

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 3 PRIMROSE STREET, NEWTOWN, CT  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Jordana Bloom, Laura Miller, Keith Alexander, Tom Long, Ben Ruben, Derek Pisani, Jennifer Nicoletti, John Zachos, Chris Gardner, Heather Dean, Eric Paradis, Steve Hinden via google meets

**ALSO PRESENT:** First Selectman Jeff Capeci, Finance Director Bob Tait, CH Booth Library Director Jennifer Nash, Library Board of Trustees Elaine Corbo, Don Stadley and David Schill and 9 members of the public

**CALL TO ORDER:** K. Alexander called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:33pm.

J. Bloom moved to add 24/25 budget discussion to the agenda. J. Zachos seconded, all in favor.

**VOTER COMMENT:** None

**MINUTES:** J. Bloom moved to approve the minutes of the 2/7/24 regular meeting and 2/26/24 special meeting, H. Dean seconded. T. Long was concerned that the action sent to the Ordinance committee was not included in the 2/7/24 minutes. J. Bloom moved to amend the motion to approve only the 2/26/24 special meeting minutes, H. Dean seconded, all in favor.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** See Attached.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** J. Bloom reported that the Ordinance Committee had their first meeting this evening. They are charged to determine if the Recycling Adhoc Committee should be turned into a permanent meeting. They are going to research this and have the First Selectman at the next meeting on 3/20/24.

**FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT:** First Selectman Capeci reported that they have found a Finance Director replacement. She is currently the financial analyst for Saco ME and will start with the Town on April 1. The BOF passed the budget and is now with the LC. There is no update on the walking bridge in Sandy Hook Center.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Fill vacancy on Legislative Council District 1* – L. Miller moved to nominate Jill Soderholm. Voting limited to Democrats. All in favor (Gardner, Miller, Alexander, Bloom, Paradis, Dean).

*Grant Acceptance SS4A (Safe Streets and Roads for All)* – J. Bloom moved to approve the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant (att). H. Dean seconded. Fred Hurley explained they are looking for various ways to reduce pedestrian and motorist serious injuries and fatalities. This action plan is the start, then if we need additional development or planning funds and the final piece would be funding programs and projects.

*Library Board Presentation* – Don Studley, Dave Schill and Library Director Jennifer Nash presented (att).

Transfer – J. Bloom moved to transfer \$40,000 from Contingency to Repair & Maintenance (fire) (att), C Gardner seconded. Bob Tait explained that this is for removing class B firefighting foam from 3 fire trucks as well as additional funds needed to cover costly repairs. It was questioned if ARP funds should be utilized for this instead of contingency. J. Bloom moved to withdraw the motion.

T. Long moved to advise the ARP committee to consider allocating the funds required for this project to come out of the covid supplies or unallocated funds at their discretion. C. Gardner seconded. All in favor.

RESOLUTION – J. Bloom moved a resolution for an appropriation totaling \$250,000 to be used for: an outdoor playscape at the Newtown Community Center as approved in the 2024-25 Capital Improvement Plan. To be funded from the Newtown Community Center special revenue fund. D. Pisani seconded. All in favor.

RESOLUTION – J. Bloom moved a resolution providing for an appropriation totaling \$500,000 to be used for: a new auxiliary pool HVAC system as approved in the 2023-25 Capital Improvement Plan. To be funded from the Capital & Non-Recurring fund in the amount of \$250,000 and the Newtown Community Center special revenue fund in the amount of \$250,000. B. Ruben seconded, all in favor.

**24/25 Budget Discussion** – K. Alexander explained that he wanted to go through the budget process. The Education subcommittee will be meeting on March 5 and March 11. The Finance subcommittee is meeting on March 4 and March 7 and the Municipal subcommittee will be meeting on March 6 and March 12.

**Voter Comment** – None

**Announcements** – None

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Arlene Miles, Clerk*

*Attachment: Correspondence, S&P Q&A, SS4A Grant, Library presentation, transfer*

**From:** Newtown CT via Newtown CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 13, 2024 8:40 AM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 - 8:40am  
Submitted by anonymous user: 146.70.202.163  
Submitted values are:

Your name: Thomas Michael O'Connor  
Your e-mail address: [mike@thirdwave.associates](mailto:mike@thirdwave.associates)  
Subject: thank you for doing the right thing  
Message:

I wanted to take second and reach out to thank you all for taking the time to consider the implications of entering into a contract with Capital tax recovery. The fact that they have subsequently walked away from this lucrative (for them) opportunity speaks volumes to what is actually happening with car taxes in the state of Connecticut, and frankly their ability to meet the commitments that they had made to Newtown. As you may know, CT leadership has been trying to move away from the car tax for some time now – and is finally having success. The new valuation schedules for vehicles provided by the state of CT will result in dramatically lower valuations for many vehicles and thus a lower assessment. This , combined with our new lower mill rate in Newtown , makes chasing down “deadbeats” much less worthwhile that it would have been in the past. This is especially true when you factor in the 30% we would have handed over to CTR and the salaries of Newtown employees involved in tax collection. What you may not know is that the state of CT does NOT require municipalities to tax motor vehicles as personal property – the law simply allows for it as a mechanism to raise additional tax revenue which of course just about all municipalities have done. Perhaps a more equitable way to handle this would be to stop tax motor vehicles in Newtown all together, and simply raise the mill rate to offset the loss of this revenue. Put this to a vote and see what the taxpayers have to say. Again, thank you for not just rubber stamping a proposal that had several complex implications, including our privacy and the equity of Newtown residents , while only providing a definite economic benefit to a company that has capitalized on our states byzantine way of allowing municipalities to raise revenue.

