

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S POLICY ON THE ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Annual Budget Process Policy is to establish, under existing local and state authority, the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, Town Administrator, and Finance Director in the preparation of the annual operating and capital budgets. The Board of Selectmen's goal is to create an efficient, effective and fiscally responsible budget process that meets the planned needs and goals of Wayland and is accountable to the taxpayer.

II. AUTHORITY

Authority to prepare the Annual Budget under the process described below is based on:

1. The authority as the chief executive and chief policy making body of the Town is provided to the Board of Selectmen under Massachusetts General Law and the authority under Chapters 60 and 19 of the Town Code to: 1) employ a Town Administrator, 2) ratify the appointment of the Finance Director and 3) appoint a Finance Committee. As the chief executive for the Town, the Board of Selectmen will play a major role in formulating financial policy, will participate directly in the Town's financial planning and budget process, will provide leadership in the development of the capital improvement plan, and will provide oversight and monitoring of the Town's financial performance.
2. The authority under Chapter 60, Section 2 of the Wayland Town Code provides the Town Administrator as the chief operating and administrative officer of the Town under the policy direction of the Board of Selectmen, with the broad authority to manage the Town's financial, personnel and legal activities and to appoint a Finance Director. Chapter 60, Section 2, outlines the Town Administrator's responsibilities for developing long term financial strategy, for review of all town departmental budgets and for overall financial management for the Town and its departments. This work is to be performed under the policy supervision of the Board of Selectmen and in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the Finance Director.
3. The Finance Director, under the direction of the Town Administrator, develops a budget schedule, provides financial projections, prepares the draft budget, prepares the debt management plan with the Treasurer, advises the Town Administrator on the proposed budget guideline and acts as Town Accountant under Massachusetts General Law.
4. The authority under Chapter 19 of the Town Code provides the Finance Committee with the responsibility to prepare and submit the annual Omnibus Budget to Town Meeting which includes the personnel and expense operating budgets and capital budgets for each Town department and the School Department. The Finance

Committee works in cooperation with the Town Administrator, with the Finance Director acting as the Finance Committee's liaison to the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen.

III. INTEGRATION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

A responsible local government budget process is based on the Board of Selectmen, its appointed senior staff, all departments and the Finance Committee each playing distinct and important roles in the budget process in a logical sequence. Each of these parties has specific legal responsibility and a distinct perspective. The Board of Selectmen's appointed Town Administrator and the Finance Director (who is appointed by the Town Administrator subject to ratification by majority vote of the full membership of the Board of Selectmen), as the professional staff managing the Town's day to day operations, are best positioned to prepare the five-year budget plan, draft the annual budget guideline and the capital and operating budgets and present these to the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen, as the chief executive elected by Wayland's residents, is best positioned to consider the overall priorities of the Town. The Board-appointed Finance Committee provides a second and independent review of the draft guidelines and budgets, primarily from the standpoint of Wayland taxpayers, after the Board of Selectmen has established priorities, and prepares the final departmental operating and capital expense budgets and presents them to Town Meeting. In Wayland, the Finance Committee is also responsible for providing comment to the voters on warrant articles. Other finance duties remain with the Board of Selectmen and its administrators.

This policy shall be applied in a manner consistent with the provisions of Chapter 19, Section 4 of the Wayland Town Code, as amended from time to time.

IV. ANNUAL BUDGET: PROCEDURAL STEPS

1. The Board of Selectmen adopts this policy on the preparation of the Annual Budget which will be transmitted to the Town Administrator, the Finance Committee and the Town and School Departments Heads. From time to time, the Board of Selectmen will also present financial policies for public review and comment.
2. The Town Administrator and Finance Director will convene a meeting with the School Superintendent and School Business Manager to discuss preliminary budget needs, the treatment of shared Town / School expenses and preliminary revenue projections.
3. The Finance Director will develop and present to the Town Administrator a five-year revenue and expense budget plan showing all assumptions and identifying proposed budget policies, and suggesting a draft annual budget guideline, based on appropriate percentage increases in Town and School budgets and also showing an appropriate dollar amount for budget growth for the Town, School and shared Town/School expenses.

4. The draft budget plan and guideline will be reviewed by the Assistant Town Administrator, Treasurer, Assessor, and School Superintendent and School Business Manager whose input will be included or noted in a second draft.
5. The Board of Selectmen will convene a public Budget Summit in mid-September at which the Finance Director and Town Administrator will review prior year end financials, 5-year financial plan including operating and capital budgets and a recommendation on departmental budget submissions. The Board will hear comment from departments, committees, and the public on budget priorities, the Budget Guideline, and any draft financial policies.
6. After a public presentation by the Town Administrator, the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee will review the budget documents and the Board of Selectmen will provide comment about budget priorities. The Town Administrator, Finance Director, and Finance Committee will adopt an agreed upon budget guideline which will be included or noted in a new draft budget plan and transmitted to Department Heads and all elected boards.
7. The Finance Director, under the direction and with approval of the Town Administrator will develop and manage the Budget Schedule and provide the schedule and the final budget guideline to Town and School departments by early October. All detailed non-school departmental budgets will be received by the Town Administrator who will note any recommended changes to each departmental budget.
8. The Finance Director and Town Administrator will receive the School Department budget from the School Superintendent and will include the School Budget unchanged but with comment in a consolidated budget plan.
9. The Finance Committee will receive from the Town Administrator complete and detailed Town and School budgets with all prior comments from the Board of Selectmen.
10. Following its review and compilation of the final budget, the Finance Committee will present a draft budget to the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, staff, boards and public. This public meeting is anticipated to occur in early February.
11. The Finance Committee will develop a final budget for inclusion in the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Adopted on June 3, 2019; revised July 27, 2020.