



Main St. Looking South, Belmont N.H.

Town Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Belmont High School

7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Town of Belmont Voter's Guide

Dear Belmont Residents:

This year marks the Town of Belmont's 17th experience with the Official Ballot Voting process that is commonly known as "SB2". The first session of the annual Town Meeting was held on Saturday, February 1st. At the Deliberative Session, the voters in attendance were presented with the articles on the warrant as proposed by the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee. There was great discussion and input into all the articles presented. You may cast your ballot on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, from 7 am to 7 pm in the Belmont High School Gym, 255 Seavey Road.

All registered voters are eligible to participate in the process. New voters can register to vote at the Clerk's Office until March 1st, 2025. Otherwise, new voter registrations will be accepted at the polls on election day. In addition to your ID and proof of residency (bill in your name, paystub, bank statement, etc.), House Bill 1569 now requires proof of valid citizenship with documents such as a birth certificate, passport, or naturalization paperwork. This new law also removes all exceptions to the state's voter ID requirements and eliminates the affidavit ballot system. For more information, please visit www.sos.nh.gov/elections/register-vote. Unable to attend the election? Absentee ballots will be available soon in the Clerk's Office. Please give us a call at 603-267-8300 x2 to see if they are ready.

We realize that sometimes the lengthy legal language required by law to write various warrant articles can be confusing to voters who have not been actively involved in the debate that created the article. To help voters, we have prepared this Voter's Guide for your use. This guide will be available at Town Hall and online via the Town's website (www.belmontnh.gov). Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in the guide, please do not hesitate to contact Town Administrator Alicia Jipson (267- 8300, ext. 124).

Tax impact information listed in the guide will not be listed on the ballot. We have provided this information here to give voters an idea of what items are estimated to cost if voters approve the item. The tax impact information listed in the voter's guide is simply an estimate based on a current snapshot in time using information and revenue projections that are available today. The tax rate will be set by the NH Department of Revenue Administration (NHDRA) in October/November 2025, using actual information that is available including any additional value attributed to new construction.

The Board of Selectmen would like to extend their deepest gratitude to each of the volunteer Budget Committee members for their hard work, dedication, and thoughtful review of the proposed 2025 Town budget. Their commitment to ensuring fiscal responsibility while balancing the needs of our community is truly commendable. The time and effort that is devoted to analyzing, discussing, and refining the budget play a crucial role in shaping the future of our Town.

Their careful consideration of each line item, their insightful discussions, and their willingness to engage in thoughtful deliberation have helped create a budget that reflects both our Town's priorities and the interests of our residents. Their efforts ensure that we can continue to provide essential services, support community initiatives, and plan for long-term financial sustainability. It is through their dedication that we can move forward with a budget that is both responsible and forward-thinking.

Thank you to our Budget Committee members for their time, energy, and expertise. Their work does not go unnoticed, and our community is stronger because of their commitment.

In closing, we would like to "Thank you", our residents for the opportunity to represent you the Townspeople, and we appreciate your consideration as we work together to maintain Belmont as a great community in which to live.

Sincerely,

Belmont Board of Selectmen

Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

Travis O'Hara, Vice Chairman

Jon Pike

Claude B. Patten, Jr.

Sharon Ciampi

Ballot #1. Election of Officers

Selectman 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Thomas Murphy

Jonathan Pike

Doug Trottier

Town Clerk Tax Collector 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Jennifer Cashman

Budget Committee 3- Year Term (Vote for up to 4)

Lee Cheshire

Tracey LeClair

Budget Committee 2- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Paul Maggioli

Budget Committee 1- Year Term (Vote for up to 2)

Rachel French

Brian Gardiner

Susan Roache

Trustee of Trust Funds 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Eric Johnson

Library Trustee 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Tasha John

Cemetery Trustee 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Sharon Ciampi

Planning Board 3- Year Term (Vote for up to 2)

Michael LeClair

Ward Peterson

Zoning Board of Adjustment 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Dana Silcock

Treasurer 3- Year Term (Vote for not more than 1)

Susan Roache

Alicia Segalini



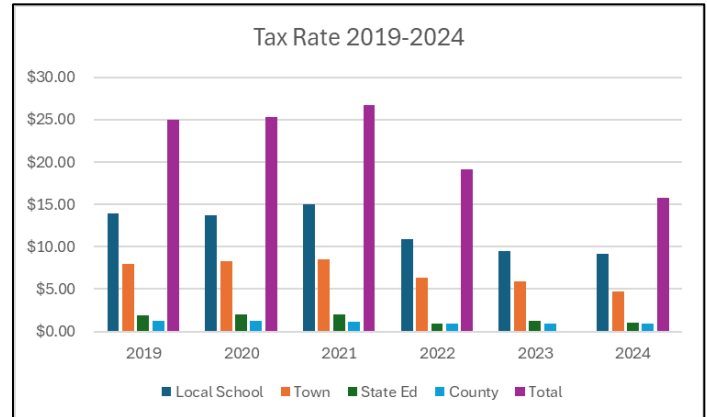
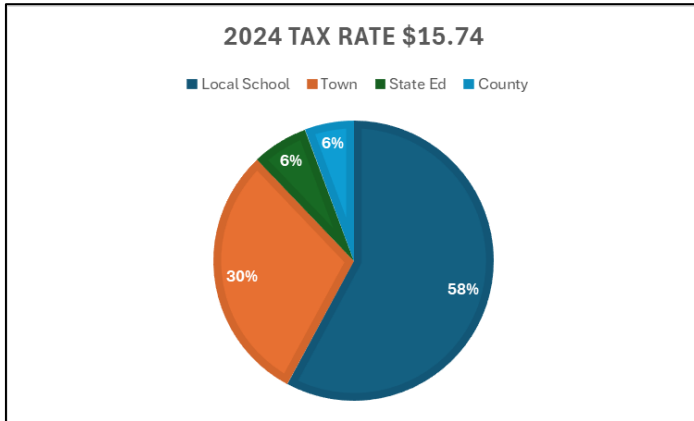
Elected officials are required to take an oath of office within 6 days of being notified of their election, in accordance with RSA 42:4. All officials elected on March 11th will need to contact the Town Clerk at 603-267-8300 ext. 122 to schedule a time to take their oath.

	Town	Local School	State Ed	County	
2019	\$7.98	\$13.89	\$1.89	\$1.25	\$25.01
2020	\$8.34	\$13.70	\$2.02	\$1.28	\$25.34
2021	\$8.54	\$14.98	\$2.05	\$1.10	\$26.67
2022	\$6.33	\$10.95	\$0.95	\$0.88	\$19.11
2023	\$5.86	\$9.47	\$1.25	\$0.89	\$17.47
2024	\$4.73	\$9.11	\$1.01	\$0.89	\$15.74

► **2024 \$15.74**

► **\$1.73**

► **9.9% Decrease**



Belmont Tax Bill

OWNER OF RECORD		TAX CALCULATION	
		Municipal Tax Amount 3,172.41 School Tax Amount 6,110.08 Education Tax Amount 677.41 County Tax Amount 596.92 Total Tax 10,556.82 Actual Tax Amount 10,556.82 Paid to Date -4,881.12 <div>PAY THIS AMOUNT 5,675.70</div>	
TAX CALCULATION	ASSESSED VALUATION		
Municipal 4.73 School 9.11 Education 1.01 County 0.89 TOTAL 15.74	Buildings 557,700 Land Value 113,000 NET VALUE 670,700		

While each property tax payment is made as a single check to the Town of Belmont, the Town acts as a “pass through”. The Town is obligated to make all the outgoing payments to the Shaker Regional School District, Belknap County and the State of New Hampshire Department of Education.

In 2024, the Town made the following payments:

\$13,545,464 to Shaker Regional School District
\$1,481,978 to State of NH Department of Education
\$1,323,442 to Belknap County

In 2024, out of \$23,397,984 collected in taxes, the Town only retained \$7,047,100 to operate the Town.

Ballot #2 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 to the Belmont Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board as follows: Amend Article 5, Table 1, Table of Permitted Uses, to clarify that Agricultural Animals are permitted by right (P), rather than by special exception (E), on lots greater than 1 acre in the Residential Multi-Family, Residential Single Family, and Rural Zones?

Recommended by the Planning Board.

Currently the Ordinance language Article 4:J Agricultural Animals states that a minimum of one acre is required but a Special Exception from the Zoning Board is required for all lots with less than 3 acres. As proposed by the Planning Board, this change would allow agricultural animals on any lots greater than 1 acre in the Residential Multi-family, Residential Single and Rural Zones. All lots with agricultural animals, regardless of size, shall be subject to the application of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food Manual of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Agriculture in New Hampshire, dated April 2002, as amended.

Ballot #3 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 to the Belmont Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board as follows: add a definition of motor vehicle?

Article 15: Definitions

Motor Vehicle:

Any self-propelled vehicle not operated exclusively on stationary tracks, including ski area vehicles. This includes all vehicles, engines, machines, or mechanical contrivances, except electric bicycles and electric personal assistive mobility devices (e.g. mobility scooter), which are propelled on the public highways by internal combustion engines, electric motors, steam engines, or other alternate sources of energy except human or animal power.

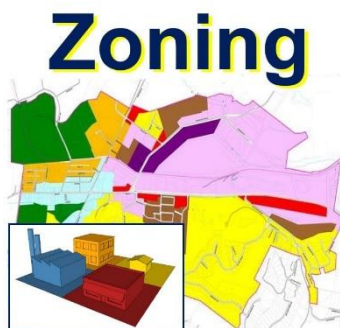
Recommended by the Planning Board.

Currently the Ordinance language does not contain a definition of a motor vehicle. As proposed by the Planning Board, this would add a definition of Motor Vehicle as guided by NH RSA 259:60 to Zoning Ordinance Article 15: Definitions.

Ballot #4 Petition Warrant Article To see if the Town of Belmont would vote to allow manufactured homes in the Town on their own land.

(The Planning Board does not support this Petitioned Warrant Article.)

The proposed is a petitioned article to the Zoning Ordinance. On January 6, 2025, the Planning Board voted to not support the petitioned article as written. The language does not restrict manufactured homes to residential zones (Residential Multi-family; Residential Single Family; Rural; and Village Zones) and would also allow them in our Commercial and Industrial Zones. This amendment, if it passes, would be advisory only as it is in conflict with Article 15 of the Zoning Ordinance.



Ballot #5 To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in an amendment to the existing collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Belmont and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 3657 (Public Safety Employees Union-Police Unit A) for the term April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year	Increase (Wages & Benefits)
2025	\$145,724

And further, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$145,724 for the current fiscal year (2025), such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the amended agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels under the existing agreement.

