

Information on Proposed Override

Council on Aging:

In FY18, the COA developed a 5-Year Strategic Plan and Goals and Objectives that is in direct response to the findings of a Town-wide Needs Assessment Study and in line with both the Age-Friendly Town Initiative currently undertaken by more than 100 agencies and organizations across Massachusetts and the Commonwealth's first Governor's Council to Address Aging. Further input from a Community Forum was used to finalize the Plan. It is essential to focus on these Goals and Objectives, which include:

- Communication, Outreach, Marketing
- Health Education and Chronic Care Management
- Exercise and Fitness activities
- Help Older Residents to Age in Place
- Nutritional Needs of Older Residents
- Opportunities for Socialization
- Reliable and Affordable transportation Options
- Educational Programs
- Promote and Offer Intergenerational Programs
- Provide Expanded Recreational Activities
- Support and Assist Informal Caregivers of Older Residents
- Enhance Volunteerism and Civic Engagement
- Obtain Additional Funding to Support and expend Services

During FY2018, the COA provided programs and services to a total of 10,121 older residents. The COA fleet of vans provided 3,211 rides for 130 persons. Through Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands, 10,783 home-delivered and on-site lunches were provided to 136 persons. The COA provided a range of exercise programs for 196 persons, and social or cultural events for 654 persons. Outreach services that help identify, advocate for, and connect older residents with unmet needs to government and private sector agencies and COA programs and services designed to meet those needs were provided for 360 individuals. In 2018, S.H.I.N.E. (Serving Health Insurance Needs of the Elderly) representatives, were able to save \$118,426 for over 273 seniors who participated in Medicare's Open Enrollment, which is held from October 15th to December 7th.

Per our Town Clerk's Office on 3/29/19, there are 9,186 people in Brewster, with 4,534 of them over the age of 60. With 49% of our population being 60 years and older, the demands of our department are increasing as more people are looking for more programs, activities and resources to help them age in place. The full time Program Coordinator position is essential for our department to meet the needs for our Town's largest age group.

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Natural Resources:

The Department of Natural Resources is requesting one full-time Natural Resource Officer. When compared to surrounding Towns, Brewster has the equivalent to one field person performing the same duties as four or more people. A brief summary of the work the Natural Resources Department completes includes:

- Harbormaster: Managing hundreds of private boat and float moorings in fresh and salt water areas throughout town;
- Water Quality: Water sampling including weekly beach monitoring for fresh and salt water landings, groundwater monitoring at Captains Golf Course, and pond monitoring monthly in Upper Mill/Walkers and Long Pond; coordinating the semiannual pond sampling of 27 ponds in town; removing aquatic weeds in Walkers Pond as a water quality improvement effort;
- Open Space: Managing thousands of acres of town open space, trail maintenance, kiosks, signs and trail maps, wildfire risk reduction;
- Beaches: Managing and maintaining town landings, beach cleanups, rebuilding beaches after storm damage, kayak racks, stairs, parking areas;
- Shellfish: Patrolling closed areas, State-mandated regular Vibrio compliance inspections of shellfish grants, monitoring all recreational shellfish programs; growing quahogs in a floating upweller; growing oysters in two areas off Mants and Ellis Landings;
- Public Events: Brewster Conservation Day; Beautify Brewster; town-wide beach cleanups spring/fall;
- Grant writing: the Department has brought in millions in grant funds over the last decade for planning efforts, construction projects, and infrastructure restoration; including this year's \$40,000 trail restoration grant for Drummerboy Park, \$20,000 state Municipal Vulnerability Planning efforts, and funding of \$700,000 in the state Environmental Bond Bill for restoration at the herring run and Paines Creek;
- Special Projects: the Department has acted as project manager for many engineering projects, including rebuilding the dam at the Stony Brook Mill, replacing undersized culverts at Rt. 6a/Stony Brook and at Paines/Freemans Pond; stormwater projects at most town landings; beach projects at several landings; and state-mandated comprehensive water planning and permitting for our ponds and nitrogen sensitive estuaries; plus the proposed treatment for Upper Mill Pond water quality this fall, and proposed restoration of the boat ramp at Long Pond;
- Staff Support (sitting on the Water Quality Review Committee, Pleasant Bay Alliance steering, technical resource and waterways committees, and Barnstable County Coastal Resources Committee; staff support to Open Space Committee, plus other town-related meetings.

With the current staff of one department head and one field person, the department is failing to meet the minimal standards of compliance required by Federal, State and local agencies that ensure public safety, sustainable resource management, and public education.

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Fire Department:

In 2017 the Town accepted a FEMA SAFER staffing grant that provided \$284,000 to fund two FF/Paramedic positions for a two year period. During current and prior budget discussions with Select Board members it was made clear that our goal would be to acquire authorization from Town meeting to permanently fund these two positions to ensure their continued employment.

Over the past several years it has become progressively obvious that while the combination type fire department model we currently employ supports a cost-effective alternative it does not adequately maintain the level of staffing required for a community of our size, composition, and increasing number of annual responses.

Factors influencing fire department staffing needs include:

- 3426 2018 calendar year responses (480 runs above 2017)
- 20,000 person increase in population during summer months
- Employee fatigue causing reduced call back availability
- Aging resident population requiring enhanced daily services
- Loss of experienced and trained call staff members to full time positions in other departments (30% in last year)
- State EMS response protocols requiring increased staffing levels on certain ambulance responses
- Frequent simultaneous responses requiring multiple on and off duty staff members (6-15)
- State and NFPA training requirements for new call firefighters creating long term (one year) replacement cycles
- Requirement to meet mandatory OSHA Two In/ Two Out staffing standards enacted February 1, 2019
- Increased burden placed on surrounding fire departments covering emergency responses in Brewster (149 requests for mutual aid ambulance services in 2018)

Based on the factors identified above the funding being requested will be utilized to permanently finance the two SAFER firefighter/paramedics positions.

Brewster Overrides for Operations, Personnel 1991-2018

1993 - Override to Fund School Budget \$123,731. Passed vote 1,255-786

1995 - Override to Fund School Budget \$132,468. Passed vote 825-661

1996 - Override to Fund School Budget \$271,000. Passed vote 1,176-797

2003 - Override - Two Firefighters \$144,000. Passed vote 318-315

2004 - Operational/ School and Town \$800,000. Passed vote 1,567-1,431

2006 - Override for Two firefighters \$130,000. Passed vote 1,102-740

2009 - Override for Town Planner \$100,000. Passed vote 345-324

2012 - Operational Override \$799,522. Passed vote 1,242-950

2013 - Two Firefighters/One police \$199,000. Passed vote 886-685

Tax Rate Impact of FY 20 Budget & Staff Request

FY20 Levy Limit (Operating Budget) \$35,326,800

Tax Rate Impact of FY20 Operating Budget \$.21

Staffing Request (over Levy Limit) \$309,000

Tax Rate Impact of Staffing Request (Override) \$.08

The current tax rate is \$8.58/1000. Approval of the FY20 budget and the new town staff request represents a tax rate increase of 29 cents. This would result in an estimated tax bill increase of \$114.24 on a home valued at \$400,000.