



Office of
the Mayor

June 27, 2017

STATEMENT REGARDING WATERVILLE MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BUDGET

Because it has been some time since we have last had a public budget meeting and we continue to await the state legislature to come to a point of agreement on the budget which in particular surrounds school subsidies, I find it appropriate to update the citizens of Waterville on where we stand with our budget here in the city. As most of you know, the council and school board chose the wise path of waiting to finalize the budget until the numbers were final from the state. Simply put, we ought not to make hasty decisions that could perhaps prove unwise in light of what factual information may come. All of this means that the numbers are still quite fluid as we look at various scenarios.

Although our numbers are not yet final, two clear goals have come to the forefront. The people of Waterville have demanded tax relief, and have also made it clear that our schools must be adequately funded. With these two goals in mind, both myself and the city manager have been in contact with the Superintendent's Office as well as various officials at the state to keep an ongoing dialogue and understanding of where our goal post continues to move.

One encouraging factor that has remained on our minds is that this year the homestead exemption is scheduled to increase by \$5,000 per home. Rightfully, homeowners should expect their bills to go down this year as this was designed for tax relief. The city also is putting together a revenue plan that we can hopefully present by next week (or when the state's final budget comes through) that will allow us to see a vision to stabilize revenues over the next two years, so we do not find ourselves once again next spring facing a massive revenue shortfall.

While myself, some city councilors and the city manager have been working tirelessly to achieve these various goals in the hopes that we can present a budget that is embraced by all Waterville residents, there are still a majority of councilors who have had little to say in regards to designing their budget. This week, the city manager and myself will be scheduling meetings with all of the council in smaller groups to hear input, ideas, and create consensus on a plan to finalize a budget that funds our schools and also allows homeowners to obtain tax relief.

Keeping in mind that in scenarios like this, no one gets everything they want, there are still decisions that need to be made. The people of Waterville deserve nothing less than our best efforts, and they should rightfully expect us to present them with a budget we can all embrace.

As of now we are scheduled to take our first of two budget votes on Wednesday, July 5th. This assumes that the state will have their final numbers to us by then and will have avoided a shutdown. If this is not the case, the city will continue to operate as normal. Your trash will get picked up, and our clerk's office readily awaits to serve you.

With so many incredible things moving forward here in Waterville from our downtown to the new Trafton Road interchange, residents should be confident that their elected officials will work in compromise to achieve their wishes and to move us forward through this process. Certainly, presenting a strong budget that stabilizes tax rates will only help us as we move forward in this exciting time for our city.

On behalf of myself and the city administration, I would like to say thank you to all of the people of Waterville who have remained patient throughout a stressful process which should reach its conclusion soon. Until then, please continue to contact myself as well as your city councilors should have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes to all,

Nick



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