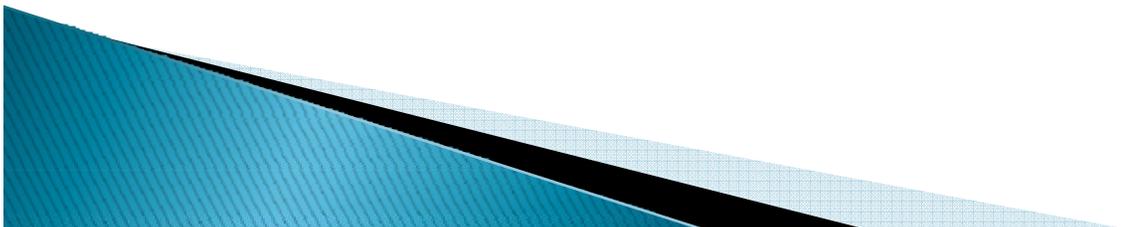


A simple choice for Acton voters

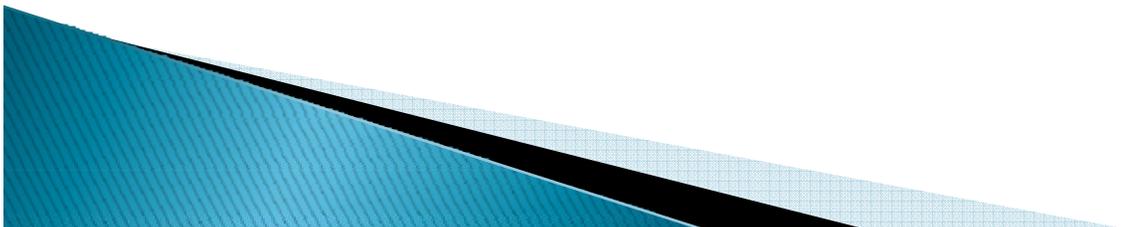
- ▶ **Vote YES for lower property taxes**
 - Eliminate this year's 4.1% tax increase
 - This uses a one-time transfer from a special account
 - It has no effect on budgets: not a budget item
 - Will cause no cuts in services, and no layoffs
 - Keeps reserves at a prudent level

Remember: tonight's vote will cut taxes but does not impact services or operating budgets



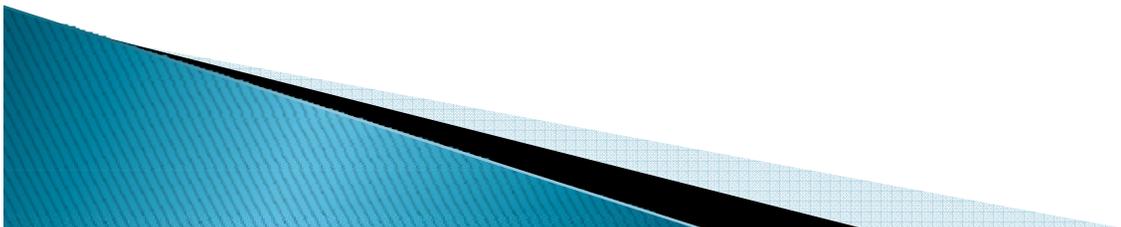
NESWC Fund: a simple choice

- ▶ NESWC balance is \$4.5M (of \$7.2m in reserves)
 - NESWC fund was collected to cap the landfill
 - No longer needed for original purpose
 - It is fair to return it to taxpayers: to help everyone
- ▶ Vote Tonight: Return \$2.4M to help taxpayers
 - Eliminate the 4.1% tax increase for this year
 - Reserves will remain above prudent level
 - Mass Dept. of Revenue (DOR) 5% level
- ▶ Will not change any budgets: no layoffs
 - Transfer of reserve funds will not affect budgets



