

**Town Manager's Report
to the Select Board
Monday January 4, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

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 2020 Annual Precinct Meeting voted to do just that and so the North Haverhill Fire Department is set to become the first station of the Town's new Fire Department. At the 2020 Haverhill Corner Precinct Annual Meeting the residents of that precinct voted not to join the Town Fire Department. It is anticipated that residents of Haverhill Corner will be offered another opportunity, at the 2021 precinct annual meeting, to vote on whether to join their station as a station of the Town's Fire Department.

The Town Fire Department Committee met throughout 2020, collectively they participated in fourteen (14) meetings to develop the new Town of Haverhill Fire Department. The organizational structure, job descriptions, funding model, training model, and other aspects of the new Fire Department have been drafted and are nearly complete. The Town Manager is preparing now to provide public information meetings anticipated to be scheduled for late January. All meeting minutes and committee documents are posted on the Town's Website on the Town Fire Department webpage.

Woodsville Lawsuit:

The Woodsville Fire District filed a lawsuit against the Town of Haverhill in Grafton Superior Court in 2019. The Town subsequently filed a set of counter claims demanding the return of lapsed funds which are due Haverhill taxpayers. In response the Woodsville Precinct has offered a response to the Court. Both parties are now in the discovery period and deposition of witnesses have begun. All filings are public record.

Dean Memorial Airport Safety Study:

The safety and feasibility study grant was signed by the NH Bureau of Aviation and Dubois & King have now started the project. The total project is estimated to cost \$79,408.00 with all of that being covered by AIP Grant monies, no Town match required. Additionally, there is up to another \$150,592.00 of 2020 AIP Grant monies remaining for safety mitigation efforts depending upon the outcome of the study. Finally, there is another \$350,000 AIP Grant monies allocated to the Dean Memorial Airport for 2021 to address any other needed safety improvements.

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. Work will now include the removal of pavement, installation of loam and seed. The window for completion of this project passed in 2020, so we will make it a priority for 2021. The Town now needs to update the schedule and estimate for the DOT, which will happen before spring.

Blackmount Trail Update:

We received information per a 91-A Request sent to both NHDOT and a FOIA Request with FHWA. 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 we 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. George Sansoucy has reviewed the documentation related to the trail and will begin the appraisal soon. Once we know the “fair market value” then we can develop a plan of action.

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 feasibility study will be put out to bid, and we will pursue grant opportunities in 2021.

Wastewater Collection in North Haverhill & Treatment in Woodsville:

Kevin Shelton, Woodsville Administrator and I met to discuss the current status of wastewater being collected and pumped to the Woodsville treatment facility and all associated processes. The discussion included:

1. Current Agreement
2. Out of District Sewer Pump Station
3. Out of District Sewer Line
4. Out of District Sewer PM Contractor
5. Out of District Maintenance costs
6. Out of District Operational costs
7. Out of District Capital Improvements
8. Planning in District Capital Improvements
9. Discharge Limit from Out of District
10. Economic Development Impacts
11. Sewer Ordinance (old and new)
12. Related RSAs
13. DES & DOS Regulations
14. User Hook-Up Agreements
15. Discharge Allocations for Users
16. Hook-Up Process & Fees
17. Billing Process & Rates
18. Communication (local, state, federal)

It was a very productive conversation; we will be working together to gather all the necessary data to fully evaluate and develop a proposed work plan moving forward. We need to schedule a meeting to continue these discussions.

Public WiFi in Woodsville Project:

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. Mosedale Integrated Solutions has begun evaluating potential host locations along Route 10 and broadband speeds in Woodsville to determine viability of the project. Once this initial phase is complete Andy Mosedale will present his findings to the Select Board.

County Road Clean-Up:

Clean up work at a property on County Road was completed in accordance with the court order issued in December of 2018. Always Wrecking performed work and the Grafton County Sheriff's Department was on site daily. The property owner filed a cease and desist request with the Grafton County Court; however, the work was complete prior to the court scheduled a court date to consider the request. That court date was then cancelled by the court, and we are still waiting for a new court date to be scheduled.

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. 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. Meetings to date have included:

The committee has narrowed the scope of its efforts to two avenues; one to bring high speed internet into all Grafton County communities, and two to develop a model by which local communities can get rural residents connected to that highspeed service. The Grafton County Commissioners have agreed to provide the committee a budget to assist with our work in 2021.

Bath-Haverhill Covered Bridge:

The bridge had been red listed and then decommissioned due to its lack of structural integrity by the NHDOT. After decommissioning ownership was transferred to the Town. The bridge received a very hefty renovation which addressed the superstructure. The approaches above the abutments experience sink holes develop each year and the pier has scour occurring which puts the substructure integrity in question. TM met with Sean James of Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. to review the structure. It has been determined that there was some work done to both abutments and at the pier, however, not all recommended work was done; which is now showing signs of wear. The voids in the pier and in the approaches will need further evaluation, as will the sag that exists at the south end of the bridge. We signed an agreement for Hoyle, Tanner & Assoc to perform the structural evaluation, which will take place in 2021.

Town Administration Reorganization:

The Town of Haverhill Administration office has gone through a reorganization for 2021. We hired a part-time financial administrator to manage very specific aspects of the Town’s finances and work with the Town’s bookkeeper. We are expanding the duties of the transcriptionist to include Planning Board support. We have established an Assistant Town Manager position who will oversee financials, human resources, property records, and assist the Town Manager with special projects. This reorganization will not result in an increase in taxes.

