
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

TO: SELECTBOARD
FROM: PETE WEBSTER, TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT
DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2009

Budget

I worked on the budget off and on for the past two+ weeks, and you now have the first draft. There are two proposed potential budgets, one reflecting an 8.26% spending cut from this year's budget, and one reflecting a 2.67% cut in spending. We have six scheduled meetings over the next few months to further discuss the FY11 budget. I want to take this moment to thank all the Department Heads for their efforts in trimming their budgets, and also give special thanks to Roberta, Nancy and Neil Fulton for their contributions.

Pending Litigation

I sat in on the deposition of Steve Wheelock by Attorney Scott McGee in the Bragg Hill lawsuit. We have a status conference hearing scheduled for next week at the Woodstock Courthouse. We heard the ruling from the State on the recent State hearing into a challenge of a BCA ruling.

Various Meetings

I met with Ed Childs who introduced me to Joan Goldstein, Executive Director of the Green Mountain Economic Development Corp. We discussed certain issues involving business development and retention in the Upper Valley and in Norwich, including King Arthur Flour and their successful and expanding operation. Subsequently I met with Steve Voigt, CEO of KAF, and Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager of Hartford, and Phil Dechert to discuss the expansion of the Hartford Waste Treatment Plant, the possibility of King Arthur extending a sewer line the 4900' to their operation, and what would be involved for this to occur.

I met with the Norwich Energy Commission on two separate occasions, one to discuss their heat and power survey for the downtown area, and the other to go over the revised spreadsheets (copies of which you were previously sent) for the proposed solar initiative, reflecting the fact that we had been unsuccessful in the 'feed-in tariff' lottery recently held by the State.

I met with Suzanne to visit the newly installed traffic island at the intersection of Union Village Road and Rt. 132. This will be discussed at greater length as part of your agenda.

I met with Folger Tuggle to discuss his signage concerns, and will be meeting w/ him again, along with a couple of your Board members to get your feedback, along with Andy and perhaps

Doug. We want to get the level of signage right, the package that the State has provided, which they feel is a safe and appropriate sign package. These are our roads, at the end of the day, and we have the right to cull out some of the signs that might be perceived as excessive or superfluous and are having a negative impact on the rural nature of Union Village Road.

I attended the TRORC Town Highway Bridge Prioritization meeting in Royalton to better understand the new bridge rankings from the State and our RPA. I will share with you, separately in an email, Andy's concerns about the drop in rankings for several of our vintage bridges that are not in great shape. This puts us much farther down the priority line when it comes to State grants for bridge repairs. It appears the State is backing away from the historic level of support for town highways and bridges, leaving the municipalities more on their own when it comes to bridge and road projects.

The State listened to the concerns and addressed them, the work being done this past week, at their additional expense.

Bandstand

I will have the final accounting on the bandstand for you within the next two weeks—I have agreed to sell the old roof to a resident for \$2,000 which will help fund an endowment for the new structure, and am hoping both the Women's Club and Lion's Club will each contribute one last time to further strengthen that new endowment.

Union Contract Negotiations

I met with Andy, Doug, George Lovell, Mike Scruggs and Gary Durkee for our first union discussions. We agreed on the same ground rules as this past year's negotiations, and set the following dates for the next three meetings: no later than Nov. 25th—simultaneous exchange of proposals; Nov. 30th, Dec. 15th and Dec. 22nd. This contract expires June 30th, but we wanted to get these discussions started (and hopefully finished) early enough to incorporate any new salaries into the FY11 budget.

GUVSWD Board Meeting

I attended this meeting, as your alternate, along with your representative Brion McMullen. A lengthy meeting to go over the proposal received from Interstate Waste Services to build and operate the district's 40 acre landfill on the district's 175 acre land in Hartland. This is a complicated and expensive (and multi-year) effort that will be coming to a head next year, and you will be getting a full report on this from Brion. Interstate Waste currently operates the Moretown Landfill, and a field trip is being scheduled to that landfill next week if any of you would like to attend and learn more.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete