



Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committee Meeting and
FY23 Budget Hearing

March 3, 2022
7:00 p.m.

Hearing begins at 7:05 p.m.
Return to Business Meeting at approximately 7:20 p.m.
Executive Session at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Administration Building Auditorium
15 Charter Road, Acton

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING AGENDA

Administration Building Auditorium
15 Charter Road, Acton

March 3, 2022

7:00 p.m. Open Meeting

To view only: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

7:05 p.m. Annual Budget Hearing

7:20 p.m. (approximately) Return to Business Meeting

8:05 p.m. (approximately) Executive Session

1. **Call to Order (7:00)**

2. **Chairperson's Welcome**

FY23 BUDGET HEARING (see separate agenda)

- Call to Order (7:05)
- Adjourn (approximately 7:20)

RETURN TO BUSINESS MEETING (approximately 7:20)

3. **Discussion of ABRSD FY23 Preliminary Budget** - Peter Light, Dave Verdolino
(FY23 Final Budget and Assessments Vote to be taken at next meeting on 3/17/22)

4. **Chairperson's Welcome** - Adam Klein (7:25)

- a. **Student Representatives Update**
- b. **Public Participation**
- c. **Superintendent's Update** – Peter Light

5. **ONGOING BUSINESS** (7:40)

- a. **Request to Rename the ABRHS Pool** - Adam Klein
 - i. Naming District Facilities, File: FF and procedures, File: FF-R
- b. **Subcommittee and Members' Reports**
 - i. Mascot Screening - Peter Light
- c. **Approval of Meeting Minutes of 2/17/22 and 2/3/22 – VOTE** - Adam Klein
- d. **Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve - VOTE** - Adam Klein
- e. **FYI**

6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** (approximately 8:05)

An Executive Session is to be convened under MGL Ch 30A, sec. 21 (a) purpose (2): to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel. The Committee will return to open meeting for the sole purpose of adjourning.

7. **Adjourn**

NEXT MEETINGS:

ABRSC: March 17, April 7 and May 5 at 7:00 p.m.

Next Community Coffee with the Superintendent & ABRSC Chair via zoom:
March 9th at 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION (FYI)

1. Acton Annual Election is March 29, 2022 and Town Meeting is May 16
2. Boxborough 2022 Annual Election Calendar, Town Meeting is May 9
3. Certification of Acton Boxborough Excess and Deficiency, 2/15/22
4. Acton Finance Committee FY23 Point of View

Posted on 2/28/22 at 4:00 p.m.
(See separate agenda for Budget Hearing)

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
FY23 OPEN BUDGET HEARING

Administration Building Auditorium
15 Charter Road, Acton

To view only: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

March 3, 2022

7:00 p.m. Open Meeting

7:05 p.m. FY23 Budget Hearing

Followed by Open Business Meeting (approximately 7:20 p.m.)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (7:05)

Please see budget material posted for the February 17, 2022 School Committee meeting at https://www.abschools.org/school_committee/meetings_agendas_packets_minutes

2. Chairperson's Introduction

3. ABRSC FY23 Budget Overview– Peter Light

1. FY23 Approved Preliminary Budget
2. Recommended Assessments and Table 6 as voted on 2/17/22

4. Budget Feedback and Public Participation

5. Budget Hearing is Adjourned

ABRSC Regular Business Meeting

(see separate agenda)

Note: A VOTE on the proposed FY23 Budget and Assessments, will be done at the ABRSC meeting on March 17, 2022.

Posted on 02/28/22 at 4:00 p.m.

Office of the Superintendent
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
(978) 264-4700
<http://www.abschools.org>

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
FROM: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
DATE: **VOTED** - February 17, 2022
RE: Recommendation for FY2023 Acton-Boxborough Regional School
District Budget and Assessments, Required Preliminary Vote

**Approved MOTION for FY2023 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
Budget Appropriation and Assessments**

MOTION: That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District regular operating budget for the fiscal year of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 be preliminarily set at **\$102,899,440**, (an increase of 3.19%) and that budget would be funded by member towns to be preliminarily assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

Acton \$69,689,255 (an increase of 3.18%) and

Boxborough \$13,257,674 (an increase of 4.59%);

Offset by use of E&D Reserve in the amount of **\$1,500,000**;

With the remainder accounted for by other sources of revenues to be detailed in the final budget vote.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700

www.abschools.org

Peter J. Light

Superintendent of Schools

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
From: Peter Light, Superintendent of Schools
Date: February 28, 2022
RE: Request to Rename the ABRHS Pool

At the School Committee meeting on March 5, 2020, a petition signed by over 1,100 people was delivered requesting that the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School pool be named after Head Coach Jeff Johnson who had tragically passed away a year earlier. Many impressive emails of support were also received.

The petition was sent to the policy subcommittee who met on March 10, 2020 and discussed the request in light of the Naming District Facilities Policy and Procedures FF. The policy requires a three year waiting period following a candidate's death and can only be waived with a unanimous vote of the School Committee. If successful, the screening process as outlined by the policy and procedures would still be required. It was agreed that the request would be brought to the School Committee at their meeting on March 19, 2020.

Unfortunately Covid 19 hit and resulted in the immediate closing of the school buildings on March 13th and the cancellation of the School Committee meeting. As the pandemic unfolded, the discussion of this request was postponed.

The three year waiting period has now passed and we have received renewed requests to name the pool after Coach Johnson.

As outlined in the Naming District Facilities [policy](#) and [procedures](#), the first step is for the School Committee to decide whether the naming of the pool is necessary and/or appropriate. If that is agreed to, the Committee would convene a screening committee consisting of representatives of the various interest groups in the community, according to the procedures. The deadline for submitting proposed names would be announced.

The Screening Committee would review and evaluate the suggested names and make a recommendation to the School Committee for their decision.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS:

- move to name the ABRHS pool
- move to convene a screening committee to review suggested names and bring forth a recommendation to the School Committee

To develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

File: FF - NAMING DISTRICT FACILITIES

The Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee believes naming or renaming a school building, structure, space, property, program or other District asset (hereafter referred to as a "Facility") is a matter of significant importance, one that deserves the most thoughtful attention of the School Committee and the Administration, and one that is an unusual occurrence or event. Further, the Committee believes it should not be influenced in its decision by personal prejudice, favoritism, political pressure or temporary popularity.

Any request to name a Facility must be brought before the School Committee for approval.

If a suggestion or petition to name or to dedicate a Facility, is brought forth to the School Committee, the School Committee will first decide whether the naming or renaming of that Facility is necessary and/or appropriate. If the decision to move forward with the naming is made, the School Committee will convene a screening committee pursuant to procedure FF-R.

In the naming of a Facility, if the name of a person is to be used, the following criteria will be applied in the selection of a person(s) to be so honored.

1. A person, living or dead, for whom a public school facility may be named must have made significant contributions to education of the youth of the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools. Evidence of such contributions may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Unusually effective and dedicated service to or on behalf of the youth in the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
- Persistent efforts to sustain a high quality system of public education for all youth and to improve programs and services for these young people
- Demonstrated understanding of the essential nature of public education in the furthering of our democratic form of government.

2. Said person should be one who is retired, deceased or has provided service to the community in excess of 15 years. A request may not be submitted sooner than three years following the death or retirement of the individual to be so honored. This requirement may be waived by a unanimous vote of the School Committee.

3. The nominee must otherwise be worthy of the honor of having a school facility named for her/him. Evidence of such attributes could include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Superior levels of performance in strengthening and supporting Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
- Community service
- Effective citizenship
- Seminal ideas or research
- Excellent character and general reputation

4. The School Committee may revoke the name of a Facility.

The Superintendent shall prepare procedures for the naming of Facilities that are consistent with this policy.

CROSS REF.: FFA, Memorials

Approved: 5/18/2017

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

File: FF-R - NAMING DISTRICT FACILITIES

1. The School Committee will announce the convening of the Screening Committee and the reason therefore. It will then announce the deadline for submitting proposed names of the relevant Facility to the Screening Committee.
2. Nominations must be submitted in writing.
3. Nominations should be submitted with answers to the following questions:
 - a. What is the reason you are suggesting the person/name? (See the criteria in the policy statement.)
 - b. Why is this a good name for the facility?
 - c. What is the biographical/other information about this person that will assist in making a decision?
 - d. Are the relevant timeframes from Paragraph 2 of policy FF met?
4. The School Committee will establish a Screening Committee consisting of representatives of the various interest groups in the community. The role of the Screening Committee is to review and evaluate the suggested names and make a recommendation to the School Committee.

Reviewed: 5/18/2017

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
FY23 BUDGET WORKSHOP Draft Minutes

Administration Building Auditorium
15 Charter Road, Acton
Public Participation is in person only

February 17, 2022
6:00 p.m.

To view the meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

Members Present: Ben Bloomenthal, Kyra Cook, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Adam Klein, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Andrew Schwartz, Nora Shine, Yebin Wang (6:02 p.m.)
Members Absent: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah
Others: Marie Altieri, Deb Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino, members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

CALL TO ORDER

The ABRSC was called to order by Chairperson Adam Klein at 6:00 p.m.

Adam announced that the meeting was being recorded and would be posted on Acton TV's website at actontv.org. Because the focus of the meeting was the FY23 Budget, comments on items NOT included on the agenda would be welcomed at the next meeting on March 3. Adam noted that in the past week the committee has received several e-mail requests regarding the renaming of the High School pool. This is something that the School Committee intends to discuss at their next meeting on 3/3/22.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. **District Strategy & Priorities for 2023, Alignment with Budget** (*P. Light*)
2. **Taxing Capacity & Levy Limit: Municipal Revenue Considerations** (*M. Altieri, A. Klein*)
3. **Superintendent's Recommended Budget Overview** (*P. Light*)

With Acton at the Proposition 2 ½ levy limit, the \$1.7M deficit in the ALG Plan must be addressed. An override is not being considered. Options are to reduce expenses, increase revenue or use more reserves. The previous School Committee meeting included reductions of \$1.7M (coincidentally the same number) and now an additional \$1M in reductions is proposed by the District (further reductions of \$500K to operating budget and \$455K more reserves used). This still leaves a deficit of approximately \$800,000 in Acton. Committee members were asked for input on the strategies to close this gap: 1. Further staffing reductions 2. Recommend All Day Kindergarten (ADK) option 2 3. Increase use of reserves.

Questions and Comments:

- Members were very frustrated about the Town of Acton's budget position after the serious reductions that the schools have made. Mr. Light added that ALG meets

tomorrow so more will be known after both meetings (School Committee tonight and ALG.

- Acton's Minuteman Tech Assessment has come down a little so that is helpful.
- Given Acton's levy limit, the 2 ½% increase tends to turn into about 3% and is pretty stable over time. If inflation is 4 or 5% in the coming years, that will be a serious budget problem. Mr. Light agreed that holding the budget to a 3% next year will be a challenge again. Two major budget drivers in this year's budget process are healthcare and ADK and they will continue next year. Health care will continue a couple of years.
- It was confirmed that the proposed reduction in assistant hours now includes two grade levels, as opposed to one grade level in the previous proposal.

