

TOWN OF WESTPORT
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING PACKET
MAY 4, 2026
07:30 PM

TOWN OF WESTPORT

REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING AGENDA

MAY 4, 2026
07:30 PM

Call

All Representative Town Meeting members and inhabitants of the Town of Westport are hereby notified that a meeting of the Representative Town Meeting members will be held at Town Hall, 110 Myrtle Ave. in the auditorium on Monday, May 4, Tuesday May 5, and, if necessary, Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 7:30 p.m. for the purposes listed below. If necessary, the meeting shall reconvene on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 to deal with any agenda items not disposed of at the adjournment of such meeting.

Anticipated to be addressed on Monday, May 4:

Attachment: Resolutions.pdf

1. **Town Budget**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the estimate and recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town of Westport for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

   Attachment: Board of Finance Recommended Budget FY 26-27
   Attachment: _1 RTM LMA Committee Report Earthplace Budget.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM LMA Committee Report Library Budget.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM HHS Com report budget 2026-7fin1.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM PZ COMMITTEE Budget Report 2026.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM Environment Comm Report Conservation Budget Review - 2027.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM Finance Committee FY27 Town Budget Report.pdf
   Attachment: _1 RTM PUBLIC WORKS WPC 2026-2027 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET.pdf
   Attachment: FY2027 Budget Presentation vF.pdf

2. **Railroad Parking Budget**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town Railroad Parking Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

3. **Sewer Budget**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Town Sewer Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

4. **Wakeman Town Farm Budget**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the Wakeman Town Farm Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and to make such specific appropriations as appear advisable.

5. **Property Taxes**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, to require that property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, shall be due and payable in four quarterly installments, and to designate the dates of the first days of July, October, January, and April as the dates upon which such installments shall be due and payable, and that all taxes in an amount of $100 or less shall be due and payable in a single installment on the first day of July.

6. **Motor Vehicle Taxes**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine to require that the motor vehicle tax shall be due and payable in a single installment.

7. **Costs related to hiring for five unanticipated openings**
   To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Fire Chief, to approve an appropriation in the amount of $495,615 to the General Fund Account Funds for covering the costs related to hiring for five unanticipated openings.

   Attachment: _7 FIRE - Approp Hiring of Five Openings.pdf
   Attachment: _7 RTM Finance _ Public Protection Joint Committee Report- Fire Fighter Replacement Appropriation.pdf

RTM Meeting
May 4, 5 & 6, 2026

R E S O L U T I O N S

MONDAY

(1)

RESOLVED: That the First Selectmen's Budget items recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted, and the sum of $_____ for the First Selectmen's Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and such sum shall be added to the amount appropriated for the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget and the Board of Education Budget.

(1)

RESOLVED: That the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget items recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted, and the sum of $_____ for the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and such sum shall be added to the amount appropriated for the First Selectmen's Budget and the Board of Education Budgets.

(2)

RESOLVED: That the Town Railroad Parking Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of $_____ is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

(3)

RESOLVED: That the Town Sewer Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of $_____ is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

(4)

RESOLVED: That the Wakeman Town Farm Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the

Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of $_____ is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures.

(5)

RESOLVED: That property taxes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 shall be due and payable in four quarterly installments and the dates upon which such quarterly installments are to be due and payable shall be the first days of July, October, January and April, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That all taxes in an amount of $100.00 or less shall be due and payable in a single installment on the first day of July, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.

(6)

RESOLVED: That the motor vehicle tax shall be due and payable in a single installment, subject to any applicable tax relief deferral programs.

(7)

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance a request by the Fire Chief, the sum of $495,615 to the General Fund Account Funds for covering the costs related to hiring for five unanticipated openings is hereby appropriated.

(1)

TUESDAY

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education's budget items as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting be adopted and the sum of $_____ for the Board of Education Budget is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures; and be it,

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Town of Westport General Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, as recommended by the Board of Finance and approved or amended by the Representative Town Meeting, be adopted and the sum of the Board of Education Budget, the First Selectmen's Budget, and the Other Agencies and Organizations Budget in the amount of $_____ is hereby appropriated to meet expenditures and that for the purpose of raising a tax on the Grand List of 2026, the sum of $_____ is hereby appropriated.

Remote Attachment:

Board of Finance Recommended Budge ... ardoc.cleargov.com/24474/961844/d)
(https://town-westport-ct-cleardoc.cleargov.com/24474/961844/d)

WESTPORT REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

Library, Museum & Arts Committee

Meeting Minutes | Earthplace Budget Request | FY 2026/2027

April 23, 2026 | 6:30 PM | Town Hall

LMA Committee Members Present

Kristin Mott Purcell – Chair, Victoria Wiley, Brandy Biggs, Candace Banks, Richard Lowenstein, Karen Kramer, Melissa Levy, Wendy Bateau

Presenting for Earthplace

- Amee Borys – Executive Director
- Luci Connell – Director of Deveopment
- Lyn Harris – Director of Finance Administration

Budget Request

Amee Borys presented Earthplace's appropriation request of $105,000 for Fiscal Year 2026/2027, consistent with the Town's allocation to Earthplace over a number of years.

Key Points Presented

Open Space & Conservation

- Earthplace maintains 62 acres of green space on its main facility and an additional 22 acres at the Partrick Wetlands site.
- All property is open and accessible to Westport residents year-round for hiking and outdoor activities.

Programs & Education

- Earthplace maintains the Raptor exhibit and runs a broad range of educational programs throughout the year.
- Earthplace operates one of the top-ranked preschools in Westport, with enrollment well above average.
- Earthplace is planning a $3 million capital campaign targeting facilities improvements.

Harbor Watch Program

- Harbor Watch conducts regular water quality testing across Westport waterways, including New Creek, Sasco Brook, Stony Brook, Saugatuck River, and Aspetuck River.
- The program monitors rivers and harbors, identifies pollution sources, and educates the next generation of environmental stewards.
- The committee discussed at length the direct positive impact and cost savings Harbor Watch provides to the Town of Westport, which members noted was well in excess of the $105,000 annual allocation.

Questions & Discussion

Questions from committee members focused on the following areas:

- Preschool enrollment figures and waitlist demand.
- Details and scope of the upcoming $3 million capital campaign for facilities improvements.
- The depth and community impact of the Harbor Watch water quality monitoring program and its value to the Town relative to the annual appropriation.

The committee was broadly and enthusiastically supportive of the $105,000 allocation and expressed appreciation that First Selectman Christie and the Board of Finance were in agreement.

Vote

Motion: To recommend approval of a $105,000 budget line item for Earthplace for Fiscal Year 2026/2027.

Motioned by: Brandy Biggs

Seconded by: Wendy Bateau

Result: Motion passed unanimously — 8 in favor, 0 opposed.

WESTPORT REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

Library, Museum & Arts Committee

Meeting Minutes | Westport Public Library Budget Request | FY 2026/2027

April 23, 2026 | 6:30 PM | Town Hall

LMA Committee Members Present

Kristin Mott Purcell – Chair, Victoria Wiley, Brandy Biggs, Candace Banks, Richard Lowenstein, Karen Kramer, Melissa Levy, Wendy Bateau

Representing the Westport Public Library

- Bill Harmer – Executive Director
- Amber Tenic – Chief Financial Officer
- Ben Chan – Board Treasurer
- Bob Boroujerdi – President, Board of Trustees
- Scott Bennewitz – Chair, Finance Committee, Board of Trustees

Budget Request

The Westport Public Library presented its FY 2026/2027 operating budget request of $6,129,557 in Town appropriations, representing a 3.2% increase over the prior year. Total operating expenses are projected at $8,029,651 (up 4.9%), with the Library committing to fund $1,900,094 (up 10.9%) from internal sources including fundraising, café/retail operations, and earned revenue. The budget is balanced with no projected surplus or deficit.

Proposed Budget Summary — FY 2026/2027

Budget Line	FY 2026–27 Amount	$ Increase	% Change
Total Operating Budget	$8,029,651	+$376,134	+4.9%
Town Appropriation Request	$6,129,557	+$190,064	+3.2%
Library-Sourced Funding	$1,900,094	+$186,070	+10.9%
Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	**$0**	—	—

Note: Does not include town-funded pension expenses of $385,792. Richard Lowenstein noted that while pension costs are covered in the Town's budget, they should be factored into the overall assessment of the Library's total budget.

Key Highlights Presented by Bill Harmer

Institutional Standing & Usage

- The Westport Public Library is a Five-Star Library, placing it in the top 1% of public libraries nationally — and the only Five-Star Library in Connecticut.
- Annual visits grew to 400,000 in FY 2025/2026, up from 335,000 the prior year.

- Meeting rooms continue to see exceptional demand, with a 94% occupancy rate.

