

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DESCRIPTION FUNDING AND STATUS

The Public Works Department implemented a department wide re-organization about two years ago to help us better serve the public, provide for upcoming challenges and allow for us to seamlessly move forward in the years to come. This implementation included a new stormwater utility to help us be ready and staffed to meet the EPA's new federally mandated and unfunded stormwater regulations, more streamlined management of staff, provide for succession planning with a number of senior people preparing to retire and having staff and equipment in place to allow us to continue to improve. The implementation is still ongoing and we hope to have it fully implemented in the next few years.

We have reduced FY21 funding by well over 5% while still maintaining our financial stability while the solid waste division is projecting an overage mostly due to recycling cost increases. Even with the reductions, we were able to add new staff as part of the reorganization to meet our mounting needs. This includes two new positions in facilities, four new positions in water and sewer and three positions in the storm water division. These new positions were all offset by reductions in overall costs or by new required fees.

There are a number of divisions within the public works department for the Town of Braintree. Below is a summary of the main divisions and some of the key activities we are currently working on, as well as some of our future needs.

The Admin Division (85 Quincy Ave) helps administer the workings of all other divisions. This includes the Assistant Director of Operations, Financial Analyst and other support staff. Currently the focus is on aligning all of the departments to function better, grant opportunities, streamlining the budget/ personnel and helping to implement MUNIS, the new financial software program, and other relevant programs.

The Facilities and Equipment Division (245 Union St) is a relatively new division and we have made some great progress in the past two years. We filled a previously vacant facilities superintendent position and a new vehicle maintenance superintendent position through the reorganization. The division work includes maintaining the existing Town buildings including cleaning, upkeep of the utilities, heating/cooling, security, pest control, etc. The division also includes oversight of capital building projects such as the Golf Course expansion, Elder Affairs addition, Town hall HVAC upgrades and the like. Through the reorganization, we have been able to save money by doing the work internally with our own dedicated staff instead of contracting it out. The funding needs of this division as noted on the reorganization chart are for a **new Electrician and Laborer / Custodian**. This will help us to be able to maintain the recently opened Eldridge School, renovated 74 Pond Street and the Arts Center among other buildings requiring additional oversight. The new Electrician will save a lot of cost and delays associated with having to constantly use an outside electrician.

The Traffic Division (85 Quincy Ave) works closely with the engineering division. Going forward, the **traffic engineer position will now be merged with the Town Engineer position** in an effort to reduce

costs. Currently the focus for the traffic division is on Union Street rotary restriping, finalizing our Neighborhood Traffic Calming program, Pearl & Ivory I/C and Grove and Liberty I/C.

The Engineering Division (85 Quincy Ave) assists all the other divisions and the Town as it relates to Civil Engineering. This includes implementation of various federal and state regulations, basic surveying, civil design plans, drainage design, property line determination, GIS system, mapping, water replacement projects, I/I sewer survey, study, design and implementation and 100 roads paving projects from beginning to end and many other tasks.

Currently the focus is on completing the current 100 roads program and creating a new one, continuing to implement and get funding through the complete streets program, assisting with ADA compliance concerns, generating a new transportation plan including sidewalk prioritization and continuing to implement our new GIS software program, People GIS. A number of staff will be retiring this year as well and transitioning to new staff will be a priority as well.

The Highway Division (245 Union) has had some repositioning of staff given the new storm water division and the Grounds and Cemetery divisions are now being managed by the Parks & Recreation division. They have a variety of dump trucks, backhoes, loaders, graders, excavators, street sweepers and vacuum trucks including many other pieces of equipment to do the job. The future goal is to have a new highway building and have more space available to better cover the existing equipment and vehicles we have.

The Highway division oversees the general maintenance of the roads and right of way of the Town. This work includes snow removal, patching potholes, upkeep of two dams and the landfill area, sidewalk repairs and placement, involvement in field monitoring of the 100 roads program, cutting grass, fixing drainage concerns, street sweeping, basin cleaning, stripping, signage, speed reduction devices, signal maintenance when warranted and many other tasks. Currently the focus is on Perry Park renovations, Edge Hill Road drainage renovations, Speed Humps placement (and soon removal for winter), placement of flashing crosswalk signs, Neighborhood Traffic Calming program implementation, street cleaning and leaf removal, basin cleaning and getting ready for the winter.

