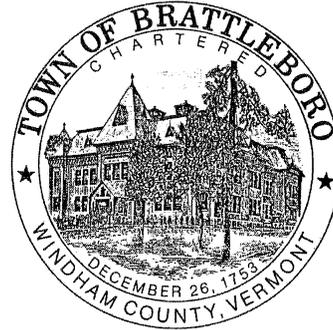


MEMORANDUM

To: Selectboard
From: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager
Re: FY21 Budget: Unfinished Business
Date: January 9, 2020



Town staff's proposed budget for FY21 was distributed on November 5, 2019. Since then, the Selectboard has considered staff's proposals and other budget matters in 7 public meetings with substantive public participation. Many line items are unchanged from FY20 and incremental changes in many other line items have been explained and accepted. However, several matters remain undecided at this time. The purpose of this memorandum is to identify the changes that have been made in the FY21 Budget since it was first proposed, provide the current status of the FY21 Budget and the property taxes required to fund it, and to address the unfinished items to assist the Selectboard in making its final decisions before the end of January. The budget that ultimately is approved by the Selectboard will be presented for consideration and adoption at the Representative Town Meeting on March 21, 2020.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE FY21 BUDGET

Total Property Taxes in the Adopted FY20 Budget = \$14,721,497

Total Property Taxes in Staff's Proposed FY21 Budget = \$15,095,827

That would require an increase of 2.5% (or 3.26 cents) in the property tax rate.

Changes during the Selectboard's 7 meetings to date in reviewing staff's proposed budget (and the resulting impact of those changes upon proposed FY21 property taxes):

Revenues

No changes to date

Expenditures

Increased Human Services Funding	+ \$ 4,510
Increased Community Marketing Initiative Funding	+ \$ 1,629
Funding for Project CARE	+ \$ 16,000

Net Impact of All Changes to Date in the FY21 Budget + \$ 22,139

Property Taxes Required to Fund the FY21 Budget in its Current Status = \$15,117,966

That would require an increase of 2.7% (or 3.45 cents) in the property tax rate.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN THE SELECTBOARD'S REVIEW OF THE FY21 BUDGET

Living Memorial Park Pool House Renovation or Replacement

Staff did not include the pool house in either the 5-year capital projects plan or the list of improvements to be included in a potential bond issue because we limited the projects on those lists to ones we deemed "necessary" and not merely "desirable." The Selectboard requested a cost estimate to renovate or replace the pool house. The estimated costs for such a project range from \$475,000 for a basic renovation to \$570,000 to replace the building with a similar structure to \$760,000 to replace the building with a nicer wood-frame structure.

Selectboard Salaries

The Brattleboro Selectboard's salaries were last increased in 2012, when they were set at \$5,000 per year for the chair and \$3,000 per year for each of the other 4 members. (The last time they were increased before that was 1996, when they were set at \$3,000 per year for the chair and \$2,000 per year for each of the other 4 members.) Of the 84 towns that responded to a 2019 survey by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Brattleboro Selectboard's current salaries are the fourth highest in Vermont, behind the small towns of Lowell (\$5,744 per year for all 3 members), Albany (\$4,200 per year for all 3 members) and Leicester (\$4,000 per year for all 3 members). The median salary for Selectboard members in Vermont is \$1,000 per year.

Solid Waste Service Alternative for Households with Diapers

Some time ago, staff was asked to see if we could work out a way for households with diapers to dispose of the diapers without having to pay extra to take them to the Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD). This was in response to concerns raised (after we implemented the every-other-week curbside garbage schedule) regarding the limited capacity for some households, particularly apartment dwellers, to store the larger volume of garbage that is represented by disposable diapers. We thought we had a solution lined up last summer, but the WSWMD decided it was not feasible. Recently, we were asked about this again, checked back with the WSWMD, and learned of an alternative that we could pursue if the Selectboard is interested: For applicable households, the Town could purchase an annual pass to drop off garbage at the WSWMD and then the household would pay \$3 for every bag of garbage they deliver to the WSWMD. Such a program would be cost neutral to participating households (except for the cost and inconvenience of transporting their bags to the WSWMD) and we estimate that it would cost the Town between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per year.

\$8,000 = 0.07 cents on the property tax rate

Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS)

SeVEDS' request is for \$3 per resident (\$36,147) from Program Income. The Selectboard will decide whether to recommend that amount, some other amount, or no SeVEDS funding for FY21. Currently, over \$400,000 is available for expenditure from Program Income. *This decision will have no impact upon the property tax rate, unless the Selectboard decides to provide funding from the General Fund instead of from Program Income.*

Provide Visual Budget Information to Make It More Accessible to All Residents

Attached are pie charts and other graphical representations of summary information contained in the budget documents and a few other budget trends. This is just an initial effort that we plan to expand upon in the future. Staff looks forward to receiving feedback from the Selectboard and the community regarding the use of these or other graphics in the 2019-2020 Town Report and in the preparation of the FY22 proposed budget.

Pay Equity for Non-Union Employees

Staff is completing our analysis of non-union pay equity. I plan to release a report next week for consideration at the January 21 Selectboard meeting. The proposed budget currently includes a \$30,000 placeholder for the FY21 cost of pay increases that will result from this review. The full cost of my recommendations (salary, FICA, and retirement contributions) will exceed that amount. An itemized cost estimate will be provided with my recommendation.

**BUDGET RELATED ARTICLES (SEPARATE FROM THE OVERALL FY21 BUDGET ARTICLE)
FOR THE 2020 REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING WARNING**

Selectboard Salaries
Use of Unassigned General Fund Balance
Community Marketing Initiative
Downtown Brattleboro Alliance
Human Services Funding
SeVEDS Funding

SCHEDULE OF REMAINING BUDGET MEETINGS**January 21 Regular Meeting**

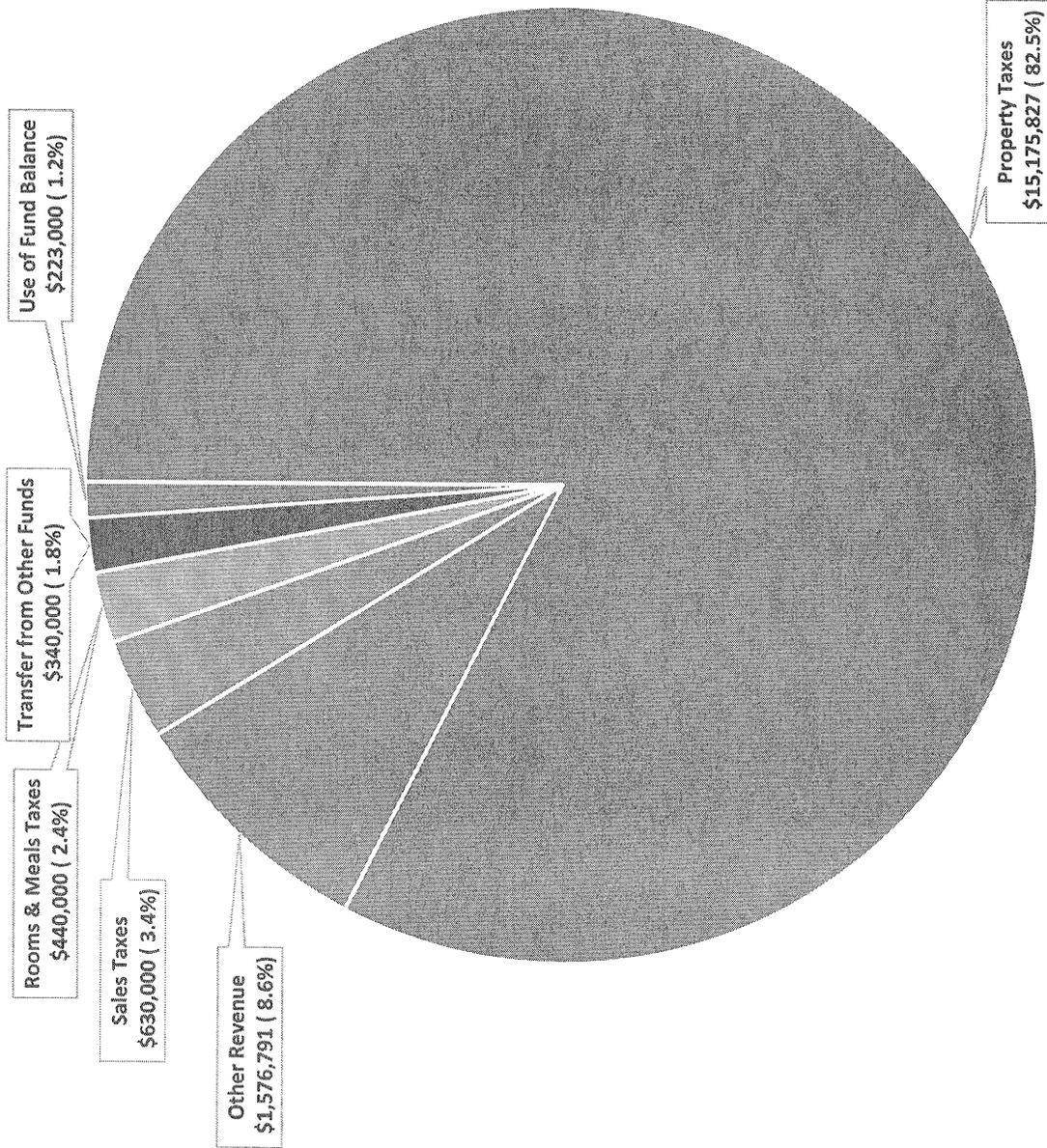
Make final decisions regarding the FY21 budget and review the draft warnings for Town Meeting Day elections on March 3, 2020, and for Representative Town Meeting on March 21, 2020.

January 28 Special Meeting

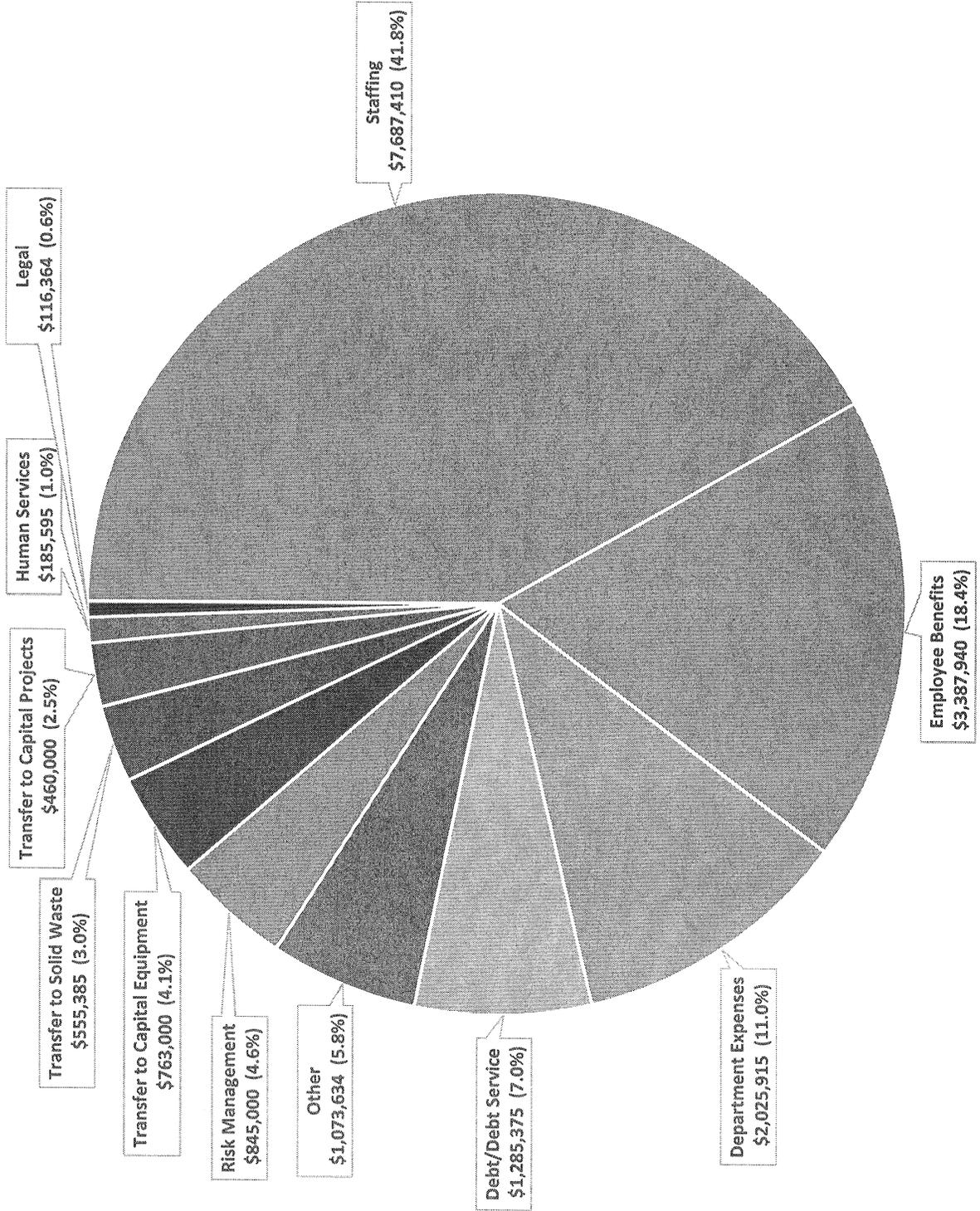
Approve the warnings for Town Meeting Day elections on March 3, 2020, and for the Representative Town Meeting on March 21, 2020. Also provide final formal approval of the Selectboard's FY21 Budget recommendation to Representative Town Meeting.

PBE:
Attachments

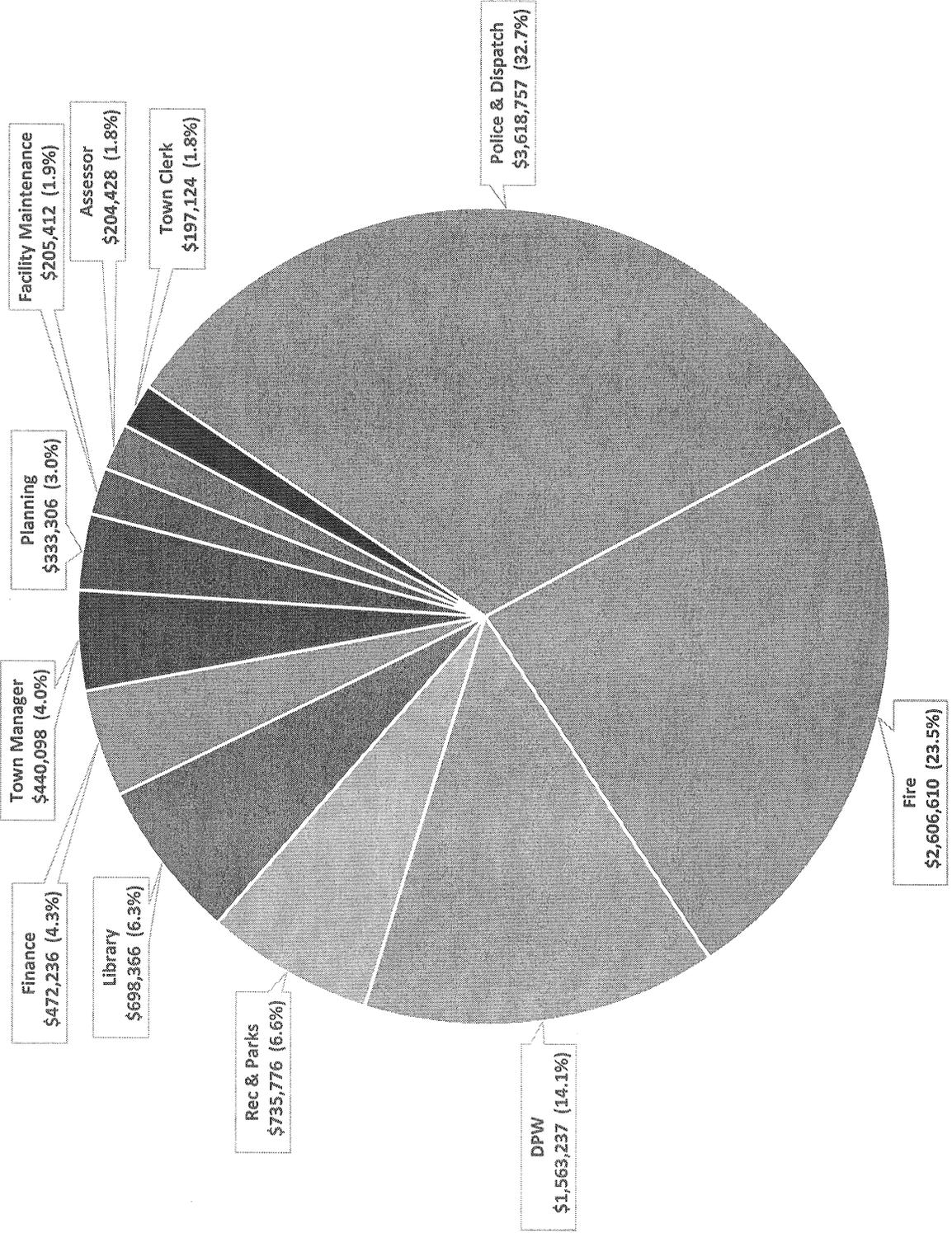
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
REVENUE BY TYPE**



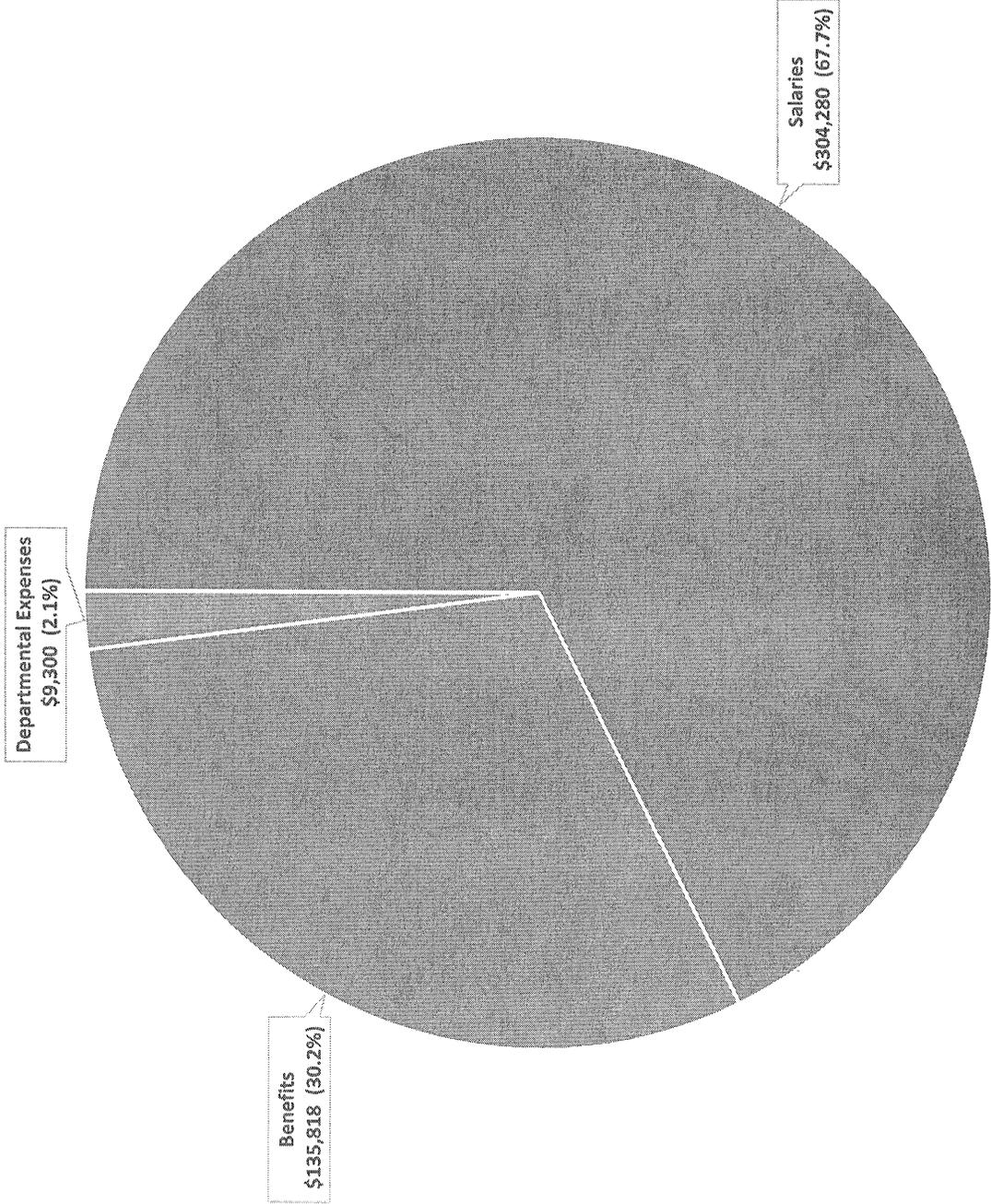
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
EXPENSE BY TYPE**



