



MODERATOR'S MESSAGE ON TOWN MEETING PROCEDURES

Belmont's Town Meetings are conducted in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, our Representative Town Meeting statute, the General Bylaws, and traditional customs and practices that we have followed for many years, with guidance provided by the principles and rules of conduct in *Town Meeting Time, a Handbook of Parliamentary law*. Several matters of procedure are summarized below.

- An **article** in the Warrant provides notice to the Town Meeting of a matter to be considered. The article itself is not a specific proposal for action. A **motion** is a proposal for action by the Town Meeting and must be within the scope of the notice provided by an article in the Warrant. An article may not be amended but a motion may be amended by vote of the Town Meeting.
- Formal seconding will not be required on **main motions** under articles in the warrant. Seconding will be required on all other motions.
- All **main motions and proposed amendments** involving the expenditure of money must be in writing. All other motions and proposed amendments must also be in writing unless they are brief and simple as to be easily understood when stated orally.
- All substantive amendments and motions to be offered under an article in the Warrant must be submitted to the Town Clerk in writing not later than the close of business on the third (3rd) business day before the commencement of the session at which the Article is considered, in order to provide sufficient time for review by Town Counsel and the Moderator and to be made available for distribution to the Town Meeting Members before the commencement of such session. The Moderator may allow exceptions to the advance filing requirement in case of motions that are easy to understand, but such exceptions are within the exclusive discretion of the Moderator.
- Except for motions involving the expenditure of money or Bylaw amendments, the Moderator will first recognize the maker of the motion, if he or she wishes to speak.
- Before commencing discussion on motions involving the expenditure of money or Bylaw amendments, the Moderator will first call for committee reports as follows:
 - **Expenditure of Money** – Warrant Committee,
 - **Capital Improvements** – Warrant Committee, then Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee,
 - **General Bylaw amendments** – Bylaw Review Committee,
 - **Zoning Bylaw amendments** – Planning Board.
- Town Meeting Members wishing to speak should come to a microphone. When recognized by the Moderator, the Member should state his or her name and precinct number before commencing.

- Registered voters of the Town who are not Town Meeting Members may speak at the Town Meeting under special circumstances, but must seek permission of the Moderator in advance of the Meeting.
- Persons who are not Town Meeting Members may be admitted to the floor by invitation **but may not vote.**
- All discussion must be relevant to a motion before the town meeting. All speakers must address the Moderator; questions may be asked only through the Moderator. Speakers are limited to an initial question and one follow-up question. A Town Meeting Member who wishes to make a motion that is debatable must first make the motion and, after it is seconded, if required, the Moderator will recognize the maker of the motion to speak to it. The Moderator will not recognize a motion made at the conclusion of a speech. This, by definition, includes a motion that would terminate debate, such as a motion for the previous question.
- The Moderator will try to recognize Town Meeting Members in the order in which they come to the microphones. While our General Bylaws do not set a time limit for Town Meeting Members when speaking for the first time, the Moderator has established a limit of three minutes. Unless the Town Meeting consents no person may speak more than twice upon any question, except to correct an error or to make an explanation of a previous statement. No person should seek recognition to speak for a second time until others who have not yet spoken have had an opportunity to be recognized.
- Section 30-115 (F) of our General Bylaws requires that all votes shall be taken in the first instance by electronic roll call vote, except those motions that are privileged, subsidiary, incidental or non-binding,
- Our Bylaws require that a Town Meeting Member who wishes to speak on an issue in which he or she or a member of his or her family has a direct financial interest, or in which he or she is engaged as an attorney or consultant, must first disclose this interest to the Town Meeting.
- A motion to reconsider a vote adopted at one session of a Town Meeting may not be made at an adjourned session of the same Town Meeting unless the mover has given notice of his or her intention either at the session at which the vote was passed or by written notice delivered to the Town Clerk by 12 o'clock noon on the first business day following the commencement of the session at which the vote sought to be reconsidered was passed. If the vote to be reconsidered was taken by roll call vote, a motion to reconsider will not be in order unless it is made by a Town Meeting Member who had voted with the prevailing side. A two-thirds vote is required for reconsideration; no vote may be reconsidered more than once.
- Action on our general budget article will not be considered final so as to require a two-thirds vote for reconsideration, or any other procedures relating to reconsideration, until all action under that Article has been completed.

Any citizen who has questions about Town Meeting procedures is encouraged to email me at mike.j.widmer@gmail.com.

Michael J. Widmer

Moderator

You are invited to attend:

Warrant Briefing

Thursday, May 25th, 2023

at 7:00 PM

Viewing Options:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87860421130>

Zoom meeting ID: 878 6042 1130

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 31st

**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**



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**TOWN OF BELMONT
WARRANT FOR 2023 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MAY 1, 2023
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 meet at the Belmont High School Auditorium on **MONDAY, MAY 1, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.**, and to notify and warn the Town Meeting Members to meet and act at said time and place on the following Articles:

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 UTILITY EASEMENT 778-782-790 PLEASANT STREET

To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to enter into an agreement to modify easements located on land now owned by Empire Management Corporation granted to the Town of Belmont, recorded at the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds, Land Court Division, as Book 9549 Page 383 and Book 9541 Page 289, for the purpose of relocating existing water and sewer utility pipes, as shown on the plan entitled "Easement Plan 778-782-790 Pleasant Street Belmont, Massachusetts" dated April 7, 2023 by Brennan Consulting, a copy of which is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk, or take any other action relative thereto.

This article will amend existing utility easements by allowing the creation of a new sewer and water easement on the property at 778-782-790 Pleasant Street.

Submitted by the Select Board

The Select Board will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 4 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS

To see if the Town will clarify certain terms in the Zoning By-law by amending Section 1.4 to add this definition:

Inspector of Buildings – The person holding the title "Inspector of Buildings" for the Town of Belmont, who shall be deemed the "zoning administrator" and a "permit granting authority" under M.G.L. c. 40A, § 1A. The terms "Building Commissioner" and "Building Inspector" in this Zoning By-law are deemed to be the same as "Inspector of Buildings."

or in any way act thereon.

§ 60-800. Public ways, sidewalks and rights-of-way.

D. Obstructions.

1. No person shall permit a tree, branch thereof, hedge, bush or shrubbery growing on his/her land to extend over or overhang any street, sidewalk or highway so as to interfere with the free and full use of such street, sidewalk or highway.
2. No person, other than an authorized agent of the Town, may place or cause to be placed or maintained any permanent or temporary structure or any natural or man-made materials (*including, without limitation, the parking of vehicles of any type*) on any public street, sidewalk or highway in such a manner as to obstruct or otherwise interfere with the free and full use of such public street, sidewalk or highway for the passage of vehicles or pedestrians, except upon written permit or authorization from the Select Board or its designee, which the Board or its designee may in its discretion issue subject to such terms and conditions, including a bond, as may be deemed necessary and appropriate to protect the public safety.
3. *Fines for violations of subsections D(1) and D(2) shall be on the following schedule: first offense: written warning; second offense: \$50; third and successive offenses: \$100 each. The Town will communicate at least annually to the residents of the Town the requirements of this §60-800.D, but failure to do so shall not affect its enforceability. In addition to other penalties applicable to violation of these bylaws, in the event the Town undertakes to remove any obstructions described in Subsection D(1) and (2) , the Town may charge the landowner for the reasonable cost thereof.*

or in any way act thereon.

Submitted by Gi Yoon-Huang, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 8

The Petitioner will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 7 CITIZEN PETITION: Amend Section 7.5.2(a) of the Belmont Zoning Bylaw to Require Development Impact Report (DIR)

To see of the Town will vote to amend the Town of Belmont Zoning By-Law by adding this provision to Section 7.5.2(a)

A DIR shall be required if such application is for a proposed project that involves any of the following:

- i. the total land area affected by the alteration, regrading, landscaping, and construction of the proposed project exceeds 35,000 square feet;
- ii. the removal of more than 50 trees that each have a caliper exceeding 4 inches (measured 4.5 feet above the surface of the adjacent ground); or
- iii. an alteration that will result in land disturbance of more than 10,000 square feet of land, whether or not the land is substantially restored to its previous grade and surface coverage; or
- iv. the addition or relocation of 40 or more parking spaces.

or in any way act thereon.

Submitted by Ralph Jones, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 3

The Petitioner and the Planning Board will report on this Article.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 8 CITIZEN PETITION: Amend General Bylaw §40-325E: Fees for Special Event permits for use of the park sites

To see if the Town will Amend § 40-325.E by adding the following:

"Fees for Special Event permits for use of the park sites shall be waived if the permittee is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Belmont, the event is open to the public, and attendees are not charged a fee to attend."

or in any way act thereon.

Submitted by the Tommasina Olson, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 5

The Petitioner will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 9 CITIZEN PETITION: Authorizing 10 Year Terms for Town Leases & Procurement Contracts for Electric Vehicles, Buses and Trucks

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following binding resolution:

In recognition of the growing availability of electric-powered cars, buses, trucks, vans, and other classes of vehicles (each an "EV", together "EVs"), as well as the increasing availability of federal and state public grants to support their procurement, it is fiscally prudent to authorize the Town to enter into long-term leases, rentals, subscriptions, or similar vehicle procurement contracts (each an "EV Contract") for EVs whenever an EV Contract is an appropriate alternative to outright EV purchase.

The upfront procurement cost of EVs, especially buses and large trucks, when combined with the purchase and installation of dedicated charging equipment, may make it financially beneficial to the Town to enter into a multi-year EV Contract in order to amortize those upfront costs over a longer term and allow the annual cost of an EV to be economically competitive with gas and diesel alternatives.

The 2009 Town Meeting adopted Belmont's Climate Action Plan, which calls for an 80% reduction in the Town's carbon emissions by 2050 (compared to 2007). The 2019 Town Meeting adopted the Climate Action Roadmap, which laid out a plan to reach that goal, including reducing vehicle emissions. The procurement of EVs across the Town's fleet is consistent with both the Climate Action Plan and the 2019 Climate Action Roadmap.

Statewide procurement law limits any municipal contract to a term of not more than three years, unless authorization for a longer term of contract is approved by the governmental body, i.e., Town Meeting. M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12(b) provides: "Unless authorized by majority vote, a procurement officer shall not award a contract for a term exceeding three years, including any renewal, extension, or option. Such authorization may apply to a single contract or to any number or types of contracts, and may specify a uniform limit or different limits on the duration of any such contracts."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Belmont hereby authorizes Belmont Schools and all other Town Departments (each a "Town Department") to enter into EV Contracts for municipal vehicles as follows:

(1) Any EV Contract hereafter entered into by any Town Department may be for a term of up to 10 years, including any term renewals, extensions, or options (the "10-Year Term"); provided, that nothing herein shall require any Town Department to procure EVs at any time, nor for any particular term of years; and

provided further, that any Town Department may enter into an EV Contract with a term shorter than a 10-Year Term, if a shorter term is deemed to be in the best financial or operating interests of the Town;

(2) The foregoing maximum 10-Year Term authorization shall be deemed hereby granted for any EV Contract entered into by any Town Department from this date forward, unless and until this authorization is revoked by action of a subsequent Town Meeting; and

(3) This authorization is intended to and shall be interpreted to implement the authorizations contemplated by M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12(b), or in any way act thereon.

Submitted by the Brian Kopperl, Belmont Registered Voter - Precinct 6

The Petitioner, the Warrant Committee, and the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 10 CITIZEN PETITION: Replace General Bylaw § 60-310 with Specialized Energy Code

To see if the Town will vote to replace § 60-310 of the Town of Belmont General Bylaws, titled "Stretch Energy Code" with a new § 60-310 titled "Specialized Energy Code," for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, pursuant to the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23 including Appendices RC and CC, including future editions, amendments, or modifications thereto, with an effective date of January 1, 2024, so that it reads as follows:

§ 60-310 Specialized Energy Code

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Specialized Energy Code is to provide a more energy-efficient and low greenhouse gas emissions alternative to the Stretch Energy Code or the baseline Massachusetts Energy Code, applicable to the relevant sections of the State Building Code for new construction.

B. Applicability

This § 60-310 applies to residential and commercial buildings.

C. Specialized Energy Code

The Specialized Energy Code codified by the entirety of 225 CMR 22.00 and 23.00 including Appendices RC and CC, and including any future editions, amendments, or modifications, is herein incorporated by reference into this § 60-310.

D. Enforcement

The Specialized Energy Code is enforceable by the Inspector of Buildings. This section § 60-310 shall be effective January 1, 2024.

or in any way act thereon.

Submitted by the Roger Wrubel, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 5

The Petitioner will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 11 FY2024 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE BUDGET & PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to act on the report of the Community Preservation Committee on the Fiscal Year 2024 Community Preservation Budget and to appropriate or reserve for later appropriation monies from the Community Preservation Fund annual revenues or available funds for the administrative and operating expenses of the Community Preservation Committee, the undertaking of Community Preservation Projects as summarized in the table below, and all other necessary and proper expenses for the year, or in any way act thereon.

Amount	Project Name	Category	Funding Source
\$ 200,000	Conservation Fund	OS	Open Space Recreation
\$ 250,000	Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing	CH	Community Housing
\$ 941,953	Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction	RC	Open Space Recreation
\$ 86,787	Library Historic Objects Preservation Plan	HP	Historic Preservation
\$ 124,592	PQ Park Basketball Court Replacement - In Kind	RC	Open Space Recreation
\$ 400,000	Rejuvenation of Sherman Gardens	CH	Community Housing

Off-Cycle Funding Applications			
\$ 31,500	Belmont Womans' Club Window Restoration Installation Project for 3rd Floor	HP	Historic Preservation

This is a standard article that appropriates funds to support the operations of the Town's Community Preservation Committee and its approved projects. The Community Preservation Fund receives revenues from a 1.5% property tax surcharge to fund the program. The state provides limited matching grant funds to the Town based on the surcharge collections.

Submitted by the Community Preservation Committee

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

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 12

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	FY2023 Salary	FY2024 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	\$ 106,556	\$—
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 FY2024. Please note that Town Meeting will establish and appropriate the compensation of other municipal employees under Article 22.

Submitted by the Select Board

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

Majority 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 FY2024 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
Total		\$ 410,000

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.*

Submitted by the Select Board

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

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 15

TRANSFER TO THE GENERAL STABILIZATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from unappropriated available funds in the Treasury to the General Stabilization Fund, or in any way act thereon.

This article is to transfer a portion of the Town's certified Free Cash balance to the General Stabilization Fund.

Submitted by the Select Board

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

ARTICLE 20

APPROPRIATION OF FY2024 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 recommendations of the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee for FY2024 capital expenditures will be distributed to Town Meeting Members prior to the Annual Town Meeting.

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 unless bonding authorization is required.

ARTICLE 21

**APPROPRIATION TO OTHER POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB)
STABILIZATION FUND**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, or transfer from available funds in the Treasury, a sum of money to the Other Post-Employment Benefits ("OPEB") Stabilization Fund; and to determine whether the money shall be provided by the tax levy, by transfer from available funds, by transfer from the Departmental Enterprise Funds, or by any combination of these methods; or in any way act thereon.

This article seeks to appropriate from available free cash or other available funds for future Town liabilities for Other Post-Employment Benefits.

Submitted by the Select Board

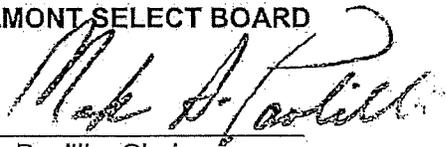
The Select Board and Warrant Committee will report on this Article.

Majority vote required for passage.

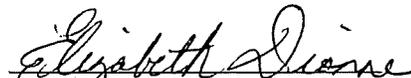


Given under our hands this 11th day of April, 2023

BELMONT SELECT BOARD


Mark Paolillo, Chair


Roy Epstein, Vice Chair


Elizabeth Dionne, Member

A True Copy, Attest

Town Clerk of Belmont, MA



MOTIONS
2023 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
May 31, 2023
Draft as of May 25, 2023
(Subject to Change)

PRELIMINARY MOTION

ORDER OF THE ARTICLES

MOVED: That the Town Meeting hear the motions in the following order:
1, 20, 16, 13, 17, 18, 19, 12, 14, 4, 7, 22, 21, 15

(Majority vote.)

ARTICLE 1

REPORTS

MOVED: That Article 1 be taken from the table.

MOVED: That Article 1 be laid on the table.

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 4

AMEND ZONING BY-LAW - INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS

MOVED: That the Town approve Article 4, as printed in the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

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

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 7 CITIZEN PETITION: Amend Section 7.5.2(a) of the Belmont Zoning Bylaw to Require Development Impact Report (DIR)

MOVED: That the Town approve Article 7, as printed in the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Submitted by Ralph Jones, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 3

The Petitioner and the Planning Board will report on this Article.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 12

SALARIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

MOVED: That the elected officers of the Town be paid as salaries for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2023 the amount set forth opposite the name of each office as listed below:

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

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

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 13

ENTERPRISE FUNDS FOR WATER, SEWER AND STORMWATER SERVICES

MOVED: A) That \$7,557,067 be appropriated from Water Revenues and \$114,249 from Water Retained Earnings to fund the expenses of the Water Department pursuant to Chapter 44, §53F½ of the General Laws as follows:

FY2024 Water Enterprise Fund Operating Budget	\$ 6,731,216
Water Department Capital Expenditures	\$ 940,100
<hr/>	
Total Water Enterprise Fund Appropriation	\$ 7,671,316

MOVED: B) That \$9,546,360 be appropriated from Sewer and Stormwater Revenues to fund the Sewer and Stormwater Enterprise Fund pursuant to Chapter 44, §53F½ of the General Laws as follows:

FY2024 Sewer and Stormwater Enterprise Fund Operating Budget	\$ 8,846,360
Sewer and Stormwater Capital Expenditures	\$ 700,000
<hr/>	
Total Sewer and Stormwater Enterprise Fund Appropriation	\$ 9,546,360

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

MOVED: That the Town establish expenditure limitations for the revolving accounts authorized in §50-220 of the Town’s General Bylaws for FY2024 as follows:

§50-220 Revolving Accounts	FY2024 Expenditure Limit
A. Senior Programs Fund	\$ 150,000
B. Art Gallery Fund	\$ 15,000
C. Rock Meadow Restoration and Maintenance Fund	\$ 15,000
D. Library Lost Book and Copying Fund	\$ 15,000
E. Stormwater Improvement Fund	\$ 100,000
F. Martin Luther King Day Breakfast Fund	\$ 5,000
G. Non-School Property Maintenance Fund	\$ 60,000
H. Stormwater Consulting Fund	\$ 50,000

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

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 15 TRANSFER TO THE GENERAL STABILIZATION FUND

MOVED: That the Town transfer **\$950,000** from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the General Stabilization Fund.

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

Majority vote required for passage.

ARTICLE 16 RENAME AND REPURPOSE THE CAPITAL/DEBT STABILIZATION FUND

MOVED: That the Capital/Debt Stabilization fund established under Article 19 at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting be renamed to the Capital Stabilization Fund which shall be for the purpose of funding capital projects as recommended by the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee. In accordance with Section 5B of Chapter 40 of the Massachusetts General Laws, any funds received by the Town

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	\$	244,625
DPW Cemetery Equipment	\$	78,270
Sidewalk Assessment Update	\$	50,000
Total Department of Public Works		\$ 422,895

MOVED: Facilities Department

Butler Elementary School Repairs	\$	607,786
New Electric Fleet Vehicle	\$	55,000
Belmont Building Assessments	\$	100,000
Refinish Butler School Gym Floor	\$	25,000
Total Facilities Department		\$ 787,786

MOVED: Fire Department

Ambulance Replacement	\$	80,000
Total Fire Department		\$ 80,000

MOVED: Police Department

Replace Police Portable Radios	\$	216,000
Total Police Department		\$ 216,000

MOVED: That to meet the foregoing appropriations, **\$107,761** shall be transferred from the Capital Endowment Fund, **\$179,029** shall be transferred from the Capital Projects Fund (Turnbacks), and the remaining amount of **\$1,219,891** shall be raised from the tax levy, for a total appropriation of **\$1,506,681**.

Majority vote required for passage.

MOVED: B) That **\$910,000** be appropriated for the Fire Department to purchase a replacement pumper truck; and that to meet this appropriation, \$125,000 be appropriated from the tax levy; and the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow \$785,000 under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7(1), or any other enabling authority.

Two-thirds majority vote required for passage.

MOVED: C) That **\$1,904,216** be appropriated for road paving projects, and **\$243,680** be appropriated for sidewalks as follows:

Capital Roads Non-Discretionary	\$	1,904,216
Sidewalks	\$	243,680
Total Paving/Sidewalks	\$	2,147,896

Majority vote required for passage.

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

**ARTICLE 21 APPROPRIATION TO OTHER POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB)
STABILIZATION FUND**

MOVED: That the Town appropriate and transfer **\$552,695** from the General Fund (Free Cash), and to appropriate and transfer a total of **\$40,325** from the Water Enterprise Fund, the Sewer Enterprise Fund and the Light Enterprise Fund to the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Stabilization Fund for the purpose of funding Other Post-Employment Benefits, as follows:

Town	93.7	\$	552,695
Light	3.4	\$	24,313
Sewer	1.5	\$	5,527
Water	1.4	\$	10,485
Total	100%	\$	593,020

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

Majority vote required for passage.

MOVED: That the following amounts be appropriated for the Fiscal Year 2024 operating budget and be raised in the tax levy or from general revenues of the Town:

MOVED: A. General Government	\$ 5,219,752
MOVED: B. Employee Benefits, Retirement Expenses	\$ 10,041,821
MOVED: C. Employee Benefits, Other Reserves	\$ 16,792,045
MOVED: D. Public Facilities	\$ 7,519,388
MOVED: E. Public Safety	\$ 14,160,201
MOVED: F. Belmont Public Schools	\$ 63,486,981
MOVED: G. Vocational Education	\$ 746,956
MOVED: H. Public Services	\$ 10,574,116
MOVED: I. Human Services	\$ 3,351,359
MOVED: J. Principal Debt and Interest	\$ 14,642,053

MOVED: That the Town transfer the following sums to meet, in part, appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2024 operating budget appropriations made at this Town Meeting:

from Belmont Municipal Light Department (PILOT Payment)	\$ 450,000
from Unreserved Fund Balance (Free Cash)	\$ 9,693,014
from Parking Meters Receipts	\$ 30,000
from Water Revenues for indirect costs	\$ 244,166
from Sewer Revenues for indirect costs	\$ 248,321
from Perpetual Care Fund for Cemetery operations	\$ 25,000

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

Majority vote required for passage.



Warrant Committee Report Town of Belmont FY 2024 Budget

May 2023

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2022–2023 Warrant Committee Members

William Anderson

Tom Caputo

Elizabeth Dionne (Secretary) – Through March 2023

Christine Doyle

Anne Helgen

Geoffrey Lubien (Chair)

Conor McEachern

Robert McLaughlin

Lynn Peterson Read

Paul Rickter (Vice Chair)

Laurie Slap

Mathew Taylor

Marie Warner

Jack Weis

Ex officio

Michael Crowley (School Committee) – Through March 2023

Meghan Moriarty (Chair, School Committee) – Beginning April 2023

Mark Paolillo (Chair, Select Board)

Executive Summary

Report of the Belmont Warrant Committee to Town Meeting May 2023

Authorization: *As prescribed by the Town of Belmont's By-Laws, 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.*

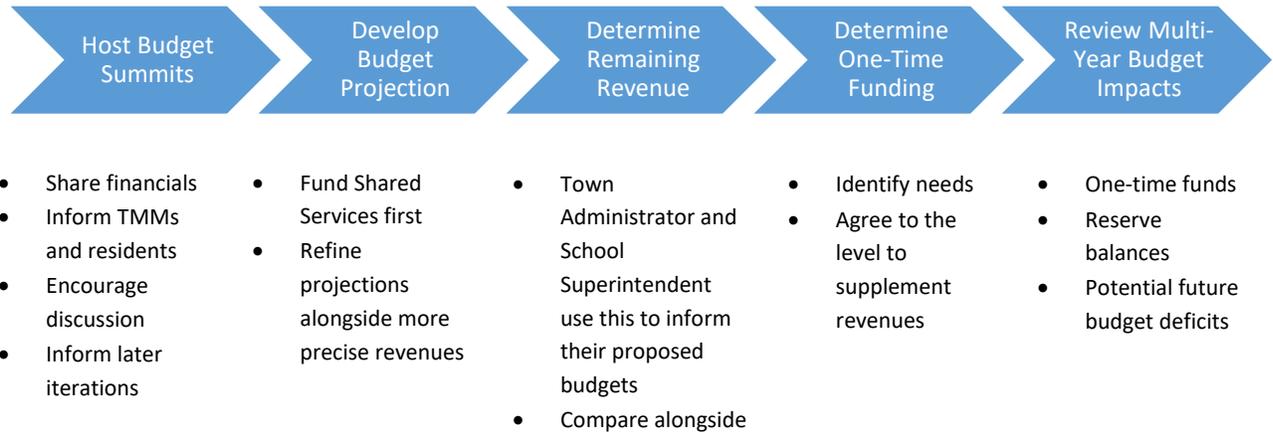
Overview of Budget Process

New Budget Process

To develop the FY24 budget, a new process and approach was implemented with a series of budget summits and a revenue-first approach. This new process and approach was adopted in the spring of 2022 based on several recommendations that came from the work of the Communications Subcommittee of the Warrant Committee on the [Financial Indicators Report](#). The primary recommendation was to hold Budget Summits beginning in the fall of 2022 that leverage the information in the report but also to create a more robust budgeting framework that would inform and engage Town Meeting Members and residents during the budgeting process. This recommendation was reinforced by analyses and recommendations made in the [Collins Center Report](#) in June of 2022. The Select Board and Town Administrator commissioned the Collins Center to analyze and report on Belmont's financial organizational structure and offer recommendations for an improved structure for financial management. Over the summer and early fall of 2022, the Warrant Committee collaborated with the Select Board, School Committee, School Department and the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee as well as with the Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator/ Finance Director to implement these recommendations.

Over the course of the fall of 2022 and the winter of 2023, five Budget Summits were hosted that resulted in a new budgeting process for Belmont (See figure 1.1). The following is the new budget process for FY24 with the key changes focusing on revenue projections and revenue availability to guide departmental requests.

Figure 1.1

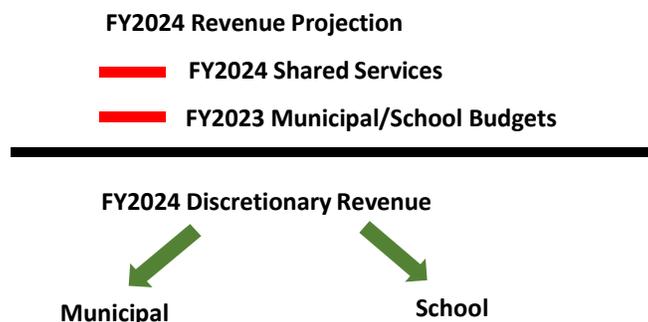


The “Shared Services” category is new to the budget and is funded first. The rationale is that these are expenditures that are shared across municipal and school needs and must be funded first because these services are essential to the operation of the Town and schools and/or are committed obligations that must be funded. The accounts that make up Shared Services is listed below in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 – Shared Services
Pension Funding
Retiree and Employee Benefits / Healthcare (OPEB)
Debt Service - Within Levy and Exempt
Facilities Department
Vocational Education Costs
Capital Non-Discretionary (Roads/Sidewalks) - Prior Year +2.5%
Capital Discretionary - Prior Year +2.5%
Warrant Committee Reserve Fund

As part of the revenue-first approach (See Figure 1.1), total revenues for the new fiscal year are projected and refined over the budgeting processes. Then estimated total Shared Services for the new fiscal year is subtracted from the total revenue projection. Next the current fiscal year’s budget for municipal and school expenses are subtracted from the total revenue projection and the remainder is the discretionary revenue that is available for the next fiscal year. The final step is to allocate the discretionary revenue to the municipal and school needs based on historical allocations.

Figure 1.1 – Discretionary Revenue Estimation and Allocation



FY24 Revenue Allocation

Total projected available revenue for FY24 was estimated to be \$139,988,743 with an assumed use of Free Cash of \$6,880,478 for a total of \$146,689,221 of preliminary funds available for the FY24 budget (Table 1.2). Shared Services was estimated to be \$54,294,949 leaving \$92,574,272 for the municipal and schools. For FY23, the municipal and school budgets less Shared Services was \$89,918,854 and when subtracted from the available FY24 revenue less Shared Services the remaining \$2,655,418 is the discretionary revenue available for FY24. Applying historical allocations of 36.2% for municipal and 63.8% for school budgets, the preliminary discretionary funds available for the municipal budget are \$33,483,475, a \$960,446 or 2.4% increase over FY23, and \$59,090,797, a \$1,694,972 or 5.7% increase over FY23 for the schools. The full allocation across all three categories is 35.9% for Shared Services, 22.1% for municipal and 42.0% for the schools. This revenue allocation is meant as a starting point for initial budgeting and incremental decisions were made from there which will be reviewed in the next section.

Table 1.2 - FY24 Revenue Allocation Model

	\$ 139,988,743				Projected Available Revenue
	\$6,880,478				Assumed Use of Free Cash
	\$146,689,221				Total Available Revenue including Free Cash
		Shared*	Municipal	School	
(1)	\$55,895,825			\$ 55,895,825	FY23 Belmont Public Schools Appropriated Budget
(2)	\$32,523,029		\$32,523,029		FY23 Municipal Appropriated Budget
(3)	\$1,500,000			\$1,500,000	FY23 School Budget Covered by Reserves
(4)	\$54,294,949				FY24 Shared Services Budgets
(5)	\$144,213,803	\$54,294,949	\$32,523,029	\$ 57,395,825	Base Budget - Used for Allocation
(6)			36.17%	63.83%	Percentage - Municipal and School only
(7)	\$2,655,418	\$ -	\$960,446	\$1,694,972	Incremental Revenue: Total FY24 Available Revenue – Base Budget (FY23 Municipal & School Budget and FY24 Share Services Projection)
		\$54,294,949	\$33,483,475	\$59,090,797	Funds Available 2/9/2023

Overview of FY24 Recommended General Fund Budget

Overview

The FY24 recommended [General Fund budget*](#) is \$151.0 million, up \$6.04 million or 4.2% from FY23.¹ The majority of the increase comes from the [School operating budget](#) of \$7.59 million, or a 13.6% increase, with the municipal General Fund portion of the operating budget increasing \$0.78 million, or about 2.4%. The newly created category, Shared Services, is \$49 million, up \$0.32 million, a 0.1% increase. The final Town Budget is \$4.16 million higher than the original amount determined from the revenue allocation model that was reviewed in the previous section. The final budget was increased to address additional needs of the schools. These incremental needs were funded with the use of additional Free Cash of \$2.81 million for a total of \$9.69 million of Free Cash used in the FY24 budget as well as increases in revenue,

* 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.

with the majority coming from a more favorable state aid number. The significant increase in the school budget is due to increases in: Out-of-District (OOD) costs both in terms of the number of students up 26% and OOD tuition costs up 14%; the opening of the new upper middle school with additional headcount; rolling over existing staff salaries with Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) and Step-and-Lanes increases. All these impacts will be addressed in greater detail later in the Education section of this report. The municipal and school departments continue to make the necessary decisions and adjustments to manage an operating budget after the failed override in the spring of 2021. Many departments that are already stretched far too thin and have minimal increases in their FY24 budgets will continue to struggle to provide the services expected by the residents of Belmont.

Continued Use of One-Time Funds

The FY24 budget includes \$9.96 million of unreserved fund balances or “Free Cash,” an increase from the \$5.96 million used in the FY23 budget. This amount of Free Cash, or one-time funds, used to balance the budget is unprecedented and is the largest ever used with FY22 previously holding that record at \$7.11 million. **The Warrant Committee cannot stress enough its concerns over the continued reliance on one-time funds to balance the budget and strongly recommends that use of such funds be mitigated in the future and that no additional use of these funds be used to for the FY24 budget.**

The Free Cash balance at the end of FY21 (July 1, 2022), at \$15.6 million, represented another year of significantly higher than usual Free Cash balance due to continued COVID-related factors and the federal government ARPA funds, challenges filling open positions - especially on the municipal side, and conservative fiscal management. Table 1 includes the breakdown of the factors that contributed to the significant balance at the end of FY22.

FY22 started off with a healthy carry-forward balance of \$7.84 million from FY21. 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 (returns to the overall Town budget). Also, with many municipal vacancies due to turnover and a challenging job market, most municipal departments did not spend their full budgets for FY22. 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 1: Free Cash Factors (\$ million)

Category	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Carryforward	\$4.0	\$4.1	\$7.8
Excess Revenues	\$0.9	\$3.8	\$1.5
Municipal Salaries	\$1.2	\$1.7	\$0.5
Municipal Expenses	\$0.7	\$1.2	\$1.2
Municipal Benefits	\$0.1	\$0.8	\$0.8
Subtotal Municipal	\$2.0	\$3.7	\$2.6
School Salaries	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$0.6
School Expenses	(\$0.8)	\$0.9	(\$0.4)
School Benefits	\$0.3	\$0.2	\$0.4
Subtotal School	\$0.8	\$2.4	\$0.7
Facilities	\$0.5	\$0.4	\$0.5
Debt Service	\$0.2	\$0.8	\$0.2
Prior Year Encumbrances	\$1.0	\$0.8	\$0.7
Other Misc. Factors	\$1.8	(\$1.0)	\$1.6
Total Free Cash	\$11.2	\$15.0	\$15.6

As the Warrant Committee has noted repeatedly, the Town of Belmont faces a structural deficit wherein recurring expenditures outpace recurring revenues. The FY24 budget is the fourth budget cycle in a row to use more than the average \$2 million in Free Cash that has historically been allocated to the following year’s operating budget. This trend is expected to continue until the structural deficit is addressed through an override or the amount of Free Cash can no longer fill the gap caused by the structural deficit, which is expected to happen within the FY25 budget season. As a result, a significant override will need to be passed in the spring of 2024 if the residents of Belmont do not wish to see a substantial reduction in both municipal and school services.

American Rescue Plan Act

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, link to 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, was 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 and funding will be 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 simply by the vote of the Select Board.

At this point, Belmont’s Town leaders have allocated most of the ARPA funds with only \$156,215 remaining. Table 2 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 FY25 and beyond.

Table 2: ARPA Funds	
State ARPA Fund Allotment	\$7,800,000
Appropriated by Select Board	
Public Health	\$276,600
COA - Senior Outreach	\$19,250
2022 Memorial Day Prep	\$25,000
Facilities - Filters	\$24,000
COVID - Middle & High School Building Committee	\$1,000,000
Schools ESSER Match	\$2,876,000
DPW Fuel Tanks	\$650,000
DPW Salt Shed	\$500,000
High School Solar Panels	\$290,633
Repairs Butler School	\$892,214
Security Projects (Schools)	\$245,000
Additional Rink Funding	\$350,000
Operating Budget FY23	\$163,303
Operating Budget FY24	\$124,000
Other	\$214,000
Subtotal	\$7,650,000
Remaining Funds	\$156,251
Total	\$7,806,251

General Fund Revenues

Expected and projected revenues are summarized below in Table 3. This includes estimated FY24 state aid to Belmont based on the Governor’s Budget and recent indications from the state legislature. Table 3 also illustrates another large amount of Free Cash used to balance the budget, increasing over 80% from FY23. Please note that Available Funds is down significantly due to a one-time increase in the funds available for discretionary capital investment in FY23 as the result of significant turnbacks.

Table 3: FY24 Expected General Fund Revenues vs. FY22 Revenues (\$ million)

Revenues	FY2024 Projected	FY2023 Estimated	\$ Change	% Change
Property Tax Levy	\$106.30	\$102.79	\$3.52	3.4%
Levy for Exempt Debt	\$13.15	\$13.72	-\$0.56	-4.1%
Total Tax Levy	\$119.46	\$116.51	\$2.95	2.5%
State Aid	\$14.57	\$12.85	\$1.72	13.4%
Local Receipts	\$8.60	\$8.59	\$0.01	0.1%
Available Funds	\$0.89	\$3.19	-\$2.29	-71.9%
Free Cash	\$9.69	\$5.38	\$4.31	80.2%
Revenue Offsets	-\$3.14	-\$2.92	-\$0.22	7.4%
Enterprise Receipts	\$0.94	\$1.39	-\$0.45	-32.1%
Total Revenues	\$151.03	\$144.98	\$6.04	4.2%

Note: Subject to adjustment when the state budget (including final state aid amounts) is approved. Calculations reflect rounding.

General Fund Expenditures

Table 4 compares the recommended FY24 General Fund budget expenditures to corresponding data for FY23. This FY24 budget is as of May 11, 2023, and is subject to minor adjustments before the June Town Meeting.

Table 4: Summary of FY24 General Fund Budget vs. FY23 (\$ million)

Spending	FY2024 Recommended	FY2023 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Belmont Public Schools	\$63.49*	\$55.90	\$7.59	13.6%
General Government	\$5.22	\$5.43	-\$0.21	-3.8%
Public Safety	\$14.16	\$13.47	\$0.69	5.2%
Public Services	\$10.57	\$10.14	\$0.44	4.3%
Health and Human Services	\$3.35	\$3.49	-\$0.14	-4.1%
Total Municipal Government	\$33.31	\$32.53	\$0.78	2.4%
Regional Schools	\$0.75	\$1.14	-\$0.39	-34.3%
Facilities	\$7.52	\$6.95	\$0.57	8.2%
Pension Assessment	\$10.04	\$10.09	-\$0.05	-0.5%
Employee Benefits	\$15.62	\$15.67	-\$0.05	-0.3%
Debt Service	\$14.64	\$15.24	-\$0.60	-3.9%
Other Shared	\$1.17	\$1.01	\$0.16	15.6%
Total Shared Services	\$49.74	\$50.10	-\$0.36	-0.7%
Capital - Streets	\$1.90	\$1.86	\$0.05	2.5%
Capital - Sidewalks	\$0.24	\$0.24	\$0.01	2.5%
Capital - Discretionary	\$1.79	\$3.79	-\$2.00	-52.7%
Total Capital	\$3.94	\$5.88	-\$1.94	-33.0%
Other Warrant Articles (OPEB)	\$0.55	\$0.58	-\$0.03	-4.6%
Total Spending	\$151.03	\$144.98	\$6.04	4.2%
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Note: Data does not include expenses budgeted in Enterprise Funds including Belmont Light. FY23 data is projected and not necessarily budget as voted by Town Meeting. Calculations reflect rounding.

*\$600,000 of the School's General Fund budget will be allocated to the Special Education Reserve Fund within the school budget by the School Committee after the budget is approved by Town Meeting.

As shown in Table 4, the FY24 General Fund budget is 4.2% higher than in FY23. The school operating expenditures funded by the General Fund are expected to increase by 13.6%. 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 5.

Table 5: FY24 Total Belmont Public School Budget (\$ million)

Belmont Public Schools	FY24	FY23	\$ Change	% Change
General Fund	63.49	55.90	7.59	13.6%
Grants & Revolving, Other	7.73	8.62	(0.88)	-10.2%
Covid Funds	0.97	1.50	(0.54)	-35.7%
TOTAL - ALL SOURCES	72.19	66.01	6.17	9.4%

Table 6 breaks out the increases in spending by service area.

Table 6: FY24 General Fund Budget vs. FY23 by Department or Function (\$ million)

	FY24	FY23	\$	%
	Recommended	Appropriated	Change	Change
Belmont Public Schools	\$63.49	\$55.90	\$7.59	13.6%
Shared Services*	\$35.10	\$34.86	\$0.24	0.7%
Pension**	\$10.04	\$10.09	\$(0.05)	-0.5%
Retiree Health Insurance	\$3.34	\$3.78	\$(0.44)	-11.7%
Employee Health Insurance	\$10.52	\$10.07	\$0.45	4.4%
Life Insurance	\$0.02	\$0.02	\$—	0.0%
Medicare	\$1.10	\$1.06	\$0.03	3.1%
Unemployment	\$0.19	\$0.23	\$(0.03)	-14.7%
Workers Compensation	\$0.46	\$0.51	\$(0.05)	-10.0%
Liability Insurance	\$0.74	\$0.59	\$0.16	26.8%
Deductible Reserves	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.00	2.5%
Warrant Committee Reserve	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$—	0.0%
Facilities	\$7.52	\$6.95	\$0.57	8.2%
Regional Schools	\$0.75	\$1.14	\$(0.39)	-34.3%
Public Services	\$10.57	\$10.14	\$0.44	4.3%
Community Development	\$0.98	\$1.00	\$(0.02)	-1.7%
Public Works	\$8.07	\$7.55	\$0.52	6.9%
Recreation	\$1.52	\$1.59	\$(0.07)	-4.1%
Public Safety	\$14.16	\$13.47	\$0.69	5.2%
Emergency Mgmt.	\$0.02	\$0.02	\$—	0.0%
Fire	\$6.39	\$5.98	\$0.41	6.9%
Police	\$7.75	\$7.46	\$0.28	3.8%
General Government	\$5.22	\$5.43	\$(0.21)	-3.8%
Assessors	\$0.43	\$0.42	\$0.00	0.2%
Human Resources	\$0.66	\$1.02	\$(0.37)	-35.8%
IT	\$1.41	\$1.35	\$0.06	4.5%

Town Accountant	\$0.44	\$0.36	\$0.08	22.3%
Town Administration	\$1.13	\$1.02	\$0.11	10.5%
Town Clerk	\$0.51	\$0.53	\$(0.02)	-3.3%
Treasurer	\$0.65	\$0.72	\$(0.08)	-10.4%
Human Services	\$3.35	\$3.49	\$(0.14)	-4.1%
Library	\$2.35	\$2.37	\$(0.03)	-1.1%
Council on Aging	\$0.41	\$0.48	\$(0.07)	-14.9%
Health	\$0.60	\$0.64	\$(0.05)	-7.0%
Debt Service	\$14.64	\$15.24	\$(0.60)	-3.9%
Within Levy Debt Service	\$1.42	\$1.44	\$(0.02)	-1.7%
Exempt Debt Service	\$13.15	\$13.73	\$(0.58)	-4.2%
Short-term Borrowing Costs	\$0.07	\$0.07	\$—	0.0%
Capital Expenditures	\$3.94	\$5.88	\$(1.94)	-33.0%
Capital - Streets	\$1.90	\$1.86	\$0.05	2.5%
Capital - Sidewalks	\$0.24	\$0.24	\$0.01	2.5%
Discretionary Capital	\$1.79	\$3.79	\$(2.00)	-52.7%
OPEB Contribution	\$0.55	\$0.58	\$(0.03)	-4.6%
Grand Total	\$151.03	\$144.98	\$6.04	4.2%

* Does not include Debt Service.

** Does not include pension expenses budgeted in Enterprise Funds, Belmont Light.

FY24 budgets for each department will be discussed in detail in this report.

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 7.

Table 7: Enterprise Funds Expenditure Summary (\$ million)

	FY24	FY23 Revised	\$ Change	% Change
Water	\$8.01	\$7.91	\$0.10	1.25%
Sewer	\$9.80	\$10.88	\$(1.09)	-9.96%
Total Enterprise Funds	\$17.80	\$18.79	\$(0.99)	-5.27%

Note: Calculations reflect rounding.

Risks in the FY24 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.

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 department.

Facilities. 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 FY24 and beyond is still significantly high.

Compensation costs. All unions contracts of the Town and schools are settled and the outcome of these negotiations, especially on the school side, has a significant impact on the FY24 and future budgets with significant roll-over costs. The increasing Full-Time Employee (FTE) numbers in the schools is a concern and not sustainable if current trends continue.

School Department Actual FTEs Relative to the FY20 Budget

	FY20 Budget	Δ FY20 Actual	Δ FY21 Actual	Δ FY22 Actual	Δ FY23 Actual (Q2)	Δ FY24 Budget
Regular Instruction	284.3	-1.3	-2.0	-5.4	-4.3	-7.6
Special Instruction	132.5	11.0	14.5	18.7	25.8	30.6
Student & Instructional Srvs.	81.0	-0.5	0.3	1.1	0.2	1.2
Leadership & Administration	43.9	0.9	0.3	4.1	5.2	7.2
COVID / One-Time Grants	0.0	0.0	3.0	13.4	14.8	9.0
Total	541.7	551.8	557.8	573.6	583.4	582.1
Δ vs FY20 Budget		10.1	16.1	31.9	41.7	40.4

Please note: These all FTEs funded through the General Fund and external funds such as ESSER & ARPA

Municipal Changes in Total FTEs

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24 Budget
Municipal	260.3	260.7	256.9	261.0	279.8
Change Y/Y	-1.9	0.4	-3.7	4.1	18.8

Assessors eliminated a PT Office Assistant (.4 FTE), Facilities is now showing the FTE's for the School custodians (22 FTE), Community Development lowered the Code Enforcement Officer from 1 FTE to .5 FTE, Community Development lowered the Planning Admin Assistant III from 1 FTE to .5 FTE, Recreation eliminated the Rink FTEs (1.4 FTE), Library added the Assistant Director (1 FTE), eliminated a Library Tech Services PT Assistant (.4 FTE), and eliminated the FT Lead Custodian (1 FTE), The custodial duties will be picked up by the Facilities Department

Healthcare costs. Belmont self-insures for healthcare. If health insurance costs rise more than the budgeted 4.4% due to a bounce-back of 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 FY25 Budget

One-time funds, like federal relief funding or increases in Free Cash balances can temporarily fill the structural budget gap; however, without fundamental changes to revenue sources or expenditures, the gap continues to widen. The ARPA funds currently allocated for one-time positions at the schools will end at the end of FY24 and any remaining ARPA funds must be obligated by December of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. The loss of these positions because of the loss of their funding will be significant and, combined with a new upper middle school opening in fall of 2023 as well as the final reconfiguration of the elementary schools in the fall of 2024, will put additional pressures on the FY25 budget. School enrollment is also a key budget driver. If a rapid enrollment rebound takes place in FY24-FY25, there could be added pressure on what will already be a challenging budget. Finally, a significant override is needed to balance at the very least a level-services budget. If an override does not pass, significant reductions to services on both the municipal and school sides will be unavoidable.

Free Cash and Stabilization Fund Update

Free Cash represents the Town's unrestricted funds from operations. Generally, these funds arise from excess receipts over budgeted revenues and from unspent expenses from departmental budgets. By law, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue must certify each City or Town's Free Cash as of July 1 at the beginning of the following fiscal year before it can be appropriated.

As shown below, Belmont started FY23 with \$15.6 million in certified Free Cash as of July 1, 2022, compared with \$15.0 million as of July 1, 2021. As was the case in FY22, much of the increase was from department turnbacks due to continued COVID-related factors and the federal government American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, challenges filling open positions - especially on the municipal side, and conservative fiscal management.

Given the override defeat in April 2021 and the continued relatively high Free Cash balance, an extraordinarily large amount of Free Cash is being used once again to bridge the gap between recurring revenues and recurring expenses in order to balance the budget for FY24. Prior to FY21, the annual operating budget typically used approximately \$2.0 million of Free Cash. As shown below, the amount of Free Cash used to balance the budget increased as the impact of increased revenue from the 2015 override has diminished. The FY24 Budget includes \$9.69 million in Free Cash, which is a historic level of one-time funds used to bridge the structural deficit. Free Cash has also been appropriated to fund the OPEB Trust Fund per the policy with a contribution of approximately \$553,000 in the FY24 budget.

