

## Selectboard Budget Preview

Our Town Report is at the printers and the informational meeting to discuss the Budget is scheduled for Monday, March 1, 1010 at 7 p.m. We would like to remind you, however, that you can come to either the February 8<sup>th</sup> or February 22<sup>nd</sup> regular Selectboard meeting if you have any questions that you would like answered.

At Town Meeting 2008, you voted to raise \$613,523 by taxes. At Town Meeting 2009, you voted to raise \$533,508. The significant decrease was, as we explained, the result of removing money for paving from the Highway Budget and we told you that that was a one time reduction. At Town Meeting 2010 we are seeking to raise \$585, 292 (that amount includes the money requested in two articles for a scholarship fund and the creamery roof). Why is there an increase?

To begin with, at Town Meeting 2010 we will need to raise \$7,700 to cover the deficit for fiscal year 2008-09. Why was there a deficit? In Fiscal Year 2008-09, our State Highway Aid was reduced by \$5,000; the Transfer Station income was down \$4,000 and the expenses were up \$10,000 (we have corrected that problem by changing haulers); and we had anticipated using funds from the Community Hall savings account to pay for the new roof. Unfortunately, those funds were never transferred to that account in 2005-06 and 2006-07 and were used instead for general fund expenses during those years.

In addition to providing for that deficit, for the 2010-11 Budget some costs that we cannot control have risen. For example, our liability insurance premium (which covers our buildings and equipment) has risen \$5,000. We need to budget for three, rather than two employees' health insurance in the event that the new Town Clerk/Treasurer needs insurance. (All employee insurance expenses are now found under Payroll Expenses and, effective July 1, 2010, employees will contribute 5% of the cost of their health insurance.) For 2010-11 we have also budgeted 4 hours a week for an Assistant Town Clerk as well as 4 hours a week for an Assistant Treasurer. Since our new Town Clerk/Treasurer will not have the benefit of Jan Ladd's 15 years of experience, we believe this is necessary. Under the Highway Budget, we have restored paving - as we told you we would be doing last year.

This (2009-10) Fiscal Year we have been aggressively pursuing – and obtaining – grants. \$56,000 of the \$63,000 cost of the Sunset Lake Spillway project was grant-funded and another \$7,000 of work on Sunset Lake Road was funded completely by a grant from Better Backroads. Early this summer we will be replacing the deck on the Route 144 bridge (Bridge #17). 95% of this work (\$304,000) will be paid for with an ARRA grant. We have the 5% match in the bank. We have been awarded a \$10,400 grant to install the Rain Garden (a rainwater filtration system) at the northwest corner of the intersection of Stage and Lake Roads and Better Backroads will be funding \$10,000 of ditching work on North Stage Road this summer. We just received \$44,000 in Emergency Funds from VTrans to reimburse the 2009-10 Highway Budget for money we had to spend as a result of last summer's storms. The Fire Department and the Energy Committee have also been awarded grants.