



# Capital Planning in Arlington:

A 30 Year Learning Process and Still Evolving

Association of Town Finance Committees  
Charles Foskett  
October 21, 2017



## Agenda

- Membership and Organization
- Capital Planning Objectives
- Ground-up Capital Planning
- Capital Planning and Annual Budgets
- Financing Strategies
- Managing Debt. Planning Ahead
- The 5% Rule
- Getting Buy-in Across Constituencies



## Capital Planning Committee

### In Arlington...

- CPC advises Town Manager, FinCom and Town Meeting
- CPC members represent:
  - FinCom
  - Treasurer
  - School Department
  - Town Manager
  - Comptroller
  - Town Meeting and Citizens
- The CPC uses a rolling five-year plan, the first year of which is the capital budget

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## Committee Membership

- Brian Rehrig – Citizen Appointee, Vice Chair
  - **Dean Carman – Treasurer**
  - **John Danizio - School Department Designee**
  - Steve Andrew - Citizen Appointee, Secretary
  - Charlie Foskett - Finance Committee Designee, Chair
  - **Sandy Pooler - Town Manager Designee**
  - Chris Moore - Citizen Appointee
  - **Richard Viscay - Comptroller**
  - Barbara Thornton - Citizen Appointee
  - **Amy Fidalgo – Management Analyst**
  - Timur Yontar - Citizen Advisor
  - Joe Barr – Citizen Advisor
- Many towns do not include Town staff members in their capital committee
  - Arlington considers staff membership critical to capital planning success:
    - Town staffers know how things really work
    - Having Town and School at the table insures a high degree of cooperation
    - Having town/school management and financial professionals involved in the process gives department managers comfort that they are getting a fair hearing
    - Having strong citizen, Town Meeting Member and FinCom participation gives Town Meeting comfort that taxpayers money being allocated for big expenditures is given close scrutiny and careful planning

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**Why Capital Planning?**

- Most town budgets are primarily limited by Prop 2½
- Rarely will budget growth, even in high growth towns, support large jumps in expenditures
- Taxpayers, Selectmen, other Elected Officials and Town Meetings don’t like financial surprises
- Large capital expenditures for infrastructure and equipment are often not supportable in a single budget year
- Failure to maintain infrastructure and capital assets can result in reduced services, citizen anxiety and even injury or death to Town workers or the public
- Employees deliver services, but the delivery platforms are the tools, equipment and infrastructure of the capital base from which government works

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## Planning

- The late and revered Yogi Berra: “It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future.”
- “...about the future”:
  - What is it we will need?
  - When will we need it?
  - Where will we get the funds to pay for it?
  - Who will manage its use?
  - Who will maintain it?

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## Capital Planning

- Capital Planning sets and meets long-range expectations for current and future capital expenditures.
- Capital Planning sets and meets expectations for Town executives and management, the Finance Committee, Town Meeting and citizens.
- Successful Capital Planning reduces or eliminates uncertainty in the acquisition of capital assets.
- Successful Capital Planning facilitates postponing some capital expenditures in favor of others as part of the planning process. (Abraham Maslow, “Psychology of Being”, 1970: Delayed gratification)
- Successful Capital Planning gives Town Meeting and voters comfort while spending large sums of taxpayers money.
- Successful Capital Planning helps improve the Town’s bond rating
- *Choose a good database tool to maintain record*