Free Cash (FC) Usage (\$ million)

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Certified Free Cash (CFC) as of July 1	\$8.41	\$8.11	\$11.24	\$15.03	\$15.55	
CFC Available for FY Appropriation	\$5.65	\$8.41	\$8.11	\$11.24	\$15.03	\$15.55
Less Amount Appropriated:						
Operating Budget	-\$1.61	-\$2.36	-\$3.79	-\$7.18	-\$5.38	-\$9.69
General Stabilization Fund	\$ -	\$ -	-\$1.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	
OPEB	-\$0.47	-\$0.55	-\$0.05	-\$0.05	-\$0.58	-\$0.55
Fire Station	-\$0.60	\$ -	\$ -			
Fire Pumper	\$ -	\$ -	-\$0.35			
Fuel Tanks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		-\$0.65	
Net Free Cash after Appropriations	\$2.96	\$5.49	\$2.42	\$4.01	\$8.42	\$5.30

Note: Free Cash is certified by the state in the fall after fiscal year end. Once certified, Town Meeting can appropriate funds from CFC for the following year. Net Free Cash represents the amount of Certified Free Cash available to appropriate for that FY less TM appropriations for that FY's budget.

The \$9.69 million in Free Cash accounts for 6.4% of the overall operating budget and is not a sustainable or prudent financial practice. The amount of Free Cash generated in FY21 -FY23 is unlikely to recur in future years post pandemic. The known sources of one-time funds currently are the remaining stabilization balance of \$1.8 million, \$156,251 currently unallocated from ARPA funds, and a Free Cash balance of \$5.30 million. However, these sources cannot indefinitely continue to fill the recurring structural deficit created by contractual compensation rate increases, pension liability amortization, deferred expenditures, and the continued rising needs of the schools.

Free Cash (FC) and Reserves as % of General Fund Budget (million)

Fiscal Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
FY General Fund Revenue Budget	\$120.01	\$124.44	\$134.46	\$144.98	\$151.03
FC Support of FY Budget	\$2.36	\$3.79	\$7.11	\$5.38	\$9.69
Free Cash Use as % of Budget	1.97%	3.05%	5.29%	3.71%	6.42%
Gen. Stabilization Fund Draw	\$2.40				
ARPA				\$0.16	\$0.12
Total Stabilization and FC Usage	\$4.76	\$3.79	\$7.11	\$5.54	\$9.81
Stabilization and FC as % of Budget	3.97%	3.05%	5.29%	3.82%	6.50%

Note: The current Stabilization Fund balance is \$1.8 million.

Use of Free Cash by Category

Use of Free Cash - FY2024				
Total	Shared	Municipal	Schools	
\$6.88	\$2.53	\$1.58	\$2.78	Original assumptions for use of Free Cash
\$2.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.81	Further recommendation to bridge gap
\$9.69	\$2.53	\$1.58	\$5.59	Total proposed in Feb. 3rd budget recommendations
	26.05%	16.26%	57.69%	

The table above shows the use of Free Cash by the three budget categories with more than half of the one-time funds allocated to the school budget at 58%.

As shown below, the net balance of Free Cash after current year appropriations will be \$5.3 million, or 3.5% of General Fund revenues. This is slightly above the minimum recommended by the Select Board/Warrant Committee guideline of maintaining Free Cash balances of 3-5% of general fund revenues.

Free Cash (FC) Guideline Calculation (\$million)

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
General Fund Budget Revenues	\$120.01	\$124.44	\$134.46	\$144.98	\$151.03
Town Free Cash Minimum Guideline*	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Minimum Guideline Amount	\$3.60	\$3.73	\$4.03	\$4.35	\$4.53
Net Free Cash After Appropriations	\$5.49	\$2.42	\$4.01	\$8.42	\$5.30
\$ Net FC Surplus (Deficit) to Guideline	\$1.89	-\$1.31	-\$0.02	\$4.07	\$0.77
% Net FC Guideline Calculation	4.6%	1.9%	3.0%	5.8%	3.5%

*The Town's Free Cash Guideline recommends a Free Cash balance of 3-5% of General Fund Revenues.

Departmental Highlights

Education

Summary:

- Excluding a separate \$600,000 allocation to capitalize a dedicated SPED reserve fund, the FY24 School Department operating budget is increasing by approximately \$7.0 million, or 12.5%, to \$62.9 million.
- About 12% of the School Department's budget is covered by other sources of revenue beside the General Fund. The Department's total FY24 operating budget, including recurring grant and revolving funds and one-time COVID-relief funding, is \$71.6 million. Due to a reduction in the reliance on prior reserve funds to cover out-of-district special education (SPED) expenses and a reduction in the utilization of non-recurring COVID-relief funds, the department's total operating budget is increasing by less than the increase in the General Fund budget – \$5.8 million and 8.7%.
- 75% of the increase in the General Fund budget is due to increases in special education costs. And, 75% of the increased SPED costs are due to increases in out-of-district (OOD) costs. Those increased OOD costs are attributable to an unprecedented year-over-year increase in OOD students in FY23, a dramatic increase in the state-approved tuition rates in FY24, and the return to a more typical level of General Fund support for OOD costs after a much higher reliance on accumulated reserves to fund OOD costs in FY23.
- The total staffing level covered by the General Fund is increasing by 11.2 FTEs (2.1%), to 539.6 FTEs. Total departmental staffing is declining by 4.2 FTEs (0.6%), to 582.7 FTEs, as the result in a reduction in 13 FTE positions covered by COVID-relief funds.
- Budgeted salary expenses are increasing by 6.13% compared to the FY23 budget. That is primarily the result of the settlement of the union contracts at the end of FY22, but also is impacted by a slight underbudgeting of salary expenses in FY23.

Risks in FY24:

- Unanticipated increases in the number of OOD students or OOD tuition expenses.
- Unanticipated additional hiring to meet mandated in-district needs or other needs.

FY25 and Beyond:

- Salary increases in the existing contracts exceed the anticipated growth rate in recurring town revenue.
- Continued increases in staffing levels add to the structural deficit.
- Funding for the positions currently paid for using federal COVID-relief funds runs out after FY25. What impact that might have on the General Fund budget after FY25 is currently not known.

Recommendations:

- Work collaboratively with the Town Administrator's office and the Warrant Committee to improve the annual budgeting process, particularly the timing for finalizing the budget.
- Proactively look for ways to better align the growth rate in the School Department budget with the town's projected recurring revenue growth rate.

Shared Services

Facilities

Budget and Staffing Changes: The Facilities Department for FY24 is growing due to a transfer of all school custodians and maintenance workers into the department from Schools. Two new custodians are being added to accommodate the new middle school.

Challenges: Adequate oversight of the many capital projects in process as well as sufficient maintenance of building assets given the thin department staffing. The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee has recommended a building assessment of all town buildings and that study will help the department to prioritize maintenance needs and capital projects.

Risks and Uncertainties: The department will be managing four new buildings in a couple years from new (high school, middle school, library, and rink). The buildings will be different to traditional buildings in several ways and the department will need adequate staffing to ensure these new buildings are properly maintained and operated.

Health Insurance

Budget Change: Cost efficiencies from the shared services model were offset by proposed increases in School staff for FY24, The FY24 budget request for Town and Schools Employee Health Insurance is \$10,331,952, an increase of 2.6% from FY23.

Risks and Uncertainties: Belmont health insurance costs for Town and School employees and retirees are self-insured. A potential transition to the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission (“GIC”) could provide the Town with quantitative and qualitative benefits. Transitioning to, or away, from the GIC is a complex, multi-year process that would not result in operational or cost savings for FY24 but could set the Town up for efficiencies in FY25 or FY26.

Recommendation: The Warrant Committee recommends that the Select Board and the Town Administration conduct an analysis, in consultation with the Town’s healthcare consultant, regarding the cost savings, benefits, and implications of a transition to the GIC with the goal of reducing health insurance cost increases in FY25 and beyond.

Pensions

Budget Changes: Pension benefits are guaranteed. As of 2022, the System is about 70% funded. In FY24, the funding schedule was updated to cover a 5% COLA in for FY23 and extend the funding schedule. The Town’s assessment will be level at about \$10 million / year through FY25, then grow at 2.5% a year through 2031.

Risks and Uncertainties: Pension systems manage and model both investments and the future value of benefits for current employees and retirees. These factors are audited and reviewed every few years, and then assumptions, schedules, and assessments are updated accordingly. The Belmont Retirement System is a separate and autonomous legal entity overseen by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

Recommendations: Review and reduce investment and administrative expenses to be in line with PRIM. The most obvious way to reduce expenses would be for the board to delegate all investment management to PRIM. This will normalize returns, simplify operations, and remove cost overhead related to evaluating

and directing investments. This will also address the investments and consultants' fees that grow with assets in the System and lower BRS's net returns.

Other Post-Employment Benefits ("OPEB")

Budget Changes: The Town identified efficiencies and improved forecasting while restructuring the benefits budget for both Town and School retirees. As a result, the FY24 pay-as-you-go budget for retiree health insurance is \$3.33 million, a decrease of nearly 12% from FY23. As of January 2023, the OPEB Trust Fund held about \$7.4 million toward a liability of about \$97.5 million.

Risks and Uncertainties: 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.

Debt

Budget Changes: The town currently has approximately \$255 million of debt outstanding. Additional debt will be issued in FY24 for the library (\$34.5 million) and the rink (\$28.6 million), both approved by voters in FY23.

Recommendations: The Warrant Committee supports the maintenance a strong bond rating through prudent financial planning and sound fiscal stewardship. Continue the practice of issuing "replacement" non-exempt debt to fund the capital plan once prior non-exempt debt has matured.

Public Services

Community Development

Budget and Staffing Changes: The Community Development Budget for FY24 represents a decrease of 1.73% from FY23 and a reduction of two 0.5 FTEs for a total of 9.26FTEs.

Challenges: The continued inability of the department to find and hire qualified candidates for the open staff planner position and the open building inspector positions forces the department to be more reactive than it otherwise should be and impairs the department's ability to perform required services on a timely basis.

Risks and Uncertainties: The statutory requirements that the department must comply with keep ratcheting up. As an example, the town's stormwater permit must be renewed every five years. The requirements the town must meet in renewing the permit get more burdensome each time, inevitably placing more burdens on the existing staff.

Department of Public Works

Budget and Staffing Changes: The DPW Budget FY24 represents an increase of 6.87% from FY23. There is no change in FTE's from FY23 to FY24, at 24.46 FTEs.

29% of the budget increase from FY23 to FY24 is due to compensation increases. These increases are the negotiated 2% COLA, a one-time retroactive increase due to the negotiations; step increases; and other union contractual payments.

There is a 10.4% increase in the FY24 budget for Disposal and Collections within the DPW. This is due to new agreements with disposal, collection, and recycling third party services.

Challenges: Staffing and staff retention are a major challenge. As of April 2023, there are nine unfilled, budgeted positions within the DPW. This department will continue to rely upon overtime and external contractors to deliver services for as long as budgeted positions remain unfilled.

Recommendations: The Committee suggests that the department should consider imposing a fee for special disposal services, that is, the pick-up and disposal of both bulky items and mattresses to cover the costs of these extra services.

Risks and Uncertainties: Like other Public Service Divisions, there are compliance and statutory regulations which create budgetary uncertainties in the DPW. For example, disposal of organics and dealing with textile disposal or proper recycling, are areas which may impact workload, staffing and other costs.

FY25 and Longer-Term Risks:

The difficulty in recruitment of staff will be exacerbated as current DPW staff members approach retirement.

Enterprise Funds - Water and Sewer

Water & Sewer Rate Increase: Town Administration commissioned a water and sewer rate study to guide the FY24 budget. 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 also estimated the incremental cost of these new rates to the consumer. For a 4-person Belmont Household, the average combined Water and Sewer bill is projected to increase by approximately 6.3%, or \$158, per year.

Recommendation: We recommend consideration of a small incremental annual rate increase once retained earnings have achieved correct levels. This may preclude the need for future large and more impactful increases on residents and businesses.

Recreation

Budget and Staffing Changes: The recreation staffing reflects a decrease of 1.4 FTE, seasonal staff associated with ice recreation. 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 Year Programs was increased to \$368,000 to allow for the potential of some ice activities.

The creation of a Recreation Revolving Fund was approved by Town Meeting on May 4, 2023, and will be used for the FY2025 budget beginning July 1, 2024.

Challenges: Current market conditions for the hiring of part-time staff – especially hiring of lifeguards – mean that wages for these positions must be increased to staff the pool, camp, rink, and other programs effectively, which has placed pressure on the budget

Future Risks and Uncertainties:

The implementation of a Recreation Revolving Fund will shape the outlook for FY25 and beyond.

The new rink will offer new opportunities for increased programming. Much of this planning work will be underway during FY24. The Recreation budget for FY@ \$ School Year Programs has been increased to \$368,000, assuming that there will be additional programming expenses for hockey programs. This amount may need to be supplemented at Fall Town Meeting.

Public Safety

Fire

After remaining flat for several years, the FY24 budget for the Fire Department budget reflects a 6.9% increase, driven by compensation increases tied to the recent completion of union contract negotiations. The two FY23 Fire Department staff vacancies were filled last year so the Department in FY24 should be fully staffed at 55 FTEs, and recent overtime budget overruns are expected to subside in FY24. Incidents requiring Fire Department response have continued to climb as community activity returns to normal after COVID, placing further demands on Department staff. Despite the Fire Chief's strong desire to introduce additional community engagement programs, the fiscal constraints of the FY24 budget will slow program expansion. Given the historical challenges in hiring new Fire Department recruits through the Civil Service program, the Fire Department may be constrained in future hiring and face challenges related to expanding diversity within the department.

Police

The Police Department continues to face vacancies, some of which remain from FY23 because they could not be filled from the Civil Service list. The continued use of Civil Service raises significant barriers to filling vacant positions, including a deficit of eligible candidates, which inflates the use of overtime, delays promotions and hurts morale. The Warrant Committee recommends that the Department work on leaving the Civil Service system, including discussions with the officers' union.

General Government

General Government comprises seven departments that deliver basic services for the Town:

- Town Clerk
- Town Administration
- Human Resources

Information Technology
Town Accountant
Town Treasurer
Assessors

Risks in FY24: Each of these departments have functioned for years with few staff and budget increases. Demands continue to rise and this leaves these departments doing more with less. A significant increase in the number of Freedom of Information Act requests (FOIA) are putting significant pressure on several town departments and the school department. A potential hybrid TMM would put addition presume on the Town Clerks Office and the Town Administrators Office.

Some departments (Treasurer, Accountant, and Human Resources) have either a new director or are in the process of hiring new directors. New leadership provides both risks and opportunities.

The Information Technology department continues to have a strong focus on responding to serious threats of cyber-attacks, which are only increasing. Their budget continues to reflect the enhancement of technology to protect the network.

FY25 and Beyond: These departments all provide essential services using very small numbers of staff. There are potential risks if their processes break down due to lack of staff. In the event of budget reductions, any cuts in these departments should be a last resort.

Recommendations: The Town should consider shifting from an elected to an appointed Board of Assessors, which is one of the recommendations of the Collins Center report.

A comprehensive PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program for the Town's non-profit landowners is needed.

Commercial property currently accounts for approximately 5% of Belmont's annual property tax receipts. We should pursue policies and practices that increase the percentage of annual property tax receipts from commercial sources.

Human Resources Department should considered moving to electronic payroll which was recommended in the Structural Change Impact Group ([SCIG](#)) report.

[Human Services](#)

Library, Council on Aging and Health Department

The Library, Council on Aging and the Health departments operate under the umbrella of the Human Services budget. They provide for the lifetime welfare of Belmont's citizens, keeping them healthy, culturally, and intellectually involved.

Next year's budget for the Human Services departments will be particularly challenging. In FY24 the COA and Health Departments have each enjoyed the use of significant ARPA funds that will not be available for level service in FY25. The Library's budget will be in a state of flux with its operation in temporary

spaces during construction of the new building and in FY26 presumably will need additional funding to operate from the new Library.

Unlike other departments organized under the Town Administrator and the Select Board, each of the Human Services departments has its own governance by either an elected or appointed board. Fortunately, each board has been actively involved in the delivery of services by their respective department. Next year each board and director will need to be particularly zealous advocates to protect their budgets from the justifiably but competing budgets for public safety, infrastructure, and education and to cover any shortfall by seeking all grants available.

FY25 and Longer-Term Issues

Four issues continue to stand out as drivers of the town’s structural gap including: 1) employee compensation costs, 2) mandated school costs, 3) capital projects, and 4) unfunded pension and healthcare liabilities.

Structural Deficit

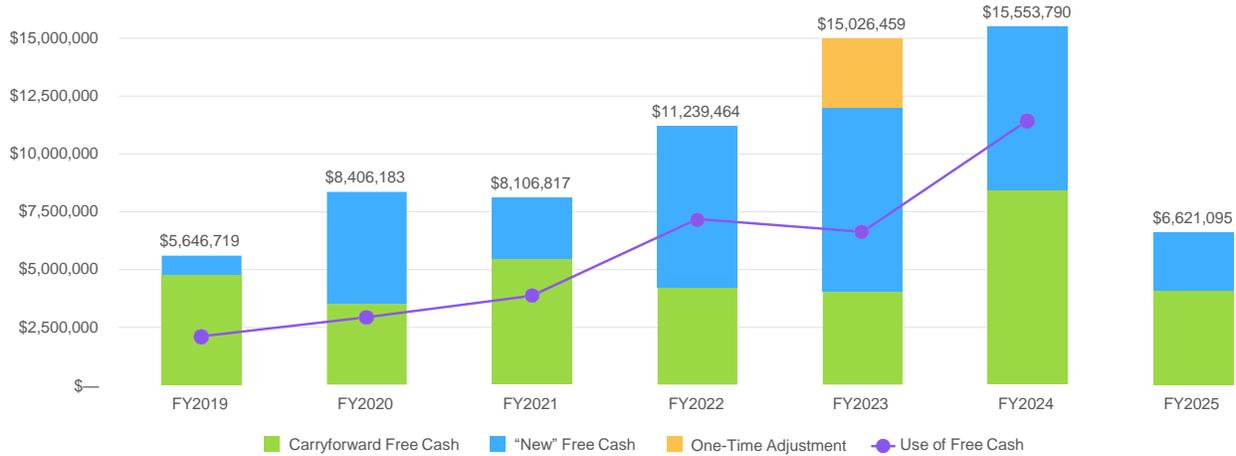
Expenditure increases are outpacing revenue growth due to rising collective-bargaining-driven labor costs, full-time employee (FTE) growth at the school department, rapid growth of Out-of-District special education costs (OOD), health care expenditures, and greater non-labor costs such as escalating pension fund payments. Revenue growth in recent years (beyond the Middle and High School Building debt exclusion and the federal COVID relief funds) has been modest. With only four successful operating overrides in the last 35 years (see table below) and 80% of the Town’s revenue coming from property taxes, the Town’s operating revenue growth has struggled to keep pace with operating expenditure growth, requiring disciplined expense management to maintain budget balance.

Belmont Override History

Date	Override Purpose	Pass	Fail	Voters	% Yes
Apr-21	Education, Town, Capital		\$6,400,000	8,089	43.80%
Apr-15	Education, Roads, Capital	\$4,500,000		8,570	55.20%
Jun-10	Education, Town, Capital		\$2,000,000	6,475	47.00%
Jun-08	Roads, Streets and Sidewalks		\$2,500,000	4,871	46.60%
Apr-06	Roads, Streets and Sidewalks		\$3,000,000	5,242	30.20%
Jun-02	Education, Town Operations	\$2,400,000		5,666	51.90%
May-01	Education, Town, Roads	\$3,000,000		5,049	61.10%
Dec-93	Education, Town Operations		\$1,116,111	5,676	31.00%
Apr-90	Solid Waste Collection & Disposal	\$2,094,946		5,585	54.20%

Following the defeat of the \$6.5 million override in 2021, the town benefited from unanticipated federal funds (American Rescue Plan Act – ARPA), higher than anticipated department turnbacks due to higher-than-expected vacancies, steady state aid growth and some one-time revenue events that have delayed the originally projected drawdown of reserves. Given the escalating cost pressures highlighted above we anticipate a meaningful drawdown of reserves in FY24 as an increasing number of recurring positions are now being funded with the one-time use of Free Cash. If department budgets increase in line with historical levels in FY25 and vacant positions are filled, the amount of remaining reserves will be insufficient to address the gap, requiring more meaningful budget reductions unless additional recurring revenue is raised.

Free Cash Experience in Recent Fiscal Years, and Potential for FY2025



Given current projections, an operating override will be needed if the town wishes to maintain level services for FY25 and beyond. This is evident with the multi-year forecast shown below where beginning in FY25 the Town will face an estimated budget deficit that could be as high as \$10.1 that increases to an estimated \$14.2 million in FY28. This outlook does not incorporate the use of Free Cash or other adjustments that may occur at this point, but the estimated deficit is \$10.1 million which is \$3.5 million more than the estimated amount of Free Cash available for FY25 of \$6.6 million. Even if the current General Stabilization Fund with a balance of approximately \$1.8 million was combined with the full balance of available Free Cash there would still be a deficit of \$1.7 million. However, completely draining reserves is not fiscally prudent and a balance between how much one-time funds to use in the budget and the size of the override needs to be determined and presented to the Town’s residents. Given the fiscal outlook for FY25 and beyond, all efforts must be made for the FY24 budget to manage the amount of Free Cash used. The Warrant Committee strongly recommends that no more than \$9.69 million of Free Cash be used with any additional unbudgeted revenues that come to the Town in FY24 to fall to Free Cash, maintaining reserves. This will allow for more options in planning the size and longevity of the next override.

Belmont Multi-Year Fiscal Forecast

Revenue Budget	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Estimated	FY2024 Projected	FY2025 Projected	FY2026 Projected	FY2027 Projected	FY2028 Projected
Tax Levy (Base + New Growth + 2.5%)	\$99,431,844	\$102,786,493	\$106,302,480	\$109,900,713	\$113,588,901	\$117,369,295	\$121,244,198
State Aid	\$12,454,009	\$12,852,939	\$14,571,551	\$14,760,058	\$14,949,633	\$15,140,295	\$15,332,068
Local Receipts	\$9,567,943	\$8,578,705	\$8,603,462	\$8,673,962	\$8,752,372	\$8,832,350	\$8,913,928
Transfers from Parking/Capital Endowment/Cemetery/Other	\$417,193	\$368,303	\$162,761	\$162,761	\$162,761	\$162,761	\$162,761
Use of Free Cash/Stabilization	\$7,163,925	\$5,959,753	\$10,245,709	\$552,695	\$552,695	\$552,695	\$552,695
Revenue Offsets (Assessments/Overlay)	(\$2,831,921)	(\$2,919,157)	(\$3,135,055)	(\$3,192,431)	(\$3,251,242)	(\$3,311,523)	(\$3,373,311)
Enterprise Indirects	\$1,188,000	\$1,388,000	\$942,487	\$1,154,799	\$1,167,419	\$1,180,354	\$1,193,613
Total Available Revenue	\$127,390,993	\$129,015,036	\$137,693,394	\$132,012,556	\$135,922,538	\$139,926,227	\$144,025,952

Expense Budgets	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Estimated	FY2024 Projected	FY2025 Projected	FY2026 Projected	FY2026 Projected	FY2026 Projected
Total School Budget	\$55,259,786	\$55,895,825	\$63,486,981	\$66,602,673	\$69,077,999	\$72,743,539	\$76,610,010
Total Municipal Budget	\$29,803,118	\$32,525,029	\$33,305,428	\$34,348,190	\$35,207,789	\$36,089,327	\$36,993,374
Total Facilities Budget	\$5,739,210	\$6,948,107	\$7,519,388	\$7,477,207	\$7,650,215	\$7,827,386	\$8,008,826
Total Benefits	\$23,713,401	\$26,337,631	\$26,214,185	\$26,599,473	\$27,312,520	\$28,045,704	\$28,799,596
Total Other Shared Expenses	\$1,560,307	\$2,151,500	\$1,919,332	\$1,838,775	\$1,940,841	\$2,051,077	\$2,170,197
Total Capital-Related Expenses	\$5,000,682	\$5,156,944	\$5,248,080	\$5,342,094	\$5,444,885	\$5,555,037	\$5,670,375
Total Expenses	\$121,076,504	\$129,015,035	\$137,693,395	\$142,208,411	\$146,634,249	\$152,312,070	\$158,252,378
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)		\$0	\$0	(\$10,195,855)	(\$10,711,711)	(\$12,385,843)	(\$14,226,426)

Compensation Costs

Total Employee compensation represents over two-thirds of Belmont’s operating budget. Many municipal and school employees are unionized, with contracts that typically last three years. All union contracts have been settled and on the Municipal side, Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) were negotiated at 2% staggered in length over the next several years. The School’s COLAs were negotiated for the various units and groups as shown in the table below. With contracts settled, the focus should be on managing FTE growth especially at the schools because if total compensation costs continue to rise faster than Belmont’s sustainable revenue growth of 3-3.5%, pressure will continue to mount for further operating overrides or great cuts in service.

Unit	Titles	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
A	All Members	2.75%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
B	All Members	Range: 0.91%-16.04% (\$1,000-\$15,070/yr)	Range: 2.75%-4.00% per person, based on performance	Range: 2.75%-4.00% per person, based on performance	Range: 2.75%-4.00% per person, based on performance
C	Administrative Assist	2.75%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
C	Clerical Aide	Range: 10.6%-18.9%, based on step (\$1.82-\$2.88/hr)	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
D	Prof Aide	2.75%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
D	Classrm Assist	Increase to Prof Aide rates	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
D	Campus Monitor	Increase to Building Sub rates	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
D	Building Sub	Range: 2.75%-4%, based on step (\$0.65-\$0.84/hr)	2.5%, additional 0.25% for top step	2.50%	2.50%
AFSCME	Custodial & Maintenance	3.85%-14%, based on step (\$0.79-\$3.84/hr)	2%	2%	Contract expires end of FY24
AFSCME	Food Service: Paid entirely from program; no general fund cost	15.8%-39.8% (\$2.21-\$7.35/hr)	2%	2%	Contract expires end of FY24

Mandated School Costs

Special Education (SPED) and English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment, which require mandated and sometimes costly services, have grown significantly in FY23 with the cost pressures expected to continue in FY24. More than half of the increase in the school budget for FY24 comes from [OOD costs](#) both in terms of the number of students up 26% and OOD tuition costs up 14%, the latter a new state mandate. More information on this is in the Education section of this report.

Capital Projects

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (“CCBC”) identifies and recommends capital projects that can be funded within the annual operating budget allocations each year. For FY24, the CCBC’s discretionary budget is \$1.8 million which is significantly down from the uncharacteristically high \$3.3 million in FY23 which was due to one-time turnbacks from completed capital projects in prior years and another \$1 million from the sale of the Cushing Square parking lot and the proceeds must be used for capital projects. FY24 is more in line with historical trends and is 2.0% above FY22.

It has been acknowledged for several years now that the Town has not had adequate resources to keep up with its capital investment needs. Prior analysis, corroborated by municipal budget experts, suggests approximately \$3 million is the appropriate level for Belmont’s annual Capital Discretionary Fund. With recent inflation and construction cost escalation, the cost of infrastructure upgrades and critical capital equipment purchases continues to grow. Belmont continues to face the challenge of maintaining our capital infrastructure, roughly 1,000,000 square feet, with annual discretionary capital investment at current levels.

Belmont must also periodically fund major capital projects investment which is typically done through debt exclusions. One such project is the Belmont Middle and High School building project. The first phase of the project was completed in September of 2021 and grades 9-12 were welcomed to the new building for the start of the school year. Construction on the second phase of the project for the Upper Middle School - grades 7 and 8 - will be completed this summer and ready for the fall. A debt exclusion was approved by the residents in November of 2022 for a new library at \$34.4 million with demolition beginning before the end of 2023 and the project is expected to be complete in fall of 2025. A debt exclusion for a new ice-skating rink was approved by the residents in April of 2023 for \$28.7 million with demolition beginning before the end of 2023 as well. The goal is for the rink to be completed by the end of November in 2024 resulting in only one season of hockey being disrupted.

The great challenge in planning major capital projects is finding solutions that minimize the tax burden. For instance, the stages of design development for the Community Path are being funded through the Community Preservation Committee, with construction to be funded largely by state and/or federal sources.

Long-term capital planning for the Town’s ongoing capital and infrastructure needs is critical. To support this effort a new Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) that combines the Long-Term Capital Planning Committee and Capital Budget Committee was approved by Town Meeting in May 2022 and implemented in the Fall of 2002 after approval by the Massachusetts Attorney General. The new CCBC plans to continue developing annual capital planning recommendations for Town Meeting but will also prepare multi-year capital plans to help guide prudent long-term capital allocations.

Unfunded Pension and Healthcare Liabilities

Pension, OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) are discussed in detail.

Departmental Budgets

Education

Budget by Source of Funds	FY24		Change from FY23			FTE	
	Budget in \$	% of Operating Budget	In \$	In %	Share of Total \$ Change	Total	Δ from FY23
Total General Fund Allocation	\$63,486,981						
Less: Replenish SPED Reserve	-600,000						
General Fund Operating Budget	\$62,886,981	87.8%	\$6,991,156	12.5%	121.5%	540	11
Grants & Revolving Funds	7,733,911	10.7%	-700,098	-8.3%	-12.2%	33	-2
COVID-Relief Funds	965,160	1.3%	-535,200	-35.7%	-9.3%	9	-13
Total Operating Budget	\$71,586,052	100.0%	\$5,755,858	8.7%	100.0%	582	-4
Total School Department	\$72,186,052						

School Department Overview

The School Department budget consists of three funding sources: the General Fund (which is financed by the Town of Belmont), grants from federal and state sources, and revolving funds (which represent fee-based programs).

Beginning in FY24, fringe benefits and facility expenses (custodians) have been reassigned to the Shared Services category in the Belmont Town budget. The FY23 budgeted fringe benefit and facility expenses have been excluded from this presentation to provide an accurate comparison to the prior year.

The Total General Fund (GF) budget presented by the School Department is \$63,486,981, which includes a \$600,000 allocation that is intended to be transferred to the department's Special Education reserve and does not represent an expected FY24 expenditure. To provide accurate year over year analyses in this report, this allocation has been excluded from the GF amounts discussed below.

FY24 GF Expenditures total \$62,886,981, an increase of \$6,991,156, or 12.5% from FY23. Including grants and revolving funds, the FY24 School Department budget is \$71,220,892. The total FY24 department budget from all sources, including non-recurring COVID-relief funding, is \$72,186,052, which is 9.4% higher than FY23.

As summarized below and detailed in the following sections, the primary drivers of the FY24 GF increase are an unprecedented increase in out-of-district (OOD) placements and the corresponding costs, and a 6.1% increase in budgeted salaries over FY23. Total Special Instruction increases account for 75% of the General Fund budget increase.

General Fund Expenses by Category

General Fund Breakdown	FY 24		Change from FY 23			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Total Budget	In \$	In %	Share of Total \$ Change	FY24	Δ from FY23
Regular Instruction ¹	\$27,603,413	43.9%	\$1,153,077	4.4%	16%	276	-2
Special Instruction ²	22,591,193	35.9%	5,256,549	30.3%	75%	159	11
Student & Instructional Services ³	7,673,880	12.2%	124,813	1.7%	2%	54	0
Leadership & Administration ⁵	4,400,319	7.0%	209,649	5.0%	3%	51	2
Contract Allowance & Fringe Benefits ⁴	618,176	1.0%	247,068	66.6%	4%	-	-
Operations ⁶	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	0%	-	-
Total General Fund Budget	\$62,886,981	100%	\$6,991,156	12.5%	100%	540	11

1. Core academic education for Grades K-12. Includes physical education, fine arts, music, etc.
2. Special Education, English Language Education, and Pre-K.
3. Guidance/Health/Psychological Services, Library/Technology, Curriculum/Staff Development, Food Services, Transportation, Athletics & Student Activities, METCO.
4. Allowance for future union contract increases.
5. District-Wide Administration, Individual School Administration, Legal.
6. Reassigned to the Municipal Budget

The table above shows the major program categories funded by the General Fund (GF), which is the portion of the School Department’s expenditures that is appropriated by Town Meeting. Separately, grants and revolving funds (excluding one-time COVID funds and the \$600,000 state aid allocation for the Special Education (SPED) reserve) utilized in the FY24 budget total \$8,833,911, \$281,098 less than FY23. Grants and revolving funds represent 10.7% of department budgeted expenditures and are an important additional recurring source of revenue.

The FY24 GF budget is increasing by \$6,991,156, or 12.5% compared to FY23. 93% of the increase is accounted for within the Special Instruction, Regular Instruction and Student and Instructional Services program categories.

- Regular Instruction represents approximately 43.9% of the total General Fund Budget and is increasing by \$1,153,077, or 4.4%. Contributing to this increase are annual step and lane salary increases for teachers and other staff, partially offset by a net reduction of 1.9 FTE.
- Special Instruction represents the cost of out-of-district tuitions and transportation, in-district special educators and accompanying services, English Language Education, and Early Childhood

Education. Collectively, these programs represent almost 35.9% of the total GF budget and 75%, or \$5,256,549, of the \$6,991,156 total GF increase.

- Out-of-District expenditure increases totaling \$4,064,809, driven by private and collaborative tuition increases, account for 77% of the \$5,256,549 FY24 SPED increase. As discussed in the Special Instruction section, this increase is driven by 1) an unprecedented rise in the number of students placed out of district in FY23 and continuing into FY24, 2) a 14% state approved increase in private placement tuition rates, and 3) a partial replenishing of SPED reserves in FY24 that were depleted in FY23.
- In-District special instruction expenditure increases totaling \$945,794, driven by step and lane compensation increases and the hiring and/or proposed hiring of ten additional FTEs since the FY23 budget was prepared, account for 10.5% of the \$5,256,549 FY24 Special Instruction increase.
- English Language Education and Early Childhood Education increases totaling \$245,946 account for the remaining 5% of the \$5,256,549 FY24 Special Instruction increase and are driven mainly by the addition of 2.8 FTEs in the English Language Education program partially offset by the reduction of 2.0 FTEs in the Early Childhood Education program.
- Student & Instructional Services represents approximately 12.2% of the FY24 GF budget and is increasing by \$124,813, or 1.7%. This increase is driven primarily by step and lane compensation increases, an increase of approximately one FTE at the Belmont Middle and High School, and various other offsetting reallocations within the program.
- Leadership & Administration represents 7.0% of the FY24 GF budget and consists of the Leadership and Administration staff located across the individual school buildings and the District Central office. This staff consists of Principals, Assistant Principals, the Superintendent's Office, and other administrative staff. This program line is budgeted to increase by \$209,649, or 5.0% in FY 24. This increase is caused primarily by compensation increases for principals and clerical staff at the Chenery Upper Elementary and Belmont Middle Schools, deferred compensation for several retiring senior staff, and the addition of two clerical staff at the new Belmont Middle School. Also, the Central Administration component of this category includes approximately \$313,000 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 School Department's expenditures by major functional category. Overall, salaries comprise approximately 82% of total costs; classroom teacher salaries are 51.4% of the total and are rising by \$1.88 million, or 6.2% over FY23. The increase in administration costs is driven primarily by the deferred compensation payouts and increases in principal and clerical salaries mentioned above.

General Fund Expenses by Function

General Fund Budget by Function	FY 24		Change from FY 23			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Gen. Fund Budget	In \$	In %	Share of Total \$ Δ	FY24	Δ from FY23
Classroom & Specialist Teachers	\$32,345,419	51.4%	\$1,877,170	6.2%	27%	318	9
Other Teaching Services	6,048,881	9.6%	258,188	4.5%	4%	110	-3
Instructional Leadership	4,837,428	7.7%	303,934	6.7%	4%	64	2
Pupil Services	4,034,280	6.4%	139,399	3.6%	2%	11	1
Guidance, Counseling & Testing	2,335,250	3.7%	196,770	9.2%	3%	22	1
Administration	1,977,432	3.1%	282,046	16.6%	4%	11	-
Subtotal	\$51,578,690	82.0%	\$3,057,507	24.2%	44%	536	11
Materials, Equipment & Tech.	1,922,520	3.1%	-13,263	-0.7%	0%	1	1
All Other	708,428	1.1%	651	0.1%	0%	2	-
Total In-District	\$54,209,638	86.2%	\$3,044,895	6.0%	44%	540	11
Payments: Out-Of-District Schools	\$8,677,343	13.8%	\$3,946,261	83.4%	56%	-	-
Total General Fund Budget	\$62,886,981	100.0%	\$6,991,156	12.5%	100%	540	11

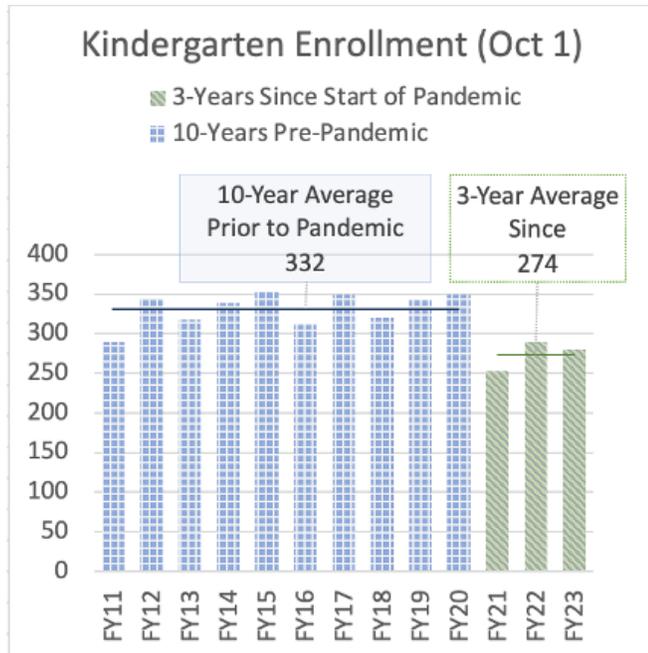
Enrollment

After ten years of increases, total enrollment is no longer a driver of higher costs or staffing increases. Enrollment is reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on October 1 each year.² In FY23, Pre-K through 12th grade enrollment rose by 52 students, from 4,356 to 4,378. The district’s total enrollment was down about 7% from its peak of 4,700 in FY20—a statewide and national trend attributed to parents choosing alternative schooling for their children. Total enrollment remains significantly lower than was projected in 2016 and 2018,³ when Belmont planned and approved the new Middle and High School.

² Source: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/enroll/default.html?yr=2223>, Enrollment by District/Grade, 2003-2023 as of Oct 1st each fiscal year.

³ Updated Enrollment Projections From McKibben Associates, March, 2018: <https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/docs/scpublicdocuments/2017-18/EnrollmentSlidesREVISED2018-04-10-500pm4-18-18.pdf>

The decrease in total enrollment is concentrated among the youngest grades—those who entered kindergarten since the COVID-19 pandemic began. In the ten years prior to the pandemic, kindergarten enrollment averaged 332 students. In the three years since—FY21 through FY23—enrollment has averaged 274 students, a decrease of more than 17% from the average of the prior ten years. The net effect at the elementary level is a decrease of 241 students since October 2019.



Shifting Resources to Larger Grades

With fewer students in the youngest grades and more constant enrollment in grades 7-12, the School Department has reduced the number of elementary classrooms and increased staff at the Middle and High School to help reduce class sizes. For more information about these changes, see the Departmental Staffing section later in this report.

Lower Grades are Growing, but Will Still be Smaller than Graduating Classes

It is not yet clear if the decrease in public school enrollment during the pandemic is a lasting change, a temporary shift, or the start of a new trend—making future enrollment difficult to project. New students are being added to the lowest grades each year. Based on school department data, FY23’s 2nd grade has added 40 students since kindergarten two years ago (from 253 to 293 students); and 1st grade added 21 students in one year. However, these elementary grades are still smaller than the FY23 graduating senior class (about 315 students) and the projected FY24 senior class (334 students).

Special Instruction – Enrollment

Special Instruction covers three categories:

1. Special Education (SPED) K-12 for Students with Disabilities⁴ (SWD)
2. English Language Education (ELE)⁵
3. Early Childhood Education Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)

Special Education (SPED) Services for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

SPED services and particularly out-of-district (OOD) tuitions for SWD are a major portion of the school budget. SPED services are a major source of budget increases, up 21% from FY23 for a total of \$24 million.

⁴ Students with Disabilities (SWD), often also referred to as SPED for the Special Education services they receive, are students who have some type of disability that affects their ability to make effective educational progress and requires special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or other services.

⁵ English Language Education (ELE) services support English Language Learners (EL) – students whose first language is not English and who are not yet able to perform ordinary classroom work in English.

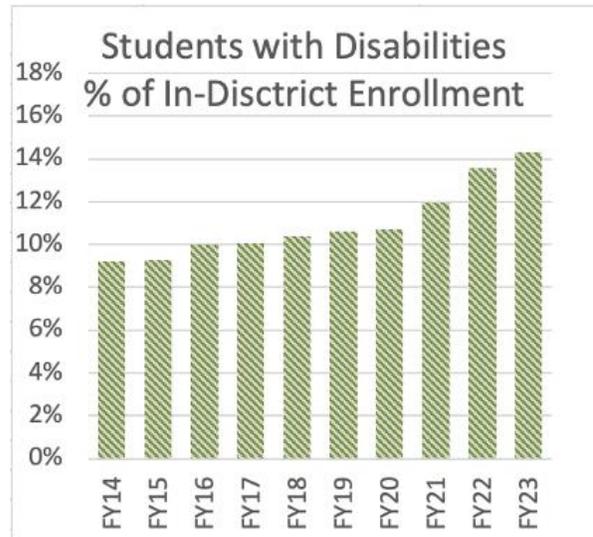
The increased costs of meeting increased numbers of SWD with more mandated services are compounded by the fact that these costs that are outpacing inflation and town revenue.

The Need for OOD Services Increased Significantly in FY23

The COVID-19 pandemic has coincided with an increase in SPED needs and OOD enrollment. SWD enrollment was relatively stable from October 2016 through October 2020 at about 10% of students. OOD enrollment unexpectedly jumped to 129 students as of October 2022, up 26% from 102 in October 2021. Because students are placed out of district throughout the school year as their needs are determined, this increase happened months after the FY23 budget was approved by Town Meeting. The School Department knows which students are expected to age out of SPED services, but it is difficult to predict individual needs for incoming students or those who have not completed their assessment process. The unanticipated needs have exceeded recent trends, stretched staff, depleted resources, and drained reserve accounts.

As total enrollment dropped from the 2019 peak, the number of SWD and particularly those whose right to access public education cannot be met in the district⁶, has increased about 40%. SWD now makes up more than 14% of enrollment.

SWD enrollment has increased from 513 in October 2019 (FY20) to 645 as of October 1, 2022.



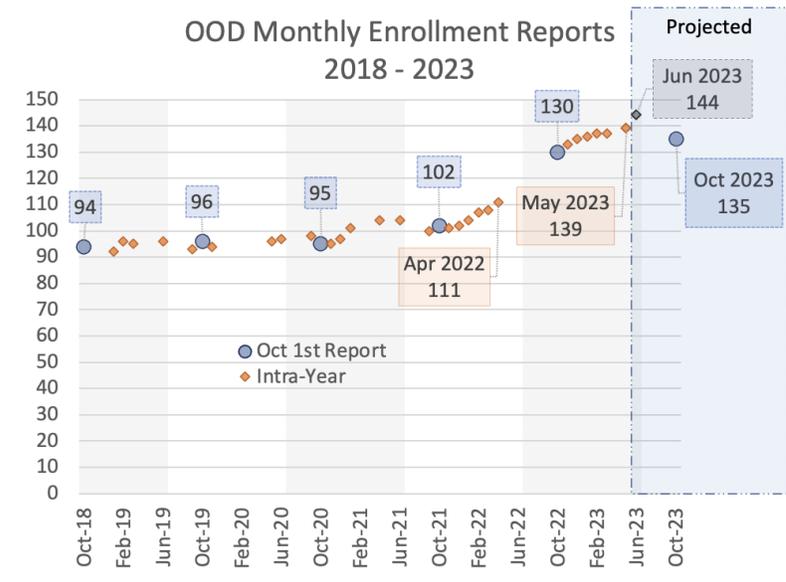
Students with Disabilities (SWD) as of Oct 1st

Fiscal Year	In-District Enrollment	# of SWD	# OOD	% of Total Enrollment	% SWD Placed OOD
FY14	4,205	394	83	9.2%	21.1%
FY15	4,283	405	93	9.3%	23.0%
FY16	4,362	444	98	10.0%	22.1%
FY17	4,466	458	104	10.0%	22.7%
FY18	4,592	486	107	10.4%	22.0%
FY19	4,628	500	94	10.6%	18.8%
FY20	4,700	513	96	10.7%	18.7%
FY21	4,420	540	95	12.0%	17.6%
FY22	4,356	604	102	13.5%	16.9%
FY23	4,378	645	130	14.3%	20.2%

⁶ Chapter 71B: Children with Special Needs: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71B>

Throughout the School Year, OOD Enrollments Have Increased Beyond Projections

SWD enrollment has continued to increase since the start of the school year. This has further strained the budget and left the School Department operating at a deficit and freezing most planned hiring and supply purchases since January 2023. SWD enrollment may change during the school year as assessments are completed or students move into or out of the district. The School Department reports enrollment (including SWD and OOD) several times during the school year.⁷



The OOD Monthly Enrollment Reports graph shows how OOD enrollment has changed since October 2018. After several years of stable OOD enrollments between 90 and 98 students, OOD enrollment has increased significantly in the past two years.

The FY22 school year began with 102 OOD students. OOD placements increased during the school year, reaching 111 by April 1, 2022. The FY23 school year began with 130 OOD students and has since added 9 more as of May 1st. Another 5 are anticipated by the end of the school year, bringing the anticipated total OOD enrollment for FY23 to 144 students (+14 since October 1).

English Language Education – Enrollment

Enrollment for English Language Education (ELE) increased to 443 students, including nine students identified by the ELE department between October and December 2022. The School Department has increased staff support and shifted resources to accommodate these increased needs. In addition, the ELE department tracks the progress of 494 former EL students. Current and former EL students represent about 21% of total enrollment.

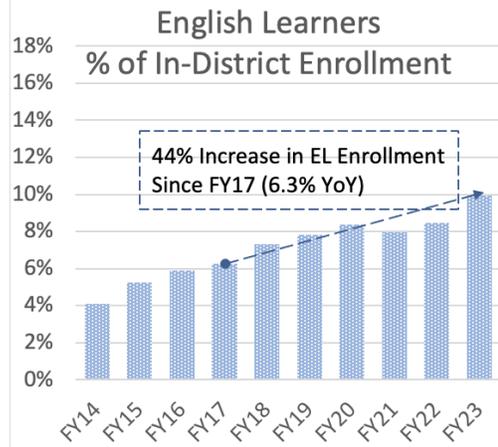
ELE Services and Enrollment are Concentrated at the Elementary Level

ELE services help students who are not yet academically proficient in English to access the curricula. In the short term, ELE increases the budget, because of higher costs and additional staffing to meet those students' needs. However, in the long term, ELE reduces costs by helping these students join mainstream classes and start learning in English at grade level. This investment is concentrated at the elementary level. More than half of Belmont’s EL students are in K to Grade 2. In FY23, 30% of kindergarteners were identified as EL students, and 20% of all K through 4 students.

