



2025 Milford Town Voters' Guide



January 2024, saw the 50th anniversary of the ambulance department. The department began operations on January 1, 1974 in the former DPW garage on Bridge St, as an all-volunteer department comprising providers certified by American Red Cross with First Aid and CPR certification, and the newly created National Registry of EMTs, EMT certification. With two van-style ambulances, the department responded to 344 calls in our first year of operation.

Fast forward 50 years to 2024, the department has evolved into a paid department with providers certified at the National Registry of EMT Advanced EMT and Paramedic levels, with the department credentialed by NH EMS as a Rapid Sequence Intubation department, in a dedicated facility, with three box-style ambulances, a Paramedic Response Vehicle and responding to 2,202 calls in 2024.

While much has changed in 50 years, the professional care from staff has not.

Here for Life!

Milford Town Vote
Tuesday, March 11, 2025
Polls Open 6:00 am to 8:00 pm
Milford High School – 100 West Street

**Town of Milford Warrant Officials
2024 – 2025**

Board of Selectmen

Tim Finan, Chairman
Paul Dargie, Vice Chairman
Dave Freel
Chris Labonte
Tina Philbrick

Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners

Dale White, Chairman
Robert Courage
Hunter Philbrick

Budget Advisory Committee

Karen Mitchell, Chairman
Chris Pank, Co-Chairman
Paul Bartolomucci
Wade Scott Campbell
Claudia Lemaire
Peggy Seward
Vanessa Sheehan
Kevin Hunter
Mike Thornton

**2025 TOWN MEETING
WARRANT & FINANCIALS**

To the inhabitants of the Town of Milford in the County of Hillsborough, in the State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in Town affairs:

You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of the Town of Milford will be held, in accordance with RSA 40:13, in said Milford, with the first session (also known as "Deliberative Session") at the Town Hall Auditorium on Saturday, February 1, 2025, at 9:00 am, to transact all business other than voting, and on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at the Milford High School Gymnasium, for the second session (also known as "Town Vote") for voting by official ballot at the polls on all matters in the warrant as well as officers and other matters to be voted on. The polls will be open on March 11, 2025, at 6:00 a.m. and will not close earlier than 8:00 p.m.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the services of an interpreter will be provided as requested. Such requests must be received in the Milford Board of Selectmen's Office, Town Hall, One Union Square, Milford, NH 03055-4240, at least two

(2) calendar weeks before the event. The Town will attempt to honor any requests received after this time.

ARTICLE 2 – BALLOT VOTE – ZONING CHANGES

The Planning Board is the local land use board charged with facilitating Milford's long-term planning process and has three distinct roles: planning, regulatory, and legislative. The planning role includes regular and timely revisions to our community's Master Plan, oversight of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), and development of other plans and tools that support the goals outlined in the Master Plan. The Planning Board's regulatory role is the function that most residents are familiar with – the application of Town ordinances and regulations to specific development plans and projects.

The legislative role involves proposing ordinances and crafting regulations designed to implement the community's vision as identified in the Town's Master Plan. Many of these proposed regulations or revisions to current rules are brought to the Planning Board for evaluation by Town Staff, by other municipal boards or commissions, and by residents and local business leaders. Others are proposed by the Board in response to regulatory changes at the State or Federal level or changing community needs. For example, three of the five proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments this year were prompted by recent changes in NH State laws.

Ballot Title: Family Day Care Home-Zoning District Criteria Revisions

Ballot Vote No. 1

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #1 as proposed by the Milford Planning Board for the Town of Milford Zoning Ordinance as follows:

AMENDMENT #1: Amend the Zoning Ordinance, Article IV, Definitions and Article V Districts, Section 5.0 (Zoning Districts & Regulations) and Article VII, Supplementary Standards, Section 7.12.6 (Home Businesses) by amending several Zoning Districts to provide additional "Allowable Uses" to provide for "Family Day Care Homes".

Topical Description of Proposed Amendment: The proposal, which affects several sections of Milford's ordinances, will make "Family Day Care Homes" acceptable in any zone where primary residential uses are permitted. Further, the facilities will no longer be subject to local site plan review or special exception process. The proposed changes bring Milford into compliance with changes mandated by the state in 2024 that facilitate the addition and availability of childcare spaces.

The Planning Board RECOMMENDS Amendment #1 (by a unanimous vote 7-0)

Ballot Title: Junkyards-Article IV (Section 4.01): Amendment to the Definition of Junkyards

Ballot Vote No. 2

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #2 as proposed by the Milford Planning Board for the Town of Milford Zoning Ordinance as follows:

AMENDMENT #2: Amend the Zoning Ordinance, Article IV, (Definitions- Section 4.01) by amending the definition of “Junkyards” to include “any lots”.

Topical Description of Proposed Amendment: This change provides consistency and clarification within our zoning ordinance language for compliance with the State of New Hampshire’s RSA-mandated language for “Junkyards”.

The Planning Board RECOMMENDS Amendment #2 (by a unanimous vote 7-0)

Ballot Title: Open Space and Conservation District

Ballot Vote No. 3

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #3 as proposed by the Milford Planning Board for the Town of Milford Zoning Ordinance as follows:

AMENDMENT # 3: Amend the Zoning Ordinance, Article VI Open Space and Conservation District, Section 6.04.4 (Location and Scope of Authority) by removing all references to the number of dwelling units.

Topical Description of Proposed Amendment: The proposal removes all references to the number of dwelling units in the Open Space and Conservation District language to eliminate confusion and ambiguity regarding the ordinance's intent.

The Planning Board RECOMMENDS Amendment #3 (by a unanimous vote 7-0)

Ballot Title: Manufactured Home Park Expansion

Ballot Vote No. 4

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #4 as proposed by the Milford Planning Board for the Town of Milford Zoning Ordinance as follows:

AMENDMENT #4: The proposal amends Zoning Ordinance, Article VII, Supplementary Standards, Section 7.05.1, Allowable Uses, to allow for the reasonable expansion of manufactured home parks.

Topical Description of Proposed Amendment: The proposal amends Article VII, Allowable Uses, to allow for the reasonable expansion of existing manufactured

housing, both internal to an existing approved manufactured housing park site, and to include adjacent lands; providing that full compliance with existing national fire code criteria shall be met. This provides for full consistency with RSA mandated zoning ordinances within the State of New Hampshire.

The Planning Board RECOMMENDS Amendment #4 (by a unanimous vote 7-0)

Ballot Title: Reduce the Residence ‘R’ Zoning District Lot Size and Minimum Road Frontage to allow for increased residential density.

Ballot Vote No. 5

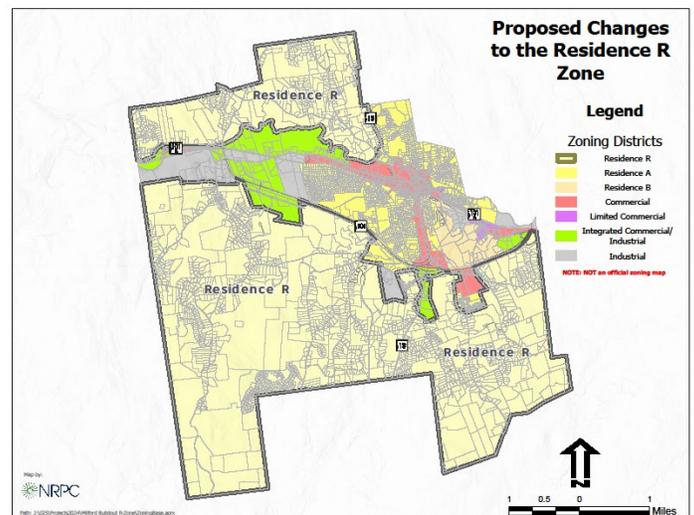
Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #5 as proposed by the Milford Planning Board for the Town of Milford Zoning Ordinance as follows:

AMENDMENT #5: Milford Residence “R” Zoning District: Amend the Milford Zoning Ordinance, (Article V, Section 5.04.4.A Lot Sizes and Frontages), to reduce the minimum required lot size & road frontage for a single-family dwelling or a single-family manufactured home unit in the Residential “R” Zoning District from the current 2 Acre (87,120 square feet) minimum lot size, to 40,000 SF or greater, with a reduction of the current minimum 200 feet linear feet of road frontage to a revised minimum of 150 linear feet of frontage along a Class V or better road.

Topical Description of Proposed Amendment: The proposal impacts approximately 12,100 acres of the town's 16,300 acres. See Associated Map.

The proposed minimum lot size and road frontage requirements will revert to the former lot standards that were in place in the town’s designated Residence “R” Zoning District prior to November 2000. The proposal enables additional dwelling units and increased densities.

The Planning Board RECOMMENDS this Amendment #5 (by a 5-2 Vote)



WARRANT ARTICLE 3 - WADLEIGH MEMORIAL LIBRARY LOWER-LEVEL RESTROOMS - \$250,000 (BOND)

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 (gross budget) for the construction of two (2) restrooms on the lower level of the Wadleigh Memorial Library (“the Project”), with \$25,000 coming from the Wadleigh Library Maintenance And Upkeep Capital Reserve Fund; and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$225,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes, to determine the rate of interest and other conditions in their judgment with a term not to exceed five (5) years; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes? The public library has three floors open for public use, but currently has only two public restrooms, both on the second floor. This article would allow the town to add two (2) restrooms on the lower level, near the renovated conference and meeting room. (3/5 ballot affirmative vote required). **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$2.45 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (3-2)

Majority:

The Wadleigh Memorial Library, which has three public floors, currently has restrooms located only on the main floor. With the recent renovation of the New Hampshire Room on the lower level, the library has experienced a significant increase in public use of that floor. Large groups frequently use this space, creating safety and accessibility concerns as individuals must use the elevator or stairs to reach the restrooms on the main floor.

The Library Trustees propose adding restrooms to the lower level, and the majority of the Select Board supports their efforts. The majority also commends the trustees for addressing issues like this on a project-by-project basis, rather than bundling multiple projects into a larger, future renovation or addition.

This project addresses an important public need in a fiscally responsible manner while enhancing safety and accessibility for all library patrons.

Minority:

Last year the Select Board decided to spend part of an ARPA fund disbursement Milford received from the (State) to renovate the dated heating and cooling systems for the library. It is the minority’s view that we do not construct the lower-level bathrooms this year. We do realize that Milford should plan for this additional facility

within the library. However, due to a large increase within the operating budget this year, it's not the right time for this project.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The Wadleigh Memorial Library currently has two single restrooms on the main level of the building. The lower level has been renovated over the past several years and has a meeting room that may be used for the residents of Milford. Adding restrooms on the lower level would enable the meeting room to have a convenient facility and to allow the library to rent out the room without having to keep the main floor open and staffed. The library will be using \$25,000 out of their Library Maintenance and Upkeep Capital Reserve Fund towards the renovation. BAC members feel this addition would enhance the library's use of space and would be very helpful for patrons meeting on the lower level.

