

Annual Report of the Town Treasurer/Collector
Brenda A. Herbeck

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The Town Collector is responsible for the billing and collection of Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes, Motor Vehicle & Boat Excise Taxes, Water & Sewer User Charges, and Sewer Betterments. The Town Treasurer is responsible for receiving all Town departmental and state monies, managing all Town funds, managing the Town's debt obligations, administering payroll and benefits, managing Tax Title accounts and foreclosures. Beach/Wharf Parking Stickers and Shellfish Permits can be purchased in the Treasurer/Collector's Office.

Collector's Office

The number of real estate parcels billed remained constant from fiscal year 2008 to 2009. Real estate and personal property commitments totaled \$16,890,723.29. The number of motor vehicle excise bills for FY 2009, 7786, dropped by 71 from the number billed in FY 2008, which is a reflection of the current economy. Betterment apportionments added to FY 2009 taxes totaled \$640,502.85. The total of unpaid water user charges lienied to FY 2009 taxes was \$31,291.57; and the total of unpaid sewer user charges lienied was \$8,594.11.

The Town continues to enjoy a high property tax collections rate (98.8% in FY09). We have been diligent in mailing correspondence to delinquent taxpayers and have a few payment agreements set up. We continue to offer online bill pay through MCC's eBill, and have seen the benefits of allowing taxpayers the ability to pay their property and excise taxes 24 hours a day from their computer. We have been working with the Tax Services to submit delinquent property tax files regularly which enables banks and mortgage companies to monitor accounts that become past due.

Treasurer's Office

As of June 30, 2009, sixty-seven (67) parcels remained in Tax Title, of which twenty-eight (28) were assessed to the same owner; one parcel was paid in full; four parcels were approved by the DOR as Land of Low Value; and Land Court foreclosure decrees were recorded for two parcels. The foreclosure process through the Land Court is continuing for two other parcels. At fiscal year end, the Tax Title balance was \$292,066.63. Four taxpayers have met the requirements and have taken advantage of tax deferral.

Mattapoisett's bond rating has increased significantly over the past four years. The increases are a direct result of implementing changes in the structure of town government, beginning with the appointment of a Town Administrator in 2003. In 2005 Moody's Investors Services assigned an "A1" rating, which was an increase from the "A2" the Town held for several years. In November 2007 Standard and Poor's assigned a "AA-"; and recently, on July 27, 2009, Standard and Poor's Ratings Services assigned a "AA" rating. This increased rating is the result of Mattapoisett's sound financial management and strong reserves, stable property taxes, high income level and low unemployment, low debt burden with modest capital needs. Maintaining the "AA" rating will be a challenge over the next few years because of cuts to state aid, decreases in local receipts and certain fixed budget increases.

The town's funds currently are invested mostly in money market accounts and an occasional CD. Some funds are invested in the Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust (MMDT). Interest rates declined in 2008 and have leveled off in 2009, so, obviously, interest income is low.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my staff for their cooperation, dedication, eagerness to learn and sense of humor. The Accountant's Office is a separate office within the Treasurer/Collector's Office; and I am grateful that, in such tight quarters, employees in both offices work well together to keep the departments running efficiently and effectively. I would also like to thank all Town departments for their cooperation and assistance throughout the year.

It is a pleasure and an honor to serve the citizens of Mattapoisett.

Respectfully Submitted:
Brenda A. Herbeck
Town Treasurer/Collector