

# **Town Manager's Report to the Select Board Monday May 11, 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 17<sup>th</sup>. The Woodsville Precinct has postponed their meeting as well, however, at the time of this report I had not heard back from anyone at the Woodsville Precinct as to the date and time of their annual meeting.

## **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 Haverhill Corner Precinct Annual 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 has begun. The Town Fire Department Committee held a kick-off meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> over Zoom. The committee will continue to meet bi-weekly throughout the year. The next Town Fire Department meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night May 12, 2020 at 6:30 PM over Zoom. The connection information can be found on the Town's website calendar, has been posted to Facebook, and also published on the Haverhill Vital Communities listserv.

## **COVID-19 Preparations & Actions:**

On-going work:

- Sit in on State EOC COVID-19 calls Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at noon.
- Sit in on Legal COVID-19 calls Tuesday at noon.
- Sit in on some GOFERR calls, time and day varies.
- Sit in on some Governor's Re-open Task Force calls, time and day varies.
- Hold calls with our legal team related to COVID-19 response by the Town.
- Hold calls with our legal team related to COVID-19 personnel matters.
- Hold Haverhill staff meetings Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 2:00pm.
- Completing grant applications.
- Tracking expenses.
- Filing required reports.

Funding:

- FEMA 4355DR-NH: This is a FEMA grant to cover up to 75% of costs borne by the Town to directly respond to the COVID-19 crisis. This funding source covers expenses such as masks, gloves, disinfectants, OT for first responders, etc.
- Aviation CARES ACT Stipend: \$20,000 flat
- First Responder Stipends: \$300/FT PD, \$150/PT PD, \$50/on-call Fire; for 8 weeks

- GOFERR Coronavirus Relief Fund: Direct costs at 100% up to \$111,176 for things such as:
  - Wages & Benefits for extended FMLA leave
  - Wages & Benefits due to Families First Act
  - Higher Assignment Rate of Pay
  - Postage & Envelopes
  - Cleaning supplies & Gloves
  - Hand sanitizer
  - Drop Boxes (3) & Mailbox (1)
  - Office equipment for social distancing (coffee maker, microwave)
  - Ink for printers
  - Laptop Computers
  - Software & Services
  - On-boarding excessive hours (Profile for remote access work)
  - Home printers
  - Losses due to business interruptions:
    - Space rentals
    - Cancelled Rec programs
    - Reduced DMV fees
    - Reduced Meals and Rooms Tax
  - Welfare costs (COVID-19 related)
    - Nootka and All Seasons lodging
    - Mortgage or rent
    - Electric payments
    - etc.
  - Legal fees
  - Municipal building modifications (plexi-glass, enclosing waiting area, credit card reader)
  - Municipal building cleaning
  - Signage for COVID-19

Additionally: The Town is realizing revenue losses due to the current crisis, including lost revenue for Parks & Recreation programming, space rentals, permit fees, etc. However, at this time loss of revenue is not covered by any funding source. There is talk at the state level that the Governor may be considering another fund to assist municipalities with assistance to cover lost revenue.

**Haverhill Town Happenings:**

In person Haverhill Happenings have been postponed until further notice. The first virtual Haverhill Happenings was held on Friday May 1, 2020 at 9:00 AM over Zoom. There were two people from Haverhill Corner in attendance and we had a very nice conversation about a variety of things going on around Haverhill. The next virtual Haverhill Happenings has been scheduled for Friday May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00am over Zoom; connection information can be found on the Town’s website calendar.

**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.

**Clark Pond Road:**

Bids were opened on April 16, 2020 at 2:00PM over Zoom. Bids were analyzed by HEB and they made the recommendation to award the contract to the low bidder Austin Construction. The recommendation for award was submitted to the NHDOT and we are awaiting their response. Once we get approval to award, we will begin the contracting process. Once we have an executed contract a notice to proceed will be issued and work may begin. The project has 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, the Town has filed a claim with Primex against the previous road agent's performance bond for \$14,997.58 for the repairs.

We have begun preparing a similar claim for the Lily Pond Road reconstruction project and repairs and corrections the Town made last year and will continue with this year.

**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.

### **Committee, Commission, and Boards Handbook:**

Joanna Bligh has provided the second draft of the Committee, Commissions, and Boards handbook for my review. She still has work to do on the handbook, but it is looking really good. The finished handbook will include; Book introduction, Section Introductions, RSAs, Warrant Articles, Rules of Procedures, and guidance on “Running an Effective Municipal Meeting”; and much more. It will prove to be a comprehensive guide to our local Committees, Commissions, and Boards.