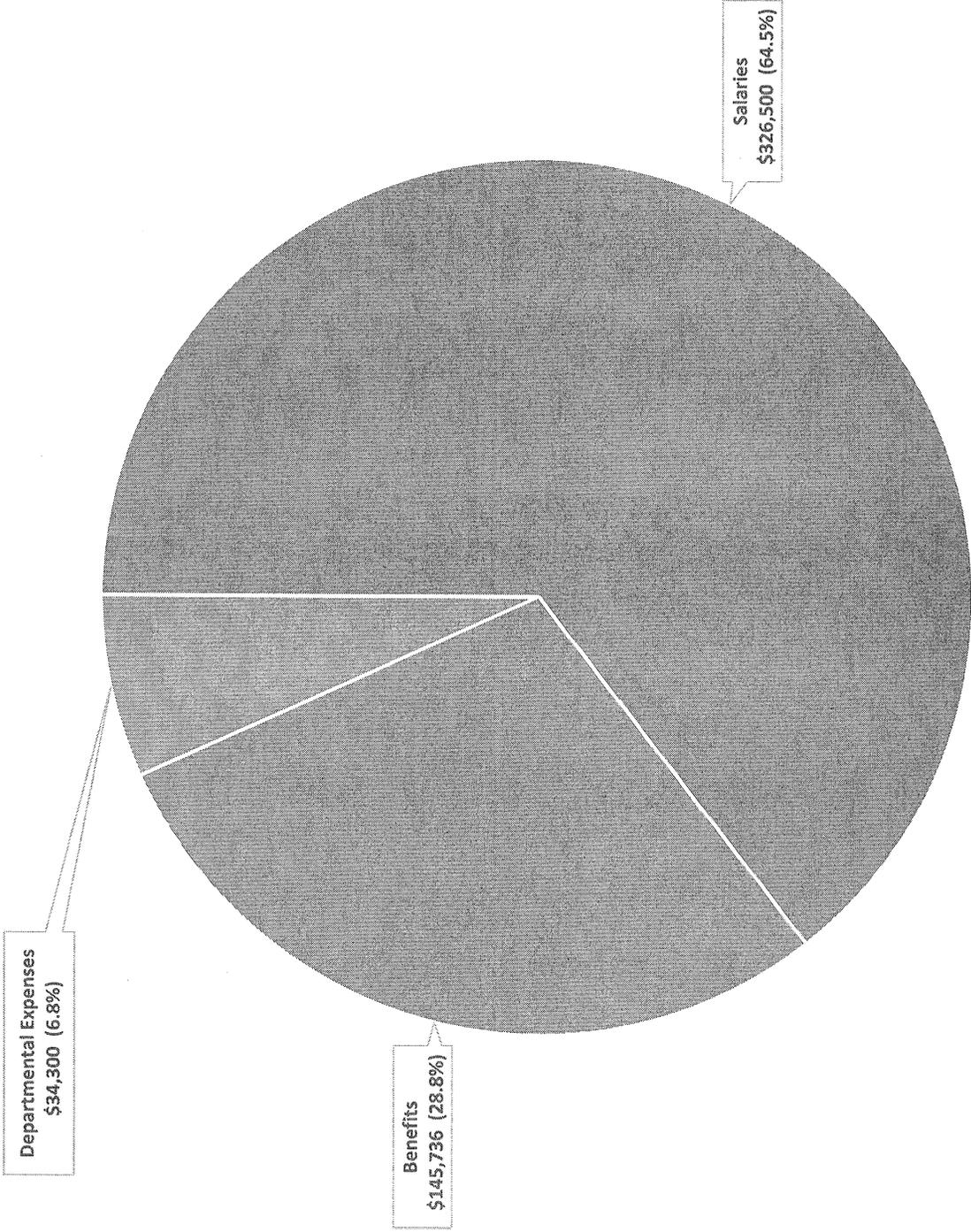
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
EMPLOYEE SALARIES & BENEFITS BY DEPARTMENT**



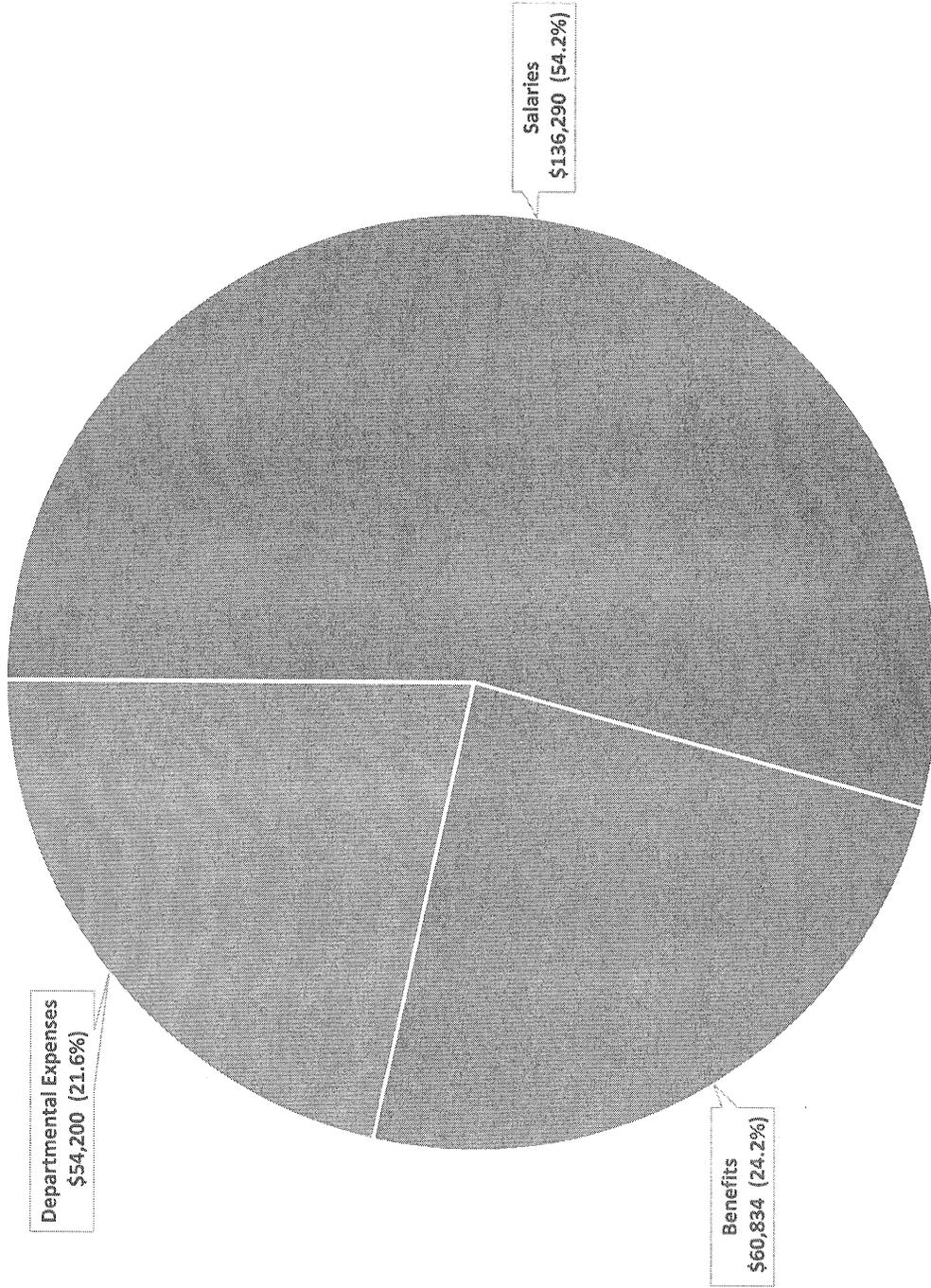
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE**