The Wadleigh Memorial Library Board of Trustees RECOMMENDS this warrant article (7-0)

In the past few years, the library has added programming space on the first floor, near the Nashua Street entrance. This has proven to be very popular with many groups and currently hosts our trustee meetings, craft groups, movie afternoons, and most of our book groups, as well as outside groups such as condo association meetings. Additionally, the Library previously had a public restroom on the third floor, although it was not always fully functional. During the HVAC upgrade project, several areas of the third floor had to be renovated in order to connect the original building HVAC system to the 1986 addition system. This resulted in a loss of this third-floor bathroom, as well as some space on that floor. Due to the increased usage of the first floor, as well as the permanent loss of the third-floor restroom, we recommend adding a new restroom on the first floor.

WARRANT ARTICLE 4 - TOWN OPERATING BUDGET - \$19,300,099

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts outlined in the budget for the purposes set forth herein, totaling \$19,300,099. Should this Article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$18,729,307, which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous actions 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. **Voting YES on this article has an estimated tax impact of \$27.96 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000 when compared to voting NO on this article.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (4-1)

Majority report:

The proposed 2025 operating budget of \$19,300,099 represents a 5.69% increase over the 2024 budget. Over 78% of this increase is allocated to two key areas: employee salaries and benefits, and additional support for the Department of Public Works (DPW) for paving and roadway maintenance. The majority of the Select Board believes this is a small price to pay for such important priorities.

For several years, the upkeep and repaving of town roads have been a top priority for the Select Board. While significant progress has been made, it is imperative to maintain focus on this critical need to ensure continued improvements.

Another priority is to support our Town's most valuable assets: the employees who provide outstanding service to the community. In a competitive job market with low unemployment and rising private-sector wages, the town has faced challenges in retaining and hiring staff. The majority of the Select Board believes it is essential to treat employees with respect and provide fair compensation. The modest increases in this year's budget are a prudent investment to address this need.

In summary, the majority of the Select Board believes this is a responsible budget that delivers necessary services at a reasonable cost to taxpayers.

Minority report:

The minority does not support the 2025 proposed town operating budget. I do not feel that the proposed budget is fully inclusive and transparent. Year after year surplus money is used to reduce the following year's budget. I feel the over \$250k surplus funds from the 2024 budget should have been returned to taxpayers, as they were not used for their intended purpose (wages and benefits from open positions). Instead, the surplus money was used to purchase items from the 2025 budget. This approach leads taxpayers to believe we are spending less on 2025 priorities than we really are.

New staffing positions and other maintenance expenses that I feel should be in the budget are on the ballot as warrant articles. These are routine operating expenses and should be in the budget. By placing these items as warrant articles, it does not reflect a true percentage increase to the budget.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The municipal portion of the budget has been carefully planned by administration and reflects the current costs of operations for the town. The proposed 2025 operating budget represents a 5.69% increase over the 2024 budget. The main drivers behind the increase from 2024 was a 3% increase in wages for town employees, health insurance and road repairs. These wage increases were

imperative to retaining experienced staff, to keep current with industry standards for various positions and to help attract talent to fill any vacant positions. The default budget is \$18,729,307. The BAC does not support the default budget.

WARRANT ARTICLE 5 - WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$2,856,974

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,856,974 to operate and maintain the Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Sanitary Sewer Collection System, said appropriation to be offset by income received from wastewater user charges, or take any other action relative thereto? Should this Article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$2,711,808 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous actions 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. This warrant article is paid for by the wastewater user fees.

The Board of Commissioners RECOMMENDS this warrant article (2-0)

The proposed Sewer Department Operating Budget reflects an increase of 5.08% to the 2024 Operating Budget. The Sewer Department has over 3,000 customers, maintains approximately 40 miles of sewer main, and 1,200 manholes, and oversees 5.5 miles of sewer interceptor between the Wilton town line and the wastewater treatment facility in east Milford.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The proposed Wastewater Department Operating Budget reflects an increase of 5.08% over the approved 2024 Operating Budget. Main drivers of the increase were a 3% wage increase for employees and increase in costs for benefits and property liability insurance. The Wastewater Department has over 3,000 customers, maintains about 40 miles of sewer main, with 1,200 manholes, and oversees 5.5 miles of larger sewer interceptor lines between the Wilton Town line and the wastewater treatment facility in east Milford.

The proposed budget represents only a marginal increase. Approximately half of the Cost-of-Living Index. The study of Milford's rate and fee structure puts Milford at the mid-lower range even with the recent rate increase.

Comparison to Other Communities

Community	Average Residential Rate for 125 GPD
Milford	\$ 423 (proposed 2022)
Greenville	\$ 1,269
Jaffrey	\$ 808
Peterborough	\$ 531
Epping	\$ 468
Exeter	\$ 620
<i>State Average at 197 gpd (2021)</i>	<i>\$ 712</i>
<i>Milford at 197 gpd</i>	<i>\$ 666 (proposed 2022)</i>

WARRANT ARTICLE 6 - WATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$2,429,662

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,429,662 to operate and maintain the Water Department, said appropriation to be offset by income received from the water user charges, or take any other action relative thereto? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$2,357,379, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous actions 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. This warrant article is paid for by the water user fees.

The Board of Commissioners RECOMMENDS this warrant article (2-0)

The Proposed Water Department Operating Budget reflects an increase of 10.21% to the 2024 Operating Budget. The Water Department oversees the town wells, 64 miles of water pipe, over 3,400 customers, and 516 hydrants.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The proposed Water Department Operating Budget reflects an increase of 10.21% over the approved 2024 Operating Budget. Main drivers for the increase were a 3% wage increase for employees, increase in benefits costs and the bond for the new Pennichuck Booster pump station being in budget for the first year. The Water Department oversees the town wells, 64 miles of water pipe, over 3,400 customers, and 514 hydrants.

WARRANT ARTICLE 7 - MILFORD SWING BRIDGE - \$634,070 (State pays \$507,256; Town pays \$126,814)

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$634,070 with \$126,814 to be raised by general taxation and \$507,256 from funds from NH Department of Transportation 10-Year Plan for the construction/rehabilitation of the rare, historically significant suspension pedestrian Swing Bridge? The Town retained Hoyle, Tanner & Associates in 2015 to assess the bridge's condition and develop an approximation of costs for replacement/repair. The company determined that the Swing Bridge was in poor condition, and repairs were needed to correct structural deficiencies and prevent further deterioration of the

historically significant community asset. This reimbursement program provides an 80% federal funding and 20% local matching funds opportunity. This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$6.21 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The construction/rehabilitation of the historic Milford Swing Bridge has been in the state 10-year plan for many years and it is now close to being implemented. The State is separately and completely funding the design and engineering for the proposed work. While this article funds only the actual construction and rehabilitation to be done that will be completed after the engineering has been complete. The \$126,814 of Milford spending that is authorized by this article represents the required 20% match of the state contribution.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The town of Milford has several major historical sites which lend to the character of this town. One of these is the rare, historically significant suspension pedestrian Swing Bridge that crosses the Souhegan River between the end of Bridge Street and Souhegan Street. The original bridge, which was wooden, was replaced in 1899 to our current metal suspension bridge that served as a conduit between the factory workers that lived around Souhegan Street and the famous factories of our downtown. For those of you who have walked across it, it is a great experience. In 2015 a study was done to determine the condition of this 116-year-old bridge, and it was determined to be in poor condition. The town applied for a federal grant and the federal government has offered to pay 80% of the cost. This is a chance for us to repair and keep this precious piece of history in our town.

WARRANT ARTICLE 8 - DUMP TRUCK 58K GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT (OR SIMILAR) WITH PLOW AND SANDER ASSEMBLY - 5 YEAR LEASE-PURCHASE - \$70,452 (Annual Lease Payment \$70,452; Total Purchase Price \$352,260)

Shall the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a 5-year lease/purchase agreement, subject to a fiscal funding clause, in the amount of \$352,260, that will protect the Town in the event of non-appropriation, for the purpose of lease/purchasing a 58K GVW dump truck with a plow and sander assembly for Highway Department operation and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$70,452 for the first year's payment for this purpose? If this article passes, future years' payments will be included in the operating budget. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$3.45 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The purpose for this purchase is to replace an 18-year-old truck that is no longer cost effective to maintain and repair. Due to its size, this truck will allow for more time on the sanding, plowing and salting routes. The pipe crew will use it in the summer months, which will free up an additional truck to be used for road work, thus, allowing two crews to be working at the same time. This was a scheduled replacement listed in the 2020 Capital Improvement Plan, but was removed by previous Select Board members.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The DPW multi-year plan calls for the replacement of a 2009 6-wheel truck that needs a new engine. The new 10-wheel model comes with a 250K, 84-month (7year) warranty, new front plow, new wing plow and new sand/salt GPS system to monitor the amount and placement of sand and salt on town roads. The new truck with increased capacity will allow for greater efficiency in completion of town road work projects and better efficiency of snow removal. The life expectancy of the new truck is 10 to 15 years of use. This truck is part of the DPW plan to improve efficiency in the department and to update old worn-out vehicles that cost much more money to repair. This purchase was supported by the Capital Improvement Committee and is supported by the Budget Advisory Committee as the town needs to update the fleet of DPW vehicles.

WARRANT ARTICLE 9 - RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN ROADS - \$300,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300,000 to reconstruct or repair Town roads? This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$14.70 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

Many of the existing roadways in Milford are in need of repair and resurfacing. For too long, Milford has not allocated or raised sufficient funds to deal with the dated roadways. The Select Board recognizes this issue and continues to support funding road resurfacing and repair as much as possible. For the past couple years, we have worked to increase the amount of funding within the DPW budget for road maintenance, but also understand to get ahead, additional funding is needed.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

Sidewalks and road upkeep and repairs are crucial in providing safe travel throughout our town. The Public Works and Water/Sewer departments plan for 2025 will coordinate underground pipe works with above ground culvert and paving needs. The work is listed for High St., Franklin St., Walker St., Knight St., Middle St. (also drainage), and South St. as well as any needed emergency repairs. However, weather, available

supplies, and time/priorities always impact projects as well. Funds in this non-lapsing account are diminished and need to be replenished to support the 2025 Plan and augment the Operating Budget.

WARRANT ARTICLE 10 - FIRE DEPARTMENT – THREE (3) FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS - \$277,195

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$277,195 for the purpose of hiring three (3) full-time firefighter personnel and to be included in the preparation of the annual budget in future years, or take any other action relative thereto? This appropriation is for 6-months only and includes wages, benefits, and other costs associated with enabling this new staffing model. In future years, the total annual amount required will be approximately \$555,399. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$13.58 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (4-1)

Majority report:

According to the 2023 census, Milford has over 16,500 citizens. The Milford Fire Department currently has 26 members, of which all but 6 are made up of on-call and per diem members. The time donated by volunteer firefighters saves localities across the country, but volunteer and per diem is becoming more and more difficult to find due to full-time job constraints and individual time demands. Milford does an average of 100 calls for service a month. Last year they responded to 71 code 100's (fires) which is a record. That number includes mutual aid fires. Adding another three full-time firefighters to staff will ensure a 24/7 run station while continuing to utilize our volunteer members. This is an investment in the safety and health for our community and those who pass through. From disaster preparedness, to medical response, to serving as educators, firefighters do a lot of behind-the-scenes work to keep our communities safe.