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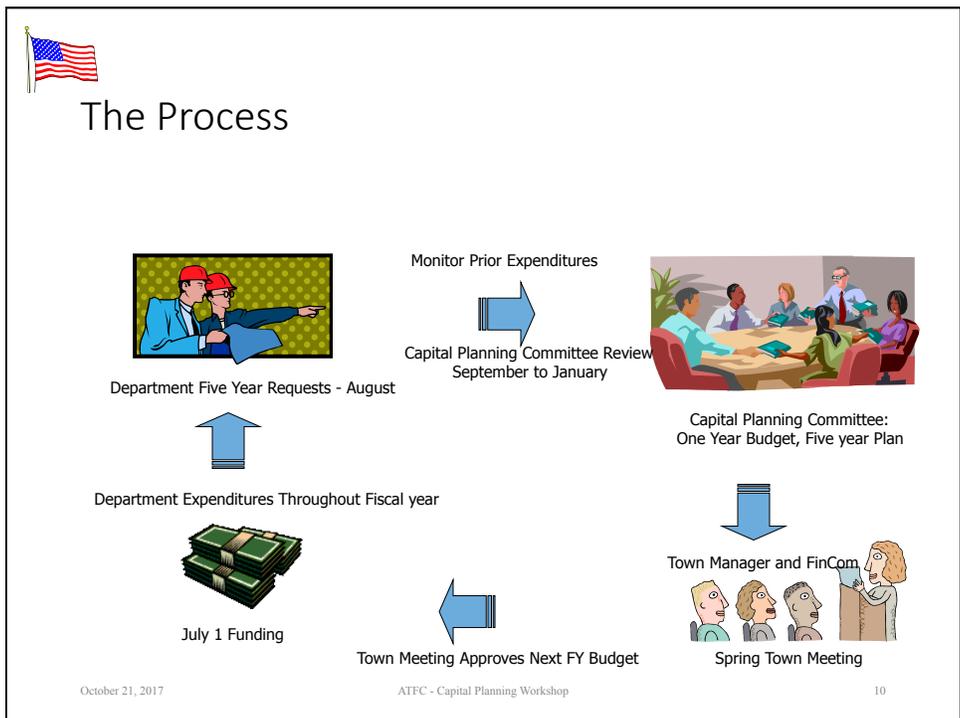
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## Some Comments on Process

- **The Town Manager normally owns the Capital Budget**
  - TM manages purchasing, implementation, maintenance, and departments. Sometimes the School Superintendent assumes specific ownership
  - Department heads request capital purchases or assets, because somebody has to have custody, care and control of the asset over its life
  - Private organizations or citizens do not request capital assets
  - A Capital Planning Committee reviews recommendations and requests, arbitrates and recommends a budget and plan to the Finance Committee and Town Meeting
  - Town Meeting approves a Capital Budget and Plan

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## Pre-1986 A time of Change and Endless Debate





\$500 - \$800 in early 1970's, \$2,000 to \$3,000 in today's currency  
Every desk had a typewriter. With memory (2,000-\$5,000 then)

- Pre 1986
  - Selectric typewriter vs. ladder truck
  - Endless debates
  - Huge surprises
  - Wide swings
  - Little intra-department coordination



1985 Pierce-Arrow Ladder 1985 ~ \$250,000

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## 30 Years of Capital Budgeting

**2016**

- Paperless data entry
- Comprehensive debt schedules
- Closer integration with Town Management
- Committee expansion?

**2011**

- New generation membership
- Transition in Town Management
- More focus on debt management and forecasting, AAA rating

**2006**

- MS Access Data Base
- Debt forecasting working
- MSBA takes over
- Exempt & Non-exempt
- Committee expands

**2001**

- Elementary school rebuild
- Debt exclusions
- Schools on Board
- Excel not adequate
- Romney and SBAB

**1996**

- "Bond Limit Model"
- Schools still resisting
- Five year horizon working for Town
- Fire alarm surprise

**1991**

- Town Manager Enthusiastic
- Excel spreadsheet
- Debt management an issue
- No School support

**1986**

- Typed Plan
- Little Planning
- Town Manager Resistance

**"Founders" of Modern Capital Planning Process:**

- Town Treasurer: John Bilafer
- FinCom Member: Murdena Campbell

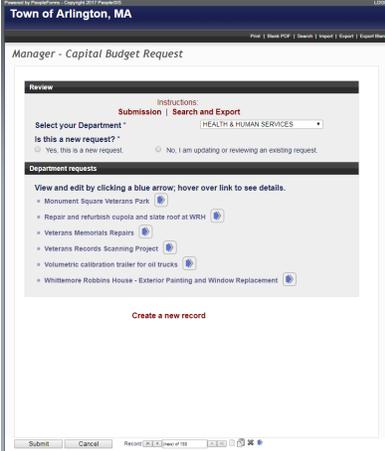
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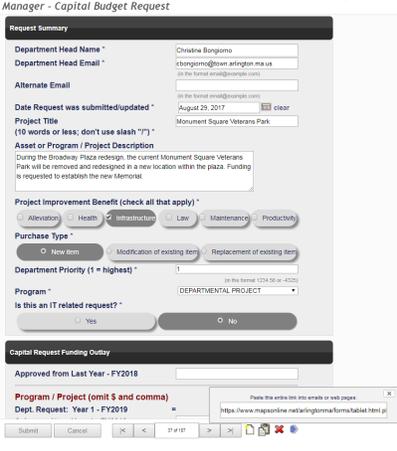
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## Cloud Capital Planning From the Ground Up





- Department managers input requests into cloud-based form
- Committee members access, review, comment and recommend on electronic form

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## Some Financial Strategies

- Non-exempt budget only (TM approval only):
  - All cash – use annual reserve set asides (tough to do), but saves on interest
  - Cash and borrowing – flexible way to meet needs on timely basis
- Exempt budget only (requires public referenda)
  - Can be cash or debt exclusion or override
- Combination of non-exempt and exempt budgeting
  - Use non-exempt plan for most projects
  - Use non-exempt plan for extraordinary expenses
  - Arlington follows this approach

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## Sources of Funds

- Current FY non-exempt budget direct appropriation (“Cash”).
- Current FY non-exempt bonded appropriation (“Bonds”).
- Grants, CDBG, Trusts, enterprise funds, other off-balance sheet income (“Other”).
- Proposition 2½ exempt borrowing.
- Community Preservation Act – new in Arlington (“CPA”)

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## Uses of Funds

- Purchase of qualifying equipment, material, buildings and other assets.
- Interest on bonds or bond anticipation notes (BANS).
- Principal on bonds (principal and interest on bonds together called “debt service”.)
- Distinguish between exempt and non-exempt debt service.

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## Non-exempt Capital Spending Policy

- Set aside debt exclusions for now as extraordinary situations.
- How do we plan aggregate spending from our non-exempt budget?
  - Level fund
  - Base on detailed annual requirements
  - *Plan to a constant percentage of non-exempt budget*
    - *Arlington uses 5%*
  - Other possibilities...

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## Defining the Capital Budget

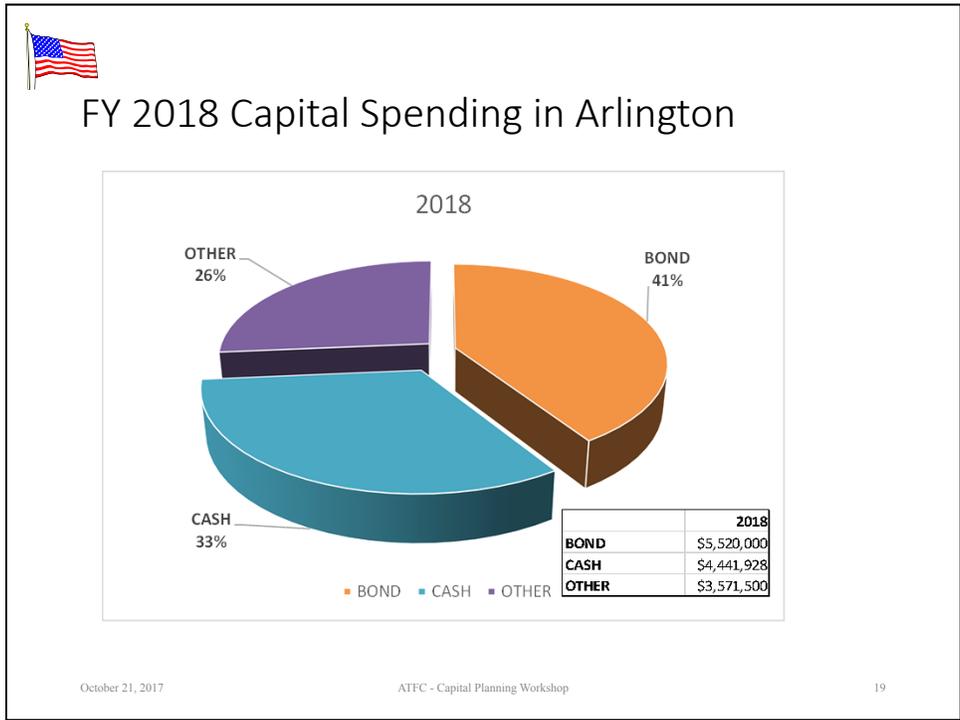
- Note: Bonds usually have interest only or small principal effect in current year.
- Total capital budget for FY is sum of:
  - Direct cash expenditures for capital items in FY, and
  - Interest and principal impact in FY of new bonds, if any, and
  - Debt service on all prior bonded expenditures.
- One planning approach fixes this sum as a percentage of the annual Town Budget.

