

**TOWN OF WEST BATH**  
**ANNUAL BUDGET TOWN MEETING WARRANT**  
**May 16, 2024**  
**West Bath School, 126 New Meadows Road, West Bath, Maine**

To: Jonathan Beane, a Constable of the Town of West Bath in the County of Sagadahoc, and the State of Maine

Greetings: In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of West Bath, in said County and State, qualified by law to vote in Town affairs, to meet at the **West Bath School, 126 New Meadows Road, West Bath, Maine**, on **Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:00 pm**, then and there to act upon the following Articles, to wit:

**Art. 1** To choose a **Moderator** by written ballot to preside at said meeting.

**Joel Merry agreed to moderate if nominated.**

**Art. 2** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **General Government Wages**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Select Board	14,000.00
Town Administrator	85,321.00
Tax Collector/Treasurer	68,714.00
Town Clerk/Registrar of Voters	57,288.00
Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer	65,531.00
Health Officer	1,876.00
Road Commissioner	9,606.00
Animal Control Officer	3,109.00
Harbor Master	2,771.00
Deputy Fire Chief	4,159.00
Fire Captain (2)	2,047.00
Fire Lieutenant (2)	<u>1,084.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 315,506.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends: Same**

**The Select Board and Budget Committee recommendation is a 3.2% increase in wages. This article includes all positions except for firefighters, ballot/election clerks, and Planning Board members.**

**Art. 3** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Insurance & Benefits**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Payroll Taxes	\$ 28,000.00
Retirement	30,096.00
Health Insurance	90,000.00
Workers Compensation	8,000.00
Property & Casualty Insurance	23,000.00
Volunteer Firefighter Insurance	<u>1,000.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 180,096.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends: Same**

**Payroll Taxes and Retirement are based on the recommended 3.2% wage increase.**

**Art. 4** To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of 5 M.R.S. § 18252-C (PL 2021, Chapter 286) as allowed by MainePERS Rule Chapter 803.

The Town agrees:

- 1) To adopt the provisions of 5 M.R.S. § 18252-C as enacted by PL 2021, Chapter 286 as allowed by MainePERS Rule Chapter 803 for its non-participating employees with optional membership who previously declined to participate in MainePERS (“eligible employees”) and to comply with the following requirements:
  - a. Beginning in 2024, to annually offer eligible employees who have been employed for less than 5 years the opportunity to join MainePERS on a prospective basis during an open enrollment period from September 1<sup>st</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup> and to provide MainePERS with documentation of each election made by eligible employees under this provision; and
  - b. To withhold employee contributions for employees who join under this provision on an after-tax basis and to remit them to MainePERS.
- 2) To authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Amended Agreement between the Employer and the Maine Public Employees Retirement System.

This is a new option offered by the Maine Public Employees Retirement System that employers may choose to adopt. An employee will have the opportunity to opt into the system until they reach 5 years from the initial date of employment rather than having to make the decision immediately upon hire.

**Art. 5** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Town Administration**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Office Expense	55,000.00
Computer/Technology	50,000.00
Assessing	45,000.00
Select Board Contingency	15,000.00
Voting	3,300.00
Office Cleaning	7,000.00
Building Maintenance	<u>9,000.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 184,300.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

Building Maintenance includes cleaning and paper supplies (400), alarm (3,300), pest control (2,000), and lawn care (3,300).

**Art. 6** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Legal**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** \$ 20,000.00

**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

Ordinance review; policy review; assessing; personnel; other items that arise.

**Art. 7** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **General Assistance**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** \$ 2,000.00

**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

An appropriation will be requested annually rather than carrying the balance forward from year to year.

**Art. 8** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Protection**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Ambulance Service	75,000.00
Hydrants	27,700.00
Fire Department Operations	81,150.00
Fire Department Incentive	26,825.00
Animal Control	<u>5,535.00</u>

**Total:** **\$ 216,210.00**

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

This includes a 3.2% increase in the firefighter incentive.

**Art. 9** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Per-diem Firefighters**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** **\$ 60,890.00**

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

The request is for current staffing plus one additional shift Monday through Friday. This would put a second person on during the week with the Fire Chief (3,112 hours).

**Art. 10** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate all dog licensing fees and penalties collected during FY 2024-2025, except for the recording fee that must be retained by the Municipal Clerk pursuant to State law, as **additional payment to the Animal Control Officer** for services rendered to the Town.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** **Approval**

Fees and penalties amount to approximately \$1,200 to \$1,300 per year.