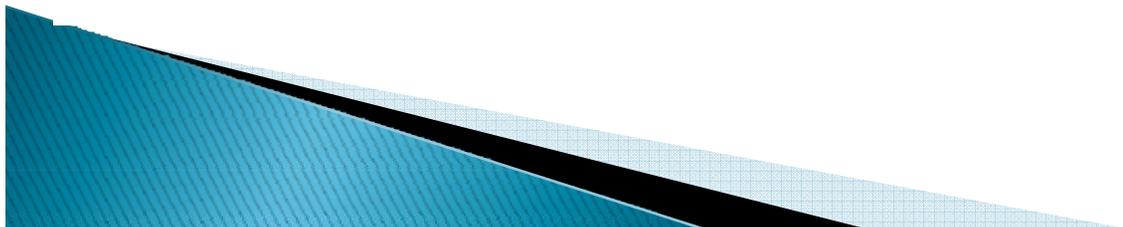
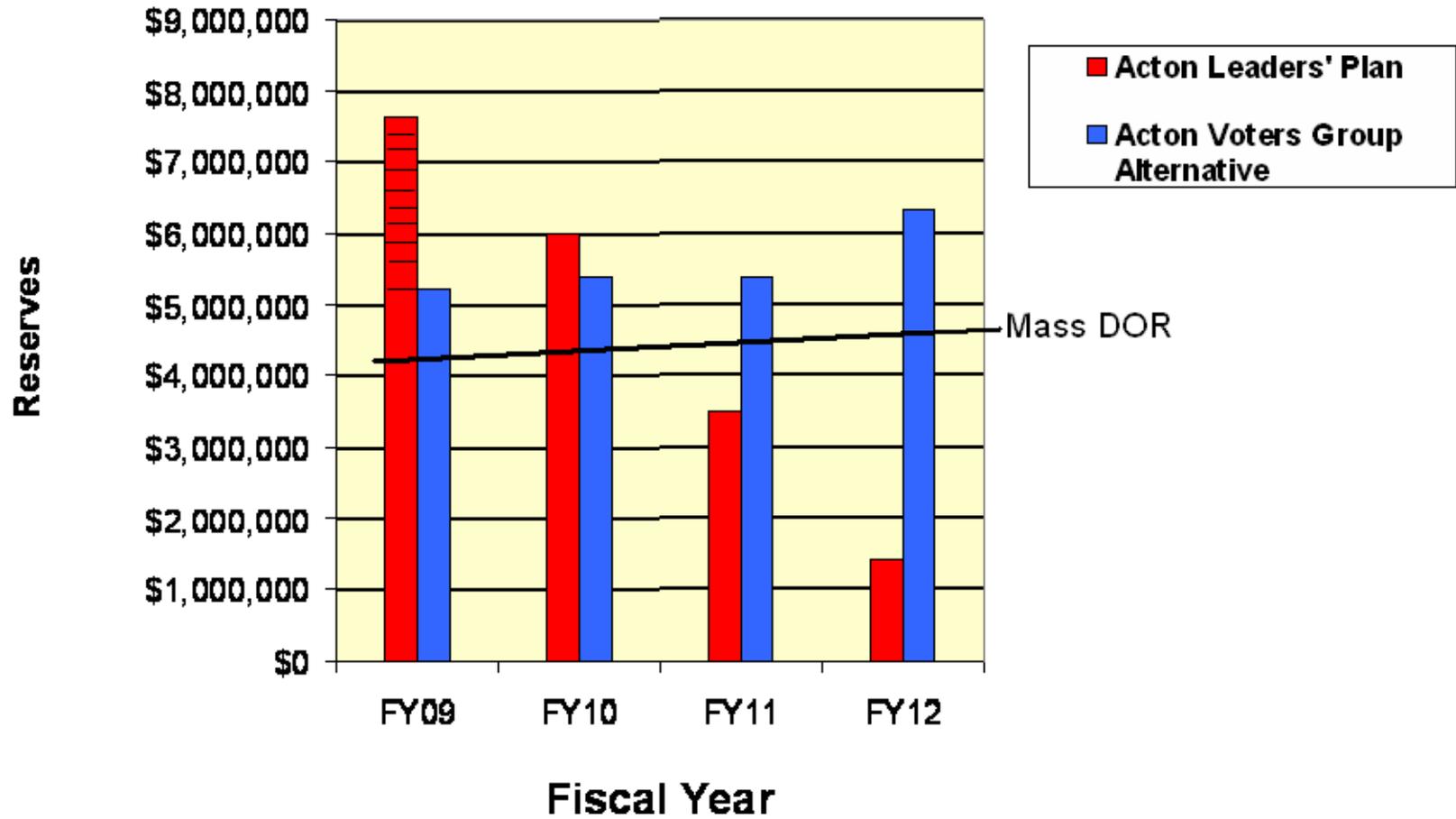
Simple choice: response not so simple

- ▶ Opponents have made this complex
- ▶ “Preserve the Reserves”
- ▶ Board of Selectmen:
 - “it is fiscally prudent to maintain [sufficient] reserves



