

FY 2027 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
210 Police Department	Galvin: Please explain what the contract services are that are referenced as a line item and explain the 11.94% increase	Chief Chambers: Contracted services are software programs for the WPD. They include scheduling software, policy management, and health and wellness. All programs have increased, with the largest increase for the scheduling software. With the creation of the Civilian Traffic Control additional user licenses were added to the scheduling software.
210 Police Department	Galvin: Please explain the 46% increase in meetings and conferences. To whom is this money paid?	Chief Chambers: The increase reflects more accurately what has been spent on meetings and conferences for professional development. The difference has been paid with forfeiture funds over the past several years. This request covers attendance at I.A.C.P. and FBI LEEDA National Conference for Chief and a member of the Command Staff, statewide Accreditation conference, and other trainings that require travel/accommodation
210 Police Department	Galvin: What was the turnover in the department in 2025?	Chief Chambers: 1 Retirement / has been replaced
210 Police Department	Galvin: Were there any expenditures this year for officers attending basic police training via MPTC? If so, how much?	Chief Chambers: In FY25, WPD had 4 officers attend MPTC Academies at \$3,200 each, totaling \$12,800
210 Police Department	Galvin: Has the WPD received any fund allotments from drug forfeitures this year. If so, how much?	Chief Chambers: The WPD has received approximately \$16,000 this year in Federal Forfeiture.

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210 Police Department	Galvin: What were the total number of Part I Crimes (FBI) reported in Westford in 2025? How does this compare with last year?	Chief Chambers: Not tracked that way anymore by FBI. No longer UCR, but NIBRS. Broken into Group A and B. <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Group A</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2024</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2025</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Crimes Against Persons</td> <td style="text-align: center;">39</td> <td style="text-align: center;">31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crimes Against Property</td> <td style="text-align: center;">157</td> <td style="text-align: center;">111</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crimes Against Society</td> <td style="text-align: center;">22</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Group B</td> <td style="text-align: center;">61</td> <td style="text-align: center;">54</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Group A	2024	2025	Crimes Against Persons	39	31	Crimes Against Property	157	111	Crimes Against Society	22	20	Group B	61	54
Group A	2024	2025															
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Group B	61	54															
210 Police Department	Galvin: What was the total number of Part II Crimes (FBI) reported in Westford in 2025? How does this compare with last year?	Chief Chambers: See above															
210 Police Department	Galvin: How many motor vehicle accidents (MVA) did the WPD investigate in 2025? How does it compare to 2024? How many fatal MVA's in each year?	Chief Chambers: Total MVA's - FY25:498, FY24: 532 Fatal MVA's - FY25:0, FY24:1															
210 Police Department	Galvin: How many search warrants were issued in 2025? How does this compare to 2024?	Chief Chambers: FY25- Warrants 34, subpoena 40 FY24- Warrants 16, subpoena 56															
210 Police Department	Galvin: How many protective orders were applied for and issued to last year. How does that compare to 2024?	Chief Chambers: FY25- 56, FY24- 50															
210 Police Department	Galvin: How many persons were taken into custody under section 12 in 2025 by the Department? How does this compare to 2024?	Chief Chambers: FY25- 121 FY24- 74															
210 Police Department	Galvin: How many total calls for service were received in 2025? How does this compare to 2024?	Chief Chambers: 2025- 32,042 2024- 28,479															
210 Police Department	Galvin: Does the WPD classify and prioritize calls for service?	Chief Chambers: Yes															

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210 Police Department	Galvin: Is the District Attorney still adhering to the policy of not prosecuting shoplifters? What other minor crimes will the DA not prosecute? What impact has the policy had in town?	Chief Chambers: Please contact the Middlesex D.A. for what policies they follow. Minor crimes are very often being dealt with at pre-trial hearings but this has not changed how WPD brings cases forward. It has reduced court overtime expenses.
210 Police Department	Galvin: Is there any litigation pending or anticipated against the Building Department at this time? If so, briefly describe the circumstances.	O'Donnell: The town cannot provide details on any pending litigation. There is no pending litigation that would materially impact the Town's finances.
215 Public Safety Communications	Galvin: What is the reason for the 5.6% increase in the operations administrators line item?	Sherman: The 5.6% increase represents contractual step increases to reflect the new OPIEU signed contract.
215 Public Safety Communications	Galvin: Please explain the 88.23% increase in the shift differential line item.	Sherman: The 88.23% increase in shift differential represents contractual step increases to reflect the new CWA signed contract.
215 Public Safety Communications	Galvin: What progress if any has been made with exploring the possibility of regionalizing this function?	Las: The Town Manager has had multiple conversations with other municipalities regarding this possibility. Based upon the upgrades to the facility and other logistical matters, it has been determined to not be in the best interest of the town at this time.
220 Fire Department	Galvin: The summary states that the collective bargaining agreement with the Firefighters expired in 2024. Are the firefighters currently working without a contract?	Chief Denehy: Yes, they are working under the FY24 contract.
220 Fire Department	Galvin: Total overtime increased for the fire department (overtime + holiday overtime) to about 40K. How much of that can be deferred to the Ambulance enterprise? Is it the commitment to staff the ambulance enterprise driving this cost?	Chief Denehy: The overtime in the 220 Fire Department budget is to fill shifts on the fire side and not the ambulance enterprise. Overtime shifts to staff ambulances are paid out of the enterprise account.
220 Fire Department	Galvin: The total overtime expense for the fire department is 495K. Is this expense largely the result of supporting the Ambulance Enterprise?	Chief Denehy: This amount is for the Fire budget. Ambulance Enterprise has its own budget

