

TOWN OF NANTUCKET IMPLEMENTS HIRING FREEZE

Nantucket, MA, November 4, 2008 – Town Manager C. Elizabeth Gibson has announced that a hiring freeze has been implemented for all Town departments. The hiring freeze has been instituted to help address the Town's fiscal situation, which has been affected by revenue performance. Revenues are not growing sufficiently to support the current level of services provided by the Town. This is a problem affecting towns throughout the Commonwealth, and has led the Governor to reduce the state's current fiscal 2009 budget.

“The hiring freeze has been implemented as a proactive measure to help address the Town's projected budget gap in fiscal 2010,” Ms. Gibson stated. “The state, has already reduced its current budget because revenues are coming in way under estimates. Given the uncertainty in the economy, declining local revenues and potentially declining state revenues, we are preparing for the likelihood of reductions in the current fiscal 2009 budget.”

The hiring freeze applies to all general fund Town departments, and does not include the School and Enterprise Fund departments. Any position that becomes vacant in one of these departments may not automatically be filled. However, departments may seek an exemption to the hiring freeze if the position meets one of four criteria, which include: (1) the position is mandated by federal, state or local law, or the position is necessary to meet federal or state reporting requirements; (2) not filling the position will result in higher costs, such as greater expenditure on overtime; (3) public safety or the general welfare of the public will be put at risk if the position is not filled; and (4) the position fulfills a critical function for a department and there will be a significant, adverse effect on departmental operations if the position is not filled. To meet this criterion, departments will need to demonstrate that the essential job function of the position cannot be assumed by other existing staff in the department.

“Our goal is to reduce spending in a responsible manner so that the delivery of essential municipal services is affected as little as possible,” explained Ms. Gibson. “Reviewing the need to fill positions on a case by case basis helps us to meet this goal.”