### **Department Head Reports:**

- ❖ **Town Clerk** – The office has been busy. We continue to see a healthy number of customers using the online services. We have seen a significant up-tick in customers calling the office and/or emailing us for assistance. However, overall there has been a reduction in DMV revenue.
- ❖ **Tax Collector** – Residents have begun paying their taxes. I have been entering payments that come through the mail, the drop box, and online. Working with others on a property issue; Pike Water Works is a water source managed through association; however, it has been left unattended and is now facing tax deeding in 2020. Ownership of the property is not easily traceable, and the water system is now degrading, and residents are complaining. We need to determine ownership.
- ❖ **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** – Finished the ramp and new entrance over at the Clifford Memorial Building. Finished cleaning up around the storage units behind the Clifford Memorial Building. Working now on replacing ceiling tiles in the PD and installing new flooring in the PD. Working with Alliance Mechanical on troubleshooting steam traps and evaluating the efficiency of steam valves. Have been meeting with contractors interested in bidding on the Center Haverhill Armory renovations; bid to open this Thursday May 14<sup>th</sup>. I am now working my summer hours, of 32 hours per week.

- ❖ **Planning & Zoning** – The Planning Board is moving forward with the permitting of active gravel pits. They are now waiting for the Select Board to set bond amounts. The Town has hired a PE on behalf of the Planning Board to perform the Town’s annual gravel pit inspections, this will be done in the next few weeks.
  
- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Grading roads and preparing for summer work. Bid Opening was held on Thursday April 30<sup>th</sup> for Winter Sand Screening, Bituminous Mix Crushing, Gravel Crushing, and Municipal Lot Sweeping. Contracts are being offered to the lowest bidders. There is another bid opening scheduled for this Thursday May 14<sup>th</sup> for paving on Cemetery Road and for renovations at the Center Haverhill Armory. The crew began marking Hazard Trees along roadways in Haverhill, the trees to be evaluated for removal by the Select Board are marked with orange ribbon. The Select Board will be provided a list of roads to review and then will be asked at a future meeting to authorize the removal of Hazard Trees. Trees removed are offered first to the landowner, and if the landowner refuses the tree becomes the property of the Town.
  
- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – Ralph Crosswell ordered the 84” pull behind mower attachment for the large John Deere tractor at the airport, it is scheduled for delivery tomorrow (5/12/2020). Ralph and Dan are doing spring cleanup around the airport, raking, preparing for flower planting, etc. Ralph is working with fuel suppliers and others to get quotes for a credit card reader so that we can move forward with that. Ralph is working on trying to extend the wifi from the Highway Garage to the airport so that Ralph and Dan can communicate from the airport grounds.
  
- ❖ **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.
  
- ❖ **Police Department** –
  - We have been busy in the Police Department taking precautions with 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.
  - Three officers have left the PD in the past month, this is a huge loss to the Department.
  - We have begun recruitment for two of those positions.
  - All trainings outside the department have been cancelled.
  - Working with the TM on our response for First Responder Stipends.
  - Officer Torrey has completed the Police Academy and is now finishing his FTO hours.
  - Per the SB request Chief Alling and the TM have begun the PD analysis.
  - The Department is stepping up patrols along Cemetery Road and Benton Road due to excessive speed complaints.
  - Renovations have begun to the PD facilities.
  
- ❖ **Emergency Management** - Started an inventory of junk/garbage issues and/or junk car issues around Haverhill. Have been speaking with TM about the Wright auction and possible timing of such. Sitting in on EOC calls Monday, Wednesday, Friday and keeping apprised of COVID-19 issues. Working with the TM and Chief of Police on campground opening concerns.

❖ **Parks & Recreation Dept –**

- A.P. POOL: The pool will not be opening this year due to continued concerns about the spread of COVID-19. With the social distancing guidelines and restrictions on gatherings the cost to open the pool could not be justified. Also, safety concerns for staff and visitors would be too great. We look forward to opening the pool in 2021.
- Senior Stretch & Drums Alive ZOOM classes: These classes continue DAILY and there has been an increase in participation. Attendees seem to really like the Zoom class platform.
- HARP Summer Camp: We have hired Mona Sanville and Donny Bowman to assist with the HARP program should we be able to open this program in some form or fashion this summer. They both have worked with children for many years and will be a good addition to the program. They are working through the hiring process. We are waiting for more guidance from the Governor's Re-open Task Force before a decision is made if, how, and when we will open the HARP program.
- Rail Trail update: We filed a 91-A Request with the NHDOT and a FOIA Request with FHWA. We have now received a response from both entities. Neither produced a copy of the original grant application, award letter, or agreement. They did provide emails, letters, and other correspondence. 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 existed it would have to be outlined in the original grant application, award letter, and agreement; which to date no one can produce. The next step is to have our legal team review all documents provided and assist us with drafting a formal opinion on the matter for the Select Board's consideration.
- 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 program continues to be a great success!
- Haverhill Picnic Areas: With assistance from Joanna Bligh and the TM, the Town applied for and was awarded a \$1,500 grant from the Walmart Corporation for picnic tables at the Dean Memorial Airport. The goal being to establish a safe picnic area for residents and visitors to come and share a meal on the grounds of the airport, watch planes take off and land, and just enjoy the beauty of Haverhill. Thank you, Joanna and Walmart! There have been a number of other grant requests prepared by Joanna and submitted to-date by the TM for picnic tables needed at Hazen Park in North Haverhill and at the new Community Garden behind the Clifford Memorial Building in Woodsville.

❖ **Public Health –** Nothing more to report – see EMD

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

*~ Helen Keller*