



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AGENDA  
April 30, 2018  
Senior Center, 75 Groton Road  
North Chelmsford, MA 01863

**1. 6:30 PM CALL TO ORDER**

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS ON TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES SIX AND EIGHT**

Documents:

**[FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNDING - ARTICLE 6.PDF](#)**  
**[DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS.PDF](#)**  
**[SPECIAL ED RESERVE FUND - ARTICLE 8.PDF](#)**

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: **May 14, 2018**

4/19/18

**Town Manager's Town Meeting Recommendations for Fire Department Operations**

Article 6: FY19 General Government Operating Budget

	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>
Fire Dept. Personnel	\$5,372,718	\$5,500,903		
Contract	<u>\$248,000</u>	<u>\$424,372</u>		
	\$5,620,718	\$5,925,275	\$304,557	5.41%
Fire Dept. Expenses	<u>\$350,000</u>	<u>\$370,000</u>	\$20,000	5.71%
Total:	\$5,970,718	\$6,295,275	\$324,557	5.43%

---

To keep all 5 fire stations open with a minimum of one apparatus staffed by 3 firefighters in FY19 would require an additional \$245,000. This would result in the Fire Department Personnel budget increasing by a total of **\$549,557 (9.77%)**.



**Office of the Town Manager**

**Paul E. Cohen**  
Town Manager

50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824-2777

978.250.5201  
Fax: 978.250.5252

April 26, 2018

TO: Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee  
FROM: Paul Cohen, Town Manager *PC*  
RE: Operational Needs of Departmental Budgets

---

At my staff meeting that was held earlier this week, many of the Town's Departmental Heads expressed their concern and disappointment that the Fire Department's budget may receive a disproportionate increase of almost 10%. I have attached a copy of memorandums from several Department Heads that list unmet operational needs across the community. While no one wants to see the closure of a fire station, consideration should also be made to other public safety, educational, health, and other areas such as:

- Police Department is understaffed from historical levels which has resulted in:
  - no traffic unit to address neighborhood safety;
  - Understaffed detective division to address the opioid crisis and other major incidents;
  - The lack of a full-time school resource officer at each middle school;
- DPW is understaffed from historical levels, which has resulted in an inability to adequately maintain the Town's buildings, roads, trees, and drainage infrastructure;
- Board of Health's inability to adequately inspect food establishments;
- School Department's needs for additional curriculum coordinators, psychologist positions, special education, ELL, and social workers.

I look forward to continuing to address the long-term needs of our community, while recognizing that the decisions of today will impact ongoing collective bargaining and budgeting/taxation concerns.



James M. Spinney Jr.  
Chief of Police

## Town of Chelmsford Police Department



April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

To: Town Manager Paul Cohen  
From: Police Chief James Spinney

Re: Police Department Operational Needs

After conducting a review of Police Department operations several areas have been determined as being insufficient or inadequate when it comes to providing police services for a community the size of Chelmsford.

The primary reason for these inadequacies is understaffing of sworn personnel. According to The Bureau of Justice, communities with populations the size of Chelmsford average a Police Officer to population ratio of 1.8 Officers per 1,000 residents. According to this data, communities the size of Chelmsford average a sworn police force of 61 Officers. Currently the total sworn complement of the Chelmsford Police Department is 53 Officers.

The following areas of the Police Department are being effected due to this understaffing issue;

2 Olde North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824  
Telephone: 978-250-5255, Fax: 978-256-7094  
Email: [JSpinney@townofchelmsford.us](mailto:JSpinney@townofchelmsford.us)



- **Community Policing / Traffic / Quality of Life Concerns**

- **No full time Traffic Unit** – Traffic Officer regularly assigned to patrol due to staffing / overtime issues.
- **Reduced River Boat Deployments** – Not enough officers staffed on shift for regular Boat deployment.
- **Playground / Neighborhood Foot Patrols** – Not enough officers staffed on shift to allow dedicated time for Foot Patrols of highly populated areas.
- **Reduced Motor Cycle Unit Deployment** – Not enough officers staffed on shift.
- **Reduced Mountain Bike Unit Deployment** – Not enough officers staffed on shift.