PRESENTATIONS:

4. Finance Overview (*D. Verdolino*)

5. Personnel, Enrollment, All Day Kindergarten (*M. Altieri*)

Questions and Comments:

- The ADK decision does not only affect tuition paying students. Content has to be delivered only in the morning when everyone is there as long as a half day program exists. Our failure to offer universal K affects every one of our Kindergarten students, especially when we have just been through a pandemic.
- We are one of the very few districts in the state that does not offer this and it is not acceptable. We can't balance this budget on the backs of 4 and 5 year olds.
- The Administration has gone back to the ARP budget and looked hard at it. We just don't have enough money in this budget to fund everything we want. The Administration cannot bring a budget to the Committee that exceeds our funding. Another challenge is that ARP money is one time funding and the expenses would need to be covered the next year(s).
- Why isn't this funding more accessible from the Town? Because the funding went to the Towns, not to the regional schools, the Select boards are in control of it. The Administration continues to try to work with the state for more funding.
- How can we move forward with all our literacy work and other curriculum and not have ADK? A member responded that not all kindergarten students need ADK. They have different experiences. Find a targeted way to give those that need it the experience.
- A budget can't go up from here, but it can go down. Tonight is not the end of what the Committee has to do.
- A member asked if the Committee was amenable to allowing PTOs to raise funds for the schools? There was a strong no response.
- Mr. Light explained plans to cover the roles that are lost with some of the cuts. There is no easy answer for all areas, but they have tried to take a balanced approach. This won't be the last year we have to make budget reductions. We do need to be careful about using one time funds, despite his desire to get to ADK.
- Relying on two communities for funding is a challenge.
- It's not just the towns but also our legislators we rely on. We are a suburban school district with urban challenges. We've seen a deepening of those challenges even before

covid. We now need to give an investment to our youngest learners that will yield long term investments. Maybe go a little deeper on assistants or some other creative idea to give this to our youngest. At ALG tomorrow we will tell them why we need the money we're asking for.

- Everyone was urged to listen because "the limit is the limit and the need is the need". This is not a luxury given who we are.
- Is ADK option 4 worth fighting harder for? Mr. Light can't suggest that the Committee budget for more funding than we believe we will get. He would have to make more big cuts if they want to do option 4. It would be going deeply into educational areas due to \$525,000 more cuts or reserves used plus \$220,000 more cut to the budget.
- Everyone is stressed now due to covid. A member voiced support for Option 2 because she was so hesitant to take anything away from teachers that supports them next year. It is a balance. Option 2 is difficult but a good choice.
- Principal Lynn Newman shared how classroom assistants play a critical role in addition to covering lunch and recess. They know the kids from the classroom when things come up. Assistants also play a bigger role in instruction now. They give tremendous value.
- Will cutting 3 High School FTEs, affect the learning experience of the students? Mr. Light replied that because High School class sizes are low compared to previously, and we are a larger school so overall we are comfortable with this cut if it is necessary. Principal Joan Dean agreed that it is "reasonable right now". Once you have more cuts than those proposed, disciplines within disciplines, that is very challenging.

PRESENTATION:

6. District Benchmarking & Comparable Communities (*P. Light*)

Mr. Light explained that the charts are very dependent on how communities code their data so one shouldn't really compare too closely. There is sometimes inconsistent coding. He looks for outliers, not at all of the different categories.

Questions and Comments:

- Prior to this year, the RADAR report was in a downloadable format, not now. It's now in a very macro level.
- Slide 74 of Staffing Changes FY16-FY23, shows where we had invested in various staffing groups over the years. Creating this chart has given us a chance to see how we compare with other districts generally. If we're well below or above the median, we could consider how to be more efficient or effective. There are many kids that can now attend our schools that could not before we added certain staff, but you cannot really measure that. One example is that Out of District tuitions are lower than previous.

DISCUSSION and VOTES

The Superintendent thanked the Administration for all their efforts on the binder material and presentations. The two votes tonight are key to giving them direction for ALG tomorrow.

ALL DAY KINDERGARTEN Comments:

- A good compromise is when both parties are not satisfied. Option 2 is that.

- It is not feasible to get to free ADK without doing real damage.
- Stop looking at free ADK as if it's a gift. We are keeping it away from students. The three years of Option 2 is too long to wait. There are discrepancies between racial, socio-economic and disability aspects regarding ADK.
- We have received emails from families that have not qualified for ADK tuition assistance that want it. Reconsider option 4. Our class sizes have come down so there may be room to think about a bit larger class sizes to get to free ADK more quickly.
- I have grave concerns about what option 4 would do to our schools.
- I'll probably support option 2 but this is excruciating, and particularly since it will be just as painful next year. The radar narrative shows we have a structural problem and we are often in the middle of the pack. Our representatives in the statehouse should have nourished our community's needs. Let your legislators hear about this.
- We have to negotiate in good faith. If free ADK is a hardship for our town, we have to find another way and that is option 2 for now.

Adam Klein concluded that in 2020 the School Committee voted the current Kindergarten plan and the community struggled because it committed future committees to their decision. Slide 87 is what was voted, and slide 88 showing option 2 is considering a change – “a win”. Voting \$1800 today does not commit the future School Committee to do the same next year. Members can change their mind next year just like they're doing right now. We are cutting the price in half with option 2.

Ben Bloomenthal moved, John Petersen seconded and it was,

VOTED: to set the All Day Kindergarten tuition for FY23 at \$1,800 as outlined in option 2 of tonight's Budget slides.

(YES: Bloomenthal, Cook, Krishnamurthy, Klein, Petersen, Schwartz, Shine, Wang

NO: Kremer, McKinley)

Mr. Light emphasized that he understands how important free All Day Kindergarten is to everyone. He reminded members that if more funding can be found, they can revote to lower the tuition.

Moving to the FY23 Preliminary Budget vote, Adam Klein reminded members that per page 7 (Section 10. A) of the Regional Agreement, “The preliminary budget shall be approved by a majority of the members of the Committee from each member town.” This is not the usual weighted majority.

Kyra Cook moved, John Petersen seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: That the total appropriation for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District regular operating budget for the fiscal year of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 be preliminarily set at **\$102,899,440**, (an increase of 3.19%) and that budget would be funded by member towns to be preliminarily assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Regional Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

Acton \$69,689,255 (an increase of 3.18%) and

Boxborough \$13,257,674 (an increase of 4.59%);

Offset by use of E&D Reserve in the amount of **\$1,500,000**;

With the remainder accounted for by other sources of revenues to be detailed in the final budget vote.

Amy Krishnamurthy voiced her appreciation to Peter Light and the Administration for all of their hard work to propose the difficult cuts that made this Preliminary Budget possible.

MINUTES:

Kyra Cook moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the minutes of January 27, 2022 as written.

WARRANTS:

Kyra Cook moved, Ginny Kremer seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the warrants (see memo).

ADJOURN

Tessa McKinley moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to adjourn the ABRSC at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: See FY23 Budget Binder and Agenda

NEXT ABRSC MEETINGS in the Administration Building Auditorium:

March 3rd at 7:00 p.m. includes **Open FY23 Budget Hearing at 7:05 p.m.**

March 17, April 7, May 5 at 7:00 p.m.

May 9 - Boxborough Annual Town Meeting begins

May 16 - Acton Annual Town Meeting begins

Next Community Coffee with the Superintendent & ABRSC Chair via zoom:

March 9th at 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING DRAFT OPEN MINUTES

Virtual Public Meeting

February 3, 2022

To view the meeting (no participation): <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1> 6:30 p.m. Executive Session
7:00 p.m. Return to Open Meeting

To preregister for Public Comment (required 24 hours prior to start of meeting):

https://abschools.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_B6qlo_3PQb-Af-AV-iDs3A

Members Present: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah (6:42 p.m.), Ben Bloomenthal, Kyra Cook, Ginny Kremer, Adam Klein, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Andrew Schwartz, Nora Shine, Yebin Wang

Members Absent: none

Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deb Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

CALL TO ORDER

The ABRSC was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chairperson Adam Klein.

He stated that the meeting was being conducted remotely via Zoom webinar per Remote Participation policy, BEDJA. The following members were in attendance remotely: Ben Bloomenthal, Kyra Cook, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Nora Shine, Andrew Schwartz, Yebin Wang and himself. Evelyn Abayaah-Issah would be arriving soon.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Adam stated the need for an Executive Session to be convened under MGL Ch 30A, sec. 21(a) purpose (3): to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee. He said that the Committee would return to Open Meeting at approximately 7:00 p.m.. Kyra Cook made the motion and it was seconded by Amy Krishnamurthy.

The Committee **VOTED by roll call** to unanimously enter the executive session for the reason given. (YES: Bloomenthal, Cook, Kremer, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Schwartz, Shine, Wang)

THE COMMITTEE RETURNED TO OPEN MEETING at 7:30 p.m.

- a. Chairperson's Welcome - *Adam Klein*

Adam thanked the public for their patience while they were in executive session.

He stated again that the meeting was being conducted via Zoom webinar per Remote Participation policy, BEDJA. The following members were in attendance remotely: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Ben Bloomenthal, Kyra Cook, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, John Petersen, Nora Shine, Andrew Schwartz, Yebin Wang and himself.

In an effort to make the meeting as secure as possible, members of the public could view the meeting using Acton tv's youtube channel. Those who wished to comment during the meeting, were asked to register 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting using the link also found at the top of the agenda. These procedures are posted with our Public Participation policy BEDH. This meeting is being recorded and will be posted on Acton TV's website at actontv.org. Per the remote policy, all votes would be done by roll call.

- b. ABRHS Student Representatives Update –
Rohan Ravindran wished everyone a Happy Lunar New Year. He said the AB Guest or public wifi has been down since the Fall meaning that personal devices are not usable. This forces students to rely on hotspots or other unusual connections and is an equity issue. Using other devices allows students to learn in different ways that the chromebooks do not permit.
- c. Public Participation
A member of the public was unable to be heard. He was asked to let the Chair know later in the meeting if he was able to unmute.
- d. Superintendent's Update - *Peter Light*
We are currently hosting finalists for the Conant and Gates Principals searches. Family forums are this week and feedback from stakeholders is being solicited. The RJGJH Principal search will begin soon. An update on the Douglas Principal search will be given shortly. Our covid numbers have shifted downward which is very good. We will be talking on Monday about covid restrictions changing. We have an over 80% vaccination rate in all of our schools – excellent!

ONGOING BUSINESS

- e. Budget - *Peter Light, Dave Verdolino*
 - i. FY22 Q2 Financial Update – Dave

There is no significant net change from Q1. Dave projects a year end \$250,000 surplus, although we are only through two quarters. Medicaid reimbursement was a positive surprise due to changes in the rules due to covid. As a result, he reduced the expected earnings to \$49,000 but it is in line with actual interest income. We are being conservative by saying that we think we will break even at year end.

- ii. FY23 Superintendent's Recommended Budget #2A

ALG Update (2/3/22) – *John Petersen & Kyra Cook*

ALG continued the discussion of the \$1.7 million deficit in the ALG plan which incorporates an Acton assessment for FY23 of \$70.5 million, a 4.36% increase. There have been no updates to the revenue estimates. If no additional revenues

are identified, the budgets will need to be modified to reach the net zero which signifies budget consensus between the Select Board, the Finance Committee and the School Committee.

