

BUDGET PROCESS

(Adopted 2007)

The LWV believes that Westport's budget process should produce budgets, both Town and Education, that meet the needs of the town as a whole. The budget process should:

- **be transparent**
- **afford opportunity for resident participation**
- **reflect long-term planning**
- **result in the adoption of a budget in a timely fashion.***

Explanation:

The LWV of Westport advocates a transparent planning and budget process for the Town and Education budgets in order to encourage more direct participation by the public. To accomplish this, Town departments should discuss their short- and long-term goals with their respective boards or commissions (where applicable) and RTM Committees early in the fiscal year. The Town's Annual Meeting should include a presentation of Departments' short- and long-term goals and objectives. The public should be informed as to the purpose and significance of the Five-year Capital Forecast. The Town should explore additional opportunities for public out-reach about the planning and budget process. To maximize opportunity for public education and participation, decisions that significantly impact the Town or Education budgets should not be made or deliberated during vacations or religious holidays.

The LWV supports measures to encourage the Board of Education and the Town to communicate their priorities and projected budget increases in order to facilitate long-term, town-wide planning. These measures should include a public planning and budget meeting in the fall where town departments and the Board of Education identify and coordinate their priorities.

* Please refer to the League of Women Voters of Westport's position on Board of Finance.