

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

## Mayor's Newton Update



Thank you to everyone who made their way to the polls yesterday in the wet and sometimes snowy conditions, to those who voted early and to everyone who paid attention, took a stand, asked questions, and spoke up.

Today, I can proudly say we will be building two new elementary schools, Countryside and Franklin.

I am excited for the students who will have better learning environments at these two great new facilities. These new schools are long overdue and will be terrific additions to our City and the Newton Public Schools.

Students should be in their new Countryside school by 2027 and work on designs for a new Franklin School will accelerate and follow a similar project schedule. The vote also means that the City of Newton will receive approximately \$20 million of the funding for Countryside from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, funds that are much needed and were contingent on the ballot question passing.

While the debt exclusions passed, the operating override which would have raised additional revenue did not.

This was a difficult time to ask people to raise their taxes. I believed, and still believe, that it was right and important for Newtonians to have the choice and vote.

Yesterday, the decision of our residents was clear.

The City of Newton is on solid financial ground. Our Triple Aaa bond rating is secure. We will continue to provide essential services and continue to stretch out taxpayer dollars that power our City and make Newton such a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Elections matter. Without additional funding, our City will have to make some challenging decisions that will reverberate through our programs, services and offerings.

I am already at work with the leadership of the Newton Public Schools and with our financial teams to draw up a balanced budget. We will develop a spending plan for the coming year that will help our schools succeed within our financial constraints. As the NPS Administration has already previewed, cuts in positions and cuts in programs will be necessary.

We will take a hard look at how and when to proceed in the years ahead with the initiatives that would have benefitted from the additional revenue proposed in Question 1, the operating override. We will eventually fund in future years more road improvements, field maintenance, tree plantings, the Horace Mann addition and renovation, and accelerated electrification of our buildings.

Throughout these last six months, I have witnessed the commitment that people with a variety of views have for our city. Newtonians care deeply. Passions run high. It is time to roll up our sleeves, and work with one another for the future of this wonderful city that we all call home.

Warmly,

Ruthanne



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