Peter reported that he was in the process of updating the School's use of ARPA funds committed by the Acton Select Board in October. The plan will not use ARPA funds in FY22, they will be applied to FY23 and FY24. The Select Board is open to a discussion of providing some of the unallocated funds to support the District in years beyond FY23.

John advocated for discussing the planned net use of reserves rather than focus on budgetary use of reserves. The desire of the Town and Finance Committee to incorporate the reality that our net use of reserves has historically been wildly different than our budgeted use into our ALG discussions remains low. With the focus on budgeted reserves rather than actual use there is limited ability to close the \$1.7 million gap by increasing budgeted reserves. **There is no consensus in ALG on how to close the \$1.7 million gap and even with additional reserve use, there will need to be significant reductions in the Town and School budgets to balance our revenues with our expenses.** ALG will meet again on 2/18/22, the day after the next School Committee meeting.

Superintendent's Recommended Budget Discussion

Mr. Light outlined the discussion: 1. What is the target budget (% increase)? 2. What are decisions on: Elementary Special Education Teacher? DEI Director? ADK Tuition Plan? 3. Which ARPA Plan should be presented to Acton? 4. What additional reserves (E&D, Capital Stabilization), if any, is the SC willing to use? Note: Budget Target – Reserve Usage = Further Reductions Needed.

Three levels of Proposed Reductions were reviewed and members were asked to give direction to the Administration. The District has reduced 14.5 FTE and reduced/adjusted approximately \$1.8M to date for next year. Acton still has a \$1.7M budget deficit (after all school reductions to date). Possible "Add Backs" and ADK are still to be determined. The budget must balance.

Questions and Comments from the Committee:

- Regarding slides 84 and 85 showing changes in class size numbers from 2015 to present, our average class size went down by 1 but our ranking went from top 20, down to the average. This was good improvement.
- The Committee received many emails. What do we mean by reducing 15% of assistants? These are not special ed assistants, and not at every grade. The public is confused. Mr. Light confirmed that generally it would be the equivalent of one grade level of assistants in each building. In the latest version, we are now proposing the equivalent of two levels.
- We need to provide direction on how to start working out the deficit, not add backs. It's the objective of the School Committee and Administration to serve 5500 students, not just kindergarteners, or any one group. This budget needs to reflect an appropriate distribution.

- We vote a top line budget and the principals and administrators work out the details. It's not appropriate for the Committee to dig into the details. Re ADK, from balancing perspectives, the original reduction is the best we can do, although not what we'd like to do.
- Regarding use of reserves, a member advocated for the net use of reserves, and wants a reserve allocation that will provide the Administration with the flexibility to adjust as needed or take advantage of an opportunity if it came up. We could increase E&D from 1.25 to 1.75, recognizing that Dave would give some back.
- Regarding serving the entirety of the population, a member advocated for the DEI director because he/she serves all, is a preventative measure, and would stop some of our current problems. She doesn't want to sacrifice this or ADK. All 3 of these things would do us extraordinary good, and are essential. We probably could have gotten them if not for covid because we had to make school happen during the pandemic. We are going to lose something now in our three most vulnerable communities. ADK is about closing the literacy gap. Most schools have 6th grade in middle school, with no assistants. Several members agreed strongly with these points.
- Reducing what we put into capital, increasing E&D and asking for more ARPA funds is the way to go.
- A member who is a psychologist, said that working with students and parents who have been struggling for 2 ½ years with covid, sets the stage. She advocated for using more E&D, and putting less into savings. Some things might have to happen more slowly. Could we wait a year to put the DEI position in place or slow down on ADK? Heartbreaking choices, but this is a way to get through it. What is the impact on students of slowing down?
- Re ARPA funds, the Administration should go to the Town with all of the things we think are important and ask them to help with what we need that was impacted by Covid. This is a serious equity issue. As long as we give a half day K option, we can't have a Full Day K curriculum.
- Frustration was expressed at the town of Acton for the way ARPA funds were allocated and that they won't help, especially since the District has to pay 2/3 of the deficit. We are struggling to avoid impacts to our most vulnerable groups. The DEI position is non-negotiable and must happen.
- Another member is comfortable adding the DEI position. In terms of these prelim discussions, the number needs to come down. The proposals can survive. ALG process that doesn't net zero, and a SC that brings forth a budget that doesn't have FINcom and BOS support is naïve. Cut in equal amounts that you are proposing, then double down on it. That is what it will take to balance.
- The Schools never stopped providing services during the pandemic, investing in a totally new remote school. The Town needs to recognize what we're trying to do and the vulnerable community we serve.
- We need to do the right thing with the three groups of our most vulnerable kids with needs – babies (ADK), special education, and those dealing with

DEI issues. It's not ok to try to close the gap with our most vulnerable students.

Comments from the Public:

- There was agreement regarding the three most disadvantaged groups of children. "Acton needs to get its act together." Go with Option 4 re ADK.
- A member was sympathetic to the opinion that the town isn't allocating funds. The Select Board needs to meet the guidelines. Ask for replacement funds due to covid losses, not to fund new programs.
- Always think "what's best for kids"? Dedicated adults are classroom assistants. Now is not the time to cut them, especially if we need to implement MTSS.
- Mike Balulescu, President of the ABEA urged members to consider any further staff cuts as a last resort. We are already asking staff to do more with less and making cuts.
- A member responded that AB is one of the only districts that staff with so many uncertified staff/assistants. She felt that we should be spending on certified positions, not so much on 12 hours/week positions. She stressed that the discussion was not about special education assistants.

The Superintendent stressed that he needed immediate direction from the School Committee regarding the \$1.7M gap:

- Whether to use additional reserves (E&D and/or Capital Stabilization) and if so, how much?
- Whether to reduce the operating budget or make other cuts

This input needed to be taken back to ALG at the meeting the next morning. The ALG Plan has to reach zero because Acton is at the levy limit with NO capacity to increase. Boxborough is in a different position because they are not at their levy limit and could increase taxes if needed.

Comments from the Committee included:

- Decrease the assessment by \$.5M and then \$1M with or without ADK, then the Committee can decide. This is what we need to do.
- It is time to use more reserves. "Risk big to get something really good." These are "stifling choices". We need to reprioritize and not put our most vulnerable first.
- Bring the Fincom and Select Board a list in good faith and include what we have lost. Hopefully the Town will hear it.
- We need to pay the piper but lovingly. Include DEI, special education, and ADK. If we need more capital, use the rainy day fund.
- Look at reserves, and not restoring as much capital stabilization, make operational cuts if needed. Don't touch services directly affecting our most vulnerable students.

A member of the public who was unable to speak during public participation spoke as an alumni of ABRHS Class of 64. He expressed his deep frustration

that the colonial mascot had been retired and felt it was erasing our traditions. He added that people don't think this was a wise idea.

f. Subcommittee and Member Reports

i. Policy - *Nora Shine*

1. NEW: Social Media, File: IJNDD - First Read

a. Draft procedures, File: IJNDD-R

The subcommittee is looking for feedback before the Second Read. Several members felt the policy was too long and hard to read. Other districts' policies were reviewed, but this is a whole new area to cover. It was suggested that some of the guidelines may be procedural. Sub members were thanked for taking on this challenging new policy.

ii. Approval of ABRSC Meeting Minutes of 1/13/22 ~~and 1/27/22~~

Kyra Cook moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 1/13/22.
(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Bloomenthal, Cook, Kremer, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Schwartz, Shine ABSTAINED: Wang)

FYI

- Acton 2022 Annual Town Election Deadlines
- Boxborough 2022 Election/Town Meeting Calendar
- Student Enrollment 2/1/22
- NEXT Community Coffee: Wednesday, February 9 at 8:30 a.m. via zoom

ADJOURN

Tessa McKinley moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to adjourn the ABRSC with gratitude at 10:04 p.m.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Bloomenthal, Cook, Kremer, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Petersen, Schwartz, Shine, Wang)

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

NEXT ABRSC MEETINGS: FY23 Detailed Budget Meeting on February 17 at 6:00 p.m.
FY23 Open Budget Hearing on March 3 at 7:00 p.m.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720
www.abschools.org

Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
(978) 264-4700
dverdolino@abschools.org

March 3, 2022

To: School Committee Chair
From: Dave Verdolino /dav/
Re: School Committee Agenda - Warrants

Members –

Below please find a summary of warrants for which I am respectfully requesting your consideration and approval at tonight's regular meeting.

The Warrant Subcommittee has previously reviewed these warrants, for the purpose of check distribution. A majority of the Subcommittee conveyed their approval electronically and the related disbursements have been made. The full School Committee should vote its authorization of these expenditures of budgeted and other funds in its custody. All members have received for each warrant the information provided as shown below, namely:

1. (for vendor warrants, including payroll withholding remittances)
 - Declining balance register of payments ("Declining Dollar report")
 - Warrant detail (payments by vendor)
2. (payroll)
 - Payroll Warrant summary

As you know, these Warrants are customarily provided to you in hard copy format for your review and manual signature. Obtaining your approval in this manner will eliminate the future need to produce what could be many paper reports, all requiring your signatures.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this request.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720
www.abschools.org

Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
(978) 264-4700
dverdolino@abschools.org

<u>Warrant Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant #</u>	<u>Amount</u>
PAYROLL	02/24/22	P2218	\$2,907,449.19
VENDOR	02/16/22	22-017A (AP Vendor)	\$ 789.28
	02/17/22	22-017 (AP Vendor)	\$5,336,088.63
	02/24/22	22-018PR (Payroll Vendor)	\$1,167,133.82

Recommended Motion Wording

I move that the School Committee vote to approve:

Payroll warrant(s) as follows –

Number P2218 dated 2/24/2022 in the amount of \$2,907,449.19;

Payroll deduction warrant(s) as follows –

Number 22-018PR dated 2/24/2022 in the amount of \$1,167,133.82;

Vendor warrant(s) as follows –

Number 22-017A dated 2/16/2022 in the amount of \$ 789.28;

Number 22-017 dated 2/17/2022 in the amount of \$5,336,088.63.

2022 ANNUAL ELECTION CALENDAR

Annual Town Election - Tuesday, March 29, 2022

Nomination papers for the March 29, 2022 Annual Election are available December 1, 2021. Please email clerk@actonma.gov to request Nomination Papers.

Last day to obtain nomination papers - Friday, February 4, 2022

Last day to file nomination papers with Board of Registrars - Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Last day to for candidates to object / withdraw - Thursday, February 24, 2022

Last day to Register to Vote - Wednesday, March 9, 2022

TOWN OFFICIALS OFFICES TO BE ELECTED

Moderator

1 Member – 1 year term

Acton Select Board

2 Members - 3 year term

School Committee

2 Members - 3 year term

Trustee- Memorial Library

1 Member - 3 year term

Acton Housing Authority

1 Member – 5 year term

Water Supply District - Acton

1 Water District Commissioner – 3 year term

Absentee / Vote by Mail Applications for the Election are available at the link below.

