

Memo

Date: June 27, 2011

TO: Selectboard

FROM: Richard McGuire

RE: Manager's Report

The following is a brief report on various issues, agenda items, projects or activities. It is not intended as a comprehensive update of all projects underway.

1. Call to Order - The meeting will start at 7:00 P.M.
2. Minutes – Minutes for the meeting held on June 6, 2011 are available for review.
3. Public Comment - According to State Statutes, the Board must make time for public comment at each regular meeting. Subjects may include any item, whether or not the issue is on the agenda.
4. Board Applications/Appointments - Please remember to bring copies of the applications previously distributed. Included with the agenda packet is a list of vacant positions on various town and regional boards along a list of incumbents and those interested in serving. A new application has been received from Mr. David Turner. He has expressed interest in the Planning Commission and the Development Review Board. Below is the suggested motion for the appointments:

MOVE to appoint APPLICANT NAME to the NAME OF BOARD for a term ending June 30, YEAR.

5. Regional Planning Project - Chittenden County has been awarded a \$1 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program, which supports more livable and sustainable communities. The grant will help fund a regional planning project which is being called ECOS - Environment. Community. Opportunity. Sustainability. Senator Lyons, who has been active on the steering committee for this project will be present Monday evening to explain the project and how it will unfold. No formal action by the Board is anticipated.
6. Sewer Allocation Rates - Currently the sewer allocation rate is \$5.37 per gallon. The rate was calculated using the cost to the sewer fund for acquiring new capacity. For example, if the town acquired 50,000 gallons at a cost of \$250,000, the sewer allocation charge would amount to \$5.00 per gallon. The charge is then increased somewhat each year based on the rate of inflation. An agreement was recently signed with the Village of Essex Junction for the purchase of 50,000 gallons over the next five years at the rate of \$10.00 per gallon. For the next several years, the allocations will come from capacity previously acquired. The question is: at what point should the new charge begin? It may not make sense to wait for the current capacity to run out. For example, it could run out in the middle of the year. The

other consideration is the huge jump in the cost. Staff is suggesting the new rate be phased in over a two year period. Phasing over a three year period is also an option. An amount also needs to be added to account for the fact that the funds for the purchase of the capacity is being loaned by the Sewer Fund. We are suggesting that \$.15 per gallon be added to the allocation charges proposed by Bruce Hoar if a two-year phase in is selected. If the Board chooses a three-year phase in, then the rates should be increased by \$1.64 per year. The following resolution is suggested:

MOVE to set the sewer allocation charge for fiscal year 2012 at \$7.65 per gallon (for a two-year phase-in) or \$7.01 per gallon (for a three-year phase in).

7. Water and Sewer Connection Fees - Please refer to the memo dated June 24, 2011 from Bruce Hoar. In the past, the Selectboard have increased the connection fees based on current increase in the cost of living index. As noted by Mr. Hoar, for the past several years, the index has shown no increase therefore resulting in no increase in the fees. This year the index increased by 3.2%. If the Board wishes to adopt the proposed fee schedule, the following resolution is suggested:

MOVE to set the water connection fees for fiscal year 2012 at \$6.23 per gallon for residential and commercial accounts and \$3.12 for affordable housing.

MOVE to set the sewer connection fees for fiscal year 2012 at \$7.09 per gallon for residential and commercial accounts and \$3.55 per gallon for affordable housing.

8. Ambulance Service Rates - Included with the agenda is a memo dated June 22, 2011 from Chief Ken Morton. Chief Morton recommends the rates be increased from \$450 for Basic Life Support service (BLS) to \$525. He also recommends that the rates for Advanced Life Support service (ALS) be increased from \$550 to \$625. Finally, Chief Morton is recommending the mileage rate increase from \$10 per mile to \$14 per mile. Should the Board wish to adopt new rates for next fiscal year, the following motion is suggested:

MOVE to adopt the following rates for the Williston ambulance service: \$525 for Basic Life Support; \$625 for Advanced Life Support and a mileage rate of \$14 per mile effective July 1, 2011.

9. Ambulance Service Collections Policy - Included is a draft policy that will govern the process used by town staff in the collection of fees for the ambulance service. An attempt was made, in drafting the policy to strike a balance between the need to collect the fees, the desire to be compassionate and address financial hardships and the need for accountability. Should the Selectboard choose to adopt the proposed policy, the following resolution is suggested:

MOVE to adopt the Ambulance Service Collections Policy dated June 27, 2011 (as amended).

10. Municipal Tax Rate - Included is a calculation form for municipal taxes for fiscal year 2012. You may also want to refer to the memo dated June 2, 2011 from Susan Lamb. A brief presentation will also be given to the Board Monday evening. The Grand List was approved very close to the amount estimated at budget time. In

addition, there are no major pending tax appeals. Staff therefore recommends the Selectboard set the tax rate at 21.5 cents.

