

**REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
FOR THE
TOWN OF WORTHINGTON
2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

The intent of this report is to provide information on the results of operations on the most recently ended fiscal year, [Fiscal Year 2023], which closed June 30, 2023 and a status report on the current Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Please note that this report uses the exact same format of prior year reports to make it easy to compare from year to year. Only the dates and amounts change.

FISCAL YEAR 2023

The tax levy for Fiscal Year 2023 was 3,235,000.61 with a resulting tax rate of 14.91. The town taxed under its levy limit (unused taxing capacity) by 211,790.66. The average single family residential value was 217,097.39 and the average single family tax bill was 4,589.36. This resulted in a 215.36 dollar increase for the average single family tax bill. At year end actual local receipts exceeded estimates by 89,342.24 and unspent net appropriations were 48,424.42 (state assessments that exceeded estimates were netted). Included in those state assessments was the school choice assessment which is a charge to the town for children who live in Worthington but opt to go to another school system for which the town must pay. The town budgeted 202,285 for this and at year end the actual charge was 280,637.00. As a result of operations the 7/1/23 Free Cash was certified at 162,805.00.

Each year the Reserve Fund is created by an appropriation at Annual Town Meeting pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.40, s.6. Its' purpose is to provide funding for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. Transfers by formal requests are approved or disapproved by the Finance Committee. To approve a transfer from the fund to another appropriation, the Finance Committee must find that the request is for either an extraordinary or unforeseen purpose and not just because the appropriation is depleted or overspent. In Fiscal Year 2023, 10,000.00 was budgeted in the Reserve Fund and five transfers were requested and approved.

No. 1	Website Maintenance	1,000.00
2	Planning Board Expense	500.00
3	Board of Health Agent	800.00
4	Machinery Fuel	5,500.00
5	HCAA Ambulance	2,039.43
	Total:	9,839.43

FISCAL YEAR 2024

The Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Town Meeting and a Special Town Meeting in December approved a total of 5,290,104.90 in appropriations. The town operating budget totaled 2,520,609.37; the town school budget totaled 1,371,663.65 and vocational education totaled 226,323.00. The town also appropriated 76,494.00 to Gateway RSD as the town's share of Gateway debt. This resulted in a grand total operating budget of 4,195,090.02. This was a 339,960.71 dollar increase and an 8.82 percent increase from the prior year. The school budget represents 32.70 percent of the total town operating budget. If we add the vocational education amount to the town school budget total, the total education budget represents 38.09 percent of the total town operating budget. It should also be noted that there are other school related costs that are not appropriated in the above mentioned school budget but are contained in other operating appropriations such as the cost of the Conwell building and fringe benefits for school employees. The Conwell building

appropriation totals 144,677.00 and fringe benefits such as health insurance total 205,045.00 which is included in the Group Insurance appropriation. In addition, as mentioned above the town is charged an assessment from the State for the cost of Worthington students that through the School Choice Program attend schools in other towns. This assessment per the Fiscal Year 2024 cherry sheet is 281,234.00 and while it is not appropriated at town meeting, it is added to the town's budget.

In addition to the operating budget, the town appropriated a total of 416,684.07 from the General Stabilization Fund. The amount of 378,000.00 was appropriated for a new ten wheel dump truck for the Highway Dept. Also for the Highway Dept., 6000.00 for extraordinary garage maintenance and 5000.00 for extraordinary machinery maintenance. Also 23,444.00 was appropriated for a new trash compactor and 4,240.07 was appropriated to the ARPA grant. To help replenish those votes, the town voted the sum of 355,252.00 from Free Cash into the General Stabilization Fund.

The town also appropriated the sum of 100,000.00 from the State Septic System Program grant for repairs to systems at the Highway, Fire and Town Hall.

The revenue budget projected 1,104,247.00 in estimated receipts from state and local sources, 3,534,221.05 from property tax revenue, 355,252.00 from Free Cash, 416,684.07 from the General Stabilization Fund, 100,000.00 from the Septic Repair Program and 232,578.81 in "Chapter 90" state highway aid.

The tax levy for Fiscal Year 2024 was 3,534,221.05 with a resulting tax rate of 14.45. The town taxed under its levy limit (unused taxing capacity) by 66,320.95. The average single family residential value was 348,120.00 and the average single family tax bill was 5,030.33. This is an increase of 440.97 from Fiscal Year 2023.

As always, we would hope that this report will help to inform you of town budget actions as well as other information that can be found on the Finance Committee's page on the town's web site <https://worthington-ma.us/municipal-directory/finance-committee/> . In closing, we also would like to thank all town departments for their help in the budget process and hope to see you all at the Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Joe Boudreau (Chair)
Bart Niswonger
Melinda Rose