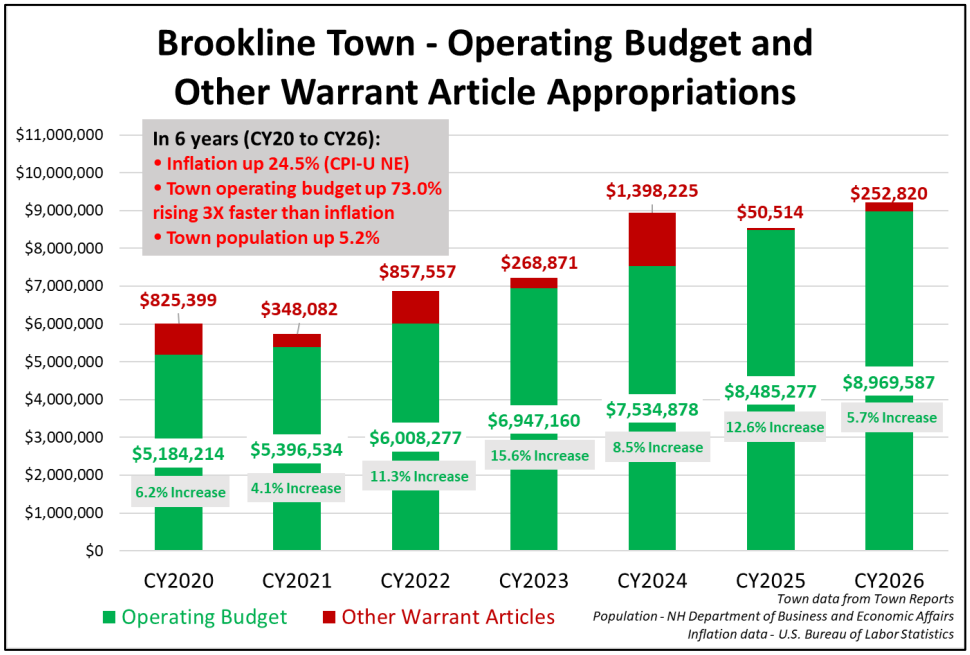
2026 Brookline Town Meeting Conservatives Voters Guide

9:00 am, Sat, March 14, 2026 - Captain Samuel Douglass Academy, 24 Townsend Hill Rd

Proposed total spending : $9,222,407, up $686,616 (+8.0%) – not counting new proposed bonds



2026 Municipal Portion of Property Tax Rate:
If all proposed spending is approved:
$5.83/1K
(Increase of +$1.10/1K from 2025 tax rate of $4.73/1K)

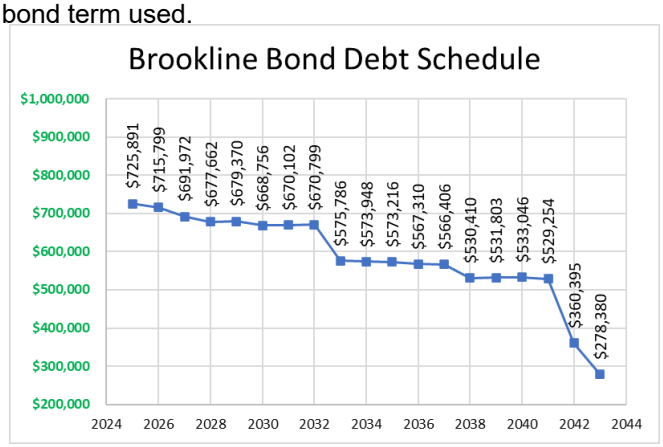
In 2027, another +$0.43/1K for the 2 bonds and 2 new DPW workers

Items in green: conservative action to support
Items in red: conservative action to oppose

Article 5: $1,000,000 Bond – Town Hall Renovation – Recommend NO (1 hr ballot vote at meeting, 3/5 required)
Warrant article does not include any expected bond term (i.e. 10 years) or tax impact, even though RSA 32:5 V-b requires disclosure of first five years of tax impact. Assume 10 year bond with 4.2% rate → $124,000 per year
Tax impact of $0.24/1K in 2027-2036. Higher impact if shorter bond term used.

Article 6: $500,000 Bond – Pierce Pond Dam Removal – Recommend NO (1 hr ballot vote at meeting, 3/5 required)
Warrant article does not include any expected bond term (i.e. 10 years) or tax impact, even though RSA 32:5 V-b requires disclosure of first five years of tax impact. Assume 10 year bond with 4.2% rate → $62,000 per year
Tax impact of $0.12/1K in 2027-2036. Higher impact if shorter bond term used.

