

Stoughton Town Crier

TOWN OF STOUGHTON UPDATED JANUARY 23, 2024 ROBERTA HARBACK



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TOWN OF STOUGHTON
MASSACHUSETTS
02072
PLANNING BOARD

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THE TOWN CLERK

TOWN HALL
10 PEARL STREET
TELEPHONE: (781) 341-1300
FAX: (781) 341-1300

Planning Department
Notice of Public Forum
Route 27 Zoning Study
Agenda

Wednesday, January 24, 2024
at 5:30 P.M.

Great Hall, Town Hall, 10 Pearl St , 3rd floor

The Stoughton Planning Department on behalf of the Planning Board will be hosting a Public Forum for the Route 27 Zoning Study Project. Town of Stoughton has received a grant to Study Route 27 from the Brockton Line to Ash Street. The Town has hired the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to work on the project. The purpose of this event is to present the project overview, share the existing conditions analysis, and gather feedback from the public—especially study area residents, property owners, businesses, and precinct members. This is the first of two scheduled public forums. To learn more about the project, visit the project webpage: <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/route-27-park-street-zoning-study/>

5:30PM

1. Town Planner Introduction of Project
2. MAPC - Presentation
3. Public Input
4. Adjournment

COMMUNITY BONFIRE

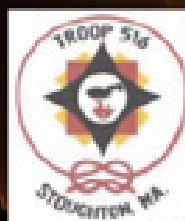
Saturday
~~January 20th~~

POSTPONED to

1/27th

5-7 PM

JOHN DENISON
ATHLETIC COMPLEX
(FORMERLY THE
WEST SCHOOL
ATHLETIC COMPLEX)



www.StoughtonRec.org



TOWN OF STOUGHTON

SELECT BOARD

10 Pearl Street – Stoughton, MA 02072 (781) 341-1300 Fax (781) 297-2879

TO: Chairman Vaughan Enokian

RE: FY25 Operating Budget

DATE: January 17, 2024

Greetings Chairman Enokian,

As you well know, the annual operating budget is the product of a lengthy, detailed, comprehensive department-by-department examination into the Town's financial and operational needs for the coming fiscal year. Among many other things, it requires robust communication with all Town departments and thorough information gathering. This year the creation of the 2025 Fiscal Year Operating Budget presented unique and significant challenges. We are, therefore taking the extraordinary step of providing this letter of explanation together with our transmittal of the budget so that the Finance Committee can better understand the context and circumstances the Select Board weighed in preparing the FY25 budget.

As part of a challenging but deeply necessary ongoing financial reform, the Town Manager, with the support of the Select Board, undertook and accomplished major changes to operations in the previous fiscal year. The Town's self-funded Health Insurance Trust Fund was in crisis but that crisis was solved. That solution however, while successful, came with financial consequences. The Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds, which had been subsidized by significant contributions from the General Fund for decades has now been weaned off those subsidies. The structural deficit in the rubbish and solid waste category has been closed. Throughout this process every Town department needed to make certain sacrifices and every Town department continues to make those sacrifices so that the Town can not only achieve a balanced budget but provide the quality of service our citizens deserve. Additionally, as you well know, there are several significant capital projects in our future; including PFAS compliance, road resurfacing, the replacement of old, underground infrastructures, a much needed addition to the existing Police Station and two new schools. The viability of those projects hangs on the financial strength of the Town. The Town's financial standing is not only exceedingly important but it is exceedingly delicate. Actions that have the potential to compromise the Town's standing could start us down a perilous path. Accordingly, in preparing the FY25 operating budget, the Select Board has taken great care and thoughtfulness to attend to both the Town's immediate needs but it has also taken equally great care to be mindful of the Town's quickly approaching future.

I would like to thank the budget team for their hard work and critical thinking as they identified and addressed unprecedented challenges throughout the FY25 budget process. The team consisted of Town Manager Tom Calter, Marc Tisdelle, Trish Shropshire, Mary Jane Martin and Deanna Chatsko. The challenges faced during the budget process were not typical of years past. The impact of inflation on goods, services and professional staff salaries are quantifiable. The labor market for Police and Fire personnel has inflated as communities exit

Civil Service. The long-standing salary disparity that exists between male and female professionals doing the same job is an injustice, which must be addressed. Failure to acknowledge and address these challenges and inequities will have costly long term consequences. As professional staff leave our employment in pursuit of market rate salaries, the cost of replacing our highly trained employees is typically 15-20% greater.