Capital Budget = Cash Purchases + New Debt Service + Prior Debt Service

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**Plan Format**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY - FIRE SERVICES</b>	<b>\$900,000</b>	<b>\$95,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$335,000</b>	<b>\$805,000</b>	<b>\$2,285,000</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$370,000</b>
Exercise Equipment & Furniture - Cardio		\$40,000				\$40,000
Jaws of Life - Extrication Equipment				\$50,000		\$50,000
Replace Firefighter Protective Gear				\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
Replace Thermal Imaging Cameras					\$50,000	\$50,000
Replacement of Portable Radios			\$150,000			\$150,000
Rescue Boat, Motor & Trailor	\$30,000					\$30,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$13,533,428</b>	<b>\$11,073,309</b>	<b>\$21,042,701</b>	<b>\$7,892,035</b>	<b>\$8,008,544</b>	<b>\$61,550,017</b>
Funding Sources Including CPA						
<b>Row Labels</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
BOND	\$5,520,000	\$4,940,000	\$14,891,000	\$2,099,000	\$1,670,000	\$29,120,000
CASH	\$4,441,928	\$2,518,309	\$2,539,701	\$2,206,035	\$2,700,544	\$14,406,517
OTHER	\$3,571,500	\$3,615,000	\$3,612,000	\$3,587,000	\$3,638,000	\$18,023,500
CPA	\$1,526,033	\$500,000	\$907,700	\$407,700	\$475,000	\$3,816,433
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$15,059,461</b>	<b>\$11,573,309</b>	<b>\$21,950,401</b>	<b>\$8,299,735</b>	<b>\$8,483,544</b>	<b>\$65,366,450</b>

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## Calculate the Tax Impact

Fiscal Year	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	Total
Prior Non-Exempt Debt	\$7,192,219	\$6,096,240	\$5,346,815	\$4,489,902	\$3,823,015	\$26,948,191
Cash	\$4,441,928	\$2,518,309	\$2,539,701	\$2,206,035	\$2,700,544	\$14,406,517
New Non-Exempt Debt Service	\$89,600	\$581,543	\$1,347,776	\$2,597,433	\$2,879,392	\$7,495,744
BAN Interest and Principal		\$4,000				\$4,000
<b>Total Non-Exempt Tax Burden</b>	<b>\$11,723,747</b>	<b>\$9,200,092</b>	<b>\$9,234,292</b>	<b>\$9,293,370</b>	<b>\$9,402,951</b>	<b>\$48,854,452</b>
<b>Direct funding sources:</b>						
Non-exempt Bond Premium FY2017	(\$2,154,418)					(\$2,154,418)
Rink Enterprise Funds	(\$85,153)	(\$82,591)	(\$79,866)	(\$28,128)	(\$27,078)	(\$302,916)
Ambulance Revolving Fund	(\$53,156)	(\$104,025)	(\$96,070)	(\$82,965)	(\$112,460)	(\$448,676)
Capital Carry Forwards	(\$341,778)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$50,000)	(\$691,778)
Antennae Funds	(\$197,000)	(\$190,834)	(\$193,886)	(\$195,922)	(\$197,280)	(\$974,922)
Urban Renewal Fund	(\$43,844)	(\$42,444)	(\$41,044)	(\$39,644)	(\$38,244)	(\$205,219)
Asset Sale Proceeds	(\$500,000)	(\$250,000)				(\$750,000)
Adjust for Roadway Reconstruction Override 2011	(\$452,563)	(\$463,877)	(\$475,474)	(\$487,361)	(\$499,545)	(\$2,378,821)
Adjust for 2016 and prior Bond Premium	(\$589,033)	(\$552,822)	(\$516,811)	(\$260,240)		(\$1,918,706)
Adjust for 2017 encumbered debt service	(\$266,516)					(\$266,516)
<b>Net Non-Exempt Plan</b>	<b>\$7,040,286</b>	<b>\$7,413,499</b>	<b>\$7,731,242</b>	<b>\$8,099,110</b>	<b>\$8,478,344</b>	<b>\$38,762,480</b>

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## Compare to Budget

Fiscal Year	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	Total
Net Non-Exempt Plan	\$7,040,286	\$7,040,951	\$7,040,951	\$7,040,951	\$7,040,951	\$7,040,951
Pro Forma Budget	\$140,827,898	\$147,817,927	\$154,744,444	\$161,921,500	\$168,638,931	\$774,750,501
Budget For Plan at 5%	\$7,041,385	\$7,380,896	\$7,737,222	\$8,098,075	\$8,481,947	\$38,737,525
Plan as % of Revenues	5.00%	5.02%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Variance From Budget	\$1,099	(\$32,602)	\$5,981	(\$3,035)	\$3,603	(\$24,955)

