

# Town of Fairfield News

3/5/2020 - Budget Update from the First Selectwoman

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FIRST SELECTWOMAN  FAIRFIELD  
**BRENDA L. KUPCHICK**

Dear Residents,

I'm sending my weekly newsletter a day early this week because I wanted to keep residents up to date after I presented my first budget proposal to the Board of Selectmen on Monday.

Over the past several months, I have been diligently working with my administration and our departments to craft the Town budget with the following goals in mind:

1. Maintain excellent Schools
2. Prioritize Economic Development to secure long-term growth and tax relief
3. Modernize Town Government to improve services for residents
4. Invest in Town infrastructure

To accomplish these goals, I have proposed making some strategic investments in Fairfield's town government.

The budget includes the creation of a part time Grant Administrator position to ensure the town identifies and competes for all eligible state and federal grants while also tracking their progress to completion. I also added a much needed Director of Business Outreach position to our Economic Development Department to help attract new businesses to Fairfield.

I believe these positions are smart investments that will increase revenue for our town and ultimately reduce the tax burden on our residents in the future.

The budget also includes making investments in technology to expedite the permitting process to make it easier for residents to make improvements to their homes and for businesses who utilize our permitting departments. Developers and small business owners who are the lifeblood of our economy should not be confined by limited Town Hall hours of availability to get permits and plans submitted for approval.

technology for our town employees that will help reduce labor costs. In 2020, employees should not be passing around sheets of paper to record time worked.

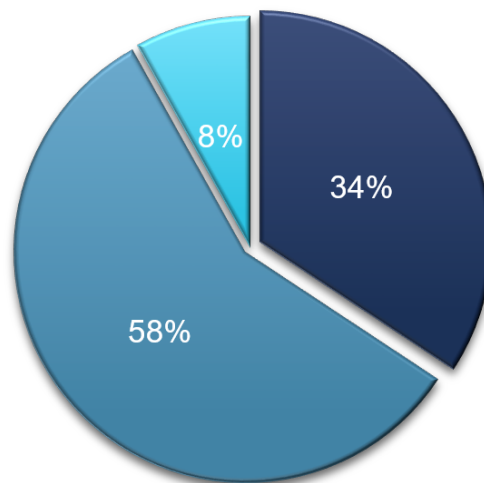
The largest driver of cost increases for this year's budget is education, which makes up 66% of the overall Town budget. The 66% includes the Board of Education (BOE) budget in addition to the in-kind services paid for by the Town on behalf of the BOE. This fiscal year is the third and final year of the current teacher's contract, approved by the Representative Town Meeting, which has the highest annual wage increase of 3.52%.

I think as residents of Fairfield, we can all agree that having an excellent public school system is a top priority. Not only do we want our children to have the best education to be successful and competitive in a global economy; it's also vital for the desirability of our town and our property values.

My administration was able to find \$800,000 in savings in the Board of Education's budget proposal after identifying changes in the healthcare benefit calculation. I have also asked the Superintendent and Board of Education to reduce their overall budget request increase for 2020 by \$600,000, or 0.31%, out of the \$188 million budget. My administration has already identified \$100,000 savings in fuel costs based on new bids.

My final BOE budget recommendation includes a 3.13% increase for education spending over the prior year as I remain committed to providing a quality education for our children. The Town budget includes a \$4.8 million increase, or 3.69%, for a total budget of \$137 million.

### Town & BOE Budget



■ Town Spending   ■ Board of Education   ■ Town Spending on Behalf of the Board of Education

When constructing the Town budget, I had to consider the needs of all of our residents. This budget includes an expansion of Senior and Disabled Tax Relief to maximize benefits to our lowest income seniors. I want to thank the senior tax relief committee, most especially the committee chairman, Chris DeWitt, for his efforts.

Tax relief was one of the main concerns expressed to me by residents over the past

to retire with dignity in the community. Working families, should not feel that they are in danger of being pushed out due to incessant tax increases.

My goal is to reduce taxes over my term as First Selectwoman, and while I would have loved to lower taxes in my first budget proposal, it would have been irresponsible to ignore the needed investment in our town systems, employees, technology and infrastructure that's crucial to grow our grand list and commercial tax base.

I believe these strategic investments will allow me to reduce the property tax burden for our residents in the coming years, keep Fairfield affordable, while also providing a top-notch education for our children. This also means that we must make smart decisions about spending going forward.

The next step in this multi-level approach is a long-term, strategic look at budgeting across the Town to identify efficiencies and cost savings for the next fiscal year. I intend to begin this process this summer in collaboration with town departments, agencies, and offices along with other elected bodies, such as the Board of Education.

My hope is to have a respectful dialogue with residents and elected officials, about my budget proposal, and how we move Fairfield forward together.

The Board of Selectmen will vote on the budget on Monday, March 9th. It will then go to the Board of Finance and Representative Town Meeting for review. The full meeting schedule is linked below.

Please reach out to me by email at [firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org](mailto:firstselectwoman@fairfieldct.org), by phone at 203.256.3030, with your thoughts or to set up a time to come meet with me at Town Hall.

Sincerely,



Brenda L. Kupchick

Click below to read the full budget or view my power point presentation.





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To watch my budget presentation [click here](#), and to view the full videos from Fair TV [click here](#).

To view the schedule of budget hearings [click here](#).

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## Fairfield News & Events

[A Seuss Celebration](#)

[Old Stratfield Market Reborn As  
Goddard School](#)

[Beacon View Affordable Housing  
Project Denied by Zoning Officials](#)

[Connecticut Hammerheads Host Kick-  
Off](#)

[Doggie Daycare Planned for Fairfield](#)

## Resources

[CPR Training](#)

[How to Look up Property Taxes](#)

[COVID-19 Coronavirus Information and  
Prevention Tips](#)

[COVID-19 Press Release](#)

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Follow these 6 steps to help prevent the spread of viruses like seasonal flu and COVID-19.

- 1) Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds
- 2) Cover your cough and sneeze
- 3) Stay home if your sick, except to get medical care
- 4) Clean and disinfect high contact surfaces
- 5) Avoid close contact with people who may be sick
- 6) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

### Prior Weekly Communications:

[February 28](#)[January 31](#)[February 21](#)[January 24](#)[February 14](#)[January 9](#)[February 7](#)

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