**Art. 11** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Harbors and Waterways**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Shellfish Warden Contract	10,000.00
Harbor Master	<u>1,600.00</u>

**Total:** **\$ 11,600.00**

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

The Shellfish Warden contract with Sagadahoc County estimates 12 hours per month. Two officers share patrol duties.

**Art. 12** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Sanitation**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Solid Waste	11,600.00
Hazardous Waste and Composting	<u>5,000.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 16,600.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

The Town of Brunswick and the City of Bath host Hazardous Waste Collection events in the spring and fall. West Bath plans to participate in both events.

Three totes are available for compost through Garbage to Garden. The Town is currently entitled to collect compost which will be used on Town property.

**Art. 13** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Public Works**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

General Roads	356,000.00
Birch Point Road Reconstruction	456,000.00
Salt Shed	1,300.00
Streetlights	2,000.00
Snow Removal	<u>297,960.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 1,113,260.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

**Art. 14** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Community Agencies**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

Bath Area Food Bank	2,000.00
Bath Area Seniors Activity Center	950.00
New Hope Midcoast	744.00
Spectrum Generations	1,915.00
Sweetser	<u>2,292.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 7,901.00</b>

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

**Art. 15** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Patten Free Library**.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** **\$ 41,332.00**

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

**Art. 16** To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for **Planning Board** stipends.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:** **\$ 3,000.00**

**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

\$50 per meeting for the Chair; \$25 per meeting for members.

**Art. 17** To see if the Town will vote to give all money received from the State of Maine for snowmobile registrations to the Over the Hill ATV Club for the maintenance of their system or network of snowmobile trails, on the condition that those trails be open to the public for snowmobile purposes at no charge in the snow season, and to authorize the Select Board to enter into an agreement with the Club under such terms and conditions as it deems advisable for that purpose.

All municipalities in the State receive an annual refund from the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands to be used for trail maintenance. Since West Bath does not have staff to maintain snowmobile trails, we would like to give the approximate \$500 we receive each year to the Over the Hill ATV Club.

**Art. 18** To see if the Town will vote to transfer all remaining but unexpended funds at the end of FY 2023-2024 from Fire Department Operations to the Fire Department Capital Fund to be used for future capital building, vehicle, and/or equipment expenditures.

**Art. 19** To see if the Town will vote to transfer all remaining but unexpended funds at the end of FY 2023-2024 from General Roads to the General Roads Capital Fund to be used for future capital road expenditures.

**Art. 20** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to use at its discretion for the following purposes the remaining \$40,528.89 in funds received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):

Fire Hall rear roof, rear entrance door, and insulating cellular shades; ADA accessible door openers to be installed at the Town Hall and the Fire Hall; Town Hall generator; Town Hall exterior building repairs.

**Select Board recommends 3-0:**

**Approval**

**Budget Committee recommends:**

**Same**

ARPA funds must be committed by December 31, 2024. The Select Board will vote to approve each disbursement of funds before they are spent.

**Art. 21** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$50,000 from unassigned fund balance (surplus) to be deposited in the Long-Term Capital Improvement Fund reserve account.

**Select Board recommends:**

**a NO vote 3-0**

**Budget Committee recommends:**

**Same**

The Investment Committee recommended in December 2019 that the Select Board include an article on the warrant each year as an "expenditure and replacement strategy" up to a total of \$880,000. This year the committee is recommending a NO vote.

**Art. 22** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to appropriate any anticipated revenues, not otherwise dedicated for specific purposes, to reduce the FY 2024-2025 Tax Commitment.

**Art. 23** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to appropriate from unassigned fund balance (surplus) an amount not to exceed 88% of the total non-capital expenditures for FY 2023-2024, and not otherwise appropriated herein, to reduce the FY 2024-2025 Tax Commitment.