Sincerely,  
Mike (Thomas) O'Connor  
22 horseshoe ridge rd  
Sandy hook

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173146>

**From:** Newtown CT via Newtown CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2024 12:04 PM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Thursday, February 15, 2024 - 12:03pm  
Submitted by anonymous user: 2600:6c65:797f:e1cf:11d1:bf20:e954:1fd2  
Submitted values are:

Your name: ROBERT A. GEDAROVICH  
Your e-mail address: [bayhills111@gmail.com](mailto:bayhills111@gmail.com)  
Subject: MOTOR VEHICLE TAX COMPLIANCE PROJECT

Message: As a Newtown taxpayer, I am extremely disappointed that the Legislative Council failed to go forward with Capital Tax Recovery on the Motor Vehicle Tax Compliance Project. The Council needs to bring this matter to a vote and engage Capital Tax Recovery to get out of state vehicle registrations onto the Newtown tax rolls. Those taxpayers who comply with the law should not be burdened with higher taxes because of residents who choose to avoid paying their vehicle taxes to Newtown. -ROBERT A. GEDAROVICH 12 ENCLAVE CIRCLE, NEWTOWN CT.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173171>

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 17, 2024 11:38 AM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Saturday, February 17, 2024 - 11:37am  
Submitted by anonymous user: 172.70.39.145  
Submitted values are:

Your name: May Gaudet-Wilson  
Your e-mail address: [mhgwilson17@gmail.com](mailto:mhgwilson17@gmail.com)  
Subject: 6 Commerce Road

Message: I am opposed to development of this parcel at 6 Commerce Road. This site occupies the upland area of a swath of undeveloped land which serves as valuable wildlife habitat and also as a buffer to Deep Brook, a Class A trout stream, one of the few in the state. There are also some legal issues to be resolved (does EDC have authority currently? and no town meeting being held). Please do not vote to develop this parcel.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173211>

**From:** Keith Alexander <lc.alexanderk@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Monday, February 19, 2024 1:02 PM

**To:** 'Saori Adams' <topdog@yourhuckleberryfarms.com>

**Cc:** 'Arlene Miles' <arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov>; 'Jeff Capeci' <jeff.capeci@newtown-ct.gov>; 'Ku, Michelle' <michelleku.newtown@gmail.com>; 'Dan Cruson Jr.' <dancruson.newtown@gmail.com>

**Subject:** RE: Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Hello Saori,

The property issue is still currently with the Board of Selectmen so I suggest you take any legal concerns to them.

The Legislative Council will keep your thoughts on land usage in mind as things move forward.

--Keith

CC: LC Clerk, Board of Selectmen

BCC: LC

Any opinions above are my own and do not represent those of the Legislative Council as a whole.

--

Respectfully,

**Keith Alexander**

*Chair, Newtown Legislative Council*

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <[cmsmailer@civicplus.com](mailto:cmsmailer@civicplus.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 6:20 PM

**To:** [lc.alexanderk@gmail.com](mailto:lc.alexanderk@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Sunday, February 18, 2024 - 6:20pm

Submitted by anonymous user: 172.71.254.96

Submitted values are:

Your name: Saori Adams

Your e-mail address: [topdog@yourhuckleberryfarms.com](mailto:topdog@yourhuckleberryfarms.com)

Subject: 6 Commerce Rd

Message:

It has come to my attention via FB that the First Selectman is trying to illegally allow development on 6 Commerce Rd without the input of the board. I want to make sure that isn't true.

I understand that some people from town think expansion is needed to take in more tax dollars but after driving through New Canaan after 25 years - I couldn't have been more disgusted with how many homes, condos and whatever else they tried to squish into that place.

Meadows have their place in the ecosystem. As a farmer we need places for wildlife to go and find food - otherwise they're eating mine and whatever I'm trying to produce for myself and my neighbors. Every piece of nature you destroy - you make it harder for me and my community to thrive because the wildlife has to find another food source.

I'd like the board to consider the long term impacts rather than the short term gain.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173241>

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 9:16 PM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Sunday, February 18, 2024 - 9:15pm  
Submitted by anonymous user: 172.69.6.118  
Submitted values are:

Your name: Neil F Baldino  
Your e-mail address: [neil.baldino@gmail.com](mailto:neil.baldino@gmail.com)  
Subject: The EDC "Executive Session" Tuesday, the 20th at 7PM - My Public Comments  
Message:  
Dear Newtown Legislative Council,

In the latest example of the Town making it as difficult as possible for the public to participate in oversight and participation, it has come to our attention that the email link on the Economic & Community Development page of the town website does not in fact go to the members of the commission. Instead, emails sent to that address go to one town employee (who is currently out of town), and one former employee. The sender then receives an auto-reply message telling them that the former employee no longer works for the town, and they must resend their message to a new town employee.

As I'm sure the 1st Selectman knows, the ECD plans to go into executive session this Tuesday (2/20) to discuss whatever backroom deal he's been working on regarding 6 Commerce Rd., without a vote of BOS as required by our town charter.

I hope there is consensus among the BOS that the process governed by the charter should be followed, mandating the BOS to vote and approve the 1st Selectman's Proposal before it can be proposed to any other commissions, AND that in light of the public not being able to email their testimony into the ECD Commissioners prior to the meeting where they will discuss 6 Commerce Rd., there should be no executive session at this Tuesday's meeting. Intentionally or not, you cannot silence the public on this.

After 18 years of failed attempts to push through ill-conceived plans to develop/sell the taxpayer-owned meadow, without ever holding a public hearing to hear what the public thinks should or should not happen, it's incredible, insane, to have to write this note right now. The town should be inviting more public participation, and making it as transparent and easy as possible. Instead, it is doing the opposite. Something has to change.

As a long standing taxpayer of Newtown (over 3 decades), you take my concerns into consideration.

Thank you,

Neil Baldino  
18 Gelding Hill Road  
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

The results of this submission may be viewed at:



**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 19, 2024 9:32 AM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Monday, February 19, 2024 - 9:31am  
Submitted by anonymous user: 172.71.194.99  
Submitted values are:

Your name: Suzan Hurtuk  
Your e-mail address: [suzanhurtuk@gmail.com](mailto:suzanhurtuk@gmail.com)  
Subject: 6 Commerce  
Message:  
Good Morning!!

I am writing you as a concerned Newtown resident. I ask that the legislative council please work with the residents of Newtown and our state representatives (who are already onboard ) to have the language of the deed for 6 Commerce changed to keep this land protected and preserved for the Newtown community.

The land has sat for 18 years, the only reason it has come up now, is because there is a road that was put in by the sanctuary to access this property.

BUT, even before the animal sanctuary took root in this area, this particular tract of open space was already VERY important to the residents of Newtown.

It is a treasure trove of natural beauty, peace and serenity. This area is also very delicate as it sits on an aquifer that supplies our single source of water in Newtown, which is already filled with E. coli, a serious danger if we don't begin to clean it up!!