Should this article fail to pass, the cost items approved by the 2023 Town Meeting for the Public Safety Employees Union-Police Unit A collective bargaining agreement for the term ending March 31, 2026 shall remain in place, unless the governing body calls a special meeting pursuant to Article #05 and the above cost items for the term April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 are subsequently approved at such special meeting. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$145,724 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand \$0.10.

EXPLANATION:

- This group represents 12 full-time sworn patrol officers at the Police Department.
- The current CBA is a 3-year term (2023-2026).
- Tentative Agreement (T.A.) is 1-year.
- The revised wage matrix is designed to compete with surrounding police departments.

In 2023, Belmont faced significant challenges in retaining and attracting police officers due to an unprecedented labor market and economic conditions. A comprehensive wage study revealed that our police officers were underpaid compared to those in neighboring communities. This imbalance led to the loss of experienced officers and left critical positions unfilled for extended periods, impacting essential services.

To address these challenges proactively, the Selectboard adopted recommendations from the wage study and incorporated them into the 2024 budget. While this represents an adjustment to wages, it's a strategic investment in retaining experienced officers, attracting qualified candidates, and ensuring the efficient use of taxpayer dollars in the long term.

The cost of turnover, including recruitment, onboarding, training, and equipment—is far higher than the proposed wage adjustments. By aligning wages more closely with surrounding municipalities, we can reduce turnover, fill critical vacancies, reduce the need for excessive overtime, and avoid further cuts to essential services.

The amount of \$145,724 (2025 figure) accounts for necessary wage increases and mandatory fringe benefits like Social Security, Medicare, and retirement contributions. These increases are targeted to support the lowest-paid employees in the department, ensuring that our resources are used where they are most needed.

Investing in competitive wages today will lead to a more stable, efficient, and effective police department for Belmont, safeguarding the quality of services we all rely on while reducing long-term costs for our community.

Ballot #6 Shall the Town, if Warrant Article #5 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Warrant Article #5 cost items only? (Majority Vote Required.)

If the amended Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) as described in Article 5 is defeated and if this Article passes, the Board of Selectmen may, if they so choose, call a Special Town Meeting to vote on the cost items only of the amended CBA.

Ballot #7 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the deliberative session, for the purposes set forth herein, \$11,395,086. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$10,822,658, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority Vote Required.)

Note: This warrant article (Operating Budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant article.

(The Budget Committee recommends \$11,395,086 and the Board of Selectmen recommends \$11,404,085.)

The annual operating budget covers all Town departments including Highway, Police, Fire/EMS, Library, Parks N Rec, and all functions at Town Hall. About 50% of the operating budget is funded through non-property tax revenue. Revenues for 2025 are estimated to be around \$5,775,459. This article provides funding for the recurring annual operating costs of providing a broad range of public services to the community. These increases are generally the result of material, service contracts and utility price increases that are anticipated to occur due to the surge in inflationary pressures that are being experienced nationwide. Please review the financial report and recommendations of the Budget Committee detailed in the warrant as shown on the MS-737 Form. The operating budget is a "bottom line budget" by law in New Hampshire. Therefore, the final vote taken on this article will be based on the aggregate appropriation. We anticipate a 16.9% increase in revenues from 2024 to 2025. The increase in the operating budget from 2024 to 2025 is 6.7%, however the amount to be raised by taxation which includes the operating budget and all other warrant articles as presented has only increased by 2.35% due to increased revenues.

Implications of a Default Budget for the Town as a Whole

A municipality that does not receive proper funding experiences a gradual decline in essential services, infrastructure maintenance, and overall community well-being. Without adequate financial resources:

- Public safety is compromised due to insufficient police staffing and outdated equipment.
- Infrastructure deteriorates as road maintenance, building repairs, and park upkeep are delayed or neglected.
- Economic development is stifled due to reduced investment in community projects, deterring businesses and residents from settling in the town.
- Resident satisfaction declines as public amenities and events are reduced or eliminated.
- Emergency response and disaster preparedness efforts are weakened due to limited funding for necessary resources.
- Staff retention and recruitment challenges increase, resulting in higher turnover and reduced efficiency in municipal operations.

- Long-term financial instability leads to higher costs in the future as deferred maintenance results in more significant repairs and replacements.

Conclusion

The constraints imposed by a default budget have impacted every department, reducing services, delaying maintenance, and hindering community growth. If another default budget is implemented, the long-term effects will become even more pronounced, including further infrastructure decline, difficulty retaining and attracting staff, and increasing limitations on Town services. It is necessary to address these financial shortfalls to ensure the sustainability of essential services and future community development.

Ballot #08 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$783,081 for the operation and maintenance of the Sewage Collection and Disposal System for the ensuing year, said sum to be offset by user fees. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$766,257, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law.

(The Budget Committee recommends \$783,081 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

This budget is to be offset by user fees not from taxation.

The operating budget for the Sewer department is for those users on the Public Sewer system only. The budget is funded through sewer usage fees and not from taxation. It will include amounts to operate and maintain the sewer system and its fees to the State of NHDES and the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program (WRBP).

Ballot #09 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$343,438 for the operation and maintenance of the Water Distribution and Treatment System for the ensuing year, said sum to be offset by user fees. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$273,729, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law.