- Art. 24** To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following rules and authorizations governing the collection of property taxes for FY 2024-2025:
- To fix the date of October 15, 2024, as the date when FY 2024-2025 taxes shall become due and payable and to charge 8.50% on unpaid taxes after that date.  
**This is the maximum interest rate that can be charged per Title 36 M.R.S. § 505.4.**
  - To authorize the Tax Collector to accept prepayment of taxes. No interest shall be payable on any prepayment.
  - To authorize the payment of tax abatements approved by the Select Board/Assessors from the property tax overlay or, if necessary, from unassigned fund balance (surplus).
  - To set the interest rate to be paid by the Town on abated taxes at 4.00% for FY 2024-2025.  
**The allowable interest rate on abated taxes is also set by the State.**
  - To authorize the Select Board to dispose of Town-owned personal property with a value of over \$500 and deemed by the Select Board to be surplus on such terms as it deems advisable.
  - To authorize the Select Board to direct the Treasurer to waive foreclosure of a real property tax lien mortgage if it determines such course of action to be in the best interest of the Town.
  - To authorize the Select Board to sell and dispose of all tax acquired property held by the Town on such terms as it deems advisable and to execute quitclaim deeds for such property, except that the Select Board shall use the special sale process required by 36 M.R.S. § 943-C for qualifying homestead property if it chooses to sell it to anyone other than the former owner(s).  
**The language in this article is required by Maine statute.**
- Art. 25** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to apply for and accept state, federal or other grants, on behalf of the Town for municipal purposes, including when necessary, the authority to sign grant contracts, documents and or other paperwork and accept the conditions that accompany grant funds, and to appropriate and expend such funds for authorized purposes, as the Select Board deems in the best interest of the Town during the ensuing fiscal year.
- Art. 26** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to accept or reject conditional or unconditional gifts of real property if acceptance of no single gift would obligate the Town to incur liabilities that total \$1,000 or more per year, as determined by the Select Board.
- Art. 27** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to accept or reject donations of personal property and/or to accept or reject gifts of money to the various accounts of the Town for the ensuing fiscal year and to appropriate those moneys donated for specific purposes.
- Art. 28** To see if the Town will vote to maintain, and exercise if appropriate, its right to take river herring from the New Meadows Lake consistent with the terms and conditions specified at the March 1977 Town Meeting.
- Art. 29** To see if the Town will vote to maintain a fishway on Winnegance Lake and to exercise its right to take river herring in accordance with the terms and conditions specified at the June 1988 Town Meeting and an agreement with the City of Bath and the Town of Phippsburg.

**Art. 30** Shall an ordinance entitled “**2024 Amendments to the Town of West Bath Land Use Ordinance to comply with H.P. 1489 – L.D. 2003 An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions**” be enacted beginning July 1, 2024?

(The proposed ordinance is available for review and inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office and will be available at the Town Meeting.)

**Art. 31** Shall an ordinance entitled “**2024 Amendments to the Town of West Bath Land Use Ordinance Regarding Public and Private Campgrounds**” be enacted?

(The proposed ordinance is available for review and inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office and will be available at the Town Meeting.)

**Art. 32** Shall an ordinance entitled “**2024 Amendments to the Town of West Bath Marine Resource Conservation Ordinance**” be enacted?

(The proposed ordinance is available for review and inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office and will be available at the Town Meeting.)

**Art. 33** Shall the Town vote to adopt the **2024 Comprehensive Plan** for the Town of West Bath, said plan to replace the existing Comprehensive Plan in its entirety?

**Art. 34** (Written ballot required by statute) To see if the Town would vote to increase the **property tax levy limit** established for the Town of West Bath by State law if the municipal budget approved under the preceding articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit.

**The proposed budget will not exceed the property tax levy limit.**

**Education Expenditures**

**Art. 35** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Regular Instruction**.

<b>School Board of Directors recommends:</b>	<b>\$ 2,723,314.91</b>
<b>Budget Committee recommends</b>	<b>Same</b>

*Explanation: This article covers salaries and benefits for regular education teachers and support personnel, as well as classroom supplies, equipment, books, and repairs for grades K-5. This article also includes the contracted services for pre-kindergarten students and tuition costs for students in grades 6-12.*

**Art. 36** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Special Education**.

<b>School Board of Directors recommends:</b>	<b>\$ 819,892.49</b>
<b>Budget Committee recommends:</b>	<b>Same</b>

*Explanation: This article provides salaries and benefits for special education teachers and support personnel, K-12 program tuition, staffing, out of district placement, and professional services.*

**Art. 37** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Career and Technical Education**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 0.00  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: Career and Technical Education will be provided through RSU 1 and is included in tuition rates.*

**Art. 38** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Other Instruction**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 4,500.00  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article includes costs to provide students with learning experiences not included under other programs (i.e., co-curricular, extra-curricular activities).*

**Art. 39** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Student and Staff Support**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 328,953.77  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article covers salaries and benefits for Guidance, Health, Technology, Improvement of Instruction, Staff Development, Library, and Student Assessment.*

**Art. 40** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **System Administration**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 110,280.75  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article provides salaries and benefits for the Office of the Superintendent. It also covers expenses for the School Board of Directors, financial software, insurance, advertising, dues and fees, legal fees, and auditing expenses.*