⁷ Source: <https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Committee/Public-Documents/Search/enrollment>. The October monthly reports and the DESE numbers sometimes differed by one student. In these cases, the school department’s numbers were used.

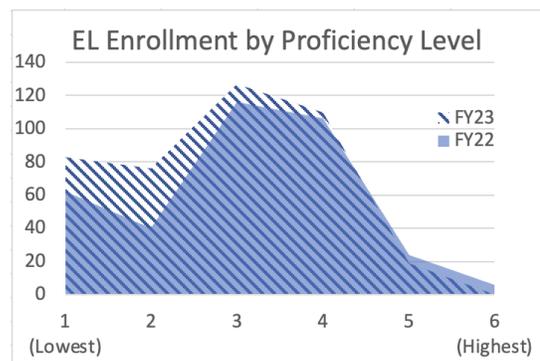
EL Enrollment Returns to Long-Term Trends

EL students made up about 4.1% of total enrollment as of October 2013 (FY14) and the number grew steadily each year through October 2019 (FY20). After an initial dip at the beginning of the pandemic, EL enrollment has returned to the level expected based on longer-term growth trends. From October 2021 through October 2022, EL enrollment grew by 65 students, to 10% of total enrollment. The ELE department reported⁸ in April 2023 that they expect EL enrollment growth rate of 3-7% per year, in line with the long-term trend, rather than the rapid increases seen after the dip early in the pandemic. This projection is based on the ELE department’s assessments completed during the first three months of the 2022-2023 school year.



EL Student Needs are Increasing

Almost all the EL enrollment growth is at the lowest levels of English proficiency. More than 83% of Belmont’s EL students have been in Massachusetts schools for three or fewer years and they may have little experience learning in English. The number of Belmont EL students at the two lowest levels of proficiency (level 1 and 2) increased by 57 students, from 102 (28.8% of EL) in FY22 to 159 (38.3% of EL) in FY23. Enrollment at the highest levels of proficiency (level 5 and 6) decreased from 30 to 19.



Exiting the EL program requires passing both quantitative and qualitative proficiency assessments of learning at grade level in English. Historically, most of Belmont’s EL students have achieved proficiency within 2-3 years, well exceeding the state standard of six years. The ELE department recently cautioned that looking forward, EL students may need increased time and support to exit the program, given pandemic-related interruptions to their education and their relative youth compared to EL students of the past.

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, including those enrolled in special instruction programs, are legally entitled to educational services provided by the Belmont Public Schools. The total SI FY24 General Fund budget is \$22.6 million, a 30% increase over the FY23 budget, of which SPED represents 90%. The 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, 95% of the increase in the FY24 SI budget consists of SPED in-district and OOD expenditures. These are described in detail below.

⁸ Source English Learners update at April 11, 2023 school committee meeting: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WYLzt1AsaAL5l6uljvhMDshKK8XKXi8/view> The ELE department measures enrollment about three months into the school year. This allows staff to assess most students’ needs. ELE December enrollment numbers may not match the October 1st numbers reported to DESE.

**FY 23-24 General Fund Special Instruction Budget
(Includes SPED, ELE and Early Education (Pre-K))**

	FY24		Change from FY23			FTEs	
	Budget in \$	% of Total SI Budget	In \$	In %	Share of Total \$ Change	FY24	Change from FY23
Special Education (SPED)							
In-District Expenditures							
Teachers, Aides & Admin	\$7,609,617	33.7%	\$843,305	12.5%	16%	130	10
Psych & Behavioral Therapy	1,181,753	5.2%	78,685	7.1%	1%	3	-
Program Svcs, Tutors & Supls.	1,124,029	5.0%	23,804	2.2%	0%	-	-
Total In-District	\$9,915,399	43.9%	\$945,794	10.5%	18%	132	10
OOD Expenditures							
Tuitions	\$8,677,343	38.4%	\$3,946,261	83.4%	75%	-	-
Transportation	1,812,087	8.0%	118,548	7.0%	2%	-	-
Total Out-of-District	\$10,489,430	46.4%	\$4,064,809	63.3%	77%	-	-
Total SPED	\$20,404,829	90.3%	\$5,010,603	32.5%	95%	132	10
English Language Education	1,560,257	6.9%	303,215	24.1%	6%	16	3
Early Childhood Ed. (Pre-K)	626,107	2.8%	-57,269	-8.4%	-1%	11	-2
Total Special Instruction (SI)	\$22,591,193	100.0%	\$5,256,549	30.3%	100%	159	11

Note: Budgeted OOD expenditures include \$600,000 intended to recapitalize 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.

Source: FY24 Budget, Draft 3 changes as of 3/10/23

English Language Education (ELE)

FY24 ELE expenditures are budgeted at \$1.6 million, a 24% increase from FY23. This reflects both mandated staffing hires made in FY23 to address an increase of 65 English Learner (EL) students over the summer of 2022, as well as mandated resources needed to support continued growth in EL students.

Early Childhood Education (Pre-School)

FY24 Pre-K expenditures are budgeted to decrease by \$57,000 or 8.4%. This reflects lower staffing needs related to lower enrollment levels.

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 most 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 the FY24 General Fund budget, due primarily to both anticipated and unanticipated increases in OOD tuitions. Total FY24 General Fund SPED expenditures are budgeted to grow by almost \$5.0 million or 32.5% compared to FY23. Of this increase, over \$4 million consists of an increase in the OOD tuition and transportation budget line, as discussed below. The number of in-district students requiring mandated services has grown significantly during the pandemic and these needs have been met with additional resources (teachers, aides, specialized FTEs, contractual services and other services). In-district expenditures are budgeted to increase by 10.5% (\$950,000).

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 varies by student, depending on the type of placement and the individual's needs, and is typically significantly higher than students served in-district.

As discussed earlier in the Enrollment section, the district experienced a dramatic increase in OOD placements and corresponding expenditures in FY23, which is forecast to continue in FY24. This, along with unprecedented increases in tuition rates and the need to build back essential reserves, contribute to a pronounced increase of \$4.1 million in General Fund OOD expenditures in FY24.

Three factors contributed to this \$4.1 million increase:

- **Increasing Number of OOD Students** - As described above in the Enrollment section, the district experienced in FY23 an unprecedented increase in the number of SWD whose needs could only be met out-of-district.⁹ This increase in private placements in FY23 is shown in the graph at right. The total increase in OOD placements from Oct 1, 2021 to May 1, 2023 has resulted in significant increases in OOD tuition and transportation expenditures. Actual FY23 total OOD tuitions are expected to exceed budgeted tuitions by \$1.9 million and deplete grant and SPED reserve funds.

⁹ Source: <https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Committee/Public-Documents/Search/enrollment> monthly enrollment reports to the School Committee

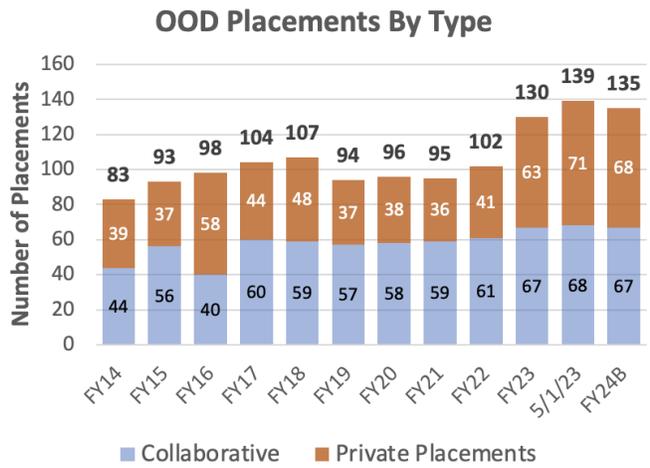
FY24

placements

are

estimated.

- State-Approved OOD Tuition Increases** - For FY24, the Massachusetts Operational Services Unit (OSU), which oversees tuition increases for approved residential and day special education schools, has set 14% “estimated rate of inflation” increase for SPED private school tuitions. This increase is based on a base inflation rate of 5.18% plus a 8.82% “workforce stability” factor to address hiring challenges and to replace state funding provided to the special needs schools during the pandemic. The 14% is significantly higher than in the prior 10 years, when increases ranged from 1.4% to 2.7%. per year. For collaborative tuitions, the OSU also approved a 5% FY24 tuition increase, which is also higher than prior years.



- Restoring Depleted OOD Reserves** - The sizable increase in FY24 budgeted General Fund (GF) OOD tuition expenses also reflects the restoration of a more typical OOD funding level, which had been reduced in FY23. That FY23 GF reduction meant that the School Department funded a higher portion of the OOD tuitions out of reserves that had accumulated in the prior years. The FY24 budget also includes a General Fund budget allocation sufficient to recapitalize \$607,605 in carry-forward reserves depleted by the unanticipated increases in FY23 tuitions. In addition, as noted at the beginning of this chapter and not included in the numbers referenced above and shown below, the General Fund budget being voted on by Town Meeting also includes an additional \$600,000 in funds to be appropriated by the School Committee to the SPED reserve fund (not yet voted on). This combined \$1.2 million recapitalization of reserves will be used to help cushion the impact of unanticipated and unbudgeted increases in OOD expenses in FY24. Any excess will be carried over as a budgeted funding source to cover FY25 tuitions expenditures.

Even though the FY24 OOD budget is increasing significantly, the projected numbers are subject to uncertainties that could result in unanticipated additional charges—for example, higher than projected increases in OOD placements and/or changes in the services needed for current placements. For FY24, the School Department projects that OOD placements will be relatively flat, because the number of SWD aging out will be replaced by a comparable number of new OOD placements. This does not include any new students who move into the district or additional students already in the district who are assessed as needing OOD placement during the next 18 months. Factors that could reduce the projected overall budget include the addition of two LABBB classrooms in Belmont, which will increase capacity for in-district collaborative programs available to students from all LABBB districts. Additionally, the School Department, town leaders and other districts are working with state legislators to identify additional state funding to cover a portion or all of the state’s unexpected and unusual 14% increase in SPED private school tuitions. Whether these factors, and others, will impact the FY24 overall OOD budget is not known at this time.

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 each year). In addition, any reserves carried forward from the prior year of federal and state grants can provide a buffer for unanticipated changes in OOD expenditures that occur during the year.

Based on the School Department’s most recent forecast (prepared in May 2023), FY23 OOD total tuitions are expected to be \$10.7 million. This will exceed the FY23 General Fund OOD budgeted amount of \$4.7 million, deplete \$4.6 million in prior year and current year grant reserves, draw down the entire SPED reserve balance of \$672,000, and require the School Department to reallocate funds from other GF accounts and/or seek a Warrant Committee reserve transfer to fund a projected FY23 deficit of \$355,000.

Total FY24 OOD tuitions are budgeted to increase by 31.7% over the prior year to \$11.6 million. The total GF OOD tuitions budget, including \$1.2 million to rebuild reserves depleted in FY23, is \$12,797,300, which is almost \$4 million higher than FY23.

Out-of-District Tuition Expenses by Placement Type and Funding Source

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23		FY24	Δ FY23 Budget - FY24 Budget	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Q3 Forecast	Budget	\$	%
Tuition Expenses by Placement Type								
LABBB Collaborative	\$3,420.4	\$4,026.0	\$3,805.4	\$3,944.6	N/A	\$4,573.0	\$628.4	15.9%
MA Public	\$63.1	-	\$32.9	\$165.7	N/A	\$47.3	-\$118.4	-71.5%
Private	\$4,213.7	\$4,016.1	\$4,401.4	\$4,380.8	N/A	\$6,811.0	\$2,430.2	55.5%
Out-of-State	\$144.0	\$33.6	\$129.8	\$310.9	N/A	\$158.4	-\$152.5	-49.1%
Total OOD Tuitions	\$7,841.1	\$8,075.6	\$8,370.0	\$8,802.0	\$10,694.2	\$11,589.7	\$2,787.7	31.7%
Tuition Expenses by Funding Source								
General Fund ¹	\$4,593.6	\$3,362.8	\$6,029.6	\$4,731.1	\$5,086.1	\$8,677.3	\$3,946.3	83.4%
GF SPED Reserve	-	-	-	-	\$672.9	-	-	-
Federal IDEA Grants	\$623.1	\$1,694.8	\$788.7	\$800.0	\$793.0	\$782.4	-\$17.6	-2.2%
MA Circuit Breaker ²	\$1,847.1	\$3,018.1	\$1,384.9	\$3,170.9	\$4,023.4	\$2,030.0	-\$1,140.9	-36.0%
LABBB Credits	\$777.3	-	\$166.3	\$100.0	\$118.8	\$100.0	-	-
Total Funding Sources	\$7,841.1	\$8,075.6	\$8,369.5	\$8,802.0	\$10,694.2	11,589.7	\$2,787.7	31.7%

1. FY23 Q3 Forecast assumes a forthcoming mid-year transfer out of the Warrant Committee reserve.
 2. FY23 Q3 Forecast includes \$180,960 in min-year Extraordinary Relief FY23 state Circuit Breaker funds.
 Sources: FY24 Budget, 5/09/23 Multi-Year SPED OOD Funding Plan (updated “Q3 Forecast”)

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 that the excess of available General Fund and grant funding sources over tuition costs in any year be rolled over (“carried forward”) into the next fiscal year. 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.

As described above, the unprecedented increase in FY23 OOD tuitions is forecast to completely deplete existing reserves, current year grants and the SPED Reserve Fund by the end of FY23. In FY24, the General Fund tuition budget will increase by almost \$4 million, including a \$1.2 million recapitalization of the reserves. Of this, the School Department will seek to allocate \$600,000 of the recently awarded increase in the town’s Chapter 70 state education funds to replenish the SPED Reserve Fund. The balance of \$607,605 will fall to School Department OOD reserves unless FY24 tuitions exceed the budgeted amount. These new reserves will support unbudgeted or other increases in FY24 OOD expenditures and/or carry forward into FY25, if possible.

In February 2023, the School Department applied to DESE for FY23 Circuit Breaker Extraordinary Relief funds. These funds are available for districts where current FY claimable SPED costs exceed 125% of the prior year’s claimable costs. In early May, the district was notified that it would receive \$180,960 in Extraordinary Relief funds to support FY23 OOD tuition expenditures.

Out-of-District Reserve Balances by Funding Source (\$)

	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	Q3 Forecast	FY24 Budget
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balances						
Belmont General Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-
GF SPED Reserve Fund	-	672,891	672,891	672,891	672,891	-
Federal IDEA Grants	261,491	659,635	-	-	10,631	-
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,854,447	1,822,990	627,109	1,499,531	1,502,200	-
LABBB Credits	175,227	-	-	-	-	-
Total Prior Year Balances	2,291,165	3,155,516	1,300,000	2,172,422	2,185,722	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation						
Belmont General Fund ¹	5,266,488	3,935,141	6,029,602	4,731,082	5,086,106	8,677,343
GF SPED Reserve Fund	-	-	-	-	-	600,000
Federal IDEA Grants	972,408	1,035,129	799,296	800,000	782,382	782,382
MA State Circuit Breaker ²	1,822,990	1,822,181	2,260,015	2,373,016	2,521,182	2,637,555
LABBB Credits	602,088	-	166,339	100,000	118,813	100,000

Total Current Year Allocation	8,663,974	6,792,451	9,255,252	8,004,098	8,508,483	12,797,280
Total Available Revenues	10,955,139	9,947,967	10,555,252	10,176,520	10,694,207	12,797,280
Less: Current Year Expenditure						
Belmont General Fund	4,593,597	3,362,773	6,029,602	4,731,082	5,086,108	8,677,343
GF SPED Reserve Fund	-	-	-	-	672,891	-
Federal IDEA Grants	623,137	1,694,764	788,665	800,000	793,013	782,382
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,847,064	3,018,062	1,384,924	3,170,889	4,023,382	2,029,950
LABBB Credits	777,315	-	166,339	100,000	118,813	100,000
Total Current Year Expenditure	7,841,114	8,075,599	8,369,530	8,801,971	10,694,207	11,589,675
Ending Carry-Forward Balances³						
GF SPED Reserve Fund	672,891	672,891	672,891	672,891	-	600,000
Federal IDEA Grants	610,762	-	10,631	-	-	-
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,830,373	627,109	1,502,200	701,658	-	607,605
Total Carry-Forward Balance	3,114,026	1,300,000	2,185,722	1,374,549	-	1,207,605

Note: Beginning reserves include SPED Reserve balances. FY24B CB includes \$607,605 in recapitalization of reserves through GF. Sources: 5/9/23 Multi-Year SPED OOD Funding Plan, FY24 Budget

1. FY23 Q3 Forecast assumes there will be a forthcoming mid-year transfer out of the Warrant Committee reserve.
2. FY23 Q3 Forecast includes \$180,960 in min-year Extraordinary Relief FY23 state Circuit Breaker funds.
3. Budgeted General Fund dollars cannot be carried over. They must be returned to the town as turnbacks. LABBB credits must be spent in the year they are received.

Sources: FY24 Budget, 5/09/23 Multi-Year SPED OOD Funding Plan (updated "Q3 Forecast")

Departmental Staffing

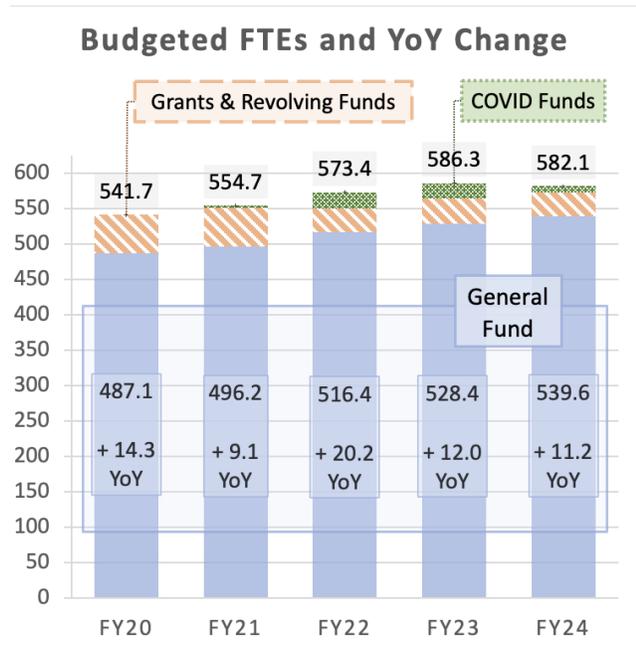
This section describes how staffing is changing in FY24 in the context of historical trends, how union contracts are affecting staffing costs this year, and use of federal funds to increase staffing during the COVID pandemic.

Staffing Changes in FY24

Budgeted FTEs in the School Department have a variety of funding sources, including the General Fund, grants and revolving funds, and in recent years federal COVID funds. These FTE counts for the past five years, their funding sources, and year-on-year (YoY) changes, are depicted in the graph to the right.

Belmont retains about 88% of teachers from one year to the next, which is approximately the median retention rate for a public school district with at least 100 teachers.¹⁰

NOTE: Historical full-time-employee (FTE) numbers have been adjusted to remove custodial staff and provide comparable numbers. For FY24, the Town updated its budgeting process, consolidating 20 custodians into the town's Facilities department. As a result, the FY24 School Department budget was reduced by \$1.2 million in related salary expenditures. The school custodial staff are still managed and overseen by the School Department.



Total Staffing Budgeted for FY24 Decreased from FY23

Staff paid from the General Fund increased by 11.2 from FY23, to 539.6 FTEs. After years of enrollment and staffing increases, student enrollment peaked in FY20, and budgeted FTEs peaked in FY23 at 586.3. The School Department's FY24 budget plans to staff seven schools with 582.1 FTEs, a decrease of 4.2 from the FY23 budget. This year-over-year change in total FTEs is highlighted in the shaded column of the chart, below. The year-over-year increase in General Fund FTEs is shown in the right-most column.

School Department Budgeted FTEs by Funding Source, FY15-FY24

Fiscal Year	General Fund	Grants & Revolving Funds	COVID Funding	Total FTEs	Year Over Year Δ	General Fund Year Over Year Δ
FY20	487.1	54.6	0.0	541.7	15.4	14.3
FY21	496.2	55.5	3.0	554.7	13.0	9.1
FY22	516.4	34.0	23.0	573.4	18.7	* 20.2
FY23	528.4	35.8	22.0	586.3	12.9	12.0
FY24	539.6	33.5	9.0	582.1	-4.2	11.2

* Note: The School Committee approved a switch to free full-day kindergarten in September 2020, after the FY21 budget was approved. As a result, all kindergarten FTEs previously funded by the full-day kindergarten revolving fund were moved into the General Fund budget, and this increase shows up in FY22.

¹⁰ Source: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/staffingRetentionRates.aspx> 2018-2023

Staffing Continues to Be Reallocated from the Smallest Grades to the Largest Grades

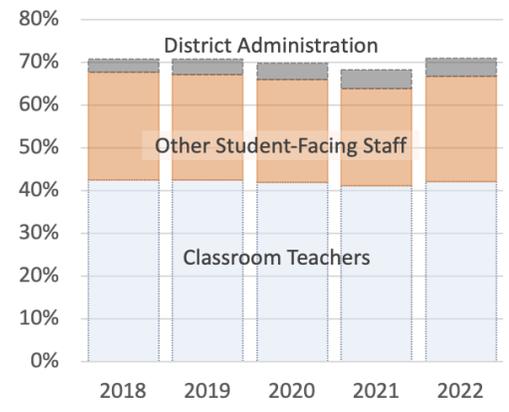
School staffing continues to shift throughout the district, particularly since the pandemic and as larger grades progress through the school system. The FY24 budget reduces K-4th grade regular instruction staff by 9.5 FTEs. Shifting educators in response to total expected enrollment for FY24 has a small effect on the budget as staffing needs have increased at the high school level where grades 9-11 are expected to average about 360 students each. For the 2022-2023 school year, 31% of high school classes have 27 students or more.¹¹ The reductions in general education staff are also offset by needing to add special instruction educators for mandated services.

67% of In-District Spending is for Student-Facing Salaries

For FY22, the most recent completed fiscal year, about 67% of spending was for staff salaries in five student-facing categories:

Classroom Teachers	42.0%
Other Teaching Services (substitutes, therapeutic staff, paraprofessionals, librarians, and distance learning)	7.9%
Pupil Services (liaisons, medical staff, transportation, food services, athletics, security)	7.5%
Instructional Leadership	5.7%
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	3.7%

Percentage of In-District Per-Pupil Spending on Staff



Cumulative Staff Changes Over the Past Four Years

In recent years, total staff growth has been concentrated in Special Instruction and COVID / grant positions. The right-most column is the total FTE growth since the FY20 budget.

¹¹ Source: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19kHhJdm7QfCZ9n8PQ2tfuysB9grXbeWce8OFqaSbUI4/edit#slide=id.g172fd9079a9_0_0

Cumulative Change in School Department Actual FTEs Since the FY20 Budget

	FY20 Budget	Δ FY20 Actual	Δ FY21 Actual	Δ FY22 Actual	Δ FY23 Actual (Q2)	Δ FY24 Budget
Regular Instruction	284.3	-1.3	-2.0	-5.4	-4.3	-7.6
Special Instruction	132.5	11.0	14.5	18.7	25.8	30.6
Student & Instructional Services	81.0	-0.5	0.3	1.1	0.2	1.2
Leadership & Administration	43.9	0.9	0.3	4.1	5.2	7.2
COVID / One-Time Grants	0.0	0.0	3.0	13.4	14.8	9.0
Total	541.7	551.8	557.8	573.6	583.4	582.1
Δ vs FY20 Budget		10.1	16.1	31.9	41.7	40.4

Budget Flexibility After Town Meeting Approves the Budget

The School Department’s staffing plans often change over the summer and during the school year, enabled by moving dollars from other items in the detailed budget. Some of the sources of budget flexibility are different in FY24 than previous years:

- **Staffing vacancies:** Vacant positions are allotted a full year’s salary in the budget and funds accumulate every month the position remains unfilled. These budgeted but unspent dollars can be used later in the year for other needs. A combination of vacant and not-yet-filled positions were used to fund one EL teacher and the one-year Director of District Reconfiguration Transition position for FY23.¹²
- **Staff exchange:** Unplanned staff turnover and leaves of absence during the school year typically result in budget savings, known as “staff exchange.” The replacement hire often has a lower salary than budgeted. In the past five fiscal years, staff exchange has returned a median of \$560,000.¹³ The School Department identified \$418,000 in staff exchange during FY23, in line with the \$400,000 in staff exchange accounted for in the budget.¹⁴ In FY24, the School Department budgeted for \$134,316 in staff exchange.
- **Fringe Benefits:** Starting with FY24, fringe benefits are no longer part of the school budget. Health insurance and worker's compensation insurance budgets were rarely fully expended because staff sometimes decline benefits or select a cheaper plan. Fringe benefits returned a median of \$222,000 a year since FY14.

Unbudgeted Staffing Changes During FY23

The School Department added 6.59 FTEs to the General Fund in FY23 for EL instruction, the required removal of the 4th grade strings fee, a reading/ELA teacher, and two additional aides. Despite a \$538,000¹⁵

¹² Source: https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/docs/scpublicdocuments/2021-22/Revenue_Sources_Reallocation_FY23_Slides.pdf

¹³ Epstein memorandum re staff exchange, dated January 3, 2023

¹⁴ Source: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bE5c0Fu-jLGPHUmYFHARiHM40NjnHHU/view>

¹⁵ \$418,000 in staff exchange as of Q1 plus \$520,000 in fringe benefits, minus the \$400,000 in planned staff exchange.

surplus from staff turnover, leaves of absence, and fringe benefits, by the end of Q2 the schools were projecting a budget deficit for FY23 due to unexpected costs for SPED services. The school implemented a spending freeze and a hiring freeze for non-mandated hires starting in January 2023. The tangible staffing consequences include reduced nurse coverage, fewer building substitutes, and fewer METCO aides.

Additional Staffing is Typically in Response to Mandated Needs

Increased needs due to COVID, SWD and EL students have driven staffing increases and adjustments to staffing plans formed the previous spring. The table below shows the difference between FTEs specified in the detailed budget plan presented at Town Meeting, and the School Department’s actual staff in that fiscal year. Since FY20, school staffing has changed to respond to decreased enrollment, increased SPED needs, and difficulty hiring COVID funded positions in FY22.

Budget Category	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Regular Instruction	-1.4	-0.7	1.7	-0.1
Special Instruction	11.0	3.5	3.2	5.1
Student & Instructional Services	-0.5	0.8	2.1	-0.8
Leadership & Administration	0.9	-0.6	2.8	0.1
COVID & One-time Grants	0.0	0.0	-9.7	-7.2
Total	10.0	3.0	0.1	-2.9

The School Department continues to see growing needs for Special Instruction, and the district has budgeted 162 positions for FY24—an increase of more than 29 FTEs since the FY20 budget. However, as seen in the past few years, changes in the SWD cohort may result in staffing changes to meet mandated needs. English Language teachers are budgeted to increase in FY24 by 2.6 FTE to 14.8, up from 12.2 in FY23.

Staff Reconfiguration of Belmont Middle School and Chenery Upper Elementary School

The Belmont Middle School (BMS) will open in the fall of 2023, for grades 7 and 8. At that time, the Chenery Middle School (CMS), which previously educated students in grades 5 through 8, will become the Chenery Upper Elementary School (CUE) and, in the 2023-24 academic year, will educate students in grades 5 and 6. There will be a second transition in the 2024-25 academic year, when the four elementary schools, which have covered grades K through 4, will shift to K through 3, and the CUE will cover grades 4 through 6.

To handle staffing needs of the new BMS and due to the reconfiguration of grades, additional hires are being made in the FY24 budget. In addition, many staff positions that were previously in the CMS budget are now being split between BMS and CUE. The new hires that the School Department has determined are necessary for this reconfiguration total 16.08 FTEs for a total cost in FY24 of \$1.4 million. These new hires are listed below.

Newly Hired Positions to Staff CUE, BMS and BHS

Reconfiguration Position	Rationale	FTE
Principal BMS	School leadership currently not in place	1.0
Administrative Assistant BMS	School support currently not in place	1.0
Clerical Aide BMS	School support currently not in place	1.0
Speech & Language Pathologist BMS	Must meet need student need for mandated services	1.0
Tech/Engineering (or similar) BMS	Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for schedule	1.0
Health BMS	Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for schedule	1.0
Special Education (KEY Prog) BMS	Needed FTE to support high need students	2.0
School Psychologist BMS	Must meet student need for mandated testing	1.0
Nurse BMS	Mandated need. Student/nurse ratio	0.4
Art CUE	Needed FTE to meet instruction gap in new schedule	0.6
PE CUE	Needed FTE to meet instruction gap in new schedule	0.6
Collab Pianist CUE	Needed for support of large music classes	0.5
Nurse BHS	Mandated need. Student/nurse ratio.	0.4
English Language Education 7-12	Needed for mandated services	0.6
Curriculum Coordinator CUE	Needed to provide curriculum support, teacher evaluations	2.0
Core subject teachers at BHS	Needed FTE to reduce class size	2.0
Total		16.1

Note that two additional FTE custodians that are needed for the configuration will be added in FY24 but are not listed here. Because school custodial costs have been moved to the Facilities Department budget in FY24, the additional 2 FTE appear in that department's budget.

These hires have all been determined by the School Department as necessary for the reconfiguration. Most of these hires are necessary for the staffing of the new BMS building, and others are being added to facilitate scheduling issues, mandated service enhancements, and reduce class sizes at BHS.

Redeployment of Staff Due to Enrollment Changes

In addition to those staff changes related to reconfiguration, there are some further staff changes in which some positions are being eliminated and some added to respond to enrollment changes throughout the rest of the system. In general, enrollments are currently higher at the High School and lower at the elementary schools. Therefore, some FTEs are being shifted in response. These staffing changes are listed in the table below and result in no net change in FTEs.

Reduce	FTE	Redeploy	FTE
Grade K teacher	1.0	Computer Science teacher BHS	1.0

Grade K assistant	1.0	Science teacher BHS	1.0
Grade 1 teacher	1.0	Math teacher BHS	1.0
Grade 3 teacher	1.0	Social Studies teacher BHS	1.0
World Languages CUE	0.4	World Language CUE	0.2
Tech Engineering CUE	0.4	ELE CUE-BMS-BHS	0.6
Health CUE	0.4	Nurse BHS	0.4
Total	5.2	Total	5.2

Union Contracts

Salary expenses are the single biggest component of the School Department budget, representing about 72% of the Department’s total FY24 budget and about 74% of the FY24 General Fund budget¹⁶. The School Department has contracts with four separate units of the Belmont Education Association (BEA) – Unit A (teachers and educators), Unit B (directors and assistant principals), Unit C (administrative assistants and clerical aides), and Unit D (classroom assistants and aides) – and with The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) for food service workers and custodians.

As is typical in Massachusetts, all of the union contracts provide for annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs). In addition, all contracts except for BEA Unit B have a system of “steps,” which provide employees with annual pay increases over and above the COLA. The Unit A contract, which covers about 60% of School Department employees, has a total of 14 steps, with pay increasing annually until a teacher reaches 15 years of service, at which point they only receive COLA increases. The Unit C and D contracts have from three to six steps, with pay increases after reaching periodic years of service milestones. The Unit B contract has specific identified salaries for individual positions, with the ability to earn additional merit-based increases.

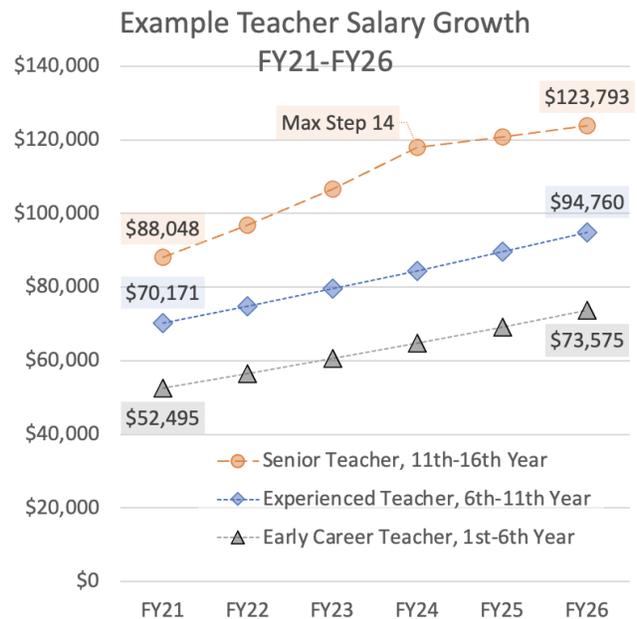
In addition to the steps, the Unit A contract also has a series of “lanes,” which provide teachers with additional pay increases for academic achievements, specifically for obtaining master's and doctorate degrees. The individual Unit A steps vary somewhat by years of service and by lane, but they average about 4.5% - 4.75% per year in addition to the COLA. The lane increases, which occur less frequently, vary by individual step, but average about 7.5% for earning a master’s degree and about 10.5% for earning a doctorate.

In late June 2022, the School Committee reached agreement with the BEA and AFSCME on new contracts for all units, retroactive to the beginning of FY22. The contracts with the BEA run through FY25; the contract with AFSCME runs through FY24. The changes to the individual contracts vary, but in general, the annual COLA increases for the BEA contracts amounted to 2.75% for FY22 and 2.5% for each of the remaining years. Additionally, the Unit C contract and the AFSCME contract also had significant one-time adjustments, retroactive to FY22, to increase salaries on the low end of the scale, with annual COLA increases of 2-2.5% thereafter.

¹⁶ FY24 Staffing and Salary table prepared by the School Department, dated May 12, 2023.

The chart to the right provides a visual example of how the COLA and steps/lanes increase the salary of three hypothetical Unit A teachers, who all joined the district in September 2020. The chart assumes a 2.5% COLA for FY26. The contract encourages continuing education and compensates teachers for completing additional credit hours.

One teacher is just starting their career having earned a bachelor's degree and 15 additional credit hours. Their starting salary in FY21 would be \$52,495 and grow to \$73,575 in the 6th year (about 7% YoY). The second teacher already has five years' experience when they join the District, has a master's degree, and 15 additional credit hours. This educator has a starting salary of \$70,171 in FY21, and it grows about 6% YoY to \$94,760 by FY26, when they will be in their 11th year of teaching. The third is a senior teacher who already has ten years' experience in FY21, with a master's degree and 45 additional credit hours. They start at \$88,048 annual salary, and after reaching the max step 14 in FY24, receive only COLA adjustments from then onward. In FY26, now in their 16th year of teaching, they would make about \$123,793.



The combination of the step and lane increases in the union contracts mean that total departmental salary expenses increase faster than the COLA percentage alone. For FY24, the School Department has calculated that the aggregate rolled-forward salary increase from FY23 to FY24 for existing employees will be 6.13%.¹⁷ To be fair, however, that annual percentage increase slightly overstates the true annual rate of salary increase attributable to the new contracts. This is because the department based its FY23 budget on an estimate of the then-unsettled union contract salary scale and that estimate turned out to be about 1% less than the final settled contract amounts.

For FY25 (the final year of the current contract), the department is projecting that the annual percentage increase for the teaching (Unit A) positions will be 5.05%. That percentage is somewhat below the percentage increase that is obtained by simply adding the COLA to the aforementioned average step increases because of the variance in individual salary increases by step, and because of the impact of teachers who are at the maximum step. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that, even with no incremental change to staffing levels, these contractual budgetary increases significantly exceed the town's recurring revenue growth under Proposition 2½ constraints.

Federal Funds

Cumulative non-recurring federal and state sources of COVID-relief total close to \$5.5 million from FY21-FY24. In the initial year of the pandemic (FY21), about 70% of the funds were used for supplies to support in-home learning (Instructional Supplies and Technology Equipment & Software categories above) or to prepare for a return to in-person learning (Medical/Building Supplies and Building Equipment categories). Since then, most of the COVID-relief funds has gone towards salaries and services to support students

¹⁷ FY24 FTE Change Detail worksheet presented to the School Committee on January 3, 2023.

with the transitional needs associated with a return to in-person learning and learning loss from the COVID years, needs arising from SPED and increased social-emotional needs among the entire school population, and increases to the nursing staff.

In FY23, the School Department budgeted \$1.5 million in available COVID-relief grants to fund a total of 22 FTEs: 2.0 Math Specialists (Elementary), 4.0 Social Workers, 4.0 Building Substitute Teachers, 8.0 METCO Aides, 1.0 Nurse (district-wide), 1.0 Special Ed Teacher (Transition Room), 1.0 Technology Integration Specialist, 0.4 Assistant Principal (Elementary) and 0.6 High School Educators.

The Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is the only COVID-related source of funds that remains available to the School Department in FY24. ARPA funds must be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.¹⁸ The Select Board approved the School Department's use of \$1.876 million of Town ARPA funds for FY24 and FY25, and the department proposes to use \$965,000 in FY24 to fund the 9.0 FTEs listed below and use the remaining \$911,000 in FY25. **Proposed Use of ARPA Funds in FY24**

FTE and Role	Budgeted Salary
1.6 Nurses District-Wide	\$199,909
0.4 Assistant Principal (Elementary)	49,836
2.0 Math Specialists (Elementary)	220,613
2.0 Social Workers (CUE)	167,527
2.0 Social Workers (BHS)	199,755
1.0 Special Education Teacher (Transition Room, BHS)	127,521
Total	\$965,160

Summary and Recommendations

Risks

- Out-of-district (OOD) enrollment increases beyond what is currently projected and/or there are other unanticipated tuition and/or transportation increases.
- The School Department and School Committee conclude during the year that there is a need for additional unbudgeted hiring, to meet Special Education (SPED), English Language Education (ELE), or other needs.
- Fringe benefits being moved from the School Department budget removes a source of budget flexibility. Because that line item often had a positive variance, savings in that account previously could be used to cover unexpected costs in other areas.

Outlook for FY25 and Beyond

- Salary increases built into the current union contracts exceed the growth rate of recurring revenue to the town. The current union contracts expire at either the end of FY24 or FY25, depending on the specific contract. These contracts will need to be renegotiated.

¹⁸ Source: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery (CSLFR) Final Rule, <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf>, page 43, "Timeline For Use of Funds." The Treasury Department further clarified "obligation" and using funds for payroll in the CSLFR Final Rule FAQ, question 13.17, <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-FAQ.pdf>, page 57

- Continued increases in staffing levels will add to the town’s structural deficit.
- Funding for the positions currently paid for using federal COVID-relief funds runs out after FY25. The positions funded with those dollars were intended to be temporary. To the extent that 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.
- Future enrollment trends – overall, by age cohort, or by individual student populations – are unknown and could have unforeseen impacts on departmental operations and budgets.

Recommendations

- The School Department should work collaboratively with the Town Administrator’s office and the Warrant Committee to incorporate best practices utilized by other neighboring communities to improve the budget development process and to complete the process earlier in the fiscal year. Examples of such enhancements could include a more explicit salary budget development model that provides a clearer understanding of the components of the budgeted salary increases and better incorporation of current fiscal year actuals into the budget. Additionally, the School Department should, as they did in this year’s budget, continue to ground the volatile OOD tuition budget numbers in explicit assumptions about projected enrollment by placement type and projected costs by placement type.
- The School Department should work collaboratively to enhance the on-going reporting throughout the year, including providing information on unbudgeted hires added throughout the year (such as rationale and cost impact) and potentially also including budget-vs.-actual numbers by budget category.
- While the Warrant Committee recognizes that the School Department and School Committee believe that there are significant unmet needs, the School Department’s budget growth rate is not sustainable in comparison to the town’s projected recurring revenue growth rate. The hiring of a new superintendent next year might present an opportunity to take a fresh look at the department’s operations, including conducting a comprehensive assessment of department costs and operations.
- The School Committee and members of the public have suggested that we might seek to provide more special education services within the Belmont schools. The Warrant Committee supports those efforts. The appeal of this initiative is primarily rooted in keeping students engaged with their peers and connected to their community. But also, from a budgetary standpoint, it may be less expensive to meet those SPED needs within the district versus sending students out of district.

Shared Services

Shared Services is a new approach to revenue allocation for FY24 described in the [Executive Summary](#). 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. The Shared Services budget for FY24 is \$54.8 million, about 38% of all projected revenue. The five biggest components are employee benefits (\$15.6 million), debt service (\$15.2 million), pension assessment (\$10.1 million), facilities (\$6.9 million), and certain capital investments (\$5.9 million).

Facilities

The Facilities Department is responsible for the maintenance and operation of both Town and School buildings. It also manages much of the capital investment the Town and Schools undertake. The Facilities Department has been moved to the new “Shared Services” category in the revised Town budget format to recognize that it is a town-wide department that serves all Town buildings, regardless of department. Since the merger of the separate Town and School facilities operations into a single town-wide Facility Department about six years ago, the department has become a model for one approach the town can undertake to improve efficiency. By having one Facilities Department, the town is improving coordination, ensuring better maintenance of assets, and avoiding duplicative costs. As is discussed in other parts of this report, as well as in the Structural Change Impact Group report, the Town may want to consider this organizational approach for other areas, such as IT.

FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

	Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY24 FTEs	FTE Change
Total Budget	\$7,519,388	571,281	8.22%	33	+22 (net increase of 2 after considering transfer of school custodians)

In FY24, all the school custodians and maintenance workers are being transferred from the School Department to the Facilities Department. This is a significant change that advances its mission as a town-wide department. As a result, Facilities Department FTEs are rising by 22. Transferred employees comprise all but two of these FTEs. Two new custodians are being added to serve the cleaning needs of the new Middle School.

The cost of custodial services for the Town and the School Department is moving in different directions due to different circumstances. The Town recently rebid its custodial services contract and that bid resulted in a drop of 14% in the custodial contract for the Town. The cost of custodial services for the schools is more complex. It includes the daytime custodians, who recently received a contractually obligated cost of living increase, as well as the cost of the night custodial service contract. As mentioned earlier, two new custodians also must be added to serve the new middle school. These factors lead to about a 42% increase in the cost of school custodial services.

Utilities are included in the Facilities Department and there are a few notable shifts:

- Natural gas: the school budget for gas is decreasing because the new Middle and High School does not use gas and because the Wellington gas boiler was updated and uses less fuel now. The Town gas budget is increasing because of the rise in gas prices.
- Electricity: Town electricity budget has decreased because the Town staff took a hard look at usage over the past few years and decided that we could accommodate a lower electrical budget. Note – the school electrical budget does not provide for savings from the PV solar array at the High School. After the financial results of the new array are visible to the Town, the budget will be adjusted in future years.
- Water: in FY23 the water and sewer fees were waived by those enterprise funds as a cost-saving measure for the Town. Such waivers are not sustainable for the enterprise funds and so the “wholesale” water and sewer charges have been reinstated. (“Wholesale” water and sewer covers only the MWRA charges and not the retail costs of service delivery.)

The Facilities Department supports, and in many cases leads, all the Town’s capital investment in buildings. This is very time-consuming and takes up most of the Director’s time.

Budget Risks/uncertainties in FY24

The transfer of the school custodians to the Facilities Department will result in a meaningful increase in management responsibility for Facilities, which is already thinly staffed at the management level. The progress of this transfer will need monitoring by the town and school department staff. The opening of the new Middle School is a major event for the Facilities Department, accompanied by some risk in initial operations.

The Facilities Department is overseeing many capital projects in the Town’s buildings, as well as participating in three major new buildings’ Building Committees. This management portfolio is wide, and the Town Administrator and the Facilities Director will need frequent communication to ensure that oversight is occurring for the many projects.

Outlook for FY25 and Beyond

The Facilities Department will oversee the operationalizing of two major buildings in FY25 and beyond – the rink and the library. These new facilities will require new types of maintenance and management. The Facilities Department may need additional management capacity to oversee these new assets.

Health Insurance

Org	Object	Description	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Approp.	FY2024 Request	FY2024 TA Rec.	Dollar Change	Percent Change
19141	518200	Town Retiree Health Insurance	\$ 1,599,018	\$ 1,560,949	\$ 1,757,729	\$ 1,798,748	\$ 1,549,991	\$ 1,549,991	\$ (248,757)	(13.8)%
5051605	517101	School Retiree Health Insurance	\$ 1,563,463	\$ 1,724,811	\$ 1,771,720	\$ 1,982,309	\$ 1,788,190	\$ 1,788,190	\$ (194,119)	(9.8)%
Total Retiree Health Insurance			\$ 3,162,481	\$ 3,285,759	\$ 3,529,448	\$ 3,781,057	\$ 3,338,181	\$ 3,338,181	\$ (442,876)	(11.7)%
19141	517000	Town Employee Health Insurance	\$ 3,029,119	\$ 2,932,976	\$ 2,838,755	\$ 3,454,596	\$ 3,254,049	\$ 3,254,049	\$ (200,547)	(5.8)%
5150603	517000	School Employee Health Insurance	\$ 6,160,289	\$ 6,116,858	\$ 6,307,820	\$ 6,613,680	\$ 7,515,731	\$ 7,077,903	\$ 464,223	7.0 %
Total Employee Health Insurance			\$ 9,189,408	\$ 9,049,834	\$ 9,146,575	\$10,068,276	\$10,769,780	\$10,331,952	\$ 263,676	2.6 %

*Figures have been restated for FY2020, FY2021, FY2022 and FY2023 to reflect the proposed combining of benefit lines in FY2024.

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 pricing. 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 15-20% of the total premium costs, depending on the negotiated union contract or employment agreement, and the Town’s General Fund covers the balance.

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. Based upon this analysis, FY24 health insurance premiums are projected to increase by 3%.

Health Insurance Expense Trends

Health insurance expenses are a significant portion of the Town's annual budget, reaching nearly 10% of the General Fund expenditures. Between FY16 and FY21, total annual health insurance costs for Town and School employees and retirees (as measured by contributions to the Trust) increased by a 5-year compound annual growth rate of 6.3%¹⁹, well above the Town's typical 3.0-3.5% recurring revenue growth. Health Insurance costs represent a consistent "budget buster" and have been a significant contributor to the Town's growing structural budget deficit.

FY24 Health Insurance Budget

For FY24, the Town and Schools' annual budget combines a number of shared and overlapping budget lines into a new Shared Services budget category. For example, Shared Services now included 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. Additionally, this approach should help inform the Town's exploration of a potential transition to Massachusetts' Group Insurance Commission (GIC) healthcare plans with the goal of reducing the Town's health insurance costs in future budget years.

The FY24 budget request for Town and School Retiree Health Insurance is \$3,338,181, a decrease of \$442,876 (-11.7%) from the prior year. The Shared Services aggregation process has allowed for the identification of budget efficiencies and improved forecasting which is reflected in the year-over-year budget reduction. The FY24 budget request for Town and Schools Employee Health Insurance is \$10,331,952, which is an increase of \$263,676 (2.6%) from the prior year. While some cost efficiencies were identified in this year's budget process, those employee health insurance savings have been offset by proposed increases in School staff for FY24. The comparatively modest increase in health insurance costs this year are likely efficiencies to be captured in a single year, and future health insurance cost increase are likely to return to prior growth trajectories, unless structural adjustments are made.

