

**TOWN OF WATERFORD
GENERAL FUND
2022-2023 PROPOSED BUDGET**

DEPT/AGENCY: **10114** **CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

LINE ITEM	DESCRIPTION	2020/2021 ACTUAL EXPENDED	2021/2022 RTM APPROP.	2021/2022 ADDITIONAL/ TRANSFERS	ACTUAL EXPEND & ENCUMB AS OF 1/1/22	2022/2023 DEPT/ AGENCY REQUEST	2022/2023 FIRST SELECTMAN RECOMMENDS	Department Request \$ Increase	Department Request % Increase
	SERVICES								
52010	ADVERTISING	989	1,500		462	1,800	1,500	0	0.00%
52020	POSTAGE	106	125		40	125	125	0	0.00%
52030	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	250	3,500			3,500	3,500	0	0.00%
52031	PLANNING SERVICES	12,000	12,000			12,000	12,000	0	0.00%
52050	DUES, CONF. & EDUC.	295	600		95	600	600	0	0.00%
52060	PRINTING	1	25			25	25	0	0.00%
	SUBTOTAL	13,641	17,750	0	597	18,050	17,750	0	0.00%
	MATERIALS & SUPPLIES								
53020	OTHER SUPPLIES	331	500			500	500	0	0.00%
	SUBTOTAL	331	500	0	0	500	500	0	0.00%
	DEPARTMENT TOTAL	13,972	18,250	0	597	18,550	18,250	0	0.00%

*no Commission vote

TOWN OF WATERFORD FY2023 BUDGET REQUEST Conservation Commission



FY 2022/23 PROPOSED CONSERVATION COMMISSION BUDGET

The Waterford Conservation Commission serves as the Inland Wetlands Agency; reviewing applications, issuing permits and enforcing activities affecting inland wetlands and watercourses in accordance with the Waterford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses regulations and CT General Statutes 22a-36 through 22a-45. The Conservation Commission also carries out the statutory responsibilities of a municipal Conservation Commission, maintaining a survey of natural resources, reviewing land use proposals and making recommendations to other Boards and Agencies on natural resource identification and protection, and Open Space preservation.

The Conservation Commission conducted 21 regularly scheduled meetings and 2 special meetings in FY 2020/21 and rendered decisions on 18 applications to conduct activities in and adjacent to inland wetlands and watercourses. All meetings were conducted virtually. Inland Wetland permits authorized the disturbance of 0.137 acres of wetland, of which 0.03 acres involved temporary disturbance which was subsequently restored. Permanent wetland fill involved 0.107 acres. Mitigation for the permanent disturbance of wetland area totaled 0.084 acres of wetland creation and wetland buffer enhancement.

FEES – Application Fees Generated from Inland Wetland Permit Applications

Fiscal year	Total Fees Collected
FY 2017/2018	\$ 700
FY 2018/2019	\$ 250
FY 2019/2020	\$ 1,100
FY 2020/2021	\$ 800
FY 2021/2022 – 4 months	\$ 500

The Waterford Conservation Commission requires an additional fee when public hearings are required. The fee off-sets the cost for the two legal notices of public hearing required by State statute.

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BUDGET REQUEST SUMMARY

Line	Description	FY22/23 AMOUNT
52010	Advertising	\$ 1,800
52020	Postage	\$ 125
52030	Professional Services	\$ 3,500
52031	Planning Services	\$ 12,000
52050	Dues, Conferences & Education	\$ 600
52060	Printing	\$ 25
53020	Other Supplies	\$ 500

Conservation Commission Total Request \$ 18,550

This is a \$300.00 increase over the approved FY 2021/ 22 budget.