2021 Budget & Town Meeting Schedule:

Due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, all locations which could be used for the Annual Town Meeting are not large enough to accommodate the public and meet safety standards set by the Governor. In accordance with HB1129 the Select Board opted to hold Town Meeting virtually. The schedule is as follows and instructions for the public will be mailed to every registered voter and published in the local papers to ensure the public know how the process will work.

**Town of Haverhill
2021 Budget & Town Meeting Schedule**

Event	Dates
Draft Department Budgets due to the Town Manager	Friday - November 6, 2020
Town Manager Meetings with Department Heads	November 9, 2020 - November 20, 2020
TM Budget to the Select Board & Advisory Budget Committee	Monday - December 7, 2020
Advisory Budget Committee Meetings	December 7, 2020 - February 5, 2021
Last Day for Petitioned Warrant Articles	Tuesday - February 2, 2021
Last Day for Budget Committee Recommendations to the Select Board	Friday - February 5, 2021
Select Board Budget Hearing	Monday - February 8, 2021
Budget & Warrant Articles to the DRA	Tuesday - February 9, 2021
Town Report to the Printers	Tuesday - February 9, 2021
Annual Town Report to the Public	Tuesday - February 23, 2021
Mail out instructions for Town Meeting to registered voters	Tuesday March 2, 2021
Town Meeting - Virtual Informational Meeting #01	Tuesday - March 9, 2021 (6:00-8:00pm)
Town Meeting - Questions & Comments Solicited	March 9, 2021 (at 8:00pm) - March 11, 2021 (at 6:00pm)
Town Meeting - Virtual Informational Meeting #02	Thursday - March 11, 2021 (6:00pm until done)
Town Meeting Day - "Walk" through voting at CMB	Saturday March 13, 2021 (8:00am-7:00pm)

Cemetery Proposal:

I provided a cost benefit analysis to the Cemetery Commission Chair to share with the Cemetery Commission at their next meeting (11/9/2020). The analysis outlines the utilization of the mowing contract monies and the Highway supplemental plowing contract monies, which currently total \$73,168.00 collectively to hire a full time staff member to mow and plow, purchase equipment for mowing the Town’s seven cemeteries, purchase a fleet vehicle for supplemental plowing, and allow for assistance in the Maintenance Department. The analysis shows a net savings to the Town at this point in time, however, regardless of the monetary savings, this proposal would offer us a lot more in return for these tax dollars. I have not yet heard back from the Cemetery Commission regarding their discussion or thoughts related to this proposal. I will reach out to discuss.

Department Head Reports:

- ❖ **Tax Collector** – This week has been crazy. I have gotten lots of mail, online, drop box and customer appointments with tax payments. Total deposit amount from Thursday Dec. 24th to Thursday Dec. 31st was \$1,447,595.21.
- ❖ **Town Clerk** – The town clerk office was closed the week after Christmas to accommodate the necessity to quarantine because family visiting from out of state.
- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – The drive shaft failed on the snow blower Dec 18th; the Highway Dept. finished plowing the runway for us with proper supervision in accordance with FAA regulations. We issued a NOTAMS about snow on taxiways, which Dan replaced with a new one Dec 23rd that the runway was reopened with no obstructions. The drive shaft was not under warranty unfortunately, we are looking into the cause. Dipped the fuel tanks on January 1st to close out the year; sold 30 Gal of fuel in December. We currently have less than 1000 gal left from the original delivery back in Jan 2020; a total of 3 deliveries were projected for 2020. The last 2020 fuel invoices have been mailed. Total of these invoices \$2,699.11 to close out the year. Runway, taxiways plowed, and fuel pit cleared after the New Year's storm. Three runway lights are not working properly, we are troubleshooting the issue.
- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Winter is upon us, we have been plowing, salting, sanding, and doing tree removal from roadways on snowy days.
- ❖ **Maintenance Dept** – Along with normal everyday minor maintenance, cleaning, and sanitizing, the major focus has been on construction of the new office spaces at the JRM building. Sheetrock completed, primed and painted first coat. Ceiling grid installed, ready for electricians and fire alarm technician to install devices.
- ❖ **Police Department** –
We have hired a certified police officer; she will begin on January 14th.
- ❖ **Welfare Dept** – We are advertising for a new Welfare Administrator to replace Amanda. When she returns from maternity leave in early summer she will begin working full time in the HPD.
- ❖ **Emergency Management** – Sitting in on Emergency Operations Center (EOC) calls and keeping apprised of COVID-19 issues. The Town has seen a rise in COVID exposures and so we are watching that very closely to assess risk to the community. Local first responder vaccinations are being arranged now.

- ❖ **Public Health** – We have been getting sporadic complaints regarding people not wearing masks in public places, addressing them as they arise.
- ❖ **Parks & Recreation Dept** – Antique strollers meet at the CMB to walk throughout the week and morning Zoom Senior Stretch classes are on-going. We are working on the development of a project plan for the Haverhill Skate Park; once done we will present it to the Select Board for their consideration.

“Public service must be more than doing a job efficiently and honestly. It must be a complete dedication to the people.” – Margaret Chase Smith