Acton - Future Reserves

Source : Warrant, October 2, 2008 Special Town Meeting



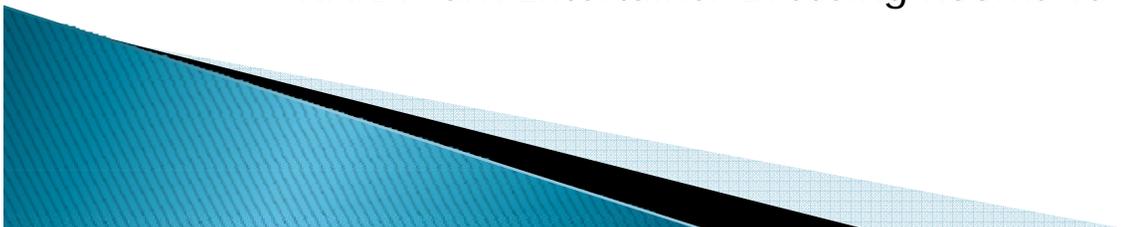
Projects will still get funding

- ▶ Returning NESWC funds is not spending them: transfer to taxpayers

- ▶ Why let taxpayers keep the money?
 - Taxpayers will have more of a say in how the money is spent
 - This seems to be the real issue
 - NESWC funds are easier to spend if taxpayers are not directly involved
 - Acton has a history of spending reserves

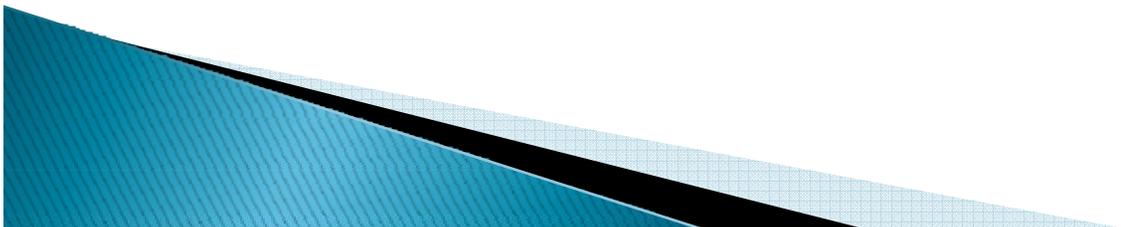
- ▶ Be careful of talk that says projects will stop
 - We have been discussing and funding these projects for years
 - Sidewalks, Sr. Center, Needed Sewers, school roofs, etc.
 - Acton taxpayers have and will support worthy projects

- ▶ Year end funds will be available with better controls
 - Cobblestones and brick crosswalk vs. Sr. center project \$97k
 - NARA Park Entertainer Dressing Rooms vs. sidewalks \$103K



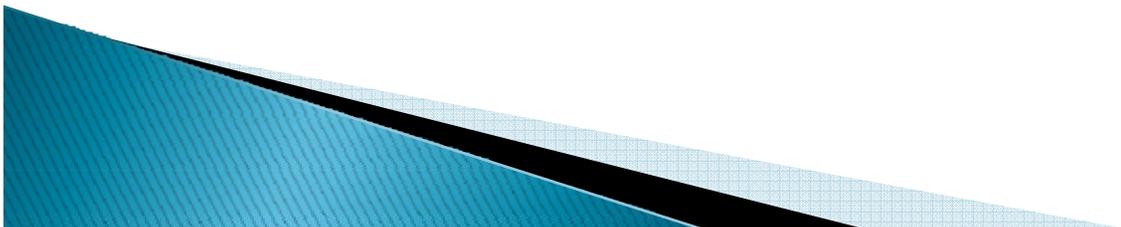
Tax refund will help all taxpayers

- ▶ Residential Taxpayers will receive 87%
 - Some help for taxpayers who are hurting
- ▶ Commercial taxpayers will receive 13%
 - Acton is trying to attract new business
 - We want to retain those we have
 - High taxes are a factor
 - A tax rebate will help



Acton's vulnerable citizens need tax relief

- ▶ Acton Property Taxes are hurting people
 - Single mom being forced out by taxes
 - Retired couple moving out due to taxes
 - Mom has to work to make ends meet and to pay taxes
 - Mom struggling w tuition for kids in college
- ▶ Economy is causing increased hardships
 - Housing values down; Stocks down; Gas prices up
- ▶ 2005 "To Live in Acton": 29% of Acton's seniors are overly burdened by housing/taxes.