ADVERTISING LINE 10114-52010

\$ 1,800 REQUESTED

The advertising account covers the cost of all legal notice requirements required by State statute. This includes publication of notices of public hearings, enforcement orders and notices of decision on all Commission inland wetland agency actions. Advertisements for public hearings and decisions of the Commission are required to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in Waterford. To off-set publication costs, the Commission requires an additional fee of \$400.00 when a public hearing is required for the legal notices. The costs for legal notices of decision placed in The Day newspaper increased in 2021.

The requested amount is a \$300.00 increase over previous approved budget line item for advertising.

POSTAGE LINE 10114-52020

\$ 125 REQUESTED

Postage expenditures include certified letter mailings required for notice of Commission decisions on applications and for enforcement proceedings, correspondence to Town residents, and referrals to municipal, State and Federal agencies.

The requested budget amount is consistent with that approved for the prior year.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES LINE 10114-52030

\$ 3,500 REQUESTED

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The professional services account is used to obtain professional technical reviews, retain expert witnesses, chemical laboratory analyses and other professional technical assistance unavailable at the municipal or State level which are needed to conduct the duties of the inland wetlands agency and the Conservation Commission. These services may include assisting the Commission with technical expert reviews of application documents, investigating complaints of wetland, soil or water quality impacts, documenting violations of the inland wetlands and watercourses regulations, providing expert testimony in court proceedings, or assisting the Commission in preparing natural resource surveys.

To carry out the responsibilities of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Act, it is critical that the Commission have the ability to retain expert witnesses for determination of impacts to wetlands and watercourses in order to reach and maintain defensible decisions. Court case law has established that the finding of adverse impacts and justification for conditions of approval requires technical expertise and expert evidence in the application record. The Commission uses the expertise of staff members, and regional and state technical offices when available, however specific technical expertise may be required during the application process within a limited time frame. Having sufficient funding available to procure services when expert review is needed is essential in consideration of the strict time frames established by State Statute for rendering decisions on inland wetland applications.

The fee schedule for Inland Wetland permit applications allows the Commission to charge the applicant for third party expert reviews and technical evaluations deemed necessary to assist in the review of complex permit applications. However, the Commission continues to require funds for obtaining professional expertise on items not associated with complex permit applications.

Expenditures under this item are difficult to predict and are related to the number and complexity of permit applications, public hearings, enforcement proceedings and technical needs of the Commission. The requested amount will fund an estimated 25 -35 hours of professional service at a rate of \$100 - \$150/hr.

The requested budget amount is consistent with that approved for the prior year.

PLANNING SERVICES LINE 10114-52031

\$ 12,000 REQUESTED

The Conservation Commission conducts a water quality monitoring program of freshwater streams and ponds in Waterford. Samples are collected at 30 locations in the early summer and late fall of a calendar year to track water quality over the growing season and monitor changes in quality over time. Sampling is conducted on Jordan Brook, Nevins Brook, Fenger Brook, Hunts Brook, Stony Brook, Oil Mill Brook and its tributaries, Millstone (Beebe) Brook, Green Swamp Brook and a tributary stream to Goshen Cove. Water quality parameters monitored include total coliform, e. coli and enterococci bacteria, chemical oxygen demand, chloride, pH, suspended solids, and nutrient loadings from nitrogen compounds and phosphorus.

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The surface water quality monitoring program has been conducted for the past 18 years by the Conservation Commission and has generated comprehensive data on the quality of the town's water resources. This data is used to evaluate potential impacts of land development on stream health and to track changes in water chemistry over time. It also provides a scientific basis for the Conservation Commission to establish required levels of stormwater treatment for development proposals, and water quality mitigation goals for enforcement proceedings.

Jordan Brook, Oil Mill Brook and Stony Brook support native trout and high quality waters. Habitat requirements for these fisheries include cool, oxygenated waters with suitable substrate conditions to provide food and aquatic habitat. Alterations and loss of vegetative cover, soil erosion, flow alterations sewage discharges and stormwater run-off can adversely impact the biological conditions of these watercourses.

The monitored temperature, nitrogen and phosphorus levels in these streams continue to indicate high quality surface waters.