Programs & Community Impact

- The Summer Learning Program recruits Westport Public School teachers to provide enrichment for children at the Library over the summer. More than 1,200 students participated last year.
- Versofest, the Library's annual arts festival, drew 3,000 attendees across 45 days this year and is establishing itself as a premier arts destination in Fairfield County. VersoFest was recognized with the prestigious Mark Award from the Fairfield County Art Alliance.
- Verso University held approximately 60 classes over the past year, offering community college-level education to Library patrons at minimal cost. The program is underwritten by a $1 million private endowment.
- The Library works with more community partners than any other public agency in Westport, providing an estimated $1.75 million in in-kind value through 34,225 hours of meeting room use.
- Bill highlighted the Library's broader economic impact: residents who visit for programs and events contribute to local commerce — dining, shopping — extending the Library's positive impact well beyond its own walls.

Staffing Efficiency & Volunteers

- The Library's FTE count has remained essentially stable for 25 years — approximately 55 FTEs — despite dramatically increased programming, visitor traffic, reference requests, and digital services.
- A key contributor to this efficiency is the Library's Crew Call volunteer program: 40 trained community members regularly assist in producing the Library's events and programs, enabling a lean staff to deliver a high volume of high-quality programming.

Financial Health & Fundraising

- Private fundraising/donations increased from $799,000 to over $1,000,000 year over year, reflecting strong community support for the Library's mission.
- The Library is targeting Library-sourced revenue of $1,900,094 for FY 2026/2027, a 10.9% increase, absorbing approximately 50% of the total budget increase internally.
- The Library holds approximately three months of operating expenses in reserve. Scott Bennewitz and Ben Chan noted that the nonprofit standard is six months, and building reserves remains a goal.
- The Library adopted a five-year Strategic Plan, available on its website, which guides all budget and program decisions.

Budget Cost Drivers — Presented by Ben Chan

Ben Chan presented the detailed budget, emphasizing that the 3.2% increase in Town appropriation is driven entirely by non-discretionary cost pressures:

- People Costs: +$65,960 (+1.2%) — wage increases of 2.5% for full-time and part-time staff, partially offset by selective part-time reductions.
- Supplies & Materials: +$109,500 (+12.2%) — driven by increased physical and digital circulation and higher program-related expenses.
- Other Operating & Facility: +$200,674 (+18.3%) — including building maintenance (+$42,000), insurance/workers' compensation (+$41,000), financial systems modernization (+$34,000), Polaris cataloging system (+$27,000), utilities (+$22,000), magazine expansion (+$18,000), and AI productivity tools (+$13,000).

Vote

Motion: To recommend approval of the Westport Public Library operating budget of $6,129,557 in Town appropriations for Fiscal Year 2026/2027.

Motioned by: Richard Lowenstein

Seconded by: Candace Banks

Result: Motion passed unanimously — 8 in favor, 0 opposed.

RTM Health and Human Services Committee Report

Meeting Date: April 21, 2026
Electronic Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:
Wendy Batteau, Jennifer Johnson, Karen Kramer, Ellen Lautenberg, Addison Moore
Others in attendance: Elaine Daignault, Director of Department of Health and Human Services;
Luci Bango, Director of the Aspetuck Health District, Paul Shaum and other members of the Aspetuck Health District Board of Directors, Kevin Christie, First Selectperson

Purpose:

The RTM Health and Human Services Committee met to discuss and vote on recommending to the full RTM (a) the Department of Human Services 2026-27 budget request of $1,808,290 as approved by the Board of Finance; (b) the Aspetuck Health District's 2026-27 budget request of $624,653, as approved by the Board of Finance.

Department of Human Services

Discussion:

The Westport Department of Human Services (DHS) provides access to social, senior, and youth services for residents of all ages and income levels. DHS programs address mental health, housing stability, financial assistance, emergency preparedness, and social and recreational engagement, while coordinating closely with Town departments, schools, and community partners and, when desirable, making referrals to outside agencies.

While state and federal policies have shifted to emphasizing prevention, diversion from emergency systems, homelessness reduction, behavioral health response, immigration concerns, and aging in place, funding has become more competitive, restricted, and time-limited. Municipalities now must deliver complex services efficiently, while demand continues to rise due to housing costs, benefit complexity, and mental health needs affecting low-income households, immigrants, seniors on fixed incomes, youth, families, and individuals with disabilities. The DHS has risen admirably to the challenge.

Over the past year the department has, in the face of increased service demand and case complexity, coordinated food security, housing stability, financial assistance, mental health, and social supports across its divisions, through careful fiscal management, strategic obtaining and use of grants and settlement funds, and expanded regional partnerships. For a more detailed picture, please do read through the DHS narrative and web information.

The 2026-27 budget of $1,808,290 ($40,635 - 2.3% - over last year's) has been constructed to maximize cost avoidance through programs such as homeless diversion, youth leadership training, senior and disabled community outreach; risk mitigation, and operational efficiencies. The main increase drivers are salary/benefits adjustments (important at a time competition to hire and retain staff is high) and necessary capital expenses. Priorities for the new year include attracting and maintaining qualified staff; monitoring demand and readiness during a time of greater need including the effects affordable housing efforts will have on population; expanding early intervention efforts leading to crisis reduction; exploring software upgrades to increase efficiency; more coordination with town and other departments to minimize duplicating efforts; expanding fundraising efforts; strengthening the Senior Center and Toquet Hall as hubs - and planning long term around Toquet Hall's future, and being ready to meet new needs.

Committee members expressed admiration of and gratitude for the department's work.

Action:

On a motion by Jennifer Johnson and seconded by Addison Moore, the RTM Department of Health and Human Services unanimously recommended that the RTM as a whole approve the 2026-27 DHS budget of $1,808,290.

Aspetuck Health District

Discussion:

The AHD is a CT regional public health agency serving Westport, Weston, and Easton; its Director is considered an assigned agent of the State Commissioner of Public Health, and the services the AHD must provide are mandated by CT statute. Easton became a member of the District in 2022, thereby entitling the district to receive a stipend of $3.00 per resident from the state(not provided to smaller districts). Questions over the town's responsibility to approve any budget the District Board of Directors and the State approve have arisen, with opinions varying. At the recommendation of the

Board of Finance this and other issuesare to be discussed by town attorneys, AHD Directors, and others before the next budget cycle.

The AHD has seen a large increase in demand for its services in all its areas of responsibility: Administrative (such a processing applications and permits); Community Health (health promotion and disease prevention throughout the area); Emergency Preparedness (response to a variety of emergencies that could affect public health); Environmental Health ensuring local, state, and federal ordinances and laws are followed (e.g. sanitarians inspect, investigate and act, if necessary, food establishment, sales, daycares, approve septic systems and private wells, and possible code violations.)

The increase in construction and renovation projects in towns together with other lockdown-era home improvements has been significant, raising the workload of AHD staff. Greater demand has become the status quo. For a comparison of Westport's larger use vs. other towns' and districts' please see the budget narrative. To better fulfill its functions the District in the past year, replaced an administrative staff member, filled a sanitarian position that had been vacant for 3 years,updated procedures, leased 3 vehicles as part of an effort to attract and retain staff, and updated its fee schedule.

The District does collect revenue from fees for environmental and community health services in addition to receiving funding from the towns and state. This year it will seek to expand vaccine programs, apply for and receive additional grants, utilize interns. Nevertheless it sees a strong need for additional staffing and funding to enable it to attract and retain (and this year, increase) staffing, manage its database systems, reduce application and permit review and approval times, and generally provide services in both the most efficient and useful ways possible. Westport's share of their total budget is $624,653 - $18,194 (3%) over last year's.

