these costs.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Digitizing Belmont's Town Meeting Records	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2017	\$85,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2017	\$57,406
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

Scanning and digitizing Town Meeting records and transcripts from 1859 to present; indexing to permit easy search of Town Meeting actions. Indexing fields into database system (existing software as used for Vital Records digitization project). Application of Optical Character Recognition.

Original Goals and Objectives

The primary goal for this project is to digitize the images of the Town Meeting and Annual Report documents from their many forms, and index them topically into the existing PaperVision database software the Town Clerk's office licenses for managing our vital records, our first CPA project. Indexing by topic will make them accessible and usable to the Town Clerk's staff utilizing the existing database software, cutting the research time certainly, but more importantly, it will allow the staff to obtain a complete picture of all the transactions or items involving that topic, instead of a lucky subset.

A future phase of this project could make the index and/or images of documents available to the general public via the internet so individuals can conduct some level of the research of public documents themselves.

Current Status

We continue to obtain, unearth and scan permanent and valuable records of the Town of Belmont dating back to 1855, even before Belmont even became a Town. We believe we're nearing completion of this effort however we know there is still a bit to go and hope to complete the work by mid-2023. COVID definitely impacted our ability to perform proper indexing of all of the documents; that's an effort that remains. We have completed Town Meeting transcripts and our most fragile collection of Annual Reports.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Conservation Fund	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2024	\$200,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2024	\$ 0

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

The Conservation Commission has evaluated the CPA programs in neighboring Towns and believes that a successful acquisition of Open Space is dependent on having a ready source of funds to initiate a transaction. This fund will provide such a source and allow the CPA to engage in the acquisition of Open Space for the Town.

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this fund is to provide a dedicated account as a source of readily accessible funds to be used to facilitate the purchase of Open Space and/or deed restrictions for allowable CPA Act purposes.

About 20% of Belmont is Open Space, with about half of that protected from development. In 2010 Belmont was number 18 out of the 351 municipalities in Massachusetts in terms of density. To date, the CPA funds have not expended any monies towards the purchase of Open Space in the Town of Belmont. A desire to protect more Open Space was one reason the town adopted the CPA in 2010. The creation of this fund will allow the Town to react quickly to opportunities to expand open space in Town.

The Conservation Commission has evaluated the CPA programs in neighboring towns, and believes that a successful acquisition of Open Space is dependent on having a ready source of funds to initiate a transaction. This fund will provide such a source, and allow the CPA to engage in the acquisition of Open Space for the Town.

Current Status

There has been no draw on the Conservation Fund at this time.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing		
CPA Category:	Community Housing		
Original CPA Grant:	FY2022	\$250,000	
	FY2024	\$250,000	
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2022	\$	0
	FY2024	\$	0
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024		

Project Description

The purpose of this project is to develop or support affordable housing within the Town by subsidizing the creation of additional affordable units in housing construction projects. This project builds on the \$250,000 in CPA funds Town Meeting approved in 2021 for the same purpose. The funds will be expended at the discretion of the Housing Trust under terms of a grant agreement signed Spring 2022 by the Town of Belmont, the Community Preservation Committee, and the Housing Trust.

Original Goals and Objectives

Ensure that Belmont increases affordable and mixed income housing when new development happens, particularly in the new multifamily zones that are required by state law for all 175 MBTA communities. Invest in affordable housing to lower the rents more than can be done through zoning alone. Work with affordable housing developers to leverage local funding to obtain state funding so that housing developments have more homes with rents that are affordable to households with low incomes. Fund pre-development work to determine if sites are suitable for community housing development.

Current Status

There has been no draw on this fund at this time. The Town is in consultation with their legal counsel to confirm the terms of the agreement on the usage of these funds match what was approved under the CPA application voted by Town Meeting.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction	
CPA Category:	Open Space/ Recreation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2023	\$ 40,000
	FY2024	\$941,935
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2023	\$ 38,563
	FY2024	\$652,537
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

This project will implement the conceptual design conducted in FY2023 through a \$40,000 CPA fund appropriation to rehabilitate the baseball fields and basketball court. It will rebuild and replant the grass playing fields, which require reconstruction every 20-25 years and are currently dangerous for players. It will also reconstruct the basketball court, which is beyond repair. Finally, it will address ongoing drainage issues to protect work done in the rest of the park.

