



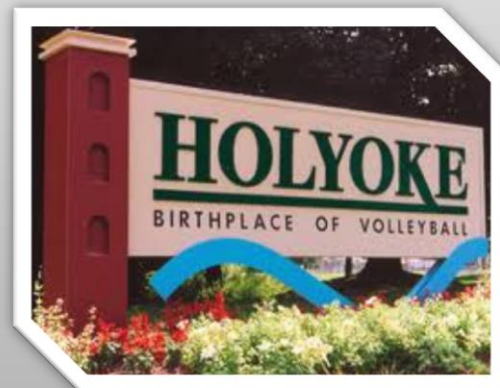
Catalyst for Regional Progress

PVPC

Timothy W. Brennan, Executive Director



**Feasibility Study
Sealers of Weights & Measures
Town of Hadley & City of Holyoke**



Prepared and Presented by

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

(District Local Technical Assistance)

2013

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Introduction

The principal responsibility of the Sealer of Weights & Measures is to enforce the laws, rules, and regulations relating to weights and measures and the use of weighing and measuring devices in commercial transactions as listed under the Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L) Chapter 98 and the Consumer Merchant Protection Act, Chapter 295 (1998). Under M.G.L. Chapter 98, Section 35, it states that



municipalities that have a population of more than 5,000 residents are required to appoint a Sealer of Weights & Measures person that must be trained and certified by the Massachusetts Division of Standards. Communities that have a population of more than 5,000 and less than 20,000 can also choose to contract with the Director of enforcement of the laws at the Massachusetts Division of Standards. The type of devices tested through this service includes small and large capacity scales, weights, fuel dispensers, and vehicle tank meters used in the sale of liquid fuels. Additionally, all scanners used for purchasing goods must be tested and certified.

When the Census 2010 data revealed that Hadley surpassed the population of 5,000, Hadley gained the flexibility to appoint a Sealer. Currently, the town receives sealer services from the Massachusetts Division of Standards to meet its mandates. In the beginning of 2013, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission was engaged to conduct a feasibility study to explore the potential of sharing the service through an inter-municipal agreement or other means to assist Hadley with fulfilling this mandate and achieve cost savings while doing so.

The City of Holyoke has also showed interest in participating in a feasibility study to explore what its options are to save costs while improving the efficiency of this service delivery. Holyoke has a part-time sealer that works under the direction of the Mayor.

Objective

The objective of the study was to perform:

- Interviews with key personnel
- A review of the statutory and regulatory confinements
- Explore other models of shared Sealers of Weights & Measures program
- A cost analysis and recommendations

The information presented focuses on the current program of the Sealers of Weights & Measures being performed at the Town of Hadley and the City of Holyoke, including what other communities are doing to meet the statutory requirements of this service. Information from existing sources was leveraged to

complete this study.

Methodology

Interviews with key municipal personnel were conducted:

- Town of Hadley – Town Administrator, David Nixon
- City of Holyoke – Mayor, Alex B. Morse; City Treasurer, Jon Lumbra
- Massachusetts Division of Standards – Director, Charles H. Carroll
- Massachusetts Division of Standards Metrology Laboratory – Manager, Ray Costa
- Northern Middlesex Council of Governments – Executive Director, Beverly A. Woods; Assistant Director, Jay Donovan; Planner, David Tilton; Deputy Sealer of Weights & Measures, Moe Lefebvre
- City of Northampton – Building Commissioner, Louis Hasbrouck; Sealer of Weights & Measures, John Frey



In addition to the interviews, a statutory and regulatory review was conducted and other models of fulfilling the requirements of this service were explored.

Town of Hadley

Population: 5,250 (2010 U.S. Census)



Sealers of Weights & Measures Service Composition

The information in this section was provided by the Massachusetts Division of Standards. The Town of Hadley has approximately 39 businesses that have devices which require annual testing. The devices being used from the businesses that are required to be sealed are checkout scanners, meters, and

scales. In the Town of Hadley, there are approximately 93 scales; 177 meters; and 17 merchandise stores with 3 or more scanners, according to the Director of Division of Standards that provides this service for Hadley, (see **Table 1** on next page).