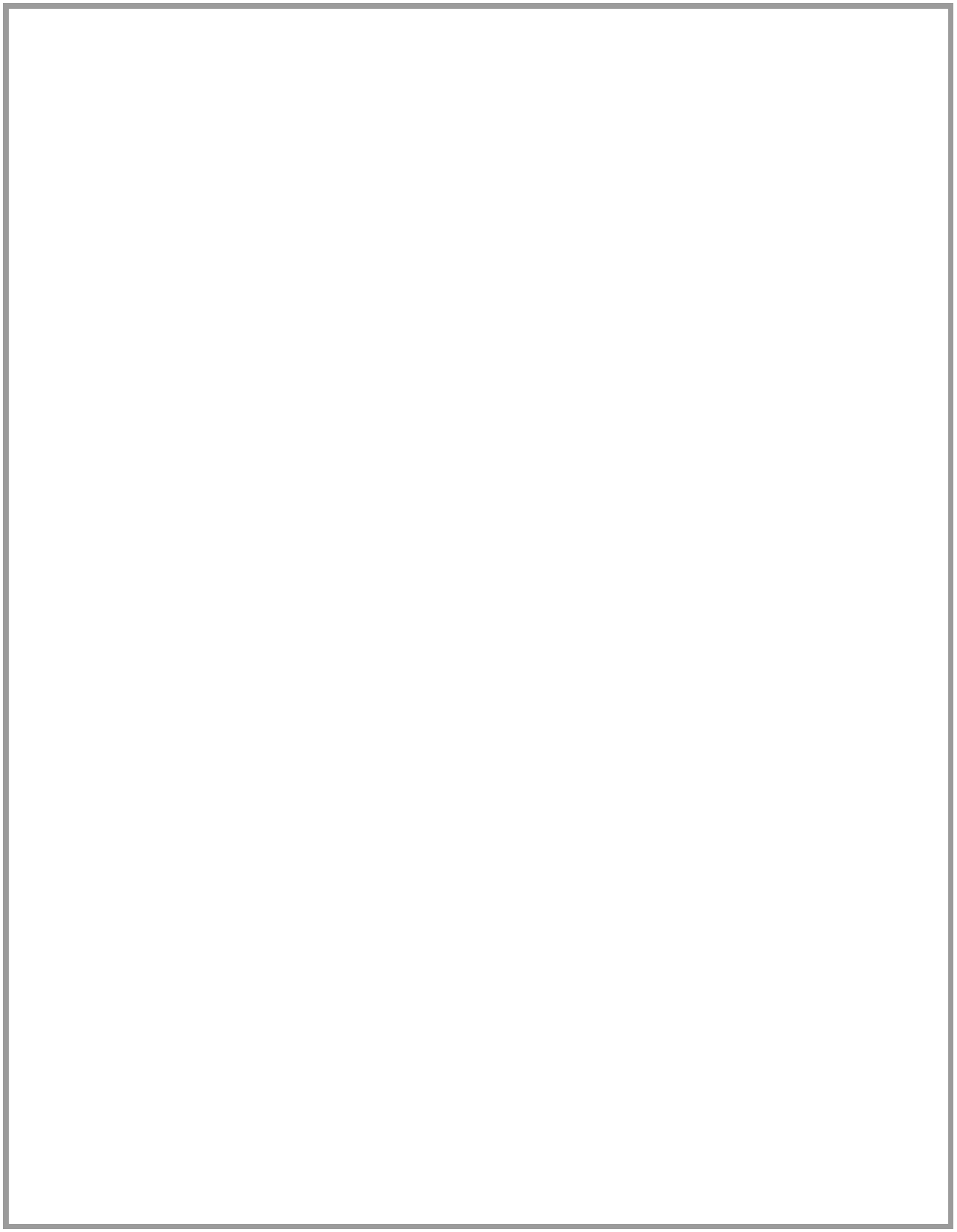
Action:

The RTM Health and Human Services Committee voted unanimously, on a motion of Jennifer Johnson and seconded by Addision Moore, to recommend that the RTM approve the Aspetuck Health District's Westport share of the 2026-27 budget of $624.653.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy Batteau

Chair, RTM Health and Human Services Committee



RTM Planning & Zoning Committee Report on Department Budget

The Committee met on Tuesday April 21st via zoom.

Attending: Mandell, Kramer, Johnson, Batteau, Newman, Lautenberg, Grayson, Sareli, Purcell

P&Z Department Director Michelle Perillie attended for the Department.

The proposal was for $799,551 a 2.88% reduction from the year prior due to changes in staffing.

The P&Z has revenue of about $900,000 making it net revenue generator for the town. The future project of work is to increase with more applications and submissions to the ZBA. Enforcement of projects and rules is lower due to the lack of a person in the staff.

Resolution to recommend the budget. Karen Kramer proposed, Alma Sareli seconded.

The vote was unanimous 9-0.

Submitted by

Matthew Mandell

Chair RTM Planning and Zoning Committee

RTM Environment Committee Review of Conservation Dept Budget

Date: 4/23/2026

Location: Town Hall Room 309

Committee members present: Ellen Lautenberg, Chair; Wendy Batteau, Ross Burkhardt, Jennifer Johnson, Charles Lucas, Kristin Schneeman, Claudia Shaum

Staff members present: Colin Kelly, Director, Town of Westport Conservation Department

Agenda: To discuss and recommend to the full RTM the Conservation proposed budget of $569,985 for Fiscal year 2027.

Discussion: Colin presented the overview of the proposed budget and began by stating that the department's specific focus is to protect the town's water resources by administering and enforcing the "Inland Wetland and Watercourse Regulations" (IWW) and the "Waterway Protection Line Ordinance" (WPLO) of the Town Code. The Department also administers the town's recreational shellfishing program, the Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone, the Single-Use Plastic Ordinance, the Retail Checkout Bag Ordinance, the Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Ordinance, and manages seasonal camping on Cockenoe Island.

The proposed budget consists of primarily staff salaries and benefits and includes some additional office supplies. It is about 6% higher than the 2026 Amended budget. The department does bring in a certain amount of fees, however, those go into the general fund.

Current goals:

1. Continue to update GIS mapping with amended wetlands in collaboration with the IT Department utilizing software for accountability and tracking.
2. Continue to provide Public Education:
    - Work with Harbor Watch/ Earthplace, Aspetuck Land Trust, and other community groups to connect with the public.
        - Continue to contact new residents with information regarding wetlands, flood zones, and how to improve water quality.
        - Continued participation in Intern opportunities
        - Work with Engineering Department to amend Waterway Protection Line Ordinance (WPLO).

- Continue role in land-use oversite permitting and provide enforcement of IWW Regulations and WPL Ordinance.
- Revise physical filing of permits within the office (replacement of cabinets).
- Revise wetland regulations to reflect those of the state's model regulations after they are adopted by CT DEEP.
- Create a database of stream conditions and habitat for named watercourses in town. This includes macro-invertebrates and finfish surveys. Will obtain Scientific Collector Permits from CT DEEP for staff to conduct work. This data will be available for residents and Commissioners to give general idea of watercourse health. Continue to collate historic data of water quality and wildlife to be readily accessible for review.

Wendy Batteau moved to approve the proposed budget of $569,985 for Fiscal year 2027.

Claudia Shaum Seconded the motion.

Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

Westport Representative Town Meeting
RTM Finance Committee
Report on the FY 2026-2027 Town Operating Budget and Related Funds
RTM Meeting May 4, 2026

1. Introduction and Summary

This report covers agenda items 1 through 4 of the May 4, 2026 RTM Meeting Agenda and presents the Finance Committee's review of the Town of Westport FY 2026–2027 operating budget and related items. The Finance Committee's report on the Board of Education budget will be delivered separately.

The Finance Committee held multiple meetings, including joint meetings on April 16 and April 23, and an additional session on the education budget. This report reflects those discussions as well as the Committee's independent review.

The Town operating budget is approximately $89.5 million, a 1.96% increase. The total General Fund budget is approximately $266.1 million, a 5.2% increase.

The increase reflects the maintenance of current service levels, contractual obligations, targeted investments, and inflationary pressures, partially offset by strong management of pensions and OPEB obligations.

RTM Agenda Item	Fund/Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Change	Primary Notes
1	General Fund / Town Budget	$266,062,614 General Fund; Town Operating Budget $89.5 million	+$13,094,823.65 overall / +5.18%; Town Operating +1.96%	Maintains current services; targeted investments in P&R, IT, public safety, and infrastructure.
2	Railroad Parking Fund	$1,995,978	+$41,613.47 / +2.13%	Self-funded by railroad parking revenues; no direct impact on the mill rate.
3	Sewer Fund	$6,246,501	+$86,402.15 / +1.40%	User-funded; driven by treatment, collection, insurance, and system maintenance costs.
4	Wakeman Town Farm Fund	$630,000	-$15,336.25 / -2.38%	User, donor, and program supported; revenue projected at $630,000.

2. Budget Process and Role of the RTM

The Town budget process spans several months and involves the First Selectman, Finance Department, Board of Finance, Board of Education, and RTM.

The Finance Department prepares and publishes the budget materials, the First Selectman submits the recommended budget to the Board of Finance, the Board of Finance reviews and recommends a budget to the RTM, and the RTM then reviews and approves, reduces or restores, items previously reduced by the Board of Finance. The RTM cannot increase appropriations.

This year's process showed improved transparency, enhanced materials and earlier opportunities for engagement, along with standardized reporting and future process improvements.

With this process as context, the Finance Committee then focused on key factors driving the FY27 budget.

3. Key Budget Drivers

The Finance Committee heard consistent themes, both external and internal, driving budgets across Town areas.

External factors

- Inflation affecting contracted services, supplies, equipment, utilities, and construction costs
- Healthcare and insurance pressures
- State, federal, and geopolitical uncertainty affecting markets, supply chains, and capital planning
- Interest rate uncertainty impacting future borrowing and capital investment

Internal factors

- Personnel costs, including contracts, staffing, and retention challenges
- Technology investments, including cybersecurity and system modernization
- Infrastructure and capital maintenance needs across Town assets
- Changing demographics affecting service demand
- Strong pension and OPEB funding helping offset cost pressures
- Increased discussion of grant funding, though not consistently tracked town-wide

These drivers are reflected across the Town's major budget areas, which are summarized below.

4. Town Operating Budget Highlights, Major Area Reviews and Votes

Highlights

Major departments reflect consistent themes:

- Public Safety: personnel, training, and equipment
- IT: cybersecurity and systems modernization
- Parks and Recreation: phased investment with revenue components
- Human Services: contracted services and community needs

All were reviewed and approved unanimously by relevant committees.

