

Town of Henniker

Annual Town Meeting
Saturday March 16, 2024





Welcome to the 2024 Annual Town Meeting!

Town Meeting in New Hampshire began in the 1600s as a way for small local communities to directly govern themselves.

It is one of the most direct and purest forms of democracy practiced in the world, allowing community members direct access to make decisions about their collective futures.

Announcements:

Thank you to the voters who came out on Tuesday to vote for town officers and zoning amendments.

Congratulations to our returning and new elected officials:

Selectboard:

Kris Blomback & Peter Flynn

Town Treasurer:

Cheryl Damour

Cemetery Trustee:

Sue Fetzter

Cogswell Spring Water Works Commissioner:

Jerry Gilbert

Planning Board:

Ryan Haley & Scott Dias

Trustees of Trust Funds:

Sue Fetzter

Trustees of Tucker Free Library:

Frances Tain &

Edward J. Petrick

Cordell Johnston

Karen Landes

Moderator:

Supervisor of the Checklist

Announcements:

**Zoning Amendments
Articles 2 through 8
passed**

We thank Selectman D. Scott Osgood for 25 years of dedicated service, devotion and support to the Town of Henniker. Scott has served on the Selectboard, Planning Board and numerous other committees and boards.

Executive Summary

The Selectboard and Budget Advisory Committee met in the fall of 2023 and set the objectives for department heads to present budget requests adequate to maintain the current level of service. The budget presented has been thoroughly examined analyzed and critiqued by stakeholders at multiple meetings and hearings. Today is your opportunity to have the final judgement.

The general fund operating budget request is \$6,926,886 an increase of \$ 400,998 or 6.14% over 2023.

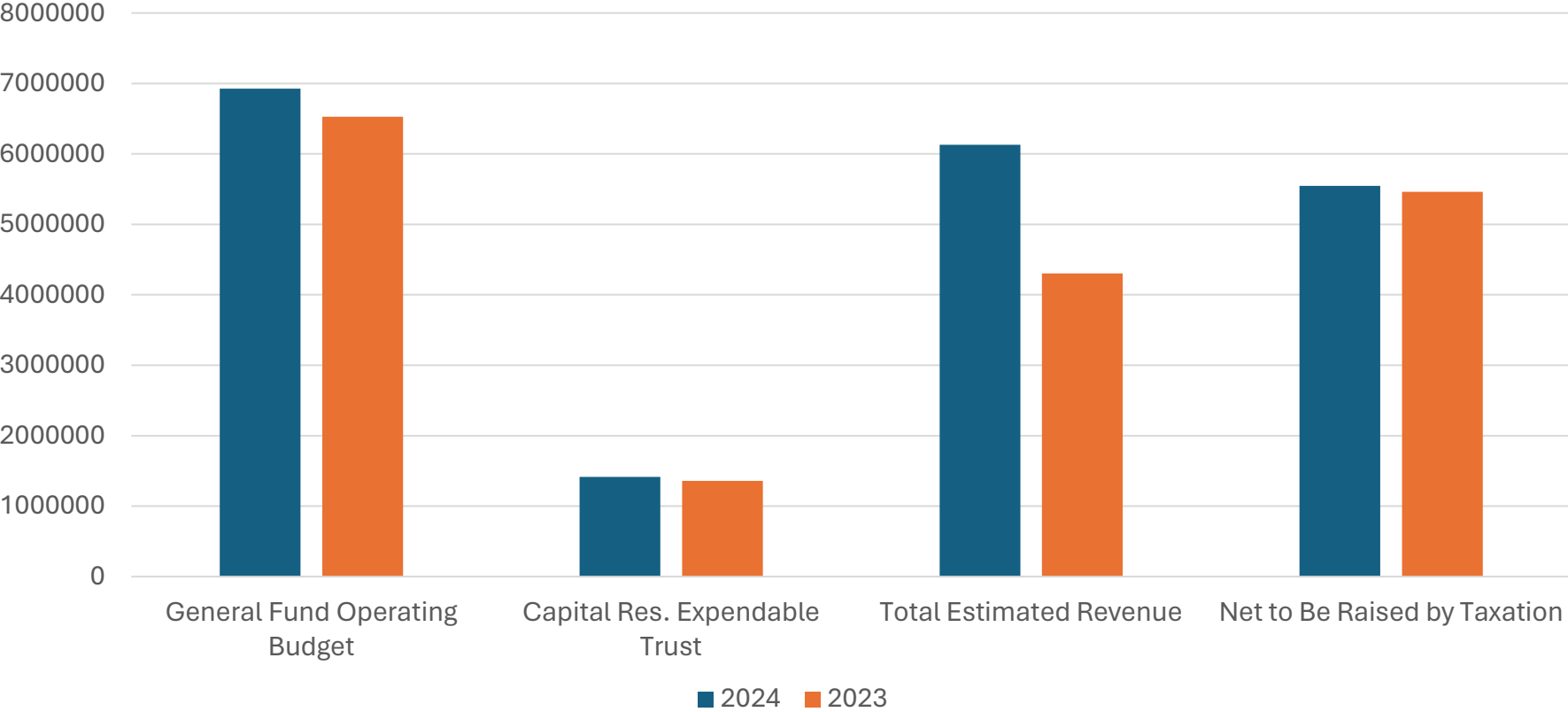
Budget Factors:

