

Town Manager's Report to the Select Board Monday April 27, 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 has postponed their meeting as well.

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. The Town Fire Department Kick-Off Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM over Zoom.

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. Myself and my staff are managing the many methods of reimbursement and acquiring stimulus money and have begun filing.

Haverhill Town Happenings:

In person Haverhill Happenings have been postponed until further notice. The first virtual Haverhill Happenings has been scheduled for Friday May 1, 2020 at 9:00 AM over Zoom.

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. Bids were opened on April 16, 2020 at 2:00PM over Zoom. Bids were analyzed and the recommendation is to award the contract to Austin Construction. A notice to proceed will be issued after contracting. 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. We have filed our first quarterly report to FEMA and are getting ready to file our second reimbursement request.

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.

Dean Memorial Airport CARES ACT:

The Dean Memorial Airport was awarded \$20,000 of the CARES Act stimulus money. We are in the process now of filing the necessary paperwork to accept the funds.

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 continue to see a healthy number of customers using the online services or calling the office for other options. We continue using this time to work on organizing the basement organizing the long-term file room. Have determined that I will need to swear in all commission members who were re-appointed; will be reaching out to them to do so over Zoom in the coming week.
- ❖ **Tax Collector** – This week I have worked on fielding lots of emails and phone calls. Reviewing deeds and getting ready to print tax bills on Tuesday. Enter payments that come through the mail, the drop box, and online. Worked on a couple of abatements for the board to sign next week. I am planning on bringing home tax bill after there are printed and the folding machine next week so that I can work on tax bills at home and getting them into the mail.
- ❖ **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** – The maintenance dept. has been busy keeping everything sanitized. I meet with Alliance every morning to go over the days’ work to be done. The project is going very well a great company to work with. The controls for the heating system were set up and are operational. 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. Have been fielding calls and arranging visits by contractor related to the Request for Proposal for renovations at the Center Haverhill Armory.

- ❖ **Planning & Zoning** – Gary Hebert and TM Codling met with the Town’s attorney to review all files related to gravel pits in town. They are working on their evaluation and will be getting back to us soon. Next meeting (Zoom) has been scheduled for 04/28/202 7:00 PM.
- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Grading roads and preparing for summer work. Ordered the new Dump Truck approved at Town Meeting; there will be a bid opening on Thursday April 30th for Winter Sand Screening, Bituminous Mix Crushing, Gravel Crushing, and Municipal Lot Sweeping.
- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – Ralph Crosswell has provided information for the purchase of a 84” pull behind mower attachment for the large John Deere tractor at the airport, to include the consignment sale of the zero turn; if the deal is acceptable this would provide the airport a credit of approx. \$3,500.
- ❖ **Welfare Dept** – Processing applications for assistance and working with Brigitte and Jennifer regarding eligibility. I have been working on going over the guidelines and researching other towns protocols with COVID-19. The guidelines do need to be updated so I have been working on that. 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.
- ❖ **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.
 - Chief Alling has sat in nearly daily conference calls and webinars relating to Covid-19.
 - We continue 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 (DEM). Both continue to sit in on EMS conference calls and legal calls related to COVID-19.
- ❖ **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 are working through the hiring process. Other employees have been contacted as well and told to reach out to Jennifer as I would like the paperwork completed asap.
 - Senior Stretch ZOOM classes: These classes continue DAILY from 9-10 and there has been an increase in participation.

- Rail Trail update: We have filed a 91-A Request with the NHDOT and a FOIA Request with FHWA. We have received a response from the NHDOT who did not have a copy of the original agreement, only emails and letters from the 2016. We are awaiting a response from from FHWA related to the Transportation Enhancement Grant application and award letter from FHWA through the NHDOT. We have determined that the TE Grant allows for many uses of these grant monies, to include the “Preservation of abandoned railway corridors...by acquiring railroad rights-of-way; planning, designing, and constructing multi-use trails.” Which is promising as that is what we ultimately want to use the trail for. Throughout the TE Grant documentation I have yet to find a stipulation for the overall grant that says, “no wheeled vehicles”. If that language exists it would have to be outlined in the original grant application, award letter, and agreement; which to date no one can produce.
 - NH the Beautiful Litter program: Was continued due to high participation. We have been offering the bags, gloves & liability waivers the JRM building. We have filled the dumpster numerous times. Overall this has been a great success!
- ❖ **Public Health** – Had one noise complaint and determined there was no enforcement authority. Have begun an inventory of sites with Junk and/or Junk Car violations so that we can begin to strategically address them.

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

~ Helen Keller