

ACJA

FY25 Budget/Financial Guidance Talking Points for Meetings with Councilors

11/3/2025

[Note the Councilor responses](#) to our ACJA survey re: Budget action.

FY25 BUDGET

We asked for:

1. Operating budget:
 - a. 2 additional FTE professional level staff positions for sustainability dept.
 - b. .30 FTE for waste hauler proposal accounting (.15 FTE) and contract compliance (.15 FTE) staff
2. Capital budget
 - a. \$400,000 in capital budget for climate action

On request for additional staffing for Sustainability Dept.:

REQUEST: 2 additional FTE professional level staff positions.

1. Reminder of how existential crisis has become much more apparent in the last couple of years, via floods, storms, fires, heatwaves, air quality,
2. The TC goal is to reduce emissions 25% by 2025.
3. We are very much behind because SC has far too much on her plate. We need to accelerate rather than falling behind.
4. Only a few of the TM goals for 2022 and 23 were addressed.
5. Additional staffing is especially needed to obtain and manage grants available through the state and fed govt.
Note: Manager suggested in June to Fincom that the town won't apply for grants that it does not have the staff to manage. [From June 2023 Fincom report: *When asked whether we are missing opportunities to apply successfully for grants, the response was that the Town has been very successful in obtaining grants but is stretched to manage grants and thus applies based on staffing ability to implement and oversee grants.*"]
6. SC requested 2 positions for the FY24 budget, and has since requested the same for the FY25 budget when addressing the Council to give the ECAC annual report and funding request.
7. ECAC also requested this year and for the past few years.
8. A grant writer could bring in more than the amount of their salary.
9. We also need staffing to do solar siting and engineering as it becomes more routine, rather than paying a consultant and not keeping the institutional knowledge gained.
10. Northampton funded a new department and positions.
11. Rather than understaffing, Town should find a better way to prioritize potential funding requests.
Also, use reserves for climate action spending.

On the FY25 Budget Guidance letter language:

REQUESTS: Take out "forego funding" language. Add commitment and prioritization of fulfilling our climate action goals. Add more mention of climate action and the CAARP. All as in years prior to FY 24.

1. The FY25 budget guidance letter needs more mention of climate action, the CAARP. A strong statement of commitment to climate action and meeting our climate action goals needs to remain in the budget guidance letter as it has been in prior years.

2. Please strike the language added to last year's budget and manager goals that deprioritized climate action for the first time, favoring four other areas. The key offending language was:
["The Town will likely need to forgo taking on some new efforts, unless revenue neutral, until we have the funds needed for the major building projects, required work on roads and sidewalks, determine the long-term public safety plan, and have the staff needed for the three public safety departments".]
 - a. *That language allows the Manager to forego climate action spending or staffing for the year.*
 - b. *Last year's Manager goals had corresponding language, deprioritizing all of the council "policy" areas not connected to those four areas.*