



News About Town

A Message from our Town Manager

Dear Gray Friends and Neighbors,

As spring tries to bloom around us, so does the promise of progress in our beloved town. The proposed FY25 budget, which will need voter approval this June, holds immense potential for Gray.

Just some of what we wanted to accomplish with this newsletter is highlight:

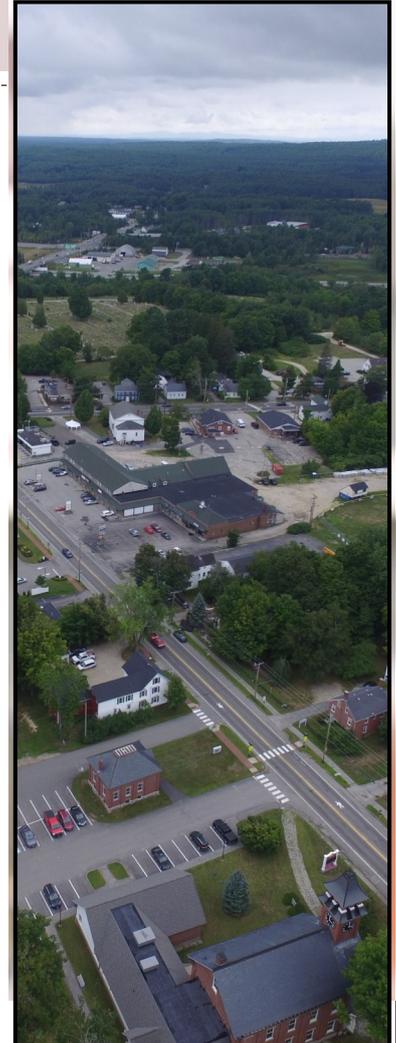
- **Sustainable Growth:** Gray has flourished in recent years, and our sights are set on the next decade. The FY25 budget is our compass, guiding responsible growth. One exciting proposal? The establishment of an Economic Development department. This new venture aims to attract and retain businesses, fostering diversity and resilience in our local economy.
- **Empowering Voters:** Our mission aligns with yours – to empower informed citizens. Dive into the details of the proposed budget. Visit graymaine.org/fy25-budget to explore how your vote can shape our community’s future. Remember, an educated electorate is a powerful one.
- **Celebrating Our Team:** In this newsletter, we celebrate our dedicated employees. From promotions to retirements, our workforce thrives on camaraderie. Join us in applauding their milestones. And if you’re seeking a warm, friendly environment to contribute your talents, explore opportunities at graymaine.org/employment.



Town Manager
Michael Foley

Together, let’s weave a vibrant tapestry of progress, unity, and shared purpose. Gray’s future is in our hands—let’s make it extraordinary!

Warm regards,
Michael Foley



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Town Council, Departments Create FY25 Budget for Voter Approval

The Town Council has now heard all Town department budget requests, the Town Manager's budget proposal, and the proposed MSAD 15 budget—all elements that help form the FY25 budget for the Town of Gray.

It's Town government's mission to inform citizens as much as possible about how their tax dollars are spent. The FY25 budget includes the following highlights:

- Funding for a new budgeting program, called ClearGov, in the hope that budget season is as effective, efficient, and transparent as possible.
- New economic development department, which would strive to attract and retain businesses in Gray. This department would include a director and a town engineer/project manager, both salaried at \$90,000.
- Allow for extended hours at Town Office, making business there for the community more accessible. (Read more about this on [page 5](#).)
- Increased pay for election workers, who help make elections run as smoothly as possible.
- Funding for annual paving of Gray roads.
- Updated equipment for the Buildings and Grounds department.
- Increased support for the Wild Blueberry Festival, an annual landmark event in Gray celebrating community, local resources, and volunteerism.
- Capital improvement projects, such as major infrastructure work on Town-owned buildings, new basketball hoops, traffic safety improvements, and road drainage improvements.
- And much more!

You can view the two Town department budget workshops, the budget hearing, and other budget-related information on our

Upcoming Events

April 3

6:30 p.m.: MSAD #15 School Board Business Meeting — 24 Main Street

April 4

6:30 p.m.: Ford Reiche, author of *A Long, Long Time Ago: Major Rock and Roll Concerts in Southern Maine*—Gray Public Library

April 9

7 p.m.: Town Council Workshop — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

April 10

6 p.m.: Open Space Committee Meeting — 24 Main Street

April 11

7 p.m.: Planning Board Meeting — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

April 24

7 p.m.: Zoning Board of Appeals—24 Main Street

Town Council, Departments Create FY25 Budget for Voter Approval (Continued)

dedicated webpage: graymaine.org/fy25-budget. These meetings express in detail how and why Town government has arrived at the proposed budget.