I am pleased to report that the budget team addressed these and other challenges head on. They prepared a \$32,626,515 municipal budget which represents a 3.8% increase, a reduction in joint costs, the elimination of several positions and the addition of others which improves the Town's competitiveness, its service quality, makes an investment in community outreach and which ensures succession planning in several management areas. In all, the municipal budget reflects a net reduction of 5.4 full time employees (FTE's).

Attached to the FY25 Operating Budget is the FY25 Town Organizational Chart. As noted, our team was unable to fill several positions, which were approved in the FY24 budget. Unfortunately, in spite of widespread advertising, the salaries offered were not competitive. The Town Manager met the resulting challenges by asking Senior Managers to accept additional responsibilities. However, Tom recognizes that this short term tactical management approach is not sustainable long term. The budget team made the salary adjustments in the FY25 budget which are needed for us to be competitive in the recruitment of high quality staff.

As you review this FY25 Municipal Budget you will note several differences from the FY24 Operating budget:

1. The FY25 Municipal Operating budget does not rely on the use of one-time Free Cash. This action, expected to take 7 years, is key to strengthening the Town's bond rating. Of course our bond rating drives our cost of borrowing for new schools and infrastructure investments. Therefore, this action is a strategic imperative.
By affirmative votes of the Select Board and School Committee on Tuesday, January 16th, the School Department FY25 budget is \$62,868,429, a 7.1% increase over FY24. Free cash will be used to balance the School Department budget.
2. The FY25 Operating budget does not require or provide subsidies for the Water and Sewer Enterprise funds. A rate adjustment will be considered in Nov. 2024.
3. The FY25 Operating budget forecasts an additional \$500,000 in new revenue needed to fully fund Rubbish Removal Services. A rate adjustment will be considered in Nov. 2024.
4. The FY25 Operating budget includes a 4-year Capital Investment Plan. (Exclusive of Schools)
5. The FY25 Operating budget has fully funded the Health Insurance Trust Fund. No subsidy will be required in FY25. A rate adjustment will be considered in Nov. 2024. The "opt out" program resulted in 38 fewer subscribers and less expense.
6. The FY25 Operating budget reflects the savings associated with the Police and Fire having joined Regional 911.
7. The FY25 Operating budget reflects the reallocation of funding of four Patrolman positions, which will not be filled until FY 26. Those savings and salaries are used to fund Labor Contracts recently executed with the Police Superiors and Patrolman Unions.
8. The FY25 Operating budget reflects a 10% increase in General Liability Insurance. (Approximately \$150,000)

10. With few exceptions, Management personnel received only cost of Living adjustments ("COLA"), with no other salary increases.
11. An FY25 warrant article includes a minimum deposit of \$1,000,000 into the Town Reserve Account. The plan is to make that deposit prior to using free cash for capital purchases.
12. The FY25 budget makes a modest contribution towards the Town's OPEB obligation.

Prior to the Select Board's receipt of the School Committee's re-voted budget on January 16th, we had assumed a School Department increase of 3.8% for FY25. Our assumption was based on a 10 year average increase in School Department budgets of 4.08%. The re-voted School department FY25 budget of \$62,868,429, reflects a 7.1% increase over FY24. The Select Board supports the School Department Budget. In order to meet that budget level, the Select Board anticipates the use of free cash, which will be certified by February 15th.

As follows:

**Town of Stoughton FY25 Operating Budget
Budget Summary**

Municipal	\$32,626,515	3.8%
School	\$62,868,429	7.1%
Regional Schools	\$1,632,547	4.4%
Joint Account	\$32,978,329	-0.4%
Total Budget	\$130,105,820	4.3%

The financial condition of the Stoughton Operating Budget is strong and getting stronger. That strength is the result of hard decisions and strategic policy initiatives instituted by the Town Manager and Superintendent with the support of the Select Board and School Committee. Again, the Select Board is committed to supporting the schools, administrators, teachers, staff and students of this community and will never fail to recognize the importance and value of each and every member of the school community. However, every department of the Town is expected to provide quality service within our limited financial constraints.

