The Town Tea Leaves: Starting the New Year with a New Budget

Recording date: January 13, 2022; Release date: January 14, 2022
Panelists: Dan Acquilano, OSC; and Sarah Brancatella, Esq. and Katie Hodgdon, Esq.

Link to Recording

- What is a Budget?
  - A budget is a Plan. Plans Change.

- What can we change in the budget?
  - Appropriations
  - Certain estimated revenues
  - The planned use of fund balance
  - The planned use of legal reserves

- What can’t we change in the budget?
  - Taxes levied

- Is there anything else we cannot change?
  - Amount charged for fire district
    - Fire district budget is not within the control of the town

- How do we know if something needs to be changed?
  - Conduct a trend analysis
  - Understand the cost of providing services
    - https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/academy/webinars
  - Discussions with department heads

- How do we modify the budget?
  - The governing board must pass a resolution identifying changes to the budget
  - Only the governing board has the authority to modify the budget, and this authority cannot be delegated.

- Is there further training available for newly elected town officials in regards to budgeting, finance, and fiscal oversight responsibilities?
  - Webinars: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/academy/webinars
  - Town Budget Workshops: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/academy/seminars-local-officials
  - Association of Towns conferences and Training events: https://www.nytowns.org/Towns/Training/Towns/Training/Information.aspx?hkey=7697d3cf-b7d1-4694-969a-c149af1fb235

- Who can we contact with questions if we don’t know what to do?
  - LOCALTRAINING@OSC.NY.GOV