



# TOWN OF NATICK

## Spring 2009 Newsletter

*Issued by Martha White,  
Town Administrator*

### Natick Board of Selectmen

John Ciccariello, Chair  
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Kristine VanAmsterdam, Clerk  
Carol A. Gloff  
John Connolly

### Fiscal Year 2010 Budget

The economic challenges prevalent throughout the nation – and, indeed, world-wide – are affecting local governments as well. Natick is currently experiencing substantially lower than normal receipts in several key local revenue categories, and we anticipate this trend to continue for quite some time. These revenue categories – notably permit fees, motor vehicle excise tax, investment income and state aid – are directly affected by the larger economic conditions.

The projections for revenues that will be available in support of the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget deviate substantially from previous fiscal years, and will necessitate sizable reductions in spending. The stability afforded to us by passage of the Proposition 2½ Override last spring has been undercut by the widespread recession conditions.

At the beginning of January 2009 the initial level-service budgets were presented for all Town departments for the upcoming 2010 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009. These budgets funded essentially the same levels of service offered by the town departments in this current fiscal year. Given projected cost increases, the resulting initial budgets exceeded projected available revenues by over \$4.7 million.

Several efforts to enhance revenues and reduce expenses were already underway and progressed over the coming weeks such that the most recent FY 2010 projected shortfall is \$4.467 million. Of this, and in accordance with a formula agreed to by representatives from the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee and the Town and School Administrations, the school department has

identified budget cuts totaling \$3.071 million and the general government has identified budget cuts totaling \$1.396 million; in order to fully fund anticipated unemployment costs, the total cut for general government will be \$1.568 million. Today's balanced budget reflects the impacts of these budget cuts.

The budgets will continue to undergo review and update as revenue information continues to be refined and as the Town and School Administrations confer with the Board of Selectmen and School Committee respectively, as well as throughout the Finance Committee's Public Hearing process. These budget reviews will take place over the coming few weeks leading up to the commencement of the Spring Annual Town Meeting.

To trim the necessary \$1.568 million from the initial level-service general government budget, the equivalent of over 18 positions are eliminated, affecting the delivery of service throughout several major areas, including the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works, School Department and Libraries.

A number of initiatives are underway to further reduce costs and enhance revenues in an effort to positively impact the budget, including elimination of the cost-of-living allowance for general government non-union personnel, a proposal to convey the Natick Community Organic Farm to the Conservation Commission such that costs currently funded through general revenues would instead be funded from the Conservation Fund, incorporating the additional revenues anticipated from approved increases in certain user fees, and more. The Administration has also proposed an early retirement

incentive program to provide opportunities for better managing the personnel reductions.

There are a number of areas, however, in which we face potential additional costs, including potential settlement of the collective bargaining agreement with the Police Supervisors' Union (which has been without a contract since July 1, 2007), additional supplement for this winter's snow removal costs, proposals to fund design services for both the Community/Senior Center and High School projects, and more.

This budget year has proven to be perhaps the most challenging in recent memory, in Natick and beyond. The Administration is committed to continued resourcefulness and innovation to best manage the delivery of high quality, cost-effective services to all Natick residents.

Further details about the FY 2010 budget can be found on-line at [www.natickma.gov](http://www.natickma.gov), or copies may be reviewed at the Office of the Board of Selectmen/Town Administrator.

### **Town Meeting**

The 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting convenes on April 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wilson Middle School. The warrant includes 44 articles on a variety of important issues including funding for capital equipment and improvements, appropriation of funds to survey a section of Main Street that has never been designated as an accepted public way, consideration of a Tax Increment Financing program for The MathWorks, acceptance of a revised layout plan for Cottage Street, funding for design work for the Community/Senior Center project and the High School project, and several citizen's petitions. All Natick residents are encouraged to become informed about the topics on the Town Meeting warrant and discuss these important issues with your Town Meeting representatives.

The Town Meeting Warrant and Finance Committee Recommendations may be viewed on-line at [www.natickma.gov](http://www.natickma.gov), or copies may be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office.

### **New Personnel**

Upon the retirement of elected Town Clerk Judi Kuhn, and in accordance with the Town Charter, the Selectmen conducted a search for an appointed

Interim Town Clerk to serve until the next available town election in March 2010. Ms. Onorina Maloney, who served as Town Clerk for the Town of Groton, MA was appointed by the Board. We welcome Ms. Maloney to Natick and thank Ms. Kuhn for her many years of dedicated service to the community.

Another recent resignation came from Town Comptroller Fred Witte. The Selectmen recently appointed Mr. Charles Panagopoulos, who most recently served the City of Boston in their auditing department. Again, we welcome Mr. Panagopoulos to Natick, and thank Mr. Witte for his dedicated service as the Town's Comptroller and in his previous position as Assistant Treasurer/Collector.

### **West Natick Commuter Parking Garage**

The state has approved funding for the preliminary design for a parking garage at the West Natick MBTA station. While this is no guarantee that funding for final design and construction will be approved, it is a good step in that direction. The design process will include opportunity for neighborhood and community input. More details will be provided in the coming months.

### **Route 27 project**

Design work for the complete reconstruction of Route 27 (from Natick Center to Wayland) is underway. This design work is funded entirely from mitigation funds from the Natick Collection, Apple Hill and The MathWorks through the Planning Board approval processes. Public meetings will be held at various stages throughout the design process. More details will be provided in the coming months.

### **Cable "Ascertainment Process"**

Have a question, concern or issue with your cable provider? The Town of Natick is currently conducting a survey as part of the Ascertainment Process for the renewal of cable licenses for Comcast and RCN.

The survey can be found at either of the Town's libraries, Town Hall (Selectmen's Office) or online at <http://www.natickma.gov/selectmen>

**Happy Spring!**