Public Safety - Police, Fire, EMS, Animal Control and Vehicle Maintenance

Public Safety includes Police, Fire, EMS, Animal Control, Vehicle Maintenance and related emergency functions. It represents approximately 32% of the total Town budget.

FY26 Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
$27,969,721	$28,567,135	+$597,414	+2.14%

Budget drivers:

- Collective bargaining agreements, steps and contractually required increases.
- Overtime and extra help reflecting security needs, demonstrations, mutual aid, and public safety demands.
- Expanded training, including school-based training, de-escalation, legal updates, and specialty requirements.
- Vehicle, technology, equipment, ambulance, and voice/data costs.

Other: Fire Department emergency management and water budgets were described as essentially flat. Fire salary line is the main driver, with equipment, training and breathing apparatus repair costs also noted as equipment comes off warranty.

Votes: Police/EMS: Finance Committee, Melissa Levy motioned, Joe Carson seconded, 7-0-0; Public Protection Committee, Louis Mall motioned, Alma Sarelli seconded, 11-0-0. Fire: Finance Committee, Melissa Levy motioned, Nancy Kail seconded, 7-0-0; Public Protection Committee, Alma Sarelli motioned, Claudia Shaum seconded, 10-0-0.

Public Works - Pete Ratkiewicz, Director of Public Works

Public Works manages roads, highway, storm response, solid waste, facilities, fleet, engineering, building maintenance, tree maintenance, and sewer-related functions. It maintains a broad capital asset base and supports many other Town functions. It represents approximately 16% of the total Town budget.

FY26 Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
$14,160,779	$14,614,891	+$454,112	+3.21%

Budget drivers:

- Salary and operating capital increases, including equipment after lower capital equipment spending in prior years.
- Highway, fleet and equipment maintenance, including aging vehicles and winter pothole equipment.
- Road maintenance and pavement materials, with possible price pressure in petroleum-based paving products.
- Storm response, building maintenance, tree maintenance, and property maintenance needs.

Other: The Town's pavement condition index was described as generally stable in the mid-to-high 70s, with 80 identified as a high benchmark. Public Works noted the goal is to maintain roads responsibly without overspending toward perfection.

Votes: Finance Committee, Pam Kopak motioned, Melissa Levy seconded, 7-0-0. Public Works Committee, Louis Mall motioned, Joe Carson seconded, 7-0-0.

Parks and Recreation – Erik Barbieri

Parks and Recreation manage beaches, camps, athletic fields, golf, boating, racket sports, recreation programs, property maintenance and other Town services. The department reported approximately one million beach visitors last year and noted revenue growth. It represents approximately 11% of the total Town budget.

FY26 Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
$9,010,277	$9,811,907	+$801,630	+8.90%

Budget drivers:

- Contractual salaries and benefits, including one additional maintenance staff position.
- Seasonal camp staffing and beach safety staffing at Burying Hill and Compo Beach.
- Golf maintenance contract, golf carts, equipment, and bringing certain maintenance in house.
- **Other:** Revenue was up approximately 7% last year. Some cost increases are intended to protect service quality and support continued revenue generation. Increase was reduced from about 13% requested to 8.9% recommended.

Votes: Finance Committee, Melissa Levy motioned, Pam Kopak seconded, 7-0-0. Parks and Recreation Committee, Karen Kramer motioned, Alma Sarelli seconded, 9-0-0.

Information Technology - Alberto Vargas, Director of IT

IT supports Town systems, cybersecurity, software, data, website, communications, hybrid meetings, permitting tools, and meeting access. The Committee emphasized that cybersecurity is one of the Town's highest technology priorities. IT is part of the proposed $8.5 million General Government budget, a major component of the Town's overall operating structure.

FY26 Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
$1,703,428	$1,936,177	+$232,749	+13.66%

Budget drivers:

- Higher cloud, software, GIS mapping and cybersecurity costs.
- New website redesign, including ADA compliance and better resident search/access.
- Hybrid meeting upgrades in smaller rooms.
- AI policy development and safe use cases, with permitting and financial system capabilities developing over time.

Other: IT investments were framed as essential to protect Town data, including tax and voter-related information, and to improve access for elected officials and the public.

Votes: Finance Committee, Pam Kopak motioned, Jill Grayson seconded, 7-0-0. IT Committee, Nancy Kail motioned, Josh Newman seconded, 8-0-0.

Human Services - Elaine Daignault, Department Head

Human Services serves residents across ages and stages, including youth, seniors, disabled residents and individuals or families needing social services or clinical support. The department described three areas of work: youth, seniors, and Town Hall-based social services / clinical support. It represents approximately 2% of the total Town budget.

FY26 Budget	FY27 BOF Recommended	Dollar Change	Percent Change
$1,767,655	$1,808,290	+$40,635	+2.30%

Budget drivers:

- Contractual obligations for partner organizations, including Kids in Crisis, Liberation Programs, Positive Directions and Toquet Hall.
- Senior Center equipment and maintenance needs, including a new oven.
- Maintenance, repairs, supplies, and equipment.

Other: Arrangements with organizations such as Silver Hill and Waveny Home Health Services and Hospice help Human Services deliver services. Grants and donors provide approximately $1 million in additional support.

Votes: Finance Committee, Melissa Levy motioned, Pam Kopak seconded, 7-0-0.

5. Other Organizations – Reviews and Votes

The Committee also reviewed Town support for other external organizations that provide important public services, the Health District, Library, Earthplace and the Westport Transit District. These entities operate outside traditional Town departments but play a meaningful role in community services and require ongoing financial oversight and evaluation. Their total proposed budget is approximately $7.7 million, representing a year-over-year decrease of approximately $0.2 million, or 0.2%.

Organization	FY27 Request / Allocation	Change / Notes	Committee Notes
Health District Lucienne Bango, Director of Health	$624,653	+$18,194 / +3.00%	Continued review of staffing, building/land value, regional participation, and future funding structure was discussed.
Westport Library Bill Harmer, Executive Director	$6,515,349 (including Town-funded pension lines)	+$205,500 / +3.26%	Five-Star Library; 400,000 annual visits; 94% meeting room occupancy; Library-sourced funding of $1.9 million or 10.9% increase, resulting in slight decline in Town portion of budget increase. Budget drivers – personnel, materials/supplies (digital subscriptions), utilities, insurance, other.
Earthplace Amee Borys, Executive director	$105,000	Consistent with Town allocation over a number of years	Open space, Harbor Watch, education programs, raptor exhibit, preschool, and environmental value to Town.
Transportation Services Peter Gold and Karina Betfarhad Co Directors, Westport Transit	$459,316	-$32,526 / -6.61%	W2U, Elderly & Disabled, Town to Town services. Ridership is up, Town contribution is down approximately 6.6%, several operational improvements. Continued study of best model and potential partnership opportunities with neighboring towns

Library Vote:
Finance Committee, Jill Grayson motioned and Pam Kopak seconded, 7-0-0.
LMA Committee, Richard Lowenstein motioned and Candace Banks seconded, 8-0-0.

Earthplace Vote: Finance Committee, Melissa Levy motioned and Joe Carson seconded, 7-0-0.
LMA Committee, Brandy Briggs motioned and Wendy Bateau seconded, 8-0-0.

Transit Vote:
Finance Committee, Pam Kopak motioned, Melissa Levy seconded, 7-0-0.
Transit Committee, Claudia Shaum motioned, Jill Grayson seconded, 7-0-0

6. Benefit-Assessed and User-Funded Organizations

Railroad Parking, Sewer and Wakeman Town Farm Funds are user-funded and do not directly impact the mill rate. All were approved.

Fund	FY26 Budget	FY27 Recommended	$ Change	% Change	Revenue Notes / Committee Discussion
Railroad Parking Fund	$1,954,365	$1,995,978	+$41,613	+2.13%	Projected revenues $1,995,978, up 4.93%. Funded by permits, fines, rents and other railroad parking revenues. No permit waiting list; parking levels approaching pre-Covid on at least several days per week. Prices for permitted and daily parking discussed at length and tabled for another meeting
Sewer Fund	$6,160,099	$6,246,501	+$86,402	+1.40%	User-funded; costs include treatment, collection, insurance, debt service and system maintenance.
Wakeman Town Farm Fund	$645,336	$630,000	-$15,336	-2.38%	Projected revenues $630,000, up 1.45%. Program fees, CSA fees, donations and events remain important.

Railroad Parking Fund Vote:
Finance Committee motioned by Melissa Levy and seconded by Charles Lucas, 7-0-0
Public Protection Committee motioned by Karen Kramer and seconded by Richard Lowenstein, 11-0-0
Transit Committee motioned by Richard Lowenstein and seconded by Claudia Shaum, 7-0-1.

Sewer Fund Vote:
Finance Committee, Pam Kopak motioned and Melissa Levy seconded, 7-0-0
Public Works Committee, Louis Mall motioned and Joe Carson seconded, 7-0-0.