Mail application to Town Clerk, 472 Main St, Acton Ma 01720

[MailMyBallotMA.com](https://mailmyballot.com)

Annual Town Meeting - Monday, May 16, 2022

TRUSTEES - TO BE ELECTED AT ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MUST BE NOMINATED AT TOWN MEETING

Temporary Moderator

1 Member - 1 year term

Trustees, West Acton Citizen's Library

1 Member – 3 year term

Trustees, Charlotte Goodnow Fund

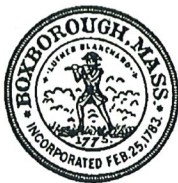
1 Member – 3 year term

Trustees, Elizabeth White Fund

1 Member– 3 year term

Trustees, New Fireman's Relief Fund Acton

1 Member- 3 year term



BOXBOROUGH TOWN CLERK

29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719

Phone: (978) 264-1727 • Fax: (978) 264-3127

rharris@boxborough-ma.org

ELECTION/TOWN MEETING CALENDAR 2022

Annual Town Meeting: Monday, May 9; Tuesday, May 10; Thursday, May 12; Wednesday, May 18; Thursday, May 19

Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 17

Tuesday, January 18: Nomination papers for elected town offices available from town clerk's office. Offices to be on the 2022 town ballot are as follows:

- Select Board, three-year term: 1 seat
- School Committee, three-year term: 1 seat
- Planning Board, three-year term: 2 seats
- Library Trustees, three-year term: 2 seats
- Board of Health, three-year term: 1 seat
- Constable, three-year term: 1 seat
- Town Moderator, one-year term: 1 seat
- Town Clerk, three-year term: 1 seat

Wednesday, February 23: Last day to submit warrant articles for Annual Town Meeting

Monday, February 14: Last day to post Special Town Meeting Warrant

Friday, February 18: Last day to register to vote before STM – open til 8:00PM

Monday, February 28: Special Town Meeting, 7:00PM Boxborough Regency

Friday, March 25: Last day to obtain nomination papers for Town Election (5:00PM)

Internal: Monday, March 28: Close of warrant for ATM – to printer

Tuesday, March 29: Last day to file nomination papers with the Board of Registers/Town Clerk in order to be on the ballot for the May 17 Town Election. Papers are due in the Town Clerk's office by 5:00PM. A minimum of 28 signatures is required.

Wednesday, April 14: Last day to withdraw name from nomination for town office (5:00PM)

Tuesday, April 19: Last day to register to vote for the Town Election. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9:00AM-4:00PM on that day. Voter registration will continue at the Boxborough Police Station, 520 Mass. Ave., from 4:00PM-8:00PM. Residents can also [register online](#) until midnight.

Monday, April 25: Last day to post Election/Town Meeting Warrant

Wednesday, May 11: Last day to apply for/request a ballot by mail

Monday, May 9: Annual Town Meeting begins at 7:00PM. Blanchard Memorial School. (May 10, 12, 18, 19th additional nights).

Tuesday, May 17: Annual Town Election, Boxborough Town Hall, 29 Middle Road. Polls will be open from 7:00AM-8:00PM. Please wear masks and observe appropriate social distancing.



David Verdolino <dverdolino@abschools.org>

EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY - Acton Boxborough

1 message

dlsgateway@dor.state.ma.us <dlsgateway@dor.state.ma.us>

Tue, Feb 15, 2022 at 1:56 PM

To: tblondin@abschools.org, dverdolino@abschools.org, accounting@acton-ma.gov, mpatel@boxborough-ma.gov, accounting@actonma.gov, selectboard@boxborough-ma.gov, mdennehy@abschools.org, eabayaah@boxboroughschool.org, nshine@abschools.org, tmckinley@abschools.org, plight@abschools.org, aklein@abschools.org, cjeannotte@abschools.org, dlsgateway@dor.state.ma.us

Cc: handfielda@dor.state.ma.us

Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services

Geoffrey E. Snyder, Commissioner

Sean R. Cronin, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services

Acton Boxborough
2/15/2022

Re: EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY - Acton Boxborough

Based upon the unaudited balance sheet submitted, I hereby certify that the amount of excess and deficiency or "E & D" as of July 1, 2021 for Acton Boxborough is:

General Fund \$3,245,055.00

This certification is in accordance with the provisions of G. L. Chapter 71, §16B½, as amended. The unencumbered funds certified above in excess of five percent of the operating budget and budgeted capital costs for the succeeding fiscal year must be applied to reduce the current fiscal year's assessment. For your district, this excess amount equals \$0.00.

This certification letter will also be e-mailed to the school superintendent, the board of selectmen in each member town and the city council in each member city immediately upon approval, provided an e-mail address is reported in DLS' Local Officials Directory. Please forward to other officials that you deem appropriate.

Sincerely

Deborah A. Wagner

Director of Accounts
Massachusetts Department of Revenue

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this mail in error please notify the postmaster at dor.state.ma.us.

 **Acton Boxborough RSD FY21 REVISED.pdf**
20K

OPEN MEETING LAW TRAINING



TOWN OF ACTON

The Town of Acton will be hosting an in-person Open Meeting Law and Public Records Request training session for its employees and members of all Boards and Committees:

Acton Town Hall*
472 Main Street
Francis Faulkner Hearing Room 204

Wednesday, March 9, 2022
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

**This meeting will be recorded by Acton TV*

This training will provide an update on and guidance about compliance with the Open Meeting Law and responses for Public Records Requests. All members of public bodies and municipal employees that provide staff support to Town Boards and Committees are encouraged to attend. Registration is not required.



Town of
Acton *Massachusetts*

Finance Committee FY23 Point of View

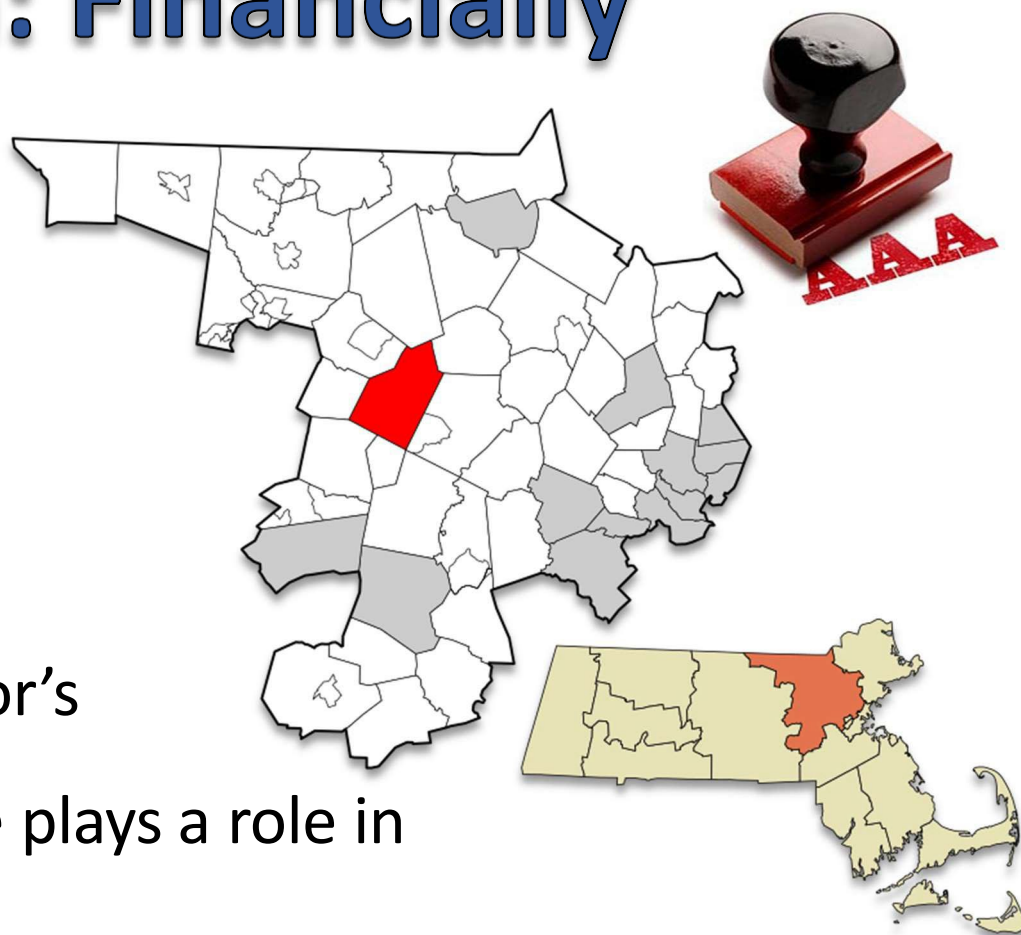
PUBLISHED: JANUARY 2022

Our Town: Economically

	Acton	Middlesex County	Massachusetts
Median Household Income ¹	\$120,865	\$ 92,878	\$ 67,846
Median Home Value ²	\$617,888 ⁴	\$678,059	\$533,440
Unemployment Rate ³	4.0%	4.3%	5.2%

Our Town: Financially

- 99% tax collection rate
- Reserves at \$6,200,000
- AAA rated by Standard & Poor's
- Acton's stable industrial base plays a role in the Town's fiscal stability
- Acton's commercial economy base has remained stable over the past ten years