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 450,000 state and municipal employees, retirees, and their dependents, including the employees of 48 Massachusetts cities, towns, and school

¹⁹ Belmont [Structural Change Impact Group Final Report](#) (pg. 269)

districts.²⁰ This includes nearby communities such as Arlington, Bedford, Brookline, Hingham, Lexington, Somerville, Sudbury, Watertown, and Weston.²¹ 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.

Belmont has considered joining the GIC in recent years 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. In Belmont's case, the Select Board can initiate a transition of the Town and School employees and retirees into the GIC, but must first engage in negotiations with employees and retirees related to GIC plan selection, premium rations, withdrawal provisions, and disposition of remaining funds in the Health Insurance Trust. If a negotiated agreement related to a transition to the GIC cannot be reached, the Town's proposal can go to a State-sanctioned review panel, which may order the transition of the Town to the GIC, if the panel finds that the transfer would provide meaningful cost savings to the Town and would sufficiently mitigate the impact on those negatively affected by the transfer. As part of this process, municipalities that decide to join the GIC for the purposes of reducing healthcare costs must share a portion of the savings with employees and retirees as a way to mitigate any increases in subscriber costs.

²⁰ [GIC Participating Municipalities](#) from mass.gov.

²¹ Belmont [Structural Change Impact Group Final Report](#) (pg. 269)

A potential transition to the GIC could provide the Town with quantitative and qualitative benefits including:

- Potential reduction in annual health insurance premium for both employees and the Town
- Reduced annual volatility in healthcare expense and greater predictability to support long-term budget planning
- Expanded breadth of health insurance plan and provider choices for employees and retirees
- GIC-managed health insurance plan design evolution which takes the annual plan adjustment responsibility away from the Select Board and, thus, removes often contention union negotiations regarding the specifics of plan design changes.

The Town is currently in the process of exploring the opportunity and implications of a transition to the GIC, including modeling the potential cost savings to the Town and the mitigation for employees and retirees. The Select Board, in consultation with the Town's healthcare consultant, has recommended that the Town wait for the GIC to complete its bidding process for the FY24 plan to have the most current and accurate information to use to estimate future costs and potential savings. This GIC program update work has recently concluded, and the Town can now proceed with this exploration in earnest. A potential transition to the GIC would not result in cost savings for FY24, but could set the Town up for a financial benefits in FY25 or FY26.

Belmont's Financial Task Force II recommended the Town explore a transition to the GIC in their [Financial Task Force II Recommendations](#) in July 2021. The following year, the Structural Change Impact Group recommended a transition to the GIC in their [SCIG Final Report](#) in March of 2022.

Recommendation: The Warrant Committee recommends that the Select Board and the Town Administration conduct an analysis, in consultation with the Town's healthcare consultant, regarding the cost savings, benefits, and implications of a transition to the GIC with the goal of reducing health insurance cost increases in FY25 and beyond.

Pension

Most Belmont employees (the teachers have a separate state system) receive pensions managed by the Belmont Retirement System ("BRS" or the "System"). The BRS is a separate and autonomous legal entity and not a municipal department of Belmont. It meets monthly to cover its two main responsibilities: managing investments and administering pension benefits.²² BRS is overseen by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission ("PERAC") which regulates standards for investment performance, accounting standards, benefits administration, ethics, education, travel, and other aspects for all public pension systems in Massachusetts. BRS regularly goes through financial audits and separate actuarial valuations.

BRS is managed by a 5-person board of two representatives elected by pension members, the town accountant, one Select Board appointee, and a 5th member chosen by the other four. Since 2016, four of the board members have remained the same. Current chair Tom Gibson and member Walter Wellman

²² See the Warrant Committees FY23 report for a detailed overview of the BRS, funding schedule, assumed rate of return and factors affecting actuarial valuation.
<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/warrant-committee/files/fy23-warrant-committee-report>

have served together on the BRS board for more than 25 years.²³ Meetings do not include an agenda item for public comment.²⁴

The System is underfunded, and most of the Town’s payments each year go toward catching up on funding its financial commitments to employees and retirees. This year, the Town of Belmont will contribute about \$10 million²⁵ from its operating budget. The 2022 actuarial valuation report by Segal states BRS is 70.42% funded, up from 60.42% the previous year. For 2022, the assumed rate of return was reduced from 7.15% to 7.00%. This change is in-line with similar pension systems. In 2022, the System paid out about \$11.6 million in pension benefits to retirees. All the benefits are guaranteed and set aside from the Town’s revenue before funds are made available for other operating expenses.

We will cover three (3) key areas that affect the general fund dollars needed each year to meet the Town’s pension obligations:

1. Net investment returns (after expenses and fees)
2. Administrative overhead
3. Increasing the FY23 cost-of-living-adjustment (“COLA”) to 5% while extending the schedule for fulling funding the System from 2030 to 2031.

The first two—net returns and administration overhead—impact the compounding dollars available to pay benefits year-over-year. The FY23 COLA increases the benefits owed retirees, while extending the funding schedule decreases the Town’s annual assessment by spreading catch-up payments over more years.

The Warrant Committee would like to thank the BRS board for their feedback, corrections, and the budget data provided to help improve this report, make it clearer, and more accurate. The BRS also noted that the Warrant Committee has made many of these points and recommendations for the past ten years or more.

Investment Returns and Fees

The BRS monthly board meetings begin with general market news and performance updates presented by New England Pension Consultants (“NEPC”).²⁶ As of January 2023, about half the BRS funds are invested in Pension Reserves Investment Trust (“PRIT”) funds, which are managed by the state’s Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (“PRIM”). Considering the 20 annual “vintages” of the PRIT Fund used by BRS (2001, 2004-2022) as a single fund, BRS directs investments to 17 other funds across nine (9) different asset managers.²⁷

²³ Source: PERAC annual reports, 1998-2021 from <https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/> and <http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/board-members/>

²⁴ Source: <http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/historical-minutes-and-agendas/>, and <http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/recent-minutes-and-agendas/>, posted agendas September 2017-April 2023

²⁵ FY24 Budget Changes Approved by the Select Board, https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif6831/f/uploads/tab_2.a_-_revised_disc_pv_on_fy2024_budget_-_budget_changes_with_total_fy2024_budget_5-8-23.pdf

²⁶ <http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/investment-docs/>

²⁷ Source: NEPC Investment Report 1/30/2023 http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/my_uploads/2023/01/BELMONT-RB-JAN-2023-MEETING.pdf and “Response to WC FY24 Draft Report to Town Meeting”

The investments of the BRS lost 8.3% in the 2022 calendar year, with the fund’s market value dropping from \$161.1 million to \$148.7 million. BRS net investment returns out-performed PRIM by an estimated 2.38 percentage points in 2022. Despite the losses, this should be considered an excellent 1-year result and is a significant improvement from 2021, when BRS underperformed PRIM’s net returns by an estimated 3.4 percentage points.

Higher investment fees and administrative costs make it more difficult for BRS to match or beat PRIM’s net returns in the long run. A 2018 review of investment-related expenses for pension funds²⁸ found BRS’s expense ratio (the ratio of fees to assets) was 0.75% (75 basis points), tied for 11th most expensive out of 105 Massachusetts retirement systems.²⁹ BRS was more expensive than every system using PRIM, and 43 of the 55 non-PRIM systems. Similar funds investing with PRIM averaged an expense ratio of 0.526%. Based on the 2020 and 2021 annual reports, BRS’s expense ratio appears to drop to 0.644%, about 22% higher than PRIM’s expense ratio. With a balance of about \$150 million, this higher fee would cost BRS an additional \$177,000 every year. BRS noted in their response that asset management fees increase lockstep with increases to market value—meaning as the Town makes catch-up payments and if investment returns are positive, investment cost will continue to increase. In the 2018-2023 budgets provided by BRS, the system stopped entering investment consultant fees, custodial fees, and manager’s fees after 2020, when they totaled more than \$122,000. BRS did not provide investment expenses for 2022, nor provide an estimate for 2023.³⁰

Exact data on expense ratio is difficult to gather. We have used available data to estimate the BRS and PRIM expense ratios to approximate the net investment returns.

Year	BRS 1-Year Returns			PRIM 1-Year Return			Δ Gross Return
	Gross	Estimated Expense Ratio	Net	Gross	Estimated Expense Ratio	Net	
1997	17.90%	0.730%	17.17%	18.43%	0.526%	17.90%	-0.73%
1998	17.39%	0.730%	16.66%	14.84%	0.526%	14.31%	2.35%
1999	10.16%	0.730%	9.43%	23.25%	0.526%	22.72%	-13.29%
2000	3.70%	0.730%	2.97%	-1.21%	0.526%	-1.74%	4.71%
2001	-2.95%	0.730%	-3.68%	-5.32%	0.526%	-5.85%	2.17%
2002	-6.65%	0.730%	-7.38%	-8.94%	0.526%	-9.47%	2.09%
2003	20.60%	0.730%	19.87%	26.33%	0.526%	25.80%	-5.93%
2004	12.78%	0.730%	12.05%	14.45%	0.526%	13.92%	-1.87%
2005	7.84%	0.730%	7.11%	12.70%	0.526%	12.17%	-5.06%
2006	15.70%	0.730%	14.97%	16.72%	0.526%	16.19%	-1.22%
2007	10.72%	0.730%	9.99%	11.90%	0.526%	11.37%	-1.38%
2008	-22.54%	0.730%	-23.27%	-29.50%	0.526%	-30.03%	6.76%
2009	26.20%	0.730%	25.47%	17.55%	0.526%	17.02%	8.45%

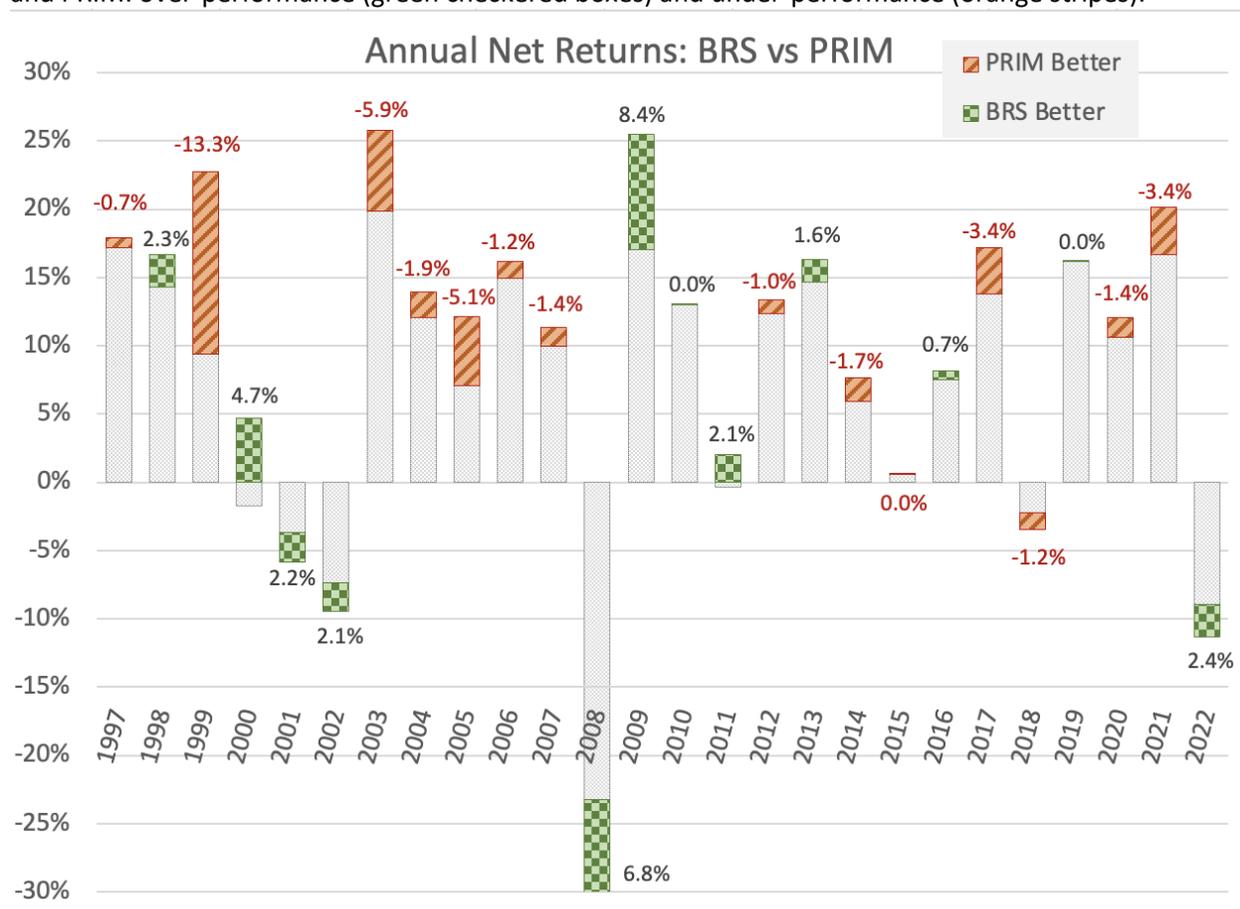
²⁸ Source: 2018 | A Comparative Analysis of Investment-Related Expenses for MA Contributory Retirement Systems and Investment Returns For 5, 10 and 34-year Periods Ending December 31, 2018, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2018-comparative-analysis-fee-report/download>

²⁹ In response to a draft of this section, BRS stated the comparative analysis should have reported an expense ratio of 0.68% for 2018. This would have tied for 27th highest expense ratio among 105 pension systems.

³⁰ As of May 2023, BRS’s 2022 annual report has not been made public yet.

2010	13.78%	0.730%	13.05%	13.55%	0.526%	13.02%	0.03%
2011	2.44%	0.730%	1.71%	0.18%	0.526%	-0.35%	2.06%
2012	13.06%	0.730%	12.33%	13.87%	0.526%	13.34%	-1.01%
2013	17.07%	0.730%	16.34%	15.22%	0.526%	14.69%	1.65%
2014	6.69%	0.730%	5.96%	8.16%	0.526%	7.63%	-1.67%
2015	1.32%	0.730%	0.59%	1.14%	0.526%	0.61%	-0.02%
2016	8.89%	0.730%	8.16%	8.02%	0.526%	7.49%	0.67%
2017	14.50%	0.730%	13.77%	17.69%	0.526%	17.16%	-3.39%
2018	-2.69%	0.730%	-3.42%	-1.73%	0.526%	-2.26%	-1.16%
2019	16.85%	0.644%	16.21%	16.71%	0.526%	16.18%	0.02%
2020	11.30%	0.644%	10.66%	12.61%	0.526%	12.08%	-1.43%
2021	17.37%	0.644%	16.73%	20.67%	0.526%	20.14%	-3.42%
2022	-8.30%	0.644%	-8.94%	-10.80%	0.526%	-11.33%	2.38%

In the last ten years, BRS's net investment returns have been approximately equal, or worse than PRIM seven times, and five of the last six years. BRS tends to do better during down years, losing value but less than PRIM. In years where the market is up, BRS tends to perform slightly worse, or like in 2017 and 2021, underperform by more than three percentage points. The chart below highlights the gap between BRS and PRIM: over-performance (green checkered boxes) and under-performance (orange stripes).



There have been years where BRS has significantly outperformed PRIM, such as 2000 (+4.7%) 2008, (+6.8%), and 2009 (+8.4%). There have also been years of underperformance, such as 1999 (-13.3%), 2003 (-5.9%), and 2005 (-5.1%). To streamline investment costs, operations, and performance, 37 pension systems in Massachusetts delegate all investment management to the low cost, professional teams at PRIM.³¹ These “Participating Retirement Systems” save time, expense, and enable local board to focus on benefits for employees and retirees. Another 62, including Belmont, use PRIM as “Purchasing Retirement Systems,” allocated a portion of their investments to PRIM funds.

Small Differences in Net Returns Can Compound to Millions of Dollars

We will show the challenge of consistently outperforming the market two ways. First, by asking: would the fund have been better off if BRS had switched to PRIM that year and stayed with PRIM through the end of 2022—even after BRS’s out-performance in 2022? It appears the System would have been better off fully switching from BRS’s investments to PRIM for twelve years straight—from 2010 through 2021. This suggests that for more than a decade, the Town will need to contribute more dollars to fully fund the guaranteed pension benefits. It also suggests any out-performance by BRS over a longer timeframe must be attributed to 2009 or sooner. We also noted that BRS underperformed PRIM for five years straight from 2003-2007.

The Difference in a \$150 Million Fund Had It Switched to PRIM at the Beginning of the Year, Through the End of 2022

BRS’s balance is currently about \$150 million. We can simplify visualizing the effect on the total investment balance if we ignore contributions in, and benefit payments out. The estimated difference in the compound annualized net return can result in a multi-million-dollar difference.

For example, if a \$150 million fund had experienced PRIM’s net returns in the past six years, from 2017 through the end of 2022, the balance would be nearly \$6 million higher—even after BRS’s excellent year in 2022. If such a \$150 million fund has switched to PRIM at the start of January 2021 that balance would be about \$200K higher with PRIM even after BRS’s excellent results in 2022.

Since Beginning of Year	Δ Net (Basis Points)	Annualized Return	Compound Difference	Timeframe
2009	23		3.2 M	14 years
2010	-33		-4.3 M	13 years
2011	-36		-4.3 M	12 years
2012	-60		-6.4 M	11 years
2013	-56		-5.4 M	10 years
2014	-78		-6.8 M	9 years
2015	-67		-5.3 M	8 years
2016	-77		-5.3 M	7 years
2017	-101		-5.9 M	6 years
2018	-57		-2.8 M	5 years
2019	-41		-1.6 M	4 years
2020	-54		-1.6 M	3 years
2021	-12		-0.2 M	2 years

Using estimated expense ratios, one must go back to 2009, another excellent year for BRS, for pension members to come out ahead using BRS’s investments compared to PRIM. For such a \$150 million

³¹ Source: <https://www.mapension.com/our-clients/>, March 29, 2023. Counts exclude former systems that have since merged into other retirement systems.

portfolio, BRS would be approximately \$3.2 million ahead of PRIM after 14 years compared to switching to PRIM in the beginning of 2009.³²

The Difference in 3-Year and 5-Year Annualized Returns Helps Show Performance Consistency

A second way to visualize the difficulty of consistently outperforming the market is to use rolling multi-year annualized returns. This method asks: What is the consistent effect of active management?

The table and bars to the right show the difference between BRS's and PRIM's annualized net return for 3-year and 5-year windows. Available annual returns data begins with 1997, so the first 3-year window ends in 1999 and first 5-year window in 2001. The orange (negative) bars show PRIM's returns were better, and by how much per year. The blue (positive) bars indicate BRS's returns were better over the previous 3- or 5-year timeframe. As with the first demonstration, small differences can have multi-million-dollar effects on a \$150 million portfolio.

Year	3-Year	5-Year
1999	-3.89%	
2000	-1.75%	
2001	-1.56%	-0.67%
2002	2.94%	-0.04%
2003	-0.10%	-1.48%
2004	-1.52%	0.57%
2005	-4.26%	-1.39%
2006	-2.76%	-2.18%
2007	-2.59%	-3.07%
2008	2.25%	0.13%
2009	4.95%	1.93%
2010	5.41%	2.92%
2011	3.35%	3.48%
2012	0.42%	3.56%
2013	0.94%	2.15%
2014	-0.39%	0.22%
2015	-0.06%	0.21%
2016	-0.34%	-0.10%
2017	-0.84%	-0.54%
2018	-1.25%	-1.08%
2019	-1.50%	-0.76%
2020	-0.89%	-1.05%
2021	-1.60%	-1.85%
2022	-0.54%	-0.57%

The effect of the outstanding 2008 and 2009 net returns compared to PRIM is evident in both the 3-and 5-year average. BRS's advantage in the annualized 3-year net return reaches a high-point of 5.41% per-year in the window ending in 2010. BRS's peak advantage in a 5-year timeframe is 3.56% per-year for 2008-2012. BRS's 3-year annualized average net return has been negative since 2014 (the years 2012 through 2014), and the 5-year since 2016 (the years 2012-2016). Even after an excellent 2022, BRS's 3-year (2020-2022) annualized net return underperforms PRIM by about 0.54% per-year, and by 0.57% per-year over 5 years (2018-2022).

Most Similar MA Pension Systems Use a Single Investment Manager

Using a single major manager provides economy of scale, simplifies the local board's operations, reduces investment overhead, and leverages investment professional expertise. To put the investment operations in context, it helps to compare BRS with similar pension systems—ones of similar size and funding levels—for a more apt comparison. There are 47 systems in the range of about half to about twice BRS's investments (\$75M – \$300M as of Dec 2021), and with a funding ratio within 15 percentage points (55% - 85% as of Jan 2023).

Thirty-three of these 45 similar systems use PRIM or another single investment manager³³ exclusively or nearly exclusively. Nine (20%) systems do not use PRIM and fully manage their investments as a "fund of

³² BRS correctly noted in their feedback that 2008 was also an excellent year for BRS, when the fund lost about 22.5% compared to PRIM's loss of about 29.5%

³³ As of the 2021 PERAC annual report, 6 pension systems use SEI Investment Trust Company and 4 used the DeBurlon Group

funds”—that is, actively directing money to various asset managers and funds. Five others, including BRS, have significant investment with PRIM but also actively manage allocations.

BRS Administrative Overhead

Operating the BRS as both an investment manager and benefits administrator has generated significant expenses for the BRS. The Town only has oversight through an appointee of the Select Board and the ex-officio board membership of the Town Accountant. These costs are born by the taxpayers as part of the Town’s annual appropriation and by employees’ pension contributions. A summary of calendar year (CY) expenses was reviewed from the 2016-2021 BRS annual statements³⁴ along with the 2022 budget actuals and 2023 budget as provided by BRS. Management fees increased from \$466K to \$663K (+42%) from 2020 to 2021, the most recent year such data was made available by BRS. This growth is highlighted in the table below by the red solid-lined box. We also have questions about staffing, legal, rent and travel expenses, which also come out of the fund, as bolded and shaded in the table.

Category	2023 (Budget)	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Board Stipend	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$14,750	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,500	\$11,000	\$12,000
Salaries	208,695	194,769	177,961	186,781	158,722	143,204	154,066	140,003	90,340
Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mgmt. Fees	No Data	No Data	663,165	466,312	422,544	403,659	383,362	430,842	440,849
Custodial Fees	No Data	No Data	40,906	29,481	34,746	23,568	43,695	55,044	17,448
Investment Consult. Fees	No Data	No Data	86,250	65,059	62,500	55,000	41,370	96,440	13,750
Legal Expense	28,000	27,670	24,973	29,579	24,532	30,111	34,471	36,898	15,020
Med. Expense	500		0	0	0	0	228	36	0
Fiduciary Ins.	6,337	6,399	6,337	5,944	5,816	5,560	5,441	5,365	5,208
Svc. Contracts			0	0	1,794	24,241	25,853	46,819	20,842
Rent Expense	26,400	26,700	25,200	25,200	24,300	24,000	6,000	0	0
Prof. Services	17,000	5,000	28,500	8,500	17,600	7,869	22,520	44,562	0
Actuarial Svc.	5,000	15,000	5,000	22,750	5,000	21,000	0	0	4,246
Account. Svc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ed. & Training	1,630	3,875	400	1,630	5,240	3,420	1,800	3,170	5,717
Admin. Expen.			57,207	59,748	47,490	16,471	52,953	4,560	724
Furniture & Equip	1,000	3,804	1,582	76	1,789	18,087	3,795	13,160	0
Travel	12,000	7,379	0	427	7,978	5,710	3,560	16,039	0
Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	Insufficient Data		\$1,132,481	\$916,237	\$835,051	\$796,899	\$791,614	\$903,938	\$626,144

Investment-related expenses raise questions about operational efficiency, and where expenses could be reduced to bring net returns more in line with PRIM. The most obvious option would be delegating all

³⁴ BRS annual statements: <http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/financial-documents/>

investment management to PRIM, a decision up to the 5-member retirement board. This could reduce BRS's reliance on NEPC, advisory fee is at least five basis points (0.05%) of assets³⁵ and, as BRS also noted in their response, will increase as the pension fund grows due to contributions and investment returns. Investment consultant fees averaged \$67K a year since 2018, and in 2021 cost more than \$86K.

We have questions about legal, staffing, rent and travel expenses as well. The BRS makes heavy use of lawyer James Quirk, who attends BRS board meetings in their entirety. Between January 2022 and April 2023, Mr. Quirk remotely attended 15 of the 16 board meetings, including both February and March 2023 when he had no updates for the Board.³⁶ Mr. Quirk's frequent attendance raises questions about legal fees for attending meetings and other events.

Total salaries have more than doubled from \$90K in 2015 to \$209K for 2023. BRS has hired additional staff since moving to private offices at 90 Concord Ave in 2017, and total salaries are up 43% from the 2016-2018 average.³⁷ These increased staffing and administration costs are in addition to the more \$26K / year rent for 2023. The BRS also spent \$35K in the furniture and equipment category from 2016-2018.³⁸

The BRS spends several thousand dollars annually on travel and education. The 2023 budget sets aside \$12K for travel, up from about \$7K in 2022. Pre-Covid, from 2016 through 2019, the board spent \$33K on travel and \$13K on education and training. This raises questions about how these travel expenses are reviewed and approved. A typical retirement board has a travel policy that utilizes in-state conferences only, single day trips, and sending one representative to report back to the other members. The Massachusetts Association of Contributory Retirement Systems (MACRS) holds a spring and fall conference.³⁹ The fall 2022 conference was held in Springfield, MA, and the spring 2023 conference will be in Hyannis, MA—both day trips by car from Belmont.

FY23 COLA Increase and BRS Funding Schedule

Aside from overseeing investments, BRS is responsible for pension administration. BRS spends about half its monthly board meetings discussing legal, budget, regulatory, and legislative news. Retirements and eligibility are discussed, reviewed, and voted upon.

In April 2023, BRS and the Select Board worked together to approve a cost-of-living-adjustment ("COLA") increase for retirees of 5% while extending the pension funding schedule to 2031. The combined effect of these two changes is lower annual assessments⁴⁰ spread over more years, while improving benefits for

³⁵ NEPC form ADV Part 2A, page 3:

https://files.adviserinfo.sec.gov/IAPD/Content/Common/crd_iapd_Brochure.aspx?BRCHR_VRSN_ID=838704

³⁶ Source: listed attendees in Belmont Retirement System meeting minutes, 2022

<http://www.belmontretirementsystem.org/recent-minutes-and-agendas/> Prior to Open Meeting Law allowing remote participation, Mr. Quirk attended board meetings in person.

³⁷ BRS clarified they hired an additional employee during this timeframe.

³⁸ BRS clarified that the furniture expense line includes "servers, laptops and telephones" and that furniture "included used furniture."

³⁹ <https://www.macrs.org/macrs/page/annual-spring-2023-conference>, <https://www.mass.gov/event/fall-macrs-conference-2022-10-02t080000-0400-2022-10-05t150000-0400>

⁴⁰ The total annual assessment also includes payments made by the Water and Sewer enterprise funds.

our employees and retirees. The FY23 COLA increase is retroactively effective to June 2022, and increases the unfunded liability⁴¹ by just over \$800K. BRS also approved a 3% COLA for FY24.

Prior to BRS’s approval of the updated schedule in April 2023, the target date was 2030 as discussed and approved by BRS in September 2022. Based on the 2021 actuarial valuation, the System is now projected to be funded by 2031. This projection will be updated in 2024 to reflect 2022-2023 contributions, retirees, employees, and investment returns. Because of the investment losses in 2022, it is generally expected the next valuation will project full funding will be after 2031.

Extending the funding schedule is like taking a longer-term loan: annual payments will be lower, but the total sum of all payments will be higher. Over the next six fiscal years, the town is scheduled to pay \$8.83 million less, but total payments are projected to be \$3.8 million more by the end of FY31.

To spread out the financial impact and give the Town budget flexibility for the next few years, BRS evaluated and approved an extended pension funding schedule. Rather than growing by 4.45% every year, the annual assessment will remain level through FY25, then grow at 2.5% per year. By Massachusetts law, the pension assessment cannot be lower than the previous year until the system is fully funded. It is expected PERAC will approve the new

	FY23 Schedule	Proposed Schedule	
Fiscal Year	4.45% Annual Increase	Flat Payment Through FY25 Followed By 2.5% Annual Increases	Difference in Proposed vs FY23 (\$ Millions)
23	11,765,178	11,765,178	0.00
24	12,288,728	11,765,178	-0.52
25	12,835,576	11,765,178	-1.07
26	13,406,759	12,059,307	-1.35
27	14,003,360	12,360,790	-1.64
28	14,626,510	12,669,810	-1.96
29	15,277,390	12,986,555	-2.29
30	9,006,505	13,311,219	4.30
31	3,105,119	11,430,961	8.33
32	3,207,869	3,207,869	0.00
33	3,314,004	3,314,004	0.00
Total FY23-FY33	112,836,998	116,636,050	3.80

schedule, with the caveat that such a delay in funding is not generally recommended. The Town can choose to increase their annual payment. The longest extension allowed by PERAC—level payments until fully funded—projected full funding in 2032.

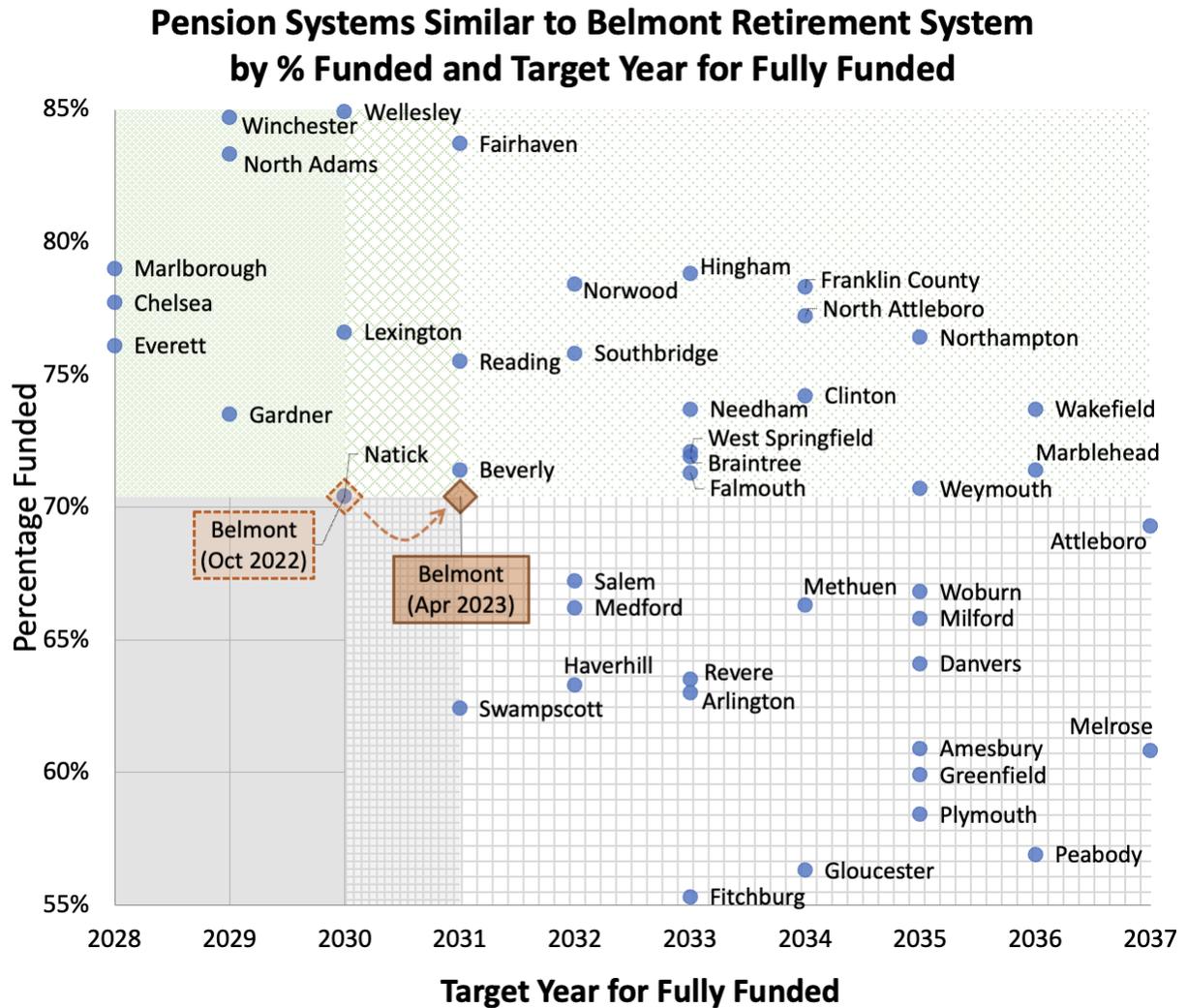
BRS Funding Schedule in Context

Because the System is underfunded, the size of the annual assessment also dependent upon the timeline for fulling funding the pension obligations. We compared BRS’s funding schedule to similar pension systems.⁴² This comparison is displayed in the chart following chart. Belmont is marked with an orange diamond at 70.4% funded, reflecting the change from 2030 (data point overlaps with Natick) to 2031.

⁴¹ Segal letter to BRS 2/27/2023 re: Cost of Increasing the July 1, 2022 COLA from 3% to 5% - updated: Increasing the July 1, 2022 COLA from 3% to 5% increases the July 1, 2022 unfunded liability by \$813,758 or 1.27% from \$64,224,373 to \$65,038,131.

⁴² Source: Retirement Board Funded Ratios as of 1/1/2023, file 010123fundedratio.csv available from <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/funded-ratios> Fund sizes as of PERAC 2021 annual report.

Presuming PERAC approves the funding change to 2031, Natick and Swampscott have more aggressive schedules: similar or lower funding, and a similar or earlier target date (shaded gray area, lower left of Belmont).



The 2031 schedule approved by BRS is still more aggressive than the 17 similarly sized and capitalized retirement systems in the green cross-hatched area in the upper right. There are 17 similar pension systems (the light gray square shading in the lower right) which are lower funded than BRS and have allowed additional years for full funding. All these systems have at least a 3-year cushion before the 2040 deadline. Six of the eight systems that target 2028-2030 are at least 75% funded.

Warrant Committee Recommendations

We recommend the BRS evaluate investment and operational review and reforms that will simplify operations, reduce expenses, standardize returns, and ease the annual financial burden on Belmont taxpayers. We recommend the BRS:

- Review and reduce investment and administrative expenses to be in line with PRIM. The most obvious way to reduce expenses would be for the board to delegate all investment management to PRIM. This will normalize returns, simplify operations, and remove cost overhead related to evaluating and directing investments. This will also address the investments and consultants’ fees which cost tens-of-thousands of dollars each year, lower BRS’s net returns, and grow with assets in the System. The board will be freed up to focus on service the employees and retirees of the Belmont Retirement System.
- Limit meeting attendance and other billed hours by legal counsel unless necessary. Verify if using Town council would be more cost effective.
- Review lease of private office space and explore possible Town owned space.⁴³
- All recommendations from the FY23 Warrant Committee report.

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 Morgan Stanley.

For FY24, the combined budgeted cost of health insurance, life-insurance, Medicare, and contribution to the OPEB Trust is just over \$5 million.

Total OPEB Contributions, FY20-FY24

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23 (approx.)	FY24 Budget
Retiree Health Insurance	\$3,162,481	\$3,285,759	\$3,529,448	\$3,781,057	\$3,338,181
Employee Health Insurance	9,189,408	9,049,834	9,146,575	10,068,276	10,331,952
Life Insurance	12,708	10,234	11,077	19,425	19,425
Medicare	831,395	875,330	908,544	1,064,576	1,097,497
Unemployment	34,698	142,423	62,279	227,000	272,900
Workers Compensation	346,533	315,529	343,420	505,998	455,398
OPEB Trust Contribution	552,695	50,000	50,000	579,275	552,695
Total (OPEB)	\$4,559,279	\$4,221,323	\$4,499,069	\$5,444,333	5,007,798

Total (excluding pensions)	\$14,129,918	\$13,729,109	\$14,051,343	\$16,245,607	\$16,068,048
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The Town identified efficiencies and improved forecasting while restructuring the benefits budget for both Town and School retirees. As a result, the FY24 pay-as-you-go budget for retiree health insurance is \$3,338,181, a decrease from the prior year by \$442,876 or nearly 12%.

⁴³ BRS noted they sought office space from the Town in 2017, and “an offer from the Town for comparable office space [...] would be given thoughtful review.”

As of January 2023, the OPEB Trust Fund held about \$7.4 million⁴⁴ toward a liability of about \$97.5 million⁴⁵, a funding ratio of 7.6%. 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’s OPEB Trust funding policy calls for the Town to aim for a contribution equal to 5% of its excess undesignated fund balance to the OPEB Trust each year. The goal is to make annual contributions to the OPEB Trust consistent with the policy until after the pension system is fully funded, when additional resources will be available to increase contributions more meaningfully into the Trust.

Recommendations

The OPEB Trust is well suited for low-fee, broad market index funds that would reduce management fees compared to a full-service advisor. The Trust is relatively small, follows a simple investment policy of 70% equities and 30% fixed income, and has a long investment horizon.

Debt

The town currently has approximately \$255 million of debt outstanding, consisting of \$209 million for schools (82% of total debt), \$32 million for general government (13%) and \$12 million (5%) for water & sewer operations. Debt service will comprise 10.8% of budgeted revenue in '24, which is down by about \$600,000 from the prior year due to the retirement of Town Hall Complex renovation debt. The \$16 million of debt service in '24 will consist of \$13 million of debt service (or 80%) that has been voted exempt from Proposition 2 ½ levy limitations (debt exclusion debt) and funded with dedicated property tax revenues with the remainder (\$1.4 million) funded within Proposition 2 ½ limitations (non-debt exclusion debt) by general operating revenues or water/sewer revenues.

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 the current fiscal year voters approved two additional debt exclusions, one for the construction of a new library and the other for a new skating rink. The estimated debt issuance for the library is \$34.5 million and \$28.6 million for the skating rink. Debt issuance for these projects is expected in FY24. The Warrant Committee recommends the issuance of any future debt be conducted in a manner consistent with the debt policies specified in the Town’s [Comprehensive Financial Management Policies](#). 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.

	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget
Exempt Debt Service	\$13,731,513	\$13,154,414
Non-exempt Debt Service	\$1,438,989	\$1,415,039
Total Debt Service	\$15,170,502	\$14,569,453
Debt Service as % of Budget	10.5%	9.7%

Town’s Bond Rating

⁴⁴ Balance: \$7,378,300. The Javaheri Group, Strategic Performance Reporting, 1/24/2023
⁴⁵ As of July 30, 2021. For more detailed overview of actuarial valuation, see FY23 Warrant Committee Report.

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 will be updated in conjunction with the upcoming bond sales associated with the library and rink projects. 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 the Community Development, the Department of Public Works, and the Recreation Department.

FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

	Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY24FTEs
Total Budget	\$10,574,116	\$436,235	4.3%%	49.47

The FY24 budget reflects a reduction of 2.4 current FTE positions. These are two 0.5 FTEs in Community Development, and 1.4 seasonal FTEs in Recreation. The proposed budget includes the addition of 1.0 FTEs in the Water Enterprise Budget for Storm Water Management.

Community Development

The Community Development Department is composed of three main operating divisions – Building Inspection, Engineering Services, and Planning. Building Inspection performs building code duties including permit review and inspections, and enforces local zoning and general bylaws, as well as state codes and regulations. Engineering Services oversees all major infrastructure projects in the town, including repairs and improvements to roads and sidewalks and to sanitary sewers and storm drains. Planning handles land use, economic development, zoning, and planning issues for the town. The department is headed by a Director and an Assistant Director who oversee all activities in the department and administer the department’s many contracts and service agreements. The Director serves as the head of the department as well as the Town Engineer, the Inspector of Buildings, and the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

A. FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

	Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23FTEs
Total Budget	\$979,022	(\$17,189)	(1.73%)	9.26

The requested FY24 budget for Community Development of \$996,212, represents a decrease of \$17,189, or 1.73%, from FY23. The FY24 decrease is attributable to a reconfiguration of departmental staffing resulting in the reduction of two 0.5 FTE positions.

Over 85% of the department’s budget consists of salary expenses. By division, the administrative division accounts for about 40% of the total budget and is up 2.8%. Building Inspection and Planning represent about 30% and 25% of the department budget, respectively. The Planning budget is up slightly (2.0%), while the Building Inspection budget is down about 10% due to the aforementioned staffing reconfiguration. The Engineering budget is unchanged from FY23.

Impact of Proposed FY24 Budget on Department Operations

STAFFING: The department has been dealing with staffing challenges for several years. Consequently, while the department is managing to perform services that are statutorily mandated, the department feels that the level of service does not match the expectations of residents.

In FY22, the town's Resident Engineer position was eliminated due to the failed April 2021 override. Most of those duties were absorbed by the Assistant Director, who had been extensively involved with the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). The department shifted those ZBA functions back to the Planning Division, but the new staff planner left in August 2022 for personal reasons and the position remains open. However, the elimination of the Resident Engineer position means that the department is not able to adequately provide oversight and management of the capital improvement projects that are underway within the town, including coordinating various separate contractors and managing scheduling issues with town residents.

RECRUITMENT: Moreover, while not strictly a budgeting issue per se, the department has a number of open positions that have been difficult to fill. For example, as noted above, the staff planner position remains open. As of October 2022, both building inspector positions (a full-time position and a part-time position) were open, although the full-time position was filled in February 2023. Filling open positions has been a challenge for the department. The open positions require a minimum threshold of technical proficiency that has generally not been evident in job applicants. Moreover, the fact that employees in the department are often expected to juggle multiple roles and responsibilities (e.g., building inspectors who are also expected to also do code enforcement), can make Belmont's positions less attractive than comparable positions in other surrounding towns.

IMPACT OF OPEN & UNFUNDED POSITIONS: The impact of the unfunded and open positions has a domino effect on the department, as other departmental employees, particularly the director and assistant director, need to step in and pick up the other tasks. This, in turn, leads to delays in response times for statutorily required tasks such as approving building permits, undertaking inspections, and responding to code violation complaints (such as snow removal by-law violations). In addition, the open staff planner position is impeding the department's ability to update the town's comprehensive plan (which is critical for obtaining federal and state grant funding), to update the town's housing production plan (which could help provide a temporary safe harbor from Chapter 40B projects if affordable housing projects are permitted), and to support the development of a now-mandated zoning plan around the town's transit stations.

Budget Risks in FY24

The continued inability of the department to find and hire qualified candidates for the open staff planner position and the open building inspector positions forces the department to be more reactive than it otherwise should be and impairs the department's ability to perform required services on a timely basis.

Outlook for FY25

The statutory requirements that the department must comply with keep ratcheting up. As an example, the town's stormwater permit must be renewed every five years. The requirements the town must meet in renewing the permit get more burdensome each time, inevitably placing more burdens on the existing staff.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is comprised of multiple divisions, and it can be stated that the DPW touches more Belmont residents and businesses daily than any other town department. This report highlights the challenges, uncertainties, and notable changes in budget requests in specific divisions of the DPW.

A. FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

	Dollars (TA Rec)	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23 FTEs	FY24 FTEs
Total Budget	\$ 8,070,665	\$ 518,920	6.87 %	24.46	24.46

COMPENSATION: Compensation (salary plus contractually obligated compensation) is 29% of the total DPW budget. The negotiated COLA increase was 2%; other contractually obligated compensation is reflected in the percentage increases shown here. The TA recommended FY24 budget for DPW of \$ 8,070,665 represents a 6.87% increase from FY23 to FY24. That increase is chiefly due to salary adjustments for a COLA of 2%, plus a one-time retroactive adjustment following the successful union contract negotiations. Those retroactive payments, plus other union contractual compensation such as step increases and longevity, contribute to the 6.87% increase seen in the FY24 budget.

	FTE/FY23	FTE/FY24	FY23	FY24	Diff.	%
Public Works Admin	3	3	\$318,842	\$333,013	\$14,171	4.4%
Parks & Cemetery	11.5	11.5	\$ 838,812	\$ 885,645	\$46,833	5.58%
Street/Fleet Maintenance	10	10	\$ 998,798	\$ 1,072,986	\$ 74,188	7.43 %
Forestry	0	0	\$20,000	\$20,000	-	-
Collection & Disposal	0	0	-	-	-	-
	24.46	24.46	\$2,176,120	\$ 2,312,492	\$136,372	6.0%

STAFFING: The number of FTEs in DPW is unchanged from FY23 to FY24 at 24.46. The department currently has **nine unfilled budgeted positions**. Efforts are ongoing to recruit and hire to fill these openings. However, echoing a nationwide trend, attracting individuals to such jobs is challenging. This staff shortage means certain services are more reactive than proactive. Examples of the services affected are street sweeping, snow plowing, and catch basin cleaning. Town-owned snow equipment may sit idle due to this staffing shortage, and because union employees may decline a request to work over-time hours. Belmont is working with the unions to study whether department compensation is competitive within the local market, as a factor in employee retention and recruitment.

RECRUITING: Recruiting employees who have a Commercial Driving Licenses (CDL) is particularly daunting, as competition for licensed individuals is keen. The staffing challenge has both a budget and service impact. Overtime costs increase, as do costs for contracted services such as snow removal. These costs offset, to some degree, the salary and benefit budget not spent.

Highway Division - Budget Changes from FY23 to FY24

	FY24 Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23 FTEs	FY24 FTEs
Total Budget	\$2,450,386	\$65,788	2.76%	10	10

This budget covers line painting, street lighting, snow and ice removal and fleet maintenance (sidewalk and road repair is conducted in collaboration with Community Development), The increase in the budget is chiefly due to compensation increases of 7.43% from COLA, plus other contractual obligations.

OVERTIME: The highway division overtime budget reflects a 46.9% increase from FY23 to FY24, restoring it to the spending level of FY22. Several factors contribute to the need for this overtime; the Highway Division no longer employs six summer-time employees; the staff was reduced by two FTEs with the defeat of the 2021 override; and the DPW currently has nine unfilled, budgeted positions.

Forestry – Budget Changes from FY23 to FY24

	FY24 Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23 FTEs	FY24 FTEs
Total Budget	\$ 426,665	\$ 22,810	5.65 %	0	0

TREE INVENTORY: A tree inventory has been completed by the external consultant, and that survey is available on the town website. There is no FY24 request for the tree warden position to be filled, part-time nor full-time, in the budget. Jay Marcotte and Mike Santoro continue to function in that role with a stipend of \$10,000 each. The Professional and Technical services line item in this budget is for the contract with Asplundh for tree removal and trimming services.

The budget includes replacement of trees, and a new tree vendor was established in FY23, with positive results. The department head raised the question for future budgets is whether the purchase of trees should be a capital budget item, with the maintenance as a line item for the DPW. The Commemorative Shade Tree Project has been a welcome source of donated trees.

Parks and Cemetery – Budget Changes from FY23 to FY24 – TA Recommended

	FY24 Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23 FTEs	FY24 FTEs
Total Budget	\$1,597, 409	\$91,138	6.05%	11.5	11.5

Compensation increase from FY23 to FY24 is 5.58%, derived from the COLA of 2%, plus other contractually obligated increases. The expense increase for the cemetery budget is chiefly due to the increased cost of disposal of soil and brush removal since the incinerator site closed.