Wakeman Town Farm Fund Vote: the fund is included as agenda item 4 and is user, donor and program supported. Any separate committee vote language can be added if available.

7. Other Financial Considerations: Pensions, Insurance and Debt

Pensions, OPEB, insurance and debt remain central to the Town's long-term financial position. The FY27 BOF recommended budget includes approximately $20.6 million for these categories, a decrease of approximately $0.2 million, or 1.0%, from the FY26 amended budget. Together, they represent approximately 23% of the Town budget.

Town employee pension funds and OPEB obligations remain well funded. This strong funded status continues to provide a meaningful offset to operating budget pressures. As in prior years, the Town will not contribute to the OPEB Trust and will instead fund current retiree health benefits through a combination of the overfunded OPEB account and pay-as-you-go General Fund support. This approach helps to mitigate the impact of rising operating costs.

Insurance is budgeted at approximately $10.0 million, down approximately $0.2 million, or 2.1%, reflecting favorable claims experience and active cost management.

Debt service in the General Fund is budgeted at approximately $4.3 million, down approximately $0.3 million, or 6.4%, largely due to continued debt paydown and the timing of new bond issuances. While this provides near-term relief, it is expected to be temporary given anticipated capital needs, including schools and infrastructure. With interest rates above recent historical lows, future borrowing costs will require careful planning.

8. Tax Impact – Including Reval, Grand List and General Fund

The final tax impact of the FY 2026–2027 budget will not be determined until the mill rate is set. Following RTM action on the Town and Board of Education budgets, the Board of Finance will establish the mill rate later in May. The actual tax impact will depend on several factors, including the adopted budget, non-tax revenues, the final Grand List after appeals and adjustments, any use of fund balance, and the resulting mill rate.

The total budget, including Town, Board of Education, and related budgets, is expected to be approximately $266.1 million. This amount will be offset by non-tax revenues estimated at approximately $27.3 million, including Parks and Recreation revenues, General Fund interest income, licenses and permits, and other recurring sources. The remaining balance will be raised through property taxes.

Westport's 2025 revaluation and resulting Grand List growth are significant factors in this year's budget cycle. The October 1, 2025 Grand List was signed at approximately $17.5 billion, an increase of just over 50% from the prior year's $11.6 billion, driven primarily by the townwide real estate revaluation. Real estate represents approximately 95% of the Grand List, with residential assessments increasing by approximately 60% and commercial assessments by approximately 16%. An additional 1.2% increase reflects new construction and renovation activity.

The revaluation, which occurs every five years, does not determine how much revenue the Town raises; rather, it redistributes the tax burden based on updated property values. As a result, while the mill rate is expected to decrease following the increase in the Grand List, individual tax bills will vary depending on how each property's reassessment compares to overall market changes.

For context, a home with a market value of $1,000,000 and an assessed value of $700,000 generated a tax bill of approximately $13,202 at a mill rate of 18.86. The same calculation methodology applies following revaluation.

When setting the mill rate, the Board of Finance will also determine whether to apply a contribution from the General Fund balance. When appropriate, this balance is used to mitigate tax increases while maintaining reserves within the Town's target range of approximately 9–11% of annual expenditures, an important factor in maintaining the Town's strong credit profile. The Board of Finance will determine any such contribution later in May.

In setting the mill rate this year, the Board of Finance is operating in a complex environment. Inflation continues to impact operating costs, interest rates remain elevated relative to recent historical levels, and broader economic uncertainty persists. At the same time, the Town is likely to face significant capital investment needs in the coming years. Together, these factors, along with revaluation and Grand List growth, will shape the final mill rate and resulting tax impact.

9. Budget Process Improvements

During the budget process, the Board of Finance, RTM, Town officials and others discussed several constructive improvement ideas below. They are not proposed as amendments to this budget, but can help improve future budget review and public understanding of Town finances.

Budget Improvement Ideas:

- Process: begin earlier, provide a clear budget calendar, and increase interim discussions
- Transparency: standardize reporting, improve staffing data, expand digital access to budget related information
- Organizations: establish clear funding guidelines, define expectations and implement review timelines
- Capital Planning: improve forecasting and prioritization, and provide progress updates

10. Conclusion and Recommendation

The FY27 budget reflects a disciplined and balanced approach, maintaining current service levels while responding to cost pressures and making targeted investments. The Town's strong financial position, including well-funded pension and OPEB obligations, supports this approach. The Finance Committee believes the Town remains well-positioned to meet future challenges through continued prudent financial management and long-term planning.

The Finance Committee thanks its RTM colleagues, Town department heads, the First Selectman, the Finance Director, the Board of Finance, and members of the public. We appreciate the work of all who prepared materials, answered questions, and helped make a complex budget more understandable.

I would personally like to extend a special thank you to my fellow Finance Committee members: Seth Braunstein (Chair), Charles Lucas, Joe Carson, Jill Grayson, Pam Kopack, and Melissa Levy.

Lastly, the Finance Committee is especially grateful to Department of Public Works Director Pete Ratkiewich and Assistant Town Attorney Eileen Lavigne for their many years of dedicated service, and we wish them all the best in their retirement.

Recommendation: The Finance Committee recommends approval of agenda items 1 through 4 by the full RTM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Kail
RTM Finance Committee, District 9

RTM PUBLIC WORKS
& FINANCE COMMITTEES

DATE; Wednesday, April 16, 2026

LOCATION; Town Hall, Zoom, 6:30 PM meeting start, 7:15 Public Works Portion of Meeting (Public Works, Finance, IT, Public Protection & Transit)

PURPOSE; Review Board of BOF approved 2026/27 Public Works Department/WPC Budgets

PRESENTED BY; Pete Ratkiewich, Director Public Works Department

2026-27 Budget Discussion - Overall budget, salaries, trees, road paving, garbage and sewers were all reviewed. The overall Public Works funding has increased by $454,112.00 from the 2025/26 "amended" budgets for the fiscal year to $14,614,891 an increase of +3.21%. Mr. Ratkiewich explained that the changes within his budget were the increase of capital purchases for survey equipment and the addition of a construction inspector within Engineering (+$51,745), Highways due to previously negotiated salary increases and capital equipment purchases of metal shed, wash bay lighting and power washing equip (+$81,188), Equipment Maintenance increased due to capital purchases, hot box (+$27,479), P&R Property Maintenance (+$52,138) due to capital projects (WTF/Longshore Pavilion/Boat House/Marina/etc). Solid Waste is increased (+$37,186) due to some maintenance projects and capital purchases (truck). A new solid waste contract was negotiated last year and recycling costs fluctuate. Street Lighting was increased (+$5,000) due to anticipated rate increases. Building Maintenance was increased (+46,825) due to capital projects, fuel cost and contract services. Road maintenance was increased (+$87,600) due to cost of asphalt. Tree maintenance was increased (+$50,231) due to Dutch Elm/Beech Leaf disease and increase in service contract. With the exception of previously negotiated salary increases and some capital purchases the remainder of the budget items are slightly increased/decreased from 2025/2026 fiscal year. The line items are outlined below (nearest dollar);

Engineering	$1,263,917 increased to $1,315,662	+$51,745	+4.09%
Highway	$2,396,708 increased to $2,447,896	+$81,188	+3.39%
Equip Maintenance	$492,951 increased to $520,430	+$27,479	+5.57%
Road Maintenance	$3,427,900 increased to $3,515,500	+$87,600	+2.56%
Street Lighting	$165,000 increased to $170,000	+$5,000	+3.03%
Solid Waste	$3,380,002 increased to $3,417,188	+$37,186	+1.1%
Build Maintenance	$1,532,291 increased to $1,579,116	+$46,825	+3.06%
Building Custodians	$491,259 decreased to $505,979	+$14,720	+3.0%
Property Maintenance	$23,500 increased to $23,500	$0	0.0%
P&R Maintenance	$412,950 increased to $465,088	+$52,138	+12.63%
Tree Maintenance	$499,3011 increased to $549,302	+$50,231	+10.06%
Facilities Management	$75,000 decreased to $75,000	$0	0.0%
WPC (incl. debt svc.)	$6,160,099 increased to $6,246,501	+$86,402	+1.4%

Mr. Ratkiewich explained the WPC budget has increased by 1.4% due to some capital costs associated with maintenance of the facility and the increase in costs associated with sludge removal. These costs are passed directly to the property owners on the sewer system through a sewer use fee.

The Public Works and Finance committees voted unanimously to recommend the PW and WPC budgets for approval to the full RTM.

