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# City and Town

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## Energy Cost Management

Scott Dressel

In an era of ever-tightening budgets, cities and towns across the Commonwealth are faced with the prospect of diverting a growing percentage of their resources to the funding of fixed costs such as health insurance, pension, and energy. The article offers a framework that will help communities take control of, and even reduce, their energy costs.

Saving energy dollars is not necessarily limited to turning off lights at night or adjusting thermostats. While larger scale energy efficiency programs often stall due to perceived cost barriers, communities and organizations around the country have committed to continuously improving their energy performance. As a result, they have produced significant cost savings, freeing up funds for other worthwhile needs. For example, according to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, "efficiency initiatives in Medford's municipal buildings are generating annual cost savings of more than \$50,000 per year, while installations of photovoltaic systems at city hall and Hormel Stadium ... are focusing attention on the benefits of clean energy technologies."

A wealth of information and resources, including technological solutions, financing innovations, and proven management strategies are now available through state and federal government agencies, non-profit groups, and private sector contractors. Effectively tapping these resources requires an ongoing commitment to improving energy cost management. This means establishing policies and procedures that draw from the expertise of employees and citizens, using past performance to formulate goals and an action plan, and

incorporating progress evaluations to ensure success on a continuing basis.

### The Energy Team/Committee

Fully addressing the issue will require the input and commitment of individuals with expertise in areas such as facilities management, contracting, and engineering. Building an energy team that includes members with these backgrounds is important because they will bring an understanding of how to measure energy use and inefficiencies as well as how to best identify and implement technical solutions. Furthermore, the employees and students who have the most direct understanding of, and impact on, how the town's energy is consumed should be represented. They will be key in implementing awareness campaigns, communicating progress, and developing incentives.

Energy Star, a government/industry partnership administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, has developed a variety of comprehensive guides, peer networks, and benchmarking tools to educate and assist organizations in improving energy efficiency. According to Energy Star, successful energy teams accomplish the following:

- Assess energy performance
- Set goals and create action plan
- Evaluate progress
- Recognize achievement

### Assess Performance

The energy team, or its designee, should collect energy use information and document data over time. A good understanding of how and where energy is consumed is vital to implementing cost

improvements and changes. It will help in identifying high performing facilities for recognition and replicable practices. It will also allow for a better prioritization of poor performing facilities for improvement. Thirdly, it will develop a historical perspective and context for future actions and decisions.

Some communities contract out to utilities or energy service companies to conduct thorough energy audits. Other communities use in-house expertise to assess and analyze their energy performance. Energy Star has a variety of self-assessment tools and other helpful tips on its website: [Energy Star: tools & resources](#). Also, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers a wealth of useful advice and tools through the [Re-build Massachusetts Program](#) as well as the [Massachusetts Technology Collaborative](#).

### Set Goals & Create Action Plan

Once performance information has been assessed and analyzed, the energy team should work to set clear and

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### From the Deputy Commissioner

On March 31, 2006, Governor Romney signed House Bill 4752, "An Act Regulating the Financial Conditions in the Athol-Royalston Regional School District."

The Athol-Royalston Regional School District (ARRSD) is a pre-kindergarten through grade twelve public school district, which includes the towns of Athol (pop. 11,673) and Royalston (pop. 1,354). It consists of one elementary school located in Royalston, and five elementary schools, a middle and a high school located in Athol. Student population is approximately 2,200 students. An elected 10-member school committee (two from Royalston, eight from Athol) governs ARRSD. It appoints the superintendent, the chief operating officer for the district. In FY2006, the district's operating budget is approximately \$22 million.

The legislation was written and passed in order to remedy the district's recurrent financial problems, including a deficit approaching \$1 million. Highlights of the recent legislation are the availability of \$1 million in 10-year deficit notes and a Finance Advisory Board that would be in existence until June 30, 2008.

The Athol-Royalston legislation is crafted after the law that established the Finance Advisory Board for the Nashoba Regional School District in the fall of 2002. At that time, Nashoba was experiencing financial problems that reached near crisis proportions. That board dissolved in June 2005, with the district having successfully overcome its financial problems.

**Gerard D. Perry**  
Deputy Commissioner

# Legal

## Bid Law Violation Voids Contract

**James Crowley**

Is a construction company entitled to damages when the contract is terminated due to the municipality's own failure to comply with the bid laws? No, said the Appeals Court in the case of *Baltazar Contractors, Inc. v. Town of Lunenburg*, 65 Mass. App. Ct. 718 (2006).