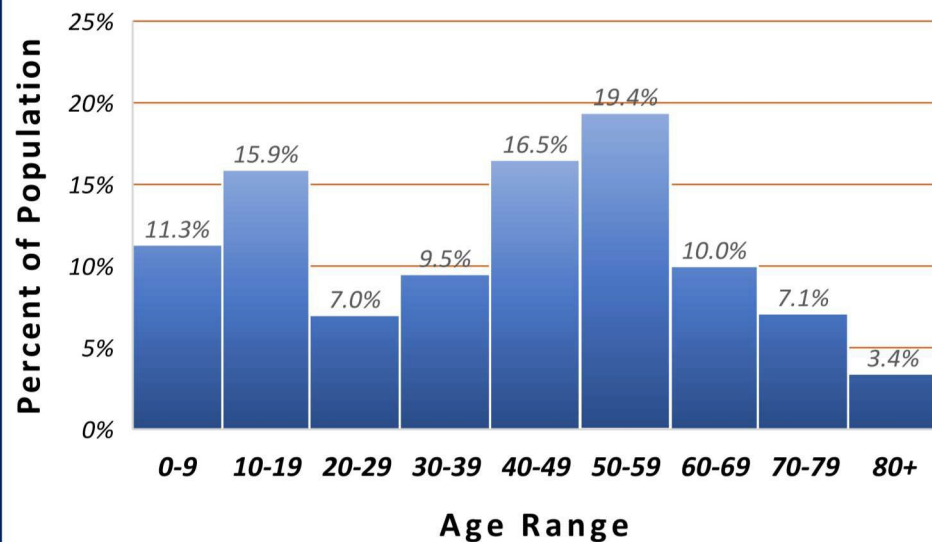


Our Town: Tax Burden

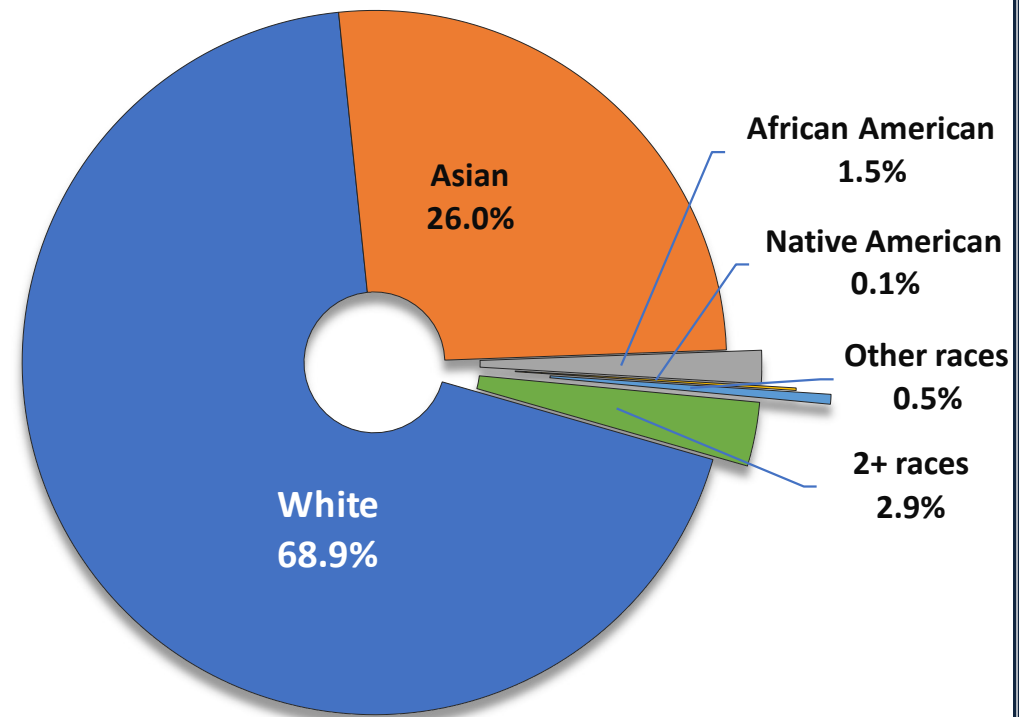
METRIC	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
EFFECTIVE TAX RATE	\$ 19.06	\$ 19.38	\$ 19.37	\$ 19.24	\$ 20.23
MEDIAN HOME VALUE	\$ 509,500	\$ 540,400	\$ 569,700	\$ 608,835	\$ 617,888
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	\$ 152,558	\$ 159,129	\$ 157,917	n/a	n/a
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$ 125,635	\$ 120,865
MEDIAN TAX BURDEN	\$ 9,711	\$ 10,473	\$ 11,035	\$ 11,714	\$ 12,500
TAX BILL AS % OF INCOME (MEDIAN FAMILY)	6.37 %	6.58 %	6.99 %	n/a	n/a
TAX BILL AS % OF INCOME (MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD)	n/a	n/a	n/a	9.32 %	10.34%

Our Town: Demographically

Age Distribution of Acton Residents



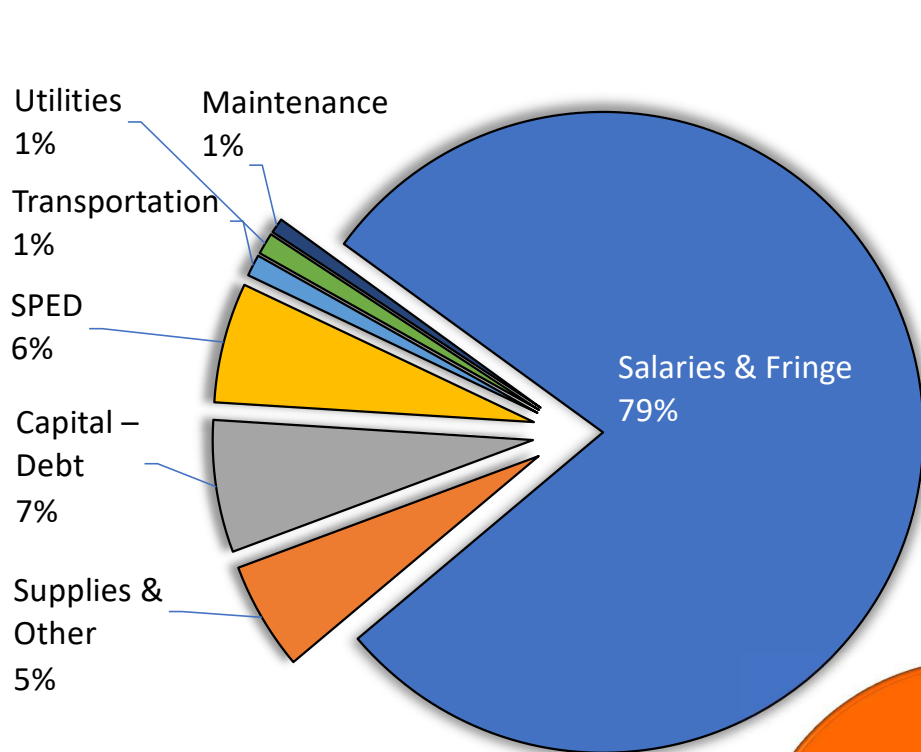
Acton's Cultural Diversity



Acton Population Growth: 1950 - 2020

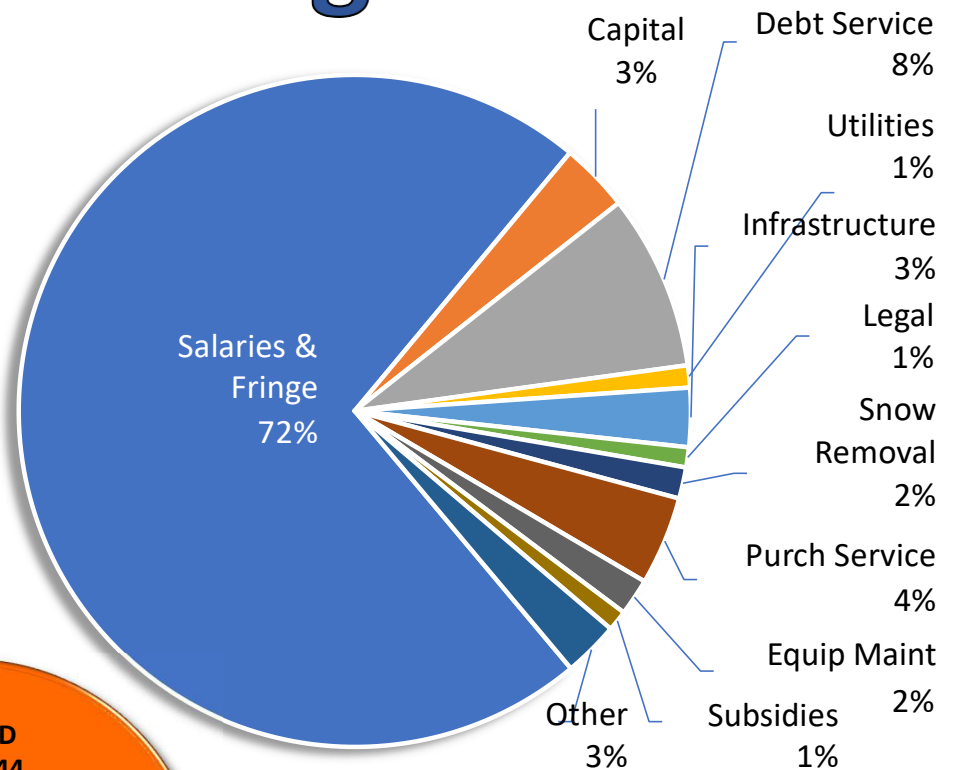
Year	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	3,510	7,238	4,770	19,000	18,144	20,331	21,936 I	24,021

