

## Town Manager Report to the Board of Selectmen

### Monday, February 25, 2019

- Town email update – The town’s email migration project is underway and we are on track to have all town email accounts transitioned to a new email provider utilizing the Outlook 365 platform, by mid-March. The new email will also provide our employees, boards and committees with more functionality, but unused email accounts will be deleted to save cost.
- Support for MVP – Both the town’s Planning Board and Conservation Commission have heard requests to support our application to the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program (MVP) and have indicated that they will provide letters of support to the grant application. I will be working with Anne Gero over the next several weeks to get the application completed and submitted to the state as quickly as possible.
- Progress on the new e-newsletter – Stirling Technology, our website provider, is nearly finished preparing the template for the new weekly e-newsletter. We expect to be Beta testing in Town Hall in the next week or so and will then be actively encouraging residents to sign up for the service.
- Appointment of Fire Chief Ray Brunet as Emergency Management Director and Forest Warden and monthly meeting with Town Manager and Public Safety Director – Last week I met with Fire Chief Ray Brunet and Police Chief Russ Stevens for our monthly check-in with Ray. During the course of that meeting we discussed a number of issues related to Ray’s new role as Fire Chief, the town’s ambulance contract and future plans for the fire service in town. Ray continues to exceed our expectations in growing into the role of Fire Chief and it seems that his leadership has created some new energy in the department. As a result, I have decided to appoint him as Emergency Management Director and Fire Warden, roles that had previously also been filled by Retired Chief Phil Stevens for which Ray is properly trained.
- Progress on new sign for public safety and the Council on Aging – The proposed new electronic sign for the Public Safety Building and Senior Center went through Site Plan Review with the Planning Board last week. They have asked for a little bit of additional information, which Chief Russ Stevens has agreed to provide. We are hopeful that they will vote and provide a positive recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the next meeting and we will plan to post a public hearing for the ZBA’s March meeting.
- Staffing update – I wanted to inform the board that we are once again facing a staffing shortage in the Treasurer/Collector’s office. The employee we hired in December did not work out. Given that we still have a vacancy in the Finance Director’s office as well, I will be discussing our options with Marisa Batista and Treasurer Cheryl Booth and we may be recommending a re-organization. I will keep the Selectboard informed as we move forward with a plan.
- FY’20 Budget amendments – Since the delivery of the FY’20 Budget Proposal in mid-January, we have received some new information, mostly in joint programs, IT/software costs and employee health insurance, which will necessitate some in or changes to our original budget proposal. I expect to have the final completed FY’20 Budget Proposal for your next meeting, to be included

in the warrant. The changes are minor and include both line items increases and decreases, but are expected to create very little change in the overall budget numbers.

- Water dye test kits – Public Works Director Tim Olson has ordered dye kits to test for water loss to have available to homeowners. The town will be informing rate payers that the kits are available free of charge upon request from the water billing department on the next water billing cycle.
  
- Update on Town Manager Goals:
  - Self-Sufficiency of the Patton Homestead – Tonight, we officially introduce Kaleigh Pare to the community as the first Patton Homestead Director. Kaleigh has been on board since mid-January and she is jumping right in and getting up to speed. I will let her share some of her ideas for the Patton Homestead.
  - Financial Policies and Stabilization Funds – No current news to report here. During the budget process, the town finance department and I have been focusing on the FY 2020 budget; we will revisit new financial policies adoptions after the Annual Town Meeting in April.
  - Chebacco Road/Well Exploration and Manchester – The FY'20 budget projection for capital investment had included a cost associated with the paving and possible laying of water main along Chebacco Woods Road. After meeting with Tim Olson and Marisa Batista last week, we have decided to remove the cost of water main from this project for now and move forward with the planning for paving the road and returning Chebacco Road to the proper right of way. The cost of including water main at this time, coupled with the potential for this not to be in our best long-term interests, suggests we slow down on connecting to the Manchester plant, until we know more.
  - Town Hall Renovations – The architect has worked with the THBC to formulate two conceptual design plans, which they will be presenting to a larger audience in the near future. The THBC has suggested that representatives of other related boards and committees be invited to that public meeting, likely in the beginning of March. The committee will be seeking additional funding for continuing design and permitting of one of the two conceptual designs at Annual Town Meeting. We will have a proposed budget and timeline ready for the town's consideration in support of that funding request.
  - Master Plan and Housing – The latest edition to the **Master Plan: Housing Profile** document has been received and is under review. It will be posted to the town website soon. Additionally, another town wide housing forum will be held March 20, at the HW-HS Cafeteria at 7PM. It will be a wrap up of the study. The survey continues to March 6. We have approximately 532 responses so far. Hard copies of the survey form are available if residents need them.