

TOWN OF DUDLEY
MASSACHUSETTS
Public Information Office



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Public Information

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For Immediate Release

June 22, 2023

Dudley Board of Selectmen seeks to prioritize public safety while considering cuts to overcome a \$867,525 deficit in the Town Meeting approved FY24 budget.

The deficit and next steps were discussed by selectmen at a June 20 meeting, where Selectman Mark Landry said, “The level of service we are getting is going to decline significantly and it will be felt by all.”

A portion of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District’s assessment to Dudley was contingent upon a Proposition 2 ½ override election held June 12, 2023. The override failed. Therefore, the FY24 school district assessment is considered to have been rejected by voters.

On June 14, 2023, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee approved a revised budget that increased the Dudley assessment approved at town meeting by \$867,525 to \$10,937,991 and transmitted same to the Town on June 15. This assessment amount creates a \$867,525 deficit in the non-contingent budget approved by voters at the Annual Town Meeting on May 22, 2023.

The Town has 45 days from June 15, 2023 (quick calculation, July 29, 2023) to hold a Special Town Meeting to vote on the revised school budget. If the Town doesn’t hold a second town meeting within the 45-day period, the revised budget is deemed to have been approved.

If a Special Town Meeting is called and fails to appropriate the amount of the revised school district assessment, the budget will be considered disapproved and the school committee will have the option of calling a Special District-wide meeting, often referred to as a “super” town meeting, where Charlton and Dudley voters will come together to vote on the school district’s revised budget.

If a super town meeting is called, and the revised budget is approved by a majority of the voters present, Dudley will be required to fund the amount assessed by the school district.

If the Town opts not to call a Special Town Meeting within 45 days, and the new school assessment amount is therefore deemed approved, it will result in a budget deficit. Dudley will need to make the necessary adjustments to the town budget at another Special Town Meeting, such as at the October Special Town Meeting. The town must approve a balanced budget before the state Department of Revenue will approve the FY24 tax rate (in and around November).

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The Board of Selectmen is expected to hear budget cut proposals from Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda and set plans for the next steps at its June 26, 2023, meeting.

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