



Senate Commission on Shared Municipal Services

May 24, 2010

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Executive Summary

Senate Resolution 2009-S 0099A created an 11-member commission to study the feasibility of sharing municipal services within and between the 39 cities and towns in Rhode Island. The Commission's purpose was to conduct a study of Rhode Island's municipal services and recommend ways to manage the State's resources and deliver its services more economically, efficiently, and effectively.

The Senate Commission held six hearings between November 2009 and April 2010. Testimony from state organizations, local city and town officials, employees, municipal planning experts, and scholars fostered discussion about which services could be shared to find savings.

The Commission's findings include:

- At less than 2,000 square miles and a population of 1.1 million, Rhode Island is divided into 39 municipal governments, 36 school districts, 38 police departments and 80 individual fire jurisdictions (districts and municipal departments, including volunteers). Sharing services would take advantage of the state's relatively small size and population, while improving service delivery, pooling resources, and saving significant tax dollars.
- Successful case studies across the nation use strategic communications and financial incentives to encourage communities to participate in shared services and cooperate with the State to establish an efficient and effective system.
- The Commission recommends moving forward with a three-year plan that examines each service area individually, gathers baseline data, identifies barriers and solutions to those barriers, implements the shared services, and evaluates the program.

Based on the testimony and the Commission's review of selected shared service programs underway in Rhode Island as well as across the country, the Commission has established a list of short- and long-term initiatives for shared services. The top priorities for the Commission are as follows:

- Establish a uniform chart of accounts to report data among municipalities for further analysis;
- Develop IT networks, infrastructure and services within and between municipalities and school districts;
- Consolidate dispatch services between cities and towns;
- Share property assessment functions between municipalities; and
- Merge tax collections between cities and towns.

The Commission recommends that the State and municipalities partner to implement a multi-pronged communications plan that educates Rhode Island taxpayers about the benefits of shared services. The State should maintain an open and transparent process to collaborate with local municipalities. The Commission recommends considering a non-binding resolution through a ballot question in November 2010 to measure voter support for the shared municipal services plan.

In addition to the above short-term goals, the Commission has outlined how other municipal services, such as financial services, public works and public safety, could follow suit as communities consider shared services. The Commission has designed an approach for overseeing and implementing its recommended initiatives, which includes creating a joint-legislative standing commission with sub teams dedicated to each service area. The new joint-legislative standing commission should work closely with the General Assembly to create legislation that would clear statutory hurdles, require shared services between communities, and create financial incentives to encourage municipalities to participate.

Background Information

At less than 2,000 square miles and a population of 1.1 million, Rhode Island is divided into 39 municipal governments, 36 school districts, 38 police department and 80 fire jurisdictions. Consolidating Rhode Island's municipal services could take advantage of the state's relative small size and population, while pooling together resources, improving overall efficiency and effectiveness, and saving significant tax dollars.

RHODE ISLAND'S MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT BY THE NUMBERS

- Among Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns, there are currently 9,306.1 FTE positions for municipal, police and fire personnel (not including education FTE positions), creating a resident to municipal employee ratio of 118 to 1.¹
- In total, Rhode Island has 528.0 FTE positions to maintain municipal finance responsibilities for the state's 39 cities and towns – an average of 13.0 FTE positions per community.²
- In municipal finance offices throughout the state, there are currently:³
 - 148.0 FTE positions for general finance/treasury
 - 118.5 FTE positions for tax collections
 - 139.5 FTE positions for tax assessment
 - 19.0 FTE positions for purchasing duties
 - 32.0 FTE positions for information systems
 - 10.0 FTE positions for personnel
 - 61.0 FTE positions for controller
- For fire and police dispatch services, the state's total number of employees between FY2004 and FY2010 increased by 180% -- from 106.0 FTE uniformed and civilian officers in FY2004 to 297.4 FTE uniformed and civilian officers in FY2010. Only 19 of the 39 cities and towns have combined the individual police and fire dispatch services in order to operate only one dispatch center per community.⁴
- Since FY2004, Rhode Island's General Revenue Fund has decreased by nearly 17.0% or \$502 million; while annual municipal expenditures have increased by 20.2% or \$524.6 million.⁵
- Today, Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns require \$3,124.2 million to pay for services compared to \$2,599.5 million in FY2004. Education expenditures (55.8%) and employee benefits (20.6%) represent the largest share of this increase.⁶

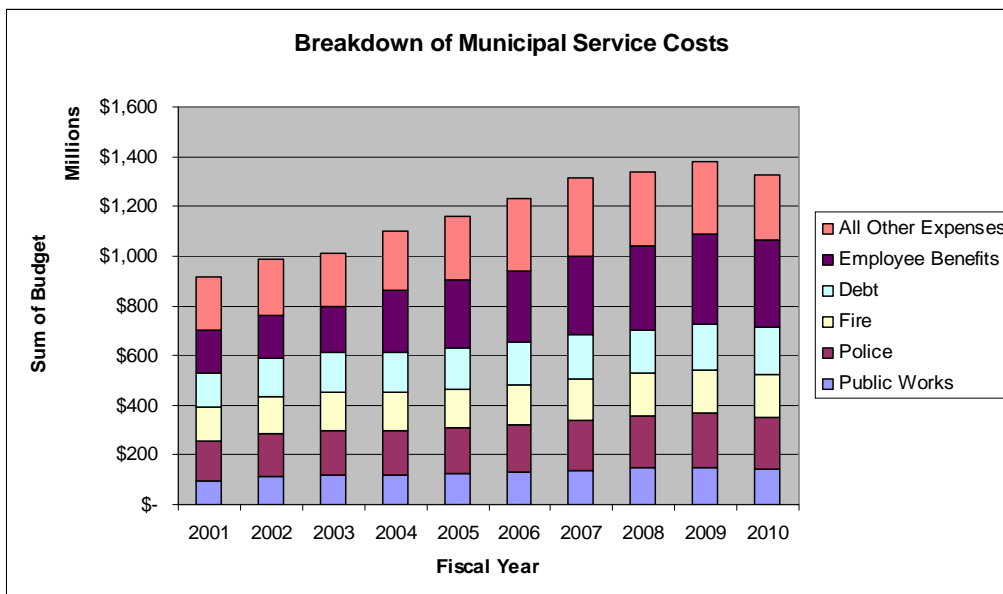


Figure 1: Breakdown of municipal service costs, 2001 through 2010 (excluding education)⁷

| Ten-Year Trend Analysis of Municipal Service Costs (Excluding Schools) - In Millions | | | | | | | | | | | Ten-year |
|--|----------|----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Municipal Services | FY2001 | FY2002 | FY2003 | FY2004 | FY2005 | FY2006 | FY2007 | FY2008 | FY2009 | FY2010 | Change |
| - Public Works | \$97.42 | \$110.85 | \$117.30 | \$120.15 | \$126.65 | \$129.64 | \$137.12 | \$147.83 | \$150.48 | \$145.66 | \$48.24 |
| - Police | 159.66 | 173.59 | 180.72 | 178.65 | 184.10 | 192.92 | 201.55 | 207.87 | 215.54 | 204.92 | 45.26 |
| - Fire | 133.66 | 148.35 | 155.53 | 151.82 | 150.50 | 159.28 | 169.39 | 174.33 | 177.93 | 170.78 | 37.12 |
| - Debt | 138.78 | 153.87 | 156.69 | 163.10 | 169.35 | 170.79 | 174.81 | 168.89 | 182.80 | 189.92 | 51.14 |
| - Employee Benefits | 170.07 | 174.23 | 188.11 | 247.56 | 275.87 | 289.49 | 317.01 | 341.40 | 362.04 | 355.69 | 185.62 |
| - All Other Expenses | 213.72 | 225.69 | 214.68 | 237.65 | 253.98 | 290.77 | 312.13 | 297.27 | 289.91 | 261.63 | 47.91 |
| - Total | \$913.31 | \$986.58 | \$1,013.03 | \$1,098.93 | \$1,160.46 | \$1,232.88 | \$1,312.01 | \$1,337.59 | \$1,378.70 | \$1,328.60 | \$415.29 |

Figure 2: Municipal service costs (in detail)⁸

RHODE ISLAND'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS

- From 1997-98 through 2007-08, Rhode Island's public school enrollment (PK-12) decreased from 151,081 in 1998 to 142,876 in 2008, a decrease of approximately 8,500 students or 5.0%. The largest decreases in enrollment occurred in Jamestown (25.0%), Newport (25.0%), Narragansett (21.0%), Middletown (17.0%), East Providence (14.0%), Burrillville (13.0%) and Bristol Warren (13.0%).⁹
- Despite the total reduction in enrollment, municipal school budgets increased between \$1,149.75 million in 1997-98 to \$1,943.43 million in 2006-07, a total variance of \$793.69 million or 40.84%.¹⁰
- Generally, municipal government and school budgets are growing at the same rates. Since FY2004, municipal expenditures overall increased by \$224.7 million, from \$1,105.5 million in FY2004 to \$1,330.2 million in FY2010. Education expenditures constitute the largest portion of municipal spending, accounting for 57.4% of total FY2010 municipal budgets (which has been consistent since FY2004).¹¹
- Rhode Island has 31 full-time school superintendents and 5 part-time superintendents. In addition, 18 school districts have assistant superintendents. Overall, 5.73% of the FY2008 budget for Rhode Island's school departments and regional school districts was spent on school leadership expenses (approx. \$117.9 million out of a total of \$2,057.9 million).¹²

