



VOTER GUIDE

2024 TOWN MEETING WARRANT

OFFICIAL BALLOT VOTING DAY:
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024 – 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
NOTTINGHAM SCHOOL, 235 STAGE ROAD

In 2022, Nottingham Town Meeting adopted the “Official Ballot Referendum” system, also known as “SB2”. With this change, Town Meeting now consists of two sessions; the first, “Deliberative Session” is similar to the traditional town meeting, with voters having the authority to discuss and amend warrant articles. Final action is taken by ballot during the second session, when all articles are voted upon and officers are elected. This is the same system used by the Nottingham School District.

This Voter Guide is provided by the Select Board and is reflective of any amendments made at the Deliberative Session. Additional information available on the Town’s website is linked in this document. All information and links in this document are available on the Town website: [Town of Nottingham NH | \(nottingham-nh.gov\)](http://TownofNottinghamNH.com)

Article #1: To choose by ballot all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year:

Board of Selectmen (2 for 3 years)

Matthew Shirland
Benjamin T. Bartlett
John Decker

Budget Committee (3 for 3 years)

Jillian Eldredge
Donna Danis
Jeffrey Morrison
Thomas Butkiewicz
Brent Tweed

Cemetery Trustee (1 for 3 years)

Catherine D. Bershtein

Library Trustee (1 for 3 years)

Lynn Soucie

Moderator (1 for 2 years)

Dawn Fernald

Planning Board (2 for 3 years)

NONE

Planning Board (1 for 1 year)

Christopher Evans
Douglas Cummings

Supervisors of the Checklist (1 for 6 years)

Ruth Anne Fuller

Town Clerk (1 for 3 years)

Lorraine (Lori) Anderson

Trustees of the Trust Funds (1 for 3 years)

James Phelps

Zoning Board of Adjustment (2 for 3 years)

Romeo Danais

Teresa L. Bascom

Article #2: Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, 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 \$5,137,855 (Five Million One Hundred Thirty-Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$4,848,607 (Four Million Eight Hundred Forty-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Seven Dollars) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action 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. The estimated tax impact is \$3.14 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6-5)

The budget process started with a proposed increase of over 10% but ultimately the Select Board and Budget Committee were able to make reductions where they felt necessary in order to meet the 4% tax cap. Many departments saw salary increases resulting from cost-of-living adjustments, and other adjustments were based on wage surveys used to recruit and retain at present staff levels. Although the rate of inflation exceeded 7.6% in 2021 and 6.5% in 2022, the town budget maintained an increase of 4% and is still playing catch up despite the cost of raw materials and subcontracted services still being quite unpredictable. While our department heads strive to provide accurate cost estimates and maintain transparency in pricing, it's essential to acknowledge that unforeseen circumstances may arise. We understand the challenges this can pose for planning and budgeting processes, and we assure you that we are committed to managing any potential cost uncertainties.

Article #3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 (Ten Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Police Technology Equipment Expendable Trust Fund previously established. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.01 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

This Expendable Trust Fund was established in 2023. The Police Department has a lot of electronic equipment that requires repair and replacement including mobile data terminals, cameras, servers, radios, tasers, radar units, body-worn cameras, etc. It is difficult to know when some of the equipment will need replacement. This fund gives flexibility to the department to replace equipment as needed. The balance of the Police Technology Equipment Expendable Trust Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$10,129.37.

Article #4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 (Forty Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of purchasing the necessary fuel, supplies, equipment, and maintenance to run the ambulance and billing services for 2024; and to authorize the withdrawal of \$40,000.00 (Forty Thousand Dollars) from the Ambulance and Equipment Replacement Special Revenue Fund created for this purpose. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.00 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

The income from ambulance services goes into the Ambulance and Equipment Replacement Special Revenue Fund which was established pursuant RSA 31:95-c. The operating costs of the ambulance comes out of the fund. This is done annually by a warrant article. Because the money is coming from user fees, there is no impact on the tax rate. The balance of the Ambulance and Equipment Replacement Special Revenue Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$235,538.00.