- **Follow up Investigations**

- **Understaffed Detective Division** – Currently four detectives assigned for all major incident investigations, and crime scene processing. Detectives also responsible for follow up with regards to opioid, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Comparable towns in our region have 6-8 detectives, (Tewksbury, Billerica).

- **School Issues**

- **School Resource Officer Program** – Currently have one School Resource Officer assigned to the High School. Plan is to add a second School Resource Officer to work with both the Parker Middle School and the McCarthy Middle School. This Officer will be utilized from the current Patrol Division.

If staffing allowed, a third School Resource Officer would be assigned so both Middle Schools would be covered Full Time.



- **Historical Perspective**

- Police activity calls have increased over 40% over the last 25 years
- In the year 2000 Police Department complement was 61 Officers
- In the year 2005 Police Department complement was 55 Officers
- In the year 2010 Police Department complement was 49 Officers
- Current Police Department complement 53 Officers
- Tewksbury and Billerica Police Departments 60+ Officers
  
- **Traffic and Safety Unit Staffing** – During the late 1980s and early 1990s Police Department operated a Full Time Traffic and Safety Unit. Officers were assigned all day foot patrols in Central Square and Vinal Square to assist with pedestrian safety, and traffic control.
  
- **Detective Division Staffing** – No increase in over 25 years.
  
- **Patrol Officers minimum staffing levels** – During the late 1980s and early 1990s there were more Patrol Officers on the street than we have today.

2 Olde North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824  
Telephone: 978-250-5255, Fax: 978-256-7094  
Email: JSpinney@townofchelmsford.us



The Chelmsford Police Department on average handles over thirty thousand police activity calls per year. With the continuing addition of large multi residential structures and communities being built in town I foresee a time in the not too distant future where calls for service needs will expand beyond our current patrol sector assignments. This issue with regards to understaffing of total sworn personnel will only worsen. Officer safety, as well as public safety may become a concern as backup and primary response times will increase.

As always the men and women of the Chelmsford Police Department will endure and persevere providing professional and dedicated service to this community.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

  
Chief James M. Spinney

2 Olde North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824  
Telephone: 978-250-5255, Fax: 978-256-7094  
Email: [JSpinney@townofchelmsford.us](mailto:JSpinney@townofchelmsford.us)

**ENGINEERING** 978-250-5228  
**FACILITIES** 978-244-3379  
**HIGHWAY** 978-250-5270



**PARKS** 978-250-5228  
**SEWER (OFFICE)** 978-250-5233  
**(OPERATIONS)** 978-250-5297

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**9 Alpha Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824-3167**

**Gary J. Persichetti, CFM  
Director**

**Telephone: 978-250-5228  
Fax: 978-250-5251**

### **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** 4/25/18  
**To:** P. Cohen  
**From:** G. Persichetti/S. Jahnle  
**Subject:** DPW Staffing/Capital Needs

As requested, attached is a summary of what we feel would bring the DPW staffing/Capital expenditures up to a level that would allow the Department to function more efficiently and at the same time provide better service to the Residents of Chelmsford.

Over the years, the DPW has experienced staff reductions and budget reductions, however, the needs of the Town continue to grow. A summary of the attached staffing/funds breakdown follows:

#### **Highway**

Previous non-management Highway staffing levels: 22  
Current non-management Highway staffing levels: 18

There are many incomplete projects/tasks due to the lack of manpower. For example, culvert cleaning, collapsing storm drains, tree debris from an aging inventory of trees that have not been maintained, and minor road repairs which grow into larger road repairs due to lack of attention.

The Highway Division is in need of two laborers and one mechanic.

#### **Parks**

Two additional sites (7 North Road and Rear of Town Hall) to maintain as well as a long overdue fertilization program of the Town Commons is creating additional work.

The Parks Division is in need of an additional laborer.



