

by the tax levy. An example is a bond premium which is the difference between the market price of a bond and its face value. A premium will occur when the bond's stated interest rate is set higher than the true interest cost (the market rate). Additions to the levy limit for debt exclusion are restricted to the true interest cost incurred to finance the excluded project. Premiums received at the time of sale must be offset against the stated interest cost in computing the debt exclusion. If receipt of the premium and the payment of interest at maturity of an excluded debt occur in different fiscal years, reservation of the premium for future year's debt service is required at the end of the fiscal year when the premium was received.

Debt Limit – The maximum amount of gross or net debt that is legally permitted under State Law.

Debt Policy – Part of an overall capital financing policy that provides evidence of a commitment to meet infrastructure needs through a planned program of future financing. The Town of Needham has debt policies that have been developed in consultation with the Finance Committee and reviewed and approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Debt Service – The amount paid annually to cover the cost of both principal and interest on a debt issuance until its retirement.

Department - A service providing entity of the town government.

Division - A budgeted sub-unit of a department.

Encumbrance – The setting aside of funds to meet known obligations.

Enterprise Fund – A municipal fund established for the operation of a municipal utility, health care, recreational, or transportation facility whereby the operations are fully funded by the fees associated with that enterprise rather than by the tax levy. The "surplus" or retained earnings generated by the operation of the enterprise remain with the fund to offset future capital improvements, extraordinary maintenance expenses, or to reduce future fees and charges of the fund.

Expenditure Account Code - An expenditure classification according to the type of item purchased or service obtained, for example, regular compensation, energy expense, communications, educational supplies, and vehicle equipment.

Fiscal Year - The twelve-month financial period used by the Town beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following calendar year. The Town's fiscal year is numbered according to the year in which it ends.

Fixed Assets – Assets of a long-term character, which are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, building, and improvements other than buildings, machinery, and equipment.

Formula Grant – Federal funding for which the allocation methodology is strictly determined in federal statute or regulation, and for which a government agency prepares a single application and receives subsequent years' allocation without re-application.

Free Cash – Free cash is the amount of the General Fund unassigned fund balance that may be used as a source to fund appropriations. The Massachusetts Department of Revenue certifies the amount of "free cash" resulting from closing the financial books as of

June 30, the end of the fiscal year. Free cash may only be used after the certification process by the Department of Revenue is complete. For example, the July 1, 2012 certified amount may be used to fund supplemental appropriations voted during fiscal year 2013, or applied as a revenue source to support the fiscal 2014 appropriations that may be voted in the spring of 2013.

Fringe Benefits – Employee-related costs other than salary, e.g., insurance and retirement costs.

Full Faith and Credit – A pledge of the general taxing power for the payment of debt obligations. Bonds carrying such pledges are referred to as general obligation bonds or full faith and credit bonds.

Full-time Equivalent Position (FTE) - A concept used to group together part-time positions into full-time units.

Fund - An independent fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts recording cash and/or other resources with all related liabilities, obligations, reserves, and equities that are segregated for specific activities or objectives. Among the fund types used by the Town are General, Special Revenue, Capital Projects, Trust, and Enterprise.

FY - Fiscal Year

GASB – This refers to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board which is currently the source of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) used by state and local governments in the United States. It is a private, non-governmental organization. The GASB has issued Statements, Interpretations, Technical Bulletins, and Concept Statements defining GAAP for state and local governments since 1984.

GASB 34 –GASB Statement Number 34 set new GAAP requirements for reporting major capital assets, including infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sewer facilities, and dams. The Town of Needham has implemented the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB) Statement Number 34, Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for State and Local Governments, financial reporting model. This standard changed the entire reporting process for local governments, requiring new entity-wide financial statements, in addition to the current fund statements and other additional reports such as Management Discussion and Analysis.

GASB 45 – The Town of Needham's financial statements are required to implement Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement Number 45 for other post employment benefits (OPEBs) including health care, life insurance, and other non-pension benefits offered to retirees. This new standard addresses how local governments should account for and report their costs related to post employment health care and other non-pension benefits, such as the Town's retiree health benefit. Historically, the Town's cost was funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. GASB 45 requires that the Town accrue the cost of the retiree health insurance and other post employment benefits during the period of employees' active employment, while the benefits are being earned, and disclose the unfunded actuarial accrued liability in order to accurately account for the total future cost of post employment benefits and the financial impact on the Town. This funding methodology mirrors the funding approach used for pension/retirement benefits. The Town has established Fund and annually appropriates the required contribution based on updated reports. The Fund will allow the Town to capture long-term investment returns and make progress towards reducing the unfunded liability.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) - The basic principles of accounting and reporting applicable to state and local governments, including the use of the modified accrual or accrual basis of accounting, as appropriate, for measuring financial position and operating results. These principles must be observed to provide a basis of comparison for governmental units.

General Fund - The fund into which the general (non-earmarked) revenues of the municipality are deposited and from which money is appropriated to pay the general expenses of the municipality.

General Obligation Bonds – Bonds for the payment of which the full faith and credit of the issuing government are pledged.