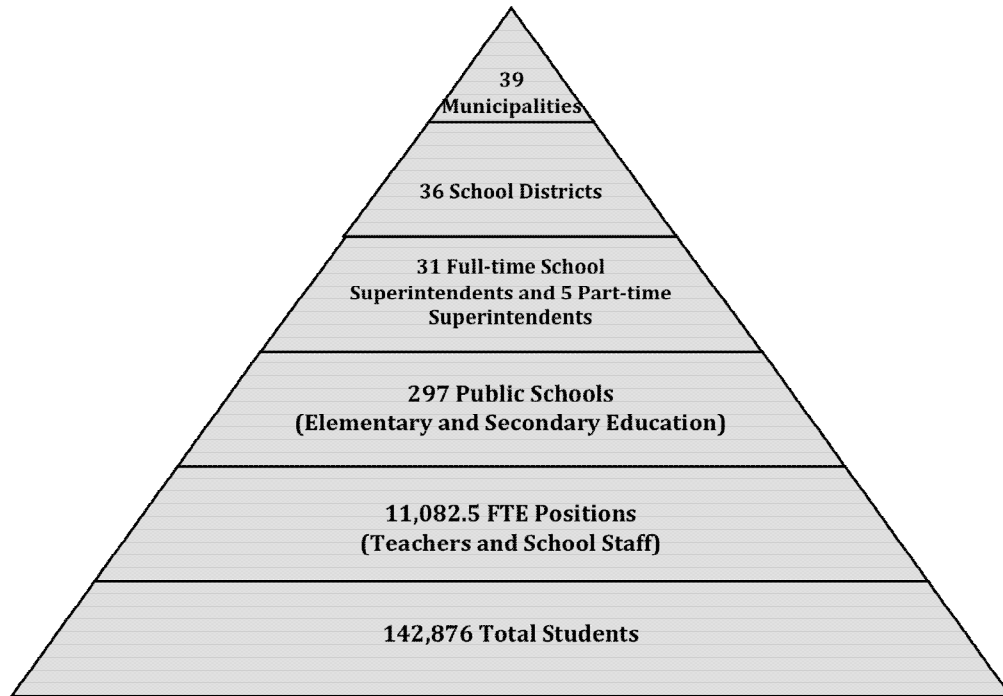


Figure 3: Overview of Rhode Island's public school system, 2007–2008¹³

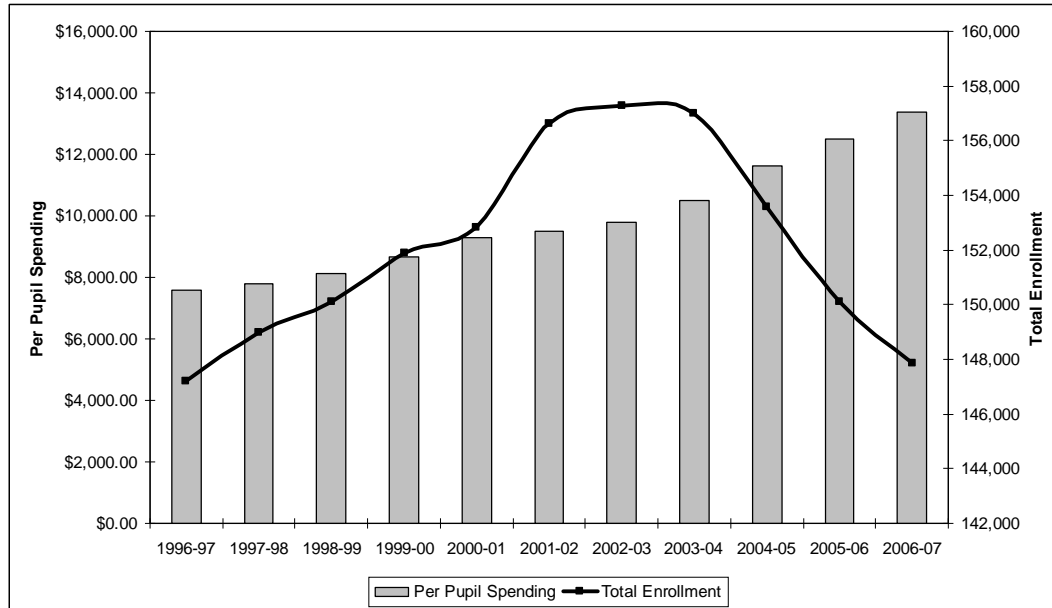


Figure 4: Per pupil spending vs. total enrollment¹⁴

| School Expenditures Trend Analysis | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Year | Education Expenditures* | Annual Percentage Change |
| 1996-97 | \$1,116.9 | - |
| 1997-98 | 1,159.7 | 3.84% |
| 1998-99 | 1,219.3 | 5.1% |
| 1999-00 | 1,316.3 | 8.0% |
| 2000-01 | 1,423.0 | 8.1% |
| 2001-02 | 1,488.9 | 4.6% |
| 2002-03 | 1,539.7 | 3.4% |
| 2003-04 | 1,647.1 | 7.0% |
| 2004-05 | 1,788.0 | 8.6% |
| 2005-06 | 1,875.9 | 4.9% |
| 2006-07 | 1,979.1 | 5.5% |

** Total education expenditures account for all daily operational and instructional costs.*

Figure 5: Annual percentage change in school expenditures¹⁵

Total School Enrollment vs. Expenditures (in millions): 1996-97 - 2006-07

| School District | 1996-1997 Enrollment | 2006-2007 Enrollment | Percentage Change | 1996-1997 Expenditures* | 2006-2007 Expenditures* | Percentage Change |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Barrington | 2,973 | 3,492 | 17.5 % | \$21.8 | \$39.0 | 78.8% |
| Bristol Warren | 3,956 | 3,479 | -12.1 % | 31.73 | 49.43 | 55.8% |
| Burrillville | 3,033 | 2,571 | -15.2 % | 20.38 | 28.82 | 41.4% |
| Central Falls | 3,109 | 3,491 | 12.3 % | 22.14 | 52.38 | 136.6% |
| Charlton | 3,880 | 3,773 | -2.8 % | 29.21 | 51.86 | 77.6% |
| Coventry | 5,475 | 5,635 | 2.9 % | 39.32 | 65.57 | 66.8% |
| Cranston | 10,647 | 10,960 | 2.9 % | 79.58 | 135.72 | 70.6% |
| Cumberland | 4,779 | 5,170 | 8.2 % | 31.83 | 52.29 | 64.3% |
| East Greenwich | 2,264 | 2,407 | 6.3 % | 16.40 | 31.72 | 93.4% |
| East Providence | 6,733 | 5,895 | -12.4 % | 46.42 | 74.82 | 61.2% |
| Exeter-West Greenwich | 2,028 | 2,047 | 0.9 % | 14.43 | 29.03 | 101.2% |
| Foster | 386 | 300 | -22.3 % | 3.05 | 4.54 | 49.0% |
| Fost-Glocester | 1,462 | 1,622 | 10.9 % | 10.45 | 17.42 | 66.7% |
| Glocester | 890 | 676 | -24.0 % | 6.53 | 10.05 | 54.0% |
| Jamestown | 652 | 501 | -23.2 % | 3.91 | 8.23 | 110.5% |
| Johnston | 3,391 | 3,253 | -4.1 % | 24.61 | 46.80 | 90.1% |
| Lincoln | 3,440 | 3,464 | 0.7 % | 22.56 | 47.30 | 109.7% |
| Little Compton | 375 | 315 | -16.0 % | 3.03 | 4.36 | 43.6% |
| Middletown | 2,842 | 2,415 | -15.0 % | 23.60 | 34.78 | 47.4% |
| Narragansett | 1,907 | 1,532 | -19.7 % | 16.55 | 24.95 | 50.8% |
| New Shoreham | 134 | 147 | 9.7 % | 1.67 | 3.98 | 137.8% |
| Newport | 3,104 | 2,282 | -26.5 % | 27.97 | 37.82 | 35.2% |
| North Kingstown | 4,468 | 4,536 | 1.5 % | 33.71 | 57.12 | 69.4% |
| North Providence | 3,535 | 3,381 | -4.4 % | 28.45 | 42.34 | 48.8% |
| North Smithfield | 1,692 | 1,886 | 11.5 % | 11.81 | 19.95 | 68.9% |
| Pawtucket | 9,619 | 9,073 | -5.7 % | 64.91 | 107.01 | 64.8% |
| Portsmouth | 2,697 | 3,033 | 12.5 % | 21.12 | 33.28 | 57.6% |
| Providence | 24,535 | 25,190 | 2.7 % | 182.65 | 379.47 | 107.8% |
| Scituate | 1,736 | 1,811 | 4.3 % | 11.32 | 20.21 | 78.6% |
| Smithfield | 2,698 | 2,620 | -2.9 % | 16.56 | 30.64 | 85.0% |
| South Kingstown | 4,082 | 3,848 | -5.7 % | 29.31 | 58.45 | 99.4% |
| Tiverton | 2,172 | 2,123 | -2.3 % | 15.26 | 24.04 | 57.6% |
| Warwick | 11,925 | 11,236 | -5.8 % | 103.53 | 164.26 | 58.7% |
| West Warwick | 3,720 | 3,799 | 2.1 % | 31.67 | 50.01 | 57.9% |
| Westerly | 3,502 | 3,436 | -1.9 % | 26.26 | 50.15 | 91.0% |
| Woonsocket | 6,592 | 6,462 | -2.0 % | 43.19 | 70.25 | 62.7% |
| Total Municipalities | 150,433 | 147,861 | -1.7 % | \$1,116.91 | \$1,958.02 | 42.96% |

*Expenditures in millions; Includes total expenditures for public elementary and secondary education (includes instructional costs but excludes capital projects). Financial data unavailable after 2006-2007.

Figure 6: Enrollment and school expenditures by municipality¹⁶

Rhode Island's Experience in Consolidating Municipal Services

To-date, only a few cities and towns have experimented with sharing municipal services, with the most progress made on Aquidneck Island, in the Foster-Glocester school district, and in the cities of Warwick and East Providence. The towns of North Kingstown and Exeter have begun sharing IT resources as well.

SCHOOLS ON AQUIDNECK ISLAND¹⁷

Initiative

In July 2009, RIPEC, in cooperation with the Aquidneck Island Advisory Committee, conducted a comprehensive study of the feasibility of school consolidation and cooperation initiatives on Aquidneck Island (Middletown, Newport and Portsmouth).

Key Findings

The study found that between FY2009 and FY2014, the Island will lose approximately 12.0% (or 889 students) of the total student population, projecting a total student population of 6,493 by FY2014. Additionally, all three districts are projected to face budget deficits and an excess space capacity in school facilities in the coming years. Estimated average annual operating budget savings for all three districts combined if shared services and consolidation is pursued would range from \$2.8 million to \$12.3 million between FY2012 and FY2014.¹⁸

Current Status

Municipal officials in Middletown, Newport and Portsmouth are continuing to discuss RIPEC's proposal. Community support for the consolidation plan has been low despite its initial support from local and State officials. One of the main concerns is how to achieve equity when pooling the communities' resources. RIPEC has outlined how the Governor's FY2011 budget and proposed new school formulas would impact the Aquidneck Island school systems, and supporters of the proposal continue to schedule hearings to discuss next steps.

FOSTER-GLOCESTER SCHOOL DISTRICTS¹⁹

Initiative

Although the towns of Foster and Glocester share middle and high schools (Foster-Glocester School District), the towns each have their own respective Pre-K through grade 5 elementary schools. In 1996-1997, Foster and Glocester's pre-k through grade 5 enrollments were 386 and 890, respectively. By 2006-2007, the enrollments for both communities had dropped to 300 and 676, respectively. In 1996-1997, Foster had 28.0 teacher FTE positions and Glocester had 69.6 FTE positions. By 2006-2007, Foster employed 22.0 FTE positions and Glocester employed 53.0 FTE positions. Therefore, both schools lost approximately 23% enrollment and reduced FTE positions by approximately 20.0%. Both school districts also have separate superintendents, school records and purchasing systems.

