

Pownal board approves budget

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POWNAL — The Select Board on Thursday approved the proposed town budget to be voted on in March at annual town meeting.

Slight increase

Voters will decide whether to appropriate \$769,470 to cover general expenses, with \$493,581 to be raised by taxes, and use \$83,898 from the previous year's undesignated funds.

For the town highway expenses, the board will warn an \$812,310 appropriation, with \$586,482 to be raised by taxes, and \$103,677 from the previous year's undesignated funds.

Chairman Nelson Brownell said the town tax rate is estimated to rise four tenths of a cent for the general fund and 3 cents for the road budget. Brownell said the largest part of the increase comes from the road, with \$74,600 more being spent than last year. He said the increase is largely due to a reduction in state aid for highways.

Brownell said the total amount of aid the town received last year from the state was \$1,011,990, but it is \$979,560 this year. He said there had been no word on how much the town might get as a result of the Obama administration's proposed stimulus package.

The other ballot articles total \$210,090.

Some of the larger items include an appropriation to the Solomon Wright Library, \$15,000; a \$60,000 appropriation to the operation and maintenance of the Pownal Fire Protective Association; a \$53,000 appropriation to the Pownal Valley Fire Department; a \$14,950 appropriation to the lease/purchase of the town's 1999 Freightliner fire truck, and a \$30,000 appropriation to the Pownal Rescue Squad toward ambulance replacement and insurance.

The floor meeting will be held March 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the Pownal Elementary School for articles 1 through 3, which involve town reports, authorizing the treasurer to receive taxes until they become delinquent, and to authorize the board to borrow money as needed in anticipation of taxes.

That meeting will adjourn and reopen at 7 a.m. the next day at the Pownal Center Firehouse for Australian ballot voting on articles 4 to 25. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

To register to vote, Pownal residents must apply by 2 p.m. on Feb. 25. Absentee ballots are available at the Town Office and can be picked up by March 2. Applications for absentee ballots can be made by phone, in person, or in writing.

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