- The board values and prioritizes the retention of a skilled and competent workforce. Labor cost increases includes an average employee merit adjustment of 3.5% and cost of living adjustment of 2%.
- Information technology has grown in complexity and is critical to the successful operations of town. Cybersecurity presents an increasing threat to finances and productivity and the town depends on expert services to protect against that threat. In 2024 we will advance an updated Information Technology Policy.
- Increased costs for subcontractors, services, and materials.
- Legal costs to defend utility values, pursue ordinance violations and opinion
- Human Services costs for rents. We see in an increase in evictions and final demands for rent. By state statute we are required to assist qualified applicants.
- Elections – 2024 has four elections and equipment replacement
- Insurance
 - Property/Liability up 4.8% due to higher-than-expected claims costs for school and municipal property, and auto physical damage for members in the Primex³ pool.
 - Health insurance is up almost 14.6 % increase in the overall claims volume and increased severity and volume of high dollar claims. Other items such as the cost and utilization of specialty drugs, newly indicated weight loss drugs, and losses within the investment portfolio due to downturns in the financial market have impacted the level of rate adjustments.
- **Some increases in the budget are 100% offset by revenue and have no tax impact:**
 - \$130,000 in the Highway Budget offset by the same in Highway Block Grant Revenue
 - \$14,531 for Community Concerts is offset by sponsorship, donations and private trust