Minority report:

By voting for this warrant article, it changes the structure on how the fire department is staffed. Currently, the department is staffed by 3 full time firefighters working 12 hour shifts from 7am to 7pm 7 days a week and the Chief and Deputy Chief working 5 eight-hour days. Call firemen respond to calls 24 hours a day. If this article is passed, Milford will be changing to 3 full time firefighters working 24 hour per day shifts and the Chief and Deputy Chief working 8 hours per day 5 days a week. Call firemen will still respond 24 hours a day. Full time firemen will go from working an average of 42 hours per week to working 53 hours per week.

The minority does not feel the current call volume supports having 24-hour staffing at this time. It has been said that the Call Members are the backbone of the department and will continue to be even with a 24-hour staff. By adding 24-hour shifts, I feel that the call

members waking up at various hours of the night to go to the station for a call and not making a truck, that they may no longer want to be part of the organization. With only having around 17 call members, we can't afford to lose any.

I do not feel that now is the time to take on the annual cost of \$555,000 per year in the budget. When this staffing model was first thought of, Milford had applied for a grant (SAFER grant) that would fund the approximate \$1.8 million cost for the first 3 years, but Milford was not awarded this grant. Milford then applied for and received a grant to help recruit call members. I believe we should be trying to attract more call members instead of going with more full-time staff.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

Fire Departments have changed dramatically over the past 10 years throughout the United States. New Hampshire with its many small municipalities were made up of volunteers, both officers as well as regular firefighters. Full time firefighters were located in the big cities as the volunteers could take care of the small towns. This was also true of our community of Milford. But times have changed. Populations have increased (2023 Milford estimate population 16,576 and the number of volunteers has decreased dramatically. The number of buildings in Milford as elsewhere: houses, condos and apartments have grown at an alarming rate. The number of fires and medical calls are increasing dramatically. In 2014 there were 673 incidents. This past year we had 851 incidents. Volunteerism is down and the amount of time each person can give is limited. In 2014 we had 45 volunteers, today we have 18 volunteers compounded by each with less time to give. What is the answer, we need full time coverage day and night. Currently our full-time coverage goes from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. In 2024 of the 851 incidents 72% were between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:59 PM. Our nighttime calls 7:00PM to 6:59AM we had 71 fire incidents and 138 EMS-specific incidents.

One other point needs to be mentioned. There are 25 towns and cities in NH with the same approximate population as Milford. All of these towns have full time coverage with fire or combination of medical coverage EXCEPT Milford. Full time coverage is about offering a consistent service by getting a fire truck out the door. Simply 1 crew of 3 firefighters, 24 X 7 X 365.

Topical Description:

This purpose of this warrant article is to provide all the necessary funding that includes wages, benefits, and other costs associated with enabling this new staffing model to add three (3) additional full-time firefighters to the Milford Fire Department, and restructure the existing six (6) positions to provide a crew staffing a fire apparatus 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. This addition and reconfiguration will provide a major improvement in the readiness and efficacy of the

department by allowing immediate response of the first crew. With the current combination of full time and on-call personnel, the fire department only has the ability to provide an immediately staffed unit from 7am to 7pm. Emergency response is exclusively the responsibility of call firefighters during the overnight hours. The department has carefully evaluated personnel availability, hiring and turnover trends, and response times, and determined that these additional positions are necessary to continue providing consistent, reliable emergency response to the community.

Milford has enjoyed a long and proud history of volunteerism in the fire department, but the evolution of American society and economics has resulted in widespread decline of call and volunteer firefighters. This coming change was considered by the Milford Fire wards as early as 1965, as evidenced by this quote from the annual report of that year: "The time is coming when the thought must be given to the problem pertaining to fire department personnel. Industry is becoming more and more reluctant to the releasing of their employees for firefighting... with more industry in town, more building of residential homes and a steady population increase, there is more fire potential." Reviewed today, their foresight is remarkable. The growth of Milford, the number of fires, and the problem of personnel have evolved exactly as they felt it would 60 years ago. Milford was fortunate for many years, even as national declines in recruitment and retention of volunteer and call firefighters began in the late 1980's through the early 2000's, Milford was able to maintain a strong roster of call firefighters. Eventually in the early 2010's, as family dynamic norms and economic constraints continued to change, Milford too began to experience this decline. As experienced firefighters retired, fewer people have come to take their place, and the department has experienced a greater than 50% reduction in call firefighters on the roster. Milford Fire has continued actively recruiting using all available methods, but these efforts have not been successful in recruiting new call firefighters at a rate that can rebuild the roster to the point where adequate service can be provided solely by call personnel. Call firefighters will continue to be an essential part of the Milford Fire Department, but the support of consistent on-duty personnel is needed to provide the necessary level and speed of fire response.

The primary impact of this change will be a significant reduction in response time for the first-arriving fire crew to an emergency during the overnight hours (7pm to 7am). Response time is primarily dependent on two factors, the distance from the fire station to the scene, and the availability of a crew to respond immediately. This proposal seeks to address the immediate crew availability by providing one consistently across all times of day. The current average response time for the first-arriving crew is 6 minutes when the station is staffed, while the response time overnight increases to an average of 12 minutes. The dramatic difference in these times is a direct result of only having on-call personnel

available to respond during the overnight hours. By nature of their position, on-call firefighters only respond to the station after an emergency has been dispatched. This means the firefighters need to get out of bed, get dressed, and then drive to the fire station before the first fire apparatus can respond to the scene.

Reducing response times during this overnight period will reduce the risk of fire fatalities and will reduce property damage. Research from the Underwriters Laboratories shows that home fires grow and spread significantly faster today than ever before. The time available for occupants to escape the average house fire is only 3 minutes today, compared to 17 minutes in 1980. Additionally, more than half of all deadly fires happen at night. While residents can take an active role in providing the maximum amount of time to escape by ensuring homes have working smoke alarms and closing bedroom doors at night, immediate response of the fire department is a critical component in preventing fire deaths and reducing property loss.

Many property owners may not be aware that their property insurance rates are directly impacted by the ability of the fire department to provide a consistent and rapid response to an emergency. Departments all across the country are evaluated approximately every 10 years and given a rating known as their "Public Protection Classification". Areas of evaluation include a number of factors, with response times carrying significant weight. Ratings range from Class 10 at the lowest, typically areas without any fire protection, to Class 1 for areas with the shortest response times, numerous fire stations, robust water systems and sufficient numbers of available firefighters. Insurance companies use this classification to weigh their risk when considering rates for each individual building in the community and factor that risk into premiums charged. Milford was last evaluated in 2013 and through the hard work and dedication the robust roster of call firefighters at the time, the department was assigned a Class 3 rating in areas with municipal water, and a Class 4 in areas without. Another rating evaluation could be initiated at any time, as it has been more than 10 years since the last rating. Without taking action to address the staffing needs of the department, it is likely that the classification rating would decline, leading to an increase in property insurance premiums town wide.

Department leadership has worked with Town Administration, the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Advisory Committee through much of 2024 to consider the problem and propose a solution. The proposal to fund this increase in staffing for 6 months in 2025 is indicative of the effort to present the most gradual, cost-effective option for this service improvement to the community.

WARRANT ARTICLE 11 - AMBULANCE REPLACEMENT AND EQUIPMENT REVOLVING FUND - \$140,000

Shall the Town vote to establish a revolving fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h for the purpose of funding future Ambulance replacements and its associated equipment? The first \$140,000 in Ambulance Department service fees collected, in each calendar year would be deposited into the fund and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate year to year and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund and shall pay out the same only with approval of the governing body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created. **This article has a tax impact \$6.86 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (3-2)

Majority report:

The town has been trying to transition to a 15-year expected life span for each of its three ambulances where each unit would spend its first 10 years in front line support and the last 5 years as a "ready spare". The long-term goal is to buy one new fully outfitted ambulance every five years. Setting up this fund will roughly set aside one-fifth the cost of an ambulance each year so we will be able to avoid borrowing money to buy ambulances. Note that the next ambulance is scheduled to be bought in three years, so that one will not have time to accumulate the full amount needed and we will need to borrow some money to complete the purchase. The ambulance after that one should be close to being fully funded when purchased.

Minority report:

The minority does not support establishing and funding an ambulance revolving fund. By funding this with revenue from transports, it reduces the offsetting income for the budget, increasing the amount they will have to pay through taxes. Milford already has a capital reserve fund in place to save for such purchases. In addition, this warrant article removes the voter's ability to approve or deny the purchase of an ambulance, that decision would be made by the Select board.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The passage of this warrant article will allow the first \$140,000.00 of ambulance service fees collected in each calendar year to be deposited into this fund and allowed to accumulate year to year for the purpose of funding future ambulance replacements and related equipment. The majority of the Budget Advisory Committee supports this article and this funding mechanism which allows the ambulance department to use its own revenue for purchases.

WARRANT ARTICLE 12 - MILFORD DAMS ALTERNATIVES FEASIBILITY STUDY - \$100,000 (Gross Appropriation. 100% Loan Forgiveness by NH State Dept. of Environmental Services)

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 (gross budget) to conduct an updated dam alternatives feasibility study for the McLane and Goldman Dams? The purpose and intent of the project is to address questions left unanswered from the 2014 feasibility study, determine the environmental and financial impacts to the Town, and provide options to help the Town develop a plan for future actions. The Town was awarded a low interest loan totaling \$100,000 through the NH Department of Environmental Services Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The program allows for 100% loan forgiveness up to \$100,000. (3/5 ballot affirmative vote required). **This Article does not have a tax impact.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (3-2)

Majority report:

This article asks the voters to approve the appropriation of \$100,000 to update the 2014 Alternative Feasibility Study for the McLane and Goldman Dams. The updated study will build on the previous findings and address questions that were left unanswered in the 2014 report.

The McLane Dam, owned by the town and located just south of the Swing Bridge, and the Goldman Dam, privately owned and located just south of the Stone Bridge near the oval, are no longer operational and are in poor condition. This study, fully funded through a 100% loan forgiveness program from the state, will evaluate the current conditions of the dams and explore all potential options for the town.

The updated study will provide critical data, including an analysis of the geological and historical significance of the dams. It will also offer precise models of river flow in the event the dams are removed, as well as projections of potential impacts from future flooding. Additionally, the study will assess the effects of dam removal on fish habitats and migration patterns.

The majority believes that updating the 2014 study is essential to ensure the public has the most accurate and current information, enabling the town to make an informed decision.

