

ANNUAL REPORT FY2022

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS



Cover Photos by Barbara Pease-Huntoon

TOWN OF CHESTER
MASSACHUSETTS



*ANNUAL REPORTS of the
Town Officers*

For the 2022 Fiscal Year
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2022

TOWN OF CHESTER

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BOARD OF ASSESSORS FY2022 Report

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Principal Assessor –

July 1 – Feb 28 - Regional Resource Group, Inc.

March 1 – June 30 - Mayflower Valuation Ltd

Board of Assessors:

Chair - Timothy Dunn

Member – Rosemary Dalesandro

Member - Kendall Bennett

Assessor Clerk - Laura Lafreniere

Fiscal Year 2022

FY2022 Tax Rate - \$19.18 per \$1000 value

Total amount to be raised \$3,573,973.22

Total receipts received 778,355.00

Tax Levy (\$ amount needed) \$2,795,618.22

Chester has 1,126 properties valued at: \$145,756,946.00

With 101 Exempt properties valued at \$15,783,700.00

Tax Levy (Real Estate & Personal Property)	Tax Rate	Tax Dollars
\$145,756,946 X	\$19.18	= \$2,795,618.22

The Board of Assessors processed:

- 8 Elderly Exemptions
- 22 Veteran Exemptions
- 4 Blind Exemptions
- 9 Senior Work-Off Abatements
- 8 Personal Property
- 7 Real Estate Abatements

The Town Hall and the Assessors' office posted hours are 11 am to 3pm on Tuesdays. We are usually in the office on Mondays 11am to 3pm as well, if coming from a distance, it is always safe to call ahead. Call 413-354-6318 with any questions or concerns. Leave a message and we will return your call when we are back in the office OR email llafreniere@townofchester.net we check our email messages when we not in the office and will email you back. Laura Lafreniere is planning on retiring as the Assessors Clerk in FY2024. Kendall Bennett is currently in training to take over this position.

Property record cards, GIS maps, State tax forms, all Applications (Chapter due Oct 1st), Exemption applications (Due April 1st) and helpful links, including senior and veteran work off information with applications, are available online at townofchester.net/assessors/ They are also on the wall outside the Assessors' door.

If you are not able to print any of these forms or applications, please reach out to the assessor's office and we will make sure to get them to you.

All homeowners are encouraged to view their property cards for accuracy after tax bills are received in January, as abatements can only be accepted up until the February tax due date. The information on these cards is used to calculate your taxes. Please call the assessors' office at 413-354-6318 if you see any errors or omissions on these cards.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Lafreniere

Assessors Clerk

February 13, 2023

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

Fiscal Year 2022

JULY 1, 2021 -JUNE 30,2022

Vital records are kept by the Town Clerks office and recorded with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health , Vital Registry.

Vital Records

Births-11

Marriages-5

Deaths-8

Dog Licenses

145 dogs were licensed in the fiscal year.

Total revenue from dog licenses was \$950.00

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Donovan

Town Clerk

Report of the Town Collector

Fiscal Year 7/1/21 to 6/30/22

In Chester, the tax rate for the fiscal year 2022 was set at \$19.18 per thousand dollars of assessed value. This represents a decrease of \$1.31 from the prior fiscal year 2021 tax rate of \$20.49. However, this did not translate into lower taxes for everyone. The lower tax rate was due partially to a significant increase in property values, based on the State's assessment criteria. Higher property values mean higher taxes in most cases, even with a lower rate.

You may be able to reduce your overall tax obligation. Veteran's exemptions and exemptions for the blind , elderly are available to qualifying taxpayers. Please discuss with the Assessing Department to see if you qualify. Various applications are available online at the Assessors town web page. The senior tax work off program allows you to work for a tax credit up to \$750. per fiscal year in lieu of monetary payment. Applications are also available in the Assessors Department.

Don't forget about the UNIPAY Gold online payment service. Take advantage of this secure website that offers you the opportunity to pay taxes at your convenience at home or away. This service is only for Real Estate and Personal Property taxes.

The Town Collector's office continues to encourage taxpayers to send in their stubs along with their payments to assure all payments are being posted to the correct accounts. Payment plans are available to those who are struggling. Call the office to set up a plan.

The Tax Collection figures are posted in the financial section of this report by the Accounting Offices.

As usual this office would like to thank those who continue to pay their bills as received and encourage those who are not making payments to do so.

Mary Ann Pease
Town Collector

Town Accountant 2022 Annual Report

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen and citizens of Chester, I submit to you the following Annual Financial Report.

Our mission is to ensure that the appropriate financial and auditing controls within the Town are maintained in an efficient, cost-effective and responsive manner. We oversee all departmental appropriations assuring that departments operate within their annual budget. In addition, we are responsible for maintaining all financial records and that they are in compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Eric A. Kinsherf". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "K".

Eric A. Kinsherf, CPA

www.erickinsherfcpa.com

Town Accountant

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
Combined Balance Sheet - All Fund Types and Account Groups
as of June 30, 2022
(Unaudited)

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	581,704.22	790,453.21	0.00	1,408,016.95	623,378.03	3,403,552.41
Investments						0.00
Receivables:						
Personal property taxes	784.39					784.39
Real estate taxes	397,705.88					397,705.88
Allowance for abatements and exemptions	(98,305.83)					(98,305.83)
Special assessments						0.00
Tax liens	33,897.82					33,897.82
Tax foreclosures	17,913.13					17,913.13
User fees	37,408.84					37,408.84
Utility liens added to taxes	90.88					90.88
Motor vehicle excise	84,964.08					84,964.08
Departmental receivables	124.80				2,148.00	2,272.80
Due from other governments	13,303.00					13,303.00
Other receivables						0.00
Amounts to be provided - payment of bonds						301,083.54
Total Assets	1,069,591.21	790,453.21	0.00	1,408,016.95	625,526.03	4,194,670.94

LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY

Liabilities:							
Accrued payroll and withholdings	963.85						963.85
Agency Funds							32,243.46
Deferred revenue:							
Real and personal property taxes	300,184.44						300,184.44
Special assessments							0.00
Tax liens	33,897.82						33,897.82
Tax foreclosures	17,913.13						17,913.13
Motor vehicle excise	84,964.08						84,964.08
Other receivables							0.00
Utility liens added to taxes	90.88						90.88
Departmental	124.80				2,148.00		2,272.80
Due from other governments	13,303.00						13,303.00
User fees	37,408.84						37,408.84
Other Liabilities							9,256.37
Prepaid taxes/fees	272.10						272.10
Tailings	1,796.65						1,796.65
Bonds payable			100,000.00				100,000.00
Notes payable							301,083.54
Total Liabilities	490,919.59	0.00	100,000.00	9,256.37	34,391.46	301,083.54	935,650.96

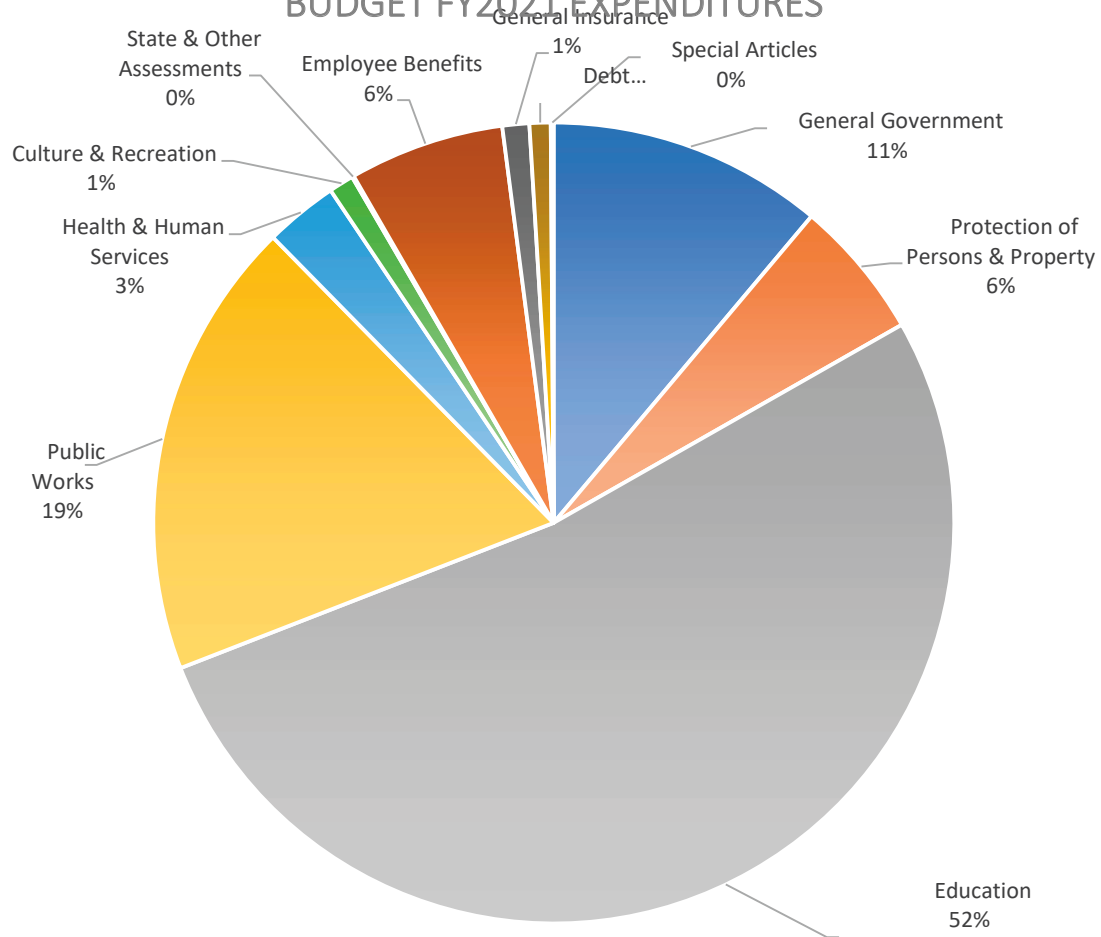
Fund Equity:

Reserved for encumbrances	45,484.79						45,484.79
Reserved for petty cash	2,825.00						3,551.34
Reserved for continuing appropriations	54,473.73			726.34			54,473.73
Reserved for appropriation deficit	(66,078.35)						(66,078.35)
Reserved for debt service	0.00						0.00
Unreserved retained earnings-Water	18,691.80						18,691.80
Reserve for depreciation							617,506.94
Undesignated fund balance	523,274.65	790,453.21	(100,000.00)	617,506.94	591,134.57		2,585,389.73
Total Fund Equity	578,671.62	790,453.21	(100,000.00)	1,398,760.58	591,134.57	0.00	3,259,019.98
Total Liabilities and Fund Equity	1,069,591.21	790,453.21	0.00	1,408,016.95	625,526.03	301,083.54	4,194,670.94

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES -
BUDGETARY BASIS - (NON-GAAP) -
BUDGET AND ACTUAL - GENERAL FUND
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

		Budgeted Amounts		Actual	Amounts	Variance with
	Carry Forward	Original Budget	Final Budget	Budgetary Basis	Carried Forward to Next Year	Final Budget Positive (Negative)
Revenues:						
Property Taxes	\$ -	\$ 2,756,261.38	\$ 2,756,261.38	\$ 2,753,578.23	\$ -	\$ (2,683.15)
Sale of Tax Foreclosure	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 81,779.00	\$ -	\$ 81,779.00
Excise & Other Taxes	\$ -	\$ 144,000.00	\$ 144,000.00	\$ 153,798.94	\$ -	\$ 9,798.94
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 38,609.07	\$ -	\$ 18,609.07
Charges for Services - Trash Disposal	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 61,631.66	\$ -	\$ 11,631.66
Charges for Services - Water	\$ -	\$ 104,000.00	\$ 104,000.00	\$ 86,903.80	\$ -	\$ (17,096.20)
Licenses, Permits & Fees	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 35,502.98	\$ -	\$ 10,502.98
Other	\$ -	\$ 72,148.00	\$ 72,148.00	\$ 63,665.63	\$ -	\$ (8,482.37)
Fines & Forfeits	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 1,789.41	\$ -	\$ (18,210.59)
Interest from Investments	\$ -	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 2,810.44	\$ -	\$ (4,189.56)
Intergovernmental-Comm. of Mass.	\$ -	\$ 332,114.00	\$ 332,114.00	\$ 355,797.00	\$ -	\$ 23,683.00
Total Revenues	\$ -	\$ 3,530,523.38	\$ 3,530,523.38	\$ 3,635,866.16	\$ -	\$ 105,342.78
Expenditures:						
Current Fiscal Year:						
General Government	\$ -	\$ 408,145.00	\$ 406,945.00	\$ 385,265.32	\$ 4,299.98	\$ 17,379.70
Protection of Persons & Property	\$ -	\$ 195,514.00	\$ 207,618.86	\$ 195,102.53	\$ 6,120.15	\$ 6,396.18
Education	\$ -	\$ 1,851,025.00	\$ 1,851,025.00	\$ 1,811,361.24	\$ -	\$ 39,663.76
Public Works	\$ -	\$ 574,821.00	\$ 604,821.00	\$ 641,923.46	\$ 23,868.12	\$ (60,970.58)
Health & Human Services	\$ -	\$ 152,497.00	\$ 120,797.00	\$ 102,594.84	\$ 3,734.60	\$ 14,467.56
Culture & Recreation	\$ -	\$ 47,791.00	\$ 48,191.00	\$ 34,663.56	\$ 5,961.94	\$ 7,565.50
State & Other Assessments	\$ -	\$ 1,652.00	\$ 1,652.00	\$ 2,452.00	\$ -	\$ (800.00)
Employee Benefits	\$ -	\$ 220,778.00	\$ 220,778.00	\$ 217,089.62	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,188.38
General Insurance	\$ -	\$ 35,800.00	\$ 35,800.00	\$ 37,585.00	\$ -	\$ (1,785.00)
Debt Service:						
Principal	\$ -	\$ 30,479.00	\$ 30,479.00	\$ 29,479.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Interest and Fiscal Charges	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Special Articles	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,001.11	\$ 4,168.44	\$ 11,580.00	\$ 252.67
Total Current Fiscal Year Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 3,544,107.97	\$ 3,461,685.01	\$ 57,064.79	\$ 25,358.17
Other Expenditures:						
Prior Year Articles	\$ 65,688.69		\$ (5,200.00)	\$ 17,594.96	\$ 42,893.73	\$ -
Prior Year Encumbrances	\$ 23,179.64	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,540.40	\$ -	\$ 3,639.24
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 88,868.33	\$ -	\$ (5,200.00)	\$ 37,135.36	\$ 42,893.73	\$ 3,639.24
Total Expenditures	\$ 88,868.33	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 3,538,907.97	\$ 3,498,820.37	\$ 99,958.52	\$ 28,997.41
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	\$ (88,868.33)	\$ 12,021.38	\$ (8,384.59)	\$ 137,045.79	\$ (99,958.52)	\$ 134,340.19
Other Financing Sources (Uses):						
Operating Transfers In	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,325.00	\$ 29,454.06	\$ -	\$ 6,129.06
Operating Transfers (Out)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (21,675.00)	\$ (15,545.94)	\$ -	\$ 6,129.06
Excess of Revenues and Other Financing Sources Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	\$ (88,868.33)	\$ 12,021.38	\$ (30,059.59)	\$ 121,499.85	\$ (99,958.52)	\$ 140,469.25
Audit Adjustments				\$ -		
Fund Balances, Beginning of Year		\$ 457,171.77	\$ 457,171.77	\$ 457,171.77	\$ -	\$ -
Fund Balances, End of Year	\$ (88,868.33)	\$ 469,193.15	\$ 427,112.18	\$ 578,671.62	\$ (99,958.52)	\$ 140,469.25

BUDGET FY2021 EXPENDITURES



- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ General Government | ■ Protection of Persons & Property |
| ■ Education | ■ Public Works |
| ■ Health & Human Services | ■ Culture & Recreation |
| ■ State & Other Assessments | ■ Employee Benefits |
| ■ General Insurance | ■ Debt |
| ■ Special Articles | |