Devices that Require Annual Testing in Hadley

Table 1

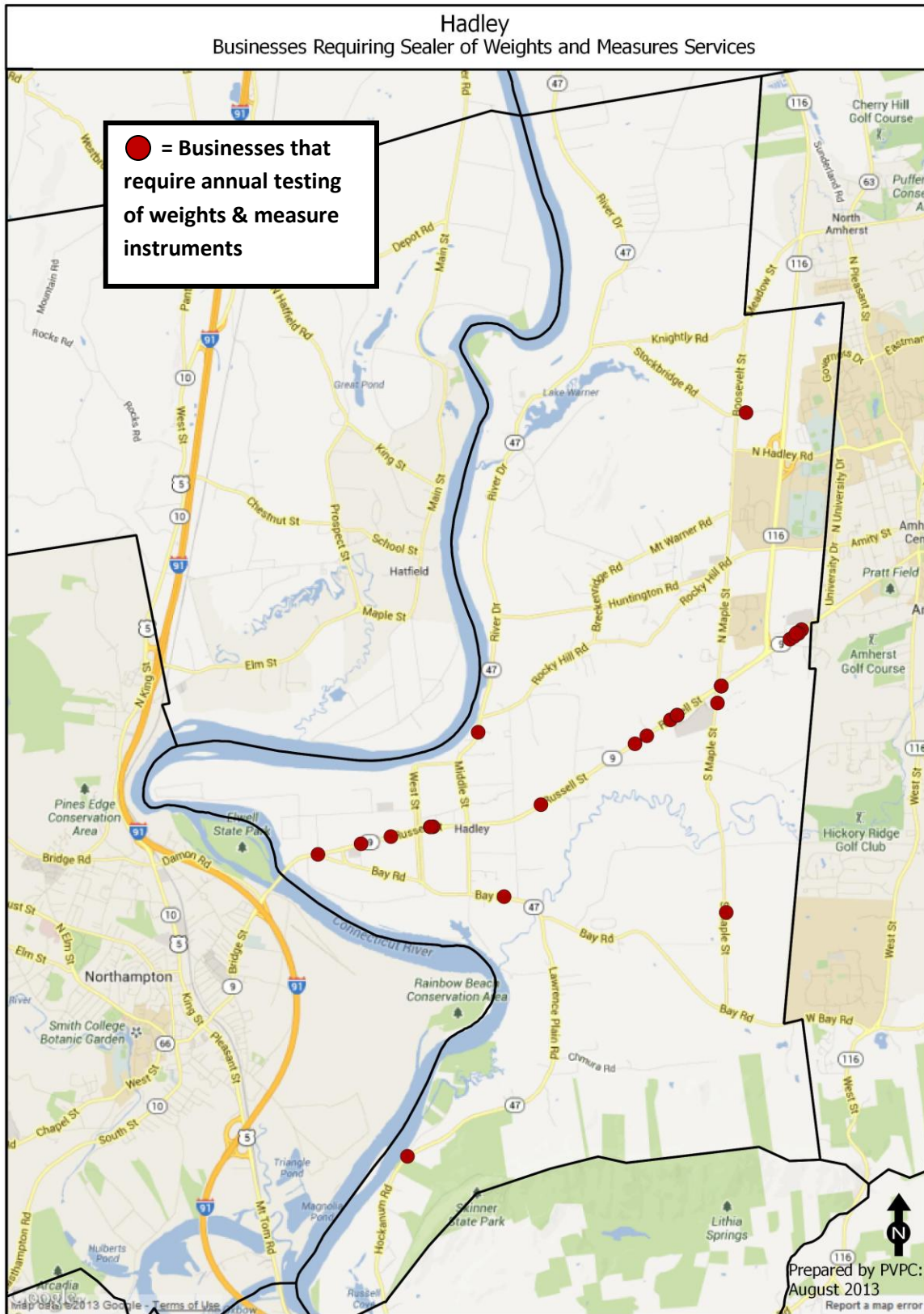
BUSINESS	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF SCALES	CAPACITY
Kelly Farm	111 Stockbridge St	6	15 -5K Lbs.
Winter Moon Farm	113 Bay Road	7	30 - 60 Lbs.
Petco	458 Russell Street # 2	5	20 - 35 lbs/
Asian Int'l Grocery	Route 9	1	220 Lbs.
Instant Gold Buy	Hampshire Mall	2	4K Gram
Kim's Market	111 Russell Street	1	30 Lb.
Bread & Circus	Route 9	38	30 Lbs.
Hadley Garden Center	Route 9	1	30 Lbs.
Rocky's Hardware	Route 9	1	600 Lbs
Hadley Elementary School	21 River Drive	1	350 Lb.
Soda & Pet City	439 Russell Street	2	1-20, 1-150 lbs
Trans World Food Mart	50 Russell Street	5	30 Lbs.
Stop & Shop	440 Russell Street	15	30 lbs.
Flavors of Cook Farm	129 S. Maple Street	1	24 Lbs.
Maple Farm Food	10 S. Maple Street	7	30 Lbs.
BUSINESS	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF METERS	
Phillips 66	110 Russell Street	24	
Route 9 Sunoco	457 Russell Street	16	
Pride Convenience	445 Russell Street	22	
Stop & Shop	440 Russell Street	24	
Mitch's Marina	2 Mitch Way	3	
O'Connell Plus Convenience	73 Russell	32	
NECG Holding Corp.	13 Russell Street	24	
Cumberland Farms	Route 9	32	