The Solid Waste Division (85 Quincy Ave/ 74 Pond) is comprised of all contract employees called casual employees. This division oversees the entire trash and other solid waste removal programs for the town, including trash, recycling, yard waste, bulk waste and twice a year solid waste removal. This also includes the general oversight of the transfer station by the Town landfill site, assistance with the compost yard, oversight of the removal company, their schedule, containers and routing. Lastly compliance with federal and state regulations for the removal and transfer station as well. Currently the focus is on doing our best to keep the costs down regarding the recycling processing. We also always continue to look for ways to improve our service and to reduce the costs to the community and recycle and reuse as much as possible.

The Recreation Division (85 Quincy Ave/ 74 Pond) relocated to 74 Pond Street from 85 Quincy Ave in order to gain more space, better access to the large conference room and more centrally located in Town. This division oversees the playgrounds, cemeteries, oversight of the Art facility, all school fields

and many activities throughout the Town. This includes a summer program with activities for children, adults and the elderly. These programs include summer camps, beach oversight, travel programs, movie nights, volunteer events, fun runs, and many other activities. Currently the focus is on the possibly of improvements to some of our existing recreational facilities, numerous events, creating new facilities, assisting with the new proposed Peterson Pool program, and many other projects as well.

The funding needs for this section include new funding for **regular operating to pay for the maintenance materials** needed for the play grounds. Also needed are the replacement of the light poles at the high school, some costs related to the transition to 74 Pond Street, Town wide fence repair, field resurfacing, implementation of new fields at the land we own at the I/C of Granite and West Streets and updated irrigation in a number of the fields.

The Grounds Section (245 Union) oversees the grounds for all the Town properties including most of the school grounds. This includes pavement upkeep (except schools), cutting the grass, upkeep of playgrounds, school fields, lighting, fencing, management of the compost yard and many other tasks. Currently the focus is on getting newer and better equipment with better equipment repair response time and an updated building. Also setting the fertilizer program in a more regular routine and getting staff more training.

The Cemetery Section (Plain Street Cemetery) oversees the various cemeteries throughout the Town. This includes cutting grass, repairing fences, upkeep of structures, performing burials, laying out future grounds and generating revenue for the division so it can be as self-reliant as possible. Currently the focus is on creating new facilities and implementation of their new fee structure. Also getting newer and better equipment with better repair response time and an updated building.

The Golf Division (101 Jefferson Street) oversees the Town's 18 hole golf course and its grounds. This includes mowing for the grass, greens, repairing divots, keeping up the general grounds, outhouse, driving range, golf carts, water around the course, equipment store, concessions, simulators, dining area, many golf events, training, competition, and many other duties. Currently the focus has been on using our expanded facility as best we can, getting a new liquor license year round, getting the simulators placed for the winter, getting more functions and cafeteria use for the winter, a future upgrade of the sprinkler system when possible and routine updates as needed.

The funding of this division has improved greatly with a new concessions facility, simulators and events. We have also updated our fees. We continue to look for more revenue and savings. Irrigation replacement, expanded kitchen facility and vehicle/ equipment replacement are key needs of this division.

The Water and Sewer Division recently created a new superintendent and water/ sewer engineer as a part of the DPW reorganization. The new Engineer position was created to help better oversee Town projects and track information.

The Sewer and Water Transmission Section oversees all the water and sewer piping systems throughout the Town. This maintenance includes routing inspection, repair, looping minor sections of lines when

possible, field oversight of the yearly water replacement projects, I/I repair projects and pavement replacement projects from the 100 roads program as well. Currently the focus is on this year's water replacement projects, sewer renovation projects, replacement of the Howard St. Pump Station project, design of the Brookside Street pump station renovation project, creating flow monitoring systems, expanding the SCADA info system, wireless real time meter reading and a new monitoring software program.

The financial needs of this section are to implement a **new Water line replacement section including 4 new staff** as part of the reorganization. These additions will be cost neutral through expenditure reductions in other areas.

