
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

TO: SELECTBOARD
FROM: PETE WEBSTER, TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT
DATE: JAN. 26, 2009

It's been less than a week since my last report, so this will be accordingly brief. Since the holiday a week ago, I have received and exchanged contract proposals with the union negotiators, the very first step in the negotiations. I will be meeting with the AFSCME representative, along with Chief Robinson and Andy Hodgdon, this coming Thursday afternoon to begin the hard work of these negotiations. I am still optimistic and hopeful for a relatively quick meeting of the minds and a new three year agreement.

I met on Wednesday with architect Charles Egbert to go over the final design drawings for the B-2 design of the bandstand/gazebo. I think the plans need some more detail work (Neil again has been a terrific resource with his building background) but the overall result is a very handsome and functional structure that the Town will be rightly proud of. I have since advertised the RFP, both through list serves, on the Town's website, and in Tuesday's Valley News, with a response date by Feb. 20th. I am hopeful of a number of very competitive bids coming in, as this is a great time to be soliciting bids for this type of work. There must be many hungry contractors and builders out there. I just had a meeting today, Monday, with a group of residents (Hoggson, McCabe, Lupien, May, Ward, Aldrich, Connington, Osgood, Garrigue) who have been involved in the bandstand project, to bring them up to date and share with them the latest designs and my plans going forward. My goal continues to be to carefully remove and preserve both the roof, and the base, if in fact the base is salvageable, for safe-keeping behind the Marion Cross School, as soon after the bids are opened as possible, certainly by the end of February. This presumes the winning bid will be covered by the balance in our bandstand fund, which I am confident will be the case. A future project of relocating and preserving the historic bandstand can then be determined at a future date. I will have more on this at your meeting Wednesday evening.

This past Friday I attended a meeting over in Hanover of the area New Hampshire Town Managers, hosted by Julia Griffin. At noon I hosted the monthly luncheon of So. Vt. Town Managers' meeting, held here at the Norwich Inn. Much discussion of budgets, and Norwich compares very well with the other 8 towns that were represented at that luncheon (Ludlow, Windsor, Weathersfield, Hartland, Winhall, Dorset, Shaftsbury and Cavendish). I do not submit these types of expenses, but these occasional meetings of fellow town managers are incredibly enlightening to us all. And attendance at the ICMA annual conference is in my employment agreement with the Town, which I am happy to report. Professional development comes in many ways, forms and forums, and I do appreciate your supporting that type of development. Later Friday I met with the Finance Committee to hear the latest from the school boards and where the tax rate might be heading. There is another meeting of the NFC this Thursday, but I will be in contract negotiations w/ the union.

That's about it, and I look forward to our meeting Wednesday evening.

Sincerely,

Pete Webster