

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MA
TREASURER / COLLECTOR'S OFFICE
FISCAL YEAR 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Staff Directory/Member List

Melinda R. Ernst-Fournier	Treasurer / Collector
Nghi Lam	Assistant Collector - Collector
Nancy Jones	Principal Clerk – Treasurer
April Plouffe	Principal Clerk – Treasurer
Joanne Battista	Senior Clerk – Collector
Max Gullekson	Senior Clerk – Collector

The major functions of the Treasurer / Collector's Office include:

- Receiving, recording, and managing all funds belonging to the Town. Receipts in excess of \$66 million were received through this office during Fiscal 2016. These came primarily from the State and Federal Governments in the form of grants and quarterly distributions, tax and utility payments to the Town Collector's Office and fees and other miscellaneous receipts received by other Town departments. We implemented online and counter credit card payments in the Clerk's Office this year. The annual report of Trust Fund activity is shown as Attachment A.
- Paying all vendor warrants. After approval of the Town Accountant and Town Manager, only the Treasurer can pay out public money. 7,358 vendor checks exceeding \$40.3 million were approved and entered into the computer system by the Accountant's Office. This office is responsible for verifying that each check is payable to the correct vendor for the correct amount and preparing them for mailing. We implemented "direct pay"

this year, giving our vendors the opportunity to have their payments deposited to their chosen account electronically.

- Paying all payroll warrants. Upon Department Head approval, we process the bi-weekly payroll for all town departments. Although the school department enters payroll and distributes payroll checks for their employees on a bi-weekly basis, all payroll processing is handled in this department. This includes the printing of all payroll checks and direct deposit stubs, preparation of all quarterly and annual payroll reporting such as quarterly tax returns and W-2s. We are also responsible for the remittance of payroll deductions such as taxes, child support, retirement, annuities, union dues, health, life and dental insurance. The gross payroll processed for this year was \$30,128,721.22. The annual wage report is shown as Attachment B.
- Coordination of Employee Benefits. The Treasurer's Office acts as the benefits coordinator for all town and school employees, as well as all retirees. All new full time employees are sent to this department for information on the various health, life and dental plans available. An annual open enrollment allows members to change plans or enroll if they haven't been members previously. We have many additional enrollments or changes throughout the year when new employees are hired or individuals have life events that statutorily allow them to enroll. We also handle all member questions on benefit matters as well as death benefits on the life insurance plans. We are responsible for the accuracy of all employee insurance deductions and insurance invoices. Effective July 1, 2015, the Town made significant changes to our co-payments and deductibles of our health insurance plans, mirroring those of the Commonwealth's Group Insurance Commission. The premium savings were used to increase the Town contribution from 50% to 60% for active employees. The Town contribution for retirees remains at 50%.
- After taxes are assessed or utility bills are calculated by the Assessor's Office, the Collector's Office is responsible for printing, mailing and collecting all bills. We mailed 46,684 bills and collected over \$35.1 million in FY 16. We accept payments by mail, at the counter and online. In May, we began accepting credit cards in the office and collected over \$12,000 in the 45 days.

The following special projects also impacted the office during this fiscal year:

- The Collector's Office received a much needed renovation using a higher counter and cabinets from the Mary E. Wells Middle School building. A new carpet was installed and the walls were painted.
- Our municipal purpose bond issued in 2008 was audited by the IRS. The information provided was accepted without further questions and the audit was closed.
- The implementation of the Federal Affordable Care required us to provide 1095 Forms to our employees. The form required information not contained in our software so the project took hundreds of hours to complete.