



2025 Voter's Guide

The Board of Selectmen are pleased to present our residents with the Voter's Guide to assist all voters who plan to visit the polls on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at Pelham High School between the hours of 7:00am and 8:00pm. Please note that voter turnout can be quite high during peak hours, so be sure to follow posted directions and traffic patterns to ensure the safety of all parties. Due to ongoing health and safety concerns, we request that anyone feeling unwell or otherwise showing symptoms of any infection, kindly practice basic precautions for the health and safety of others.

The purpose of this guide is to help you, the voter, make informed decisions as you cast your ballot. The way the Town operates and how much it spends is determined by you, the voters. Please note that the State's "No Means No" law prohibits the Town from spending any funds for the purposes described in the articles you are voting on, should the majority vote "no". The sole exemption is Article 9, the Town Budget. Please refer to Article 9 for explanation.

In the event you have questions that are not answered in this Voter's Guide, we welcome you to call the Selectmen's Office, and you will be connected to the correct department. We strongly encourage you to vote on March 11, 2025, and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued civic participation and to remind you that, regardless of the outcome, we move forward together, as the Town of Pelham.

Sincerely,

Pelham Board of Selectmen

Jason Croteau, Chair - 2025

Charlene Takesian, Vice Chair - 2025

Jaie Bergeron - 2026

Heather Corbett - 2026

Kimberly Abare - 2027

**Town of Pelham
State of New Hampshire
2025 Town Meeting**

To the inhabitants of the Town of Pelham, in the County of Hillsborough and the State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in Town affairs, you are hereby notified of the following annual Town Meeting Schedule.

**First Session of Annual Meeting
(Deliberative Session)**

You are hereby notified to meet at the Sherburne Hall, 6 Village Green, Pelham, New Hampshire on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at 7:00pm. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles numbered 7-24. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles the wording of which is prescribed by law shall not be amended and (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended.

**Second Session of Annual Town Meeting
(Official Ballot Voting)**

You are hereby notified to meet again at the Pelham High School, 85 Marsh Road, Pelham, New Hampshire on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, between the hours of 7:00am and 8:00pm to vote by official ballot in choosing all necessary Town officials for the ensuing year and to vote on warrant articles numbered 1-24.

A Citizen's Guide to Understanding Terms

Appropriations: A sum of money or total of assets devoted to a specific purpose.

Article: Individual numbered items within the warrant.

Budget Committee: An *elected* body of eleven (11) individuals which reviews and elects to approve or not approve all Town and school budgets, as well as any and all articles involving the expenditure of funds. The budgets presented are prepared by the Budget Committee.

CBA: A Collective Bargaining Agreement is a contract between a group of employees (police, fire, or other municipal employees) and the Board of Selectmen, cost items of which are approved by the voters.

Capital Reserve Fund: Essentially a "savings account" created by action of a prior Town meeting vote into which funds are placed for a designated purpose, but limited to capital expenditures- such as a piece of major equipment, building, etc.

Conservation Commission: A group of *appointed* officials tasked with "the proper utilization and protection of the natural resources of the Town, per RSA 36-A:2".

Forestry Committee: An *appointed* group of five (5) members who volunteer to plan, preserve, and protect public, forested lands (forests, parks, open space, water courses, wetlands) and the wildlife therein. They often work in conjunction with the Conservation Committee, Planning, the Board of Selectmen, as well as with Parks and Recreation.

Map/Lot: This designates the exact location of a parcel of land on the Town tax map.

Non-Capital Reserve Fund: The same "savings account" concept as a capital reserve fund, but not specifically tied to buildings or equipment.

Planning Board: An *elected* body - Pursuant to RSA 673:2, the Planning Board shall consist of seven (7) members, six (6) of whom shall be elected by the local legislative body and the seventh shall be an ex-officio member appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

RSA: Refers to a state law- Revised Statute Annnotated. These laws can be found on the State of New Hampshire's website under "Laws and Rules".

Special Warrant Article: As provided in State law, this designation identifies any appropriation in the article as non-lapsing (having no expiration date) and non-transferable (not to be used for anything other than the specific expressed purpose).

Unassigned Fund Balance: The accumulation of revenues over expenditures, accrued over the years. It can be used for any purpose voted on by the Board of Selectmen with approval and has been used to offset tax increases or to offset the cost of "big ticket" projects, i.e. the fire station.

Warrant: The official legal name for a group of articles presented to the voters.

Water Commission: The Water Commission is a board of five (5) *appointed* members who act in a fact finding and advisory capacity on all issues pertaining to water in the Town of Pelham.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: An *appointed* body of five (5) members. As a quasi-judicial board, the Zoning Board of Adjustment's (ZBA) primary responsibility is to determine what is lawful, not necessarily popular in determining the balance between the constitutional rights of property owners to the reasonable use of their land and the public rights of others.