HAMPSHIRE MALL STORES WITH 3 OR MORE SCANNERS

Aeropostale	J.C Penny
American Eagle Outfitters	New York & Co
Bath & Body Works	Payless Shoes
Dick's Sporting Goods	Radio Shack
GNC	Target
Joanns Fabric	

MT. FARMS MALL WITH 3 OR MORE SCANNERS

Bed Bath & Beyond
Dave's Soda & Pet City
Old Navy
Marshalls
Michael's
Wal-Mart



City of Holyoke

Population: 39,880 (2010 U.S. Census)



Sealers of Weights & Measures Service Composition

The information in this section was provided by the Sealer for the City of Holyoke and what was reported to the state by the Sealer in his 2012 Annual Report. The Sealer in Holyoke is appointed by the Mayor to provide this service out of the City Hall offices. The Sealer works part-time (15 hours a week). The Mayor oversees the implementation of this program. Holyoke has approximately 37 businesses that have devices which require annual testing. The devices being used from the businesses that are required to be sealed are meters and scales. In Holyoke, there are approximately 114 scales and 15 gas stations with meters. The Sealer does not currently scan checkout scanners (See table 2 on next page).

The City's annual budget for this service delivery is approximately \$14,849 according to the 2012 Annual Report. The annual deficit for Holyoke to assure it is meeting this statutory requirement is \$9,452 after collecting its fees from businesses. Since the Sealer does not inspect automated checkout scanners, the statutory requirements for the program are not fully being met.

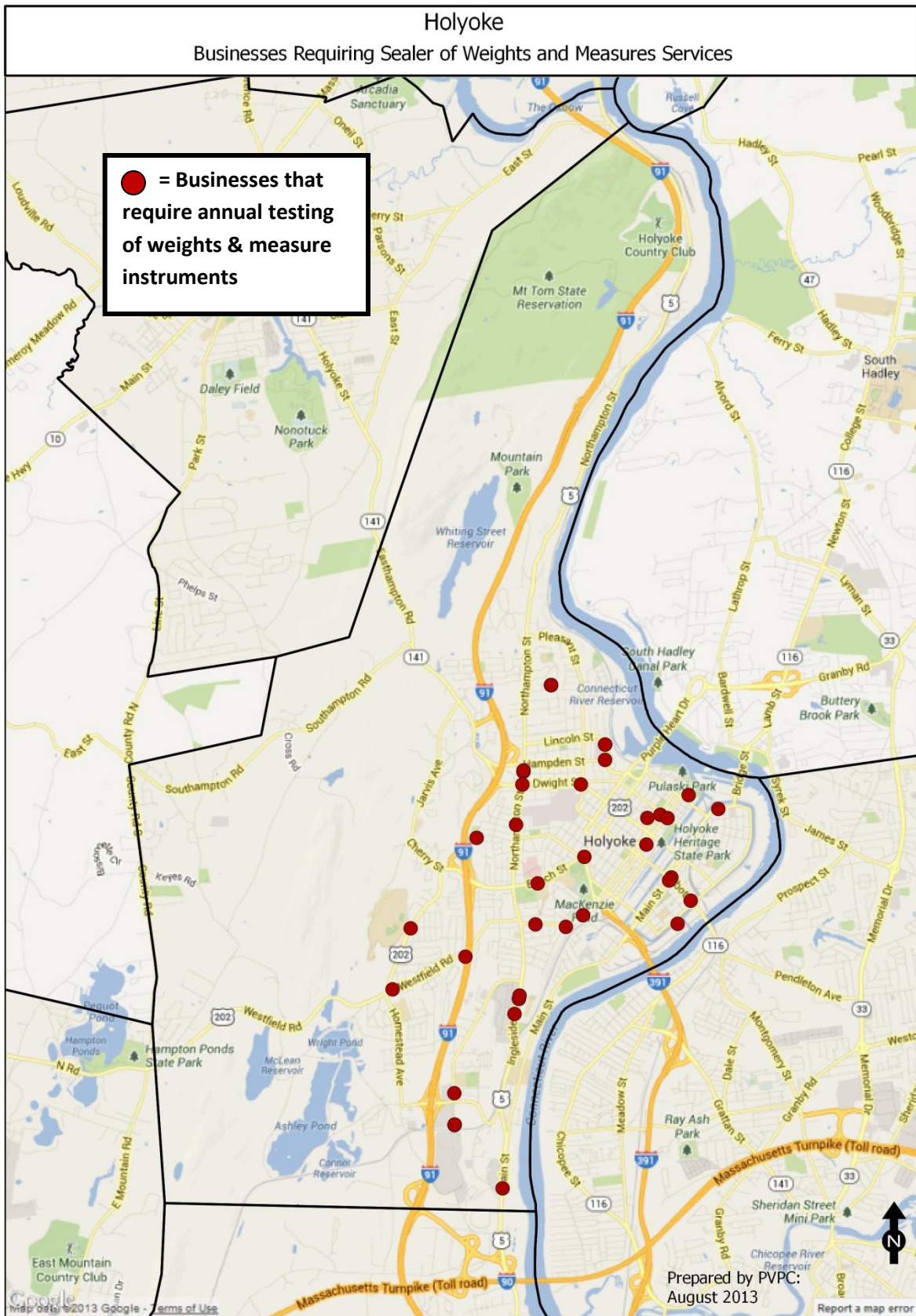
Number of Devices Sealed	451
Budget for Program in 2012	\$14,849
Salary for Sealer	\$14,050.86
Cost for other expenses	\$798.14
Fees Collected in 2012	\$5,397
Deficit	-\$9,452