Minority report:

The minority does not support this article. This study is meant to conduct an updated dam alternatives feasibility study for the McLane (By the Swing Bridge) and the Goldman (by the Stone Bridge) dams. A similar study was done in 2014 the minority does not feel much has changed. One of the dams is owned by the town, and the other is privately owned. The article seems to imply that the dams should be removed. The minority does not agree. By removing the dams, the Town of Milford would also lose the aesthetic value that the dams give to the river and the town. There has also been mention of a 3rd

party involvement, the minority does not support this due to lack of clarity.

The Budget Advisory Committee DOES NOT RECOMMEND this warrant article (3-6)

Majority report:

Concerns exist as to purpose and need for this study now. The cost will be borrowed with anticipated repayment by the State except who pays the interest on the loan. These dams are at least 200 years old and formed with stone/granite. The BAC has not learned of any requirement to alter the dams, and hopefully not to remove as they make the area so unique. The fish ladder on the McLane Dam could be refurbished but according to the Nashua Fish Hatchery they do not stock fish near it.

More information is needed before any Town money is committed to this project. The owner(s) of the Goldman Dam must be contacted and learn of their responsibility in both decision-making and possible future monetary impact. If they choose, they can transfer the title/ownership (procedure in NH RSAs) of the dam to the Town, as apparently the Town has been paying all fees and maintenance costs since 2014. Also, the NHDES needs to agree that both themselves and the "interested party" willing to pay the Loan's Interest, will have no say in the Town's plans for the dams.

The SOUHEGAN RIVER Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC) and the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) has received. \$14,635 award to support the creation of an updated management plan. The plan will address critical aspects, risks to the river, human health, recreational access, & changes in river corridor, for the Souhegan River from Ashburnham, MA to Tyngsboro, NH.

With volunteers, the SoRLAC samples the river during open water months, and issues a yearly report on air and water temperature, bacteria counts, Ph, turbidity/particulates, etc. See the 8/22/2024 report @ (souhegan.river.monitoring@gmail.com)

Minority report:

This study is for the Goldman Dam (near the Stone Bridge downtown) and the McLane Dam (near the Swinging Bridge downtown). There was a Study done in 2014 with Town Funds. These dams can be referenced in the Town's istory of mills and goods produced with waterpower. The 2014 Study mentions that the Goldman Dam was owned by the Helen Goodwin Estate. The NHDES Dam Bureau concluded that the Town has no financial or legal responsibility to operate or maintain that dam. However, the Town has taken on the operation and maintenance of the Goldman Dam costing approx.\$1000/year (in 2014). The McLane Dam, owned by the Town of Milford, cost approx.\$1200/year (in 2014). Also, an annual dam registration fee was approx.

\$400/year (in 2014), and the Dam Bureau inspected the dams every 6 years.

WARRANT ARTICLE 13 - KEYES PARK EXPANSION COMMITTEE PROJECT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$60,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 to be placed in the Keyes Park Expansion Committee Project Capital Reserve Fund? The \$60,000 adds to the Keyes Park Expansion Committee Project Capital Reserve approved by voters in 2017. The current available balance in this capital reserve account as of December 31, 2024, is approximately \$170.32. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$2.94 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The Purpose of this Warrant Article is to fix the four (4) tennis courts within Keyes Memorial Park. The court surface has become unplayable and is in need of resurfacing. The Majority of the Select Board wishes to have this project completed as soon as possible for the Milford residents and Milford High School tennis teams to use this Spring. This Warrant Article will be used to fund the Keyes Capital Reserve Account and in conjunction with additional funds that have been raised by private donations, and pay for the necessary repairs.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The Milford Recreation Department and the community volunteer members of the Milford Recreation Commission support this warrant article. The Keyes Memorial Park Expansion Committee report from 2016 and the more recent \$60,000 Turnstone Corporation report suggested many of the same key elements for the improvement and updates of Keyes Park and the implementation of updated programs for the residents of Milford. The Recreation Commission believes this warrant article will provide necessary funds for the replenishment of the original Keyes Capital Reserve funding that voters have supported in the past. The Recreation Commission and the new Director of the Recreation Department plan to meet with the Board of Selectmen over the next few months to marry the best element of the 2016 Keyes Committee plan and the more current Turnstone Plan into a final 10-year cost effective plan for improvements and updates to Keyes Memorial Park. This is important as the town grows and experiences demographic change from a youthful to a more senior population.

WARRANT ARTICLE 14 - SOCIAL SERVICES - \$45,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$45,000, for the purpose of providing funding to Social Service agencies for Milford residents as proposed by the Social Services Committee and submitted to the Board of Selectmen? This is a Special Warrant Article in

accordance with RSA 32. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$2.20 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

A committee of Social Services members and the Town's Welfare Director reviews all applications from agencies that request monies from Social Services. This year ten (10) agencies were chosen, and all these agencies assist Milford residents. The services offered by these organizations provide an invaluable benefit to Milford residents in need. Not only do these funds go to provide critical assistance to our neighbors in need, but by helping these agencies, we reduce the amount of money the Town of Milford spends on welfare to qualifying residents.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

In these economic times our citizens continue to need assistance. The funds this year are allocated to several different agencies focused on mental health, the elderly population, abuse disorders, housing services, and at-risk youth. Without these resources, the overall burden would likely increase more than the amount requested.

WARRANT ARTICLE 15 - POLICE DEPARTMENT PORTABLE, MOBILE RADIO AND MOBILE DATA TERMINAL (MDT) REPLACEMENT FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND - \$35,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$35,000 to replace Portable, Mobile Radios and Mobile Data Terminals for the Police Department to come from the Public Safety Communication Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve? The current available balance in this capital reserve account as of December 31, 2024, is approximately \$63,734.76. **This Article does not have a tax impact.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

This warrant article is asking the Town of Milford to support the removal of \$35,000 from the Public Safety Communications Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund, RSA 35:1. This capital reserve fund currently has \$63,743.76 available as of December 31, 2024.

The Budget Advisory Committee asked about utilizing this Capital Reserve fund that was already in place to fund equipment and help reduce the overall increase to the 2025 budget. The current amount requested would reduce the overall cost of two (2) Police vehicles by purchasing some of the equipment for each new 2025 SUV. The equipment that is needed for these two (2) vehicles will be, one (1) for each vehicle, mobile radio and MDT, Mobile Data Terminal and to replace two (2) older portable radios.

The total of all six (6) pieces of equipment will cost \$35,000. All six (6) pieces of equipment are used for communications between our dispatch center, MACC Base and other emergency services. This capital reserve fund was setup for this very purpose and has been utilized by all Milford's emergency services departments. This warrant article has no tax impact and does not increase our Town budget and the Capital Reserve Account will be used for what it was intended.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The passage of this warrant article will allow the Town to expend up to and not exceed \$35,000.00 to replace Portable, Mobile Radios and Mobile Data Terminals for the Police Station to come from the Public Safety Communication Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve. The Budget Advisory Committee unanimously supports this article.

WARRANT ARTICLE 16 - NON-EMERGENCY COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BUS SERVICES \$32,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$32,000 for the purpose of providing the Town's share of funding to the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative (SVTC) to continue operating a regional, non-emergency, wheelchair-accessible transportation service providing rides within the designated service area to seniors, people with disabilities, and the general public? The Board of Selectmen designates this article as special and non-lapsing. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$1.57 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative continues to provide affordable, wheelchair-accessible transportation for non-emergency healthcare appointments and other activities such as shopping, at a very low cost for its users. Since its founding in 2008, they have provided more than 45,000 rides of which 62% have been for Milford residents. This "Blue-Bus" service for the Town of Milford and surrounding communities mainly benefits the elderly and disabled population helping them to be independent.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

This appropriation has been approved yearly as Milford's share of the cost for citizens needing rides to medical appointments, pharmacies, groceries, and some department stores in the area. This service is especially important for seniors, the disabled (bus is wheelchair accessible), and citizens without vehicles. A small fee is also paid by the rider if able.

WARRANT ARTICLE 17 - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL RESERVE - \$20,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be placed in the Information Technology Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund? The Board of Selectmen has the authority to expend from this fund. The \$20,000 adds to the Information Technology Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund approved by voters in 2021. The current available balance in this capital reserve account as of December 31, 2024, is approximately \$61,249.74. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.98 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

This Capital Reserve Fund is to be utilized for high-cost, one-time or occasional infrastructure items needed for the Town's software, network, and data needs. This fund intends to smooth out the IT budget line from extreme ups and downs by keeping these high-cost, one-time or occasional infrastructure items out of the budget and using the capital reserve instead.

Some of the upcoming projects that will be able to utilize these funds include extending the Town's fiber-optic network from Town Hall to the DPW facility on South Street, upgrading the fire suppression system in the Town Hall server room as well as possibly installing a fixed generator to keep critical IT infrastructure running during power outages. This fund currently has a balance of \$61,249.74.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

IT Infrastructure is a critical part of how the town operates on a day-to-day basis, both internally for the employees and externally for the residents. This capital reserve fund would be used for the purpose of upgrading or replacing existing hardware such as servers, SAN data storage devices, network switches, fiber between buildings, phone system equipment, as well as major software upgrades such as server operating systems, Microsoft Office and Exchange Email. The committee feels that this fund is a worthwhile means to help prepare for future expenses much as we already do with other town departments (which rely heavily on the town IT infrastructure to function). The current balance of the fund is \$61,249.74.

WARRANT ARTICLE 18 - CONSERVATION LAND FUND - \$20,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of adding it to the Conservation Fund created in accordance with RSA 36-A, said fund being allowed to accumulate from year to year and to be available for the acquisition of property, conservation easements and other RSA 36-A allowable purposes, or take any other action relative thereto? Contributions

further the protection of the town's natural resources. The current available balance in this fund account as of December 31, 2024, is approximately \$72,909.31. This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.98 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (3-2)

Majority:

This article was proposed by the Conservation Commission in order to increase the funds in the conservation fund. These funds continue to build a base and enable the Conservation Commission to work with other organizations in the event prime properties become available, and assist landowners with easements. The Conservation Land Fund has a balance of approximately \$72,909.31 but it is currently being used for a land purchase which will leave the fund a zero balance. By voting to support this article, you are helping to protect the town's natural resources.

Minority:

This article was proposed by the Conservation Commission in order to increase the funds in the Conservation Fund. These funds continue to build a base and enable the Conservation Commission to work with other organizations in the event prime properties become available, and assist landowners with easements. The Conservation Land Fund has a balance of approximately \$72,909.31, but it is currently being used for a land purchase which will leave the fund a zero balance. By voting to support this article, you are helping to protect the town's natural resources.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The Conservation Land Fund presently has a balance of \$72,909.31 but that amount is earmarked for an ongoing land project. In 2024 the BAC recommended that the fund should be at a balance of about \$184,000 as it is used for land surveys, title search, legal fees, easements, as well as land purchase. Presently approximately 1,119 acres of Milford's 16,000 acres are protected conservation land which preserves and protects our water supply and air quality, provides recreation as well as the Rail Trail through town, and protects wildlife and nature. The Fund along with fundraising, donations, and grants will allow for quick action if suitable land comes up for consideration by the BOS, and the Conservation Commission as well as public meetings. The BAC feels that in the future a portion of the Land Use Tax received from the State should be deposited in the Land Fund instead of using a warrant article which may or may not pass each year.