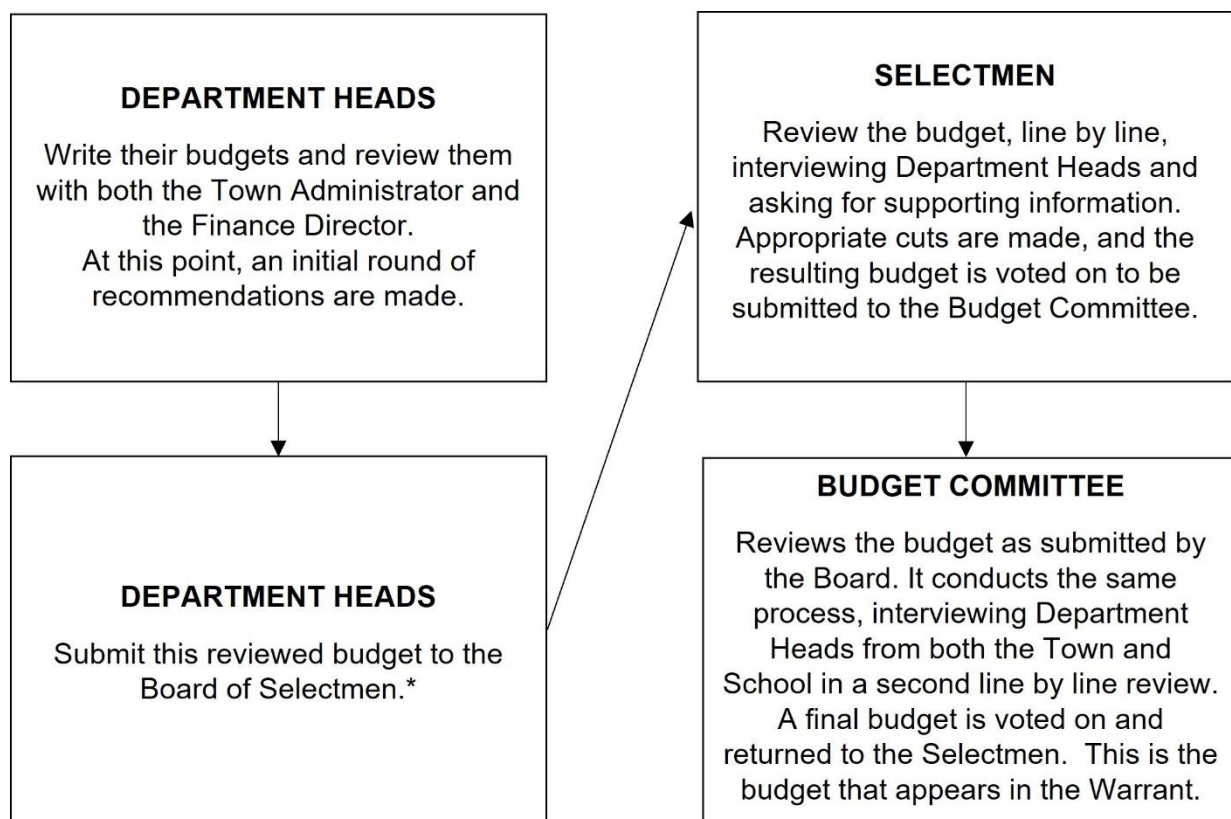
In 2023, the Board of Selectmen decided to include the vote by which an article was approved. This was done in an attempt to help further educate citizens as to which issues do not have the full support of the Board and may require some extra attention on the part of every voter. The vote is indicated at the end of each warrant:

Example: **Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)**

This format indicates - Votes for, Votes against, and Abstentions*

*Abstentions indicate that a seated member of a Board declined to vote on a warrant article.

How does the Town determine its operating budget?



**It should be noted that the Trustees of the Cemetery and the Trustees of the Library present their budgets as a courtesy to the Board. Neither budget is controlled by the Board of Selectmen.*

ARTICLES FOR VOTING

Article #1: Election of Officials

To see what action the Town will take in the election of the following Officers: Two (2) Selectmen for a the term of three (3) years; One (1) Budget Committee member for the term of one (1) year; One (1) Budget Committee member for the term of two (2) years; Three (3) Budget Committee members for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Cemetery Trustee for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Cemetery Trustee for the term of two (2) years; Two (2) Library Trustees for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Planning Board member for the term of two (2) years; Two (2) Planning Board members for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Town Clerk/Tax Collector for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Trustee of the Trust Funds for the term of three (3) years.

Article #2: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 1

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article II Section 307-6 Definitions to add a definition for Short Term Rentals and to update Article V Permitted Uses, Table 2 to add to the existing language Hotels, motels, inns, rooming houses, or tourist cabins are treated as short term rentals as defined.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #2 Explanation: *The intent of this zoning article is to define short term rentals as follows: "An individually or collectively owned single-family house or dwelling unit or any unit or group of units in a condominium, cooperative, or timeshare, or owner-occupied residential home, that is offered for a fee and for less than 30 consecutive days and to clarify that the existing uses of hotels, motels, inns, rooming houses, and tourist cabins fall under the definition of short term rentals."*

A YES vote would add a formal definition for short-term rentals and specify that hotels, motels, inns, rooming houses, and tourist cabins are treated as short-term rentals. The intent is to provide clarity as to what uses are permitted or regulated in Pelham and in which zones.

A NO vote would leave the Zoning Ordinance unchanged, meaning there would continue to be no formal definition or time frame associated with hotels, motels, inns, rooming houses, and tourist cabins in Pelham.