Original Goals and Objectives

This project will address issues with the court and fields that are used by hundreds of residents weekly. This project will address the CPC goal of preserving the Town's precious assets. This project would address issues identified in previous work at the Grove Street Park.

Current Status

The Grove Street project is almost complete and has an expected completion date of mid-June. Some of the park will need to remain off-limits at that time to allow for grass growth, but the basketball courts and walking path will be accessible.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: Library Historic Objects Preservation Plan
CPA Category: Historic Preservation
Original CPA Grant: FY2024 \$86,787
CPA Spending to Date: FY2024 \$3,480
Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

Key artifacts will be removed, renovated, and/or repaired as needed, stored, and then reinstalled in the new library building.

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to protect, preserve, restore, and reinstall specific historic artifacts that are currently housed in the Belmont Public Library building.

The Trustees wish to bring the past forward into the new library building. Each of the artifacts included in this proposal represent a unique and special tie to the history of our Town.

Current Status

The stained glass windows, bronze relief plaques, and Veterans' Memorial plaques have been removed and are being stored while the new Library building is being built.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: PQ Basketball Court Replacement
CPA Category: Open Space/ Recreation
Original CPA Grant: FY2024 \$124,592

CPA Spending to Date: FY2024 \$108,114

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

This court at PQ Park is a critical piece of infrastructure within the Town's parks system. Replacing it in-kind and making it playable will allow many residents to enjoy the sport. Parts of the court are torn up and are dangerous to play on. The plan is to combine the design and engineering and construction into one phase, since the court will be replaced as-is. This project is identified as a need in the Activitas Inventory and Assessment document.

Original Goals and Objectives

This project will address issues with the basketball court and the CPC Plan goal of preserving Town assets. The PQ basketball court is in need of replacement. It was the only aspect of the original renovation of the park that wasn't included in the construction. Parts of the court are torn up and are dangerous to play on. This project will seek to replace the current basketball court in-kind. The hope is to combine the design and engineering and construction into one phase since the court will be replaced as is. This project is also identified as a need in the Inventory and Assessment document.

Current Status

This project is expected to wrap up in mid-June with the courts being immediately available following the completion of the work.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	School Admin Building Roof Restoration		
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation		
Original CPA Grant:	FY2024	\$200,000	
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2024	\$	0
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024		

Project Description

The project is to design and construct repairs to the roof of the Belmont School Administration Building to stop active leaks and ongoing water damage. The building is located at 644 Pleasant Street and is owned by the Town of Belmont.

Original Goals and Objectives

The Belmont Historic District Commission has identified the School Administration building as one of Belmont's most important Town-owned assets. This classical revival building, constructed in 1902, was originally the Underwood Library and now houses administrative offices for the Belmont Public Schools. It is part of the Town Hall complex which comprises a number of important Town-owned historic buildings which together are a character-defining feature of the town. The building also lies within the Pleasant Street Historic District. Using CPA administrative funds, the committee commissioned a conditions assessment of all three buildings in the Town Hall Complex. The leaking roof of the School Administration Building was identified as the most urgent repair work among the three buildings.

Current Status

Spencer Conservation Group has been contracted to design, bid, and oversee construction for this project.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Town Hall Retaining Wall		
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation		
Original CPA Grant:	FY2024	\$	160,000
 CPA Spending to Date:	 FY2024	 \$	 0
 Submission Date:	 May 3, 2024		

Project Description

The existing retaining wall that supports the driveway up to the historic front doors of the Town Hall has failed. The granite stones have given way. Facilities has secured the wall so it does not get worse before the project can take place.

Original Goals and Objectives

This funding will be used to support the Town to hire an engineer to analyze and design a new wall. The hired firm will need to determine if water coming off of the Town Hall is causing the deterioration and if so will have to come up with a plan to mitigate that. Soils should be analyzed as part of this process to make sure that they are still structurally sound. Once the design is complete an additional CPA Application will be presented for funding to repair/replace the retaining wall as well as any mitigation work necessary to ensure the new wall's longevity.