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## Planning the Future

- Calculate year's forecast budget
- Adjust for exempt debt, re-imburements
- Calculate 5% for total capital and debt service = capital budget
- Add in each year's new planned debt service to known non-exempt debt service now and in future
- Add in direct cash expenditures as planned
- Compare to budget

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## New Access Bond Data Base and Pivot Tables

BondID	BondTyp	EnterpriseFund	BAN	MWRA	DateOfIssue	Purpose	Exempt/Non	Inside/Outside	AmountBon	FirstPrinPaymentDate	FinalPaymentDate	Taxis
# 1 S					12/1/1999	December 1 1999 - Hardy School (Non-Called) (OE)	E	O	2,215,000	8/1/2000	8/1/2010	
# 2 S					12/1/1999	December 1 1999 - Hardy School 2 (Non-Called) (OE)	E	O	1,786,000	8/1/2000	8/1/2010	
# 3 S					12/1/1999	December 1 1999 - Bishop School (Non-Called) (OE)	E	O	1,748,000	8/1/2000	8/1/2010	
# 4 S					12/1/1999	December 1 1999 - Bishop School 2 (Non-Called) (OE)	E	O	800,000	8/1/2000	8/1/2010	
# 5 S					12/1/1999	December 1 1999 - Brackett School (Non-Called) (OE)	E	O	450,000	8/1/2000	8/1/2010	
# 6 S					9/15/2001	September 15 2001 - Peirce School 1 (Non-Called) (IE)	E	I	7,200,000	6/15/2002	6/15/2012	
# 7 S					9/15/2001	September 15 2001 - Peirce School 2 (Non-Called) (IE)	E	I	2,597,000	6/15/2002	6/15/2012	
# 8 S					9/15/2001	September 15 2001 - Peirce School 3 (Non-Called) (IE)	E	I	148,000	6/15/2002	6/15/2012	

- This a truncated sample
- Every feature of every bond is captured in MS Access, Type, interest, term, payments, exempt/non-exempt, inside or outside limit, etc.
- Updated with new borrowing yearly
- Permits straightforward, accurate forecasts of future debt service based on Authorized and issued bonds

Kudos to: Deputy Treasurer Michael Morse  
CPC Vice-chair Brian Rehrig

NOTE: This table comes from the query that excludes BAN principal

Sum of Amount	Column Labels	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
I	\$	554,795	\$ 874,764	\$ 590,523	\$ 519,829	\$ 448,154	\$ 383,529
P	\$	2,689,725	\$ 2,979,000	\$ 2,019,700	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,005,000	\$ 1,475,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,244,520</b>	<b>\$ 3,853,764</b>	<b>\$ 2,610,223</b>	<b>\$ 2,544,829</b>	<b>\$ 2,453,154</b>	<b>\$ 1,858,529</b>

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## Forecasting New Debt Service

