

TOWN OF UNION
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JUNE 2016

TOWN MEETING

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING JUNE 20, 7:00 PM

It is that time of the year again! It seems like a month ago we had our 2015 Town Meeting. I urge all of you to attend the Town Meeting, this is where things happen and it is one of the purest forms of government.

We will be electing, from the floor, 7 members of the budget committee and once we get through that process we will be voting on all of the spending articles and operating articles that are printed in the enclosed town report.

We have to update our Floodplain Ordinance and there are some other interesting articles.

HOMESTEAD— FROM THE ASSESSOR

The Homestead Exemption increases for 2016 from \$10,000 to \$15,000. For 2017, the Homestead Exemption will be \$20,000. You do not need to complete a new application.

For 2016, in theory, this would reduce the taxes for each Homestead qualified owner by \$80+/- if budgets were not going to increase. But, wait for it, here is the rest of the story. The increase in the Homestead exemption reduces the taxable value of the town by \$5,000,000 dollars. Why is that important?

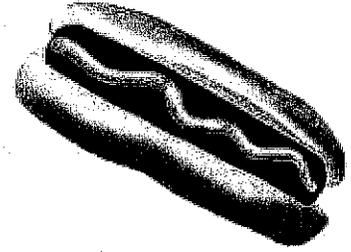
The tax rate calculation is the amount of budget dollars to be raised divided by the town's taxable value.

If the budget dollars to be raised do not change and the taxable value decreases, then the tax rate increases.

But, you ask, what about the new construction value, does that not reduce the tax rate? Glad you asked. To cover the decrease in the taxable value from the increase in the Homestead Exemption amount, the new construction needs to increase by \$5,000,000 for 2016 just to break even and have a flat tax rate.

I am required to track the new value increases each year for the LD 1 calculation. Since 2009 the town has never had a gross value increase of over \$2,500,000 in new construction. Gross increase, not net increase. Decreases in value come from a variety of reasons including correction of details, removal of buildings or parts of buildings, surveys with better acreages and other reasons.

So the taxable value is starting \$5,000,000 in the hole which means if the budgets do not increase the tax rate is going up. And as the sale tax increased for snacks and such, tax payers are going to pay more in taxes. So much for the state government 'reducing' your property taxes.



**HOT DOGS SERVED
BY THE FIRE AND
AMBULANCE
DEPARTMENTS.**

**COME TO THE MEET-
ING AND SUPPORT
OUR DEPARTMENTS
WHILE ENJOYING A
GREAT TOWN MEET-
ING. 6:30 DOORS
OPEN!**

- BRING A DESSERT TO SHARE, COOKIES, BROWNIES ETC.
- Free Coffee and Water
- Free good times with your friends and neighbors!
- Did I mention HOT DOGS for a small fee????

BUDGET COMMITTEE: We have an unusually large number of openings this year on the Budget Committee, and although you can't change the world on the committee you can learn an awful lot about Town Government here. Simply show up at Town Meeting and ask someone to nominate you or nominate yourself. It is only about 3 evenings a year!

OTHER COMMITTEES: We also have openings on other committees including but not limited to: Planning Board, Appeals Board, Recreation and our newest committee to be established; Aging in Place. Come in or call the Town Office for more details.

ELECTIONS, PLEASE VOTE: It is so important that you come out to vote on June 14th and then come to the Town Meeting on June 20th. The Board of Selectmen has enclosed a letter regarding the MSAD #40 increases and has suggested you vote no on the school budget. No matter how you feel about the subject, it is hard to complain when you don't vote.

ELECTIONS

JUNE 14, 8AM-8PM

TOWN MEETING

JUNE 20, 7:00 PM