

Town of Bedford, New Hampshire
Calendar Year 2021 Budget
January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Appropriations by Function

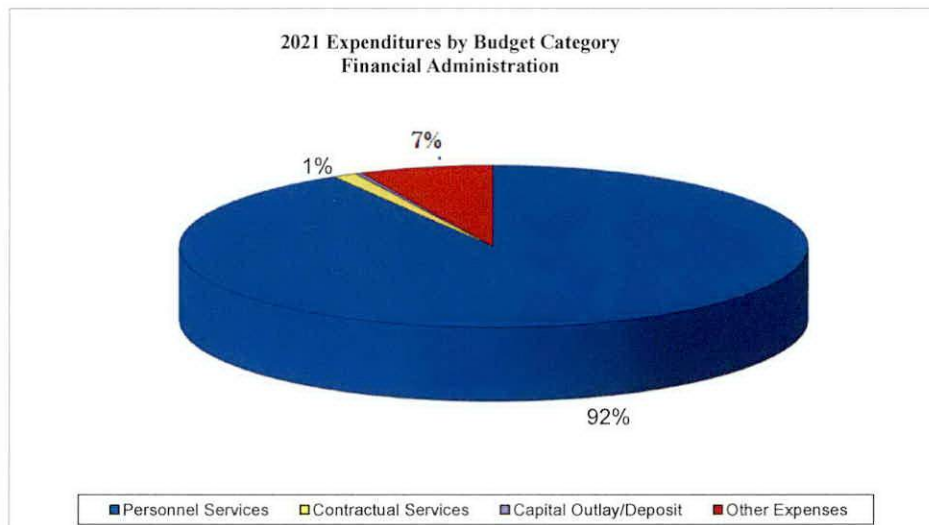
Function	Description	2019 Prior Year Actual	2020 CY Budget as Adopted	2021 Department Proposed	2021 Town Manager Proposed	Dollar Change	% Change
10 General Fund							
10010314	Finance & Tax	537,753	602,448	614,713	614,707	12,259	2.03%
10010316	Human Resources	173,747	237,189	238,706	234,879	(2,310)	-0.97%
10010318	Assessing	305,561	324,381	334,601	326,575	2,194	0.68%
10010336	Insurance	2,671,233	3,079,146	3,447,916	3,387,367	308,221	10.01%
10010350	Fund Balance Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
10010252	Unallocated Reserve	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	-	0.00%
10090382	General Assistance	2,355	7,500	7,500	7,500	-	0.00%
Total for Division		\$ 3,690,649	\$ 4,275,664	\$ 4,668,436	\$ 4,596,028	\$ 320,364	7.49%

Appropriations by Budget Category

Description	2019 Prior Year Actual	2020 CY Budget as Adopted	2021 Department Proposed	2021 Town Manager Proposed	Dollar Change	% Change
Personnel Services	3,351,689	3,904,327	4,276,581	4,207,280	302,953	7.76%
Contractual Services	58,457	51,415	55,950	55,950	4,535	8.82%
Capital Outlay/Deposit	24,156	18,227	27,002	17,502	(725)	-3.98%
Other Expenses	256,347	301,695	308,903	315,296	13,601	4.51%
Total Department - Financial Admin	\$ 3,690,649	\$ 4,275,664	\$ 4,668,436	\$ 4,596,028	\$ 320,364	7.49%

Department Revenues

Description	2019 Prior Year Actual	2020 Current Year Budget	2021 Department Proposed	2021 Town Manager Proposed	Dollar Change	% Change
10010314 Finance & Tax	24,768,429	25,209,426	27,850,217	26,599,330	1,389,904	5.51%
10010350 Fund Balance Reserve	1,000,000	2,300,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	(800,000)	-34.78%
Total Department Revenues	\$ 25,768,429	\$ 27,509,426	\$ 29,350,217	\$ 28,099,330	\$ 1,389,904	5.05%



FINANCE

Director: Tammy Penny

Mission Statement: To manage the financial resources of the Town in a safe, accurate, and efficient manner; to fulfill all responsibilities including compliance with Federal, State and Local laws and generally accepted accounting principles; to report the financial position and performance of the Town to the Town Manager, Town Council, debt underwriters and rating agencies in a timely manner.