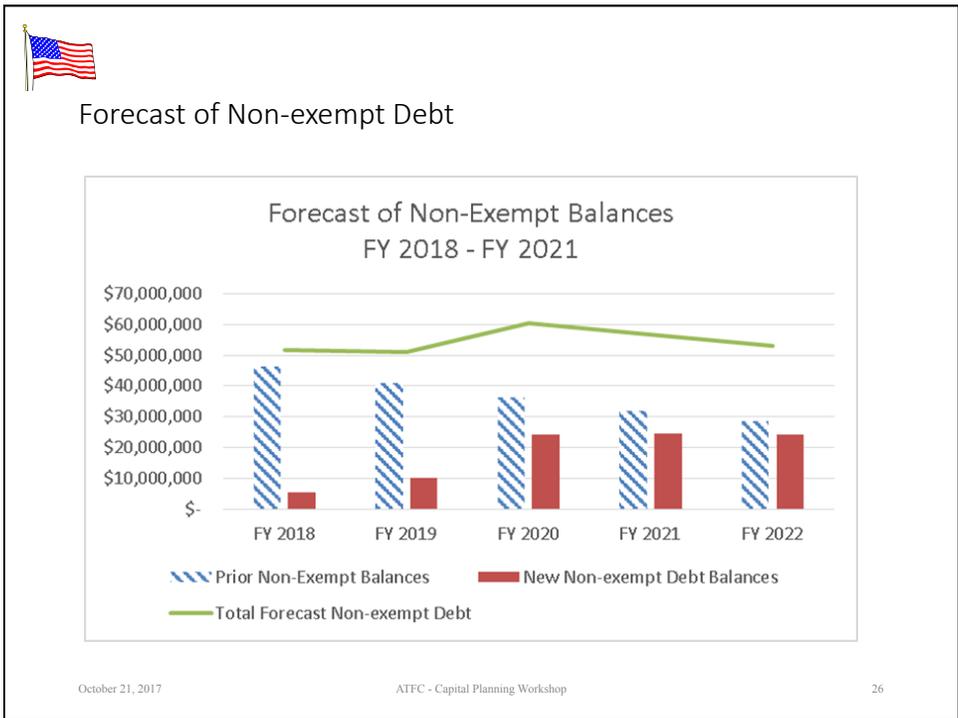
**Note: List is truncated**

FUNDING SOURCE	(All)								
Department	Item	Life	Fiscal Year					Grand Total	
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
BOARD OF SELECTMEN	Voting Machines	10			\$1,925	\$14,850	\$14,465	\$31,240	
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN Total</b>					<b>\$1,925</b>	<b>\$14,850</b>	<b>\$14,465</b>	<b>\$31,240</b>	
COMMUNITY SAFETY - FIRE SERVICES	Purchase Engine Pumper to Replace #1006	20					\$12,000	\$12,000	
	Purchase New Engine-Pump - Replace #1007	20	\$10,063	\$48,875	\$47,869	\$46,863	\$45,856	\$199,525	
	Replacement of Portable Radios	7			\$2,625	\$26,679	\$25,929	\$55,232	
	Rescue-Ambulance 2008 Ford Osage	5	\$4,200	\$56,400	\$54,720	\$53,040	\$51,360	\$219,720	
	Rescue-Ambulance 2013 Ford Horton	5			\$4,550	\$4,550	\$4,550	\$13,650	
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY - FIRE SERVICES Total</b>			<b>\$14,263</b>	<b>\$105,275</b>	<b>\$105,214</b>	<b>\$131,131</b>	<b>\$196,245</b>	<b>\$552,127</b>	
COMMUNITY SAFETY - POLICE SERVICES	Radio Upgrade- Replacement Program	7			\$14,998	\$152,424	\$148,139	\$315,560	
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY - POLICE SERVICES Total</b>					<b>\$14,998</b>	<b>\$152,424</b>	<b>\$148,139</b>	<b>\$315,560</b>	
FACILITIES	Town Hall - Renovations	20	\$1,750	\$10,250	\$18,575	\$26,725	\$34,950	\$92,250	
<b>FACILITIES Total</b>			<b>\$1,750</b>	<b>\$10,250</b>	<b>\$18,575</b>	<b>\$26,725</b>	<b>\$34,950</b>	<b>\$92,250</b>	
SCHOOLS	Bus #102 - S3 passenger bus	5			\$1,663	\$22,325	\$21,660	\$45,648	
	Bus #103 - 77 passenger bus	5		\$2,275	\$30,350	\$28,640	\$28,730	\$91,195	
	Bus #107 - S3 passenger bus	5		\$1,925	\$25,850	\$25,080	\$24,310	\$77,165	
	Bus #108 - S3 passenger	5					\$2,000	\$2,000	
	Convert to Science Classrooms Dullin & Brackett	20				\$4,375	\$21,250	\$25,625	
	Dullin - Chiller	20		\$4,375	\$21,250	\$20,813	\$20,375	\$66,813	
	Food Services Truck	15		\$963	\$5,592	\$5,463	\$5,335	\$17,353	
	Gibbs School Renovation	20	\$8,750	\$42,500	\$41,625	\$40,750	\$39,875	\$179,500	
	Hardy School Expansion	20	\$61,250	\$297,500	\$291,375	\$285,250	\$279,125	\$1,214,500	
	Landscape Improvements - Bishop School	15			\$2,188	\$12,708	\$12,417	\$27,313	
	Water Penetration Bishop	20				\$5,250	\$25,500	\$30,750	
<b>SCHOOLS Total</b>			<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$349,538</b>	<b>\$420,092</b>	<b>\$451,654</b>	<b>\$480,577</b>	<b>\$1,771,860</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>\$89,600</b>	<b>\$581,543</b>	<b>\$1,347,776</b>	<b>\$2,597,433</b>	<b>\$2,879,392</b>	<b>\$7,495,744</b>	
Bond Anticipation Notes Interest					\$4,000			\$4,000	
<b>Total Bond and Non-Exempt Future Debt Service</b>			<b>\$89,600</b>	<b>\$585,543</b>	<b>\$1,347,776</b>	<b>\$2,597,433</b>	<b>\$2,879,392</b>	<b>\$7,499,744</b>	