RTM attendance;
PW - Jay Keenan (Chair), Joe Carson, Andrew Colabella, Gail Coykendall, Charles Lucas, Josh Newman and Lou Mall
Finance – Seth Braunstein (Chair), Pam Kopak, Joe Carson, Nancy Kail, Charles Lucas, Jill Grayson and Melisssa Levy

WESTPORT
CONNECTICUT

Fiscal Year 2027

Board of Finance Recommended Budget

As presented to the Representative Town Meeting

May 4, 2026



Table of Contents

Subject Area	Page
• BOF Budget Framework	3
• FY2027 Budget	9
• BOF Conclusions	14
• Next Steps	18
• Appendix	22

BOF Budget Framework

Lens

"Is this the highest and best use of the next marginal dollar to support Westport's property values over the long term?"

Key Questions

- What is the Town trying to maximize? Property values? Resident utility? Fiscal stability? Intergenerational equity?
- If the Town were incorporated today, what would we fund – and at what level?
- Are we measuring the right outputs? Do we have the right tools to do so?
- Are we an outlier from comparable towns? If so, is this level of spending justified by better outcomes?
- What risk are specific capital projects seeking to mitigate? What are their life cycle costs? Does they enhance property values? Reduce future operating expenditures?

Does this budget improve or degrade the long-term attractiveness of living in Westport?

First Principles

- **Intentionality**
  - Does our proposed spending **reflect our community's values?**
- **Realism**
  - Is it anchored to **conservative revenue assumptions?**
- **Sophistication**
  - Do we distinguish between **fixed and variable costs, maintenance and growth expenditures, sunk costs?**
- **Transparency**
  - Does our budgeting process **promote accountability?**
- **Anti-Fragility**
  - Can we survive a **"black swan" event?**
    - Rapid **wage and cost inflation**
    - Spiking healthcare claims and **health insurance costs**
    - Loss of **state grants** and subsidies
    - Forced absorption of **unfunded pension liabilities**
    - **Reduction in commercial tax base** through conversion to multifamily



BOF Objectives

- **Balance** equilibrium between town services and tax burden
- **Enhance** core assets supporting education, safety and recreation
- **Maintain** key assets including roads, bridges, parks, and waterfront amenities
- **Reinforce fairness** among all groups of Westport citizens
  - Enable Seniors, and those on fixed incomes, to remain in place in Westport
  - Enhance opportunities for younger individuals and new families to move to Westport
- **Develop resilience** in the face of climate change and continued development
- **Comply** with sustainability goals



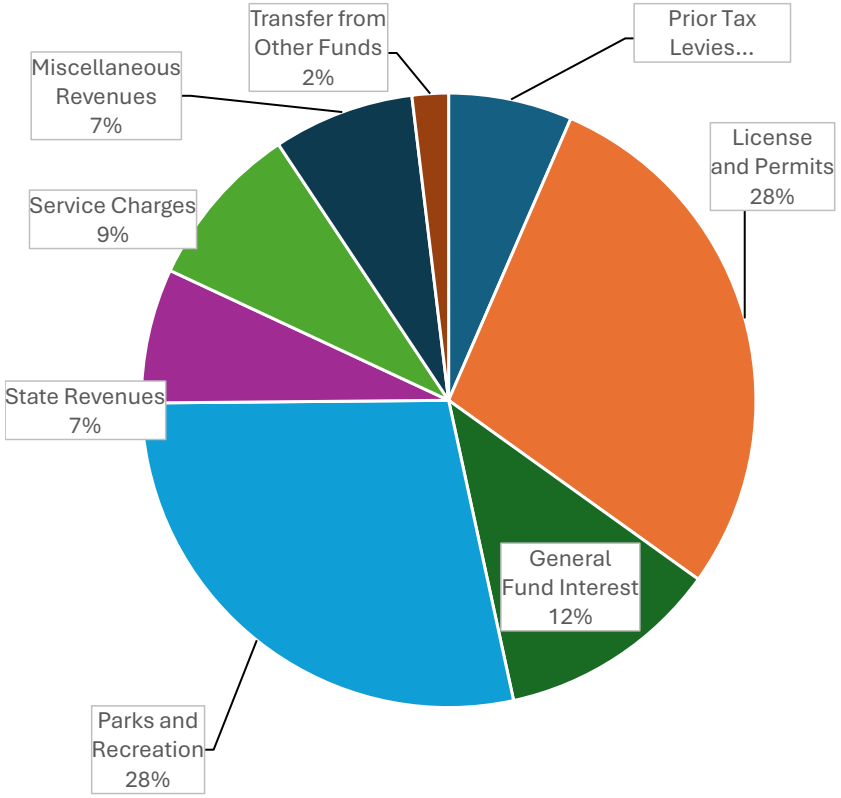
BOF Review Process

- Rigorous **line-by-line departmental review**
- **Multi-day budget workshops** streamed and recorded for the first time + public office hours
- **Regular audits and transparent reporting** leveraging Audit Subcommittee Review with a special focus on overtime and P&R revenue
- Consideration of a **multi-year financial planning** horizon
- Responsible, responsive **pension investment management**



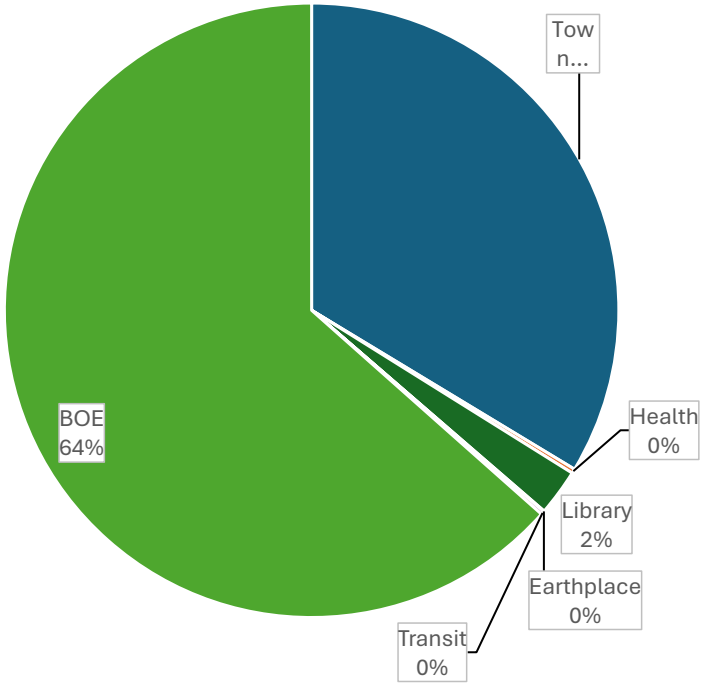
FY 2027 Budget

Revenue (non-tax)



	$m's		Year-Over-Year	
	FY26	FY27	$	%
Prior Tax Levies	$2.3	$1.8	(0.5)	(21.1%)
License and Permits	8.3	7.7	(0.5)	(6.3%)
General Fund Interest	3.9	3.2	(0.7)	(17.3%)
Parks and Recreation	7.3	7.7	0.4	5.5%
State Revenues	1.8	1.9	0.1	4.7%
Service Charges	2.2	2.4	0.2	8.7%
Miscellaneous Revenues	1.6	2.0	0.4	26.4%
Transfer from Other Funds	0.5	0.5	(0.0)	(3.1%)
Total	**$27.8**	**$27.3**	**(0.6)**	**(2.1%)**

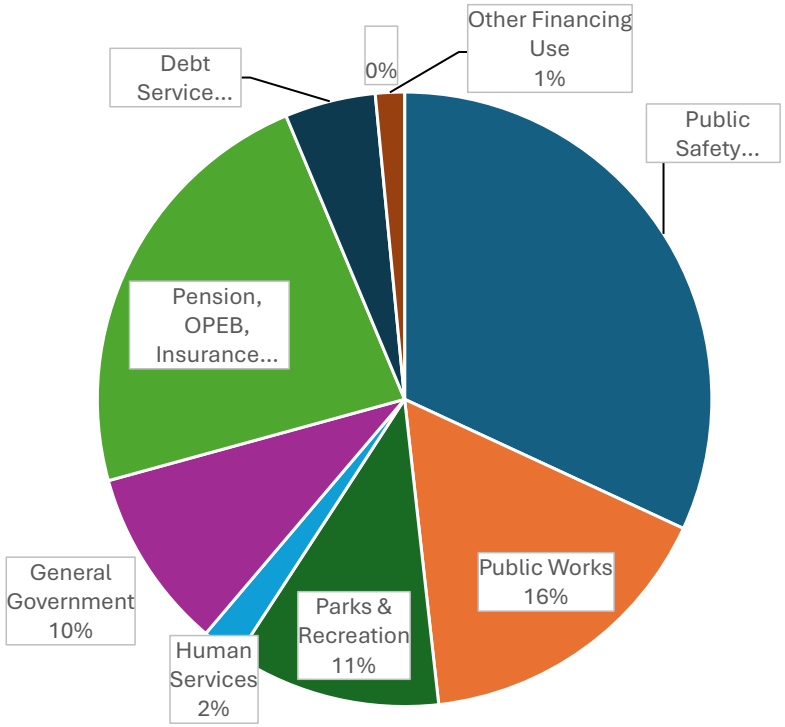
Expenses



	$m's		Year-Over-Year	
	FY26	FY27	$	%
Town	$87.8	$89.5	$1.7	1.96%
Health District	0.6	0.6	0.0	3.0%
Library	6.3	6.5	0.2	3.3%
Earthplace	0.1	0.1	-	-
Transit District	0.5	0.5	(0.0)	(6.6%)
Subtotal	**$95.3**	**$97.2**	**$1.9**	**2.0%**
BOE (excl. Healthcare)	$127.8	$132.7	$4.9	3.8%
Healthcare	22.6	25.2	2.6	11.6%
Subtotal BOE	**$150.4**	**$157.9**	**$7.5**	**5.0%**
Prgrm exp./Private Sch.	0.8	0.8	0.0	2.2%
Debt Service	6.5	10.1	3.7	56.9%
Total BOE	**$157.6**	**$168.8**	**$11.2**	**7.1%**
Total Town of Westport	**$253.0**	**$266.1**	**$13.1**	**5.2%**