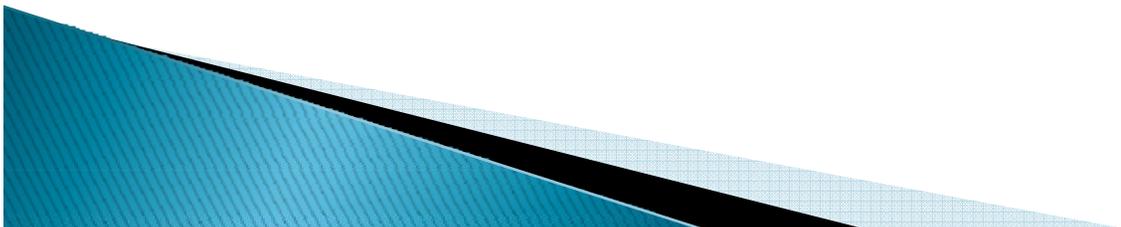
AVG Budget comments

- ▶ **We are not voting on budgets tonight**
 - Tax reduction has no effect on budgets this year or any other year

- ▶ **AO 3 year Plan needs an Override in FY12**
 - Override will hurt many taxpayers financially
 - Override is a particular risk to schools: it often fails

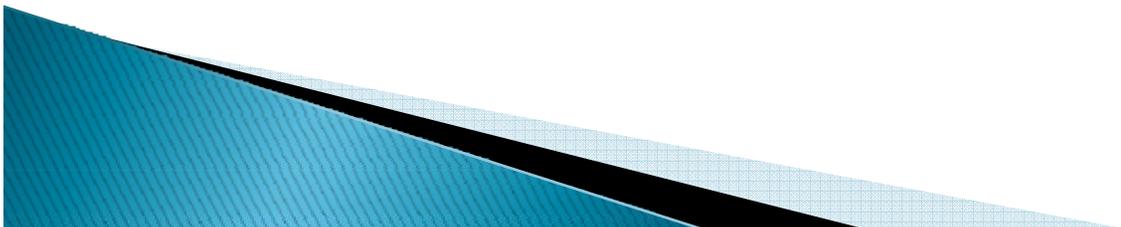
- ▶ **What actions are we taking now to avoid the override?**
 - Where is the cost reduction plan?
 - Where is the plan to control spending?
 - Why expand budgets 5.7% per year, exceeding revenue?

- ▶ **Do not be sidetracked: we are not voting on budgets**
 - Budget discussions are for after this Special Town Meeting



Questions to keep in mind

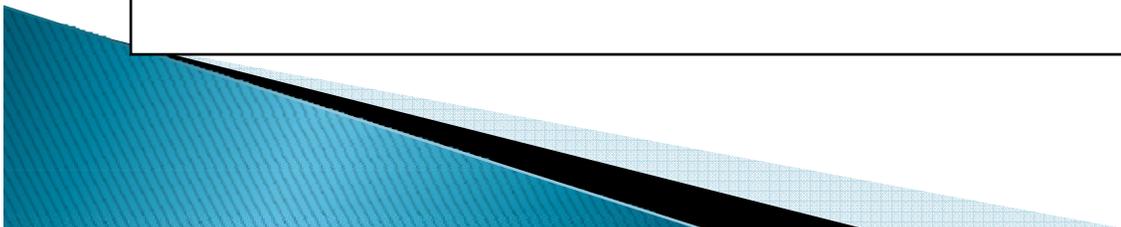
- ▶ Why spend down reserves when you say you want to preserve them?
- ▶ Do comparable towns spend reserves to 1 1/2%?
- ▶ Why hasn't the town put together a long-term plan that doesn't rely on risky overrides to balance?

