

Editorial

Not enough

Anyone hoping for a miracle to come in the form of state aid numbers was sorely mistaken when the first version of the budget was released Wednesday.

Gov. Deval Patrick's budget proposals for local and school aid are not going to help any the local communities to the degree they say they need it.

None of the aid numbers for the four towns in the Community Journal's coverage area was increased more than \$25,000 from last year. This means the towns will have to struggle to control budget growth, which is hard when fuel and electricity costs are increasing faster than new growth or state help. The other choice is the voters in these towns may face Proposition 2 1/2 overrides.

The governor proposed state aid at \$870,706 for Ashburnham, which is a \$15,029 increase from last year.

Westminster's aid from the state rose about \$15,000 and Ashby's increased \$6,638 over last year.

Townsend's local aid went up by \$26,000.

The budget will not be adopted in this final form, and will be revised by both the House and Senate. But, this is the first time in many years that a Democratic governor is proposing a budget to a Democrat-controlled legislature. So it is unclear how close these predictions will be to the actual amounts the towns will receive from the state in FY08.

Our local representatives are going to need to work overtime if residents do not want to see staffing cuts and services reduced.

Watching these numbers it is hard to tell if it is better to fund local government through higher property taxes and control it on a local level, or to ask the state to pick up more of the tab and pay these bills through sales and income taxes.

It would be clear that paying and controlling on a local level would be preferable, if there were not a high number of state mandates and regulations about how the money needed to be spent.

Letters to the Editor

Thank you to Ashburnham Fire Department

To the Editor:

We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the Ashburnham Fire Department for all that was done for us by your emergency team in response to our 911 call on Feb. 2.

We arrived at our home at 170 Lake Shore Drive on Feb. 2, after a two week vacation, and found five and one half feet of water in our basement. The downstairs TV room and the basement equipment room were completely under water, and the water was still running in.

Both of us knew only one thing that we could do to get help. We dialed 911. Within minutes, help was on its way. The fire engine arrived along with a team of nine firefighters head by Captain William Nolan and Lt. Rick Sicard. The entire team was extremely well trained and knew exactly what needed to be done and set out to do it.

Over the next many hours, Captain Nolan brought in the help of the Ashburnham Water Department, the power and light department, Assistant Wire Inspector Joseph Olivari and Wire Inspector Richard Canavino and other key people need to safely regain order. Without exception, everyone jumped in to help us.

We also wish to thank all the other members of the fire department emergency team that included F.F. Alex Bergeron, F.F. Jeremy Salo, F.F. Jake Zbikowski, F.F. Kim McGowan, Engineer Bob Plant, Recruit Matt Betez and Recruit Rebeka Williams.

*J. Leo and Barbara A. Clark
Ashburnham*

Letters to the Editor Policy

All letters should be no more than 500 words in length, and should include the writer's name, address and phone number.

We will not publish street address, e-mail address or phone number.

Please avoid handwritten letters if at all possible.

The editor reserves the right to reject letters or edit for clarity, brevity, good taste and accuracy, and to prevent libel. No poetry, attacks on private individuals, or letter-writing campaigns, please. Due to the volume of mail, writers are asked to limit submissions to one letter every 30 days.

- The Community Journal reserves the right to refuse or hold any submission.
- All submissions become the property of The Community Journal and cannot be returned.
- Opinions expressed in letters or columns, as well as any other opinion piece are solely the opinion of that author and not necessarily the opinion of the staff or editors of The Community Journal.
- Publication of an opinion does not imply an endorsement by The Community Journal.
- Anonymous Letters to the Editor will be automatically rejected.

You can send us letters to the editor by e-mail, fax or mailing to:

editor@thecommunityjournal.com
or (978) 827-3200 or

The Community Journal

PO Box 67, Ashburnham, MA 01420

Thank you, we look forward to hearing from you.

COMMUNITY JOURNAL QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Are you going to celebrate St. Patrick's Day?

Yes. No.

Cast your vote online at www.thecommunityjournal.com

Results of last week's question:

Do you think there is enough types of leadership training?

Yes - 0 percent

No - 100 percent

There is no such thing as leadership training - 0 percent



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SN7
Suburban Newspapers of America

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DEADLINES: News — Tuesday, noon

Advertising — Monday, 5 p.m.

Classified — Tuesday, 3 p.m.

HOURS: The Community Journal office is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$29 for 52 issues (one year).

Single copy: .75

The Community Journal (USPS 0021-0420) is published weekly by: The Holden Landmark Corp., 1650 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522

Postmaster: Send address changes to:

The Community Journal,

P.O. Box 545, Holden, MA 01520

Periodical postage paid at Jefferson, MA

and additional mailing offices.

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