Article #3: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 2

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article XII Section 307-74 Additional Requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to add that an interior door shall be provided between the principal dwelling unit and the attached ADU consistent with RSA 674:71-73.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #3 Explanation: *The intent of this zoning article is to explicitly require that an interior door be provided between the principal dwelling unit and the attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).*

A YES vote would update the Zoning Ordinance to make the Town's regulation clearer and consistent with RSA 674:72, which requires that there be an interior door between a principal dwelling and an ADU.

A NO vote will leave the Zoning Ordinance unchanged, but RSA 674:71-73 will still require an interior door between the principal dwelling unit and the ADU; however, it will remain less clear in the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Article #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No 3

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article XII Section 307-76, II Minor Home Occupations to limit minor home occupations that are located in an accessory structure to utilize no more than 25% of the primary dwelling unit total square footage by removing the allowance that an occupation conducted in an accessory structure can be based on the total square footage footprint of all structures on the property? Further, to amend Section 307-76, II to not limit minor home occupations to only single-family residences by allowing minor home occupations in duplexes or multi-family properties if the duplexes or multi-family dwelling met all established criteria. Minor Home Occupations do not require the approval of any Town board or official. (Recommended by the Planning Board 7-0-0)

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #4 Explanation: The intent of this zoning article is to clarify how the 25% usage limit for minor home occupations applies to occupations that take place within accessory structures. While the current regulation limits business use to no more than 25% of the living area of the primary dwelling unit if the occupation takes place within the primary dwelling unit, this amendment specifies that the same percentage limitation applies to businesses conducted within an accessory structure. Additionally, this would expand eligibility of minor home occupations to duplexes and multi-family properties creating equitable opportunities for residents in different housing types to engage in minor home occupations.

A YES vote will clarify that a minor home occupation, even if conducted within an accessory structure, cannot exceed 25% of the total square footage of the primary dwelling unit. This change removes the allowance that the occupation could be based on the total square footage footprint of all structures on the property. It would also allow such uses in duplexes and multi-family properties if all criteria are met.

A NO vote will leave the language unchanged, allowing minor home occupations to potentially use up to 25% of the total square footage footprint of all structures on the property, including accessory structures, allowing home occupations to use a larger square footage of a lot. Additionally, a NO vote would continue to prohibit minor home occupations in duplexes and multi-family properties.

Article #5: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No 4

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article XVIII Natural Resources Management to clarify that the requirement of all new major subdivisions and commercial/business developments maintain an undisturbed fifty-foot perimeter buffer around the entire parcel with the exception of the entrance into the property is only until such time that the Planning Board has had the opportunity to approve the removal of the buffer and further, to remove the requirement of a performance guarantee on the water infrastructure of new major

subdivision and commercial/business developments since the implementation of the new Well Ordinance provides adequate assurances for water quality and quantity of all new developments.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #5 Explanation: *The intent of this zoning article is to clarify the existing requirement of a 50' buffer remaining undisturbed around all new major subdivisions and commercial/business developments is only until such time that the Planning Board has had an opportunity to review and approve the removal or adjustment of the buffer. The purpose is to provide the Planning Board the opportunity to evaluate plans before any land clearing occurs. Current language is unclear as to whether this buffer is temporary. The amendment also removes the requirement for a performance guarantee on water infrastructure for new developments, as the recently implemented Well Ordinance provides assurances for water quality and quantity.*

A YES vote will clarify that the 50-foot undisturbed perimeter buffer for new major subdivisions and commercial/business developments must remain intact only until the Planning Board reviews and approves its potential removal or adjustment.

A NO vote will leave the current language unchanged. It will also retain the requirement for a performance guarantee on water infrastructure.

Article #6: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No 5

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 5 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article VIII – Floodplain Development Ordinance, Section 307-46 Definitions, to define Floodway vs. Floodplain and Section 307-47 (E) to regulate development within flood-prone areas to ensure that construction and modifications do not increase flood risks by requiring applicants of new development to demonstrate through analysis that their proposed development will not raise floodwater levels anywhere in the floodplain and by prohibiting encroachments (e.g., fill or construction) within designated Floodplains and Floodways unless the developer provides equivalent on-site flood storage to offset the displaced volume of fill inside the floodplain and floodway. The changes would also require that the encroachment complies with standard engineering practices.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #6 Explanation: *The intent of this zoning article is to clarify the language of and strengthen regulations for development within flood-prone areas. It also defines terms, such as “Floodway” and “Floodplain” to distinguish between these areas. It will establish stricter controls to ensure that new developments do not increase flood risks.*

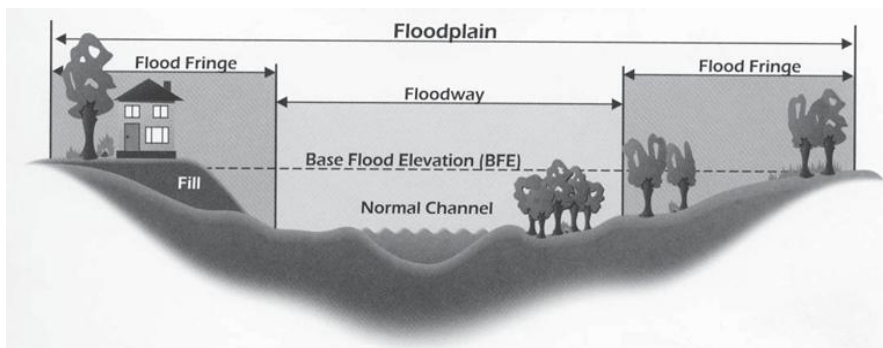


Image courtesy FEMA NFIP Guidebook

The floodway is the part of the river or stream channel and nearby land where water flows to discharge the base flood without raising the water elevation above the designated height. This is the inner-most portion of the diagram shown to the left.

