

Advisory Board Summary – Fiscal Year 2013

The Advisory Board works diligently throughout the year to recommend a reasonable and balanced budget for the town. In the early months of the calendar year, the board meets with each department to better understand that board's financial needs and responsibilities. The advisory board acts as a listening partner for all town departments looking to improve their services or maximize their benefit to the town. Every conversation offers the department another perspective on their situation, including the effects of a potential change on the rest of the town's departments as well as the town's people. Because we work with all departments, we provide a broad perspective as well as a long-term outlook.

Over the past three years, we have helped the Police Chief maximize his resources and improve efficiency in the department with the purchase of a records management system and the addition of an administrative assistant. This year, we have budgeted for an additional police officer to start in the fall. We have supported the Fire Department in the purchase of new trucks and equipment. We have assisted the Board of Health in moving to a fiscal year cycle for the trash stickers, instead of a calendar year cycle. This transition coincides with the movement towards a revolving account, with a lower town subsidy for the transfer station, and a goal of becoming a financially self-sufficient department like the Water Dept. We have held significant conversations with the Library Director regarding the library's HVAC system, hoping to create a more energy-efficient and cost-effective building. We continue to support the Groton Dunstable Regional School District with up to 57% of our overall town budget.

The country's economic situation over the past few years impacted several of our town departments with reductions in funding. We are pleased to have the opportunity in FY 2013 to restore some of those budgets to their previous levels.

The fact that we end each fiscal year with a proportionately small amount of free cash demonstrates how tightly each department is managing its budget. The Advisory Board appreciates the willingness of each department to meet with us to discuss their situation and any potential opportunities or challenges, and their ability to work within the recommended budget as well as they have.

We are pleased to present the town with a balanced FY 2013 budget that meets the needs of the town while staying within the confines of Proposition 2 ½.