In June 2002 the Town of Lunenburg sought bids for a sewer construction project. The public bid law (M.G.L. Ch. 30 Sec. 39M) states that contracts must be advertised as provided in M.G.L. Ch. 149 Sec. 44J. Specifically, the municipality must (1) post a notice inviting bids in its offices, (2) publish the notice in the Secretary of State's central register, and (3) advertise the bid notice in a local newspaper of general circulation. In the case at hand, the town adhered to most of the bid requirements but failed to place the advertisement in the local newspaper. After bids were submitted, Baltazar Contractors, Inc. (Baltazar) was selected since it was the lowest bidder. A contract was then signed wherein the town accountant certified that an appropriation in the amount of the contract was available for expenditure. The certification was made in accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 44 Sec. 31C. Baltazar was unaware at the time that the town did not advertise in the local newspaper. Under the agreement, the contractor would begin work as soon as the town sent a written "Notice to Proceed." Although town officials subsequently held discussions with Baltazar, the town never issued a "Notice to Proceed."

In August 2002 the Department of Environmental Protection informed the town that its state funds were at risk due to its failure to advertise in the local newspaper. Shortly thereafter, in September 2002, the town notified Baltazar that it

### in Our Opinion

was terminating the contract due to improper notice. When the town again solicited bids, another firm as low bidder was awarded the contract. Baltazar immediately filed a lawsuit seeking damages on the theory that its contract with the town was enforceable despite the lack of a local newspaper advertisement as required by M.G.L. Ch. 149 Sec. 44J.

A lower court judge ruled in favor of the town, and the case was appealed. At issue for the Appeals Court was whether Baltazar's contract was void as a matter of law. The Appeals Court relied on the prior decision of *Phipps Products Corp. v. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority*, 387 Mass. 687 (1982) where the Supreme Judicial Court had announced the general rule that failure to comply with the statutory bidding requirements would render a contract void. According to the Supreme Judicial Court, the rationale for the public notice requirements was to prevent favoritism, assure honesty, obtain the best price and treat all parties equally. In *Phipps*, the Supreme Judicial Court invalidated a contract for the sale of Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) property since the MBTA failed to comply with public bidding requirements by advertising the sale in a newspaper of general circulation. The Supreme Judicial Court found the violation of the bid laws to be significant. In the case at hand, the Appeals Court permitted the Town of Lunenburg to argue the bidding process was defective even though the town by its own actions had not complied with the bidding statute. With *Phipps* as precedent, the Appeals Court ruled the contract was void since the public interest predominates and overrides any other concerns.

The Appeals Court briefly dismissed Baltazar's next argument. With regard to the contract's certification language as

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# Focus

## on Municipal Finance

### Public Library Funding

**Dianne Carty, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Head of State Aid and Data Coordination**

Serving the residents of Massachusetts, there are 370 public libraries in 348 of its 351 cities and towns.

#### Operating Income

In the most recent fiscal year ending on June 30, 2005, public libraries received \$196,896,026 or 90 percent of their operating income through local appropriations. The other sources used by public libraries to fund daily operations include trust and endowment income, state and federal income and other sources such as gifts and donations. (See Chart 1)

Looking at public library funding from another perspective, in FY2004, municipalities reported to the Division of Local

Services through the Schedule A that \$181,598,078 or 1.20 percent of their total expenditures went to the public library for operations. (See Chart 2)

Fiscally speaking, it has been an arduous several years for cities and towns. It has been particularly difficult for those municipal departments that receive the smaller share, and at 1.2 percent of the municipal budget, public libraries cannot compete with larger programs like education.

#### Operating Expenditures

Public libraries, as part of the application for State Aid to Public Libraries, annually report fiscal, staffing and program information. While not all of the public libraries in Massachusetts report this information, for FY2005, 364 out of 370 (98 percent) did provide information. At \$148,265,462, salaries

and benefits account for 68 percent, the lion's share of public library expenditures. (See Chart 3)