The floodplain is comprised of the floodway and the floodway fringe. This is known as the 1-percent-annual-chance floodplain, or the 100-year floodplain.

A YES vote will update the ordinance to define “Floodway” and “Floodplain” to clarify regulations related to flood-prone areas. A YES vote will also impose stricter regulations related to new developments and potential flood risks by requiring developers to demonstrate through analysis that their projects will not raise floodwater levels and to provide equivalent on-site flood storage to offset any displaced volume caused by encroachments, such as fill or construction.

A NO vote will leave the current ordinance unchanged. The current ordinance does not explicitly define “Floodway” or “Floodplain” or require developers to offset displaced flood storage caused by encroachments inside the floodplain.

Article #7: Long Pond Watershed Principal Forgiveness Loan

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the purpose of creating a watershed management plan for Long Pond and to authorize the issuance of not more than One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and, further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the conditions and the rate of interest thereon; further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for loan funding for the above-referenced amount through the Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF), it being understood that repayment of the loan funds may be, but is not guaranteed to be, eligible for up to 100% principal forgiveness in the amount up to \$100,000. (Requires a 3/5 ballot vote)

Recommended by the Selectmen (4-1-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

Article #7 Background/Explanation: The Planning Department has received pre-approval for a principal forgiveness loan through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) for the purpose of creating a watershed plan in the Long Pond area. The authority to borrow is required through a Town warrant article and required for the full loan application process.

A “watershed management plan” is a document that guides the residents and relevant stakeholders of a targeted waterbody towards improving the watershed and the water quality within that area. These plans contain recommendations and actions that can protect the watershed after the sources of pollution are identified. Plans encourage different homeowner practices, develop educational materials for residents, set water quality goals, and more. Watershed management plans are created with the future in mind and include input from residents and stakeholders. The goal is to improve the water quality and reduce the frequency of harmful algal blooms on Long Pond.

Work is anticipated to occur over 2-3 years, including public input periods. The amount borrowed over the life of the project is what the loan covers. Most communities pay back whatever interest has accrued upon project completion to avoid future compounding. Rates for this program are currently in the 1% - 2% range but at this time there is no way to know what the rates will be over the next few years. The language below does not expressly state that there is no tax impact since loan forgiveness is not guaranteed. However, to date, no community has failed to meet the standard of/for forgiveness. We currently estimate the total interest cost to be in the vicinity of \$2,000.

A YES vote would allow the Town of Pelham to move forward with the principal forgiveness loan application process. This would ensure that the Town of Pelham takes steps to control water pollution and contamination to the pond.

A NO vote would prevent the application process for the loan and prevent the creation of a watershed plan from being created for Long Pond in 2025.

**Article #8: Professional Fire Fighters of Pelham,
International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), Local 4546
Collective Bargaining Agreement 2025-2030**

Shall the Town vote to approve cost items included in the five (5) year collective bargaining agreement ratified by the Board of Selectmen and the Professional Firefighter's of Pelham, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), Local 4546, which calls for the following increases in salary and benefits and to further raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Twenty One Dollars (\$123,521) to fund this year of the agreement, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Cost</u>
2025	\$123,521	\$123,521
2026	\$128,594	\$252,115
2027	\$ 97,367	\$349,482
2028	\$ 80,737	\$430,219
2029*	\$ 93,503	\$523,722

*Including 3 months of 2030

Article #8 Explanation: The above warrant article would provide funding for a collectively bargained contract between the Professional Firefighters of Pelham, International Association of Fire Fighters Local #4546 and the Town of Pelham. This contract was collectively negotiated between representatives of Local #4546 and representatives of the Pelham Board of Selectmen and their designees.

The covered employees include all full-time firefighters up to and including the rank of Lieutenant.

The proposed contract is a five-year contract to begin at the expiration of this group's current contract that ends on March 31, 2025. The contract provides for an updated wage scale. This increased wage scale will help the Town keep and attract quality firefighters during a time of increased competition for their services.

The proposed contract also has provisions for increases in employee contributions for health insurance benefits. These increases will help offset rising health insurance costs to the Town.

This proposed contract was negotiated in good faith with both sides making concessions and compromises to complete the finished contract.

A YES vote would approve the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Professional Firefighters of Pelham, International Association of Fire Fighters Local #4546 and the Town of Pelham.

A NO vote means that local #4546 would then be working under an expired contract and would need to reopen negotiations with the Town.