## **Engineering**

Previous staffing levels: 4  
Current staffing levels 3

Management of the current projects/workload is more than the staff can handle. Many drainage projects are being put on hold partially due to the Stormwater initiative being put on hold and no funding for the projects as well as a shortage of staff to oversee each drainage project. Keeping up with tree maintenance is an ongoing battle. We do not have dedicated staff to review and monitor the tree work. Therefore, in order to keep up with the work, we are pulling an engineer away from other projects to review hazardous trees which is time consuming. We are currently not performing tree maintenance (only hazardous removal). Given the large volume of trees within the Town, we should have a Forestry Division dedicated to this effort.

The Engineering Division is in need of an additional Engineer and the Department is in need of a Forestry Division.

## **Capital**

Although Capital Road funding is used to supplement the decrease in Chapter 90 Funding that has taken place over the years, this allocation is about 60% less than what is needed to support the road/sidewalk maintenance needs of the Town.

## **Facilities**

As buildings age and the number of buildings to maintain grows, increased maintenance is required. In addition, there are buildings/sites that require temporary maintenance (i.e., 101 Mill Road, Wright Street, and Progress Ave). The staffing levels of the Facilities Division have not changed in over ten years.

The Facilities Division is in need of a Plumber Apprentice as well as a laborer.

## **Stormwater**

As you are well aware, the proposed Stormwater initiative was placed on hold due to the pending EPA lawsuit. However, the requirements have not changed and it is likely we will need to implement the Stormwater initiative as voted by TM.

Startup funding for this initiative will be approximately \$1.2M.

It is clear that the DPW is in need of additional staffing and funds to operate more efficiently. We continue to do our best to maintain the roads/buildings within the staffing and funding limits set from year to year, however, this is beginning to take a toll on our staff.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS -- ADDITIONAL STAFFING/CAPITAL FUNDING NEEDS**

<b>Highway Division</b>		<b>Capital Roads</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
2 Laborers	\$99,958	<b>Capital Sidewalks</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
1 Mechanic	\$57,609	<b>Capital Drainage</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>Facilities Division</b>			
1 Plumber Apprentice	\$56,160	<b>Stormwater TM Vote</b>	<b>\$1,142,588</b>
1 Laborer	\$45,136		
		6 Employees	
<b>Parks Division</b>		2 Interns	
1 Laborer	\$48,000		
<b>Engineering Division</b>			
1 Engineer	\$68,490		
<b>Forestry Division</b>			
1 Foreman	\$57,595		
3 Laborers	\$149,937		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$582,885</b>	<b>TOTAL STAFFING AND CAPITAL FUNDING</b>	<b>\$2,225,473</b>

**Chelmsford Town Offices**  
**Board of Health**  
50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824  
Tel: 978-250-5241  
Fax: 978-250-5244  
[www.townofchelmsford.us](http://www.townofchelmsford.us)



**Annmarie Roark, Chairman**  
**Nicholas H. Parlee, Vice Chairman**  
**Dr. Eric Meikle, MD, Clerk**  
**Sue Rosa, BSN, RN, Public Health Director**  
**Richard Day, Deputy Health Director**  
**Mark Masiello, Environmental Health Inspector**  
**Kerry Sorrentino, MSN, RN, Public Health Nurse**  
**Amanda Glaser, BS, Health Educator**  
**Carole McCaul, Departmental Assistant**

4-25-18

Dear Mr Cohen:

The Board of Health like all departments has unmet needs that are not funded in our budget.

In fiscal year 2017 the Board of Health performed 743 inspections. These inspections include restaurants, food retail, farmer's market vendors, mobile food vendors, dumpsters, school food service, recreational camps for children, public swimming pools, bathing beaches, tanning facilities, and housing.

We have one full time Environmental Health Inspector trying to keep up with this workload, which is not possible.

According to MDPH regulations food establishments are to be inspected 1, 2, or 3 times a year depending on the risk level of the restaurant. Currently the restaurants are only being inspected once per year and sometimes less than that.