Program Description/Major Service Areas:

- Financial Planning: the program facilitates Town-wide financial planning, manages the Town's short-term and long-term debt, coordinates the financing projects for Town projects, and provides management with current information concerning economic conditions and the potential fiscal impact to the Town.
- Accounting: Maintains the Town's financial systems including General Ledger, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, and Fixed Assets. The program is also responsible for the coordination of the financial statement audit and preparation of the Town's annual financial statements and special monthly and quarterly reports including preparation of the Capital Improvements Program documentation and the CAFR.
- Payroll: Ensures timely payment of employees. *The human resource department created in 2019 now ensures that the Town payroll processes are in compliance with all Federal, State and Local regulations, Union contract administration and benefits administration.*
- Budget: Responsible for assisting the Town Manager in the preparation of the Town's annual budget, including coordination and ongoing monitoring of the Town-wide operating and capital budgets.
- Risk Management: Coordinates the Town's risk management function in conjunction with the human resource department and monitors property loss claims. *The human resource department created in 2019 now monitors claims in the areas of liability, workers' compensation and unemployment compensation.*
- Purchasing: Responsible for monitoring the acquisition and/or facilitation of all materials and services to ensure compliance with Town policies and procedures.
- Sewer Billing: Responsible for the accurate and timely billing of the Town's sewer services.

Program Broad Goals:

- Review and revise as necessary financial policies to prudently manage the assets of the Town.
- Seek optimum financing structures to mitigate debt service costs while reinforcing our solid standing with credit rating agencies.
- Prepare a balanced budget that effectively addresses the Town Council's Broad Goals, citizen's priorities and complies with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements.
- Enhance revenue sources, mitigate expenses, evaluate cash flows and issue bonds when necessary.
- Develop and administer financial operating and internal controls to ensure data integrity.
- Provide financial information to internal and external customers on which they can make informed decisions about Town operations and finances.
- Be a financial 'consultant' to other Town departments by providing training, tools and support to increase their financial knowledge.
- Ensure employees are paid timely and accurately, in conjunction with the Human Resource Department.
- Process payments and deposits accurately and timely.

Program Summaries – General Government

2021 Program Objectives:

- Completion of the 2020 audit and CAFR.
 - Expand Internal Control Formal Reviews
 - Ensure succession planning is in place by developing and maintaining staff education and experience as well as documented procedures.
 - Continue research and documentation for a comprehensive Long-Term Financial Plan including new policy development to encompass budgeting policy, risk management policy, fund balance policy Continue the development and refinement of the Town's program budget information to facilitate a more comprehensive review of the Town's operating budget
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Summary Expenditures By Type:

	2019	2020	2021	2021
Description	Prior Year Actual	CY Budget as Adopted	Department Proposed	Town Manager Proposed
Personnel Services	432,210	509,246	515,711	515,705
Contractual Services	57,878	44,300	48,800	48,800
Capital Outlay/Deposit	588	502	502	502
Other Expenses	47,077	48,400	49,700	49,700
Finance & Tax	\$ 537,753	\$ 602,448	\$ 614,713	\$ 614,707

HUMAN RESOURCES and WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

Director: Pamela D. Hogan

HR Mission Statement: To manage the newly formed Human Resources Department in a compliant and service-oriented manner by providing leadership and collaboration in support of the Town departments' goals and objectives. The HR department will provide professional, compliant, timely, quality-driven and courteous service in the areas of workforce recruitment, onboarding, development and retention that enable Town departments to provide their required services in a safe and effective manner to our residents, businesses and the community at large.

The Human Resources Department works toward enhancing training and development, trust, diversity, inclusion, acceptance, appreciation, wellness, competitive wages and benefits, and safe working conditions. In doing so the department strives to ensure employees' work is conducted with integrity and honesty, while serving the community with professional and quality service.

Welfare Mission Statement: To serve the Town and residents effectively through required emergency and general assistance as applicable under the State of NH rules and Town of Bedford guidelines. To provide timely and relevant information regarding local service agencies and services based on the client's emergent needs, and provide timely hearings as needed.

Program Descriptions/Major Service Areas:

Ensures an effective employee life cycle through:

- **Recruitment.** Researches and seeks out the most effective recruitment venues for each job type to quickly and effectively recruit and hire a highly qualified workforce.
- **Onboarding and Job Descriptions** – Serves employees and supervisors through the onboarding process. Ensures job descriptions are available, legally compliant and properly reflect job duties. Issues and interprets policies, collective bargaining agreements and procedures
- **Retention & Recognition.** Fosters a worksite that values and achieves safe, integrity-driven, rewarding work while providing recognition for the above as well as collaboration, wellness, training achievements and employee development.
- **Worker's Compensation, ADA and Leave Management.** Ensures compliance with all laws enabling leaves of absence, support for ADA accommodations and provides education and support during each process. Assists with procurement of Worker's Compensation services and reports and monitors claims.
- **Wage and Salary Administration.** Complies with federal and state regulations, collective bargaining agreements and conducts research to analyze effective wage programs.
- **Labor Relations.** Provides contract interpretation and compliance to employees and supervisors, guides in relation to policy regarding compliance and any necessary discipline, maintains and develops policies and procedures for approval by the Town Manager and Council. Researches and applies new laws as necessary, serve on negotiation team as requested.
- **Benefits Administration.** Assists to select and maintain relations with providers, processes enrollment transactions for Medical, Dental, Short Term and Long Term Disability, Worker's Compensation, NHRS, Life, Flexible Spending Accounts and supplemental insurance plans. Manages and analyzes Unemployment Compensation claims, billing and appeals as applicable.
- **Records Management.** Ensures proper active maintenance and retention of Personnel files, I-9's, leave files, benefit files and payroll files, as applicable to HR.
- **Compliance** – Ensures compliance with all State and Federal labor laws, the Town's Collective Bargaining Agreements and Town Policies including, but not exclusive to, HIPPA, FMLA and

- Military Leaves, Anti-Discrimination, and general employment areas. Serve on the Town Joint Loss Management Committee for safety and inspection. Provide legally required training.
- **Payroll Support and Processing.** Through alliance with Finance personnel, maintains payroll processes in compliance with all Federal, State and Local regulations, Union contract administration and benefits administration. Provides Direct Deposit, verifications of employment and other payroll service functions.
 - **Exit Assistance** – Through exit interviews, collects and aggregates results and uses feedback to expand workplace culture, safety and satisfaction.

Ensures proper administration of Welfare Funding and Services

- **General Assistance.** Responsible for the administration and processing of all applications for general assistance under the Town’s program guidelines and in compliance with applicable State statutes. Provide service agency information. Process liens for repayment as applicable.

Broad Program Goals 2021:

Provide up-to-date systems and policies that enhance the Town’s operations

Objective: Continue process of updating Personnel Policies to meet the needs of employees and the Town and that are compliant and up-to-date.

- Select policies needing revision and development. Create new policies as needed. Re-write Personnel Policies Handbook. Gain approval upon completion.
- Collaborate with Department Heads during policy revision and development.
- Ensure draft is legally sound.
- File maintenance in applicable legal areas is sound.

Objective: Continue to improve automated processes

- Continue to develop the implementation plan for time and attendance.
- Continue to evaluate updates to time and attendance software to meet the needs of the Town. Install applicable departments per the implementation plan. Evaluate other software as needed to enhance Scheduling and Time and Attendance.
- Install equipment as needed and conduct proper department training.
- Research and consider future adoption of Applicant Tracking Software for efficient operation that renders the Town current in its service to applicants, department supervisors and administration and legally compliant.

Engage the workforce through new initiatives and by fostering personal growth and development.

Objective: Develop and offer appropriate programs and information.

- Offer access to and training on effective use of online resources, policy and benefits understanding
- Promote wellness and self-development offerings
- Support Town Departments in the job specific training needs

ONGOING: Provide continuous improvement initiatives in all areas of the Human Resources service areas and continue to promote efficient and effective employee service to the community.

HR, Welfare and Payroll - Program Staffing:

#	Position	FTE
1 FT	Director of Human Resources and Welfare Director	1.0
1 FT	HR & Payroll Coordinator	1.0
	Total Program FTE	2.0

Employee Data 2020:

Payroll

149 FT Active Employees (non-seasonal)

43 PT employees

192 Active Regular Employees

93 Election Workers on-call (does not include volunteers)

10 Elected Officials

3 Seasonal (Pool, Camp, other temporary, etc.) NOTE: NO POOL OR CAMPS IN 2020

106 Elected and Seasonal on Payroll

298 Total on Payroll (including FT, seasonal, part time, elected and town council)

New Hires - January 1 to October 1, 2020:

(15 New FT Employees + 39 PT, Seasonal, Election and Elected)

Full time:

4 Fire

1 Finance

7 Police (Officers and Dispatch)

3 DPW Drivers

15 Total - New Full Time Employees

Part time:

1 Recreation Assistant

2 DPW (Seasonal)

3 DPW Transfer Station

1 Police (Dispatch on call)

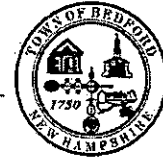
0 Camp and Pool (Seasonal)