#### State Aid to Public Libraries

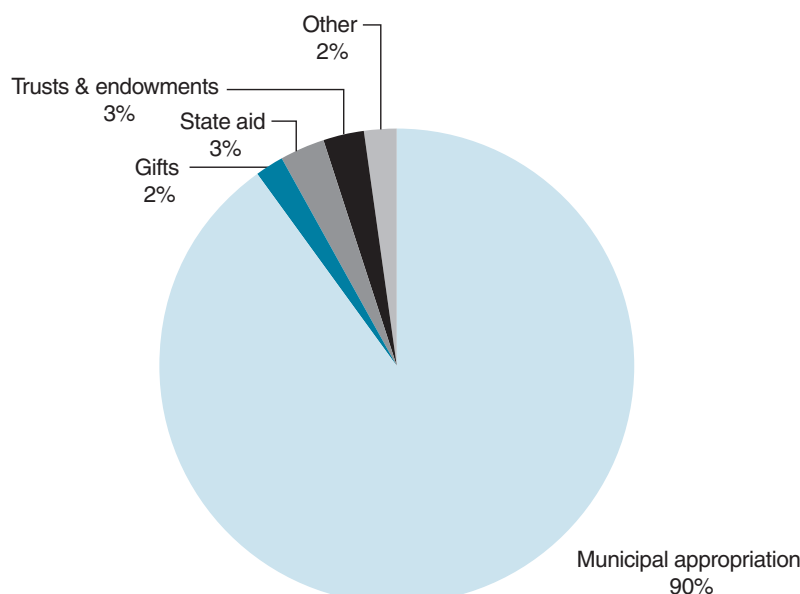
State aid is available to all municipal libraries that apply and are certified annually by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) as meeting a municipal appropriation requirement and certain minimum standards of free public library service per M.G.L. Ch. 78, Secs. 19A & 19B and 605 CMR 4.00. State Aid to Public Libraries consists of the Library Incentive Grant (LIG), the Municipal Equalization Grant (MEG) and the Nonresident Circulation Offset (NRC). These three awards are disbursed to each municipality meeting the requirements using different formulas (per capita for the LIG; variant of the lottery formula that uses population and EQV for the MEG; and per transaction formula for the NRC). The FY2006 appropriation to the Board for State Aid to Public Libraries was \$9,039,844 and was distributed to 341 municipalities.

The purpose of State Aid to Public Libraries is to encourage municipalities to support and improve public library service; compensate for disparities among municipal funding capacities; and offset the cost of circulating public library materials to residents of other Massachusetts municipalities certified to receive state aid.

#### Use of State Aid

State Aid to Public Libraries has always been listed as an offset item on the annual Cherry Sheet distributed by the Department of Revenue. Because of this classification as an offset item and annual budget language stating that "any payment made under this appropriation ... shall be expended by the public library ... without appropria-

**FY2005 Sources of Operating Income for Public Libraries**



\$221,834,636 total operating income reported by 364 libraries.

Chart 1

[continued on page four](#)

## Public Library Funding

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## FY2004 Massachusetts Municipal Pie

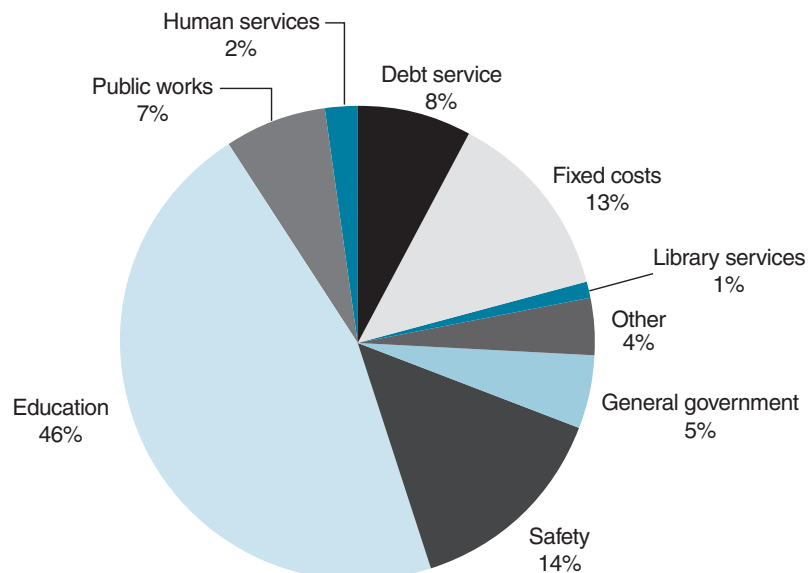
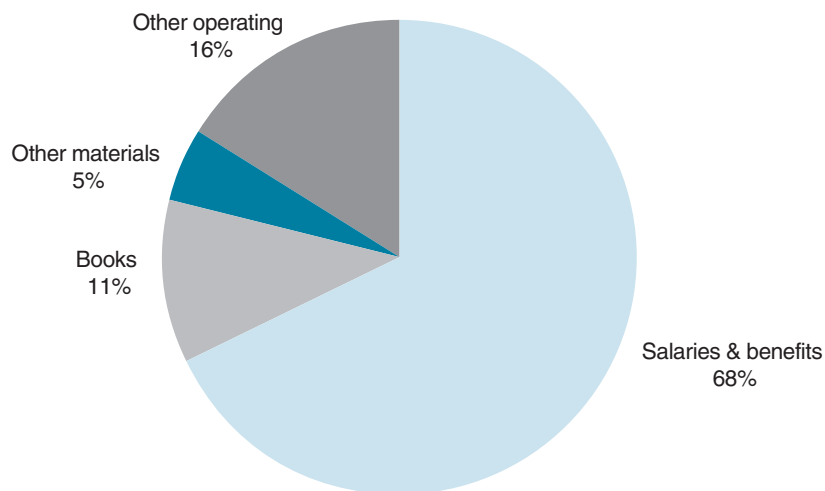


Chart 2

## FY2005 Public Library Operating Expenditures



\$215,093,378 total operating expenditures reported by 364 libraries.

