

**A GUIDE TO  
TOWN MEETING  
IN WESTFORD**

**The League of Women Voters of Westford**

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. It never supports or opposes political parties or candidates. The League takes action on selected matters of governmental concern that its members have studied. Membership in the League is open to both women and men.

The League urges you and all Westford residents to register to vote and to get involved in Town government. We hope this guide helps you to better understand, appreciate and enjoy town meeting. We hope, also, that it encourages you to take an active part in this 273-year-old tradition of direct democracy in Westford.



## Acknowledgements

For many years the League of Women Voters of Westford's "Guide to Town Meeting in Westford" was part of the Annual Town Reports. More recently it was included in the *Finance Committee Report and Recommendations*. This booklet is an updated and expanded version of that guide.

The Westford League's Town Meeting Study Committee researched and wrote the first edition of this new Guide in 1999. Committee members were Lynn Cohen, Fran Mower, Lisa Garvey, Ellen Harde, Linda Stronge and Emily Teller. Lynn Cohen and Ellen Harde revised the Guide to produce this second edition in 2003. Our thanks to Town Clerk Kaari Mai Tari, Finance Committee members Erica Davidson and Kelly Ross, and Marc Davidson for their sharp eyes and sound suggestions.

Much of the Guide's Glossary is from the Westford Finance Committee's *Report and Recommendations on the 1999 Annual Town Warrant* and from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services' website, [www.dls.state.ma.us/reference/ref\\_toc.htm](http://www.dls.state.ma.us/reference/ref_toc.htm). In preparing this Guide the committee also consulted the following sources:

Bresler, Kenneth. *Citizen's Primer on Town Meeting*. Published by William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth, January 1996.

*Concord Town Meeting Traditions and Procedures*. First edition, Town of Concord, MA, March 1988.

Johnson, Richard B, Benjamin A. Trustman, and Charles Y. Wadsworth. *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962.

Town Government Study Committee. *Groton Town Meeting*. Volume 1, October 1997.

Turner, Warren. *A Voters Guide to Town Meeting*. West Bridgewater, MA, 1998.

Winchester League of Women Voters. *A Guide to Winchester Town Meeting*. 1994. Available online at [www.winchester.org/townmtg.html](http://www.winchester.org/townmtg.html)

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*“Town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science; they bring it within the people’s reach, they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it.”*

Alexis de Tocqueville

*“The most important office...is that of private citizen.”*

Louis Brandeis

In Westford, as in many New England towns, voters participate directly in the major decisions that affect how the Town runs itself and how it spends its money. Town meeting is the legislative branch of Westford's government, and all registered voters may attend, speak and vote at our open town meeting. Town meeting has two primary responsibilities: establishing an annual budget by voting to appropriate money for all Town departments, and voting on the Town's local statutes, called bylaws.

If you are a registered voter in Westford you can, and should, participate in town meeting. Renters as well as property owners, if registered to vote, may attend and vote at town meeting. You must attend in person, however; no absentee voting is allowed. If you are not a registered voter<sup>1</sup> you are welcome to attend town meeting as an observer.

#### **ANNUAL AND SPECIAL TOWN MEETINGS**

State law requires towns to hold at least one town meeting – called the Annual Town Meeting – each year between February 1 and June 30. Westford bylaws set our Annual Town Meeting on the first Saturday after the first Tuesday in May. The principal business of Annual Town Meeting is to appropriate money to fund the Town's expenses for the fiscal year that starts the following July 1. Annual Town Meeting acts on other issues as well.

If additional matters come up at a later time, a Special Town Meeting can be called, either by the Board of Selectmen or by citizens' petition. Westford's current practice is to hold a Selectmen-called Special Town Meeting every fall to fine-tune

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<sup>1</sup> Voter registration forms are available at the Town Clerk's office, Town Hall, 55 Main Street, 978-692-5515. Or you can mail in your registration using forms available at the J.V. Fletcher Library and at many state agencies, including the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

the current fiscal year's budget, which Annual Town Meeting adopted the previous May, and to address any other necessary matters.

For citizens to call a Special Town Meeting, 200 registered voters must sign a petition asking the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Special Town Meeting. The Selectmen must then call a town meeting to be held within 45 days of receipt of the petition.

