

2023 Voters Guide

Article 1

To elect all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year.

This article is for the election of Town Officers as described. Instructions are included on the ballot.

Article 2

“Shall the Town of Newton raise and appropriate as an Operating Budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$4,792,352.00** Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$4,056,753.00**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newton or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.”

The estimated budget increase from the 2022 ACTUAL budget to the 2023 PROPOSED budget represents a tax impact increase of \$1.213 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value.

Default Budget would result in an estimated tax impact increase of \$0.086 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value.

This article sets the total Town Operating Budget for FY 2023 to be raised by taxes.

- The proposed budget includes line item decreases and increases based on the predicted expenses to run the town for the year
- The default budget contains the same appropriations as contained in the operating budget authorized for the previous year, decreased, and increased by debt service, contracts, and other obligations previously incurred or mandated by law, and reduced by one-time expenditures contained in the operating budget.

A YES vote would mean...

\$4,792,352.00 will be raised to fund the operating costs of the Town. This is an increase of \$735,599.00 over the default budget.

A NO vote would mean...

\$4,056,763 will be raised to fund the operating costs of the town. This amount is insufficient to maintain the same level of service to which we are accustomed.

The default budget would require the town to absorb all of the increases in utilities, gasoline, diesel, heat fuels, goods and services. In doing so Newton town government will have to curb, reduce, or eliminate selected services.

We are experiencing great difficulty recruiting and retaining employees primarily because we are competing with surrounding New Hampshire communities and Massachusetts communities that offer higher pay. Simply said Newton is not an attractive employer. The default budget does not contain the planned increase to our wage scale which would make us somewhat appealing to job seekers.

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Our call fire fighters, six to be exact, were poached by border towns. Lured to Kingston and Danville for the pay and in some cases benefits. Call departments, across the country, are becoming a thing of the past. Transitioning all call departments to a hybrid model of a combination of full time and call. If we want to maintain the current model; we must become competitive.

In addition, due to the historic inflation we are all experiencing, the default budget would result in reductions in public safety personnel, a reduction in the number of emergency vehicles that respond to calls for assistance. Trinity EMS currently provides hospital transports are currently free of charge, are planning to start charging communities for transports. For which there is no funding.

Our police department planned for hiring two additional officers to increase shift coverage so that no officer will be required to work alone and to free up seasoned officers to devote their time to the increasing number of cases requiring investigation. These initiatives will not occur.

The transfer station may be required to reduce hours of operation to cover a 35% to 40% increase in the cost of hauling and disposal totaling approximately \$80,000. There is a projected 30% increase in the cost of recycling and a 50% increase in the cost of recycling tires. We may be forced to increase the fee schedule.

The cost of winter maintenance materials (sand & salt) has nearly doubled creating a situation whereby the town's road agent will be unable to provide appropriate attention to road improvements. Summer weather work such as roadside drainage, culvert maintenance, swale cleaning and paving will have to be scaled back due to the lack of appropriate funding to accomplish these services.

Although the Recreation Department has a small budget, the commission planned to start special mailings throughout the year to advise the community of available programs and special events. This enhanced communication effort cannot be undertaken due to a lack of funding.

Our Library Trustees have expressed concern about having to work with a default budget. Purchasing fewer books and DVDs, fewer programs, including supplies needed for children's story times. Having to choose between child and adult programs. The discontinuance of digital lending and genealogy services. Reduce the number of current learning and research books Newton students rely on.

By voting against the proposed 2023 operating budget in support of the default budget the town's elected officials, appointed officials and municipal employees cannot provide the same quality and level of services you are accustomed to.

Article 3

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,200.00** to be deposited into the **Engineering & Renovation Capital Reserve Fund** created in 2015; said funds to come from the **Unassigned Fund Balance**. This represents the Rental Fees received at 8 Merrimac Road.*

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This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

This article will take the 2022 rental income from the tenant at 8 Merrimac Rd that has been deposited into the Unassigned Fund Balance and deposit it into the Capital Reserve Fund which can only be spent on Engineering and/or Renovation of the land and buildings at the same address. This article has been approved each year since 2015.