Devices that Require Annual Testing in Holyoke

BUSINESS	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF SCALES	CAPACITY
Sullivan Steel Corp.	107 Appleton St	5	20k -120K Lbs.
Sav-A-Lot	235 South St	8	20 - 30 lbs
Paper City Deli	1693 Northampton St	3	30 lbs
Stop & Shop	2265 Northampton St	29	20 - 30 lbs
Stop & Shop	28 Lincoln St	26	20 – 30 lbs
C-Town	13 Cabot St	11	20 – 30 lbs
Fitzgeralds Fish Market	224 Westfield Rd	3	30 – 1000 lbs
Strums Butch Shop		4	30 lbs
Sabrosura Market	439 High St	4	30 lbs
Sunoco Paper Products	200 South Water St	1	120k lbs
American Legion	50 St. Kolbe Drive	1	60 lbs
Petco	45 Holyoke Rd.	4	30 Lbs
Icky, Stick & Goo	50 Holyoke Rd.	2	30 lbs
Holyoke Gas & Electric		2	20 Lbs
WIC	300 High St	4	130 – 300 lbs
Nuestras Raices	329 Main St	1	30 lbs
Teavana	50 Holyoke Rd	1	30 lbs
Aramark Corp.	HCC	2	30 lbs
Smoke & Deal	1500 Northampton St	1	40 lbs
Providence Hospital Food Service	1233 Main St	1	30 lbs
Summit Farms	30 Summit St	1	30 lbs
BUSINESS	ADDRESS	NUMBER OF METERS	
Jims Auto Center	1635 Northampton St	8	
Shell	225 Whiting Farms Rd	12	
Shell	820 High St	8	
Total Fuel Express	679 Main St	4	
Highland Farm Shell	636 Main St	8	
Crabtree Service Center	1530 Northampton St	10	
Stop & Shop	2265 Northampton St	6	
Stop & Shop	28 Lincoln St	6	
Racing Mart	181 Franklin St	10	
Pride	1553 Dwight St	Closed	
B & D Petroleum	3 Brown Ave	8	
Garvulenski Service Station	32 Canal St	4	
Racing Mart	580 South St	4	
Michael J's Shell	11 Lincoln St	4	
Racing Mart	330 Main St	6	

Table 2



Analyzing Fee Structures

M.G.L Chapter 98, Section 56 provides an approximate amount of what municipalities can charge businesses for sealing services of weighing and/or measuring their devices. It's important to note that although approximate amounts are listed, the governing body of the city/town can establish their own fee structure by vote in a town/city meeting. Therefore, the fees communities charge varies across the Commonwealth. The chart below (**Table 3**) displays comparables of what some cities and towns in the Pioneer Valley are currently charging for sealing services. The chart also shows the state average of established fee structures.