11

FS FY27 Town Budget Recommendation



	$m's		Year-Over-Year	
	FY26	FY27	$	%
Public Safety	$28.0	$28.6	$0.6	2.1%
Public Works	14.2	14.6	0.5	3.2%
Parks & Recreation	9.0	9.8	0.8	8.9%
Human Services	1.8	1.8	0.0	2.3%
General Government	8.2	8.5	0.3	3.9%
Subtotal	**$61.1**	**$63.3**	**$2.2**	**3.6%**
Pension, OPEB, Insurance	20.8	20.6	(0.2)	(1.0%)
Debt Service	4.6	4.3	(0.3)	(6.4%)
Other Financing Use	1.4	1.4	-	-
Total	**$87.8**	**$89.5**	**$1.7**	**1.96%**

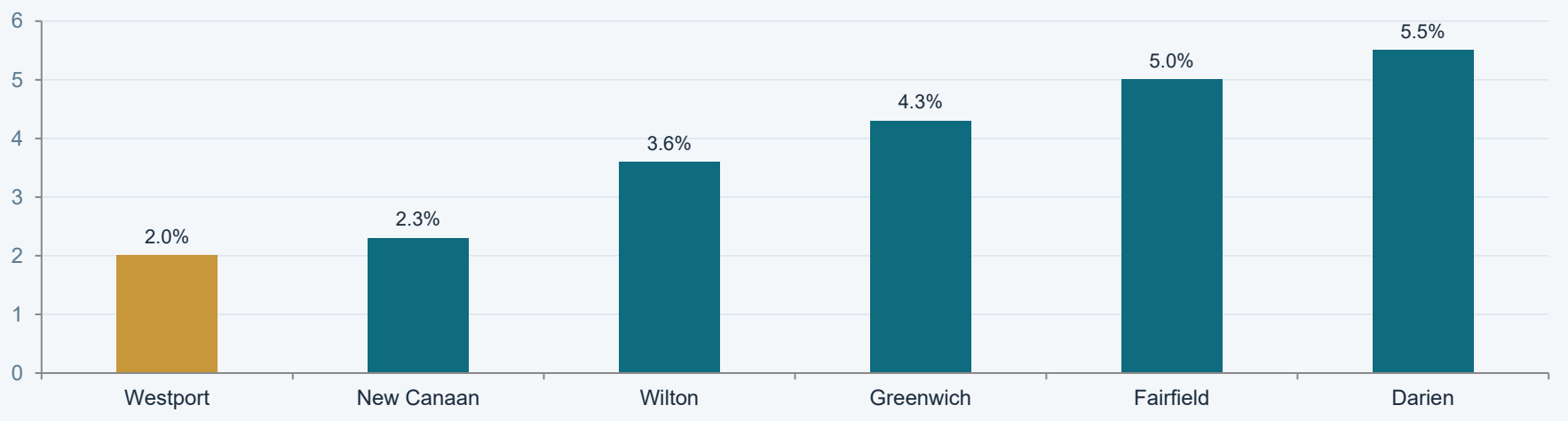
12

Outstanding Issues

- Aspetuck Health District
  - Structure, governance, and accountability remain open items; Town Attorney has confirmed the town's authority to reduce HD budget
- Town Funding of Nonprofits
  - Linkage to criteria for future funding remains open item, benefit for town should be established in each case
- Westport Transit
  - Structure and cost-effectiveness questions remain; service delivery has improved
- Budget Creep
  - Budget increases are multi-factorial and unsustainable; specific principles of zero-based budgeting should be considered

BOF Conclusions

Town is demonstrating fiscal restraint …



At a 2% increase, Westport Town's operating budget compares favorably to neighboring Fairfield County towns

Sources: FY2026-27 proposed/approved town operating budgets (municipal side only, excluding education). Westport: First Selectman Christie proposed (1.96%); New Canaan: Board of Finance approved (2.3%); Wilton: BOS approved (3.6%); Greenwich: First Selectman proposed (4.3%); Fairfield: First Selectperson proposed (4.97%); Darien: BOS proposed (5.5%).

… but multiple future challenges remain …

CES & Fire Station Investment

Debt service will grow as we make transformative investments in our educational facilities and fire infrastructure

Housing Conversion Zoning

New zoning law will drive office and retail conversion to multifamily potentially reshaping our tax base and service demands over time

Healthcare Cost Arc

School healthcare costs are on a rising trajectory; we are actively working to bend this curve through plan redesign and negotiation

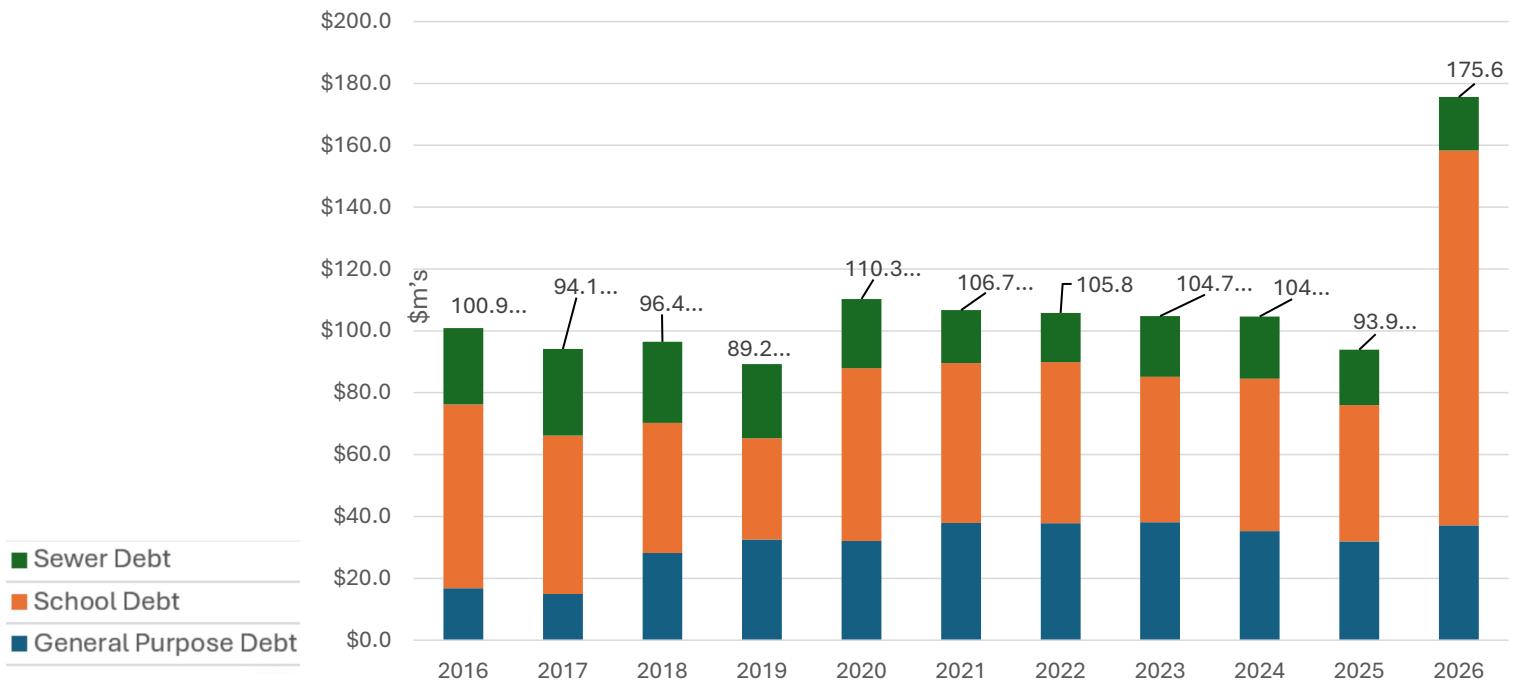
8-30g & Larger Projects

Affordable housing and large-scale development grow Grand List, but create significant infrastructure and service demands ahead

Unfunded State Mandates

Education and municipal services face increasing state requirements without corresponding funding - a real and growing fiscal burden

… including increasing debt due to investment



Next Steps

Mill Rate Mechanics

Step 1: Finalize the Annual Budget

- BOF and RTM approve spending needs, including:
  - Town Services + Education
  - Debt Service

Step 2: Subtract Other Revenues

- Not all expenses are funded by property taxes. The town subtracts:
  - State aid
  - Fees and permits
  - Grants
  - Other income
- This results in the amount that must be raised through property taxes (the tax levy).