Chart 3

tion," state aid received by a municipality under the authority of this program can be spent for any library expenditure without appropriation.

Most library directors, at least 60 percent, report that they use State Aid to Public Libraries to purchase library materials for their users. Other uses for State Aid are split fairly equally between staffing, capital projects, programming, save for the future and other uses.

Local library officials were recently asked the question, "Why is State Aid to Public Libraries important to you?" Their responses include:

"By becoming full members of an automated resource sharing network we have seen dramatic increases in our network charges. State Aid is critical for maintaining our full member status."

"As a small public library, State Aid is absolutely essential to supplement town budget. Our entire programming and nearly one quarter of our materials budget comes from State Aid and donations."

"It is vital to our operation. It allows us to provide services, programs and increased hours beyond our limited budget and benefits every member of our community."

In FY2005, State Aid to Public Libraries represented a little over 3 percent of all public library operating income.

Complete public library data for Massachusetts and information about the State Aid to Public Libraries program is available on the [MBLC website](#).

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners is the state agency that administers state and federal funds to public libraries in Massachusetts. The Board is comprised of nine members appointed by the governor and works with a staff of 26. ■

**Editor's note:** This article represents the opinions and conclusions of the author and not those of the Department of Revenue.



## Energy Cost Management

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measurable goals. These goals will help to gauge the success of the energy management program. Furthermore, they will foster ownership of energy management, thus helping to motivate employees, volunteers and community members.

The energy team will then need to design an action plan that will close the gap between current performance and the decided upon goals. It will be up to the team to research and understand what types of energy saving activities or projects are most relevant to the community's needs given the results of the performance assessment. Programs may include projects as large as major capital improvements, or as small as campaigns to influence energy-use behavior. However, a key element to all successful energy action plans is the incorporation of cost-benefit analyses that measures potential energy savings against the resources needed to implement each part of the program. Such analyses will also be helpful in communicating the value of the program to decision makers and taxpayers.

The town of Brookline's [Climate Action Plan](#) is an excellent illustration of how cost-benefit analysis can be incorporated into the overall strategy and effectively presented to the public. The plan includes a [table](#) that lists all of the existing and proposed initiatives, the estimated annual cost savings associated with each, and the estimated implementation cost.

The Energy Star website offers valuable, yet free, tools (including a [cash flow opportunity calculator](#)) to help estimate the cost-benefit impacts of different projects. An expanded list of tools and resources can be found at [Energy Star: tools & resources](#).

In studying costs, the team would be responsible for researching innovative financing sources and tools. For example, some utility companies offer rebates that can greatly reduce the cost of efficiency improvements. The city of New-

ton received rebates from NSTAR Electric that paid for 80 percent of the city's energy efficient lighting program:

*As of 2004, forty public buildings had been retrofitted at a cost of \$550,000, with NSTAR providing 80 percent of this amount (\$414,000). Newton's investment of \$136,000 is saving 700,000 kilowatt hours every year, or about \$70,000 per year at current energy prices (City of Newton: Energy Action Plan).*

In some cases, grants and/or tax incentives may be available to lessen the upfront cost impact of energy efficiency projects. [The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative](#) summarizes many of these financial supports on its website.

Furthermore, the following two articles detail popular mechanisms for financing energy efficiency projects: "[Innovative Financing Solutions: Finding Money For Your Energy Efficiency Projects](#)" and "[Easy Access to Energy Improvement Funds in the Public Sector](#)". The energy team should carefully study these and other mechanisms that can greatly reduce, or eliminate the upfront costs of energy efficiency projects.

Finally, a vital component of any action plan will be a strategy to raise awareness. A communication plan should be developed to inform and build support among those who consume the energy as well as the taxpayers who fund its cost. Many organizations have created incentives that encourage their employees to improve energy management. An effective awareness campaign will incorporate both motivation and education. For example, most people are not aware that activating the power management features on a computer and monitor can save up to \$100 annually per workstation (see [Energy Star: Power Management](#)). Nor do they realize that 25 percent more energy may be required to distribute air if your vents are blocked by furniture, files, stacks of paper, etc. Simply posting such [energy-saving tips](#) is a good start in changing wasteful behavior. How-

ever, as Patty Barry, the head of Medford's Energy and Environment Office, points out, "while people may be gung-ho at first, we need to keep following up on a continuing basis. Ongoing education is key."