	FY 23 Actuals	FY 24 Budget	FY 24 Actuals 12/31	Department Request	Manager	Council	\$ Change	% Change
Total Expenses	\$ 7,916,008.16	\$ 12,953,030.03	\$ 4,637,234.08	\$ 14,769,620.18	\$ 13,403,456.57	\$ 13,265,556.57	\$ 312,526.54	2%
Department Budget								
Administration	\$ 696,006.10	\$ 948,663.00	\$ 305,206.60	\$ 905,283.45	\$ 980,795.20	\$ 985,795.20	\$ 37,132.20	3.9%
Human Resources & Benefits	\$ -	\$ 1,098,065.00	\$ 3,801.50	\$ 1,102,292.77	\$ 1,895,363.49	\$ 1,895,363.49	\$ 797,298.49	72.6%
Community Development	\$ 253,192.09	\$ 283,719.00	\$ 134,039.20	\$ 258,166.67	\$ 324,173.07	\$ 324,173.07	\$ 40,454.07	14.3%
Economic Development (NEW)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 277,000.00	\$ 346,258.75	\$ 346,258.75	\$ 346,258.75	
Assessing	\$ 149,055.46	\$ 168,884.00	\$ 81,036.29	\$ 335,117.28	\$ 335,117.28	\$ 335,117.28	\$ 166,233.28	98.4%
Code Enforcement	\$ 229,529.06	\$ 286,334.00	\$ 109,606.76	\$ 264,995.32	\$ 258,995.32	\$ 249,995.32	\$ (36,338.68)	-12.7%
General Assistance	\$ 42,934.34	\$ 59,286.00	\$ 17,378.88	\$ 59,915.00	\$ 59,890.00	\$ 59,050.00	\$ (236.00)	-0.4%
Communications & Information Technology	\$ 251,303.17	\$ 333,364.00	\$ 148,442.79	\$ 471,207.48	\$ 421,558.48	\$ 421,558.48	\$ 88,194.48	26.5%
Elections	\$ 7,310.69	\$ 20,159.00	\$ 4,922.52	\$ 23,331.60	\$ 26,131.60	\$ 26,131.60	\$ 5,972.60	29.6%
Library	\$ 367,564.03	\$ 410,416.00	\$ 201,204.77	\$ 375,187.97	\$ 375,187.97	\$ 375,187.97	\$ (35,228.03)	-8.6%
Recreation	\$ 29,872.44	\$ 59,492.00	\$ 7,751.28	\$ 567,778.29	\$ 563,159.29	\$ 563,159.29	\$ 503,667.29	846.6%
Public Safety	\$ 1,532,303.66	\$ 1,803,721.00	\$ 892,168.84	\$ 1,733,465.29	\$ 1,741,885.69	\$ 1,741,885.69	\$ (61,835.31)	-3.4%
Public Works	\$ 1,305,234.86	\$ 1,636,156.00	\$ 542,041.86	\$ 2,283,519.58	\$ 2,344,289.58	\$ 2,309,289.58	\$ 673,133.58	41.1%
Solid Waste & Recycling	\$ 860,256.91	\$ 981,425.50	\$ 452,794.09	\$ 1,046,820.68	\$ 1,023,713.68	\$ 1,023,713.68	\$ 42,288.18	4.3%
Facilities & Parks	\$ 477,169.87	\$ 592,651.00	\$ 252,205.37	\$ 716,522.25	\$ 858,570.62	\$ 760,510.62	\$ 167,859.62	28.3%
Council & Board	\$ 75,251.73	\$ 75,703.00	\$ 40,908.88	\$ 10,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (75,703.00)	-100.0%
Law Enforcement	\$ 238,980.04	\$ 283,927.00	\$ 266,891.51	\$ 481,016.23	\$ 434,016.23	\$ 434,016.23	\$ 150,089.23	52.9%
Community Services	\$ 39,760.18	\$ 40,025.00	\$ 26,349.41	\$ 41,525.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (40,025.00)	-100.0%
Debt Service	\$ 1,360,283.53	\$ 1,150,483.53	\$ 1,150,483.53	\$ 1,249,975.33	\$ 1,220,100.33	\$ 1,220,100.33	\$ 69,616.80	6.1%
Total General Fund (Proposed)	\$ 7,916,008.16	\$ 10,232,474.03	\$ 4,637,234.08	\$ 12,203,620.18	\$ 13,209,206.57	\$ 13,071,306.57	\$ 2,838,832.54	27.7%
Capital Improvement Program	\$ -	\$ 2,720,556.00	\$ -	\$ 2,566,000.00	\$ 194,250.00	\$ 194,250.00	\$ (2,526,306.00)	-92.9%
	\$ 7,916,008.16	\$ 12,953,030.03	\$ 4,637,234.08	\$ 14,769,620.18	\$ 13,403,456.57	\$ 13,265,556.57	\$ 312,526.54	2.4%
TOTAL	\$ 7,916,008.16	\$ 12,953,030.03	\$ 4,637,234.08	\$ 14,769,620.18	\$ 13,403,456.57	\$ 13,265,556.57	\$ 312,526.54	2.4%