Topical Description:

An additional \$20,000 continues to build a base of funds: 1) to work with other organizations in the event that prime properties become available, 2) to work with landowners

needing assistance in placing an easement on a property, or 3) to enable a quick responsive action by the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Fund has a balance of \$72,909.31, of which \$75,000 is earmarked for an ongoing land acquisition project. The 2025 Budget Advisory Committee recommended that a minimum of \$184,000 be held in this fund. The American Farmland Trust found that the cost of services for open spaces and working farms and forests are about half the cost of services for residential properties. This Fund request has been repeatedly supported by the town residents.

WARRANT ARTICLE 19 - MEMORIAL, VETERANS & LABOR DAY PARADES AND RECOGNITION SUPPORT - \$11,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,000 for the purpose of town support relative to the observance of Memorial, Veterans, and Labor Day Parades or take any other action relative thereto? These funds shall be used to cover parade costs incurred by Public Works, Police Departments, and other Town departments, and to purchase flags to be placed on the graves of veterans about 30 days before Memorial Day and removed about 30 days after Veterans Day. Departmental support costs and materials associated with the provision of these services will be charged against this appropriation. This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. This is a non-lapsing article until 12/31/26. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.54 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The Board of Selectman fully support this Article which helps fund the logistic support by the towns, Police, Fire and DPW departments for parade related costs.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

These parades are well-attended and popular with the community. This warrant includes costs for safety coverage and cleaning up by Police, DPW, and other Town Departments as well as the purchase of flags placed on Veterans graves for Memorial Day.

WARRANT ARTICLE 20 - SUMMER BAND CONCERTS SUPPORT - \$9,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,000 for the purpose of holding the annual summer evening Band Concerts (bands, sound system, crossing detail) or take any other action relative thereto? This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. This is a non-lapsing article until 12/31/26. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.44 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The summer band concerts are an on-going and long-standing tradition that has been a part of Milford's character and charm. The concerts are held at the Keyes Field Amphitheater, Emerson Park next to the post office or in Town Hall when there is inclement weather. The concerts provide an opportunity for hundreds of people of all ages to get out and enjoy an evening of music and community involvement along the banks of the Souhegan River. These band concerts are an example of why Milford is such a great place to live.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The summer band concerts have been funded at this dollar amount for at least the past 20 years. The Recreation Department has been able to continue to provide 10 concerts a year during the summer months. The department selects a variety of genres which results in entertainment for hundreds of residents who bring chairs or blankets to sit on the lawn. Large crowds of residents enjoy these concerts throughout the summer months. The summer concerts provide an opportunity for the very young as well as more senior residents to enjoy a beautiful summer night of music in their chairs or on blankets in the grass. The concerts will take place at either Emerson Park or the new "Stage" at Keyes Park depending on the size of the band and/or the weather.

WARRANT ARTICLE – 21 ANNUAL LABOR DAY PARADE SUPPORT - \$8,000

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$8,000 for the purpose of funding bands, musicians, and other allied expenses directly attributed to the annual Labor Day Parade? This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. This is a non-lapsing article until 12/31/26. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.39 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

Milford's annual Labor Day Parade is one of the largest and most well-known in the state. It gives Milford the opportunity to show its community pride, honor its working-class roots, and have some fun. Together with private donations, this warrant article will pay for marching bands, musicians, and other expenses directly tied to the parade.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

This appropriation is used to fund the bands, musicians, and other allied expenses directly attributed to the annual Labor Day Parade. This annual event is popular with the citizens of Milford. Streets are closed and hundreds of people line the parade route and enjoy the bands, floats, and various local groups marching in the parade.

WARRANT ARTICLE 22 – NECESSARY MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY REPAIRS TO KEYES POOL - \$89,000 by Petition

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$89,000 for the purpose of repairing safety and maintenance concerns in the Town pools. This funding would make necessary repairs to ensure the main pool and kiddie pool are safe for all users. This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32. This is a non-lapsing article until 12/31/26. **This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$4.36 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (3-2)

Majority:

Keyes Memorial Pool was a gift from the Arthur L. Keyes Memorial Trust. The pool and bathhouse were installed and dedicated in 1965. It includes six racing lanes used annually for Rotary Swim meets and GSSA State Championship meets. It also includes a small wading pool for little children. Keyes Memorial Pool is greatly utilized and appreciated by the Milford Community. Swim team practice and swim lessons take place weekday mornings and the pool is enjoyed by families in the afternoons. In 2024, pool staff issued season passes for 1,357 people (1,066 were residents and 291 non), day passes for 1,129 people (681 residents and 448 non-residents) and hosted children from the Boys and Girls Club for open swim 3,046 times.

Keyes Memorial Pool is currently in need of many safety repairs and maintenance which include, but not limited to: grinding down sharp-edged areas, repainting racing lines, replacing caulking in the 3 expansion joints inside pools as well as several other concerns. The majority feel that these repairs are necessary and must be addressed to ensure the safety of its users.

Minority:

The minority does not recommend this article due to the repairs are not all safety issues and some of these items could be put into future year budgets. The safety issues of the pool could be fixed out of the 2025 budget before the pool is filled for the year. By doing this, the pool could still be open and the remaining maintenance issues and painting of the full pool could be appropriately budgeted and done in 2026.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The Keyes pool is more than 50 years old. Even though yearly maintenance is performed on the pool, recently it was noted there are some safety and additional maintenance items that need to be addressed. These additional safety and maintenance items were placed in the town budget. However, during the budgeting process these items were removed to reduce the overall town budget. There are still sections of the sides and bottom of the pool showing rough exposed areas of cement. This

past year pool lifeguards had to file down these rough areas so people in the pool did not suffer abrasive cuts on their skin. The pool is used by people of all ages during the summer months. In addition, the Town of Milford uses Keyes Pool to host the Rotary Swim Meet and the New Hampshire State Swim Meet. Since the repaired areas and lane markers will also need to be repainted; the entire maintenance cost was submitted during the budget cycle. The repairs and painting can be accomplished while the pool is drained for the winter and before the beginning of the next swim season, it is expected that the repairs and painting will last for at least 7 years.

WARRANT ARTICLE 23 – SUPPORT OF REPAIR AND RESURFACING OF THE MALCOLM ELLINGWOOD ROTCH TENNIS COURTS AT KEYES MEMORIAL PARK - by Petition

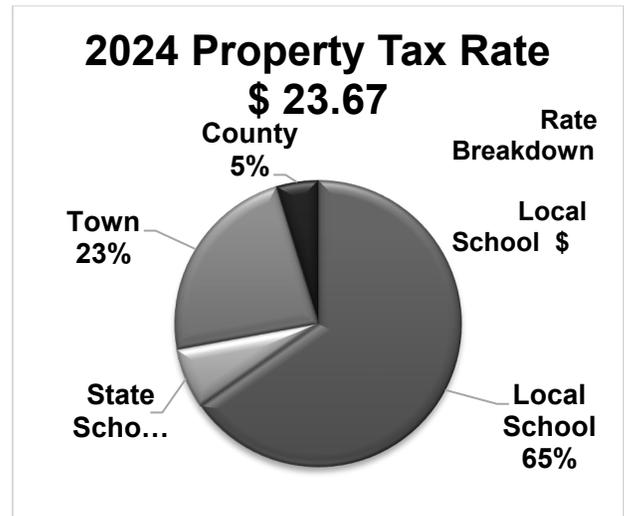
Shall the Town vote to encourage and support the Town and School District to cooperate in the repair and resurfacing of the Malcom Ellington Rotch Tennis Courts at Keyes Memorial Park? **This Article has no tax impact.**

The Board of Selectmen RECOMMENDS this warrant article (5-0)

The Select Board fully supports the effort to repair the Malcolm Ellingwood Rotch Tennis Courts at Keyes Park. Funding for these repairs will come from the Keyes Expansion Capital Reserve Fund, into which sufficient funds will be deposited if Warrant Article #13 passes. The Select Board also wishes to thank the petitioner for advocating for this important issue, as well as raising additional private funds.

The Budget Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS this warrant article (9-0)

The purpose of this warrant is to encourage town and school district support for the purpose of repairing and resurfacing the Malcom Ellingwood Rotch Tennis Courts at Keyes Memorial Park. The cracks in the surface of the four courts have grown to the extent to where the courts are considered unsafe and unplayable. Community members have engaged in private grant writing and received donations to heavily offset the cost of this project to the town. The remaining balance will ensure project completion and restore the tennis courts for use by community members, Milford Recreation activities and Milford High School tennis programs from April through October.



2025 Town Officer Candidate Profiles

All candidates were presented with the opportunity to submit profiles including a two-hundred and fifty (250) word statement on any topic they choose.

Picture and bios are optional.

SELECTMEN – 3 Year Term (vote for one)



DAVID J. CATANZANO

OFFICE SOUGHT: Board of Selectmen
ADDRESS: 492 Ponemah Hill Road
CONTACT INFO: davidjcatanzano@gmail.com
OCCUPATION: Chief Operations Officer
EDUCATION: **Business Management/Entrepreneur**

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Katie's closet
 The Lowell food bank
 Boston Community Food Bank,
 Coats for kids
 Board Member of Erica's Foundation
 Board Member, Opioid Task Force, Lowell Mass.
 Board Member, Ashuelot Pound Association.

As a 7-year dedicated member of our community, I am excited to announce my candidacy for Selectman. With a strong background in business development, operations management, and community engagement, I am committed to bringing responsible leadership, transparency, and progress to our town.

With over 40 years of experience in business management, public service, and finance as a Chief Operations Officer I have successfully led teams, managed budgets, and implemented strategic initiatives that drive efficiency and growth. My ability to collaborate, problem-solve, and listen to the concerns of residents makes me well-equipped to serve as your Selectman.

My priorities include:

- ✓ Fiscal Responsibility – Ensuring our town’s budget is managed effectively to maintain and improve essential services.
- ✓ Community Growth & Development – Supporting smart, sustainable development while preserving the character of our town.
- ✓ Transparency & Engagement – Keeping residents informed and involved in the decision-making process.
- ✓ Infrastructure & Public Safety – Advocating for improvements to roads, public spaces, and emergency services.

I am passionate about making our town an even better place to live, work, and raise a family. I look forward to earning your support and working together for a stronger future.

Feel free to reach out with your thoughts and ideas—I believe in a government that works for the people, with the people.