The Board of Health responds to complaints almost daily. These complaints encompass issues around trash, rodents and mice, beavers, nuisance, food establishments, housing, animals, and more, all of which require follow up.

With the change in personnel in the past year and a half the Public Health Nurse is currently working 25 hours per week down from the previous PHN working 30 hours per week. Immunization programs, Blood Pressure and Cholesterol screenings, Emergency preparedness, Tuberculosis case management, Communicable disease investigation and follow up reporting to MDPH, Influenza vaccine program, and public health education on current issues are some of the responsibilities of the PHN. With the decrease in hours, disease investigations are sometimes delayed.

As the Health Director, I do my best to try to assist both the Environmental Health inspector and the Public Health Nurse in their duties but that is limited due to the overall responsibilities of being the department head and all that that entails.

MDPH just updated the Recreational Camp regulations for Boards of Health. The update doubles the workload to permit and inspect these camps. These are mandates by DPH that are unfunded yet our department must comply. MDPH is currently updating both the Food Code and the Housing Code, which will increase workload and be unfunded mandates as well.

There are six people in the department with one department assistant supporting five others, which is a very demanding position.

With these challenges facing the department, the Board of Health would greatly benefit by adding another part time health inspector, increasing the public health nurse hours to full time, and adding a part time department assistant.

Sincerely,

Susan M Rosa, BSN, RN, CHO  
Health Director



**Town of Chelmsford  
Building Department  
50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824-2777**

MARK DUPELL  
BUILDING COMMISSIONER

TELEPHONE: (978) 250-5225

MARTIN J. ALLAN  
LOCAL INSPECTOR

## **Memorandum**

To: Honorable Board of Selectmen & Finance Committee  
From: Mark Dupell- Building Commissioner  
Date: April 26, 2018

Re: **Operational Needs of the Building Department**

Dear Honorable Board of Selectmen & Finance Committee,

As you know, thru the increase in permit fee revenue, the Town and this Department has seen extraordinary construction growth and activity in recent years, which has had the ripple effect of increased plan review / documentation, inspections and increased customer interactions in the Building Department office as well as via phone & email, this will continue to increase as other pending projects enter the pipeline.

This office has continually performed with no increases in operating budget and still has tried to perform without a decrease in services to the Town, which will not be sustainable with current staff and logistics, due to the increase in such activity, this has also resulted in increased demand for fast track service from most customers.

In order to provide the necessary and required services to the Residents / Business Owners and Contractors in the Town, I offer the following information for your consideration:

### **Critical Needs for the Building Department**

1. Need additional full time Building Inspector due to increased demand in following areas:
  - Plan Review of applications and supporting documents.
  - Inspections for issued permits permits-Building, Plumbing/Gas, Electrical.
  - Solar permits / review of Engineering in a timely manner as set forth with Chelmsford's Solar guidelines.
  - Online records requests from real estate brokers performing due diligence requests.
  - Zoning compliance- increase of complaints.

The Department currently has a request in for funding for a part time inspector (un-benefited), which should in fact be a full time position with benefits, securing Qualified / Certified Inspectors for un-benefitted part time positions has been/is a continuing problem in the Commonwealth.

2. Need additional space to store documents/plans/current files in an organized location.

- Online Permitting System has not resulted in a noticeable decrease in paperwork.
- Currently documents are stored in a shared location with Town Clerk files.
- Old plans are stored under the stairwell in stacked (due to limits of storage space) boxes that are heavy to handle to access requested plans.
- Paper Plumbing permits (not required to be done online) are split between old file cabinets in two different rooms.
- The uploading of the old archived plans / documents would eliminate the need for additional storage space but would be a major undertaking that the department is not capable of without an increase in additional administrative staff, thus services would be from an outside contractor with a high price tag.

3. The demands for Inspectional service requests/services have increased the expectations on the office Admin. Staff, who no longer is, just the face & voice of the office, but now is also the Records Officer for Freedom of information requests and the ViewPermit Administrator for the online permitting system, which means that daily she must resolve problems with applicant's registration & licensing issues.