Key Findings

Since the Foster-Glocester School District proved to be a success in terms of consolidation of resources, local municipal leaders thought it would be a natural next step to consolidate the elementary schools and academic records systems between the two communities as well. A ballot initiative was introduced to consolidate the elementary schools within the Foster-Glocester School District, eliminating the separate Foster and Glocester districts entirely. The ballot referendum failed due to teacher union resistance and broad feelings that the towns would lose their "identities" if they merged completely.

Current Status

Since the ballot initiative failed, the Foster and Glocester school districts have grown further apart rather than continuing the process of consolidation. Although the communities were sharing several services between their respective elementary school systems, they are now completely separated. In sum, the anti-ballot initiative resulted in opposition to regionalization.

CITY OF WARWICK²⁰

Initiative

In August 2005, the City of Warwick engaged RIPEC to direct the preparation of a five-year financial forecast of school spending and a benchmarking analysis that includes four peer Rhode Island school districts. These tools would permit local policymakers and taxpayers to review how Warwick schools compare in terms of spending, revenue sources, student populations and student performance. The City also requested that RIPEC review several key administrative issues facing the School Department, such as information technology and the School Department's central administrative office.

Key Findings

RIPEC conducted the Warwick School District Management Study and presented its recommendations in March 2006. The key recommendations included modernizing the school district budget document to include a budget narrative, all funds budgeting, enhanced internal budgeting and financial management, a personnel supplement, an accurate five-year forecast, more aggressive federal indirect cost recovery, operations expenditures, and most importantly, considerations for the teacher contract. RIPEC recommended that the Warwick School Department and municipal government establish a unified IT function, Financial Management Information System (FMIS) and Wide-Area network and IP Telephony. For the central administration, RIPEC recommended consolidating administrative clerical duties, controller functions and purchasing between the School Department and municipal government.

Current Status

Mayor Scott Avedisian of the City of Warwick provided testimony on November 19, 2009 to discuss his experiences consolidating services within the City of Warwick, including the RIPEC School Management Study. To-date, the City of Warwick has made little progress with respect to implementing the RIPEC School Management Study's recommendations. Mayor Avedisian informed the Commission about Warwick's other initiatives to share services, including a pilot yard waste program with East Greenwich and the consolidation of public safety dispatch services with East Greenwich and North Kingstown.

EAST PROVIDENCE²¹

Initiative

In February 2008, the Roger Williams University/Institute for Public Policy conducted a study to identify ways for the City of East Providence to reduce expenditures, with a focus on exploring the possibility of consolidating municipal functions with similar non-instructional functions currently conducted by the East Providence School Department. The Roger Williams University team conducted nearly 60 interviews of City and School officials and employees from municipal and school departments, site visits, and a review of a variety of budget and related documents.

Key Findings

The Roger Williams University team learned that there was strong sentiment to explore consolidation of municipal and non-instructional school functions among the interviewees. Many realized that without some action, the only viable options available to the municipal and school leaders would be layoffs and reductions in services.

The main recommendations for the City of East Providence included consolidating all non-instructional services into municipal departments, conduct a technology audit to determine what it would cost to acquire and maintain hardware and software to make City services function better, streamline purchasing and administrative functions, study the desirability of changing the non-standard fiscal year, and consider personnel actions in the event that funding sources continue to deteriorate.

Potential obstacles cited to tackle these problems included union jurisdictions, contract language, various Federal and State mandates, local political and power considerations, parental and neighborhood pressures, and the condensed timeframe available to address current and projected deficits.

Current Status

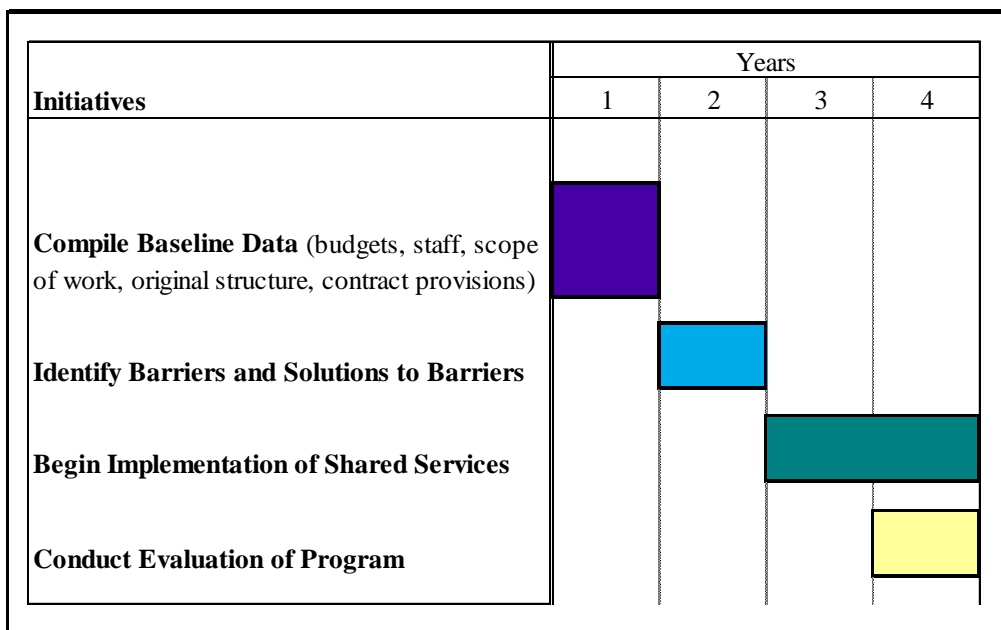
At this time, none of the Roger Williams University team's recommendations are implemented.

Key Recommendations

After testimony from municipal officials, union leaders, local employees, academia and others, who have experienced relative success with sharing municipal services as well as conducting research on the experiences with shared services initiatives across the country, the Senate Commission has outlined recommendations for both the short- and long-term.

The Commission recommends the following approach and timeline to gathering accurate data and implementing the shared services proposals:

Recommended Timeline Shared Municipal Services



SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES

Information Technology

IT staff is responsible for maintaining municipal networks and providing back-room support for municipal governments and schools. This includes capital expenditures, software investments, service, disaster recovery program and other IT functions (telecom, etc.). Currently, the state's municipalities have 32.0 FTE positions for the 39 cities and towns; this figure excludes school departments due to lack of data. Through the Commission's research, it is recommended to look at sharing IT resources between municipal governments and school departments.²² North Kingstown and Exeter have initiated a program to share their respective Information Technology resources. As the State looks to review additional cooperative IT arrangements, it should evaluate the experience in North Kingstown/Exeter.

Recommended**Next Steps:**

- Conduct survey of municipal governments and school districts to determine the number of IT FTE positions per community, budgets, scope of services provided and an assessment of technology needed (including school districts)
- Examine each community's IT capacity and systems
- Develop strategic plan to share services within communities (between government and schools)
- Study options to share IT services between communities (based on IT systems, needs & resources)

Consolidation Goal: Achieve 20% efficiency of overall budget while expanding best practices

Implementation: Rhode Island Department of Administration

Tax/Property Assessment

Tax assessors are charged with producing accurate and defensible property values across Rhode Island. Assessment determines what the tax value is for each property parcel and, by aggregation, the total tax value of the local jurisdiction. Currently, municipalities are required to conduct a full revaluation every 9 years with a statistical update in the 3rd and 6th years between full revaluations. These records play a critical role in ensuring equity among taxpayers as well as determining property tax rates and local revenues.

Cities and towns across Rhode Island abide by various assessment schedules and employ contractors (in addition to their staff) to conduct regular evaluations of property. Contractors most often used include Appraisal Resources, Inc., Certified Revaluation Company, Clipboard, Inc., Information Applications & Solutions, Tyler Technologies, and Vision Appraisal Company.²³

During the past ten years, municipalities have completed at least two cycles of evaluations or assessment updates. During the first update (2001- 2007), Rhode Island assessed a total of 396,743 properties and paid contractors a total of \$8.07 million at an average rate of \$20.52 per parcel.²⁴ The State reimbursed cities and towns for \$7.56 million (at a maximum of \$20 per parcel) pursuant to Chapter 44-5 of Rhode Island General Laws.

In the second update (2005-2010), municipalities assessed a total of 388,340 properties and paid contractors a total of \$6.81 million at an average rate of \$18.76 per parcel. The State reimbursed municipalities for \$5.43 million (at a maximum of \$16 per parcel).²⁵

As of FY2010, there were 139.5 FTE positions across the state dedicated to local tax assessment. Most communities employ two to four FTE positions with exceptions in Providence (15.0 FTE positions for 41,117 parcels), Warwick (14.5 FTE positions for 39,157 parcels), Cranston (7.0 FTE positions for 32,166 parcels), Pawtucket (6.0 FTE positions for 19,733 parcels), East Providence (6.0 FTE positions for 15,848 parcels) and Westerly (6.0 FTE positions for 12,323 parcels). See Appendix 2: Municipal parcel counts, assessors FTE positions, and contracts for municipal breakdown of FTE positions and number of parcels.²⁶

Recommended Next Steps:

- Work with the RI Association of Assessing Officers to conduct further analysis on contractor agreements per community and evaluate schedule of statistical updates to identify and understand how timing can impact opportunities to share assessment services.
- Survey municipal leaders and assessors to determine how shared services could be implemented and what savings can be achieved through combined efforts.

Consolidation Goal: Achieve 20% efficiency of overall budget while expanding best practices

Implementation: Division of Municipal Finance, Department of Revenue, Rhode Island Association of Assessing Officers

Tax Collections

Tax collectors are responsible for managing the tax payment system. As of FY2010, Rhode Island municipalities employed 118.5 FTE positions for local tax collections. Only five (Barrington, Central Falls, East Greenwich, Lincoln and Little Compton) of the 39 cities and towns have consolidated tax collections services within their municipality's finance office; the remaining communities have separate offices dedicated to tax collections.²⁷ An example of how Rhode Island might consolidate local tax collections services stems from a recent state-led initiative in Tennessee. All business taxes were shifted from local collections to the State's electronic tax collections system, creating a uniform system that keeps track of business tax receipts.

Recommended Next Steps:

- Work with the Rhode Island Tax Collectors Association and the State Department of Revenue to create an analysis of local tax collections services, including budgets, FTE positions and scope of work.
- Survey municipal tax collectors to determine best approach for sharing services between municipalities.
- Consider opportunities to shift tax collection functions to the state-level.