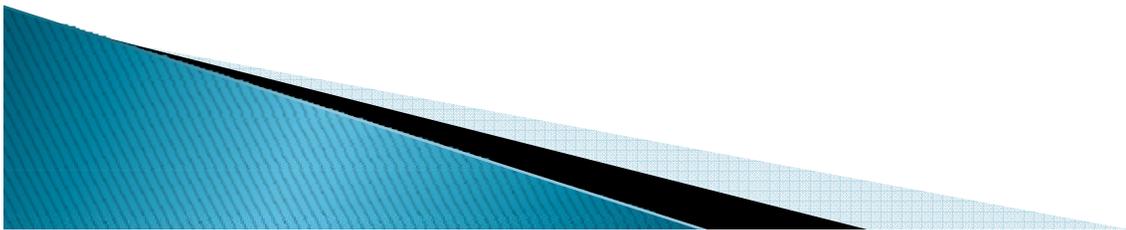


A choice for Acton Voters

- ▶ **Vote YES for lower property taxes**
 - Eliminate this year's 4.1% tax increase
 - Will cause no cuts in services
 - Has no effect on budgets
 - Will keep reserves at prudent levels

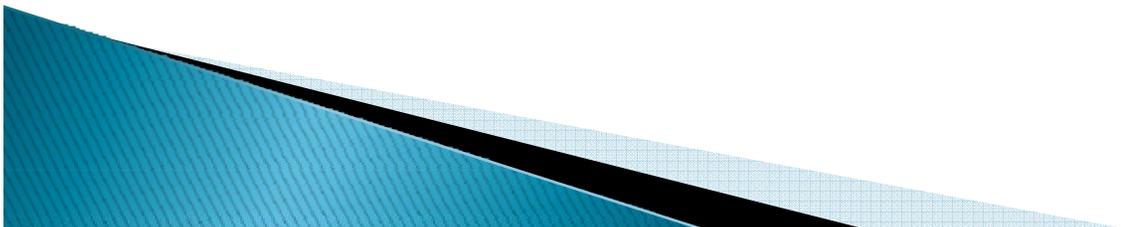
Remember: tonight's vote will cut taxes but does not impact services or operating budgets





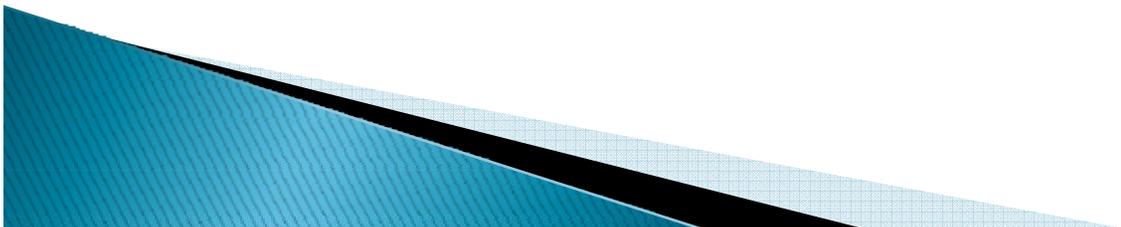
Rebuttal: A choice for voters

- ▶ Vote YES for lower property taxes
 - No increase this year (vs. 4% plan)
- ▶ A one time transfer to taxpayers
 - Does not affect budgets now or in future
- ▶ We are not voting on budgets tonight