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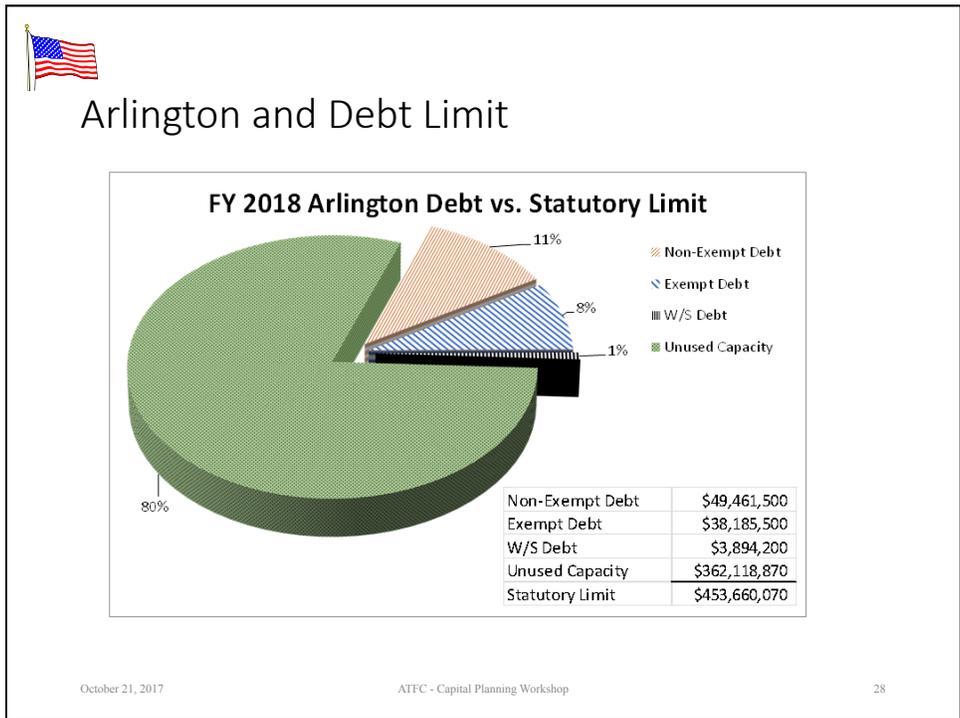
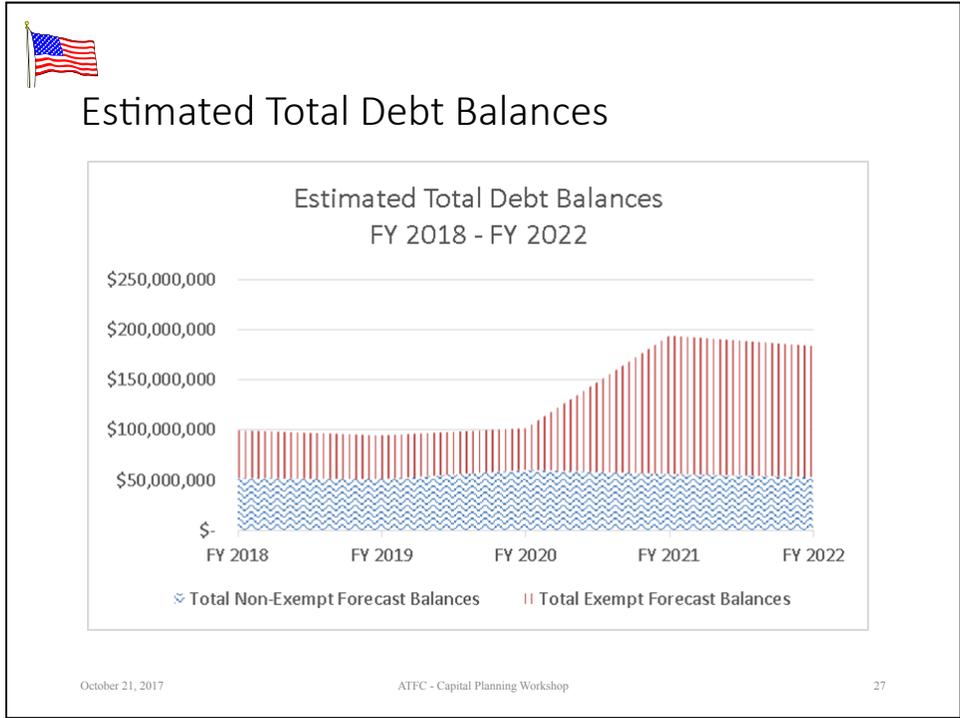
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## Winning Town Meeting Support for the Capital Budget

- Have a Capital Plan as well as a budget.
- Whenever possible stick to the plan.
- Bring bad news to TM as soon as possible, preferably years in advance.
- Always highlight problems, don't gloss them over, explain them in detail.
- Give TM credit for Capital Spending *within the plan*, which then becomes TM's plan.
- Give TM credit for spending large amounts of money wisely; that's usually what they want to do, but rarely can be sure they have. A Capital Plan and history allows measurement and proof.

