

**Town of Hill
Budget Committee
2026 Budget**

Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes 2/11/26

Members Present: Bruce Blazon (Chair), Harold Knott, MaryAnne Moses (Ex-Officio), Bill Machado, Jr. and Karen Sylvestre, Lexi White (Ex-Officio), Frank Simeone, Tom Angeley, Tom Scribner and Marshall Bennett (Vice Chair)

Members Absent: None

Public: Shelly Henry, Charlie Henry, Stephen Thomson and David White

First Order of Business:

Review Minutes: No correction requested. BB motioned to except minutes.

Seconded: FS

All In Favor: Yes

Chair Vote: Affirmative

Action Items:

Lexi White assisted with executive GL presentation. Read/verified the executive/general ledger section numbers during the public presentation and assisted with finalizing over/under figures for those GL accounts.

Mary Moses confirmed paving measurements and revenues. She will double-check with Amanda (tomorrow morning) whether R&D Paving measurements were submitted and confirmed and finalized revenue figures to close out draft revenues.

Overview

- Line-by-line presentation of the 2025 budget to the public; committee reviewed GL sections and recommended matching most Select Board numbers.
- Select Board recommended total: \$1,636,112.58; committee notes this is a \$145,881.75 increase over the draft/last-year totals.

- Town-wide 2025 underspend: \$220,236.80 (actuals vs. 2025 budget), many departments showed underspends, while key increases came from ambulance and health insurance.
- Major public discussion focused on ambulance service sustainability (big increase), fire department support, and highway/street underspends (~\$158k).
- Administrative follow-ups: finalize revenues (MS-737), correct draft numbers, and send MS-737 to Select Board for completion.

General Government line items

- Executive section 2025 budget was \$98,989; underspent by \$10,581.44; Select Board recommended cut \$5,045.01; Budget Committee recommends \$93,943.99 (matches Select).
- Budget Committee matched Select Board on these line items: Town Clerk \$75,615 (line-item increase \$955), Tax Collector \$6,570, Re-evaluation of Property \$19,981, Legal Expense \$15,000, Planning & Zoning \$5,395, General Government Building \$26,400, Professional Liability Insurance \$30,133.
- Cemeteries 2025 budget was \$11,400; underspent by \$3,500; Select Board proposed \$1,000 for 2026; delta \$10,400.
- General government totals: 2025 budget \$305,017; underspent by \$27,475.81; Select Board recommended \$296,350.99.
- No substantive public comments recorded on the presented section.

Public Safety: Police, Ambulance, Fire

- Budget committee recommended \$192,712 for police, matching the Select Board; includes a \$8,661 annual lease payment (5-year) contingent on a warrant article to use capital reserve for a new cruiser; health insurance cited as a major cost driver.
- Ambulance: 2025 budget \$142,468 (underspent \$1,153.95); 2026 budget set at \$217,415.59; delta \$74,947.59.
- Fire Department: committee recommended \$125,893 matching the Select Board; 2025 budget \$76,391.82 (overspent \$14,330.32); delta \$49,501.18; a 10% proposed cut failed; noted turnover (three chiefs in ~2.5 years) and expressed support to fund rebuilding.
- Emergency Management: committee recommended \$2,325 matching the Select Board; 2025 budget \$2,325 (underspent \$2,160); no delta.
- Overall totals discussed: total budget \$3,365,146.82 (underspent \$8,947.93); 2026 collection budget \$538,345.59 with a delta of \$173,198.77.
- No substantive public comments recorded on the presented section.

Highways, Streets & Sanitation

- Budget committee recommended GL 4312 (highway & streets) \$436,620, matching the select board; selectmen's 2026 budget set \$436,620, a decrease of \$21,954 vs prior year.

- 2025 highway & streets totals reported as \$478,416 (overall) and \$458,570 on a line item; 2025 underspent by \$158,000 (alternate figure \$146,536.50 on another line).
 - GL 4316 (street lighting) recommended \$5,844; prior year exceeded budget by \$315.94.
 - GL 4319 (reconstruction of highways) recommended \$14,000; prior year underspent by \$11,835.48.
 - Underspending attributed to prolonged staff absence and a death; plan to resume previous maintenance/cost-saving practices and adopt an approximate five-year rotation.
- No substantive public comments recorded on the presented section.

Budget Totals, Revenues & MS-737 actions

- Grand total for 2025 budgets was \$1,490,230.82; town-wide underspend \$220,236.80; Select Board recommended \$1,636,112.58 (increase \$145,881.75).
 - Cultural & recreational 2024 budget was \$61,282, underspent \$4,688.04; Select Board recommended \$62,152 (+\$870).
 - Select Board recommended \$300 for conservation dues; budget committee concurred.
 - Ambulance (line 4215) costs increased due to higher call volume across municipalities; initial Bristol estimate \$240,000 was reduced by the local fire chief by about \$30,000.
- Committee approved minutes from 1-21-26 and 2-4 as amended; committee voted unanimously to send the budget to the Select Board for completion of the MS-737; Admin will draft and distribute the MS-737; next meeting is next Wednesday the 18th to finalize the school budget.
- No substantive public comments recorded on the presented section.

New Business:

- Reviewed two sets of meeting minutes. 1/21/26 and 2/4/2026
- Changes to strike line related to re-evaluation amounts. Recommended and approved for meeting minutes 2/4/26.

BB motioned to approve 1/21/26
 FS Seconded
 All Affirmative – Yes

BB motioned to approve 2/4/26
 LW Seconded

All affirmative – Yes

- BB motioned to send back to the select board for filling out the MS 737 as is. FS seconded. Vote as unanimous.

BB ended meeting at 8:15pm

Respectfully Submitted,

MaryAnne Moses, Secretary

Minutes approved by attending Budget Committee members 2/18/2026