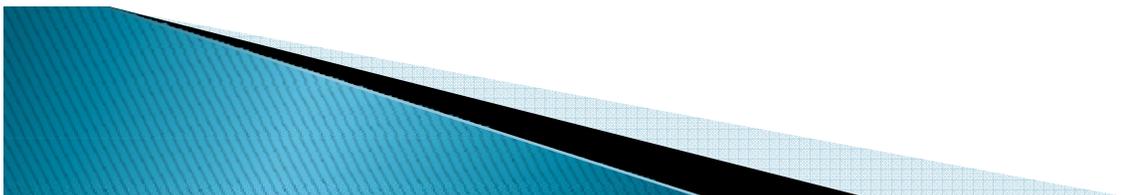
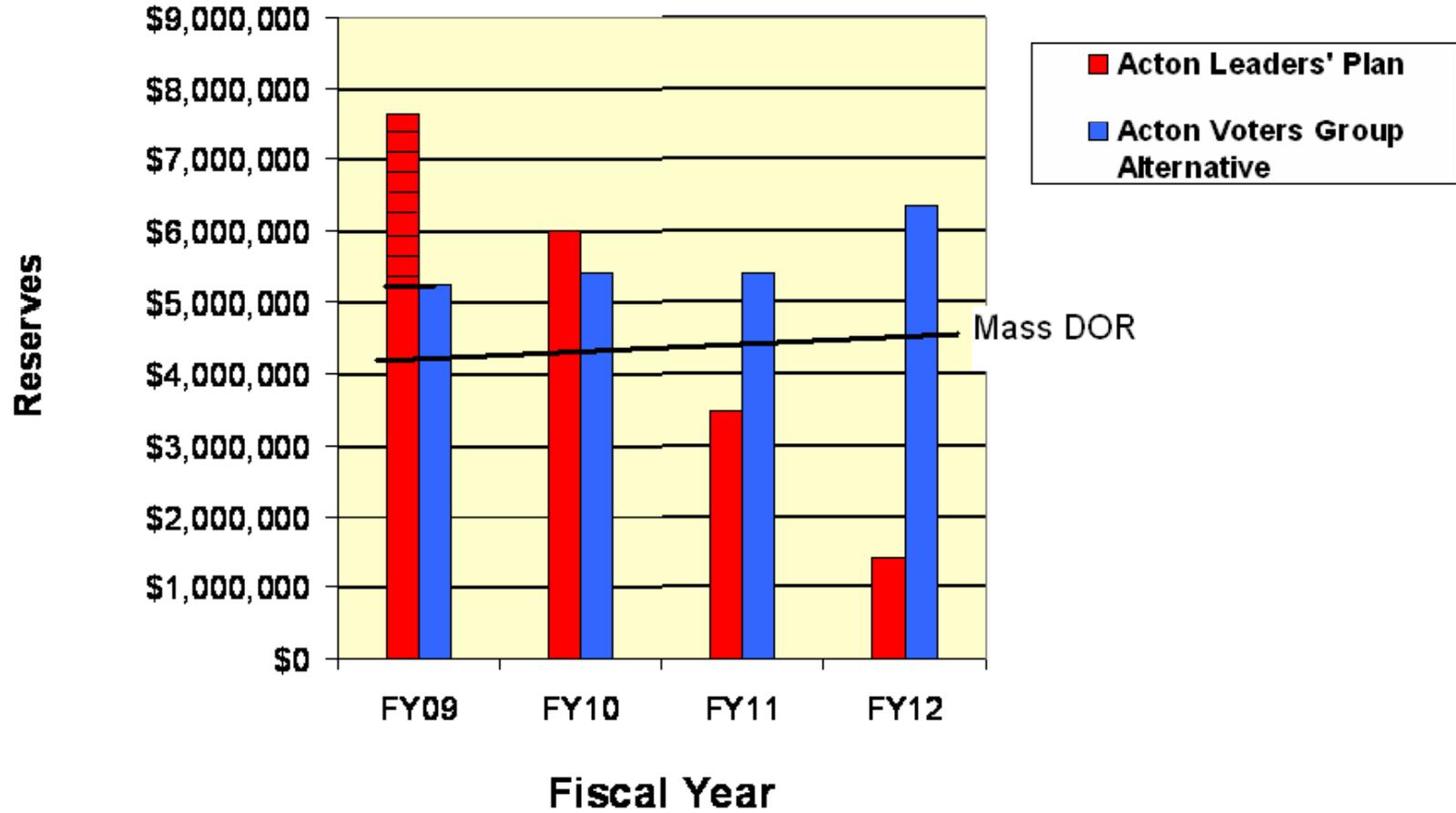
Questions for Acton Officials

- ▶ Why spend down reserves when you say you want to preserve them?
- ▶ Do comparable towns spend reserves to 1 1/2%?
- ▶ Why hasn't the town put together a long-term plan that doesn't rely on risky overrides to balance?



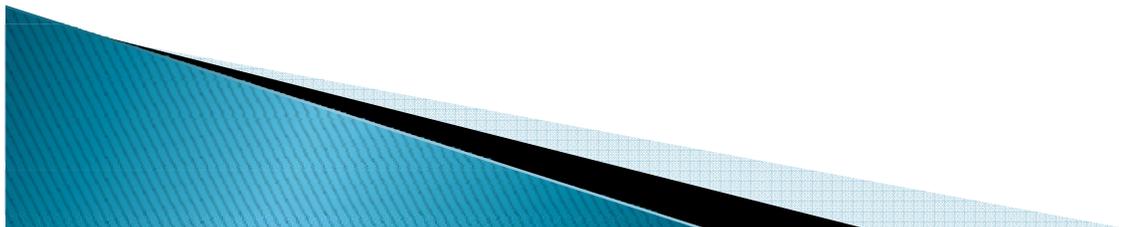
Acton - Future Reserves

Source : Warrant, October 2, 2008 Special Town Meeting



Acton Official's 3-year plan

Multi-Year Plan	DRAFT		Revised 9/17/2008		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Revenues:					
TOTAL	\$72,233	\$76,881	\$81,564	\$85,995	\$90,698
% increase		6.4%	6.1%	5.4%	5.5%
NET POSITION	\$900	\$200	\$23	\$75	\$(2,365)
Reserves:					
Free Cash	\$1,900	\$2,455	\$2,475	\$1,471	\$250
NESWC	\$4,886	\$4,469	\$3,069	\$1,869	\$1,000
E&D	\$1,100	\$726	\$446	\$154	\$154
TOTAL	\$7,886	\$7,650	\$5,990	\$3,494	\$1,404



