

Wallingford Budget Questions 2024

BOE

How much did the BOE spend last year (2022-2023 budget) and in the current budget year (2023-2024) on consultants, studies, and lawyers, respectively?

How much money is budgeted in the BOE proposed budget (2024-2025) for consultants, studies, and lawyers, respectively?

How much did the BOE spend on coaches (instructional, curriculum, other) in the prior closed fiscal year? How much this year is budgeted for coaches? How much is proposed for coaches in the 2024-2025 budget?

How much of the BOE Contingency (Line 100) has been used each year over the past 3 budget years?

Did the BOE use the \$290,000 the Council gave back (restored from Mayor's budget) in last year's budget amendments on what the Council earmarked (requested) that money be used for? If not, where did that money go? a.Pond Hill Elementary School gymnasium floor = \$130,000
b.Dag renovate ball fields = \$80,000
c.Dag replace back gym floor = \$80,000

How much money is currently in the 2% Fund?

What portions of their proposed budget are 'locked' by contract? Estimated amount is acceptable.

What portions of your proposed budget will have to be cut- given the Mayor's response- that are in your opinions necessary?

What portions of your proposed budget contain items not funded from prior years? If any, which ones will require removal - given the Mayor's response- that are in your opinions necessary?

Cap and Non

Community Lake Park tennis & basketball court replacements...good, but the ones at Doolittle are brand new and have issues, so hopefully we can prevent that from happening here. Also, why are the pickleball courts not being done until next year? Could this be a combo with the tennis courts?

Sidewalk – good, but did the \$150,000 the Council put towards downtown/uptown sidewalk repairs in the current budget get used?

See answer under the Engineering questions

2025-2026: Brick Paver replacement: May we please look into stamped concrete that has the appearance of bricks? The bricks shift and grow weeds and look unsightly after just one or two seasons. The stamped or stenciled concrete will achieve the same look but not require maintenance.

Engineering can look into it.

Comptroller

Should the passage of a state law allowing for the compensation of Board of Education members pass, how would we fund this?

The Board of Education would have to pay for it out of their funding.

Can we have a report of stipend and compensation increases for the mayor, council and boards and commissions over the past 20-40 years?

See Addendum

What would the mill rate need to be to include an un-reduced Board of Education budget?

See Addendum

What would the average household tax liability be if it included that? What is the average increase in dollar amount per household with the mayor's proposed budget and what would it be if the BOE proposal was granted in full?

See Addendum

Contingency

How much has been used in the current fiscal year? How much was used in the last closed fiscal year?

Why are accrued expenses listed here, and why the \$150,000 increase?

EDC	What is the additional \$22,000 in the Promotional Expenses line? (Line 55405). Is this the video that was taken off of the Council agenda?	The proposed promotion expense is the same amount requested as FY 23/24. This does not include the video that was taken off the Council agenda.
	Why isn't the \$2,500 laptop capital request listed on the budget page under capital?	he laptop capital request was not added based on the Mayor's new technology infrastructure initiative.
	What is the new \$1,500 Operating Expenses (Line 58735) and how does that differ from Office Expenses?	The operating expense is for the billboard maintenance. Office expenses is aligned with the typical office expenses such as paper, printer ink, etc.
Electric Division	How many unfilled positions? Please identify them on the Personnel pages, if possible.	See Addendum
	What is Loss on Disp. Of Plant (Line 411, page 70)? Does this have to do with the recent vote we took about the Pierce Plant?	
Engineering	Of the Capital item Sidewalk Repair – Town Center – that the council added last year, was any of that \$150,000 ever used for this? If not, can it be used now? (p. 50)	A contractor has been hired and they are starting any day now. The work will be completed prior to June 30, 2024.
	What is the Chief of Party position? (p. 33)	Licensed land surveyor.
	Why does the department head work 37.5 hours and the aide works 40?	I follow the Manager's Union Contract.
	In explanation letter, "Salaries – as recommended by Finance" means the contractual amounts, correct?	Correct
Fire Dept	Another firefighter...we just added 4, what is the staffing status for vacancies? And an explanation as to why this number to add.	See Addendum

How many volunteer firefighters do we have in Company 7 and Company 8 respectively? How many have the proper certifications and how many are in training? See Addendum

List of all apparatus/vehicles/ambulances/fleet, what is used daily, what is not...can we push out buying new apparatus one extra year per apparatus?

Why did the Medical Exams line increase? Was this due to the switch to Covanta? How much difference (amount) were the bids between Covanta and Yale Occ. Health? (Line 56734, page 35)

Why isn't FF/Paramedic listed in the personnel data and salary calculations list? Does a FF/Paramedic get more than a FF/EMT, and if so, how much?

Do our firefighters each have 2 sets of gear?