OVERTIME: In FY23, overtime costs for DPW service of the Viglirolo Rink surpassed \$30,000. While this specific overtime expense will not occur in FY24, it is anticipated that overtime will be needed in delivery of other park services, due to the overall DPW staff shortage (9 unfilled positions). For example, the water in the Underwood Pool must be tested daily, incurring overtime costs on weekends. Overtime is also needed for weekend pick-up of trash in Belmont playgrounds, parks and in town center.

Collection and Disposal - Budget Changes from FY23 to FY24

	FY24 Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY23 FTEs	FY24 FTEs
Total Budget	\$3,763,512	\$345,929	10.4%	0	0

NEW COLLECTION AGREEMENTS: There are no DPW employees dedicated to this division. The percentage increase from the FY23 to FY24 budget is due to the new collection and disposal agreements with third party service providers. Changes in regulations for disposal and recycling are uncertainties impacting the budget for FY24 and future years. Recent regulation changes in textile recycling and disposal are an example. Potential additional compliance will involve disposal of organics, with consequent increased expense.

SPECIAL DISPOSAL SERVICES: Extra costs are incurred with resident requests for disposal of mattresses and bulky items. 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 FY24

Like other Public Service Divisions, there are compliance and statutory regulations which create budgetary uncertainties in the DPW. For example, disposal of organics and dealing with textile disposal or proper recycling, are areas which may impact workload and staffing and other costs.

The challenges of attracting and retaining employees in this department will continue in FY24 and FY25.

The Committee suggests that the department should consider an increase in fees for pick-up and disposal of both bulky items and mattresses to cover the costs of these extra services.

Outlook for FY25

Staffing and staff retention will remain a major challenge. As retirement age nears for some individuals employed within the DPW, the pressure on recruitment and compensation will increase to ensure adequate staffing to provide services. This department will continue to rely upon overtime and external contractors to continue to deliver services for as long as budgeted positions remain unfilled.

Enterprise Funds - Water & Sewer

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 FY24.

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 FY24 Water Department budget is \$8,005,382, up 1.2%, or \$95,558, from FY23. The increase is driven by a 4.2% increase in compensation totaling \$62,601 from an in-depth review of employee benefits. The Division’s budget employs 12.3 FTEs, unchanged for FY24 from prior years. Overall, the Division’s day to day operating budget, which includes compensation, is \$17,795 lower than FY23 as higher compensation costs are offset by savings primarily in vehicle maintenance.

- The single largest budgeted expenditure is the MWRA assessment, totaling \$3,279,924, an increase of 1.4%, or \$45,077, from FY 23.
- The Division’s capital budget, for replacement of water mains and other infrastructure, is increasing by \$352,525 in FY24. The Division funds capital improvements with cash raised through water charges and with annual low interest borrowings.
- In FY24, the Division Budget benefits from lower indirect costs charged by other Town departments that provide administrative support. These costs are lower by (\$274,834) from an updated analysis of services and charges.
- The Water Division Budget is shown here:

Water Division Budget Summary

Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Revised	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$ 1,581,517	\$ 1,349,519	\$ 1,393,960	\$ 1,504,293	\$ 1,566,894	\$ 62,601	4.16 %
Expenses	\$ 5,709,943	\$ 5,313,689	\$ 5,390,857	\$ 6,405,531	\$ 6,441,473	\$ 35,942	0.56 %
Total 5250 Water Division	\$ 7,291,460	\$ 6,663,208	\$ 6,784,817	\$ 7,909,824	\$ 8,008,367	\$ 98,543	1.25 %

Division Summary	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Revised	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Total 5251 Water Dept. Operating	\$ 2,254,514	\$ 2,022,476	\$ 1,928,161	\$ 2,624,599	\$ 2,606,804	\$ (17,795)	(0.68)%
Total 5253 MWRA Assessment	\$ 3,001,040	\$ 3,040,437	\$ 3,321,668	\$ 3,234,847	\$ 3,279,924	\$ 45,077	1.39 %
Total 5254 Debt Service	\$ 903,500	\$ 851,392	\$ 797,813	\$ 854,188	\$ 844,488	\$ (9,700)	(1.14)%
Cash Capital	\$ 602,280	\$ 77,750	\$ 210,000	\$ 669,275	\$ 1,022,500	\$ 353,225	52.78 %
Indirect Expenses	\$ 519,000	\$ 664,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 244,166	\$(274,834)	(52.95)%
OPEB Contribution	\$ 10,485	\$ 6,990	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 10,485	\$ 2,985	39.80 %
Total 5250 Water Division	\$ 7,290,819	\$ 6,663,045	\$ 6,784,142	\$ 7,909,409	\$ 8,008,367	\$ 98,958	1.25 %

Public Works Sewer Division

The Belmont Highway Department maintains Belmont’s sanitary sewer system consisting of 76 miles of sewer main pipes, 2,365 manholes, 6,700 service lines to buildings, and three pumping stations. The Highway 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.

- The FY24 Sewer Department budget is \$9,799,181, a decrease of (\$1,085,401), or (9.97%), from FY23. This savings is driven by a 65% reduction in capital expenditures of (\$1,285,700) and a reduction in indirect costs of (\$270,679), or (52.15%), from an updated analysis of services and charges, partially offset by a 39.68%, or \$404,724, increase in compensation and benefits.
- The Sewer Division has maintained a staff of 12 FTE through FY23. In FY 24 the Division has budgeted a new position for a Stormwater Manager to oversee and address increasing regulatory demands from

federal and state compliance requirements. This, along with the result of an in-depth review of employee benefits and a reallocation of \$109,261 in pension benefits from the Water fund, accounts for the \$404,724 compensation increase.

- The single largest sewer division cost is the MWRA assessment, totaling \$5,750,128, an increase of 1.27%, or \$72,128, from FY 23.
- The Division’s capital budget, for replacement of sewer mains and other infrastructure, is decreasing by (\$1,288,187) in FY24. The Division funds capital improvements with cash raised through user fees and with annual low or no interest borrowings. The FY24 savings results from the completion in FY23 of two culvert replacements for Trapelo Road and Claflin Street.
- In FY24, the Division budget benefits from lower indirect costs charged by other Town departments that provide support to the Division. These costs are lower by (\$270,679) from an updated analysis of services and charges.
- The Sewer Division Budget is shown here:

Sewer Division Budget Summary

Budget Summary

Department Summary	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Revised	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Compensation & Benefits	\$ 1,321,952	\$ 1,384,494	\$ 922,946	\$ 1,019,902	\$ 1,424,626	\$ 404,724	39.68 %
Expenses	\$ 8,097,483	\$ 8,438,604	\$ 8,262,413	\$ 9,864,680	\$ 8,375,582	\$(1,489,098)	(15.10)%
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$ 9,419,436	\$ 9,823,099	\$ 9,185,359	\$10,884,582	\$ 9,800,208	\$(1,084,374)	(9.96)%

Division Summary	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Revised	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Total 5261 Sewer & Stormwater Operating	\$ 1,997,051	\$ 1,845,808	\$ 1,389,770	\$ 1,781,682	\$ 2,183,019	\$ 401,337	22.53 %
Total 5262 MWRA Assessment	\$ 5,312,385	\$ 5,332,639	\$ 5,482,714	\$ 5,678,000	\$ 5,750,128	\$ 72,128	1.27 %
Total 5263 Debt Service	\$ 843,373	\$ 908,340	\$ 925,124	\$ 915,700	\$ 913,213	\$ (2,487)	(0.27)%
Cash Capital	\$ 742,100	\$ 1,213,200	\$ 864,250	\$ 1,985,700	\$ 700,000	\$(1,285,700)	(64.75)%
Indirect Expenses	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 248,321	\$ (270,679)	(52.15)%
OPEB Contribution	\$ 5,527	\$ 4,112	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,527	\$ 1,027	22.82 %
Total 5260 Sewer Division	\$ 9,419,436	\$ 9,823,099	\$ 9,185,359	\$10,884,582	\$ 9,800,208	\$(1,084,374)	(9.96)%

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 this public perception Belmont has held water and sewer rates flat starting in 2019, leading to our recent position at 7th highest in the state. Town Administration recognized this is unsustainable and commissioned a water and sewer rate study to guide the FY24 budget. 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.

While Belmont’s rates have not changed since 2019, water and sewer rates across the country have increased by approximately 5% and 6%, respectively, on average, as inflation, aging infrastructure and declining consumption (causing volume-based revenue declines) have placed pressure on the cost of water and sewer service delivery.

The study generally found that the cost of both operations and maintenance, and infrastructure improvements will continue to increase through 2028. Total water fund expenditures are projected to grow from \$9.4M in fy24 to \$10.2M in FY28. Likewise, sewer fund expenditures are expected to grow from \$10.4M in FY24 to \$12.3M in FY28. Without corresponding rate increases, the funds' cash flow will be negative in each of these years and the funds' reserve balances will be depleted starting in 2025.

To avoid running out of money, the study recommends the following rate increases:

	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>
Water Rates	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>
Sewer Rates	8.0%	8.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

Please note the final Water and Sewer rates will be voted on by the Select Board on 5/22/2023 after this report is published.

With these new 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.

The study also estimated the incremental cost of these new rates to the consumer. For a 4-person Belmont Household, the average combined Sewer and Sewer bill is projected to increase by approximately 6.3%, or \$158, per year.

Recreation Department

The mission of the Recreation Department is to offer quality year-round programs and services for residents of all ages and abilities. These offerings include summer and school-year programs, the Underwood Pool, the Skip Viglirolo Rink, and S.P.O.R.T. adaptive programs among others.

FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

	Dollars	Change from FY23	% Change	FY24 FTEs	FTE Change
Total Budget	\$1,524,426	(\$65,496)	(4.12%)	14.75	(1.4)

The total FY24 budget for Recreation is \$1,699,429, an increase of \$109,504 or 6.9% from FY23. The increase in expenses is due to increased programming, particularly in the summer. These expenses are almost entirely offset by participant fees.

	FY23 Revised Budget	FY24 Recommended	\$ Change	% Change	FY24 FTE
Total Compensation	\$896,435	\$844,439	(\$51,996)	(5.8%)	14.75
Total Expenses	\$693,490	\$679,990	(\$13,500)	(1.95%)	
Grand Total	\$1,589,925	\$1,524,426	(\$65,496)	(4.12%)	

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION: Participation in recreation programs is back above pre-pandemic levels with a large increase in the variety of programs offered. At the Fall 2022 Town Meeting, a supplemental budget was approved for the recreation department to support the larger-than-anticipated program participation. Program fees are expected to match the appropriation.

REVOLVING FUND: Because of the fee-for-service nature of recreation, Belmont has long planned to create a Recreation Enterprise or Revolving Fund – an independently-operated town “enterprise” that manages its own revenues and expenses. (Many towns run their recreation departments with a similar model; neither recreation program revenue nor expenses are part of the regular general fund budget.) The formation of either a revolving or an enterprise fund was delayed due to the pandemic and loss of fields and gyms with the Belmont Middle High School construction. The creation of a Recreation Revolving Fund was approved by Town Meeting on May 3, 2023, and the first monies to flow into this account will come from summer program fees that start to come in during the Spring 2024.

PART-TIME WAGES: Current market conditions for the hiring of part-time staff – especially hiring of lifeguards – mean that wages for these positions must be increased to staff the pool, camp, rink, and other programs effectively, which has placed pressure on the budget.

Budget Risks/uncertainties in FY24

RINK: The rink permanently closed on March 18, 2023. The April 4th debt exclusion vote confirmed that the current rink would be demolished, and a new rink constructed. Construction plans and timing predict the loss of one season of ice in Belmont. The Recreation budget for the rink was reduced from FY23 levels of \$216,000 to \$68,000 for FY24 reflecting a reduction in compensation, supplies, heating, electricity, and professional and technical services related to rink programs. These expenses will not be incurred, nor will there be fees collected for skating and ice recreation activities in FY24. \$68,000 remaining in the budget for ice recreation, which may address FY24 programs and activities on rented ice, and the consequent cost of that alternative. That budgeted amount may be reassessed in the Fall Town Meeting.

Outlook for FY25 and Beyond

The implementation of a Recreation Revolving Fund will shape the outlook for FY25 and beyond. The new rink will offer new opportunities for increased programming. Much of this planning work will be underway during FY24.

Public Safety

Fire, Police, Emergency Management

	<u>FY24</u>	<u>Change from FY23</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Fire Department	\$ 6,390,227	\$411,947	6.89%	55.49
Police Department	\$7,731,948	\$269,096	3.61%	70.38
BEMA	\$24,144	\$0	0.00%	Within FD

The positive variances are largely the result of the completion of contract negotiations with associated increases for both the Fire and Police Departments. For Police, the increases are limited due to ongoing vacancies and recent retirements.

Fire Department

FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

- After remaining flat for several years, the FY24 budget for the Fire Department budget reflects a 6.89% increase, driven largely by compensation increases tied to the recent completion of contract negotiations.
- The budgeted amount for salaries is up \$386,647 (7.23%). The Fire Department budget headcount at 55.5 FTEs remained unchanged in FY24. Headcount has been largely flat since FY15 with the exception of a budgeted reduction of one firefighter in FY22, following the failed override.
- Budgeted expenses are up \$25,300 (4.0%) due to an increase in projected ambulance use which will increase ambulance services billing costs and ambulance supplies. Some of this cost increase will be offset by modest increases in ambulance revenue.
- The two remaining Fire Department staff vacancies were filled in FY23 so the Department in FY24 should be fully staffed. Recent vacancies and long-term disability have resulted in substantial demands on the FY23 Overtime budget which will likely be overspent by year-end. The FY24 Overtime budget has been increased by 8.2%, in line with the increase in salary expense.
- The Fire Department provides revenue to the Town through the ambulance services which is projected to be \$950,000 in FY24, representing a 6.9% decrease over FY23 levels.

Impact of Proposed FY24 Budget on Department Operations

- With lingering vacancies in 2023, the Fire Department has continued 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 is constrained by limited growth in the FY24 budget, beyond the contractual increase to salary. Specifically, the broader rollout of the EMS bike unit, home safety inspections, and additional community CPR courses are examples of programs that were not fully funded in the FY24 budgets. The Fire Chief continues to implement limited versions of these programs, to the degree possible, by leveraging state grants and stepped-up commitments from the Fire Department staff.
- Significant opportunities exist to better serve the community through expansion of fire prevention services, but limited staffing prevents meaningful expansion in FY24.
- Incidents requiring Fire Department response have continued to climb as the community activity returns to normal after COVID (2020: 2,678 incidents; 2021: 3,280 incidents; 2022: 3,869 incidents). The frequency of calls for service has continued to increase in 2023, and the expectation is that the Fire Department will respond to over 4,000 incidents in 2023, if trends continue. EMS and Fire Alarm calls are some of the biggest drivers of incident growth. This steady growth puts strains on existing budgets which, with the exception of salaries, have only increased moderately in recent years.
- Morale with the Fire Department has continued to improve in recent months as contract negotiations have concluded and lingering vacancies have been filled, reducing overtime burdens.
- 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 FY24; Impact on Town Services

- Overtime continues to be a risk for the FY24 Fire Department budget, but the situation will likely improve in the coming year. With all vacancies now being filled, Overtime will likely return to budgeted levels.

- The continued use of Civil Service is presenting less urgent challenges in ensuring a qualified pool of applicants for open roles. However, the use of Civil Service continues to present challenges to increasing the diversity of the Department, which is nearly 100% white, as documented in the [report of the Diversity Task Force](#).

Outlook/Recommendations for FY24

- Given the historical challenges in hiring new Fire Department recruits through the Civil Service program, the Fire Department may be constrained in the future hiring and face challenges related to expanding diversity within the department. The Town should, once again, explore the option of withdrawing from Civil Service.
- The Fire Department was successful in obtaining grants to fund an initial pilot of the EMS Bike Unit and will continue to seek additional public and private funding, when available.
- The Fire Department, like other Town departments, should continue the effort to implement the recommendations of the Town’s Diversity Task Force report.

Police Department

FY24 Budget Changes from FY23

- After remaining flat for several years, the FY24 budget for the Police Department (Department) reflects a modest increase.
- The budgeted amount for salaries rises by \$276,631 (4.21%), resulting from the completion of contract negotiations. However no new positions have been added since 2014, with the exception of a School Resource Officer (SRO) in 2018 (now budgeted in the Detective unit). Also, the budgeted number of 48 patrol officers (PO) is one less than it was in FY21 because the Department reduced one PO as part of the FY22 budget cuts after the failure of the override.
- The rise in salaries will be somewhat offset by continued vacancies not filled, long term injury, and recent retirements including high-ranking officers.
- Continued vacancies result in high overtime (OT). OT is already 36% over budget in FY23.
- Budgeted expenses decline by \$7,535 (0.85%), due to a reduced fuel budget as the department purchases only hybrid patrol cars.

Impact of Proposed FY24 Budget on Department Operations

- Despite the contracted salary increases, the Department feels daily the impact of vacant positions going unfilled. In November 2022, of 48 budgeted positions, 38 were working, resulting in forced overtime (OT) and double shifts. Overtime is 36% over budget in FY23, and OT usage will continue to be high in FY24.
- While the Department has been able to fill three positions, some vacancies remain and two retirements are anticipated.
- An essentially flat budget combined with ongoing vacancies leaves the Department little margin to respond to unusual events. For instance, this year numerous officers have been called to testify in court on the death of Henry Tapia, and court time is likely to remain high in FY24 due to the double shooting in January 2023. Most court time is OT.
- The Department continues to have a contracted Social Worker through a grant from the state Department of Mental Health. The Social Worker helps de-escalate calls with people in crisis and helps divert these incidents from hospital emergency rooms and arrests that would consume patrol

officer time. The Social Worker does a high volume of evaluations and has had a positive impact for the Department and residents.

Budget Risks in FY24; Impact on Town Services

- The Police Department is facing 4 vacancies in FY24, two of which remain from FY23 because they could not be filled from the Civil Service list, and two retirements are expected around July 2023. At the time of this report, the Department plans on requesting an additional list from Civil Service for the hiring of 4 additional candidates. These 4 candidates would enter the academy in late 2023 or early 2024. In addition, one supervisor remains on National Guard duty and two Patrol Officers are on long-term injury leave.
- Any significant delay in filling the vacant positions could lead to greater use of OT. The high use of OT can impact the health and safety of Patrol Officers, delay promotions, and hurt morale, and thus impact the delivery of continued public safety service. The continued use of Civil Service raises significant barriers to filling vacant positions, including a deficit of eligible candidates, which inflates the use of overtime and delays promotions.
- In addition, the continued use of Civil Service is a significant barrier to increasing the diversity of the Police force, which is currently 98% white, as documented in the [report of the Diversity Task Force](#).
- The Department expects OT will continue to be affected by court duty as officers are required to appear in person for trials and other judicial proceedings.
- The lack of crossing guards is again becoming an issue. Despite the installation of traffic signals at Common/School and Sycamore/Lexington streets, which eliminate two posts for crossing guards, the remaining positions are difficult to fill, which puts a strain on patrol officers and affects traffic control.

Outlook/Recommendations for FY24

- Given the lack of a reasonable number of qualified Police candidates from the Civil Service list, the Town can expect vacancies and excess OT to continue.
- The Department was successful in obtaining a \$100,000 grant to fund the Social Worker position and will continue to seek funding for the Social Worker position going forward.
- The Police Department, like other Town departments, should continue the effort to implement the recommendations of the Town's Diversity Task Force report.

The Warrant Committee notes the extensive hiring challenges faced by the Town's Police Department in recent years. These challenges have led to several lengthy vacancies, which in turn have driven high OT costs. Among the contributing factors to the hiring difficulties is the Town's participation in the state civil service system. The Structural Change Impact Group ([SCIG](#)) included a lengthy review and analysis of the civil service system in Belmont in its final report.

The Warrant Committee will not repeat the excellent review of civil service from the SCIG; however, the Warrant Committee supports the "Next Steps" outlined in the SCIG Report (page 53) for the Select Board and the Town Administrator:

- Continue discussions with unions with the goal of withdrawing from Civil Service with union support.

- As part of negotiations, continue the discussion of terms and conditions for an alternate system for hiring in Police Department and Fire Department.
- Hire an outside consultant to forecast savings and costs to determine the net benefit/loss for the Town.
- Develop a plan to leverage existing work done in non-civil service communities to develop exams, and other necessary guidelines.

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 FY23 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.

	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	FY24 FTE	Change from FY23
Town Clerk	\$525,298	\$508,161	(\$17,137)	(3.26%)	4.5	0
Town Administration	\$1,018,088	\$1,125,097	\$107,009	10.51%	5.0	0
Human Resources	\$1,020,978	\$655,063	(\$365,915)	(35.84%)	2.75	0
Information Technology	\$1,352,693	\$1,413,944	\$61,251	4.53%	5.4	0
Town Accountant	\$362,152	\$443,031	\$80,879	22.33%	4.0	0
Town Treasurer	\$724,774	\$649,437	(\$75,337)	(10.39%)	6.5	0
Board of Assessors	\$424,098	\$425,021	\$923	0.22%	4.0	0

Town Clerk

The principal change in the FY24 budget compared to FY23 results from the fact that there will only be two elections during FY24 as compared to three elections last year. However, there are new state mandates concerning voting by mail and in-person early voting which result in increased costs requiring overtime and poll workers to support the process. Although the chart above shows 4.5 FTEs, the operation of the Clerk's Office actually includes four FTEs (Clerk, Assistant Clerk, two Administrative Assistants). The Town Moderator and the Board of Registrars of Voters result in the additional .5 FTE.

The Clerk's Office has embraced new technologies. At this year's elections, the familiar paper poll book has been replaced with an electronic version that shows not only the person's name, but whether they are properly registered and if they are in the wrong precinct. It even provides directions to the proper precinct. There are new electronic voter tabulators which not only count the votes but inform the voter

when any ballot has been improperly completed (i.e., vote for 13 Town Meeting Members when only 12 seats), asking the voter whether the ballot should be counted as is or if they would like a new ballot. The use of technology is now allowing more accessible ways for the public to secure Town records and licenses.

Town Administration

The most significant personnel change in the Town Administrator's office in 2022 was hiring Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Director Jennifer Hewitt. Ms. Hewitt has provided essential information for budget planning to the committees that are responsible for planning the FY24 budget: the Select Board, School Committee, Warrant Committee, and Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee. In FY24, there are no changes in FTEs in the Town Administration department.

Legal services are covered under the Town Administration budget and it has been increasing in the past several years. In FY24, the budget for legal services has increased by \$90k or 30.25% (from \$297,500 to 387,500), which reflects recent spending levels. This increase is appropriate because of the significant number of situations where the Town needs legal advice to determine how to resolve conflicts among property owners and residents. For example, the Beatrice Circle 40-B project and the Belmont Hill School parking lot project have both generated significant legal fees. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic raised a large number of legal issues. Residents should be aware of the financial cost of legal services that the Town incurs each time a conflict arises.

Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) department has been without a director since September 2022. The Town is working with a third-party to help with recruitment. The difficulty in hiring the HR Director is an example of the difficulties the Town has faced in hiring senior staff in the past year. It has been generally easier to hire lower-level staff.

All public employee union contracts have been settled. There are four contracts that will expire on June 30, 2023, and negotiations are underway. Concluding negotiations with these unions is a primary goal in FY24. In addition, the department will be implementing changes recommended from the wage and classification study that was completed in late 2022. HR is also responsible for 889 benefit-eligible employees, in Town and school departments.

In FY24, the HR department budget decreases by 35% (\$1.02 million to \$655,000). This large decrease is entirely due to the HR budget carrying a smaller salary reserve in FY24 than in FY23. Salary reserve is included in the HR budget to account for potential salary changes due to union negotiations and there are fewer outstanding union contracts this year.

Information Technology

In addition to its other responsibilities, the IT department assists the Assessors Office with importing data into the Department of Revenue reporting system. This is a significant annual task, as the Town's current CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) software does not follow state standards. (See the Assessors section for a further discussion of CAMA.)

The addition of a part-time administrative assistant has made a significant improvement on the department's ability to focus on mission-critical performance and security needs.

The department implemented a Town-wide upgrade to Microsoft Office 2021 on very favorable terms. This will be the final non-subscription upgrade available for that software suite. The department anticipates that software services for FY2026 will increase by approximately \$90,000 under Microsoft's mandatory subscription model.

Cyber threats targeting government networks continue to challenge IT department resources. Ransomware and other threats are a serious concern and require multifaceted efforts, including training for town staff to avoid email phishing attacks and network security tools to detect unusual activity on the network. The department has now purchased automated security assistance through a Security Operations Center (SOC) on an annual contract.

Town Accountant

After the previous Town Accountant resigned and moved out of state, the Assistant Town Accountant succeeded to the position. The process of updating and streamlining the Town's accounting procedures continues. Closing the Town's books shortly after the fiscal year on June 30 has allowed the Town to receive timely Free Cash Certification by the state Department of Revenue, a significant help to the town's budget process over the past two years.

In recent years, the Accountant's office has demonstrated a creative approach to finding efficiencies in the Town's various accounting systems, including implementing and training the Town's various departments on Tyler Content Manager in MUNIS, the Town's accounting system. The decentralization of the process of entering invoices allows for the generation of necessary financial reports in real time.

Last year the office located and released approximately \$430k in prior year encumbrances related to capital expenses. These funds then became available for necessary capital expenditures. The department has now implemented a policy of using or releasing encumbrances before September 30 of the following fiscal year.

Last year the office also assumed responsibility for payroll processing from the Treasurer's office. The Town Accountant's office decentralized time entry and implemented workflow approval. Further updates will allow employees online access to pay stubs, W-2's, and other data are being planned.

Town Treasurer

The citizens of Belmont have been fortunate for the past 18 years to have had Mr. Floyd Carmen (first elected in 2005) as its Town Treasurer. He brought great competence and professionalism to the position of Treasurer and skillfully guided the cash management of the Town. On his watch, Belmont has maintained a AAA bond rating by both Moody and S&P putting Belmont as one of the only 11 communities in Massachusetts to have earned this distinction.

The office of Treasurer is now in a state of transition. Mr. Carmen has retired. In keeping with one of the recommendations of the Collins Report, the April 4, 2023, Annual Town Election ratified the previous Town Meeting vote to now provide that the office of the Treasurer shall no longer be an elective position, but hereafter shall be by appointment of the Town Administrator.

The reduction of the Treasurer’s budget as reflected above results primarily from the transfer of a Payroll Manager position to the Accounting Office. Mr. Carmen, as outgoing Treasurer, stated that he did not believe the office needed the continued service of an office assistant as a .5 FTE. The Treasurer’s Office last year closed out six real estate tax liens yielding \$796,301. The function of the Treasurer’s Office as collecting parking fines should not be viewed as a profit center but instead as a necessary activity for the effective enforcement of parking laws.

Assessors’ Office

The Assessors Office lists and values all real and personal property for purposes of taxation by the Town, in accordance with state law and as certified by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. It administers tax exemptions and abatements, as well as inspections and changes in value due to structural additions and modifications.

The new growth figure for FY2024 is expected to be \$860,000, largely driven by residential additions or renovations.

The Abatements and Exemptions reserve is now \$840,000, which is approximately 1% of total property tax revenue. The reserve accounts for new growth valuations that might create additional abatement requests. It also accounts for property tax work-off programs provided to Belmont seniors.

The Assessors Office currently uses CAMA (computer assisted mass appraisal) software developed by J.F. Ryan. The Collins Center Report has “emphatically” recommended that the “Town should invest in upgrading its CAMA system” to one which conforms to state standards. However, this upgrade is unlikely to happen prior to the summer of 2025. Every five years the Massachusetts Department of Revenue recertifies the Town’s assessed values, a process that will begin in FY2024 and which typically lasts an entire year. The current CAMA contract runs through 2025, and it would be too difficult to migrate to a new system the year before recertification.

Abatement requests have varied in recent years. (FY2024 abatement requests were due this year on February 1, 2023.)

<u>Year</u>	<u># of requests</u>
2019	200
2020	556
2021	408
2022	148
2023	139

FY24 Recommendations

Pursuant to recommendation 1.8 of the Collins Center Report, Town Meeting should consider a ballot question to shift the Board of Assessors from an elected to an appointed body.

If the Town adopts an appointed Board of Assessors, the Select Board should then implement a comprehensive PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program for the Town’s non-profit landowners. (This is recommendation 2.1.2 of the Collins Center Report.) The Town is unlikely to implement a successful PILOT program without clear lines of authority and a coordinated approach, including necessary data from the Board of Assessors.

Commercial property currently accounts for approximately 5% of Belmont’s annual property tax receipts. The Town should pursue business-friendly policies and a rewrite of the zoning bylaw, with an ultimate goal of substantially increasing the percentage of annual property tax receipts from commercial sources.

Town Meeting should consider filing 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.

In anticipation of an override ballot question on the April 2024 ballot, Town Meeting should consider filing a home rule petition with the state legislature to provide additional property tax relief to qualifying seniors, beyond the maximum current limits Belmont already provides under state law.

Human Services
Council on Aging

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

Budget Overview

	FY 23 Budget	FY24 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Salaries	\$439,136	\$369,079	\$(70,057)	(15.95)%
Expenses	\$38,004	\$36,775	\$(1,229)	(3.23)%
Total	\$477,140	\$405,854	\$(71,286)	(14.94)%
FTE	5.6	5.6	--	--
ARPA/Grant FTE	1.6	1.6	--	--

The decrease in compensation for FY24 of (15.95%) reflects the fact that ARPA grant should not be included in the budget. Economies in rental of office equipment and vehicle supplies account for the decrease of (3.23%) in the expenses budget.

It is anticipated that a FY25 grant will be secured to replace ARPA funding for a Social Worker.

Grant Overview

Grants and additional funding the COA receives:

- State Formula Grant-\$80,628 allows COA to fund three staff positions, including one driver, media coordinator, and volunteer coordinator.
- Title III-This funding supports congregate meal site five days a week.
- Taxi & Livery Partnership Program administered by MassDevelopment- \$10,000 awards the COA an opportunity to provide medical taxi rides through a partnership with Belmont Taxi. The medical rides go to locations beyond where the BelderBus can take people.
- Friends of the Belmont Council on Aging- The Friends provide various financial support when needed. Examples include funding the facilitator for our decluttering support group, volunteer appreciation lunch, money to provide expanded evening and weekend programs, covering the cost of the technology needed for our volunteer driver program and MyRec for online registrations, paying for the tent and spot at Town Day, and so much more.

- Massachusetts Councils on Aging- When available, the COA will apply for grants through MCOA. Last year, the COA was awarded over \$7,000 for a diversity luncheon event.

Program Overview

The Beech Street Center opened full time in FY23 and is open late on Tuesday evenings. The Center receives a 100-119 Belmont Seniors daily, and serves luncheon, provided by Springwell, to an average of 50 seniors daily. There are a monthly average of 700 rides to medical appointments or other learning and recreation activities. (Details on utilization are below.) Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the Center's busiest days.

Using March 2023 as a representative month, The COA serviced **482** individual Belmont Seniors in the 23 days opened, delivering a total of 3699 events, rides, or other services. This tally of 482 individuals includes the COA volunteers and others.

In March, the total population of center users was 663 people serviced, as seniors from neighboring towns and other Belmont residents use the Center. March 2023 data showed that people aged 50 and older who lived outside of Belmont checked into the center **904** times.

Activities in the Center include fitness, indoor pickle ball, wellness and learning programs. The COA provides at-home services as well, including nutrition, social services, and in-home fitness.

In coordination with the Age-Friendly Action Committee, the COA is organizing programs for seniors living independently. These initiatives address safety, access to services, and life-long learning opportunities for seniors.

The COA also manages the weekend and off-hours rental of the Beech Street Center, with rental fees flowing to the town. The Center has been rented by private parties for weddings, scout troop meetings, and Easter Egg hunts, among other uses. Rentals are beginning to pick up as the weather gets nicer. Every Saturday was booked with a rental in March, and May and June weekends are already booked.

Fees are collected from seniors for learning and recreational trips and events. These sums offset the costs of such programs, and scholarships are offered for those unable to afford the fee.

Future Considerations and Recommendations

The Director of the Council on Aging does not foresee any major risks in the FY24 budget. In FY25, it is anticipated that grant funding will replace the ARPA funding for the new social worker, so there will not be a requested additional FTE in the FY25 budget.

Outreach to serve more Belmont seniors at the Center is important, as well as seniors who are unable to visit on-site. Consideration should be given to mailers, flyers placed in local houses of worship, or other contact for Seniors who may not be reached via the internet and social media.

Review of the rental fees for the Center is appropriate to determine if these rates are market competitive and reasonable.

Library

Budget Overview

FY23	FY24	\$ change from prior year	% change from prior year	FY24 FTEs
\$2,374,315	\$2,348,394	\$25,921	(1.1%)	26.85

Budget by Program

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, Technology and Technical Services, Plant Operations and Administration.

Program	Budget \$	% Change
Public Services	1,461,098	(1.41%)
Technology and Technical Services	391,620	6%
Plant Operations	234,871	(25.8%)
Administration	260,805	26.6%
Total	\$2,348,394	(1.1%)

To be certified, the state requires certain minimum standards of free public library services which include a minimum appropriation and minimum hours per week. The present recommended appropriation just meets the MBLC's Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). It is funded to the exact necessary amount. Typically, this number increases annually by 2.5% and, therefore, will bear close scrutiny in the preparation of the FY25 budget.

FY24 will be a year of transition for the Library. With the successful Town Meeting vote and tax override, progress on building the new Belmont Library is underway. It is anticipated that the Library operations will move out of the existing location and demolition will begin before the end of this calendar year. Construction of the new building will begin early in calendar 2024 and the target for opening is Labor Day of 2025.

During the construction year, the Library will continue to function. Plans are being finalized but it is expected that there will be as many as four - five temporary locations to house the Library's functions.

In recent years, the Library Trustees and the Director have undertaken an overhaul of the Library structure by combining departments and revising job descriptions. In addition, they have implemented automation, including automatic self-checkout machines and online reservation systems, self-service checkout via mobile apps and more.

Comparing FY24 to FY23, the following savings have been realized: (i) reduction in part-time salaries \$58,284; (ii) reduction in overtime \$2,000; (iii) reduction in new books and e-resources \$19,168; (iv) reduction in the maintenance budget because of new building \$24,435. Now, with the elimination in FY24 of a full-time custodial line and its support lines an additional \$64,320 has been realized.

It was the request of the Library that with these savings the FY24 budget would include sufficient funding to provide for a full-time Assistant Library Director. The need for an Assistant Director is compelling. The Library is the only department in Belmont and the only Library compared with our peer towns that is

without an assistant director. The Belmont Library is the 10th busiest library in the Commonwealth. The Director manages a workforce of 26.85 FTEs and during next year, he will be burdened by the responsibility of managing the separate temporary library locations as well as devoting substantial time as a liaison to the Library Building Committee. Because of the fiscal constraints of balancing Belmont's FY24 budget, the recommended budget could not entirely meet the Library's request for the full-time Assistant Director. That said, with the savings from the overhaul of the Library structure in previous years referenced above and including now the elimination of a full-time custodial role from the FY24 budget, the final recommended budget for the Library for FY24 includes enough funds to hire an Assistant Director approximately half-way through FY24.

Health Department

Budget Overview			
FY24	\$ change from prior year	% change from prior year	FY24 FTEs
\$597,112	(\$45,224)	(7.04%)	6.27

Budget by Program

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

Program	Budget \$	Budget %
Health Administration including: Environmental Health and Disease Control	\$412, 748	69.12%
Veterans' Services	\$109,940	18.42%
Animal Care & Control	\$74,424	12.46%
Total	\$597,112	100%

The Department's budget decrease of 7.04% results from recognizing that ARPA grant funding should not be reflected in the budget, and a reduction in hours requested by the Veterans Services Officer.

In FY23 the Health Department's workload remained as unusually high as it resumed more of its traditional responsibilities to enforce minimum sanitary standards for retail food sales and rental housing, investigate nuisance complaints, inspect swimming pools and summer camps, and perform Title V septic inspections, while continuing to address continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department received one-time federal funding to hire a temporary Public Health Agent, who conducted free dual-vaccine clinics for flu and COVID, and led contact tracing after Covid outbreaks including a Butler School classroom in September 2022. The Agent also conducts outreach for the Department on food safety inspections and veterans' issues and helps with all functions in the Department. The resumption of twice-yearly inspections revealed that during the pandemic, many food service establishments had slipped out of compliance, requiring more visits by the Department than usual to bring them back into compliance.

The Department has no full-time Public Health Nurse but shares a Nurse with the Town of Arlington. 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 and reduced his hours in FY23. The full-time Animal Control Officer remains in high demand for administration of pet licensing, off-leash dog programs and response to nuisances including rats and the conditions that attract them. The Youth and Family Services Social

Worker has been moved into the Recreation Department, but there is need for a 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, and staff and the volunteer Board members continue to make themselves available on evenings and weekends.

The high demand for Department services means it will be necessary to replace the one-time federal funding to retain the Public Health Agent position, which will expire after FY24.

The Department sought and received grants from other sources, including a \$5,000 grant from the US Food and Drug Administration to participate in a program to reduce the rate of food-borne illness. However, the Department lacks the staff to draft grant proposals for more funding.

The Health Department has unmet needs for capital to invest in an electronic payment system for the many permit fees administered by the Department. Such a system would free employees to provide health services needed throughout Belmont.

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.

REPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
2023 Town Meeting
May/June 2023

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Introduction

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a five-year capital plan of \$46 million and a one-year capital plan for FY24 of \$9.995 million. The one-year budget covers about 26 projects supported by a range of funding sources. Town Meeting is asked to vote for 18 projects funded by \$6.7 million. This will be accomplished through seven votes, excluding the votes for three CPA projects that have already taken place in Segment A of the 2023 Town Meeting.

The motions before Town Meeting for votes will include:

1. Department of Public Works
2. Facilities Department
3. Fire Department
4. Police Department
5. Inlevy Debt for Fire Department
6. Roads and Sidewalks
7. Enterprise Funds

Genesis 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. 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 by the end of FY24, its second year of operations.

Inaugural CCBC

The inaugural CCBC was fully appointed by November 2022 and consists of the following appointees. (See table.) The initial three-year terms are staggered. The Committee consists of two members of the former Capital Budget Committee (Brusch/Burgess-Cox), three members of the temporary LTCPC (Becker/Doyle/Huang), and four additional members (Bowen/Dash/Link/Pikcilingis). The Committee has worked on an accelerated schedule since its November appointment to establish its new processes, to work with the Town staff closely, and to fulfill the initial framework of the new bylaw that guides its work. (The Committee did not begin work until November due to a delay in the Attorney General’s approval of a by-law change to create this new Committee as required under MGL c.40, §32.)

Name	Appointing Authority	Term Expiration
Claus Becker	Select Board (Energy Committee Designee)	6/30/2023
Catherine Bowen	Select Board (School Committee Designee)	4/4/2023
Patricia Brusch	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Susan Burgess-Cox (Vice Chair)	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Adam Dash	Select Board (Select Board Designee)	4/4/2023
Christine Doyle (Chair)	Select Board (Warrant Committee Designee)	6/30/2023
Melinda Huang	Town Moderator	6/30/2023
Lawrence Link	Town Moderator	6/30/2025
Aaron Pikcilingis	Town Moderator	6/30/2023
Jennifer Hewitt (non-voting)	Select Board (Town Administrator Designee)	
John Phelan (non-voting)	Select Board (Superintendent of Schools)	

CCBC First Year Priorities

During its first year of operations, the CCBC worked on the following priorities:

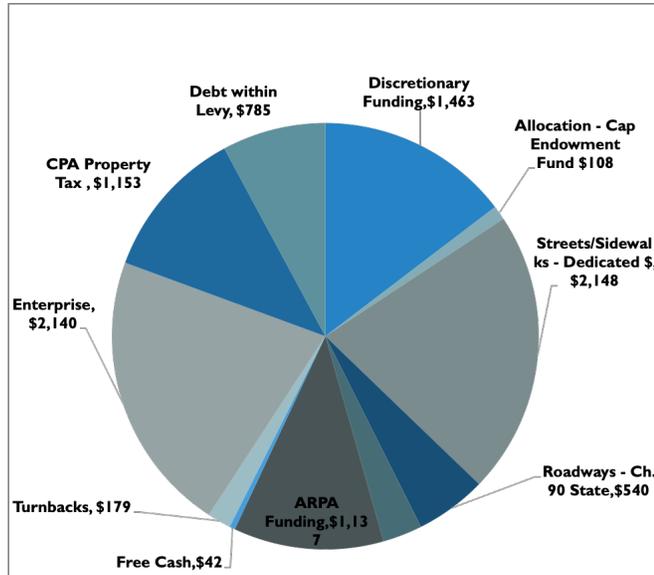
1. Established common understanding of the Committee’s mission and initial priorities. The committee decided on a “committee of the whole” approach to its work for the first year. The committee committed to a collaborative and out-comes oriented work approach.
2. Established timetable for the year’s work and a constructive relationship with Town staff, particular our liaison Jennifer Hewitt.
3. Educated the committee about available revenues sources and Town policies that impact the capital budget.
4. Educated CCBC on Town committees that are “adjacent” the CCBC (i.e. CPC, Capital Endowment Committee, Structural Change Implementation Committee). The CCBC established an approach to its involvement with those committees, at least for its inaugural year.

5. Revised the policy on the threshold to define a capital project from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Projects below \$25,000 need to flow through the operating budget.
6. Adopted a set of CCBC operating procedures.
7. Adopted initial policies on minimum Town funding for capital needs.
8. Developed and implemented project ranking criteria and methodology.
9. Recommended funding for a Building Condition Assessment study to help establish an asset inventory.

Funding Sources for Capital Projects

The FY24 capital budget recommendation includes funding from eleven sources. See the table below. The funding sources for FY24 are finalized as presented for Town Meeting. The funding sources for FY25-28 are estimates based on information at hand. These funding sources and the amounts available in years 2-5 will certainly change.

FUNDING FY24- FY28	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	Total
1 Available Discretionary Funding	\$1,462,652	\$1,800,258	\$2,045,117	\$2,200,948	\$2,258,424	\$9,767,398
2 Allocation from Cap Endowment Fund	\$107,761	\$107,000	\$107,000	\$107,000	\$107,000	\$535,761
3 Free Cash	\$42,239					\$42,239
4 ARPA Funding	\$1,137,214					\$1,137,214
5 Total Turnbacks	\$179,029					\$179,029
6 Streets/Sidewalks - Dedicated \$	\$2,147,896	\$2,201,591	\$2,256,627	\$2,313,042	\$2,370,868	\$11,290,024
7 Enterprise	\$2,140,100	\$2,212,835	\$2,557,285	\$2,672,642	\$2,726,259	\$12,309,121
8 Roadways - Ch. 90 State Grant	\$540,000	\$540,000	\$540,000	\$540,000	\$540,000	\$2,700,000
9 Intersection - State earmark	\$300,000					\$300,000
10 CPA Property Tax Funds	\$1,153,314	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,153,314
11 Within Levy Bond Proceeds - Pumper Truck	\$785,000					\$785,000
Total Funding Available	\$9,995,205	\$7,861,684	\$8,506,029	\$8,833,632	\$9,002,551	\$44,199,100



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 FY24 the discretionary capital spending from the operating budget is proposed as \$1,462,652, combined with \$107,761 from the Capital Endowment Fund, \$42,239 from free cash, and \$179,029 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. The funds are invested and managed by the Town Treasurer, with the advice of the Capital Endowment Committee. The Select Board determines the amount distributed from the Fund each year. The net income of the fund 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 FY24, the Select Board has recommended appropriating the net income of \$107,761. The CEF has a balance of about \$4.5 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 FY24, turnbacks are estimated at \$179,029.

Debt Within Levy

The Town is permitted to issue debt “within levy,” that is without a debt exclusion. It does this periodically for small to medium size capital needs that would crowd out funding for other annual capital projects, but which are smaller than is practical to request a debt exclusion. In FY24 the CCBC is proposing the issue of within levy debt of \$785,000 for the purchase of a new pumper truck. (This debt is assumed to be issued at a rate of 5% for a term of five years.) (The pumper truck cost is \$910,000. The balance of \$125,000 will be funded from discretionary funds of the Town.)

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 non-discretionary funds are based on Town policy, state laws and prior override votes. These non-discretionary funds include funds 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 and 2015, voters approved overrides in the amounts of \$3 million and \$4.5 million, respectively. These overrides included commitments to roads and sidewalks. Each year, override funds increase by 2 ½ %. In the 2015 override, \$200,000 was dedicated to unique sidewalk needs. 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 are performed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and comprehensive road work is performed under the direction of the Office of Community Development (OCD). The Departments make every effort to coordinate their work. Additional funds are available periodically through unique federal programs and through MassDOT grant programs – Belmont joined the Complete Streets Program in 2019.

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 the Office of Community Development is responsible for the management of these items and projects. Water and sewer user rates are set by the Select Board acting as the Enterprise Fund Boards. Town policy states that 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

This year the Select Board allocated one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the Town’s capital budget in the amount of \$1,137,214. The ARPA funds were allocated based only on a vote of the Select Board, per state and federal requirements; Town Meeting does not have authorization over the ARPA funds. However, the Select Board asked the CCBC for project recommendations and the CCBC brought project recommendations for the ARPA funds to the Select Board on April 3, 2023. The Select Board voted affirmatively on the CCBC recommendations (see page 10 below). The CCBC notes with considerable caution that the ARPA funds are “one-time” funds that are not going to be advanced in FY25 and beyond. While the CCBC is pleased that the \$1,137,214 of ARPA funds have been dedicated to capital needs, the CCBC and the Town Meeting should not expect any additional funds from this source.

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 of open space and recreation, affordable housing, and historic preservation. The town’s adoption of the CPA diverts several capital expenses from discretionary capital funds.

Other Miscellaneous Funding Sources

Belmont received a so-called “earmark” in the FY24 state budget for \$300,000 for planning and design work on the intersection of Huron Avenue and Grove Street. In the past the Town utilized funds from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to help fund recent 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.

FY24 Capital Budget Recommendations
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Capital Budget Process

The capital budget process timing is in the process of being adjusted by the Town staff. Generally the Town’s finance office asks 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. This year the CCBC received the requests in December 2022; however, the Committee is expecting to receive them earlier next year as the Town finance office is more well-established as is the new CCBC. The content of the capital request form is an important starting point for the capital process and the CCBC will work with the finance office to incorporate some recommendations of the CCBC that will facilitate easier assessment of certain aspects of the more effective delivery of the Town’s capital needs.

Capital Project Evaluation

The CCBC developed a project ranking methodology, informed by a set of project evaluation criteria and relative criteria weightings.