The residents of this town already opposed this development that is coming back on the table with Teton Capital.

I am VERY concerned that the board of selectman is not following protocol and abiding by the Charter for our town.

How can you assure me that you are doing everything to engage with the community that you serve and that you are following our town Charter?

Thank you for taking this matter seriously!  
-Suzan

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173261>

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 19, 2024 1:55 PM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Monday, February 19, 2024 - 1:55pm  
Submitted by anonymous user: 172.70.39.16  
Submitted values are:

Your name: Jessica Kurose  
Your e-mail address: [jessica.kurose@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.kurose@gmail.com)  
Subject: Meadow on 6 Commerce Rd.

Message: I am writing because I want to call on our First Selectman and the Economic and Community Development Commission to keep the beautiful and environmentally critical land on 6 Commerce Rd, adjacent to the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary, away from developers. Newtown's nature and open spaces are one of the things that makes it so special - please keep it that way.

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173271>

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 6:43 AM  
**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Monday, February 26, 2024 - 6:43am  
Submitted by anonymous user: 172.70.134.19  
Submitted values are:

Your name: Dan Holmes  
Your e-mail address: [danholmes1022@gmail.com](mailto:danholmes1022@gmail.com)  
Subject: Development in the right places  
Message:  
Letter to Board of Selectmen

To whom it may concern,  
The property adjacent to the Hubbard Animal Sanctuary which was originally slated for "economic development" is an important piece of land to protect and preserve for many reasons. I have been part of a large group of citizens that have been vocal against the originally proposed Technology Park for nearly 20 years now and we are faced once again with continued threat to the disruption and ecological fragmentation that would ensue upon the Town of Newtown's eagerness and short sighted plans to construct buildings, add parking and other impacts to this prime agricultural land now known as 6 Commerce Road. I still prefer to call it Old Farm Road.  
This parcel of land is owned by our town and as such should continue to benefit all of its citizens. There is always a need to foster economic development, yet there is not a good reason to destroy the rural nature of this land since it will be forever changed and impacted negatively-for the fish, the amphibians, and of course our enjoyment of the land. We need to think creatively about where we build and what we build. This parcel of land is not the space for this type of development.  
We also need to continue to find creative ways to create housing to accommodate our growing population. Again, this is not the space to create those structures.  
All of our town has the ability to benefit from the open spaces and creative uses of the remaining greenfield spaces in our town. It is because of these meadows, woodlands and other pastoral parcels that we are drawn to our town. We have to continue to be vigilant to preserve these spaces throughout our town so that we have them available for many generations.  
With this action, we can feel comfortable knowing that our generation cared enough to look forward and preserve as much of the land as possible.  
Again, no one is saying "no development in our town" but what we are saying is let's develop in the right way with higher standards of low impact development in the right place.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Holmes  
2 Spring Road  
ZNewtown, CT. 06470

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173416>

**From:** newtownct via newtownct <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

**Sent:** Monday, February 26, 2024 10:55 AM

**To:** lc.alexanderk@gmail.com

**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact the Newtown Legislative Council

Submitted on Monday, February 26, 2024 - 10:55am

Submitted by anonymous user: 172.70.174.30

Submitted values are:

Your name: david ackert

Your e-mail address: [dave@daveackert.com](mailto:dave@daveackert.com)

Subject: Process for disposing of real property (6 Commerce Rd.)

Message:

Good morning. It has come to my attention that our First Selectmen has shared his written opinion that a vote of the BOS is not required before proposing the sale or development of the taxpayer owned property at 6 Commerce Rd. (in accordance with section 8-10 of the town charter, which is included at the end of this message for reference), because he believes that the Economic Development Commission is still appointed under Chapter 132 of CT General Statutes to operate as a municipal "Development Agency"...an appointment bestowed onto them by vote of the LC in 2006 for the specific purpose of forming a development plan for the project known as the Newtown Tech Park. A portion of his recent statement is quoted below for reference:

"... a Board of Selectmen/Legislative Council designated the EDC as the development agency for the property eighteen years ago. What they are doing currently is within the scope of that appointment. When they finish their work, they will return to the Board of Selectmen with a recommendation for the property."

I reached out to the First Selectman's officer with a FOIA request for any legal opinions regarding the validity of the "Development Agency" designation today, and was told that was privileged information. I made the same request with the CT Commissioner of Economic Development in Hartford. Thankfully, they were very responsive, forthcoming and transparent. The Commissioner's office has oversight on municipal development agency appointments. Within minutes of my request, a legal staffer confirmed that our local EDC's appointment as Development Agency was limited in scope to the Tech Park Project, and because there was grant money issued to them for that project, their Development Agency designation officially ended as soon as the State forced them to reallocate the remainder of that grant money to another unrelated project (FFLD Hills). She further confirmed, that even if the appointment was still recognized by the state, and even with the "Economic Development" language attached to the land conveyance, nothing in the CT Gen Statute encourages or allows the process outlined in our charter to be ignored or circumvented.

I'm writing to ask for your help in clarifying some of the confusion in the First Selectman's office and among the Economic Development Commission. A simply vote by the LC, on a resolution to revoke the EDC's authority to act as Development Agency that was granted by the LC back in 2006 for the long-dead Tech Park project, would bring closure and go a long way. The EDC needs to understand that their appointment as a development agency ended with the Tech Park project, which would remove the fiduciary responsibility and pressure they feel encumbered by. And the First Selectman needs to understand that the process outlined below by our Charter, is the process that should be followed.