We look forward to addressing our shared challenges through a collaborative effort between Town Government, the School Committee and the Finance Committee. Through the leadership of Vice Chairman Steve Carey and School Committee, Chair Katherine Weiss, that collaborate process is well underway!

Respectfully,



Debra Roberts
Select Board Chair



Town of Stoughton

OFFICE OF THE TOWN COLLECTOR

10 Pearl Street • Stoughton, MA 02072 • (781) 341-1300 • FAX (781) 341-1032

The Treasurer/Collector, Paula Nute, has announced the **3rd quarter Fiscal Year 2024 REAL ESTATE and PERSONAL PROPERTY tax bills are due February 1, 2024**, and must be received in the Collectors' office or at the PO Box in Medford on or before this date.

A postmark date is not acceptable as payment made if payment is not received in the Collectors' office or at the PO Box in Medford by February 1, 2024.

The 3rd and 4th quarter tax remittances were mailed in the same envelope on December 30, 2023.

When sending payment(s) to the Lockbox address in Medford, checks AND tax remittances MUST BE SENT. PLEASE do not send checks only to the Medford address. If there are no remittances with the check(s), the payment cannot be processed and will be returned to Town Hall for processing. This will delay the payment(s) from being applied to your tax bill(s).

When processing a payment online through your bank, you MUST include the bill number, year, and type in the Memo field (for example, Bill #25, 2024 real estate or personal property) so your payment will be properly applied.

When paying multiple bills through your bank, you must include each bill number. If this information is not included on your check, your check may be returned to you, and interest may accrue due to a late payment.

Online bank payment checks must be mailed to Town of Stoughton PO Box 9108 Stoughton MA 02072.

There is a secured payment drop box outside Town Hall on Pearl St. The payment drop box is emptied two to three times a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, and if needed, once before leaving the office.

Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills may be paid online at:

<https://www.stoughton.org/home/pages/pay-bills-online>

The Collector's Office is now accepting payments by credit and debit cards in the Collector's Office for all tax and water, sewer, trash bills. There is a 3% fee if a card is used to process a payment.

All Fiscal Year 2024 Real Estate and Personal Property taxes remaining unpaid after their respective due dates are subject to 14% per annum interest.

Please call 781-341-1300 X 9222 if you need your bill number(s) and or amount(s) due. The Collector staff are available by phone and in person Monday through Wednesday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7:00 PM, and Friday from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM.



STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN HOUSING FORUM

February 1, 2024 – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Light Refreshments will be Served

Greetings and Happy New Year.

Please join Co-Hosts Debra Roberts and Steve Cavey in an open discussion of Housing and Development opportunities in Stoughton Center.

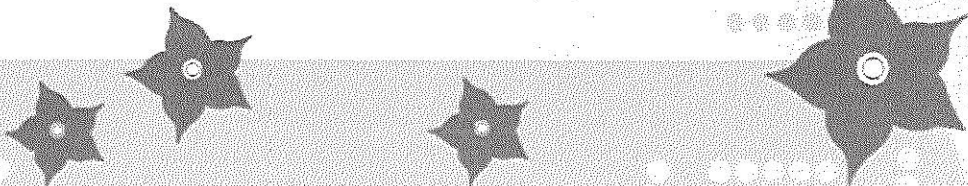
We are honored to have guest Speaker Jay Ash join us for this important discussion. Jay served as the Former Cabinet Secretary of Housing and Economic Development in the Baker Administration. In addition, he served as Chelsea's City Manager from 2000 to 2014.

Strategic Opportunity

This forum provides an opportunity for Town Meeting Members to receive valuable information from Secretary Ash. Jay is considered an accomplished expert on both Municipal and State Housing issues.

Please join us on February 1st from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Great Hall.

RSVP to Gilda Pereira – (781) 232-9212 or
gpereira@stoughton-ma.gov by 1/26/2024





stoughtontv.com
781-341-1708
421 Page Street, Suite 2

Verizon: Public 28 / Education 26 / Government 24
Comcast: Public 9 / Education 6 / Government 8



Godfather 1 produced by **Peter Ventresco**



Last Word on Sports produced by **TJ Chamberlain**



Local Civics produced by **Luke Asack**



Neighborhood Talk produced by **Michelle Sofi**

Did you
know that
many
Stoughton
residents
produce
shows at the
SMAC
Studio?