The retaining wall has direct impact on the integrity of the Town Hall building and its foundation. This makes identifying the root cause of the collapse of the retaining wall a high priority for the Town and its maintenance of its buildings.

Current Status

This funding has not been drawn upon at this time. The project is expected to be put out to bid over the summer.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Homer House Window Restoration	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2021	\$100,000
	FY2024	\$ 31,500
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2021	\$ 67,057
	FY2024	\$ 31,500
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

Restoration and repair of 43 windows in the historic 1853 Homer House, located at 661 Pleasant Street, Belmont. It was determined that the existing window frames on the third floor were unstable, due to significant rot. Additional funding was awarded for the placement of scaffolding around the building in order to remove the rot and replace pieces of the window frames as needed.

Original Goals and Objectives

Restore and repair 43 windows to functionality, safety and beauty. The windows in the Homer House have never been repaired and were in dire need of restoration. Most were inoperable; many had broken glass and/or broken mechanical parts that prevented the windows from being opened. This made it impossible for the house to be ventilated, which contributed to the risk of mold and made it unsafe for use by the public and renters.

Current Status

The contractor, Window Woman, is restoring the windows in phases. Seven windows were removed during the first round and were repaired and reinstalled several months later. Three additional windows have since been removed and brought to the Window Woman workshop for repair. These are two from the third floor and one from the second floor. The third-floor windows require rebuilding, which is a more extensive process compared to the repair of most other windows. These three have not yet been reinstalled. This was all further delayed by the rot on the third-floor window frames. At this time the third-floor window frames have been restored and the window restoration project can continue.

It should be noted that the entire process in total will take several years given the time-consuming nature of the work. The Woman's Club will need an extension of the current CPA grant schedule when it nears expiration.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Preserving Belmont's Original Vital Records	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2017	\$80,000
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2017	\$22,135
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

Conservation of the original vital records of births, deaths and marriages in Belmont that was started as one component of our FY13 CPA project to digitize and preserve the original vital records

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is conservation of the original vital records of births, deaths and marriages in Belmont that was started as one component of our FY13 CPA project to digitize and preserve the original vital records.

The Town Clerk is responsible for creating and archiving the records of the Town since its incorporation in 1859, including, but not limited to, vital records of births, deaths and marriages. Vital records are created and recorded daily by the Town Clerk's staff. The proper preservation of and access to these fragile original records is a major thrust for the Dept of Public Health for the Commonwealth as well as every town and city in the Commonwealth. The Belmont archive is the only source for these documents from 1859 to 1930, after which the Commonwealth Registry of Vital Records and Statistics was created and now stores a paper copy, but has not made electronic scans. The job of preserving and scanning has fallen to the individual Towns in the Commonwealth. We must preserve and conserve these individual vital record documents (birth certificates, death certificates, marriage certificates) to halt further degradation of the paper documents in addition to making digitizing them (our original FY13 CPA project).

Current Status

We continue to select books of vital records to have preserved and bound adhering to the standards and priorities of the Conservation Survey performed by Northeast Document Conservation Center. Unfortunately, during COVID our priorities had to shift in order to continue to provide full level of service to the demands of 2020, 2021, and 2022 Federal, State and Local Elections, Town Meetings and routine Town Clerk requirements and reinventing our processes. This has kept us from fulfilling the goals indicated in our application.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project: Rock Meadow: Habitat Preservation Control of
 Non-native & Invasive Vegetation
CPA Category: Open Space/ Recreation
Original CPA Grant: FY2020 \$25,400

CPA Spending to Date: FY2020 \$14,815

Submission Date: May 3, 2024

Project Description

The proposal consisted of a multiyear program of land management and treatment of non-native and invasive plant species at Rock Meadow.

Original Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to preserve the valuable and unique grasslands and woodlands within Rock Meadow, through the reduction and elimination of targeted noxious weeds. The work is a component of the Rock Meadow Conservation Master Plan, prepared by the Conway School and the Conservation Commission in 2018, and is currently being implemented by a professional land manager, trained in the selective application of various control techniques.