Section 8-10, Newtown Charter:

(a) The First Selectman, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen and the Legislative Council by a majority vote of its membership, may propose the Disposition of Real Property.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dave Ackert, on behalf of the Newtown Conservation Coalition

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/node/86983/submission/173431>

NEWTOWN, CT

NEW ISSUANCE CONFERENCE CALL: 2/22/2024 @ 2:30PM

## S&P CONTACTS

Victor Medeiros | 617-530-8305 | [victor.medeiros@spglobal.com](mailto:victor.medeiros@spglobal.com)

Dylan Lindow | 617-530-8033 | [dylan.lindow@spglobal.com](mailto:dylan.lindow@spglobal.com)

Telephone: (646) 558-8656

Meeting ID: 856-6140-3865#

Passcode: 571572#

## Debt & Liabilities

1. Please discuss the town's debt issuance plans for 2024 and 2025. Any new debt authorizations the town is considering?

The town plans to issue debt in 2024 for the following projects. These projects were all planned in the adopted Capital Improvement Plan and have all gone through the town appropriation process:

### 2024 PROJECTS TO BE BONDED:

SANDY HOOK MEMORIAL	50,000
HAWLEY HVAC	4,000,000
HIGH SCHOOL HVAC REPLACEMENT	950,000
MUNICIPAL CENTER ROOF	1,550,000
HIGH SCHOOL BACKFIELD	10,000
HEAD O'MEADOW CONDENSING	515,000
GLEN RD CLEAN UP	200,000
BRIDGE PROGRAM	925,000
FIRE APPARATUS 22 23	600,000
LIBRARY RENOVATIONS	200,000
MULTI PURPOSE HVAC REPL	200,000
	<u>9,200,000</u>

The current approved CIP (attached) has no bonding in 2025. The town has had a practice of taking a bonding "holiday" every fifth year.

2. Have you entered to any of the following transactions/agreements (if yes, please provide any supporting documents)?

- Bank loans or privately-placed debt (aside from small capital leases) – (yes/no)

No

- Variable interest rate or synthetic interest rate debt – (yes/no)

No

- Unrated loans or bonds – (yes/no)

No

## Economy

3. Update on economic development and new growth. Any new developments that will drive grand-list growth?
4. Any local economic pressures worth highlighting that will have financial implications?

## Finances

### 5. Fiscal 2023 and 2024:

- Please discuss FY 2023-year end results and discuss positive/negative variance compared to the budget. Did the year perform as anticipated?

FY 2023 ended up with good results. On the revenue side the general fund ended up with a positive variance of \$431,285 (page 87 of the financials) despite budgeting the use of fund balance of \$1,300,000. In other words, we did not end up actually using any fund balance. Fund balance was used due to our fund balance policy. The use of fund balance was offset by an appropriation on the expenditure side in the transfer out – capital non-recurring account (one time capital items).

Back to revenues, a negative variance in current property taxes was offset by a positive variance in other grants. This was due to the state CAP on motor vehicle taxes. To make this up they gave the towns affected a grant. Intergovernmental revenues had a positive variance due to the CAP mentioned above. Charges for services were as budgeted (for the most part) and investment income had a great outcome. A \$1.3MM positive variance! This is due to not being overly aggressive on the budget figure.

Expenditures had an overall positive experience of \$146K. The result was actually \$417K to the better at fiscal year end until the town transferred that amount to the capital and non-recurring transfer out account.

- Please update 2024 year-to-date. What are your estimates for yearend general fund balance?

In FY 2024 we have a planned use of fund balance of \$1,500,000 (again, offset on the expenditure side with an appropriation to one time capital items). I estimate that the town will end up using \$200,000 of the fund balance. Mainly because of a favorable balance in interest earnings (again) and intergovernmental.

On the expenditure side the town estimates to have a \$400,000 favorable balance mainly due to staff turnover and the time it takes to replace these positions.

Total general fund, fund balance at the end of FY 2024 is estimated to be \$18,000,000+ (14%) as shown in our current BOS/BOE budget proposal for FY 2025 (page 32...attached).

- Discuss school budgetary performance. Is there any budgetary pressure from the sunset of ESSR grants?

The latest school budget report dated 12/31/2023 (attached) estimates a year end surplus of close to \$500,000. Positions funded by ESSR grants are now being funded in FY 2024 in the general fund. The BOE's current request for the 2025FY represents a 5.59% increase over the prior year. The overall budget increase at this point in time (in the budget process) is 4.57%. Newtown has experienced four years of practically no mill rate (effective tax rate) increases up to this point. There is budgetary pressure but not of a large magnitude.



6. 2025 and Long-Term Projections:

- Discuss budgetary assumptions heading into FY 2025. How are you assuming state/intergovernmental aid?

We are in the second year of the State bi-annual budget so state revenues are more stable in the second year. We are reasonable sure that the revenues the governor has already announce will stay the same or increase. We have the governor amounts in the FY 2025 budget (that is in process). The recommended pension ARC is reflected in the budget. Employer health insurance contributions have increased 10% because of claims experience. It is a same services budget with inflation applied to it in areas. Again, the overall budget increase, at this point in the budget process, is a 4.57% increase.

- Any plans to draw on reserves?

The use of fund balance in the FY 2025 budget request is \$1,200,000 which is offset on the expenditure side by an equal appropriation to one time capital items. This is the fourth year in which the town has budgeted the use of fund balance to comply with our fund balance policy (fund balance can be no more the 12% of total budget). However, because of favorable budget experience in all those years we continue to budget for it.

- A handful of collective bargaining contracts expire at 6/30 – What are your expectations?

Negotiations with the police union are in process. Negotiations with the emergency communications are expected to start soon. It is expected that the process will be completed in house. Very rarely does the town go to arbitration. Both contracts are expected to be completed by fiscal year end. Estimated salary increases of 2.93% for these union positions are reflected in the current FY 2025 budget request.

**Management**

7. Have you recently experienced any turnover in key executive or financial management positions? If so, what was the principal reason for the turnover?

The Town has a new First Selectman who has had many years' experience on various town boards (Legislative Council and the Board of Selectmen). So he is very familiar with the town practices including the budget process and the capital improvement plan.

The Finance Director is retiring on 4/12/2024. The town is at the second interview point with (3) good candidates. It is planned to have a two week overlap period during which the current finance director will fill in the new finance director with current responsibilities, practices and plans.

8. Have there been any changes to your financial management practices or policies? Since our last rating review. Anything you want to highlight regarding cyber security or environmental risk mitigation?

There have been no changes to our management practices or policies since the last rating review. We continue to secure cyber security insurance. Our IT department is proactive regarding risk mitigation (the insurance application process for cyber security is a long process whereby we have to demonstrate our risk mitigation activities).

Please provide the following updated documents:

- Most recent budget report, as shared with the governing body.
- Most recent investment report including holdings and earning, as shared with the governing body.
- Updated capital improvement plan (if applicable)
- Updated financial forecast (if applicable)



- Updated debt management plan (if applicable)



# **Bond Rating – Standard and Poor's**

**Newtown Economic and Community Development Update**

**February 14, 2024**



## Summary

- The 2023 Grand List is expected to grow 0.64.
- In 2023, more than 2,300 building permits were issued - 16 for new construction and the balance for myriad improvements, outbuildings, etc.