A YES vote would mean...

Rental income from 8 Merrimac Road will be deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund. These funds could then be directed by a vote of the Board of Selectmen to be used for Engineering and Renovation of the land and buildings belonging to the Town at 8 Merrimac Road.

A NO vote would mean...

Rental income from 8 Merrimac Road will remain in the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Article 4

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000.00** to be deposited into the **Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund** created in 2006, for the purpose of maintenance, repairs, and construction of Town Buildings. Said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance with no amount to be raised from taxation.*

This amount would result in no increase in the amount to be raised in taxes.

This article will take \$50,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance and deposit it into the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund which can only be spent on repairs, maintenance, or improvements of Town-owned buildings.

A YES vote would mean...

As directed by a vote of the Board of Selectmen, the funds can be used to offset the cost of repairs, maintenance, or improvements of Town-owned buildings.

A NO vote would mean...

All funds will remain in the Unassigned Fund Balance. Minimal repairs/maintenance on Town-owned buildings would be the only thing done. Major repairs which might include life safety issues would need to be raised through taxation.

Article 5

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Police Chief, the sum of **\$25,000.00** to be deposited into the **“Police Cruisers and Equipment” Capital Reserve Fund** created in 2021. Said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance with no monies to be raised by taxation.*

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

As of December 31, 2022, the fund balance is \$70,111.71.

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A YES vote would mean...

This article will take \$25,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to be deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund. The fund can only be used by a vote of the Board of Selectmen for repairs, maintenance, or purchase of cruisers or equipment.

A NO vote would mean...

No funds will be added to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 6

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Fire Chief, the sum of \$50,000.00 to be deposited into the “**Fire Apparatus and Equipment / Refurbishment Fund**” Capital Reserve Fund created in 2005 and amended in 2011. Said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance with no monies to be raised by taxation.*

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

As of December 31, 2022, the fund balance is \$40,337.37.

A YES vote would mean...

This article will take \$50,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to be deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund. The fund can only be used by a vote of the Board of Selectmen for repairs, maintenance, and purchase of fire apparatus.

A NO vote would mean...

No funds will be added to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 7

*To see if the Town will vote **to dissolve the Expendable Trust Fund** established in 2009 known as **Emergency Ops Center**, established for the continuation of town services during an emergency. If approved, any monies in said Expendable Trust Fund, presently in the amount of \$8,417.00, plus any accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, shall lapse to the Town’s Unassigned Fund Balance. This article is contingent upon the Town Meeting’s approval of Article 8, and, if the Town Meeting does not approve Article 8, this Article shall be null and void.*

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

Will close out this fund provided Article 8 passes.

A NO vote would mean...

That the fund will remain opened and will be restricted on how funds can be expensed.

Article 8

*To see if the Town will vote to establish an “**Emergency Management Operations Revolving Fund**” pursuant to RSA 31:95-h **for the purpose of providing and maintaining government services during emergencies, as deemed appropriate by the government body**. Further, to see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town to deposit into the Revolving Fund all or any part of the revenues from state or*

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*federal grants, any other state or federal funding program, or from any other sources intended for Emergency Management purposes, as approved by the governing body for deposit into the Revolving Fund. **Further, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$8,417.00 to be deposited in the Revolving Fund, said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, with no monies to be raised by taxation. The money in the Revolving Fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year and shall not be considered part of the town's general fund unassigned fund balance. The Board of Selectmen shall be the agents to expend from the Revolving Fund. The town treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund and shall pay out the same only upon order of the Board of Selectmen, and no further approval of the legislative body shall be necessary to expend. The monies in the Revolving Fund may be expended for maintaining government services, including, but not limited to, payroll, equipment, supplies, maintenance and repairs, utilities, and fuel. This article is contingent upon the Town Meeting's approval of Article 7, and, if the Town Meeting does not approve Article 7, this Article shall be null and void.***

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

Will open a new fund with expanded reasons for disbursement. This article is contingent on Article 7 passing.

A NO vote would mean...

No new fund will be created, and the current fund will be restricted on how the funds can be expensed.

