

Town Manager's Report to the Select Board Monday April 13, 2020

Annual Precinct Meetings:

The Mountain Lakes Precinct and North Haverhill Precinct have held their annual meetings already. The moderator has postponed the Haverhill Corner Precinct annual meeting until June 17th. The Woodsville Precinct postponed their meeting until April 22nd but are considering postponing it future.

Town of Haverhill Fire Department:

At Haverhill's Annual Town Meeting the Town voted to create the Town of Haverhill Fire Department and accept both the North Haverhill and Haverhill Corner Fire Departments should the two precincts independently at their Annual Precinct Meetings vote to relinquish their fire departments so they can become part of the Town Fire Department. Subsequently, North Haverhill at their Annual Precinct Meeting voted to do just that and so the North Haverhill Fire Department will become the first station to join the Town's new Fire Department. At the Annual Haverhill Corner Precinct Meeting the residents of that precinct will vote on a warrant article asking residents whether they wish to join the Town Fire Department. Development of the new Town of Haverhill Fire Department will begin immediately per and continue throughout the next year per RSA 154:1. I have reached out to potential committee members and will schedule the first Fire Department Development Committee meeting soon.

COVID-19 Preparations:

I have been sitting on COVID-19 Emergency Management conference calls for weeks, those calls are now held three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I also sit on COVID-19 Legal conference calls twice a week Tuesday and Thursday. These calls are at noon and usually run between 1.5 and 3 hours. Sitting in on these calls are Town Manager, Town Administrators, and Emergency Management Directors, and others. These calls have been instrumental in my ability to monitor updates to the virus's progression through the state, understanding the implications of the Governor's Orders, being aware of the State's response, as well as other municipality's responses to all of this. These calls have also helped me to keep the Select Board, residents, and employees of the Town of Haverhill informed and it has helped us with our preparations and response to the pandemic. I am holding staff meetings over ZOOM three times a week now to keep us connected and to ensure we are available to support each other.

COVID-19 & FEMA:

The Town will realize losses due to the current crisis, including lost revenue for Parks & Recreation programming, space rentals, permit fees, etc. The Town will also see losses due to direct costs due to the pandemic, such as installation of plexi-panels, extra cleaning supplies, increased postage, drop boxes, ZOOM software license, etc. I responded to the NH Bureau of Safety survey in order to get into the que for FEMA funding once it becomes available. Spoke to Paul Hatch our field representative and he and I discussed timing and preparation. The BOS will notify us when its time to go into the Grants Portal to file for reimbursements. Until then myself and Town department heads are tracking all costs associated to our time and materials, so we are ready to submit our request.

Haverhill Town Happenings:

In person Haverhill Happenings have been postponed until further notice. Plan on trying a few of these meetings over ZOOM and see how it goes. If people hop onto the ZOOM meeting, then I will schedule more of them.

Clark Pond Road:

We have submitted the first FEMA reimbursement request for engineering costs totaling approx. \$111,000. The mandatory on-site pre-bid meeting took place on March 26th with 10 contractors in attendance. The construction contract has been advertised with a bid opening on April 16, 2020. The project will have a start date of May 26th and a completion date of October 9, 2020. The bridge will remain closed and road will remain closed to through traffic until the project is complete.

Lime Kiln Road:

In July of 2017 there was a weather event that caused significant damage to Lime Kiln Road. Work to repair the road included the reinstallation of four cross culverts and the installation of riprap to stabilize the embankment along one side of the road. Subsequently, in the spring of 2018 and again in the spring of 2019 the installed culverts could not handle the spring rains, snow melt, and water shed from the hill side, which caused significant damage to the roadway and abutting property owners' property. In July of 2019, Haverhill's new Road Agent and I together began to assess Lime Kiln Road, damage realized each spring, and the damage cause to the abutting properties. It was determined that the culverts installed in 2017 were not installed at the correct angle so not to impede the flow of water, the culverts were undersized, and no headwalls had been installed. In the summer of 2019 the Haverhill Highway Department, in conjunction with D. Gramm Enterprises LLC, installed three new larger culverts and three headwalls. This spring water flowed as expected and the problem has been corrected. In response to this issue we are filing a claim with Primex against the previous road agent's performance bond of approximately \$22,000 for the repairs.

Central / Forest Intersection:

After months of meetings between the North Country Council, NHDOT, Woodsville Precinct, and the Town Manager a phased solution to correcting safety issues at the Central & Forest Street intersection was agreed to. In response the Town Manager developed and submitted for NHDOT District 2 consideration the Excavation Permit and Traffic Control Plan for the Central Street (302) and Forest Street project. Phase one (1) is to remove the wide turning lane in front of McDonalds in an effort to narrow the intersection and eliminate cross-traffic issues. Specifically, work will include the installation of vertical granite curbing, topsoil fill, seeding, and where needed mulching. There will be warning signs to alert the public that there will be a new traffic pattern at the intersection. The NHDOT through District 2 has begun its evaluation of the intersection and utilities under the road that are their responsibility, in preparation for work at the intersection. The Woodsville Precinct stated that the precinct no longer intends to participate in this safety project. At this point work at this intersection will likely occur later this summer 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dean Memorial Airport Safety Study:

The safety and feasibility study was approved at Town Meeting, however, the State of NH has paused all funding for projects with a Completion Date later than 2020. Though the project was slated to wrap up in the fall of 2020, the project has an AIP funding completion date in 2021. The NH Bureau of Aviation has stated that they will let us know as soon as the "pause" is lifted, which will likely occur this summer. Once that happens, we will sign the Agreement & Notice to Proceed, after which Dubois & King can start the project.

County Road Property Clean-up:

I am working with Gary Hebert, Haverhill Health Officer to finalize proceedings under the 12-2018 Court Order by setting a date and drafting specifications for an auction of items found on the property.

Committee, Commission, and Boards Handbook:

Joanna Bligh has provided the first draft of the Committee, Commissions, and Boards handbook for my review. She still has work to do on the handbook, but the first draft is looking really good. The current draft is 56 pages and includes guidance on “Running an Effective Municipal Meeting”.

Department Head Reports:

- ❖ **Town Clerk** – The office has been busy. We’ve seen an uptick of customers using the online services or calling the office for other options. We’ve added a troubleshooting list to the website to help customers navigate registering vehicles. We are also using this time to work on organizing the basement organizing the long-term file room.

- ❖ **Tax Collector** – I have worked on getting the residents tax bills printed off and in the mail. Also been working on timber tax bills. Over the last few weeks I have been fielding lots of calls regarding tax questions, responding to emails, processing online tax payments, and getting my monthly reports done. I have been receiving lots of mail. People are paying their residents tax through the mail and online, some are also paying on their 2019 taxes so that they don't get a lien placed on them in June. I also have sent out reminder notices to people in danger of losing their property in the fall to tax deed. Hopefully they will clear their balances up before the fall. Taken some calls from customers wondering when we are going to be holding our Auction this year, which has been postponed until September 2020. Getting ready to hopefully be printing property tax bills soon.

- ❖ **Property Records** – I am processing permit application requests by mail to residents. I have processed 3 Intent-to-Cuts and 2 Report-of-Cuts generating a little over \$2,000 of income. I am working with Melinda by email to complete the tax processing. Reminder Letters to loggers and landowners that have not reported are being sent out in the next week. The Tax Deeded sale is being moved from June 2020 to September 2020 due to the pandemic. The Mitchell Group has recommended that we re-issue notices to those property owners that have lost their properties in the last 3 years. There are 2 properties that we are ironing out legal issues but hope to have them resolved soon.

- ❖ **Maintenance Dept** – So the maintenance dept. has been busy keeping everything sanitized. I meet with Alliance every morning to go over the days’ work to be done, I had dead river meet with us to plan on a 1000-gal LP tank to feed the new boiler. The project is going very well a great company to work with. We are waiting on Mike of Profile Technologies to set up the controls for the heating system. The boiler was installed Monday 4/6/2020; railing going down stair was removed to fit boiler downstairs, most everything in all offices are complete. I’m working with Budget Lumber on ordering panic bar entry locks for Morrill Building. I have started digging and grading for Sherri’s new entrance ramp/step at the Clifford Building. I will have it all poured this week. Request for Proposal for renovations at the Center Haverhill Armory in the office area.

- ❖ **Planning & Zoning** – March 2020 meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19. Gary has obtained committee member requests for reappointments. Fees have been updated. There is a pending lot-line adjustment and abutters have been notified. Gravel Pits – ongoing - findings from Mary - Pinkham Langer have been forwarded to the Towns legal team for opinion. Next meeting (Zoom) has been scheduled for 04/28/2020.

- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Took delivery of the new Grader. Provided Town Manager quotes for the new Dump Truck and settled on an International, the truck was ordered on Friday April 10, 2020. Worked with Brigitte to fully document the claim for Lime Kiln Road rework. Rock crushing, bituminous pavement crushing, sand screening, paving cemetery road, bids all were published last week.

- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – Ralph Crosswell the Airport Manager is retiring from his position with GE Aviation and will be living in Benton full time as of May 1, 2020. This will make it more accessible and available. Things are going well at the airport.

- ❖ **Welfare Dept** – Over the past few weeks I have been working on going through applications and assisting as much as I can. I have been working on going over the guidelines and researching other towns protocols with COVID-19. Shelters are not taking in new people due to the virus. This is causing the Town to pay out more money for motel/hotel stays. The number of people signing up for welfare has not increased at this point, but it isn't over yet. I have a strong feeling it will pick up once the virus is over and evictions can resume. The guidelines do need to be updated so I have been working on that.

- ❖ **Police Department** –
 - We have been busy in the Police Department taking precautions with Covid-19.
 - We have had several informal trainings and information distribution regarding Covid-19.
 - I have partaken in nearly daily conference calls and webinars relating to Covid-19
 - We are beginning to see an increase in domestic violence related activity presumably due to the self-quarantines and social distancing
 - We have implemented all PPE at our disposal, and I have outlined guidelines for all staff on how and when to use it.
 - All trainings outside the department have been cancelled.
 - Officer Torrey is completing the Police Academy online now.

- ❖ **Emergency Management** - Gary Hebert has been appointed as Emergency Management Director (EMD); Mike Banonno continues to serve as the Deputy Emergency Management Director (DEMD). Sat in on 4 EMS conference calls and 2 legal calls related to COVID-19. Made 1 official equipment requests for PPE for the Woodsville Ambulance; and received 100 N95 masks, 48 face shields, and 11 gowns. More PPE for the Haverhill PD has been requested, receipt is pending. EMS trailer was transferred and moved to Littleton. Coordinated with Chief Blanchard to move 5 hospital beds from the Grafton County Nursing Home to Cottage Hospital. National Guard was onsite in Woodsville and assisted in reorganizing surge space at the hospital, which resulted in several extra beds for surge. It was determined that the Clifford Building would be kept as a backup.

❖ **Parks & Recreation Dept –**

- **HARP & POOL:** We hired Mona Sanville as my Assistant HARP & POOL summer camp assistant and Donny Bowman as my Head Counselor they have worked with children for many years and will be a good addition to the program. They have both contacted Jennifer to get the hiring packet started. Other employees have been contacted as well and told to reach out to Jennifer as I would like the paperwork completed asap.
- **Rail Trail update:** I am researching options for insuring use of the trail, as the Town will need to hold the policy on the trail since the State will not do so should the Select Board vote to open the trail to public ATV/UTV traffic this summer. Graham Insurance agency has been asked to pull together numbers on what it would cost the Town of Haverhill to insure the trail from the beginning of the trail across from Brushwood Road in North Haverhill to the endpoint at Smith Street in Woodsville, NH. I expect Michael Graham to be in touch soon.
- **Ice Rink:** I have asked Rich to disassemble the ice rink on the Community field in Woodsville. He and Tammy have removed the noodles and kick plates as they were blowing around. The liner needs to be spread out and dried before we can put it away. The liner will be brought to the CMB and spread out to dry. It is there we can assess any damage to the liner and make repairs with white Gorilla tape where needed. We had complaints last year from the Precinct Commissioners as it was on the courts too long and I do not want complaints again this year.
- **Playgrounds & Parks:** I have reached out to the Woodsville Precinct Commissioner Dick Guy and VFW Commander Steve Wheeler regarding the Woodsville Community Field and the VFW memorial playground to see if they had thoughts on marking it closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am will mark Railroad Park (RRP) and Hazen Park as closed. I also have to do some clean-up at RRP as there are still remnants of where someone was camping behind the bandstand. I will utilize Rich for this as there is a mattress/pillows that need to be removed. There are also potentially many bags of trash that need to be picked up.
- **NH the Beautiful Litter program:** Going extremely well with offering the bags, gloves & liability waivers the JRM building. We have filled the dumpster once and as I walked around my local roads yesterday, I did see two people picking up trash and happy to do so! They thanked the P&R Department for offering the program. I will leave the dumpster there until it is no longer being utilized.
- **Senior Stretch ZOOM classes:** These started last week and will continue DAILY from 9-10. I expect that once they get the hang of using their computers more, I will see more participation.

❖ **Public Health –** Had one “Health Hazard” report out of Woodsville, investigated and determined it unfounded.

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."

~ Helen Keller