<u>Style</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Single family residential	21	38	71	29
Rental apartments	27	54	98	96
Total units	48	92	169	125

- The impact of industrial, retail plazas, rental apartments and assisted living facilities is a significant contributor to tax revenue.

Assessment	Use
\$45,548,156	Industrial
\$43,670,770	Retail Plaza
\$23,900,415	Rental Apartments
\$20,368,993	Assisted Living
\$10,548,700	Utility
\$7,201,700	Professional
<u>\$6,039,710</u>	Vacant Land
\$157,278,444	

- Over the next two years, three properties with significant value will finish the business incentives that they were awarded, increasing their net assessment.



## 2023 Grand List Growth

	2022 Grand List	2023 Grand List	Difference	Growth
Real Estate	\$4,016,850,721	\$4,035,742,221	\$18,891,500	.47%
Personal Property	\$154,088,688	\$165,993,006	\$11,904,318	7.72%
Motor Vehicles	\$352,254,380	\$338,651,377	-\$1,698,685	-1.1%
Totals	\$4,523,193,789	\$4,540,386,604	\$29,097,133	.64%





## Fairfield Hills Mixed Use

- The application for national historic designation is pending federal approval.
- Rental apartments and mixed use entities are proposed in two existing buildings on the campus. The town has [entered into a memorandum of understanding](#) with a developer for two buildings, totaling 300,000 square feet.
- Investment in Kent and Shelton Houses could reach \$70-\$80 million, creating an estimated 162 one and two bedroom units. Units would be both market rate and affordable.
- Job creation: 214 direct construction, 247 indirect construction, 5 FTE permanent.





## Commercial Growth

- Most of the community's retail spaces are full or near capacity with several new businesses poised to open in the coming weeks.
- Sand Hill Plaza, the community's largest retail center, is under new ownership and is aggressively being marketed nationally for new tenants.
- Other areas of town with smaller retail centers and storefronts are experiencing similar occupancy success.
- Sandy Hook Village continues to lead local growth with new multi-family housing developments complimenting new business growth and storefront occupancy.
- Job creation: Dozens of new jobs are being created and maintained as new business tenancy continues growing.







## 201 South Main Street

- A recreational vehicle dealer invested \$7 million to open a new facility on a previously developed but long abandoned site. The company has since been acquired by a larger national operator – Blue Compass RV Newtown. This site continues to attract RV repair customers and purchase prospects from the region to Newtown.





## 7 Glen Road, Sandy Hook

- Town owned brownfield leased to local business organization
- A Small Town Economic Assistance (STEAP) Grant received for \$129K for adding infrastructure and capping of some contaminated soils will create a trailhead for a destination Heritage Trail, and provide much needed incremental parking to the village. Project expected to be completed spring of 2024.



Heritage Park  
Heritage Trail Pavilion







## 28A Glen Road, Sandy Hook

- Town owned brownfield obtained through foreclosure process due to unpaid taxes (2013)
- Newtown is in the process of awarding a contract to a qualified bidder for remediation and demolition. The town is in the early stages of considering post-remediation use for the parcel.





## E&CD Department Active Grants

- Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP): \$128,500
  - 7 Glen Road, Sandy Hook
- Economic Development Administration (EDA): \$914,000
  - Sanitary sewer system replacement has been completed at Fairfield Hills – this grant is now closed out.
- Community Project Funding Grant (EPA): \$480,000
  - Funds are currently committed and reserved with a planned application submission to activate that funding anticipated April 1.
- **Total: \$1.0 million**





## Additional Economic and Community Development Department Initiatives

- Business support functions include promotion through press releases, a monthly e-newsletter to 2,000+ recipients, ribbon-cutting events.
- Re-activated Newtown's representative to the regional state Tourism District.
- Attending and hosting regional commercial brokers meetings.
- Networking with statewide contacts through CT Office of Small Towns (COST) and CT Main Street Center.
- Newly designed department website has launched, allowing the department to enhance promotion of the town and its many offerings, helping to drive traffic to support businesses.
- Increasing department budget to accommodate increased advertising of the community to site finders and relocation professionals.



---

### Developing News!

January 2024

---

#### Got MAC?

New family business catering to Apple lovers!



Photo: #022024

Newtown's first new business ribbon cutting of 2024 happened on the chilly morning of January 5, as family members and staff joined First Selectman Jeff Caputo, Economic Development Commission Chairman Jeffrey Robinson and ECD staff welcoming Patrick Foti, President and founder of **COMPEO** for a ceremonial ribbon cutting at his second location in the Village at Lexington Gardens.

After launching a successful first location in Stamford, MAC lovers and owners can now access Newtown's own Apple Authorized Service Provider and Lenovo authorized service provider.

Along with offering a variety of computing and gaming accessories, Foti also stocks a variety of peripherals, along with rebuilt and updated pre-owned laptops and desktop monitors. For information, inquiries or orders, please contact: [info@compeo.com](mailto:info@compeo.com) or call 860-339-0000.

## C. H. Booth Library Surplus Analysis-23/24 Fiscal Year

**Audited surplus at June 30,2023     \$       546,618.00**

Designated for June 30,2024 budget deficit	\$       147,907.00	Required to balance budget as originally submitted to town
Designated for capital improvements	\$       200,000.00	As approved by Library Board
Designated for operating reserve-10%	\$       185,870.00	In accordance with Board of Finance policy (10%)
Undesignated surplus	\$       12,841.00	
Total Summary	\$       546,618.00	



## C.H. BOOTH LIBRARY - 2024 BUDGET

### EXPENDITURES

	23/24 Budget	24/25 Proposed	Difference
Personnel	1,236,474	1,285,820	49,346
Town-Pension	25,354	25,354	-
Operations	280,775	268,377	(12,398)
Occupancy	128,178	147,149	18,971
Administration	27,000	27,000	-
	<u>1,697,781</u>	<u>1,753,700</u>	<u>55,919</u>

### Surplus Funds Used for Operations

2020-2021	-
2021-2022	106,300
2022-2023	136,022
2023-2024	<u>147,907</u>
	<u>390,229</u>