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL FUND EXPENSE REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Account Number	Description	Balance Forward	Budget	Revisions	Revised Budget	Expended	Balance	Closed	Carry Forward
GENERAL GOVERNMENT									
10114.00	Moderator Stipend	\$	200.00	\$	200.00	\$	400.00	\$	-
10122.00	Select Board Stipend	\$	6,880.00	\$	6,880.00	\$	6,879.96	\$	0.04
10122.01	Town Administrator Salary	\$	46,589.00	\$	46,589.00	\$	46,410.52	\$	178.48
10122.02	Assistant Town Administrator	\$	14,976.00	\$	14,976.00	\$	12,974.40	\$	2,001.60
10124.00	Select Board Expense	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	1,908.68	\$	91.32
10124.02	General Office Expense	\$	3,000.00	\$	3,000.00	\$	2,095.31	\$	904.69
10124.03	Town Report	\$	750.00	\$	750.00	\$	750.00	\$	-
10124.08	Inspectors Certification Costs	\$	500.00	\$	500.00	\$	125.00	\$	375.00
10115.00	Finance Committee Expense	\$	100.00	\$	100.00	\$	-	\$	100.00
10115.01	Reserve Fund	\$	10,000.00	\$	(10,000.00)	\$	-	\$	-
10135.07	Audit	\$	18,000.00	\$	18,000.00	\$	18,000.00	\$	-
10135.05	Accounting Software	\$	2,925.00	\$	2,925.00	\$	2,925.00	\$	-
10135.08	Outsourced Accounting Services	\$	40,800.00	\$	40,800.00	\$	40,800.00	\$	-
10141.00	Assessors Stipend	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	999.96	\$	0.04
10141.02	Assessors Clerk Salary	\$	14,280.00	\$	14,280.00	\$	14,225.38	\$	54.62
10141.11	Assessors Assistant Clerk	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.01	\$	(0.01)
10141.03	Assessor Expense	\$	1,750.00	\$	1,750.00	\$	1,708.74	\$	41.26
10141.04	Assessors Education	\$	500.00	\$	500.00	\$	-	\$	500.00
10141.05	Consultant/Services	\$	34,670.00	\$	34,670.00	\$	34,502.44	\$	167.56
10141.06	Assessors Maps & GIS	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	-
10141.10	Assessors Software	\$	3,750.00	\$	3,750.00	\$	3,745.00	\$	5.00
10145.03	Land Court Fees	\$	5,000.00	\$	5,000.00	\$	4,974.35	\$	25.65
10145.04	Bank Charges	\$	100.00	\$	100.00	\$	100.00	\$	-
10145.05	Treasurers Services	\$	45,000.00	\$	45,000.00	\$	41,717.25	\$	3,282.75
10145.06	Treasurers Software	\$	2,785.00	\$	2,785.00	\$	2,742.24	\$	42.76
10145.07	Payroll Expenses	\$	2,100.00	\$	2,381.80	\$	2,381.80	\$	-
10146.00	Tax Collector Stipend	\$	21,388.00	\$	21,388.00	\$	21,305.96	\$	82.04
10146.02	Tax Collector Expense	\$	5,000.00	\$	5,000.00	\$	4,934.85	\$	65.15
10146.03	Tax Title Expense	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	155.00	\$	1,845.00
10146.06	Software Support	\$	651.00	\$	651.00	\$	477.08	\$	173.92
10161.00	Town Clerk Stipend	\$	14,000.00	\$	14,000.00	\$	13,946.40	\$	53.60
10161.02	Town Clerk Expense	\$	2,375.00	\$	2,375.00	\$	1,706.84	\$	668.16
10162.00	Elections	\$	3,500.00	\$	3,500.00	\$	1,245.00	\$	2,255.00
10163.00	Registrations	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	-	\$	1,000.00
10124.01	Legal Services	\$	10,000.00	\$	9,118.20	\$	6,216.25	\$	2,901.95
10171.00	Conservation Expense	\$	300.00	\$	300.00	\$	144.39	\$	155.61
10175.00	Planning Board Expense	\$	200.00	\$	200.00	\$	82.75	\$	117.25
10176.00	Zoning Board of Appeals Expenses	\$	300.00	\$	300.00	\$	-	\$	300.00
90100.00	Town Hall Custodial Wages	\$	6,040.00	\$	6,040.00	\$	5,607.07	\$	432.93
90192.00	Town Hall Expenses	\$	15,000.00	\$	19,000.00	\$	18,828.38	\$	171.62
90192.01	Town Hall Repairs/Maintenance	\$	15,000.00	\$	200.00	\$	15,123.51	\$	76.49
90192.06	Town Hall Internet & Phone	\$	24,756.00	\$	5,000.00	\$	29,234.08	\$	521.92
90192.07	Website/Permit Eyes	\$	5,980.00	\$	5,980.00	\$	4,875.11	\$	1,104.89
90192.12	Old School Building Maintenance	\$	15,000.00	\$	15,000.00	\$	13,016.61	\$	1,983.39
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		\$	408,145.00	\$	(1,200.00)	\$	385,265.32	\$	21,679.68
PUBLIC SAFETY									
60210.01	Police Officer Wages	\$	16,050.00	\$	16,050.00	\$	16,050.00	\$	-
60210.00	Police Chief Salary	\$	30,000.00	\$	30,000.00	\$	30,000.00	\$	-
60210.04	Police Expenses	\$	31,400.00	\$	40,679.86	\$	40,679.86	\$	-

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL FUND EXPENSE REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Account Number	Description	Balance Forward	Budget	Budget Revisions	Revised Budget	Expended	Balance	Closed	Carry Forward
60110.00	Fire Chief Stipend	\$	5,247.00		\$	5,247.00	\$	20.22	\$
60110.01	Fire Dept. Expenses	\$	35,500.00		\$	30,955.10	\$	4,544.90	\$
60110.03	Fire Dept Wages	\$	1,616.00		\$	-	\$	1,616.00	\$
60110.13	Fire Dept Turn out Gear	\$	10,000.00		\$	5,824.17	\$	4,175.83	\$
60231.00	Ambulance Service	\$	32,416.00		\$	32,416.32	\$	(0.32)	\$
60231.02	Ambulance Replacement Fund	\$	-	2,825.00	\$	2,825.29	\$	(0.29)	\$
60240.00	Building Inspector Salary	\$	9,807.00		\$	9,769.50	\$	37.50	\$
60241.00	Building Inspector Expense	\$	558.00		\$	285.55	\$	272.45	\$
20430.00	Tree Removal	\$	16,500.00		\$	16,215.00	\$	285.00	\$
60110.02	Civil Defense	\$	1,000.00		\$	1,000.00	\$	-	\$
60292.00	Animal Control Officer Salary	\$	2,500.00		\$	2,490.54	\$	9.46	\$
60292.01	Animal Control Expenses	\$	1,500.00		\$	387.42	\$	1,112.58	\$
40491.02	Animal Inspector Stipend	\$	920.00		\$	916.50	\$	3.50	\$
40491.15	Animal Inspector Expenses	\$	500.00		\$	60.50	\$	439.50	\$
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY		\$	195,514.00	12,104.86	\$	195,102.53	\$	12,516.33	\$
EDUCATION								6,396.18	\$
30001.00	Gateway Regional	\$	1,635,333.00		\$	1,632,562.00	\$	2,771.00	\$
30001.10	Vocational Education	\$	215,692.00		\$	178,799.24	\$	36,892.76	\$
TOTAL EDUCATION		\$	1,851,025.00	-	\$	1,811,361.24	\$	39,663.76	\$
PUBLIC WORKS									-
20422.00	Highway Wages	\$	210,650.00		\$	200,936.66	\$	9,713.34	\$
20422.03	Contract Services	\$	16,000.00		\$	14,209.16	\$	1,790.84	\$
20423.00	Highway Garage Heat & Lighting	\$	13,500.00		\$	13,743.28	\$	(243.28)	\$
20423.01	Highway Uniforms	\$	4,000.00		\$	3,895.18	\$	104.82	\$
20423.02	Highway Supplies/Repairs	\$	50,000.00		\$	44,459.42	\$	5,540.58	\$
20423.03	Highway Stone, Gravel, Asphalt	\$	88,000.00		\$	88,000.00	\$	-	\$
20423.04	Highway Gas & Diesel Expense	\$	23,000.00		\$	23,000.00	\$	-	\$
20422.02	Highway Winter Wages	\$	24,000.00		\$	36,601.91	\$	(12,601.91)	\$
20423.07	Highway Winter Expenses	\$	50,000.00		\$	102,894.41	\$	(52,894.41)	\$
20428.01	Water Employee Wages	\$	43,712.00		\$	36,996.20	\$	6,715.80	\$
20428.02	Water Dept Operations	\$	42,000.00	30,000.00	\$	72,000.00	\$	2,453.94	\$
20427.00	Cemetery Commissioners Salary	\$	791.00		\$	-	\$	791.00	\$
20427.01	Cemetery Laborer Salaries	\$	8,168.00		\$	7,275.42	\$	892.58	\$
20427.02	Cemetery Expenses	\$	1,000.00		\$	365.76	\$	634.24	\$
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS		\$	574,821.00	30,000.00	\$	641,923.46	\$	(37,102.46)	\$
HUMAN SERVICES								(60,970.58)	\$
40491.00	Board of Health Salaries	\$	4,287.00	666.00	\$	4,953.00	\$	-	\$
40491.01	Transfer Station Salaries	\$	11,500.00	(666.00)	\$	10,834.00	\$	1,548.43	\$
40491.03	Board of Health Expenses	\$	1,400.00		\$	1,112.20	\$	287.80	\$
40491.10	Board of Health Clerical Assistant	\$	7,700.00	(7,700.00)	\$	-	\$	-	\$
90919.00	Wood Landfill Test Costs	\$	4,000.00		\$	3,680.00	\$	320.00	\$
40491.04	Transfer Station Expense	\$	48,000.00		\$	40,138.14	\$	7,861.86	\$
40494.00	Council on Aging Expenses	\$	7,000.00		\$	7,000.00	\$	-	\$
40494.01	Council on Aging Salary	\$	10,701.00		\$	10,247.72	\$	453.28	\$
40494.02	Council on Aging Van Service	\$	1,000.00		\$	583.83	\$	416.17	\$
40543.00	Veterans Services District	\$	6,909.00		\$	6,909.00	\$	-	\$
40543.01	Veterans Benefits	\$	50,000.00	(24,000.00)	\$	26,000.00	\$	18,685.38	\$
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES		\$	152,497.00	(31,700.00)	\$	120,797.00	\$	18,202.16	\$
CULTURE & RECREATION								14,467.56	\$
40500.00	Library Wages	\$	25,004.00		\$	19,124.75	\$	5,879.25	\$