Table 3

CITY/TOWN	OVER 10,000 lbs	5,000 lbs to 10,000 lbs	1,000 lbs to 5,000 lbs	100 lbs to 1,000 lbs	10 lbs to 100 lbs	0 to 10 lbs	WEIGHTS METERS	GASOLINE METERS	VEHICLE TANK
AMHERST	\$150.00	\$90.00	\$60.00	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
NORTHHAMPTON	\$150.00	\$90.00	\$60.00	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
SOUTHAMPTON	\$150.00	\$90.00	\$60.00	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
SPRINGFIELD	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$60.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$2.00	\$30.00	\$60.00
HOLYOKE	\$75.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$1.00	\$20.00	
<i>Averages in MA</i>	\$162.50	\$92.50	\$63.75	\$37.50	\$26.67	\$26.25	\$2.75	\$26.25	\$52.50

Continued:

CITY/TOWN	BULK STORAGE	TAXI METERS	FABRIC MEASURE	YARD STICKS	ADJUSTING FEE	LAST UPDATE
AMHERST	\$50.00	\$25.00	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	2003
NORTHHAMPTON	\$50.00	\$25.00	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	2003
SOUTHAMPTON	\$50.00	\$25.00	\$2.00	\$1.00		2003
SPRINGFIELD	\$100.00	\$30.00	\$20.00	\$10.00	25% of fee	1992
HOLYOKE	Not listed	Not listed	Not listed	Not listed	Not listed	
<i>Averages in MA</i>	\$62.50	\$26.25	\$6.50	\$3.25		



Scanners

The state general standard for each automated electronic retail checkout system with fewer than four (4) cash registers or computer terminals is listed at not more than \$75. Each automated electronic retail checkout system with no less than four (4) and no more than eleven (11) cash registers or computer terminals, the state standard is listed at not more than \$150.

Moving Forward

The service delivery of this requirement varies throughout the Commonwealth. Some communities budget to hire a full-time Sealer and many other communities' budget to have a part-time Sealer. Other municipalities do a small scale shared service to split the cost of one (1) part-time Sealer such as the current composition in Northampton. Northampton provides Sealer services as a fee-for-service for Granby, Amherst, and Southampton and is overseen by the Building Commissioner. Depending on how the municipality structures its program, the Sealer positions are either overseen by an appointed Deputy Director, the Building Commissioner, and/or the Chief Executive Officer (Mayor, Town Manager, etc.). The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) in Lowell, MA, has established a regional Sealer of Weights & Measures program for its member communities where the Sealer is full-time and works out of the office of NMCOG.

M.G.L Chapter 98 has language that provides flexibility for municipalities to appoint a Sealer and decide how to arrange this program to best meet the need of this service requirement. The cost to fund this position depends on how much communities want to spend and the availability of competent individual to fill the Sealer role for the budget provided. Typically, communities either break even or spend less than what was budgeted by collecting fees from businesses after providing Sealer services.

Fees collected get placed back in the city/towns general funds. However, communities that contract with the Massachusetts Division of Standards to implement this service do not receive fees from businesses since the state does not collect them.

The provision of a municipal Sealer of Weights & Measures is a statutory requirement mandated by the state and communities with a population of more than 5,000 people have to make available such services to meet this obligation. The question is however, how can municipalities efficiently provide this service and meet their mandate at a cost that is less burdensome to the tax payers of their community? After reviewing the current composition of this service in Hadley and Holyoke and reviewing the statutory requirements under M.G.L Ch. 98, options are made available to assist local leaders of the municipalities with making the best decision that not only meets the need of this mandate but also makes the most sense with achieving cost benefit.



Options for Hadley

There are three (3) options available for Hadley to move forward on. **Option A** welcomes Hadley to build and implement its own program by appointing a Sealer. **Option B** invites Hadley to participate in a shared service opportunity with other municipalities within the region. **Option C** suggests for Hadley to maintains its current services received from the Director of the MA Division of Standards.

