

TOWN OF TOPSFIELD



JOB DESCRIPTION PRINCIPAL ASSESSOR

Summary:

Full-time (40 hours) professional, technical and supervisory position that is responsible for the administration of the Town's property appraisal systems under the general direction of the Board of Assessors; Responsible for the management of all municipal tax assessment activities as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Position Purpose:

Professional and supervisory position that is responsible for the administration of the Town's property appraisal systems under the general direction of the Board of Assessors; Responsible for the management of all municipal tax assessment activities as required by state statutes, case law, Town bylaws and directives from the Department of Revenue and Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Serves as a member of the Town's Financial Management Team under the general direction of the Town Administrator; performs all other related work as required.

Supervision:

Supervision Scope: Performs highly responsible functions of a technical nature requiring considerable judgment in the analysis and determination of property values. Duties require independent thinking and initiative in the administration of the assessors' office. Incumbent uses initiative and resourcefulness to establish policies and procedures, and to modify procedures to meet new conditions.

Supervision Received: Works independently under the policy direction of the Board of Assessors, in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws and overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

Supervision Given: Supervises one part-time employee.

Job Environment:

Administrative work is conducted under typical office conditions; some fieldwork is conducted under varied conditions, with some exposure to inclement weather and the hazards associated with construction sites. Work environment involves moderate risks, which require normal safety precautions. Work requires the attendance at evening meetings with Board of Assessors and other Town boards as necessary.

Operates computers and printers, and other standard office equipment; operates automobile; utilizes camera, measuring tape, rulers, and other related tools.

Has regular contact with employees in other municipal departments; makes frequent contact with property owners, developers, GIS consultants, contractors, attorneys, engineers, bank officials, real estate professionals, representatives from state and federal agencies, and others relative to the municipality's valuation of property. Contacts require excellent customer service and negotiation skills; contacts are by telephone, in person, and in writing, and require discussing complex technical matters.

Has access to department-related confidential information such as personal information about citizens.

Errors could result in confusion and delay, could seriously affect the work of other employees and/or board members, could be costly to correct and result in the loss or delay of tax revenue for the municipality, could lead to legal ramifications, and could reflect poorly on the department's image.

Essential Functions:

(The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types 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.)

Responsible for valuation and assessment of all real and personal property in town for *ad valorem* tax purposes. Views Real Property, performing field measurements and inspections; establishes values thereon utilizing proper appraisal methodology and procedures; evaluates land and land value.

Implements and oversees in-house valuation program utilizing Vision Appraisal Technology's CAMA, MUNIS and Arc View GIS software programs.

Responsible for the management and timely reporting of all municipal tax assessment activities as required by the Division of Local Services, Department of Revenue, Commonwealth of Massachusetts in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws.

Performs on-going analysis of real estate market conditions and events to determine trends and change analysis.

Reviews applications for abatements and exemptions; provides information to Board of Assessors for decisions on applications. Keeps Board informed as to changes in State statutes, regulations and court decisions; provides information to the Board in connection with real

property values, estimates of market value changes, revised assessments, tax abatements, complaints, special requests, and reports and priorities.

Prepares and presents material to the Board of Selectmen for Classification Hearing to determine whether to classify tax rates and submits documentation to State for certification.

Serves as a member of the Town's Financial Management Team, working closely with the Town Administrator, Treasurer/Collector, Town Accountant and Purchasing Agent;

Works cooperatively with the Town Administrator and other members of financial team throughout the fiscal year to report on municipal assessing and taxation issues;

Prepares Tax Recapitulation Sheet in conjunction with other town departments for submission to Bureau of Accounts.

Provides information and data during the Town's annual budget process including analysis of expenditures and projections;

Supervises the Commitment of real estate, personal property, motor vehicle and special assessments tax bills to the Treasurer/Collector.

Provides contract review, administration and quality control for work done by outside contractors and appraisal firms.

Oversees and supervises work performed by contractors.

Administers the general business activities of the office including maintaining of office records in compliance with State guidelines and statutes. Assists with preparation of abutters list and general information requests.

Assists with the preparation of cases for Appellate Tax Board for Board of Assessors and/or counsel.

Prepares annual budget for Board of Assessors' approval.

Prepares agendas and takes minutes of meeting.

Attends professional meetings, training programs and seminars to maintain knowledge of changes in assessment administration.

Performs similar or related work as required.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications:

Education, Training and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in business or public administration, finance, or related field; Master's preferred. Requires two (2) years experience in a municipal assessing position in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; or three (3) years experience in a municipal assessing position in a municipal assessing position outside of Massachusetts; or five (5) years experience in real estate appraisal and valuation of property for property tax purposes in accordance with modern assessment principles.

Municipal assessing experience and/or municipal finance experience in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is highly advantageous. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

Special Requirements:

Certification as a Massachusetts Accredited Assessor (MAA)
Commercial Massachusetts Assessor (CMA) desirable
Valid Massachusetts motor vehicle operator's license.

Knowledge, Ability and Skill:

Knowledge. Knowledge of the Massachusetts General Laws relating to the assessment of property and the levying of taxes. Knowledge of assessment administration and municipal finance; knowledge of mass appraisal methodology for both real and personal property. Knowledge of building construction and architecture. Knowledge of appraisals, evaluations and property sales. Thorough knowledge of computerized assessing programs. Knowledge of mapping procedures. Knowledge of GIS helpful.

Ability. Ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relations with the public and to resolve difficult customer service complaints. Ability to maintain overview of detailed and accurate records using data processing. Ability to compute using various statistical methods. Ability to work with a computer on a daily basis. Ability to accurately appraise real and personal property. Ability to apply appraisal techniques. Ability to read and understand legal descriptions and appraisal manuals. Ability to work independently and set priorities.

Skill. Excellent interpersonal skills and the skill to communicate clearly. Strong problem solving and analytical skills. Financial skills. Skill in all of the above listed tools and equipment. Aptitude for working with statistical methods, databases, and details. Skill in utilizing computers and related software programs.

Physical 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 essential functions.

Employee is regularly required to operate/maneuver objects, tools, or controls, and reach to pick-up papers, files, and other common office objects. May lift and/or move objects weighing up to 10 pounds such as books, equipment, supplies, etc. May spend a majority of shift walking or standing; required to stoop, kneel, climb, or crawl while performing field work. Operates a keyboard at an efficient speed. Vision and hearing at or correctable to normal ranges. Physical ability to operate a motor vehicle.

(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.)

Hours and Salary:

This is a full-time (40 hours/week) position eligible for the Town's full benefits package. Starting salary range is \$53K-\$69K annually depending on experience and qualifications.

How to Apply:

To apply, send your resume, cover letter and a listing of 3 professional references to: Town of Topsfield, Town Hall, 8 West Common Street, Topsfield, MA 01983, Attn: Town Administrator/Personnel Director, or via email at selectmen@topsfield-ma.gov.

For highest consideration, submit a resume and letter of interest **by December 18, 2015**.

The position will remain open until filled and will be posted on the Town's website until such time as a suitable and qualified candidate has been hired.

The Town of Topsfield is an AA/EEO compliant employer.