### **THE WARRANT**

The agenda for a town meeting is called the warrant. For Annual Town Meeting it consists of two parts: information about the Town election (held on the first Tuesday in May), and the issues, called articles, to be voted on at town meeting. Warrants for Special Town Meetings contain only the articles.

A warrant is literally a warning: to ensure that voters are alerted to when and where a town meeting will take place and what issues will be addressed. Town meeting can only act on issues that are included on the warrant, and the actions of town meeting are valid only if voters have been adequately "warned."

### **Articles on the Warrant**

The warrant is developed under the direction of the Board of Selectmen. Before both Annual and Special Town Meetings the Selectmen publicly set a period during which the warrant is declared "open." During this time Town departments and officials can ask the Selectmen to include articles on the warrant.

Citizens can also petition to place articles on a warrant. For an Annual Town Meeting, the signatures of at least 10 registered voters are required to place an article on the warrant. If the petition is presented to the Selectmen by the first Tuesday in March, the Selectmen must place the article on the warrant unless the petition asks the Town to do something illegal. The signatures of at least 100 registered voters are required to place an article on a Special Town Meeting warrant.

### **Notice**

The Board of Selectmen must give notice of all town meetings at least 14 days before the meeting by posting the warrant at

the Town Hall, the J.V. Fletcher Library and each Westford post office.

Town bylaws require the Finance Committee to distribute its *Report and Recommendations* to Westford residents 10 days before the Annual Town Meeting. This booklet contains the complete warrant, the Finance Committee's recommendations on articles relating to spending money, and an abundance of background information. For Special Town Meetings, the Selectmen are responsible for distributing the warrant to all residents at least 10 days before the Meeting.

### **PREPARING FOR TOWN MEETING**

There are many opportunities for you to learn about the issues to be decided at an upcoming town meeting.

#### **Hearings and Forums**

Prior to all Annual Town Meetings and some Special Town Meetings, the Finance Committee, Planning Board and School Committee hold publicized hearings to offer voters an opportunity to prepare for town meeting discussion. Other boards may also hold special meetings to explain articles they are sponsoring.

Often cable channel 8 airs several programs, including forums sponsored by the League of Women Voters, that review the warrant for the upcoming town meeting. Keep an eye on the local newspapers for announcements of these meetings and programs. The papers also usually print their own news stories previewing an upcoming town meeting.

The Finance Committee's *Report and Recommendations* is full of information and data that provide extensive background for the budget discussions at Annual Town Meeting. It also contains the text of all warrant articles. Reading this *Report* goes a long way toward preparing yourself to understand and take part in deliberations at Annual Town Meeting.

Additional material and updated information are often available at town meeting itself. Usually placed on a table just outside or inside the hall, these handouts will often make it easier for you to understand the issues being discussed.

## **TOWN MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

A diagram of the layout of a typical town meeting – who usually sits where – is on page 11.

### **Voters**

To take part in a town meeting, you must be registered to vote in Westford. Observers are welcome but are required to sit in a separate visitors' section established by the Moderator. A person who is not a registered Westford voter may address town meeting only if invited to do so by a two-thirds vote of the meeting.

### **Quorum**

No quorum – that is, no minimum number of voters – is needed to conduct business at Annual Town Meeting.

At a Special Town Meeting, a quorum of 200 registered voters is necessary for the transaction of business. A number less than a quorum may adjourn any meeting.

### **Moderator**

Elected for a three-year term, the Moderator presides at town meeting, reading each motion aloud, deciding all questions of order, and declaring the outcome of all votes. The Moderator aims to conduct the meeting as fairly and expeditiously as possible, protecting the rights of all to be heard while at the same time ensuring that the meeting moves efficiently through the warrant.

### **Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk, appointed by the Town Manager, keeps the official record of the proceedings at town meeting and notifies those affected by its action. An assistant may accompany the Clerk.

### **Board of Selectmen**

The Selectmen, elected for staggered three-year terms, set the warrant and have responsibility for carrying out the decisions of town meeting. The Selectmen hire the **Town Manager**, who sits with them and may speak on the Board's behalf.

**Town Counsel**

Appointed by the Selectmen, Town Counsel is present to advise on legal matters. Such opinion is advisory only and not binding on the Town, any person, or town meeting.

**Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee, appointed by the Moderator for staggered three-year terms, makes recommendations to town meeting on all articles relating to spending money. The **Finance Director**, hired by the Town Manager and responsible for the Town's financial management and planning, sits with the Finance Committee and is available to clarify financial issues.

