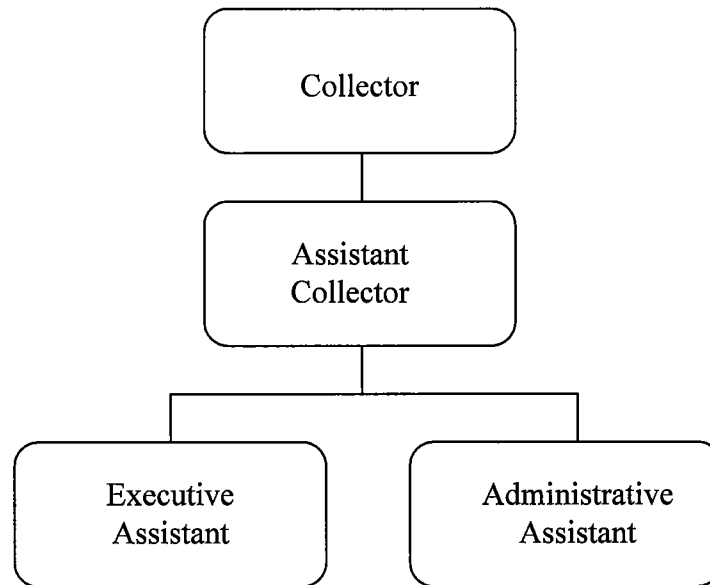


Fiscal Year 2007 Organization

Utility Billing



Leadership Profile:

Robert Palmer, Finance Director/Treasurer/Collector

2001-Present: Finance Director/Treasurer/Collector
1994-2001: Finance Director
1980-1994: Director of Assessment, City of Newton

Business Administration/Management
Graduate Studies Preparatory Program
Master of Arts Degree, Management

Narrative

Town of Natick Utility Billing

I. Main Purpose of the Department

The primary responsibility of the Department is the quarterly billing of 12,500 water and sewer accounts. These duties include preparation of quarterly invoices, dispute resolution with rate payers, special fee invoicing, etc. This Department is responsible for the certification of delinquent accounts to the Board of Assessors for inclusion as water and sewer liens transferred to real estate bills.

II. Recent Developments

To assist ratepayers in understanding the manner that a bill is calculated a "Web Site" application allows a user to enter their rate code and usage and see a detailed billing breakdown. The most recent utility bills for each district are displayed on the Town's website under the Collector's or Department of Public Works Water Division departmental pages.

III. Current Challenges

The format and content of information included with the water and sewer bill is being evaluated for clarity. The goal is to improve the information provided to ratepayers.

IV. Significant Proposed Changes for the Upcoming Fiscal Year and Budget Impact

A more informative billing format will be implemented in FY2007. This format will at a minimum include usage history, comprehensive explanation of bill calculation, and other informational materials. The budget request for FY2007 continues to include funding for improved notification to delinquent accounts, notification to subsequent/new property owners, and additional research/resolution for returned mail. The estimated costs related to water & sewer billing is \$11,000.

V. On the Horizon

The United States Postal Service is scheduled for a significant increase in postal rates. This increase will have an impact on future budgets for mailing of bills and notices. The development of increased Internet access to information and the development of information kiosks at Town Hall and Library are goals for the near future.

FY2007 Budget Presentation

Trends in Major Departmental Activities by Fiscal Year						
Activities	2002	2003	2004	2005	Approved 2006	Proposed 2007
1 Warrants Water & Sewer	\$10.105m	\$11.613m	\$11.049m	\$11.031m	\$10.819m	\$10.300m
2 Revenue User Charges	\$9.830m	\$11.023m	\$10.788m	\$11.018m	\$10.300m	\$10.350m
3 Revenue from All Other Sources	\$0.673m	\$0.596m	\$0.678m	\$1.098m	\$0.519m	\$1.750m

Salaries Operational Staff Salaries for two staff positions are funded in this line item. This positions are responsible for preparation of monthly water and sewer charges, special billings (final bills, flat charges, etc.), printing of water / sewer bills, posting payments, customer service inquiries, file maintenance, etc. A full time position has been reduced in the Collector's budget after an employee retirement. This position (Administrative Assistant) will be funded in the amount of 50% via indirect charge to the General Fund. The addition of a part time position is also included in this staffing change.