### REVENUE

	23/24 Budget	24/25 Proposed	Difference
Town-Grant	1,301,469	1,479,976	178,507
Town-Pension	25,354	25,354	-
Fund Raising	133,500	153,000	19,500
Investment income	65,550	73,594	8,044
Other	<u>24,001</u>	<u>21,776</u>	<u>(2,225)</u>
	<u>1,549,874</u>	<u>1,753,700</u>	<u>203,826</u>
Surplus Funds	<u>147,907</u>	-	-
	<u>1,697,781</u>		

### Town Funding:

	Grant	Pension	Total	
2020-2021	1,395,351	28,557	1,423,908	
2021-2022	1,381,000	27,013	1,408,013	(15,895)
2022-2023	1,381,469	26,152	1,407,621	(392)
2023-2024	1,301,469	25,762	1,327,231	<u>(80,390)</u>
				<u>(96,677)</u>



## C. H. Booth Library Building & Grounds Work Summary Report

- Following are lists of repairs and upgrades to be completed using the Library “Fund Balance” in accordance with direction from Legislative Council and Board of Finance during the development of budget 2023/24.
- Each Category lists a number of Subcategory items with estimated cost and priority.
- The scope of work was developed for each Category, then recently updated based upon employee feedback, budget, and priority.
- Subcategory items have been combined under one scope, and the use of General Contractor is being considered to make bidding process more efficient and economical.
- Total Estimated cost for all listed work is \$200,000 (with 3% Contingency)

## C. H. Booth Library Building & Grounds Work Summary Report

### General Maintenance:

<u>Subcategory</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Fix ceiling Panels	High	\$ 7,000.00
Fix vents and water damaged ceiling	High	\$ 4,000.00
Front Entrance Stair Tread	High	\$ 1,000.00
Painting (Stairwell, Hallway, Entryway)	Med	\$ 2,000.00
Library Signs/ Directory/ Emergency Signs	High	\$ 30,000.00
Outdoor Sign	High	\$ 3,000.00
New AV Equipment for Meeting Rooms (New Item)	High	\$ 11,000.00



## GENERAL MAINTENANCE



Ceiling Tile  
Childrens Room



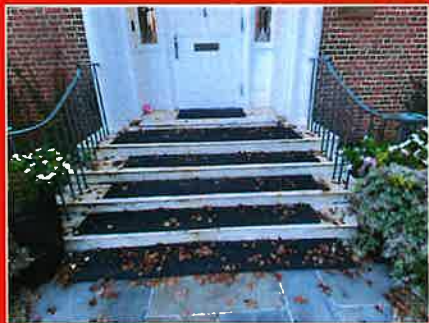
First Floor Ceiling  
Tile Stairwell



Second Floor Ceiling  
Tile Stairwell



Breakroom Vent  
Water Damage



Main Entrance  
Stair Tread



Bathroom Vent  
Water Damage



Storage Closet  
Water Damage



## C. H. Booth Library Building & Grounds Work Summary Report

### Carpet & Flooring:

<u>Subcategory</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Resurface Stairwell Stairs	High	\$ 13,000.00
Childrens Storytime Room – repair & replace floor	High	\$ 5,000.00



Storytime Room Floor



Stairwell Stairs

## C. H. Booth Library Building & Grounds Work Summary Report

### Cabinets & Furniture:

<u>Subcategory</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Childrens Storytime Room - replace cabinets	High	\$ 15,000.00
Childrens Storytime Room - replace sink/ countertop and cabinets	High	\$ 4,000.00
Childrens Room Circulation Desk (New Item)	High	\$ 70,000.00
Breakroom - New Cabinets	Med	\$ 17,000.00
Meeting Room Kitchen (New Item)	High	\$ 18,000.00

