



May 5th, 2022

**Highlighting Key Municipal Investments and Programming:  
The FY22 Supplemental Budget, the FORWARD Act, and the  
Opening of the One Stop for Growth Full Application**



**In this edition:**

- **Highlighting Key Municipal Investments and Programming: The FY22 Supplemental Budget, the FORWARD Act, and the Opening of the One Stop for Growth Full Application**
- ***Ask DLS: Role of the Finance Committee, Selectboard, and Officers in Drafting and Presenting the***



Dear Municipal Official,

As a busy Spring season continues, I am eager to share significant municipal investments and programming news with you. At the beginning of April, Governor Baker signed a Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Supplemental Budget into law which included significant investments in the public health response to COVID-19, rental assistance, special education schools direct care and staffing, and human service provider rates. While the FY22 Supplemental Budget did not include the \$100 million one-time supplement to the Chapter 90 program or the \$150 million in climate change resiliency initiatives our Administration proposed back in February, we were pleased to work with our partners in the Legislature to include **\$100 million in funds for municipalities to repair winter road damage and extend COVID-19 outdoor dining policies for a year**, as originally proposed.

Last month, our Administration introduced **The Forward Act**, a **monumental \$3.5 billion economic development bill that will make transformational investments in all 351 cities and towns** and support Massachusetts' post-pandemic future by strengthening state infrastructure, creating jobs, and revitalizing downtowns. The legislation includes \$2.3 billion

***Annual Budget to  
Town Meeting***

**Important Dates &  
Information**

**FY2023 Budget Issues and  
Other Related Matters**

The Division of Local Services (DLS) Bureau of Accounts (BOA) has issued and posted Bulletin (BUL) 2022-5. This Bulletin addresses several topics that cities, towns, regional school and other districts should consider for FY2023 budgeting and other related matters.

**[BUL-2022-5: FY2023 Budget  
Issues and Other Related  
Matters](#)**

To view the bulletin, [click here](#). To access additional IGRs and Bulletins, please visit this [webpage](#). For additional information and guidance regarding emergency procedures, please visit our webpage [here](#).

**One-Time Assistance for  
Districts with Pandemic-  
Related Enrollment**

in funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and over \$1.256 billion in capital bond authorizations.

Highlights of the Forward Act include:

- \$1.2 billion in ARPA funds for climate resiliency and preservation efforts, including: \$750 million for the Commonwealth’s clean energy industry; \$232 million for 67 parks, trails, and campground projects; \$97 million for 55 coastal infrastructure projects
- Almost \$550 million for MassWorks local infrastructure project grants, including \$147 million in ARPA funds for 100 local projects and \$400 million in capital reauthorization
- \$108 million for downtown recovery grants for 246 municipalities
- \$104 million in authorization for Clean Water Trust Fund grants
- \$50 million in authorization for broadband matching funds in anticipation of competitive programs at the federal level and \$12 million in authorization for “middle mile” broadband grants
- \$325 million in ARPA funds for workforce efforts via the Unemployment Trust Fund and HireNow Program
- \$270 million in authorization to support housing production, including affordable rental housing production, public housing, climate resilient housing, and transit-oriented development

We look forward to working with the Legislature to take action on this bill quickly to ensure that municipalities have much needed recovery funds and are grateful to our partners in municipal government for their advocacy.

Lastly, I am pleased to share that the Full Application submission period for the Community One Stop for Growth, the Commonwealth’s single application portal for community development grant programs, is now open. When in the Full Application, applicants will now see an

## **Disruptions Impacting Chapter 70 Aid**

The Division of Local Services (DLS) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have jointly issued guidance regarding FY2022 One-Time Assistance for Districts with Pandemic-Related Enrollment Disruptions Impacting Chapter 70 Aid. The information provided includes the spending timeframe and purpose as well as accounting matters.

[Click here to view the DLS/DESE guidance.](#)

## **DLS Issues Two Bulletins and a Local Finance Opinion**

The Division of Local Services (DLS) Bureau of Local Assessment (BLA) has issued two new Informational Guidelines Releases (IGRs) and a Local Finance Opinion.

[IGR-2022-12 – FISCAL YEAR 2023 GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL ASSESSMENT AND ALLOCATION OF TAX LEVY](#)

IGR 2022-12 provides combined guidelines for annual determination of property assessments for

option to submit at the bottom of the menu on the left side of the screen. **As a reminder, all Full Applications may be submitted at any time, but must be submitted no later than June 3, 2022 at 11:59 p.m.** For more information on the One Stop, including the FY23 One Stop NOFA, links to each One Stop program website, and frequently asked questions, please visit [www.mass.gov/onestop](http://www.mass.gov/onestop). Along with the Legislature, our Administration looks forward to celebrating One Stop awardees across Massachusetts when notifications of awards and announcements occur this fall.

