

## FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
<b>294 Tree Warden</b>	FitzPatrick: Does this Department relate to revolving funds for forestry work?	O'Donnell: The only relation is that the Tree Warden is on the Forestry Committee as one of the members. The general fund tree warden budget is to take care of nuisance trees and limbs throughout the year where the Forestry Committee has planned projects where they sell the timber to generate revenue for the revolving fund.
<b>410 Engineering</b>	FitzPatrick: is there a plan for storm water that details what projects need to be done?	There is no 410 budget for stormwater. We have a 5-year capital plan that Dan can share with you that captures our larger projects that include stormwater improvements. O'Donnell: Please see attached Engineering Capital Plan.
<b>410 Engineering - Gasoline</b>	Hari: Being the line item empty leaves challenges my imagination. Can you provide some comments?	The Engineering Department fuels its vehicles at the new Highway Facility and no longer purchases gas directly.
<b>410 Engineering – Expense Total</b>	FitzPatrick: Less than \$400 of the budget is spent in FY19. Are the expenses cyclical	Yes. Some years we need more for unexpected items than other years.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Koehr: Are we keeping up with the Plan, or deferring work to future periods?	No, we have deferred a quite a bit of work due to staffing and funding.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Koehr: Is the Road Management Plan Updated every year?	No, we plan to update every 3 years using Chapter 90 funds.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Koehr: When will we see a positive budget impact from the Newport Materials mitigation (paving, material, etc.)	Once the plant is built, then we have access to the mitigation funds which will be analyzed in the capital planning meetings.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Morrison: How are department stipends distributed	Based on the different licenses (hoisting, pesticide, etc), mechanic tools, being on call, operating specialized equipment, being available

## FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		in the winter season, etc.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Morrison: Would adding additional heavy equipment operators reduce overtime and contract services in the budget?	It probably would not reduce overtime, because most overtime is based on weather conditions and plowing or emergency responses after hours. We contract out for certain types of work, such as road paving, that we will continue to do.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Pilachowski: Can you please provide more specifics on what is included in the Uniforms Allowances?	The contract specifies each employee will be paid \$875.00 per year which can be used for work clothes, safety shoes and any safety equipment that they would like to purchase or upgrade, above the safety equipment provided by the department. It is also used to silk screen the Town Seal for identification.
<b>421 Highway</b>	FitzPatrick: Every year we hear that the retiree from years ago isn't being replaced. What is not getting done by not having that person on staff?	The person replaced was an employee who was a shared position with the grounds crew and Highway Department. The workload is heavier on the other personnel and we are not able to complete as many projects.
<b>421 Highway-Utilities</b>	FitzPatrick: The electricity budget is almost fully spent and the natural gas is barely used? Is this just because we've finished the cooling season and are just getting into using heat. Are the garage bays conditioned space?	The budget you are provided does not account for open purchase orders that we are asked to provide for a full year of expenses. We have not had to put our purchase order in for gas as it is the beginning of the heating system.
<b>421 Highway-Drainage</b>	FitzPatrick: would this become part of the storm water utility? Would any other expenses?	It is anticipated that it will be part of the Storm Water utility. We would be analyzing all drainage expenses to get an average impact to the Highway Budget.
<b>421 Highway-Diesel</b>	FitzPatrick: the FY19 budget is almost used in entirety. Is this because the fuel for the season is prepaid?	Yes, with the open purchase order for the anticipated fuel for the year.

## FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
<b>421 Highway-Traffic Lines</b>	FitzPatrick/ Please refresh my memory. I thought there was one-time expenses due to redoing misc. crosswalks in town. Wouldn't the budget be more in line with FY18	The Town installed 4 composite crosswalks, the anticipated maintenance savings is that we will not be using about 5 gallons of yellow traffic paint. The crosswalks were partially donated, and the rest of the work came from contracted services.
<b>421 Highway-Resurface Materials</b>	FitzPatrick/ Can you explain how this is different from the capital allocations and chapter 90 funds? Do all these different sources just go into one big pot of funds for road paving?	We prioritize road repairs using the pavement management software and perform visual inspections to determine which roads need to be repaired. We have streets designated for Chapter 90 funds, and streets earmarked for capital. The money in this line item is for minor repairs and to repair potholes during the winter.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Galvin: Please explain the increase in the seasonal staff account from 20K in 2019 to 31K in 2020?	The 31K has been the number in the budget since FY 18
<b>421 Highway</b>	Galvin: Please explain the increase in the Equipment Operators and Laborer's account from 700K in 2019 to 800K in 2020?	We asked for 2 new employees and for the vacant position to be filled. It wasn't funded due to budget constraints.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Hari: Why is this line time going up 100K for the last two years?	In the last 2 years we have asked to replace a vacant position due to retirement, along with two additional employees this year that were not funded.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Hari: Pavement of Boston Road. Kudos for completing the job in one day. It is left unmarked. Is the intent to leave it like that until Spring?	We have asked the contractor to install the lines but the weather has not been helpful. It is our intent to line this year, asap.
<b>421 Highway</b>	Hari: This might be my ignorance. Is there a place on Town's website that outlines the scheduled projects that requires town residents to know ahead like planned road constructions?	Residents can sign up for email notifications on "Latest Road Construction News" at: <a href="http://www.westfordma.gov/subscriber">www.westfordma.gov/subscriber</a> Emails and social media notice is sent out for detours, road

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

<b>Dept. Number, Name + Account</b>	<b>Questioner's Name/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
		closures, etc.
<b>424 Street Lights</b>	Greene: Please explain how this budget is unchanged if we are purchasing 1,140 light fixtures from National Grid, taking over the maintenance, and switching to LEDs.	With the purchasing of the street lights from National Grid, we will be decreasing our electricity costs, but increasing our maintenance costs. We will not definitively know the costs until the project is complete. We will be monitoring this closely and seeking appropriate budget reductions as warranted.
<b>424 Street Lights</b>	Greene: Please give an update on the status of the installation of the new street lights.	New street lights are in a storage container at the Highway Garage and the Asst. Town Manager is finalizing the details of the installation contract.
<b>424 Street lights – maint</b>	FitzPatrick: 70% of the maint budget is spent in FY19 before we've retrofit. Is there risk that this maintenance account doesn't have a high enough budget?	The budget usually exceeds its appropriation and is supplemented by Hwy Op funds. This line item has historically been used for maintaining 200 town owned street lights in various sub-divisions. With the acquisition of street lights from National Grid, we can expect this line item to increase.
<b>427 Stormwater</b>	FitzPatrick: would all these expenses be incorporated into the utility should that be the funding means adopted.	The utility revenue is currently proposed to supplement existing and new operational and capital stormwater costs.
<b>427 Stormwater</b>	Galvin: Please provide an explanation regarding the proposed imposition of fees to support the Town's Storm Water License permits. Why is this necessary? Who is driving it? What are the plans to address it?	Across the Commonwealth, the cost of stormwater management is rising for cities and towns due to new State and Federal requirements and aging drainage infrastructure (culverts, pipes, manholes, and storm drains) that will require more maintenance and replacement with every passing year. In Westford alone, the town maintains over \$150 Million of drainage infrastructure that protects personal property

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

<b>Dept. Number, Name + Account</b>	<b>Questioner's Name/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
		<p>and allows safe travel.</p> <p>Many communities have evaluated various funding alternatives that strive to be as fair and reliable as possible. Options include property taxes or a stormwater fee, which is common in many other regions of the U.S. A stormwater fee is typically assessed based on the amount of hard surface on a given property. Hard, impermeable surfaces are related to increased and more polluted stormwater runoff as well as changes to the watershed that contribute to downstream problems such as stream channel erosion, poor water quality, and decreased infiltration into drinking water aquifers. A growing number of Massachusetts communities have recently adopted a stormwater fee, including our neighbors Chelmsford, Dracut, and Pepperell with average residential fees ranging from \$40 to \$95 per year. Nonresidential rates vary greatly.</p> <p>The Board of Selectmen is comparing stormwater funding alternatives as part of the ongoing efforts of our Stormwater Management Master Plan. The Board is exploring the details of a possible stormwater tax or fee with input from our residents, town departments, other officials, and consultants to present to residents at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. To learn more,</p>

