



[Home](#) > [Wayland Town Crier](#) > [Local News](#) >  [RSS Feed](#)

Town reveals municipal cuts if override fails

By **Katie Liesener**/ Staff Writer
Thursday, March 30, 2006

A week after the School Committee announced its potential cuts in case the \$2.1 million override were to fail in April, the Board of Selectmen similarly approved \$697,730 in potential municipal cuts, over half of which would come at the cost of public safety.

Those cuts, submitted by Town Administrator Fred Turkington after discussions with several departments and boards, would include the elimination of two police officers, one police cruiser, two firefighters, 10 call men (part-time firefighters), four crossing guards and one emergency dispatcher - a total of \$363,882 in public safety reductions.

The cuts in fire-fighting staff would require the second fire station on Cochituate Road to be closed roughly two-thirds of the time.

"There's no way around the fact that public safety would be impacted," selectmen Chairman Michael Tichnor said at last week's selectmen's meeting.

But Selectman Alan Reiss, a longtime proponent for more choice in voting on override amounts, was not so sure. At the same meeting, Reiss questioned why such drastic cuts would be made in public safety before being made elsewhere.

"If you look at it from a global point of view ... anything that affects health, safety, life and limb is priority one. Everything else is priority two," he said.

Reiss mentioned the school system as one area where cuts might be better made.

"If class sizes go up by one or two children, no one is going to die," he said.

Currently, the \$2.1 million override amount represents a 70/30 split between the school and municipal sides, a ratio set by the Finance Committee to mirror the two sides' portions of the town budget, Turkington said.

Two weeks ago, the School Committee approved \$1.47 million in cuts, or 70 percent of the total \$2.1 million override, in case the override does not pass.

In making the municipal side's share of the cuts, Turkington said he spoke with several departments and boards to propose those that were "least onerous."

Turkington said a large part of the municipal cuts were proposed in public safety because it represents half of the municipal budget. Public safety was also one of the few municipal departments to escape cuts when the FinCom was looking to pare down departmental budgets in preparation for its override recommendation.

Though Turkington identified \$67,730 more cuts than asked (the actual municipal deficit created by a failed override would be \$630,000 rather than \$697,730), restoring a police or fire-fighting position would still not be possible, he said, because it would cost more than the \$67,730 differential.

Fire Chief Bob Loomer, whose department will be reduced by 8 percent if the proposed cuts are made, said the Fire Department has not seen a staff increase since 1970. The town already has one of the lowest per capita expenditures on fire and emergency services among peer towns, according to the FinCom's figures.

Loomer said the proposed reductions would force the department to operate less efficiently because minimal staffing would require more firefighters be paid overtime to cover for those out sick or on vacation. The department would also spend more money on fuel to bring the fire truck at Cochituate Station to the main station every time Cochituate Station closed.

Cochituate Station is "by far the busiest," Loomer said, due to the area's dense population, older residents and the proximity of three assisted living centers.

"It's important to have the snow plowed in winter and for kids to get a good education, but when you call 911, you want someone to show up and show up quickly," he said.

In addition to public safety cuts, the proposed municipal cutbacks would also include reductions in assessors' external inspections, the senior tax work-off program, a foreman position and seasonal staff positions in the Park & Recreation Department, school nurse hours and a 50 percent cut in road resurfacing.

Herald Interactive Tools



[Recent articles](#)



[E-mail article to a friend](#)



[View graphic version](#)



[Get RSS feed](#)








[Search site](#)



[Sign up for home delivery](#)

Recent articles

-  [Nursery school anniversary](#)
-  [Agreement reached on new bylaw](#)
-  [Wreck injures two local women](#)
-  [Battle of the Bands rocks towns](#)
-  [Kings of doo-wop](#)

Today's most read Town Online articles Updated 9:45 AM ET

1. [Instant replay coming to high school sports](#)(181)
2. [Soldier still fighting after return from Iraq](#)(179)
3. [TV crews set to arrive Monday](#)(162)
4. [Malden-based cocaine ring busted](#)(154)
5. [Parents can get the dope on drugs](#)(133)

Search the site

Enterprise-level broadband service provided by [Expedient: America's Largest All-Ethernet Network](#)

Wireless broadband service provided by [Towerstream](#)

[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)]

Order Home Delivery Online: [Weekly papers](#) [Daily papers](#) or call **1.800.982.4023**

© Copyright of CNC and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)

bh.heraldinteractive.com: 0.027432:Fri, 31 Mar 2006 15:30:58 GMT cached