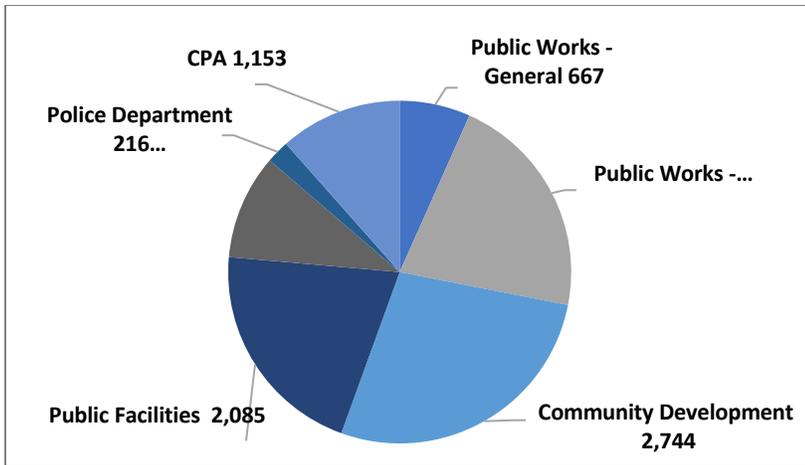
Each project was evaluated on five criteria: 1) Impact to health, safety and security of citizens, employees, or property; 2) maintenance and preservation of capital assets such as major repairs of buildings, replacement of vehicles and equipment, park and play area renovations; 3) urgency, work deemed by departments that must be done within a certain time frame; 4) improvement of productivity, or relief of 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 that are required based on an outside funding source requirement do not need to go through the same ranking evaluation process, as these projects will need to be completed regardless of project ranking result.

FY24 Capital Budget

The FY24 capital budget presented by the CCBC contains 25 town projects totaling \$9.995 million, including all funding sources. Of this total, Town Meeting is asked to vote on about 18 projects totaling about \$6.7 million through the capital warrant articles. (During Segment A Town Meeting also voted on CPC articles, three of which funded Town assets totaling \$1.151 million.) The 25 town projects are grouped by departmental area in the pie chart below.



Certain capital projects recommended for FY24 are highlighted briefly below.

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.” This is a challenging effort. The Town has several elements of such an inventory, but other elements are missing. The data in such an inventory should help to inform the identification and prioritization of capital projects. The CCBC has recommended funding a building assessment be conducted by an outside party in FY24 for an estimated \$100,000. The CCBC and the Town staff will use the results of this assessment to guide the selection of future capital projects.

Roads and Sidewalks

DPW’s backlog comprises 1,000 sidewalk repair requests despite the dedicated multi-year stream of annual investment amounts set aside from the 2015 Override. The next five years allocations total \$1.04 million (~250,000, increased 2.5% per year). The “Sidewalk Assessment” recommended by CCBC as part of the FY24 capital budget will provide 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.

The Office of Community Development (OCD) oversees a complex, three-year planning and execution cycle for resurfaced 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 OCD has produced “Road Condition” reports over the past 20 years, based on periodic evaluations of all roads in town and their respective needs. OCD is just now working on creating a new Road Condition Index which will be a part of the FY24 Pavement Management Program.

Currently, an approximate \$2 million annual allocation from the 2001 and 2015 Overrides (increasing at 2.5% per year) through 2028 will cover road planning and repairs/reconstruction. OCD staffing shortages delayed the Road Condition Index until sometime this summer. The FY23 roadwork also suffered some delays due to staffing shortages, however, that design work should begin this summer. Going forward, the OCD will be using a GIS-based budgeting and scheduling system which will be coordinated with the DPW sidewalk work.

Pumper Truck for Fire Department

The Fire Department has requested a new pumper truck to support its vehicle fleet. Generally needs two pumper trucks, one that is within its first ten years of life and a backup pumper truck that is within its second ten years of life. After a replacement pumper truck is purchased, the retired pumper truck would be sold, and those proceeds would be dedicated to Town capital needs. As stated earlier in the funding section (page 5), the pumper truck funding is proposed to be split between within levy debt of \$785,000 and discretionary funds of \$125,000.

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.

ARPA Projects -- Schools

Proposed and approved projects for ARPA funding are listed below. These projects were recommended by the CCBC to the SB for ARPA funding because the Town would like them completed by September 2023 and this could only occur with a spring 2023 project start date. (A June Town Meeting approval for these projects would not have permitted project completion by September 2023.) Since ARPA funds are allocated by the Select Board and not Town Meeting, the CCBC recommended these projects to the Select Board, and they were approved on April 3, 2023.

ARPA Funded Capital Projects -- FY24		
FAC-24-01	Butler Elementary School Repairs	892,214
FAC-24-04	Video Camera Improvements - Schools	330,000
FAC-24-06	Security Vestibules - Schools	75,000

The table below presents the capital projects funded in FY24 and arrays them by the funding sources summarized earlier on page 4. The projects are color-coded as follows:

White & Green: Projects Town Meeting will vote in the warrant articles.

Blue: Projects funded via the CPA and previously voted by Town Meeting in Segment A.

Orange: Projects funded through ARPA funds and previously voted by the Select Board and the Select Board on April 3, 2023, by recommendation of the CCBC.

Capital Project Summary Funding FY24

AS OF MAY 23, 2023

Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2024	FY24 Funding Sources					CPA
			TOTAL	Operating Cash	Enterprise Cash	Debt (in levy)	ARPA	
Public Works								
DPW-24-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	243,680	243,680					
DPW-24-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000					
DPW-24-03	DPW Highway Equipment	-	-					
DPW-24-04	DPW Parks Equipment	244,625	244,625					
DPW-24-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	78,270	78,270					
DPW-24-06	Sidewalk Assessment Update	50,000	50,000					
	Subtotal Department of Public Works	666,575	666,575	-	-	-	-	
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds								
ENT-24-01	Water Main Replacement	756,000		756,000				
ENT-24-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	700,000		700,000				
ENT-24-03	DPW Water Equipment	500,000		500,000				
ENT-24-04	DPW Sewer Equipment	-		-				
ENT-24-05	GIS Updates	87,700		87,700				
ENT-24-06	Hydraulic Modeling & Valve Exercising Tasks	96,400		96,400				
	Subtotal Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds	2,140,100	-	2,140,100	-	-	-	
Community Development								
CD-24-01	Pavement Management Program	1,904,216	1,904,216					
CD-24-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	-					
CD-24-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-					
CD-24-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000				540,000		
CD-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	300,000				300,000		
	Subtotal Community Development	2,744,216	1,904,216	-	-	-	840,000	
Facilities								
FAC-24-01	Butler Elementary School Repairs	1,500,000	607,786			892,214		
FAC-24-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	-	-					
FAC-24-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	-	-					
FAC-24-04	Video Camera Improvements - School	330,000				330,000		
FAC-24-05	New Electric Vehicle	55,000	55,000					
FAC-24-06	Security Vestibules	75,000				75,000		
FAC-24-07	New Public Works Facility	-	-					
FAC-24-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement	-	-					
FAC-24-09	Belmont Building Assessments	100,000	100,000					
FAC-24-10	Refinish Butler School Gym Floor	25,000	25,000					
	Subtotal Facilities	2,085,000	787,786	-	-	1,297,214	-	
Fire								
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	80,000	80,000					
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-					
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	-					
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	910,000	125,000		785,000			
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-					
	Subtotal Fire	990,000	205,000	-	785,000	-	-	
Police								
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	216,000	216,000					
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-24-08	Replacement/Addition Tasers	-	-					
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	-					
PD-24-10	Replacement Department Sidearms	-	-					
	Subtotal Police	216,000	216,000	-	-	-	-	
Information Technology								
IT-24-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-					
	Subtotal Information Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets								
CPA-Town	Grove St Baseball	941,935					941,935	
CPA-Town	PQ Basketball Court	124,592					124,592	
CPA-Town	Library Historic Objects	86,787					86,787	
	Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets	1,153,314	-	-	-	-	1,153,314	
	Capital Projects Total All Department	9,995,205	3,779,577	2,140,100	785,000	1,297,214	840,000	

Capital Budget Years 2 - 5 (FY25 – FY28)

The CCBC is presenting a draft capital plan for years 2- 5 (i.e. FY25 – FY28). This draft plan includes about 33 projects and spending of about \$36 million. However, the draft capital plan for FY25 – FY28 is **NOT COMPLETE**. The projects and funding sources for FY25 – FY28 will continue to evolve. It will also be informed by the Building Assessment that is recommended for funding in the FY24 capital budget. The table below summarizes current information for FY25 – FY28.

The CCBC has highlighted certain potential projects below that will likely arise in years FY25 - FY28.

Chenery School Boiler - FY25 estimated \$1.5 million

30 individual boilers power the multi-zone heating system, all of which now have reached their original useful life expectancy. Because the boilers are the same age, make and model, a domino effect of failures could be imminent. The professional assessment recommends installation of two high efficiency boilers and pumps, the latter with a variable speed drive system (geothermal technologies are not a viable option due to extensive cost and space issues).

Chenery School Roof – 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. 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.

Former Incinerator Site – perhaps FY27 estimated \$4.8 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 should be budgeted for annual post-closure monitoring and maintenance inspections, again as required by the Commonwealth. The Town has set aside some funds for this purpose.

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. (The cost estimate is simply a placeholder, using a current 2023 price, elevated by annual inflation of 6 percent. BFD will review and update this figure annually.)

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.

Capital Project Summary - FY2024-28							AS OF MAY 17, 2023	
Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	TBD	Total
Public Works								
DPW-24-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	243,680	249,770	256,010	262,410	268,970	-	1,280,840
DPW-24-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	250,000
DPW-24-03	DPW Highway Equipment	-	54,508	72,888	154,503	156,570	119,083	557,552
DPW-24-04	DPW Parks Equipment	244,625	142,410	49,030	-	-	-	436,065
DPW-24-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	78,270	78,720	-	-	-	-	156,990
DPW-24-06	Sidewalk Assessment Update	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	50,000
Subtotal Department of Public Works		666,575	575,408	427,928	466,913	475,540	119,083	2,731,447
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds								
ENT-24-01	Water Main Replacement	756,000	1,080,000	1,166,400	1,259,712	1,360,489	-	5,622,601
ENT-24-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	700,000	800,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	-	4,500,000
ENT-24-03	DPW Water Equipment	500,000	79,800	233,120	106,105	72,145	-	991,170
ENT-24-04	DPW Sewer Equipment	-	253,035	257,765	306,825	193,625	-	1,011,250
ENT-24-05	GIS Updates	87,700	-	-	-	-	-	87,700
ENT-24-06	Hydraulic Modeling & Valve Exercising Tasks	96,400	-	-	-	-	-	96,400
Subtotal Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds		2,140,100	2,212,835	2,557,285	2,672,642	2,726,259	-	12,309,121
Community Development								
CD-24-01	Pavement Management Program	1,904,216	1,951,821	2,000,617	2,050,632	2,101,898	-	10,009,184
CD-24-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	-	-	4,793,000	-	-	4,793,000
CD-24-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-	-	-	-	3,300,000	3,300,000
CD-24-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	-	2,700,000
CD-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	300,000	-	-	-	-	-	300,000
Subtotal Community Development		2,744,216	2,491,821	2,540,617	7,383,632	2,641,898	3,300,000	21,102,184
Facilities								
FAC-24-01	Butler Elementary School Repairs	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,500,000
FAC-24-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	-	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	1,500,000
FAC-24-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	200,000
FAC-24-04	Video Camera Improvements - School	330,000	-	-	-	-	-	330,000
FAC-24-05	New Electric Vehicle	55,000	-	-	-	-	-	55,000
FAC-24-06	Security Vestibules	75,000	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
FAC-24-07	New Public Works Facility	-	-	-	-	-	22,000,000	22,000,000
FAC-24-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement	-	-	5,400,000	-	-	-	5,400,000
FAC-24-09	Belmont Building Assessments	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
FAC-24-10	Refinish Butler School Gym Floor	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Subtotal Facilities		2,085,000	1,700,000	5,400,000	-	-	22,000,000	31,185,000
Fire								
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	-	400,000
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-	-	-	48,690	-	48,690
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	80,000	90,000	85,000	-	-	255,000
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	910,000	-	-	-	-	-	910,000
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-	-	-	-	1,650,000	1,650,000
Subtotal Fire		990,000	160,000	170,000	165,000	128,690	1,650,000	3,263,690
Police								
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	216,000	210,200	-	-	-	-	426,200
PD-24-03	Replace Fiber Multiplexers	-	195,000	-	-	-	-	195,000
PD-24-04	Townwide Base Radio Replacement	-	-	-	-	400,000	400,000	800,000
PD-24-05	Replace CAD and RMS Server	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	25,000
PD-24-06	Replace Police Domain Controllers	-	28,000	-	-	-	-	28,000
PD-24-07	Replace Call Logging Recorder	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
PD-24-08	Replacement/Addition Tasers	-	275,000	-	-	-	-	275,000
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	-	42,000	-	-	-	42,000
PD-24-10	Replacement Department Sidearms	-	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000
Subtotal Police		216,000	733,200	137,000	-	400,000	400,000	1,886,200
Information Technology								
IT-24-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-	-	60,000	-	-	60,000
Subtotal Information Technology		-	-	-	60,000	-	-	60,000
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets								
CPA-Town	Grove St Baseball	941,935	-	-	-	-	-	941,935
CPA-Town	PQ Basketball Court	124,592	-	-	-	-	-	124,592
CPA-Town	Library Historic Objects	86,787	-	-	-	-	-	86,787
Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets		1,153,314	-	-	-	-	-	1,153,314
Capital Projects Total All Department		9,995,205	7,873,264	11,232,830	10,748,187	6,372,387	27,469,083	73,690,956

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 in that timeframe are listed below. This list is NOT complete, and the Committee has not yet dug into these projects in detail.

White Field House, West of Harris Fields, Indoor Multi-Sport Surfaces at Rink

The High School/Middle School Building Project originally included White Field House and the “West of Harris Fields”; however, the projects were deferred for project planning, timeline, and budgetary reasons. The White Field House needs to be razed and hazardous material must be removed. The Fields require leveling, re-sodding and possible drainage work. The New Rink’s Indoor Surface refers to the “multi-sport” aspect of the New Rink project and it would facilitate the full potential of the new Rink facility for indoor sports during non-ice months. No reliable estimates or timing for these three projects exists.

Harris Field Turf Replacement

Originally installed in 2014¹ the useful life of artificial surfaces typically spans 8-12 years, with 10 being the rough average. Necessary repairs or replacement closely relates to the total amount of use/intensity, 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 several HS women’s and men’s sports (Lacrosse, Soccer, Field Hockey, Football to name the majority users) as well as many youth levels of the same sports. The following presumes replacement 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 teamwork. The CCBC estimates that plans for a replacement facility should be incorporated into the Town’s capital budget by 2032.

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.

Recent Debt Exclusion Projects

Belmont Middle and High School

This past year as the new High School worked through its second full year of operation, its partner Middle School moved toward completion for the fall of 2024. A \$300 million Town investment in facilities leveraged nearly \$80 million in Commonwealth construction funds and is fulfilling the educational aspirations and programmatic needs of over half of Belmont’s student population. In turn, the Town will be able to turn its attention to the capital improvements and provide far better space and conditions at Chenery and the elementary schools.

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 were approving approximately \$34.5 million as a significant \$5 million in private fundraising, foundation grants and other funds offset the Town's borrowing needs by nearly 15%.

Rink

While a similar ballot proposal failed that November for a new Rink and Multi-Sport facility, a revised plan was presented to voters in April 2023, at a reduced estimated cost of \$29.9 million, but only adding \$28.6 million to the Town's debt load thanks to the \$1.3 million in gifts and grants raised by generous donors and energetic boosters. This ballot measure met with success, so Belmont will soon be completing its last two major deferred capital projects identified several years ago.

CCBC Policy and Process Work for Year Two (Preparation of FY25 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.

Process priorities for year two will likely include:

1. Develop a capital plan for years 6 – 30.
2. Integrate project ranking criteria into department heads' preparation of capital project requests.
3. Incorporate results of Building Inventory and Assessment, as well as CPC asset inventories, into capital plan.
4. Integrate review of potential regional and private roles for capital needs into Town staff project requests and into CCBC review of projects.
5. Establish early communication with CPC and improved integration of CPC projects into the capital plan.
6. Expand and improve review of Enterprise Fund capital requests and capital funding capacity, including understanding of recent outside report on Enterprise funds.
7. Monitor activity of the Structural Change Implementation Group and consider incorporation of recommendations.
8. Understand the Town's maintenance processes and investments.

The Committee has identified some policy changes that will also move Belmont toward its management, financial planning, and other Town policy goals:

1. The CCBC recommends that the portion of the Town's FY23 operating budget dedicated to the support of "exempt debt service" will remain dedicated to 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. The CCBC recommends that the funds from the operating budget dedicated to capital needs each year have a "floor" and this floor be increased by 2.5% in each subsequent year to make a new "floor."

3. The CCBC recommends that a portion of Free Cash be dedicated to capital each year, starting with at least \$50,000 for the FY25 capital budget.
4. The CCBC recommends that the 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. The CCBC recommends that the proceeds of rebates related to capital assets 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. The CCBC recommends that turnbacks from capital projects be returned to the capital budget, not the operating budget.
7. The CCBC recommends that the Town should 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 should not focus primarily on the short-term operating cost of securing these outside funds.

Structural Change Impact Group and the CCBC

In addition to the above key policy recommendations, the CCBC supports the following recommendations from the Structural Change Impact Group (SCIG), which was formed in 2021 to investigate and recommend a list of key structural changes for the Town of Belmont.

Over a period of 15 months the SCIG gathered ideas from a variety of sources and then assessed each idea for its potential to reduce the cost Town services and/or improve efficiency and/or quality of service delivery. The SCIG created a report compiling these assessments, available on the Town website. It provided several recommendations relevant to the work of the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee:

1. *SCIG recommends that the Town continue its transition to electric vehicles.*
2. *SCIG recommends that the Town improve its fleet management system.*
3. *SCIG recommends that the Town implement a 311 system.*
4. *SCIG recommends that the Town implement a Visual Budget website.*
5. *SCIG recommends that the Town evaluate town-owned parcels for their best use.*

With these recommendations in mind, the CCBC will address each of these recommendations in the coming year and seek to work with Town staff to develop implementation approaches.

Reserves – 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. 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 supports the Town’s proposal to rename and repurpose the Capital/Debt Stabilization Fund as the “Capital Stabilization Fund.” The repurposed Fund takes advantage of a change in state law – the municipal modernization law -- that permits municipalities more flexibility to reserve funds for capital purposes. The repurposing also makes clear that funds from the following sources will 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.

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 Financial Policies directs the Town toward two metrics related to capital investments, which are presented below. The CCBC needs further in-depth conversations with Town staff and the Select Board about the Financial Policies. We look forward to making sure we are interpreting the policies correctly and to clarifying certain definitions.

Capital Reserves: The Town is to maintain capital reserves in the range of 3-4% of the General Fund Operating Budget. For FY24 the CCBC tentatively believes that this indicates a \$4 - \$5 million reserves requirement. Currently the Town has about \$11.3 mm in reserves for capital, with restrictions on some of those funds.

Annual Capital Investment as compared to the General Fund Operating Budget: The Town is to make annual capital investments in the range of 5% to 7% of the General Fund Operating Budget. Enterprise Funds and CPA funds are excluded for the purpose of calculating this ratio. For FY24 the CCBC tentatively believes that the Town’s annual capital investment will be about 4.6% of the General Fund Operating Budget, excluding Enterprise Fund projects and revenues and excluding CPA projects and revenues.

Update on FY23 Capital Projects in Process

A chart below summarizes this status of the Town’s FY23 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. Most of these projects can only be done in the summer months to prevent disruption during the school year.

FY23 Bid Reserve Update

In FY23, the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) was able to fund all priority projects utilizing discretionary funds and one-time funds. These one-time funds came from the sale of the Cushing Square parking lot and turn-back capital funds from past projects. In addition to utilizing funds for FY23 requests, the Town elected to 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, projects can incur unexpected increases in expenditure. The bid reserve mitigates the likelihood of needing to rebid projects. The Bid Reserve was used once during FY23 for a cost discrepancy on a project for a safety system at Winn Brook School. The Town has approximately \$93,000 in this bid reserve fund.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 CAPITAL PROJECT STATUS

Dept.	Project Description	Budget	Status
	Project Bid Reserve	\$93,738.00	Funds Available
Community Development			
	Roads Rebuild	\$150,000.00	Bids Received 3/23
Subtotal Community Development:		\$150,000.00	
Facilities			
	Butler Masonry	\$487,000.00	Specs and Documents in Process
	Butler KaiWal	\$415,000.00	Contract will be awarded at an upcoming SB meeting
	Hybrid Utility Vehicle	55,666.00	Project Complete
	Wellington Heat Pump	97,595.00	Project Complete
	Butler PA Syst	\$300,000.00	Work to begin in summer 2023
	Electric Van	\$54,756.00	Will go into production in June 2023
	Winn Brook Fire Alarm System	\$122,000.00	Contract awarded
Subtotal Facilities:		\$1,532,017.00	
Library			
	Radio Frequency ID System	32,306.00	Project Complete
Subtotal Library		32,306.00	
Fire Department			
	Replace Staff Vehicle	\$75,000.00	Project Complete
	Ambulance Replacement	\$80,000.00	New allocation for future vehicle
	Power Load Cot System	\$45,081.00	Project Complete
	Cardiac Monitor	\$ 7,000.00	Project Complete
	Air Packs	\$ 376,584.00	Project Complete
Subtotal Fire Department:		\$583,665.00	
Police Department			
	Radio Amplifier	\$ 30,000.00	Project Complete
	Replace Emergency Medical Dispatch S	\$ 12,000.00	Project Complete
Subtotal Police Department:		\$ 42,000.00	
Information Technology			
	Fiber Line to Antenna Site	\$ 150,000.00	Work Started
	Fiber Line for Burbank/Wellington	\$ 20,000.00	Project Complete
	Network Storage	\$ 60,000.00	Awaiting quotes from vendors
Subtotal IT:		\$ 230,000.00	
Department of Public Works			
	Fuel Tanks	\$ 649,699.00	Contract Awarded
	Tree Inventory	\$ 55,000.00	Project Complete
	Replace Trees	\$ 25,000.00	To use in conjunction with Spring 2023 tree plantings
	#117 Cemetery Pick-Up	\$ 58,310.00	Project Complete
	Parks Front End Loader	\$ 112,450.00	Project Complete
	#110 Parks Pick Up	\$ 58,310.00	Project Complete
Subtotal DPW:		\$ 958,769.00	
DPW Sidewalks			
	Sidewalks for FY23	\$ 337,730.00	Project Complete
Subtotal DPW Sidewalks:		\$ 337,730.00	
FY23 Total:		3,960,225.00	

Conclusion

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a five-year capital plan of \$46 million and a one-year capital plan for FY24 of \$9.995 million. The one-year budget covers about 26 projects supported by a range of funding sources. Town Meeting is asked to vote for 18 projects funded by \$6.7 million. This will be accomplished through seven votes, excluding the votes for three CPA projects that have already taken place in Segment A of the 2023 Town Meeting.

The motions before Town Meeting for votes will include:

1. Department of Public Works
2. Facilities Department
3. Fire Department
4. Police Department
5. Inlevy Debt for Fire Department
6. Roads and Sidewalks
7. Enterprise Funds

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 gamely adapted to a new system and our new focus on longer time periods and took time out of their schedules to meet with us and answer questions. We thank them for their flexibility and support. Special thanks go out to the Town Administrator's office and Jennifer Hewitt in particular for tireless support of the committee's work.

We would like to recognize outgoing members Adam Dash and Catherine Bowen, committee members until April 3, 2023, whose depth of knowledge and attention to details have been critical to our work and will be missed!

BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FY24 Budget (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024)



BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meghan Moriarty, *Chair*
Amy Checkoway, *Secretary*
Jeff Liberty
Jamal Saeh
Jung Yueh
Amy Zuccarello

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

John P. Phelan
- *Superintendent of Schools*
Janice Darias
- *Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction*
Anthony DiCologero
- *Director of Finance, Business, and Operations*
Michael McAllister
- *Director of Human Capital*
Chon'tel Washington
- *Director of Diversity Equity & Inclusion*

A letter from the School Committee...

Dear Town Meeting Members and Residents of the Belmont Community,

Last year, I wrote my first letter to Town Meeting Members as Belmont School Committee Chair. In that letter, I expressed our gratitude to Belmont taxpayers for the generous support of our schools over the years, including the new Middle and High School building where we are now convened for Town Meeting. Over the past year, our appreciation has only grown. I am writing again to thank the Belmont taxpayers for their continued generous support and Belmont's Select Board members, Town Administrator, and Warrant Committee for their collaboration this year.

The progress that has been made in our schools would not have happened without the exceptional and dedicated educators, administrators, and staff supporting all aspects of academic and social-emotional learning across the district. We are fortunate to have parents and community members who are involved and whose support enables us to be forward-thinking. There are countless examples of how our students contribute to the Belmont community and beyond, that amplify the positive impacts of graduates from Belmont Public Schools. In the last year, you may have seen members of the High School Student Advisory Council participating in our meetings and sharing information from the student perspective to the School Committee. I have no doubt that these students represent the many graduates from Belmont High who will become future leaders.

The FY24 budget endeavors to maintain Belmont's commitment to high-quality, nurturing programming for all students. This budget acknowledges that many students have more complex needs since returning to in-person learning and need more support; that teachers play a major role in student achievement and we should be investing in them; and that the Town has significant financial constraints. But as Tony Bennett, Head Coach of Virginia men's basketball program, stated, "If you learn to use adversity right, it will bring you to a place you couldn't have gone any other way."

In the year ahead, students, educators, and new administration will complete the process of moving into and configuring the Belmont Middle and High School. Preparations for fourth graders to move into the Chenery Upper Elementary at the start of the 2024-25 school year will continue. Our new district leadership team will engage with the community as they lead the district in strategic planning and visioning. As you read this letter, I hope you share my excitement about the opportunities ahead.

Finally, on behalf of the School Committee and with much gratitude, I'd like to extend tremendous thanks to Superintendent John Phelan for his dedicated leadership of the Belmont School District and wish him all the best after he retires this Fall.

Meg Moriarty
School Committee, Chair

A note from the Superintendent...

Dear Town Meeting Members and Residents of the Belmont Community,

It is with great appreciation that I thank the community for the support provided to the students of Belmont in the form of our new and soon to be completed, in August 2023, Belmont Middle and High School building. The community has been through many years of planning, design, and construction, and now our grades 7-12 will be in this wonderful school building and campus for the 2023/24 school year.

With the completion of the Belmont Middle and High School, the students have access to the full complement of spaces and programming of our new school. There are many exceptional learning spaces like: the Black Box theater and auditorium; separate middle and high school band rooms; middle and high school locker space; and our renovated field house, small gym, pool and work out area. Students in both schools have access to library and media spaces and technology and robotic classrooms that support STEM learning and wonderful small classroom spaces for student support programming. I want to convey my deepest appreciation to all the members of the Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee led by Bill Lovallo and Pat Bruschi. Bill and Pat have continued to lead the committee of Belmont resident volunteers through a six year tenure of work that continues through the fall of 2023. The School Department is eternally grateful for the support of the community of this wonderful education space for our students.

This year the Belmont Public Schools has been working successfully toward our major priority which was to engage all students in a rigorous and safe learning environment. As we have made our way through a construction project and a pandemic, our students have demonstrated incredible resilience and effort towards achieving their common goal of high academic outcomes and post graduation success. My deepest thank you to each and every student who has put their full dedication and determination into their school experience as they prepare for their future endeavors.

The success of our students is supported by the families that send their children to our schools and the educators, staff, and administrators who greet and challenge our students each day.

The district, with backing from the School Committee, Town Administration, Warrant Committee and Select Board, will open our new Belmont Middle and High School and support the 2023/24 school year with a limited budget. As the Town works through the historic and continuing fiscal challenges, we are fortunate to have the relief of a substantial amount of one time funds to support the school budget.

As we plan for the 2023/24 school year, our budget remains lean. We will continue to utilize the remaining federal Covid-recovery funds to provide essential services to our students. Our goal - this year and every year - is to balance the needs of our students with the fiscal realities of the Town.

In summary, the School Department appreciates the ongoing support of the Belmont community and is looking forward to another successful year. Thank you for working with us to encourage and educate all of our wonderful Belmont students.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Phelan
Superintendent of Schools
Town of Belmont

PART I: FY24 BUDGET OVERVIEW

FY24 Budget Context	1
FY24 School Department Initiatives	3
FY24 Budget Objectives	3
Technical Budget Assumptions	4
Unknown Variables	4

FY24 BUDGET CONTEXT

The Town of Belmont has and continues to grapple with an ongoing structural deficit. [See links below to Town fiscal presentations based on Financial Task Force work.] Strategic planning by Town and School leaders for the FY24 Budget began in August 2022. The FY24 School Budget planning process has been presented and discussed at School Committee meetings since October 2022.

The district presented a series of FY24 Budget documents, which provide a deep dive into the data of what is needed for the Belmont Public Schools for the 2023/24 school year. These documents are on our [website](#). The original priority of the FY24 budget was to provide staffing and other resources for opening the new Belmont Middle School. This is the final phase of our six-year Belmont Middle and High School Building project.

Given the projected structural deficit for FY24, Town leaders (Select Board, Warrant Committee, School Committee) have held multiple [Budget Summits](#) to discuss the FY24 budget from a revenue perspective and then from an expense perspective. This process informed reductions and shifts needed for the School and Town budgets.

Based on available revenue, an FY24 School Budget gap of \$2.1M was identified. Reductions to close that gap have been presented publicly; and deliberated and revised by the School Committee, resulting in the FY24 Draft 3 Budget reflected in this Report.

It should be noted that given the current revenue available, the School Department will be strained in our ability to provide the needed direct and wrap-around services to students and families. However, we can say with confidence that these funds will be utilized as effectively as possible to address the needs of our students for the 2023/24 school year.

The FY24 Budget also includes the use of one-time local and federal funds to support our students, for which the school district is appreciative.

As we turn our attention to FY24 and beyond, we will focus on the continued partnership among Town and School leaders in order to support our collective constituencies for the planning and development of the FY25 Budget.

Also, we will be operationalizing the district reconfiguration work done for the full opening of the Belmont Middle and High School, scheduled for September 2023. In addition, we will continue the planning needed to implement the final phase of the reconfiguration for grade 4 students to move from the current elementary schools to the Chenery Upper Elementary School for FY25.

The following links provide additional information regarding the FY24 School Budget:

[FY24 School Budget Presentations December 2022 - March 2023](#)

[Budget Page of the Belmont Public Schools website](#)

The following links provide additional information regarding fiscal analysis on the Town's website:

[Town Structural Deficit Presentation, December 9, 2020](#)

[Examining Financial Options for FY22 and Beyond, January 7, 2021](#)

[Financial Task force Model and Recommendation Update, January 15, 2021](#)

Publication Note:

Please note that on the publication date of this Report, May 18, 2023, the FY24 Budget information included in this Report reflects items that have not yet been taken up for vote by the School Committee; and vote(s) will likely be scheduled for May 23, 2023. These items include:

- The migration of school custodial and maintenance staff salaries, and the migration of fringe benefits for all school employees from the School Budget to the Shared Services Budget, beginning with FY24
- The allocation of an additional \$600,000 to the School General Fund FY24 Budget, potentially for consideration by the School Committee to vote to be transferred to the Special Education Reserve Fund

As a result, the budget information in this Report may be subject to change.

FY24 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES

- ❖ Open our new middle school and complete the 7-12 school building project which creates our 7th school within our new Belmont Middle & High School.
- ❖ Meet the needs of our diverse learning communities with the expectations of high student outcomes for all students.
- ❖ Commit to academic and mental health recovery with federal funds for two more fiscal years.
- ❖ Commit resources to the service delivery models for special education programs and to develop plans to improve in-district capacity within Belmont Public Schools and our LABBB partnership.
- ❖ Review the district's work through the lens of equity and access for all students of the Belmont Public Schools.
- ❖ Ensure appropriate class size at the high school level, where enrollment is increasing.
- ❖ Continue the district-wide professional development of staff to support the outcomes of culturally responsive teaching practices.
- ❖ Move forward the work of the District Configuration Education Planning Committee to organize the district for the movement of our grade 4 students and staff to the Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE) School in September of 2024.
- ❖ Move forward with the preparation and development of our NEASC vision for teaching and learning work and strategic plan.
- ❖ Professional development focus areas pre-K-12: Curriculum and assessment development and review; Technology tools and applications to improve instruction; Teaching English Language Learners, Development of critical thinking skills; Social-emotional learning to improve the district's capacity to engage and support all learners.

FY24 BUDGET OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Maintain a well-rounded education of rigorous academics, strong performing arts, and high participation in athletics, extra-curricular experiences, and community service with limited funding.
- ❖ To the extent possible, address increasing class sizes and program offerings.
- ❖ Open our new middle school and complete the 7-12 school building project which creates our 7th school within our new Belmont Middle & High School.

- ❖ Continue the planning and preparation of the transition of grade reconfigurations in conjunction with our final movement of grade 4 to the Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE) School, including: staffing, curriculum and instruction, and operations for September 2024.
- ❖ Align the FY24 Budget to the priorities of the initiatives outlined above.
- ❖ Continue to fund supports necessary for student academic and mental health recovery through federal funds.
- ❖ Support positions, services and programs that allow equity and access for all students.
- ❖ Meet existing contractual commitments.
- ❖ Maintain and support the continuous improvement of our staff through professional development and our vision of teaching and learning for the Belmont Public Schools.

TECHNICAL BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

- ❖ School General Fund Budget for FY24 is \$63,486,981 (*Subject to School Committee vote*).
- ❖ The FY24 Draft 3 Budget includes some new positions related to opening the new grade 7 & 8 Belmont Middle School; the budget also reflects the parsing of budget dollars and FTEs for current Chenery Middle School staff as they either continue at the now-named Chenery Upper Elementary School (CUE) or the new Belmont Middle School (BMS).
- ❖ School fringe benefit costs for all current School employees, as well as salary and wages for School custodial and maintenance staff will be migrated to the Town Shared Services budget for FY24 (*Subject to School Committee vote*).
- ❖ Recurring federal grants budgeted in FY24 as level funded from FY23 plus contractual increases for staff allocated to grants.
- ❖ User fees
 - The fee for transportation has been decreased from \$575 to \$450, beginning in FY24.
 - Total user fees for high school athletics has been voted to increase by a total of \$40,000
 - *Specific per student fee amounts are subject to School Committee vote.*
 - All other user fees are expected to remain the same for FY24.
- ❖ 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.

UNKNOWN VARIABLES

- ❖ The impact on student achievement as it relates to our staffing count and the increases in class size at the high school level, and enrollment increases in the areas of Special Education and English Language Education (ELE).

- ❖ Increases or decreases in State and Federal Grants (METCO, Circuit Breaker Reimbursement, IDEA, Title I, Title IIA, etc.) have not yet been determined for FY24.
- ❖ Extent of student needs for academic and mental health recovery in FY24 as we measure progress made in FY23.

PART II: ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The following charts and data provide information and context for enrollment trends in the areas of general enrollment, English Language Learner population, and Special Education out-of-district enrollment.

Enrollment – District-wide: Changes Since 2012	7
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English Learner (ELE) Enrollment Growth over Time	8
Out-of-District (OOD) Enrollment, October 2012 through October 2022	9
Out-of-District (OOD) Enrollment in FY23, by Placement by Month	10

K-12 ENROLLMENT – DISTRICT WIDE Enrollment Changes Since 2012

	Oct. 1, 2012	Oct. 1, 2013	Oct. 1, 2014	Oct. 1, 2015	Oct. 1, 2016	Oct. 1, 2017	Oct. 1, 2018	Oct. 1, 2019	Oct. 1, 2020	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022
K-12 Enrollment	3994	4136	4222	4303	4408	4531	4568	4633	4378	4285	4,324

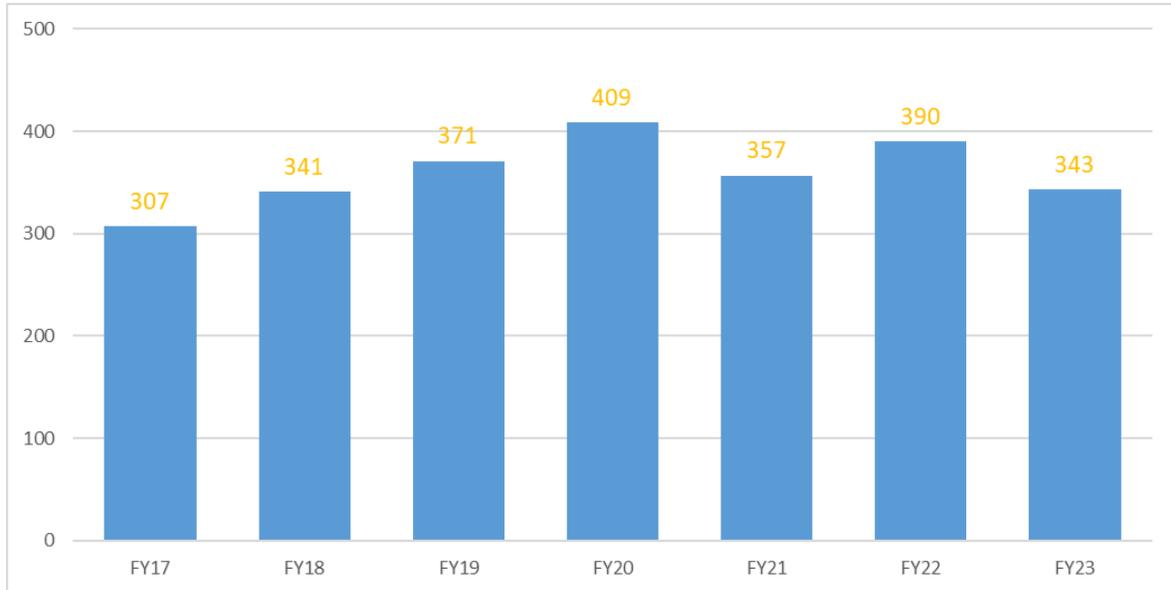
- **K-12 Enrollment increase 2012 → 2019 = 639**
- **K-12 Enrollment decrease 2019 → 2021 = 309**

K-12 ENROLLMENT – COMPARISON BY LEVEL

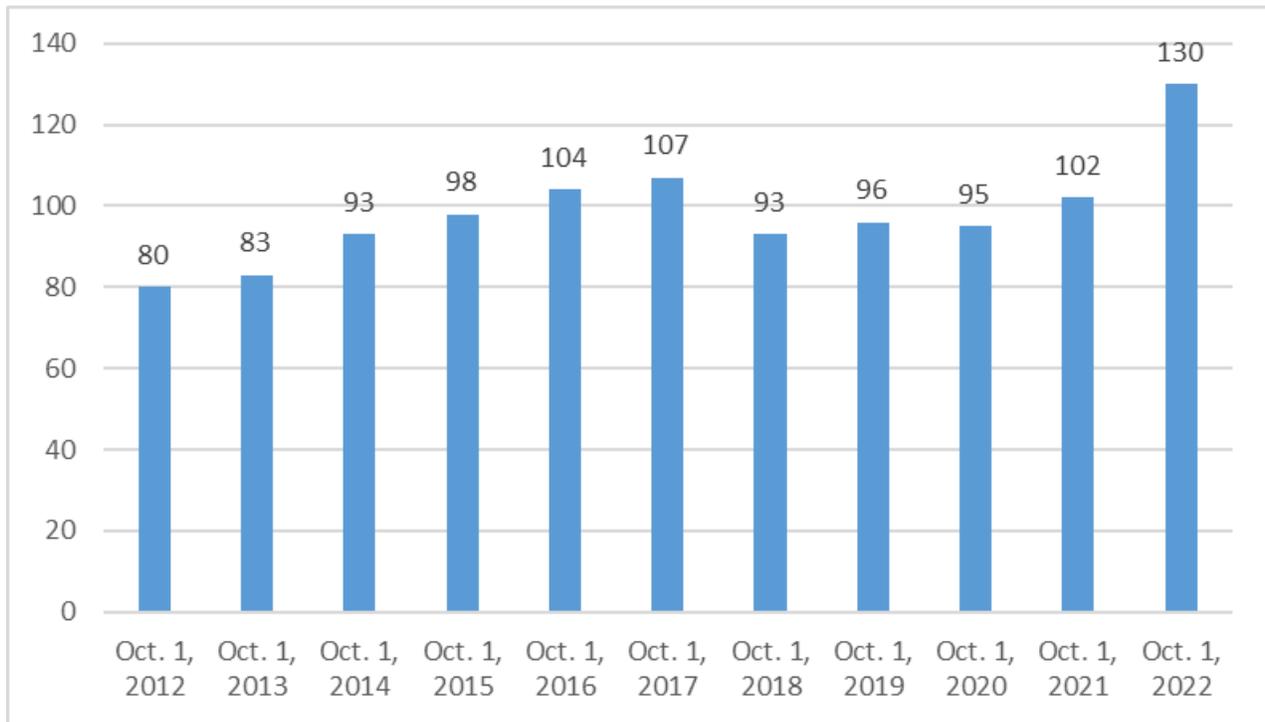
	2021-22 Enrollment as of October 1, 2021	2022-23 Enrollment as of October 1, 2022	Change
Elementary	1,594	1,586	-8
Middle	1,361	1,370	9
High	1,330	1,368	38
Totals	4,285	4,324	39

ENROLLMENT BY SUBGROUPS: English Learners (ELE) and Special Education (SPED)

ELE Program Growth Over Time



OUT-OF-DISTRICT (OOD) ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 2012 THROUGH OCTOBER, 2022



Financial Impact:

- The average cost per OOD pupil is approximately \$65,000 per student inclusive of transportation.
- The average cost range per OOD pupil is from \$50,000 - \$150,000 per student, inclusive of transportation.

OUT-OF-DISTRICT (OOD) ENROLLMENT IN FY23 BY PLACEMENT BY MONTH, TABLE

Type	Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		Sep-Apr	Jun-Apr
	#	Δ (Prior June)	#	Δ	#	Δ	#	Δ	#	Δ	#	Δ	#	Δ	#	Δ	Δ	Δ
LABBB - Served in Belmont	23	1	24	1	25	1	25	0	25	0	25	0	25	0	24	-1	1	2
LABBB - Served Elsewhere	33	2	33	0	33	0	34	1	34	0	34	0	34	0	33	-1	0	2
Collaboratives	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	11	2	2	2
Mass Public Schools	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Private Placements	62	12	63	1	65	2	66	1	67	1	68	1	68	0	70	2	8	20
TOTAL	128	15	130	2	133	3	135	2	136	1	137	1	137	0	139	2	11	26

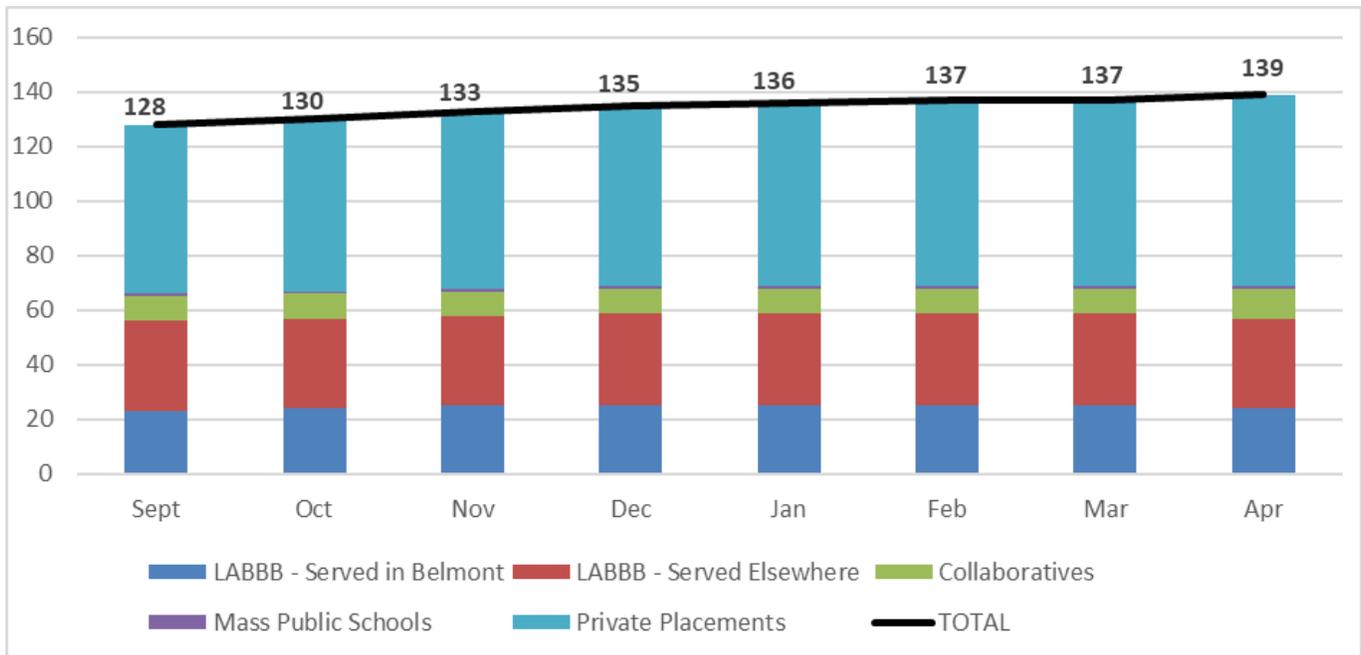
Additional known placements, not yet finalized (not reflected above)

2 of 5

Additional prospective placements

3-5

OUT-OF-DISTRICT (OOD) ENROLLMENT IN FY23 BY PLACEMENT BY MONTH, GRAPH



Note: In FY23, the district experienced an increase in the number of out-of-district placements. For FY24, we are anticipating that the number of placements will be approximately the same as in FY23. Along with the changes in placement counts, the state has approved an increase of 14% for private tuition cost in FY24 over FY23 rates. The state budget is still being developed at this time, with each iteration so far including an amount of funding intended to alleviate some of the cost of this rate increase. The exact amount of this funding at a statewide level has varied among iterations. Currently, the amount that will ultimately be available to Belmont, as well as the mechanism and timing of how and when those funds can be accessed and/or requested has not yet been determined.

