
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

TO: SELECTBOARD
FROM: PETE WEBSTER, TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT
DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2009

Budget

We continue to refine the proposed budgets, reflecting new numbers as they come in—for example, unemployment insurance rates are going up, a proposed 7% increase from the ambulance service, etc. We will have the second budget session next Tuesday as part of your Selectboard meeting, hearing from the following departments: Police, Solid Waste, Conservation Commission, Fire Department, Emergency Management, Planning/DRB, Recreation and Listsers.

Pending Litigation

I sat in on the status conference held at the Woodstock Court House, a request from our attorney to speed up the progress of the Bragg Hill assessment case. My impression of the conference was that Judge Eaton is becoming frustrated at the appellant's handling of the case, the speed at which this case is moving forward.

GUVSWD Board Meeting

Our monthly board meeting was concerned with two issues: the upcoming annual budget of the solid waste district, and the proposal from IWS (Interstate Waste Services) to develop and manage the district's proposed landfill in North Hartland. The proposal from this company was the only serious response to the district's RFP, and we are approaching some significant milestones. I would like to schedule a meeting with Brion McMullen (he is your appointed representative for Norwich and I am your alternate) and either Fred Moody or Steve Willbanks to come and discuss the specifics of where this issue stands and what are the deadlines we have to meet with the Selectboard. Possibly the Dec. 2nd meeting would be an appropriate one. I spent a couple hours up at the Moretown Landfill with other board members, touring that site. It is also managed by IWS, and is an impressive facility. It might be helpful to have your Board also tour the landfill to get an idea of this company's management practices. I believe the Hartland Selectboard will be conducting such a tour. This is a big decision for the ten town district, and will have implications for how we handle our MSW for the next 50+ years.

Various Meetings

The third of the nine full day sessions of the Leadership Upper Valley was held, and this focused on the health and human service issues of the Upper Valley. I found this session to be informative, as were the first two.

I met with Sarah, Suzanne, Andy and a resident to go over various issues relating to the High Risk Rural Roads grant that we received six months ago. This meeting had to do with the enhanced signage package, the guard rails and new intersection at Rt. 132 and Union Village Road. We will be holding a public hearing on these issues.

I attended the Green Mtn. Economic Development Corp. annual meeting. Ed is chair of this organization. We heard from Kevin Dorn about the current state of the business economy in Vermont, issues relating to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, which is currently \$100 million underfunded (hence the dramatic increase in our upcoming FY11 rates).

I met with the Finance Committee to go over the monthly financial report. We seem to be right on track in our current budget, although we still have concerns about future revenues.

I met with our Energy Committee, discussion centered on two things: (1) the possibility of Norwich being involved in a CEAD (Clean Energy Assessment District) and (2) the proposed solar project at the Public Works Department, possibly scaling back the scope of the project due to the lower projected revenues since we did not win in the recent lottery for a higher feed-in-tariff rate.

That is about it for this period. Please feel free to call or email me with any questions about any of these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Webster