Consolidation Goal: Share tax collection services between communities, achieving 20% efficiency of overall budget while expanding best practices

Implementation: Rhode Island Division of Taxation, Department of Revenue, Rhode Island Tax Collectors Association

Dispatch Services

Dispatch centers handle all incoming emergency phone calls, serving as the liaison between 9-1-1 Uniform Telephone System and local fire, police and EMTs. All Enhanced 9-1-1 calls from Rhode Island are answered at the Enhanced 9-1-1 Uniform Telephone System statewide telecommunications public safety answering point in North Providence and are transferred to the dispatch center if the caller requests ambulance or fire from anywhere in the dispatch coverage area. There are currently dispatch centers in each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns; 19 communities share dispatch services between the police and fire stations, whereas 20 cities and towns have separate dispatch services for each public safety function.

In FY2010, municipalities employed 297.4 FTE positions for police and fire dispatch (both uniform and civilian personnel). In FY2004, there were 106.0 FTE positions, representing a 180% increase in dispatch personnel in six years. See Appendix 3 for a breakdown of comparisons between FY2004 and FY2010.²⁸

Recommended Next Steps:

- Working with State and local Emergency Management officials, conduct an analysis of dispatch centers, compiling budget data, staffing requirements and scope of work.
- Create strategic plan to share dispatch services through technology improvements, sharing office space and personnel.

Consolidation Goal: Share public safety dispatch services between communities, achieving 20% efficiency of overall budget while expanding best practices

Implementation: Rhode Island Department of Public Safety

LONG-TERM INITIATIVES

The Senate Commission encourages municipalities to consider sharing services within the following municipal service areas for the long-term. The Senate Commission recommends that the State conducts further analysis to compile baseline data, recommended next steps and consolidation goals.

Purchasing

Municipalities have experience in joint purchasing programs, cooperative energy arrangements as well as other initiatives that demonstrate that there have been and continue to be opportunities to leverage joint efforts in purchasing supplies and services. Efforts should build on these and other experiences to continue and expand joint purchasing arrangements, such as those provided through the League of Cities and Towns, as well as the energy-related purchasing arrangements with the Washington County Regional Planning Council.

An example of a successful shared purchasing program is the Rhode Island League of Cities and Town's Energy Aggregation Program. The energy purchasing collaborative took effect in July, 1999 as thirty-two of Rhode Island's cities and towns began purchasing all of their electricity from Select Energy, Inc. in Connecticut. Since then, the League reports that cities and towns have reaped more than \$6.0 million in electricity savings and these savings continue to increase month after month.²⁹

The Rhode Island General Assembly is also considering Article 18 of the Governor's FY2010 Supplemental Budget Proposal, which would provide a mechanism for public schools and school districts to participate in a statewide purchasing system for goods, supplies and services. This would authorize the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in collaboration with the Department of Administration, to establish state-level purchasing and programs for statewide school transportation, food services management, and school employees' healthcare and dental insurance. According to RIPEC, the Budget Article noted above could have a fiscal impact on the State and municipalities; however, the amount of impact cannot be determined as it relates to future purchases.³⁰

Building Inspection Services

Building inspections are required with any form of building, electrical, mechanical or plumbing projects. Permits are required for most construction work performed, including roofing, siding, pools, fences, sheds, garages, new additions, cabinetry, doors, new construction, windows, electrical, plumbing and mechanical work, temporary structures, and retaining walls.

It is the responsibility of the Inspections Department to enforce the provisions of the Rhode Island State Building Codes, the BOCA Codes, the National Electrical Code, and other relevant codes, including individual municipal laws.

Further analysis should be conducted to determine municipal budgets, FTE positions and scope of work for building inspection services across the state to determine the feasibility of sharing staff and resources.

Animal Control

Animal control handles all incoming emergency inquiries related to displaced animals. Many Rhode Island municipalities have an animal control service as well as rely heavily on private organizations. Further analysis should be conducted to determine municipal budgets, FTE positions and scope of work for animal control services across the state.

Moorings/Harbor Services

As a coastal state, there are nearly 30 different marinas in Rhode Island, and municipalities up and down the coast are responsible for maintaining and protecting their coastline. Harbor services are responsible for storm watches, regulating and registering boats and sea vessels, monitoring environmental impacts, etc. Testimony during the Commission hearings suggested that harbor services could be shared among coastal communities. Further analysis should be conducted to determine municipal budgets, FTE positions and scope of work for harbor services.

Police

Municipal police services are an integral component of public safety. Currently, there are 38 police departments throughout the state with a total of 2,586.0 FTE positions. In FY2010, the State's municipalities had a total budget of \$204.92 million for police departments.³¹ Although many communities have already established mutual aid agreements, further analysis is required to provide accurate information on budgets, FTE positions and jurisdictions for police.

Fire

Rhode Island has a total of 80 fire jurisdictions, including municipal departments, various districts and stations, as well as volunteers. In FY2010, the State's municipal fire departments had a total of 1,999.0 FTE positions and a budget of \$170.78 million.³² In 2007, the State's volunteer fire departments had a total budget of \$3.99 million with 33.0 FTE positions (paid) and 745 FTE positions (volunteer).³³ See Appendix 6 for a map of the existing jurisdictions across the 39 cities and towns. Although many communities have already established mutual aid agreements, analysis should be expanded to consider budgets, FTE positions and ways of sharing services.

Schools

Education expenditures represent the largest investment of resources by state and local governments across the country and are the largest component of State aid to local governments in Rhode Island. In the FY2010 budget, enacted total education aid (including state fiscal stabilization funds through ARRA) is \$855.5 million, or 28.5% of the FY 2010 general revenue expenditure budget. At the local level, education spending accounts for more than half of all municipal expenditures.³⁴

Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB)

OPEB annual payouts may be the fastest growing liability in a government's budget. There are currently no state-administered OPEB plans for municipalities – all municipal OPEB plans are locally administered. The actuarial value of assets collectively held by these plans is \$18 million (as of the most recent data available in the FY 2009 audit reports). OPEB costs are driven by high medical inflation rates, upcoming baby boomer retirements, and retirees living longer. Government employers must now recognize OPEB costs on an actuarial basis. These costs are almost totally unfunded as the collective unfunded liability for OPEB benefits is \$2.4 billion and municipalities have only set aside assets to cover less than 1.0% of the actuarial accrued liability.³⁵ Further analysis should consider a 5-10 year plan to encourage communities to meet their Annual Retired Contribution (ARC) for OPEB rather than the current "pay as you go" system. According to RIPEC (using Standard & Poor's data), credit quality will suffer through the OPEB cost pressures as they weaken the municipality's financial position and flexibility.³⁶

Economic Development/Planning

Planning and economic development offices across the state are charged with planning and permitting land to capture the greatest return on investment. In addition to municipal offices, there are currently 45 organizations separate from municipalities that are also responsible for economic development. The State has recently embarked on strengthening the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and its relationships at the local level. As this proves, further analysis should consider the state's return on investment for its sponsored and subsidized economic development initiatives.

Public Works

In FY2010, municipalities employed 1,135.9 FTE positions for public works across the 39 cities and towns, with a total budget of \$124.87 million. In FY2004, the total budget across the state was \$61.17 million.³⁷ Further analysis should consider which areas of municipal public works that can be shared between communities, as well as how municipal governments share public works personnel, equipment and scope of work with the school department janitorial staffs.

Potential Barriers and Solutions to Shared Municipal Services

From a fiscal perspective, sharing municipal services in a small state like Rhode Island appears to have potential for more efficient and effective services at a lower cost to taxpayers. Yet despite its population size and land mass, Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns are all distinct jurisdictions with diverse demographics, histories and individual characteristics. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to believe that a "one size fits all" approach to consolidating municipal services would be a feasible solution. Municipal governments and residents prefer to have control over the scope and the way services are delivered because the municipality is the first contact to its respective residents.

After hearing testimony and researching case studies in the City of Warwick and the City of East Providence, the Commission anticipates that the following barriers may arise as the State tries to implement its shared services initiative:

- Lack of quality data and analysis;
- Stakeholders resistance to change (local and state officials, residents);
- Fear of losing control and access;
- Union jurisdictions and contracts may make it difficult for school and municipal staff to integrate between and among jurisdictions;
- State charter agreements may require significant changes;
- Retirement and health benefit plans differ between communities;
- Cities and towns' relative fiscal health may impact their willingness to consider long-term initiatives; and
- "NIMBYism" may prevail, preventing participation from residents and municipalities.

The State needs to approach the shared services initiative as a partnership with not only municipal and school leaders, but taxpayers and employers as well, in order to move towards a successful transition. Although the State has spearheaded the data gathering efforts and compiled the key recommendations, it would be appropriate to maintain on-going, meaningful relationships to share these findings and ask for additional insight from municipalities, schools and employers who are closest to the service in order to develop comprehensive plans.

Every city or town in Rhode Island is facing fiscal constraints. The numbers indicate that consolidating municipal services has the potential to be a win-win scenario for the municipalities; however, the State may need to be willing to invest in the short-term in incentives for communities in order for long-term benefits to occur. Immediate incentives may provide an opportunity for communities to sell the idea to taxpayers as well. If the State teams up with municipalities to ensure that there is sufficient education, sharing of information, listening and working alongside residents to find the most efficient and effective outcome, the State will be successful in implementing these recommendations in the long term.

Oversight Structure

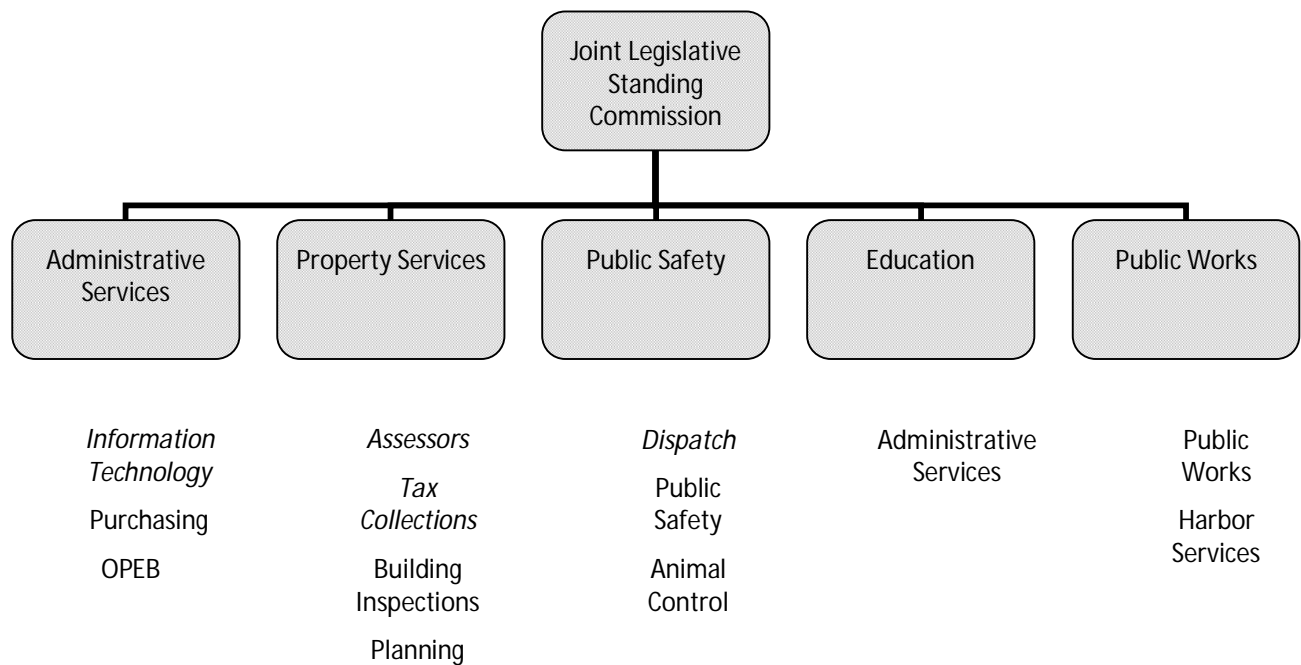
The Senate Commission's recommendation for oversight and implementation of shared services includes a two-pronged approach between a newly created legislative standing commission and a series of sub teams.