PART III: FY24 BUDGET DETAILS

The following charts and data are included to provide clarity and transparency in the School budget request. Included are the amounts budgeted by program and category of expenditures as well as amounts budgeted from general funds, state and federal grants, and revolving accounts. The FY24 Budget Details section includes:

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FY24 DRAFT 2 BUDGET, ALL FUNDING SOURCES, FEBRUARY 9, 2023

	FY23 Budget FTE	FY23 Budget \$	FY24 Draft 2 Budget FTE	FY24 Draft 2 Budget \$
General Fund	548.73	66,982,926	530.62	63,090,797
Total Grants - Recurring	9.50	5,312,442	8.58	4,658,156
Total Grants - COVID/One-time	22.00	1,500,360	9.00	965,160
Total Grants	31.50	6,812,802	17.58	5,623,316
Total Revolving	25.83	3,167,567	24.41	3,286,988
Total Other	0.50	135,000	0.50	135,000
Subtotal: All Non-General Fund Sources	57.84	10,115,369	42.50	9,045,304
Grand Total: All Source	606.57	77,098,295	573.12	72,136,101

FY24 BUDGET: SHIFTS IN THE \$2.1M REDUCTION VOTED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE, MAY 2, 2023

SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE OF MAY 2, 2023

General Fund			
Salary/ Stipends	Supplies	OOD Tuition	Fringe

Offsetting Costs	
Revolving	Grants
Salary/ Stipends	FY24 CB OOD Tuition

Savings	FTE	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Increase athletic fees		40,000	40,000			
Reinstate pre-COVID operations for charging gate fees		40,000	40,000			
Further decrease in substitute line, resulting in no daily substitutes at BHS		50,000	50,000			
Decrease the supplies line for all PreK-12 instructional materials		100,000		100,000		
Increase FY24 CB reimbursement estimate; reallocate GF OOD dollars to other GF areas		100,000			100,000	
Adjust salary line for anticipated staff exchange from FY23 to FY24		134,316	134,316			
Total Savings		464,316	264,316	100,000	100,000	-

\$	\$
40,000	
40,000	
	100,000
80,000	100,000

Costs	FTE	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Reinstate Kindergarten Classroom Assistants (8)	7.34	306,743	240,000			67,830
Reinstate Gr 4 Strings Teacher	0.60	63,243	45,000			18,243
1.0 Teacher to support the academic schedule, Gr. 7-12	1.00	94,331	75,000			18,243
Total Costs	8.94	464,316	360,000	-		104,316

Net General Fund: Costs - Savings **8.94** **-** **95,684** **(100,000)** **(100,000)** **104,316**

FY24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET: CHANGES FROM DRAFT 2 TO DRAFT 3

Subject to School Committee Vote

FY24 General Fund Budget: Changes from Draft 2 to Draft 3		
FY24 Draft 2 General Fund Budget Total	63,090,797	
Residual Fringe Included in Draft 2	(99,500)	<i>Subject to SC vote</i>
Subtotal	62,991,297	
Remaining Fringe Resulting from May 2 SC Meeting	(104,316)	<i>Subject to SC vote</i>
Subtotal	62,886,981	
Add for OOD Tuitions (possible future transfer to Sped Reserve)	600,000	<i>Subject to SC vote</i>
FY24 Draft 3 General Fund Budget Total	63,486,981	<i>Subject to SC vote</i>

CHANGE FROM FY23 TO FY24 DRAFT 3 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Subject to School Committee Vote

Reflects FY23 GF Budget, Unadjusted for Shared Services Cost to be Migrated in FY24

Subject to SC vote

	Draft 3 Total	Possible Transfer to Sped Reserve Fund	Total After Transfer
FY24 Draft 3 General Fund Budget Total	63,486,981	(600,000)	62,886,981
<i>FY23 Budget, as Approved by Town Meeting</i>	<i>66,982,926</i>		<i>66,982,926</i>
Change FY23 TM Budget to FY24 Draft 3 Budget	(3,495,945)		(4,095,945)
% Change	-5.22%		-6.11%

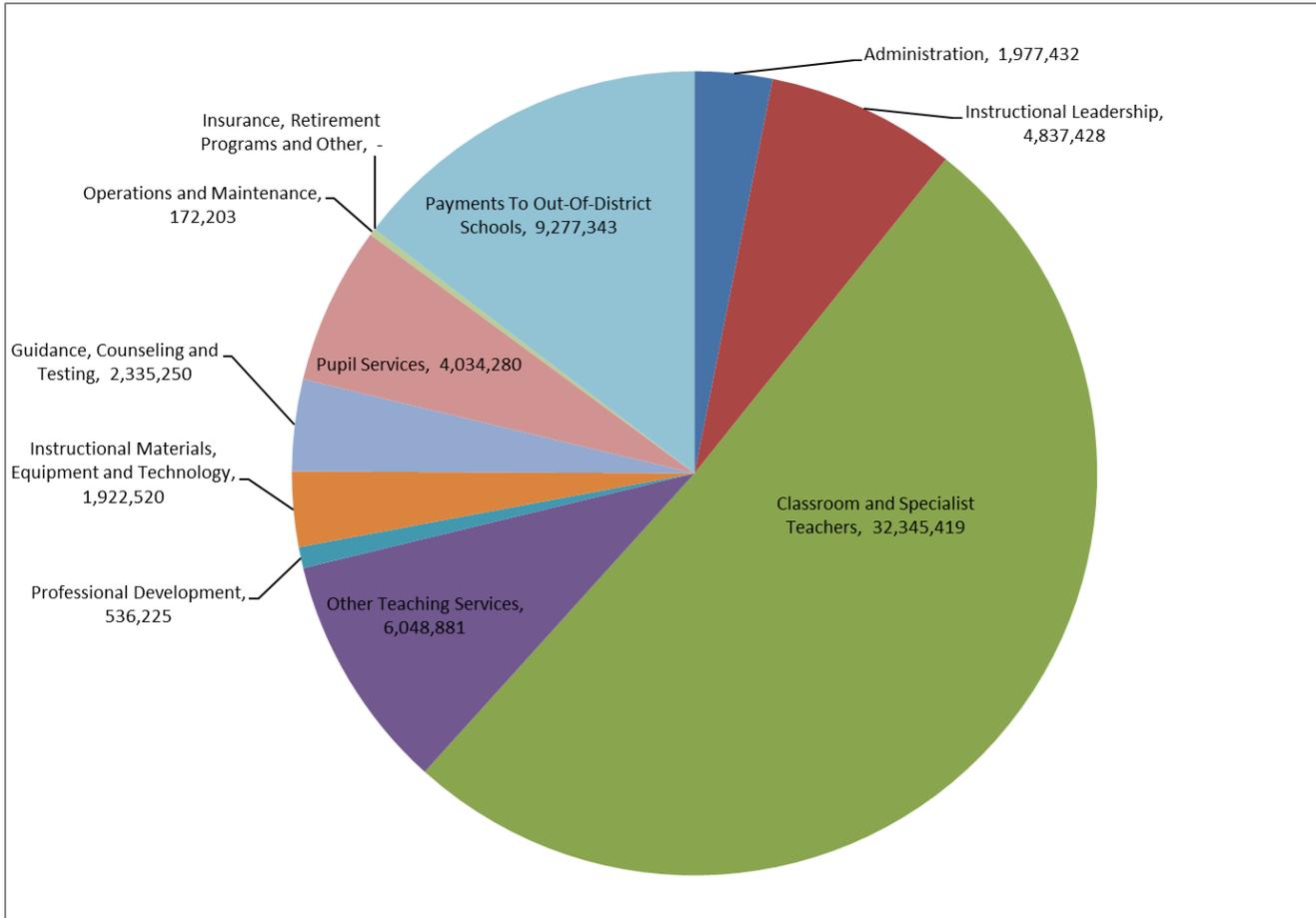
Reflects FY23 GF Budget, Adjusted for Shared Services Cost to be Migrated in FY24

Subject to SC vote

	Draft 3 Total	Possible Transfer to Sped Reserve Fund	Total After Transfer
FY24 Draft 3 General Fund Budget Total	63,486,981	(600,000)	62,886,981
<i>FY23 Budget, Less: FY23 Amounts for Shared Services Line to be Migrated in the FY24 Budget</i>	<i>55,895,825</i>		<i>55,895,825</i>
Change FY23 Budget (Adj. for Shared Services) to FY24 Draft 3 Budget	7,591,156		6,991,156
% Change	13.58%		12.51%

DISTRIBUTION OF PROPOSED GENERAL FUND ALLOCATIONS

FY24 School General Fund Draft 3 Budget by Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
Function Category , *Subject to School Committee Vote*



DISTRIBUTION OF PROPOSED GENERAL FUND ALLOCATIONS

FY24 School General Fund Draft 3 Budget by DESE Function Category, *Subject to School Committee Vote*

Function (DESE Categories)		FTE	\$	% of Total
1	Administration	10.70	1,977,432	3.1%
2	Instructional Leadership	64.21	4,837,428	7.6%
3	Classroom and Specialist Teachers	318.47	32,345,419	50.9%
4	Other Teaching Services	110.01	6,048,881	9.5%
5	Professional Development	2.00	536,225	0.8%
6	Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	1.25	1,922,520	3.0%
7	Guidance, Counseling and Testing	22.17	2,335,250	3.7%
8	Pupil Services	10.75	4,034,280	6.4%
9	Operations and Maintenance	-	172,203	0.3%
10	Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	-	-	0.0%
11	Payments To Out-Of-District Schools	-	9,277,343	14.6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		539.57	63,486,981	100.0%

FY24 BUDGET OVERVIEW: GENERAL FUND ONLY

Subject to School Committee Vote

GENERAL FUND ONLY	FY22 Budget	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Change (FY24-FY23)	Change (%)
Salaries & Fringe	55,053,082	56,832,105	48,603,346	-8,228,759	-14.5%
Instructional Expenditures (supplies, materials, software)	1,555,340	1,606,175	1,583,540	-22,635	-1.4%
Operations (Central Office, IT, reg. ed. transport, maintenance, utilities)	1,088,787	1,231,225	1,266,171	34,946	2.8%
SPED (tuition, transport, expenses)	8,508,349	7,313,421	12,033,924	4,720,503	64.5%
Total	66,205,558	66,982,926	63,486,981	-3,495,945	-5.2%
Total Salary & Fringe	55,053,082	56,832,105	48,603,346	-8,228,759	-14.5%
Total Non-Salary	11,152,476	10,150,821	14,883,635	4,732,814	46.6%
Grand Total	66,205,558	66,982,926	63,486,981	-3,495,945	-5.2%

FY24 BUDGET OVERVIEW: ALL FUNDING SOURCES

Subject to School Committee Vote

ALL FUNDS: incl. General Fund, Grants, Rev. Accts.	FY22 Budget	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Change (FY24-FY23)	Change (%)
Salaries & Fringe	58,339,704	60,184,784	51,738,648	-8,446,136	-14.0%
Instructional Expenditures (supplies, materials, software)	2,049,360	2,062,496	1,845,365	-217,131	-10.5%
Operations (Central Office, IT, reg. ed. transport, maintenance, utilities)	3,277,782	3,466,705	3,655,783	189,078	5.5%
SPED (tuition, transport, expenses)	11,123,575	11,384,310	14,946,256	3,561,946	31.3%
Total	74,790,421	77,098,295	72,186,052	-4,912,243	-6.4%
Total Salary & Fringe	58,339,704	60,184,784	51,738,648	-8,446,136	-14.0%
Total Non-Salary	16,450,717	16,913,511	20,447,404	3,533,893	20.9%
Grand Total	74,790,421	77,098,295	72,186,052	-4,912,243	-6.4%

PROPOSED FY24 SCHOOL BUDGET (ALL FUNDING SOURCES)

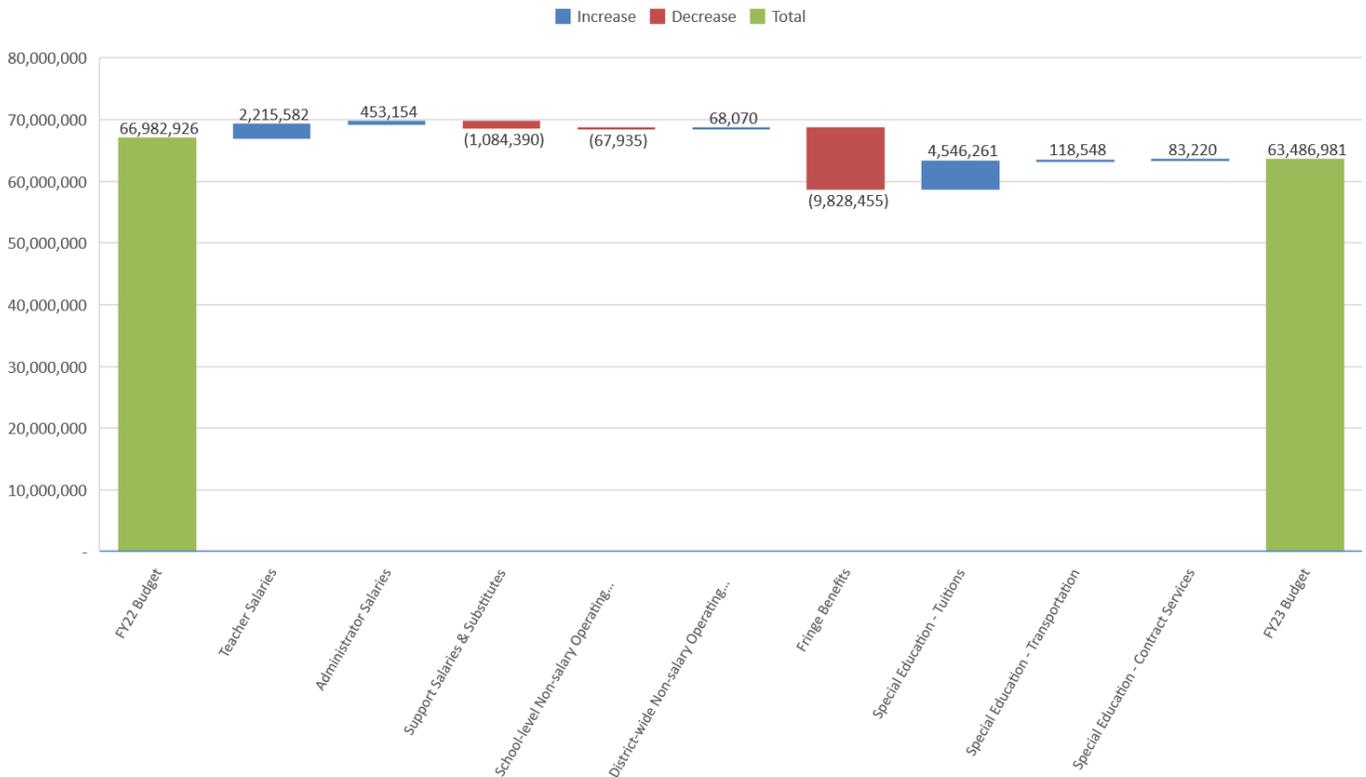
Subject to School Committee Vote

	FY22 BUDGET	FY23 BUDGET	FY24 BUDGET	CHANGE FY24-FY23	
GENERAL FUND	66,205,558	66,982,926	63,486,981	-3,495,945	-5.2%
GRANTS and REVOLVING	8,584,863	10,115,369	8,699,071	-1,416,298	-14.0%
TOTAL	74,790,421	77,098,295	72,186,052	-4,912,243	-6.4%

GENERAL FUND BUDGETED CHANGES BY COST CENTER, FY23-FY24, *Subject to School Committee Vote*

	FY23 BUDGET	FY24 BUDGET	CHANGE
Teacher Salaries	33,748,431	35,964,013	2,215,582
Administrator Salaries	3,684,267	4,137,421	453,154
Support Salaries & Substitutes	9,138,727	8,054,337	(1,084,390)
School-level Non-salary Operating Expenses	873,699	805,764	(67,935)
District-wide Non-salary Operating Expenses	1,963,701	2,031,771	68,070
Fringe Benefits	9,828,455	-	(9,828,455)
Special Education - Tuitions	4,731,082	9,277,343	4,546,261
Special Education - Transportation	1,693,539	1,812,087	118,548
Special Education - Contract Services	1,321,025	1,404,245	83,220
Total	66,982,926	63,486,981	(3,495,945)

GENERAL FUND BUDGETED CHANGES BY COST CENTER FY23-FY24, *Subject to School Committee Vote*



SUMMARY OF FY24 PROPOSED BUDGET BY PROGRAM (General Fund), Subject to School Committee Vote

	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	CHANGE: FY23 VS FY24		
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24	FTE	\$	%(\$)
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$			
REGULAR INSTRUCTION							
1 English, Grades 5-12	26.80	2,613,020	28.30	2,832,821	1.50	219,801	8.41%
2 Reading, Grades K-8	9.23	1,020,221	9.43	1,099,217	0.20	78,996	7.74%
3A-D Elementary, grades 1-4	66.87	6,029,816	59.29	5,856,338	(7.58)	(173,478)	-2.88%
4 Fine Arts Supervisory	1.30	139,789	1.05	124,891	(0.25)	(14,898)	-10.66%
5 Art, Grades 1-12	11.50	1,225,988	12.10	1,314,701	0.60	88,713	7.24%
6 Music, Grades K-12	11.11	1,189,845	12.75	1,350,649	1.64	160,804	13.51%
7 Theater Arts, Grades 7-12	1.00	130,283	1.00	133,977	-	3,694	2.84%
8 Kindergarten	28.75	1,851,340	26.85	1,962,359	(1.90)	111,019	6.00%
9 Mathematics, Grades 5-12	29.58	2,830,288	30.88	3,045,200	1.30	214,912	7.59%
10 Physical Education, Grades K-12	10.79	1,108,227	11.59	1,220,432	0.80	112,205	10.12%
11 Science, Grades 5-12	27.70	2,842,995	29.00	3,022,737	1.30	179,742	6.32%
12 Health Education, Grades 6-12	4.36	429,302	4.96	498,108	0.60	68,806	16.03%
13 Technology Education, Grades 6-12	3.00	268,674	4.35	384,660	1.35	115,986	43.17%
14 Social Studies, Grades 5-12	26.60	2,800,095	27.90	3,039,897	1.30	239,802	8.56%
15 Foreign Languages, Grades 5-12	19.00	1,970,453	16.20	1,717,426	(2.80)	(253,027)	-12.84%
SUBTOTAL	277.59	26,450,336	275.65	27,603,413	(1.94)	1,153,077	4.36%
SPECIAL INSTRUCTION							
20 ELL	13.00	1,257,042	15.80	1,560,257	2.80	303,215	24.12%
21 Early Childhood Education Pre-Kinder.	12.92	683,376	10.88	626,107	(2.03)	(57,269)	-8.38%
22 Special Education, Grades K-12	122.27	15,394,226	132.37	21,004,829	10.10	5,610,603	36.45%
SUBTOTAL	148.19	17,334,644	159.05	23,191,193	10.86	5,856,549	33.79%
STUDENT & INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES							
30 Athletics & Intramurals, Grades 5-12	1.00	610,624	0.70	508,926	(0.30)	(101,698)	-16.65%
31 Student Activities, Grades 5-12	0.25	147,640	0.25	118,776	-	(28,864)	-19.55%
32 Food Service	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
33 Guidance, Grades K-12	14.54	1,404,522	14.54	1,470,252	-	65,730	4.68%
34 Psychological Services, Grades Pre-K-12	7.63	780,717	8.63	913,461	1.00	132,744	17.00%
35 Health Services, Grades Pre-K - 12	9.00	869,338	9.80	988,512	0.80	119,174	13.71%
36 Library	6.00	284,955	5.59	287,993	(0.41)	3,038	1.07%
37 Technology & Audio Visual	10.50	1,508,744	10.50	1,563,227	-	54,483	3.61%
38 Curriculum Development	1.00	210,950	1.00	206,632	-	(4,318)	-2.05%
39 Staff Development	1.00	303,577	1.00	311,688	-	8,111	2.67%
40 Substitutes	3.08	850,000	2.08	695,000	(1.00)	(155,000)	-18.24%
41 METCO	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
42 Adult Education	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
52 Regular-Day Transportation	-	578,000	-	609,413	-	31,413	5.43%
SUBTOTAL	54.00	7,549,067	54.09	7,673,880	0.09	124,813	1.65%
OPERATIONS							
50 Buildings & Grounds	5.00	412,540	-	0	(5.00)	(412,540)	-100.00%
51 Custodial Services	15.30	846,106	-	0	(15.30)	(846,106)	-100.00%
53 Utilities	-	0	-	0	-	-	#DIV/0!
SUBTOTAL	20.30	1,258,646	-	0	(20.30)	-1,258,646	-100.00%
LEADERSHIP & ADMINISTRATION							
60A-F Building Administration	37.95	2,603,182	40.06	2,788,111	2.11	184,929	7.10%
61 Central Administration	10.70	1,398,988	10.70	1,441,258	-	42,270	3.02%
62 Legal Services	-	175,000	-	158,021	-	(16,979)	-9.70%
63 School Committee	-	13,500	-	12,929	-	(571)	-4.23%
SUBTOTAL	48.65	4,190,670	50.76	4,400,319	2.11	209,649	5.00%
CONTRACT ALLOWANCE & FRINGE BENEFITS							
70 Contractual Allowance	-	371,108	-	618,176	-	247,068	66.58%
71 Fringe Benefits	-	9,828,455	-	0	-	(9,828,455)	-100.00%
SUBTOTAL	-	10,199,563	-	618,176	-	-9,581,387	-93.94%
GRAND TOTAL	548.73	66,982,926	539.57	63,486,981	(9.17)	-3,495,945	-5.22%

BUDGET BY GRANT, REVOLVING, AND OTHER ACCOUNTS

RECURRING STATE & FEDERAL GRANTS

Grant Name	Funding Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
TITLE IV A (309)	Federal	Student SEL & Activities	Stipends, non-salary exp	-	10,000	-	10,060
IDEA (240)	Federal	SPED	OOD tuitions, prof. devel.	2.00	1,109,144	1.00	1,061,071
TITLE II A (140)	Federal	Elem. Curriculum	Salaries	0.44	52,366	0.44	55,134
TITLE III (180)	Federal	ELE	Stipends, supplies, software, memberships	-	56,150	-	57,570
EARLY CHILDHOOD (262)	Federal	Pre-K	Salaries	0.25	27,871	0.25	30,383
TITLE I (305)	Federal	Reading support	Salaries	1.05	124,879	1.05	130,402
METCO (317)	State	METCO	Salaries, busing, supplies, memberships	5.76	761,143	5.84	817,353
METCO (317) B	State	METCO	Salaries, busing, supplies, memberships	-	-	-	-
CIRCUIT BREAKER	State	SPED	OOD tuitions	-	3,170,889	-	2,029,950
DPH CSHS GRANT	State	Nursing	Prof. devel. supplies	-	-	-	40,000
TOTAL RECURRING GRANTS				9.50	5,312,442	8.58	4,231,923

COVID/ONE-TIME STATE & FEDERAL GRANTS

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
IDEA ARPA (252)	Federal	SPED	Salaries, student services	0.60	42,000	-	-
ESSER II	Federal	COVID Recovery	Salaries, stipends, prof. devel.	4.00	456,001	-	-
ESSER III	Federal	COVID Recovery	Salaries, prof. devel., tutoring	17.40	1,002,359	-	-
Town APRA Fund, Allocated by SB to SC/SD	Federal	COVID Recovery	Salaries to support student academic and mental health recovery	-	-	9.00	965,160
SUBTOTAL - FY22 GRANTS				22.00	1,500,360	9.00	965,160

REVOLVING ACCOUNTS

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
FOOD SERVICE	FEES	School breakfast, lunch	Salaries, food, supplies	21.36	1,546,081	21.36	1,704,351
BHS ATHLETIC REVOLVING	FEES	HS athletic program	Stipends, contract serv. supplies, transportation	-	490,000	-	588,800
TUITION - STUDENTS	FEES	Pre-K	Salaries, supplies	2.75	299,584	2.75	318,569
SUMMER SCHOOL	FEES	Student enrichment activities	Stipends, supplies	-	65,000	-	65,000
SCHOOL BUILDING RENTALS	FEES	Building maintenance	Salaries, maint. & repair of school buildings	0.30	199,642	0.30	221,081
BUSING FEES	FEES	Busing	Contract services	-	250,000	-	281,587
BELMONT AGAINST RACISM	DONATIONS	Equity	Contract services, supplies	-	15,000	-	15,000
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC REVOLVING	FEES	Fee eliminated in FY23	Salaries, supplies	1.42	132,324	-	-
BHS FINE & PERM ARTS REV	FEES	VPA	Stipends, supplies	-	65,500	-	67,450
BHS CLUB ACTIVITIES	FEES	Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	25,000	-	25,600
CUE FINE ARTS, CLUB ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS	FEES	Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	77,936	-	7,210
BMS FINE ARTS, CLUB ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS		Student activities	Stipends, supplies	-	-	-	72,340
TOTAL				25.83	3,167,567	24.41	3,366,988

OTHER SOURCES

Name	Source	Program	Expense Categories	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
				BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
				FTE	\$	FTE	\$
LABBB OOD TUITION CREDIT		SPED	OOD tuitions	-	100,000	-	100,000
TOWN TRANSFER-SHARED IT SUPPORT		Technology	Salaries	0.50	35,000	0.50	35,000
TOTAL				0.50	135,000	0.50	135,000

GRANT, REVOLVING, OTHER TOTALS; TOTAL BUDGET, ALL SOURCES

	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
GENERAL FUND	548.73	66,982,926	539.57	63,486,981
TOTAL GRANTS - RECURRING	9.50	5,312,442	8.58	4,231,923
TOTAL GRANTS - COVID/ONE-TIME	22.00	1,500,360	9.00	965,160
TOTAL GRANTS	31.50	6,812,802	17.58	5,197,083
TOTAL REVOLVING	25.83	3,167,567	24.41	3,366,988
TOTAL OTHER	0.50	135,000	0.50	135,000
SUBTOTAL: ALL NON-GENERAL FUND SOURCES	57.84	10,115,369	42.50	8,699,071
GRAND TOTAL: ALL SOURCES	606.57	77,098,295	582.06	72,186,052

FY24 DRAFT 3 BUDGET – ALL SOURCES

Subject to School Committee Vote

Reflects FY23 GF Budget, Unadjusted for Shared Services Cost to be Migrated in FY24

	FY23 BUDGET FTE	FY23 BUDGET \$	FY24 BUDGET FTE	FY24 BUDGET \$	CHANGE FTE	CHANGE \$	CHANGE %
General Fund	548.73	66,982,926	539.57	63,486,981	(9.17)	(3,495,945)	-5.22%
Total Grants - Recurring	9.50	5,312,442	8.58	4,231,923	(0.92)	(1,080,519)	-20.34%
Total Grants - COVID/One-Time	22.00	1,500,360	9.00	965,160	(13.00)	(535,200)	-35.67%
Total Grants	31.50	6,812,802	17.58	5,197,083	(13.92)	(1,615,719)	-23.72%
Total Revolving	25.83	3,167,567	24.41	3,366,988	(1.42)	199,421	6.30%
Total Other	0.50	135,000	0.50	135,000	-	-	0.00%
Subtotal: All Non-General Fund Sources	57.84	10,115,369	42.50	8,699,071	(15.34)	(1,416,298)	-14.00%
Grand Total: All Sources	606.57	77,098,295	582.06	72,186,052	(24.51)	(4,912,243)	-6.37%

Reflects FY23 GF Budget, Adjusted for Shared Services Cost to be Migrated in FY24

	FY23 BUDGET FTE	FY23 BUDGET \$	FY24 BUDGET FTE	FY24 BUDGET \$	CHANGE FTE	CHANGE \$	CHANGE %
General Fund	528.43	55,895,825	539.57	63,486,981	11.13	7,591,156	13.58%
Total Grants - Recurring	9.50	5,312,442	8.58	4,231,923	(0.92)	(1,080,519)	-20.34%
Total Grants - COVID/One-Time	22.00	1,500,360	9.00	965,160	(13.00)	(535,200)	-35.67%
Total Grants	31.50	6,812,802	17.58	5,197,083	(13.92)	(1,615,719)	-23.72%
Total Revolving	25.83	3,167,567	24.41	3,366,988	(1.42)	199,421	6.30%
Total Other	0.50	135,000	0.50	135,000	-	-	0.00%
Subtotal: All Non-General Fund Sources	57.84	10,115,369	42.50	8,699,071	(15.34)	(1,416,298)	-14.00%
Grand Total: All Sources	586.27	66,011,194	582.06	72,186,052	(4.21)	6,174,858	9.35%

FTE STAFFING BY BUDGET CATEGORY, JOB FUNCTION, AND FUNDING SOURCE

	FY20		FY21		FY22		FY23		FY24
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Q2 Actual	Budget
Budget Category									
Regular Instruction	284.35	282.99	282.99	282.25	277.17	278.86	280.06	279.96	276.71
Special Instruction	132.48	143.45	143.45	146.98	147.98	151.19	153.19	158.25	163.05
Student & Operational Services	81.01	80.46	80.46	81.26	80.01	82.13	82.07	81.23	82.23
Operations	19.30	19.30	19.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	20.30	-
Leadership & Administration	43.87	44.76	44.76	44.20	45.20	47.95	48.95	49.06	51.06
COVID/One-time Grants	-	-	3.00	3.00	23.00	13.35	22.00	14.84	9.00
Total	561.01	570.97	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06
Job Function									
Administrator	29.85	29.65	29.65	29.45	29.95	30.45	30.45	30.85	30.85
Professional	350.13	350.16	353.16	354.96	359.96	360.36	365.96	365.76	372.32
Secretarial/Clerical	27.50	28.51	28.51	28.48	28.48	28.57	28.57	28.57	30.57
Other	152.53	162.64	162.64	165.10	175.26	174.40	181.59	178.47	148.32
Stipends	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tutoring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	561.01	570.97	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06
Funding Source									
General Fund	506.41	515.49	515.49	519.54	536.70	543.53	548.73	555.32	539.57
Grants	7.83	8.29	11.29	10.85	30.85	23.92	31.50	23.42	17.58
Revolving Funds	46.27	46.69	46.69	47.10	25.60	25.83	25.83	24.41	24.41
Other	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Total	561.01	570.97	573.97	577.99	593.66	593.78	606.57	603.65	582.06

SALARY EXPENSES BY BUDGET CATEGORY, JOB FUNCTION, AND FUNDING SOURCE

	FY20		FY21		FY22		FY23	FY24	Change FY23 - FY24	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget	\$	%
Budget Category										
Regular Instruction	24,346,389	23,682,503	25,066,895	23,979,295	25,723,083	25,442,267	26,324,421	27,531,507	1,207,087	4.59%
Special Instruction	8,283,480	8,277,915	9,010,748	8,749,961	9,616,697	9,460,378	10,183,676	11,315,461	1,131,785	11.11%
Student & Operational Services	6,784,435	6,240,161	7,019,331	6,522,380	7,173,669	6,941,485	7,275,628	7,641,451	365,824	5.03%
Operations	1,162,675	1,126,573	1,217,704	1,083,561	1,266,949	1,251,054	1,305,358	30,381	(1,274,977)	-97.67%
Leadership & Administration	3,258,945	3,324,421	3,416,654	3,234,116	3,414,403	3,537,913	3,614,018	3,844,513	230,495	6.38%
COVID/One-time Grants	-	-	343,153	334,867	1,267,925	1,005,503	1,176,025	896,721	(279,304)	-23.75%
Total	43,835,924	42,651,572	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,727	47,638,600	49,879,125	51,260,034	1,380,909	2.77%
Job Function										
Administrator	3,914,894	3,894,754	3,975,738	3,874,297	3,991,540	3,956,026	3,998,195	4,503,170	504,975	12.63%
Professional	32,110,749	30,941,465	33,494,911	32,324,208	35,166,548	34,774,616	36,314,040	38,322,134	2,008,094	5.53%
Secretarial/Clerical	1,429,877	1,452,338	1,565,284	1,487,137	1,619,760	1,526,479	1,593,815	1,673,566	79,751	5.00%
Other	5,245,712	5,370,918	5,749,958	5,336,116	6,256,397	6,230,472	6,532,331	5,365,969	(1,166,362)	-17.86%
Stipends	684,692	582,984	728,594	546,482	868,482	723,585	860,744	815,195	(45,549)	-5.29%
Tutoring	450,000	409,113	560,000	335,940	560,000	427,423	580,000	580,000	-	0.00%
Total	43,835,924	42,651,572	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,727	47,638,600	49,879,125	51,260,034	1,380,909	2.77%
Funding Source										
General Fund	41,249,048	40,129,354	42,978,834	41,652,375	45,257,390	44,687,248	46,610,425	48,194,771	1,584,346	3.40%
Grants	626,654	680,474	984,695	973,646	1,892,670	1,851,295	2,019,203	1,731,000	(288,203)	-14.27%
Revolving Funds	1,925,222	1,806,744	2,075,956	1,243,159	1,277,667	1,065,057	1,214,497	1,299,263	84,766	6.98%
Other	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	-	0.00%
Total	43,835,924	42,651,572	46,074,485	43,904,180	48,462,727	47,638,600	49,879,125	51,260,034	1,380,909	2.77%

POSITIONS NEEDED FOR RECONFIGURATION: PROPOSED AND RETAINED IN THE FY24 BUDGET

Reconfiguration Positions (Proposed in Draft 1 Budget)	Keep	Reduce	Rationale/Impact <u>(Please see memos for detail)</u>
1.0 Principal BMS	✓		School leadership currently not in place.
1.0 Admin Asst BMS	✓		School support currently not in place.
1.0 Clerical Aide BMS	✓		School support currently not in place.
0.2 World Language BMS	✓		Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for schedule.
1.0 Speech and Language Path. BMS	✓		Must meet student need for mandated services.
1.0 Tech/Engineering (or similar) BMS	✓		Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for schedule.
1.0 Health BMS	✓		Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for schedule.
2.0 Special Education (KEY Prog) BMS	✓		Needed FTE to support high need students.
1.0 School Psychologist BMS	✓		Must meet student need for mandated testing.
0.4 Nurse BMS	✓		Mandated need. Student/nurse ratio.
0.6 Art CUE	✓		Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for new schedule.
0.6 PE CUE	✓		Needed FTE to meet gap in instruction for new schedule.
19 hrs / week Collab Pianist CUE	✓		Needed for support of large music classes.
0.4 Nurse BHS	✓		Mandated need. Student/nurse ratio.
0.6 ELE CUE-BMS-BHS	✓		Needed for mandated services.
2.0 Curriculum Coordinator CUE	✓		Needed to provide curriculum support, teacher evaluation.
3.0 (of 4.0) Positions for Core Subject Class Size at BHS	✓		Needed FTE to reduce class size.

POSITIONS NEEDED FOR RECONFIGURATION: PROPOSED AND REDUCED FROM THE FY24 BUDGET

Reconfiguration Positions (Proposed in Draft 1 Budget)	Keep	Reduce	Rationale/Impact (Please see memos for detail)
1.0 (of 4.0) Positions for Core Subject Class Size at BHS		✓	Continued large class sizes, impacts student learning.
2.0 Grade 6 Half Team		✓	Continued large class sizes, impacts student learning.
2.0 Grade 7 Half Team		✓	Continued large class sizes, impacts student learning.
0.5 Science Facilitator CUE		✓	Lost support to elementary science, impacts student learning.
2.0 Custodians (Transferred to Town Budget)		✓	All School custodial and maintenance staff to be migrated to the Facilities Department & Budget, beginning in FY24

EXISTING POSITIONS REDUCED TO MEET FY24 AVAILABLE REVENUE

General Fund Positions Reductions (Below Reasonable Level-Service)	Keep	Reduce	Rationale/Impact (Please see memos for detail)
2.6 World Languages Teachers Gr. 6		✓	Loss of world language acquisition until grade 7.
1.0 Building Substitute Teacher BHS		✓	Decrease in student learning, supervision, support
Daily Substitute Teachers BHS		✓	Decrease in student learning, supervision, support
1.0 Assistant Principal BMS		✓	Loss of critical student support, educator evaluation, and building management.
3.0 Paraprofessional Educators		✓	Loss of additional support for students in general education classrooms.
1.0 Encore Teacher CUE/BMS		✓	Loss of elective opportunities for students. Increased study halls.
TOTAL		8.6	

FY24 REDUCTIONS DUE TO ENROLLMENT

1.0 Grade K teacher at the elementary level
1.0 Grade K assistant at the elementary level
1.0 Grade 1 teacher at the elementary level
1.0 Grade 3 teacher at the elementary level
Total: -4.0 Educators

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES

BURBANK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-4				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
<u>SALARY</u>	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	129,998	1.00	133,385
Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	58,564	1.00	60,882
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.00	188,562	2.00	194,267
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	3.00	283,357	3.00	304,766
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	15.00	1,380,942	14.00	1,396,914
Special Ed. Teachers	3.60	343,756	4.60	402,270
Art Teachers	1.25	129,235	1.25	132,527
Music Teachers	1.25	108,333	1.25	115,437
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	113,006	1.00	117,842
Reading Teacher	1.00	119,124	1.00	121,042
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	26.10	2,477,753	26.10	2,590,798
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	114,906	1.00	119,842
Psychologists	1.00	97,906	1.00	117,842
Nurses	1.00	105,352	1.00	109,857
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	318,164	3.00	347,541
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	2.75	64,374	2.75	92,967
Regular Ed. Aides	1.20	41,058	0.29	11,037
Special Ed. Aides	6.63	216,492	10.40	362,265
Library Aide	0.65	19,619	0.51	16,530
METCO Aide	0.92	29,031	0.93	31,520
TOTAL AIDES	12.15	370,574	14.88	514,319
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	2.00	102,036	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.80	40,292	1.80	49,640
Lunch Aides	2.04	33,075	2.07	34,236
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	5.84	175,403	3.87	83,876
TOTAL SALARY	49.09	3,530,456	49.86	3,730,801
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		5,450		5,431
Supplies		54,120		49,756
Other Expenses		5,000		1,500
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		64,570		56,687
GRAND TOTAL	49.09	3,595,026	49.86	3,787,488

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

BUTLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-4				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
<u>SALARY</u>	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	127,990	1.00	131,325
Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	50,443	1.00	56,584
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.00	178,433	2.00	187,909
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	3.00	293,231	3.00	337,528
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	12.00	1,158,122	12.00	1,219,962
Special Ed. Teachers	3.80	358,354	4.80	460,724
Art Teachers	0.70	57,414	0.70	59,573
Music Teachers	0.95	94,306	0.95	98,341
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	97,535	1.00	101,676
Reading Teacher	2.00	220,150	2.00	229,570
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	23.45	2,279,112	24.45	2,507,374
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	79,563	1.00	85,410
Psychologists	1.00	63,564	1.00	68,911
Nurses	1.00	94,947	1.00	99,007
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	238,074	3.00	253,328
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	2.75	64,124	2.75	92,717
Regular Ed. Aides	1.83	58,288	-	-
Special Ed. Aides	6.42	193,312	7.43	250,491
Library Aide	0.63	21,628	0.28	10,962
METCO Aide	0.92	42,693	0.92	45,020
TOTAL AIDES	12.55	380,045	11.38	399,190
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	2.00	103,850	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.98	47,227	1.98	57,061
Lunch Aides	2.54	41,175	2.54	41,175
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	6.52	192,252	4.52	98,236
TOTAL SALARY	47.52	3,267,916	45.35	3,446,037
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		2,450		2,431
Supplies		42,575		39,218
Other Expenses		250		1,500
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		45,275		43,149
GRAND TOTAL	47.52	3,313,191	45.35	3,489,186

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

WELLINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES PRE K-4				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
<u>SALARY</u>	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators (Including Pre-K)	2.60	297,647	2.60	308,573
Secretarial/Clerical	1.98	75,324	1.98	76,171
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	4.58	372,971	4.58	384,744
TEACHERS				
Preschool Teachers	6.80	627,690	5.80	599,896
Kindergarten Teachers	5.00	514,100	4.00	476,325
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	19.00	1,686,437	18.00	1,683,876
Special Ed. Teachers	6.00	519,823	5.00	482,906
Art Teachers	0.75	59,672	0.75	55,496
Music Teachers	0.83	87,751	1.85	182,399
Physical Education Teachers	1.54	140,602	1.54	150,765
Reading Teachers	3.00	335,056	3.00	350,852
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	42.92	3,971,131	39.94	3,982,515
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.40	140,868	1.40	146,340
Psychologists	1.48	144,892	1.48	157,035
Nurses	1.40	123,795	1.40	130,031
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	4.28	409,555	4.28	433,406
AIDES				
Preschool Aides	8.12	266,270	7.08	255,803
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	4.58	110,208	3.67	126,789
Regular Ed. Aides	1.83	57,488	-	-
Special Ed. Aides	14.17	454,830	15.85	549,213
Library Aide	0.97	33,370	1.07	37,176
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	29.67	922,166	27.67	968,981
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	3.00	150,891	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.37	32,581	1.37	39,520
Lunch Aides	2.50	40,500	2.50	40,500
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	6.87	223,972	3.87	80,020
<u>TOTAL SALARY</u>	88.32	5,899,795	80.34	5,849,666
<u>NON-SALARY</u>				
Contract Services		5,450		5,431
Supplies		70,303		64,501
Other Expenses		800		2,000
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		76,553		71,932
GRAND TOTAL	88.32	5,976,348	80.34	5,921,598

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

WINN BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES K-4				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	1.00	135,158	1.00	138,006
Secretarial/Clerical	1.58	69,747	1.58	64,756
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	2.58	204,905	2.58	202,762
TEACHERS				
Kindergarten Teachers	4.00	430,781	4.00	399,665
Regular Ed. Classroom Teachers (grades 1-4)	16.00	1,480,898	15.00	1,392,089
Special Ed. Teachers	3.60	337,025	4.60	446,041
Art Teachers	0.80	50,450	0.80	54,630
Music Teachers	1.25	110,475	1.25	90,710
Physical Education Teachers	1.00	99,044	1.00	101,676
Reading Teacher	1.50	162,518	1.50	170,636
Math Coaches	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	28.15	2,671,191	28.15	2,655,447
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	1.00	106,984	1.00	111,568
Psychologists	1.00	113,006	1.00	117,842
Nurses	1.00	96,672	1.00	100,842
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	3.00	316,662	3.00	330,252
AIDES				
Kindergarten Classroom Assistants	3.67	87,935	3.67	128,509
Regular Ed. Aides	-	-	-	-
Special Ed. Aides	13.04	428,285	13.95	474,316
Library Aide	0.92	31,378	0.74	26,894
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	17.63	547,598	18.36	629,719
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	2.00	104,895	-	-
Food Service Staff	1.66	39,675	1.66	48,394
Lunch Aides	1.70	27,540	1.70	27,540
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	5.36	172,110	3.36	75,934
TOTAL SALARY	56.71	3,912,466	55.45	3,894,114
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		2,950		2,931
Supplies		54,868		49,614
Other Expenses		800		2,000
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		58,618		54,545
GRAND TOTAL	56.71	3,971,084	55.45	3,948,659

*Note: All elementary schools are supported by elementary-wide and district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

CHENERY UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES 5-6				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
SALARY	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	4.00	474,302	2.00	251,120
Secretarial/Clerical	4.00	202,803	3.00	161,318
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	8.00	677,105	5.00	412,438
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	13.00	1,195,432	8.50	747,795
World Language Teachers	7.80	823,683	-	-
Math Teachers (includes Math Coaches)	15.00	1,311,625	8.50	816,057
Health Ed. Teachers	2.00	211,928	0.60	79,268
Science Teachers	13.00	1,296,607	7.50	679,401
Technology Ed. Teachers	2.00	181,599	0.60	49,703
Social Studies Teachers	13.00	1,309,127	7.50	726,906
Special Ed. Teachers	12.00	1,173,151	7.96	696,005
Art Teachers	4.00	439,662	2.60	274,410
Music Teachers	4.30	442,818	2.60	310,429
Physical Education Teachers	4.00	432,502	2.60	265,438
Reading Teachers	2.00	207,335	2.20	247,528
TOTAL TEACHERS	92.10	9,025,469	51.16	4,892,940
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	1.00	104,784	1.00	111,268
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	6.00	600,936	5.00	508,670
Psychologists	1.32	150,136	1.00	117,842
Nurses	3.00	282,034	1.00	109,268
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	11.32	1,137,890	8.00	847,048
AIDES				
Special Ed. Aides	24.72	787,071	18.00	617,737
Library Aide	1.00	27,076	1.00	31,316
METCO Aide	1.07	35,664	1.13	40,328
TOTAL AIDES	26.79	849,811	20.13	689,381
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	3.00	159,089	-	-
Food Service Staff	3.37	83,336	3.37	103,389
Lunch Aides	-	8,300	-	4,716
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	6.37	250,725	3.37	108,105
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	7,500	-	3,750
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	110,006	-	6,212
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	117,506	-	9,962
TOTAL SALARY	144.58	12,058,506	87.66	6,959,874
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		35,260		19,922
Supplies		170,866		77,045
Other Expenses		24,989		7,058
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		231,115		104,025
GRAND TOTAL	144.58	12,289,621	87.66	7,063,899

*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADES 7-8				
	FY23		FY24	
	BUDGET		BUDGET	
SALARY	BUDGET		BUDGET	
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	-	-	2.00	266,598
Secretarial/Clerical	-	-	3.00	112,394
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	-	-	5.00	378,992
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	-	-	6.00	588,061
World Language Teachers	-	-	5.00	574,528
Math Teachers (includes Math Coaches)	-	-	7.00	636,913
Health Ed. Teachers	-	-	2.00	186,728
Science Teachers	-	-	6.00	670,389
Technology Ed. Teachers	-	-	2.00	186,268
Social Studies Teachers	-	-	6.00	701,024
Special Ed. Teachers	-	-	8.00	799,808
Art Teachers	-	-	2.00	231,384
Music Teachers	-	-	1.70	181,072
Physical Education Teachers	-	-	2.00	237,684
Reading Teachers	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	-	-	47.70	4,993,859
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	-	-	1.00	111,728
Psychologists	-	-	1.32	113,719
Nurses	-	-	2.40	236,117
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	-	-	4.72	461,564
AIDES				
Special Ed. Aides	-	-	7.00	227,946
Library Aide	-	-	-	-
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	-	-	7.00	227,946
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	-	-	-	-
Food Service Staff	-	-	-	-
Pianist	-	-	0.62	21,180
Lunch Aides	-	-	-	3,753
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	-	-	0.62	24,933
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	-	-	3,750
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	-	-	80,472
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	-	-	84,222
TOTAL SALARY	-	-	65.04	6,171,516
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		-		12,323
Supplies		-		89,298
Other Expenses		-		14,919
Tuition		-		-
Transportation		-		-
Sped Expenses		-		-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		-		116,540
GRAND TOTAL	-	-	65.04	6,288,056

*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.

SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET VIEW, ALL FUNDING SOURCES (CONT.)

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES 9-12				
	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24
<u>SALARY</u>	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	FTE	\$	FTE	\$
Administrators	4.00	473,729	4.00	512,448
Secretarial/Clerical	3.00	164,494	3.00	170,833
TOTAL BUILDING ADMINISTRATION	7.00	638,223	7.00	683,281
TEACHERS				
English Teachers	12.80	1,281,584	12.80	1,355,260
World Language Teachers	10.20	1,047,877	10.20	1,032,183
Math Teachers	12.80	1,297,511	13.55	1,360,458
Health Ed. Teachers	2.36	211,524	2.36	226,709
Science Teachers	13.20	1,342,955	13.95	1,462,122
Technology Ed. Teachers	1.00	78,575	1.75	140,666
Social Studies Teachers	12.60	1,359,538	13.35	1,476,979
Special Ed. Teachers	9.90	1,012,813	9.30	1,015,396
Art Teachers	4.00	424,613	4.00	446,143
Music Teachers	1.90	228,086	1.90	239,799
Theater Arts Teachers	1.00	103,783	1.00	110,065
Physical Education Teachers	2.00	187,646	2.00	199,045
Transition Room Educators	1.00	73,394	1.00	116,992
Reading Teachers	-	-	-	-
TOTAL TEACHERS	84.76	8,649,899	87.16	9,181,817
OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Librarian	-	-	-	-
Guidance Counselors & Social Workers	9.00	806,985	9.00	876,673
Psychologists	1.83	211,213	1.83	220,270
Nurses	1.60	147,003	2.00	184,681
TOTAL OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF	12.43	1,165,201	12.83	1,281,624
AIDES & SUPPORT STAFF				
Special Ed. Aides	8.40	260,601	5.89	198,838
Library Aide	0.83	28,425	1.00	36,433
Music Accompanist	0.63	19,535	0.63	19,535
Guidance Secretarial/Clerical	1.00	58,489	1.00	60,882
METCO Aide	-	-	-	-
TOTAL AIDES	10.87	367,050	8.52	315,688
OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS				
Custodians	3.30	165,345	-	-
Food Service Staff	9.19	220,353	9.19	253,203
Campus Monitors	4.00	113,744	4.08	129,746
TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT POSITIONS	16.49	499,442	13.27	382,949
STIPENDS				
Special Education After School Support	-	31,500	-	31,500
Extracurricular: Arts, Club Activities, Athletics	-	489,863	-	504,877
TOTAL STIPENDS	-	521,363	-	536,377
TOTAL SALARY	131.54	11,841,178	128.78	12,381,736
NON-SALARY				
Contract Services		278,169	-	275,170
Supplies		380,226	-	365,096
Other Expenses		418,596	-	411,158
Tuition		-	-	-
Transportation		-	-	-
Sped Expenses		-	-	-
TOTAL NON-SALARY		1,076,991		1,051,424
GRAND TOTAL	131.54	12,918,169	128.78	13,433,160
*Note: All schools are supported by district-wide positions and expenses.				

