

The Select Board will be meeting tomorrow night (Thursday) at 5:30 to finalize this years town budget.

Harry Judd and I proposed no increases in town employee salary schedule. At least one board members is favoring increases.

The Bow SWAT Team is gone from the budget and all the towns that use the Bow Police dispatch service are paying their fair share of the cost.

A majority on the Select Board is really trying to hold the line on spending.

The Budget committee will meet this evening to vote on the School Boards budget and it appears that the Budget Committee could not even find \$1 in justified reduction to the schools \$24million +budget. The school board budget request includes *3% raises for the administrators* and a warrant article to *increase teachers salaries line by 3.69%*. The board ended this *past year with a \$509,000 surplus* and has stated that ***this year the surplus will be substantially higher then \$509,000***. The surplus is in part due to the extra \$330,000 in health insurance that passed the Budget Committee and School Board last year. FYI, school enrollment has been declining for several years and will decline dramatically in the next three years. Bow will need to look for tuition students from other towns. This year our average cost per pupil is a little over \$14,200. This year in Math and Science standardized test (NECAP) Bow 8th and 11th grades student recived test scores below 60%.

The school expenses is the largest single factor in determining property taxes, the town budget is a distant second.

Voters get to vote on the school budget at the annual school meeting on Friday March 13 at 7PM in the High School auditorium.

The town budget will be voted on at the annual town meeting held the first week in May.

If you have any question please do not hesitate to call me.

Tom Keane