LEGISLATIVE STANDING COMMISSION

The main component of the oversight and implementation structure will be a newly created legislative commission that oversees the sub teams and meets with each group on at least a quarterly basis. The legislative commission will include elected officials from the Senate and House.

SUB TEAMS

In addition to the main oversight commission, the Senate Commission recommends creating a series of sub teams to focus solely on individual service areas. The sub teams will be responsible for meeting with local municipal leaders and experts to compile baseline data and determine the most efficient methods for sharing services. The sub teams will be the chief liaison between municipalities and the State to coordinate the shared services initiatives, and the legislative commission will appoint teams to spearhead specific areas of focus.



Legislation

§ 42-51-1 Establishment of commission. – There is established within the general assembly a permanent joint commission to be known as the "Commission on Shared Municipal Services," hereinafter referred to as "the commission."

§ 42-51-2 Composition of commission. – The commission shall be composed of ten (10) members of the general assembly, five (5) of whom shall be from the Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate, not more than four (4) of whom shall be from the same political party, and five (5) of whom shall be from the House of Representatives to be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, not more than four (4) of whom shall be from the same political party. The President of the Senate shall select one co-chairperson and the speaker of the House shall select one co-chairperson of the commission.

§ 42-51-6.2 Committees and municipal affairs coordination teams. – (a) The commission is authorized to create advisory committees and municipal affairs coordination teams to perform tasks within the jurisdiction of the commission.

(b) The commission may itself, or it may empower these committees and coordination teams to:

(1) Investigate and research opportunities to create a more economic, efficient and effective management of the State's overall resources by pooling said resources and saving significant tax dollars;

(2) Establish current baselines of the municipal expenditures;

(3) Set specific tasks, timelines, goals and methods to evaluate the progress of the committees and municipal affairs coordination teams.

(c) The committees and teams may make recommendations to the commission for the development of policies and procedures in general.

(d) Advisory committees and coordination teams created by the commission shall be composed of representative citizens serving without pay.

(e) Three (3) members of a committee under this commission constitutes a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business of that committee.

Reports and recommendations. – The Joint Commission on Shared Municipal Services shall from time to time and at least annually report to the general assembly on its findings and the results of its studies, and make any recommendations to the general assembly and propose any legislation or initiate any studies that it shall deem advisable.

References to commission. – Each branch of the legislature may refer to the joint commission, either initially or after action by committees, all bills and resolutions dealing with or affecting municipal affairs coordination.

Place of meeting – Quorum. – The joint committee on legislative services shall provide adequate space in the state house for the use of the joint Commission on Shared Municipal Services; provided, that the joint Commission on Shared Municipal Services may conduct hearings and hold meetings elsewhere when doing so will better serve its purposes. A majority in number of the joint Commission on Shared Municipal Services shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Role of General Assembly

The Senate Commission suggests that the Rhode Island General Assembly focus its role to help local governments initiate shared services by:

- Reviewing existing statutes to remove barriers to cooperation;
- Identifying mandates and other provisions that may make it increasingly difficult to share public services; and
- Creating incentives that may encourage further collaboration among municipalities and schools.

CLEAR PATH OF STATE STATUTES

The Commission recommends that the General Assembly identify State statutes that may prevent or inhibit municipalities and school districts from working cooperatively and collaboratively. There may also be opportunities to provide legislative authority to encourage joint efforts, cooperation and share services.

MANDATE SHARED SERVICES

The Commission recommends that the General Assembly consider the approach of the Senate Committee on Government Oversight regarding State mandates. The Committee recommends the collection and reporting of existing mandates affecting municipalities and school districts, which should include identifying those mandates that inhibit communities and school districts in their efforts to share services.

PROVIDE INCENTIVES TO MUNICIPALITIES

The Commission believes that financial and other incentives may be necessary to create the necessary environment for shared services and the strong partnerships between the State and municipalities for successful cooperation efforts. While these incentives have yet to be identified, consideration should be given to ensuring the incentives are appropriate and sustainable for the course of action communities and school districts choose in their shared services efforts.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: OVERVIEW OF MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT, CONTRACTORS, AND SCHEDULES³⁸

| Municipal Assessment Evaluation Schedules, Contractor Budgets & State Reimbursements | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Municipality | First Update | Parcel Count | Cost per Parcel | Total Cost | Total Reimbursement* | Second Update | Parcel Count | Cost per Parcel | Total Cost | Total Reimbursement* |
| Barrington | FY2003 | 6,281 | \$18.72 | \$117,600 | \$118,721 | FY2009 | 6,351 | \$21.75 | \$138,134 | \$101,616 |
| Bristol | FY2005 | 9,937 | 19.75 | 196,300 | 196,300 | FY2008 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Burrillville | FY2001 | 6,306 | 19.51 | 123,000 | 122,942 | FY2007 | 6,379 | 23.11 | 147,400 | 102,064 |
| Central Falls | FY2001 | 2,806 | 24.95 | 70,000 | 56,120 | FY2007 | 3,060 | 18.79 | 57,500 | 46,000 |
| Charlestown | FY2002 | 6,118 | 35.96 | 220,000 | 121,800 | FY2008 | 6,115 | 21.32 | 130,400 | 97,840 |
| Coventry | FY2002 | 13,613 | 16.84 | 222,400 | 228,400 | FY2005 | 13,744 | 14.95 | 205,500 | 164,400 |
| Cranston | FY2003 | 31,765 | 19.73 | 626,800 | 629,800 | FY2009 | 32,166 | 15.02 | 483,133 | 386,400 |
| Cumberland | FY2002 | 13,798 | 21.83 | 301,200 | 275,960 | FY2008 | 14,207 | 16.40 | 233,000 | 186,400 |
| East Greenwich | FY2003 | 4,914 | 25.64 | 126,000 | 98,280 | FY2009 | 5,173 | 20.01 | 103,512 | 82,768 |
| East Providence | FY2004 | 15,526 | 24.15 | 375,000 | 310,520 | FY2010 | 15,848 | 17.12 | 271,318 | 217,040 |
| Exeter | FY2006 | 2,835 | 19.37 | 54,900 | 54,900 | FY2009 | 2,990 | 16.72 | 49,993 | 40,000 |
| Foster | FY2003 | 2,179 | 20.61 | 44,900 | 43,580 | FY2006 | 2,186 | 22.64 | 49,500 | 34,976 |
| Glocester | FY2005 | 4,813 | 20.78 | 100,000 | 96,260 | FY2008 | 4,776 | 17.27 | 82,500 | 66,000 |
| Hopkinton | FY2006 | 3,726 | 16.67 | 62,100 | 62,100 | FY2009 | 3,769 | n/a | n/a | 60,304 |
| Jamestown | FY2001 | 3,486 | 16.94 | 60,000 | 60,000 | FY2007 | 3,439 | 21.11 | 72,600 | 55,024 |
| Johnston | FY2001 | 12,911 | 20.20 | 262,500 | 258,220 | FY2007 | 12,668 | 21.16 | 268,000 | 202,688 |
| Lincoln | FY2001 | 7,240 | 15.40 | 111,500 | 111,500 | FY2007 | 7,504 | 18.59 | 139,500 | 111,600 |
| Little Compton | FY2004 | 3,139 | 16.60 | 52,100 | 52,078 | FY2007 | 3,163 | 19.52 | 61,750 | 49,400 |
| Middletown | FY2003 | 6,129 | 21.86 | 134,000 | 120,604 | FY2006 | 6,058 | 18.82 | 114,000 | 91,200 |
| Narragansett | FY2006 | 11,824 | 18.22 | 215,400 | 215,400 | FY2009 | 12,107 | 17.70 | 214,294 | 171,440 |
| Newport | FY2006 | 9,577 | 22.64 | 216,800 | 188,200 | FY2009 | 9,668 | 18.27 | 176,634 | 141,280 |
| New Shoreham | FY2007 | 2,003 | 33.20 | 66,500 | 40,060 | FY2010 | 2,053 | 28.74 | 59,003 | 32,848 |
| North Kingstown | FY2001 | 10,948 | 21.61 | 236,200 | 218,960 | FY2007 | 10,806 | 16.44 | 177,600 | 142,080 |
| North Providence | FY2002 | 12,979 | 22.09 | 286,700 | 259,580 | FY2008 | 12,675 | 18.93 | 239,900 | 191,920 |
| North Smithfield | FY2001 | 5,125 | 20.10 | 103,000 | 102,500 | FY2007 | 5,171 | 19.82 | 102,500 | 82,000 |
| Pawtucket | FY2003 | 21,022 | 18.06 | 379,700 | 379,700 | FY2006 | 19,733 | 14.37 | 283,600 | 226,880 |
| Portsmouth | FY2002 | 8,503 | 15.04 | 127,900 | 130,774 | FY2005 | 8,644 | 16.77 | 145,000 | 116,000 |
| Providence | FY2004 | 40,517 | 21.72 | 880,100 | 792,086 | FY2007 | 41,117 | 19.69 | 809,700 | 657,872 |
| Richmond | FY2005 | 3,309 | 19.64 | 65,000 | 65,000 | FY2008 | 3,390 | 21.03 | 71,300 | 54,240 |
| Scituate | FY2004 | 4,634 | 18.13 | 84,000 | 84,000 | FY2007 | 4,540 | 15.97 | 72,500 | 58,000 |
| Smithfield | FY2001 | 7,679 | 22.73 | 174,000 | 153,580 | FY2007 | 7,775 | 17.81 | 138,500 | 110,800 |
| South Kingstown | FY2001 | 12,780 | 18.08 | 240,300 | 240,558 | FY2007 | 13,069 | 17.86 | 233,385 | 186,708 |
| Tiverton | FY2006 | 7,980 | 19.74 | 157,500 | 157,500 | FY2009 | 8,014 | 16.85 | 135,036 | 108,000 |
| Warren | FY2004 | 5,671 | 20.41 | 115,750 | 113,420 | FY2010 | 4,399 | 19.66 | 86,484 | 69,196 |
| Warwick | FY2004 | 38,983 | 21.60 | 842,000 | 779,660 | FY2010 | 39,157 | 15.20 | 595,186 | 476,000 |
| Westerly | FY2004 | 12,115 | 16.37 | 198,288 | 198,288 | FY2007 | 12,323 | 14.49 | 178,500 | 142,800 |
| West Greenwich | FY2005 | 2,368 | 19.97 | 47,281 | 47,281 | FY2008 | 2,444 | 20.25 | 49,500 | 39,104 |
| West Warwick | FY2001 | 10,915 | 17.15 | 187,150 | 187,150 | FY2007 | 11,017 | 22.40 | 246,800 | 176,272 |
| Woonsocket | FY2003 | 10,289 | 18.37 | 189,000 | 189,000 | FY2006 | 10,642 | 17.71 | 188,500 | 150,800 |
| Total | FIRST | 396,743 | \$20.52 | \$8,072,869 | \$7,560,781 | SECOND | 388,340 | \$18.76 | \$6,811,663 | \$5,429,960 |