### Evaluate Progress

A commitment to energy management means regularly reassessing performance. Measuring the effectiveness of projects and programs will help in making informed decisions about future energy initiatives. As the energy program pare its progress to pre-program baselines, as well as against the established goals. Many organizations also compare energy usage to peers in order to establish a relative understanding of where their performance ranks. Once again, Energy Star and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (among others) offer valuable resources in developing suitable benchmarks that can be compared to similar projects, buildings, and local governments.

### Recognize Achievement

"Providing and seeking recognition for energy management achievements is a proven step for sustaining momentum and support for your program" (Energy Star: Guidelines for Energy Management). Giving recognition to individuals and groups within the organization who help achieve energy goals will motivate the staff and students, as well as bring positive exposure to the energy management program. Obtaining recognition from outside sources, such as the Energy Star Awards program, will highlight and validate the importance of the program. The energy team should determine how the different forms of recognition would be most effective at various levels in the organization, and incorporate them into the action plan.

This article, including links to energy cost management resources, and other "Best Practices" can be found on the [Technical Assistance website](#). ■

## Reminder to Assessors and Clerks

The Division of Local Services (DLS) requires that city and town clerks notify the Division of various election or appointment results.

In order for the Division to maintain a list of qualified assessors, each municipality must annually complete a summary form.

Once annual elections are over, assessors or clerks should return a copy of the "Assessors Qualification Summary" to Debra Joyce at: Division of Local Services, 40 Southbridge Street, Room 210, Worcester, MA 01608. Fax: 508-421-2310. If you have any questions concerning this requirement, please call Ms. Joyce at 508-792-7300 x22315.

The Division also requires that city and town clerks notify the Municipal Data Management/Technical Assistance Bureau of the results of all questions placed before the voters concerning Proposition 2½. This includes override or underide questions as well as debt or capital exclusion questions. The Division requires the results of all questions, whether or not the voters approved the question. Please send or fax the results to Municipal Data Bank, PO Box 9569, Boston, MA 02114. Fax: 617-626-2330.

We thank all city and town clerks in advance for their cooperation and assistance as we maintain the accuracy of our records ■.

## Bid Law Violation Voids Contract

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found in M.G.L. Ch. 44 Sec. 31C, the Appeals Court wrote that the town accountant's certification merely assures that the appropriation is sufficient and does not operate to validate a contract that is otherwise void.

The Appeals Court did recognize that a technical violation of the bid laws would not always invalidate a contract. For example, in *LeClair v. Town of Norwell*, 430 Mass. 328 (1999), the Supreme Judicial Court upheld a town's contract with a design firm where the designer selection statute (M.G.L. Ch. 7 Secs. 38A½–38O) did not expressly void a contract in the event of some technical violation of the statute. The Supreme Judicial Court also wrote that voiding the contract might harm the town since Norwell would risk the loss of State School Building Assistance funds. Unlike the situation in *LeClair*, the Appeals Court noted in this case that violation of the notice provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 149 Sec. 44J could lead to fine or imprisonment. In addition, the Appeals Court ob-

served that, by seeking new bids, the Town of Lunenburg received a lower bid than originally offered by Baltazar. Consequently, in the view of the Appeals Court, it was in the public interest to void the Baltazar contract in favor of the newer contract with the better price.

The Appeals Court also rejected Baltazar's second claim for damages under the theory of *quantum meruit* ("as much as he deserved") for costs incurred by the company at the verbal urging of town officials. According to the Court, Baltazar could not avoid the strict provisions of the statute by providing services and then expecting payment. Compliance with the statutory provisions was an essential prerequisite for payment.

Accordingly, the Appeals Court affirmed the lower court decision rejecting Baltazar's claim since invalidation of the contract was required to satisfy the legislative purpose in prescribing bid procedures. ■

# DLS Update

## FY2006 Sewer Rate Relief Awards

Awards were recently released from the Commonwealth Sewer Rate Relief Fund for FY2006. The Fund was established in 1993 to mitigate sewer rate increases due to debt service obligations for qualified sewer construction projects.

The Division of Local Services (DLS) in consultation with the Department of En-

vironmental Protection (DEP) administers the program. For FY2006, the balance in the Fund from the prior year and the FY2006 state budget appropriation provided for awards calculated at \$12,491,301, up from \$9,978,667 in FY2005.

For FY2006, based on applications received and reviewed by DLS and DEP, the following awards were granted: Massachusetts Water Resources Author-

ity (MWRA), \$9,630,651; two local Water and Sewer Commissions for a total of \$343,850; Five Sewer Districts for a total of \$457,415; and 84 cities and towns for a total of \$2,059,385.

