



# Department of Municipal Licenses and Inspections

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## FY 22 Department Budget Submittal Summary and Questions from Ways & Means

This memorandum serves as a general summary of the FY 22 budget submittal for the Department of Municipal Licenses & Inspections.

As was directed, all Town departments were required to submit a level services budget reduced by 10%.

In preparing the department budget with these reductions, the following programs were individually reviewed and with great effort, the required 10% reduction submitted:

- Building and Health Division programs- personnel and operating expenses;
- Substance Use Prevention program-personnel and operating expenses;
- Commission on Disabilities-program operating expenses.

To summarize, with program personnel and operating expenses, the department's level services budget is \$ 1,076, 604.00. The 10% reduction to this level services budget is: \$ 107, 660.00. Unfortunately, with a small department, the bulk of the required reduction had to come from personnel line items, in the amount of: \$ 97,405.00.

This figure includes the following positions:

-PT Clerical:	\$ 22,156.00;
-Local Building Inspector:	\$ 36,607.00;
-Health Code Enforcement Officer:	\$ 18,642.00;
-Substance Use Prevention Coordinator:	\$ 20,000.00.

The remaining \$ 10,255.00 in reductions are from the administrative operating expense line items from Building & Health, as well as Substance Use Prevention programs, as follows:

Building & Health: \$ 6,570.00 (Telephone, Postage, Mtgs/Seminars, Dues/Memberships, Motor Vehicle repairs, Eyewear and clothing allowances, Mileage, Beach Testing).

Substance Use Prevention: \$ 3,685.00 (Office Supplies, Printing, Mtgs/Seminars, Postage, Dues/Memberships, Data Processing, Travel expenses).

It is also very important to note that the department budget has consistently sustained cuts since FY 20, as follows:

- FY 20 sustained an overall 1% department operating expenses budget cut of \$ 1,000.00.  
(Health & Building: \$ 851.00; Substance Use Prevention: \$ 138.00; Commission on Disabilities: \$ 11.00.

-FY 21 sustained a greater than 4% department personnel and operating expenses budget cut of \$ 50,123.00, as follows:

- Vacant Building Inspector line item salary of \$ 79, 449.00 was reduced by: \$ 45, 311.00;
- Substance Use Prevention operating expenses were reduced by: \$ 4,812.00.

Additionally, in order to meet these budget cuts over the past three years, while attempting to maintain the same level of services provided by the department for the Town and community, the following adjustments have been made:

- Eliminated salary funding of a fourth Building Inspector position to reduce costs;
- Delayed filling the position, reduced the salary funding by \$ 45,311.00, and then eliminated the remaining salary funding of \$ 36,607.00 from a third vacant Building Inspector position to reduce costs;
- Reorganized the Administrative/Clerical Division by merging a Health Division Administrative Assistant position and Building Division Scheduling Coordinator position into one Office Manager position to reduce costs by \$ 29,000.00;
- Delayed filling and then eliminated the salary funding for the Part-Time Clerical position to assist with Town budget shortfalls and then reduce costs by \$ 22,156.00.
- Reclassified the ADA Coordinator position into an ADA Coordinator/Code Compliance Officer to assist the Building Division with required and necessary code compliance duties, that would normally be overseen by the Building Inspectors, as a result of the reduction/elimination in funding of Building Inspector positions;
- Reduced the Substance Use Prevention Coordinator salary by \$ 20,000.00 to reduce costs, and will subsidize this reduction with available gift and grant account funds; and
- Used three school and retired nurses to assist with the COVID response using state provided COVID-19 funding.

Over this past year, the Department has been directly involved in all COVID-19 investigations, vaccination management and distribution and COVID-19 compliance in the community. Essentially, all department staff has been assisting with this effort, in addition to the duties the department is routinely involved with on a daily basis, and all the while managing staff restrictions and reductions.

**In response to the questions by the Town Council-Ways & Means Committee, I offer the following:**

1) Administrative/clerical decreased \$ 29K, or 29%, was a position removed or vacated? Hours cut?

- Answer: I reorganized the Administrative/Clerical Division by merging a Health Division Administrative Assistant position and a Building Division Scheduling Coordinator position in October 2020, into an Office Manager position to reduce costs by \$ 29,000.00;

2) Part-time clerical decreased from \$ 22K to \$ 0, it seems like there was very little FY 21 actual, was a position removed permanently?