GARY DANIELS

OFFICE SOUGHT: Board of Selectmen
ADDRESS: 127 Whitten Road, Milford, NH 03055-3228
CONTACT INFO: gldaniels127@gmail.com
RESIDENCY: 50+year resident of Milford
FAMILY: Married to Loreen (Saucier) Daniels, 6 children
OCCUPATION: Independent Insurance Agent

Certified Long-Term Care Specialist (CLTC), Social Security Certification (SSC)

EDUCATION: Milford Area High School Graduate, Higher Education: New Hampshire Technical Institute, New Hampshire College

AFFILIATIONS:

- Military Service: U.S. Army (active), NH Army National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve
- Little Arrows Childcare Services Board of Directors

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

- Milford Board of Selectmen - 21 years
- State Senator (District 11) - 6 years
 - Senate Committees - Finance (chair), Capital Budget and Ways & Means Committees
- State Representative (Milford) - 19 years
 - House Labor Committee - 18 years
 - House Finance Committee - current
- Hillsborough County Legislative Delegation – 19 years
- Milford School Board - 6 years
- Milford School District Moderator - 6 years

The various legislative positions to which I have been elected have given me good knowledge of state statutes and how to run a compliant meeting, ensuring transparency in the legislative process, as well as experience in governmental budgeting.

If re-elected to the Board, I would bring extensive, well-rounded leadership and legislative experience, and a solid 35-year record of honesty, integrity and commitment in public service that would be beneficial to the Board as it faces the next few challenging years.

I thank you for your past support and respectfully ask for your vote for re-election on March 11th so that I might continue serving as one of your Selectmen.

CEMETARY TRUSTEE – 3 Year Term (vote for one)



JAY DUFFY

OFFICE SOUGHT: Cemetery Trustee
ADDRESS: 491 A Nashua Street
CONTACT: duffyjay39@gmail.com
RESIDENCY: Home Grown Milford Resident

OCCUPATION: Town of Milford Depart of Public Works Parks and Cemetery Caretaker. St. Patrick Church Cemetery Sexton/Caretaker Diocese of Manchester
EDUCATION: Bachelor of Science, Criminal Justice 1999. Milford AREA Senior High School 1991

I've served the Town of Milford as a Cemetery Trustee in the past. I am currently working diligently at maintaining and bringing our 5 Cemeteries back to the beautiful sacred places they are. I am Extremely Proud to have corrected some longtime challenges that have faced our Cemeteries.

The Water System at Riverside Cemetery had been broken and unusable since 2011. I worked diligently along with Cemetery Trustee Alternate Mr. Bob Courage to have the Water System fixed. After a great deal of research, I was able to locate a forgotten Cemetery Trust Fund. This Trust was able to pay the entire cost of \$65,000 without using any tax dollars.

I was able to help salvage and reinstate the Milford Flower Trust Fund which places flowers at our Milford Ancestors Graves for perpetuity. The Flower Fund is now working smoothly with the help of the Milford Garden Club.

As a grassroots effort 5 years ago, I reinstated the placing of the American Flag at Every Milford Veteran's final resting place at our 5 Cemeteries. I am proud to say that this effort has grown steadily every year with approximately 150 Volunteers participating this past Memorial Day. Our 5th Annual will be May 18, 2025 at Riverside Cemetery. Just as in the past Everyone is invited! From 5 years old to 95 years young. Everyone is invited!!! This is a Great day for Our young people to learn the importance of honoring Our Milford Heroes!

I have accomplished my duties with respect and honor. I am proud to be a Milford Cemetery Trustee. Milford Forever!!!



MIKE THORNTON

OFFICE SOUGHT: Cemetery Trustee
RESIDENCY: Resident since 1997

CONTACT: mikeLT091350@gmail.com
603.249.6666

OCCUPATION: Retired military officer & Milford Volunteer

EDUCATION: **B.S. Business Administration [Operations, Management major Franklin University, Columbus, OH 1978. graduate work toward MBA Operations Research / Project Mgmt.**

Liz (wife) and our daughters moved here in 1997, we fell in love with Milford, built our home in 1998. Milford has become the 'home town' most military children never have. Our daughters attended Milford's School System. Have been serving our town for about 18 years in various capacities: Zoning Board, Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) etc.

I believe that we residents have a Civic Duty to participate in our system of governance. I am currently serving a three year term as a Cemetery Trustee; and I'm asking for your support for another three years.

The Milford Cemetery Trustees have made significant progress in the past three last three years. WE have:

- * Establishes the required bylaws (RSA 289.7) required since 1994
- * Reported critical needs to the Board of Selectmen (now Select Board)
- * Published a Milford Cemeteries Master Plan
- * Have coordinated with the Department of Public Works to ensure Cremation plots remain available while sparring tax expenditures

Plans for the future:

- * Providing a gift from the Right to Inter Fund to conserve the area remaining at our Riverside Cemetery via a Columbarium
- * Building a set of agreements between the Town of Milford and her Cemetery Trustees detailing precisely what each party is responsible to do and when
- * Becoming more available to citizens during non-working hours.

CEMETERY TRUSTEE – 2 Year Term (vote for one)

(NO PICTURE PROVIDED)

CHRIS COSTANTIO

OFFICE SOUGHT: Cemetery Trustee
ADDRESS: 721 N River Road
CONTACT INFO: chris.costantino@gmail.com
RESIDENCY: 40 Years
EDUCATION: BS Forestry from UNH

I am interested in exploring alternative burial options to offer to Milford residents. There is growing interest in green burials and what would that look like in Milford.

**CHECKLIST SUPERVISOR – 1 Year Term
(vote for one)**

KEVIN OVERBY – NO BIO PROVIDED

TOWN CLERK – 3 Year Term (vote for one)

JOAN DARGIE – NO BIO PROVIDED

LIBRARY TRUSTEE – 3 Year Term (vote for two)

(NO PICTURE PROVIDED)

CHRIS COSTANTIO

OFFICE SOUGHT: Library Trustee
ADDRESS: 721 N River Road
CONTACT INFO: chris.costantino@gmail.com
RESIDENCY: 40 Years
EDUCATION: BS Forestry from UNH

I have been a Wadleigh Memorial Library Trustee and Alternate Trustee for several years. The Wadleigh Memorial Library is the centerpiece of our community and provides services for all ages. The Library is an information hub providing, through our talented staff, resources to answer most every question or need; particularly essential to those who do not have access to internet connectivity or computers. I would like to continue to serve Milford as a Library Trustee.

(NO PICTURE PROVIDED)

JENNIFER SIEGRIST

OFFICE SOUGHT: Library Trustee
CONTACT INFO: jenni.creative@gmail.com
RESIDENCY: 21 Years
OCCUPATION: Graphic Designer/Business Owner

EDUCATION: Boston University—BA English/Pre-law with a minor in Business Administration, Mass College of Art — Graphic Design, multimedia, Harvard University — Intensive immersion course in Russian

In 2004 my husband and I came to Milford to be closer to my parents and start a family in this wonderful town. For the past 20 years I've also run a small design firm and volunteered on many local boards and committees.

The Wadleigh Memorial Library plays a vital role in our community. Over the years, it has evolved to meet the needs of our town, thanks to its dedicated staff, many of whom have been here for years—a testament to the strong leadership of the library.

During my five years as a Trustee, we've been able to make significant improvements, including securing an ARPA grant to replace the outdated HVAC System, upgrade the electrical system, repair the roof, and refurbish the Milford Room into a welcoming space for meetings and programs. The Wadleigh also expanded Passport services and introduced new programs for patrons. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the library not only continued to serve the community, but was named NH Library of The Year. Our Board Chair, Kathy Parenti, was also recognized as Trustee of The Year.

I am proud to have served on the Library Director Search Committee and this year we hired a fantastic new Director, Beth Piezzo.

This year I am asking for your vote for a third term as Library Trustee so we can continue this progress and ensure the Wadleigh is a welcoming space for everyone in our community.

TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUND – 3 Year Term (vote for one)

JANET SPALDING – NO BIO PROVIDED

TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUND – 1 Year Term (vote for one)

GINA MATTHEWS – NO BIO PROVIDED

WATER AND WASTEWATER COMMISSIONER – 3 Year Term (vote for one)



DALE WHITE

OFFICE SOUGHT: Water/Sewer Commissioner
ADDRESS: 50 Amherst Street
CONTACT INFO: dale.white@leightonawhite.com
OCCUPATION: Owner of Leighton A. White, Inc., a site construction business in Milford (46 years)
EDUCATION: Milford (MASH) High School

It has been a privilege to be elected Water Utilities Commissioner in Milford for the past 15 years, & serving as Board Chair for the last 4 years.

Being the business owner of a local site construction company has given me extensive insight into municipal needs, balancing budgets, fulfilled personnel & proper water/utility construction. Matching problems to solutions is the focus, and my motto remains the same as always: "What is best for our town & its residents?"

**WATER AND WASTEWATER COMMISSIONER
– 1 Year Term (vote for one)**



ERIC KNOTT

OFFICE SOUGHT: Water/Sewer Commissioner
ADDRESS: 43 Union Street, Apt. 1
CONTACT INFO: eric@knottslandcare.com
OCCUPATION: Operations Manager at Knott's Land Care
RESIDENT: 16 Years
EDUCATION: High School, Future Leaders in Construction (FLIC) Graduate, Green Snow Pro Certified, Interlocking Concrete Paving Institute (ICPI) Certified

My family moved from Nashua to Milford when I was 10 years old. One of the main reasons we were excited about moving to Milford was better water quality. This is where my interest in water started. I have worked for my families landscaping company for 8 years. During this time, I have designed and installed many irrigation systems that are focused on responsible water consumption and follows the rules and regulations of each town's water department. Other than that, I do not have any direct water and waste water department experience, however, I am excited to learn from the senior members of the department and the commissioners to help provide Milford with the best possible water and sewer management systems.



Working together to serve our Community!