Step 3: Divide by the Grand List

- The tax levy is divided by the town's total taxable property value (the Grand List).

Mill Rate = Tax Levy ÷ Grand List × 1,000

Improving BOF Processes

Introduce new budgeting software via the FS

- Improve transparency
- Increase accountability
- Enable granular reporting of spending data
- Empower BOF members to review budget data directly

Update capital review process w/ the assistance of the FS

- Request comprehensive presentations in advance of hearings
- Improve diligence of vendors/partners
- Tighten and standardize lease terms for town assets
- Increase public access to approvals process

Streamline BOF decision-making

- Schedule 2nd virtual meeting to improve BOF timeliness
- Maintain office hours to enhance public access
- Share agenda publicly to increase public awareness

Q&A

Appendix

Deep Dive: Public Safety

32% of town budget

	$m's		Year-Over-Year		FY27 % of
	FY26	FY27	$	%	Total
Police (incl. vehicle maintenance)	$11.8	$12.1	$0.3	2.8%	42.5%
Fire	11.2	11.4	0.2	1.8%	39.9%
Water	1.2	1.2	-	-	4.3%
Emergency Management	1.4	1.4	-	-	4.9%
Emergency Medical Services	1.5	1.6	0.0	2.7%	5.4%
Other Public Safety	0.8	0.9	0.0	2.9%	3.1%
Total	**$28.0**	**$28.6**	**$0.6**	**2.1%**	**100.0%**

Other Public Safety includes Dog Warden and Building Department

Deep Dive: Pension, OPEB, Insurance

23% of town budget

	$ 000's		Year-Over-Year	
	FY26	FY27	$	%
Pension (Defined Benefit & Defined Contribution Plans)	$8.4	$8.2	($0.2)	(2.7%)
OPEB	-	-	-	-
Insurance	10.2	10.0	(0.2)	(2.1%)
Subtotal Pension, Health & Insurance	**$18.6**	**$18.1**	**($0.4)**	**(2.4%)**
Other Benefits	2.2	2.4	0.2	11.2%
Total	**$20.8**	**$20.6**	**($0.2)**	**(1.0%)**

Other Benefits includes Fees for Actuaries, Pension Investment Advisors and Benefit Consultants, set-aside for salary increases and casualty and Miscellaneous Expenses

Deep Dive: Other Org. Budget Requests

	$000's		Year-Over-Year	
	FY26	FY27	$	%
Aspetuck Health District	$606	$625	$18	3.0%
Westport Library	6,310	6,515	206	3.3%
Earthplace	105	105	-	-
Westport Transit District	492	459	(33)	(6.6%)
Total	**$7,513**	**$7,704**	**$191**	**2.5%**

Capital Allocation Checklist (A – D)

A Context Summary

- Define item being purchased, built, or repaired
- Scope summary with specific bullet points
- Estimated useful life (years)
- Itemized cost summary: hard costs, soft costs, total
- Funding source(s) identified

B Rationale

- Top three justifications for approval
- Background: how the need was identified
- Relevant consultant findings summarized
- Supporting photos / images with captions
- Links to consultant or engineering reports

C Market Analysis & Alternatives

- At least two market comparables (name + cost)
- Alternatives considered: repair, partial replacement, technology
- Rationale for why recommended option is preferred

D Project Risks

- At least two risks identified if project proceeds
- Mitigation measure provided for each risk

Capital Allocation Checklist (E – G)

E — Counterparty / Vendor Due Diligence

- Vendor name, ownership, and corporate information
- Litigation, regulatory, or performance history noted
- Prior municipal experience described
- Procurement status: RFP/RFQ, bids received, selection rationale

F — Status Quo — What If the Town Does Nothing?

- Consequences of inaction identified (safety, service, compliance, cost, efficiency)
- Detailed explanation of each identified consequence
- Estimated cost of deferral (if quantifiable)

G — Timeline

- Estimated project start date
- Estimated completion date
- Key milestones listed (at least two)

Thank You

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WESTPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nicholas L. Marsan
Chief of Department

WESTPORT
CONNECTICUT

APPROVED

Kevin Christie
First Selectman

DATE: 3 / 20 / 26

March 19, 2026

Mr. Kevin Christie
First Selectman
Westport Town Hall
110 Myrtle Avenue
Westport, Connecticut 06880

RE: Request for an appropriation of $495,615 for Costs Associated with Five Unanticipated Vacancies

First Selectman Christie,

I am writing to request an appropriation of $495,615 to cover expenses incurred as a result of five unanticipated vacancies during the current fiscal year.

These unexpected departures created significant and immediate staffing challenges, requiring substantial expenditure in both recruitment and operational coverage. Costs were incurred for uniforms, background checks, physicals, turnout gear, specialized training, and other onboarding needs for newly hired personnel.

Additionally, to maintain mandatory minimum staffing levels while these positions remained vacant, we relied heavily on overtime coverage throughout the year.
A summary of the associated financial impact is outlined below:

- Recruitment and Training: $129,895 for equipment, physicals, and professional training for new personnel.
- Operational Coverage: $365,720 in backfill overtime required to maintain minimum staffing levels.

This request reflects only the costs associated with five specific unanticipated resignations to other departments. It does not include retirements, disability pension separations, or vacancies created through internal promotions. The overtime calculations cover the period from each departure through the time when their replacements become fully operational in mid-December.

Thank you for your consideration of this necessary appropriation.

Respectfully,

Nicholas L. Marsan
Chief of Department

515 Post Road E, Westport, CT 06880
FOLLOW US! Facebook | Instagram | Twitter

WESTPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nicholas L. Marsan
Chief of Department

WESTPORT
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March 19, 2026

The Chief of the Westport Fire Department respectfully requests an appropriation of $495,615. These budget lines are currently depleted or trending toward depletion before the end of the fiscal year and restoring these funds is critical to maintaining our department's readiness and service levels:

101-02-22-220-0000-513413-FLSA FF Open Position - FIR $360,625
101-02-22-220-0000-513410-FLSA Training Leave/Replace – FIR $5,092
101-02-22-220-0000-513409-FLSA Training Days – FIR $16,848
101-02-22-220-0000 -585014-Training: General – FIR $47,402
101-02-22-220-0000-585015-Training: Supplies & Equip - $56
101-02-22-220-0000-585001-Expenses: Department Physicals - $3,522
101-02-22-220-0000-528402-Replacement/Dress – FIR $7,016
101-02-22-220-0000-575303-Fire Turnout Gear $55,054

Respectfully,

Nicholas L. Marsan
Chief of Department.

515 Post Road E, Westport, CT 06880
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April 17, 2026

Joint Meeting Report RTM Finance and Public Protection Committees

On Thursday April 16, 2026, the RTM Public Protection and RTM Finance Committees met to discuss and vote to recommend to the full RTM on the following Board of Finance approved item.

Upon the request of the Fire Chief to approve an appropriation in the amount of $495,615 to the General Fund Account Funds for covering the costs related to hiring for five (5) unanticipated openings.

1. 10102220-513413 FLSA FF Open Position -FIR $360,625
2. " 513410 FLSA Training Leave/Replace-FIR $5,092
3. " 513409 FLSA Training Days-FIR $16,848.
4. " 585014-Training General FIR $47,402.
5. " 585015 -Training Supplies and Equipment FIR $56.
6. " 585001- Expenses: Department Physicals $3,522.
7. " 528402- Replacement / Dress -FIR $7,016.
8. " 575303 Fire-Turnout Gear $55,054

Fire Chief Nick Marsan and Deputy Chief Matt Cohen explained the need, and cost of the above appropriation. Both committees engaged in a question-and-answer session, more leaning reasoning for these sudden firefighter departures.

There was no single answer as to the cause of these departures. Reasons noted, pay-benefits, facilities, openings in other towns may have been first choice.

Both committees agreed we need to find a way to retain those we train.

The Vote was unanimous by both committees approve the appropriation.
Finance 7-0 Public Protection 10-0

In Attendance – Finance Seth Brunstein -Chair, Joe Carson, Jill Grayson, Nancy Kail, Pam Kopack, Melissa Levy, and Charley Lucas. Public Protection – Jimmy Izzo -Chair, Candice Banks, Louis Mall, Claudia Shaum, Alma Sarelli, Karen Kramer, Andy Colabella, Dick Lowenstein, Gayle Coykendall, and Pam Kopack. Fire Chief Nick Marsan, Deputy Fire Chief Matthew Cohen.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jimmy Izzo -Chair
RTM Public Protection Committee