

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TREASURER/COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

The treasurer/collector's office serves as the Town of Wareham's cash manager. In this role the office maintains custody of all municipal funds and possesses responsibility for the deposit, investment and disbursement of these monies. The office must administer the town's resources to ensure the availability of adequate liquid assets to pay obligations as they become due. In addition, the office plays a principal role in municipal borrowing, managing tax title accounts and supervising tax foreclosure proceedings.

The treasurer/collector's office takes custody of all monies belonging to the town and must scrupulously account for those monies. In this accounting, the office must utilize and maintain a cash book, containing a breakdown of all receipts, disbursements, and cash balances.

Other responsibilities include a major role in the issuance of municipal debt. Issuing debt requires, initially, an affirmative vote by the town's legislative authority, the town meeting. Temporary loans require a majority vote and longer-term borrowing, a two-thirds vote. Debt instruments must be signed by the treasurer/collector and countersigned by a majority of the Board of Selectmen. Upon authorization of long-term debt, the treasurer/collector negotiates borrowing, prepares documents and notes, and reports to the Director of Accounts on all debt issued.

Only the treasurer/collector's office may pay out public money. Even then, the treasurer/collector may only make payments upon the signature of the town accountant and the majority of the board of selectmen. In the case of payrolls, the department head must attest to their accuracy before the treasurer/collector may make payment.

The treasurer/collector's office is responsible for receiving, accounting for, and disbursing all payroll and personnel deduction amounts (taxes, retirement, insurance, annuities, etc.) The office must maintain custody of stabilization funds, trust funds, enterprise funds, investments, and all other funds of the town not specifically allocated to other agencies by general law or special act.

Generally, the treasurer/collector's office serves as custodian of various financial documents, such as insurance policies, fidelity bonds of other town officials, and deeds to all municipal property acquired by deed. (The town accountant serves as the custodian of contracts in the town and must also maintain a register of sureties on bonds) The office conducts sales of land of low value and prepares documents required to petition for foreclosure, when appropriate.

Ultimately, the treasurer/collector's office bears responsibility for the closing and reconciliation of all books and accounts in the office, including the cash book, warrants (including vendor, payroll, and special warrants), bank accounts (checking accounts, trust funds, and bond and coupon accounts), debt records, and tax title accounts.

The treasurer/collector's office regularly prepares all obligatory reports, including (a) cash reconciliation reports (b) reports to the accountant of all receipts and balances; reports of payroll deductions (i.e., federal withholding, state withholding, retirement funds, group insurance, credit union, union dues, etc.) (c) an annual report, which includes a statement of receipts and disbursements, a statement of debt, and a report of trust funds, and (d) reports required to be submitted to the Bureau of Accounts.

The treasurer/collector's office upon receiving commitment lists and warrants from the board of assessors and sewer commissioners must issue bills. It is the responsibility of the office to print and mail bills for real estate, personal property, district tax, betterments, special assessments, motor vehicle excise, boat excise, sewer usage, demands, fees, and other charges. State statutes provide the office with a number of procedures to collect outstanding or delinquent taxes. It is the responsibility of the treasurer/collector's office to collect those charges.