

## Town of Durham

### **Secret Ballot Budget Referendum Informational Sheet**

Due to the pandemic, the Town of Durham will not be holding a traditional Town Meeting. On July 14, 2020, the Town will vote on the municipal budget by secret ballot in conjunction with the State and RSU5 ballots.

**\*\*\*Voting will take place at the AMVETS Post 13 on July 14, 2020\*\*\***

**Virtual Public Hearing on June 9, 2020, at 6:00pm**

There will be additional information on our web page at [www.durhamme.com](http://www.durhamme.com) and the Durham FaceBook page in the coming weeks.

The following pages contain what you will see on the ballot. Both the Select Board and the Budget Committee met to change the original warrant and recommendations due to the pandemic. Many of these questions are different than and replaces the Draft Warrant which appears in the Durham Annual Report. The intent of these changes is to keep Durham's tax rate flat this year.

When the Town "appropriates" an amount the residents are giving the Town permission to spend that amount, "raise" means the funds will be raised through taxes and "transfer" means the Town will transfer funds from an existing fund (usually a revenue or capital fund).

At the end of the ballot, there are eleven (11) "Business Articles". These appear on the warrant every year and give the Select Board authority to transact business for the Inhabitants of the Town of Durham.

**Question 1:** To see if the Town of Durham will vote to raise and appropriate an amount not to exceed the 2019 Durham Municipal Budget for any budget articles not approved.

*If any article does not pass, the Town would revert to last years budget. In the following pages you will see last year's budget. These figures will not appear in the actual ballot although a copy of this informational sheet will be available upon request.*

**Question 2:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer \$188,600 from the Public Works Capital Fund for the purchase of a new truck and snowplow package.

*This truck would replace a 20-year old truck. The funds for this truck would not be raised in taxes this year but transferred from the Public Works Capital.*

<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>	<u>Capital Fund Balance as of 12/31/2019</u>
\$220,000	\$194,927	\$188,600	\$308,550

**Question 3:** To see if the Town will enter into a three year contract with Pine Tree Waste for Curbside Waste and Recycling as outlined in their Contract Proposal.

*Durham's curbside pickup contract expires June 30, 2020. The proposal for the new contract is for three years and is available at the Town Office.*

**Question 4:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$255,692 for Solid Waste. Funding Source: Raise \$235,003 and transfer \$20,689 from the Solid Waste Revenue Fund.

*The last solid waste contract was entered into prior to the collapse of the recycling market. This contract reflects a significant increase due in part by recycling. The proposal includes an automatic adjustment in the case the recycling market improves..*

<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
\$210,710	\$210,572	\$255,692

**Question 5:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer \$10,000 from undesignated funds for the Emergency Fund which can be accessed by a majority vote by both the Select Board and the Budget Committee. The balance of the Emergency Fund as of December 31, 2019, is \$6,953.

*This article increases the existing emergency fund in case of unforeseen circumstances. As stated in the warrant article, any expenditures would need to be approved by the Select Board and the Budget Committee.*

**Question 6:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer \$77,410 from undesignated funds to be applied to the municipal operating budget. These funds lapsed into the undesignated fund due to an error in the RSU5 tax assessment and are being used to offset a portion of this year's tax impact.

*RSU5's last audit caught an error in the school's assessments for all three towns for their fiscal year 2019/2020. This caused Durham to raise \$77,410 too much in taxes in 2019. This article offsets that error and will decrease the amount raised in taxes this year by \$77,410.*

**Question 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$472,753 for the Durham Fire and Rescue Operating Budget. Funding Source: Raise \$472,753

<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
\$486,725	\$450,241	\$472,753

**Question 8:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,038,693 for the Public Works Operating Budget. Funding Source: Raise \$31,930 and Transfer \$1,006,763 from the Following Revenue Funds: Excise Taxes \$952,183 and LRAP (Local Roads Assistance Program) \$54,580.

*This budget was significantly decreased in response to the economic environment caused by the pandemic. The Select Board and Budget Committee voted to decrease spending on road maintenance by half this year. All but \$31,930 is transferred from existing funds.*

<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
\$1,240,101	\$1,195,052	\$1,038,693

**Question 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$390,544 for Administration Expenses. Funding Source: Raise \$284,187 and transfer \$106,357 from the following Revenue Funds: Building Permits \$15,028, Electrical Permits \$6,175, Plumbing Permits \$6,765, Vehicle Registration \$16,261, Delinquent Tax Interest \$ 33,005, Tax Exemption Reimbursement \$17,004, Town Clerk Fees \$5,432 and Miscellaneous Revenue \$6,687.

*This budget's increase this year is a result of expenses associated with the retirement of our Town Clerk and the presidential election and primaries.*

<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
\$378,781	\$373,760	\$390,544

**Question 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$991,693 for the Town of Durham's annual debt service. Funding Source: Raise \$899,973 and transfer \$91,720 from the following funds: Fire Department Capital Fund \$41,720 and Undesignated Fund \$50,000.