(The Budget Committee recommends \$343,438 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

This budget is to be offset by user fees not from taxation.

The operating budget for the water department is for water users only. The budget is funded through water usage fees and not from taxation. It will include amounts to operate and maintain the Towns water system.

Ballot #10 Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement with a non-appropriation clause in an amount up to \$550,000 payable over a term of 60 months for a new Tanker for the Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 for the down payment for that purpose and further to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said amount from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c created 1994/Amended 1999? No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$250,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The current balance in the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$513,141. Funds to support Articles 10, 11, 12 and 13 are proposed to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund. The last payment will be in 2030.

In 2024, the Town's 2001 Peirce Mack Tanker with a 2,500-gallon tank was found to have cracked frame rails. While working on repairing the tanker it was discovered that repairs would be more expensive than the truck was worth, and there was no warranty on the repairs. The tanker was put out of service and sold at auction. A

committee was formed to work on replacing the 23-year-old tanker with a new tanker. Per NFPA 1911, "Apparatus should respond to first alarms for the first 15 years. For the next 5 years, be in reserve status for use at major fires or as a temporary replacement for out-of-service first line apparatus." This truck was built and purchased in June 2000 from Pierce Manufacturing in Florida.

While the Town has hydrants in the Village area of the town, the outskirts of Town have limited water access. Not having adequate water supply inhibits fire suppression and can also increase homeowners' insurance rates. Having a tanker will help keep rates lower. The ISO rating has already increased due to the lack of a ladder truck in our fleet. The ISO rating will increase more without a tanker.

Financing would consist of a \$250,000 down payment, followed by 5 annual payments of \$69,048. These funds will come from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c and not from taxation.

Per Belmont's Purchasing Policy, we have contacted other dealers and have not only found this tanker to be comparable in price to other dealers, but readily available as it is a demo tanker that fits the needs of the Town. Outfitting the truck with tools is included in the price. The outfitting will set the tanker up with NFPA specifications for an Engine with ladders and attack lines, while continuing to maintain tanker status.

Ballot #11 To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken on Article 7 at the 1999 Annual Meeting to restrict all revenues from ambulance billings to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund to instead restrict all but the first \$149,500 of revenues from ambulance billings received during the 2025 budgetary year to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund. The first \$149,500 of revenues from ambulance billings will be deposited in the Town's General Fund to defray the cost items identified below. This restriction shall only be effective for the 2025 budgetary year. No amount to be raised by taxation. (2/3 Majority Vote Required.)

Training Expenses \$3,000
Medical & Supply Expenses \$30,000
Ambulance Billing Fees \$20,000
Overtime \$40,000
Telephone \$2,000
Conferences & Dues \$1,500
Office Expense \$12,000
Vehicle Repair & Parts \$33,000
Fuel \$8,000

(The Budget Committee recommends \$149,500 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The current balance in the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$513,141. Funds to support Articles 10, 11, 12 and 13 are proposed to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund.

Ballot #12 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$105,000 for the second year's payment on the long term lease/purchase agreement entered into in 2023 for the purchase of a new Ambulance for the Fire Department, and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said amount from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA

31:95-c (Created 1994/Amended 1999). The Town is obligated by the terms of the lease/purchase agreement, as well as the super majority ratifying that agreement in Article 7 at the 2023 Town Meeting, to make these yearly payments. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$105,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The current balance in the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$513,141. Funds to support Articles 10, 11, 12 and 13 are proposed to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund.

This article is part of the Capital Improvement Program. These funds have been used to purchase a new ambulance with equipment through a Capital Lease. That vote in 2023 authorized the down payment and all future loan payments. If this article does not pass the Town will need to return the ambulance and will lose all the money paid to date on the lease.

Ballot #13 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,776 for the tenth year's payment on the long term lease/purchase agreement entered into in 2016 for the purchase of a new pumper truck for the Fire Department, and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said amount from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c (Created 1994/Amended 1999). The Town is obligated by the terms of the lease/purchase agreement, as well as the super majority ratifying that agreement in Article 4 at the 2016 Town Meeting, to make these yearly payments. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$60,776 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The current balance in the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$513,141. Funds to support Articles 10, 11, 12 and 13 are proposed to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Special Revenue Fund.

If approved, this will be the final payment on the lease purchase agreement. If this article does not pass, the Town will need to return the pumper truck and will lose all the money paid to date on the lease.

Capital Reserve Funds

The Town of Belmont uses Capital Reserve Funds as a cost-effective method of financing the purchase or replacement of facilities, equipment and infrastructure. Consistent amounts have been included in annual budgets for transfer to Capital Reserve Funds (similar to savings accounts) in past years, so that sufficient monies are available in these funds when purchases or replacements are required. This spreads the cost over the funding period, rather than requiring a large appropriation in the year of purchase or replacement and thereby helps to stabilize property tax rates. The added benefit of earning interest on the funds serves as an extra cushion against inflation, further stabilizing finances.

Article #14 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$750,000 to be placed in the Highway Reconstruction and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006). (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$750,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand \$0.50. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$1,201,297.59.

The Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund was established in 2006. This \$750,000 appropriation allows the Town to continue necessary road reconstruction and improvements to the infrastructure. The current request for appropriation has remained the same since 2009. By depositing the funds into this Capital Reserve Fund, it ensures that the funds can only be used for that purpose. Background: Within the context of the Annual Road Program, capital road rehabilitation and reconstruction continue towards a goal of improving overall road conditions within the Town. Road Program priorities are generally guided by road condition and PCI (pavement condition index) ratings, traffic volumes, and opportunities to coordinate road construction with other projects. Most of the funds are dedicated to construction, with a portion of the funds being allocated to engineering. This overall approach enables the Town to execute a well-coordinated construction project, and at the same time, prepare/maintain a healthy backlog of design projects that will be ready for reconstruction in subsequent years. Well maintained roads will cost less to reconstruct in the long-term, which is savings to taxpayers. Last year voters failed to pass the article, which put us behind on funds to complete projects in our Town Road Program.

Ballot #15 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500,000 to be placed in the Municipal Facilities Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006). (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$500,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand \$0.34. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$662,852.23.

The intent of this expendable trust fund is to save money for the purpose of Town buildings' interior and exterior capital maintenance (including but not limited to carpeting/flooring, siding, roofing and painting,) all building site maintenance, building expansion and/or reconfiguration, and buildings' interior systems (including but not limited to HVAC, electrical, plumbing, communications, and security) repair and/or replacement. This fund continues to be invested in an interest-bearing account and can only be withdrawn by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen. Funds have been used to renovate the Belmont Mill in anticipation of Town Hall moving to the building in the future, siding on Town Hall, painting of the front of Town Hall and Library exterior, a new roof on the Mill, the purchase of the property at 154 Main Street, replacement Heat and HVAC systems at the Highway and Fire Departments, the overhang at the Highway Garage, lighting retrofits at the Highway Garage, repairs to the floor on the 4th floor of the Mill, access system at Town Hall including security cameras, renovations to the Mill allowing usage of the 4th floor for meetings and the 1st floor for relocation of General Assistance Office. Funds have been used to replace the oil tanks at the Mill and to enclose the dumpster, and roof repair at the Fire Station. Repairs were made to the Mill's furnace, the tennis court backboard at Sargent Park was rebuilt, and garage doors were repaired at the Fire Station.

Ballot #16 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$197,367 for the reconstruction of highways, anticipated to be offset by Highway Block Grant funds provided by the State of New Hampshire. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.) **No funds to come from taxation.**

(The Budget Committee recommends \$197,367 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

HIGHWAY BLOCK GRANT AID

By law, all municipalities in the State having Class IV and V mileage are entitled to Highway Block Grant Aid. RSA 235:23 stipulates the funding apportionments. Highway Block Grant Aid is distributed to municipalities by the State of New Hampshire on a yearly basis with partial disbursements made four times a year. The funds can only be used for construction, reconstruction and maintenance of each municipality's Class IV and V highways. It can, therefore, be used to be part of the match for a project in the bridge aid program. It also can be used towards equipment to maintain the local roads. The intent here is that it be used towards the local roads, i.e., not used to build a new library or school or buy a fire truck. Highway Block Grant Aid funds represent a portion of the State's highway revenues received in the preceding fiscal year including revenues resulting from Senate Bill (SB) 367. If this article fails, the Town will not be able to spend the revenue received by the State of NH for its intended purpose.

Ballot #17 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be placed in the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2007), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$100,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$100,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Expendable Trust Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$155,782.77.

This fund was established to cover the payment of earned time balances when employees retire, as required by law or negotiated in contracts. We have 19 employees who are at retirement status in 2025. The total amount needed to fund these liabilities in 2025 is \$232,457.39.

Ballot #18 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be placed in the Water System Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006) with said sum to be offset by user fees. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$100,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$412,306.95.

The Water Department request for \$100,000 for the Capital Reserve Fund allows funds to be available for future upgrades and repairs to the distribution system. These funds are necessary for continued upgrades as well as unanticipated emergency repairs.

Ballot #19 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$110,000 to be placed in the Highway Department Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2002), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$110,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$110,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$186,113.96.

The Department of Public Works has over 20 vehicles or pieces of equipment with values ranging from \$50,000 to \$310,000. The expected lives of this equipment and vehicles range from 10 to 25 years. DPW has scheduled its expected equipment needs, including costs and the expected year of replacement, as the basis for the necessary level of funding. Timely deposits into the Highway Department Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund will allow for the orderly replacement of highway vehicles using only capital reserve funds which helps to stabilize the yearly tax impact. This fund is invested in an interest-bearing account and funds can only be withdrawn by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen. Since 2002, the Town has set aside money annually in this capital reserve to stabilize our future tax rate. Without this savings account, our tax rates would increase in the years we purchase new equipment, or we would need to borrow, paying long-term interest rates. As our Town grows and new roads are added, the demand for our equipment increases.

Ballot #20 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$80,000 to be placed in the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2005), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$80,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$80,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$63,914.24.

This article adds \$80,000 to the existing fund that has been established to budget for the State mandated reassessment of all properties in Belmont. The law, RSA 75:8-a, requires a full revaluation take place every five years. This \$80,000 request is one of the yearly installments needed to save towards the estimated cost of \$350,000 for the next full revaluation in 2029. This fund will help level the cost the 2029 revaluation out over multiple years. This fund will be invested in an interest-bearing account and funds can only be withdrawn by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen. If funds are not set aside leading up to 2029, the Town will need to enter into a loan to cover the costs, thus having an increased financial impact on taxpayers.

Ballot #21 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$37,500 to be placed in the Information Technology Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2002), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$37,500 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$37,500 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$25,305.10.