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220 Fire Department	Galvin: How many structure fires to include dwellings did the Fire Department respond to in 2024 and 2025?	Chief Denehy: Dwelling fires 2024 = 12 2025 = 16
220 Fire Department	Galvin: How many Hazmat calls did the Fire Department respond to in 2024 and 2025?	Chief Denehy: Hazmat calls 2024 = 50 2025 = 47
220 Fire Department	Galvin: Is there any litigation pending or anticipated against the Fire Department at this time? If so, briefly describe the circumstances.	O'Donnell: The town cannot provide details on any pending litigation. There is no pending litigation that would materially impact the Town's finances.
220 Fire Department	Greene: Does the Fire Department currently have any vacant positions? If so, which positions and for how long have they been vacant?	Chief Denehy: One FF/Medic position is vacant Has been for one month (December 2025).
220 Fire Department	Fryer: When Rogers Fire Station is closed, how much longer does it take to reach areas that Rogers covers, Forge village for example?	Chief Denehy: Increase of 6-10 minutes with many variables.
220 Fire Department	Fryer: How many times did Westford provide mutual aid to other towns in FY25 and in FY26 to date and from which towns? What are the estimated costs of this aid?	Chief Denehy: FY25:219 FY26: 136 times do date (mid January 2026) Estimated costs: many variables such as location and duration of call.
220 Fire Department	Fryer: How many times did Westford request mutual aid from other towns in FY25 and FY26 to date and from which towns? Are there any costs associated with this aid?	Chief Denehy: FY25 requested 141. FY26 to date is 73 (mid January 2026). Estimated costs: many variables such as location and duration of call.
220 Fire Department	Fryer: With the expansion of Westford due to the MBTA program, is it anticipated that the Fire department will become understaffed at some point, and if so when?	Chief Denehy: See response in Ambulance Enterprise.

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241 Building Dept	Galvin: Please explain in more detail the relationship between the increase of 15.34% in the personnel expenses and the “non union” adjustment of 2.5% and contractual obligations under the OPEIU and CWA collective bargaining.” Are the building inspectors unionized and what impact did this have on their salaries?	Tardif: The Building Commissioner is a non-union position. Two full-time Building Department employees are unionized: the Assistant Building Commissioner is a member of OPEIU, and the Records Supervisor II is a member of CWA. Both unions negotiated a COLA increase of 2.5% in FY27 over and above step increases. However, the 15.34% increase is mainly attributed to the \$45,000 increase to Personal Services for the Zoning Enforcement Inspectors line item. (See additional information below)
241 Building Dept	Galvin/Greene: Are the fees paid for building inspections and plans review keeping pace with inflation? Have they been adjusted at all? When were our permitting fees last analyzed?	Tardif: In my opinion, our fees have not kept pace with inflation and are not commensurate with other area (Market Basket) towns. Building Department permit fees have not been adjusted comprehensively since 2004. The goal would be to conduct a thorough review of Building Department fees over the upcoming fiscal year and propose adjustments as needed. Ideally, this would be part of wide-ranging changes to the Town’s permitting process that includes a new online system. Edwards/O’Donnell: This is a planned activity for FY27 to do a comprehensive fee review across all Town fee schedules if the Management Analyst is approved by Town Meeting.
241 Building Dept	Galvin: Is there any litigation pending or anticipated against the Building Department at this time? If so, briefly describe the circumstances.	O’Donnell: The town cannot provide details on any pending litigation. There is no pending litigation that would materially impact the Town’s finances.

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<p>241 Building Dept</p>	<p>Greene/Fryer: Why is vehicle maintenance increasing by 150%?</p>	<p>Tardif: The previously budget of \$600 was for the maintenance and upkeep of one vehicle, which was insufficient to cover the true costs for vehicle maintenance. A high-mileage second vehicle, formerly used for plowing operations, was transferred from the Department of Public Works to the Building Department to allow both the Building Commissioner and Assistant Building Commissioner to operate Town vehicles when performing their duties about town. The requested budget increase is to accommodate the routine maintenance for two vehicles. While this current request represents a modest increase and improvement, future requests will need to account for non-routine maintenance items.</p> <p>O'Donnell: The budget is increasing from \$600 to \$1,500.</p>
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<p>241 Building Dept</p>	<p>Greene: In the description of changes, “Future budgets will need to address the growing demands of [new building projects]”. Could you please explain this further. Do the estimated FY28 – 29 budgets reflect this demand?</p>	<p>Tardif: We currently have two full-time building inspectors (Building Commissioner and Assistant Building Commissioner) for all residential and commercial projects in town. Duties for these two inspectors include application/plan review, permit issuance, certificates of inspections, zoning enforcement, public inquiries, FOIA requests, and physical inspections for more than 1,500 permits each year. In my opinion, we are not adequately staffed to complete these duties in a timeframe that’s reasonable for the town’s residents nor the building professionals performing the work.</p> <p>Additionally, there are several large construction projects that will require dedicated time and attention from staff, including, but not necessarily limited to: 530 units at 37 Powers Road, 300 units at the Westford Regency, an 80-unit mixed-use development at 5 Tech Park East (proposed by the Gutierrez Company), and 35 units (with a Food Pantry) at 35 Town Farm Road. While the specific construction timing of each of these projects is unknown, there will undoubtedly be overlap with multiple projects. Therefore, it is possible (depending on timing) that additional funds may be requested for inspectional coverage.</p> <p>Even in the event these large projects generate significant building permit and inspectional fee revenues, and a new online permitting system would create meaningful efficiencies for multiple Town Departments, including Building, it will</p>
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		not solve the underlying issue of inadequate staff capacity. O'Donnell: The \$45,000 in additional funding is in the FY28 and FY29 budget projection.
291 Emergency Management	Galvin: Who is currently acting as the Director of Emergency Management for the town?	Chief Denehy and Sherman: Fire Chief Michael Denehy and Operations Administrator Andrew Sherman are EM Co-Directors, please see page 13 of the Budget document that shows this information.
291 Emergency Management	Galvin: What efforts have been made to ensure that Westford Public Safety is National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant and has a succession plan for police, fire and police communications been established?	Chief Denehy and Sherman: Public Safety is NIMS compliant. We are actively looking into Incident Command System (ICS) courses for Department Heads as part of the Towns Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)
292 Animal Control	Galvin: Explain the 27.11% increase in the animal control officer expense?	Edwards: As noted in the budget narrative, an additional shift has been added to allow scheduled overlap of the two ACO's. Currently, calls requiring two ACO's result in call-in and mandatory pay for 3 hours, whereas this will allow for more efficient scheduling to also allow training. Note that there is a corresponding decrease in expected overtime (call-ins)

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292 Animal Control	Galvin: In description of changes reference is made to increases in animal cruelty- explain, mental health related cases – please explain and housing and financial insecurity- explain. Provide numbers of each. Please explain how these are related to animal control costs?	Edwards: Many calls for animal cruelty also have overlap with other Town public safety and social services functions; calls to public safety (police, fire, EMS) that are mental health related can trigger a call to AC if a pet is present. Also, as mental health issues and instances of financial insecurity increase, there are a higher number of calls for all public safety services across the board, which includes Animal Control. If another Town department (public safety or social services) has a call where an animal is involved, AC will often be looped in for assistance. Call data for past 5 years attached.
292 Animal Control	Galvin: The volume of calls was referenced. Have you made any effort to classify the calls or group them according to severity or priority?	Edwards: We have regrouped call types to significantly improve the data tracking and reporting. No call is black and white, some calls may self-resolve and others can appear straightforward and turn out to be far more complicated than originally reported. Each call is carefully assessed before any off-hour response, and whenever appropriate, residents are guided via phone with regular success. Less urgent calls are responded to during the next scheduled shift alongside the regular call load to reduce OT/call-out hours.
292 Animal Control	Galvin: Is there any litigation pending or anticipated against Animal Control at this time? If so, briefly describe the circumstances.	O'Donnell: The town cannot provide details on any pending litigation. There is no pending litigation that would materially impact the Town's finances.