Executive Summary



2024 to 2023 Comparison



Executive Summary



2023 VALUATION
\$737,302,477

TAX RATE IMPACT

\$737,302 = \$1.00

\$73,730 = .10 CENTS

\$7,373 = .01 CENTS



TOWN PORTION OF TAX
RATE

2023 = \$6.93

2024 ESTIMATED = \$7.52



THE ANNUAL TAX RATE IS SET IN
THE FALL OF THE CURRENT
BUDGET YEAR

ACCORDING TO FUND BALANCE
POLICY THE SELECTMEN MAY
USE UNASSIGNED FUND
BALANCE TO FURTHER OFFSET
THE RATE AT THAT TIME

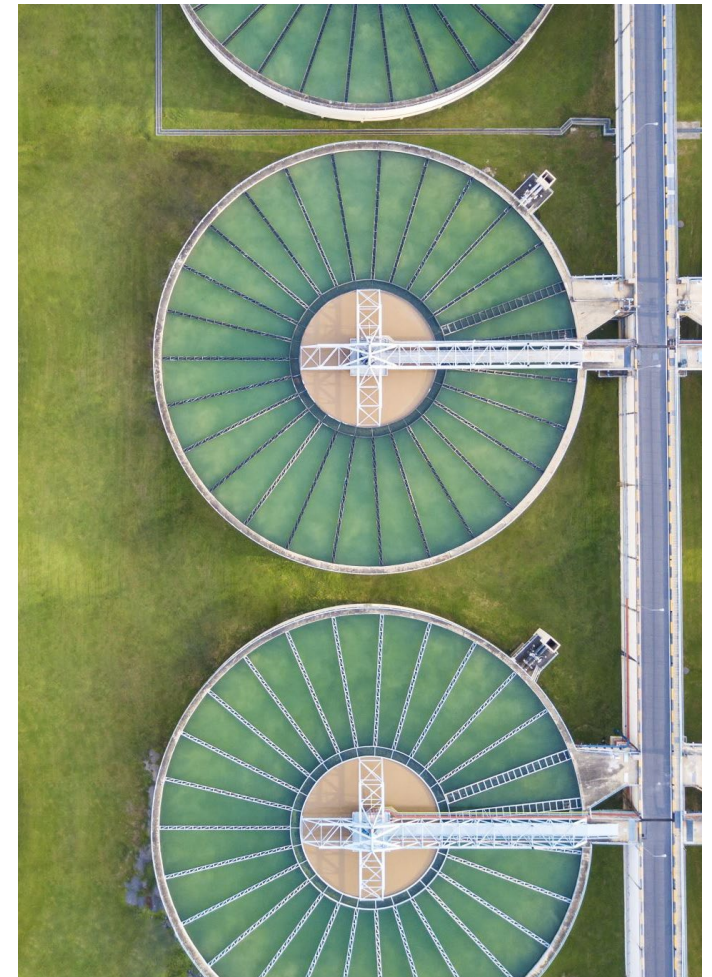
Article #9 - Wastewater Supplemental

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500,000 for the purpose of supplemental upgrades to the wastewater treatment facility, that will qualify the Town for federal and state funds, such sum to be raised by the issuance of serial bonds and notes not to exceed \$1,500,000 under, and in compliance with, the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (NH RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended) and to authorize the Town officials to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and determine the rate of interest thereon, and to take such actions as may be necessary to affect the issuance, negotiation, sale and delivery of such bonds or notes as shall be in the best interest of the Town. Additionally, to authorize the Town to apply for and accept grants or other funds that may reduce the amount to be repaid and participate in the State Revolving Fund (SRF) RSA 486.14 established for this purpose, and to allow the Town to expend such monies as become available from the federal and state governments and pass any vote relating thereto. It is anticipated that the Town will receive up to \$425,000 in principal forgiveness from the State Revolving Fund loan program. The remaining bond for this project will be funded by general taxation.

3/5 Ballot Vote Required
Recommend 4-0-1

Selectmen/Sewer Commissioners

20-year loan payments expected to begin in 2027 with estimated yearly payment of \$55,000



TOWN OF HENNIKER
2024 TOWN MEETING
HENNIKER WWTF
UPGRADE SUPPLEMENTAL
by
Underwood Engineers

Henniker Projects Summary

- The Town is committed to investment in their critical wastewater infrastructure. The following is a list of the recent and ongoing projects by the Town:
 - Asset Management Plan – Completed 2019 & identified upgrade needs.
 - CMOM (Capacity, Management, Operation & Maintenance) – Ongoing plan for the collection system required by EPA.
 - Henniker WWTF Upgrade – Ongoing \$3.2M project to upgrade WWTF & PS's.

Henniker WWTF Upgrade Supplemental

- Further upgrades needed to address aging infrastructure, meet current standards and provide process optimization and energy efficiency.
- Town has been offered CWSRF loan of \$1.5M with \$0.425M of principal forgiveness
- Town must vote on warrant article in March 2024 (Loan offer expires June 2024)
- Scope of Work
 - WWTF - New Screening and Screening Handling System
 - WWTF - Replacement effluent flow metering System
 - WWTF - Replacement VFDs & Site-wide Lighting
 - WWTF - New Plant Water System
 - WWTF - New Nitrate Recycle System
 - WWTF - New SCADA System

Article #10 – Lake Management Consulting

Shall the Town of Henniker vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Dollars) to hire a Lake Management Consulting Firm to study conditions and provide design solutions to reduce external and internal phosphate loading in French and Keyser Ponds -- to mitigate recurring Cyanobacteria algae blooms in these ponds.

And to authorize the issuance of \$100,000 of bonds or notes in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended, with the amount of such bonds or notes to be reduced by any grant funding received for the project; to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; to authorize the Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto.

It is anticipated that there will be \$100,000 in principal loan forgiveness under the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Clean Water State Revolving Fund(NH CWSRF).

Fiscal Impact Note: The tax impact associated with this will be \$0.00 per \$1,000 valuation. The principal loan amount of \$100,000 will be forgiven per the terms of the NH CWSRF agreement. No Tax Impact.

3/5 Ballot Vote Required Selectmen/Sewer Commissioners Recommend 4-0-1

No Tax Impact

**New Hampshire's Cyanobacteria Plan:
A Statewide Strategy**

2022



NH House passed Bill 1066 requiring the NH Dept. of Environmental Services to develop a statewide plan to address NH cyanobacteria blooms.

Competitive funding is provided by the **NH Clean Water State Revolving Fund** loan forgiveness program.