**Thank You for your time and attention to these matters & your service to the Town.**

Respectfully



Mark Dupell  
Building Commissioner



**CEMETERY COMMISSION**  
130 BILLERICA ROAD  
CHELMSFORD, MA 01824-3162  
978-250-5245

**Memorandum**

**TO: Paul Cohen, Town Manager**  
**FROM: David J. Boyle, Superintendent of Cemeteries**  
**DATE: April 25, 2018**  
**SUBJECT: Current Cemetery Operational Needs**

Please find the following, this list addresses the current Cemetery Operational & Capital needs that, due to the Town's budget constraints we are not able to address at this time.

- A) Hiring of a full time Truck Driver /Laborer. The cemetery department currently operates six town owned cemeteries, which consist of a total of approximately 70 acres. Since being hired in 2003 there has been an additional 10 acres become developed and active. As of today there is a total of 60 acres currently cared for with only 3 full time employees.
- B) Purchase of Fire proof file cabinets to protect all Cemetery records that dates are from the late 1600's to present.
- C) Restoration of Wrought Iron fencing at Pine Ridge Cemetery. I have presented in front of the Capital Planning committee the past three year's requesting assistance in the restoration of the wrought iron fencing at Pine Ridge. This project involves the restoration or replacement of fencing that dates back to the early 1950's
- D) Restoration of the granite stone walls at Fairview Cemetery, that are in need of work due to age and location on Main St
- E) Removal of chain-link fencing between Historical West Chelmsford Cemetery and the Current West Chelmsford Cemetery and replacing with granite post and rail fencing.

**To: Paul Cohen, Town Manager**

**From: Becky Herrmann, Library Director**

**Memo: Unmet needs at the Chelmsford Public Library**

In response to Town Manager Paul Cohen's request of 4/24/18 for a list of unmet needs that would require increased funding and/or personnel, I submit the following:

**Services (not provided but frequently requested by the public)**

- Providing Notary Service
- Acting as a Passport Agent
- Staying open on Sundays year-round
- Develop our outreach services, so we can provide library services to more areas of the community and to patrons who may not be able to get to the library buildings (homebound delivery services, community storytimes, services at community events and recreation locations, etc)

**Collections**

- Increase our collection budget so that we make the state's municipal requirement for State Aid. We only fulfill the state requirement by adding in our Gift Book purchases and our Friend's book purchases.
- Increase collection budget to better respond to changing preferences in format – patrons are increasingly using downloadable and streaming services, which is a different pricing structure than physical items (examples are buying additional ebooks so patrons aren't waiting so long, - and devoting more dollars towards Hoopla or Overdrive because we routinely max out our use limits)
- Increase our collection budget to allow growth while still getting replacement copies of popular items when needed (sometimes updating projects need to be spaced out over years or new material goes unpurchased in favor of getting replacements for classics)
- Increase our collection budget so it covers the cost of purchasing copies of the giveaway books for One Book Chelmsford that the Friends of the Library routinely buy

**Staffing Needs**

- Add an additional FTE to get us back to the staffing levels the library was at in 2008
- Increase travel and staff education lines in the budget to adequately cover the expenses incurred by staff for continuing education, workshops, conferences and participation in consortium, state and regional events – the budget routinely has a shortfall of \$10,000-\$15,000 that is paid out of State Aid

**Programs**

- Provide adequate town funding for the program budget that we expend each year. The Friends allocate \$15,000 to \$20,000 each year to provide authors, lecturers, children's performers, musicians, refreshments and supplies for programs. This is primarily funded through the annual book sale, if there is no book sale one year or it becomes less successful, our budget would be greatly reduced.

**Building Maintenance**

- This budget year and next we have made great strides to have the building maintenance budget adequately reflect how much the library expends. In the past, as much as \$20,000 has been spent from State Aid to meet the library needs.