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640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin/Greene: What was the amount of bad debt incurred this year? What was the percentage of the calls that the town received no revenue from? What is the collection rate on ambulance billing? How much was written off?	Jeremy Healy: As of June 30, 2025, Coastal had an outstanding balance of 1,376,455.58. In FY25 Coastal sent \$534,327.34 to collections and collections (First Financial) had a balance of \$921,300.44. Collection rate for FY25 89.2%
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: What percentage of the Ambulance Enterprise Budget is subsidized from the town's general fund?	O'Donnell: For FY27, the recommended budget is \$1,451,966. The FY27 projected revenue is \$925,000 and the retained earnings applied is \$120,000, leaving a general fund subsidy of \$406,966, or 28.03% of the budget.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: Describe the difference between ALS response services and BLS response services.	Chief Denehy: Ambulances respond at the Advanced Life Support (ALS) level has ability to administer medication and perform invasive and advanced airways which Basic Life Support (BLS) providers cannot. The level of care needed is based on patient condition upon evaluation.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: Is there any litigation pending or anticipated against the Ambulance Enterprise at this time? If so, briefly describe the circumstances.	O'Donnell: The town cannot provide details on any pending litigation. There is no pending litigation that would materially impact the Town's finances.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: Are any retained earnings expected to be used to balance FY27? If so, how much?	O'Donnell: Yes, \$120,000.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: Please provide an accounting of the Ambulance Enterprise retained earnings over the past 5 years. Revenue, Expenses, interest, beginning and ending balances.	O'Donnell: Please see attached.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: What is the estimated revenue for FY27?	O'Donnell: \$925,000.

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640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: When were Ambulance fees last reviewed?	Chief Denehy: September 2023 Budget Task Force. The rates were adjusted to be 400% above Medicare, set mileage rate of \$39 per mile and. to automatically adjust each year. Approved by Selectboard 09/12/2023. Edwards/O'Donnell: This is a planned activity for FY27 to do a comprehensive fee review across all Town fee schedules if the Management Analyst is approved by Town Meeting.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: Can you explain how mutual aid works in regards to fees collected? Are Westford's taxpayers supporting non-resident Ambulance calls?	Chief Denehy: If Westford ambulance transports a patient, we bill regardless of the response area or resident's address.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Fryer: What are the implications of having no collective bargaining agreements since FY24?	Chief Denehy: They work under the FY22-FY24 bargaining agreement.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Fryer: Why is there an increase in vehicle maintenance costs and a decrease in vehicular parts and accessories?	Chief Denehy: The department no longer has an in-house mechanic requiring apparatus to be sent out to outside vendors for repairs with an increase in costs and decrease in parts and accessories.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Fryer: How much of the Ambulance services are in the Town of Westford and how much is outside? By number of calls, costs to Westford and how much cost is recovered for the last 5 years (if possible).	Chief Denehy: FY25 total calls were 2476 of which 167 were mutual aid outside requested. Represents 2.7%
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Fryer: The with expansion of the number of Westford residents due to the MBTA program, is it anticipated that the Ambulance Enterprise will become understaffed at some point, and if so when?	Chief Denehy: Each year as calls for service increase, evaluation of staffing levels needs to be ongoing. The continued growth of town, complexity of calls we respond to, expanded scope of practice, and the aging population will further increase demand for our services. Continued discussions and evaluation will be needed to determine when the understaffing will become critical.

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640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: Can we get an update on FY26 YTD revenue and what was budgeted for FY26 - revenue, retained earnings and general fund subsidy?	O'Donnell: Please see attached summary.
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WESTFORD ANIMAL CONTROL FISCAL YEAR CALL LOG COMPARISON

Town of Westford						
292 Animal Control Calls						
January 15, 2026						
CALL TYPE	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FYTD26 through 12/31/25
ANIMAL BITES/CONTACT	27	39	45	53	56	26
ANIMAL CRUELTY/WELFARE	44	30	45	162	149	25
DOMESTIC HBC	5	5	4	28	17	11
DOMESTIC DECEASED	4	4	6	6	4	1
DEER HBC	18	22	34	42	38	41
DOMESTIC COMPLAINT	37	37	66	68	97	35
DOMESTIC LOST/FOUND	149	142	173	184	229	111
DONATION	4	1		1	1	6
INQUIRY/FOLLOW UP	23	54	84	140	163	50
KENNEL/ANIMAL CARE	1	10	15	20	31	19
ROADKILL	52	58	52	97	57	28
WILDLIFE	277	289	326	320	337	124
EPIDEMIOLOGY			3	1	8	5
EXTERNAL RQ/INQUIRY		7	15	68	94	10
PD/EPO ASSIST	4	7	19	12	13	6
TOTAL	645	705	887	1,202	1,294	
FYTD TOTAL CALL VOLUME 7/1-12/31	316	381	416	419	455	498

Coastal Medical Billing, Inc.