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL FUND EXPENSE REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Account Number	Description	Balance Forward	Budget	Revisions	Revised Budget	Expended	Balance	Closed	Carry Forward
40500.01	Library Expenses		\$ 16,387.00		\$ 16,387.00	\$ 10,951.44	\$ 5,435.56	\$ 1,214.95	\$ 4,220.61
40500.07	Library MassCat Annual Fee		\$ 900.00		\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00	-	-	
40492.00	Historical Commission Expenses		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 2,024.77	\$ 875.23	\$ 125.23	\$ 750.00
40543.02	Memorial Day Expenses		\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00	\$ 333.90	\$ 166.10	\$ 166.10	
40544.00	Recreation Commission Expenses		\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,328.70	\$ 1,171.30	\$ 179.97	\$ 991.33
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION		\$ -	\$ 47,791.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 48,191.00	\$ 34,663.56	\$ 13,527.44	\$ 7,565.50	\$ 5,961.94
DEBT									
80720.00	Water Treatment Plant (P&I)		\$ 29,479.00		\$ 29,479.00	\$ 29,479.00	-	-	
80752.00	Interest on Short Term Debt		\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	-	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	
TOTAL DEBT		\$ -	\$ 30,479.00	\$ -	\$ 30,479.00	\$ 29,479.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -
ASSESSMENTS									
6008.00	Air Pollution Control District		\$ 359.00		\$ 359.00	\$ 359.00	-	-	
6011.00	RMV Surcharge		\$ 1,080.00		\$ 1,080.00	\$ 1,880.00	\$ (800.00)	\$ (800.00)	
6013.00	Regional Transit Charge		\$ 213.00		\$ 213.00	\$ 213.00	-	-	
TOTAL ASSESSMENTS		\$ -	\$ 1,652.00	\$ -	\$ 1,652.00	\$ 2,452.00	\$ (800.00)	\$ (800.00)	\$ -
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS									
90912.00	Workmans Comp Insurance		\$ 11,000.00		\$ 11,000.00	\$ 10,524.00	\$ 476.00	\$ 476.00	
90914.00	Health Ins-Town Share		\$ 85,500.00		\$ 85,500.00	\$ 84,620.76	\$ 879.24	\$ (620.76)	\$ 1,500.00
90916.00	Medicare Expense - Town share		\$ 13,457.00		\$ 13,457.00	\$ 8,777.27	\$ 4,679.73	\$ 4,679.73	
90917.00	Unemployment Insurance		\$ 8,255.00		\$ 8,255.00	\$ 11,775.59	\$ (3,520.59)	\$ (3,520.59)	
90917.01	Contributory Retirement		\$ 102,566.00		\$ 102,566.00	\$ 101,392.00	\$ 1,174.00	\$ 1,174.00	
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		\$ -	\$ 220,778.00	\$ -	\$ 220,778.00	\$ 217,089.62	\$ 3,688.38	\$ 2,188.38	\$ 1,500.00
OTHER INSURANCE									
90193.00	General Insurance & Bonds		\$ 26,600.00		\$ 26,600.00	\$ 29,806.00	\$ (3,206.00)	\$ (3,206.00)	
90193.03	Police/Fire-Accident & Health Ins		\$ 8,200.00		\$ 8,200.00	\$ 7,329.00	\$ 871.00	\$ 871.00	
90917.02	Bonds		\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 550.00	
TOTAL OTHER INSURANCE		\$ -	\$ 35,800.00	\$ -	\$ 35,800.00	\$ 37,585.00	\$ (1,785.00)	\$ (1,785.00)	\$ -
TOTAL BUDGET		\$ -	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 9,604.86	\$ 3,528,106.86	\$ 3,457,516.57	\$ 70,590.29	\$ 25,105.50	\$ 45,484.79
FY2022 ARTICLES									
10122.90	Permit Eyes		\$ 11,580.00		\$ 11,580.00	\$ -	\$ 11,580.00	\$ -	\$ 11,580.00
10122.91	Prior Year Bills		\$ 3,484.14		\$ 3,484.14	\$ 3,431.47	\$ 52.67	\$ 52.67	
20428.91	Prior Year Bills		\$ 386.72		\$ 386.72	\$ 386.72	-	-	
40428.91	Prior Year Bills		\$ 550.25		\$ 550.25	\$ 350.25	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	
TOTAL SPECIAL ARTICLES		\$ -	\$ 16,001.11	\$ 16,001.11	\$ 16,001.11	\$ 4,168.44	\$ 11,832.67	\$ 252.67	\$ 11,580.00
TOTAL FY2021 BUDGET & ARTICLES		\$ -	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 25,605.97	\$ 3,544,107.97	\$ 3,461,685.01	\$ 82,422.96	\$ 25,358.17	\$ 57,064.79
TRANSFERS TO OTHER FUNDS									
99000.00	Stabilization				\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	
99000.00	Fire Truck Stabilization		\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
99000.00	Town Building Stabilization		\$ 10,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
99000.00	Town Roads Stabilization		\$ 10,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
99000.00	Education Stabilization		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL TRANSFERS TO OTHER FUNDS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL ALL FY2021 BUDGET & ARTICLES		\$ -	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 70,605.97	\$ 3,589,107.97	\$ 3,506,685.01	\$ 82,422.96	\$ 25,358.17	\$ 57,064.79
PRIOR YEAR ARTICLES CARRIED FORWARD									
20428.90	Town's Sanitary Survey	\$ 1,400.00			\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
40493.00	Preservation Project Year 2	\$ 4,000.00			\$ 4,000.00		\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL FUND EXPENSE REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Account Number	Description	Balance Forward	Budget	Budget Revisions	Revised Budget	Expended	Balance	Closed	Carry Forward
40493.01	Flag Poles	\$ 700.00			\$ 700.00		\$ 700.00	\$ -	\$ 700.00
90192.03	Town Hall Doors	\$ 31,000.00			\$ 31,000.00	\$ 16,194.96	\$ 14,805.04	\$ -	\$ 14,805.04
90192.08	Eng & Surveying	\$ 2,500.00			\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
90192.09	Design Services	\$ 15,088.31	\$ -	(5,200.00)	\$ 9,888.31		\$ 9,888.31	\$ -	\$ 9,888.31
90192.93	Town Hall Boiler Replacement	\$ 11,000.38			\$ 11,000.38		\$ 11,000.38	\$ -	\$ 11,000.38
TOTAL PRIOR YEAR SPECIAL ARTICLES		\$ 65,688.69	\$ -	\$ (5,200.00)	\$ 60,488.69	\$ 17,594.96	\$ 42,893.73	\$ -	\$ 42,893.73
PRIOR YEAR ENCUMBRANCES									
10141.80	Assessors Consultant	\$ 2,818.75			\$ 2,818.75	\$ 2,818.75	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
10145.80	Land Court Fees	\$ 240.00			\$ 240.00	\$ 240.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
20423.80	Hwy Supplies/Repairs	\$ 18,026.47			\$ 18,026.47	\$ 14,387.23	\$ 3,639.24	\$ 3,639.24	\$ -
20428.80	Water Expenses	\$ 172.78			\$ 172.78	\$ 172.78	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
40500.80	Library Expenses	\$ 992.87			\$ 992.87	\$ 992.87	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
60292.80	Animal Control Expenses	\$ 353.77			\$ 353.77	\$ 353.77	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
90917.80	Bonds	\$ 575.00			\$ 575.00	\$ 575.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL PRIOR FISCAL YEAR ENCUMBRANCES		\$ 23,179.64	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,179.64	\$ 19,540.40	\$ 3,639.24	\$ 3,639.24	\$ -
TOTAL BUDGET, ARTICLES & ENCUMBRANCES		\$ 88,868.33	\$ 3,518,502.00	\$ 65,405.97	\$ 3,672,776.30	\$ 3,543,820.37	\$ 128,955.93	\$ 28,997.41	\$ 99,958.52

**TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL REVENUE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022**

	Fund Balances June 30, 2022	Opening Balance	Rev	Exp	Balance
Special Revenue:					
Federal Grants:					
EMPG Grant	\$ (2,379.36)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,379.36	\$ (2,379.36)
DHCD EDF Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 395,557.52	\$ 395,557.52	\$ -
Summer 21 Storm Damage	\$ 474,012.21	\$ -	\$ 590,034.00	\$ 116,021.79	\$ 474,012.21
ARPA	\$ 186,451.73	\$ -	\$ 204,601.73	\$ 18,150.00	\$ 186,451.73
State Grants:					
Chapter 90	\$ -	\$ 1,308.47	\$ 295,366.19	\$ 296,674.66	\$ -
ADA Town Property Study	\$ -	\$ (12,200.00)	\$ 12,200.00	\$ -	\$ -
Elections	\$ 3,105.18	\$ 3,416.79	\$ -	\$ 311.61	\$ 3,105.18
Community Compact	\$ (15,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00	\$ (15,000.00)
PVPC MVP Grant	\$ 20.56	\$ 20.56	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20.56
PVPC Covid Grant	\$ (0.09)	\$ (0.09)	\$ (15,237.44)	\$ (15,237.44)	\$ (0.09)
PVPC Covid Grant 2	\$ -	\$ 15,237.44	\$ -	\$ 15,237.44	\$ -
Covid Relief Fund	\$ 1,414.05	\$ 21,242.99	\$ 6,425.00	\$ 26,253.94	\$ 1,414.05
Shared Police Grant	\$ 910.35	\$ 910.35	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 910.35
Fire Safety	\$ (7,694.00)	\$ -	\$ 2,555.00	\$ 10,249.00	\$ (7,694.00)
Police AED Grant	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
Police Vests Grant	\$ (1,800.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,800.00	\$ (1,800.00)
Road Safety	\$ (2,079.00)	\$ -	\$ 3,793.91	\$ 5,872.91	\$ (2,079.00)
HAZMAT Shed	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
Council On Aging Formula	\$ 10,614.79	\$ 5,666.01	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 1,051.22	\$ 10,614.79
Arts Cultural Council	\$ 12,235.12	\$ 14,335.12	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,100.00	\$ 12,235.12
Library FY21 Virtual Cares	\$ 3,100.00	\$ 3,100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,100.00
Library State Grant	\$ 17,914.27	\$ 13,824.70	\$ 4,089.57	\$ -	\$ 17,914.27
Green Community Grant	\$ (539.65)	\$ (539.65)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (539.65)
Recycling Grant	\$ 5,950.00	\$ 2,450.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ -	\$ 5,950.00
IT Grant	\$ 2,530.51	\$ 6,173.50	\$ -	\$ 3,642.99	\$ 2,530.51
EDC Redo	\$ 27,000.00	\$ -	\$ 27,000.00	\$ -	\$ 27,000.00
Economic Development	\$ 563.48	\$ 563.48	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 563.48
Receipts Reserved for Appropriation:					
Transportations Network	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10	\$ -	\$ 0.20
Sale of Real Estate	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 89,294.64	\$ (81,794.64)	\$ -	\$ 7,500.00
Sale of Cemetery Lots	\$ 21,770.00	\$ 21,770.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21,770.00
Revolving Funds:					
Plumbing	\$ (835.00)	\$ 730.00	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 4,365.00	\$ (835.00)

**TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL REVENUE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022**

	Fund Balances June 30, 2022	Opening Balance	Rev	Exp	Balance
Wiring	\$ (810.00)	\$ (1,270.00)	\$ 4,225.00	\$ 3,765.00	\$ (810.00)
BOH	\$ 7,686.68	\$ 3,141.68	\$ 15,865.00	\$ 11,320.00	\$ 7,686.68
Building Inspection Fines	\$ 19,250.00	\$ -	\$ 19,250.00	\$ -	\$ 19,250.00
Cemetery	\$ 10,752.64	\$ 11,798.84	\$ -	\$ 1,046.20	\$ 10,752.64
Insurance	\$ (23,900.55)	\$ 20,435.37	\$ (44,335.92)	\$ -	\$ (23,900.55)
Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 2,760.70	\$ 2,760.70	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,760.70
Reimburse Tax Title Legal	\$ 1,719.28	\$ 1,719.28	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,719.28
Tax Title Redemption	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 75.00
MIIA Elevator	\$ 2,885.00	\$ -	\$ 43,720.00	\$ 40,835.00	\$ 2,885.00
Other Special Revenue:					
Recreation	\$ 201.92	\$ 201.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 201.92
Town Clock	\$ 617.05	\$ 617.05	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 617.05
Library	\$ 12,609.11	\$ 13.36	\$ 12,595.75	\$ -	\$ 12,609.11
Covid 19	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
Veterans Memorial	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200.00
Flag	\$ 736.80	\$ 396.80	\$ 340.00	\$ -	\$ 736.80
Police	\$ 2,081.13	\$ 998.38	\$ 7,845.75	\$ 6,763.00	\$ 2,081.13
Cemetery	\$ 615.00	\$ 615.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 615.00
COA Gifts	\$ 2,863.10	\$ 2,763.10	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 2,863.10
Historical Gifts	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00
Composting	\$ 145.00	\$ 145.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 145.00
Total Special Revenues	\$ 790,453.21	\$ 234,415.89	\$ 1,527,196.52	\$ 971,159.20	\$ 790,453.21

TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
CAPITAL PROJECTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Fund Balances June 30, 2022		Opening Balance	Rev	Exp	Balance
Capital Projects:					
Highway F550 Truck					
\$	(100,000.00)	\$ (100,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (100,000.00)
					\$ -
Total Capital Projects					
\$	(100,000.00)	\$ (100,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (100,000.00)

**TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES -
CHESTER MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022**

	Carry Forward	Actuals	Amounts Carried Forward to Next Year
Revenues:			
Charges for Services	\$ -	\$ 1,306,727.91	\$ -
Liens	\$ -	\$ 5,841.39	\$ -
Deposits	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Interest from Investments	\$ -	\$ 906.39	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ 22,414.50	\$ -
Total Revenues	\$ -	\$ 1,335,890.19	\$ -
Expenditures:			
Current Fiscal Year:			
Maintenance & Operation	\$ -	\$ 118,911.62	
General Expenses	\$ -	\$ 1,165,654.51	
Deposits	\$ -	\$ 4,400.00	
Total Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 1,288,966.13	\$ -
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 46,924.06	\$ -
Other Financing Sources (Uses):			
Operating Transfers In	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Operating Transfers (Out)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Excess of Revenues and Other Financing Sources Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	\$ -	\$ 46,924.06	\$ -
Audit Adjustments		\$ -	
Fund Balances, Beginning of Year		\$ 1,351,836.52	\$ -
Fund Balances, End of Year	\$ -	\$ 1,398,760.58	\$ -

**TOWN OF CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHEDULE OF TRUST FUNDS AND AGENCY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022**

	Fund Balances June 30, 2022	Opening Balance	Rev	Exp	Balance
Trust Funds:					
<i>Non-Expendable:</i>					
Cemetery	\$ 46,098.21	\$ 46,098.21	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,098.21
<i>Expendable Trust:</i>					
Cemetery	\$ 1,282.88	\$ 3,677.16	\$ (2,394.28)	\$ -	\$ 1,282.88
Theodore Steinhard Trust	\$ 39,020.00	\$ -	\$ 39,020.00	\$ -	\$ 39,020.00
Stabilization Accounts:					
Stabilization	\$ 340,274.48	\$ 365,709.85	\$ (25,435.37)	\$ -	\$ 340,274.48
Fire Truck Stabilization	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 75,000.00
Town Building Stabilization	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Town Roads Stabilization	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
Education Stabilization	\$ 59,459.00	\$ 82,784.00	\$ -	\$ 23,325.00	\$ 59,459.00
Agency Funds:					
Payroll Insurance Withholding	\$ (2,286.06)	\$ (5,545.49)	\$ 8,095.48	\$ 4,836.05	\$ (2,286.06)
Shared Police Services	\$ 29,525.70	\$ 18,749.79	\$ 180,859.72	\$ 170,083.81	\$ 29,525.70
Deputy Collector Fees	\$ (184.00)	\$ 2,686.00	\$ 1,813.00	\$ 4,683.00	\$ (184.00)
Tax Collector Fees	\$ (4,562.92)	\$ (1,190.42)	\$ (190.50)	\$ 3,182.00	\$ (4,562.92)
Town Clerk Fees	\$ -	\$ 4,210.59	\$ -	\$ 4,210.59	\$ -
Police Detail	\$ 6,734.43	\$ 8,478.43	\$ 53,952.00	\$ 55,696.00	\$ 6,734.43
FireArm Permit Fees	\$ 3,016.31	\$ 2,778.81	\$ 2,725.00	\$ 2,487.50	\$ 3,016.31
Total Trust & Agency Funds	\$ 623,378.03	\$ 588,436.93	\$ 303,445.05	\$ 268,503.95	\$ 623,378.03

Treasurer Report

The treasurer's office is responsible for collecting and documenting all money received from all town departments via turnovers, and depositing that money into the Town's bank accounts. The turnovers are submitted with money and account numbers, which we post into our software system, Softright. We maintain a cash book which is able to track all activity of transactions and allows us to reconcile to the bank accounts' activity throughout the year. The cash book shows all the bank accounts in use by the town, along with the beginning and ending balances of the bank statements which represents the Town's total cash. The cash book is also where we post: transfers, voids, warrants, adjustments, and interest. We reconcile the bank statements and cash book to the accountants' general ledger every month.

We print all of the Town's checks bi-weekly based on warrants submitted by the departments. We collect all warrants submitted by the Town's departments and scan them to the accountant every non-check printing week for them to process the warrants. After the checks are printed for the current warrant, we match up every payment to the warrants submitted to ensure payments are correct. We stuff all checks and mail them after this process is complete.

We are also responsible for processing payroll which is then sent to the accountant for verification. All town employee information is submitted to us, which we take the correct action to update employees' information in Harpers payroll services, and file all documents in the office.

We are typically on-site in the Treasurer's office on Wednesdays, but spend many hours off-site per week working remotely.

Best ways to contact the Treasurer's office is via email:

Ivan- Assistant (On-site Wednesdays)- ivan@massmunifin.com

Sara- Town Treasurer- treasurer@townofchester.net

CHESTER MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Formed in 1926, Chester Municipal Electric Light is a municipally owned utility that provides electricity to approximately 742 active customers. Chester Municipal Electric operates on a calendar year rather than a fiscal year like the town does; therefore the financials are not available as of the deadline date that is needed to be included in this report.

On December 31, 2022, Jill Moretz retired as CMELD General Manager. Chester Municipal Electric Light Department wishes her a happy and healthy retirement. After an extensive interview process, Diane Hall was hired as the new manager. Diane worked at Sweatland/Payless Oil in Pittsfield for the past 35 years and lives in Housatonic with her husband. She has family ties to the town of Chester and fond memories of visiting here when she was young.

CMELD welcomed Cooper Chechile as our new linesman. Cooper graduated from Southeast Lineman Training Center in Trenton, GA. He resides in Westfield and will be a welcomed asset to our town.

This past year, the CMELD line crew worked with contractors on the removal of large hazardous trees, as well as storm cleanup, line trimming, and replacing and installing new hardware on damaged poles. They worked with various town departments, inspectors, vendors, and the solar company to complete the interconnect of the pole barn and town garage solar power. They completed projects on Rte. 20, Crane Road, and Lynes Road. They ran the electrical circuit and installed pole-mounted receptacles to enable the installation of security cameras at the town baseball field. They also provided assistance in the lighting of the town Christmas tree, as well as continuing to attach flags, bunting and banners throughout the town.

CMELD linesmen continue to attend safety and continuing education classes to stay updated on changes in electricity.

CMELD continues to assist the Water Department in reading meters, billing, and collecting revenues for the town.

CMELD has strived to provide the best service possible to the residents of Chester. Since the COVID outbreak in 2020, we have seen huge increases in costs – power, gasoline, diesel, and everyday living expenses. We will continue to work hard to keep prices manageable and hope that we all may see some “light” at the end of the tunnel.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Hall

Manager, Chester Municipal Electric Light Dept.

CHESTER COUNCIL ON AGING

The Council on Aging (COA) exists to support residents 60 years of age and older by providing information and programs designed to support their ongoing contributions to our community, stay in their homes with dignity, health and safety. Provide programs and opportunities to meet their evolving needs educationally and socially.