Infrastructure – The underlying foundation or basic framework of an organization or system, e.g., roads, bridges, buildings, land, and natural resources.

Lease-Purchase Agreements – Contractual agreements which are termed "leases," but which in substance amount to purchase contracts in which the financing is provided by an outside party.

Levy Limit – Property tax levy limits that constrain the total amount of revenue that can be raised from the property tax. In Massachusetts, the levy limit is governed by Proposition 2½.

Mandate – A requirement from a higher level of government that a lower level government perform a task in a particular way or in conformance with a particular standard.

Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (MWPAT) - A statewide revolving fund that commenced operations in 1990 to address necessary environmental actions outlined in the Federal Clean Water Act.

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) - The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority is a Massachusetts public authority established by an act of the Legislature in 1984 to provide wholesale water and sewer services to 2.5 million people in 61 metropolitan Boston communities. The Town of Needham disposes all wastewater through the MWRA system and purchases drinking water as needed from the MWRA during the year.

Modified Accrual Basis - The accrual basis of accounting adapted to the governmental fund type, wherein only current assets and current liabilities are generally reported on fund balance sheets and the fund operating statements present financial flow information. Revenues are recognized when they become both measurable and available to finance expenditures of the current period. Expenditures are recognized when the related fund liability is incurred except for a few specific exceptions. All governmental funds and expendable trust funds are accounted for using the modified accrual basis of accounting.

Note Payable – In general, an unconditional written promise signed by the maker to pay a certain sum in money on demand or at a fixed or determinable time either to the bearer or to the person designated therein.

Official Statement - The municipal equivalent of a bond prospectus.

Operating Budget - A budget making appropriations for the ordinary maintenance or administration of activities for the fiscal year.

Operating Equipment - Equipment that has a life expectancy of more than one year and a value of less than \$25,000 dollars. Equipment with a useful life of five or more years and a value greater than \$25,000 dollars is capital equipment.

Overlay Surplus - Any balance in the overlay account of a given year in excess of the amount remaining to be collected or abated can be transferred into this account. At the end of each fiscal year, unused overlay surplus is "closed" out to fund balance, in other words, it becomes a part of Free Cash (see Undesignated Fund Balance).

Override - A permanent increase of the Town's levy limit (but not the levy ceiling) when a majority of voters in an election approve such an override. The override amount becomes part of the levy base when setting the next year's levy limit. To place an Override question on the ballot requires a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen.

Pay-As-You-Go – A term used to describe the financial policy of a government which finances all of its capital outlay from current revenues rather than by borrowing. A government which pays for some improvements from current revenues and others by borrowing is said to be on a partial or modified pay-as-you-go basis.

Pay-As-You-Use – A term used to describe the financial policy of a government which finances its capital outlays from borrowing proceeds and pays for capital assets over their useful life.

Performance Measure - An indicator of progress toward a goal or strategy. Measures can be defined for identifying output, work or service quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity.

Proposition 2½ - That measure which limits municipal property taxes to 2½ percent of the community's full and fair cash value (levy ceiling), and which limits the amount of revenue a municipality can raise through property taxes (levy limit) to 2½ percent each year, plus a factor for new growth. A municipality may exceed its levy limit in two ways: override or debt exclusion.

Provisional Capital – A capital request that is submitted by a department to identify a future need or obligation, but the department is not in the position to provide the necessary details so that the request can be evaluated.

Reserve Fund - An amount set aside annually by a vote of Town Meeting to provide a funding source for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. Only the Finance Committee can authorize transfers from the reserve fund. Any balance remaining in the reserve fund at the end of the fiscal year is "closed" out to fund balance and ceases to be available.

Special Revenue Fund - Used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources (other than special assessments, expendable trusts, or sources for major capital projects) that are legally restricted to expenditures for specific purposes. A special revenue fund is accounted for in the same manner as a General Fund.

Stabilization Fund – Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5B allows a municipality to appropriate annually to such fund an amount to be raised in the preceding fiscal year; the aggregate amount in the fund shall not exceed ten percent of the equalized

valuation of the municipality. The Treasurer shall be custodian of the fund and may invest the proceeds legally; any interest earned shall remain with the fund. The Stabilization Fund may be appropriated by Town Meeting. The appropriation may be used for any lawful purpose.

Technology Infrastructure - The hardware and software that support information requirements, including computer workstations and associated software, network and communications equipment, and system-wide devices.

Town Meeting - Town Meeting is both an event and a governmental body. As an event, it is a gathering of a Town's representative Town Meeting Members (TMM), and is referred to as "the Town Meeting." As a governmental body, it is the legislative body for the Town of Needham, and is referred to simply as "Town Meeting."

Trust Funds - Funds held by the Town in a fiduciary role, to be expended for the purposes specified by the donor.

Uniform Procurement Act – Enacted in 1990, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30B establishes uniform procedures for local government to use when contracting for supplies, equipment, services and real estate. The act is implemented through the Office of the Inspector General.

Warrant - The warrant lists a Town Meeting's time, place, and agenda. A warrant is also known as a warning. A Town Meeting's action is not valid unless the subject was listed on the warrant.