Sincerely,

Karyn E. Polito  
Lieutenant Governor

## ***Ask DLS: Role of the Finance Committee, Selectboard, and Officers in Drafting and Presenting the Annual Budget to Town Meeting***

This month's *Ask DLS* features frequently asked questions concerning the role of the finance committee and selectboard in drafting and presenting the annual budget to town meeting. Please let us know if you have other areas of interest or send a question to [cityandtown@dor.state.ma.us](mailto:cityandtown@dor.state.ma.us). We would like to hear from you.

### **What is the role of the finance committee?**

[G.L. c. 39, §16](#) provides that towns whose aggregate property values exceed one million dollars *shall*, and in small towns may by bylaw, establish an appropriation, advisory, or a finance committee (collectively finance committee). The finance committee shall make reports and recommendations to the town and is primarily responsible for submitting its recommendations on the annual budget to town meeting. [G.L. c. 39, §16](#). In towns that do not have a finance committee, the selectboard is responsible for submitting its

certification and interim years, classification of property according to usage class, calculation of the minimum residential factor and allocation of the tax levy among the property classes for Fiscal Year 2023. [Click here to view the IGR.](#)

[IGR-2022-13 – FISCAL YEAR 2023 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING ANNUAL LEVY LIMIT INCREASE FOR TAX BASE GROWTH](#)

IGR 2022-13 describes procedures and forms for reporting tax base growth and adjusting levy limits for FY2023. [Click here to view the IGR.](#)

[LFO-2022-2 - EXEMPTION ELIGIBILITY WHEN PROPERTY IS HELD IN TRUST](#)

The Municipal Finance Law Bureau (MFLB) has issued a new Local Finance Opinion (LFO) 2022-2 concerning exemption eligibility when property is held in trust. [Click here to view the LFO.](#)

To access IGRs, LFOs and Bulletins, please visit this [webpage](#).

**Bulletins on Coronavirus**

recommendations on the annual budget to town meeting. [G.L. c. 39, §16](#). Additionally, towns may provide by bylaw that the selectboard is responsible for submitting its recommendations on the annual budget to town meeting. [G.L. c. 39, §16](#). Many towns have enacted specific bylaws that establish its local finance committee in order to meet the community's specific needs.

The finance committee is typically involved in budget preparation, developing budget forms and, in many communities, establishing budgetary guidelines for department heads. Prior to town meeting, the finance committee often conducts budget hearings to allow a more extensive review of the budget. The finance committee "shall after due consideration designate the amounts which in their opinion should be appropriated for the ensuing fiscal year, and shall accompany the same with such explanations and suggestions in relation thereto as they may deem desirable for the proper information of the inhabitants." [G.L. c. 41, § 60](#). The finance committee, in addition to presenting the proposed annual budget, is responsible for considering and making recommendations to town meeting on all other non-budgetary articles. [G.L. c. 39, §16](#). It may reasonably be argued that little comes before town meeting that does not have a potential fiscal impact on the town.

**What is the role of the selectboard?**

A major role of the selectboard should be to coordinate the roles of all players in the financial management process and to promote a team approach in resolving fiscal issues. The selectboard should participate in the budget process, directly reviewing budget requests and having input at all levels of the process. As the chief executive body of the town, the selectboard members develop and implement policy. It is important that they develop consistent budget guidelines, at the same time taking into consideration the available financial resources of the municipality.

Because the budget is usually the single most important policy document a town develops each year, participation by

## Relief Fund

The Division of Local Services Bureau of Accounts has issued and posted the following two bulletins:

### [BUL-2022-3: Coronavirus Relief Fund – Municipal Program Denied Costs at Audit](#)

This Bulletin outlines procedures for COVID-19 expenses deemed ineligible during of the audit performed by the Executive Office for Administration and Finance's Federal Funds Office on the use of CvRF-MP funds.

### [BUL-2022-4: Veterans' Cost of Living Adjustment Chapter 115 Funds](#)

This Bulletin outlines procedures to account for additional FY2022 Veterans' Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Chapter 115 Funds in a special revenue fund.

To access additional IGRs and Bulletins, please visit this [webpage](#). For additional information and guidance regarding emergency procedures, please visit our webpage [here](#).

the selectboard is essential to their leadership role in town government. The selectboard should have input concerning the budget's format, they should review all budget requests and familiarize themselves with the finance committee's position on the budget. The selectboard, in cooperation with the finance committee, should also establish policy priorities and provide leadership in the ongoing debate between the needs of municipal departments for sufficient resources to deliver public services and the needs of the taxpayers to receive adequate services at a cost they can afford.

### **How do town officers cooperatively fulfill their roles in the budget process?**

Coordination among department heads and the major fiscal officers of the town is very important. The selectboard, department heads, and other officers authorized to spend money must furnish detailed estimates of expenses and revenues in their department for the ensuing fiscal year by 10 days before the end of the calendar year or 90 days before the start of the annual town meeting, whichever is later. [G.L. c. 41, § 59](#). These estimates must be provided to the town accountant, or if none, to the finance committee, or if none, to the selectboard. [G.L. c. 41, § 59](#). The accountant tabulates the data and provides the results to the finance committee or selectboard. [G.L. c. 41, § 60](#). The finance committee or selectboard considers and submits a written report of recommended appropriations at or before town meeting. [G.L. c. 41, § 60](#).