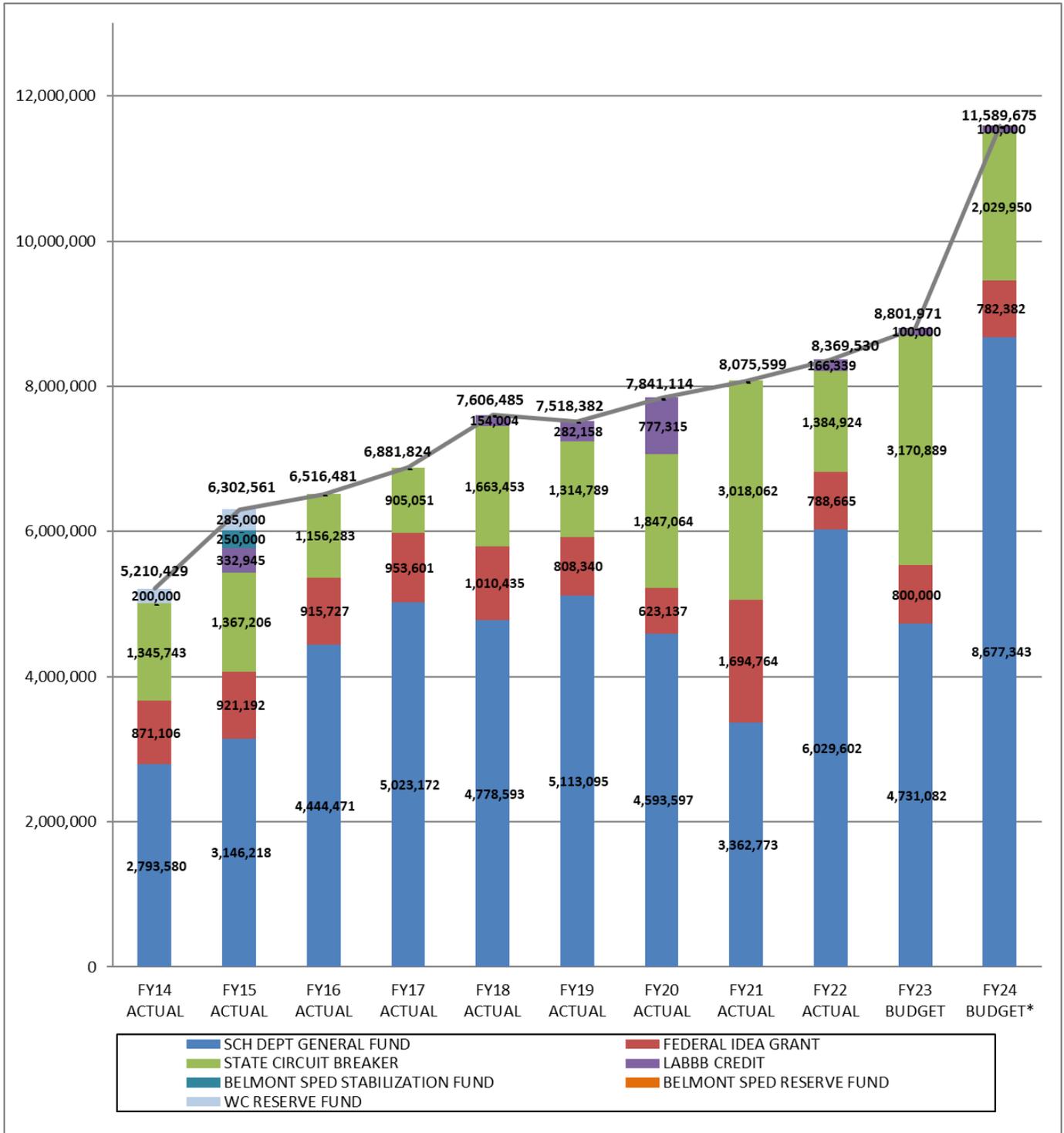
SPECIAL EDUCATION – OUT OF DISTRICT TUITION FUNDING

OUT-OF-DISTRICT TUITION EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE: FY14-FY24 (TABLE), *Subject to School Committee Vote*

FUNDING SOURCE	FY14 ACTUAL	FY15 ACTUAL	FY16 ACTUAL	FY17 ACTUAL	FY18 ACTUAL	FY19 ACTUAL	FY20 ACTUAL	FY21 ACTUAL	FY22 ACTUAL	FY23 BUDGET	FY24 BUDGET*
SCH DEPT GENERAL FUND	2,793,580	3,146,218	4,444,471	5,023,172	4,778,593	5,113,095	4,593,597	3,362,773	6,029,602	4,731,082	8,677,343
FEDERAL IDEA GRANT	871,106	921,192	915,727	953,601	1,010,435	808,340	623,137	1,694,764	788,665	800,000	782,382
STATE CIRCUIT BREAKER	1,345,743	1,367,206	1,156,283	905,051	1,663,453	1,314,789	1,847,064	3,018,062	1,384,924	3,170,889	2,029,950
LABBB CREDIT	-	332,945	-	-	154,004	282,158	777,315	-	166,339	100,000	100,000
BELMONT SPED STABILIZATION FUND	-	250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BELMONT SPED RESERVE FUND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WC RESERVE FUND	200,000	285,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*FY24 Budget reflects the amounts anticipated to be expended in FY24, by funding source. The General Fund amount of \$8,677,343 does not include \$600,000 in funds that are not expected to be spent in FY24; and that may be transferred to the Special Education Reserve Fund, *subject to School Committee vote*.

OUT-OF-DISTRICT TUITION EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE FY14-FY24 (BAR GRAPH), *Subject to School Committee Vote*



Out-of-District Enrollment by Placement Type

	FY 21 Actual	FY 22 Actual	Q3 FY 23
LABBB Collaborative*	57	62	68
MA Public	2	1	1
Private	35	48	68
Out-of-State	3	2	2
Total Out-of-District Placements	97	113	139
*Includes students at all collaboratives			

Out-of-District Tuition Expenses by Type and Funding Source

	FY19 Budget	FY19 Actual	FY20 Budget	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	FY21 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Change FY23 - FY24	
									\$	%
Out-of-District Tuition Expenses:										
LABBB Collaborative	2,934,045	3,446,688	3,976,749	3,420,396	3,510,954	4,025,955	3,944,557	4,572,993	628,436	15.93%
MA Public	966,818	144,641	137,807	63,064	147,453	-	165,664	47,250	(118,414)	-71.48%
Private Tuitions	4,084,478	3,687,253	4,568,336	4,213,653	4,634,460	4,016,063	4,380,840	7,411,018	3,030,178	69.17%
Out-of-State Tuitions	160,500	239,801	258,630	144,000	276,734	33,581	310,910	158,414	(152,496)	-49.05%
Total Out-of-District Tuitions	8,145,841	7,518,382	8,941,522	7,841,114	8,569,601	8,075,599	8,801,971	12,189,675	3,387,704	38.49%
Funding Sources:										
General Fund	5,113,095	5,113,095	5,266,488	4,593,597	3,935,141	3,362,773	4,731,082	9,277,343	4,546,261	96.09%
General Fund Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Federal IDEA Grants	973,635	808,340	1,016,032	623,137	1,898,587	1,694,764	800,000	782,382	(17,618)	-2.20%
MA State Circuit Breaker	1,919,111	1,314,789	2,329,816	1,847,064	2,735,873	3,018,062	3,170,889	2,029,950	(1,140,939)	-35.98%
LABBB Credits	140,000	282,158	329,186	777,315	-	-	100,000	100,000	-	0.00%
Total Funding Sources	8,145,841	7,518,382	8,941,522	7,841,114	8,569,601	8,075,599	8,801,971	12,189,675	3,387,704	38.49%

*FY24 Budget reflects the amounts anticipated to be expended in FY24, by funding source. The General Fund amount of \$9,277,343 does include \$600,000 in funds that are not expected to be spent in FY24; and that may be transferred to the Special Education Reserve Fund, *subject to School Committee vote*.

Out-of-District Reserve Balances by Funding Source

	FY 20 Actual	FY 21 Actual	FY 22 Actual	FY 23 Budget	FY 24 Budget	FY 25 Budget
Federal IDEA Grants:						
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	261,491	659,635	-	10,631	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	972,408	1,035,129	799,296	782,382	782,382	782,382
Less: Current Year Expenditures	623,137	1,694,764	788,665	793,013	782,382	782,382
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	610,762	(0)	10,631	-	-	-
MA State Circuit Breaker:						
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	1,854,447	1,822,990	627,109	1,502,200	-	607,605
Plus: Current Year Allocation	1,822,990	1,822,181	2,260,015	2,339,222	2,637,555	2,906,262
Plus: Current Year Extraordinary Reli	-	-	-	181,960	-	-
Less: Current Year Expenditures	1,847,064	3,018,062	1,384,924	4,023,382	2,029,950	2,237,001
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	1,830,373	627,109	1,502,200	-	607,605	1,276,866
LABBB Credits:						
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	175,227	0	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	602,088	-	166,339	118,813	100,000	100,000
Less: Current Year Expenditures	777,315	0	166,339	118,813	100,000	100,000
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	0	-	-	-	-	-
Belmont General Fund:						
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plus: Current Year Allocation	5,266,488	3,935,141	6,029,602	4,731,082	8,677,343	9,284,757
Less: Current Year Expenditures	4,593,597	3,362,773	6,029,602	4,731,082	8,677,343	9,284,757
Subtotal	672,891	572,368	-	-	-	-
	Sped Reserve Transfer	Turnback to Town		Amount Needed from Other Sources		
Other	(672,891)	(572,368)	-	(355,026)		
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	-	-	-	(355,026)	-	-
Belmont Sped Reserve Fund:						
Prior Year Carry-Forward Balance	0	672,891	672,891	672,891	-	600,000
Plus: Current Year Allocation	672,891	-	-	-	600,000	-
Less: Current Year Expenditures	-	-	-	672,891	-	-
Ending/Carry-Forward Balance	672,891	672,891	672,891	-	600,000	600,000
Combined Carry-Forward Balances	3,114,026	1,300,000	2,185,722	(355,026)	1,207,605	1,876,866

CURRENT BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT MAY 1, 2023

	Pre	K	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Subtotals 2023	Subtotals 2022	Subtotals 2021	Subtotals 2020	Subtotals 2019	Subtotals 2018
Burbank		19	21	19	18	22						
		18	21	18	22	21						
		17	22	18	20	22						
		0	0	0	21	21						
Total Burbank		54	64	55	81	86	340	362	373	421	430	380
Butler		18	21	23	21	24						
		21	20	23	23	22						
		21	21	21	23	24						
Total Butler		60	62	67	67	70	326	333	327	365	383	391
Wellington	14	19	22	20	21	21						
	12	19	20	20	22	22						
	11	19	20	20	21	22						
	12	19	22	20	21	22						
	13	17	20	0	22	22						
	11											
	0											
Total Pre	73						73	86	67	66	75	78
Total Wellington 1-4		93	104	80	107	109	493	488	506	562	572	569
Winn Brook		20	21	22	23	22						
		19	21	24	24	23						
		19	21	21	23	24						
		19	20	22	24	23						
Total Winn Brook		77	83	89	94	92	435	426	425	465	465	474
Total Elementary	73	284	313	291	349	357	1667	1695	1698	1879	1925	1892
Chenery M.S.			Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8						
			355	349	308	368	1380	1374	1401	1490	1437	1361
Belmont H.S.			Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12						
			360	362	331	315	1368	1340	1305	1318	1310	1262
Total Secondary							2748	2714	2706	2808	2747	2623
Grand Total							4415	4409	4404	4687	4672	4515
Annual Change							11	5	-283	15	157	11

ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SELECTED POPULATIONS (2022-2023)

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity & Selected Populations (2022-23)		
Race	% of District	% of State
African American	3.9	9.4
Asian	22.9	7.3
Hispanic	5.0	24.2
Native American	0.1	0.2
White	59.9	54.4
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	8.2	4.4
Title	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	29	25
English Language Learner	9.8	12.1
Students With Disabilities	14.3	19.4

Town of Belmont, Massachusetts



Fiscal Year 2024

FY2024 Final Recommended Budget & Financing Plan

May 17, 2023

Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Estimated	FY2024 Projected
Property Tax Levy	\$ 95,854,621	\$ 99,431,844	\$ 102,786,493	\$ 106,302,480
Levy for Exempt Debt	\$ 13,638,294	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,154,514
Total Tax Levy	\$ 109,492,915	\$ 111,719,939	\$ 116,505,822	\$ 119,456,994
State Aid	\$ 12,253,713	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,852,939	\$ 14,571,551
Local Receipts	\$ 8,092,290	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 8,590,889	\$ 8,603,462
Available Funds	\$ 4,342,665	\$ 7,841,118	\$ 8,565,598	\$ 10,587,499
Revenue Offsets	\$ (2,838,733)	\$ (2,831,921)	\$ (2,919,157)	\$ (3,135,055)
Enterprise Receipts	\$ 2,833,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487
Total Revenues	\$ 134,175,850	\$ 139,939,088	\$ 144,984,091	\$ 151,026,937

Spending	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Recommended
Belmont Public Schools	\$ 51,589,917	\$ 55,259,786	\$ 55,895,825	\$ 63,486,981
Regional Schools	\$ 1,391,511	\$ 1,124,430	\$ 1,137,269	\$ 746,956
Total Education	\$ 52,981,428	\$ 56,384,216	\$ 57,033,094	\$ 64,233,937

General Government	\$ 3,830,936	\$ 4,510,315	\$ 5,428,081	\$ 5,219,752
Public Safety	\$ 12,228,092	\$ 12,921,617	\$ 13,465,276	\$ 14,160,201
Public Services	\$ 8,407,046	\$ 9,317,830	\$ 10,137,881	\$ 10,574,116
Health and Human Services	\$ 2,881,736	\$ 3,053,356	\$ 3,493,791	\$ 3,351,359
Total Municipal Government	\$ 27,347,809	\$ 29,803,118	\$ 32,525,029	\$ 33,305,428

Facilities	\$ 5,240,068	\$ 5,739,210	\$ 6,948,107	\$ 7,519,388
Pension Assessment	\$ 8,728,097	\$ 9,662,058	\$ 10,092,024	\$ 10,041,821
Employee Benefits	\$ 13,679,110	\$ 14,001,343	\$ 15,666,332	\$ 15,619,669
Debt Service	\$ 14,724,266	\$ 14,579,196	\$ 15,243,002	\$ 14,642,053
Other Shared	\$ 511,161	\$ 435,877	\$ 1,014,231	\$ 1,172,376
Total Shared Services	\$ 42,882,702	\$ 44,417,683	\$ 48,963,696	\$ 48,995,307

Capital - Streets	\$ —	\$ 1,812,460	\$ 1,857,772	\$ 1,904,216
Capital - Sidewalks	\$ 226,147	\$ 231,801	\$ 237,730	\$ 243,673
Capital - Discretionary	\$ 950,268	\$ 1,757,682	\$ 3,787,495	\$ 1,791,681
Total Capital	\$ 1,176,415	\$ 3,801,943	\$ 5,882,997	\$ 3,939,570

Other Warrant Articles (OPEB)	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 579,275	\$ 552,695
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Total Spending	\$ 124,438,354	\$ 134,456,960	\$ 144,984,091	\$ 151,026,938
Net Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	N/A	N/A	\$ —	\$ —

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Approp.	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 1000: General Government								
1100	Assessors Compensation	\$281,169	\$198,009	\$222,793	\$281,598	\$277,521	\$(4,077)	(1.4)%
1100	Assessors Expenses	\$52,186	\$152,607	\$101,282	\$142,500	\$147,500	\$5,000	3.5%
	<i>Subtotal 1100 Assessors</i>	<i>\$333,355</i>	<i>\$350,616</i>	<i>\$324,075</i>	<i>\$424,098</i>	<i>\$425,021</i>	<i>\$923</i>	<i>0.2%</i>
1200	Human Resources Compensation	\$250,029	\$211,922	\$243,923	\$200,828	\$213,664	\$12,836	6.4%
1200	Human Resources Expenses	\$22,987	\$28,791	\$37,089	\$69,700	\$80,450	\$10,750	15.4%
1250	Salary Reserve	\$6,062	\$39,899	\$406,299	\$750,450	\$360,949	\$(389,501)	(51.9)%
	<i>Subtotal 1200 Human Resources</i>	<i>\$279,079</i>	<i>\$280,612</i>	<i>\$687,311</i>	<i>\$1,020,978</i>	<i>\$655,062</i>	<i>\$(365,915)</i>	<i>(35.8)%</i>
1300	IT Compensation	\$393,489	\$391,560	\$342,744	\$420,193	\$433,569	\$13,376	3.2%
1300	IT Expenses	\$520,826	\$537,123	\$757,202	\$932,500	\$980,375	\$47,875	5.1%
	<i>Subtotal 1300 IT</i>	<i>\$914,315</i>	<i>\$928,683</i>	<i>\$1,099,946</i>	<i>\$1,352,693</i>	<i>\$1,413,944</i>	<i>\$61,251</i>	<i>4.5%</i>
1400	Town Accountant Compensation	\$296,199	\$254,069	\$293,774	\$279,852	\$358,431	\$78,579	28.1%
1400	Town Accountant Expenses	\$76,986	\$66,600	\$74,621	\$82,300	\$84,600	\$2,300	2.8%
	<i>Subtotal 1400 Town Accountant</i>	<i>\$373,185</i>	<i>\$320,669</i>	<i>\$368,394</i>	<i>\$362,152</i>	<i>\$443,031</i>	<i>\$80,879</i>	<i>22.3%</i>
1500	Town Administration Compensation	\$566,567	\$575,361	\$508,807	\$603,048	\$620,057	\$17,009	2.8%
1500	Town Administration Expenses	\$284,072	\$347,762	\$497,827	\$415,040	\$505,040	\$90,000	21.7%
	<i>Subtotal 1500 Town Administration</i>	<i>\$850,639</i>	<i>\$923,123</i>	<i>\$1,006,633</i>	<i>\$1,018,088</i>	<i>\$1,125,097</i>	<i>\$107,009</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
1600	Town Clerk Compensation	\$336,318	\$336,901	\$327,688	\$395,926	\$391,716	\$(4,210)	(1.1)%
1600	Town Clerk Expenses	\$75,875	\$94,400	\$82,805	\$129,372	\$116,445	\$(12,927)	(10.0)%
	<i>Subtotal 1600 Town Clerk</i>	<i>\$412,193</i>	<i>\$431,301</i>	<i>\$410,494</i>	<i>\$525,298</i>	<i>\$508,161</i>	<i>\$(17,137)</i>	<i>(3.3)%</i>
1700	Treasurer Compensation	\$470,447	\$475,344	\$479,753	\$511,174	\$435,837	\$(75,337)	(14.7)%
1700	Treasurer Expenses	\$154,459	\$120,589	\$133,709	\$213,600	\$213,600	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 1700 Treasurer</i>	<i>\$624,906</i>	<i>\$595,933</i>	<i>\$613,462</i>	<i>\$724,774</i>	<i>\$649,437</i>	<i>\$(75,337)</i>	<i>(10.4)%</i>
Total General Government		\$3,787,672	\$3,830,936	\$4,510,315	\$5,428,081	\$5,219,752	\$(208,329)	(3.8)%

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Approp.	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 2000: Shared Services								
2110	Pension	\$8,227,468	\$8,728,097	\$9,662,058	\$10,092,024	\$10,041,821	\$(50,203)	(0.5)%
2200	Retiree Health Insurance	\$3,162,481	\$3,285,759	\$3,529,448	\$3,781,057	\$3,338,181	\$(442,876)	(11.7)%
2201	Employee Health Insurance	\$9,189,408	\$9,049,834	\$9,146,575	\$10,068,276	\$10,515,468	\$447,192	4.4%
2210	Life Insurance	\$12,708	\$10,234	\$11,077	\$19,425	\$19,425	\$—	—%
2220	Medicare	\$831,395	\$875,330	\$908,544	\$1,064,576	\$1,097,497	\$32,921	3.1%
2310	Unemployment	\$34,698	\$142,423	\$62,279	\$227,000	\$193,700	\$(33,300)	(14.7)%
2320	Workers Compensation	\$346,533	\$315,529	\$343,420	\$505,998	\$455,398	\$(50,600)	(10.0)%
	<i>Subtotal Employee Benefits</i>	<i>\$21,804,692</i>	<i>\$22,407,207</i>	<i>\$23,663,401</i>	<i>\$25,758,356</i>	<i>\$25,661,490</i>	<i>\$(96,866)</i>	<i>(0.4)%</i>
2400	Liability Insurance	\$496,273	\$511,161	\$435,877	\$587,259	\$744,730	\$157,471	26.8%
2410	Deductible Reserves	\$4,610	\$—	\$—	\$26,972	\$27,646	\$674	2.5%
	<i>Subtotal Liability Insurance</i>	<i>\$500,883</i>	<i>\$511,161</i>	<i>\$435,877</i>	<i>\$614,231</i>	<i>\$772,376</i>	<i>\$158,145</i>	<i>25.7%</i>
2450	Warrant Committee Reserve	\$—	\$—	\$—	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal WC Reserve</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>—%</i>
2500	Facilities Compensation	\$1,662,832	\$1,603,030	\$1,789,467	\$2,000,101	\$2,293,029	\$292,928	14.6%
2500	Facilities Expenses	\$3,316,504	\$3,637,039	\$3,949,743	\$4,948,006	\$5,226,359	\$278,353	5.6%
	<i>Subtotal 2500 Facilities</i>	<i>\$4,979,336</i>	<i>\$5,240,068</i>	<i>\$5,739,210</i>	<i>\$6,948,107</i>	<i>\$7,519,388</i>	<i>\$571,281</i>	<i>8.2%</i>
	Total Shared Services	\$27,284,911	\$28,158,436	\$29,838,488	\$33,720,694	\$34,353,254	\$632,560	1.9%
Program 3000: Public Safety								
3000	Emergency Mgmt Compensation	\$15,116	\$16,258	\$15,667	\$16,200	\$16,200	\$—	—%
3000	Emergency Mgmt Expenses	\$7,843	\$7,944	\$6,262	\$7,944	\$7,944	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 3000 Emergency Mgmt</i>	<i>\$22,959</i>	<i>\$24,202</i>	<i>\$21,929</i>	<i>\$24,144</i>	<i>\$24,144</i>	<i>\$—</i>	<i>—%</i>
3100	Fire Compensation	\$5,181,346	\$5,196,516	\$5,445,810	\$5,347,730	\$5,734,377	\$386,647	7.2%
3100	Fire Expenses	\$518,299	\$504,023	\$488,621	\$630,550	\$655,850	\$25,300	4.0%
	<i>Subtotal 3100 Fire</i>	<i>\$5,699,646</i>	<i>\$5,700,539</i>	<i>\$5,934,431</i>	<i>\$5,978,280</i>	<i>\$6,390,227</i>	<i>\$411,947</i>	<i>6.9%</i>
3200	Police Compensation	\$6,158,068	\$5,978,535	\$6,258,108	\$6,573,687	\$6,864,199	\$290,513	4.4%
3200	Police Expenses	\$691,832	\$524,815	\$707,148	\$889,165	\$881,630	\$(7,535)	(0.8)%
	<i>Subtotal 3200 Police</i>	<i>\$6,849,899</i>	<i>\$6,503,351</i>	<i>\$6,965,256</i>	<i>\$7,462,852</i>	<i>\$7,745,829</i>	<i>\$282,978</i>	<i>3.8%</i>
	Total Public Safety	\$12,572,504	\$12,228,092	\$12,921,617	\$13,465,276	\$14,160,201	\$694,925	5.2%

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Approp.	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Program 4000: Education								
4100	Belmont Public Schools Compensation	\$39,233,144	\$42,194,418	\$43,751,812	\$45,745,004	\$48,194,771	\$2,449,767	5.4%
4100	Belmont Public Schools Expenses	\$10,254,036	\$9,395,499	\$11,507,974	\$10,150,821	\$15,292,210	\$5,141,389	50.6%
	<i>Subtotal 4100 Belmont Public Schools</i>	<i>\$49,487,180</i>	<i>\$51,589,917</i>	<i>\$55,259,786</i>	<i>\$55,895,825</i>	<i>\$63,486,981</i>	<i>\$7,591,156</i>	<i>13.6%</i>
4200	Regional Schools	\$984,887	\$1,391,511	\$1,124,430	\$1,137,269	\$746,956	\$(390,313)	(34.3)%
	<i>Subtotal 4200 Regional School Expenses</i>	<i>\$984,887</i>	<i>\$1,391,511</i>	<i>\$1,124,430</i>	<i>\$1,137,269</i>	<i>\$746,956</i>	<i>\$(390,313)</i>	<i>(34.3)%</i>
	Total Education	\$50,472,067	\$52,981,428	\$56,384,216	\$57,033,094	\$64,233,937	\$7,200,843	12.6%
Program 5000: Public Services								
5100	Community Development Compensation	\$787,971	\$734,527	\$719,783	\$887,081	\$849,892	\$(37,189)	(4.2)%
5100	Community Development Expenses	\$150,081	\$127,211	\$161,892	\$109,130	\$129,130	\$20,000	18.3%
	<i>Subtotal 5100 Community Development</i>	<i>\$938,052</i>	<i>\$861,738</i>	<i>\$881,675</i>	<i>\$996,211</i>	<i>\$979,022</i>	<i>\$(17,189)</i>	<i>(1.7)%</i>
5200	Public Works Compensation	\$2,060,871	\$1,950,188	\$2,022,462	\$2,176,120	\$2,312,492	\$136,371	6.3%
5200	Public Works Expenses	\$4,627,663	\$5,044,225	\$5,419,332	\$5,375,624	\$5,758,173	\$382,549	7.1%
	<i>Subtotal 5200 Public Works</i>	<i>\$6,688,534</i>	<i>\$6,994,413</i>	<i>\$7,441,794</i>	<i>\$7,551,744</i>	<i>\$8,070,665</i>	<i>\$518,920</i>	<i>6.9%</i>
5300	Recreation Compensation	\$585,886	\$380,922	\$592,637	\$896,435	\$844,439	\$(51,996)	(5.8)%
5300	Recreation Expenses	\$271,765	\$169,974	\$401,724	\$693,490	\$679,990	\$(13,500)	(1.9)%
	<i>Subtotal 5300 Recreation</i>	<i>\$857,651</i>	<i>\$550,896</i>	<i>\$994,361</i>	<i>\$1,589,925</i>	<i>\$1,524,429</i>	<i>\$(65,496)</i>	<i>(4.1)%</i>
	Total Public Services	\$8,484,237	\$8,407,046	\$9,317,830	\$10,137,881	\$10,574,116	\$436,235	4.3%
Program 6000: Human Services								
6100	Library Compensation	\$1,427,924	\$1,359,268	\$1,430,861	\$1,648,407	\$1,665,057	\$16,650	1.0%
6100	Library Expenses	\$564,751	\$613,522	\$685,935	\$725,908	\$683,337	\$(42,571)	(5.9)%
	<i>Subtotal 6100 Library</i>	<i>\$1,992,675</i>	<i>\$1,972,789</i>	<i>\$2,116,796</i>	<i>\$2,374,315</i>	<i>\$2,348,394</i>	<i>\$(25,921)</i>	<i>(1.1)%</i>
6200	Council on Aging Compensation	\$356,531	\$365,934	\$378,117	\$439,136	\$369,079	\$(70,057)	(16.0)%
6200	Council on Aging Expenses	\$26,749	\$20,793	\$24,361	\$38,004	\$36,775	\$(1,229)	(3.2)%
	<i>Subtotal 6200 Council on Aging</i>	<i>\$383,279</i>	<i>\$386,727</i>	<i>\$402,478</i>	<i>\$477,140</i>	<i>\$405,854</i>	<i>\$(71,286)</i>	<i>(14.9)%</i>

Program Summary

Town of Belmont, MA

Element	Description	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Approp.	FY2024 Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
6300	Health Compensation	\$415,135	\$401,094	\$419,580	\$504,193	\$449,951	\$(54,242)	(10.8)%
6300	Health Expenses	\$120,916	\$121,125	\$114,501	\$138,143	\$147,161	\$9,018	6.5%
	<i>Subtotal 6300 Health</i>	<i>\$536,051</i>	<i>\$522,219</i>	<i>\$534,082</i>	<i>\$642,336</i>	<i>\$597,112</i>	<i>\$(45,224)</i>	<i>(7.0)%</i>
	Total Human Services	\$2,912,005	\$2,881,736	\$3,053,356	\$3,493,791	\$3,351,359	\$(142,432)	(4.1)%
Program 7000: Debt Service								
7000	Within Levy Debt Service	\$1,511,462	\$1,639,620	\$1,458,739	\$1,438,989	\$1,415,039	\$(23,950)	(1.7)%
7000	Exempt Debt Service	\$8,574,488	\$13,084,646	\$13,029,464	\$13,731,513	\$13,154,514	\$(576,999)	(4.2)%
7000	Short-term Borrowing Costs	\$2,500	\$—	\$90,993	\$72,500	\$72,500	\$—	—%
	<i>Subtotal 7000 Debt Service</i>	<i>\$10,088,450</i>	<i>\$14,724,266</i>	<i>\$14,579,196</i>	<i>\$15,243,002</i>	<i>\$14,642,053</i>	<i>\$(600,949)</i>	<i>(3.9)%</i>
	Total Debt Service	\$10,088,450	\$14,724,266	\$14,579,196	\$15,243,002	\$14,642,053	\$(600,949)	(3.9)%
Capital Expenditures								
8000	Capital - Streets	\$1,725,126	\$—	\$1,812,460	\$1,857,772	\$1,904,216	\$46,444	2.5%
8000	Capital - Sidewalks	\$220,631	\$226,147	\$231,801	\$237,730	\$243,673	\$5,943	2.5%
8000	Discretionary Capital	\$1,909,232	\$950,268	\$1,757,682	\$3,787,495	\$1,791,681	\$(1,995,814)	(52.7)%
	<i>Subtotal 8000 Capital Expenditures</i>	<i>\$3,854,990</i>	<i>\$1,176,415</i>	<i>\$3,801,943</i>	<i>\$5,882,997</i>	<i>\$3,939,570</i>	<i>\$(1,943,427)</i>	<i>(33.0)%</i>
	Total Capital Expenditures	\$3,854,990	\$1,176,415	\$3,801,943	\$5,882,997	\$3,939,570	\$(1,943,427)	(33.0)%
Other Articles								
	OPEB Contribution	\$552,695	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$579,275	\$552,695	\$(26,580)	(4.6)%
	<i>Subtotal Other Articles</i>	<i>\$552,695</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$579,275</i>	<i>\$552,695</i>	<i>\$(26,580)</i>	<i>(4.6)%</i>
	Total Other Articles	\$552,695	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$579,275	\$552,695	\$(26,580)	(4.6)%
Grand Total		\$120,009,530	\$124,438,354	\$134,456,960	\$144,984,091	\$151,026,938	\$6,042,847	4.2%

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 FY2024, Total General Fund Operating Revenues are projected to increase by approximately \$6.04 million, or 4.17%. Net General Fund Revenues, those available to support school and municipal operating budgets, are projected to increase by \$8.22 million, or 5.93%.

General Fund Revenue Summary	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Estimated	FY2024 Projected	FY2023-24 Change	
						\$	%
Property Tax Levy (Table 1A)	\$92,562,993	\$ 95,854,621	\$ 99,431,844	\$102,786,493	\$106,302,480	\$ 3,515,987	3.42 %
Tax Levy, Exempt Debt (Table 1B)	\$ 8,746,407	\$ 13,638,294	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,154,514	\$ (564,815)	(4.12)%
Combined Property Tax Levy	\$101,309,400	\$109,492,915	\$ 111,719,939	\$116,505,822	\$119,456,994	\$ 2,951,172	2.53 %
State Aid (Table 2)	\$ 11,994,553	\$ 12,253,713	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,852,939	\$ 14,571,551	\$ 1,718,612	13.37 %
Local Receipts (Table 3)	\$ 9,097,903	\$ 8,092,290	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 8,590,889	\$ 8,603,462	\$ 12,573	0.15 %
Available Funds (Table 4)	\$ 6,083,456	\$ 4,342,665	\$ 7,841,118	\$ 8,565,598	\$ 10,587,499	\$ 2,021,901	23.60 %
Revenue Offsets (Table 5)	\$(2,707,200)	\$(2,838,733)	\$(2,831,921)	\$(2,919,157)	\$(3,135,055)	\$ (215,898)	7.40 %
Enterprise Receipts (Table 6)	\$ 1,688,000	\$ 2,833,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487	\$ (445,513)	(32.10)%
Total General Fund Operating Revenues	\$127,466,112	\$134,175,850	\$139,939,088	\$144,984,091	\$151,026,937	\$ 6,042,847	4.17 %
Less - Revenues Set-Aside for Designated Purposes	\$ 4,286,684	\$ 1,226,415	\$ 3,851,943	\$ 6,462,272	\$ 4,289,286	\$(2,172,986)	(33.63)%
Net General Fund Revenues	\$123,179,428	\$132,949,435	\$136,087,145	\$138,521,819	\$146,737,652	\$ 8,215,833	5.93 %

Detailed Description:

Property Tax Levy: The FY2024 property tax levy is projected to increase approximately \$3.52 million, or 3.4%. The projected levy is a function of the FY2023 levy limit increased by 2.5% per Proposition 2½, plus an increment for new growth. FY2024 new growth will be a function of construction activity for the period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. FY2023 new growth is estimated at \$860,000 based on a review of historical data on new growth 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 FY2024, debt service is projected to decrease by \$(564,815) or (4.12)%, primarily due to the completion of payments for the Town Hall complex renovations. Debt service for the new library building and skating rink will not be reflected until the FY2025 budget.

State Aid: In recent years, Local Aid has seen minimal increases, with a notable exception in FY2023 due to robust state revenues. It would appear that FY2024 will also see noteworthy increases. The pending state budget revises the formula for Chapter 70 education aid to

further implement the Student Opportunity Act, for which Belmont receives additional funding. At this point, an overall State Aid increase of \$1,718,612 or 13.37% is projected for FY2024. Final figures are likely to be known in June 2023 when the Legislature adopts, and the Governor signs, the FY2024 State budget.

Local Receipts: FY2024 projections for each category of receipt are based on the history of actual collections and projections of 3- and 5-year historical averages. There are minimal adjustments from FY2023 to FY2024, primarily because the FY2023 projections were updated in July 2022 using FY2022 actual revenue data and the same 3- and 5-year averages. This situation will not recur in FY2025. Projections are still somewhat constrained as a result of the pandemic; not all areas have rebounded. Projections for FY2024 Departmental Municipal Receipts reflect the loss of revenue from Rink operations.

Available Funds: The significant increase in Available Funds over the FY2023 budget is due to an increase of \$4,312,536 in Free Cash used to support the operating budget, a practice which is not sustainable long-term, but has become a recurring need since the failure of the operating override in April 2021. Free cash use for overall operations is projected at \$9.69 million, with an additional \$552,695 set-aside for funding the Town's OPEB contribution. (Other Post-Employment Benefits)

The Free Cash increase is offset by the use of significant one-time funding sources in FY2023 for capital - specifically, \$1,042,722 from the Sale of Municipal Land Fund, \$366,092 from prior capital authorizations, and \$649,699 in Free Cash for the Fuel Tanks.

Revenue Offsets: Revenue Offsets are projected to increase by approximately \$215,898 or 7.40%. 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. During FY2021, the Light Department provided advanced funding of \$1 million, offset by lower contributions in FY2022 to FY2024, which are projected to resume at \$650,000 in FY2025. For FY2024, the Finance Director has conducted a detailed review of the water and sewer indirect charges which has resulted in a decrease in indirect transfers, somewhat offset by higher direct payments from water and sewer for other budget elements. This analysis will be updated in future years to ensure that indirect charges are kept in sync with actual budget situations.

Revenue Summary							
	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Estimated	FY2024 Projected	FY2023-24 Change \$	%
Table 1A: Property Tax Levy							
Tax Levy	\$ 89,250,198	\$ 92,590,155	\$ 96,008,913	\$ 99,443,942	\$102,870,712	\$ 3,426,770	3.45%
Prop. 2.5%	\$ 2,231,255	\$ 2,314,754	\$ 2,400,223	\$ 2,486,099	\$ 2,571,768	\$ 85,669	3.45%
New Growth	\$ 1,108,702	\$ 1,104,005	\$ 1,034,806	\$ 940,671	\$ 860,000	\$ (80,671)	(8.58)%
Override/Excess Levy Capacity	\$ (27,162)	\$ (154,293)	\$ (12,099)	\$ (84,219)	NA		
Subtotal	\$ 92,562,993	\$ 95,854,621	\$ 99,431,844	\$102,786,493	\$106,302,480	\$ 3,515,987	3.42%
Table 1B: Tax Levy - Exempt Debt							
Exempt Debt	\$ 8,746,407	\$ 13,638,294	\$ 12,288,095	\$ 13,719,329	\$ 13,154,514	\$ (564,815)	(4.12)%
Subtotal - Combined Tax Levy	\$101,309,400	\$109,492,915	\$111,719,939	\$116,505,822	\$119,456,994	\$ 2,951,172	2.53%
Table 2: State Aid							
Chapter 70	\$ 9,519,647	\$ 9,755,929	\$ 9,891,949	\$ 10,158,889	\$ 11,784,535	\$ 1,625,646	16.00%
Charter School Reimbursement	\$ 3,157	\$ 28,381	\$ 38,838	\$ 25,761	\$ 66,416	\$ 40,655	157.82%
Reimb. - Vocational Transp.	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 4,480	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	—%
Unrestricted General Govt. Aid	\$ 2,397,629	\$ 2,397,629	\$ 2,481,546	\$ 2,615,549	\$ 2,667,860	\$ 52,311	2.00%
Veterans' Benefits & Exemptions	\$ 74,120	\$ 71,774	\$ 37,196	\$ 52,740	\$ 52,740	\$ —	—%
Subtotal	\$ 11,994,553	\$ 12,253,713	\$ 12,454,009	\$ 12,852,939	\$ 14,571,551	\$ 1,718,612	13.37%
Table 3: Local Receipts							
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax	\$ 3,418,785	\$ 3,315,051	\$ 3,647,472	\$ 3,522,427	\$ 3,525,000	\$ 2,573	0.07%
Other Excise	\$ 223,636	\$ 198,767	\$ 328,822	\$ 240,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 85,000	35.42%
Penalties & Interest	\$ 348,501	\$ 357,437	\$ 515,182	\$ 330,000	\$ 330,000	\$ —	—%
PILOT's	\$ 43,913	\$ 35,063	\$ 36,092	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000	\$ —	—%
Rentals	\$ 9,285	\$ 1,530	\$ 6,800	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500	\$ —	—%
Departmental-Schools	\$ 32,857	\$ 153,506	\$ 378,935	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ —	—%
Departmental-Municipal	\$ 1,789,924	\$ 1,955,817	\$ 2,626,950	\$ 2,734,006	\$ 2,559,006	\$ (175,000)	(6.40)%
Licenses & Permits	\$ 1,267,537	\$ 1,322,274	\$ 1,556,574	\$ 1,353,632	\$ 1,353,632	\$ —	—%
Fines & Forfeits	\$ 216,849	\$ 181,101	\$ 200,020	\$ 199,324	\$ 199,324	\$ —	—%
Investment Income	\$ 1,715,007	\$ 436,171	\$ 156,917	\$ 150,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 100,000	66.67%
Miscellaneous Non-Recurring	\$ 31,608	\$ 135,575	\$ 114,179	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	---
Subtotal	\$ 9,097,903	\$ 8,092,290	\$ 9,567,943	\$ 8,590,889	\$ 8,603,462	\$ 12,573	0.15%
Table 4: Available Funds							
Parking	\$ 105,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ —	—%
Capital Endowment Fund	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 107,761	\$ (42,239)	(28.16)%
Capital Projects Fund - Prior Auth.	\$ 163,946	\$ 25,000	\$ 260,000	\$ 545,121	\$ 179,029	\$ (366,092)	(67.16)%
Free Cash - Operating Budget	\$ 2,359,710	\$ 3,792,665	\$ 7,113,925	\$ 5,380,478	\$ 9,693,014	\$ 4,312,536	80.15%
Free Cash - OPEB Contribution	\$ 552,695	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 579,275	\$ 552,695	\$ (26,580)	(4.59)%
Free Cash - Capital Projects/Other	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 649,699	\$ —	\$ (649,699)	(100.00)%
Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 121,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 27,193	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ —	—%
Sale of Town-Owned Property	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 1,042,722	\$ —	\$ (1,042,722)	(100.00)%
Overlay Surplus	\$ 235,000	\$ 235,000	\$ 235,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	---
American Rescue Plan Act	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 163,303	\$ —	\$ (163,303)	(100.00)%
Bond Premium Amortization	\$ 18,000	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	---
General Stabilization Fund	\$ 2,403,105	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	---
Subtotal	\$ 6,083,456	\$ 4,342,665	\$ 7,841,118	\$ 8,565,598	\$ 10,587,499	\$ 2,021,901	23.60%
Table 5: Revenue Offsets							
Cherry Sheet Assessments	\$ (1,862,912)	\$ (1,976,233)	\$ (1,982,588)	\$ (2,089,526)	\$ (2,295,055)	\$ (205,529)	9.84%
Overlay (Abatements)	\$ (844,288)	\$ (862,500)	\$ (849,333)	\$ (829,631)	\$ (840,000)	\$ (10,369)	1.25%
Subtotal	\$ (2,707,200)	\$ (2,838,733)	\$ (2,831,921)	\$ (2,919,157)	\$ (3,135,055)	\$ (215,898)	7.40%
Table 6: Enterprise Receipts							
Water	\$ 519,000	\$ 664,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 244,166	\$ (274,834)	(52.95)%
Wastewater (Sewer)	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 519,000	\$ 248,321	\$ (270,679)	(52.15)%
Belmont Municipal Light Dept.	\$ 650,000	\$ 1,650,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 100,000	28.57%
Subtotal	\$ 1,688,000	\$ 2,833,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 1,388,000	\$ 942,487	\$ (445,513)	(32.10)%
Gross General Fund Revenues	\$127,466,112	\$134,175,850	\$139,939,088	\$144,984,091	\$151,026,937	\$ 6,042,847	4.17%
Revenues Set Aside for Designated Expenses	\$ 4,286,684	\$ 1,226,415	\$ 3,851,943	\$ 6,462,272	\$ 4,289,286	\$ (2,172,986)	(33.63)%
Net General Fund Revenues Available for Appropriation	\$123,179,428	\$132,949,435	\$136,087,145	\$138,521,819	\$146,737,652	\$ 8,215,833	5.93%

Revolving Accounts
FY23
Report:
As of 5/22/23

	<u>Commission</u>	<u>Limits Art. 17</u> <u>FY23</u>	<u>Add. Amount</u> <u>Approved</u> <u>by Warrant</u>	<u>Adjusted</u> <u>Budget</u> <u>FY23</u>	<u>Beginning</u> <u>Balance</u> <u>6/30/2022</u>	<u>FY23</u> <u>Receipts</u>	<u>FY23</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>FY23</u> <u>Balance</u>	<u>Available</u> <u>to Spend vs.</u> <u>Limits FY23</u>
Senior Programs (2152010*)	Council of Aging	\$ 150,000.00	\$ -	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 64,366.62	\$ 62,048.14	\$ 81,024.71	\$ 45,390.05	\$ 68,975.29
Art Gallery (2152012*)	Belmont Cultural Council	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 5,066.55	\$ 3,110.29	\$ 3,247.75	\$ 4,929.09	\$ 11,752.25
Rock Meadow Maint (2152113*)	Conservation Commission	\$ 11,000.00	\$ -	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,874.57	\$ 11,480.00	\$ 4,864.29	\$ 18,490.28	\$ 6,135.71
Copying/Lost Books (2152013*)	Board of Library Trustees	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 1,379.50	\$ 8,328.00	\$ 1,990.81	\$ 7,716.69	\$ 13,009.19
Stormwater Improvements (2159527*)	Community Development	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 13,500.00			\$ 13,500.00	\$ 100,000.00
MLK Day Breakfast (2152017*)	Human Rights Commission	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
Non-School Property Maintenance Fund (2158456*)	Recreation	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 14,034.58	\$ 10,512.50	\$ 20,255.87	\$ 4,291.21	\$ 39,744.13
Stormwater Consulting (2159526*)	Community Development	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 108.97			\$ 108.97	\$ 50,000.00
		<u>\$ 406,000.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 406,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 110,330.79</u>	<u>\$ 95,478.93</u>	<u>\$ 111,383.43</u>	<u>\$ 94,426.29</u>	<u>\$ 289,616.57</u>

**Michael F. Crowley, TMM Precinct 8
Article 22 Amendment, ATM 2023**

2023 MAY 25 PM 12: 09

Article 22 Budget Amendment: Motions C and F
Additional \$250,338 to BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS and \$38,662 to EMPLOYEE BENEFITS,
OTHER RESERVES

MOVED: That the Motion for Article 22: FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET APPROPRIATION AND
TRANSFER BALANCES TO FUND THE FY24 BUDGET, Belmont Public Schools, be amended:

To change the appropriated amount after the words "Belmont Public Schools" from
"\$63,486,981" to "\$63,737,319", the appropriated amount after the words "Employee Benefits,
Other Reserves", from "\$16,792,045" to "\$16,830,707", AND the transfer amount after the
words "from Unreserved Fund Balance (Free Cash)" from "\$9,693,014" to "9,982,014".

Brief Explanation:

The amendment provides an additional \$289,000 for special education programming in the Belmont Public Schools, including \$189,000 for two positions and \$100,000 for SPED program design and development. Providing in-district special ed keeps students connected with their community and peers. Out-of-district tuition is a top cost driver for the district, and investing now can reduce future expenses. The School Committee, Warrant Committee, and many other town committees and elected officials have identified SPED investment as a unique opportunity to improve quality of service and slow budget growth.

Contact Info:

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Phone/text: 617-752-2250

The amendment also is supported by many Town Meeting Members, including:

Angus Abercrombie, Karen Bauerle, Heather Barr, Dan Barry, Joe Bernard, Marty Bitner, Julie Crockett, Michael Gao, Kim Haley-Jackson, Paul Joy, Mark Kagan, Amy Kirsch, Linda Levin-Scherz, Hannah Liberty, Eric Perkins, Paul Roberts, Erica Zidel