

Town of Northfield, Massachusetts
Job Description

Position Title:	Town Accountant	Grade Level:	9
Department	Accountant	Date:	Dec. 16, 2014
Reports to:	Town Administrator	FLSA Status:	Exempt

Statement of Duties: The Town Accountant provides accounting work of an administrative, supervisory and participatory nature with responsibility for maintaining the Town’s General Ledger, processing of accounts payable, processing of payroll in a manner consistent with the Town’s Personnel Policy and Compensation plan. The Town Account monitors expenditures of Town funds versus budgetary amounts, classification of revenues and the preparation of various financial reports and payables in accordance with applicable Local, State, and Federal Laws and Regulations. The employee is required to perform all similar or related duties.

Supervision Required: Under the direct supervision of the Town Administrator with duties and responsibilities pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41 Section 55, incorporating the General Accepted Accounting Principles and the Uniform Municipal Accounting System. The employee plans and carries out the regular work in accordance with standard practices and previous training, with substantial responsibility for determining the sequence and timing of action and substantial independence in planning and organizing the work activities, including determining the work methods with approval from the Town Administrator. The employee is expected to solve through experienced judgment most problems of detail or unusual situations by adapting methods or interpreting instructions to resolve the particular problem. Instructions for new assignments or special projects usually consist of statements of desired objectives, deadlines and priorities. Technical and policy problems or changes in procedures are discussed with the Town Administrator. Upon approval from the Town Administrator the employee would plan the work, lay out the work, and carry the work through to the point of near completion, submitting the work to the Town Administrator for final approval prior to completion. Work is reviewed for technical adequacy, appropriateness of actions or decisions, and conformance with policy or other requirements. Methodology used in delivering work products are reviewed in detail with the Town Administrator.

Confidentiality: The employee has regular access to department-level confidential information such as department records in accordance with the State Public Record Law.

Supervisory Responsibility: Employee, as a regular and continuing part of the job is required to lead other employees to assist them in completing their assigned work. The employee may be involved in hiring but is not responsible for taking any disciplinary actions.

Judgment: Work is performed pursuant to Administrative or Municipal Policies, General Municipal Accounting Principles, State and Federal legislation, or directives that pertain to a specific department or functional area. Extensive judgment and ingenuity are required to develop new or adapt existing methods and approaches to accomplish objectives and/or to deal with new or unusual requirements within the limits of established guidelines, practices, or policies. The Town Administrator is recognized as the department or functional area’s authority in interpreting the guidelines, in determining how they should be applied, and in developing operating policies, the employee serves as the primary designate for the Town Administrator’s Authority for the functional area.

Complexity: Work consists of the practical application of a variety of concepts, practices, and specialized techniques relating to the Municipal Accounting Profession. Assignments typically involve

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evaluation and interpretation of factors, conditions or unusual circumstances; inspecting, testing or evaluating compliance with established standards or criteria; gathering, analyzing and evaluating facts or data using specialized fact finding techniques; or determining the methods to accomplish the work.

Work Environment: The work environment involves everyday discomforts typical of an office environment with frequent interruptions. Noise or physical surroundings may be distracting, but conditions are generally not unpleasant. Employee is required to work beyond normal business hours in order to attend evening meetings.

Nature of Public Contacts: Employee has constant interaction with Local, State, and Federal Government Officials, Community Leaders and any other individuals to protect and promote the Municipality's overall interest. Employee must possess a high degree of diplomacy and judgment. Duties require a well-developed sense of strategy and timing in representing the Municipality effectively in critical and important situations that may influence the wellbeing of the Municipality.

Accountability: Consequences of errors, missed deadlines or poor judgment could result in serious losses and ramifications; jeopardizing programs, initiatives, contractual relationships, or cause legal repercussions for the Town of Northfield.

Occupational Risks: Duties of the job present little potential for injury to the employee. Risk exposure is similar to that found in a Municipal office setting.

Essential Functions:

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various type of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Maintains comprehensive financial records for the Town including cash books, general ledger, general journal, and subsidiary ledgers in accordance with GAAP and UMAS.