This article is part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The intent of this fund is to maintain Town information technology systems including repair or replacement of necessary technology equipment/systems and/or software to perform important critical Town business. Timely deposits into this fund will allow for the orderly replacements and/or updates of important information technology equipment and software using capital reserve funds, which helps to level the yearly tax impact. This fund will be invested in an interest-bearing account and funds can only be withdrawn by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen.

Ballot #22 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 to be placed in the Sewer System Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2011) with said sum to be offset by user fees. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$30,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

Funds to come from user fees. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2023 is \$64,045.06.

The Sewer Department request for \$30,000 for the Capital Reserve Fund allows funds to be available for future upgrades and repairs to our collection system. These funds are necessary for continued upgrades as well as unanticipated and emergency repairs.

Ballot #23 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the already established General Cemetery Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund governed under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a for the purpose of cemetery maintenance, said amount to be expendable at the discretion of the Cemetery Trustees (1997). (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$25,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand \$0.02. The balance in the Cemetery Maintenance Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$33,929.41.

The Cemetery Trustees Capital Reserve Fund is used as a tool for the Trustees to save for large or long-term projects such as restoration, fence repair, signs and more. Funds are also used for emergencies like storm damage.

Ballot #24 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the Drainage Projects Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2003), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$25,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$25,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$56,379.88.

Ballot #25 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the Library Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2000). (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$25,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand \$0.02. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$427,355.11.

This \$25,000 request aims to fund important improvements to the library building, ensuring its continued service to the community. This reserve fund has been built over the past 20 years through contributions from voters, reflecting a long-term commitment to maintaining and enhancing the library's facilities. The original library is 100 years old, and Belmont has outgrown the building and lacks necessary ADA accommodations. It is the intention of the Library Trustees to move forward with plans for an addition to the current building that will support ADA needs and create more space for the community. The funds will be used for essential upgrades to the current structure and set aside for future expansion plans. In 2025, the library will use capital reserve funds to develop an initial plan for a historically respectful and user-friendly expansion at the current location.

Ballot #26 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the Town Bridge Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2003), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$25,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$25,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No funds to come from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$409,009.13.

Bridges and culverts enable Town roads to cross waterways and divert stormwater to minimize flooding and keep our road infrastructure passable. This CRF is used for the engineering, design and construction costs for current and future bridge and culvert replacement. The Town of Belmont continues to request these funds for the eventual need for the replacement of the Church Street bridge as well as other necessary repairs to this type of infrastructure throughout Town. The replacement costs for these repairs are significant.

Ballot #27 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be added to the Durrell Mountain Road Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2021). This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$5,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No amount to be raised from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$16,855.51.

The establishment of a Capital Reserve for the maintenance of Durrell Mountain Road was part of an agreement reached in 2019 with the owners of the gravel pit located in Gilford who travel over Durrell Mountain Road to access the pit, thus creating wear and tear on the roadway due to the heavy trucks traversing. Year one we received \$2,500 and in subsequent years the pit owner is required to contribute \$5,000 to be placed in the account. If this article fails, the funds will lapse into the General Fund and cannot be used for their intended purpose.

Ballot #28 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,500 to be placed in the Heritage Fund previously established (2004). (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$4,500 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand is \$0.00 (a fraction of one penny). The balance in the Heritage Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$41,753.

The balance in the Heritage Fund is used to save for unanticipated repairs, restorations and renovations of historical buildings and landmarks such as next year's replacement of The New Hampshire Preservation Seals located outside of the Bandstand and Belmont Mill. The Fund is also slated to aid in the restoration, preservation and purchasing display cases for artifacts that were handed down to the Commission and the Historical Society. This specific warrant article covers the following Heritage Commission's yearly signature programs: Community Service Awards, Fourth Grade Belmont History Program, supporting Old Home Day activities and the Senior Citizens Valentine's Day Project. In the past two years warrant article funds were also used to install the new Tioga Trail sign and new Main Street banners.

Ballot #29 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 to be placed in the Election Equipment Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2020) and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$2,500 from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$2,500 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No amount to be raised from taxation. The balance in the Capital Reserve Fund as of 12/31/2024 is \$18,177.27

This fund was originally created in anticipation of the mandatory upgrade and replacement of our ballot counting device. The Town hosted demonstrations of both machines available for purchase as approved by the State of NH and determined which machine (along with its service plan cost) best serves our needs. The cost of the new machine is approximately \$7,000. The Town will apply for a grant to supplement a portion of the cost of the new machine, once a vendor is approved by the State of NH.

In addition to requiring a new ballot counting device, the State of NH requires the Town to provide an adequately equipped voting location. The current number of registered voters in the Town has increased by at least 1,000 voters over the last year. There are currently 5,138 registered voters in Town. Per RSA 658:9-V-b: *For a general election where votes will be cast for President there shall be 1 booth per every 100 voters. For a general election where votes will not be cast for President there shall be 1 booth per every 125 voters. For all other state elections, including the state primary election, there shall be 1 booth per every 150 voters. For all cities, towns, school district, and village district elections, there shall be 1 booth per every 200 voters.* This fund will also be used to purchase the required number of voting booths per our number of registered voters, as well as replace broken booths, stanchions, boundary ropes, etc. to equip our voting location per the standards of the State of NH.