I would like to thank the many volunteers who have stepped up to support a significantly greater number of our seniors this year. Without their contribution of time and talent, the number of services provided, would quite literally not have been possible. If you would like to join us in helping out our neighbors, please contact the COA. Volunteers have provided nearly 600 hours of time and talent to our community. We owe them a BIG Thank You!

Foot Care by Nurses has been providing care for just over one year. There have been praises sung by those who participate in this program. Seniors have been very conscientious to stay home from appointments after testing positive for Covid. They are automatically rescheduled for the following months Foot Clinic, with no penalty. The Foot Clinic has a power lift chair located in the Building Inspector's Office to enable the COA to meet the regulations for providing foot care and food services. The Foot Clinic served 109 seniors this year.

The list of Medical Equipment available to loan has increased, some by seniors and their families when it is no longer needed. Some from other COA's with surplus of an item. The loan program has been a blessing for those needing a short-term assist as well as those in need of long-term support.

Farmer's Market Coupons were provided by the State rather later than is customary this year. Recipients were happy to supplement their diet with fall and winter vegetables at many local Farmer's Markets. The coupons are available to those 60 & older who meet the income guidelines. This year's coupons went to 15 households. If you are interested, please contact the COA to be put on the list of recipients. By the time you are reading this Annual Town Report we should be hearing about the date of distribution of 2023 Coupons!

Those living in the Hilltowns are very aware of the difficulty of arranging transportation whether due to an accident or injury. Many seniors have additional concerns due to medical or aging that may restrict, limit or stop their ability to transport themselves. The Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) provides transportation to area seniors. The fee ranges from \$.75 to \$2.25. A bargain! The van picks you up & returns you to your door. Thanks to the support and effort of our local legislators, transportation can be arranged to contiguous counties as well. A solution to those seniors with Medical services needed in Pittsfield, Northampton, Holyoke or Springfield. Please contact the COA or FRTA to apply. 28 Seniors were able to take advantage of this safe, reliable & inexpensive means of transportation this year.

The Central Hampshire Veterans Services, headed by Steve Connor continue to provide much deserved information on benefits and services available to Chester Veterans. The Veterans luncheon at the Chester Common Table Restaurant provide the opportunity to 63 veterans and their spouses to meet, obtain vital newly available information while enjoying a wonderful meal. There were many Veterans that had never participated in any Veterans Day activities. Many were not aware of the service provided by their friends & neighbors. Steve Connor emphasized that there has been significant changes in many aspects of services available. The most important information is that if current Veterans do not use their earned services, they may not be available to current and future Veterans. They can be reached at vetadmin@northamptonma.gov or 413 587-1299.

The Western Mass Food Bank continues to provide support monthly in the form of shelf stable food as well as seasonal fruits and vegetables. The Chester & Middlefield COA's combine efforts to provide this service to approximately 30 seniors. Thank You to Lois Bell for her lengthy service to the Town of Middlefield. While she is hanging up her hat as COA Director, She continues to serve her Town and neighbor's in her other posts! She has been training her replacement, Suzanne Lemieux. We look forward to working jointly with Suzanne on this and other joint projects.

Highland Valley Elder Service (HVES) made a significant investment to upgrade equipment to continue the "Grab & Go" meal program at the height of the covid infections. This investment in equipment and personnel has enable the COA to provide meals to many local seniors. The "Grab & Go" program has grown from serving 12 seniors in August 2021 to 503 in April 2022. This year nearly 4,100 meals were served. An extraordinary accomplishment!

In other joint activities with neighboring COA's:

Chester seniors were invited to the Russell COA Picnic at Strathmore Park on June 13, 2022. The Russell COA offered an opportunity to clear out some treasures and make money at their Tag Sale on September 17, 2022. They could also participate for free on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday in Well-Being classes, aka exercise.

The Huntington COA welcomed all to join the fun at the Wednesday afternoon (2-3pm) live music, an art class, nutritional and educational information at their "Memory Café".

The Hampden County Sheriff's Office presented information on their "R U Safe Program" for those who would benefit from a free phone call by the department at the time of your choosing. Calls can be suspended for travel or other reasons by the senior. The "Is your Number Up" program provides & installs free reflective numbers on a post for those with homes not readily visible from the road. The Chester COA, Police Department, Fire Department & Board of Assessors are working Jointly to identify properties that could benefit from this free service. PLEASE call the COA and leave a name and telephone number if you are interested. The Emergency services cannot help you if they cannot find you. A delay could mean a life.

HVES provides meals for a Picnic Lunch at the Historic Chester Railway Station on May 9, 2022. Food & fun was had by more than 90 seniors & their guests. Guests were charged a small fee by HVES. A great time was had by all on a gorgeous day.

Gateway Regional School District were delighted to invite all area seniors to a “Spring Brunch & Concert”. No Christmas Concert was able to be scheduled due to Covid restrictions. It is hoped that December of 2022 will see the return of the much loved “Christmas Brunch & Concert. Nearly 100 area seniors thoroughly enjoyed the event.

Family Movie Night were sponsored jointly by the COA, Recreation Committee, Fire Dept, Library & Police Department. The February vacation movie was held during a snowstorm! 20 hardy souls braved the wind & snow.

The summer “Drive-In” movies held in June, July & August at the Emery Street ball lot. Nearly 200 people showed up with lawn chairs and porch furniture to enjoy the show. Great weather, free snacks & drinks provided a most enjoyable experience.

Thank You to Town Administrator’s Kathe Warden and Don Humason for their support and assistance. Your efforts are appreciated. A special thanks must be extended to the Fire Department, Police Department, Recreation Committee & Library for a variety of contributions.

I continue to be grateful and hopeful that efforts to support our fellow residents will continue. Time, showing up at events, donations of cards (keep them coming!) and financial support enables assistance in a variety of ways to many of our friends & neighbors. I believe that when we help each other, we all benefit.

Thank You for the opportunity to serve. I hope to see you soon.

With Respect and Gratitude,

Ann Daley

Director

Chester Council on Aging

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Chester Board of Health offered several COVID-19 vaccination clinics and one influenza clinic in the Town of Chester which vaccinated/boosted over 200 hilltown residents and children.

The Board also worked closely with the Mass DEP and DPH to oversee the Chester Transfer Station and all health-related permits and issues. Problem properties were addressed and enforced. To date twenty-two properties have been addressed some with court action. Health Agents re-hired in 2022 were Charlie Kaniecki and Claudia Lucas which fees are paid through the permitting process. The Board has updated the website to include permit forms online, updated transfer station information and has revised the permit application process for a faster turnaround. RDP grant award this year was for \$3,850.00. The transfer station was also awarded a \$3,000 grant for a hazardous item collection shed. The Board of Health continues its partnership with the Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition which gives the Town access to free health services including three public Health Nurses, clinics and free health supplies and services. Chester is the only non-Hampshire County member of HPHPC.

The transfer station continues to pass inspection to DEP standards and has a current Authorization-to-Operate permit. New this year is the relationship with CMRK where we now have a textile recycling bin and free home pickup of items. The town receives money for every pound donated. The compactor has been serviced for the first time in years. There are currently 308 resident transfer station permits up 25 households from last year. Operating hours are Wednesday 3 to 6 pm and Saturday 9 am to 1 pm and is manned by two attendants and an alternate.

The Board of Health issued many permits. Permitting is now available online on the Permit Eyes portal. Food Permits/Inspections (4), Temporary Food Permits/Inspections (8), Commercial Kitchen Food Permit/Inspections (2), Title V Reviews (18), Septic Plan Reviews (11), Construction Works Permits (6), Certificate of Compliance (6), Percolation Tests (12), Well Permits (4), Housing Inspections (4), Septic Installer Permits (6), Campground Permits (1), Trailer Park Permits (1), Beaver Permits (1), Bed and Breakfast Permits (8), Temporary Housing Permits (1), Septage Hauler Permits (2), Trash Haulers Permit (1). The Board also handles Housing code enforcement, infectious disease investigation and reporting, health related public complaints and investigation.

The Board welcomes all questions, comments and suggestions at BoardofHealth@TownofChester.net or by phone 413-354-7781 seven days a week. The Board is dedicated to keep Chester Beautiful and Healthy for its residents and businesses.

Respectfully submitted.
 Nicholas J. Chiusano, Chair
 Elizabeth Massa
 Duane Pease

CHESTER PLANNING BOARD

The Chester Planning Board had five active members last year; Richard Holzman, Lyle Snide (Chair), Nick Chiusano, Brian Fogue (Clerk), and Liz Massa. We lost Brian Fogue and Lyle Snide this year and gain Robert Daley and Liz Massa was voted new chair. There is currently a vacant seat available on the board. The planning board meets as needed to sign ANR's (approval Not Required) under the subdivision bylaw, special permits. Notable special permit this year was granted to SBA Communications to add a T Mobile antenna to the existing cell phone tower at 86 Rt. 20. The majority of this year was spent on discussion and writing of the new Short Term Bylaw which includes glamping.

Chester Historical Commission and Society

Local Historical Commissions are the official agents of the Municipal Government and are responsible for community-wide historical preservation and planning. They are advisors to the Board of Selectmen.

Local Historical Societies are private organizations, concerned with the preservation of local histories through records, collections, and properties.