*According to Chapter 44-5 of the RI General Laws, first update costs shall be borne by the state in an amount not to exceed twenty dollars (\$20.00) per parcel. The costs incurred by the towns and cities for the second update shall be borne eighty percent (80%) by the state (in an amount not to exceed sixteen dollars (\$16.00) per parcel) and twenty percent (20%) by the town or city. and in the third update and thereafter, the state shall pay sixty percent (60%) of the update (not to exceed twelve dollars (\$12.00) per parcel) and the town or city shall pay forty percent (40%); provided, that for the second update and in all updates thereafter, that the costs incurred by any city or town which is determined to be a distressed community pursuant to § 45-13-12 shall be borne eighty percent (80%) by the state and twenty percent (20%) by the city or town for all updates required by this section.

Analyst's Note: In South Kingstown (FY2001), the evaluation cost \$18.80 per parcel, yet the State reimbursed the Town at a rate of \$18.88 per parcel (adding an additional \$257.50). In Portsmouth (FY2002), the State reimbursed the municipality for \$2,874 more than the contract's budget. In Barrington (FY2003), the cost per parcel was \$18.72, but the State reimbursed Barrington at a rate of \$18.90 per parcel, adding \$1,120 to the total payment. In Cranston (FY2003), the cost per parcel was \$19.73, but the State reimbursed Cranston for \$18.90 per parcel, adding \$3,000 to the total payment.

APPENDIX 2: MUNICIPAL PARCEL COUNTS, ASSESSORS FTE POSITIONS, AND CONTRACTS³⁹

| Parcel Counts vs. FTE Positions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Municipality | Parcel Count | FTE Positions | Parcel per FTE | Contract Budget | Cost per Parcel |
| Barrington | 6,281 | 2.0 | 3,140.5 | \$117,600 | \$18.7 |
| Bristol | 9,937 | 3.0 | 3,312.3 | 196,300 | \$19.8 |
| Burrillville | 6,306 | 2.0 | 3,153.0 | 123,000 | \$19.5 |
| Central Falls | 2,806 | 2.0 | 1,403.0 | 70,000 | \$24.9 |
| Charlestown | 6,118 | 3.0 | 2,039.3 | 220,000 | \$36.0 |
| Coventry | 13,613 | 3.0 | 4,537.7 | 222,400 | \$16.3 |
| Cranston | 31,765 | 7.0 | 4,537.9 | 626,800 | \$19.7 |
| Cumberland | 13,798 | 4.0 | 3,449.5 | 301,200 | \$21.8 |
| East Greenwich | 4,914 | 2.0 | 2,457.0 | 126,000 | \$25.6 |
| East Providence | 15,526 | 6.0 | 2,587.7 | 375,000 | \$24.2 |
| Exeter | 2,835 | 2.0 | 1,417.5 | 54,900 | \$19.4 |
| Foster | 2,179 | 2.0 | 1,089.5 | 44,900 | \$20.6 |
| Glocester | 4,813 | 2.0 | 2,406.5 | 100,000 | \$20.8 |
| Hopkinton | 3,726 | 2.0 | 1,863.0 | 62,100 | \$16.7 |
| Jamestown | 3,486 | 1.0 | 3,486.0 | 60,000 | \$17.2 |
| Johnston | 12,911 | 3.0 | 4,303.7 | 262,500 | \$20.3 |
| Lincoln | 7,240 | 3.0 | 2,413.3 | 111,500 | \$15.4 |
| Little Compton | 3,139 | 1.0 | 3,139.0 | 52,100 | \$16.6 |
| Middletown | 6,129 | 3.0 | 2,043.0 | 134,000 | \$21.9 |
| Narragansett | 11,824 | 3.0 | 3,941.3 | 215,400 | \$18.2 |
| Newport | 9,577 | 4.0 | 2,394.3 | 216,800 | \$22.6 |
| New Shoreham | 2,003 | 1.0 | 2,003.0 | 66,500 | \$33.2 |
| North Kingstown | 10,948 | 3.0 | 3,649.3 | 236,200 | \$21.6 |
| North Providence | 12,979 | 5.0 | 2,595.8 | 286,700 | \$22.1 |
| North Smithfield | 5,125 | 2.0 | 2,562.5 | 103,000 | \$20.1 |
| Pawtucket | 21,022 | 6.0 | 3,503.7 | 379,700 | \$18.1 |
| Portsmouth | 8,503 | 2.5 | 3,401.2 | 127,900 | \$15.0 |
| Providence | 40,517 | 15.0 | 2,701.1 | 880,100 | \$21.7 |
| Richmond | 3,309 | 2.0 | 1,654.5 | 65,000 | \$19.6 |
| Scituate | 4,634 | 2.0 | 2,317.0 | 84,000 | \$18.1 |
| Smithfield | 7,679 | 4.0 | 1,919.8 | 174,000 | \$22.7 |
| South Kingstown | 12,780 | 5.0 | 2,556.0 | 240,300 | \$18.8 |
| Tiverton | 7,980 | 3.0 | 2,660.0 | 157,500 | \$19.7 |
| Warren | 5,671 | 2.0 | 2,835.5 | 115,750 | \$20.4 |
| Warwick | 38,983 | 14.5 | 2,688.5 | 842,000 | \$21.6 |
| Westerly | 12,115 | 6.0 | 2,019.2 | 198,288 | \$16.4 |
| West Greenwich | 2,368 | 0.5 | 4,736.0 | 47,281 | \$20.0 |
| West Warwick | 10,915 | 3.0 | 3,638.3 | 187,150 | \$17.1 |
| Woonsocket | 10,289 | 3.0 | 3,429.7 | 189,000 | \$18.4 |
| Total | 396,743 | 139.5 | | \$8,072,869 | |
| Average per Municipality | 10,173 | 3.6 | 2,820.2 | \$206,996.64 | \$20.54 |

APPENDIX 3: OVERVIEW OF MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH SERVICES⁴⁰

| Fire & Police Dispatch | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|----------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|-----------------|--------------|---------|----------------|--------|
| | Fire Dispatch | | | Fire Dispatch | | | Police Dispatch | | | Police Dispatch | | | Shift Schedule | |
| | # of Employees | FY 2004 | FY 2010 | Uniformed | Civilian | FY 2010 | Unif | FY 2010 | FY 2010 | Unif | FY 2010 | FY 2010 | Fire | Police |
| Barrington | NA | NA | 0 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | No | 8 |
| Bristol | | | | | | | | | | | | | NA | 8 |
| Burrillville | Dispatched by Police | | | NA | NA | NA | NA | 4.5 | 7 | NA | 4.5 | 7 | NA | 8 |
| Central Falls | | | | | None | | | 6 | | | 6 | | | |
| Charlestown | | | | | | | | 5 | | | 5 | | | |
| Coventry | Subcontracted/local FD | | | | | | | 5 | | | 5 | | | |
| Cranston | 8 | 8 | | 8 | 0 | 8 | 13 | 13 | | 0 | 13 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| Cumberland | NA | NA | | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | | NA | NA | | | |
| East Greenwich | | | | | | | 4 | 4 | | 2 | 2 | | | |
| East Providence | NA | NA | | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | | NA | NA | | 8 | 8 |
| Exeter | | | | | | | | 0 | | | | | | |
| Foster | 4.5 | 4.5 | | 0 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4+PT | | 0 | 4.5 | | 8 | 8 |
| Glocester | NA | NA | | NA | NA | NA | 4+PT | 4 | | 0 | 4+PT | | | |
| Hopkinton | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | | | 4 | | NA | 8 |
| Jamestown | 1 | 1 | | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4.5 | 4.5 | | 0 | 4 | | 8 | 8 |
| Johnston | | | | | 0 | | 4 | 4 | | | 4 | | | |
| Lincoln | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 6 | | 0 | 6 | | NA | 8 |
| Little Compton | 6 | 6 | | 0 | 6 | | 6 | 6 | | 0 | 6 | | NA | 8 |
| Middletown | 1/shift | | | NA | 0 | | 1/shift | 1/shift | | NA | 0 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| Narragansett | NA | NA | | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | | NA | NA | | | |
| New Shoreham | 4.5 | 4.5 | | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | | | 4.5 | | 8 | 8 |
| Newport | 4 | 4 | | 4 | 0 | 9 | 9 | 9 | | 0 | 9 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| North Kingstown | 4 | 4 | | 4 | 0 | 6 (3ft/3pt) | 6 (3ft/3pt) | 6 (3ft/3pt) | | 1 | 5 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| North Providence | 7 | 7 | | 0 | 7 | | 9 | 9 | | 0 | 9 | | 8 | 8 |
| North Smithfield | Private Entity | | | | | | 4 | 4 | | | 4 | | | |
| Pawtucket | 8 | 8 | | 8 | 0 | | 9 | 9 | | 0 | 9 | | 2 & 2 | 8 |
| Portsmouth | 1/shift | | | 1/shift | 0 | | 1/shift | 1/shift | | 1/shift | 0 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| Providence | 16 | 16 | | 6 | 10 | | 23 | 23 | | 4 | 19 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| Richmond | No Fire Dept. | | | | | | 11 (3ft/8pt) | 11 (3ft/8pt) | | 0 | 11 (3ft/8pt) | | NA | 8 |
| Scituate | 5 | 5 | | 0 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | | 0 | 5 | | 8 | 8 |
| Smithfield | 4 | 4 | | 0 | 4 | | 7 | 7 | | 0 | 7 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| South Kingstown | Volunteer | | | | | | 8.4 | 8.4 | | 0 | 8.4 | | NA | 8 |
| Tiverton | 0 | 0 | | | 1 | | 5 | 5 | | | 9 | | NA | 7.5 |
| Warren | 5 | 5 | | 0 | 5 | | 5 | 5 | | 0 | 5 | | 4 on / 2 off | |
| Warwick | 11 | 11 | | 2 | 9 | | 19 | 19 | | 3 | 16 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| West Greenwich | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West Warwick | 4 | 5 | | 0 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 8 | | 0 | 8 | | 10 & 14 | 8 |
| Westerly | NA | NA | | NA | NA | 7 | 7 | 7 | | 0 | 7 | | NA | 8 |
| Woonsocket | | | | | 0 | | 8 | 8 | | | 8 | | | |
| Totals | (41) | (93) | | 32 | 62 | 65 | (204.4) | (204.4) | | 10 | 203.9 | | | |

