

**TOWN OF BROOKLINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Administration & Finance Subcommittee**  
**Public Hearing**  
**March 24, 2023 8:30 a.m.**

**Attendance:** Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; Chief John Sullivan; Subcommittee members: Kelly Hardebeck, Neil Gordon, Joslin Murphy, Harry Bohrs, and Wendy Macmueller, John Van Scoyoc

**Hearing Recording**

[https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/TkY1Xxbd9pmCv3\\_wpqegy\\_vEXd8E2HPkHCM1z\\_n4sLK S5SdEP9qgHa-kmC03RD9V.hjjJ3pUnO\\_gbJE6i](https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/TkY1Xxbd9pmCv3_wpqegy_vEXd8E2HPkHCM1z_n4sLK S5SdEP9qgHa-kmC03RD9V.hjjJ3pUnO_gbJE6i)

The subcommittee met on March 24<sup>th</sup> to review non-appropriated expenditures “requested” for FY24. Note that this category consists of mandated expenditures and assessments that are automatically added to the tax rate, without appropriation. As these assessments are not appropriated by Town Meeting, neither the subcommittee nor the full Advisory Committee need make any recommendation.

The following table is from the FY24 Financial Plan; individual line items, summarized from the Financial Plan, are further explained below the table:

CLASS OF EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL FY2022	BUDGET FY2023	REQUEST FY2024	FY24 vs FY23	
				\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
<u>State and County Assessments</u>					
County	1,116,294	1,144,201	1,134,411	(9,790)	-0.9%
Air Pollution District	35,140	36,540	36,224	(316)	-0.9%
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)	32,571	35,293	36,351	1,058	3.0%
Special Education	64,770	78,840	53,486	(25,354)	-32.2%
School Choice Sending Tuition	76,456	101,247	85,794	(15,453)	-15.3%
Charter School Assessment	66,816	48,175	69,916	21,741	45.1%
Registry Parking Surcharges	189,020	104,440	49,680	(54,760)	-52.4%
MBTA	5,357,582	5,838,522	6,086,842	248,320	4.3%
<b>SUB-TOTAL - STATE AND COUNTY ASSESSMENTS</b>	<b>6,938,649</b>	<b>7,387,258</b>	<b>7,552,704</b>	<b>165,446</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
<u>Misc. Non-Appropriated Expenses</u>					
Cherry Sheet Offsets -Libraries	101,559	131,592	145,424	13,832	10.5%
Tax Levy Overlay	3,603,145	1,930,062	1,978,314	48,252	2.5%
Tax Titles/ Court Judgments/ Deficits	17,062	25,000	25,000	0	0.0%
<b>SUB-TOTAL - MISC. NON-APPROPRIATED</b>	<b>3,721,766</b>	<b>2,086,654</b>	<b>2,148,738</b>	<b>48,252</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>TOTAL NON-APPROPRIATED</b>	<b>10,660,415</b>	<b>9,473,912</b>	<b>9,701,442</b>	<b>227,529</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

**COUNTY TAX**

The cost of county government is apportioned according to the equalized valuation (EQV) of Brookline in relation to the total EQV of all cities and towns in Norfolk County. Under the present EQV's, Brookline pays more than 14% of the Norfolk County assessment.

Brookline is assessed for a portion of the costs incurred by the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to monitor air pollution levels and enforce air quality standards at industrial,

commercial, and institutional facilities. Expenditures made for such purposes are assessed one-half in proportion to the EQV's and one-half by the population of each community.

### **METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL (MAPC)**

The basic purpose of the Council is to coordinate and assist communities in their planning efforts, particularly for those activities or projects that may have a regional impact. The total assessment is apportioned based on the community's share of the total district population.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

This assessment is to partially reimburse the State for providing special needs education to children enrolled in state hospital schools. The cost that each municipality is charged is the average per pupil cost of education within the school district multiplied by the Full Time Equivalent of resident pupils served by the State. Current year charges are for pupils served in the prior school year.