Article #9: Operating Budget

Shall the Town vote to 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 herein totaling Twenty-Two Million, Three Hundred Seventy-Seven Thousand, Three Hundred Twenty-Three Dollars (\$22,377,323)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Twenty One Million, Seven Hundred and Twenty-Seven Thousand, Four-Hundred and Twenty-Seven Dollars (\$21,727,427) 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. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (11-0-0)

Department	Selectmen 2025 Approved	Budget Committee 2025 Approved
Assessor	\$ 247,345	\$ 246,647
Budget Committee	\$ 2	\$ 2
Cable Department	\$ 180,340	\$ 180,340
Cemetery	\$ 239,491	\$ 229,189
Conservation	\$ 10,900	\$ 10,900
Debt Service Interest	\$ 40,985	\$ 40,985
Debt Service Principal	\$ 248,507	\$ 248,507
Elections	\$ 23,670	\$ 23,670
Emergency Management	\$ 10,813	\$ 10,813
Fire Department	\$ 3,138,245	\$ 3,138,245
Health Officer	\$ 69,652	\$ 69,652
Health Services	\$ 46,665	\$ 46,665
Highway Maintenance	\$ 2,217,352	\$ 2,217,352
Human Services	\$ 75,650	\$ 75,650
Insurance	\$ 3,560,625	\$ 3,482,715
Legal	\$ 202,500	\$ 202,500
Library	\$ 568,842	\$ 568,842
Parks & Recreation	\$ 497,358	\$ 497,358
Planning Dept	\$ 585,510	\$ 614,970
Police Department	\$ 4,209,815	\$ 4,242,315
Retirement	\$ 2,612,167	\$ 2,604,110
Selectmen	\$ 732,646	\$ 734,223
Senior Center (in Parks & Rec now)	\$ 0	\$ 0

Technology	\$ 315,426	\$ 315,426
Town Buildings	\$ 907,445	\$ 907,445
Town Celebrations	\$ 24,960	\$ 24,960
Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$ 342,382	\$ 341,722
Transfer	\$ 1,388,540	\$ 1,294,600
Treasurer	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
Trust Funds	\$ 520	\$ 520
Total	\$ 22,505,353	\$ 22,377,323

Article #9 Explanation: This is the requested amount of funds necessary to operate all Town-related departments. It does not include any school related costs.

Should the presented operating budget fail to be supported by citizen vote, the Town will revert as per state law, to a "default" budget of \$21,727,427. The default budget is derived by using last year's operational budget with the addition of certain adjustments for previous contractual obligations of the Town or by law. If the Town reverts to a "default" budget, it may result in a reduction in some Town services.

Prior to the Deliberative Session, the Budget Committee (11-0-0) and the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) both recommended a Town operating budget of \$22,377,323.

Article #10: Police Vehicle Lease Purchase

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a three-year lease-purchase agreement in the amount of Four-Hundred Fifty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$456,000) for the purpose of leasing and purchasing seven cruisers for the Police Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) for the first year's payment for that purpose. All proceeds from sale of any vehicles to be replaced by the vehicles purchased under this warrant article will be used to offset the cost of the acquired vehicles. This capital lease agreement contains a non-appropriation (escape) clause. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

Article #10 Explanation: The Police Department seeks to replace seven front-line vehicles in 2025 through a three-year lease purchase agreement as recommended on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP ranks the vehicle replacement project as "Urgent".

The new cruisers will be used by patrol officers who are responding to calls. Once the new fleet is purchased, the older cruisers will be passed down to the administration/detectives or other Town departments. Older vehicles that are currently being used will be traded in to offset the cost of the transaction and we currently anticipate trade value of \$32,500.

Due to the Town's decreasing debt service, the change in debt service over the prior year, after adding this three-year obligation is estimated to impact the median homeowner by approximately \$4.35 on their total 2025 tax bill.

A YES vote would update the front-line patrol vehicle fleet of the Police Department. The operational readiness level of the fleet would be maintained, and maintenance costs would be controlled.

A NO vote would not replace any police vehicles, which would likely increase maintenance costs of the police fleet and potentially increase downtime of some vehicles leading to service disruptions. The fleet would then be presented for purchase in the 2026 operating budget with predictable annual pricing increases.

Article #11: Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing fire apparatus and associated equipment and to raise and appropriate the sum of Five-Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

Article #11 Explanation: The Fire Department seeks to order a replacement for Engine 3 in 2027. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) recommends that this project be funded through a newly established capital reserve fund with at least the first deposit being fully offset with fund balance. The CIP ranks this project as “Needs Research” because the full cost of replacing apparatus, and specifically, what will be purchased is not known yet. This will be determined by a study committee. We anticipate that the purchase will cost over \$1.5 million dollars and would like to start putting away funds in a capital reserve fund. Further deposits will be required to have sufficient funding when the order is placed. The lead time for large fire apparatus is currently three years.

The 2025 deposit into the capital reserve fund would have no new tax impact on the homeowner since it would be fully offset by unassigned fund balance.

A YES vote would begin the savings process towards purchasing a new fire truck. By spreading the cost over several years, it will flatten the cost curve avoiding a large spike in the tax rate should the truck rather be purchased through a single year expenditure.

A NO vote would eliminate the creation of a Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund and likely lead to a future full cost warrant article for a fire truck.