Our Town: Spending FY22



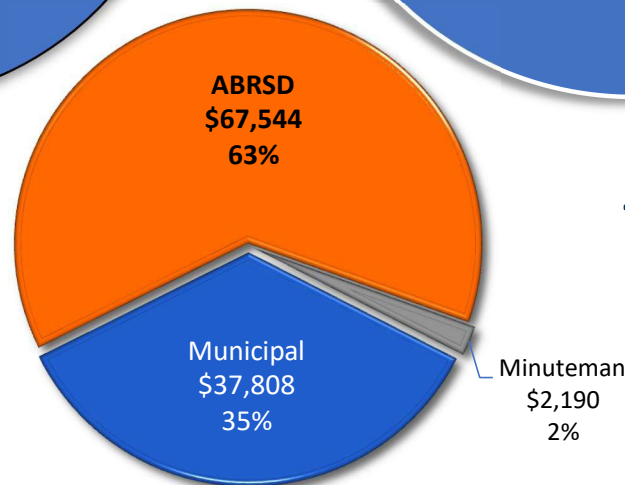
ABRSD Budget \$67,544,000

Source: FY22 Superintendent Budget



Town Budget \$37,807,832

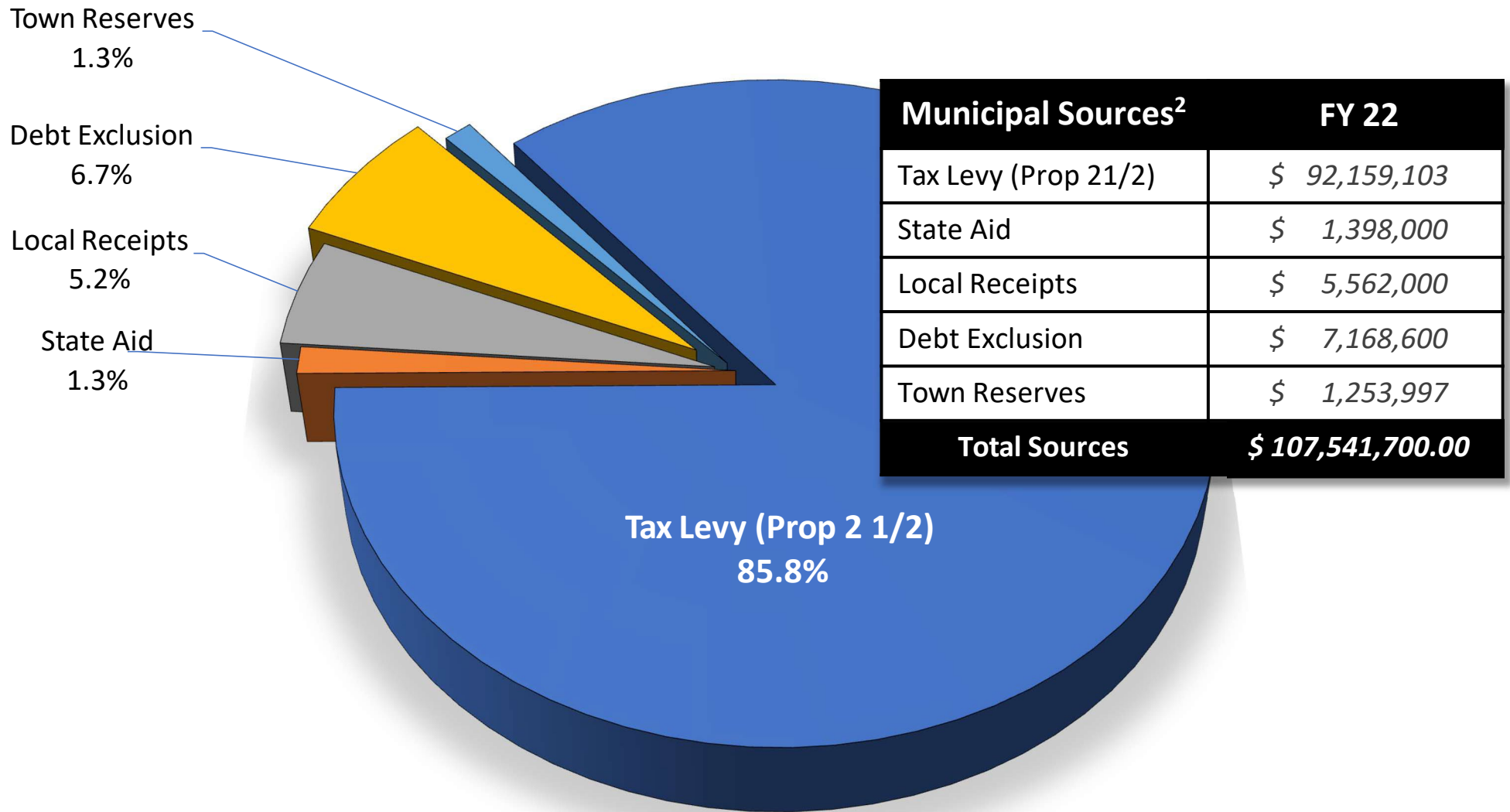
Source: FY22 ALG Budget Projection



FY22 Total Municipal Budget \$107,542

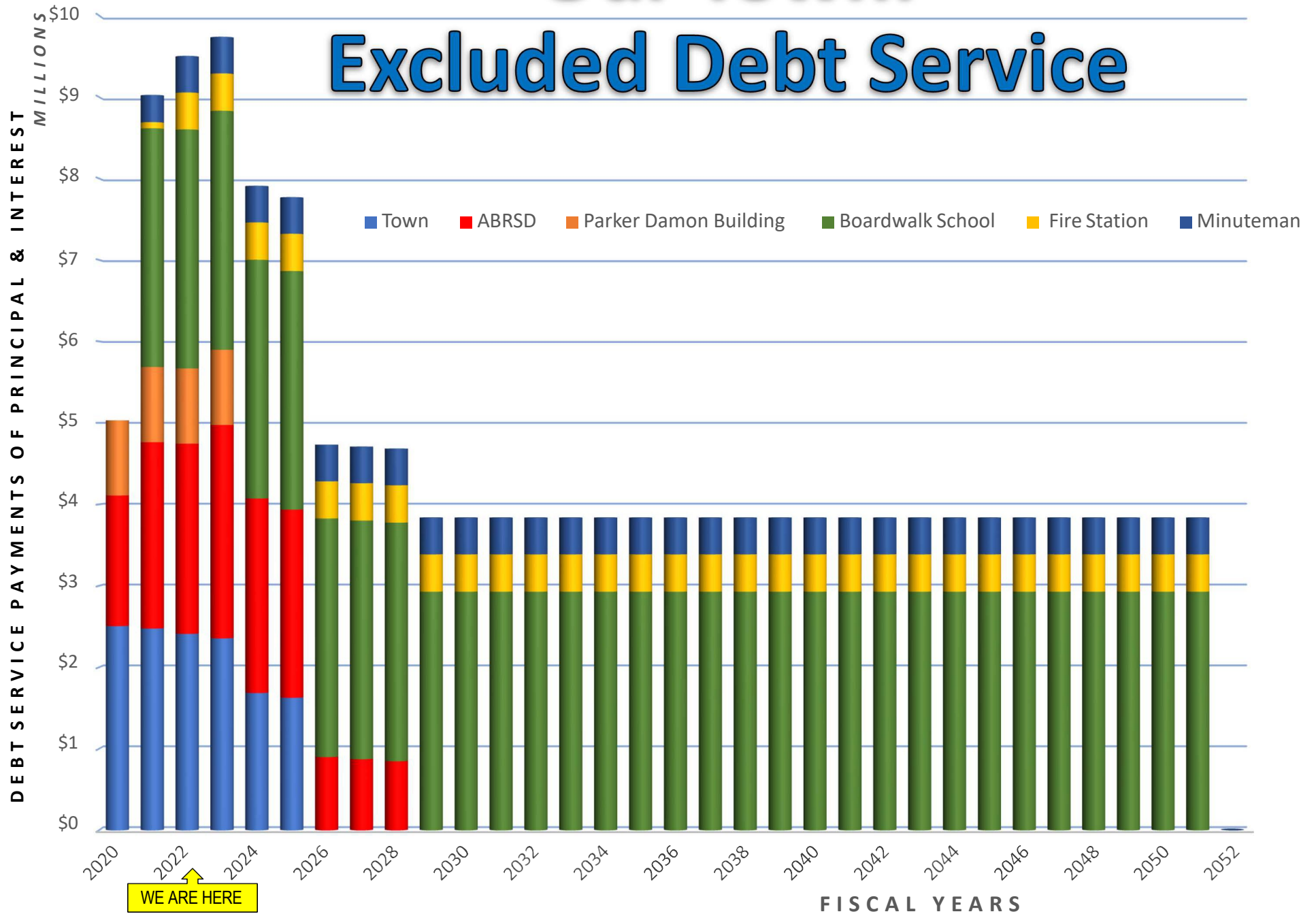
Source: FY22 ALG Budget Projection

Our Town: Revenue Sources FY22

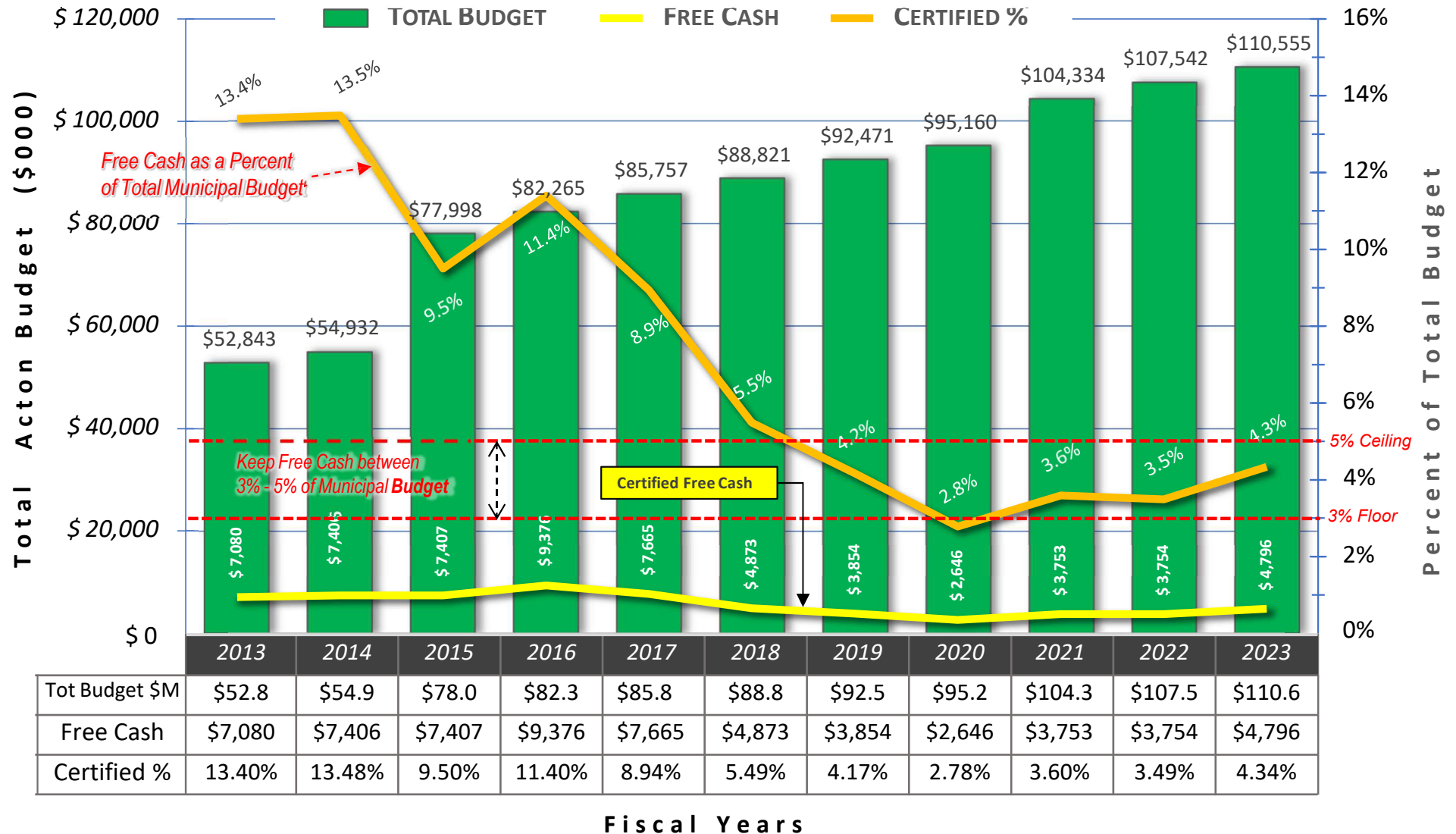


FY22 Municipal Funding Sources

Our Town: Excluded Debt Service



Our Town: Certified Free Cash





Our Town: Reserves

Town of Acton

- Free Cash: \$4,796,257
- Stabilization Fund: \$1,452,384
- Enterprise Fund: \$2,231,702

Acton Regional Schools

- ABRSD E&D (Acton's Portion): \$3,100,000
- ABRSD Stabilization Fund: \$2,000,000

Recommendations: Future Capital Projects

- Approach capital projects with extreme caution
 - *Continue third party funding where possible*
 - *Fund ongoing maintenance within the Operating Budget*
- Prioritize future capital needs well before they become critical
- CIP should continue to focus on finding ways to support Acton's local business community.
- Leverage Federal and State grants and other sources such as American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Concerns: OPEB

- Other Post Employment Benefits
- Healthcare, Life Insurance, Deferred Compensation
- \$15.3M owed by Town
 - *Investing \$600K per year*
 - *2020 liability decreased by \$854k from 2018*
 - *Funded ratio is 33.4% and fully funded in 2034*
- \$ 39.5M owed by School District
 - *Investing \$900K per year*
 - *2020 liability decreased by \$4.5m from 2018*
 - *Funded ratio 13.5% and fully funded in 2060*



Concerns: Economic Uncertainty

- 4.0% of Acton citizens are currently accessing unemployment benefits
- Uncertain Revenue Sources due to COVID19 economy
- Median income down \$5k from 2020
- FY21 Year End Local Receipts Shortfalls:
 - *Permits/Fees off 14% or \$ 192k*
 - *Motor Vehicle Excise off 5% or \$167k*
 - *Investment Income off 51% or \$54k*
- FY 21 Municipal local receipts short by \$400k
- ARPA allows revenue replacement to deliver services in FY22 and FY23, when the coverage ends.