Since FY1994, the sewer rate relief program has distributed over \$446 million. ■

### Sewer Rate Relief Fund for FY2006

Governmental unit	FY2006 project aid	Governmental unit	FY2006 project aid	Governmental unit	FY2006 project aid
Abington	\$ 36,216	Fitchburg	\$ 37,348	North Attleborough	\$ 28,375
Amesbury	17,749	Franklin	11,062	North Brookfield	7,712
Andover	77,917	Gardner	5,072	Northfield	2,944
Ashfield	1,204	Grafton	17,284	Oxford-Rochdale Sewer District	2,088
Athol	3,318	Great Barrington	15,752	Palmer	6,723
Attleboro	17,162	Groton	470	Peabody	10,033
Auburn	19,343	Hingham	5,730	Pepperell	21,525
Ayer	25,402	Holbrook	39,106	Plymouth	9,105
Barnstable	15,445	Holyoke	3,867	Raynham	18,469
Barre	10,407	Hopkinton	13,349	Rockland	26,347
Bellingham	12,787	Hudson	2,666	Rockport	20,029
Billerica	130,127	Lowell	23,813	Rutland	1,602
Boston Water and Sewer Commission	275,571	Lynn Water and Sewer Commission	68,279	Salisbury	26,806
Boxborough	467	Malden	778	South Essex Sewerage District	378,335
Braintree	19,824	Manchester-by-the-Sea	1,219	Somerset	11,138
Brockton	20,653	Marion	14,742	Southwick	17,181
Brookline	21,134	Marshfield	13,903	Sturbridge	22,363
Cambridge	240,386	Mass. Water Resources Authority	9,630,651	Templeton	5,393
Canton	20,770	Mattapoiset	3,963	Tewksbury	54,754
Charlemont Sewer District	654	Merrimac	9,837	Upper Blackstone WPA District	64,442
Charlton	13,274	Methuen	8,731	Wakefield	4,536
Chelmsford	138,653	Milford	15,372	Walpole	5,653
Chelsea	23,681	Millbury	11,350	Waltham	14,497
Cherry Valley Sewer District	11,896	Montague	2,319	West Springfield	14,777
Cohasset	11,458	Natick	13,002	West Stockbridge	2,659
Danvers	15,165	Needham	19,738	Westborough	17,852
Dartmouth	16,144	New Bedford	175,648	Westfield	11,262
Dracut	45,659	Newburyport	10,860	Weymouth	66,953
Dudley	9,620	Newton	2,541	Whitman	20,539
Edgartown	36,909	North Andover	24,607	Worcester	56,007
Fairhaven	27,586			<b>Total awards</b>	<b>\$12,491,301</b>
Fall River	21,562			<b>Total recipients</b>	<b>92</b>

Table 1

# DLS Update

## Statewide Contracts Available to Municipalities

### Operational Services Division Offers Free Statewide Contract Sessions

Many public and quasi-public entities are entitled to utilize the Commonwealth's Statewide Contracts. Using these contracts provides several benefits to a municipality by leveraging the Commonwealth's central purchasing power.

Understanding the process can sometimes be daunting, therefore the Operational Services Division (OSD) Outreach staff is available to present information about Statewide Contracts including where to find them and how to use them.

If you are interested in having a presentation or would like additional information please contact [Pam Brasill](#), Outreach Coordinator at OSD at 617-720-3117.

If you would like to subscribe to the e-mail list for monthly publication updates on Statewide Contract Education Sessions please send a blank e-mail to [OSD](#).

For access to online Statewide Contract information please visit either the [OSD website](#) or the [Commonwealth Procurement Access and Solicitation System website](#).

### Statewide Contract for Natural Gas

OSD has hired the energy consulting team of SAIC/World Energy to assist in the establishment of this contract. The team of SAIC/World Energy combines market intelligence, Internet-based procurement tools, and a best practices process proven to be the most effective in the market. As the largest online energy broker in the US with over \$1 billion in transactions, World Energy is the market leader in competitive online procurements. Together, the SAIC/World

Energy team's transparent and auditable process has resulted in over \$700 million in electricity and natural gas supply contract awards by federal and state government entities serving thousands of facilities Nationwide.

SAIC/World Energy, in conjunction with OSD, will market this program to those Eligible Entities that have opted to participate, meet and gather requirements and account information from client agencies, gather and review data from the utilities regarding Consumption, develop the Request for Response and establish qualification criteria.

OSD's intention is to establish a pool of qualified suppliers through a qualification process. The energy contract will be awarded to the supplier offering the lowest bid.

This solicitation will involve large natural gas accounts, with total annual expenditures of over \$60,000 for each account. Municipalities may participate in this process, but will be required to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OSD, which obligates the city or town to accept the terms and pricing that the Commonwealth accepts.