Ballot #30 To see if the Town will vote to establish a Contingency Fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further raise and appropriate \$20,000 to go into the fund. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and no amount is to be raised from taxation. Any appropriation left in the fund at year end will lapse to the General Fund. Use of these funds will be pursuant to RSA 31:98-a. and further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Budget Committee recommends \$20,000 and the Board of Selectmen supports this recommendation.)

No amount to be raised from taxation.

Establishment of a contingency fund gives the Board of Selectmen another tool to manage the Town efficiently. If unanticipated expenses arise the Board of Selectmen would have a source of funds to pay for the unanticipated expense. A Contingency Fund is less restrictive than other typical Capital Reserve Funds. The fund must be re-established each year with a new appropriation and funds cannot accumulate from year-to-year. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund.

Article # 31 To see if the Town will vote to expend the income from the John M. Sargent Trust Fund for the purposes recommended by the Sargent Fund Committee. No amount to be raised by taxation.

Belknap Country Fair Association \$2,500
Belmont Girl Scouts Troop 12117 \$385
Belmont Girl Scouts Troop 60200 \$770
Belmont Girl Scout Community \$300
Belmont Heritage Commission \$250
Belmont High School PTO \$700
Belmont Historical Society \$550
Belmont Middle School - Fifth Grade Camp Cody \$3,750
Belmont Middle School PTO \$700
Belmont Public Library \$900
First Baptist Church of Belmont \$3,200
Got Lunch! Belmont & Friends \$5,879.71
Lakes Region Girls Softball \$500
Lakes Region VNA \$1,500
Saint Joseph Food Panty \$3,200
Visiting Nurse Association of Franklin, dba Franklin VNA & Hospice \$1,500

No amount to be raised from taxation. Total award given out for 2025 if approved is \$26,584.71. This is the total of net earnings in the Sargent Fund for CY2024.

Ballot #32 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$193,391 for salary and benefits to hire two (2) full-time firefighters.

Fiscal Year	Salary	Benefits	Total
2025-26	\$109,675	\$83,716	\$193,391

(The Budget Committee does not recommend \$193,391 (11-0) and the Board of Selectmen do not recommend \$193,391 (3-2).)

2025 Estimated Tax Impact per thousand is \$0.13.

The Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee collectively did not support funding for this request during the 2025 Budget season.

Financial Concerns of Hiring Two New Firefighters

Hiring two additional firefighters could pose significant financial challenges for the Town. The cost of salaries, benefits, and training add a substantial burden to the Town's budget. Firefighter salaries are only part of the expense—benefits such as health insurance, retirement contributions, and overtime will increase the overall cost to taxpayers.

The cost of new equipment, uniforms, and ongoing training further increase expenses. If funding comes from increased taxes or budget cuts in other areas, residents may see reduced services elsewhere, such as road maintenance, public safety programs, or community initiatives.

Additionally, long-term financial commitments must be considered. Once hired, firefighters become a fixed expense in the operating budget, and reducing staff in the future can be challenging if the Town faces economic downturns. The Town may struggle to afford these additional positions without cutting other essential services.

Before making a commitment for additional personnel, the Selectmen would like to determine if there are any alternative solutions, such as optimizing current staffing schedules, utilizing part-time or call firefighters, or improving mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments. By carefully evaluating the financial impact, the Town can ensure fiscal responsibility while maintaining emergency services.

The goal of this request from the Fire Chief is to add 2 additional full-time firefighters on a rotating shift schedule to bring staffing levels to 4 firefighters on each 24-hour shift. The Fire Department is aware of the need for increased staffing to bring the department closer to the national standard. NFPA 1710 recommends that each company be staffed with 4 firefighters per shift. If the article is approved, the Fire Chief has stated the overtime line can be reduced. Shifts with 4 on duty will not need to call for a recall when transporting to Concord Hospital. Mutual Aid received from other towns that are also struggling with increased calls will be reduced, and multiple calls will be handled by our own crews.

Ballot #33 Shall the Town modify the provisions of RSA 72:37-b, Exemption for the Disabled from property tax, based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to increase the exemption from \$50,000 to \$80,000 and to increase the permitted net income of the property owner from \$25,000 to \$35,000 or if married, a combined net income of not more than \$50,000 instead of \$35,000; and to increase the permitted net assets of the owner(s) to be not in excess of \$200,000 instead of \$100,000, excluding the value of the person's residence? (Majority Vote Required.)

The following information is reflective of existing approved applicants for Disability Exemptions and the examples are based on the most recent 2024 tax rate.

- At the 2024 tax rate, each disabled applicant would have saved an additional \$472.20 on their 2024 property tax bills.
- 14 applicants with an increased exemption amount from \$50,000 to \$80,000 = \$30,000 each x 14 applicants = \$420,000/1,000 * \$15.74 tax rate = \$6,610.80
- Disability Exemption total tax impact based on 2024 values: \$6,610.80
- Total taxable Town assessment value lost = \$420,000.

Given the recent rise in property values and inflation, the Board of Selectmen moved this article forward to increase the income and asset maximums allowed for Disability Exemptions, as well as to increase the exemption amounts in order to benefit applicants in a greater capacity.

Ballot #34 Shall the Town modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for Elderly Exemption from property tax in the Town of Belmont, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, increase the exemption from \$65,000 to \$80,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, increase the exemption from \$80,000 to \$100,000; for a person 80 years of age or older increase the exemption from \$125,000 to \$150,000. In addition, to increase the permitted net income of the owner from not more than \$25,000 to \$35,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$50,000 instead of \$35,000; and to increase the permitted net assets of the owner(s) to be not in excess of \$200,000 instead of \$150,000, excluding the value of the person's residence? (Majority Vote Required.)

