



## OBSERVER REPORT

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** 3/8/21 LWVM Observers: Katharine Redmond, Bonnie Grenier  
Members Present: Ben Berman, Pat Franklin, Emily Belfbecker, Blair Nelson, Alec Goolsby, Kevin Brodrick, Emma Puglisi, Clerk

Retirement Board: Linda Gifford

- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC) determines the annual retirement appropriation amount. Marblehead's FY22 appropriation is \$4,783,897.
- Town contribution impacting tax rate is \$3,822,649. This is an increase of approximately 8.79%.
- Remaining contribution of \$961,248 comes from the Marblehead Housing Authority and the Light, Water, Sewer and Harbor enterprise funds.

Assessors Department: Michael Tumulty

- Budget of \$262,903.79 approved for vote at Town Meeting
- There is a slight increase in the salary budget over last year because the Clerk I position will be funded for the full twelve months. It had been vacant July and part of August 2020.
- There is a significant decrease in the expense budget in appraiser subcontracted services since FY22 is not an appraisal certification year

Water and Sewer Departments: Amy McHugh

- Water and Sewer are Enterprise departments and their budgets do not impact the town tax rate
- Water budget of \$5,308,798 approved for vote at Town Meeting
- Sewer budget of \$5,104,016 approved for vote at Town Meeting
- Water purchase fees to MWRA constitute the largest cost to the Water Department
- Town Meeting in 2019 authorized the Water Department to borrow \$5.26 million from the MWRA for a 10-year, 0% interest loan. \$2.2 million was used last year to replace the main and add additional valves along Tedesco Street. This year the remainder of the loan will be used to do the same work on Humphrey Street. Water budget includes loan repayment of \$526K.
- SESD appropriations constitute the largest cost to the Sewer Department.

Cemetery Department: Kathy Kobialka

- Level funding budget of \$400,474 approved for vote at Town Meeting
- Increase in burials anticipated in FY '22. Plans for the development of the Locust East at Waterside Cemetery, an area near Liberty Lane, are underway

Recreation and Parks Departments: Peter James, Jaime Bloch, Charles Osborne and Linda Rice-Collins

- Level funding budget of \$836,831 approved for vote at Town Meeting
- Renovations to the Stramski property are scheduled for completion in the fall of '22 at which time the house will be fully handicapped accessible and available for community and private revenue generating events.
- Public hydration stations are planned to open this summer
- A tree and landscape initiative is in the planning stages
- Both pavilions in Chandler Hovey Park are becoming unusable due to safety concerns. Possible next steps are demolition or private fund raising and/or a town override for needed repairs.
- User fees for recreation areas may be considered to provide needed funding for upkeep and development, as is common practice in many towns.