9 Main Street Suite 2K ♦ Sutton, Ma 01590 ♦ 866-268-5200 ♦ 508-476-9748 ♦ jenn@coastalbilling.com

Hello and Happy New Year!

Below is the 2026 Fee-for-Service-Payment Schedule. Here is the link if you wish to look at it in its entirety.

State	Locality	HCPC	2025	2026
MA	01	A0425 MILEAGE	\$9.15	\$9.33
	01	A0427 ALS	\$615.22	\$626.37
	01	A0433 ALS2	\$890.45	\$906.58
	01	A0429 BLS	\$518.18	\$527.47
	99	A0425 MILEAGE	\$9.15	\$9.33
	99	A0427 ALS	\$563.75	\$571.94
	99	A0433 ALS2	\$815.95	\$827.80
	99	A0429 BLS	\$474.74	\$481.63

*01 = Middlesex, Norfolk and Suffolk Counties all others are 99

Medicaid Rates

	BLSN	BLS	ALS	ALSN	ALS2	SCT	MLG
	A0428	A0429	A0427	A0426	A0433	A0434	A0425
2025	\$208.87	\$334.19	\$396.86	\$250.65	\$574.40	\$678.83	\$6.45
2026	\$208.87	\$334.19	\$396.86	\$250.65	\$574.40	\$678.83	\$6.45

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AmbulanceFeeSchedule>

If you are interested in raising your rates please contact us at 508-476-9470. Please keep in mind demographics affects your revenue, and there are federal mandatory adjustments that have to be written off and are not collectible. We are happy to discuss this with you and make the changes you want regarding the charges.

Best,

The Team at Coastal Medical Billing

Town of Westford						
Ambulance Enterprise FY21-26						
January 15, 2026						
Retained Earnings Balance:	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Beginning Balance	488,501.00	192,305.00	287,053.00	486,996.00	815,478.00	1,309,846.00
Retained Earnings Appropriated	(413,889.00)	(73,889.00)	(53,219.00)	(72,000.00)	(220,757.00)	
Retained Earnings Generated	117,693.00	168,637.00	253,162.00	400,482.00	715,125.00	
Ending Balance	192,305.00	287,053.00	486,996.00	815,478.00	1,309,846.00	
Part I Cash	622,806.00	778,086.00	560,663.00	922,821.00	1,597,987.00	
Current Liabilities, Designations of Fund Balance:						
Accounts Payable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(30,972.00)	
Payroll Payable	(20,845.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Warrants Payable	(20,655.00)	(8,010.00)	(7,878.00)	(13,310.00)	(88,431.00)	
Encumbrances	0.00	(1,894.00)	0.00	(2,077.00)	(3,882.00)	
Expenditures	0.00	(25,000.00)	(50,000.00)	(50,000.00)	(50,000.00)	
Continuing Appopriations	(389,000.00)	(441,474.00)	(1,829.00)	(22,000.00)	(114,856.00)	
Other Liabilities						
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings	0.00	(14,654.00)	(13,960.00)	(19,956.00)	0.00	
Rounding	(1.00)	(1.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Petty Cash	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total	(430,501.00)	(491,033.00)	(73,667.00)	(107,343.00)	(288,141.00)	0.00
Part II Retained Earnings, Undesignate	192,305.00	287,053.00	486,996.00	815,478.00	1,309,846.00	0.00
Check	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ambulance Enterprise Actual Revenue:						
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Programs	979,861.72	1,098,099.76	1,091,816.59	1,228,184.04	1,543,246.22	
Investment Income	362.51	163.02	6,446.19	15,497.95	20,915.06	
General Fund Subsidy	437,078.00	666,324.00	589,944.00	605,371.00	786,441.00	
Total Revenue	1,417,302.23	1,764,586.78	1,688,206.78	1,849,052.99	2,350,602.28	0.00

Town of Westford		
Ambulance Enterprise Revenue		
January 15, 2026		
	FY26 Budget	FY26 Actual through 12/31/25
FY26 Budget		
Personal Services	947,179.00	456,620.72
Expenses	272,275.00	102,742.27
Direct/Indirect Costs	370,483.00	370,483.00
Total	1,589,937.00	929,845.99
FY26 Revenue	925,000.00	739,189.94
FY26 Retained Earnings	59,600.00	59,600.00
FY26 G/F Subsidy	605,337.00	605,337.00
Total Revenue	1,589,937.00	1,404,126.94