**Other Town Boards, Committees and Departments**

Many other Town board and committee members, department heads and employees attend town meeting to speak to articles they have sponsored or budget items that affect their areas of responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

**Tellers**

The Tellers, appointed and paid by the Selectmen, sign in the voters and count votes as requested by the Moderator or by town meeting.

**ARTICLES AND MOTIONS**

Some of the articles on the warrant are quite general, while others are very detailed. An article describes the subject under discussion. Town meeting, however, acts on motions, which are made under the article and describe the specific action on which town meeting is voting.

The Moderator reads the motion, which then must be seconded. Sometimes the motion is identical to the article. At other times, the motion may be worded substantially differently to reflect new information that came to light after the warrant was printed, though the intent of the motion must remain within the scope of the article.

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<sup>2</sup> See the Blue Pages of the *Westford Directory* for descriptions of Town boards' and committees' duties.

After the Moderator has read the motion and it has been seconded, a presentation may be made by the group or groups that submitted it. For motions having a financial impact on the Town, the Moderator asks the chair of the Finance Committee to give the committee's recommendation.

#### **Order of Consideration**

Town meeting takes up the articles in the numerical order in which they appear on the warrant. However, in special cases an article may be taken out of order if a majority vote to do so.

All articles appearing on the warrant must be acted on before town meeting can adjourn. Usually motions made under articles are passed or rejected with or without amendment after debate, but they may also be withdrawn (see page 8).

#### **Article 4 – The Budget**

Article 4 in the Annual Town Meeting warrant is the budget prepared by the Town Manager for the following fiscal year. By custom Annual Town Meeting acts on Article 4 differently than it does on other articles. Rather than voting on the entire budget as one motion, town meeting takes it up a section or two at a time.

The Moderator reads the line items in groups of accounts and includes the amount of the Town Manager's recommended appropriation for each. Anyone having a question about or wishing to amend any line item can call out "hold" after the item has been read. When the Moderator finishes reading the section, town meeting votes on all items not on hold. Then the Moderator takes up budget items that were held, calling for debate, possible amendments, and a vote on each item.

With the exception of the education accounts, town meeting can change any line item within a department's budget. Although the Westford Public Schools' line item budget is included in the *Finance Committee Report*, state law requires that town meeting vote only on the Westford schools' total budget. This is also true of Nashoba Valley Technical High School's budget.

## **THE DEBATE**

Town meeting proceedings are governed by the rules contained in *Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law*, most recent edition, except as modified by law, Town bylaws, or vote of town meeting. Don't let a lack of knowledge about town meeting procedures stop you from participating; if you're puzzled, feel free to ask the Moderator for help.<sup>3</sup>

### **Addressing the Meeting**

There are three microphones on town meeting floor for you to address the meeting: one for asking questions and making amendments, one for speaking in favor of a motion, and one for speaking against a motion. The Moderator points these out at the start of town meeting; the microphones are labeled as well.

To speak to town meeting, walk to the appropriate microphone and wait to be recognized by the Moderator. Then give your name and address. You may continue to speak as long as you speak directly to the motion or question under discussion and conduct yourself acceptably.

All comments from town meeting floor should be directed to the Moderator, not to town meeting or an individual, so you should not directly debate or ask questions of another speaker.

### **Amendments**

If in addition to speaking about the motion you wish to change it in some fashion, you must do so by moving to amend the motion.

You must submit a motion to amend to the Moderator in writing, which must state exactly how you wish to change the motion. Putting the motion in writing ensures that the Moderator knows exactly what it is you want to do before ruling on the motion or putting it to a vote. The Moderator must rule out of order any motion to amend that changes the original motion to the extent that it is no longer within the scope of the article.

Not more than two amendments to any motion may be pending at one time. According to Westford bylaws, "A motion and amendments to a motion shall be voted on in inverse order [that

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<sup>3</sup> See pages 12-13 for a Parliamentary Motions Guide.

is, the last amendment is voted first], provided that when two amounts of money have been presented for appropriation by motion and amendment thereto, the largest amount shall be voted upon first.”

#### **Dividing a Question**

At times a motion may comprise more than one part, but you want town meeting to vote on the parts separately. To do this, make a motion to “divide the question” and describe how you wish this to be done. You must submit your proposed division to the Moderator in writing; each part must make sense, grammatically and otherwise, on its own.