Monitors all expenditures including payroll and taxes for appropriated fund accounts for the Town. Examines all bills and vouchers for appropriateness of expenditure, accuracy and availability of funds before payment by Treasurer. Insures compliance with pay rates and the Town's compensation plan. Responsible for the preparation of payroll data and the entering of information in to the department's software system. Responsible for the periodic reporting cycle to all department heads concerning budget balances.

Maintains an awareness of financial software computer system changes and improvements and acts as troubleshooter on all accounting systems integration and coordination issues.

Accountable for all general ledger accounts including revenue and expenditure accounts for the Town, which involve cash, property taxes, liens, deferred taxes, motor vehicle excise tax, betterments, agency payable, tax titles, reserved fund balances, special revenue funds, revolving funds, trust funds, and sewer enterprise accounts.

Responsible for the entering and posting of Treasurer's receipts to general ledger accounts.

Responsible for the reconciliation of the Town Accountant's cash to the Town Treasurer's cash on a monthly and quarterly basis and updating the Town Accountant's debt ledgers as principal and interest

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become due.

Prepares the appropriate town, state, and federal reports as required.

Oversees the preparation of warrants and the processing of bills to be paid. Processes accounts payable, payroll and denies payment of any inappropriate bills in accordance with State and Federal guidelines.

Responsible for the compilation of the Town's Annual Budget; maybe designated by the Town Administrator to participate in budget meetings and planning sessions with the Town's Finance Committee.

Ensures that funds are expended in accordance with approved annual Town meeting appropriation of funds.

Responsible for the preparation of fiscal year end balance sheets and appropriation reports for the Town Administrator, as well as the Recap Sheet in collaboration with the Town's Board of Assessors in order to establish the tax rate; prepares financial reports as requested.

Routinely reconcile account balances and Town trust funds with the Treasurer/Collector

Together with the Town Administrator, the employee provides oversight for the auditing of Town's financial operation with outside auditors when conducted.

Maintains current knowledge of new legislation, regulations and changes in accounting procedures through publications review, attendance at meetings, conferences and peer associations.

Conducts research on municipal finance laws, special accounts and other matters; obtains information pertaining to revenue sources, including state aid and prepares estimates.

Prepares subsidiary schedules for the Assessors' recapitulation sheet.

Together with the Town Administrator, the employee provides oversight for the operation of the Town accounting system and its conversion to new data processing systems whenever apt.

Required to review town meeting finance articles and may be required to attend town meeting

Works with all Town departments to ensure for the safe, effective and efficient financial operations and administration.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications:

Education and Experience: Associate's Degree in accounting or a related field or Bachelor's Degree desirable; three to five (3-5) years of responsible experience in accounting or financial management; Municipal experience preferred; or any combination of education, training and experience.

Special Requirements: Massachusetts Accountants & Auditors Certification is preferred.

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Knowledge, Abilities and Skill

Knowledge: Knowledge of Municipal finance laws and regulations, accounting and auditing principles, practices and procedures; thorough knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles, promulgation's of UMAS, Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and GAAP accounting standards and applicable Massachusetts General Laws, regarding finance, insurance and procurement; knowledge of Municipal budgetary functions; knowledge of financial software applications; thorough knowledge of the operations of Town departments.

Abilities: Ability to develop effective working relationships with department personnel, subordinates and with the general public; ability to express oneself clearly and concisely orally and in writing. Ability to use office equipment efficiently.

Skill: Excellent organizational skills; excellent data processing skill in the use of financial software and spreadsheet applications. Excellent analytical skills.

Physical and Mental Requirements

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the position's essential functions.

Physical Skills: Little or no physical demands are required to perform the work. Work effort principally involves sitting to perform work tasks, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. There may also be some occasional lifting of objects related office work.

Motor Skills: Duties are largely mental rather than physical, the job continually requires motor skills for activities such as operating a telephone system, computer and/or most other office equipment, computer keyboarding, filing or sorting of papers.

Visual Skills: Visual demands require the employee to routinely read documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

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