OPTION A – Appoint a Sealer and build internal Sealers of Weights & Measures program

This option encourages the Town of Hadley to build an internal Sealer of Weights & Measures program. We could not identify an exact cost amount for Hadley to implement its own program since costs varied significantly throughout the state. For instance, a community like Holyoke budgets roughly \$15,000 a year for a part-time Sealer that works less than 20 hours a week with no benefits. This budget includes annual training costs, the salary of the sealer, maintenance of equipment, travel costs, and administrative expenses. In a City like Westfield whose needs are similar to that of Holyoke, the budget is roughly at \$50,000 for its sealer program. Although Hadley is a much smaller community than these two Cities, Hadley requires a similar amount of work to complete due to its significant amount of commercial business with the community. It would be up to Hadley to decide how to structure the budget for this position and other costs to meet its needs in accordance to being able to attract qualified candidates that will do the work under the structure proposed by the town.

Cost for equipment would need to be considered also for the first year to effectively implement this program. The chart below displays an inventory of items needed and the costs for those items. These are the minimum items that would be necessary for a Sealer to be self sufficient and capable of testing most scales, gasoline meters, and to perform price verification of bar code scanners in supermarkets and department stores. For any huge capacity scales that goes up to 5,000 lbs capacity, or even truck scales, the Sealer would have to call a local scale company to bring their certified weights to properly test (and adjust if necessary) these large scales in the presence of the Sealer.

The chart below reveals a total investment of roughly \$6000.00 in equipment and supplies needed for a Sealer to efficiently carryout his/her duties. The chart also displays an approximate start-up cost for the first year that includes Sealer salary and other expenses.

Inventory of Items Needed	Cost Estimate
31lb. Class F Avoirdupois Weight Kit (27 pcs from 10lb to .001lb & 1/32oz)	\$1000
Minimum Class F 25lb Cast Iron Grip Weights	\$1000

Class 1 Metric Weight Kit (7 pcs from 10 grams to 1 kilogram)	\$1000
5 gallon stainless steel volumetric test measurers (gasoline, diesel fuel)	\$1600
Portability cart for transport filled test measures to underground tank opening	\$800
High Hat galvanized funnel for above	\$800
Minimum Orange safety cones for use at gas stations when meter testing	\$200
Plastic and wire security seals (lead seals are no longer preferred)	\$400
Pliers with dies to indicate year & town two letter abbreviation for above seals	\$400
Red & Green pressure sensitive inspection seals (they alternate colors each year)	\$400
"Not Sealed" tags	\$400
"Condemned" tags	\$400
Receipt booklet to provide copy of inspection receipt to device owner	\$400
Various forms required to perform meter, scale, price verification inspections	Copies can be obtained from the State or designed internally
Miscellaneous Safety Equipment such as safety glasses, shoes, gloves, vest, knee pads, hard hat, variety of tools, etc.	Cost varies depending on where items are purchased
Cost for Equipment	\$6,000
Sealer Salary	\$7,000 - \$47,000
Other Costs	\$800 - \$3,000
First Year Approximate Total	\$14,000 - \$50,000+

Note that the costs range depending on the budget structure Hadley decides to place together to fund its program.

- PVPC's Recommendation:** Option A is a good long-term possibility for Hadley, however, it's not a feasible option to entertain Hadley's immediate need for this service at this time. Realizing what the potential cost can be to hire a Sealer, to pay for necessary training and certification for personnel, and the cost for all equipment necessary to begin an effective program, it is clear that this is not a feasible option therefore we do not recommend it.

OPTION B – Participate in a shared service Sealers of Weights & Measures program

This option encourages Hadley to join a municipality that has an existing Sealer of Weights & Measures program that can expand its services to Hadley. M.G.L Ch. 98, Sec. 36 provides municipalities the flexibility to combine this service with other municipalities through an Inter-Municipal Agreement. The start-up direct costs for purchasing and certifying own equipment, training and certifying personnel, and assuming administrative costs associated with the program are

eliminated through a shared option for Hadley.

- **PVPC's Recommendation:** This option appoints a nearby community to provide Sealer services for an initial fee-for-service. This arrangement will allow Hadley to not have to worry about other costs and oversight necessary that is associated with building and maintaining an internal program. In addition to this option, fee revenue opportunity is made available under this option. The fees collected from businesses in Hadley would be placed into the town's general budget. Fees collected can be used to offset the cost to contract with Northampton to provide this service. Depending on what the host community charges and how much fees are collected, there is potential for Hadley to break even in their budget for this service, spend less than what the state charges, or even gain a surplus. In terms of meeting mandates and achieving a cost benefit, this is a very desirable option for the Town of Hadley to consider.