Drone footage from the 2024 Pumpkin Festival

MILFORD TOWN VOTE

Tuesday, March 11, 2025
Polls Open from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm

Voting Summary Sheet (Fill out and take it with you to the polls)

Article 1. Election of Officers

Board of Selectmen – 3-Year Term (vote for one)

David J. Catanzano _____
Gary Daniels _____

Cemetery Trustee – 3-Year Term (vote for one)

Jay Duffy _____
Mike Thornton _____

Cemetery Trustee – 2-Year Term (vote for one)

Chris Costantino _____

Checklist Supervisor – 1-Year Term (vote for one)

Kevin Overby _____

Library Trustee – 3-Year Term (vote for two)

Chris Costantino _____
Jennifer Siegrist _____

Town Clerk – 3-Year Term (vote for one)

Joan Dargie _____

Trustees of Trust Funds – 3-Year Term (vote for one)

Janet Spalding _____

Trustees of Trust Funds – 1-Year Term (vote for one)

Gina Matthews _____

Water-Wastewater Commissioner – 3-Year Term

Dale White _____

Water-Wastewater Commissioner – 1-Year Term

Eric Knott _____

Article 2. Zoning Questions

Ballot Vote 1. Family Day Care Home-Zoning District Criteria Revisions

Yes _____ No _____

Ballot Vote 2. Junkyards-Article IV (Section 4.01): Amendment to the Definition of Junkyards

Yes _____ No _____

Ballot Vote 3. Open Space and Conservation District

Yes _____ No _____

Ballot Vote 4. Manufactured Home Park Expansion

Yes _____ No _____

Ballot Vote 5. Reduce the Residence 'R' Zoning District Lot Size and Minimum Road Frontage to allow for increased residential density

Yes _____ No _____

Article 3. WADLEIGH MEMORIAL LIBRARY LOWER-LEVEL RESTROOMS - \$250,000 (BOND)

Yes _____ No _____

Article 4. TOWN OPERATING BUDGET - \$19,300,099

Yes _____ No _____

Article 5. WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$2,856,974

Yes _____ No _____

Article 6. WATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$2,429,662

Yes _____ No _____

Article 7. MILFORD SWING BRIDGE - \$634,070 (State pays \$507,256; Town pays \$126,814)

Yes _____ No _____

Article 8. DUMP TRUCK 58K GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT (OR SIMILAR) WITH PLOW AND SANDER ASSEMBLY - 5 YEAR LEASE-PURCHASE - \$70,452 (Annual Lease Payment \$70,452; Total Purchase Price \$352,260)

Yes _____ No _____

Article 9. RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN ROADS - \$300,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 10. FIRE DEPARTMENT – THREE (3) FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS - \$277,195

Yes _____ No _____

Article 11. AMBULANCE REPLACEMENT AND EQUIPMENT REVOLVING FUND - \$140,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 12. MILFORD DAMS ALTERNATIVES FEASIBILITY STUDY - \$100,000 (Gross Appropriation. 100% Loan Forgiveness by NH State Dept. of Environmental Services)

Yes _____ No _____

Article 13. KEYES PARK EXPANSION COMMITTEE PROJECT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$60,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 14. SOCIAL SERVICES - \$45,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 15. POLICE DEPARTMENT PORTABLE, MOBILE RADIO AND MOBILE DATA TERMINAL (MDT) REPLACEMENT FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND - \$35,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 16. NON-EMERGENCY COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BUS SERVICES \$32,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 17. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL RESERVE - \$20,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 18. CONSERVATION LAND FUND - \$20,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 19. MEMORIAL, VETERANS & LABOR DAY PARADES AND RECOGNITION SUPPORT - \$11,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 20. SUMMER BAND CONCERTS SUPPORT - \$9,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 21. ANNUAL LABOR DAY PARADE SUPPORT - \$8,000

Yes _____ No _____

Article 22. NECESSARY MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY REPAIRS TO KEYES POOL - \$89,000 by Petition

Yes _____ No _____

Article 23. SUPPORT OF REPAIR AND RESURFACING OF THE MALCOLM ELLINGWOOD ROTCH TENNIS COURTS AT KEYES MEMORIAL PARK- by Petition

Yes _____ No _____

~ NOTES ~

2025 SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Polls Open from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm

Ballot Summary Sheet

(Fill out and take it with you to the polls)

Choose **two (2)** Members of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years.

_____ Ryan Freed
_____ Susan Smith
_____ Write in _____

Question 1. CTE/MHS RENOVATION PROJECT

Yes _____ No _____

Question 2. MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL ROOF PROJECT

Yes _____ No _____

Question 3. SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATING BUDGET

Yes _____ No _____

Question 4 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT: MILFORD ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP

Yes _____ No _____



MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Milford Voters:

This Voter Guide contains important information about items appearing on the Ballot for Tuesday, March 11, 2025. Voting will take place at the Milford High School, 100 West Street. The polls will open at 6:00 AM and close no earlier than 8:00 PM. Wheelchairs are available for people with disabilities. You can register to vote at the school that day. Please bring a photo ID, or you will need to sign an affidavit that you are eligible to vote and have your picture taken.

Information in this Voter Guide includes a summary of the items appearing on the ballot, followed by more detailed descriptions of some of the more notable items. At the end of the Voter Guide you will find sample voting sheets, which you can fill out and take to the polls with you to speed the voting process.

One copy of this Voter Guide will be sent to each household address that contains at least one registered voter. Additional copies are available at the Town Hall, and the Superintendent of Schools' office, located in the SAU office at the northeastern corner of the high school.

Please exercise your right to vote!

Judith Zaino, Chairman Milford School Board

SCHOOL OFFICIALS 2024 – 2025

Judith Zaino (Chairman) School Board
Term Expires 2026

Jason St. Jean (Vice Chair), School Board
Term Expires 2025

Noah Boudreault (Secretary), School Board
Term Expires 2025

Amy Clark Canty (Member), School Board
Term Expires 2026

Karin Cevasco (Member), School Board
Term Expires 2027

Peter Basiliere, School District Moderator
Term Expires 2026

Rosemarie Evans, School District Treasurer
Term Expires 2026

John Yule, School District Clerk
Term Expires 2026

Officer Rich Addonizio, School Resource Officer

Vachon and Clukay, School District Auditor

Christi Michaud - Superintendent of Schools

Christopher Motika - Assistant Superintendent

Jenny Graves - Business Administrator

Janette Radowicz - Principal, High School

Jerry Gregoire - Principal, Middle School

Stephen Capraro - Interim Principal Heron Pond School

Timothy O'Connell - Principal Jacques Memorial School

Santina Thibedeau - Executive Director, Student Services

William Cooper - Director of Buildings and Grounds

Raymond Morrison - Director of Computer Technology

Budget Committee Members for the 2024-2025 School Year

Carrie Marsh (Chairman)

Lynn Coakley Rob Halstead

Gary Daniels Suzanne Schedin

Joan Dargie Mike Thornton

Rich Elliott John Yule

2025 School Officer Candidate Profiles

All candidates were presented with the opportunity to submit profiles. Picture and bios are optional.

SCHOOL BOARD - 3-Year Term (vote for TWO)



RYAN FREED

OFFICE SOUGHT: School Board
OCCUPATION: Director of Systems Implementation, Tech Logistics, Milford NH
EDUCATION: Bachelor of Science, Double Major in Legal Studies and Political Science
AFFILIATIONS: Milford Community Athletic Association, Director of Maintenance and Fields
Call firefighter, Milford Fire Department

The prosperity and well-being of a community heavily depend on the quality of education that its school system can offer.

One of my core values is an unwavering commitment to inclusive and equitable education. I believe that every student, regardless of their background or abilities, should have access to high-quality education and the support they need to succeed. Our goal should be to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that fosters creativity and innovation for all.

My stances on some key issues:

- I support securing state funding for the MHS building improvements and “CTE program”, and will work for a required, detailed maintenance plan on any improvements or additions.
- I support Special Education Services, including but not limited to, the MEEE Program, Child Find, children with disabilities programs, and Alternative Learning Environments.

- I support the need for a growing list of cocurricular and extracurricular activities.
- I will advocate for competitive salaries, ongoing professional development, and a supportive work environment for our educators.
- I do not support the practice of book banning, promoting or discouraging specific religions, or encouraging membership to one political party over another in public schools.
- By voting for me, you are supporting a candidate who will prioritize the needs of our students, empower our educators, and work tirelessly to create an education system that benefits everyone.



SUSAN SMITH

OFFICE SOUGHT: School Board
I have lived in Milford with my family for the past 17 years and have volunteered on the Milford School Budget Advisory Committee (3 years), Planning Board (past 3 years), Capital Improvement Plan Committee (past 2 years) and Master Plan Committee (currently). I have one son who graduated from Milford High School and is a senior in mechanical engineering at URI, and my youngest is currently attending Milford High School. I also work as a product marketing director for a company that provides educational content for information technology professionals.

In the 15+ years that I've been involved with the school district as a parent, volunteer and attendee at Milford School Board meetings, I've seen how challenging it can be to gain the trust and support of taxpayers for important projects and programs. This challenge has become more urgent as the state has drastically reduced education funding, while school transportation, maintenance, insurance, and most other costs have risen. As a result, school budgets have increased to the point that some taxpayers question the value of our public schools.

One of my goals if I'm elected is to use my volunteer experience to help improve communication and transparency with taxpayers and town officials—especially those who don't have students in the schools and may not be aware of the great things happening in them. If we can better inform taxpayers about what the schools are accomplishing and why they need your support, develop a proactive plan with the new Capital

Improvements Committee, and incorporate your concerns and input from town leaders into the school district's plans, I believe Milford's schools can return to being among the best in the state (which they were when I went to high school here).

Milford is lucky to have very resourceful school administrators and teachers who have made tremendous progress toward that goal. We also have talented, hard-working students who make an inspiring contribution to our community, and we can all be proud of them. I look forward to the opportunity to get the word out about the amazing citizens our schools are educating, why they need your support, and how we can balance their needs with the needs of the town and the taxpayers. I will be honored to earn your vote.



SCHOOL WARRANT The State of New Hampshire

To the Inhabitants of the School District in the Town of Milford, County of Hillsborough, in the State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in District affairs:

You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of the School District of Milford will be held, in accordance with RSA 40:13, at the Milford High School Cafeteria in said Milford, with the first (deliberative) session on the sixth day of February 2025, at seven o'clock in the evening, to transact all business other than voting, and on the eleventh day of March 2025, in the Milford High School Gymnasium, for the second session for voting by official ballot at the polls on all matters in the warrant as well as officers and other matters to be voted on. The polls will be open on the eleventh of March 2025 from 6:00 AM and will not close earlier than 8:00 PM.

2025 SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT SUMMARY

Question 1. CTE/MHS RENOVATION PROJECT - \$23,565,000 GROSS BUDGET (\$9,900,000 STATE OF NH RENOVATION AND EXPANSION GRANT) (\$13,665,000 BOND):

Shall the Milford School District raise and appropriate the sum of \$23,565,000 (gross budget) for the design, construction, and equipping of additions and renovations to the Milford High School Applied Technology Center and necessary improvements to the High School, including, but not limited to, replacements of the roof, HVAC roof top units, exhaust fans, unit ventilators, restrooms, secure main entrance; repairs of the masonry wall units; renovations to art and science classrooms ("the Project"); to authorize the issuance of not more than \$13,665,000 in bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act, (RSA Chapter 33); to authorize the Milford School Board to apply for, accept, and expend funding of up to \$9,900,000 from the State of New Hampshire Renovation and Expansion Grant funding from the NH Department of Education (DOE) (which amount represents 75% of eligible costs of the DOE approved CTE project per RSA 188-E:10,I(e)) and not from local taxes; to authorize the Milford School Board to apply for, accept and expend any federal, state, or other aid and/or donations and/or private funds which may become available for the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded; to authorize the Milford School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds and notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Milford School Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto and to comply with all laws applicable to the Project; and further to raise and appropriate an additional sum of \$350,000 for the first year's interest payment of the bond? If the DOE CTE funding is less than \$9,900,000, the appropriation in this article will be reduced by the difference between the funding anticipated (\$9,900,000) and the actual funding the Milford School District receives and the project scope will be adjusted accordingly. (3/5 ballot vote required to pass). **School Board: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 5-0). Budget Advisory Committee: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 7-0). This article has an estimated tax impact of \$16.81 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000 in the first year. The estimated tax impact in the second year is \$67.40 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000. The estimated tax impact in the third year is \$65.84 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board 5-0)

The School Board supports this bond for the following reasons:

School Board Explanation:

- **Cost reduction:** The project cost has been significantly lowered in response to community feedback.
- **State funding assistance:** A \$9.9 million state funding

opportunity will help modernize ATC facilities, reducing the local bond amount to \$13,665,000.