The following information is reflective of existing approved applicants for Elderly Exemptions and the examples are based on the most recent 2024 tax rate.

- At the 2024 rate, each elderly applicant would have saved an additional \$236.10 to \$393.50 on their 2024 property tax bills; depending on their age bracket.
- Age 80+ - 25 applicants with an increased exemption amount from \$125,000 to \$150,000 = \$25,000 each x 25 applicants = \$625,000/1,000 * \$15.74 tax rate = \$9,837.50 increased tax impact
- Age 75-79 – 14 applicants increased exemption amount from \$80,000 to \$100,000 = \$20,000 each x 14 applicants = \$280,000/1,000 * \$15.74 tax rate = \$4,407.20 increased tax impact
- Age 65-74 – 18 applicants increased exemption amount from \$65,000 to \$80,000 = \$15,000 each x 18 applicants = \$270,000/1,000 * \$15.74 tax rate = \$4,249.80 increased tax impact
- Elderly Exemption total tax impact based on 2024 values: \$18,494.50
- Total taxable Town assessment value lost = \$1,175,000.

Given the recent rise in property values and inflation, the Board of Selectmen moved this article forward to increase the income and asset maximums allowed for the Elderly Exemptions, as well as to increase the exemption amounts in order to benefit applicants in a greater capacity.

Ballot #35 Petitioned Warrant Article Are you in favor of increasing the number of Cemetery Trustees from 3 to 5?

(This article submitted by Petition.)

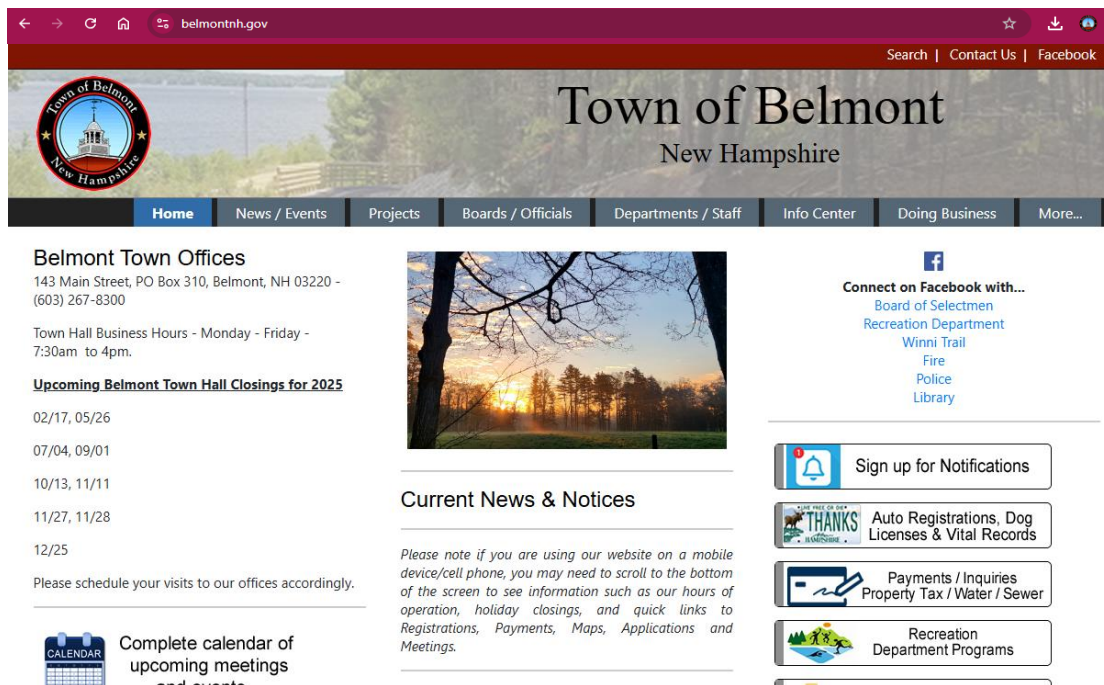
Ballot #36 Petitioned Warrant Article Shall the Town vote to make the Selectmen's meetings be after 4:00 pm, unless there is an emergency that requires a daytime meeting?

(This article submitted by Petition.)

This petitioned warrant article is advisory only.

Implicit in State statute is the ability of any public body (Selectmen) to convene a public meeting at a time and place of its choosing. If a petitioned warrant article dictated what time of day a public body (Selectmen) could hold its meeting, this would invade the statutory authority of the public body (Selectmen) and undermine their ability to manage the prudential affairs of the Town per RSA 41:8.

Please be sure to visit the
Town of Belmont's
website at
belmontnh.gov



Check our home page for important notices, calendar of meetings, quick links for registrations and utility payments and more.

Sign up for our town newsletter and notices using the Sign-Up button.

Each Department, Board and Committee, has their own webpage and we have an Info Center where you can find applications and ordinances.

**TOWN OF BELMONT
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ELECTION AND BALLOT VOTING**

**BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL GYM
255 Seavey Road**

MARCH 11, 2025

**POLLS OPEN AT 7:00 A.M.
AND CLOSE AT 7:00 P.M.**