Cyanobacteria Mitigation in French and Keyser Ponds, Henniker, NH

**NH Dept. of Environmental Services
NH Clean Water State Revolving Fund**



August 2019

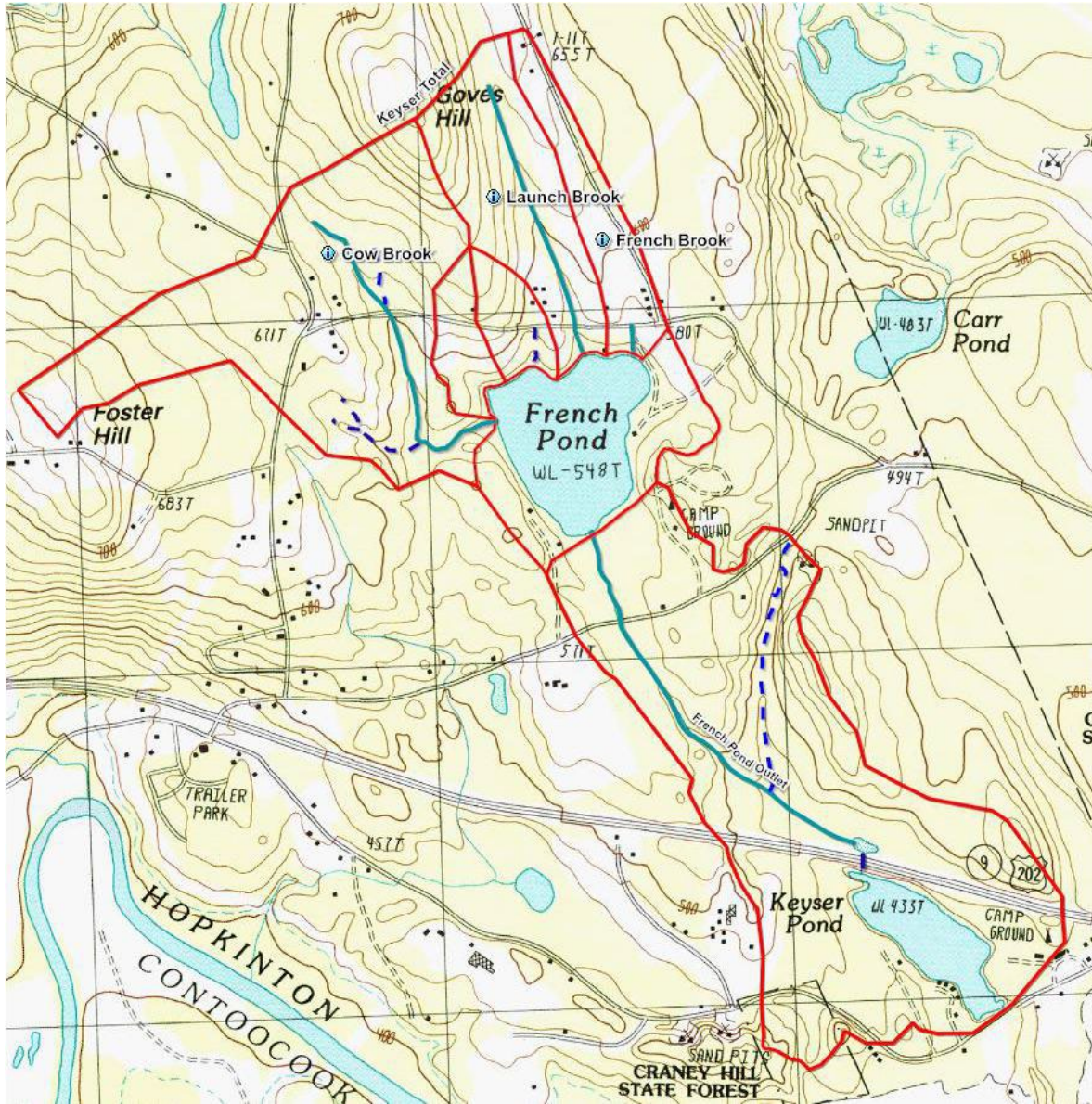


October 2019



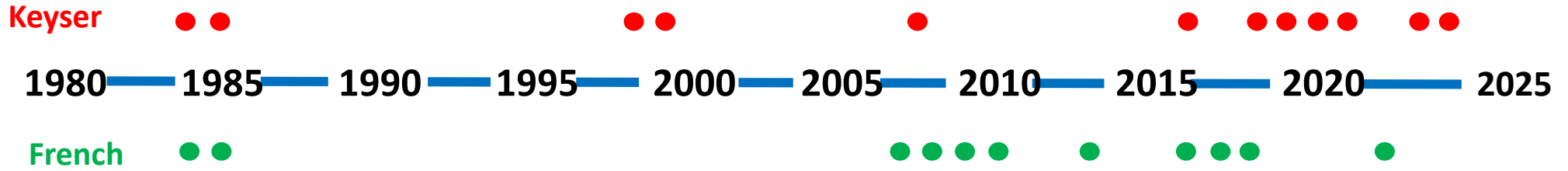
Community Impacts of Cyanobacteria Blooms on French and Keyser Ponds

- Lost revenue to local businesses
- Lost revenue for campgrounds, summer cabins, and cottages
- Lost tax revenue when homeowners apply for tax abatement
- Aesthetics and limited recreational use (swimming and fishing)
- Public health advisory posted by the state