Article 9

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,363.00 for the following Community Services.

AREA HOMECARE & FAMILY SERVICES	\$3,800.00
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER	2,000.00
DRUGS ARE DANGEROUS	2,500.00
HAVEN	3,050.00
NHSPCA	750.00
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION	5,000.00
ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION MEALS ON WHEELS	2,927.00
ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION MEALS ON WHEELS TRANSPORTATION	700.00
SOROCK COALITION FOR HEALTHY YOUTH	4,936.00
VIC GEARY CENTER	2,700.00
WAYPOINT (f/k/a CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES)	<u>2,000.00</u>
	\$ 30,363.00

This article would result in an estimated \$0.047 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

This article will allow the Town to pay for certain community services for the residents. The list of service providers in the article represent services used/offered to town residents and are used by the Newton Police Department, the Newton Fire Department, and the Newton Welfare Department.

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A YES vote would mean...

The Community Services listed will be funded as summarized and offset the costs to the Town.

A NO vote would mean...

This type of assistance that is provided to Newton residents in need would come out of the Operating Budget.

Article 10

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission the sum of \$5,000.00 for Recreational Programs and Trips for Newton Senior Citizens.

This article would result in an estimated \$0.008 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

The Newton Recreation Commission is requesting \$5,000 to plan/offer special programs and trips for Newton resident senior citizens. This is an increase of \$500 from 2022.

A YES vote would mean...

There would be \$5,000.00 to support programs and trips specifically for Newton Seniors. These events would be planned and organized by the Newton Recreation Commission.

A NO vote would mean...

There will be less events offered for seniors as they would need to be supported by the Recreation operating budget.

Article 11

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission, the sum of \$25,9200.00 to hire four Part-Time Lifeguards, one Part-Time Supervisor of Lifeguards: performing candidate searches and training and to purchase necessary Safety Equipment, to oversee the safety of all swimmers at the Town Beach between May 2023 and September 2023.

This article would result in an estimated \$0.040 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

This article will pay for the Beach Lifeguard program with funds collected by taxes to purchase equipment, recruit, train and hire lifeguards and a supervisor to oversee the safety of swimmers at the Town Beach during peak hours of the summer months.

A YES vote would mean...

The Town will have equipment, lifeguards, and a supervisor at the Town Beach for the summer.

A NO vote would mean...

The Town would not hire any lifeguards or supervisor for the Town Beach.

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Article 12

To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$60,000.00** to be paid toward the **2023 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL BUDGET** as an offset to the recycling and disposal costs, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$60,000 from the **Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund** created in 2003 for this purpose.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

This article authorizes the Town to withdraw up to \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund to take offset the hauling cost.

As of December 31, 2022, the fund balance is \$269,405.00

A YES vote would mean...

The Town can withdraw \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund to off-set the 2023 Solid Waste Disposal budget.

A NO vote would mean...

The Town would not withdraw \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund.

Article 13

*To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000.00** for the purpose of holding a Hazardous Waste Day, for Newton Residents only. Said monies to come from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund created in 2003 with no monies to come from taxation.*

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

The Town will hold a Household Hazardous Waste Day for residents only. Residents will be allowed to bring household hazardous waste such as paints, old gasoline, and more.

A NO vote would mean...

The Town would not hold the Household Hazardous Waste Day.

Article 14

To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Board of Selectmen to review and revise the 1998 Ethics Policy, to update the Ethics Policy in such a way as to allow the continued operation of town services.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

The Board of Selectmen would review and revise if needed the current code of ethics. The Board may choose to create a committee or a sub-committee for this project.

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A NO vote would mean...

No action would be taken, and the current code of ethics policy would remain as is.