Result: 31 years successful TM votes with no changes, most votes unanimous.

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## Capital Planning Committee Role

- Set standards and priorities.
- Provide continuity and institutional memory over many years.
- Inspire and cajole managers to plan ahead.
- Reward careful planning by management with funding - someday.
- Communicate short-term and long-term needs to Town Manager, Finance Committee, Town Meeting and Citizens.
- Exhibit predictability and *Gravitas*.

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## Past Present and Future

**Arlington non-exempt capital spending viewed by Program as of June 2017:**

Program	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total
DEPARTMENTAL PROJECT	\$3,212,250	\$220,500	\$1,452,500	\$694,000	\$185,000	\$217,000	\$310,000	\$10,000	\$6,241,250
EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT	\$510,000	\$389,700	\$284,000	\$390,500	\$297,000	\$1,203,180	\$206,675	\$182,500	\$3,562,555
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	\$824,300	\$1,047,750	\$452,100	\$842,365	\$625,000	\$615,000	\$615,000	\$610,000	\$5,531,515
INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT	\$9,393,500	\$3,649,000	\$2,370,000	\$7,128,000	\$4,225,000	\$13,315,000	\$3,040,000	\$3,030,000	\$49,355,500
MAJOR REPAIRS	\$395,000	\$525,000	\$532,000		\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000			\$5,252,000
PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS	\$802,500	\$580,000	\$630,400	\$172,000	\$187,000	\$199,000	\$147,000	\$138,000	\$2,555,900
PHOTOCOPIER PROGRAM	\$184,400	\$186,300	\$185,300	\$188,000	\$416,492	\$488,086	\$300,000	\$191,000	\$1,889,238
PUBLIC BUILDING MAINTENANCE	\$416,805	\$9,300,400	\$6,078,240	\$2,252,569	\$2,023,377	\$2,285,475	\$2,277,360	\$2,289,544	\$26,904,264
ROADS AND PATHS INFRASTRUCTURE	\$1,740,250	\$1,720,756	\$1,566,525	\$269,000	\$260,000	\$95,000	\$80,000	\$300,000	\$5,792,531
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	\$45,000	\$120,000	\$95,000	\$1,476,000	\$744,000	\$645,000	\$1,056,000	\$1,397,500	\$5,608,500
VEHICLE REPLACEMENT	\$774,000	\$533,000	\$1,908,000	\$190,000	\$180,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$3,665,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$17,803,005</b>	<b>\$18,221,206</b>	<b>\$15,384,065</b>	<b>\$13,533,428</b>	<b>\$11,073,309</b>	<b>\$21,042,701</b>	<b>\$7,892,695</b>	<b>\$8,008,544</b>	<b>\$112,958,293</b>

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## Major Building Projects Over 30 Years

### Non-Exempt

- Ottoson Middle School (rnv)
- Robbins Library (with grants) (rnv + new)
- Park Circle Fire Station (new)
- Highland Fire Station (rnv)
- Community Safety Building (rnv complete)
- Central Fire Station (rnv Complete)
- Stratton E.S. (rnv in process, partially exempt)
- Hardy Expansion (in process)

### Exempt

- Brackett E.S. (new)
- Hardy E.S. (rnv)
- Bishop E.S. (rnv)
- Peirce E.S. (new)
- Dallin E.S. (new)
- Thompson E.S. (new)
- Arlington H.S. (rnv in planning)
- Minuteman Regional V.H.S. (in process)
- Gibbs M.S. (in process, partially non-exempt)
- Thompson expansion (complete)

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## New Challenges for Arlington

- Respond to apparent increase in student population growth = one new elementary school
  - Expand Thompson Elementary School
  - Expand Hardy Elementary School
  - Bring former Gibbs Middle School back on line
- Rebuild Arlington high School

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You can download a copy of this presentation and the Arlington Capital Report for FY2018 from the internet <http://www.foskettco.com/ATFC2017>

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# Thank You!

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