Article #12: Third School Resource Officer

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty-Seven Thousand Nine-Hundred Forty-Nine Dollars (\$87,949), for the purpose of hiring and equipping an additional School Resource Officer effective April 1, 2025. Said amount includes anticipated wages, benefits, taxes, and retirement contributions. If approved, the appropriation for this position will become part of the annual operating budget in subsequent years. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

Article #12 Explanation: *The Police Department seeks to add a third School Resource Officer on April 1, 2025, as the School District is requesting. Adding another School Resource Officer would also allow for the assignment of an officer at Veteran's Memorial Park over the summer.*

The new School Resource Officer would be covered under the Police Collective Bargaining Agreement and estimated first year costs include 39 weeks at the bottom step patrol officer rate, benefits, retirement and the cost to equip the new officer.

Calculation of First Year Costs of New Position:

Wages (40 hours X 39 weeks X \$28.62)	\$	44,647.20
Payroll Taxes (Medicare 1.45%)	\$	647.38
NH Retirement Employer Contribution (31.28%/30.95%)	\$	13,867.42
Equipment (uniform/weapons/radio etc.)	\$	6,000.00
Insurance (Health/Dental/WC/Life)	\$	22,786.64
Total Estimated Cost 4/1/25-12/31/25:		\$ 87,948.64

A YES vote would provide a third School Resource Officer to the Pelham School District. The officer would be overseen by the Pelham Police Department.

A NO vote would leave the current staffing level as is, with two School Resource Officers.

Article #13: Sherburne Road Public Water Supply Design

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the purpose of funding the engineering and design costs associated with the development of a public water supply to service the Sherburne Road area of the Town. This sum will be used for the planning, surveying, designing, and engineering necessary to evaluate and create plans for a proposed water supply system to the Sherburne Road area of Town to include all properties beginning at Map 39, Lot 1-103 (including Scenic View Drive) and including all lots reflected on Tax Map 39 Lots on Sherburne Road to the west of Lot 1-103, as well as all Lots on Tax Maps 32 and 38. This appropriation will be considered a non-lapsing appropriation pursuant to RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the monies are expended or December 31, 2030, whichever is earlier. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (7-4-0)

Article #13 Explanation: *This warrant article was requested by the Pelham Water Commission. It is designed to appropriate funding to begin the process of finalizing any public water supply conceptual designs for the Sherburne Road area of Town, which has been identified as critically lacking a consistent well water supply for certain residences in that area. The Board of Selectmen voted on 1/7/25 to include the warrant article on the 2025 ballot.*

A YES vote would authorize the Pelham Water Commission, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to request up to \$20,000 in order to pay for professional engineering services, or to use towards grant funding related to the creation of a public water supply in the Sherburne Road area of Town.

A NO vote would result in the Pelham Water Commission receiving no money to fund any professional engineering services, or to use towards grant funding related to the creation of a public water supply in the Sherburne Road area of Town. If funds are not approved, the Water Commission would need to try and seek funding from other sources.

Article #14: Highway Block Grant

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$350,000) for repair, maintenance, purchase of equipment and upgrading of Town roads, to be offset by anticipated Highway Block Grant funds? This special article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, IV. No money to be raised by taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (9-0-0)

Article #14 Explanation: Each year the State of New Hampshire distributes a portion of the State highway fund to municipalities through a local highway aid formula based on population and miles of class IV and V roads. The State highway fund includes revenues from the road toll (gas tax) and State motor vehicle registration fees. These funds can be used for the construction and maintenance of class IV and V roads – including the purchase of equipment used to maintain these roads. These funds could also be used to implement sidewalks.

The proposed article amount is slightly less than the \$361,213 State FY 2025 estimate for Pelham, and if we receive more than \$350,000, then the difference would be used to offset the municipal portion of the 2025 tax rate. In the unlikely event that Pelham receives less than \$350,000, then the NH DRA would initiate a process to adjust the article down to only the realized amount of the grant. (Confirmed by Pelham's NH Department of Revenue Municipal Advisor back on October 20, 2023)

As a point of reference, the 2024 article anticipated \$345,000 in block grant monies and we received approximately \$357,697.

A YES vote would allow the appropriation to be non-lapsing.

A NO vote still means we receive this state shared revenue source. However, we will no longer have the non-lapsing appropriation.

Article #15: Mammoth/Marsh Roundabout Additional Funding

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate an additional sum of Two-Million One-Hundred Four-Thousand and Eight Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$2,104,813) for the purpose of constructing a roundabout located at Mammoth Road and Marsh Road, of which One-Million Six-Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand One-Hundred Eighty-Nine Dollars (\$1,667,189) will be funded by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) as a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program Grant, and Four-Hundred Thirty-Seven Thousand and Six-Hundred Twenty-Four Dollars (\$437,624) to be expended from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No money to be raised by taxation. This appropriation is in addition to the non-lapsing appropriation authorized by Article 8 of the 2024 Town Meeting for the construction of two roundabouts at the intersections of Sherburne Road and Mammoth Road and Mammoth Road and Marsh Road. This is a special, non-lapsing warrant article in accordance with RSA 32:7, IV. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (11-0-0)

Article #15 Explanation: *The Town currently has \$3,460,000 appropriated for the construction of two Mammoth Road roundabouts that must be constructed in specific order. Construction bids for the first (southernly) roundabout located at Sherburne/Mammoth were received on November 14, 2024 and the total cost is now anticipated to come in significantly higher than we were originally expecting. The estimated completion date of the first roundabout is spring 2025 and we already have sufficient funding for the project.*

Engineers also estimate the cost of the second (northerly) roundabout located at Mammoth/Marsh, anticipated for the fall of 2025, to come in higher. Therefore, the Town is requesting an additional appropriation in the amount of \$2,104,813 to complete the second roundabout. The increased cost will continue to be funded through a Department of Transportation reimbursement grant that covers 60% of the design phase and 80% of the construction phase of each project.

