



OBSERVER REPORT

Finance Committee February 13, 2023

Abbot Hall

Format: Hybrid

LWVM Observer – Katharine Redmond

Members Present: Alec Goolsby, Pat Franklin, Cameron Staples, Timothy Shotmeyer, Terra Samuels, Michael O’Neil, Molly Teets, Eric Knight, Michael Janko
Guests: Thatcher Kezer

Thatcher Kezer’s update on the FY24 Budget Submission/Review Process:

The town has reached a long-anticipated budget crisis. On-going base line expenses have grown faster than available revenues for yet another year and there is not sufficient “free cash” to close the gap. There is a structural deficit and to submit a balanced budget at Town Meeting, departments will need to make budget cuts which will be visible and painful to all.

Thatcher is working with department heads and Finance Committee members are meeting with their liaison groups developing these painful budgets.

At the same time, Thatcher and the Finance Committee liaison groups will continue meetings to hammer out an alternative budget which would require an override to Proposition 2 ½. Thatcher aims to create budgets which accurately reflect the cost of doing the town’s business. Part of the discussion will be to decide if the override should address the problem for FY 24 only – or build a more long-term plan. (The “Town of Marblehead State of the Town” presentation is very informative. It is posted on the Town of Marblehead website under “Home/News”).

Tentative Schedule of Finance Committee Meetings to Review Budgets

Monday March 20:

Health and Waste
Library
Retirement

Monday, April 3
Selectmen
Schools
Water and Sewer

Monday March 27:

Recreation and Parks
Assessor
Cemetery
Town Clerk

Monday, April 10 - Warrant Hearing