Part Time Operational This funds 240 hours of part time operational staff. This position will provide administrative / clerical support to the Finance Director/ Collector and will be available during peak receipt periods to supplement the full time Utility Billing staff.

Overtime Operational This funds overtime worked by operational staff during peak receipt periods.

Repairs and Maintenance This is for the maintenance and repair of business equipment used in the Collector's office for Utility Billing purposes. The primary equipment is the high speed laser printer used for production of the water / sewer bills and bar code scanning equipment, etc.

In State Travel/Meetings For attendance at Department of Revenue seminars, Treasurer / Collector Association meetings, and administrative / clerical support staff seminars.

Training and Education The costs related to POINT Software training, Neptune meter reading and inventory systems, and PC specialized training seminars, etc.

Communication Telephone This is the proportional costs assigned to the Utility Billing for telephone service.

Communication Postage This is the direct cost associated with the mailings from the Utility Billing Collector's Office. (Water / Sewer bills, water quality survey, water ban, etc.) This item is reduced to reflect the actual amounts expended over the past several years. There has not been a need to mail notices for a mandatory water BAN. Costs will also be reduced as a result of utility billing enhancements which include CASS certified mailing of bills.

Collection Activities These funds are for additional mailings of notices of unpaid / delinquent charges, and demand bills, and other accounts receivable.

Copy/Mail Center Fees This is the proportional cost assigned to the Utility Billing Collector's Office for mail center labor for mail handling and copy charges.

Utility Billing Software This is utilized for minor programming modifications for water / sewer billing. These would include modifications not included in the annual maintenance that Point Software provides for the Water and Sewer receivable / collection system. The annual maintenance contracts for all Point Software applications are included in the Information Technology budget.

Utility Billing Printing The cost of services and supplies for the preparation of water / sewer bills including forms, consumables (toner), CASS certification software (Print Machine). This line item was increased to include a non capital lease for software to facilitate CASS certified mailings (see reduction in Postage).

Office Supplies General office supplies for the Utility Billing Collector's Office for employee benefit and bank reconciliation functions. This request has been increased by \$500 based on the historical spending requirements in this account.

FY 2007 Budget Presentation

Town of Natick Fiscal Year 2002 thru 2006
Departmental Executive Summary of Finances

Departmental Budget and Personnel Requirements Expended - by Fiscal Year					
Category	2002	2003	2004	2005	Thru December 2006
Staffing					
Full-Time Employees	2	2	2	2	2
Part-Time Employees					
Seasonal Employees					
Operating Budget					
Personal Services	\$71,515.96	\$78,411.34	\$78,699.14	\$78,893.40	\$38,231.33
Purchase of Services	\$44,392.53	\$37,070.66	\$45,735.90	\$31,969.38	\$28,076.58
Other Personnel Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Technical & Professional Sys	\$2,860.02	\$22,098.97	\$9,218.85	\$24,686.62	\$4,247.87
Supplies	\$0.00	\$1,006.07	\$3,681.22	\$2,918.55	\$1,685.34
Other Chgs & Expenditures	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Operating Budget	\$118,768.51	\$138,587.04	\$137,335.11	\$138,467.95	\$72,241.12
Capital Investments Expended					
Encumbered Operating Expenses	\$18,732.50	\$15,000.00	\$19,776.32	\$27,300.00	\$25,481.72
Encumbered Capital Expenses					
Quarterly Expenditure Pattern Fiscal Year 2001 thru 2006 - Operating Budget					
Percent Expended - by Fiscal Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Personal Services					
Quarter 1 ending Sept 30	10.63%	21.01%	23.53%	21.83%	22.14%
Quarter 2 ending Dec 31	13.41%	26.79%	25.22%	25.21%	24.12%
Quarter 3 ending March 31	21.84%	22.84%	25.19%	24.22%	
Quarter 4 ending June 30	49.56%	27.59%	26.06%	27.10%	
Encumbrances for Year	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
Closed to Fund Balance	4.56%	1.77%	0.00%	1.64%	
Total Pers Svs	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	46.26%
All Non-Personal Services					
Quarter 1 ending Sept 30	15.57%	6.68%	11.40%	10.57%	11.04%
Quarter 2 ending Dec 31	16.32%	22.00%	19.23%	14.26%	13.43%
Quarter 3 ending March 31	6.38%	18.19%	19.93%	24.87%	
Quarter 4 ending June 30	23.51%	28.60%	21.37%	10.18%	
Encumbrances for Year	24.45%	0.00%	24.02%	27.44%	
Closed to Fund Balance	13.77%	24.53%	4.05%	12.68%	
Total Non Pers Svs	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	24.47%
Capital Investments Expended					
Quarter 1 ending Sept 30					
Quarter 2 ending Dec 31					
Quarter 3 ending March 31					
Quarter 4 ending June 30					
Encumbrances for Year					
Closed to Fund Balance					
Total Capital	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Encumbrances include Current Year and Carryforward amounts from Previous Fiscal Years

Please NOTE some Encumbrances are MULTI-YEAR.

Utility Billing

	No of Staff	Tn Adm Recommended	Dept Requests	2006 Expended 12/31/05	2006 Appropriated	2005 Actual	2004 Actual	2003 Actual	2002 Actual
Salaries Operational Staff	2.0	83,129.48	83,129.48	37,295.08	79,138.33	77,207.97	75,693.20	75,263.00	70,341.80
Part-Time Operational Staff	0.1	4,807.68	4,807.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operational Staff Overtime		3,500.00	3,500.00	936.25	3,500.00	1,685.43	3,005.94	3,148.34	1,174.16
PERSONAL SERVICES	2.1	91,437.16	91,437.16	38,231.33	82,638.33	78,893.40	78,699.14	78,411.34	71,515.96
Repair & Maint Equipment		4,000.00	4,000.00	1,063.86	4,000.00	2,679.68	259.65	3,295.00	4,000.00
In State Travel/Meetings		500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	28.25	0.00
Training & Education		2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00	300.00	0.00	1,716.00	2,380.00
Communication Telephone		1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	430.66	936.00	1,621.50	0.00
Communication Postage		20,000.00	20,000.00	7,373.35	27,000.00	16,559.04	13,778.00	20,198.67	13,619.43
Collection Activities		11,000.00	11,000.00	0.00	11,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Copy/Mail Center Fees		33,000.00	33,000.00	15,639.37	33,000.00	12,000.00	30,062.25	10,211.24	18,000.00
PURCHASE OF SERVICES		72,500.00	72,500.00	24,076.58	79,500.00	31,969.38	45,035.90	37,070.66	37,999.43
Utility Billing Software		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Utility Billing Printing		36,200.00	36,200.00	4,247.87	24,200.00	24,686.62	9,218.85	22,098.97	2,214.98
TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL SVS		41,200.00	41,200.00	4,247.87	29,200.00	24,686.62	9,218.85	22,098.97	7,214.98
Office Supplies		3,500.00	3,500.00	885.34	3,000.00	2,918.55	1,781.22	1,006.07	645.04
SUPPLIES		3,500.00	3,500.00	885.34	3,000.00	2,918.55	1,781.22	1,006.07	645.04
BUDGET TOTAL		208,637.16	208,637.16	67,441.12	194,338.33	138,467.95	134,735.11	138,587.04	117,375.41