### **SCHOOL CHOICE SENDING TUITION**

The State assesses Brookline for pupils attending another school district under School Choice. School Choice tuition charges are assessed against the sending district and paid to the receiving school district. Cherry Sheet estimates are based on the prior year's final tuition rates and enrollment figures. The tuition charge is based on the number of Full Time Equivalent students multiplied by the per pupil tuition rate. Per pupil tuition rates are based on the receiving district's per pupil costs for the prior fiscal year. Costs are based on instruction, pupil services, administration, maintenance and fixed charges. A student's tuition equals 75% of the per pupil cost, up to a limit of \$5,000. For a student with an individualized education plan, a special education increment augments that tuition. The amount of the increment is determined by applying annual cost rates to the specific services cited in a pupil's individual education plan.

### **CHARTER SCHOOL ASSESSMENT**

The State assesses Brookline for the costs associated with pupils attending a Charter School district. Municipalities and school districts are reimbursed for this assessment based on the following schedule: in year one, an amount equal to 100% of the assessment; in year two, an amount equal to 60% of the assessment; in year three, an amount equal to 40% of the assessment; after year three, no reimbursement. The reimbursement of the assessment, which appears as revenue under State Aid, is, of course, subject to appropriation. If the account is not fully-funded, then the reimbursement is pro-rated.

### **PARKING FINE REGISTRY SURCHARGE**

If after proper notices a motorist fails to pay a parking fine, motor vehicle excise tax, or a charge for abandonment of a motor vehicle, the Town notifies the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) to not renew the license and registration of that motorist. To cover the RMV's administrative costs of entering the necessary information into its computer system, the RMV assesses the Town a fee of \$20 for each notification it receives. This fee, which comes through as a charge on the Cherry Sheet, is recovered by the Town by adding this amount and other penalties to the original fine amount.

### **MBTA**

The MBTA provides rapid transit and other mass transit services to 175 cities and towns including Brookline. Prior to the 1999 enactment of the reform package that overhauled the budgeting and assessment procedures for the MBTA (commonly referred to as "forward-funding"), only 78 communities were assessed, totaling \$145 million and increasing 2 1/2 % annually. Now 175 communities are assessed and total assessments declined over a six-year period, ending in FY06, when it reached \$127.5 million. With the total assessment being spread over a larger number of communities, the assessment for the original 78 communities was lowered over the six-year period.

Each community's MBTA assessment equals its weighted share of the total population of the authority. The population figures utilized in this calculation are the most recent from the United States Census Bureau.

### **EDUCATION OFFSET**

Included in the estimated amount of aid to be received from the State are grant funds for the Libraries. These funds are reserved for direct expenditure by the departments and cannot be counted as general available revenues. Consequently, as part of the tax rate preparation process, whatever amount is included within the state aid estimate is also included in the non-appropriated expense section as an off-setting debit.

### **TAX LEVY OVERLAY**

The Board of Assessors is required to put aside funds from each tax levy in a reserve that is called an Overlay. This account is established in anticipation that a certain percentage of the tax levy may end up being abated or exempted. Individual tax abatements are paid out of this fund, as are exemptions for certain elderly, veterans, surviving spouses, and blind persons. The final amount of the overlay account is determined by the Assessors and added to the tax rate without appropriation.

### **TAX TITLES, COURT JUDGMENTS, AND DEFICITS**

If the Town receives a court judgment requiring the payment of funds, the Treasurer, with the Director of Account's approval, may pay the award from the treasury without appropriation. The amount must then be added to the tax rate for the following year unless a subsequent appropriation is made to cover the deficit prior to setting the next year's tax rate. From time to time, there are other non-appropriated expenses that have to be added to the tax rate. Any deficits in revenue, overlay, pensions, or debt and interest accounts, along with tax title amounts, must be added to the following year's tax rate.