Current Status

Work, to date, remains incomplete. The pandemic initially caused delays with the contractor's ability to provide contracted services, and recent delays have been at the Commission's request. Control of the Black Swallowwort infestation has been complicated, and the Commission has asked the contractor to provide additional treatment options for the completion of the grant. Work is expected to begin again this spring and summer.

Progress Report for Town Meeting

Project:	Town Hall Slate Roof Restoration	
CPA Category:	Historic Preservation	
Original CPA Grant:	FY2020	\$100,000
	FY2023	\$266,300
CPA Spending to Date:	FY2020	\$100,000
	FY2023	\$68,250
Submission Date:	May 3, 2024	

Project Description

Survey and quantify all the slate roof deficiencies on Town Hall. Develop a specification and bid out the project to qualified bidders to make all the necessary repairs.

Original Goals and Objectives

To preserve the buildings' structure and maintain the integrity of the interior.

Current Status

The project went out to bid spring of 2022 where there was only one bidder and the amount was double the allowed budget. An off-cycle request at Special Town Meeting took place in the fall of 2022. An additional \$266,300 was awarded and added to the budget but it was too late to rebid. Facilities re-bid the roof project in the spring of 2023 where a number of bidders participated. The winning bid came in at \$147,250. The project is mostly completed at this time and will most likely close out in the fall of 2024.

Community Preservation Fund Balances

	Open Space	Historic Resources	Community Housing	Unbudgeted Reserves	Undesignated Fund Balance	Total CPA Funds
1 FY2023 Year-end Balance	\$ 211,928	\$ 170,289	\$ 292,127	\$ -	\$ 3,508,556	\$ 4,182,899
2 FY2024 Estimated Revenue	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 410,029	\$ 1,835,029
3 FY2024 Anticipated Turnbacks	\$ 58,000				\$ 47,043	\$ 105,043
FY2024 Total Revenue	\$ 208,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 457,072	\$ 1,940,072
2023 Annual Town Meeting (FY2024 Projects):						
4 Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction					\$ (941,935)	\$ (941,935)
5 Predevelopment Planning for Rejuvenation of Sherman Gardens					\$ (400,000)	\$ (400,000)
6 Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing			\$ (140,000)		\$ (110,000)	\$ (250,000)
7 Conservation Fund	\$ (140,000)				\$ (60,000)	\$ (200,000)
8 PQ Basketball Court Replacement - In Kind					\$ (124,592)	\$ (124,592)
9 Historical Object Preservation Plan - Belmont Public Library		\$ (86,787)				\$ (86,787)
10 Off-Cycle Final Application - Belmont Woman's Club Request		\$ (31,500)				\$ (31,500)
11 Administrative Expenses				\$ (75,000)		\$ (75,000)
12 TOTAL FY2024 Approved Projects at 2023 ATM	\$ (140,000)	\$ (118,287)	\$ (140,000)	\$ (75,000)	\$ (1,636,527)	\$ (2,109,814)
Fall 2023 STM (FY2024 Projects):						
13 Community Path Phase 1 Design					\$ (335,868)	\$ (335,868)
14 Town Hall Retaining Wall					\$ (160,000)	\$ (160,000)
15 School Administration Building Roof Restoration					\$ (200,000)	\$ (200,000)
16 TOTAL FY2024 Approved Projects at 2023 STM	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (695,868)	\$ (695,868)
Grand Total FY2024 Projects	\$ (140,000)	\$ (118,287)	\$ (140,000)	\$ (75,000)	\$ (2,332,395)	\$ (2,805,682)
17 Available Balance (Projected as of 6/30/2024)	\$ 279,928	\$ 202,002	\$ 302,127	\$ 900,000	\$ 1,633,232	\$ 3,317,289
18 FY2025 Revenue Estimate (\$200k State match)	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000
Proposed FY2025 Projects:						
19 Community Path Right of Way Acquisition				\$ (192,000)		\$ (192,000)
20 Chenery Park Design & Engineering				\$ (300,000)		\$ (300,000)
21 Chenery Park Funding	\$ (479,927)			\$ (520,073)		\$ (1,000,000)
22 Fund to Support New Affordable Housing			\$ (275,000)			\$ (275,000)
23 Homer House Paint Restoration		\$ (120,000)				\$ (120,000)
24						
25 Administrative Budget				\$ (100,000)		\$ (100,000)
26 TOTAL 2024 ATM Proposed Projects (FY2025 Projects)	\$ (479,927)	\$ (120,000)	\$ (275,000)	\$ (1,112,073)	\$ -	\$ (1,987,000)
27 Projected Remaining Balance for FY2025	\$ -	\$ 282,002	\$ 227,127	\$ 287,927	\$ 2,533,232	\$ 3,330,289