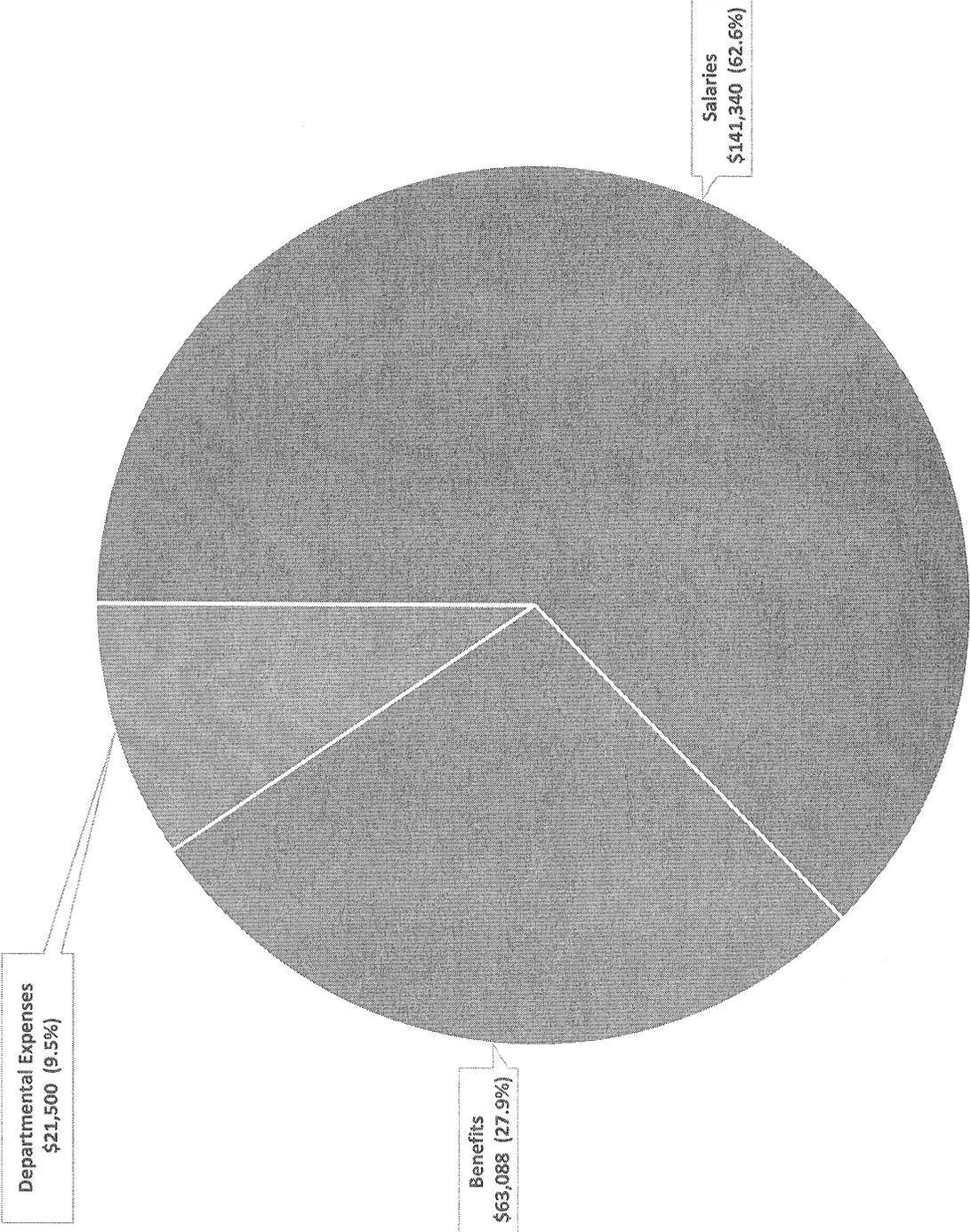
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
FINANCE**



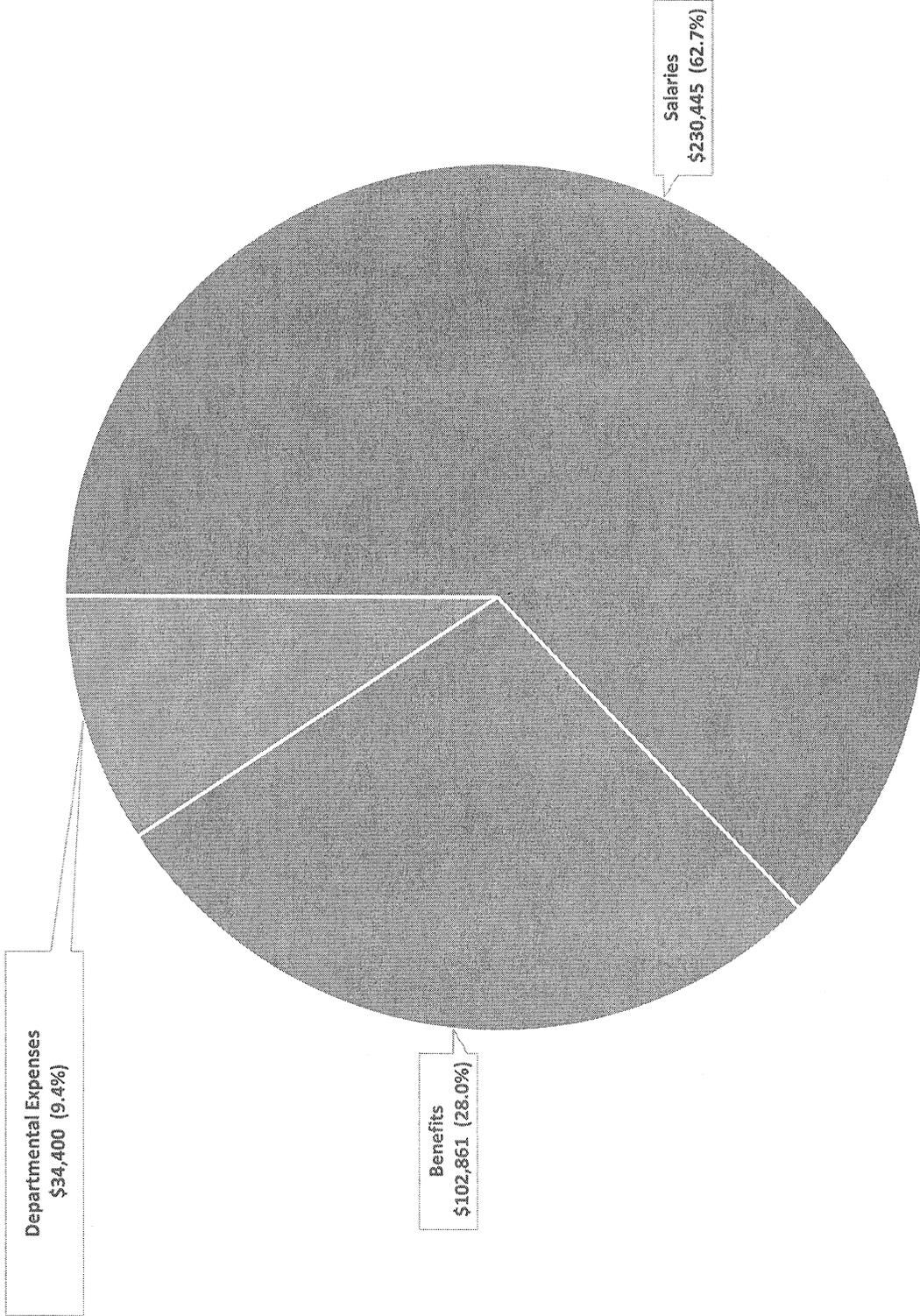
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
TOWN CLERK**



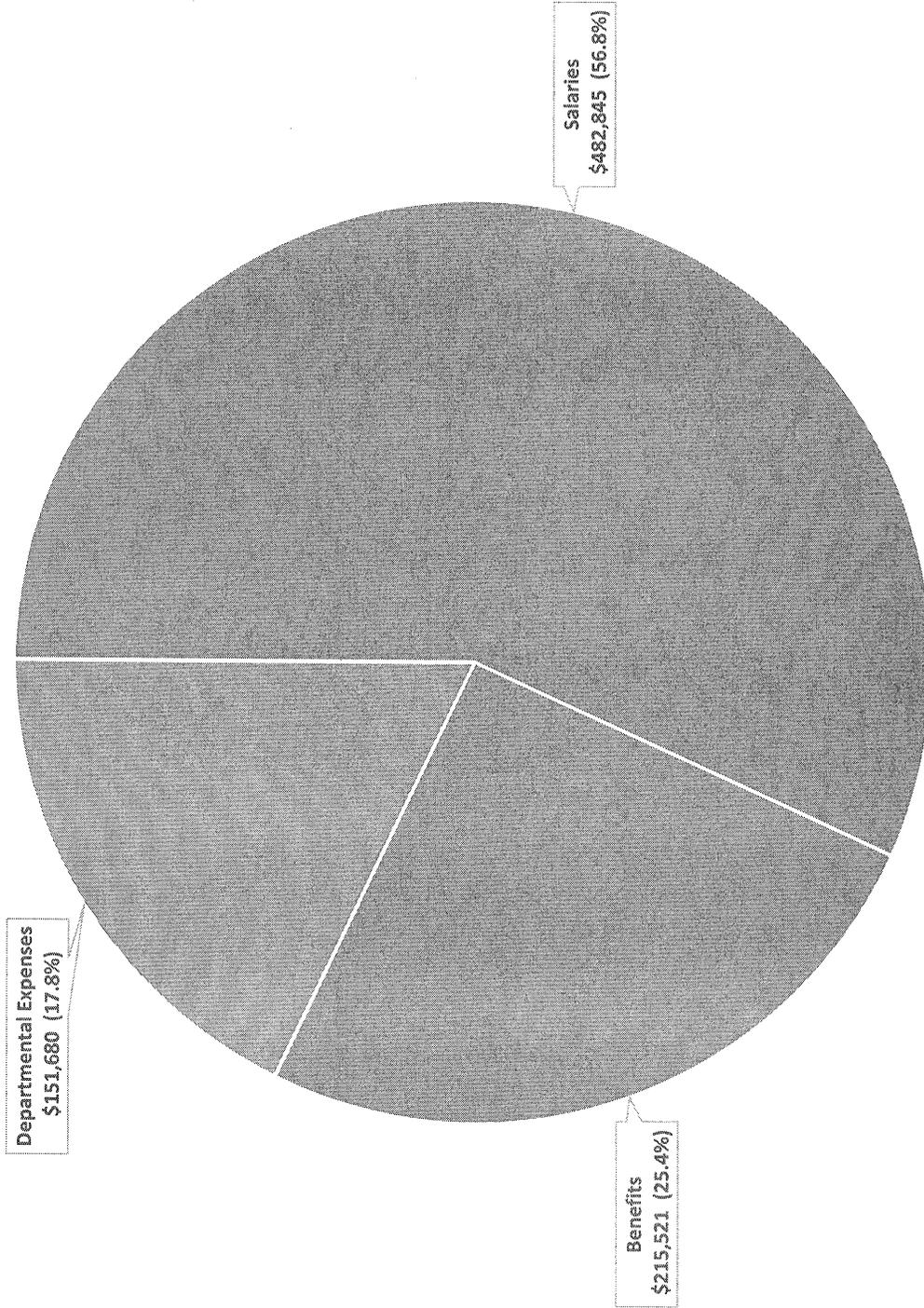
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE**