Don't Just
Watch TV
- MAKE IT! -

Call today for
more
information!



Town of Stoughton

Planning Board Agenda

Thursday...January 25 ...6:30 PM...Fitzpatrick Rm.Town Hall
and virtually via Google Meets

In accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, which extends the Governor's March 12, 2020 "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20," until March 31, 2025, this meeting will be conducted both in person and virtually via Google Meets.

To Join via Google Meets: meet.google.com/egx-aweg-buu

Phone: 1-567-402-0532

Pin: 808 163 591#

Note: Items may be taken out of order.

6:30PM

1. Chairman's Comments
2. Form A – ANR Plan – 127 Benson Road; Map 73, Lots 19 and 20
3. A **CONTINUED** public hearing will be held on the petition of the applicant - Citizens Bank represented by Expedite The Diehl LLC agent for the property owner KJDHGL LLC, 139 Weatherbee Drive, Westwood, MA 02090, for a Sign Special Permit under Section 6.2.7. The applicant is seeking to allow three signs where Section 6.2.6.5 states "No more than two signs shall be allowed for any one business or industrial establishment in the B or I Districts". The project is located at 90 Sharon Street (Assessors Map 3, Lot 121) in a GB (General Business) Zoning District.
4. A **CONTINUED** public hearing will be held on the petition of the applicant - JF White Contracting Co., 56 Old Page Street, Stoughton, MA 02072, represented by Karla Chaffee, Esq., Nixon Peabody, LLP, Exchange Place, 53 State Street, Boston, MA 02109 for Site Plan Review under Section 10.6.2 for a proposed 1,200+/- SF, 2-story office building with 13 parking spaces and related site improvements. The applicant has requested waivers to Section 10.6.9 (17, 19, 20 & 24) Submittal Requirements to not provide an Operation and Maintenance Plan, Signage Details, Color Renderings and Snow Storage Plan; and Section 10.6.10 (1, 2, 3, 4 & 5) Development Impact Report to not provide a Traffic Impact, Visual Impact, Environmental Impact, Economic Impact and Community Impact Assessments. The project is located at 56 Old Page Street (Assessors Map 93 Lot 007) in an I (Industrial) Zoning District.

5. A *CONTINUED* public hearing will be held on the petition of the applicant - Project Expeditors Consulting Company, c/o Andy Fitz, 28 Station Street, Manalapan, NJ 077726, on behalf of the property owner Papantoniadis Properties LLC, 701 Gay Street, Westwood MA 02090 for Site Plan Review under Section 10.6.2 for a proposed Chase Bank. The applicant proposes to renovate and retrofit the existing building into a new bank branch with a drive-through ATM. The renovations include building enhancements and parking lot, lighting & landscape improvements. A Special Permit under Section 3.1.4.D.5 to allow a drive-through for a proposed Chase Bank is also requested. The project is located at 386 Washington Street (Assessors Map 56 Lot 012) in an GB (General Business) Zoning District.
6. A *CONTINUED* public hearing will be held on the petition of the applicant – the petition of the applicant and owner, VFW Brucewood LLC, 540 VFW Parkway, Suite 3, West Roxbury, MA 02132, represented by Attorney Barry R. Crimmins, 909 Washington Street, Stoughton, MA 02072 for a Definitive Subdivision Approval, under MGL Ch. 41, Sec. 81K-81GG and the Stoughton Land Subdivision Regulations of February 17, 1999. The proposal is to create an 18 lot residential subdivision with related infrastructure. Waivers have been requested to Section IV – Procedures for Submission and Approval of Plans and Section VI – Design and Construction Standards. The property is located at 0 Eagle Rock Road (Assessors Map 8, Lots 16 and 17) in the Residential A (“RA”) zoning district.
7. General Business
 - Housing Forum – February 1, 2024 – Select Board Invite
 - 2024 Meeting Schedule
 - Meeting Minutes
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment



Town of Stoughton

Planning Board Agenda

Thursday...January 25 ...6:30 PM...Fitzpatrick Rm.Town Hall
and virtually via Google Meets

Tea Time Talks

with Teresa

Thursday mornings

9-9:30am; 9:30-10am appts

10-10:30 Open Drop-in Time

Stoughton Public Library

FREE CONFIDENTIAL CONSULTATION TIME
FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS, GRANDPARENTS
WITH THE
STOUGHTON YOUTH COMMISSION
SENIOR CLINICIAN



We will be picking up trees
on your recycle day
for the month of January.

