

FINANCIAL TERMS USED AT TOWN MEETING

PROPOSITION 2-1/2: Law enacted in 1980 limiting the increase of property tax Levy limit to 2-1/2% plus new growth as of January 1 for the subsequent year.

LEVY: Revenue raised through real and personal property tax.

LEVY LIMIT: Maximum amount a town can levy in a given year.

NEW GROWTH: New construction, additions and alterations that result in increases in assessed valuations.

DEBT EXCLUSION: Enables a community to assess taxes in excess of its levy limit for the purpose of raising funds to pay for the costs of capital projects. This exclusion only affects the levy limit for the fiscal year in which the project is undertaken.

CAPITAL OUTLAY EXPENDITURE EXCLUSION: Enables a town to assess taxes in excess of its levy limit for the purpose of raising funds to pay for the costs of capital projects. This exclusion only affects the levy limit for the fiscal year in which the project is undertaken.

OVERRIDE: Enables a town permanently to increase its levy limit by a specific dollar amount for operating costs that the community expects will continue in the future.

CHERRY SHEET: Named for the cherry colored paper on which it was originally printed, the Cherry Sheet is the official notification from the Commissioner of Revenue of the next fiscal year's state aid and assessments to communities and regional school districts.

UNAPPROPRIATED AVAILABLE FUNDS: Sum of funds appropriated and raised by the Town but not expended, minus uncollected taxes from prior years. Must be certified by the Massachusetts Bureau of Accounts before it can be appropriated.

OVERLAY: Amount raised by the Assessors in excess of appropriations and other charges for the purpose of creating a fund to cover abatements and exemptions.

OVERLAY RESERVE: The accumulated amount of overlay for previous years that has not been used.

OVERLAY SURPLUS: The portion of each year's overlay account no longer required to cover property tax abatements and exemptions.

RESERVE FUND: A fund established at the Annual Town Meeting which is under the control of the Advisory Committee and from which transfers may be made for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.

STABILIZATION FUND: An account from which amounts may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. A two-thirds vote of town meeting is required to appropriate money from the stabilization fund.