The “Old Chester Jail”, across the street from the Chester History Museum is owned by the Town of Chester, and is used for our monthly winter meetings, and continues to be our research area. It was visited many times during the year by people researching family history and genealogy. With our yearly Commission money, we maintain the jail, do necessary repairs, pay for the heat, and produce brochures, pamphlets, etc. to promote the history of our town. This year, with the help of volunteers, and “The Sign Smith” we were able to refurbish the “Entering Chester” signs, located at the Bendix Drive intersection and near Walker Island.

The “Chester History Museum”, located across the street from the jail, is owned by the Chester Historical Society, It contains many displays featuring the history of the town, and is used for our monthly summer meetings, and is open to the public upon request, during “Chester on Track” and on Sundays during the month of August. The operation of the museum is funded through fund raisers and donations. This year the Society submitted a matching grant application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for the continued restoration of the museum’s second floor. It was accepted and bid notices were published in the local media.

We want to thank all who continue to support our efforts to preserve our “Gem of the Valley’s” history.

John Hultman

President

RECREATION COMMITTEE

The recreation committee sponsored and/or participated in a large number of events this year including: the annual Trunk or Treat celebration at Emery Field on Halloween including the haunted trail, numerous movie nights both outdoors at Emery Field and indoors in the Chester Town Hall auditorium, Easter Egg Hunt at the Littleville Fair, and more. We hope to hold many more events this year such as movie nights, horseshoe tournaments, town-wide picnic, a clean-up effort at Hampden St park, etc. Many of these events were held with the cooperation of the Council on Aging, the Chester Fire Department, and the Chester Hill Association. We are always open for suggestions as well as hopeful for additional volunteers. Please reach out to me anytime at (413) 205-6504 with any questions/comments/suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Forgue

HAMILTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Fiscal year 2021/2022 started with **HAMILTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY** being closed for extensive renovations. The entire contents of the library were removed and placed in storage for 6 months. Carpet was removed, the original wood floors were sanded and sealed, walls and ceilings were repaired and repainted. Professional mold remediation and 2 follow up air quality tests were conducted before the contents of the library were returned. Air purifiers were purchased and are run daily. It was a challenging process getting the book collection organized and in place with the work being done by trustees' volunteer time. A new librarian and assistants were hired and the library reopened in April of 2022. An extensive book weeding program began under the direction of Judy Kelly, our librarian, in order to eliminate old and damaged books. New and updated books were purchased. The children's section of the library turned into a welcoming oasis with a new rug, book shelves, and engaging books. The adult section received a facelift as well with removal of outdated shelving and the addition of a comfy fireplace seating area. Computers were updated or replaced. A window AC unit was purchased. Outdoor furniture was added to the lawn. Patron numbers started slowly returning with the dedicated and enthusiastic library staff offering programs for children and adults. The library is now open 19 hrs/week.

Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee 2022 Annual Report

Over seventy miles of the Westfield River and tributary streams received the federal designation of Wild & Scenic in recognition of the outstanding natural resources, history and free flowing waters of the River. The Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee was convened to celebrate and advance activities to preserve, protect, and enhance the special qualities and outstanding natural resources of the Westfield River. The Committee has appointed representatives and alternates from the ten Wild & Scenic communities of Becket, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Savoy, Washington, Windsor and Worthington plus partners including the National Park Service, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Westfield River Watershed Association and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Project funding is provided through the National Park Service's Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers Program.

A recent updating of the River's Stewardship and Conservation Plan refined the Committee's four priority work areas. Activities and projects focus on the following desired outcomes:

- ☐ protecting and enhancing cold water habitat, the most extensive in the state,
- ☐ improving free flowing characteristics impacted by dams and inadequate stream-road crossings,
- ☐ managing invasive species to protect high-quality riparian habitat and
- ☐ continuing to engage, educate and assist citizens and towns to be river stewards.

In 2022 the Committee focused heavily on invasive species and stream connectivity. The Committee conducted a pilot a few years ago to help our Wild & Scenic towns upgrade five undersized and failing stream-road crossings to: allow the river to flow freely, allow fish to pass easily upstream and down, to facilitate safe passage for animals along river banks, and have a properly sized crossing to accommodate floods. The pilot was a success with three of the crossing constructed with grant funding, one will be installed next summer and the fifth crossing in final design and permitting. The second phase of this initiative started this year. Nine of our ten Wild & Scenic communities signed on to participate selecting their priority road crossing from a list provided by the Committee. Under the agreement, the Committee funds and manages all the work. The towns will be provided with plans of existing site conditions, a concept design for an upgraded culvert with appropriate green infrastructure and a technical report with needed supporting data. The Committee and consultant are also working to prepare a grant application for each of the nine crossings that will allow the towns to pursue additional grant money to fund the next phase of the project.

Stream connectivity activities also included liaising with the Army Corps of Engineers to inspect newly upgraded crossings and the culverts now under study. The town of Washington requested and was awarded a Wild & Scenic Community Grant to allow the completion of the final design and permitting on a failing culvert. The grant allowed the town to avoid forfeiting time constrained construction funding from the state. The Committee also provided other Community Grants awarded this year including funds to the Westfield River Watershed Association to support the Wild Water Race this spring, the town of Middlefield to address invasive knotweed at a crossing being upgraded, Highland Foot Path for legal research to secure a right-of-way for the trail and the Hilltown Land Trust to cover the costs of a two-day Vernal Pool Certification Workshop.

The Committee's invasive management efforts are expanding. We continued to tackle select infestations, mapping locations and types of invasives along priority streams, and began a research initiative to determine the effectiveness of treatment methods. Invasives species are introduced plants and animals causing disruption to natural communities. Some plants can even clog streams causing

localized flooding. Much of the invasive work was accomplished by our three paid summer interns. Under the direction of our Outreach Coordinator, the students enjoyed extensive training before establishing several test plots to systematically test the effectiveness of different knotweed removal techniques. Each student had a special project to map invasives at all nine of the road-stream upgrade sites. The interns also continued tracking native bees as part of a long-term pollinator project and helped with community events including assisting children to make their own fish prints at Chester-on-Track.

Our Outreach Coordinator continues a range of activities to assist Wild & Scenic towns, watershed residents and partners. Education is a big part of the job and includes visits to the river to introduce children to river insects, producing informative and entertaining videos (available on the Wild & Scenic website) and helping partner organizations with their programs. Workdays to clean-up and repair trails and scenic vistas have resumed after a two-year pandemic hiatus. Our Coordinator also helped with the Vernal Pool Workshop, the Wild Water Race and the Highlands Foot Path initiative and at Chester On Track.

The Wild & Scenic Committee also funded the year's-long effort to obtain National Historic Landmark status for two Chester highlights; The Railroad Station and the Keystone Arches, in January of 2021. This is the highest designation available. It requires national significance. It's the same category that Mt. Rushmore and The Washington Monument are included in.

The Committee is in the process of updating its website to offer visitors more resources in a user-friendly format. Look for its official launch this summer. The Committee was honored to award the Robert Thompson Stewardship Award to our long-time web master Steve Hamlin. Steve has been a great friend to the Westfield River and the Committee. The Committee also celebrated the work of the interns at the Remarkable River Potluck in October. Two of the interns presented on their work through the summer to a receptive and appreciative audience.

Our committee meets monthly and all meetings are open to the public. We encourage you to find out more about the Westfield River and the Committee. To learn more about what is happening in the watershed, visit our website at www.wildscenicwestfieldriver.org or contact Dave Pierce, Chester Representative, at 413 961 9166. If you would be interested in serving on the Committee, please visit: www.westfieldrivercommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Pierce, Chester Rep.

CHESTER-BLANDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

2022 Annual Report

The Chester-Blandford Police Department saw some new faces in 2022. With the departure of Chief Tammy Weidhaas in August, we gained a new Police Chief, Jen Dubiel, who has 14 years of experience in law enforcement. We did lose a couple officers but gained 2 new officers at the end of the year, bringing our total number of sworn personnel to 6. The hope is that 2023 will bring us a Sergeant as well as 2-3 more officers so we can have close to 16 hours a day of coverage during our peak times.

The department was awarded 2 grants in 2022. One for bulletproof vests and one for traffic enforcement. The town also allowed the department to utilize some funding from an IT grant so we could update the laptops in the cruisers. We are already working on several funding opportunities for 2023.

Calls for the year totaled 926. The goal is to double that call volume for 2023. Each patrol shift, officers not only respond to 911 calls, but they also do several property checks, motor vehicle stops, community service calls, investigations, and many more important functions to protect our communities.

By June 30, 2023 all of our officers will be POST certified with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which means, they will have met the new standard of training and certification to function as a police officer in Mass. The process requires background checks, added training of 200 hours for a bridge academy, including emergency vehicle operations, firearms qualifications, defensive techniques, several exams and a requirement to complete 2400 hours of patrol time. This is all in addition to the annual requirements of specialized training that all officers must complete. Beyond the requirements, officers are able to attend extra training opportunities throughout the year, most of the time free of charge to the department.

We are looking forward to what 2023 will bring for the Chester-Blandford Police Department and meeting as many of you as possible through special events, patrols or in passing. We look forward to continuing to serve the communities and encourage everyone to reach out to us at any time either through our email or by phone. You can also check us out on our Facebook page, which we will begin utilizing more and more.

Thank you for all the support we receive, we truly do appreciate it.

Chief Jen Dubiel

ANIMAL CONTROL AND INSPECTOR OF ANIMALS REPORT

July 1,2021-June 30,2022

Inspector of Animals

48 "barn " visits were made in the fall of 2021.