The Water Treatment Section (300 King Hill Road) oversees the treatment plant, the grounds around the plant, the reservoirs, various dams, piping system, the water towers around Town, Sewer Pumping stations and various wells. This maintenance includes the upkeep of the water flow, hydrant flushing, pumping systems, treatment systems, testing, reporting, security, future plant design and many other duties as well. Currently the focus has been on moving forward with the proposed new treatment plant and until then keep the existing plant going as effectively as possible.

The Stormwater Division was created to be able to comply with the new federally mandated Stormwater program. The new staff include a Stormwater Manager, Billing Analyst and Outreach Representative, as well as the transfer of three positions from the Highway division to create the Division. The funding for these positions was created by the recently implemented Stormwater fee. This division helps us provide the outreach, mapping, testing, permitting, inspection and other activities that a stormwater program requires. This also allows the department to focus on Town wide outreach and connection to the program for all departments as is required. Currently the focus has been on complying and meeting the several stormwater permit deadlines, working on a 604B grant we secured through DEP for possible future drainage treatment projects, another grant for the Stetson Street culvert replacement project, another grant for tree box filters around the town to help remediate sediment contaminants and getting new software to better track the drainage system and our impervious areas throughout Town.

The storm water fee will be raised this year as part of the previously approved ordinance from the **\$6.25 per quarter to \$11.25 per quarter**. This will help fund **three new stormwater field staff** so that we can meet the regulations that require annual basin and roadway cleaning. It will also provide funding for new trucks and equipment and a new building in the future.

Questions from Ways & Means

- Acronym help: What does I/I stand for?

Inflow and Infiltration

Roads/Sidewalks

- Do we have a schedule and work start ETA for the 100 roads projects, and the repairs of intersections at Liberty/Grove and Pearl/Ivory Streets? How can residents access this information?
- On the 100 Roads projects, are the sidewalks included in that budget or are all sidewalk repairs lumped into the sidewalk portion of the budget?

The Yearly Road and Infrastructure Program (previously known as the 100 Roads Program) will continue into FY21. As part of the program, the Town takes several factors into consideration including the condition of the road and future work planned in the area. Any water projects are completed prior to resurfacing the roadway to avoid a situation where a newly resurfaced roadway is disturbed to complete a water project. Additionally, all utility work has to be coordinated with the Town to ensure that new roads are not disturbed. When a street is reconstructed, the sidewalk (not the parking aprons) is also reconstructed. If the work is limited to a surface treatment, crack sealing or trench repair (or related work), the sidewalk is not reconstructed. Work performed on the sidewalks is funded through the Project budget. Information on roads completed through 2019 can be found on-line at <https://braintreema.gov/446/100-Roads-Program>. The Town will continue to update this information as we move forward in the Program.

The FY20 Capital Plan includes continued funding for this Program. Specifically, a total of \$2,550,000 has been requested to continue supporting improvements to the roadways and infrastructure throughout the Town. The amount includes anticipated bonding (\$1,550,000) and reimbursement from the state Chapter 90 grant program. The start of water work for this year has been delayed due to COVID-19 and our inability to enter people's homes to bypass the water system (a necessary step in order to begin the water main replacement prior to starting the roadwork).

The intersection of Pearl and Ivory Streets has been identified for improvement; however, the start of work has been delayed due to the lead time and increased cost of traffic signal mast arm replacements. The intersection of Liberty and Grove Streets has also been identified for improvement; however, work will not start until the mitigation funds from the old lottery building that is currently on appeal is addressed and prior to the issuance of a

building or demo permit of that site. The Planning Board decision on the application included a condition that the new occupants contribute to the road work in the area.

- 25% reduction in street lighting: I feel that street lighting is a safety issue. Can you please provide some color on how this decision was made?

This cost is associated with a contract the Town has with BELD for the installation of LED bulbs around town. This reduction is based on the payment due in FY21.

Trash/Recycling

- Are we projecting enough of an increase for recycling costs? I see a 200% increase for transportation, but are there other associated costs that are increasing? What steps are we taking to reduce our costs and are there best practices from other municipalities that we can adopt?