Article #5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Fire Vehicle/SCBA Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.12 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee develops recommendations for the Town's Select Board and School Board to budget these large expenses evenly over the years. An analysis of the Fire Truck/SCBA replacement schedule indicates \$100,000 needs to be set aside every year to remain on this schedule. Two new fire trucks and the expensive SCBA system are scheduled for replacement in the early 2030s. The total cost is estimated to be over \$1,200,000, but the plan is for all of that to be saved ahead of time so there is no spike in taxes. The balance of the Fire Vehicle/SCBA Capital Reserve Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$414,391.96.

Article #6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 (Sixty Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of increasing the Fire Chief stipend for the remainder of 2024 with the estimated yearly stipend in 2025 to be \$71,440, and all future costs to be included in the annual budget and default budget going forward. This increase is based on the increased minimum mandated qualifications of Chief, as set forth by the Nottingham Fire Rescue Department (NFRD) Bylaws. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.07 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee DOES NOT recommend this appropriation (8-3)

In 2022, voters approved funds to increase to six career firefighters to the permanent staff and allow the department to staff the station 24 hours/day. With the expected increase in the town's population and service expectations, we acknowledge the need for additional leadership to support and oversee the full-time department. It can no longer be expected that a qualified leader will do this for a stipend equivalent to \$31/day.

Article #7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 (Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of replacing the flooring in the Community Center gymnasium. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.03 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

A necessary underdrain repair completed in 2023 caused the existing tile to be cut out and removed, and the filled back in with concrete after the repair was completed. This repair left behind an unfinished floor surface that is not level with the existing VCT tile which has also seen its fair share of wear and tear. In addition to this problematic section, the floor has buckled and cracked the length of the gym in one section. This area of the Community Center is heavily used in the summer for the Recreation Department Summer Camp, and daily through the week for activities such as pickleball, karate, toddler play time, Betty's basketball, and for other events such as American Red Cross Blood Drives and a voting location, to name just a few. Along with several other deferred maintenance items identified throughout town buildings, the floor replacement has been identified as a target project to be completed this year.

Article #8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 (Forty Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of exploratory options and design for the relocation of the Police Department. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.05 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

The Police Department in its existing location has been identified in the town facilities assessment committee report as "suffering from some space and security issues that are inherent in a growing operation". This coupled with concerns expressed for its proximity to the rec department and community center provide additional concern for public safety. The Select Board would like to pursue investigating other options for the location of the Police Department to include but not limited to, potentially expanding the fire department as shown on a plan identified as Phase 2, drafted at the time the fire station was built, circa 2007. The money allocated in this warrant article will allow exploratory options to be pursued.

Article #9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand Dollars) to begin work on the cleanup and renovations needed to the rear community center building. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the work is complete or not later than one year after the end of fiscal year 2024, whichever occurs earlier. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.06 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (9-2)

The rear of the Community Center is another area identified as problematic in the town facilities assessment committee report. In addition to the presence of mold, and other safety concerns, it has also been identified as an entry point and breeding ground for a major pest infestation that has manifested over the past year. With the money allocated in this warrant article, priority will be given to begin abating some of the nuisances and creating a barrier to button up access to the in-use portion of the community center.

Article #10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars) to begin work on the reconfigured parking lot at the library, and also address safety concerns such as parking lot lighting and improving walkways. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.02 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee DOES NOT recommend this appropriation (6-5)

The survey work started in the late fall of 2023. Delays were encountered as the engineering firm and library staff worked to identify the exact location of the leach bed location necessary to begin the design. This year's warrant article is designed to pay for actual design work, which is key to determining what actual construction costs will be, and to start work if it's possible.

Article #11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 (One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Town Building Maintenance and Repair Expendable Trust Fund previously established. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.18 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

Many of the town buildings are showing their age and need a lot of maintenance. The town established this expendable trust fund for building maintenance in 2014. This is a way to have money available for those repairs without a tax rate impact. Several repairs were deemed necessary in 2023 which nearly depleted the balance of the expendable trust fund. Some of these items include a new furnace at the library, overhead door repair, new water softener and water heater, and security system at the fire department, repair wastewater underdrain, winterize and repair due to frozen pipes at the community center, and a new furnace at the recycling center. The balance of the Town Building Maintenance and Repair Expendable Trust Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$18,001. As the Select Board works at prioritizing projects identified in the town facilities assessment committee report, along with our newly assigned facilities manager in place, adding to this expendable trust fund is necessary to bring the town buildings out of deferred maintenance status.