Capital Request: "BLS green bag"...Before these are purchased, may we discuss/consider having the volunteer BLS bags match the career BLS bags for ease of use on scene, so both career and volunteer can locate items quickly and efficiently in each other's BLS bags during emergencies? (Volunteer apparatus mainly have the blue bags? Career mainly green bags?)

HR

Please identify all department vacancies, and the corresponding pay. (It is not necessary to add in benefits.)

Mayor

Can we get an explanation or report on how and what goes into the 14% health insurance program? What would the impact of having more employees insure through unions (such as fire), particularly is there a difference between the "hazard" duty positions?

In the renewal process, the claims from the previous 12 months as well as the stop loss and admin fees are reflected in the 14% increase for the FY24-25 health insurance renewal. The Town and BOE health insurance rates are driven by the claims experience.

Looking at alternative funding mechanism such as the Teamsters or Firefighters IAFF Trust are an option but any option that the Town looks at would have to be evaluated through that union's claims experience. While the Town has moved the Firefighters to the IAFF Trust, this may not be a consideration with other unions until that bargaining unit's claims experience is fully evaluated, including how moving a group out of the Town's health insurance plan will impact the Town's overall insurance rates.

high-risk position would not impact the Town's health insurance rates as an on-the-job injury would be paid out of the WC budget and not out of the Town's self-insurance health insurance fund. When a high-risk position would have an impact on our health insurance claims experience is if an employee needed medical treatment independent of a workplace injury.

A

Can we expect this is a sort of reset or catch up budget and any idea how next year might go?

Where is the SCOW Roof Replacement project that had been slated for this year under the Cap & Non for the past few budgets?

We have been keeping up with interim repairs to the existing roof system at SCOW. We know it will need replacement which is why it was presented as a future project in Cap/ Non-Recurring. The decision to pull it out from this year is mainly due to the fact that we are pursuing a Building Condition Assessment study for seven Town buildings (including SCOW) to hopefully be completed in the near future. Depending on those findings, another capital project may be more pressing and need to be completed sooner than the SCOW roof. It appears prudent to await those findings to help us prioritize funding for various capital projects.

What town buildings are occupied by outside organizations?

As identified, we have SCOW and STEM in the building at 284 Washington Street (within the Sr Center campus). We also have the Wallingford Theatre group in an adjacent building, formerly the Police Dept Sign Shop, in the same "Sr Center campus". The building at 238 Washington Street is also maintained by DPW and is occupied by the Wallingford Committee on Aging (Wallingford Senior Center).

The historic railroad building is maintained by DPW and is occupied by BOE's Adult Education program. The model railroad club formerly occupied the basement area but has recently fully vacated the premises.

As noted, the library is Town owned but DPW does NOT do general maintenance (painting, carpet, etc.). We have been responsible for larger capital building amenities such as HVAC systems and the elevator. I suspect the Center Street Cemetery building at 60 Prince Street falls into this same category.

Are there any vacant town-owned houses/buildings?

The building at Doolittle Park is vacant and is planned to be demolished and removed.

Police Dept

Police Accreditation Manager continue PT? I'd like background and possibly a discussion regarding this.

PUC

Do these expenses come out of taxpayer money, or ratepayer money? If tax money, is it possible that this \$311,895 be funded through reserve money in the Utilities budgets, split evenly 3 ways (water, sewer, electric)?

Park and Rec

Facilities Coordinator, history, salary, job description, salary range it would be today/next year if we proceed forward with it.

Registrar of Voters

Early voting will cost us \$20,750, which we never had to spend before. Is the State reimbursing us for this additional cost?

The State is not reimbursing the Town for expenses incurred for the Early Voting process. Another unfunded Mandate.

Town Clerk

The clerks work 35 hours per week? (One hour unpaid lunch? Are they hourly or salary?)

In the Town Clerk's Office I have two full time Senior Staff, one full time Assistant Town Clerk and one part time Seasonal Clerk. My full time staff is paid hourly. I am the only one in my office who is paid salary.

What is the seasonal clerk?

the purpose of my seasonal clerk is to help the office during our busy times of the year, during June which is dog licensing season and during election time in October when we have absentee ballots. She also will cover the office sometimes if we are extremely short staffed.

YSS

With an increased budget of \$98,000 year-over-year, please address the potential duplicity of services. We are adding positions and hours for counselors and we have a Drug and Alcohol Counselor, yet we are paying \$36,000 for the rent for an outside organization that does very similar work (Line 58201).

See Addendum

How much rent do we pay or offer at a reduced rate for outside organizations, i.e. \$36,000 storefront for Coalition, reduced annual rent for SCOW, etc.? What town buildings are occupied by outside organizations?

See Addendum

Has there been an increase in caseload or are the requests for increased staffing that have been not fulfilled from past years?

See Addendum

If the current budget were adopted- what are the potential service related challenges you might anticipate?

See Addendum