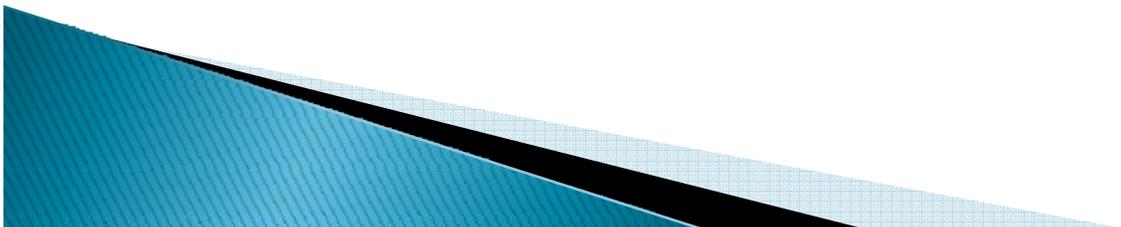
A no layoff three year budget plan

- ▶ We are not voting on a three year plan tonight
- ▶ Suggestions: Avoid layoffs with prudent budgeting
 - Avoid deficit spending
 - Control budget expansions from 5.7% to 3.7%
 - Reengineering Acton for cost reductions
- ▶ NESWC is for capital: has no impact on budgets
- ▶ This tax reduction has no impact on budgets

Revenues:	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Free Cash	\$1,594	\$450	\$430	\$1,277	\$1,547
NESWC for capital		\$750	\$1,400	\$1,200	\$869

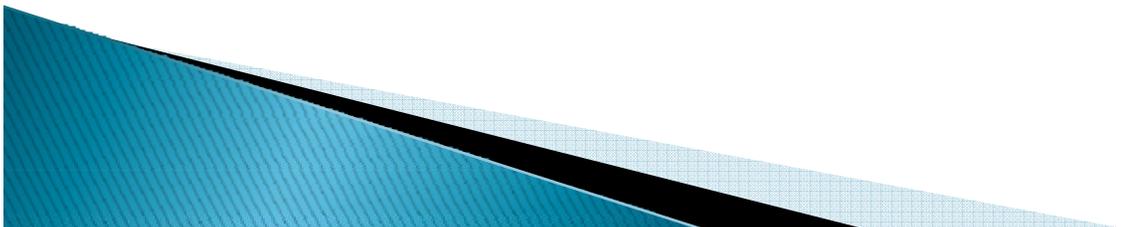
Reality check: this year's budget

- ▶ We are not voting on budgets tonight
- ▶ This year: increased spending at 6.6%
 - Allowed hiring of 28 new staff
 - With no new hires: spending increase of about 4.0%
- ▶ Plan for next year: 6.3% increase
 - AO claim verbally (not in warrant) no new hires
 - How is this possible?
 - Need to rethink the AO plan



