

**Town Manager's Report
to the Select Board
Monday September 14, 2020**

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.

Town Fire Dept Meetings

April 29, 2020
May 12, 2020
June 2, 2020
June 16, 2020
June 30, 2020
September 1, 2020

Public Input Sessions

July 14, 2020 (7 pm)
July 21, 2020 (11 am)
July 21, 2020 (7 pm)

Firefighter Input Sessions

August 4, 2020 (11 am)
August 12, 2020 (7 pm)

The committee will continue to meet bi-weekly throughout the year. The next Town Fire Department meeting has not been scheduled to give members time to complete the "homework" assigned to them. The next meeting is expected to be scheduled later in September or early October. All meeting minutes and committee documents are posted on the Town's Website on the Town Fire Department webpage.

Clark Pond Road:

The Contractor, Austin Construction mobilized on June 22nd. The project has 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. The contractor has been actively working on-site and is on schedule and on budget. To-date the Town of Haverhill has submitted for and received \$84,391.35 from FEMA. There is another \$463,436.33 that has been awarded by FEMA for this project and will be requested as payments to the contractor are made.

French Pond Road Project:

Tree removal went very well, clearing the right of way of trees allows for proper ditching and for sunlight to make it to the roadway, which will improve road conditions over the winter months. The large culvert now has a new headwall at the inlet, which will prevent water damage to the culvert. It will also extend the life of the new roadway. There will be guardrail added at a later date. Pike Industries, the paving contractor is scheduled to begin reclaiming the week of September 14th and will then follow up with the paving and shouldering. They expect to be able to complete the project in two weeks. The project is under budget and it is expected that there will be appropriated funds left unused.

Woodsville Lawsuit:

The Town through its lawyers have been served with a summons for the lawsuit filed by the Woodsville Fire District in Grafton Superior Court against the Town of Haverhill. The Town subsequently provided a response to include counter claims. In response the Woodsville Precinct has offered a response to the Court. All filings are public record.

Woodsville Highway Committee:

The Town was notified that the Woodsville Fire District was reaching out to precincts and others to put together a “Road Committee”; due to significant concerns with the appropriateness of any member of the Select Board, the Town Manager, or any Town employee participating on this committee; specifically because the Woodsville Fire District has filed a law suit against the Town and that lawsuit focuses on highways and highway monies; the Select Board voted not to participate on this committee at this time. It would be inappropriate for the Town and the Fire District to engage in active discussions about this topic until such time as the lawsuit is settled. The Town would have eagerly participated on a committee in the absence of the lawsuit.

Dean Memorial Airport Safety Study:

The safety and feasibility study grant funding has finally been “unpaused” by the NH Bureau of Aviation and we have fully executed our grant documents with the Bureau of Aviation. We will now execute the Notice to Proceed so that Dubois & King can start the project. Additionally, the State has approved 100% funding for this project so there will be no contribution required by the Town as approved at the 2020 Town Meeting.

Central / Forest Intersection:

The NHDOT has verbally approved the Town’s excavation permit for Phase one (1) of this 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 now include the removal of pavement, installation of loam and seed. There will be warning signs to alert the public that there will be a new traffic pattern at the intersection. The Town is anticipating this work can occur in early fall after completion of the French Pond Road project.

Blackmount 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. Discussed this with the Town’s law team and they have recommended we get the trail appraised with intended restrictions; which I will arrange soon. Once we know the “fair market value” then we can develop a plan of action. TM reached out to George Sansoucy, as recommended by Alan Rutherford, to inquire about having him perform the appraisal.

Wastewater Treatment & Collection System Study Grant:

The proposed project is to perform a Wastewater Treatment and Collection System Feasibility Study, which would look at developing a collection system and wastewater treatment plant within the precinct of North Haverhill, with the option of future expansion beyond the precinct boundaries into areas such as Mountain Lakes. The purpose of creating this new system would be to promote the economic and residential development within the Town of Haverhill. The Town received notice that we were not chosen for the Norther Borders Regional Commission (NBRC), so the TM moved onto Plan “B” and presented the study to the UNH Graduate Students as a possible capstone project. We will find out this week if our project was chosen as a capstone project.

Connecting NH Emergency Broadband Expansion Program Grant:

The proposed project is to construct a public mesh WiFi network that will be available free of charge to residents, businesses, and visitors along 1.8 miles of Central Street in the Village of Woodsville as well as 2.21 miles along Route 10, Route 116, and Airport Road in North Haverhill. The entire project, both locations are within the Town of Haverhill, which is the seat of Grafton County. I have been checking in with the Office of Strategic Initiative (OSI) and was told that until the Governor signs the grant awards no one will be told who is being funded. The Town of Haverhill was not chosen as a recipient of the Broadband CARES ACT grant money. The proposed contractor will be presenting the Woodsville portion of the proposed project to the Select Board at the next Select Board Meeting scheduled for Sept 28th for possible funding using the Town’s Broadband funds approved at the 2020 Town Meeting.

Grafton County Broadband Committee:

The Grafton County Commissioners have formed the Grafton County Broadband Committee. There are five appointed members, of which the TM is one. The committee will be meeting monthly at the Clifford Memorial Building, will be on Zoom, and broadcast live on Facebook. The Committee will work on an array of initiatives with the single goal of developing a long-term Broadband solution for the residents of Grafton County. This committee has the full support of the Grafton County Commissioners who are prepared to assist the committee, to include bonding of future projects, which is now allowed by SB170. Additionally, members agreed to serve as liaisons to their neighboring communities; Haverhill TM will serve as liaison to Piermont and Bath. Haverhill has developed a Haverhill Broadband webpage on the Town’s website www.haverhill-nh.com. The webpage can be found under “Announcements”. This page will contain pertinent information related to Broadband efforts in Haverhill; which will include the work of the Grafton County Broadband Committee.