Article 15

Shall the Town of Newton vote in accordance with RSA 72:27-a to readopt the provisions of the All Veterans' Tax Credit, RSA 72:28-b, and RSA 72:28-b:II, known as the Optional Veterans' Tax Credit, in the amount of \$750.00 per year? If adopted, the following individuals will be eligible for the Veteran's Tax Credit: (a) every resident of this state who served not less than 90 days on active service in the armed forces of the United States in any qualifying war or armed conflict listed in RSA 72:28, V, and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from service; or the spouse or surviving spouse of such resident, (b) every resident of this state who was terminated from the armed forces because of service-connected disability; or the surviving spouse of such resident; and (c) the surviving spouse of any resident who suffered a service-connected death. This tax credit shall replace and shall not be in addition to the standard veteran's tax credit and shall be subtracted in accordance with RSA 72:28, III.

The amount to raised from taxation is not determinable because it is not known how many qualified Veterans will apply for the credit.

A YES vote would mean...

Any Veteran who meets the requirements can apply for the tax credit under the RSA. The RSA was amended at the State level to include more Veterans and spouses. Currently, the Town offers qualified Veterans a tax credit of \$750.00 per year.

A NO vote would mean...

The Town would no longer offer the tax credit to all qualified Veterans and spouses.

Article 16

*To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 to be known as **the "Town Cisterns and Fire Ponds Capital Reserve Fund"** for the purpose of maintaining, repairing, and improving or replacing the Town's cisterns and fire ponds; to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to be placed in the fund and to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from such fund. Said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance.*

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

The Town will establish a capital reserve fund that would be for cisterns and fire ponds. The fund would be established using \$25,000.00 from the unassigned fund balance. These funds would be used to repair and maintain the 9 cisterns and fire ponds within the Town. The Town has not performed maintenance on these in over 10 years.

A NO vote would mean...

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No fund would be established to repair and maintain the cisterns and fire ponds within the Town. This could result in increase in property insurance for residents.

Article 17

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum \$5,130.00 to be deposited into the Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund created in 2021; said funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. The amount \$5,130.00 in the unassigned fund balance represents donations raised by Paul Murray through various events and deposited into the Town's general fund, but which are restricted for the purposes for which the Fund was created.

This proposed article will result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

The funds that were raised via donations would be placed in the Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund.

A NO vote would mean...

The funds would remain in the unassigned fund balance.

Article 18

*By petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the Town of Newton to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3000 to support a **Lake Host Program at the Newton Town Boat Ramp for the 2023 summer season**. The Lake Host Program is a collaborative effort between NH Department of Environmental Services, NH LAKES and local lake associations. It trains and employs individuals to provide courtesy boat inspections to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive plants, such as milfoil, from one lake to another thereby protecting public lake uses such as swimming, fishing, and boating.*

This article would result in an estimated \$0.003 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

In 2022 Country Pond Lake Association (CPLA) of Newton organized a Lake Host program that provided over 266.25 hours of inspection time at the Newton Town Boat Ramp. In 2023 CPLA plans to expand that to 565 hours of inspection time with a total cost of \$5,300. Funding for this program will come from town support via this warrant article, a matching NH LAKES grant and CPLA member donations.

A YES vote would mean...

The program will continue to educate boaters about invasive plants and provide a free voluntary inspection of boats and trailers.

A NO vote would mean...

No funds will be available to support the program and the program may not run in 2023.

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Article 19

By petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the Town of Newton NH , shall the town vote to express the non-binding view that the Planning Board should study the need and feasibility for adopting a Growth Management Ordinance pursuant to RSA 674:22, to restrict the development based on the state of Municipal Water and Sewer infrastructure in the town and other relevant considerations with the burden being placed on the developer to show this is the case.

This proposed article will result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

A YES vote would mean...

This would ask the Planning Board to investigate the feasibility of adopting a new ordinance that would restrict development until such time the Town has a municipal water and sewer infrastructure.

A NO vote would mean...

No action would be taken by the Planning Board.

Article 20

*By petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the Town of Newton to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** to be deposited into the **Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund** created in 2021 for the purpose of repairing, constructing / reconstructing, and maintaining the skateboard park located at Greenie Park.*

This article would result in an estimated \$0.015 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

As of December 31, 2022, the fund balance is \$20,104.95.

A YES vote would mean...

This article would raise \$10,000.00 from taxation and place the funds into the trust fund for future repairs of the skateboard park.

A NO vote would mean...

No funds would be raised through taxation.