

**TOWN OF RYE BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING**
Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Town Hall

https://www.townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=32&id=71706

Committee Present: *Chair Kate Dumas, Clerk Steven Borne, Doug Abrams (Vice Chair), Richard Furber, Tim Durkin, Elsie DiBella, Rye Beach Rep Frank Drake, Rye Water District Rep Scott Marion,*

Absent: *Jennes Beach Village District Rep Bill Christo, School Board Rep. Matt Curtin, Select Board Rep Scott McQuade*

Also Present for the Town: *Town Finance Director Alicia Griffin (present for meeting) and Lee Arthur for Sewer*

[Click Here](#) for the Agenda

Budget Committee Documents:

Updated green sheet for the meeting: [Click Here](#)

Reserve funds with end of year balances: [Click Here](#)

Note: During the meeting Finance Director Griffin reported that expenditures have not been pulled out of these funds. That is, the town has been using general funds and then requests distributions from the reserve funds.

Town Warrant Articles: [Click here](#)

Sewer Warrant Article: [Click Here](#)

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Dumas called the meeting to order at 7:35pm ET.

There was discussion about whether or not the Committee voted to adjourn the school public hearing, so this meeting was adjourned again.

- **Meeting Minutes**

Chair Dumas asked if there were comments on the School Board workshop meeting of December 17th. There was one issue with attendees.

Kate Dumas moved to approve the final meeting minutes of December 17th as amended. Seconded by Steven Borne. Approved all in favor 8-0

Chair Dumas asked if there were any comments on the town budget meeting of December 18th minutes. There was one issue with attendees. Hearing no other comments, **Scott Marion motioned to approve the meeting minutes of December 18th. Doug Adams seconded. Approved 8-0, one abstention for not being in attendance.**

Unfinished Business

Finance Director Griffin explained the updates to the principal debt and interest payments for the fire engine bond.

Kate Dumas motioned to approve the 4711-67 Debt Principal of \$139.00. Seconded by Steven Borne. All in Favor 9-0

Kate Dumas motioned to approve 47210-67 Debt Interest of \$42,812. Seconded by Doug Abrams. All in favor 9-0

Capital Outlays were discussed.

The Committee discussed the Planning Board request for \$30K 01-4902-68-746 to support the Master Plan Implementation and along with the letter and correspondence from Dominique Winebaum about how the Committee moved this to operating expenses last year and now it is back as a capital outlay. After seeing that this was the case in 2025, the expenditure was approved to operating expenses.

Steven Borne moved to increase the Planning Board Budget line 4191-11-468 by \$30K. Seconded by Frank Drake. All in favor 9-0

Frank Drake, seconded by Kate Dumas, then moved to increase the bottom line of Planning Board budget 4191-11 to the new total of \$272,084. All in favor 9-0

This change has no impact to the budget warrant article.

Scott Marion moved to approve the capital outlay request for 01-4902-68-760 in the amount of \$70K for a new vehicle. Seconded by Elsie Dibella.

No discussion. **All in favor. 9-0**

Tim Durkin moved Capital Outlay 01-4902-68-773 for \$40K for DPW MS4 assistance. Seconded by Scott Marion.

Member Borne explained that this was similar last year and to the Planning Board request in that this should be OpEx and not a one-time capital expense as it is for un-specified support that could be needed during the year. Member Borne also explained there is already an OpEx line for MS4 work and a reserve fund, so this is three different buckets of money to support MS4 work. Discussion was leaning to not move this to the DPW Budget and that it should be OpEx next year.

Vote to recommend 8-1.

Scott Marion moved Capital Outlay 01-4902-68-761 in the amount of \$25K for DPW repairs. Seconded by Doug Abrams.

Member Borne stated there are budgets and reserves for DPW equipment, and it was unclear why a specific \$25K was needed above what is currently available.

Vote to recommend 8-1.

Warrant Articles with expenditures:

Full Document: [Click Here](#)

***Article A.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the Emergency Management Capital Reserve Fund established by Article 18 of the 2023 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of emergency preparation and management, infrastructure repair, pollution mitigation, coastal hazards response, and all other costs and expenditures related to any disaster, critical incident, accident, fire, flood, public health concern, storm, or weather-related event. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Scott Marion moved to recommend Article A. Seconded by Kate Dumas.

There was discussion that the last report the Committee received shows \$73K in this fund. There has been no reason given as to why additional funds need to be added to this reserve account. There is not a known target amount for this reserve fund.

Committee recommended with a vote of 5-4.