30 Election Workers

2 Elected Officials

39 Total - PT, Seasonal, Election and Elected

	2019	2020	2021	2021
	Prior Year	CY Budget	Department	Town Manager
Description	Actual	as Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
Personnel Services	164,659	215,739	217,256	215,429
Contractual Services	419	2,500	2,500	2,500
Capital Outlay/Deposit	3,523	3,000	3,000	1,500
Other Expenses	<u>5,146</u>	<u>15,950</u>	<u>15,950</u>	<u>15,450</u>
Human Resources	<u>\$ 173,747</u>	<u>\$ 237,189</u>	<u>\$ 238,706</u>	<u>\$ 234,879</u>



October 26, 2020

Bedford Town Council
24 N Amherst Road
Bedford, NH 03110

Re: 2021 Goals Bedford Assessor's Office

Members of the Council, the goals of the Bedford Assessor's Office for the 2021 year are as follows:

CUSTOMER SERVICE

To continue the level of service those who interact with our office are accustomed to, and to improve upon when and where possible. As referenced in multiple town reports, the online assessing database hosted by Vision Government Solutions continues to be updated on a weekly basis Friday evenings. There are filmed/recorded PSA's involving Tax Exemption and Credits available from/on BCTV that we re-record on an annual basis, including reminding people of the April 15 deadline to file for exemptions and credits. We/I make house calls whenever necessary to either assist or deliver and review exemption and credit information to/with seniors who may be unable to venture out from their homes.

To improve efficiency, the vast majority of Building Department records including plot plans, septic designs, and house plans have been transferred over to the Building Department at 55 Constitution drive. Now when a taxpayer wishes to build an addition, pool, or other outbuilding they can determine if it is possible without variance on the spot at one place, at one time, and do not have to travel back and forth between buildings to do so.

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

The Assessing Office Administrative Assistant has completed the portion of the State Statutes course designed to increase her knowledge base. Attending the series of sessions/classes has helped her answer questions for and work with taxpayers and enabled her to solved queries on her own. The Assessor and Assistant Assessor will continue to take advantage of any education opportunities when presented during the year either as stand-alone classes or as part of municipal and association conferences/seminars. Should education opportunities arise that would benefit the Administrative Assistant she will be encouraged to attend.

I have been preparing the Assistant Assessor Doug Irvine, to take over the Chief Assessor position when I retire. The Council prefers and is behind internal succession whenever possible and I believe we can achieve this without difficulty.

2021 ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND FUTURE YEARS

The Assessing Office, with the services of Vision Government Solutions successfully conducted a statistical update for the 2019 tax year. This was the first of several updates on a two year schedule designed to lessen the "blow" to taxpayers such as the one experienced during the 2017 update. The market since the 2017 update justified this approach. Our assessment to sale ratio was already down to 90.9% for the 2018 year as determined by the NHDRA, and studies conducted by this office showed us to be below 90% for the first half of 2019 and no indication of a slowing down. As such we wanted to avoid placing an average 16% increase to assessed values again, which may have happened if we put the work off another 2-3 years. The average increase to taxpayers as a result of the 2019 update was between 7% and 8%; many viewed this as "a pain" but I think after one or two more updates, people will get used to the process and at least some may realize it is a good way to keep large increases at bay and the tax rate at least somewhat consistent.

We have scheduled another update for the 2021 tax year. Our ratio for 2019, 96%, has dropped to about 90% for 2020 already (we do not have an official ratio from the DRA yet but I believe my estimate will be pretty close). At present, there is no signs of this letting up as the vast majority of sales continue to be at approximately 10% over the 2019 assessed value. Inventory is still low and demand is still strong. At some point, this will begin to reverse and prices will stabilize; by spring of 2021 mortgage defaults and resultant foreclosures may pick up some headway here but not at present. It is possible timing –wise, that by the time the 2021 update is completed prices may be even declining a little but not yet. I prefer to think things will continue upward. However, there are many areas where unemployment is very high and the impacts have not caught up with the rest of the country yet. This may make for a somewhat difficult update public relations wise as it will be framed by some as directly upon the backs of the homeowners which it may be, however nothing is being given away at this time. Other communities including Portsmouth, Seabrook, and Merrimack have 2021 revaluations/updates scheduled as well.

As I have mentioned in the past, "one town, one ratio" is another reason to update on a more frequent basis. When a town or city ratio drops below 90% in a strong market or above 110% in a decreasing market the commercial tax reps will come back out of the woodwork to file commercial appeals. In similar fashion to the 2019 updates, our ratio is driven by the residential market that increases and decreases faster than the commercial market. This can make commercial values hard to defend at times. In the long run we will save monies by updating more often if required. To be honest if the market stagnates for a couple years until the next update it is possible a minimal update of value may occur, or it is possible we would recommend no update be performed. In the end I feel taxpayers will eventually appreciate the more frequent updates recognizing market changes, up or down especially down should the market begin to decline at some point in the future.