If you are interested in participating in this solicitation, please e-mail [James Ferri](#), Contract Manager-Energy, an expression of interest along with the name, phone number and e-mail address of a contact person. OSD will have the consultant team contact you.

## Senate Ways & Means Budget Proposal

[The FY07 local aid estimates](#) based on the Senate Ways & Means (SWM) budget proposal have been posted to the Division of Local Services' web site.

Please be advised that these estimates are based on the appropriation levels appearing in the SWM FY07 budget proposal and may change as the legislative process unfolds and proposed appropriation levels change.

In consultation with the Department of Education, we have removed the Racial Equality program from the Cherry Sheet this year, as it is actually a grant that has no impact on the local tax rate setting process. It is important to note that the funding from this program is still in the state budget. Additional information about Racial Equality Grants can be found at the [Department of Education website](#).

Local officials should be aware of the periodic updates to the Charter School Tuition Assessment and Reimbursement programs. The Governor's Budget Proposal used October 1, 2005 enrollments, expected growth in grade structure, and assumptions about local school spending to project FY07 tuition assessments and reimbursements. Similar assumptions are reflected in the SWM proposal, except that the enrollment numbers reflect anticipated FY07 enrollment submitted by charter schools to DOE in March. Subsequent Charter Tuition Assessments and Reimbursements could be impacted by changes made by the legislature or minor enrollment and tuition rate adjustments.

For additional information about how the estimates were determined and what may cause them to change in the future, please refer to the narrative link associated with each account by clicking on the program name.

If you have questions about these estimates please call Lisa Juszkiwicz at 617-626-2386, Jared Curtis at 617-626-2320 or Donnette Benvenuto at 617-626-2360. ■



# DLS Update

## DOR Audit Division Extends Thank You

All agencies and political subdivisions of the Commonwealth, including municipalities, must file with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) an annual list of all new and renewed licenses to conduct a business, trade or profession during the previous calendar year. The information is submitted via the DOR's Audit Division online Annual License Information Form (ALIF) and is due **by March 31**. The Department of Revenue's Audit Division would like to extend a thank you to the 238 cities and towns that have complied with this requirement.

DOR uses this license information to identify businesses and individuals that have not registered to collect and/or remit tax. While this is a very small percentage of the business community, the revenue the Commonwealth is missing is significant. Since almost one quarter of all revenue collected by DOR is distributed to cities and towns via local aid, the DOR hopes that the municipalities will see this program as a partnership that benefits both the agency and the communities. DOR's Child Support Enforcement Division has also begun using the list of licenses to identify business owners that owe past due child support payments.

The online application can be found on the DOR website. For more information concerning this program, please contact Erin Botelho at 617-887-6863 or Lisa Magno at 617-887-6879. ■

## ALIF Compliant List

Abington	Dracut	Huntington	Northborough	Stow
Acushnet	Dudley	Ipswich	Northbridge	Sudbury
Adams	Dunstable	Kingston	Northfield	Sunderland
Agawam	Duxbury	Lancaster	Norton	Sutton
Amesbury	East Bridgewater	Lawrence	Norwell	Taunton
Amherst	East Brookfield	Lee	Norwood	Templeton
Andover	East Long-meadow	Lenox	Oak Bluffs	Tewksbury
Arlington	Eastham	Leominster	Oakham	Topsfield
Ashburnham	Easthampton	Leverett	Orange	Townsend
Ashby	Easton	Lexington	Oxford	Truro
Ashfield	Edgartown	Littleton	Palmer	Tyngsborough
Athol	Egremont	Longmeadow	Paxton	Upton
Auburn	Everett	Ludlow	Peabody	Uxbridge
Avon	Fairhaven	Lunenburg	Pelham	Wakefield
Barnstable	Falmouth	Lynn	Pepperell	Wales
Barre	Fitchburg	Lynnfield	Peru	Walpole
Becket	Florida	Manchester	Petersham	Waltham
Bedford	Foxborough	Mansfield	Phillipston	Wareham
Belchertown	Framingham	Marblehead	Pittsfield	Warren
Belmont	Franklin	Marion	Plainfield	Watertown
Berkley	Freetown	Marlborough	Plymouth	Wayland
Berlin	Gardner	Marshfield	Plympton	Wellesley
Bernardston	Gill	Mashpee	Princeton	Wellfleet
Billerica	Gosnold	Mattapoisett	Provincetown	Wendell
Blackstone	Granby	Maynard	Quincy	West Boylston
Boston	Granville	Medfield	Randolph	West Bridgewater
Boxborough	Greenfield	Medford	Raynham	West Brookfield
Boxford	Groton	Merrimac	Reading	West Springfield
Brewster	Hadley	Middleborough	Rochester	Westborough
Bridgewater	Halifax	Middleton	Rockland	Westfield
Brimfield	Hamilton	Milford	Rockport	Westhampton
Brookline	Hamilton	Millbury	Rowley	Westminster
Buckland	Hampden	Millis	Rutland	Weston
Canton	Hanson	Millville	Sandisfield	Westport
Carver	Hardwick	Monson	Saugus	Weymouth
Charlton	Harvard	Montague	Sheffield	Whately
Chelmsford	Harwich	Nantucket	Shelburne	Whitman
Chicopee	Holbrook	Natick	Shrewsbury	Wilbraham
Chilmark	Holden	Needham	Shutesbury	Williamsburg
Colrain	Holland	New Braintree	Somerset	Williamstown
Concord	Holliston	Newbury	Southampton	Wilmington
Cummington	Holyoke	Newton	Southborough	Winchester
Dalton	Hopedale	Norfolk	Southbridge	Worcester
Dartmouth	Hopkinton	North Adams	Spencer	Wrentham
Dedham	Hubbardston	North Andover	Springfield	Yarmouth
Dennis	Hudson	No. Attleborough	Sterling	
Douglas	Hull	North Brookfield	Stockbridge	
Dover		Northampton	Stoneham	