A simple choice for Acton voters

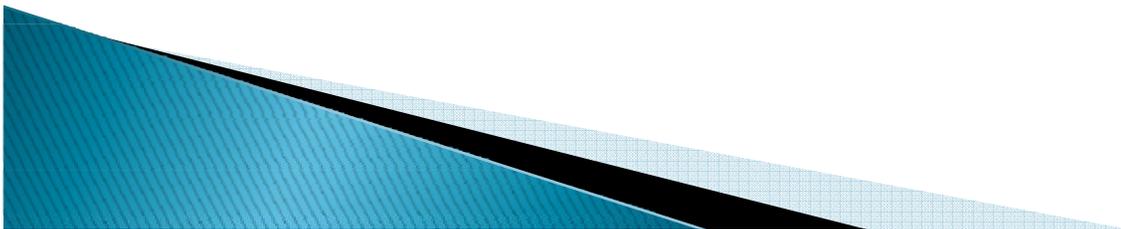
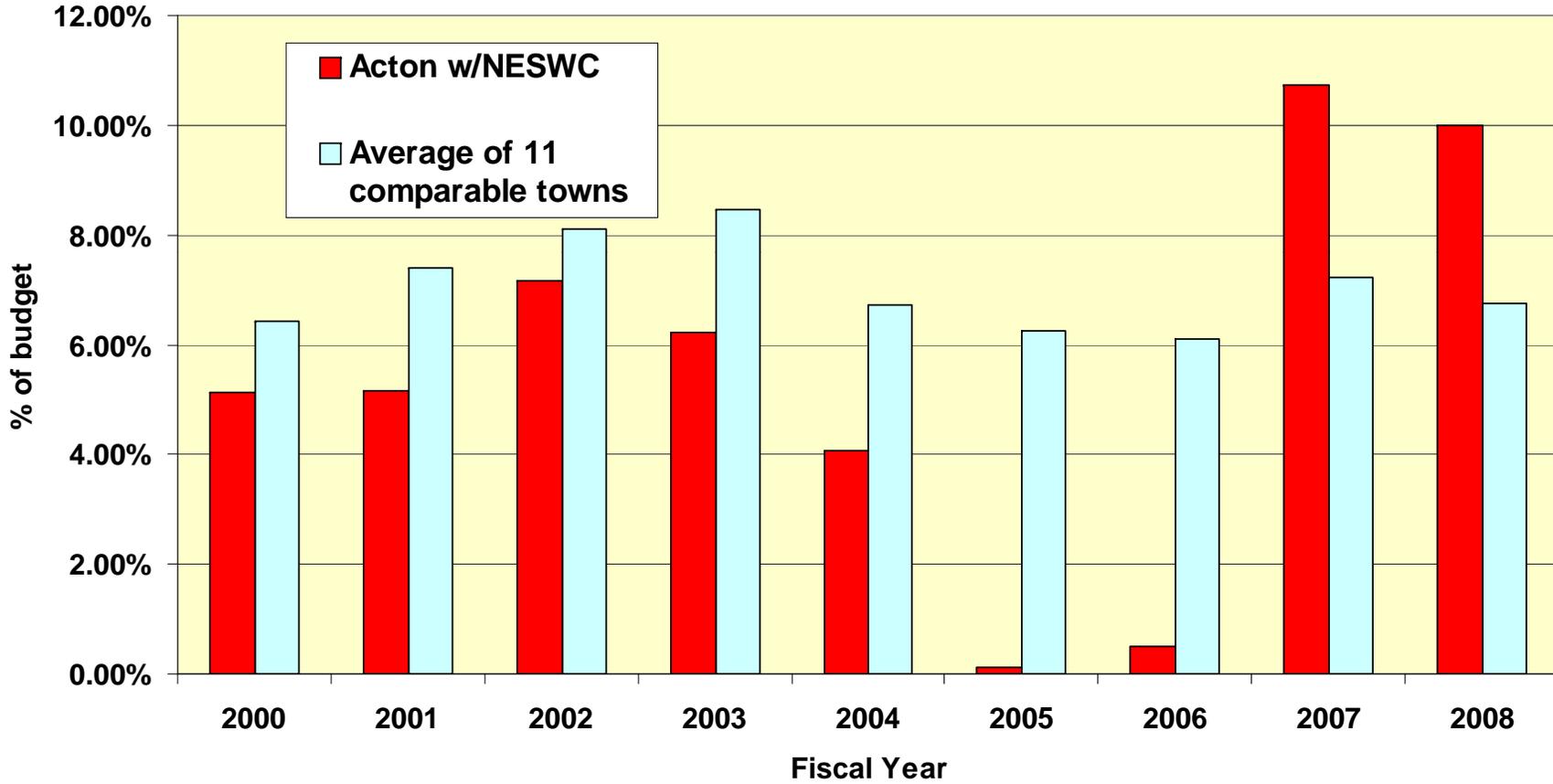
- ▶ **Vote YES for lower property taxes**
 - Eliminate this year's 4.1% tax increase
 - This will cause no cuts in services
 - It has no effect on budgets
 - This is not a budget expenditure
 - This is a transfer from a non-budget account
 - Keeps reserves at a prudent level



Reserves -- Acton vs. Average of 11 Comparable Towns

Acton Reserves include NESWC

Source : Department of Revenue



FY08 Residential Tax Rates, Acton and "comparable towns"

Source : Department of Revenue