## CABNIETS & FURNITURE



Storytime Room Cabinets



Storytime Room Sink & Backsplash



Meeting Room Kitchen



Breakroom Cabinets



Circulation Desk

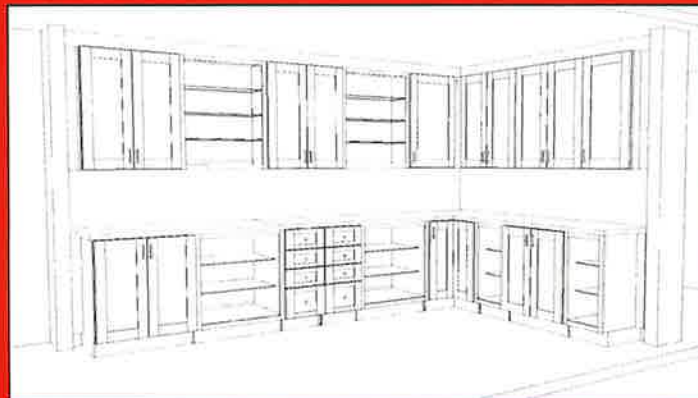
## CABINETS & FURNITURE DESIGN DETAILS



Storytime Room/ Break Room  
Sink & Backsplash



Meeting Room Kitchen



Storytime Room Cabinets

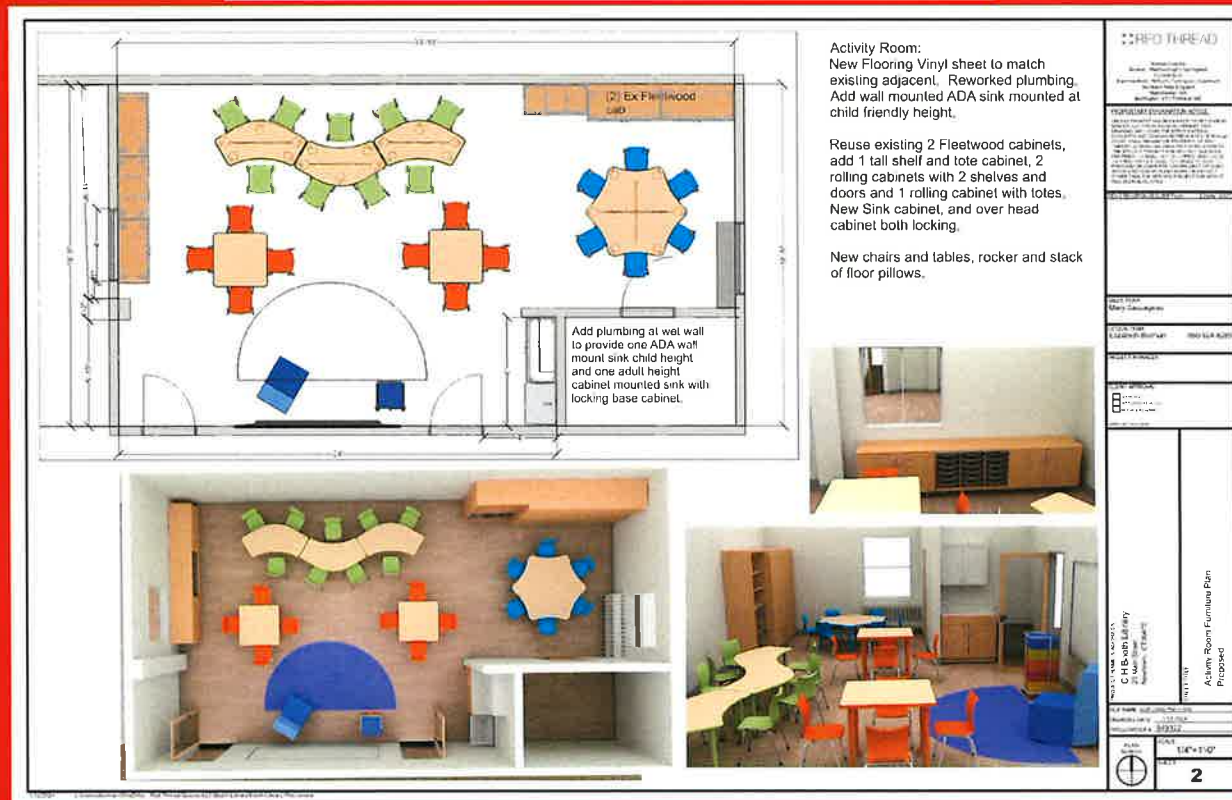


## CABINETS & FURNITURE DESIGN DETAILS



## Children's Room Circulation Desk

## CABINETS & FURNITURE DESIGN DETAILS



## Story Time Room Design

## Project Schedule

	Activity Name	Duration (Days)	Start Date	Finish Date	Feb 24				Mar 24				Apr 24				May 24		
					4	11	18	25	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12
1	Childrens Storytime Room - Flooring	4.00	2/7/24	2/12/24															
2	Childrens Storytime Room - Ceiling	2.00	2/5/24	2/6/24															
3	Childrens Storytime Room - Cabinets	25.00	2/13/24	3/18/24															
4	Childrens Storytime Room - Sink/ Countertop	10.00	3/19/24	4/1/24															
5	Childrens Room Circulation Desk	60.00	2/5/24	4/26/24															
6	Meeting Room Kitchen	30.00	4/2/24	5/13/24															
7	Breakroom - Cabnets, eiling and Vent	10.00	2/7/24	2/20/24															
8	Stairwell - Flooring and Painting	20.00	2/13/24	3/11/24															
9	Front Entrance - Stairs & Painting (Weather Issue)	10.00	4/1/24	4/12/24															
10	Signs (Supply Issue)	10.00	2/16/24	2/29/24															



## Fund Balance Summary Sheet

Category	Subcategory	Priority	Estimated Cost	Funded	Contractor	Actual Cost	Source of Funds	Town CIP#	Readiness	Assigned	Actual Cost	Status
<b>Childrens Rooms</b>												
Childrens Storytime Room - replace book cabinets/remove counter	Cabinets/ Furniture	High	\$ 14,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ 15,236.74	Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
Childrens Storytime Room - replace sink/ countertop and cabinets	Cabinets/ Furniture	High	\$ 8,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ 4,403.50	Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
Childrens Storytime Room - Fix Ceiling	General Maintenance	High	\$ 2,000.00	Yes	AP Malin's	\$ 7,138.56	Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	AS & DS		
Childrens Storytime Room - replace floor	Carpet/ flooring	High	\$ 4,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ 4,824.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
Childrens Room - Circulation desk (NEW)	Cabinets/ Furniture	High	\$ 60,000.00	Yes	Estimated	\$ 60,000.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Revised Scope	AS & DS		
Childrens Room - Family Seating Furniture	Cabinets/ Furniture	High	\$ 10,000.00	Yes	Estimated	\$ 10,000.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Revised Scope	AS & DS		
<b>Stairwell</b>												
Resurface Stairwell Stairs	Carpet/ flooring	High	\$ 8,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ -	Fund Balance	N/A	Pending	AS & DS		
Fix stairwell ceiling tiles	General Maintenance	High	\$ 2,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ -	Fund Balance	N/A	Pending	AS & DS		
Paint Stairwell	Painting	High	\$ 3,000.00	Yes	TBD	\$ 13,000.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Pending	AS & DS		
<b>Meeting Room</b>												
Meeting Room Kitchen - replace sink/countertop and cabinets (NEW)	Cabinets/ Furniture	Med	\$ 23,000.00	Yes	AP Malin's	\$18,743.67	Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	AS & DS		
<b>Breakroom - Area</b>												
Breakroom - fix vent and damaged ceiling	General Maintenance	High	\$ 2,000.00	Yes	AP Malin's		Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	AS & DS		
Breakroom - New Cabinets/ countertop/ sink	Cabinets/ Furniture	Med	\$ 3,000.00	Yes	AP Malin's	\$ 17,078.17	Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	AS & DS		
Update Book Keepers Bathroom	Cabinets/ Furniture	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Carpet												
Replace carpet - Entryway to Main Desk	carpet/ flooring	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Replace Carpet Misc Locations	carpet/ flooring	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Flooring												
Replace Tile 2nd floor Restroom	carpet/ flooring	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
New Tile 3rd floor bathroom	carpet/ flooring	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Lighting												
Lighting Level Three (replace pendants)	electrical	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Lighting for Hawley/ Museum Area	electrical	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
Lighting for Art Gallery/ Main Stairway	electrical	On Hold		No	N/A			N/A	On Hold			
<b>Miscellaneous</b>												
Fix Ceiling 3rd floor Bathroom	General Maintenance	High	\$ 2,000.00	Yes			Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
<b>Exterior - Front Entry</b>												
Front Entrance Stair Tread	General Maintenance	High	\$ 300.00	Yes	TBD	\$ -	Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
Repaint Exterior Front Entryway	Painting	Med	\$ 600.00	Yes	TBD	\$ 1,263.54	Fund Balance	N/A	Reviewing Bids	AS & DS		
<b>Signage</b>												
Interior Signage	Signs	High	\$ 30,000.00	Yes	Sign	\$ 29,223.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	IN		In Progress
Outdoor Sign	Signs	High	\$ 3,000.00	Yes	Signarama	\$ 2,200.00	Fund Balance	N/A	Contracted	IN		In Progress
<b>Sound Equipment</b>												
AV Equipment - Meeting Room (NEW)	Equipment	High	\$ 14,000.00	Yes	R&B	\$ 16,474.05	TBD	N/A	Contracted	IN		In Progress
<b>Summary</b>												
Estimated Total			\$ 188,900.00			\$ 199,585.23						
Original Fund Balance Budget			\$200,000.00			Original Fund Balance Budget	\$200,000.00					
Estimated Total			\$ 188,900.00			Actual Cost - Committed to date	\$ 199,585.23					
Estimated Remaining Fund Balance Funds			\$11,100.00			Actual Remaining Fund Balance Funds	\$414.77					

