



# Town of Bowdoinham

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Nicole Briand, Town Manager

April 1, 2024

## **2025 Municipal Budget Message**

To Members of the Bowdoinham Select Board,

Submitted herewith is the proposed municipal budget for the fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025).

The spending levels outlined in this budget attempt to provide the programs and services that the residents of Bowdoinham have experienced over the past several years while maintaining our efforts in the capital improvement area. It is our goal to provide the citizens of this community with the best level of service possible within the financial resources available. The budget development process begins with the receipt of budget requests from Department Heads, followed by the Town Manager's review. The budget is then submitted to the Finance Advisory Committee, Select Board and then submitted to the voters at the annual town meeting for final adoption.

### **Budget Highlights**

The proposed budget reflects a net budget increase of \$56,386 or 3%. While the department expense budget has a proposed increase of \$353,517 or 9.1%, much of that proposed increase is offset with an increase of \$297,131 (17.49%) in estimated revenues. The three areas in which the largest increase in estimated revenues proposed are Municipal Revenue Sharing, Homestead Reimbursement and Investment Income.

### **Wages & Benefits**

This budget reflects our continued efforts in wage adjustments to bring our staff to the median level wage for their positions and job responsibilities. I have also budgeted a 2.0% allowance for wage increases based on performance evaluations for all employees. As has been discussed, it has been difficult to recruit and retain employees with the main reason being the wages we are offering.

The health insurance plan increased 12.8% for the year, our plan year is March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2025. I've budgeted each eligible employee for a minimum of the employee spouse plan. This is to ensure there are funds budgeted should employees change their plan or staff change.

### Administration

The Administration budget shows an increase of \$45,126 or 5.7%, which includes:

- funding for wage adjustments for office staff,
- increase in our risk management insurances and worker compensation insurance, and
- increase in our software licenses and security services.

### Debt Services

The Debt Services Budget shows an increase of \$174,690, or 33.4%, as our first payments will be due on the \$1,000,000 road bond and excavator that were approved last year.

### Fire & Rescue Department

The Fire and Rescue Department budget has the largest proposed increase for this year. An overall increase of \$28,108, or 7.3%, due to the following:

- The proposed ambulance contract with Lisbon Emergency is \$72,342 less than our current contract with North East Ambulance.
- The budget includes a full-time fire chief. This will allow for adequate time to perform duties including emergency management and planning for future program changes.

### Town Facilities & Maintenance

The Town Facilities & Maintenance budget shows an overall decrease of \$12,500, or -10.5%. This is due to the completed streetlight project and moving the cost of the navigational and no wake aids to the ACO/Harbor Master Department

### Animal Control Officer and Harbor Master Department

These department budgets show an overall increase of \$10,998, or 39.5%. This includes an increase for personnel and funding for the navigational and no wake aids.

### Recreation

The Recreation budget shows a proposed increase of \$31,867 or 26.1%., which includes: funding for wage adjustments for staff, and additional programing. The revenue for the new programing is planned to cover the cost of that programing. The net cost of the department to taxpayers would be \$122,864.

### Planning & Development

The Planning & Development budget shows a proposed decrease of \$52. The shift of 65% to 70% of the Planning & Development Director position to our TIF districts is offsetting the increase in personnel costs.

### Public Works

The Public Works budget shows an overall increase of \$102,429 or 12.7%, which includes:

- funding for wage adjustments, and
- increases for winter maintenance which is offset by the revenue from Post Road Winter Maintenance agreement (\$73,665).

### Solid Waste and Recycling

The Solid Waste and Recycling budget shows an overall decrease of \$1,433, which includes:

- funding for wage adjustments,
- reduced costs due to new trash disposal contract with Maine Waste Energy,

- increased costs for the curbside pickup contract, and
- reduced single stream contract costs due to the reduction in hauling needed with the compacting dumpster.

### Capital Reserves

The Capital Reserves budget is based on the Capital Improvement Plan. This plan proposes to raise \$350,000 per year for annual road paving, in place of borrowing. However, due to our current road conditions, additional money will need to be raised until the Town can catch up on its road maintenance plan.

In addition to the proposed expense budget, the following capital expenditures are proposed:

- Purchase of Fire Truck to replace Engine 2 (2002) - \$750,000. The bond payment for a 15-year term is estimated at \$65,000.

### **LD1**

The Town's LD1 Municipal Property Tax Levy limit for FY25 is \$2,809,489. The budget as proposed will result in a municipal property tax levy of \$2,221,902 which is \$587,587 below the Town's property tax levy limit. Therefore, no action will be required at Town Meeting.

### **Tax Impact**

The budget as proposed would increase the tax rate by 3%; this would be an increase of \$163 for every \$250,000 of assessed value.

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

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