The costs for recycling include the cost for curbside pickup and disposal. Pick up is a flat rate while the disposal is calculated on a per ton basis and fluctuates depending on the load. The most recent valuation was \$98.72/ton with an anticipated increase to \$150/ton. The amount budgeted for FY21 is anticipated to cover these costs. The Town is increasing outreach efforts town wide to educate residents about proper recycling. This will avoid increased costs incurred as a result of the comingling of recyclables with solid waste materials. Additionally, the Transport recycling account is primarily for the addition, repair and replacement of the collection carts. The Carts are approaching their guaranteed life expectancy, and we're finding more damage (some of which is a Sunrise handling issue we bill them back on), new requirements, theft and unspecified damage. We will continue to see higher replacement costs into 2022-2024. Braintree is a leader in Best Practices and assists other towns based on our experiences/leadership.

- Have we assessed time of day when Sunrise and the Recycling trucks are running their routes? Can we assess adjusting their schedule to coincide to be not during morning rush hour, which could speed up the collection process, reduce gas and reduce traffic congestion – and presumably lower costs?

The contract with Armada Waste d/b/a Sunrise Scavenger includes a flat fee for curbside pick-up of both solid waste and recycling. Run times are based on union contracts, availability of hours to 'tip' material and use of equipment /driver schedules (some drivers move to trash after recycling).

- Are specific steps being taken within the Town buildings to reduce our trash and recycling to help offset growing costs?

Departments are working to reduce the amount of paper being used in the day to day operation. Additionally, efforts are made to purchase supplies made from recycled materials.

The transition to MUNIS will alleviate the need for a lot of paper circulation by moving processes to an electronic platform. Every Town building also has a recycling bin. Additionally, we have a well-established recycling program in all town buildings and schools.

- With such a dramatic increase in costs, is the Mayor considering raising the trash fee?

Consideration was given to increasing the fee, but the decision was made not to implement an increase in this fiscal year.

- Can you explain the 3 large cost drivers in greater detail:
 - transport-recycling: is this entirely a fee paid to Sunrise Scavenger for residential pick-up of recyclables?
 - refuse-collection: is this entirely a fee paid to Sunrise Scavenger for residential pick-up of trash or does it include dump/tipping or other charges that can be broken out separately?
 - recycling processing: Can you explain more about the terms of the contract? How much of the expense is fixed vs. volume based vs. penalties (for plastic bag contamination, etc.)

The Town has contracted with Armada Waste d/b/a Sunrise Scavenger for the pickup and transfer of recycling, solid waste, Christmas trees and yard waste. This is a 3 year contract scheduled to expire on June 30, 2021. The cost is based on a flat rate for each type of material and includes both the curbside pickup and transfer to the appropriate disposal site. Recycling disposal is performed by Recycle America (formerly WM Avon). This is also a 3 year contract scheduled to expire on June 30, 2021. The cost is based on per ton and fluctuates based on end markets. This account also includes a \$36,000.00 annual stipend for Jeff Kunz.

DEP Regulations require that trash collectors separate recyclables from solid waste. The failure to do so results in fines and potential loss of licenses to the collectors (and disposal facilities). Also, recyclables must be kept out of the solid-waste disposal stream and there are limits on the percentage of non-recyclables that can be included in collected recyclables. Comingling of solid waste and recyclables could lead to enforcement action and possible rejection of shipments by Covanta (or increased costs to the Town for processing).

Personnel

- Is the 300% increase in casual labor being increased to come closer to prior year actuals? What falls under this line item that we would be going from \$5K in FY20 budget to \$20K

Casual employees are non-union employees that in this case perform janitorial services. They earn minimum wage. This line was increased to account for the increase in minimum wage and based on prior years' spending to cover these payroll costs.

- Is reduction in Engineering Services budget a result of a retirement with a backfill of a less experienced/lower pay grade hire?

This line is used to pay a consultant that works with the Engineering Department. Due to the amount of work performed on behalf of the Water & Sewer Division, a portion of this cost has been shifted to the Water & Sewer account. Funds from this line are also used to monitor the closed landfill and conduct a study every two years of the site, which is funded entirely from this line.