GOFERR CARES ACT Grant:

We are working on our third reimbursement for CARES ACT monies through the Governor’s Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery (GOFERR) committee. To-date we have submitted reimbursement requests totaling \$49,433.44; the next request is due on September 15th. There is one more reimbursement period allowed after this one ending October 30th.

Aviation CARES ACT Grant:

The Town was approved for a \$20,000 grant to be used toward operations at the Dean Memorial Airport. The Town received the fully executed grant documents and will now file for reimbursement for the full \$20,000.

Haverhill Police Department Study:

Months ago, the Select Board requested that the Chief of Police conduct a study of the operations within the Department in order to fully evaluate staffing needs for the PD. The first full draft of that study is complete and has been provided to the TM for review. It is expected that the presentation of such to the Select Board and the public will occur at a near future Select Board Meeting.

Department Head Reports:

- ❖ **Tax Collector** – Working on getting ready to meet with the board about deeding properties this year.
- ❖ **Property Records** – Processing building permits, intent to cut permits, intent to excavate, report of excavations, updating deeds, etc.,

- ❖ **Town Clerk** – The new Deputy, Brittany Grant, is doing very well learning the flow of the office. She has her validation for Vital Records, but still waiting for validation for DMV. This has been more challenging since the usual training in Concord is not available with COVID restrictions. Online classes are being used instead but are time consuming. Customer appointments for the Town Clerk’s Office are booking about 10 days out, but more people are using the online option and still doing some drop box options. Election night was a success, but very long day, 17 hrs for Town Clerk and Moderator. A round of applause to all that worked that day, we received a good inspection, especially considering all the extra changes. Thank you to all that helped.

- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – The Airport Zoning Commission is wrapping up final revisions to the Dean Memorial Flight Scholarship program. We are looking forward to rolling out the new scholarship program. In early October, the Granite State Sky Riders will be flying their powered parachute and powered paraglider recreational vehicles at and from the Dean Memorial Airport, this is an event for public entertainment.

- ❖ **Maintenance Dept** – Toured all facilities with the Town Manager and began to develop a plan of action for each. Evaluated all roof tops that were experiencing leaks, secured the PD roof with a temporary fix, but will come back and install permanent fix in the next few weeks. Will also be patching the CMB roof soon. Have begun reviewing Tax Deeded properties. Assisted with the set up and tear down for elections.

- ❖ **Police Department** –
 - Staff have been attending training remotely
 - The staffing study is completed.
 - We have one candidate that just completed a polygraph examination and we are awaiting the official results. We administered oral boards to two other candidates. We have several candidates that have been scheduled to take a PT Test and written test. We have multiple applicants for the detective position as well. There have been several applicants that have failed out of the hiring process as well.
 - There has been a great deal of activity with felony cases at the County Attorney’s office with hearings etc.
 - We continue to be appreciative of the support our community offers the Police Department.
 - Drug Task Force is not meetings or conducting undercover activities right now because of COVID. I have spoken with the team leader for our area and there are operations in the work. We also have our own operations and investigations that are always ongoing. We have open cases that will be going for prosecution. These are items we cannot discuss publicly.
 - Working down 3 officers has been very difficult and all staff are working at maximum capacity. It is a challenge to not have all the employees here get overwhelmed by our current workload and not get burned out. An officer has to go on call most nights besides Friday and Saturday due to being short staffed.

- ❖ **Welfare Dept** – The Welfare department has still been busy dealing with COVID homelessness. I still have one person who I am hoping to get into a place soon. The Town has been helping him for a few months now due to COVID. I am still working on finding new and better practices for running the department. I have taken a course called “What NH Legal Assistance Wants You To Know about Housing and Benefits” which gave me a better understanding about what tenants should be asking their landlords and when they can take legal action to prevent and eviction. This can help the department in many ways because we may be able to refer them to LARC which is free legal advice and they may not end up needing assistance through welfare. I am just taking things day by day and doing what I can to help people but also make sure we are not just handing out money.

- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Clark Pond Road Bridge is actively being constructed. French Pond Road reclamation and paving project begins this week and will take two weeks. Took delivery of the new truck. Ditching on Tewksbury. Going to get out to grade County Road this week.

- ❖ **Planning & Zoning** – Gravel Pit inspections have been completed, and one Gravel Pit reclamation bond has been posted, we are waiting on two others. The Planning Board will be addressing gravel pit permits soon.

- ❖ **Emergency Management** –Sitting in on Emergency Operations Center (EOC) calls and keeping appraised of COVID-19 issues.

- ❖ **Public Health** – With the Governor’s Stay at Home 2.0 Emergency Orders there has been an increased need for the Health Officer to respond to questions, comments, and reports of violations of the EOs, which has kept the Health Officer very busy. Investigated a complaint of a possible failed septic system.

- ❖ **Parks & Recreation Dept** –
 - A.P. POOL: The pool did not open this year; we are hoping to reopen next year.
 - 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: There has been no summer camp programs this summer.
 - Hazen Park: There are now Friday Senior Stretch class at the park at 9am for those interested. Working on plans for a Haunted Hayride at Hazen Park this year.
 - Railroad Park & the Caboose: There have been concerts, acoustic music jams, and the Farmers Market at the park with no concerns related to social distancing, people have been respectful.
 - Community Garden: The community garden is wrapping up.