

FY 2022 Budget Overview

The fact that this is an 18-month budget enabling the town to transition to a new fiscal year makes year over year comparisons challenging.

The FY2022 Fiscal Year will begin on July 1, 2021 and end on June 30, 2022

The period from January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 is a transition period.

This fiscal year change aligns South Thomaston with RSU13 and the State of Maine making planning and forecasting more accurate and efficient.

The Town's Department Heads conformed to The Selectboard's guidelines for wages, salaries, a priority on asset maintenance and upkeep and careful, prudent new spending requests. There are no appreciable staff increases.

The Town Meeting Warrant will include an Article to fix two tax bill dates - October 1, 2021 and April 1, 2022. Town Meeting has sole authority over the timing and frequency of tax due dates.

The total Town Gross Budget is \$2,250,970 vs 2020 of \$1,584,843.

Spending per month however is \$125,054 in FY21/22 v \$132,070 in 2020, a decrease of \$7,016 per month.

Major spending items or departments:

Solid Waste Disposal at \$462,861; \$126,296 is a reserve transfer to the Transfer Station Renovation Project with no impact on the appropriations in this budget.

Administration of \$391,085. 48% of Administration is wages, salaries, and stipends. Most other categories are run rate or inflation driven or benefits tied to payroll.

Ambulance Service overran its 2020 budget - due mostly to COVID mandated expenses, some, or all of which may be reimbursed by FEMA. Calls in 2020 were well below 2019 but it can be expected that the trend of increase from 2019 will restart in post COVID. The budget includes allowance for the COVID related mandated staffing but also is 18 months of 7 days x 12 hours on-site coverage.

The Town Road Budget is \$286,365 driven by the Snowplow Contract fee of \$239,666 (83.6%). No road paving is planned for this year except for the Island Road

Renovation which is not funded from this budget or its appropriation. The Omnibus Budget includes \$50,000 in funding for the Paving Reserve.

Fire Department budget is \$202,940; wages, salaries and stipends are in line with Selectboard Guidance. The budget is essentially a level function budget with some equipment expenses for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus and other safety items. In addition, there is a first-time payment for an exhaust system in the fire bay that may be covered by a grant. We should know this prior to Town Meeting.

The remaining Department Budgets are in line with guidance, reflect known priorities and contain few exceptional items.

Reserves. This budget funds several Reserve Accounts notably Fire Truck at \$52,900, Paving at \$50,000, EMS at \$10,000 and Fire Equipment at \$15,000.

We forecast \$784,559 in Town Revenues and \$355,127 in State Revenues. The State Revenues reduce our Tax Commitment when we set the "mill rate".

We project, with a high degree of confidence a County Assessment of \$312,664 and an RSU13 assessment of \$5,176,977. Our student population has increased which has driven our RSU13 % higher.

The bottom line is total expenditures including the RSU 13 and Knox County assessments, are budgeted or projected to be \$7,740,611.