- I understand the Mayor has instituted a hiring freeze but DPW shows 2 new positions: Is it safe to say the Mayor deems these positions to be critical? Is electrician a full-year salary and laborer about a half-year salary? Can you explain where we will be seeing expense reductions due to replacing contract work

Yes, the determination has been made that the addition of these positions is critical to the operations and will result in a cost savings overall. The proposal includes the addition of a full time custodian, a full time electrician and an additional casual employee. These additions will result in a reduction in overtime costs. Additionally, the addition of an electrician will eliminate the need to contract for these services with a third party vendor.

Overtime

- Overtime of \$80K in Grounds and Maintenance.

These costs are most commonly incurred as a result of time spent preparing fields, working sporting and special events, and large scale programs, which often occur during evenings and weekends.

- Overtime facilities and equipment routinely coming in ~\$70K, but we are only budgeting ~\$31K

The Town currently has a large number of projects ongoing with significant night and weekend work required to avoid an impact on operations (i.e., HVAC, carpet cleaning). This has led to increased spending on overtime. Additionally, COVID-19 has required an increase in cleaning—which has required overtime. Also, the FY21 proposal includes the addition of a full time custodian, a full time electrician and an additional casual employee, which we anticipate will cause a reduction in overtime costs. The additional positions are reflected in the labor/custodians/mechanical line and the casual employees line.

- Overtime highway averaging more than \$75K, but we are only budgeting \$30K
 - Have we considered hiring part time employees or even a full-time employee at a lower grade to reduce these costs (even if we had to pick up the benefits, it may be less expensive)?

- Would so doing also help us close the gap between budget and actual for facilities/equipment and highway?

A majority of the overtime incurred in the Highway program is incurred during completion of special projects outside of regularly assigned tasks. Work is also required to maintain the landfill and two dams in town, including keeping the grass and vegetation down.

Consideration has been given to adding staff, but for FY21 we will continue to complete the work with existing resources.

Fuel

- Natural gas has routinely come in over \$20K, do we have enough budgeted for FY21?
- Similar to my question that I posed for Golf: can we buy gasoline now to hedge on low costs and store for later use?

We currently pay natural gas at the market rate; however, the town is exploring options to lock in a rate through a natural gas broker, which may result in lower costs in this area. Gas is purchased through the Norfolk County Consortium. Typically, the Town locks in a rate and notifies the consortium of estimated purchase quantities. If the Town exceeds the estimated amount, we pay the market rate for the duration of the time frame. We are not currently locked into a rate, but are in the process of gathering the necessary information to provide the consortium for gas purchases.

Repairs/Maintenance

- Building repairs (40002-5430): is \$76K enough? What will be different in FY21 that we expect our building repair costs to decrease vs. prior three years?

This line is project driven—in FY19 a supplement was required in order to complete an unusually high number of emergency projects (boilers, elevators, etc). As equipment is replaced, the need for repairs is reduced resulting in a cost savings. More energy efficient equipment being installed, which should also alleviate the need for future repairs. Facilities has been working to complete a back log of projects that has also caused an increase in the cost.

- Outside M/V Repairs (40003-5241) FY18 and FY19 expenses over \$175K. Although FY20 has come in through 4/24/20 at \$37K, what has changed from FY18 and FY19 that we would bring the budget down so significantly?

In FY18 and 19 there was a significant amount of vehicle repairs required across the entire DPW Fleet. In FY 18 we had to repair the Vactor Tube (\$9,911.92), an F350 (\$5,090.84), two engine repairs (\$10,763.75), the Vactor Fan Blower (\$19,812.99), a transmission repair (\$9,861.62), brooms and brushes (\$4,756.88) and the sweeper-conveyor repair (\$18,716.530). In FY19 we had to repair the flail mower (\$9,410.00), the sweeper-fuel tank/pump repair

(\$4,602.82), the trackless hyde valve (\$1,043.05), Vactor Pony Motor (\$7,706.42), wood chipper (\$4,688.90), and 3 vehicle lifts (\$48,212.67). Also, in the past, all m/v repairs were to be paid out of this program. That has changed and costs are now divided between the divisions. Through the facilities division, we are ensuring that regular maintenance is performed and doing in house repairs when possible.

- **Hardware and Paint: why are we so much over budget this year and why do we expect to be on budget next year?**

The hardware and paint account in cemetery is as high as it is due to the need for new weed whackers, a walk behind blower, a pole chain saw and other tools and equipment. Some items needed to be replaced and others are new purchases (for example the purchase of a pole saw for pruning trees). The hardware and paint account in the grounds is high due to the following: establishing a small inventory of irrigation items (this is now being done in house), the purchase of a trailer required to safely move the new infield groomer and to maintain all the tools and attachments for work in one location.

- **Why are schools lots excluded from DPW pavement upkeep responsibilities?**

The school department is responsible for maintenance through their facilities department.

Snow and Ice

- **Snow and Ice coming in on budget is dependent on mother nature. What are the contingency plans if we have a terrible winter in FY21? Does the State help make up the shortfall**

We have budgeted \$500,000 for snow and ice removal for FY21. If we have a terrible winter, state law allows municipalities to spend in excess of the budgeted amount as long as the funds appropriated for the fiscal year are at least as much as the prior year's amount. Any deficit in spending is either carried over into the next fiscal year for payment or paid with free cash. There are also opportunities for state/federal reimbursements, depending on the weather event.

Parks & Rec

- **40015-5252 "Repairs for... \$75K" is that the line item for park upkeep and improvement that Mayor Kokoros referenced in his budget submission? If so, is there a plan that residents can access to see which parks are scheduled to be worked, what is planned to be done and when improvements are scheduled to begin?**

Yes, this is the line referenced by Mayor Kokoros during the budget presentation. The funds will be used to perform regular general maintenance of fencing, courts, and other equipment on/in our parks and playgrounds.

- Are we anticipating cancelling/cutting summer programs in July and August of 2020? Is that why we can reduce the Summer Part-Time portion of the budget by ~75%

We will continue to assess options for summer programming with the Mayor's Office and the Health Department and will be prepared to reopen/reschedule events when it is deemed safe to do so.

- What is Bra-Wey rec assessment?

This relates to Pond Meadow and covers the Town's share of the Braintree Weymouth recreational assessment.

- Can we remove the July 4th budget for the year now that it has been cancelled? There may be other costs in other line items throughout the town – can these be cut as well?

The July 4th event is actually paid for before the end of the fiscal year since Braintree has the event the weekend before the 4th of July. Therefore, if we were to cut the July 4th event from the FY21 budget we would not have any funding for the 4th of July event next year (June/July 2021). In contrast, where this year's 4th of July events have been cancelled, the 4th of July funding in the FY20 budget has been turned back over to the Town to reduce the amount of free cash required to fund the last supplemental budget request of this year.

As to other costs to cut we did reduce the summer programs 01-40020-5124 from last year's budget of \$225,672 to \$60,000 due to the current restrictions. This gave the Town a savings of \$165,672 while allowing for some summer programming if allowed.

Water & Storm Water

- Why did you choose the comparison municipalities you did?

This will be addressed during the meeting.

- What is the benefit of having a rate range? Should Braintree consider doing the same? Do we have any offsets for people who may struggle with the upcoming rate increase?

The Storm water Ordinance sets out the fee structure: \$25 first 2 years; \$45 for next 2 years; \$60 in year 5. These rates are based on the total cost of maintaining the program.

Water and Sewer has a tiered structure that is based on a rate range where the less you use, the less your rate is. The Town does not offer any off sets but has made payment plans/arrangements as needed. The office works hard to avoid shutting people's water off.

- Can you please elaborate on the discussion that was begun last night as it pertained to revenue: Is it accurate that we increase the water rates when our usage declines? If so,

how does this help us achieve our environmental goals? It seems antithetical that we are essentially charging people more when they are conserving water.

The rate increases are required to cover the costs related to providing water. While some of the increase is due to a reduction in water usage, the increased costs are in large part required to cover the MWRA assessment that has increased significantly year to year.

- Can you explain the MWRA charge increase of \$448K?

Updated information on the assessment will be provided during the meeting.

- Page 100 (breakdown on 438-66) We were told the 4 new hires under this department were for cleaning sewer mains, water main replacements and looping the system in areas. During a year that going to have substantial financial impacts for FY21 – do we really need these hires? We are hiring stormwater personnel and have street sweepers. It was discussed that people move from department to department. Can't we utilize the existing personnel and new stormwater hires to get through this year and relook at it again next year?

These positions are for a new dedicated water main replacement division in water and sewer. We spend over \$3,000,000 a year to contractors to replace our existing water mains throughout town and construction contracts are much more costly than having in house staff performing these duties. For example, these construction contracts regularly include wage rates, profit and overhead, changes to the work that can lead to change orders, and increased cost for time and materials. Additionally, there is value in having employees, who are invested in the Town and have an interest in the work being performed, complete these projects rather than using an outside vendor. Also, for this fiscal year we cut the capital budget which is normally \$500,000 per year in half to help cover the cost for this coming fiscal year. This helped save \$250,000 in this year's yearly capital costs to fund most of the cost of these new positions.

The looping of the water mains (sewer main cleaning is a separate section) is only secondary to the intended purpose of this division and the increase in staff will further reduce costs spent on outside contractors. This addition will bring a substantial savings to the community over the long run. Additionally, this additional staff will provide support during snow events, including assisting with plowing. Having more dedicated in house staff to come to these events helps us make sure the roads, schools and sidewalks are clear so the police and fire, our residents and the rest of the public can have access they need.

Lastly only within a fund can we help from division to division. We cannot go from the general fund to a utility or the other way around without paying for it. If staff from highway or stormwater were to help Water and Sewer we would have to pay for their help and would

likely face a challenge from the union. For instance when snow operations happen in the winter the general fund pays back to the water and sewer utility for the time they spend assisting with the snow removal. Therefore the overall cost for the work would remain in place.

- Please provide the total all-in cost for the 4 new hires.

The salary detail for the 4 new positions can be found in Exhibit H, Page 66 of the budget packet. In addition to the base salaries noted (\$55,306.40 x 2; \$60,683; and \$63,533) the Town would be responsible for health benefit and pension costs. As noted above, pension is calculated at 8.2% and the health benefits vary depending on the coverage plan chosen by the employee.

- Please confirm how much the water sewer rate increase to residents would drop due to not hiring these persons.

The rates would not change much at all since the capital improvement costs for this year have been decreased from \$500,000 to \$250,000 to supplement costs for this fiscal year. In future years the capital costs will be reduced by the costs noted above as this work will be completed in house. If the positions were eliminated the capital cost would go back up to an expenditure of \$500,000. This divided by the total water and sewer budget of \$20,442,351 and not including the numerous other costs besides the cost to the consumer would be extremely small. Additionally, all the benefits, savings and helpful items I have noted above would be eliminated without the additional positions.

Highway

- Page 60 (breakdown of increase is on Page 421-53) – The highway department is requesting an additional electrician and partial costs for a laborer. The explanation given was that we paid significant consulting fees for an electrician and by hiring one full time we would not only have a full timer electrician, but it would also have a significant savings to the consultant fee. Can DPW (Highway) please provide

Before addressing the salary costs of the new position, please note the following on past year expenditures for electrical work as submitted by the Facilities Director:

Based on services performed by outside electrical contractors from FY18 to the present, the Town has paid for services at a rate of approximately \$75.00 per hour, including both materials and labor. The proposal to add a full time salaried electrician would allow the Town to benefit from 40 hours per week for services at an hourly rate of less than \$30 per hour. Additionally, the Town would save on the cost of materials by providing its own for work being performed.

One of this year's goals of the facilities department will be to convert the lighting in all Town buildings to LED type fixtures, which will produce immediate energy savings for the Town. Being able to do this work with a staff electrician will also save a minimum of thousands of dollars in labor costs. Other projects will include updating existing HVAC controls, security systems, and continuing to address the increasing amount of smaller service projects still needing attention on a daily basis throughout Town facilities. This would be the optimum time to consider this investment by adding this new position and realizing the cost savings of bringing the position in house.

- Total cost of electrician including salary – benefits – union requirements etc. Basically, the all-in cost for the new position. Also, what is the total range step for the position.

The DPW budget is responsible for the salary costs and any contractual benefits associated with the position. Costs related to health and pension benefits are incorporated into the Human Resources budget. The starting salary for the electrician is budgeted for \$58,135. Benefits vary, but if the employee takes a Harvard Pilgrim Health Care family plan, the Town pays \$16,716 for its share of the benefits. Additionally, the Town covers 8.28% for pension costs.

As previously noted for the Committee, the FY21 proposal includes elimination of the Traffic Engineer position which yielded a total savings (base pay plus benefits) of approximately \$130,000.

The position cost included in the FY21 budget includes the first step increase, which will take effect 6 months after the person is hired. As a result, the budget amount will not increase until 18 months after the hire date. The top of the current range for the position is \$63,988.

- Total cost for the laborer (I believe this salary is split between a couple places (stormwater) – all in cost and where the remaining salary costs are coming from.

The Laborer position is split 50/50 with the storm water fund in the costs. The Laborer position pay is a total cost of \$25,037 to the general fund for wages plus benefits, which are also split with Storm Water. As is noted above, the savings created by eliminating the Traffic Engineer position covers the cost of adding this position, with a surplus in additional savings. The remaining cost of \$37,666 is paid by the storm water utility as this portion of the position benefits the utility. The storm water utility pays these costs from revenue it generates from the storm water fee.

- I cannot find where the consultant fees have decreased anywhere for the electrician. Can DPW please provide which specific line item has been decreased to show the cost savings?

By hiring a full time electrician, the Town will be able to significantly reduce the costs associated with the building repairs account (01-40002-5430), which is consistently overspent year over year. DPW typically spends about \$60,000 out of that line for electrical work and the addition of the full time position will allow for work to be performed in house, reducing the overall cost and expense to this line going forward. Additionally, DPW spends about \$30,000 out of various other Town department accounts for work performed on behalf of other departments (for both maintenance/repairs and capital projects). Having a full time electrician will also reduce these costs, which also average approximately \$60,000 per year. For a total cost of \$120,000, the Town currently receives approximately 20 hours a week of work from the electrical contractor.

- Can you provide the best case (least expensive) scenario costs for health benefits so I can calculate total costs please – thanks

Health benefits range depending on the plan elected. For example, an individual plan with Harvard Pilgrim is \$7360.92 and a family plan with Blue Care Elect is \$20,730.24. The best case is that the employee gets health benefit elsewhere, for example, from a spouse or the military.

- Is the 3MIL in costs for previous years under the capitol funds for water distribution system that we do one year prior to paving the roads so we don't have to go back into them after paving? If so why weren't the cost savings removed from this cost of the capitol budget?

That is "capital" money so it is not a part of the operating budget. As an explanation, the \$3 Million (from the Water & Sewer Capital Fund) is divided into approximately \$2 Million for water replacement in the Summer and Fall and \$1 Million for restoring the roads to the binder course (in the Fall), settling over the Winter; then in the Spring, we use the capital road money (from the general fund) to finish the entire roadway including sidewalks, curbing and final pavement. At this time of year, only the resurfacing money that is proposed in the FY20 capital, is available. This is necessary so that the road can be completed and not have residents live with an unsightly and disrupted situation.

- Why wasn't the building repairs reduced by \$60,000 and the other areas reduced by \$30,000? In essence we are not saving anything and increasing our yearly costs by hiring the electrician.

The \$60,000 would have been an increase in the budget, but instead, the cost savings of this addition, plus the other mentioned benefits, more than pay for the electrician position. The budgets for electrical work in other departments are also likely to realize savings as a result of bringing the work in house and reducing both the labor and materials cost for work performed. Also, as previously noted, the building repairs lines in all programs are consistently overspent year over year. By adding

this position, we anticipate the overall expenditures to decrease allowing DPW to stay within the budgeted amount while performing all necessary work.

- I agree with all that was said about using in house workers vs subs who care about the quality of the job. I also agree there is a cost savings in hiring a full time electrician. However, if there are no costs removed from the budget to compensate for the additional costs there is no cost savings to the town.

As noted above, the savings realized from the addition of the position will allow DPW to stay within the budgeted allotment, which is in contrast with prior year required spending in repairs/maintenance work. Additionally, it will provide a greater value for money given the difference in cost between a contractor (billing at \$75/hour) and in house staff. Additionally, DPW eliminated the Traffic Engineer position which resulted in a savings of approximately \$130,000. That savings pays for this position as well as reduces the funding required from the general fund. Finally, not increasing the building repairs line to adjust for prior year spending serves to provide an overall reduction in the program.