Recommendations: OPEB

- **Town:** Continue funding at current levels
 - *Acton's funding is a strength, compared to other towns*
 - *The aggressive funding and the earnings on investments on the OPEB Trust Fund caused a small current year decrease in the net OPEB liability (\$35,311).*
- **School District:** Increase current funding of OPEB by \$100k to \$1 million per year
 - *\$1.4 M yearly investment required to fully address Service Cost within a timely manner*

ARPA Recommendations

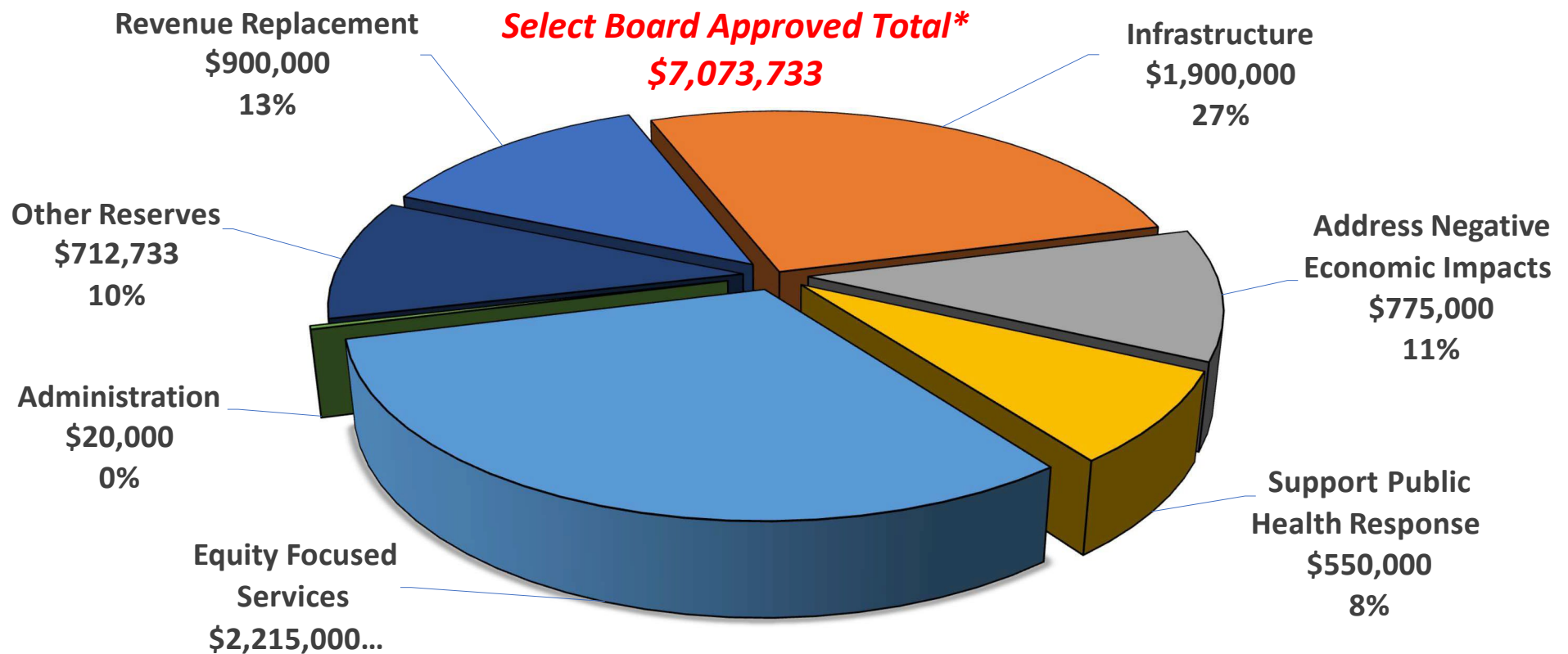
Fincom Priority One:

- Back fill all clearly identified COVID related losses
 - *Proven Lost Revenue*
 - *Direct COVID costs already absorbed*

Fincom Priority Two:

- Invest only in previously identified CIP projects
 - *Do not fund new initiatives that will have on-going costs with one-time monies*
 - *Select Board approved a strategy for a \$7.1M investment plan on October 18, 2021*

ARPA Investment Allocation



Sample Approved Non-School ARPA Investments

Partial Project
list (sample)

	<u>Amount</u>
• Fort Pond Brook and River St Dam	\$ 500,000
• Permitting system	\$ 150,000
• Revenue Replacement - Local Receipts	\$ 400,000
• Mass Ave/Gardner streets and parking	\$ 400,000
• DESIGNE extra park between AHA and Dog park	\$ 45,000
• Public health services and supplies	\$ 200,000

* Federal Treasury Categories



Strategies: Economic Uncertainty

- No more than 2.5% property tax increase
- Spend cautiously
- Increase efficiencies in our budgeting process across Town and ABRSD operations
- Continue aggressive funding of OPEB
- Create detailed expense forecast for 3-5 years and maintain a 10-year Capital Plan
- Costs other than Compensation should be level funded
- Projected cost increases will be proportional to the revenue raised by a 2.5% tax increase



Concerns: Future Capital Projects

- Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) identified a total of \$76.8 million in community needs
- A 10-year Plan is not feasible without additional revenue sources
- Capital planning will be an ongoing annual process
- Acton should continue to develop programs and initiatives that help retain existing businesses and attract new commercial investments in the community
- Labor costs consumes the majority of our budget, leaving very little for capital needs



Concerns: Our People

- Compensation is our largest budgetary item
- Past five years of compensation growth $\geq 4\%$
- Tax bills have increased over \$510 per year on average for the past 3 years (*FY19, FY20, FY21*)
- Middlesex Assessment likely to increase beyond 6.5%
- Health Insurance Trust predicts a 10% rate hike

Recommendations: Staffing

- No non-essential new hires
 - *Limit hiring wherever possible*
- Protect our services
 - *The Town and Schools should be encouraged to employ staff, teachers, first responders, etc. throughout the economic crisis to maintain services at current levels*
- Prepare for increases in the Middlesex retirement assessment
 - *Prepare for 10% increases in the Health Insurance Trust*

Recommendations: Reserve Policy

- Free Cash
 - *Floor of 3% of Total Acton Spending**
 - *Ceiling of 5% of Total Acton Spending*
- Establish a Stabilization Fund for CIP projects
- Strategic use of Free Cash and E&D
- Reserves and E&D used only for one-time items
 - *Unforeseen capital needs*
 - *Emergencies*

**Total Acton Spending = Municipal Budget + ABRSD Assessment + Minuteman Assessment*

Concerns & Recommendation: Land Purchases

- Make no future land purchases without clearly identifying the Town's purpose for owning the property.
- There should be a clear long range funding maintenance strategy in place prior to any land purchase

Point of View Takeaways

- Although Acton is in good financial shape, we are in a period of economic uncertainty that may linger for several years
- Inflation will have a negative impact on household budgets for the next three to five years
- The Tax Levy, Acton's biggest source of revenue, is not indexed for Inflation, yet our largest expense, Salaries is inflation adjusted though CBA's.
 - *Salaries & Fringe account for more than 75% of Total Budget*
- Labor, Energy and Supply Chain issues are problematic, and businesses must use innovative solutions to stay competitive
- Town and Schools need to manage budgets to avoid an override
 - *Without a change in spending, operating overrides may become necessary in the future*
- Finance Committee does not support an operating budget override.

Thank you for
your time.
Any questions?



PoV Supplemental Data

Additional Selected Supporting Documents

Slide	Slide Title	General Description
27	ARPA	Allocation Plan
28	Additional information 1	Tax Burden, Demographics
29	Additional information 2	Households, OPEB, Takeaway
30	Additional information 3	More Takeaway data
31	2021-2022 ABRSD	Enrollment; Enrollment By Race/Gender
32	Inflation	Definition

American Rescue Plan Act

Town of Acton

Approved Investment Plan for American Rescue Plan Act Funds

October 18, 2021

Select Board Approved FY22-FY23 ARPA Allocation Plan

#	Category	Investment	Request	Approved Allocation FY22	FY23	Approved for Reserve
P1, P46	Revenue Replacement	Replace revenue to deliver services in FY22 and FY23 (P1, P46)	\$600,000	\$400,000		reserve
P2	Revenue Replacement	Funding to support rehabilitation of the historic Asa Parlin House and surrounding grounds for reuse as community/ cultural center for programming and meeting space (P2)	\$1,000,000	\$400,000		
P5	Revenue Replacement	Funding to serve as match for grant applications to complete NARA accessibility improvements such as replacing the damaged boardwalk at NARA park with an ADA compliant and new ADA compliant walkways (P5)	\$400,000			reserve
P7	Revenue Replacement	Sustainability initiatives including an electric vehicle pilot program for public transportation vans and public safety vehicles, constructing solar arrays, and energy efficiency improvements to public facilities to advance efforts towards achieving net zero carbon emissions (P7)	\$200,000	\$100,000		
P9	Infrastructure	Construct a sewer main extension to the Acton Housing Authority site at 364 Main Street and provide opportunities to connect nearby commercial properties (P9)	\$1,500,000			reserve
P10	Infrastructure	Stormwater Management and Climate Change Readiness Measures (P10)	\$300,000	\$500,000		
P11	Infrastructure	Conduct a feasibility study and initial design for improving waste water infrastructure to support existing businesses and create new economic development opportunities in the Great Road commercial district (P11)	\$400,000	\$100,000		\$300,000
P44	Infrastructure	Support the design costs and partial construction costs for Acton Water District PFAS mitigation measures for the North Acton Water Treatment Plant (P44)	\$2,000,000	\$450,000		\$550,000
P14	Address Negative Economic Impacts	A new online permitting system to streamline the building, health, conservation and planning permits to improve services and transparency (P14)	\$130,000	\$150,000		
P15	Address Negative Economic Impacts	Gardner Field Improvements and related streetscape improvements in West Acton (P15)	\$400,000	\$400,000		
P16	Address Negative Economic Impacts	Design a community recreation amenity as part of a cohesive design for the Main Street property that will also have AHA Senior Housing and a Dog Park (P16)	\$45,000	\$45,000		
P17	Address Negative Economic Impacts	Forgivable loan programs to make it easier and more cost effective for residents and businesses to implement energy efficiency upgrades and reduce carbon emissions	\$100,000		\$30,000	reserve
P45	Address Negative Economic Impacts	Improvements to the Nagog Treatment Waste Water Treatment System (P45)	\$300,000		\$150,000	reserve
P20	Address Negative Economic Impacts	Update the existing Complete Street Plan to improve infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists	\$35,000			reserve
P22	Support Public Health Response	Projects that will address air quality in public facilities by improve HVAC systems (P22)	\$300,000		\$500,000	
P25	Support Public Health Response	Covid Mitigation Measures for items not covered by FEMA or other programs (P25)	\$200,000	\$50,000		reserve
P30	Support Public Health Response	Create an outdoor meeting space next to Town Hall to facilitate outdoor customer service interactions and staff meetings (P30)	\$40,000			reserve
ABRSD	Equity Focused Services	Acton Boxborough Regional School District Requests	\$2,600,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
P32	Equity Focused Services	Rehabilitate and make energy efficiency improvements to affordable housing units (P32)	\$200,000			reserve
P35	Equity Focused Services	Emergency rental assistance program (P35)	\$300,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	reserve
P38	Equity Focused Services	Childcare subsidy programs (P38)	\$80,000		\$40,000	reserve
P41	Equity Focused Services	Pilot program to provide a universal access program that ensures equal access to public recreational facilities by providing specialized equipment, programs and techniques (P41)	\$25,000		\$25,000	
P43	Administration	Financial consulting and audit services to ensure compliance (P43)	\$25,000	\$20,000		
P99	Revenue Replacement	Transportation Programs	\$450,000			reserve
						Subtotal Reserve Items Above \$1,350,000
				Total Allocated FY22	Total Allocated FY23	Total Funding Available for Reserved Items
				\$3,665,000	\$1,345,000	\$2,062,733