Table 2

## DLS Profile

### Donnette Benvenuto, Analyst with the Municipal Data Bank

The Municipal Data Management and Technical Assistance Bureau (MDM/TAB), overseen by Bureau Chief Frederick Kingsley, is responsible for managing all municipal data reported to the Department of Revenue, distributing various local aid funds or appropriations, and providing technical assistance to municipalities, among other duties. Donnette Benvenuto has been working in the Municipal Data Bank as an analyst for just over a year. In coordination with the other Data Bank staff members, Donnette prepares local aid payments for quarterly distributions, monitors the state budget process for Cherry Sheet data, maintains the Data Bank and various Internet files, and prepares data for municipalities and other entities.

Donnette graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 2000. She spent two years managing restaurants before moving to the Town of Lincoln's treasurer/collector's office as revenue coordinator. After two years in Lincoln, Donnette spent a brief time in the Town of Winthrop's accountant's

office before coming to the Division of Local Services.

Donnette loves to travel, and spent a semester abroad in Switzerland while at University. She has traveled extensively throughout the rest of Europe and the United States. Originally from East Boston, Donnette now lives in Lynn. Her husband, Mark, runs the Theater Division for the Boston Culinary Group, and the two of them spend their weekends playing with their boxer, Riley, and renovating their new house.



Donnette Benvenuto

**Note:** Visit the DLS website for more information about the [Municipal Data Bank](#). ■

## Mark Your Calendars

### Municipal Fiscal Calendar

#### May 15

**Treasurer:** 3rd Quarterly Reconciliation of Cash

**DOR/BLA:** Commissioner Determines and Certifies Telephone and Telegraph Company Valuations

#### June 1

**Clerk:** Certification of Appropriations

**Assessors:** Determine Valuation of Other Municipal or District Land

**DOR/BLA:** Notification of Proposed EQVs

#### June 10

**DOR/BLA:** Public Hearing on Proposed EQVs

#### June 15

**DOR:** Commissioner Determines and Certifies Pipeline Valuations

**Assessors:** Deadline for Appealing Commissioner's Telephone & Telegraph Valuations

**Assessors:** Make Annual Preliminary Tax Commitment

#### June 20

**Assessors:** Final Date to Make Omitted or Revised Assessments

#### June 30

**State Treasurer:** Notification of Quarterly Local Aid Payments Before June 30

**Accountant:** Overlay Surplus Closes to Surplus Revenue

**Assessors:** Physical Inventory of all Parcels for Communities that Accepted M.G.L. Ch. 59, Sec. 2A(a)

**Assessors:** Submit Annual Report of Omitted or Revised Assessments

**Assessors:** Last Day to Submit Requests for Current Fiscal Year Reimbursements of Exemptions Granted Under the Various Clauses of Ch. 59, Sec. 5

More information is available in the [Municipal Calendar](#), available on the DLS website.

## Opportunities for Training

### New Officials Finance Forum

The Division of Local Services will offer a seminar for recently elected or appointed officials on Thursday, June 8, 2006, at the Henry M. Hogan Campus Center at the College of the Holy Cross, One College Street, Worcester, MA. With an emphasis on the basics, this proach to the various offices by developing an understanding of the responsibilities of the various offices as well as their interrelationship. The [Registration Bulletin](#) is available on the DLS website.

Contact Donna Quinn, Assistant Coordinator of Training, at 617-626-3838 for more information. ■

#### City & Town

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Lydia Hill, Editor

To obtain information or publications, contact the Division of Local Services via:

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