**Technology**

- Provide a faster internet connection that better suits library staff and patron demand



## Office of the Town Clerk

Town of Chelmsford  
50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824  
Phone: 978-250-5205  
[www.townofchelmsford.us](http://www.townofchelmsford.us)

Patricia E. Dzuris, *Town Clerk*  
Nancy S. Sousa, *Principal Clerk*

MaryLou Carney, *Assistant Town Clerk*  
Jennifer V. Almeida, *Voter Registration Coordinator*

**To:** Paul Cohen

**From:** Tricia Dzuris

**RE:** Underserved Departmental Needs

**Date:** 4/24/2018

One of the primary functions of the Town Clerk's Office is to maintain and preserve Town Records in accordance with the MA State Records Retention Schedule. Records such as: Annual Town Reports; Charter & Bylaws; Historic Records; Board & Committee Minutes; Planning and Zoning files; Street Acceptance Maps; Appointment and Resignation letters; Town Meeting and Vital Records are all permanent records. These and many more types of records need to be archived in a proper environment in order to prevent deterioration over time.

Due to a lack of funding, the storage of permanent records has been substantially inadequate. As a result, many of our oldest records have severely deteriorated. Costly restoration is the only option for preservation of these historic records. It is and has been the goal of the Town Clerk's Office to improve the practices, procedures, and environmental factors that affect the quality of our record keeping. This includes utilizing appropriate archival supplies, adding proper archival shelving, humidity, temperature, fire suppression and secure access controls to our existing spaces. Archival storage is a serious underserved need, not just for Town Clerk Records, but also for the permanent records in every town department.

Another primary function of the Town Clerk's office is to execute all federal, state and local elections. With the original implementation and future uncertainty of the Early Voting initiative, we face expensive mandates. During the Presidential Election the requirement was that we extend office hours during the week as well as additional hours on the weekend. This required overtime for staff members and the need to hire additional election workers during the mandated Early Voting timeframe. We anticipate that Early Voting will continue to be required for all state and federal elections going forward.

The Town Clerk's Office will always stand at the ready to assist our residents and we will continue to extend ourselves, beyond any limitations, to best serve the Town.





**Finance Department**

50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824

[jsousa@townofchelmsford.us](mailto:jsousa@townofchelmsford.us)

**John Sousa, Jr.**  
Finance Director/Treasurer

Telephone (978) 244-3390  
Fax: (978) 256-5545

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Paul Cohen, Town Manager  
FROM: John Sousa, Finance Director  
DATE: April 25, 2018  
RE: Treasurer/Collector's Office Staffing Level

For the past several years, the Treasurer/Collector's Office has operated with the following staff:

- 1.0 FTE Finance Director/ Treasurer/ Collector
- 1.0 FTE Assistant Treasurer
- 1.0 FTE Assistant Collector
- 2.0 FTE Principal Clerks

Since Chelmsford is a larger Town, our office experiences heavy demands for customer service. Each year, we issue and collect approximately 12,566 Real Estate tax bills plus 484 Personal Property tax bills 4 times per year for quarterly billing. In a typical year, we also issue and collect just over 40,000 Motor Vehicle Excise tax bills. Our office processes payments for 13,250 sewer accounts, issues Municipal Lien Certificates, and issues Sewer Betterment lien releases. The office also receives turnovers of funds for various fines, permits, fees, and other charges from all Town Departments, including the Chelmsford Public Schools. As you can imagine, the Treasurer/Collector's Office receives a high volume of telephone calls each day from residents, business owners, banks and mortgage lenders, as well as attorneys handling real estate.

The Assistant Collector inputs all receipts into the Town's MUNIS system. She is also responsible for issuing all refunds from overpayments or abatements to taxpayers. The staff also assists callers with questions on online payments for the Treasurer's office as well as other Departments.