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		<p>please visit us at <a href="http://www.westfordma.gov/stormwater">www.westfordma.gov/stormwater</a> where we will post additional information in the coming months.</p> <p>To be added to the stormwater information contact list to receive email notices about upcoming public meetings, write to <a href="mailto:stormwater@westfordma.gov">stormwater@westfordma.gov</a>.</p>
<b>427 Stormwater</b>	Liewei: What would be different in services, if we collect the stormwater utility (tax/fee) in the future?	The goal of the mandate is to improve the quality of stormwater runoff into our natural resources like rives, brooks, streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands. See above for additional stormwater detail.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	FitzPatrick: Is the blended rate part of the disposal services?	Harde: The blended rate is used to calculate the monthly disposal services charge.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	FitzPatrick: there is only about \$46k left in the FY19 budget... are the remaining funds adequate for this year?	O'Donnell: Through five months, we have spent \$46,673.76. If tonnage and the disposal fee were to stay constant, that equates to \$112,017 over the course of a full year. We will be monitoring this account closely to determine if we need a supplemental appropriation at town meeting.
<b>432 Recycling revolving account</b>	FitzPatrick: are there compost bins in inventory and that's why it looks like we are paying more than we are getting in?	Harde: Yes. We buy 20 compost bins at a time in order to get the State bid price and we sell about 20=25 in a year.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	FitzPatrick: Do the large complexes have pick up?	Harde: This issue is being reviewed by a working group formed by the Selectmen to create a recommendation for a town wide solid waste and recycling policy that is consistent and fair. The

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		<p>report is due by Jan 22. Apartment complexes like Princeton Properties, Abbot Mills and Graniteville Woods do NOT have municipal recycling (or trash) pickup. Condominium complexes including Blanchard Farms, Pilgrim Village and Hildreth Hills do. Brookside Mills has recycling collection as do the Villages at Stone Ridge. The Recycling Commission can provide the FinCom with a complete list of complexes and an explanation for each if you would like. In a nutshell, recycling at these units was begun in the 1990s when the Town was being paid (handsomely) for recyclables and the contract payment was the same no matter how much residents recycled.</p> <p>The industry is not the same in 2018. As we wrote in our 2018-19 Recycling Guide that was mailed town wide this past June: "The rules have changed. The recycling industry is changing and Westford must change with it."</p>
<b>432 Recycling</b>	Galvin: If recycling tonnage has decreased by 3.4% in 2018, why has the "Curbside Collection-Recycling" account increased from 451K in 2019 to 464K in 2020?	Harde: The "Curbside Collection-Recycling" line item covers recycling collection only and is a yearly fixed price based on the contractor's bid. The \$464K figure is Republic Service's original 4th year contract price. However, Republic, as is their right according to the contract, has decided not to honor this pricing and thus the recycling contract is in the process of going out to bid.

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

<b>Dept. Number, Name + Account</b>	<b>Questioner's Name/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
		Therefore, this \$464K is an estimate. The "Disposal Services" is a separate figure calculated monthly based on the tonnage of recycling collected multiplied by the blended rate.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	Pilachowski: How much revenue does the special collection events generate, and where is that money reflected in the budget?	Harde: The Electronics collection dollars all go directly to Northeast Materials Handling, the contractor who runs the collection. We get a report on tonnage collected, but no report on dollars collected. The Household Hazardous Waste collection is every two years. The Town appropriation pays Clean Harbors and money collected from residents at the collection is paid to the General Fund.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	Galvin: Please explain the Fuel Surcharge Credit and why has that figure increased in the budget from 6K in 2019 to 10K in 2020?	O'Donnell: The contract with Republic Services has a fuel surcharge when the price is above \$2.25 per gallon. Republic gives us a fuel discount when the price is less than \$2.25 / gallon which was the case at the beginning of FY18.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	Morrison: Will the contract with Republic Services be re-negotiated in 2019?	Harde: Yes. The RFP will go out in January 2019. See answer to Galvin's question above.
<b>432 Recycling</b>	Morrison: Are there any plans to provide more community education now that contamination of recycling is a pressing issue due to the change in the recycling market?	Harde: The focus of all the Commission's meetings is now on just this. Three prongs of our attack: 1) Our chair, Charles Stark, read a statement on "the change in the recycling market" at the October Special Town Meeting when the Town