Article #12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Dollars) for highway reconstruction and maintenance on town roads to include but not limited to paving approaches on dirt roads throughout town as prioritized by the Highway Director, pave a section of Priest Road up to the rear access road to the Fire Station, and Stevens Hill Road from Deerfield Road to the existing pavement. The sum of \$150,300 (One Hundred Fifty Thousand Three Hundred Dollars) is to come from unassigned fund balance. The balance of \$349,700 (Three Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars) to be raised by taxation. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the work is complete or not later than one year after the end of fiscal year 2024, whichever occurs earlier. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.42 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6-5)

This is a routine warrant article, but the amount differs from what has been raised in years past. The line item in the highway department budget was decreased from \$300,000 to \$100,000 and this warrant article was increased to meet the remaining target amount of \$600,000 as identified in the CIP. In some years this capital improvement work has included road reconstruction projects, and the current priority is to invest in paving the approach of several dirt roads such as those listed in the warrant article, as well as increase pavement on roads identified and prioritized by the Highway Director. With an anticipated return of \$160,000 (unaudited) to be added to the town's unreserved fund balance, the Select Board found it would be prudent to reduce the amount to be raised by taxation by using \$150,300 from unreserved fund balance.

Article #13: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.12 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (4-1)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (11-0)

The Capital Improvement Committee develops recommendations for the Town Select Board and School Board to budget these large expenses evenly over the years. An analysis of the truck replacement schedule indicates \$100,000 needs to be set aside every year to remain on this schedule. This is done based on a 15-year life for the six-wheel and 10-wheel dump trucks, a 10-year schedule for the 1-ton trucks, and an 8-year schedule for smaller trucks. If money is not set aside, the replacement may be delayed by increasing maintenance costs. The balance of the Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$129,825.99. The next piece of equipment scheduled for replacement is the grader with an estimated replacement cost of more than \$400,000.

Article #14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars) to be added to the previously established Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of performing a statutory revaluation of property every five years. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.02 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (8-3)

This is a recurring appropriation, the same as in prior years. This Capital Reserve Fund pays for five-year revaluations to be completed as required by State law. The next revaluation will take place in 2025, and this routine article spreads the cost over the five years. The balance of the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$71,968.27.

Article #15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,375 (Twenty-Four Thousand Three Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars) to provide financial support to the following social service organizations that provide a service to the residents in the Town of Nottingham:

Cornerstone VNA	\$2,400
Lamprey Health Care	\$4,500
Seacoast Mental Health	\$1,000
Waypoint (Child & Family Services)	\$3,000
Haven	\$1,450
AIDS Response Seacoast	\$575
CASA	\$500
RSVP - Friends Program	\$100
SNHS Community Action Program	\$5,500
Rockingham County Nutrition/Meals on Wheels	\$1,500
Area Homecare/Family	\$1,100
Child Advocacy Center	\$1,250
Ready Rides	\$1,500

Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$.03 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (8-2-1)

Support for these social service organizations has been found in the town's operating budget more recently. Each year, these organizations provide a letter requesting financial support from the town for the services they provide to Nottingham residents. These requests were grouped into a separate warrant article seeking voter's support. A summary of services provided by these organizations can be found on the Town website: [Social Service Agencies | Town of Nottingham NH \(nottingham-nh.gov\)](#)

Article #16: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 (Ten Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Invasive Species Prevention and Eradication Removal Expendable Trust Fund previously established. Majority vote required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.01 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6-5)

This is a recurring appropriation, the same amount raised in prior years. In 2023, a grant was received from NH DES for the eradication of milfoil in Pawtuckaway Lake through diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) and herbicide treatment methods. Several new patches of milfoil growth were detected including a large section in the area of the Town Beach. The grant funding received in 2023 was 100% since it was the first year received, but future years of grant funding will be dependent on need and funding availability and will likely be a matching grant equivalent to 20-50%. The balance of the Invasive Species Prevention and Eradication Removal Expendable Trust Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$62,758.82. PLIA assembled a great PowerPoint presentation that can be found on the Town's website: [PLIA Presentation to BOS Nov 6, 2023 | Town of Nottingham NH \(nottingham-nh.gov\)](#)