OPTION C – Contract with the Massachusetts Division of Standards for Sealer services

M.G.L Ch. 98, Sec. 35 allows Municipalities with a population of more than 5,000 and less than 20,000 to contract with the state to meet this mandate. This option suggests that the Town of Hadley maintain its current arrangement with the Deputy Director of the Massachusetts Division of Standards. The cost that Hadley pays to the Massachusetts Division of Standard was undetermined.

- **PVPC's Recommendation** – Since this is the current arrangement in Hadley, this option is feasible and is effective in meeting the towns Sealer of Weights & Measures mandates. However, Hadley is missing the opportunity to offset the cost paid to the state with fees that can be collected from the area businesses to provide this service. There are two suggestions for Hadley to consider under this recommendation: 1) appoint someone to begin collecting fees from businesses after the state does its inspections; 2) keep it as is in which Hadley only pays a one time fee-for-service and does not have to worry about other costs and oversight necessary to build and implement its own program. The opportunity to collect fees is what keeps this option different from options A and B. We recommend for Hadley to consider this option if sharing services with a nearby community is not in interest.

Final Summary of Recommendation for Hadley

It is in PVPC's intention to recommend options that are feasible and which efficiently meet the required mandates of the Sealer of Weights & Measures program for the Town of Hadley. With the three (3) options presented, options B and C are the most feasible options for Hadley to consider in meeting its immediate need. These options offer the opportunity for Hadley to not have to worry about purchasing and certifying their own equipment, training and certifying personnel, assume administrative costs associated with the program, and/or looking for anyone competent enough to provide the service which most municipalities have a difficult time doing during transition. Hadley would essentially have to be responsible for only paying a fee-for-service which can vary. Although these two options are the most feasible, the best option to move forward on based on financial conditions and the immediate need for such services is Option B. This option not only provides Hadley with efficient services to meet their mandates at an affordable cost, but makes available the opportunity for Hadley to generate revenue through the fees collected while meeting immediate needs of this service. Through the shared option, the Sealer will collect all appropriate fees due to the municipality and deposit all revenues and receipts to Hadley's general town budget. Those fees can be used to potentially offset the cost charged by the host municipality to provide Sealer services.

Options for Holyoke, MA

Holyoke has its own part-time sealer appointed by the Mayor who works less than 20 hours a week. Holyoke's Sealer currently inspects devices for 39 businesses. The Holyoke Sealer reported to the state within the 2012 Annual Report having done testing on 451 devices. \$5,397 of sealing fees was collected in accordance with the Holyoke fee structure. The city budget for this program is \$14,849. Of this budget, \$14,050.86 went to salary and the remaining \$798.14 went to equipment, transportation, training, and other expenses. Taking away the \$5,397 collected in sealing fees, the end cost for the City of Holyoke to have this program functioning within its community is \$9,452. Below are two (2) options identified for Holyoke. **Option A** encourages Holyoke to stay with its current program but make minimal changes to increase program efficiency and achieve cost savings. **Option B** invites Holyoke to participate in a shared service opportunity with other municipalities within the region.

OPTION A – Maintain existing Sealer of Weights & Measures program

This option recommends for Holyoke to stay with its current program but to consider some suggestions for minimal changes that will increase program efficiency and achieve potential

cost savings. Currently, the program is well established within the city. However, it has not been fully meeting the statutory requirements under the state mandate. The Sealer does not inspect checkout scanners at those businesses which have them which is clearly mandated under M.G.L Ch. 98, Sec. 56D. The statutory requirement states that automated checkout systems shall be tested every year in all establishments with three (3) or more cash registers to determine whether the price that an item is offered is the correct price being purchased by the buyer. The state general standard says that for each automated electronic retail checkout system with fewer than four (4) cash registers or computer terminals is listed to charge businesses no more than \$75 per checkout scanner. Each automated electronic retail checkout system with no less than four (4) and no more than eleven (11) cash registers or computer terminals, the state standard is listed for municipalities not to charge more than \$150 per checkout scanner. We suggest that the Sealer begin inspecting the automated checkout scanners within the city in order for Holyoke to be in full compliance. This will reduce the vulnerability of consumers being taken advantage of during purchases. Moreover, by inspecting the checkout scanners, Holyoke will increase their revenue of fees being collected and decrease its deficit for this service. It is assumed that because of the Sealers part-time status, there isn't enough adequate time to inspect checkout scanners. If this is the case, Holyoke should consider providing the Sealer more hours. If the city considers increasing the hours for the Sealer, the city would then have to consider the costs associated with the change in hours and benefits to the Sealer position.