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

<b>Dept. Number, Name + Account</b>	<b>Questioner's Name/Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
		<p>Manager asked for \$85,000 more in the recycling contract line item.</p> <p>2) Please go to <a href="http://www.westfordcat.org/watch-online/government/meetings-coverage/">//www.westfordcat.org/watch-online/government/meetings-coverage/</a> to watch the half hour show we taped last week.</p> <p>3) We are working to publicize the DEP's <a href="http://recyclesmart.ma.gov">recyclesmart.ma</a> Recyclopedia.</p>
<b>442 Wastewater- Management</b>	FitzPatrick: Do we pump every year?	The Pre-Treatment and Flow Equalization Tanks at Abbot, Blanchard, Stony Brook, and Westford Academy are pumped every year. The contract operator has recommended that we include a second pumping for Stony Brook in the next RFQ due to the additional volume from the new at Stony Brook Housing units.
<b>442 Waste Water Management</b>	Galvin: Please explain the reason for the cost increases for “Sludge, Pumping and Removal” at the Abbot, Blanchard, Stonybrook schools and Westford Academy?	Sludge, Pumping, and Removal is incorporated in the Wastewater Contract Operations contract. The cost increase is reflective of the potential 5% increase in the operations contract.
<b>442 Waste Water Management</b>	Galvin: What are the reasons for the increase in contracted services accounts across the board?	The increases are due to anticipated increases in the Wastewater Contract Operations contract, which the Town has the option to renew at a maximum increase of 5% above the existing contact price, dependent upon the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index.
<b>491 Cemetery</b>	FitzPatrick: What equipment is being maintained?	We maintain and repair several “small engine” type equipment, including mowers, weed-whackers, chainsaws, seeder, blowers, etc.

**FY 2020 Budget Questions & Answers**  
**Finance Committee**

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		The department also has trucks and a loader/backhoe that require both periodic preventative maintenance and repairs due to breakdown.
491 Cemetery	Greene: Who can be buried at the Town cemeteries?	Currently, anyone can be buried in Westford cemeteries, including residents and non-residents. Non-resident lot sales are assessed an additional \$400 per grave fee.
491 Cemetery	Greene: What is the income generated as a result of the sale of lots, burials and monuments (pg. 107)	<p>The following information reflects actual revenues for FY18:</p> <p><b>Sale of Lots:</b> Total revenue of \$41,400. This is split 60% into perpetual care and 40% into Sale of Lots account. Funds in the Sale of Lots account is available for appropriation and expenditure via Town Meeting vote.</p> <p><b>Monuments:</b> \$600, which is deposited to the General Fund.</p> <p><b>Grave Openings:</b> \$27,825, which is deposited to the General Fund.</p> <p>We are currently conducting a financial analysis of our lot charges with surrounding communities and looking at a long-term plan for expansion of the Pine Gove Cemetery. This is a Selectmen goal for the next year.</p>

**Town of Westford  
FY20-23 Capital Plan  
As of October 19th, 2018**

<b>Department: 410 - ENGINEERING</b>								<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	
		FY2020		FY2021		FY2022		FY2023	
		Priority #	Requested	Priority #	Requested	Priority #	Requested	Priority #	Requested
7	410 - Condition Assessment of Town-Wide Culverts	1	100,000						
8	410 - Plain Road, Oak Hill Road & Moore Road Infrastructure Improvements	1	100,000	1	3,000,000				
9	410 - Pedestrian Safety Improvements	1	210,000						
10	410 - Town-Wide Sidewalk Assessment	2	140,000						
12	410 - Dam Improvements - Engineering			1	200,000				
13	410 - Signal Upgrade at Tyngsboro Road & Route 40			1	75,000				
14	410 - Boston Road Reconstruction Project			1	100,000				
15	410 - Beaver Brook Bridge Non-Participating Costs			1	75,000				
16	410 - Culvert Designs			1	150,000				
17	410 - Bridge Evaluation Study			2	45,000				
18	410 - Complete Streets Design			2	50,000				
19	410 - School Intersection Improvements					2	125,000		
20	410 - Culvert Replacements					1	250,000	1	250,000
21	410 - Dam Improvements					1	1,500,000		
22	410 - Boston Road Reconstruction Non-Participating Costs					1	500,000		
23	410 - Engineering & Conceptual Design for 4 High Priority Intersections					2	50,000		
24	410 - North Main Street - Water Main & Roadway Design					1	115,000		
25	410 - Pavement Management Program Reevaluation							1	40,000
26	410 - School Area Traffic & Intersection							1	1,250,000
27	410 - North Main Street - Water Main & Roadway Construction							3	900,000
28	410 - Design Engineering for Water Distribution System Improvements - Bridge Street							3	150,000
<b>Department 410 Totals</b>			<b>550,000</b>		<b>3,695,000</b>		<b>2,540,000</b>		<b>2,590,000</b>