

**Town Manager's Report
to the Select Board
Monday November 9, 2020 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 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
October 20, 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)

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: November 10, 2020

The committee will continue to meet bi-weekly throughout the year. **The organizational structure for the new Town Fire Department has been developed and committee members have given input. Other work is on-going.** 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 completion date of October 9, 2020 was extended 20 working days due to delays in the casting of precast units for the bridge; **the bridge opened to vehicular traffic on November 4, 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; the project is now delayed, and this will increase construction engineering costs, which will be covered by applied liquidated damages and quantity underruns. Pending final invoices, it appears the Town's contribution to this project will be \$36,343.75.

French Pond Road Project:

This project is nearly complete **pending guardrail installation on November 16, 2020.**

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. **Both parties are now in the discovery period.** All filings are public record.

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 are ready to execute the Notice to Proceed so that Dubois & King can start the project; **waiting for final signed documents from the State DOT BOA.** 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. 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.

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 has filed for full reimbursement. The money will off-set the salary lines for both the Airport Manager and the Airport Maintenance Technician.

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. The Town is anticipating this work can occur in early fall after completion of the French Pond Road project. Notification has been sent to McDonalds. **This project is still on our radar for November 2020.**

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. **George Sansoucy is still reviewing of all documentation related to the trail and has agreed to perform the appraisal.** 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 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. Our project was not chosen as a capstone project. I have begun discussions with Anthony Puntin, P.E. who works for UNH as well as the BETA Group; he is interested in assisting us with this work. **The feasibility study will likely need to be put out to bid, and we will pursue other 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 will meet again soon.**

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. **Andy Mosedale has begun evaluating potential host locations and broadband speeds in Woodsville to determine viability of the project.**

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 was completed and was provided to the TM for review. **The HPD study was presented by Chief Sullivan was at the October 26, 2020 Select Board Meeting; the Select Board will invite him to the next Select Board Meeting for questions on November 23, 2020.**

County Road Clean-Up:

Clean up work at a property on County road begun on Wednesday October 14, 2020; this is per execution of a court order allowing the Town to clean up the property. Always Wrecking is the contractor who will be performing the work. There is a sheriff on site daily. **Clean up work is on-going and visits to the site, upon the request of the property owner, has taken up a great deal of my time the past few weeks.**

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:

- September 1, 2020 at the Grafton County Commissioners Office 11AM & Zoom
- September 30, 2020 at the Clifford Memorial Building at 10AM & Zoom
- October 28, 2020 at the Cannan Emergency Operation Center at 11AM & Zoom
- November 28, 2020 location TBD at 10AM & Zoom

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.

GOFERR CARES ACT Grant:

The Town of Haverhill was allocated up to \$111,176.00 in COVID related expense reimbursements. The reimbursements are based on the ever-changing set of guidelines. So, our first two reimbursements were revised by the GOFERR due to changes made to the guidelines as we progressed. 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 as follows:

- May 31, 2020: \$38,371.08
- July 15, 2020: \$10,891.50
- Sept 15, 2020: \$63,214.37 (*edited per Goferr*)
- Oct 30, 2020: PENDING

Total to-date: \$112,476.95

Grant remaining: \$0.00

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. The Town obtained an engineering proposal to perform a structural evaluation of the Bath-Haverhill Covered Bridge; the cost is estimated to be \$3,200.00 for the study. This amount was approved as part of the 2020 budget but has not been expended due to uncertainty with COVID expenses and funding. After meeting 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. **I have received two proposals for this work, one from HEB and one from Hoyle, Tanner & Assoc. As soon as we have fully evaluated the two proposals and choose an engineering firm, we will be moving forward with the structural evaluation.**

Town Administration Reorganization:

The Town of Haverhill Administration office will be going through a reorganization heading into 2021. We will be hiring a part-time financial administrator to manage very specific aspects of the Town's finances and work with the Town's bookkeeper. We will expand the duties of the transcriptionist to include Planning Board support. We will establish 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 Development:

My first cut of the 2021 budget was sent to Department Heads a few weeks ago and they are now submitting their draft budgets for review. Meetings between Department Heads and myself will begin this week. In those meetings we refine departmental budgets and finalize them for submission to the Advisory Budget Committee and the Select Board. I have notified Jay Holden of the date set for the Select Board's budget hearing and he has begun to put together the Advisory Budget Committee. It is expected that the Advisory Budget Committee will begin meeting in early December.

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.

Department Head Reports:

- ❖ **Tax Collector** – This week I sent out reminder notices for overdue resident's tax bills. Also been putting in prepayments for the second 2020 tax bills. Answering lots of calls regarding when the second half 2020 tax bills will be available.
- ❖ **Property Records, Planning, & Zoning** – I have been working on processing applications for Lot Line Adjustments, Subdivisions, Voluntary Lot Mergers for the Planning Boards consideration in November. I have been working on Gravel Pit Permitting, as well as updating property related processes, procedures, applications, and other documentation to clarify what is needed and the process it will follow. I have been processing all Building Permits and Driveway Permits (with the Road Agent) as well as coordinating with the precincts on such. We will be adding a line to the bottom of the Driveway Permit to include a measurement by the Road Agent to allow for the assignment of an E-911 address. Tim our contracted assessor has been inputting deed information into our assessing system. I will be working with Joanna and Jennifer to get them both up to speed on all of this once it is caught up and on track, after which they will take over property records and planning board activities.

- ❖ **Town Clerk** – Elections are done, we processed over 2100 voters, unprecedented! I am thankful for the GREAT help that worked the election. Supervisors of the Checklist, Carol, Charlene and Regis, ballot clerks, Audrey, Denise, Sherri and Brittany, Maintenance, Jim, Board members, Fred and Matt, and Jennifer, Diane and Brigitte for helping the front door and of course Mark for dealing with the cold temperatures at the front desk.
- ❖ **Dean Memorial Airport** – The Airport Zoning Commission is wrapping up final revisions to the Dean Memorial Flight Scholarship program. Trying to find a buyer for the beacon.
- ❖ **Highway Dept** – Clark Pond Road Bridge & French Pond Road paving are complete. Anticipating completing the Forest Street / Central Street intersection project in late November. Preparing for winter. We concluded interviews for a new Highway Maintenance Workers and have made an offer, anticipating hearing from them Monday with an answer.
- ❖ **Maintenance Dept** – regular maintenance and cleaning of all buildings and grounds as needed. Set up for scheduled meetings and rentals at Clifford building, clean and sanitize all offices and meeting areas daily and as needed. Some roof repairs at Morrill Building completed, more repairs underway. Agreement signed with roofing contractor for Center Haverhill Armory roof replacement and roof insulation. Planning well underway for temporary housing for animal control facility. Set up and cleanup for general election at Morrill Building. Met with airport manager regarding work needed at airport for a heated workspace for airport workers. Delivered donated materials to Hazen Park for stabilization Project of root cellar at the old foundation.
- ❖ **Police Department** –
 - Ty Brown has started his training and will start the Police Academy in January.
 - There are additional candidates making their way through the hiring process, two of which are certified officers.
 - Things are going well, and spirits are high.
 - Budget development is underway.
- ❖ **Welfare Dept** – The Welfare department has still been busy dealing with COVID homelessness. I am still working on finding new and better practices for running the department. 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.
- ❖ **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.
- ❖ **Public Health** – No incidents to address this period. Seeking a Deputy Health Officer to assist with field work.
- ❖ **Parks & Recreation Dept** – Hazen Park Haunted Happenings was a smash it, everyone had fun and we learned a lot for next years event to make it even better. 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.

"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same"

~ Ronald Reagan