**Art. 41** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **School Administration**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 217,147.64  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article includes salaries and benefits for the Principal and support staff. It includes equipment, supplies, dues and fees, and contracted services.*

**Art. 42** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Transportation**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 180,625.00  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article covers expenses for transporting students in grades K-12 to and from school.*

**Art. 43** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Facilities Maintenance**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** \$ 232,840.00  
**Budget Committee recommends:** Same

*Explanation: This article covers expenses for facilities operations and contracted services for the West Bath School and grounds.*

**Art. 44** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Debt Service and Other Commitments**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** **\$ 0.00**  
**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

*Explanation: There is no current outstanding indebtedness relating to West Bath School.*

**Art. 45** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for **Other Expenditures, including Food Service**.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** **\$ 50,000.00**  
**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

*Explanation: This article covers expenses related to the food service program.*

### Revenues

**Art. 46** To see what sum the Town will appropriate for the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and to see what sum the Town will raise and assess as the municipality's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688.

**School Board of Directors recommends Total Appropriated:** **\$ 2,740,861.69**  
**School Board of Directors recommends Total Raised:** **\$ 2,442,519.10**

*State-Mandated Explanation: The Town's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act is the amount of money determined by state law to be the minimum amount that the Town must raise and assess to receive the full amount of state dollars.*

**Art. 47** (*written ballot required*) To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate in additional local funds (**the School Board of Directors recommends \$1,901,692.87**), which exceeds the State's Essential Programs and Services allocation model by (**the School Board of Directors Recommends \$1,851,692.87**) as required to fund the budget recommended by the School Board of Directors.

**The School Board of Directors recommends \$1,901,692.87** for additional local funds and gives the following reasons for exceeding the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model by \$1,851,692.87: the additional local funds represent local costs to support school budget programs and services that are not included in the State's funding model, including costs for transportation and special education services.

*State-Mandated Explanation: The additional local funds are those locally raised funds over and above the Town's local contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act that will help to achieve the budget for educational programs.*

## Summary Total Operating Budget

**Art. 48** To see what sum the Town will authorize the School Board of Directors to expend for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 from the school administrative unit's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, local funds for non-state-funded school construction debt service, additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, Section 15690, undesignated fund balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy and other receipts for the support of schools.

**School Board of Directors recommends:** **\$ 4,667,554.56**  
**Budget Committee recommends:** **Same**

*Explanation: This article is a summary article and approves expenditures of the proposed budget of \$4,667,554.56. This article authorizes the School Board of Directors to spend revenues on the amounts appropriated in the previous articles. This article does not raise any additional money. The estimated revenue sources are:*

Local Contribution	\$ 2,442,519.10
Additional Local Contribution	1,901,692.87
EPS State Subsidy	298,342.59
Carryover from 23-24	<u>25,000.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 4,667,554.56</b>

## Cost Center Transfers

**Art. 49** Shall the School Board of Directors be authorized to transfer amounts exceeding 5% of the total appropriation for any cost center to another cost center or among other cost centers for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, provided that transfers shall not be permitted to increase the authorized total school budget?

**The School Board of Directors recommends a YES vote.**

## Aid for Other Programs

**Art. 50** In addition to the amount in Article 14, shall the School Board of Directors be authorized to accept and expend any state, federal, and other grants, aid, and receipts during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, for school purposes, provided that such grants, aid, and receipts do not require the expenditure of other local funds not previously appropriated?

**The School Board of Directors recommends a YES vote.**

## Additional State Subsidy

**Art. 51** In the event that the Town receives more state education subsidy than the amount included in its budget, shall the School Board of Directors be authorized to use all or part of the additional state subsidy to increase expenditures for school purposes in cost center categories approved by the School Board of Directors, increase the allocation of finances in a reserve fund approved by the School Board of Directors, and/or decrease the local cost share expectation, as defined in Title 20-A, section 15671-A(1)(B), for local property taxpayers for funding public education as approved by the School Board of Directors?

**The School Board of Directors recommends a YES vote.**

The Registrar of Voters will be available at the West Bath Town Hall until 4:00 pm and at the West Bath School from 5:30 pm until closing for the purpose of correcting the voter list and to accept new enrollments.

Given under our hands this **2<sup>nd</sup> day of May 2024.**

/s/ Madelyn Hennessey, Chair

/s/ Suzanne Andresen

/s/ Kathleen Lavallee