Community Preservation Fund Balances

	Open Space	Historic Resources	Community Housing	Unbudgeted Reserves	Undesignated Fund Balance	Total CPA Funds
1 FY2023 Year-end Balance	\$ 211,928	\$ 170,289	\$ 292,127	\$ -	\$ 3,508,556	\$ 4,182,899
2 FY2024 Estimated Revenue	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 410,029	\$ 1,835,029
3 FY2024 Anticipated Turnbacks	\$ 58,000				\$ 47,043	\$ 105,043
FY2024 Total Revenue	\$ 208,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 975,000	\$ 457,072	\$ 1,940,072
2023 Annual Town Meeting (FY2024 Projects):						
4 Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction					\$ (941,935)	\$ (941,935)
5 Predevelopment Planning for Rejuvenation of Sherman Gardens					\$ (400,000)	\$ (400,000)
6 Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing			\$ (140,000)		\$ (110,000)	\$ (250,000)
7 Conservation Fund	\$ (140,000)				\$ (60,000)	\$ (200,000)
8 PQ Basketball Court Replacement - In Kind					\$ (124,592)	\$ (124,592)
9 Historical Object Preservation Plan - Belmont Public Library		\$ (86,787)				\$ (86,787)
10 Off-Cycle Final Application - Belmont Woman's Club Request		\$ (31,500)				\$ (31,500)
11 Administrative Expenses				\$ (75,000)		\$ (75,000)
12 TOTAL FY2024 Approved Projects at 2023 ATM	\$ (140,000)	\$ (118,287)	\$ (140,000)	\$ (75,000)	\$ (1,636,527)	\$ (2,109,814)
Fall 2023 STM (FY2024 Projects):						
13 Community Path Phase 1 Design					\$ (335,868)	\$ (335,868)
14 Town Hall Retaining Wall					\$ (160,000)	\$ (160,000)
15 School Administration Building Roof Restoration					\$ (200,000)	\$ (200,000)
16 TOTAL FY2024 Approved Projects at 2023 STM	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (695,868)	\$ (695,868)
Grand Total FY2024 Projects	\$ (140,000)	\$ (118,287)	\$ (140,000)	\$ (75,000)	\$ (2,332,395)	\$ (2,805,682)
17 Available Balance (Projected as of 6/30/2024)	\$ 279,928	\$ 202,002	\$ 302,127	\$ 900,000	\$ 1,633,232	\$ 3,317,289
18 FY2025 Revenue Estimate (\$200k State match)	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000
Proposed FY2025 Projects:						
19 Community Path Right of Way Acquisition				\$ (192,000)		\$ (192,000)
20 Chenery Park Design & Engineering				\$ (300,000)		\$ (300,000)
21 Chenery Park Funding	\$ (479,927)			\$ (520,073)		\$ (1,000,000)
22 Fund to Support New Affordable Housing			\$ (275,000)			\$ (275,000)
23 Homer House Paint Restoration		\$ (120,000)				\$ (120,000)
24						
25 Administrative Budget				\$ (100,000)		\$ (100,000)
26 TOTAL 2024 ATM Proposed Projects (FY2025 Projects)	\$ (479,927)	\$ (120,000)	\$ (275,000)	\$ (1,112,073)	\$ -	\$ (1,987,000)
27 Projected Remaining Balance for FY2025	\$ -	\$ 282,002	\$ 227,127	\$ 287,927	\$ 2,533,232	\$ 3,330,289