- Answer: The position was funded in FY 21 for \$ 22,156.00 and filled by a long-standing part-time principal clerk. Of the \$ 22,156.00 funded, \$ 1,983.00 was expended before the individual resigned from the position in August 2020. Thereafter, filling the position was delayed to assist with Town budget shortfalls in FY 21 and the salary funding was eliminated to meet required budget reductions in FY 22.

3) Inspection/code enforcement inspectors' salary line decreased, was a position removed or vacated? Hours cut? Is the department expecting to take in less revenue as a result of cut salaries/hours?

- Answer: The Building Division, some four years ago had an Inspector of Buildings position and three Local Building Inspector positions. In these past four years due to staff position elimination and budget reductions, the Building Division now has an Inspector of Buildings position and a Local Building Inspector position. The ADA Coordinator/Code Compliance Officer now assists the Building Inspectors with the myriad and multitude of code compliance issues that arise daily. Code compliance was formerly performed by the Building Inspectors, but with eliminations and reductions, there was not enough staff to fulfill these duties. In order to assist the Building Inspectors with required Weights and Measures duties, we utilize an alternate Building Inspector on a casual basis.

As for revenue projections, the Building Division delivers a substantial amount of revenue to the Town on an annual basis, in the form of permit fees and fines (Building, Plumbing, Gas, Electric, Signs, Trenches, Certificates of Occupancy/Inspection, Weights & Measures, etc.). Basically, the more Building Inspectional staff that is available and in place, the more revenue that will be produced in the form of permit fees and violation fines. With additional staff, above what is presently in place in the department, additional revenue could be recovered.

4) Substance Use Prevention Coordinator salary decreased by \$ 20,000.00. Is there an expected decrease in services from this?

- Answer: The Substance Use Prevention Coordinator salary was reduced by \$ 20,000.00 to reduce costs, and will be subsidized with available gift and grant account funds. The department will strive to and hopes to maintain all services that are being offered.

5) Health Inspectors' salary decreased. Was this a vacated or removed position? Is there an expected decrease in revenue or services from this?

- Answer: A Health Code Enforcement Officer with the Health Division resigned in April 2021 and filling the position has been delayed. The position has been funded in FY22, but account for a continued delay in filling the position. Currently, with only one Health Code Enforcement Officer in the department, there may be a decrease in revenues and delay in services based on staff availability.

- 6) What outside M/V repairs are required for this dept.? I know it's not a lot of money, but I'm curious what this entails.
- Answer: The department has two hybrid vehicles and a Weights & Measures equipment van. This line item is for maintenance, repairs and fuel.
- 7) Commission on Disabilities: where would funding for closed captioning fall? Could that be grant-funded? Is it something COD can pick up?
- Answer: The only funding available for COD is for preparation of the monthly meeting minutes. Funding for closed captioning would have to come from another funding source. At the May 2021 meeting the COD endorsed use of \$2,000.00 from the Handicapped Parking Fine account for closed captioning services.
- 8) What is the role of an Alternate Inspector?
- Answer: The department utilizes an alternate electrical inspector, an alternate plumbing/gas inspector and an alternate Weights & Measures inspector to provide coverage when inspectors are on leave and assist with inspections as necessary.
- 9) Do we feel we can cover all our inspectional needs and requirements with only three inspectors? Is it the Health Code officers who inspect for Covid violations, restaurants, cigarette/liquor sale violations, noise and pest complaints, etc.?
- Answer: No, we do not have enough inspectional staff, both health inspectors and building inspectors. Present staff are diligently doing all they can to maintain services and perform all required inspections. With the addition of COVID related inspections and enforcement, this has compounded the ability for all duties to be fulfilled. Building Inspectors and the Code Compliance Officer have been appointed as special health agents to assist with COVID related duties, as they are able.
- 10) Any progress on the public health nurse position? Do we expect to expend the full salary amount in FY 2022?
- Answer: The department and Town are actively advertising the PH Nurse position. The obstacle being encountered is the shortage of nurses in general across the Commonwealth. We will continue our recruitment efforts and hope to hire a PH Nurse as soon as possible.