	<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
Equipment Bond Public Works	\$141,524	\$141,524	\$141,524
Building Bond Public Works	\$91,120	\$91,120	\$91,120
2016 Road Bond	\$168,992	\$168,992	\$166,949
2018 Road Bond	\$251,860	\$251,860	\$247,460
2019 Road/Ambulance Bond	\$0	\$0	\$285,746
2018 Fire Engine Bond	<u>\$58,894</u>	<u>\$58,894</u>	<u>\$58,894</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$712,390	\$712,390	\$991,693

**Question 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$151,433 for the following budgets: Animal Control \$16,528, Assessing \$21,100, Cemeteries \$4,650, Conservation. Recreation and Parks \$10,986, Eureka Community Center \$6,910, General Assistance \$1,000, Planning Board/Appeals Board/Historic District Commission \$35,038, and Telecommunications \$55,221 . Funding Source: Raise \$77,052 and transfer \$74,381 from the following funds: Animal Control \$1,765, Undesignated Fund \$4,300, Recreation Fund \$10,986, Eureka Rentals \$1,240, General Assistance \$359, Conditional Use Permits \$300, Appeals Revenue \$210 and Telecommunications \$55,221.

*This article combines eight articles into one in an effort to make the ballot manageable.*

- *Assessing—This budget is a contract and is mostly flat from year to year*
- *Animal Control—This budget is based on two contracts, one with the Coastal Humane Society and one with the Town of Lisbon for Animal Control Services.*
- *Cemeteries—This budget includes the contract for mowing the cemeteries, funds for flags and upkeep of the Town owned cemeteries. Funds raised but not spent last year (\$4,300) will be transferred from undesignated funds to offset the expense this year.*
- *Eureka Center—These funds pay for the maintenance and upkeep associated with the Eureka Community Center.*
- *General Assistance—these are the funds used in the administration of our General Assistance Program. The State reimburses us 70% of all expenditures.*
- *Planning—This budget funds the Planning Board, Historical District Commission and Appeals Board and includes the salary for the Town's part-time Planner who has been assisting the Planning Board with updating the Land Use Ordinances to be consistent with Durham's 2018 Comprehensive Plan and State Requirements.*
- *Conservation and Recreation—This budget takes care of the Town's open space properties and contributes funds to Durham Softball, Durham Little League and the Tri Town Penguin's Snowmobile Club. No funds will be raised through taxes for this budget.*
- *Telecommunications—This budget covers all expenses that are incurred for broadcasting meetings, our website, emails, the Town Facebook pages and IT infrastructure and services. No funds will be raised through taxes for this budget.*

	<u>2019 Budget</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>	<u>Amount Raised</u>
Assessing	\$21,150	\$20,062	\$21,100	\$21,100
Animal Control	\$15,003	\$14,502	\$16,528	\$14,763
Cemeteries	\$8,650	\$4,130	\$4,650	\$350
Eureka Center	\$6,774	\$3,932	\$6,910	\$5,670
General Assistance	\$2,000	\$514	\$1,000	\$641
Planning	\$46,654	\$30,038	\$35,038	\$34,528
Conservation/Rec	\$11,250	\$9,969	\$10,986	\$0
Telecommunications	<u>\$54,779</u>	<u>\$48,865</u>	<u>\$55,221</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$166,260	\$132,012	\$151,433	\$77,052

**Question 12:** To see if the town will vote to appropriate an amount not to exceed 5% of the total 2020 Net Assessment for Commitment to pay tax abatements and applicable interest granted during the 2020 fiscal year.

*Five percent is the highest allowed by State Law. Durham's average percentage in the past five years has been 1.13%*

**Question 13:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to seek, accept and disburse grant funds from private, state or federal agencies, for the purpose so designated in each specific grant.

**Question 14:** To see what action the Town will take in regard to fixing interest on delinquent taxes and establishing a date for interest to start. Interest shall begin to accrue on all unpaid taxes forty-five days after the date taxes are committed. The interest rate on delinquent taxes shall be 9% per annum.

Town of Durham  
630 Hallowell Road  
Durham, ME 04222



**Vote on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.** Absentee Ballots will be available up to and including the day of election. Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the AMVETS Post 13, 1049 Royalsborough Road in Durham. .

A **Virtual Public Hearing** will be held on **June 9, 2020, at 6:00pm**. Please visit [www.durhamme.com](http://www.durhamme.com) for further information.

**Question 15:** To see if the Town will vote to leave the appointment of standing committee members and officials in the hands of the Board of Selectmen.

**Question 16:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of town owned property which they determine is no longer needed or usable by the town, on such terms as they deem advisable.

**Question 17:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Town, to sell and/or dispose of any property acquired by tax liens and allow the Selectmen to authorize the Treasurer to waive automatic lien foreclosures when it is in the best interest of the Town.

**Question 18:** To see if the Town will vote to set the interest rate to be paid by the Town on overpayment of abated taxes at 5% pursuant to 36 MRSA § 506.

**Question 19:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector or Treasurer to accept prepayments of taxes not yet due or assessed, and to pay interest thereon at an interest rate of 0% pursuant to 36 MRSA § 506.

**Question 20:** To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to resolve any disputes with parties having an interest adverse to that of the Town which do not involve the expenditure of public funds or where there are sufficient funds in budgeted accounts to allow payment of any claim which is to be settled.

**Question 21:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to spend an amount not to exceed one third (1/3) of the budget amount in each category of the Town of Durham 2020 annual budget during the period from January 1, 2021 to the close of the 2021 annual town meeting.

**Question 22:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer to borrow money on notes approved by at least three members of the Board of Selectmen and countersigned by the Select Board Chair, to pay for the operating costs of the Town.