APPENDIX 4: ALLOCATION OF PERSONNEL IN MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICES⁴¹

Allocation of Positions by Function

The table below shows how the positions in municipal finance offices throughout Rhode Island's cities and towns are allocated by the more traditional functions of municipal finance administration. It should be noted that these allocations are based upon the organizations charts and job titles. The allocations are more distinct in the larger town and city departments, while in smaller town offices work assignments transcend these functional areas. It should also be noted the members of Boards of Assessors and a Board of Finance (unpaid or nominally-paid positions) were not counted when making the allocations listed below. Furthermore, distinctions between full-time and part-time positions were not taken into consideration.

| | General Finance/ Treasury | Tax Collecting | Tax Assessing | Purchasing | Information Systems | Personnel | Controller | Total |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| BARRINGTON | 5 | In Finance | 2 | | 0 | | | 7 |
| BRISTOL | 4 | 2 | 3 | | 0 | | | 9 |
| BURRILLVILLE | 4 | 2 | 2 | | 2 | | | 10 |
| CENTRAL FALLS | 5 | In Finance | 2 | | 0 | | | 7 |
| CHARLESTOWN | 3 | 2 | 3 | | | | | 8 |
| COVENTRY | 4 | 4 | 3 | | | | | 11 |
| CRANSTON | 3 | 6 | 7 | 3 | | | 5 | 24 |
| CUMBERLAND | 4 | 3 | 4 | | | | | 11 |
| EAST GREENWICH | 7 | In Finance | 2 | | | | | 9 |
| EAST PROVIDENCE | 3 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 1 | | 4 | 21 |
| EXETER | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 6 |
| FOSTER | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | | | 5 |
| GLOCESTER | 4 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 8 |
| HOPKINTON | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 6 |
| JAMESTOWN | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 5 |
| JOHNSTON | 1 | 4 | 3 | | | 2 | 4 | 14 |
| LINCOLN | 7 | In Finance | 3 | 2 | | | | 12 |
| LITTLE COMPTON | 2 | In Finance | 1 | | | | | 3 |
| MIDDLETOWN | 6 | 2 | 3 | Finance Dir. | | Finance Dir. | | 11 |
| NARRAGANSETT | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | | | 4 | 13 |
| NEW SHOREHAM | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 5 |
| NEWPORT | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 4 | | 5 | 22 |
| NORTH KINGSTOWN | 2 | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | 3 | 12 |
| NORTH PROVIDENCE | 1 | 6 | 5 | 1 | | | 5 | 18 |
| NORTH SMITHFIELD | 4 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 8 |
| PAWTUCKET | 8 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 6 | | 39 |
| PORTSMOUTH | 5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | | | Finance Dir. | | 10 |
| PROVIDENCE | 7 | 15 | 15 | | 5 | | 17 | 59 |
| RICHMOND | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 6 |
| SCITUATE | 5 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 9 |
| SMITHFIELD | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | 2 | 11 |
| SOUTH KINGSTOWN | 6 | 4 | 5 | | 1 | | 1 | 17 |
| TIVERTON | 4 | 3 | 3 | | | | | 10 |
| WARREN | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 5 |
| WARWICK | 3 | 8.5 | 14.5 | 4 | 8 | | 7 | 45 |
| WEST GREENWICH | 3 | 1.5 | 0.5 | | | | | 5 |
| WEST WARWICK | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | 12 |
| WESTERLY | 5 | 5 | 6 | | | | | 16 |
| WOONSOCKET | 6 | 3 | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 4 | 19 |
| TOTALS | 148 | 118.5 | 139.5 | 19 | 32 | 10 | 61 | 528 |

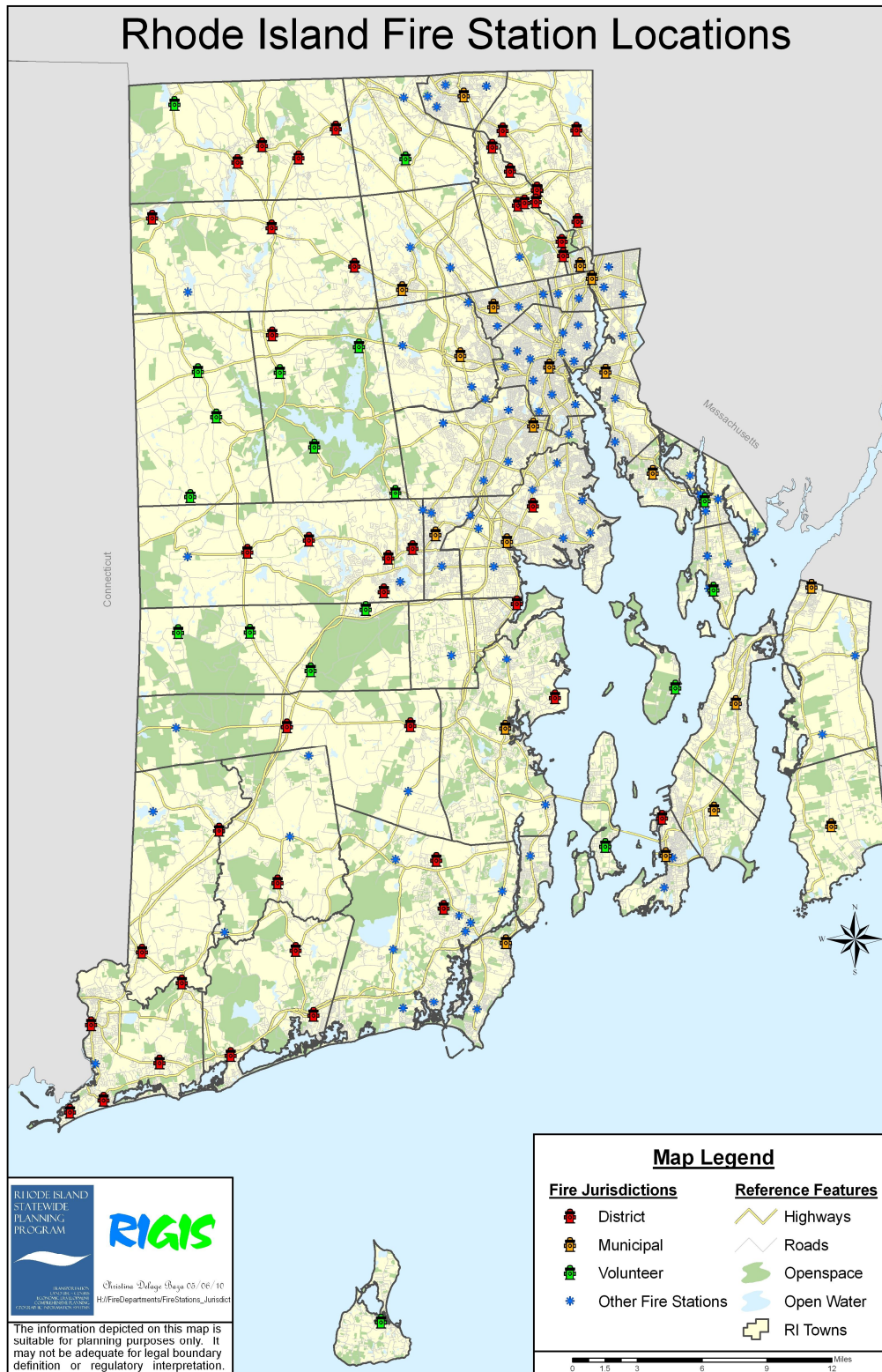
APPENDIX 5: BUDGET INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY CITIES AND TOWNS (FY2010)⁴²

BUDGET INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY CITIES AND TOWNS FY 2010

PERSONNEL (FTE Count excluding school positions)