The tree must be bare..



Stoughton Public Works Department



Jones Early Childhood Center

PRESCHOOL SCREENING

Friday, February 16, 2024
at the Jones Early Childhood Center
(137 Walnut St.)

Stoughton Public Schools



Attention parents of school age children ages 2.9 to 4 years:

In compliance with Chapter 766, Stoughton Public Schools will screen preschool-aged children to identify those children with possible special education needs.

The screening will occur at the E.A. Jones Early Childhood Center on Friday, February 16, 2024.

The screening will include the following: Speech and language, education, motor skills, and completion of a parent questionnaire.

If you want to schedule an appointment, please call by Wednesday, January 31, 2024.

This screening is not for enrollment for the preschool.
Your child must be a Stoughton resident.

If you have any questions or want additional information, please get in touch with the Jones ECC at 781-344-7003 or email Lynda Feeney at l_feeney@stoughtonschools.org. Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS

CREATE-YOUR-OWN



NEWS SEGMENT

Tues-Thurs | 2/20-2/22 | 1-4 pm

Grades 6-9 | \$20 | Location: SMAC Studios

Join Stoughton Media Access in partnership with the Stoughton Recreation Department to create your very own news segment during February Vacation! This hands-on program not only delves into the fundamentals of journalism, including conducting interviews and scriptwriting, but also provides practical experience in video production, teaching technical skills such as camera operation and editing. Through collaborative teamwork, participants will produce a cohesive news segment, grow their communication skills and foster a sense of shared accomplishment. Join us on the final day for the red carpet viewing party!

Registration open now

WWW.STOUGHTONREC.ORG



TRIVIA NIGHT

THURSDAY 2/22

5-6:30 PM | GRADES 5-9

\$12 | PIZZA INCLUDED!



PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

WWW.STOUGHTONREC.ORG

Welcome to the Town Manager's Office!

On December 12, 2022 I was honored to begin my career in Stoughton. After enjoying a successful career in business, as a State Legislator and as a Town Administrator, I've taken on this challenge with eyes wide open. From a career of professional experiences, successes and mistakes, I join the Town well prepared to meet the challenges, and leverage the opportunities before us. It's hard to believe that almost 3 months have already passed. I apologize for not reaching out sooner. I want you to know that I am true and committed to several core values.

First, you can always expect transactional honesty from me. I will respectfully say what I mean and mean what I say. Second, I am committed to openness and full transparency. Secrets, hidden agendas and old grievances will not play any part in my decision making process nor, will they eat up the valuable time needed to do this job properly. Third, you can always expect me to use prudent fiscal judgement. We have real financial challenges and clear solutions which will require your understanding and support. I am not promising a "Rose Garden". I am promising however, that within three years, the Town of Stoughton will stand on a strong financial footing.

We have some challenges that are among my top priorities. As Stoughton looks forward to its 300th Anniversary, it's important to understand that our infrastructure is old and has been neglected for decades. We seldom appreciate the value of clean running water and efficient waste management until those services are interrupted or lost. We all share 112 miles of Stoughton roads. Only 24.1 miles require minimal or no maintenance. As we develop a long-term infrastructure plan, we need to coordinate the replacement of 100 year old water and waste water distribution lines with the pavement of those roads. We need to replace water meters that are not properly recording water consumption. This may appear to be getting into the weeds. However, the condition of our water and sewer lines, town buildings, and town roads is beneath the standard you deserve. Meeting those challenges is among my top priorities. Meeting you and hearing your views will be among my greatest joys!

In closing, I want you to know that openness, transparency and constituent service are among my core values. Those values served me well as a business executive, business owner, legislator and municipal leader. Your confidence in Stoughton town government is needed in order for us to move our common agenda forward. I ask that you stay in touch, stay involved, share your thoughts and make your voice heard.

Respectfully,

Thomas J. Calter