MOVE to set the municipal tax rate for fiscal year 2012 at \$.215

11. Fund Balance Policy - The current Fund Balance Policy was adopted by the Selectboard in 2000 and has not been updated since. In response to new accounting requirements, the policy has been completely re-written. Copies of both the existing policy and the proposed policy are included with the agenda packet. The proposed draft policy has been reviewed and approved by the Town's auditor. Susan Lamb, Finance Director will be in attendance to answer questions. If the Board wishes to adopt the new policy, the following resolution is suggested:

MOVE to adopt the proposed revisions to the Selectboard Fund Balance Policy.

12. 2011 Comprehensive Plan - Please remember to bring your copies of the Plan, which were previously distributed. Included with the agenda packet is a summary of changes requested by the Selectboard during the course of its review, as prepared by Ken Belliveau, Planning Director. The next chapter to be reviewed is also the last chapter. It is our hope that the Board will be in a position to schedule the second of two required public hearings on the plan. In anticipation of this, the following resolution is offered:

MOVE to send the list of proposed changes to the Planning Commission for review and comment and schedule a public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan.

13. Host Town Agreements - On September 15, 2008, the Selectboard authorized the Manager to sign host town agreements with All Cycle Waste and with Burlington Transfer Station, Inc. The agreements were reached after considerable discussion with both firms. Both agreements had a term of three years which is expiring June 30th. Over the past few months, staff has not had the time to re-negotiate the agreements and this matter should have been brought to the Board's attention sooner than now. Given there is not sufficient time to re-negotiate both agreements, both parties are willing to accept a one-year extension thus giving all parties more time to re-negotiate the agreements. The following motion is therefore suggested:

MOVE to authorize the Manager to sign a one-year extension for the host town agreements with All Cycle Waste and Burlington Transfer Station, Inc.

14. Planned Parenthood Agreement - Ten years ago, a tax appeal was filed by Planned Parenthood claiming their property was tax exempt. The town argued the property was in fact, not tax exempt. As a way of settling the appeal, Planned Parenthood agreed to make an annual payment for services to the Town of Williston and the Town agreed to classify the property as tax exempt. This arrangement was determined to be acceptable with the state. The agreement is now expiring. In addition, Planned Parenthood is in the process of trying to sell its Williston property. A one-year extension has therefore been negotiated. If the Board wishes to accept this agreement, the following motion is suggested:

MOVE to authorize the Manager to sign a one year agreement with Planned Parenthood of Northern New England for the payment of services.

15. Town Manager's Report

- a) Future Issues - Please refer to the attached list.

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- b) Financial Report - Included with this report is a memo dated June 22, 2011 from Susan Lamb, Finance Director. Her report covers the town's finances through June 21st.
 - c) Conant Farmland - Notice was recently received that the closing on acquisition of development rights on the Conant farmland located off of North Williston Road will be held in the near future.
 - d) Unsung Hero Award - An award was recently presented to the Williston Reparative Board and the Williston Police Department by the Jean Garvin School for their work with the School.
 - e) Legal Actions Summary - Included is the summary of legal actions currently involving the Town. While the amount spent to date is below the amount budgeted, we expect this line-item will be overspent by less than \$5,000.
 - f) Sewer Allocation Record - Included is a report on sewer allocations approved to date.
 - g) Grant Summary - Included with this report is a summary of grant applications submitted to date. This past year has been extremely productive concerning grants. Most grants applied for were granted and the total amount approved totaled \$1.2 million dollars. This amounts to just under 8 cents value saved on the town's tax rate.
 - h) Letter from Town of Essex - Included is a letter from the Town of Essex concerning the Circumferential Highway.

16. Other Business

17. Equalized Grand List Appeal - A meeting was recently held with officials from the State Tax Department. A verbal report will be presented. Since the report will involve a discussion on the town's legal strategy, an Executive Session is suggested prior to discussion.

18. Adjournment

Please note: If an Executive Session is needed the following motion is suggested:

To discuss (Name of Topic) which involves (labor relations, negotiations, civil action) where premature knowledge would place the Town at a substantial disadvantage and invite (name of persons other the Board) to attend.

Selectboard Goals for 2011 - 2012

- Create a sustainable budget
- Utilize different forms of communication in order to increase or facilitate greater public input/information.
- Consider affordability for the individual and community in each decision.
- Complete an assessment of the Town's demographics and study the changing needs and needs not being addressed.
- Adopt and implement the Town Plan and report progress in accomplishing the goals outlined in the plan.
- Reach a decision on the town's stormwater management policy.