| CITY/TOWN | Municipal | Police | Fire | Total General Fund | Non General Fund | Total Municipal Positions |
|------------------|-----------|---------|---------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| BARRINGTON | 61.0 | 30.0 | 25.0 | 116.0 | 5.0 | 121.0 |
| BRISTOL | 76.0 | 49.0 | 3.0 | 128.0 | 15.0 | 143.0 |
| BURRILLVILLE | 53.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 78.0 | 10.0 | 88.0 |
| CENTRAL FALLS | 58.0 | 42.0 | 42.0 | 142.0 | 9.0 | 151.0 |
| CHARLESTOWN | 37.0 | 19.0 | 0.0 | 56.0 | 0.0 | 56.0 |
| COVENTRY | 189.0 | 76.0 | 0.0 | 265.0 | 0.0 | 265.0 |
| CRANSTON | 246.0 | 178.0 | 208.0 | 632.0 | 0.0 | 632.0 |
| CUMBERLAND | 133.0 | 48.0 | 0.0 | 181.0 | 18.0 | 199.0 |
| EAST GREENWICH | 60.0 | 43.0 | 0.0 | 103.0 | 5.0 | 108.0 |
| EAST PROVIDENCE | 174.0 | 111.0 | 92.0 | 377.0 | 52.0 | 429.0 |
| EXETER | 14.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 14.0 |
| FOSTER | 18.0 | 12.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| GLOCESTER | 38.0 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 52.0 | 0.0 | 52.0 |
| HOPKINTON | 34.0 | 16.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 |
| JAMESTOWN | 34.0 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 48.0 | 0.0 | 48.0 |
| JOHNSTON | 160.0 | 72.0 | 87.0 | 319.0 | 0.0 | 319.0 |
| LINCOLN | 99.0 | 47.0 | 17.0 | 163.0 | 5.0 | 168.0 |
| LITTLE COMPTON | 13.0 | 10.0 | 9.0 | 32.0 | 0.0 | 32.0 |
| MIDDLETOWN | 65.0 | 34.0 | 31.0 | 130.0 | 7.0 | 137.0 |
| NARRAGANSETT | 56.3 | 51.0 | 34.0 | 141.3 | 20.8 | 162.0 |
| NEWPORT | 103.0 | 104.5 | 99.0 | 306.5 | 54.5 | 361.0 |
| NEW SHOREHAM | 39.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 44.0 | 8.0 | 52.0 |
| NORTH KINGSTOWN | 54.7 | 60.0 | 77.0 | 191.7 | 37.4 | 229.0 |
| NORTH PROVIDENCE | 150.0 | 92.0 | 108.0 | 350.0 | 0.0 | 350.0 |
| NORTH SMITHFIELD | 36.0 | 24.5 | 0.0 | 60.5 | 2.1 | 62.6 |
| PAWTUCKET | 256.5 | 180.0 | 146.0 | 582.5 | 108.5 | 691.0 |
| PORTSMOUTH | 40.0 | 36.0 | 36.0 | 112.0 | 0.0 | 112.0 |
| PROVIDENCE | 742.0 | 594.0 | 467.0 | 1,803.0 | 0.0 | 1,803.0 |
| RICHMOND | 20.0 | 19.0 | 0.0 | 39.0 | 0.0 | 39.0 |
| SCITUATE | 31.0 | 27.0 | 0.0 | 58.0 | 0.0 | 58.0 |
| SMITHFIELD | 74.0 | 41.0 | 48.0 | 163.0 | 5.0 | 168.0 |
| SOUTH KINGSTOWN | 102.2 | 53.0 | 17.0 | 172.2 | 35.9 | 208.0 |
| TIVERTON | 46.0 | 27.0 | 34.0 | 107.0 | 2.0 | 109.0 |
| WARREN | 45.5 | 22.0 | 1.0 | 68.5 | 1.0 | 69.5 |
| WARWICK | 442.0 | 163.0 | 217.0 | 822.0 | 68.0 | 890.0 |
| WESTERLY | 138.0 | 49.0 | 0.0 | 187.0 | 0.0 | 187.0 |
| WEST GREENWICH | 20.0 | 11.0 | 3.0 | 34.0 | 0.0 | 34.0 |
| WEST WARWICK | 79.0 | 71.0 | 73.0 | 223.0 | 29.0 | 252.0 |
| WOONSOCKET | 150.0 | 116.0 | 125.0 | 391.0 | 36.0 | 427.0 |
| TOTAL | 4,187.1 | 2,586.0 | 1,999.0 | 8,772.1 | 534.1 | 9,306.1 |

APPENDIX 6: MAP OF RHODE ISLAND'S EIGHTY FIRE JURISDICTIONS



APPENDIX 7: SUMMARY OF COMMISSION HEARING TESTIMONY TO DATE⁴³

October 6th, 2009 – 4:30 P.M. – Room 313

RIPEC Presentation: The Aquidneck Island Study

- Outlined forms of collaboration / consolidation, such as inter-local agreements, and examples of what type of departments and services can be consolidated.
- Outlined programs of shared services already in place in Rhode Island, such as education collaboratives.
- Outlined the findings of the Aquidneck Island Consolidation Feasibility Study.
- Consolidation maybe a cost-effective option to maintain or increase the level of education services while reducing costs.
- Outlined potential pathways to consolidation, such as, joint educational planning and legal and structural analysis. RIPEC provided examples of merger processes in other states.

The Commission was presented with a packet of handouts:

- Overview of Education Collaboratives
- Aquidneck Island school districts: Shared services
- Rhode Island Inter-local Risk Management Trust
- Governmental Health Group of Rhode Island: Notice of meeting and agenda
- Aquidneck Island school districts: Revenue Forecast Methodology and Assumptions

November 19th, 2009 – 2:00 P.M. – Room 313

Mayor Scott Avedisian of the City of Warwick testified before the commission in regards to his own experiences of consolidating functions within the city of Warwick.

- Mayor Avedisian described his attempts to consolidate functions between the city hall and the School Department.
- He referenced the RIPEC management study and benchmarking analysis of the Warwick School Department.
- RIPEC made several suggestions to institute cost saving measures within the school department:
 - Pooling clerical staff functions
 - Consolidation of facilities management between the city and school.
- Mayor Avedisian highlighted certain shared services the city of Warwick shares with neighboring communities:
 - A pilot yard waste program with East Greenwich.
 - Consolidation of public safety dispatch services with East Greenwich and North Kingstown.
- Bill Sequino, the town manager of East Greenwich testified before the commission.
 - Mr. Sequino detailed the town of East Greenwich's shared services with other neighboring communities.
 - He also stated he believed there are significant economies to be achieved with school districts, especially from an administrative and information technology viewpoint.

- Mr. Thomas Dwyer, the President / Executive Director of the Rhode Island Interlocal Risk Management Trust.
 - Mr. Dwyer detailed the cost savings Rhode Island communities who are members of the Trust. He also discussed options to explore similar relationships to address OPEB liabilities.

December 8th, 2009 – 4:30 P.M. – Room 313

Public testimony was accepted at this commission meeting. Here is a summary of public testimony:

- Donald Iannazzi of the Laborers' Union believed the state's probate courts are a good starting point for consolidation efforts.
- Chiefs George Farrell and Kevin Sullivan of the RI Association of Fire Chiefs detailed their experiences with shared services.
 - They have had great success with the Marine Strikeforce that is shared between Warwick, Providence, East Providence, and Cranston.
 - They believe staffing levels between municipalities and infrastructure difference would be obstacles in consolidation.
- Tim Duffy of the Rhode Island Association for School Committees detailed state wide purchasing programs between the state's school departments.
- J. Michael Downey, Michael Connolly, and Jim Cenerini of Council 94 testified that they have no fundamental objections to consolidation. They only wish to be a part of any discussions that take place.
- Chief George Kelley of the Rhode Island Police Chief's Association offered several possible services and functions that could be consolidated:
 - SWAT Teams
 - Dispatch Control Centers
 - Equipment Agreements
 - Internal Affairs and Forensic Units
- Ralph Ezovski of the International Brotherhood of Police echoed many of the same sentiments as Chief Kelley.
- Paul Valletta of the Rhode Island Firefighters Association came before the commission and voiced his opinions on the previous commission meetings and their effectiveness.
- Mayor Charles Lombardi of North Providence spoke before the commission in order to address several points Mr. Valletta brought up about the city of North Providence.

January 25, 2010 – 4 p.m. – Room 313

There was a presentation on the Governor's Municipal Stress Task Force Report at this meeting.

Public testimony included the following:

- Jean Ann Guiliano, East Greenwich School Committee
 - Ms. Guilano believes that with shared municipal services, control needs to follow responsibility. For example, if the schools are going to share services with the general government within the municipality, the town manager needs to report to the school superintendent because he/she has the control. This leads to turf wars and can be difficult to manage.

- Lori Ann Fox, Dir. Of Technology at City of East Providence, RI Chapter President at GMIS International
- Tim Duffy, Executive Director of the RI School Committee Association

February 19, 2010 – 3 p.m. – Room 313

The Commission welcomed Dr. Ed Mazze to share his thoughts on shared municipal services and provide recommendations specific to Rhode Island based on his experience. His top recommendations include:

- RI needs to change the structure of government to five or less county-based systems
- Need to debunk myths of county government (busing, extra taxes)
- Sharing services is a band-aid approach to the bigger problem – the size of RI government.
- Tim Duffy of the RI School Committee Association also spoke at the hearing. He discussed the potential requirement for a ballot referendum in order to pass the Commission’s initiatives.

April 9, 2010 – 3 p.m. – Room 313

The Commission asked Senate Fiscal Advisor Peter Marino to provide an overview of the testimony to-date, focusing on the key takeaways and recommendations for the Commission’s report. His presentation included the following:

- Overview of municipal and school budgets (including an explanation of the “need” to share services from a fiscal perspective)
- Recommended approach for implementing a shared services plan
- Short- and long-term service initiatives that should be included within the report
- Outline of the barriers and solutions to barriers of implementing shared services
- Suggested long-term oversight structure

References

- ¹ RIPEC, FY2010 Budget Information Submitted by Cities and Towns
- ² RI Division of Municipal Finance, “Organization and Staffing in Municipal Finance Offices in Rhode Island” December 2009
- ³ RI Division of Municipal Finance, “Organization and Staffing in Municipal Finance Offices in Rhode Island” December 2009
- ⁴ RI Department of Administration, Office of Local Government Assistance, “Fire Districts and Volunteer Fire Departments in Rhode Island” December 2006; and RI State Fire Marshal, April 2010
- ⁵ Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, Feb. 2010
- ⁶ Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, Feb. 2010
- ⁷ Rhode Island Division of Municipal Finance and Senate Fiscal Office
- ⁸ Rhode Island Division of Municipal Finance and Senate Fiscal Office
- ⁹ National Center for Educational Statistics
- ¹⁰ National Center for Educational Statistics
- ¹¹ Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council
- ¹² RI Dept of Elementary & Secondary Education and RI Association of School Committees
- ¹³ National Center for Educational Statistics and Senate Fiscal Office
- ¹⁴ National Center for Educational Statistics and Senate Fiscal Office
- ¹⁵ National Center for Educational Statistics and Senate Fiscal Office
- ¹⁶ National Center for Educational Statistics and Senate Fiscal Office
- ¹⁷ RIPEC, June 2009 Aquidneck Island Consolidation Feasibility Study
- ¹⁸ RIPEC
- ¹⁹ RI Division of Municipal Finance, Senate Fiscal Office, RIPEC
- ²⁰ RIPEC, Warwick School District Management Study, March 2006
- ²¹ Roger Williams University Report on City of Providence, 2008
- ²² Rhode Island Division of Municipal Finance
- ²³ RI Division of Municipal Finance, “Registered Revaluation Companies” 2009
- ²⁴ RI Division of Municipal Finance, Municipal Revaluation Reports
- ²⁵ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ²⁶ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ²⁷ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ²⁸ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ²⁹ Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns
- ³⁰ RIPEC, 2009 Budget Articles Report
- ³¹ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ³² RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ³³ RI Division of Municipal Finance, “Fire Districts & Volunteer Fire Departments in Rhode Island” February 2007
- ³⁴ RIPEC; “Rhode Island Public Schools by the Numbers”
- ³⁵ Office of the Auditor General, Status of Pension and OPEB Plans Administered by Rhode Island Municipalities, March 2010
- ³⁶ RIPEC
- ³⁷ RI Division of Municipal Finance; Cumberland and Johnston missing from totals; data excludes school departments.
- ³⁸ Division of Municipal Finance and Senate Fiscal Office
- ³⁹ RI Division of Municipal Finance and Senate Fiscal Office
- ⁴⁰ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ⁴¹ RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ⁴² RI Division of Municipal Finance
- ⁴³ Testimony compiled by Senate Fiscal Office