Note: Need to update with the latest SB allocation

Additional Information - 1

SLIDE 4 – Tax Burden

- The FY22 tax burden in this chart has been calculated using the Median Home Value and Median Household Income.
- Acton 20.23, Maynard 20.15, and Stow 19.9 have the highest 2021 residential property tax rates of towns in Middlesex County, MA4
- Cambridge 5.85, Woburn 9.33, and Medford 9.41 have the lowest property tax rates in the county.
- The average residential tax rate for the county is 14.56⁴

SLIDE 5 – Demographically

- Acton has a diversity score of 87/100
- Acton school enrollment has dipped only slightly during the past few years, and a somewhat flat enrollment is anticipated for the next 3 – 4 years.
- The U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) provides the best information about age groups., the biggest increases in population have been taking place in the 65+ age group. The 65+ population has nearly tripled since 1990, from 1,194 to 3,303 while the other segments of the population have grown much more modestly or even decreased in some cases.
- Definition of the foreign-born population includes anyone who was not a U.S. citizen or a U.S. national at birth

Additional Information - 2

SLIDE 6– Household Data

- The % of Income for Mortgage quantifies the percentage of median household income dedicated to mortgage payments on a home priced at the median value (assuming a 30-year mortgage and a 20% down payment).
- The Wealth Index is based on a number of indicators of affluence including average household income and average net worth, but it also includes the value of material possessions and resources. It represents the wealth of the area relative to the national level. Acton's Wealth Index is 275. Values above or below 100 represent above-average wealth or below-average wealth compared to the national level.

SLIDE 13– Concerns: OPEB

- The long-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic for OPEB is still unknown. Results do not include the impact of the following:
 - *Short-term or long-term impacts on mortality of the covered population*
 - *The short-term impact on health plan costs;*
 - *The potential for federal or state fiscal relief*

SLIDE 24– Takeaways

- **Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Nov. 9, 2021:** Inflation has accelerated sharply, and consumer prices are rising at their fastest over-the-year pace in more than 30 years. Persistent supply chain bottlenecks continue to push prices skyward.
- **New York Fed:** Nov.8, 2021: Investors expect inflation to average 3% a year for the next five years. "Consumers are feeling it in the pocketbook at the gas pump, grocery store and tenants could get sticker shock at their next lease renewal."

Additional Information - 3

SLIDE 24– Takeaways

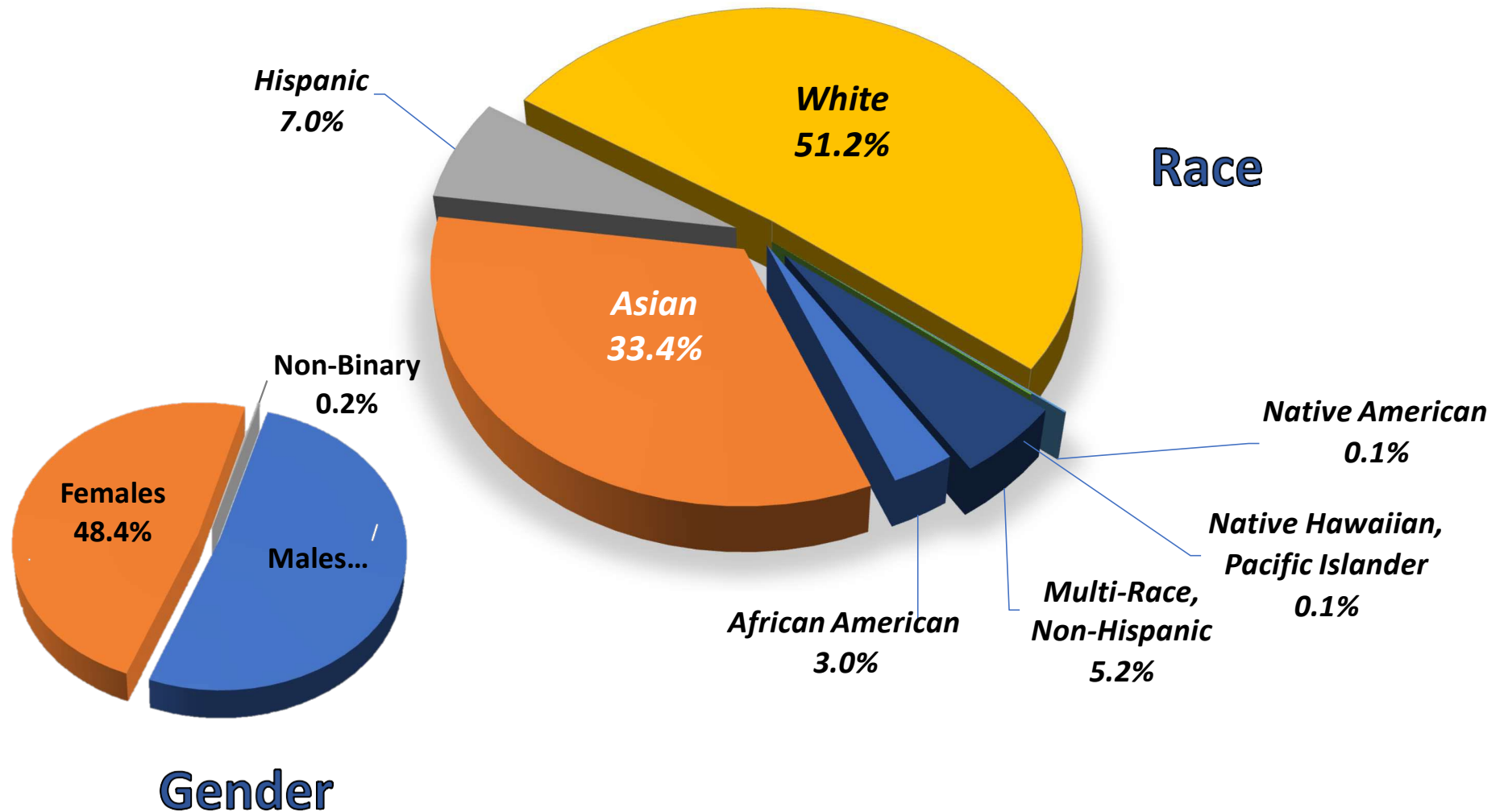
- More than half of our staff are members of Collective Bargaining Units (CBA's).
- The CBA Negotiation Process is NOT transparent.
- We currently have four (4) unresolves CBA's with the Fire Department and Police

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Nov. 9, 2021: Inflation has accelerated sharply, and consumer prices are rising at their fastest over-the-year pace in more than 30 years. Persistent supply chain bottlenecks continue to push prices skyward.

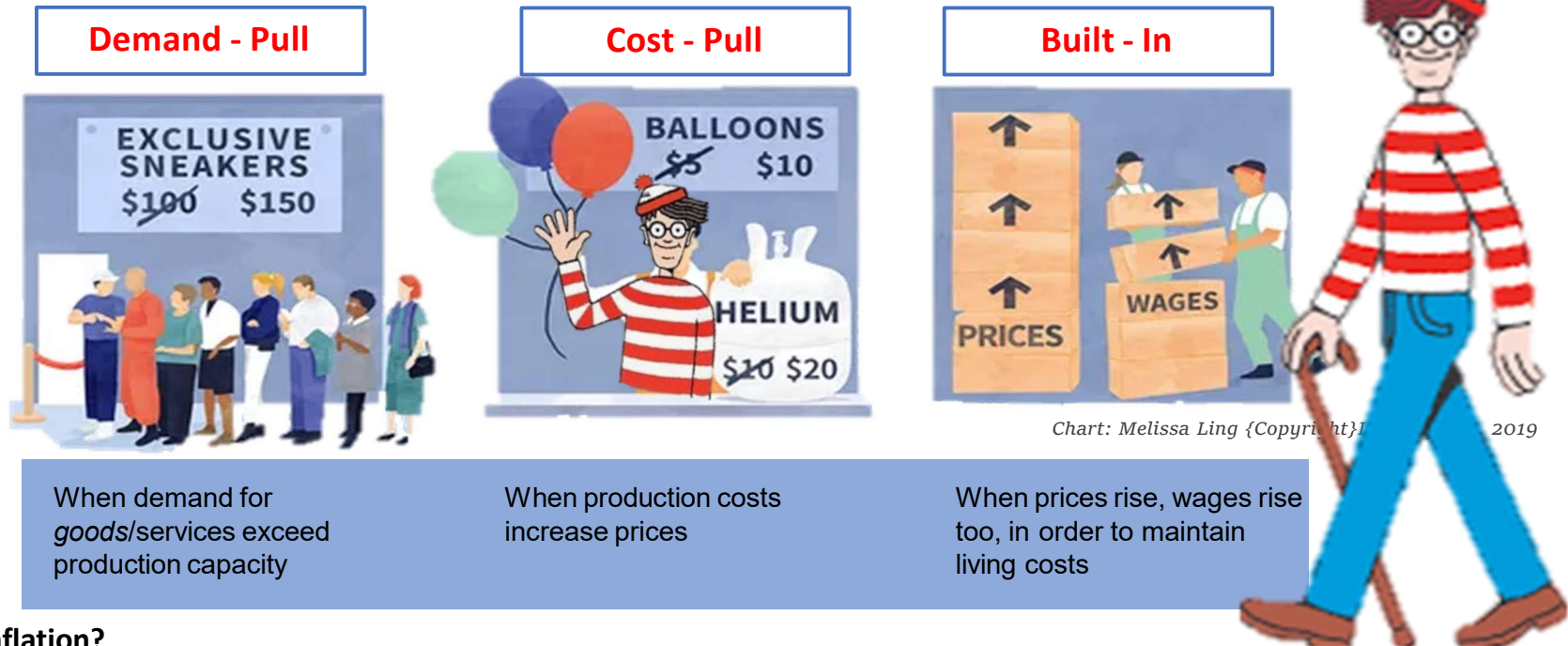
New York Fed: Nov.8, 2021: Investors expect inflation to average 3% a year for the next five years.

“Consumers are feeling it in the pocketbook at the gas pump, grocery store and tenants could get sticker shock at their next lease renewal.”

2021-2022 ABRSD Enrollment By Race/Gender



Inflation – a Definition



What Is Inflation?

As a currency loses value, prices rise and it buys fewer goods and services. This loss of purchasing power impacts the general cost of living for the common public which ultimately leads to a slow down in economic growth.

Inflation is the decline of [purchasing power](#) of a given currency over time. A quantitative estimate of the rate at which the decline in purchasing power occurs can be reflected in the increase of an average [price level](#) of a [basket of selected goods](#) and services in an economy over some period of time.

- Inflation is the rate at which the value of a currency is falling and, consequently, the general level of prices for goods and services is rising.
- Inflation is sometimes classified into three types: Demand-Pull inflation, Cost-Push inflation, and Built-In inflation.
- The most commonly used inflation indexes are the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Wholesale Price Index (WPI).
- Inflation can be viewed positively or negatively depending on the individual viewpoint and rate of change.
- Those with tangible assets, like property or stocked commodities, may like to see some inflation as that raises the value of their assets.