The Town's share of the increased cost will be fully offset with up to \$437,624 in unassigned fund balance so there will be no tax impact for this article. Should the article fail, the construction of the northern rotary will not move forward, and the Town would be responsible for the \$13k spent so far on the design phase for the second roundabout.

If approved, the total authorized appropriation for the design, permitting, and construction of the Mammoth Road and Marsh Road roundabout will be \$2,960,000, of which \$855,187 was appropriated by Article 8 of the 2024 Town Meeting and \$2,104,813 is appropriated by this article.

A YES vote would allow enough funding for the second round about to be built with no monies raised through taxation.

A NO vote would prohibit the Town from using the stated funding shift, effectively stopping the process of construction of the 2nd round about at the intersection of Mammoth and Marsh Roads.

Article #16: Elderly Exemption

Shall the Town modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for the elderly exemption from property taxes, based on the assessed value, for qualified taxpayers to be as follows:

- For persons aged 65 to include 74 years of age, \$116,000
- For persons 75 to including 79 years of age, \$167,000
- For persons 80 years and above, \$216,000

To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married to each other for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$48,000, if single, not more than a combined net income of \$58,000, if married, and own assets (excluding the value of the person's residence) of not more than \$250,000. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #16 Explanation: *To reflect current market rates and the economy at large, the Assessor's Office is asking to increase the elderly tax exemption to the rates listed above. The new limits,*

proposed above, are based on an 2% increase in overall assed value, which was current at the time of drafting the article in October 2024.

A YES vote would increase the tax exemption for the elderly by the rates listed above.

A NO vote would leave the elderly exemption rates as is:

For persons aged 65 to 74 years of age: \$114,000

For persons aged 75 to 79 years of age: \$164,000

For persons 80 years and above: \$212,000

Article #17: Blind Exemption

Shall the Town of Pelham vote to modify the current exemption from property taxes for inhabitants who are legally blind, as determined by the blind services program, pursuant to RSA 72:37, to increase the exemption from \$57,800 to \$59,000 on the assessed value of the inhabitant's residential real estate, provided all other eligibility criteria shall remain unchanged. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #17 Explanation: *Most towns have left the exemption at the minimum prescribed by the state (\$15,000). The RSA provides for amendment when the community decides to do so. Our current blind exemption was updated in 2023.*

The blind exemption is not an income means test; however, the person must be certified by the State Department of Education to be eligible for the exemption. This reflects the percentage increase in Pelham assessments from 2023 to 2024.

A YES vote would increase the current Blind Exemption from \$57,800 to \$59,000.

A NO vote would leave the exemption at its current level of \$57,800.

Article #18: Adopt Disabled Exemption

Shall the Town adopt the provisions of RSA 72:37-b, Exemption for the Disabled from property tax, based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to be \$116,000. To qualify the person must be eligible under Title II or Title XVI of The Federal Social Security Act for benefits to the disabled. Additionally, to qualify, the person: must be a resident of the state for at least five (5) years; must occupy the property as his/her principle place of abode; must own the property (as defined in RSA 72:37-b (IV) individually or jointly, or if owned by a spouse, they must have been married for at least five (5) consecutive years; had in the calendar year preceding April 1 a net income from all sources, of not more than \$48,000, if a single person, and \$58,000, if married; and own net assets not in excess of \$250,000, excluding the value of the person's residence as described in RSA 72:37-b (III)(b). (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

To qualify the person:

- Must be under age 65.*
- A resident of NH for at least 5 years.*
- Must have been receiving Title II or Title XVI (Social Security Disability benefits convert to retirement benefits at 65).*

- *Property where the exemption is claimed must be the applicant’s principal place of abode, to the exclusion of others; or*
- *Must be owned by the resident; or*
- *Owned by a resident jointly or in common with the resident’s spouse, either of whom meet the requirements for the exemption; or*
- *Owned by a resident jointly or in common with a person not the resident’s spouse, if the resident meets the applicable requirements for the exemption claimed; or*
- *Owned by a resident, or the resident’s spouse, either of whom meet the requirements for the exemption claimed and when they have been married to each other for at least five consecutive years.*

A YES vote would allow those that qualify to apply for this new exemption.

A NO vote means this exemption will not be available to qualifying taxpayers.