***Article B.** To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty-four thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$64,000.00) and to authorize the withdrawal of said sum from the Ambulance and Fire Special Revenue Fund that was established by Article 15 of the 2005 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA 31:95-c, the name and purpose of which was amended by Article 24 of the 2018 Town Meeting, for the purchase, outfitting, and readying for service of a replacement vehicle for Car-1 the Fire Chief's vehicle. This article has no current tax impact. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

There is no tax impact from this article as it withdraws from a fund with a last shown balance of \$240,867.

Kate Dumas moved to recommend Article B. Seconded by Tim Durkin.

Committee recommended with a vote of 9-0.

Article C. To see if the Town will vote to establish a Non-Capital Reserve Fund in accordance with RSA 35:1-c, to be known as the Heritage Preservation Non-Capital Reserve Fund, for the purpose of acquiring, preserving, and restoring historical properties and cultural resources within the Town and for such other purposes identified in RSA 674:44-b, and to designate the Select Board as agents to expend from this fund after recommendation and approval by the Rye Heritage Commission. Further, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Twenty-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$25,000.00) to be deposited into the Heritage Preservation Non-Capital Reserve Fund. Prior to funds within the Heritage Preservation Non-Capital Reserve Fund being used for the acquisition of real property, the Heritage Commission shall hold a hearing in accordance with RSA 674:44-d. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (2-1)

Steven Borne moved to recommend Article C. Tim Durkin seconded.

There was discussion about the current Heritage funds, its ability to raise private money and the Town Hall shutter replacement project.

Committee recommended Article C with a vote of 5-4.

Article D1. Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget for the General Fund, 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 thirteen million, nine hundred seventy-two thousand, three hundred twenty-eight and 98/100 dollars (\$13,972,328.98)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be thirteen million, two hundred sixty-eight thousand, four hundred eight and 00/100 dollars (\$13,268,408.00) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town 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. (Majority vote required) NOTE: this operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations in any other warrant articles.

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

The early changes to the Capital Outlay do not impact the bottom line of this budget.

Scott Marion moved to recommend Article D1. Seconded by Doug Abrams.

Committee recommended 9-0.

Article D2. *Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget for the Sewer Department, 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 five hundred forty-seven thousand, two hundred twenty-two and 00/100 dollars (\$547,222.00)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget for the operation of the Sewer Department shall be five hundred seven thousand, one hundred thirty-seven and 00/100 dollars (\$507,137.00) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law. Said sum to come from sewer system user fees and rates and other non-tax revenues. (Majority vote required) **NOTE: this operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations in any other warrant articles.***

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Finance Director Griffin explains the MRI recommendation to separate the Sewer Fund from the Town Budget as it has no tax impact. All current operation costs are supported through user fees.

Member Borne pointed out that Sewer sets a precedent for the entire town voting on a service that only supports a subsegment of voters.

Steven Borne moved to recommend article D2. Seconded by Doug Abrams. Committee recommended 9-0.

Article E. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$50,000.00) to be added to the Rye Public Library Building Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund established by Article 14 at the 2005 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Discussion about the balance, which the Finance Director believes is not what is show as the Town still needs to replace funds spent from the 2025 operating budget for maintenance work.

Member Drake was adamant that the Library is not eligible to utilize the Town Maintenance Reserve Funds with the latest report showing a balance of \$239,241. Member Borne sees it as a municipal building and they should be able to draw from this reserve fund.

Scott Marion moved to recommend Article E. Seconded by Kate Dumas. Committee voted 9-0 to recommend Article E.

Article F. Non-monetary article. Committee does not vote on.

Article G. *To see if the Town will vote to establish a Contingency Fund pursuant to RSA 31:98-a for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000.00) to put in the fund. This sum to come from*

the unassigned fund balance. Any appropriations left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. No monies to be raised through taxation. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

The Committee discussed the history of this warrant and when the funds are not used, they go back to the un-assigned fund balance and could contribute to reducing the tax rate.

Member Borne feels that the general fund tends to have more than ample cushion. The \$59K that was just spent to produce the Beach Parking Meter study was not planned and came from other budgets.

**Doug Abrams motioned to recommend Article G. Seconded by Scott Marion
Committee recommended article G 7-2.**

Article H. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000.00) to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund established by Article 24 at the 2020 Town Meeting pursuant to RSA 35:1 for the revaluation of the Town at least as often as every fifth year as required by RSA 75:8-a. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

There was discussion about when the revaluation will be and what the cost will be. When the fund was established, the plan was to contribute \$15K a year for five years to get to \$75K. The reserve fund report shows \$49,513, so this implies 2026 will be year four. Select Board McQuade reported he believes the new estimate will be \$100K.

Member Borne thought the cost should be going in the other direction as Rye now outsources assessing to MRI, so there should be synergies and savings.