In addition to updates conducted by vision, as listed in the 2021 CIP we will next employ flyovers combined with change detection software in the spring of 2022 at a total cost of approximately \$9,000.00 budgeted over a three-year period. We perform this task to keep our data up to date to satisfy the NHDRA without the expense of a full measure and list. As we have an overall entrance rate of only between 30% - 35% (conversations with Vision indicate they are also experiencing 30% - 35% home entry rates in their communities overall even after second notices and callbacks), this office does not feel the expense of a full measure and list is necessary at this time nor for many years

in the future. Many of those who say “well, how do you know about my home you have not been in it” may also not want to let us inspect when the time actually arrives. We have been told in the past about interior conditions, and then told no inspection please. There are programs that allow taxpayers to film their own interiors on their phones and sign affidavits as to the accuracy of the process, and this office will look into such options for the future. Given the onset of covid-19 that I believe will serve to diminish any entrance rates even further such programs will be worthwhile to explore and may provide a good additional avenue for information. I believe that once the dust clears and even with a vaccine, entry levels will remain at lower %.

Our data is very good overall, and we can put off performing a full measure and list for many years to come. One might recommend a full measure and list for say 2029 – 25 years after our last full measure and list as by then we may hear from the NHDRA and societal pressure to conduct one. However on the other hand if our data continues to stand the test of time and DRA scrutiny as I feel it will based on our ongoing efforts, we can continue to put off a full measure and list until we are in fact prompted to via government oversight.

We do not pick up enough tax revenue to implement the flyover and change detection software on an annual basis – the aim is to conduct this work every three years as we estimate the changes and resultant revenues picked up over a three-year period will be enough to justify the budgeted cost. We will continue to use the services of two companies, Nearmap and Pushpin, as their results are effective.

Therefore, the goal of this office is to budget/prepare for and conduct the next update for tax year 2021, and then 2023, 2025, and 2027.

	2019	2020	2021	2021
	Prior Year	CY Budget	Department	Town Manager
Description	Actual	as Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
Personnel Services	278,237	297,141	298,551	298,525
Contractual Services	160	4,615	4,650	4,650
Capital Outlay/Deposit	20,045	14,725	23,500	15,500
Other Expenses	<u>7,119</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>7,900</u>
Assessing	\$ 305,561	\$ 324,381	\$ 334,601	\$ 326,575

TAX COLLECTION/MV REGISTRATION

Tax Collector: Tammy Penny

Mission Statement: To provide a full range of Tax Collector services to the citizens of Bedford. To serve the public professionally, courteously, competently and efficiently, and to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the office in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and ordinances.

Program Description/Major Service Areas:

- Accurate and timely billing of property taxes, as well as collection of property taxes.
- Municipal Agent for the State of NH, Division of Motor Vehicles where motor vehicle permits and title applications are processed.
- Issuance of dog tags and collection of associates fees, in conjunction with Town Clerk office.
- Collection of sewer bills and other miscellaneous departmental billings such as current use, police alarms, details, etc.
- Processing of delinquent tax accounts including notification and filing of tax liens and execution of tax deeds, including recording with the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds.

Program Broad Goals:

- To issue tax bills as efficiently as possible and ensure taxpayers more than the required 30 days to pay their tax bill.
- To begin the tax lien process as soon as practical but no later than January 31st to ensure adequate notification and processing time.
- Issue timely administrative complaints to the Department of Safety for motor vehicle permits paid for with insufficient funds. This admin complaint will retract the validity of the registration and usually prompts payment by the customer.
- To distribute the work load in the office that most efficiently addresses the needs of our residents including walk-in customers, mail in customers, online users and phone inquiries.
- To have all clerks fully trained and competent in all areas of the tax/motor vehicle office to ensure the best and most efficient customer service possible.
- To have the Tax Collector accessible to all citizens requiring assistance.

2021 Program Objectives:

- ONGOING: Provide continuous customer service training and other necessary training to the clerks to ensure the best, most efficient customer service possible.
- Continue cross-training between Finance and Tax staff to maximize coverage during busy times.
- To educate customers about the ability to view and pay property tax and vehicle renewal information online.

Finance and Tax Office Program Staffing:

#	Position	FTE
1 FT	Director of Finance/Tax Collector	1.0
1 FT	Accountant	1.0
1 FT	Fund Accountant	1.0
1 FT	Finance Clerk	2.0
1 FT	Window Clerk	2.0
	Total Program FTE	7.0