Article #19: Water Commission Referendum Question 1

To see if the Town vote will vote, in a non-binding advisory capacity, to support the Pelham Water Commission continuing plans to design and build, using any combination of state, federal and private funding and local taxation, the necessary infrastructure to supply public water to the Sherburne Road area of Town to include all properties beginning on Tax Map 39 Lots on Sherburne Road to the west of Lot 1-103, as well as all Lots on Tax Maps 32 and 38? (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #19 Explanation: Since its creation in 2019, the Water Commission has worked on bringing water to Pelham, with its primary focus on the Sherburne Road area, and then subsequently expanding to the rest of Town. This referendum is intended to gauge public opinion on whether the Pelham Water Commission should continue planning the design and construction of infrastructure to provide public water specifically to the Sherburne Road area.

This article has no immediate tax impact, as it does not appropriate funds. It simply offers guidance to the Water Commission on the level of community support for pursuing this project using a combination of state, federal, and private funding, as well as potential local taxation in the future. The outcome of the vote will help inform future decisions but does not obligate the Town to proceed.

A YES vote supports continued planning and design efforts to establish a public water supply in the designated areas of Sherburne Road.

A NO vote directs the Water Commission to discontinue planning efforts for this public water supply project on Sherburne Road.

Article #20: Water Commission Referendum Question 2

To see if the Town will vote, in a non-binding advisory capacity, to support the Pelham Water Commission continuing plans to design and build, using any combination of state, federal and private funding and local taxation, the necessary infrastructure to supply public water along the Route 38 commercial area from Main Street south to the Massachusetts State Line? (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #20 Explanation: Since its creation in 2019, the Water Commission has worked on bringing water to Pelham, with its primary focus on the Sherburne Road area and then subsequently expanding to the rest of Town. This referendum is intended to gauge public opinion on whether the Pelham Water Commission should continue planning the design and construction of infrastructure to provide public water specifically to Route 38, between the intersection with Main Street and the State Line.

This article has no immediate tax impact, as it does not appropriate funds. It simply offers guidance to the Water Commission on the level of community support for pursuing this project using a combination of state, federal, and private funding, as well as potential local taxation in the future. The outcome of the vote will help inform future decisions but does not obligate the Town to proceed.

A YES vote supports continued planning and design efforts to establish a public water supply along Route 38, helping to ensure a reliable and adequate water supply for businesses and potential commercial expansion.

A NO vote directs the Water Commission to discontinue planning efforts for this public water supply project along Route 38.

Article #21: Water Commission Referendum Question 3

To see if the Town will vote, in a non-binding advisory capacity, to support the Pelham Wastewater Commission continuing to seek publicly funded wastewater treatment solutions for the Town? (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #21 Explanation: In conjunction with efforts to bring public water to Pelham, the Water Commission established a Wastewater Research Subcommittee in 2024 to explore wastewater management and treatment solutions for the Town. This referendum is non-binding and is intended only to gauge public opinion on whether the Town supports continued efforts to seek publicly funded wastewater treatment solutions for Pelham.

This article has no immediate tax impact, as it does not authorize or allocate any funding. Instead, it provides guidance on whether the Town supports further research and planning to determine the feasibility of wastewater service options for the Town of Pelham.

A YES vote directs the Pelham Wastewater Research Subcommittee to continue evaluating the feasibility of a public wastewater management system for the Town. Any future construction or operational expenses for such a system would require a separate Town-wide vote.

A NO vote directs the Wastewater Research Subcommittee to discontinue further exploration of a public wastewater management system until further notice.

<p>The following warrant articles below are “Citizens Petition Warrant Articles” and not put forward by the Board of Selectmen. Per RSA 39:3, any citizen has the right to submit a warrant for consideration by the voters after collecting the signatures of at least 25 voters registered in the Town of Pelham.</p>

Article #22: Citizens Petition

Shall Pelham study the partisan official ballot system to understand implications on taxpayers, administrative staff & volunteers for the election of town officers as provided under RSA 669:12?

RSA 669:12 states:

Any town may vote to adopt the partisan official ballot system for election of town officers under an article in the warrant for any town meeting, and may rescind such action in like manner. The partisan ballot system shall not be in effect until the town election first following the town meeting at which such system is adopted. A plurality shall elect in towns using the partisan ballot system.

Source: 1979, 410:1, effective July 1, 1979.

In addition, by accepting this petition, the town may be responsible for any costs associated with additional primaries required by this ballot system. (Majority vote required)

Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (0-3-2)

Article #23: Citizens Petition

Per RSA 289:6, II-a(a), shall the Town of Pelham delegate the duties and responsibilities of the Cemetery Trustees to the Board of Selectmen? A majority vote in the affirmative shall delegate these duties to be effective 90 days after adoption and shall continue until rescinded by vote of the Town meeting. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0-1)

Article #24: Citizens Petition

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) for the Pelham Trails Subcommittee, for the purpose of funding expenditures directly related to the development, improvement, and maintenance of Town trails infrastructure, including but not limited to trail repairs, signage, construction of new trails, and maintenance of existing trails. This appropriation shall be funded by taxation and shall be non-lapsing, with any unexpended funds to be carried forward into subsequent years for the same purpose. (Majority vote required)

Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (0-3-2)

Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (0-10-0)

Given under our hands this 27th day of January 2025,

Jason Croteau, Chair - 2025

Charlene Takesian, Vice Chair - 2025

Jaie Bergeron - 2026

Heather Corbett - 2026

Kimberly Abare - 2027