

## Town of Milton

### Ballot Articles

#### *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)*

#### **ARTICLE I – Acceptance of the reports of Town Officials as presented in Town Report**

##### *Financial well-being of Town:*

The Town ended FY20 with a surplus of \$287,469, which is retained in the general fund balance. The unassigned fund balance, which means these funds are not restricted for a specific purpose, at the end of FY20 was \$1,747,028.

The Town has an Undesignated Fund Balance policy which states that the Town strives to maintain a minimum unassigned fund balance equal to 7.5% of the current general fund budget. Our current balance actually represents 23.6%, so we have a healthy reserve of funds in our general fund, which can be used for unforeseen, unbudgeted situations such as a pandemic.

The Town also has a debt policy which states that total debt issued should not exceed \$25,000,000 plus any amounts authorized by State approved Tax Increment Financing District Plans. The Town's total long-term debt is \$12,322,561, including TIF debt so we are well under our allowable limits for debt.

***These factors are two of the largest indicators of the Town's financial health and both show that the Town is in a good financial position.***

#### **ARTICLE II -To elect all Town/School/Library Officers as required by law and Charter**

#### **ARTICLE III- Shall the voters of the Town of Milton approve the Fiscal Year 2022 budget**

##### *Budget introduction:*

The proposed FY22 budget totals \$8,688,495 of which \$6,780,911 will be raised by property tax revenue. The total budget is an increase of 3.9% or \$323,732 over the current FY21 budget.

The primary factors driving this increase are:

1. A proposed increase to the rescue department of \$124,628 for additional staffing
2. A proposed increase to paving of \$115,000 which brings the annual paving budget total to \$350,000
3. A significant increase to the capital improvement fund to pay for a variety of capital projects that include a tandem dump truck, small pick-up truck, tennis court resurfacing and trails.

***Budget documentation can be found on our website at [www.miltonvt.gov](http://www.miltonvt.gov) on the Finance Department page.***

##### *Tax implications:*

Your property tax bill is made up of both Town and Education taxes. Historically, about 73% of your total property tax funds Education with the remaining 27% funding all Town operations.

*Assuming there will be no growth in the grand list values, the current Town tax rate for a homestead is .5805. If the proposed FY22 budget passes it would increase this rate to \$.6053 for an increase of \$.0248.*

*On a homestead with a value of \$250,000 this would result in a \$62 annual increase. FY22 \$1,513.25 - FY21 \$1,451.25= an increase of \$ 62.00 more than last year.*

**ARTICLE IV - Shall the Town of Milton raise \$400,000 through an additional tax with funds to be used for highway resurfacing/paving**

The Town of Milton has been underinvesting in paving projects in town for more than a decade, with the exception of FY19 when voters approved a \$1 million bond for paving. In FY21, the Department of Public Works had a paving budget of \$235,000, which is not a sustainable budget for the 100 miles of roads the Department of Public Works is required to maintain. The Town needs an annual amount of at least \$750,000 per year to go toward the maintenance and reconstruction of the town's roads. For FY2022, the Select Board proposed \$350,000 for the paving budget, and wanted to obtain public sentiment on this separate article for an additional \$400,000 for more paving in town. Given the pandemic, the SelectBoard understands the financial situation some residents may find themselves, and wanted to ask the voters for approval for this additional \$400,000 for paving projects instead of putting it in the general paving budget.

The projects to be considered with \$750,000 would be: crack sealing for maintaining worn, but roads still in fairly good shape, and a number of roads for paving. We are currently planning on paving portions of East Road and Duffy Road, and will likely need some of the FY2022 budget to complete one of these projects. DPW would also apply for the \$175,000 Class 2 Paving Grant through VTrans for the remaining portion of East Road.

***If this proposal is approved by the voters it will require an additional 3.5 cents on the proposed tax rate. This equates to an additional \$87.50 per year on a \$250K homestead. If the budget and paving article were both approved, the total increase would be \$149.50 per year on a \$250K homestead.***

**ARTICLE V – Shall the voters exempt the Milton Grange property locate at 135 River Street for a period of five years**

This property is currently being leased to the Town of Milton for \$1 per year and is utilized for recreation programs, meetings and other social gatherings. The town rents the building to non profits and for profit entities. This building has served an important role during Covid since all municipal and school properties prohibited access to the public.

**ARTICLE VI – Shall the voters approve the addition of section 129-807 and other amendments to the Charter**

Section 129-807 pertains to reapportionment and redistricting for State Representatives, SelectBoard appointment of the Police Chief and a Town Assessor. Prohibits a candidate from running for more than one vacant elected office. Most of the remaining amendments proposed are clean up language and technical corrections.