#### **Laying a Motion on the Table**

There are times when temporarily deferring debate and delaying a decision on a motion seem reasonable. Perhaps time is needed for town officials to research information that would help the meeting come to a decision. To do this, make a motion to “lay the motion on the table.” This delays a decision until later in the meeting.

To bring back the motion so it can be discussed and acted on, you make a motion to “take it from the table.” Because town meeting cannot adjourn (that is, end) until all business on the warrant has been acted on, all tabled motions must be taken from the table and dealt with before town meeting can declare its work done.

#### **Dismissing Articles and Withdrawing Motions**

It is possible for town meeting to decide not to take action on an article. This decision is usually made because new or additional information has come to light after the preparation of the warrant indicating that action on the article is unnecessary, unwise or illegal. If you want no action to be taken under an article, you can make a motion to “dismiss the article.”

If you have made a motion or an amendment, you can move to “withdraw the motion” if you have second thoughts or new information. A motion to withdraw can be made any time during the debate of the motion but cannot be made after the motion has been voted on.

**Reconsideration**

Town meeting can take up an article again after it has been voted if on the same day a majority of the voters approve a motion for reconsideration.

To reconsider an article that was acted on at a previous session of the town meeting, however, Westford bylaws require a two-thirds vote in favor of reconsideration.

In every case, the motion to reconsider must be made by a person who voted on the prevailing side in the original vote.

**Limits on Debate**

There is no prescribed limit to debate except common sense. The Moderator can limit debate and can ask speakers to stop if they are straying from the subject or talking at unnecessary length.

Town meeting itself can also terminate debate. To do so, go to a microphone, wait to be recognized by the Moderator, and say, "I move the previous question." This motion is not debatable, and if seconded and voted by a two-thirds majority, debate ends and the motion under discussion is immediately put to a vote.

**Parliamentary Questions**

You can interrupt any speaker if necessary to obtain information from the Moderator if you have a question about parliamentary rule or what procedures are permissible. The question must be relevant to pending business. No vote is required.

**Point of Order**

If you think that a parliamentary rule is not being followed, you can raise a "point of order." This indicates to the Moderator that you feel something is wrong – for instance, an amendment is not relevant to the issue or a motion is out of order. The Moderator can either make an independent decision with no debate or put the question to the town meeting as a motion, which may be debated.

**VOTING**

Most motions are decided by a simple majority vote, although state statutes or Town bylaws may require a larger majority to

decide certain matters. The Moderator announces before every vote whether a simple majority or more is needed to pass the motion. Amendments to zoning bylaws, taking land by eminent domain, approving bond issues and a few parliamentary procedures require a two-thirds vote.

### **Voting Methods**

Voting is usually done by voice, with the Moderator asking that all in favor say "Aye," then asking that all opposed say "Nay." If the Moderator cannot determine the outcome, voters may be asked to raise their hands or stand. The Moderator can direct that the vote be counted if it is still too close to call by sight. If a count has not been made and you disagree with the Moderator's ruling, you can challenge it. If at least six other voters agree with you, the tellers must take an official count.

You can also ask for a secret written ballot on any motion or amendment. Westford bylaws allow secret balloting if 20 voters request it.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

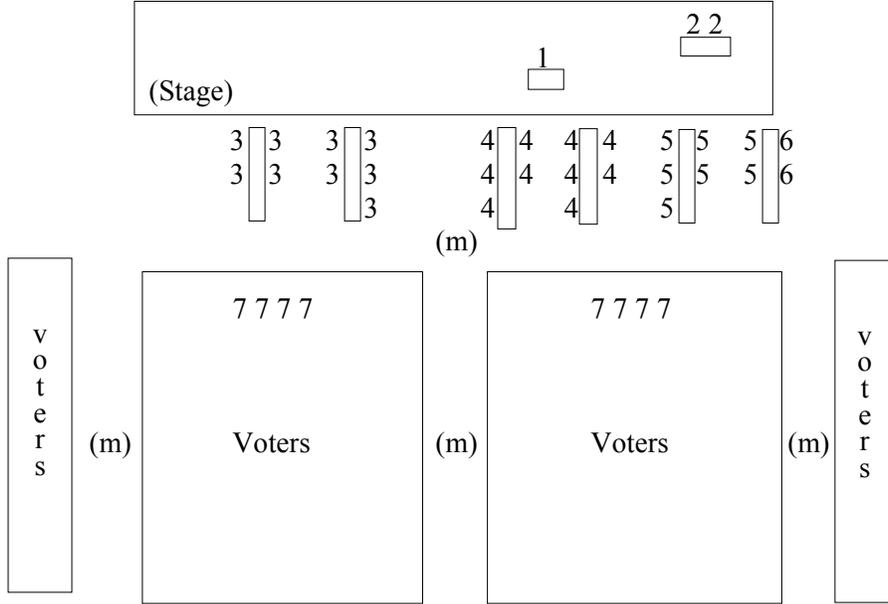
Town meeting may want to act on items not subject to warrant articles, such as extending thanks or offering other courtesies. It may also wish to give direction to a board without binding effect or indicate the desire of the Town in a matter not subject to direct action. These expressions may be made in the form of resolutions, which are voted on by the meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