The second suggestion under this option is to increase the current fee structure that is in place to charge businesses for Sealer service. If you look at page 10, you will recognize that Holyoke's fees are significantly lower than the state average. In fact, Holyoke has one of the lowest fee structures in the Commonwealth charging businesses half than what other communities are charging. Realizing Holyoke's \$9,452 deficit for this program after fees are collected, this option recommends for the City to increase the Sealers of Weights & Measures fee structure to double the current amount to assist with minimizing the deficit.

OPTION B – Participate in a shared Sealer of Weights & Measures program

This option encourages Holyoke to join a municipality that has an existing Sealer of Weights & Measures program that can expand its services to its community. This shared service venture will assure mandates are fully met but it is not guaranteed that Holyoke will save money compared to the current composition of this program in the city. However, it is anticipated that the incorporation of the fee structure of another community that is much higher than Holyoke's will, in fact, result in an equitable position for the city, and possibly a slight revenue generation.

- **PVPC's Recommendation** – The regional approach has potential to reduce cost and improve the efficiency of the delivery of this service. This option makes available a Sealer of Weights & Measures program for Holyoke at a fee-for-service which minimizes costs for maintaining and certifying equipment, annual costs for training and education for the Sealer, assumed administrative costs, and full compliance with statutory requirements. It's not guaranteed Holyoke will reduce costs but an improvement in service delivery is anticipated.

Final Summary of Recommendation for Holyoke

It is in PVPC's intention to recommend options that are feasible and which efficiently meet the required state mandates of the Sealer of Weights & Measures program. The current program in Holyoke is a well established program with a Sealer that is very competent. Compared to what other communities are budgeting for this service, Holyoke is fortunate to have its current Sealer that is dedicated to do the amount of work that has to be done at the budget allocated. Therefore, we recommend Option A with the condition that Holyoke implements the suggestions provided. The suggestions include for the Sealer to begin inspecting automated checkout scanners as mandated by state law to be fully compliance, and to increase the established fee structure. If Option A cannot be implemented as recommended or if circumstances change, we strongly suggest for Holyoke to consider exploring a shared Regional Sealers of Weights & Measures opportunity recommended in Option B. A shared service delivery effort has the potential to meet all of Holyoke needs in a timely fashion without setbacks during future transition.

In Summary

An extensive statutory and regulatory review was conducted and other models of fulfilling the requirements of this service were explored. Additionally, the current composition of this program within the individual communities was analyzed. The principal responsibility of the Sealer of Weights & Measures is to enforce the laws, rules, and regulations relating to weights and measures and the use of weighing and measuring devices in commercial transactions as listed under the Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L) Chapter 98. It was PVPC's intention to recommend options that are feasible and which efficiently meet the required state mandates of the Sealer of Weights & Measures program within the respective communities. The M.G.L, Ch. 98 provides local government the flexibility to structure how they wish to assure this service is being implemented within its communities. The flexibility includes appointing a Sealer, contracting with the state to provide the service if fewer than 20,000 inhabitants, and/or share

with a nearby community through an inter-municipal agreement. With this, municipalities struggle on deciding how they can efficiently provide this service and meet their mandate at a cost that is less burdensome to the tax payers of their community. Through this analytical study, comparison of services and limited cost analysis, it is in our hope that the municipalities consider PVPC's recommendation to assure full compliance and cost that is feasible for both Holyoke and Hadley.

Sources

City of Holyoke – Sealers of Weights & Measures Department

<http://www.holyoke.org/departments/sealer-of-weights-and-measures/>

Commercial Scale & Balance Co., Inc.

<http://www.csbc.com>

Massachusetts Division of Standards Metrology Laboratory

<http://www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/labmetrology/lab-contacts-m.cfm>

Massachusetts Division of Standards – Sealers of Weights & Measures

<http://www.mass.gov/ocabr/government/oca-agencies/dos-lp/>

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 98; and Consumer Merchant Protection Act, Chapter 295

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/>

Massachusetts Weights & Measures Association

<http://www.mwma.us>

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

<http://www.nmcog.org>

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

<http://www.pvpc.org>

Town of Hadley

<http://www.hadleyma.org>