This spreadsheet shows total expenses for the Town budget since FY23. A physical copy of all budget-related information is available in the Town Office.

Please note budget season is still ongoing, so always check our budget page for the latest budget information.

The FY25 budget incorporates both responsiveness and fiscal responsibility. Assuming the proposed school budget remains unchanged, the overall tax rate will experience a modest increase of \$0.816. For homeowners with a \$350,000 property value, this translates to an estimated \$286 rise in property taxes. However, please know the Town Council has meticulously reviewed and adjusted the Town’s proposed budget, and *the municipal portion of the tax rate is actually decreasing.*

The Town Council will approve warrant articles on Tuesday, April 9 ahead of Election Day on June 11. Budget questions and clarifications can be directed to admin@graymaine.org.

Town Government Celebrates Employee Career Milestones



L-R: Kyle Hadyniak, Jon Powers, Judy Rand, and Tim Estes

One of the guiding principles of working for the Town of Gray is that employees are recognized for their contributions to Town operation, knowledge, and dedication. On that front, Town Manager Michael Foley has filled high-level Town positions with people who he thinks will do the job well. A few promotions we have recently celebrated include:

- Long-time clerk Judy Rand being promoted to Deputy Clerk.
- Interim Director of Communications and IT Kyle Hadyniak being promoted to permanent head of that department.
- Interim Public Works Director Tim Estes selected to be the permanent head of that department.
- Public Works veteran Jon Powers promoted to Public Works Foreman.

These are all positions of high responsibility for the Town of Gray, and Town management is confident these employees will do a great job for Gray and its residents.

We also recently celebrated the retirement of a long-time Gray Public Library employee, Darcel Devou, who has wrapped up an incredible 22 years of service to the library and our community. The Gray Public Library would not be the pillar of Gray it is today if not for Darcel's dedication.



Happy retirement, Darcel!

Town Office to Adopt Extended Hours in May

The Town of Gray is excited to announce it's adopting an extended work week for many Town staff starting on Monday, May 6, 2024.

The new hours are as follows:

- **Monday:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Tuesday:** 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Wednesday:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Thursday:** 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Extended schedules such as this are increasingly common in municipal governments, and they promote accessibility to the Town Office, while also supporting employee retention and recruitment.

The new schedule will apply to staff in the Administration, Human Resources, Assessing, Planning, Code Enforcement, and Communications and IT departments. The Town will explore implementing schedule changes in other departments to better serve the public.

Remember, online services, such as vehicle registrations, licensing, permits, and payments, are available on our [website](#) any day of the week.

If you have any questions about this schedule change, please email admin@graymaine.org.



Town Office, located at 24 Main Street.

Springing into Action: A Resilient Town's Journey

The Town of Gray Resiliency Committee (RC) has been diligently meeting and workshopping a grant proposal for the Community Resilience Partnership. This partnership offers a beacon of hope, providing \$50,000 grants with no match required, to bolster our resiliency efforts. Our proposal, affectionately titled "Water We Doing," is a collaborative endeavor between the Town of Gray Resiliency Committee, the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD), the Little Sebago Lake Association (LSLA), the Crystal Lake Association (CLA), Royal River Conservation Trust, and Presumpscot Land Trust.

The essence of our proposal revolves around three key initiatives:

Creating a Town-Wide Watershed Management Plan:

At the core of our resilience strategy lies the need to comprehensively manage our watershed. Led by CCSWCD, lake associations, and the Resiliency Committee, a comprehensive Town-Wide Watershed Management Plan is in progress. Leveraging funds from a

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership grant, this initiative compiles vital existing data, analyzes watershed dynamics, identifies gaps in data, prioritizes management actions, and facilitates plan adoption. Through collaborative efforts, the aim is to safeguard Gray's natural resources in alignment with the town's commitment to environmental protection outlined in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and to become more resilient against adverse climate events.

