



Peter B. Webster
Town Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: Peter B. Webster, Town Manager

DATE: June 17, 2010

SUBJECT: Information for the Selectboard

GUVSWD

The Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District Board met this afternoon, Thursday, and unanimously passed the following resolution: **“RESOLVED, that the public interest and necessity demand that certain public solid waste management improvements be made, viz: refunding Eight Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$875,000) of outstanding obligation previously issued to finance bridge and access improvements to the District’s landfill in the Town of Hartland.”** This will be a vote of each of the ten member towns (Norwich’s share of that vote is 19.28), and is not new debt; it is to retire the loan from Twin States Sand and Gravel that was entered into two years ago to complete the bridge across I-91 to access the site. I would suggest we have Fred Moody join us at the August 18th Selectboard meeting, which will be the next SB meeting after setting the tax rate July 7th. I am not sure how many residents understand the history of the GUVSWD and how we have arrived at this vote. This will increase our expense line from the approved \$29,238 in the FY11 budget to \$38,333, an increase of 31%. The FY11 SWD budget will be amended at a future board meeting, reflecting reduced management salaries in an effort to make the increase to member towns as small as possible.

Communications Study

The communications study effort, headed up by Neil with input from Doug, Andy, Steve and I, met with Normand Boucher (Communications Design and Consulting Group out of Barrington, NH, the winning bidder) for several hours to go over the specific needs of the Town's emergency response services. This is a complicated process to design the very best communications network for our difficult topography; this study will be ongoing through the summer and we hope to have a final recommendation with cost estimates on how best to improve radio emergency communications in Town by October. At that point it will be a matter of funding, of looking for communications grants and trying to make it happen.

Parsonage

Originally the church subcommittee was to have had a proposal for the sale earlier this week for your consideration, but has deferred this meeting until next week. The new assessment on the parsonage is \$543,000, and we await the proposal from the church.

News from the Norwich Police Dept.

Doug Robinson has recently received a \$6000 grant from the Governor's Highway Safety Program for 'occupant safety' (seatbelt compliance) and DUI enforcement. He has also ordered the second speed monitoring sign, which should arrive in the next 4 to 6 weeks. The plan is to mount this on a utility pole on Beaver Meadow Road as one is heading into Town (speed limit drops to 25 MPH in this section), just before the Norwich Pool. Andy, in response to concerns raised by the Transportation Committee, is taking steps to put in a shoulder on one side of the road from Moore Lane up to the entrance to the pool, cutting back the brush and trees to create better sightlines, as this is heavily travelled by young pedestrians and cyclists. Controlling the speed of vehicles coming down that hill will be an important part of this effort.

Campbell Flats Road Property Auction

As of yesterday afternoon (Wednesday), the auction was still scheduled for the 23rd, according to the Rutland auctioneer who is conducting the sale. This may well not go to auction, time will tell. Our Treasurer will have processed a check for the auction as instructed by the Board.

Fire District Sidewalk Project

After the new fiscal year begins next week, we will have a budget for finishing the 1.2 mile section of road paving on Union Village Road from Koch Road on out to just before Old Coach Road, where we left off last fall. When this is resurfaced, the section of sidewalk (owned by the Fire District) that comes in from Turnpike to Koch Road, about 600 feet in length, will need to be completely reworked and raised. The Fire District is planning on making this improvement—widening the walk to 5 feet, putting in granite curbing—and would like to then turn it over to the

Town for future maintenance/ownership. The section from that intersection out Turnpike Road towards Huntley Meadow to the new section of sidewalk installed last fall is jointly owned by the Fire District and the Town. In discussions with the Fire District, they would like that also taken over by the Town. I feel this is a reasonable request, and will have more information for your next meeting. Andy has met with the Fire District to go over this proposal and is in agreement with it.

Melendy Property Management Plan

Six years ago the Selectboard adopted a management plan for this parcel (at the intersection of Church Street and River Road, currently being farmed by Killdeer Farm). This was a purchase by the Town in conjunction with the Upper Valley Land Trust back in 2001, and that plan calls for review at least every five years and “amended to meet the changing needs of the Town of Norwich”. I don’t believe this has ever been revisited. I am meeting with Jake Guest, the current lessee who has been farming this land for the past decade. I have never seen a formal agreement between the Town and Killdeer Farm, nor has Jake, but I will look into drafting something. It has been a very informal kind of agreement, as far as I can determine.

Junkyard Ordinance

Roger and I have met with the property owners to discuss this situation and hopefully work towards a cooperative and collaborative solution to concerns over health, safety and environmental pollution. I will continue to work on language for a draft ordinance for a future meeting of your Board, but I do believe this situation is being addressed appropriately right now.

White River Partnership—Class 4 Road Erosion and Restoration

Andy and I met with a group out on Burton Woods Road (just before the AT crossing) to look into the possibility of improving drainage and building water bars by utilizing some labor from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps this summer. Jim Ryan from that organization should be at our meeting to further enlighten you, but this is a good opportunity to make improvements with no cost to Norwich taxpayers.

I will try and have an accurate summary of how the budget is wrapping up for your meeting, but at this point it looks quite positive with almost all departments spending well under their approved budgets.