Above bonds will significantly increase future bond debt payments



Article 7: $8,969,587 Operating Budget –
up 29% in 3 years, up 73% in 6 years
Recommend amending to smaller budget by $250K+/-
Increased benefits costs +$183,450 +18.9%
Insurance: Property, Liability, Worker +$158,209 +30.0%
Building operations +$33,824 +11.9%
Hollis Communications +$37,798 +13.4%
Ambulance +$39,692 +8.7%
Highways/Streets +$82,173 +7.0%
Consulting for Inhouse PR $5,000 (?)
IT Provider/Licenses/Equip up $16,000,
New Land Use Assistant Salary $38,266
Legal Budget $100,000
Off Equip Maint/Account SW $47,000 (up from $16,000)
Moderator pay $400 (up from $100)
Emergency Manager budget +$21,500 (doubled) with new $31,000 pay (up from $9,500)
Tax impact of $5.81/1K

By Eric Pauer https://www.hollisbrookline.com

Article 8: $102,666 Two More DPW Employees ($183,652 annual cost) – Recommend NO
$60,480 in pay and $42,186 in benefits for seven (7) months of 2026
Tax impact of $0.09/1K (2026), $0.16/1K (2027 and beyond)
Article 9: $50,000 Pave Gravel Road Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend NO
We don't need to pave any more gravel roads, make agreement with Mason for grader to save $$$
Tax impact of $0.04/1K
Article 10: Establish Public Works Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend YES
Creates fund for savings towards capital equipment for public works department coming from land use change tax
No tax impact
Article 11: Allocate Revenues from Land Use Change Tax – Recommend YES
50% of tax goes to Public Works CRF, 50% of tax goes to Land Acquisition (Conservation) Fund. **No tax impact**
Article 12: $50,000 for Public Works Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend NO
We can skip additional taxation this year for this fund, and let land use change tax accumulate
Tax impact of $0.04/1K
Article 13: $20,314 Reappraisal Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend YES
We save 20% of the cost for mandatory 5-year town-wide re-evaluation of property values, avoids spike on 5th year
Tax impact of $0.02/1K
Article 14: $25,000 for Establishing Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend YES
Recommend creating CRF and fund with small amount to fund future public fire safety equipment needs
Tax impact of $0.02/1K
Article 15: Sell old fire trucks for $28,350 and fund Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) – Recommend YES
Recommend selling 3 old fire trucks, place the expected $28,350 into the existing Fire Truck CRF. **No tax impact**
Article 16: Establish Fire Dept Detail Revenue Revolving Fund – Recommend YES
Good fiscal tool to manage revenues and payments from fire department details. Will be initialized with up to $5,000 from the town unassigned fund balance (surplus). **No tax impact**
Article 17: Change Fire Department Governance – Eliminate all 3 Fire Wards, and Fire Department Reports to Selectboard – Recommend NO
Current Fire Ward structure works well; not advisable for Selectboard to manage fire department; it is better to distribute authority rather than further concentrate authority. **No immediate tax impact**
Article 18: Increase number of Fire Wards from 3 to 5 – Recommend YES
Town and fire department have grown, and it is logical to expand the number of Fire Wards to 5. **No tax impact**
Article 19: Establish Town Celebrations Revolving Fund using existing 250th Fund – Recommend YES
Essentially changes name and expands purpose of existing 250th fund to future town celebrations. **No tax impact**
Article 20: Establish Timber Harvest Revolving Fund – Recommend YES
Fund will receive revenues from timber harvests on town-owned conservation land, to be used by Conservation Commission for associated trail maintenance and other conservation-related expenses. **No tax impact**
Article 21: Increase 100% Disabled Veteran's Tax Credit to $5,000 – Recommend YES
We have 27 veterans who are 100% disabled receiving this $4000 tax credit. New state law under 2025 HB99 raised the maximum to $5,000, but they no longer get the $750 tax credit Let's take care of our 100% disabled veterans.
Tax impact of $0.01/1K
Article 22: Move Ambulance Donations to Ambulance Expendable Trust – Recommend YES
Moves ambulance donations from general fund to Ambulance Expendable Trust. **No tax impact**
Article 23: Selectboard Authority to Demolish Buildings – Recommend YES
Allows selectboard authority to demolish dilapidated buildings, after review and recommendation from planning board and to the conservation commission. **No tax impact**
Article 24: Selectboard Authority to Demolish Structures on Lot B-55– Recommend YES
Allows selectboard authority to demolish structures on lot B-55 only. Applicable if Article 23 fails. **No tax impact**
Article 25: Grant Conservation Commission Authority to Issue Violations – Recommend YES
Grant conservation commission authority system for the administrative enforcement of violations occurring on town-owned conservation lands. **No tax impact**
Article 26: Adopt SB2 Official Ballot Voting – Recommend YES (1 hr ballot vote at meeting, 3/5 required)
Same system used with Brookline School District. Deliberative Session then all day official ballot voting on all warrant articles. **No tax impact.**
Article 27: Adopt Town Budget Cap – Recommend YES (1 hr ballot vote at meeting, 3/5 required)
Sets common sense town budget cap at $1,493 per resident—adjusts annually for inflation and population growth.
No tax impact.
Article 28: Local Tax Cap for Town – Recommend YES (1 hr ballot vote at meeting, 3/5 required)
Allows tax effort each year to increase by inflation and population growth (tax effort = total expenditures – revenues)
No tax impact.