

THE ANTRIM ADVISOR

The Budget for 2008

Our 2008 Budget Hearing will be Tuesday evening, February 5 at 7 pm at the Town Hall. Please mark your calendars. We hope that you will be able to attend.

All of our departments have worked very hard to bring you a very conservative operating budget for 2008. The overall increase is 1.5%, an increase of \$49,611. We consider this very reasonable, considering the major cost increases we have had to absorb in fuel, heating oil, utilities and employee benefits costs. In addition, because of the way the days of the week fall, 2008 will have 53 pay periods instead of 52, so our payroll is automatically increased by one week's pay.

To give you an overall summary, the following is what is projected by major expense category:

General Government: \$996,500. An increase of \$64,610 over 2007 due mainly to health insurance, retirement fund, heating oil and utility cost increases.

Public Safety: \$488,130. An increase of \$40,075 due to the addition of an officer, as approved at 2007's Town Meeting.

Highway/Streets/Bridges: \$840,550. A decrease of \$80,300 from 2007 due to a reduction in road improvements for 2008, which helps to offset the large increases in fuel and winter maintenance operations.

Equipment Leasing: \$90,000. No change from 2007.

Health and Welfare: \$69,770. A decrease of \$6,235 due to strong control on welfare costs.

Culture & Recreation: \$193,682. An increase of \$9,866 due mainly to the increased operating cost for the library for fuel, utilities, etc. because of the library addition.

Conservation: \$1,000. A decrease of \$1,000 from 2007.

Debt Service: \$261,036. An increase of \$37,855 over 2007 due to the library addition.

Water & Sewer: \$319,090. A decrease of \$16,410 from 2007 due to increased revenue and fewer project expenses.

In summary, this gives us an operating budget of \$3,270,958, and excludes all warrant articles, which will be addressed in the February issue of the Advisor and at Town Meeting. We hope you will come to the Budget Hearing so that we can fully explain the budget, answer any questions and consider the suggestions you may have.

Antrim's New Equalization Rate

The State of New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) has recently set Antrim's equalization rate at 85.8% for the tax year 2007, an increase of approximately 1% over the previous year. Each year, the DRA sets a new equalization rate for each municipality, based on qualified sales values recorded in that town from the previous October 1 to the following September 30. The equalization ratio indicates the difference between the assessed value of a property and the market value and is used in determining our school funding rate and to modify market value of properties under review for abatement.

The new rate increases our total equalized valuation to \$281,026,608, an increase of over \$30,000,000 from the previous year. In New Hampshire, towns are required by law to reassess property every 5 years to keep in line with market values. Antrim's next revaluation is slated for 2009. We also examine 25% of the properties in town each year to pick up any changes that may have occurred since the last revaluation.

To calculate your equalized assessment, divide your assessed value by the equalization ratio. For example, if your assessed value is \$200,000, divide that value by .858 to arrive at the equalized assessment or approximate market value of \$233,645. Keep in mind, however, that the equalization ratio is an average derived from sales that includes other types of properties, including commercial properties and vacant land, so the calculation will estimate only an approximation of market value.

News from the Recreation Land Search Committee

The Recreation Land Search Committee would like to announce that negotiations for the West Street property have come to an unsuccessful conclusion. Despite numerous attempts by both parties, common ground could not be reached.

As a result, the committee has refocused its efforts on another piece of property on Park Place (Map 213 Lot 24) that the committee had looked at earlier. Although not as centrally located, it is owned by the town and the committee believes that a ball field can be constructed on this site primarily using funds that are already in the reserve account.

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, February 5 at 7 pm	Budget Hearing	Antrim Town Hall
Wednesday, February 6 at 7 pm	ConVal School District Budget Deliberative Session	ConVal High School Gym Peterborough
Tuesday, March 11, 8 am - 7 pm	Voting Day	Antrim Town Hall
Thursday, March 13 at 7 pm	Town Meeting	Antrim Town Gym Antrim Elementary School

From the Office of the Tax Collector

Donna Hanson, Deputy Tax Collector

Did you know that The Town of Antrim offers:

- **Veterans tax credits** in the amount of \$500 for qualifying veterans and \$2,000 for service-connected totally disabled veterans. Spouses of deceased qualifying veterans can also apply for a tax credit. To qualify, you must own property on April 1 of the year you apply; be a NH resident for 1 year prior to April 1; submit a copy of DD Form 214 stating you were honorably discharged; and you must have served no fewer than 90 days during a qualifying war or armed conflict.
- **Elderly exemptions** for qualified homeowners. To qualify you must be 65 years old on or before April 1 in the year you are applying for the exemption; you must have been a New Hampshire resident for 3 years prior to April 1; you must have owned the residence by April 1 individually or jointly or if the residence is owned by a spouse, you must have been married for at least five years. You must have a net income of less than \$26,000 or if married, a combined net income of less than \$39,000. You cannot have assets in excess of \$90,000, excluding the value of the dwelling. The elderly exemption is deducted from your assessed value.

The valuation reductions are as follows:

\$25,000 (Ages 65-74) \$50,000 (Ages 75-79) \$65,000 (Age 80 or Older)

- **Blind exemptions** for residents who are legally blind as determined by the Blind Services Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of the Education Department. Like the elderly exemption, the blind exemption of \$15,000 is deducted from your assessed value.

Any resident who may be eligible for an **elderly** or **blind exemption** or **veterans credit** for the first time must file a permanent application no later than April 15 in order to receive the exemption or credit for the current tax year. All applications are available at the Town Hall. You are welcome to stop by, give us a call at 588-6785 ext. 223, or email us at antrimatc@tds.net with any questions you may have.

Officer Dean Wright Joins Antrim Police Department

Effective January 28, 2008 Officer Dean Wright will become the police department's newest officer. He will be filling the vacancy left by Lt. Scott Dunn.

Officer Wright comes to the Antrim Police Department as a full-time NH Certified Officer with more than seven years of police experience. He is a Baton Instructor, Defensive Tactics Instructor and a Preliminary Breath Test Instructor. Officer Wright's background also includes 7 years in the United States Army with military intelligence and he has an Associates Degree in Administration of Justice from the University of Hawaii.

There is no doubt that Officer Wright will be an asset to not only the police department, but to the Town as well.

<p>Antrim Town Hall 66 Main Street PO Box 517 Ph: 588-6785 Fax: 588-2969 www.antrimnh.org</p>	<p>We look forward to hearing from you. Please contact any of us with your questions and concerns. The Antrim Board of Selectmen <i>Ben Pratt, Mike Genest & Steve Schacht</i></p>	<p>POSTAL PATRON BULK RATE US POSTAGE PAID ANTRIM, NH 03440 PERMIT #50</p>
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