Article #17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 (Five Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of conducting courtesy inspections of boats using the State Boat Launch at Fundy Boat Ramp and the Pawtuckaway State Park Boat Ramps on Pawtuckaway Lake, and to request permission to remove suspicious materials and to educate the public on how to prevent the spread of exotic species from water body to water body. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is less than \$.01 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (8-3)

Clean water, healthy wildlife, and stable property values depend on a healthy lake free of invasive species. The [NH LAKES Lake Host Program](#) is the first line of defense in protecting our lakes from invasive plants and animals. This appropriation was moved into a separate warrant article seeking voter's support.

Article #18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,500 (Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars) for the purpose of purchasing a new ballot machine. The Town will be applying for aid to offset the cost of this purchase. The final amount used is subject to receipt of any state or federal grant or aid. If grant or other aid is not received, the total sum of \$7,500 is to be raised by taxation. Majority Vote Required. The estimated tax impact is \$0.01 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6-5)

The Town passed a warrant making Nottingham a ballot count device ward. The existing Accuvote ballot machine has been in place since the mid-1990's, has reached end of life, and parts and service availability is extremely limited. This appropriation will allow for the purchase of a new ballot tabulator and laptop. State Rep Hal Rafter informed us that the Help America Vote (HAVA) money has been earmarked to help offset the cost burden to purchase a new ballot machine.

Article #19: To see if the Town will vote to approve the readoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b). The readoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit, if approved would continue to offer a \$750.00 tax credit to all honorably discharged veterans that qualify under the current requirements and as of April 1, 2023, would expand the eligibility requirements to include those individuals that have not yet been discharged from active service. Majority vote required.

The New Hampshire Legislature passed, and Governor Sununu signed into law House Bill 1667 (Chapter 121, Laws of 2022), amending eligibility criteria for certain veterans' property tax credits. Effective on July 26, 2022, the bill amended RSA 72:28, the "Standard and Optional Veterans' Tax Credit," and RSA 72:28-b, the "All Veterans' Tax Credit," to expand the eligibility requirements of the veterans' tax credit to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces. Under RSA 72:27-a, IV amendments to tax credits and exemptions which require adoption will only apply "in a municipality which previously adopted the provision only after the municipality complies with the procedure" specified in RSA 72:27-a, II, unless otherwise expressly required by law. Nothing in HB 1667 created an exception to this readoption requirement. The Standard and Optional Veteran's Tax Credit was readopted in 2023, but erroneously the All Veterans' Tax Credit readoption was omitted from the ballot. This readoption will ensure that eligible veterans receiving the All Veterans' Tax Credit of \$750.00 annually will continue to receive that credit.

Article #20: To see if the Town will vote to change the name and the purpose of the existing Tri-Centennial Fund created in 2013 to the Celebrate Nottingham Fund for the purpose of town-wide celebrations to include but not limited to future anniversary celebrations (ie: 325th), and to authorize the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend. 2/3 vote required.

The Select Board recommends this appropriation (5-0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (9-2)

The Celebrate Nottingham Committee was newly formed in 2023 with a mission to carry forward the spirit of the Town's 300th Anniversary through a series of events and activities that the entire community celebrates with pride in Nottingham. This article will repurpose the existing Non-Capital Reserve Fund comprised of money raised through taxation and donations, to be used toward future celebrations spearheaded by the Celebrate Nottingham Committee. The balance of the Tri-Centennial Fund as of the printing of this voter guide is \$42,769.08.

Article #21: Harbor Street Limited Partnership, Joseph Falzone, Manager, formally requested through this petition (per RSA 674:40-a), the Town of Nottingham's acceptance of "Maple Ridge Road" of the Maple Ridge Subdivision. With the acceptance, the ownership of this road will be transferred to the Town of Nottingham, upon approval of the Town engineering firm. (By citizen petition).

Closing Summary: If all Warrant Articles pass as proposed, the projected tax impact will add \$0.28 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (based on 2023 values).*

2023 actual town tax.....\$4.03*

*2024 projected town tax..\$4.31***

***per thousand of valuation*