**Scott Marion moved to recommend Article H. Seconded by Doug Abrams.
Committee voted to recommend 9-0.**

Article I. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be added to the Recreation Building and Property Maintenance Fund, the purpose of which was amended by Article 18 of the 2022 Town Meeting. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

There was discussion that there is a budget for maintenance, and a reported balance of \$49,229 in this fund. Member Borne said that Recreation, as an appointed commission, must certainly qualify as municipal buildings and could use the \$239,241 in the Municipal Buildings Maintenance Reserve Fund or the \$113K in the Construction and Renovation Reserve Fund. Finance Director Griffin reported that the Town spent from the general fund in 2025 and that the Municipal Building Reserve Fund balance is closer to \$190K.

Scott Marion moved to recommend Article I. Richard Furber seconded.

Committee recommended with a vote of 5-4.

Article J. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$250,000.00) to be added to the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, created in 1994. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

There were questions about why the Town is requesting to allocate such a large amount of cash when the Select Board has been saying the plan is to bond large expenditures.

Member Borne reiterated what DPW Director Rucker has explained multiple times. There is about \$1.4M or more of DPW heavy equipment. Stretching the useful life was eliminating any resale value and those later years accounted for disproportional amount of the maintenance. The new plan retires vehicles when there is resale value and prior to growing anticipated maintenance.

Member Borne went on to explain that every year residents benefit from the roads, snow plowing and the other DPW services, so each tax year should contribute. Contributing to reserves or paying debt both work, the Town just needs to do one or the other. Member Borne pointed out how the Town is paying more for the fire engine that is partially bonded when there was saved and ample cash to pay without borrowing costs. Note the \$1.5M the Select Board used to buy down taxes in the fall of 2025.

Finance Director Griffin explained that the \$571K shown in the reserve fund balance is not all available as 2025 spending from the general fund has not been reimbursed from this fund. Current actual balance is unclear.

Kate Dumas motioned to recommend Article J. Seconded by Doug Abrams. Committee votes to recommend 9-0.

Article K. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$25,000.00) to be added to the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan/Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SPCCP/SWPPP) Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 established by Article 14 at the 2024 Town Meeting for the purpose of preparing for mandates related to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program, also referred to as "MS4 Program" and such other regulatory mandates that may relate to stormwater management and control. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Member Borne questioned what the target balance is. Why is not the \$50K sufficient? There is an operating budget for this work and there was the capital outlay. Yes, MS4 state mandates require more DPW effort, so it should be in Opex and planned for.

Scott Marion motioned to recommend Article K. Seconded by Kate Dumas. Committee voted to recommend Article K 8-1.

Article L. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$35,000.00) to be added to the Municipal Building Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund established by Article 11 at the 2007 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA 31:19a, for the purpose of major repairs to municipal buildings. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Scott Marion moved to recommend Article L. Kate Dumas seconded.

The \$190K in the Municipal Building Maintenance, \$113K in Construction/Renovation Fund and the \$92K in building maintenance budgets was discussed. The Committee questioned why another \$35K needed to be added to reserve funds.

Members Marion and Dumas were requested to withdraw the motion to recommend.

**Doug Abrams motioned to not recommend Article L. Seconded by Steven Borne
Committee voted to not recommend Article L 9-0.**

Article M. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the Landfill Monitoring Capital Reserve Fund established by Article 11 at the 1994 Town Meeting the purpose of which was amended by Article 22 of the 2024 Town Meeting. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Member Borne pointed out that this is for the Breakfast Hill Landfill and the Grove Road dump. As these were annual costs, the Town had moved this annual expense to OpEx. However, as the Breakfast Hill PFOA plume continues to expand, the Town had un-anticipated costs one year, so contributions to this fund started again.

Member Borne questioned why the \$26K balance is not sufficient and why the town needs to increase this by \$10K.

**Scott Marion moved to recommend Article M. Seconded by Doug Abrams.
Committee voted to recommend Article M 6-3.**

Article N. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the Municipal Buildings Construction and Renovation Capital Reserve Fund established by Article 9 at the 2020 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA35:1 for the purpose of construction or renovation of town owned buildings. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

No one could speak about what the current \$113K balance is for and when it would be used. There was no rationale for why \$10K more is needed.

**Doug Abrams moved to not recommend Article N. Seconded by Steven Borne.
Committee voted to not recommend Article N 8-1.**

Article O. No tax impact, so the committee skipped this article.