- **Targeted renovations:** The project focuses on extending renovations to both the MHS and ATC more equitably. It eliminates major construction while still improving facilities, including modifications to the dedicated culinary entrance and a small addition near the front of the current MHS building.

- **Inclusivity in education:** Ensures inclusive learning environments for students with diverse abilities and learning styles.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote (7-0))

Budget Committee Explanation:

With a vote of 7-0, the SBAC is in support of the revised CTE/MHS renovations project. We appreciate the Board and District's willingness to compromise and put forward a plan that is more affordable for this community, and still offers upgrades to the CTE programming, addresses some of the critical repairs that need to be made to the high school, and includes a plan to reintegrate Project Drive back into MHS without moving/changing the SAU or requiring additional funds for Bales.

Question 2. MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL ROOF PROJECT - \$1,500,000 GROSS BUDGET (\$1,500,000 BOND) [PETITION WARRANT ARTICLE]:

In the event that Article I is not approved, to see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1.5 million (gross budget) to replace the Milford High School roof ("the Project") and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1.5 million of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); to authorize the Milford School Board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Milford School Board to apply for, accept and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and further to raise and appropriate an additional sum of \$50,000.00 for the first year's interest payment of the bond? (3/5 ballot vote required to pass). **School Board: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 5-0). Budget Advisory Committee: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 7-0). This article has an estimated tax impact of \$2.45 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000 in the first year. The estimated tax impact in the second year is \$16.52 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000.**

Petition Article Sponsor:

This petition warrant article was filed as a safeguard to ensure the Milford High School roof will be replaced in the event that Article, I is not supported by the voters. The roof is one of the most critical and urgent maintenance items that needs to be addressed.

SCHOOL BOARD: SUPPORT (School Board 5-0)

School Board Explanation:

The School Board supports this bond for the following reasons:

1. **Addressing Critical Maintenance:** If Warrant Article I does not pass, the roof of MHS remains the most pressing deferred maintenance issue. Immediate action is essential to prevent further structural and financial concerns.

2. **Facilitating Solar Power Goals:** Installing a new roof at MHS will support the District's long-term goal of pursuing solar energy solutions, promoting sustainability and reducing energy costs for the District.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote (7-0))

Budget Committee Explanation:

Should article 1 fail, the SBAC supports this article as a "replacement" with a vote of 7-0.

Question 3. SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATING BUDGET - \$50,029,504

Shall the Milford School District vote to raise and appropriate as an Operating Budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026, 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 first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$50,029,504? The proposed operating budget has an estimated tax impact of \$147.66 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000, over the FY 2025 Budget. Should this article be defeated, the Default Budget shall be \$50,415,014, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Milford School District 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. **The calculated default budget has an estimated tax impact of \$166.18 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000, over the FY 2025 Budget. School Board: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 4-1); Budget Advisory Committee: DOES NOT RECOMMEND this article (vote 3-4). (Majority vote required)**

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board 4-1)

School Board Explanation:

Majority:

● **School Board Responsibility:** The School Board affirms that this budget reflects our continued commitment to providing an excellent education for all students.

● **Explanation of Increases:** In a challenging fiscal environment marked by rising expenses in transportation, energy, special services, and declining state funding, we have worked diligently to minimize the budget increase. Despite these pressures, the proposed budget reflects a moderate increase of 5.48%, balancing the need for fiscal responsibility with the imperative to maintain high-quality educational services.

● **State Funding Decreases:** This budget reflects substantial cuts in education by the State of NH, particularly in the area of special education as well as overall cuts in per pupil cost sharing. This shifts an increasing burden on the individual taxpayers of Milford.

Minority:

As the minority I supported the budget as presented prior to the change made at the Deliberative. The already too high budget which was supported by the demand of contractually obligated funding, special education costs increasing and just normal cost escalation. The 5.3% increase was a good balance found between School Board, Administration and the School Budget Advisory Committee. The money added back into the budget may and was requested to go towards supporting programs that have historically had low student interest and overall lowering enrollment. Previous attempts in the past were made at reducing this area of the budget and again were supported by the same data presented to the community regarding low student interest and overall enrollment going down. Good points were made through which I support which is to look into why overall enrollment was going down.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We DO NOT SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote (3-4))

Budget Committee Explanation:

The minority report of the members reflects that they don't fully support the operating budget and felt frustrated that the efforts put forth by the District to get the budget as low as possible were wiped away by a blanket percentage increase, rather than a continued approach of really looking at what was necessary to operate. Ultimately, they chose to support the operating budget, simply because it was lower than the default.

The majority oppose this Article, not because we support the default budget (which is higher), but because of the process by which the operating budget amount was derived.

We commend the Administration for starting the budget process with a goal of level funding the budget.

After budget presentations were completed, three primary areas - Special Education costs associated with transportation, out-of-district tuition, and contracted services, resulted in the proposed budget being up 3.8%, slightly higher than the Northeast Consumer Price Index (which reflects inflation) of 3.5%. When the Budget Committee presented its 3.8% budget proposal to the school board on November 18, 2024, one of the school board members stated that since the default budget was up 6.3%, the operating budget could be raised to just under that and the voters would have to vote for that because it was still less than the default budget. A motion was then made and seconded to raise the operating budget from 3.8% to 6.0%. During discussion, the 6.0% proposal was "negotiated" down to current 5.3% because another board member did not want to raise it to more than 5.0%.

A survey conducted by the school board after last year's CTE warrant article failed revealed that the major objection from those opposed to that article was that spending was too high and that they could not afford higher taxes. That was also the reason that last year's operating budget failed, resulting in the default budget being adopted for the past year. The survey comments caused the Administration to seek a level-funded budget. The school board, however, ignored the voter survey feedback and showed no sign of empathy to the taxpayers' ability to financially support the spending by proposing a 6.0% increase, or even a 5.3% increase, in this year's operating budget, simply dismissing the prior budget work done by staff and administrators to keep the budget as low as possible. An effort to amend the operating budget to \$49,231,630 (representing about a 3.8% increase instead of 5.3%) was made at the Deliberative Session. That failed. Subsequently a motion was made from the floor to add to the budget more money for a position that had been removed. That motion passed and the budget was raised above the 5.3% increase to the current figure of \$50,029,504. With declining enrollment, projected to be 1975 for next year, the average cost per student in Milford will increase to over \$25,330 with passage of the operating budget. Unfortunately, the cost will be even higher if the default budget passes.

Those responsible for developing the budget need also to weigh the ability of taxpayers to support the spending requests, and this proposed budget fails to do that.

The majority vote, therefore, reflects the dissatisfaction with the process in which the budget was developed, the school board's insensitivity to taxpayers' ability to support the level of spending requested, and a rejection of efforts to keep the operating budget as affordable as possible. But, again, the majority vote is not to be taken as support for the default budget, which is higher than the operating budget.

Question 4. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT: MILFORD ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (\$240,310 GRAND TOTAL OVER 4 YEARS)

Shall the Milford School District vote to approve the cost items included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (2025/2026 through 2028/2029) reached between the Milford School Board and the Milford Administrative Group, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Account	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Grand Total
Salaries	\$77,629	\$48,268	\$46,785	\$40,498	\$213,180
Benefits	\$9,252	\$5,126	\$6,126	\$6,626	\$27,130
Totals	\$86,881	\$53,394	\$52,911	\$47,124	\$240,310

and further to raise and appropriate \$86,881 for the upcoming fiscal year 2025-2026, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. The costs for the years of the agreement beyond the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year will be included in the operating and default budgets for each of those years.

School Board: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 4-1); Budget Advisory Committee: RECOMMENDS this article (vote 5-2). (Majority vote required). This article has an estimated tax impact of \$4.17 on an assessed valuation of \$100,000 in the first year. The estimated tax impact for the remaining years based on an assessed valuation of \$100,000 are: \$2.56 in 2026-2027, \$2.54 in 2027-2028, and \$2.26 in 2028-2029.

SCHOOL BOARD: We SUPPORT (School Board 4-1)

School Board Explanation:

Majority:

The majority of the school board supports this agreement for the following reasons:

- 1. Fair and Equitable Compromise:** The agreement represents a balanced solution between the District and the Milford Administrative Group.
- 2. Salary Rebalancing:** It addresses previous inequities caused by past practices, ensuring more equitable compensation for administrative staff.
- 3. Updated Role Descriptions:** Position responsibilities have been adjusted to better reflect actual duties and expectations.
- 4. Longevity Incentives:** The inclusion of long-term incentives aims to encourage administrative staff to remain in Milford, fostering stability and continuity.
- 5. Stability Through a Four-Year Term:** The four-year contract provides a stable framework for the coming years, reducing the need for frequent renegotiations.

Minority:

As a minority member of the Board, I must express my opposition to the school administrators' group contract due to the inequities it creates and its misalignment with the progress made in aligning other contracts across the district.

While much of the contract has been brought in line with other contracts, there are still significant disparities within this contract specifically. These changes not only perpetuate inequities within the administrators' unit but also undermine the progress that has been made to ensure fairness and equality across other contracts.

The Board has worked diligently over the past few years to align contracts both in framework and content by addressing disparities in a way that promotes equity and fairness for all groups at all levels.

However, this contract represents in my opinion a step backward by disrupting that alignment. To maintain the progress made toward equity, it is crucial that the contract be revised to better reflect the institution's commitment to fairness across not only administrators but all staff members.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We SUPPORT (Budget Advisory Committee vote (5-2)

Budget Committee Explanation:

SBAC supports the Milford Administrators Group agreement with a vote of 5-2. We believe this contract was negotiated in good faith and keeps our costs as low as possible while offering competitive salaries to the members of this group, for staff retention and morale.

The minority oppose this Article based on student performance assessments. The Administrative Group members are those we hire to run the educational system in Milford. The expectations are that this group is ultimately responsible for ensuring the educational proficiency of our students. Looking at the District achievement data on the state Department of Education website for the past three years shows ELA Proficiency is at 51%, Math Proficiency at 37% and Science Proficiency is at 35%. All of those proficiency scores have been less than the state proficiency scores for the last three years. One would expect that when taxpayers are paying close to \$25,000 per student, proficiency scores should be considerably higher and that something in the system is not working. Ultimately, that is the responsibility of the Administrative Group to correct, and the past three years have not shown any history of significant improvement.

The minority therefore opposes the Administrative Group contract and its associated cost increases.



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