If the hour is late and there are still articles to be acted on, the Moderator and the Board of Selectmen can confer and ask for a motion to adjourn the town meeting to another time to complete the warrant. A voter can also make a motion to adjourn. The time and place for resuming town meeting must be specified in the motion.

When all business on the warrant has been acted on, the Moderator asks for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which must be seconded and voted on.

**WESTFORD TOWN MEETING DIAGRAM  
at the Abbot School**



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Entrance

to gym

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**Legend**

1. Moderator
2. Town Clerk & assistant
3. School Committee, Superintendent & Business Manager (at times, another committee)
4. Finance Committee & Finance Director
5. Board of Selectmen, Town Manager & Assistant Town Manager
6. Town Counsel
7. Other boards & committees
8. Tellers

(m) Microphones

Please note that this layout may vary depending on where town meeting is held and what items are under discussion.

## PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS GUIDE

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	MAY INTERRUPT?	2 <sup>nd</sup> REQUIRED?	DEBATABLE?	AMENDABLE?	VOTE?
<b>Privileged motions</b>						
End the meeting	I move to <b>adjourn</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adjourn to another time	I move to <b>adjourn to...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Find out if there's a quorum	I rise to a <b>point of no quorum</b>	No	No	No	No	None
Set the time to/at which to adjourn	I move to <b>adjourn to/at...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Raise a concern	I rise to a <b>question of privilege</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None
<b>Subsidiary motions</b>						
Lay motion aside temporarily	I move that this be <b>laid on the table</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Close debate	I move the <b>previous question</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move that <b>debate be limited to...</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone motion to a certain time	I move to <b>postpone the motion to ...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer motion to committee	I move to <b>refer the motion to...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify wording of a motion	I move to <b>amend (or substitute)...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	MAY INTERRUPT?	2 <sup>nd</sup> REQUIRED?	DEBATABLE?	AMENDABLE?	VOTE?
<b>Incidental motions – same rank as motion out of which they arise.</b>						
Enforce rules	I rise to a <b>point of order</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None
Submit matter to the meeting	I <b>appeal</b> from the ruling of the chair	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Divide the motion	I move to <b>divide the question</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Separate consideration	I move for <b>separate consideration...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Fix the method of voting	I move to <b>vote</b> on this motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Nominate someone to a committee	I <b>nominate...</b>	No	No	No	No	Plurality
Withdraw or modify your own motion	I move to <b>withdraw/ modify</b> my motion...	No	No	No	No	Majority
Suspend rules	I move to <b>suspend the rules...</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3*
<b>Main motions – no order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else pending.</b>						
Make a main motion	I <b>move...</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Various
Reconsider or rescind a motion**	I move to <b>reconsider/ rescind</b> the vote ...	No	Yes	**	No	Majority or 2/3***
Take matter from the table	I move to <b>take from the table ...</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Advance an article	I move to <b>advance</b> article ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Adapted from *Town Meeting Time* and [www.jimslaughter.com/zipfiles/roberts10thpobox.pdf](http://www.jimslaughter.com/zipfiles/roberts10thpobox.pdf)

\* Unanimous if rule protects minorities; out of order if rule protects absentees.

\*\* Same rank and debatable to same extent as motion being reconsidered.

\*\*\* Majority required if motion is made at same session, 2/3 required if made at an adjourned session.

## GLOSSARY

*The following is a glossary of terms often used at town meetings. Anytime someone uses a term that you don't understand, you should rise to make a "point of information" and ask for an explanation or definition. If you don't understand something, be assured that many others are puzzled as well. They're just too shy to speak up.*

**Appropriation:** An authorization by town meeting to spend money.

**Assessed valuation:** The value set on real property (that is, land and buildings) or personal property by the Board of Assessors as a basis for setting the tax rate.

**Budget:** A plan of financial operation embodying an estimate of proposed revenue and expenditures for a given period and the proposed means of financing them.

**Cherry Sheet:** A form from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue showing, for the following fiscal year, all the state and county charges and reimbursements to the Town for local aid and for providing specific town services. Called the Cherry Sheet because it was originally printed on cherry-colored paper.

**Debt exclusion:** A vote by a municipality at an election to exclude debt service payments for a particular capital project from the levy limit, which allows the Town to increase its total property tax levy above the limit set by Proposition 2½. The amount of the annual debt service payment is added to the levy limit for the life of the debt only. (See **Proposition 2½**, below.)

**Debt service:** The cost of payment of interest and principal to holders of the Town's bonds and notes.

**Encumbrance:** Obligations in the form of purchase orders or contract or salary commitments that are chargeable to an appropriation and for which a part of the appropriation is reserved.

**Enterprise Funds:** An accounting mechanism allowing a community to show the portion of total costs of a service that is

recovered through user charges and the portion that is subsidized by the tax levy. In 2003, the Water Department and the Ambulance were Westford's only enterprise funds.

**Expenditure:** The spending of money by the Town for programs within its approved operating budget.

**Fiscal year:** Westford's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. The moneys appropriated at the Annual Town Meeting in May are for the fiscal year starting the following July 1.

**Foundation budget:** The target set by the state for each school district establishing the spending level necessary to provide an adequate education, as defined by the state, for all students. The foundation budget comprises both local funding and state aid.

**Free cash:** A dollar value, certified by the state usually in late summer, that represents unspent and unencumbered income and receivables from the previous fiscal year. Town meeting can spend this money once free cash is certified.

**General fund:** The fund used to account for most financial resources, including town receipts and tax revenues, and operating activities governed by the town meeting appropriation process.

**Indirect costs:** Costs of a service not reflected in the service's operating budget. Health insurance costs for employees is an example of an indirect cost of providing Town services.

**Local receipts:** Town revenues other than property tax and enterprise fund revenues. Examples are motor vehicle excise taxes, investment income, and fees.

**New growth:** Under Proposition 2½, the taxing capacity added by new construction and other increases in the property tax base. New growth is calculated by multiplying the value associated with new construction by the tax rate of the previous fiscal year.

**Operating budget:** The plan of proposed spending for the upcoming fiscal year. It is the Town's "best guess" on what it will cost to operate.

**Overlay account:** An account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year. Also called Overlay Reserve.

**Overlay surplus:** Any balance in the overlay account of a given fiscal year in excess of the amount remaining to be collected or abated can be transferred into this account. Overlay surplus may be appropriated for any lawful purpose.

**Override:** A vote by a municipality in an election to permanently increase the levy limit (see **Proposition 2½**, below).

**Proposition 2½:** An initiative law approved by Massachusetts voters in 1980. Prop. 2½ sets a limit on the amount of real and personal property taxes a community may levy as well as a limit on the annual increase in the tax levy.

The *levy limit* is a restriction on the amount of property tax a community may levy. Under Prop. 2½, a community may not increase taxes more than 2½% over the previous year's levy (plus the value of any new growth that has occurred in the Town) and may not levy more than 2½% of the total full and fair cash value of all taxable real and personal property in the community (the *levy ceiling*).

Prop. 2½ allows cities and towns to vote in an election to exclude certain costs as well as to increase its annual levy limit. See **Debt exclusion** and **Override**, above.

**Reserve Fund:** An amount set aside annually within the Town's budget to provide a funding source for "extraordinary and unforeseen" expenditures. The Finance Committee authorizes transfers from this fund.

**Revolving Fund:** Moneys, usually derived from fees, that may be used by a Town department for special use without town meeting appropriation.

**Stabilization Fund:** Essentially a "rainy day" fund. It is a special reserve account created primarily to provide for capital improvements and unforeseen circumstances. It requires a two-thirds vote of town meeting to take money from this fund and appropriate it for expenditure.

**Warrant:** A list of items to be acted on by town meeting.





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