The Asst. Treasurer is responsible for reconciling all Town bank accounts, processing cash disbursements, and processing monthly health insurance premiums payments for all Town Retirees. The number of retirees has been steadily increasing over the past decade and includes retirees from General Government, the Chelmsford Public Schools, and three independent Water Districts. This function has become more time consuming and the Asst. Treasurer often works increased hours to complete these tasks.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for our Department to handle the volume of telephone calls and customers at the service counter without resulting in increased waiting times for service. This is especially apparent when one Clerk is out of the office for lunch or if one employee may be away on vacation. Due to current staffing limitations, I instituted a Department policy that allows only one employee to request scheduled time off on the same day in order for our Department to maintain an adequate level of customer service.

By contrast, the Town of Billerica's Treasurer/Collector's Office operates with 8.0 FTE employees. In consideration of our current staffing limitations, I hereby request that the Treasurer/Collector's Office be authorized to hire one additional Principal Clerk.

**BOARD OF ASSESSORS**

Elissa F. Magnant  
John J. Duffett  
Samuel P. Chase



**Chief Assessor**  
Frank T. Reen, M.A.A

**Assistant Assessor**  
Kathryn S. Bianchi, M.A.A

**Telephone:** (978) 250-5220  
**Fax:** (978) 250-5223

**Chelmsford Town Offices**  
**Assessor's Office**  
50 Billerica Rd  
Chelmsford, MA 01824-2777  
[www.townofchelmsford.us](http://www.townofchelmsford.us)

**Administrative Assistant**  
Susan Taylor

**TO: Town Manager, Paul Cohen**

**FROM: Frank Reen, Chief Assessor**

**DATE: April 25, 2018**

**RE: Assessor's Office unmet needs.**

As you know the Chelmsford Assessor's Office recently completed a town-wide measure and list of all descriptive property. The Town contracted with an experienced firm to conduct the inspections in order to meet the DOR issued directive in a timely manner. The mandate reads that each parcel be inspected at least once in every nine-year cycle, the current cycle ends in FY2026. The intent is to ensure that the data being utilized to generate assessments is consistent, accurate and evenly applied. Contracting with a firm to perform the inspections in a 12 to 18 month timeframe satisfied the mandate and was a success, however it may not be the ideal way to accomplish this required task.

A number of communities the size of Chelmsford have a full or at least part time position whose function it is to measure and list all improved parcels within the Town both commercial and residential. The position is usually a dedicated field position. There are several advantages to the approach of having a Town employee conduct the inspections:

- Familiarity with Chelmsford
- Improved accuracy
- Easier to manage the data
- Consistency with interpretation of data
- Public's familiarity
- Greater oversight

Maintenance of current and accurate property inventory data is a critical element in the development of uniform, fair market values. Taxpayer's confidence in the data being assessed and the manner the information is being gathered is an important concern of the Assessor's Office.

Respectfully,

Frank T. Reen M.A.A.  
Chief Assessor  
Town of Chelmsford

## Cohen, Paul

---

**From:** Jackson, Regina  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 26, 2018 12:22 PM  
**To:** Cohen, Paul; McCall, Michael  
**Subject:** unmet needs/ Veterans Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hi, I have thought a lot about my Department - and how to better serve the needs of our Chelmsford Veterans. The Chapter 115 program budget is based on the actual number of qualified , eligible Veterans in need of this short term, public assistance – so this number fluctuates and must always be funded (which it is). Please remember that this line item is reimbursed to the Town at 75%.

The unmet need of Veterans Services is staffing. I could use another me. I am a one person office with no additional administrative support. In addition to the State/ Town 115 program, I administer and case manage hundreds of VA Federal claims. I would advocate for a p/t admin position. The Veterans Service offices in all the comparable Towns have additional staff support. I understand the need to level fund Departments. I am very cognizant and frugal with Town funds, however funding of a p/t admin position would enhance the services we provide to our Chelmsford Veterans.

Thank you.

Regina B. Jackson

## Article 8

# Special Education Reserve Fund

I move that the Town (a.) accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 13E to establish a reserve fund for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs of special education, out-of-district tuition or transportation; and (b.) transfer \$528,817 from the FY18 School Department Operating Budget to said special education reserve fund to be utilized in the upcoming fiscal years.

**SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager**