

# **Town Manager Budget Message and Statement of Financial Condition**

## **2025-2026 Town of Bradley Municipal Budget**

**Budget Message:** The Town of Bradley Charter requires that the budget be presented by February 1 of each year. The budget presented is \$120,233.28 above the self-imposed budget cap, by far the most over the cap since my start. The budget cap allows for a 2.5% increase, which translates to a \$18,939.44 allowable increase.

### **Budget Considerations:**

- General Budget Information: All budgeted amounts are rounded to an even amount.
- Wages: 2.5% (Cost of Living Allowance) increase on all wages.
- Website: As approved by the Town Council, the website will be upgraded to increase accessibility and monitored by a company based in Maine, TownCloud. I created a new line item for invoice ease; the funds were previously included in contracts. The upgrade will cost \$2,030 for this fiscal year but is expected to decrease to \$1,700 for the next two fiscal years (we will create a reserve).
- Software Upgrade: As approved by the Town Council, the Town will upgrade to TRIO web. This upgrade will use reserves established in this fiscal year and an additional \$3,500. An extra \$1,000 line item was added to appropriate funds for the software's hosting.
- Machine Purchase & Repair: The current copier was purchased in 2017 using a 5-year lease. The Town currently pays \$482.76 per year for maintenance. Transco, the copier company, has notified us that this will be discontinued as it is no longer possible to get parts for the machine. With the approval of this budget, I will seek out a new copier lease through an RFP. I am currently estimating a lease payment of \$210 per month. IT services are also included in this line item.
- Health Insurance: The current fiscal year deemed a 9% increase in health insurance costs. The Maine Municipal Health Trust has stated that the price will continue to increase due to the high cost of prescription drugs and medical services.
- Elections: Due to increased wage amounts and food costs, this has increased to \$4,000, a \$2,100 increase.
- Legal Fees: Due to the ongoing issue with 114 Cram Street, I have increased the budget for legal fees to \$20,000. Depending on the court's actions in the remainder of this fiscal year, there may be a carryforward to use. The desired amount in the legal fund is \$20,000.
- County Tax: The county has not yet provided a final number; however, the estimate received is \$250,490, an increase of \$22,037.24.
- Ambulance: I have not received a number from Old Town, Chief Gifford, and I met with them on January 16 to discuss a change in the cost-sharing formula. The budget includes a 20% increase, which equates to a \$31,324 increase.
- Solid Waste: A reserve for solid waste disposal was created in 2020-2021 due to the Hampden Facility's shutdown. Only \$3,000 remains in the reserve; therefore, a more extensive appropriation of \$51,625 will increase that line item by \$17,125.
- Road Construction: As I discuss yearly, this line item is one of the few we can adjust. Our roads are in good shape, and no major work is needed currently. I kept the budget request of \$90,000 to continue building a reserve. The amount available, if budgeted as is, will be \$490,000. I have also placed in the budget binder a proposal by All States Construction to do a Shim and Chip Seal on Boynton Street, Cram Street, and Highland Ave. In the past, this practice was done on Cram Street, Deer Run Lane, and Highpoint Place to preserve the pavement. It was a difficult trial then; however, the pavement has proven strong.
- Library Voucher Program: The town council created this new line item in 2024. The budget amount is \$2,500, and any unused amount recorded at the budget-setting public hearing will be carried forward for use and will not lessen the budget.
- Fire Department Budget: I have not received a budget from the fire department; my amounts include an overall 2% increase.
- Revenue Sharing: The state anticipates a continued decrease in revenue, so the revenue sharing projections are low. However, they did provide new data in April.
- Clean Up Fees: This budget of \$2,600 is estimated using an increased amount of \$20.00 per resident.
- Post Office Lease: The lease increased to \$52,290 until 2031.
- Carryforwards: In April, we will evaluate additional carryforwards, including Machine Purchase & Repair, Legal, and Salt & Sand.

**Statement of Financial Condition as of December 31, 2024**

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Fund Balance:                           | \$1,812,849.72        |
| Budgeted Municipal Expenses 2024-2025   | \$3,408,043.80        |
| Appropriated                            | <u>\$1,479,930.25</u> |
| Total Remaining                         | \$ 1,928,113.55       |
| Remaining School Assessment             | <u>\$ 767,713.37</u>  |
| Total Municipal Expenditure Remain      | \$1,160,400.18        |
| <br>Budgeted Revenue 2024-2025          | <br>\$ 770,158.80     |
| Total Collected as of December 31, 2024 | <u>\$ 415,019.23</u>  |
| Total Remaining                         | \$ 355,139.57         |