Article P. (By Petition) *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Four Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,400,000.00) for the purpose of replacing the Town's DPW fuel station located at the Grove Road Transfer Station and to move it back from its current location and further away from the Rye Water District Wellhead Protection Area and to authorize the issuance of not more than One Million Four Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,400,000.00) in bonds and/or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, NH RSA Chapter 33 as amended, and to further authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds and/or notes and to determine the rates of interest thereon? (3/5 ballot vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

RWD Rep. Scott Marion explained that this is from the RWD because the DPW and Select Board were looking to locate the fueling station at the location shown on a site plan from former DPW Director McCarthy. This is to push the fueling station as far away from the Garland Well as possible, as it is the primary well for Rye water.

Member Borne discussed how it was not a great idea to locate the Transfer Station in the aquifer protection zone originally. Even though spending \$800K on the salt shed made this situation less bad, it's still not good. Member Abrams indicated that the money should not be spent installing a fuel island this close to Garland Well.

**Doug Abrams moved to not recommend Article P. Seconded by Steven Borne.
Vote to not recommend: 4-5 (failed)**

**Scott Marion moved to recommend Article P. Seconded by Kate Dumas.
Committee voted to recommend Article P 5-4.**

Article Q. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the Conservation Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund established by Article 13 at the 2021 Town Meeting pursuant to RSA 31:19-a to repair and maintain land and buildings owned by the Town of Rye and managed by the Rye Conservation Commission. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. (Majority vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Member Borne once again stated that these buildings should fall under municipal buildings and could use the \$190K if needed or the \$113K construction/renovation funds. In the past, the Conservation Commission said it's going to be \$40K to repair the walls, we will put in money this year and next, then do the work. So, what is the money for now that is not in the OpEx budget?

**Scott Marion moved to recommend Article Q. Seconded by Tim Durkin.
Committee recommended Article Q 6-3.**

Article R. *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$45,000.00) for the purpose of developing a Sewer Financial Assessment and Plan and to authorize the Sewer Commission to borrow Forty-Five Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$45,000.00) from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) Clean Water Revolving Fund, in accordance with RSA 33:5-d and all other provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, NH RSA Chapter 33, as amended, and to further authorize the Sewer Commission to negotiate, execute, and issue such bonds, notes, and other documents as needed for such purposes. Further, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars and 00/100 Dollars (\$450.00) for interest payments on said loan during Fiscal Year 2026, said amount to be paid by and through sewer rates. If approved, monies borrowed under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund will be eligible for principal forgiveness upon approval of the loan application and the satisfaction of the requirements under the loan program. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation in accordance with RSA 32:7, VI and shall not lapse until either the completion of the project or December 31, 2031, whichever is earlier. (3/5 vote required)*

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Sewer Director Lee Arthur explained this warrant to the Committee. While it calls out the \$450 interest payment, this has no impact to people not using the sewer system. Any wording changes would require going back to the DRA, so it is staying as is.

**Steven Borne moved to recommend Article R. Seconded by Doug Abrams
Committee voted to recommend Article R 9-0.**

Article S. *To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the latest tentative bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Rye Select Board and the Rye Police Association affiliated with the Teamsters Local 633 of New Hampshire, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:*

Year Estimated Increase	
2026	\$41,908.00
2027	\$33,383.00
2028	\$29,640.00

And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-one thousand nine hundred eight and 00/100 dollars (\$41,908.00) for the 2026 fiscal year, such sum representing additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement. This appropriation is in addition to funds appropriated through the operating budget for current staffing levels in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

Member Borne inquired about any changes to accrued vacation and sick time to better align with the private sector practice of not allowing this time to accumulate. Member Borne expressed concern that the CBA helps with retention as that is one of the largest challenges.

Scott Marion motioned to recommend Article S. Seconded by Doug Abrams. Committee voted to recommend 9-0.

Article S2. No Committee action required

Article T. *To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the latest tentative bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Rye Select Board and the Rye Town Employees Association affiliated with the Teamsters Local 633 of New Hampshire, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:*

Year Estimated Increase

2026 \$39,986.00

2027 \$39,075.00

2028 \$25,866.00

And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-nine thousand nine hundred eighty-six and 00/100 dollars (\$39,986.00) for the 2026 fiscal year, such sum representing additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement. This appropriation is in addition to funds appropriated through the operating budget for current staffing levels in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement. (Majority vote required)

This article is recommended by the Selectmen (3-0)

No discussion.

Scott Marion motioned to recommend Article T. Seconded by Doug Abrams. Committee voted to recommend 9-0

Article U. (By Petition) *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of nine thousand five hundred and 00/100 dollars (\$9,500.00) to purchase two or three mounted radar speed signs.*

This article is/is not recommended by the Selectmen (x-x)

There was some discussion about whether this article needs to specify which department this money goes to and who is responsible.

Steven Borne moved to recommend Article U. Seconded by Richard Furber. Committee voted to recommend 9-0.

No further business before the Committee.

Tim Durkin moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Borne