The finance committee and selectboard should both be aware of and cooperate with the actions of each other as their responsibilities are intertwined. There are many opportunities for cooperation between the selectboard and the finance committee, including the following: developing financial forecasts, establishing an appropriate budget and capital planning process, developing joint guidelines by which departmental requests will be reviewed, holding joint budget hearings with department heads and establishing policies regarding the use of free cash and stabilization funds. In addition, the selectboard with the approval of the

## **Informational Guidelines Releases (IGRs) Concerning Personal Property Audits and Intermunicipal Assessing Agreements**

The Division of Local Services  
Municipal Finance Law  
Bureau has issued two new  
Informational Guidelines  
Releases (IGRs) concerning  
personal property audits and  
intermunicipal assessing  
agreements.

### [IGR 2022-10 Personal Property Audits](#)

IGR 2022-10 explains  
procedures for auditing  
personal property tax returns  
(also referred to as “true  
lists” or “forms of lists”) for  
the purpose of verifying that  
a complete and accurate  
accounting of personal  
property subject to tax has  
been made. Procedures for  
making omitted and revised  
assessments resulting from  
audits are also explained.

### [IGR 2022-11 Intermunicipal Assessing Agreements](#)

IGR 2022-11 provides boards  
of assessors and other city  
and town officials with  
information on entering into  
intermunicipal agreements to

finance committee may make some budget transfers during the last two months of the fiscal year and first 15 days of the next fiscal year in order to close out the town’s financial records. [G.L. c. 44, § 33B](#). The two bodies should work together closely. By agreeing on processes and procedures ahead of time, both boards will save time and can resolve disagreements during the budget process.

## **What is the role of the town meeting?**

The town meeting is the appropriating authority and is not bound by the finance committee’s recommendations. *Young v. Town of Westport*, 302 Mass. 597, 20 N.E.2d 404 (1939). As the appropriating authority, town meeting approves the annual budget and — by approval of appropriations — authorizes specific expenditures. The initial town budget is approved at annual town meeting prior to the July 1 commencement of the fiscal year. The town meeting may subsequently on its own initiative transfer appropriations by majority vote, if not expended or encumbered.

Town meeting must also approve the issuance of debt. A two-thirds vote of the meeting is required for this purpose. Approval of town meeting by two-thirds vote is also necessary to establish a stabilization fund or change the purpose of the fund. A majority vote of town meeting is required to appropriate money into the fund and a two-thirds vote of town meeting is required to make appropriations from the stabilization fund. Town meeting may also enact additional by-laws concerning the financial management and organization of the town. As the legislative body, town meeting ratifies major policies concerning the financial management of the municipality.

Note: The above summary does not reflect an exhaustive summary of all relevant laws and is only intended as general guidance. As stated above, each town may further define its local process through bylaw, and for this reason, town counsel should be consulted with respect to interpreting a town’s charter, bylaws, procedures, and requirements.

share assessing functions through common boards and administrative staff.

To access IGRs, LFOs and Bulletins, please visit this [webpage](#).

### **DCR Seeks Summer Lifeguards**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation is seeking lifeguards at agency-managed waterfronts and pools across the state for the summer season. Pay starts at \$21/hour; and positions are available five days per week, 40 hours per week, weekends included. Additionally, lifeguards who sign on by March 27 will receive a \$500 signing bonus and those who remain guarding for the duration of the season with DCR will also receive an additional \$500 bonus at the end of the season. Interested candidates 16 years and older can find additional information by visiting the DCR [lifeguard webpage](#). To apply to be a lifeguard, please visit the [application webpage](#). To assist DCR in safeguarding local swimming destinations in your area, please share with any interested



applicants seeking summer employment.

### **Cybersecurity Health Check Program**

The Office of Municipal and School Technology provides the following program available to Massachusetts municipalities and schools. If you have any questions, please contact

[Catherine.Marques@mass.gov](mailto:Catherine.Marques@mass.gov)

[v](#)

[Cybersecurity Health Check](#)

The Cybersecurity Health Check Program provides opportunities for local government to access basic cyber security services at no cost. These services can be a good first step in discovering, assessing and identifying cybersecurity gaps that could impact IT systems that support essential business functions. This is a rolling application.

### **DLS Links:**

[COVID-19 Resources and Guidance for Municipal Officials](#)



[Events & Training Calendar](#)

[Municipal Finance Training  
and Resource Center](#)

[Local Officials Directory](#)

[Municipal Databank](#)

[Informational Guideline  
Releases \(IGRs\)](#)

[Bulletins](#)

[Tools and Financial  
Calculators](#)



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