

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

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510 Board of Health	Galvin: Why aren't the number of times Narcan is administered by either the police or fire recorded?	Stephens: Narcan usage has not typically been reported to the Health Department. The Fire Department recently has provided data to us so we can track the usage of Narcan. Additionally, when Westford residents leave the town and OD in another community, that data is more difficult to retrieve.
510 Board of Health	Greene: Under Dept Goals "expand plastic ban to include straws" is listed. Could you expand on this goal?	Stephens: There has been a push to include a ban on straws and plastic stirrers in Westford by a group of people. They are same ones that have advocated for the ban on polystyrene and plastic bags. We are looking to regulate the use of plastic straws and stirrers that is most effective for the Town. There currently is a BoH regulation that will have a public hearing on January 13 th . The regulation does not fully ban them, as some board members felt that we could be over regulating. The proposed regulation only prohibits restaurants from offering plastic straws. Polystyrene plastic straws are already banned under current Town ByLaws.
510 Board of Health	Greene: Under Department Goals "make the Department "greener" is listed. Could you describe the accomplished thus far as this was also a goal last year? What is planned for this year?	Stephens: Last year this was a goal because we continually look to reduce the use of paper in the office. We have gone electronic in many of our inspections. Some types of inspections are more difficult to transition to electronic because of the type of inspection. This is reducing the amount of paper we must keep on file. Our next goal is to reduce the amount of paper plans that come into

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		the office and find a better storage option that both employees and residents can access as easy as paper files. Challenges include plans that must be viewed in a certain scale and having a not only easy, but useful access to them. Our efforts are primarily focusing on paper and storage reduction within the office. Other efforts are educating residents on greener methods to clean and maintain their property, such as fertilizer reduction.
510 Board of Health	Greene: Has there been an attempt transition the BOH newsletter to an electronic format, where residents could opt out of receiving hard copy in the mail to reduce paper, printing, and postage costs?	Stephens: We did reduce the brochure we send out from two times a year to one. As all of you know, getting program information is important and we receive a large amount of feedback from the paper flier. The Department is considering keeping the paper copy for seniors only and going paperless for the remainder of the community.
510 Board of Health	Greene: Under "Significant Dept. Accomplishment" reimbursement for 1300 flu doses was \$18K. Last year 1200 doses resulted in over \$54K reimbursements. Can you explain the discrepancy? Possibly a typo as the Receipts table seems to indicate \$48,978 for flu reimbursements for FY19.	So I identify two numbers. One is the total reimbursement. This takes almost a year to receive all reimbursement from insurance companies, and this number is the 54K received in FY 18. Each year, this amount varies depending on the amount of vaccine we dispense, and the amount of unused vaccine we return to the supplier. 54K is also the cost of the vaccine, AND the administrative fee we can charge. The 18K is the number I get from finance. The 18K is only the administrative fee for services.

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510 Board of Health	Greene: Which schools and grades received the 4 vaping seminars? Will this program continue and/or be expanded in the future?	Stonybrook and Blanchard both received the programing. It was run by Substance Abuse and Geoff Pavao from PD. They would sometimes bring in additional speakers. This was all done in house. We have not had manpower to put together any vape programing for the fall. This fell right into Substance Abuse.
510 Board of Health – Dental services	FitzPatrick: It looks like the dental program expanded to 6 th grade. What is the cost of this expansion? How many of these kids have dental insurance separately? Does it get billed? My concern is that it's "free" so why not have a child that's adequately followed by a dentist get a check or cleaning thru the school. Are there statistics on how many Westford students don't have dental insurance?	<p>There was a goal to expand the dental program to the sixth grade, but this has not been done as of yet. In 2019, it remained K-5. This has been a long-standing program that I have kept running for the past two years. I have not asked if dental patients have had access to insurance. The Health Department receives a very discounted rate from local dentist and the Hygienists are paid for their time. The Health Department does pay for supplies.</p> <p>As far as insurance goes, I have recently learned that dental insurance may have a public health component that would let a school screening count against the two dental cleanings paid for through insurance. I am doing the research on this potential option.</p>
510 Board of Health – Nurse	Fitzpatrick: The verbiage states that the nurse spends time processing insurance. Have quotes ever been obtained to see how much it would be to outsource this? Is it something an administrative asst could do? Does the flu clinic make money, break even?	Accuracy and continuity are the biggest reasons that the Public Health Nurse processes the forms. While it may be possible to outsource the administrative work, the nurse is able to check and upload all forms into the Massachusetts

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		Immunization Information System (MIIS) to be sure that all nurses working at a clinic, recorded the right vaccine, from the correct lot number, and gave it to the proper person. This task is often performed only by Public Health Nurses in the State.
510 Board of Health	FitzPatrick: Has the social media dissemination of information allowed for a decrease in printing/ mailing? What avenues are used? How is this publicized as a new communication tool?	We mail one brochure in the fall to all residents with the fall and winter programs that are pre-planned. Nearly all other communication for residents is done through social media and the Town Website. Facebook is the primary social media platform. We do not have another Department social media account at this time. When issues such as mosquito spraying require notification, we will use FB, Town Website, Town Hall Bulletin Board posting, Westford CAT, and if needed, the RAVE system out of Dispatch. Our last mailing did notify of other alternatives to disseminate information.
510 Board of Health	FitzPatrick: Where does the data come from in the table of metrics? No strep or pneumonia?	All this data is by the State through (MAVEN) Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiological Network. All reportable diseases are tracked through this system.
510 Board of Health	FitzPatrick: Do the revenues flow into Dan's revenue worksheets? Is the 185K a receivable or received? This number is fairly consistent but it seems many metrics increased. Why would that be, are some big tickets that decreased? How did septic haulers/installers increase 50% but revenue only 10%? – I combined revenue lines.	This is "cash received" from permits and applications received at the front counter of the department. All cash is recorded in the permit tracking system. Thank you for the catch in the number of

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		<p>installers and Haulers permits. The cash received matches column is correct, but the number of permits is wrong. The number of permits should be 94. Sometimes permits are hand counted by the Department. What happens is some customers will submit "several" of the same application, but only one gets approved. The pending applications are allowed to stay in the system. I will work with IT, to see if there is an easy way to address that, but some applications lay pending for some time for various reasons before they are approved.</p> <p>Finally, as far as many of the metrics in the Department, there has been an increase, but the total amount of money received by flu, varies based off of the amount of residents that get flu shots and whatever the state sets the reimbursement rate at. Both of which we don't control.</p>
541 COA	Greene: What is the balance of the 53E1/2 Revolving account? How are funds spent from this account? What can they be spent on?	Claro: The revolving account balance is \$52,617 These funds are used to help pay for exercise and enrichment classes, special events and trips which help keep costs affordable for all who desire to participate in center activities.
541 COA	Greene/FitzPatrick: Could you give an update on the Heating system, the energy audit findings from last year and the new vendor for HVAC services.	Fox: When first presented to the capital committee this past fall, it was determined that a design study must be performed first to understand where we are and what could be

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		<p>done to the system. A deliverable of this product was to evaluate and audit the current usage and potential savings. It was decided that the Maintenance Capital Appropriate from past years could and will fund this project for \$28,800. The findings from the design and recommendations would be brought forth to the committee in the future, at which time a project could be determined if felt appropriate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on Heating System – Currently, still having unpredictable issues with the heating system. Components of the system are unreliable and failing consistently. 2. Energy Audit Findings – To the best of my knowledge an energy audit has not been conducted since 2006. However, we do collect data. 5 years worth of data has been passed along to the recently hired design company. During the evaluation and design stages, this data will be analyzed to determine any potential return on investment and energy usage savings. 3. BLW Engineering is doing the Design Study. The Town has a contract with Cooling and Heating Specialists to preform maintenance on the equipment.

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		The results and recommendations of the design is anticipated being complete around March/April.
541 COA – Bottled Water	Greene: Thank you for installing a refilling station and eliminating the \$800-line item!	Claro: Refill station has been well received at the center by all. Everyone really likes the refill station option for hot water so now one’s tea doesn’t taste like coffee.
541 COA - Postage	Greene: What is sent to residents via mail? Are there opportunities to reduce this by using electronic formats?	Claro: We send our monthly newsletter to residents age 70 and over (1,645 residents) at no cost. All other center participants age 55+ receive the newsletter by email and/or pick up at center and other locations around town. This is our second year reducing the newsletters mailed out to center participants age 69 and below.
541 Council on Aging	FitzPatrick: Is TREAD privately funded in perpetuity?	TREAD is not privately funded in perpetuity.
541 Council on Aging	FitzPatrick: Where do the misc. receipts show in the budget?	O’Donnell: They are located under “Fees” in local revenue. In FY19, we collected \$2,254 in local fees for the COA.
543 Veterans Services	Cunningham/FitzPatrick: Line item for Veteran’s Services increases by \$15,000 over the FY20 Budget and \$10,000 over the requested amount. Please explain what this line item includes and the reason for the increase over the requested amount.	Cobleigh: This line is benefits paid to Ch115 applicants which can include money for supplemental income, fuel, medical premiums, copays, prescriptions, burials and other special circumstances. The amounts vary for each applicant’s situation and by how many are enrolled. Before the original budget request, the average # of clients were 9 with over \$4,200 paid out each month not including a burial expense of over \$2,200. After the request clients were

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		slowly added/removed and now there are 12 with an average of just over \$6,000 per a month which would bring my year end to \$74,500 if no further changes. This was brought up during the budget meeting. 75% of this budget line is also reimbursed by the state.