



Town of Ashland, Massachusetts

Finance Committee

101 Main Street, 01721-1191

Adam Elbirt, Chair
Scott Warnetski, Vice Chair
Ryan Turncliff, Secretary

Jack Walsh, Member
Jennifer Cooney, Member
Jonathan Moore, Member

Date: October 12, 2016

To: All Town Department Heads
Relative Boards & Committees
Mr. Jim Adams, Superintendent of Schools

RE: FY 2018 Budget

The Ashland Town Charter, Part VII, Section 7-1 (Budget Process) requires that the Town Manager develop a budget calendar that results in the Finance Committee receiving the town's budget at least 105 days before the Annual Town Meeting. In addition, it provides that the Finance Committee, prior to November 1st, and after consultation with the Board of Selectman, School Committee and Town Manager will issue a policy statement that shall establish general guidelines for developing the next year's fiscal budget for the town. Accordingly, we provide the following guidelines and instructions.

For Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), we will continue our practice of conservative revenue estimates. To that end, this year we will base our FY18 local aid numbers on FY17's final local aid budget figures. This approach will provide us a level of stability throughout the budget development process. FY18 local receipt figures are anticipated to only go up slightly. Early revenue estimates for FY18 indicate that new growth numbers are expected to grow. The levy limit will increase the standard 2.5 percent.

The budget process in FY15, FY16, and FY17 was radically different than in previous years. Central to this approach to doing our business was the adoption of an outcomes-based budgeting approach, which zero-bases line items and establishes performance measures and outcomes associated with any new spending. We intend to continue this approach and improve upon it in FY18 for all departments and our schools.

The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Schools, will be sending our more detailed instructions and forms to each department and school administrators respectively in late October/early November. Given the structure of the budget this year, we anticipate several meetings between Town Management, School Administrators and department heads throughout the budget season. The Finance Committee will also be interviewing departments throughout the budget process and will be asking for information to be provided prior to any scheduled meeting. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Attached is a calendar that establishes a schedule for certain milestones during the budget season. Finance Committee meetings are posted on the Town's website and we encourage your participation, when requested.

Respectfully,

ADAM ELBIRT

Adam Elbirt, Chair

CC: Ashland Board of Selectman
Ashland School Committee
Michael Herbert, Town Manager
Jennifer Ball, Assistant Town Manager
Brittany Iacaponi, Finance Director/Town Accountant
Barbara Durand, Assistant Superintendent

1 Attachment:
FY18 Town Manager Budget Calendar