Community Outreach and Education on Phosphorus Ordinance Adoption:

Knowledge is power, and our community's empowerment begins with understanding. To engage residents in understanding the new Phosphorus Ordinance, a "Raise Awareness" Campaign is proposed. Targeting various stakeholders, including lakefront owners and farmers, the campaign employs strategies like webpages, flyers, social media, and electronic messages. Deliverables include the adoption of the ordinance by the Town Council alongside the campaign's implementation.

Raising Awareness and Changing Behaviors for Watershed Protection:

True resilience is born from collective

Springing into Action: A Resilient Town's Journey

action. The Resiliency Committee collaborates with local partners to promote watershed protection practices in response to climate change. Through videos, events, and flyers, the campaign encourages pollution-reducing behaviors. Adapted materials and a dedicated webpage on the Town's site support ongoing resilience efforts, fostering collective action for a resilient community.

As we eagerly await the outcome of our grant proposal and engage in early conversations about implementing compost initiatives at the Transfer Station, let us continue to embrace the spirit of resiliency that defines our town. Together, we can weather any storm and emerge stronger, more united, and infinitely more resilient than before.

Stay tuned for more information about resilience work in Gray!

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Gray's Code Enforcement Office to Help North Yarmouth

The Town of Gray's [Code Enforcement Office](#) is assisting North Yarmouth while they evaluate how best to serve their community after recently experiencing a vacancy in the code enforcement officer (CEO) position. Our staff will continue serving Gray while we help our neighboring community during this transition.

This arrangement will begin in April. This partnership is a testament to Gray CEO Tammy Munson's expertise and the Gray Code Enforcement Office's willingness to assist neighboring communities.

"We are more than happy to help North Yarmouth while they determine how best to staff their town's needs," said Munson. "I have the utmost faith in our team's ability to continue our efficient operations here in Gray while we also support our neighbors."

North Yarmouth will be compensating Gray for these services. Those agreements and details are being finalized in the coming weeks.

Gray is Looking for Committee Members

Serve your town by volunteering for these committees!



Various committee/board members meet for a Leadership Academy in 2022.

- **Wild Blueberry Festival Committee:** Celebrates and promotes local businesses, community and school organizations, and the Pennell Complex.
- **Community Economic Development**

Committee: Promotes

community and cultural connections in Gray and supports established businesses.

- **Community Television Advisory Committee:** Makes recommendations regarding broadcast options for Gray, and recommends improvements to public, educational, and governmental programming.
- **Dry Mills School House Committee:** Preserves the rich history of the Dry Mills School House.
- **Open Space Committee:** Makes recommendations to the Town Council to help secure access to land/corridors through acquisitions, easements, land swaps, and other forms of agreements.
- **Planning Board:** Reviews and approves subdivision plans, site plans, conditional uses, and Shoreland Zoning applications in accordance with State Statutes and Town Ordinances.
- **Resiliency Committee:** Promotes climate action planning and influences the path our community will take toward climate resilience, energy efficiency, waste management and renewable energy.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals Committee:** Hears and decides administrative appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, or determination by the Code Enforcement Officer.
- **MSAD #15 School Board:** Shapes the functioning of the Gray-New Gloucester school system.
- **Recreation Committee:** Advises and recommends to the Town Council on recreational and public parks matters, such as: programs, policies, development, and leisure time activities.

To apply to any of these committees, go to graymaine.org/volunteer.

The Town of Gray is Hiring!

The Town of Gray is growing at an exceptional rate, and we are looking for highly qualified people to make it happen. Check out our employment page at graymaine.org/employment.

We currently have a variety of positions open, including:

- Adult Services Librarian
- Deputy Assessor
- Assistant Clerk
- Head of Circulation, Transfer Station Attendants
- Summer Camp Staff
- Town Engineer/Project Manager
- And more!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

- Famed Maine author Paul Doiron recently visited the Gray Public Library for a talk as part of the library's Pat Barter Speaker Series. You can check out a recording of this event [here](#).
- Nomination papers, available at the Town Office, are due by April 12 for the following offices ahead of the June 11 election:
 - Gray Town Councilor (Two 3-year terms to expire June 2027 and one balance of a 3-year term to expire June 2025)
 - MSAD 15 Board of Directors (Two 3-year terms to expire June 2027)
 - Water District Trustee (One 5-year term to expire June 2029)

If you have an idea for a newsletter submission, please fill out this [form](#).

Questions can be directed to:
Kyle Hadyniak
Director of Comm. and IT
207-657-3339 x116

Find Us!