French Pond & Keyser Pond Watershed

Keyser and French Pond Cyanobacteria Bloom History

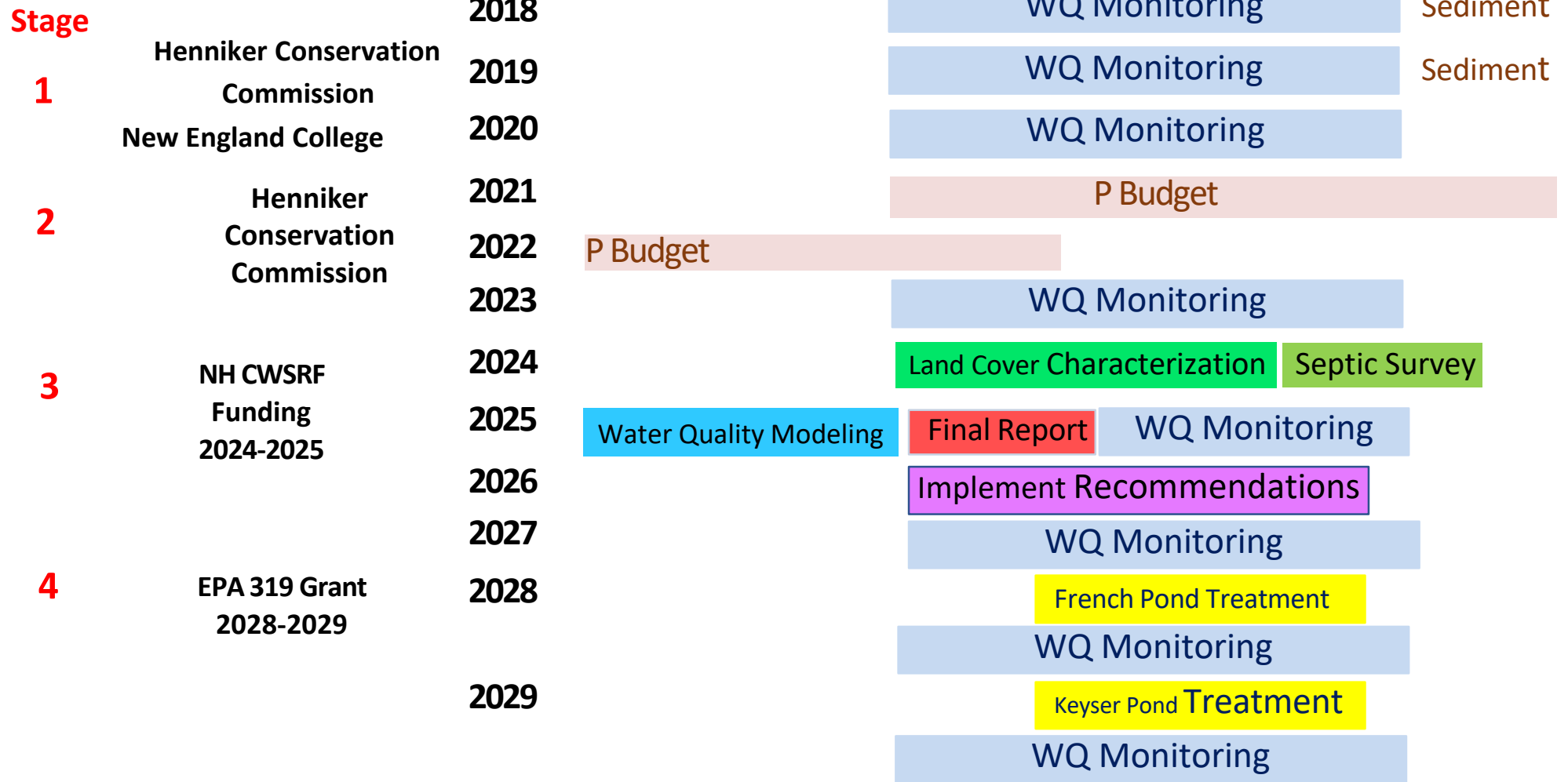


Keyser Pond August 2019

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

- Created under the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act
- Provides \$ for nonpoint source watershed protection and restoration projects to protect public health and improve water quality.
- Award loan recipients can receive 100% principal forgiveness, up to \$100,000.
- To receive award, communities must authorize funding through a town meeting vote.

Revised Project Timeline



Questions?

Thank you for your time

Article #11- General Municipal Operations

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Million Six Hundred Sixty Thousand Six Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$6,660,642) for general municipal operations.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 3-1-1

Excludes Appropriation for
Department 4550 – Library

GENERAL FUND	2024	2023
Municipal Operations	\$6,660,642	\$6,283,678
Library Operations	\$266,244	\$242,210
TOTAL	\$6,926,886	\$6,525,888

2024 Henniker General Operating Fund Budget Summary of Year over Year Changes

GENERAL FUND OPERATING			
2024 General Fund Operating Budget			6,926,886
2023 General Fund Operating Budget			6,525,888
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE \$		400,998
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE %		6.14%
CAPITAL RESERVE AND EXPENDABLE TRUST FUNDING			
2024 Capital Reserve Funding			470,000
2024 Expendable Trust Funding			865,000
2024 Ambulance Capital Reserve			80,000
	2024 TOTAL		1,415,000
2023 Capital Reserve Funding			445,000
2023 Expendable Trust Funding			825,000
2023 Ambulance Capital Reserve			80,000
	2023 TOTAL		1,350,000
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE \$		65,000
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE %		4.81%
TOTAL REVENUE ALL FUNDS			
2024 Total Revenue Estimates			6,127,952
2023 Total Revenue Estimates			4,303,640
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE \$		1,824,312
	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE %		42.39%