The 2020 State of Connecticut Integrated Water Quality Report, submitted by CT DEEP to the EPA, identifies Alewife Cove, Niantic Bay and near-shore waters of Long Island Sound as not meeting designated uses of habitat for fish and other aquatic life. In addition, Alewife Cove, Jordan Cove, and areas of Niantic Bay and the Niantic River are listed as impaired for direct shellfish consumption due to bacteria levels. Fenger Brook is listed as not supporting designated uses for aquatic life and recreation. Hunts Brook downstream of the Miller Pond dam is listed as not supporting fish and aquatic life habitat. The lower reach of Stony Brook south of Rte 1 has been identified as impaired for recreational use due to bacteria. The State is developing restoration policies to improve water quality and habitat of impaired waters.

The Commission continues to monitor bacteria, nitrogen and phosphorus levels in stream reaches that eventually discharge to Jordan Cove, the Niantic River, and Long Island Sound. This long-term water quality monitoring is a critical part of the natural resource inventory work the Commission conducts and allows tracking of trends in water quality from land use changes and can provide an indication of where water quality may be affected. Town staff conducts the sampling to minimize costs. Cost variations are linked to the number of water samples collected.

The Commission is requesting the same amount for this item as approved in the previous fiscal year.

DUES, CONFERENCES, EDUCATION LINE 10114-52050

\$ 600 REQUESTED

Expenditures from this line item include membership dues, commission and staff training, attendance at seminars and workshops. The Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act [CGS 22a-36 - 22a-45a] recommends members of inland wetland agency complete a comprehensive training program developed by the CT DEEP. Commissioners also attend environmental education conferences and legal

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seminars regarding inland wetlands to keep informed of changes to State Statute or case law affecting application review practices, public hearing records and decision-making for Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Regulations application. The Commission satisfies the minimum required training recommended by CT DEEP for inland wetlands agencies.

The Commission is requesting the same amount for this item as the previous fiscal year to maintain the level of training of its members.

PRINTING LINE 10114-52060

\$ 25 REQUESTED

Expenditures under this line item include printing of oversized documents, maps and colored copies, which cannot be printed or are unavailable at Town facilities. As a result of changes in court procedures, some printing funds may be necessary to reproduce, in paper or digital format, large documents and files. The amount requested under this line item is the same as the prior fiscal year.

OTHER SUPPLIES LINE 10114-53020

\$ 500 REQUESTED

Funds in this account are used to purchase and maintain environmental testing/monitoring equipment, safety equipment, survey flagging, and Conservation Easement and Non-Encroachment Boundary Line markers for field markings. This equipment allows the Conservation Commission with its professional staff to perform wetland identification, water testing, natural resource inventory and conservation easement boundary marking that would otherwise require contracting for outside professional services.

The amount requested under this line item is the same as the previous year.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Richard Muckle , Chair
Tali Maidelis, Secretary
David Lersch
Jessica Patterson
Geneva Renegar
Wade Thomas

Ivy Plis - Alternate
Julie Wainscott – Alternate

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HISTORY OF EXPENDITURES

	FY 17/18	FY18/19	FY19/20	FY20/21	FY21/22 To date	Proposed FY22/23
52010 Advertising	\$765.00	\$469.80	\$901.65	\$989.0	\$260.85	\$1,500
52020 Postage	\$ 80.65	\$50.12	\$104.40	\$106.0	\$ 18.58	\$ 125
52030 Professional Fees	\$ 0	\$2,900	\$0	\$3,500	-	\$ 3,500
52031 Planning Services	\$10,126	\$10,665	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$4,781	\$ 12,000
52050 Dues/Education	\$ 545	\$485	\$455	\$295	\$ 95	\$ 600
52060 Printing	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 25
53020 Supplies	\$243.0	\$404.37	\$ 8.40	365.92	-	\$500

Approved by Conservation Commission – October 28, 2021