

**Board of Selectmen
Fiscal Policies
Fiscal Year 2019**

1. In presenting the Fiscal Year 2019 proposed budget, the Town Manager is directed to file budget recommendations that reflect the Town's revenue stream in compliance with the Town's levy limit.
2. The Town's reserves are a major factor in the Town's bond rating. Sudden decline in reserve amounts could result in a decline in bond rating and potential increases in the costs of borrowing. Reserve funds are defined as the Stabilization Fund and Free Cash. Reserves are maintained to cover revenue shortfalls or to make possible capital projects without the need to borrow. Accordingly, the Board establishes the following Reserves/Stabilization Policy:
 - a As the Board strives to reach a reserve balance goal of 6.5% of the Total Operating Budget, as of July 1, 2018, the Board of Selectmen will seek a combined Certified Free Cash and Stabilization Fund balance that will be no less than 4.0% of the Total Operating Budget adopted at the May 2018 Annual Town Meeting. The combined balance percentages have been in recent years as follows:

July 1	Free Cash (Adjusted)	Stabilization (6/30)	Combined	Operating Budget (Previous May)	Percent
2017*	\$5,582,465	\$825,061	\$6,407,526	\$119,025,932	5.4%
2016	\$5,603,965	\$602,560	\$6,206,525	\$114,370,468	5.4%
2015	\$4,883,732	\$416,487	\$5,300,219	\$111,429,799	4.8%
2014	\$4,970,257	\$358,744	\$5,329,001	\$109,312,699	4.9%
2013	\$4,796,042	\$350,544	\$5,146,586	\$101,372,766	5.1%
2012	\$5,567,137	\$348,025	\$5,915,162	\$97,747,737	6.1%
2011	\$5,554,067	\$157,136	\$5,711,203	\$91,890,924	6.2%

*FY2017 is estimated based upon internal calculation and is subject to State Certification

- b Withdrawals from the Stabilization Fund will only be used for purposes for which the Town can borrow as set forth in M.G.L. Ch. 44 s. 7 and s. 8 to avoid borrowing. The Board will not seek to draw the fund balance below \$250,000.
- c The Town shall strive to make an annual appropriation to the stabilization fund. Even if a nominal amount, this annual appropriation will demonstrate the commitment to reserves and keep the account in focus.
- d Funds shall be allocated from Reserves only after an analysis and utilization plan has been prepared by the Town Manager and presented to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. The analysis shall provide sufficient evidence to establish that the remaining balances are adequate to address potential downturns in revenue sources and provide a sufficient cash balance for emergencies and for budget stabilization purposes;

and that conditions exist in future years that will allow for replenishment of reserve funds.

3. Properly managed debt is an effective way to finance significant infrastructure and capital projects. Responsible use of debt preserves our credit rating, enhances flexibility in current and future operating budgets, and provides us with long-term assets that maintain or improve our quality of life. To provide guidance and responsible use of debt, the Board of Selectmen has adopted debt management policies which are contained in Exhibit A attached.
4. The Board of Selectmen will seek to maintain a single tax rate and direct the town manager to make full use of the Town's levy capacity in FY2019 and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee that reflects adherence to this objective.
5. The Board of Selectmen will continue to adjust water rates as necessary to maintain the water utility as self-supporting plus maintaining sufficient reserves for future capital needs to minimize any future borrowing. The Board will also advise the Town Manager and Sewer Commission to do the same for the sewer system.
6. The Board of Selectmen will propose to use one time revenues for capital replacement, debt management or infrastructure improvement purposes (including but not limited to cash matches to leverage grant funds) and not to be used for operational purposes. Further, the Board desires to make use of one time revenue to enhance economic development opportunities whenever possible.
7. The Board of Selectmen directs the town manager to file with his initial budget recommendations a five-year fiscal forecast.
8. The Board of Selectmen directs the town manager to include in his budget recommendations funding sufficient to meet the pension system funding schedule in order to fully fund the pension system by the close of FY2022.
9. The Board of Selectmen will endeavor to make contributions to the Other Post Retirement Benefits (OPEB) Trust established in May of 2011 as fiscal conditions allow. It is the intention of the Board that once the pension system is fully funded that a funding schedule will be adopted making use of funds freed up due to the pension system being fully funded.

Adopted this 14th day of November, 2017.

Board of Selectmen:



John I. Lebeaux



Moira E. Miller



James F. Kane



Maurice M. DePalo



Beth N. Casavant

Exhibit A
Debt Management Policies

1. Long-term debt should be issued only for capital projects or assets that have a long useful life. It should be issued to pay for the cost of significant infrastructure and capital projects. Long-term debt should not be issued for recurring, small capital purchases with a useful life of less than five years.
2. Bonds will be paid back within a period not to exceed the expected useful life of the capital project or the period defined by state law; whichever is shorter.
3. The town will not use long-term debt to finance current operations.
4. Long-term borrowing will take place only for objects or purposes authorized by state law under M.G.L. Ch. 44, sec. 7 and 8, and will be confined to infrastructure and capital projects too expensive to be financed from current revenues. In general, the Town will attempt to finance purchases costing less than \$1,000,000 with operating revenues.
5. Long-term debt should not be incurred without a clear identification of its financing sources. Because of the debt service costs and annual appropriations necessary to retire this debt, there should be clear knowledge and commitment of revenue sources available to pay these costs without competing with operating budgets for limited resources.
6. The Town should attempt rapid debt repayment schedules. This ensures cost savings to the community and seeks to avoid strapping future generations with large debt obligations. This policy recognizes that capital needs continue and that new debt will continue to be identified and issued.
7. Where possible, the town will use special assessment, revenues or other self-supporting revenues to fund general obligation bonds. (ex: light, cable, water)
8. To the extent practicable, user fees will be set to cover the capital costs of Enterprise type services or activities - whether purchased on a pay-as-you-go basis or through debt financing - to avoid imposing a burden on the property tax levy.
9. The town will maintain good communications with bond rating agencies about its financial condition. The town will follow a policy of full disclosure on every financial report and bond prospectus.
10. The town will retire bond anticipation debt within 6 months after completion of the project. Exception- Town may carry BAN(s) longer if market conditions are not favorable.

11. Refunding bonds should be issued only if the present value of debt service saving exceeds 3 percent of the debt service amount of the refunded bonds.
12. The Town will strive to limit annual increases in debt to a level that will not materially jeopardize the Town's Aa3 (Aa2 – Global Scale) credit rating.
13. Outstanding debt shall not exceed 3 percent of the Town of Shrewsbury Assessed value.