Town of Belmont - FY2025-29 CPA Project Summary

Total Estimated Requests

CPA Requestor	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
Total Recreation/DPW CPA	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 3,900,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 5,750,000	\$14,050,000
Total Engineering CPA	\$ 192,000	\$ —	\$ 500,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 692,000
Total Public Facilities CPA	\$ 275,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 150,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 3,825,000
Total Outside Groups CPA	\$ 120,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ —	\$ 2,720,000
Grand Total	\$ 1,887,000	\$ 4,550,000	\$ 6,950,000	\$ 1,050,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 5,750,000	\$21,287,000

Individual Requests

Recreation / Department of Public Works - Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects

Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
Rec-CPA-01	Chenery Fields	\$1,300,000	\$2,000,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$3,300,000
Rec-CPA-02	PQ Field Renewal	\$ —	\$ 200,000	\$2,000,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$2,200,000
Rec-CPA-03	Harris Field Renewal	\$ —	\$ —	\$1,600,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$1,600,000
Rec-CPA-04	Underwood Hill Renewal	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 100,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000
Rec-CPA-05	Grove St. Lower Field/Playground	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 100,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000
Rec-CPA-06	West of Harris Field	\$ —	\$ 200,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$1,250,000	\$1,450,000
Rec-CPA-07	Town Field Renewal	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 100,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000
Rec-CPA-08	Winn Brook Fields Renewal	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 150,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,650,000
Rec-CPA-09	High School Tennis Courts	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 300,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 300,000
Rec-CPA-10	Belmont Cemetery	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 250,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 250,000
Total Recreation/DPW CPA		\$1,300,000	\$2,400,000	\$3,900,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 450,000	\$5,750,000	\$14,050,000



Town of Belmont - FY2025-29 CPA Project Summary

Individual Requests Continued...

Engineering Division - Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects

Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
Eng-CPA-01	Community Path - Phase 1 - Right of Way Acquisition	\$ 192,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 192,000
Eng-CPA-02	Community Path - Phase 2 Placeholder	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 500,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 500,000
Total Engineering CPA		\$ 192,000	\$ —	\$ 500,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 692,000

Department of Public Facilities - Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects

Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
Fac-CPA-01	Town Hall Historic Study Implementation	\$ —	\$1,500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$2,000,000
Fac-CPA-02	Homer Building Restoration	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 550,000	\$ 150,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 700,000
Fac-CPA-03	Historic School Building Repairs	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 850,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 850,000
Fac-CPA-04	Housing Trust Funding	\$ 275,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 275,000
Total Public Facilities CPA		\$ 275,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,900,000	\$ 150,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$3,825,000

Outside Group Requests - Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects

Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
OUT-CPA-01	Homer House Exterior Paint Restoration	\$ 120,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 120,000
OUT-CPA-02	Sherman Gardens Phase 1	\$ —	\$ 650,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 650,000
OUT-CPA-03	Sherman Gardens Phase 2	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 650,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 650,000
OUT-CPA-04	Belmont Village	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ —	\$1,300,000
Total Outside Group CPA Requests		\$ 120,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ —	\$2,720,000

CPA 5-Year Expense Projection

CPA Requestor	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD	Total
Total Recreation/DPW CPA	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 3,900,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 5,750,000	\$ 14,050,000
Total Engineering CPA	\$ 192,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 692,000
Total Public Facilities CPA	\$ 275,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,825,000
Total Outside Groups CPA	\$ 120,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	\$ -	\$ 2,720,000
Administrative Budget	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000
Grand Total	\$ 1,987,000	\$ 4,650,000	\$ 7,050,000	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 5,750,000	\$ 21,787,000

CPA 5-Year Revenue Estimate vs. Projected Expenses

	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	TBD
Available Balance	\$ 3,330,289	\$ 3,343,289	\$ 738,289	\$ (4,220,586)	\$ (3,232,183)	\$ (2,245,320)
Estimated Revenue	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 1,845,000	\$ 1,891,125	\$ 1,938,403	\$ 1,986,863	\$ 2,036,535
Estimated State Match	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000
Project Turnbacks	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Expenses	\$ (1,987,000)	\$ (4,650,000)	\$ (7,050,000)	\$ (1,150,000)	\$ (1,200,000)	\$ (5,750,000)
Remaining	\$ 3,343,289	\$ 738,289	\$ (4,220,586)	\$ (3,232,183)	\$ (2,245,320)	\$ (5,758,785)