GENERAL OPERATING Explanation Year over Year Change			
Wages, Taxes, Benefits			
	WAGES	56,010	3.5% merit 75% year; 2% COLA 100% year; Exec add service; 4 elections ballot clerks
	OVERTIME	8,572	factor of wage increases
	STIPENDS	(16,964)	accounting code reclassifications and adjustments
	FICA/MEDI	3,757	factor of wage increases
	INSURANCE	58,982	change in employee plan option election
	RETIREMENT	10,641	factor of wage increases
Total Wages, Taxes, Benefits		120,998	
Technology Services		11,610	increase to support contract for # users, security and software
PD Dispatch		11,000	increase to contract
Highway		14,964	training and vehicle expenses; communications equip
Highway - Highway Block		130,000	NO TAX IMPACT - Highway Block Grant reclassified from warrant articles; 100% Offset
Streets		46,500	Chip seal Western Ave; striping
Legal		20,000	PSNH 2017,2018,2019 appeal of values case
Human Services		10,000	housing cost/availability
Concerts		14,531	*offset by revenue
Elections		13,800	4 election year and equipment
Insurance WC/Liab		13,059	actuarial increases
Emergency Management		3,951	operating expenses for Emergency Management Tower
Cemetery		13,700	trees
	Subtotal above	303,115	
	Total Increase	424,113	
	Minus misc decreases	(23,115)	
	TOTAL YoY CHANGE	400,998	

Article #12 – Appropriation to Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$470,000) to be added to previously established Capital Reserve Funds as follows:

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

Funding as recommended
by Capital Improvement
Plan

FUND	2024	2023
Highway Equipment	\$200,000	\$200,000
Wastewater	\$100,000	\$75,000
Fire Equipment	\$100,000	\$100,000
Bridge Repair	\$25,000	\$25,000
Transfer Station	\$30,000	\$30,000
Property Revaluation	\$15,000	\$15,000
TOTAL	\$470,000	\$445,000

Article #13 – Ambulance Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000) to be added to the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund established in 1988 under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purchase of an ambulance for the Rescue Squad, of which the amount of \$10,000 (Ten Thousand dollars) to come from the Town of Bradford.

If these funds are not received, the appropriation will be reduced to \$70,000 which will be raised through general taxation.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

Funding as recommended
by Capital Improvement
Plan

FUND	2024	2023
Ambulance Capital Reserve	\$80,000	\$80,000

Article #14 – Rescue Ambulance Chassis

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Forty-One Thousand Two Hundred-Two Dollars (\$141,202) for the purchase of a New Rescue Ambulance Chassis and Re-boxing of the 2016 ambulance body and authorize the withdrawal of One Hundred Forty-One Thousand Two Hundred-Two Dollars (\$141,202) from the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1



Funding as recommended by
Capital Improvement Plan

Article #15 – Appropriation to Expendable Trust

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$855,000) to be added to previously established Expendable Trust Funds as Follows:

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

**Funding as recommended
by Capital Improvement
Plan**

FUND	2024	2023
Road Maintenance	\$700,000	\$700,000
Police Department Site Purchase, Building Engineering, Design and Construction	\$100,000	\$75,000
Fire & Rescue Building Maintenance	\$25,000	\$25,000
Police Department Equipment	\$10,000	\$10,000
Town Owned Building Maintenance and Repair	\$10,000	\$10,000
Highway Building Maintenance	\$5,000	\$0
Parks Equipment	\$2,500	\$2,500
Town Technology	\$2,500	\$2,500
TOTAL	\$855,000	\$825,000

Article #16 – Highway Dump/Plow Truck

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Five Thousand Dollars (\$305,000) for the purchase of a New Highway Dump/Plow Truck and authorize the withdrawal of Three Hundred Five Thousand Dollars (\$305,000) from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund established at the 2007 Town Meeting under the provision of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing highway equipment.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

**Recommended by Capital Improvement Plan
and Road Management Committee**

Article #17 – Tucker Free Library Restoration of Granite and Mortar

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the purpose of continued restoration of granite and mortar on the exterior of the Tucker Free Library. Furthermore, this appropriation is 100% reimbursable to the Town from a Conservation License Plate Grant Program offered through the State of New Hampshire. If the grant is not received, this article will be null and void.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

**No Tax Impact
Recommended by the Library Trustees**

Article #18 – Tucker Free Library Operation Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Four Dollars (\$266,244) for the Tucker Free Library with said amount to be funded by general taxation.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

**\$24,034 increase over 2023
Recommended by the Library Trustees**

2024 Tucker Free Library Operating Budget

		USE	SOURCE						
ACCOUNT NUMBER	2024 ACCOUNT TITLE	2024 BUDGET	TOWN APPROPRIATION	TOWN MANAGED TRUST FUNDS	TDBANK MANAGED TRUST FUND	OPERATIONAL REVENUE	GRANTS	FRIENDS	TOTAL SOURCE FUNDS
PERSONNEL EXPENSES		\$245,445	\$245,170	\$275	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$245,445
Personnel Expenses Managed By Town									
4550-110	Library - Wages	\$185,190							
4550-110	COLA INCREASE (2%)	\$3,032							
4550-110	Merit (Pool of \$3,000)	\$3,000							
4550-110	Library - Wages Longevity	\$1,375							
4550-211	Library - Benefit Insurance (92/8PER TOWN POLICY)	\$24,754							
4550-220	Library - FICA	\$14,734							
4550-230	Library - Retirement	\$11,709							
4550-523	Library - Workers Comp/Unemp Ins	\$1,376							
Additional Personnel Expenses									
6-2020	Library Membership, Mileage	\$150							
6-2030	Library Staff Development	\$125							
PATRON SERVICES EXPENSES		\$28,173	\$0	\$3,373	\$18,000	\$2,800	\$0	\$4,000	\$28,173
6-3000	Library Acquisitions - Books	\$16,000							
6-3002	Library Acquisitions - Material Processing Fee	\$1,300							
6-3010	Library Acquisitions - Audio Books	\$0							
6-3020	Library Acquisitions - Periodicals	\$300							
6-3030	Library Acquisitions - Video Appropriation	\$300							
6-3035	Library Acquisitions - Patron Technology	\$500							
6-6000	Library Contract Services - Technology/Hardware								
	Library Circulation System	\$2,050							
	Annual Payment to NH Downloadable	\$2,689							
	Misc. Software Fees - Staff	\$470							
	Annual Newsletter & Website Fees	\$436							
	Misc Patron computer licensing fees & management	\$128							

2024 Tucker Free Library Operating Budget

		USE	SOURCE						
ACCOUNT NUMBER	2024 ACCOUNT TITLE	2024 BUDGET	TOWN APPROPRIATION	TOWN MANAGED TRUST FUNDS	TDBANK MANAGED TRUST FUND	OPERATIONAL REVENUE	GRANTS	FRIENDS	TOTAL SOURCE FUNDS
6-6010	Library Programs - Speakers & Supplies	\$4,000							
FACILITY MANAGEMENT EXPENSES		\$31,926	\$21,074	\$10,852	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31,926
6-4000	Library General Maintenance - Janitorial	\$5,500							
6-4010	Library General Maintenance - Repairs	\$8,965	\$7,189						
6-4020	Library Contracted Services - Building Safety & Utilities	\$13,961							
	<i>Central Dispatch Monitoring</i>	\$408	\$408						
	<i>Annual Lifts Inspection</i>	\$500	\$500						
	<i>Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection</i>	\$55	\$55						
	<i>Annual Fire/Safety System Inspection</i>	\$350	\$350						
	<i>PO BOX Rental</i>	\$76							
	<i>Heating</i>	\$6,154	\$6,154						
	<i>Electric</i>	\$3,200	\$3,200						
	<i>Water</i>	\$228	\$228						
	<i>Sewer</i>	\$480	\$480						
	<i>Phone</i>	\$1,094	\$1,094						
	<i>Internet</i>	\$1,416	\$1,416						
6-4030	Library Building Maintenance - Supplies	\$3,500							
6-4035	COVID Related Supplies/Expenses	\$0							
6-7015	MOOSE PLATE PROJECT	\$0							
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT EXPENSES		\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
6-5010	Library Technical Maintenance	\$500							
6-5020	Library Technical Equipment/Software								
TOTAL OPERATION BUDGET		\$306,044	\$266,244	\$15,000	\$18,000	\$2,800	\$0	\$4,000	\$306,044

Article #19 – Library Accessibility and Safety

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Library Accessibility and Safety Project Expendable Trust Fund established at the 2022 Town Meeting under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a, with said amount to be funded by general taxation.

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen Recommend 4-0-1

**Recommended by Library Trustees and
Capital Improvement Plan**

Article #20 – Wastewater Operation Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Eighty Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-Two Dollars (\$780,792) for the operating expenses for the Wastewater Treatment Plant with Six Thousand Five Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$6,525) to offset this appropriation by an anticipated water pollution grant and the remainder to be raised by Sewer assessments. No amount to come from general taxation.

Majority Vote Required

Sewer Commissioners Recommend 4-0-1

Increase of \$57,734 includes costs for compliance under new permitting requirements for testing and reporting, increased costs of employee benefits, sludge disposal costs, processing chemicals

Wastewater	2024	2023
Operations	\$780,792	\$723,058

Article #21 – Cogswell Spring Water Works

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Fourteen Thousand Six Hundred Sixteen (\$514,616) for the operating expenses of Cogswell Spring Water Works with said funds to come from Water assessments. No amount to come from general taxation.

Majority Vote Required

Water Commissioners Recommend 3-0

Selectmen Recommend 3-0-2

Cogswell Spring Water Works	2024	2023
Operations	\$504,616	\$497,655

Article #22 – Petition Warrant Article

Shall we modify the income and asset limit qualifications for the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Henniker, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire residence for at least 3 years, own real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$70,000 (currently \$48,800), or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$85,000 (currently \$61,000); and own net assets not to exceed \$400,000 (currently \$84,000).

Note: The persons residence equals actual residence and land upon which it is located up to the greater of 2 acres of the minimum single family residential lot size specified in the local zoning ordinances.

Submitted by Petition

Article #23 – Petition Warrant Article

To see if the Town will vote to eliminate monthly meeting space rental fees paid by an organization whose efforts benefit residents of Henniker. An organization that raises or contributes cash, items, or public service work hours of \$2,000 per year or more (in value) for the benefit of the Town of Henniker or its residents will not be charged to pay rental fees to the Town for regularly scheduled meeting space (special event space rentals are not covered by this article).

This authorization to remain in effect until rescinded by a vote of the Town Meeting.
(Majority vote required)

Submitted by Petition

The image features the text "The End" written in a white, elegant cursive script. The text is centered within a series of four concentric circles that create a tunnel-like effect, receding towards the center. The circles are rendered in a gradient of dark gray to black, with the innermost circle being the darkest. The overall composition is symmetrical and minimalist, set against a solid black background.

The End