**TOWN OF NEWTOWN  
FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(Per Town Charter 6-35(b), 6-40 & 7-25)**

**REQUESTING DEPARTMENT**     PUBLIC WORKS

**PROJECT:** SAFE STREETS & ROADS FOR ALL - ACTION PLAN

**PROPOSED APPROPRIATION AMOUNT:**     \$ 100,000

**PROPOSED FUNDING:**

BONDING	\$	-
GRANT	\$	80,000
LOCAL MATCH	\$	20,000
OTHER	\$	-
CONTINGENCY	\$	-
IN KIND	\$	-
	\$	<u>100,000</u>

**ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT ON OPERATING BUDGET (GENERAL FUND):**

List any financial impact your request will have on the Town's annual operating budget.  
Attach spreadsheet(s) showing your calculation of the estimated impact.

<b>EXPENDITURE CATEGORY:</b>	<small>**FOR BRACKETS USE NEGATIVE SIGN BEFORE NUMBER**</small>	<b>(POSITIVE IMPACT) / NEGATIVE IMPACT</b>	<b>Attachment #</b>
SALARIES & BENEFITS		***	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			
CONTRACTED SERVICES			
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE			
UTILITIES			
OTHER			
DEBT SERVICE (average)	\$	-	
<b>TOTAL IMPACT ON EXPENDITURES</b>	\$	-	

<b>REVENUE CATEGORY:</b>	<b>POSITIVE IMPACT / (NEGATIVE IMPACT)</b>	<b>Attachment #</b>
PROPERTY TAXES		
CHARGES FOR SERVICES (FEES)		
OTHER		
<b>TOTAL IMPACT ON REVENUES</b>	\$	-

**TOTAL FINANCIAL IMPACT ON OPERATING BUDGET**     \$ -

**EQUIVALENT MILL RATE OF TOTAL IMPACT**


(using current year's information)

0.0000 mills

**COMMENTS:**

There is no impact on the general fund. The Town match of \$20,000 is available and appropriated in the Highway budget under contractual services. After the acceptance and award of the grant and upon completion of the safe streets action plan the town may apply for an "implementation grant" and supplementals safety planning and / or safety demonstration activities.

**PREPARED BY:**



**DATE:** 1/23/2024

TOWN OF NEWTOWN			
APPROPRIATION (BUDGET) TRANSFER REQUEST			
FISCAL YEAR	2023 - 2024	DEPARTMENT	Fire
		DATE	2/15/24
FROM:	Account 101245700000-5899CONTINGENCY	Amount (40,000)	USE NEGATIVE AMOUNT
TO:	101123200000-5430REPAIR & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	40,000	USE POSITIVE AMOUNT
REASON:	Transfer from Contingency. See attached memo.		
AUTHORIZATION:	date:		
(1) DEPARTMENT HEAD			
(2) FINANCE DIRECTOR			
(3) SELECTMAN			
(4) BOARD OF SELECTMEN			
(5) BOARD OF FINANCE			
(6) LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL			
AUTHORIZATION SIGN OFF			
FIRST 335 DAYS	>>>>WITH IN A DEPT.>>>>LESS THAN \$50,000>>>> (1), (2) & (3) SIGNS OFF; MORE THAN \$50,000>>>> (1), (2), (3) & (5)		
	>>>>ONE DEPT TO ANOTHER>>>>LESS THAN \$200,000>>>>ALL EXCEPT (6); MORE THAN \$200,000>>>>ALL SIGN OFF		
AFTER 335 DAYS	>>>>(1), (2), (3), (5) & (6) ANY AMOUNT FROM CONTINGENCY>>>> ALL SIGN OFF		

To Robert Tait,

The Board of Fire Commissioners is requesting funds to cover the cost of removing class B firefighting foam. Class B foam is primarily used to extinguish flammable liquids and petroleum fires (vehicle fires). CT-DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) has outlawed the use of class B foam because of health and environmental issues which have required the Town of Newtown and the Board of Fire Commissioners to take action to comply with this state mandate.

The Town of Newtown has three fire trucks that carry this firefighting foam that was identified as having banned additives (PSAF). The State of CT has produced a compliant procedure to rid the Town Fire Departments of this foam and has put in place a procedure to reimburse for the work performed. The reimbursement is on a first come first served basis and therefore needs to be initiated soon. Three in-state companies were quoted for the work required including proper disposal as required by DEEP procedures. An amount of **\$13,066.70** was lowest quoted to do the work.

The Board of Fire Commissioners will initiate this process and has funds to temporarily cover the cost from its own budget. Not knowing the timeline of the State of CT for reimbursement this money will need to be replenished so we can continue to pay expenses for the remainder of the 2023-2024 budget.

The Board of Fire Commissioners is also requesting additional funds to be added to the truck repair line item to cover unexpected costly repairs. We have had several major repairs this year. The BOFC truck repair line item is designed for annual inspections and maintenance not major fire pump and engine repairs. Because of these additional repairs we have a deficit in this account. The amount of **\$25,000.00** is being requested to cover an expected deficit of \$12,000 by the end of this month with additional funds to hopefully take this account to the end of the budget year. In total we are requesting \$38,066.70

Tim Whelan  
2/13/2024