The purpose is to document ownership of each animal, providing the Mass Dept of Agricultural Resources with data for response planning in an emergency. It is also to check the welfare of the animals.

Animal Control Officer

A total of 5 home kennels were inspected prior to licensure for 2021. All kennels were inspected and approved as meeting all standards of care per the state guidelines.

Calls to the ACO were as follows:

9-miscellaneous information calls

5-dog "at large"

7-wildlife call

3- loose livestock

8- stray pick up

1-hit by car

3 - nuisance/barking dog

2- dog bite

1- livestock Quarantine

1- rabies positive Raccoon

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Donovan ACO/Animal Inspector

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Sixty one permits were issued by the building department in 2022 which is well above average from recent years. One new single family dwelling permit was issued, while eight more were for major home renovations, additions, or large garage/barn projects. Three permits were issued for new commercial projects as well. Upgrades have begun on a few of our abandoned buildings in the downtown area with much more planned to in the current year. The continued advancement towards Chester's inclusion in the East-West rail should only further complement our recent growth.

Twelve energy conservations permits pulled this year including solar installations, window/replacements, and insulation and air sealing upgrades. Ten permits were also issued for wood or pellet stoves. Please note that the installation of any solid-fuel burning appliance (wood stoves, pellet stoves, etc.) requires a permit, regardless of the installer. The fee for this permit is reasonable, required by all home insurance companies, and important to the safety of the inhabitants of the structure. If you have already installed one of these devices, you can still apply for a permit and have a quick inspection.

Along with the Board of Health, I have started to more strictly enforce our zoning bylaws in an effort to maintain property values and public safety of all residents. Please feel free to reach out any time with any concerns you may have throughout town and I will address accordingly. In the coming year we plan to take numerous actions to clean up several of the blighted properties around town.

A large thank you goes out to all of the other town departments and boards for their assistance and cooperation when requested. The dedication of these numerous, primarily volunteer, individuals is greatly appreciated and a testament to their commitment to the betterment of our town.

Under normal circumstances, office hours are every 2nd and 4th Monday evening of the month from 5:00-6:00, however I am readily available to meet with you in the office, at your home, or at the jobsite as needed. As a Chester resident myself, I am consistently in the area so please feel free to reach out to me anytime at (413) 205-6504. Copies of each type of building permit application are located on the outside of my office door for you to pick up at your convenience if the online permitting system is not a viable option for you.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Forgue, Building Commissioner

CHESTER PARKS AND TRAILS

The Town of Chester continued to be a premiere outdoor recreation destination in Western Massachusetts this year.

The Keystone Arch Bridges Trail received National Historic Landmark Designation last year, namely the sixty-five- and seventy-foot stone arch bridges and the Chester Railroad Station.

The Chester Becket Trail on Hampden Street is now connected to the Gobble Mountain section of the Highlands Footpath/Unkamit's Path and the Hampden Street Town Park Trail. This means there is an official continuous trail connection in Chester starting at the Chester Railway Station through downtown, along the trails in Hampden Street Park and then branching to both the Chester Becket Trail; newly blazed section of the Highlands Footpath on Gobble Mountain and onwards to the Keystone Arches and Round Top Hill to the Chester Blandford State Forest. The Round Top Hill Trail will have new informational kiosks this Spring and last summer a new lookout to the East was created.

The Chester Walks "Gem of the Valley" map originally funded by Healthy Hampshire continues to be the most popular Hilltown walking map and sets the standard as other towns have followed suit. The Cultural Council generously funded reprinting of 500 copies of the walking map last year. This year we have added some historical locations and are going to print again.

Hampden Street Park is our hidden gem. Enjoy Walker Brook while sitting on the benches eating take out lunch from Carm's Restaurant. Crosswalks have been completed as well as pedestrian signs and the trail will be officially opened complete with a ribbon cutting ceremony in the spring of 2023.

Get outdoors, stay healthy hiking or walking and enjoying the natural beauty of the Town of Chester!

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Massa



Central Hampshire Veteran Services has produced 5 episodes of our new outreach television show, which is being aired district-wide on both town websites and local access television, and can be found on YouTube under Central Hampshire Veteran Services. We also developed a letter, which we would like to distribute to selected residents of Chester, who self-identified as veterans informing them of our program. This is part of an overall effort to conduct outreach to veterans and their family members to connect them to the many benefits and services our office provides.

Last autumn, USICH, HUD, and VA jointly announced major progress in veteran homelessness reductions. Newly-released data from the 2022 Point-in-Time Count reveals an 11% decrease in veteran homelessness since 2020 and a 55.3% decrease since 2010. These declines demonstrate the success of veteran homelessness programs that are grounded in Housing First principles. The key best practice guiding this reduction has been the Housing First model. This model is central to veteran homelessness programs, including the Supportive Services for Veteran Families and the HUD-VA Supportive Housing programs. I am pleased to announce that our work locally is also seen a significant decline in veterans homelessness. The point in time count of homeless from 2018 to 2022 saw a 58% decrease within the # County Continuum of Care (CoC) and our office has assisted **many** of those veterans to get into permanent housing over the last dozen years or so.

Through our efforts as a leading member of the Western Massachusetts Veterans Outreach Project, our office has spearheaded an initiative with Cooley Dickinson Hospital (CDH) to provide improve intake and referral services for Veterans accessing the CDH system of care. CDH has identified this initiative as a major strategic priority. Known as the “Just Ask Campaign,” the initiative includes a question for patients at CDH if they or a family member have a history of military service. This question is now part of the CDH electronic medical records (EMR) system. Our office is now working as part of a collaborative that includes CDH, ServiceNet, Smith College and others to improve referral services for Veterans and their family members when accessing health care outside the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. We hope this pioneering work will be replicated elsewhere in our state.

Also, as a member of the Western Mass. Veterans Outreach Project, we are researching, planning and implementing a training conference / event to improve the lives of military and veteran family members in our western Massachusetts region for November 2023. The goal is to reach health care and behavioral health providers, first responders, law enforcement personnel, veteran organizations, veteran services representatives, school guidance counselors and educators, pastoral care and clergy, and all others who connect with family members or who interact with our broad and diverse military and Veteran community in western Massachusetts to improve their lives and well-being.

We have received a grant from the Northampton Arts Council to bring "A Stone's Throw", an art installation / performance project inspired by the ripple effect of military service on Veterans, family members, and the broader community. A visual/sonic immersive experience created in collaboration with area Veterans and families, "A Stone's Throw" lifts the voices of those in our community who are navigating the ongoing complexities of "home after war" --months, years and even decades after serving. Running for one month in A.P.E.'s Gallery, the installation will be open a minimum of 25 hours a week. At least 8 times a week, the installation will "come alive" through live performance by actors and movement artists, transporting the audience into the lives of Veterans and their families, across time and place. Additionally, we will curate a weekend of play / poetry readings and film screenings, amplifying the themes of A Stone's Throw in different mediums. We plan to cooperate with veteran service organizations across our district to bring these stories to the Valley.

Veterans' Day in the town Chester saw the return the second Annual Veterans Day lunch at the Chester Common Table and served over 60 veterans and their guests honoring the veterans in the community. It was a wonderful dinner and I was fortunate this year to be in attendance. I had the opportunity to speak to those in attendance regarding changes and improvements to benefits that Massachusetts and the federal government provide to veterans. I also left behind literature to as both a reminder and for folks to take and inform others in the community of all that is available. We were so grateful to Bob and Anne Daley for their efforts in organizing this event for another year and we look forward to working together again in 2023.

Lastly, this year many veterans and some dependents of Chester received VA compensation and pension benefits in the amount of \$55,036.00 on a monthly basis. In addition, the town was able to help several veterans and families by providing financial assistance in accordance with M.G.L. CH 115. In all, the town issued \$18,685 in benefits for FY 2021 and received 75% (14,014) of that money reimbursed from the state



CHESTER WATER DEPARTMENT

The Board of Selectmen appointed a three person Water Commission in September 2021 to address water quality and water department operational issues. The immediate issues to address were contained in a MA Department of Environmental Protection Administrative Consent Order (ACO), a legally enforceable document that listed corrective actions to be taken with assigned completion dates. The required actions included:

- Identify all distribution operator activities performed on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly schedule and include them in the Distribution Operations and Maintenance Manual by AUG 2022
- Develop a valve exercise program by FEB 2023 and implement by MAY 2023
- Submit an engineering report by 27MAY2023 for a plan to address the causes of, and corrective action to, reduce the level of disinfection byproducts in the water
- Collect a minimum of one years' worth of water sample data to assist in the preparation of the engineering report
- Submit a completed Watershed Protection Plan performed by a qualified engineer by MAY 2023
- Complete a Rate Survey and Asset Management Plan by MAY 2023

As of 30JUN2022, all ACO requirements are on track for completion by the assigned due dates.

In addition, the following activities are being taken:

- Replacing aging equipment in the water plant, such as chemical pumps and metering equipment for chlorine, pH, turbidity, and water flow
- Updating the electronic control system (SCADA) used to monitor and treat the water
- Established a Water Dept. Enterprise Fund as dedicated funding for water operations
- Aggressively locate and repair water leaks
- Pursuing a shared water operator agreement with Blandford, similar to the shared police agreement, to provide a full time water operator
- Working with Gateway Regional School on a student water operator intern program to increase the number of available water operators
- Have an approved grant to add a carbon filter layer at the water plant to improve water filtration
- Working with Baystate Forestry to conduct selective harvesting of trees located in the Horn Pond watershed to maintain the health of the watershed
- Develop and implement a routine hydrant flushing program