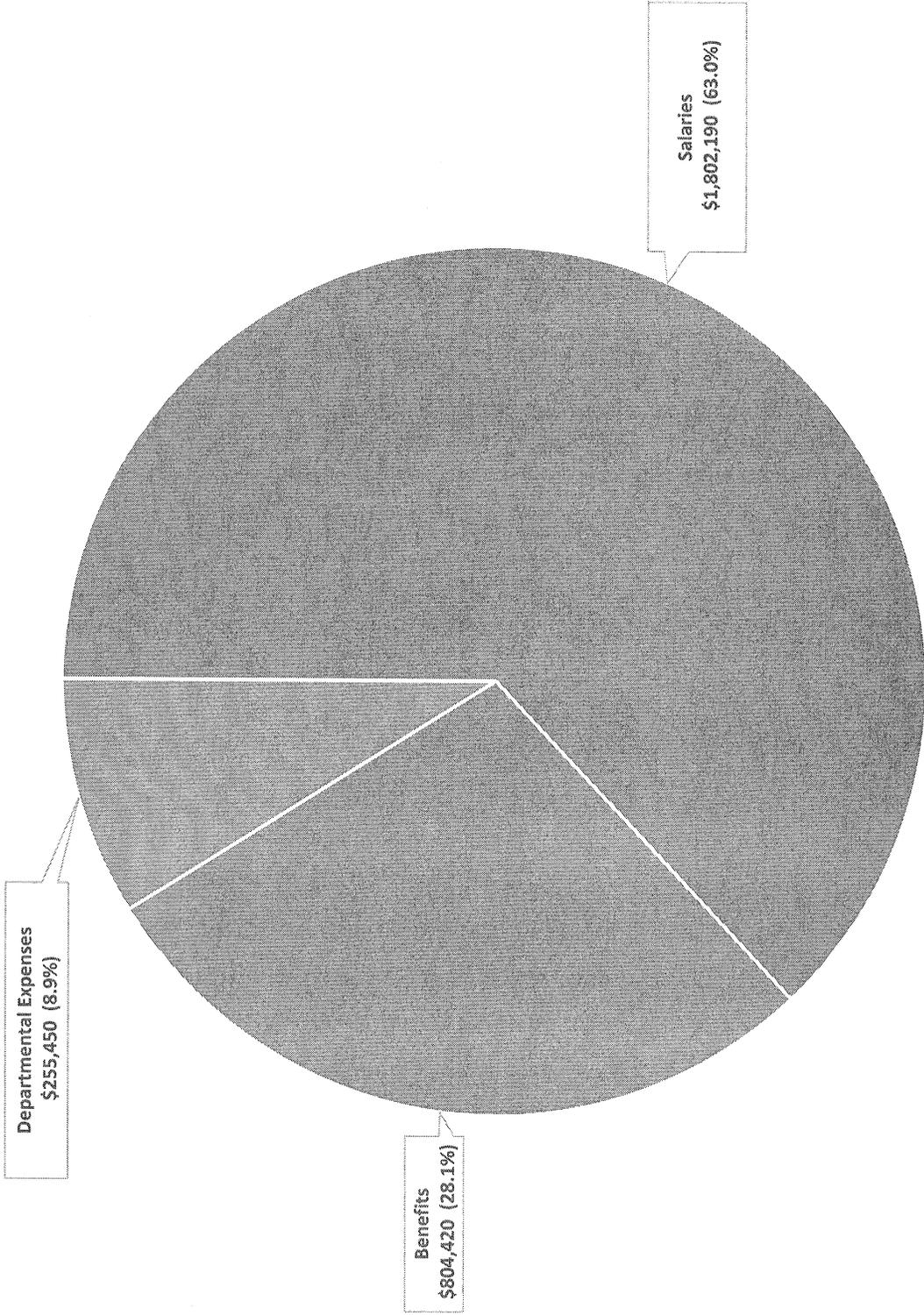
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
PLANNING**



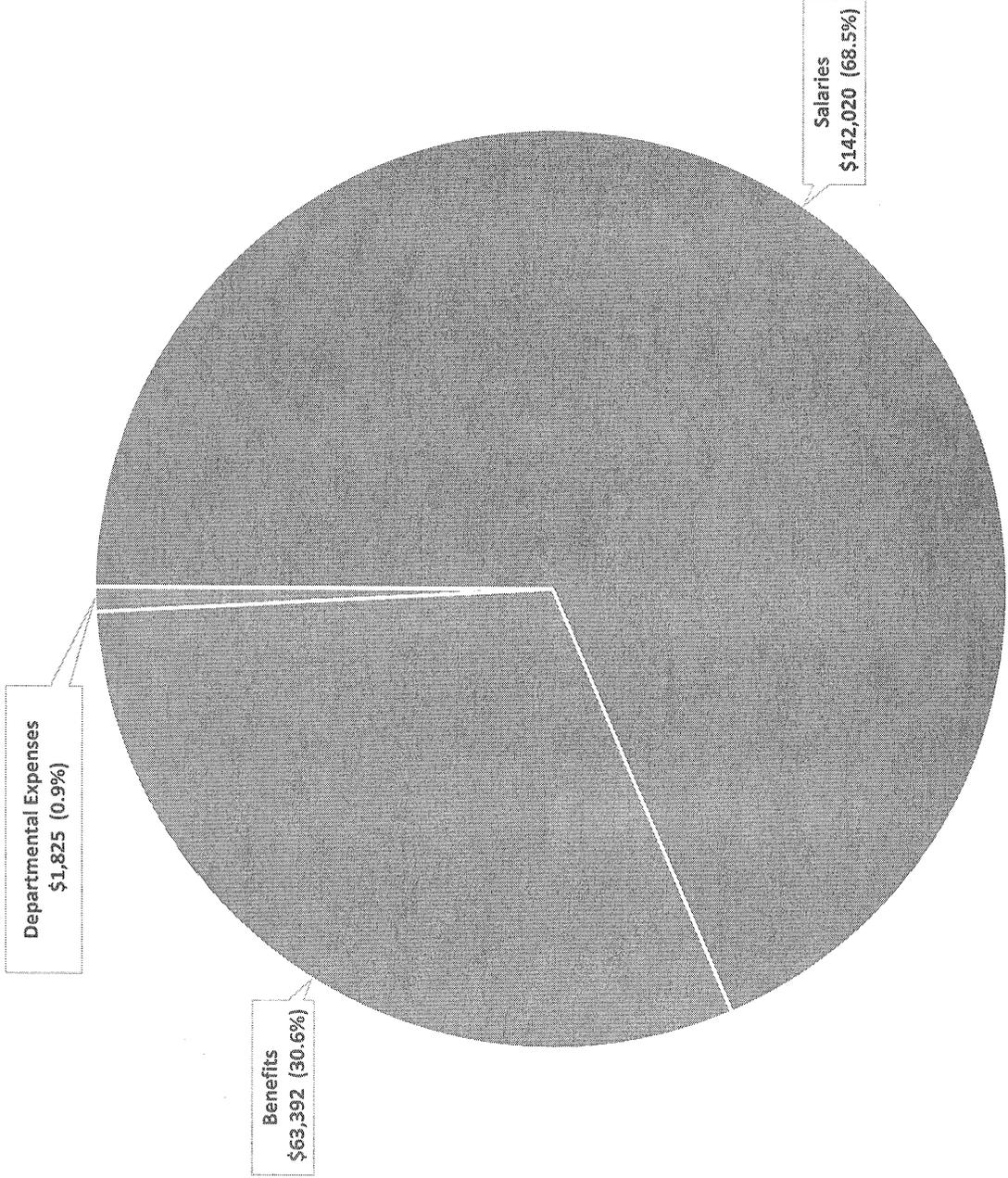
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
LIBRARY**



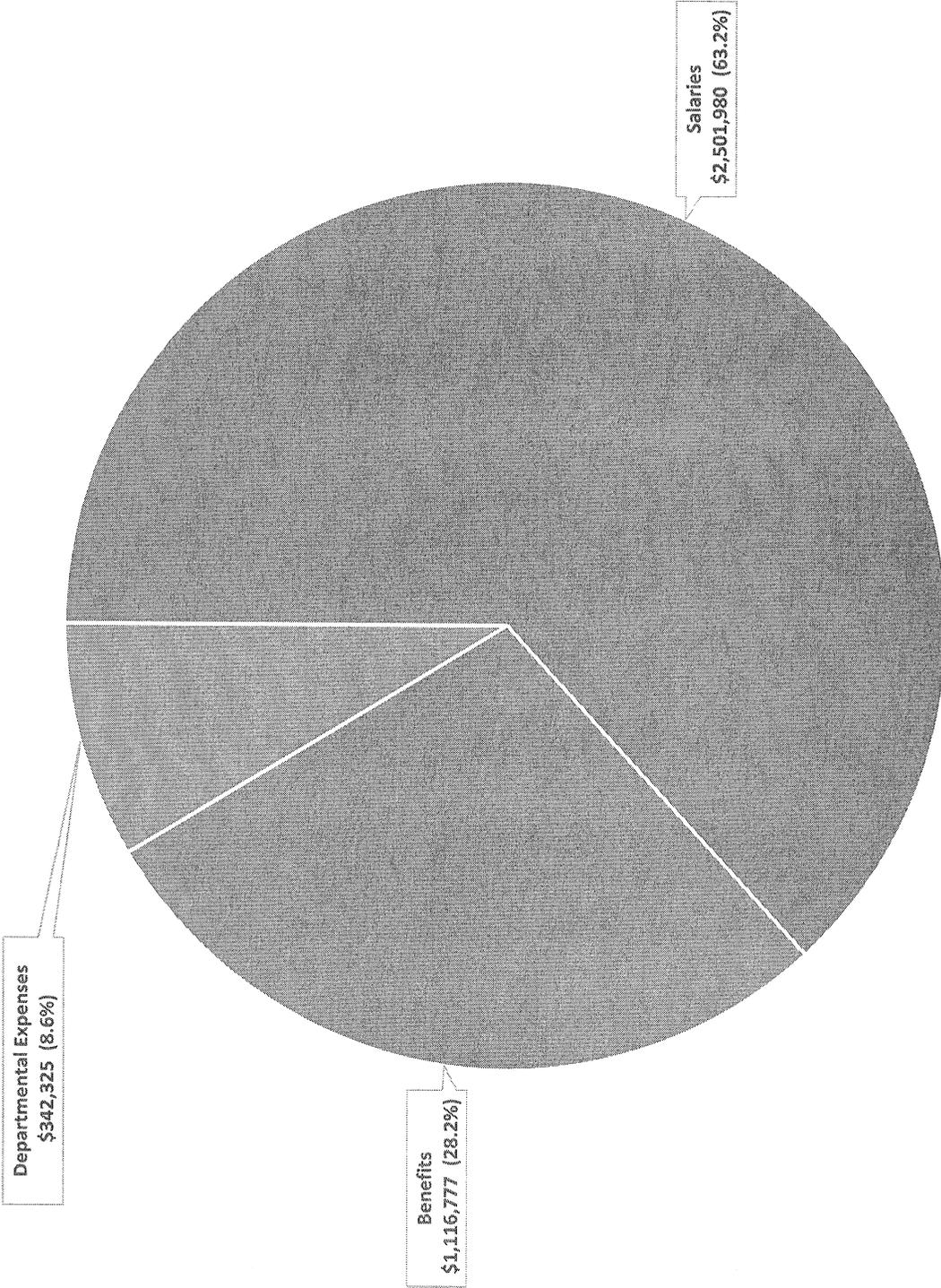
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
FIRE**



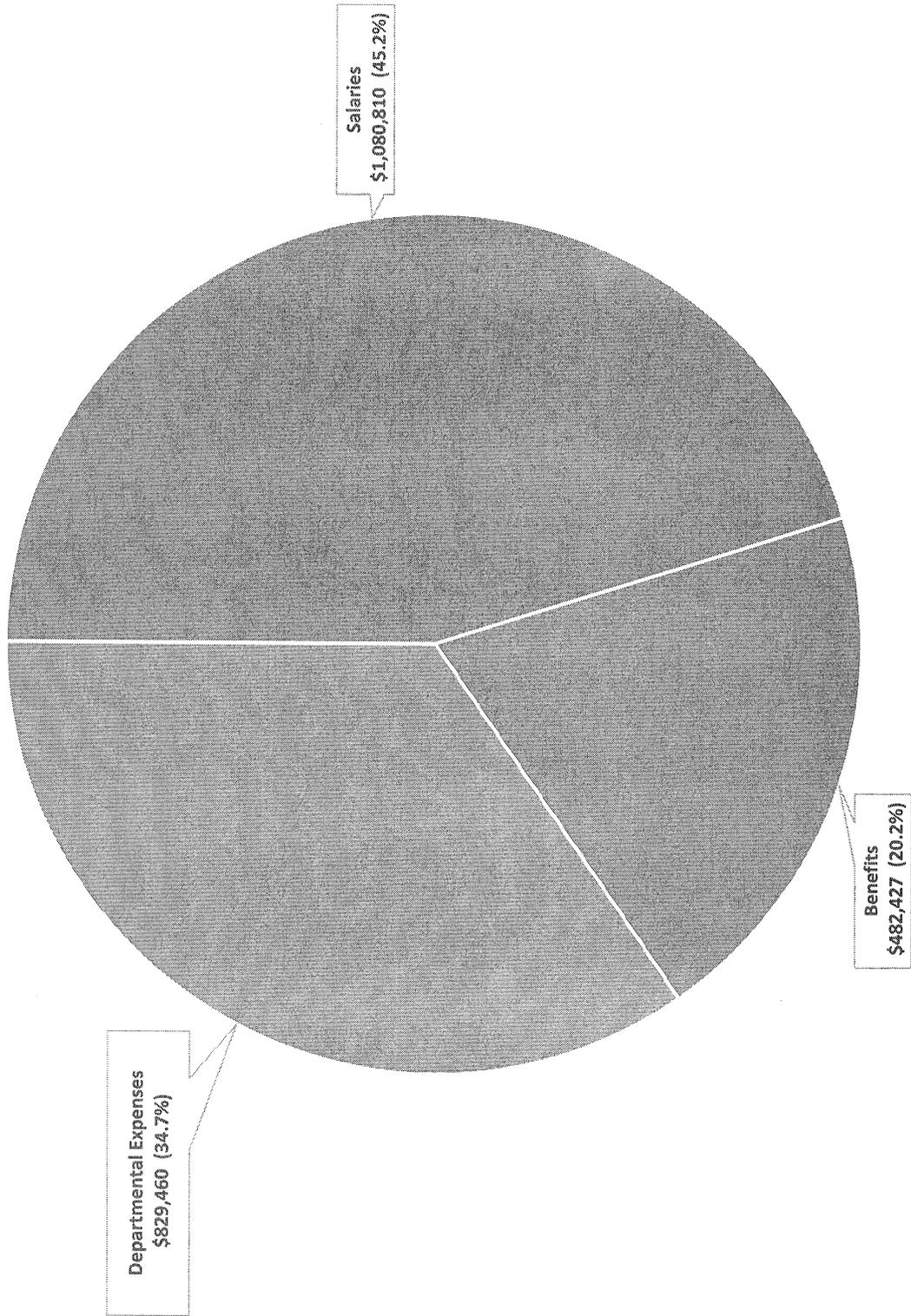
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE**



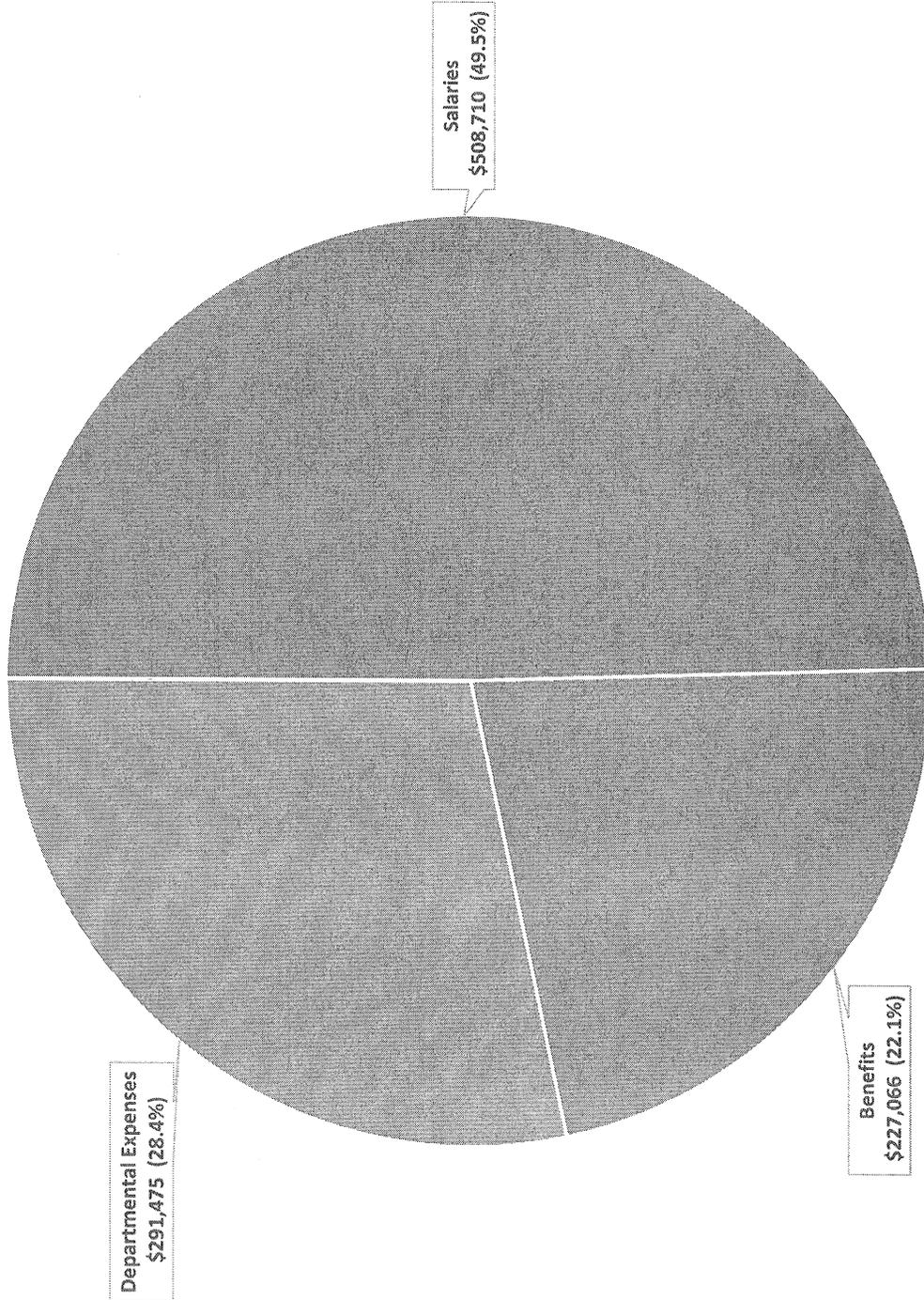
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
POLICE & DISPATCH**



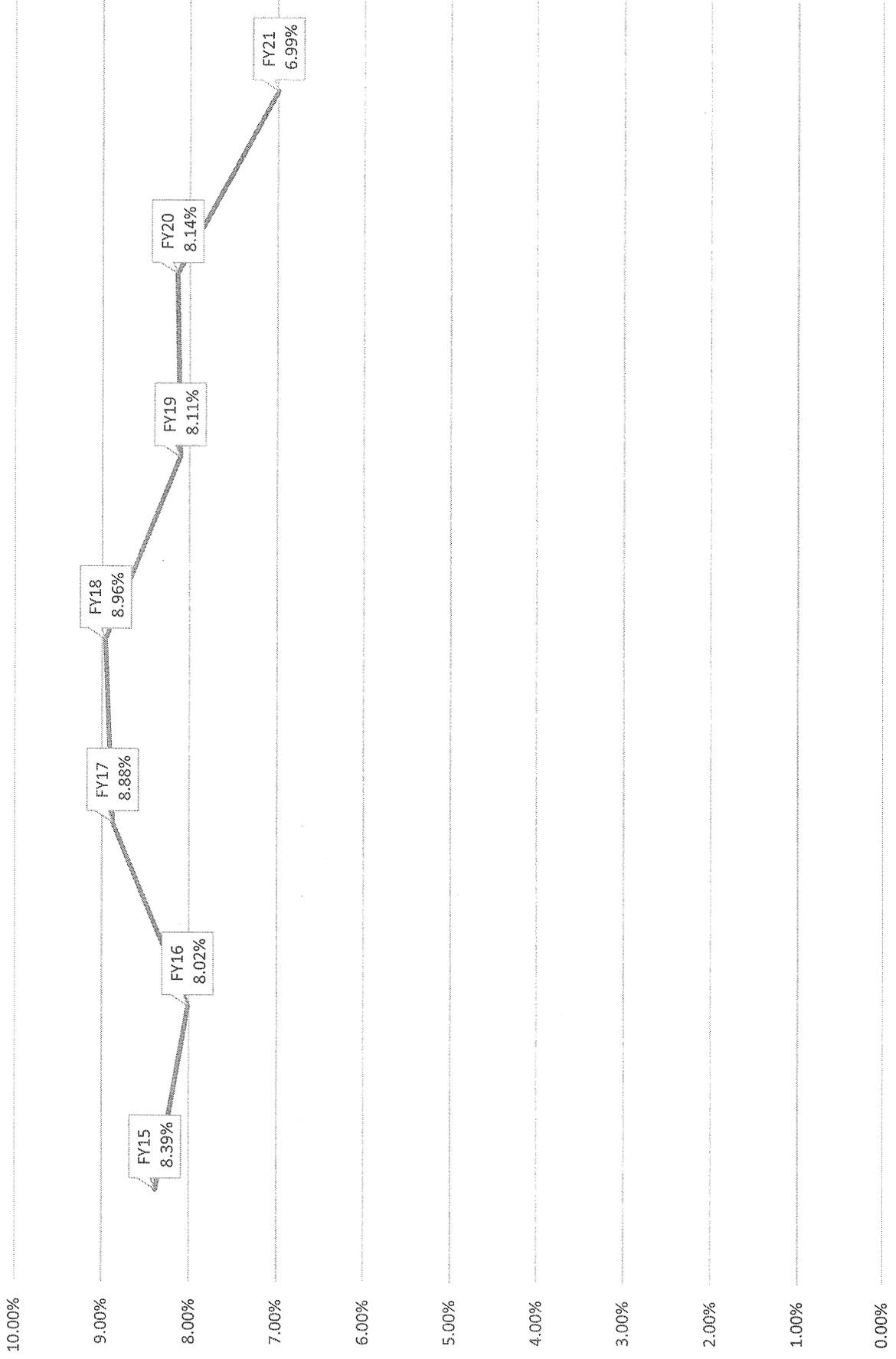
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
PUBLIC WORKS**



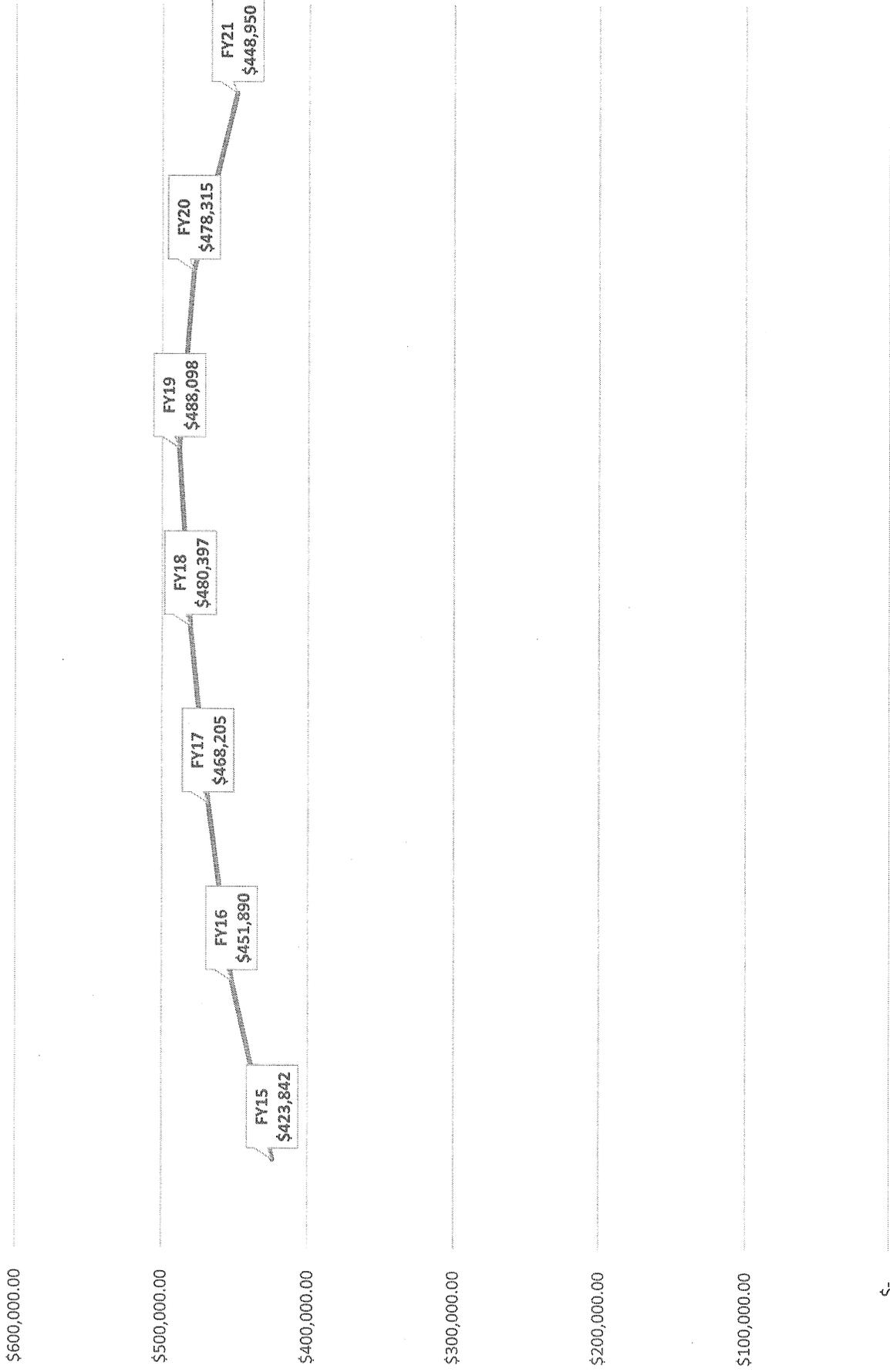
**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
RECREATION & PARKS**



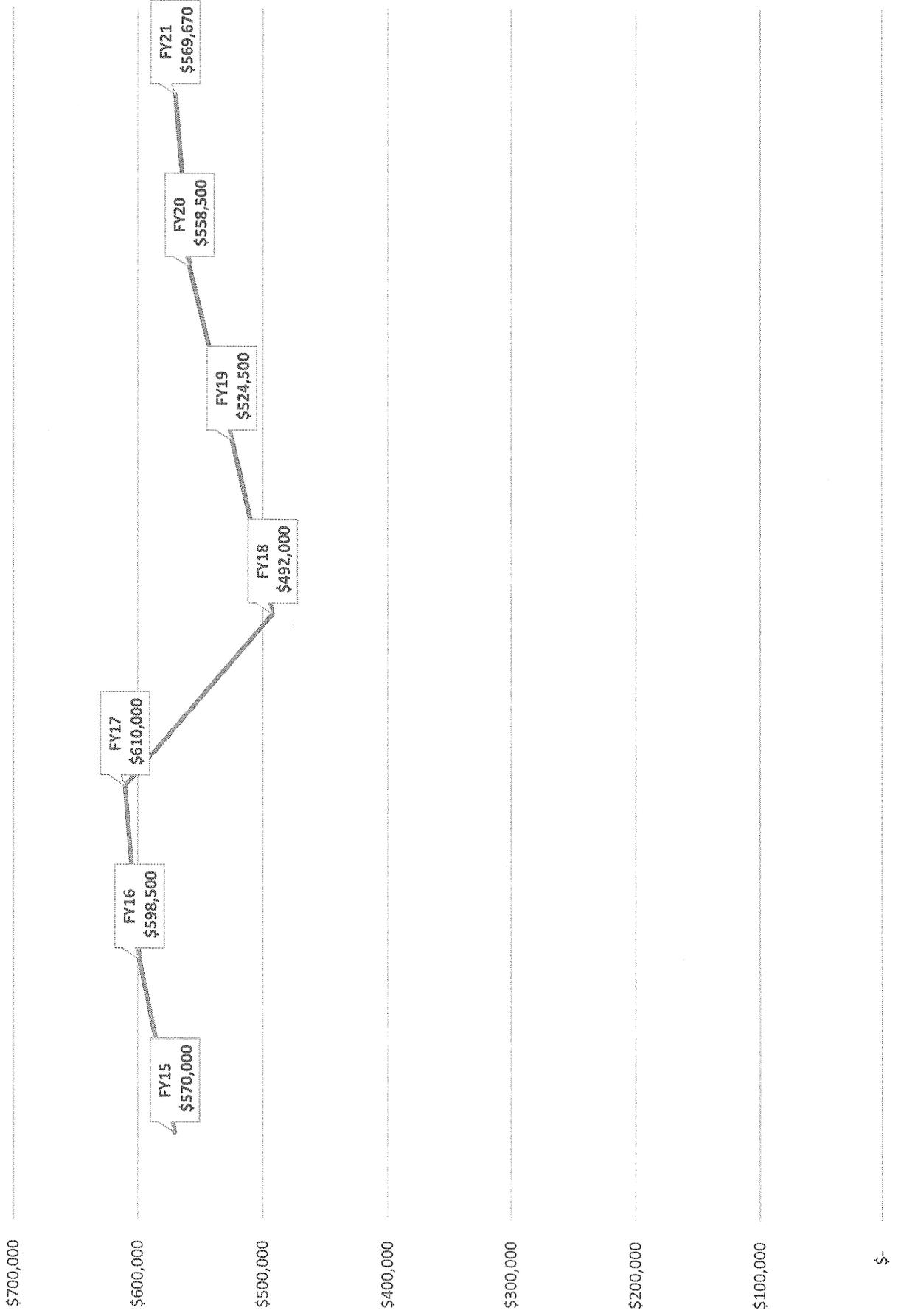
**DEBT & DEBT SERVICE COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET
FY15 - FY21**



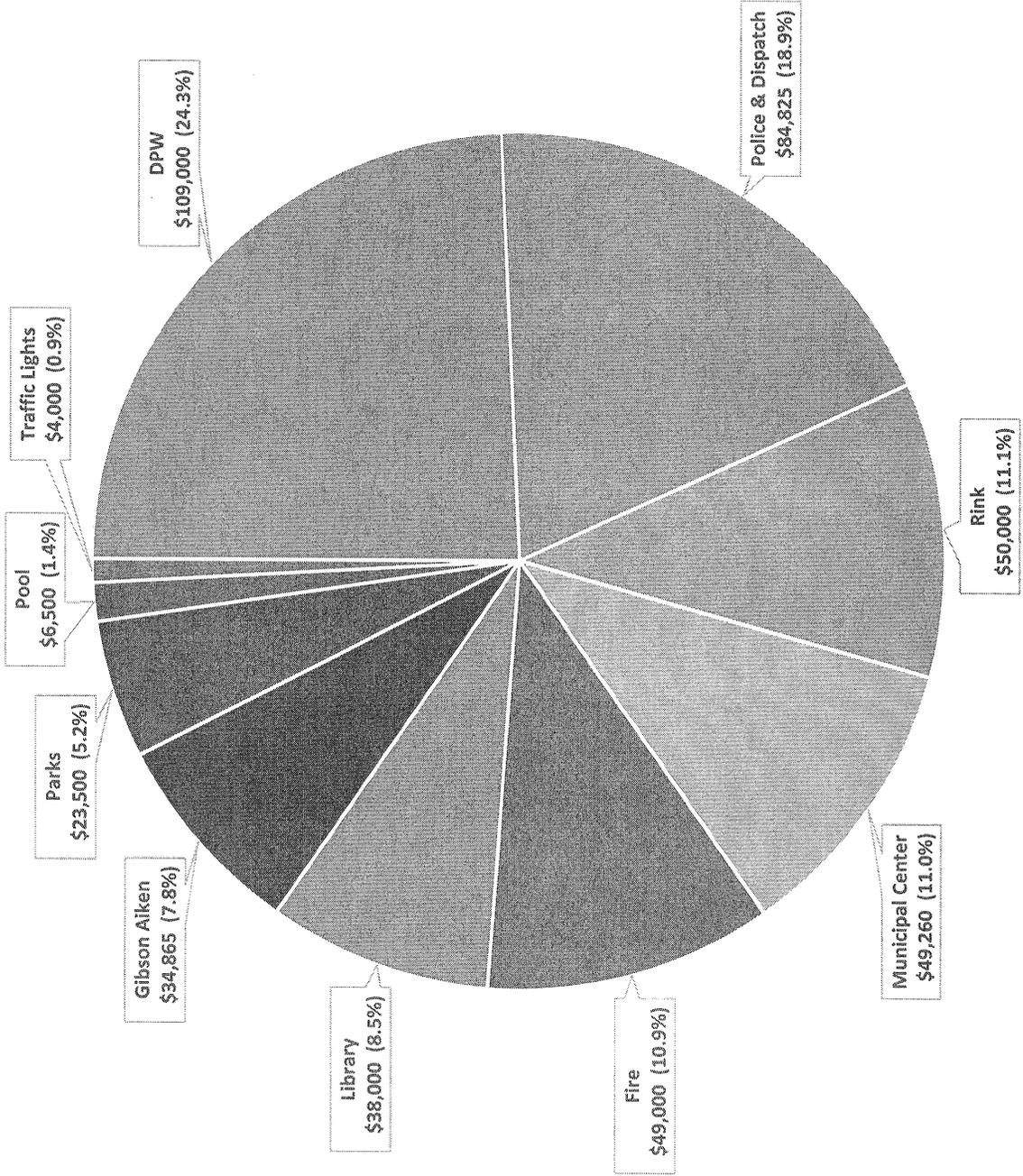
**ENERGY USE IN GENERAL FUND FACILITIES FY15 - FY21
(INCLUDES VEHICLES, HEAT, ELECTRICITY)**



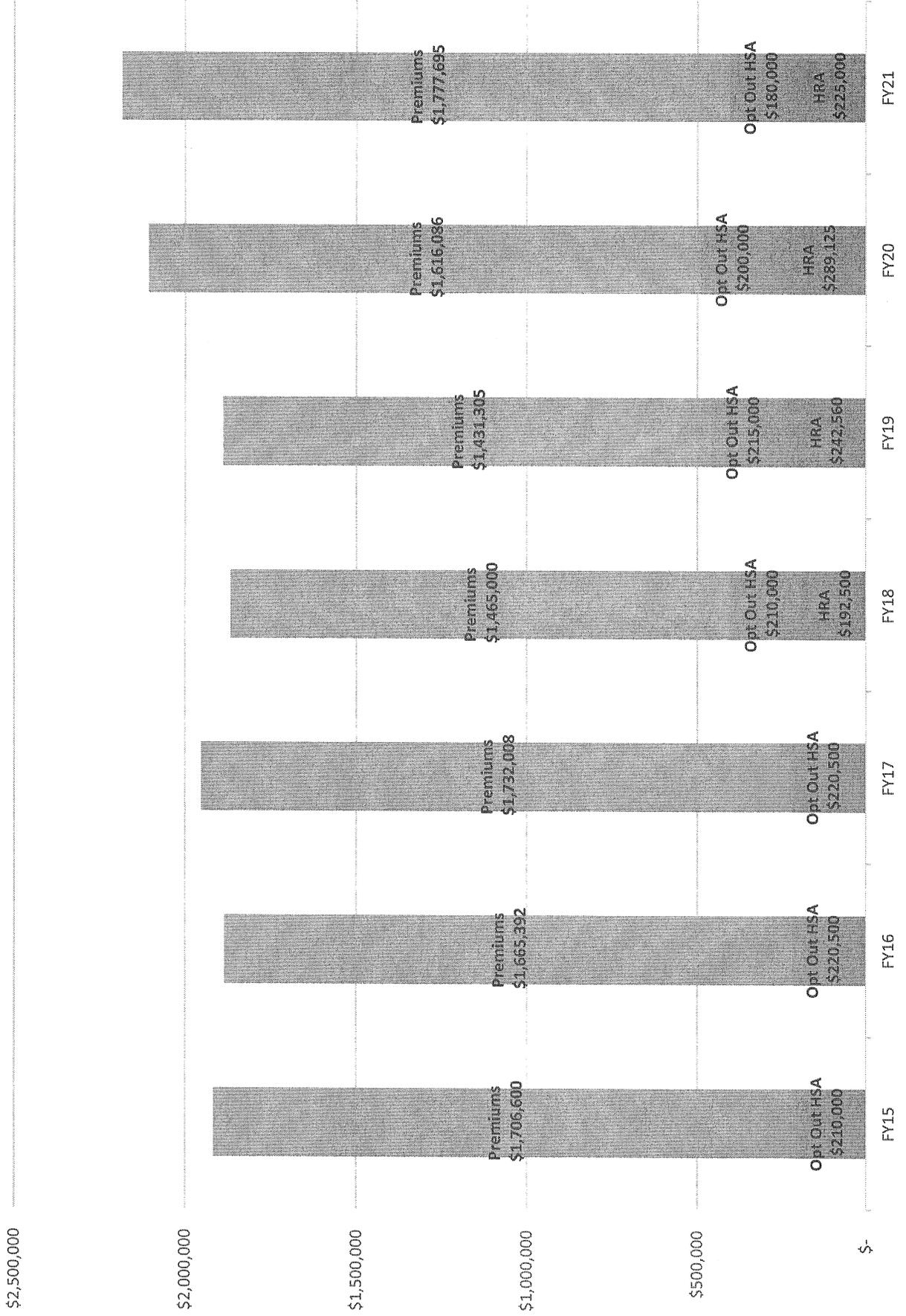
EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT COSTS FY15 - FY21



**STAFF'S PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET
ENERGY RELATED COSTS
(VEHICLES, ELECTRICITY, FUEL)**



HEALTHCARE PROGRAM COSTS FY15 - FY21



The FY21 Proposed Budget is a separate document. See the Town's website (www.brattleboro.org) or contact the Town Manager's Office (251-8151) to obtain a copy of the budget.