



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memo To: Board of Selectmen
From: Blythe C. Robinson, Town Manager
Date: May 2, 2014
Re: Town Manager's Weekly Report

Warrants:

- Payroll: \$ 72,326.69
- Expense Warrant: \$ 92,681.68

For Your Information/Follow Up:

- We received word this week that Charter Communications, our cable provider has reached an agreement on a series of tax efficient transactions that subject to regulatory approval will mean that about \$1.6 million Charter customers will be transferred to Comcast. The timing for this has not been determined, but it will probably take a year to a year and a half at least. I understand that this would include all Upton customers. We'll let you know as we learn more.
- We have learned that the Town Hall water damage as a result of hydrant flushing last week will result in a change order of about \$19,500 to remove and replace the pipe insulation that was damaged. We have coverage for claims like this under the builder's risk policy that we purchased from The Travelers. There is a deductible of \$5,000 that will have to come out of the project. Driving by the site you have probably noticed that a portion of the foundation on the north and south sides is exposed where water proofing is to be installed. Digging down to do this work has uncovered some issues with the structure that will require some reinforcing before the water proofing can be applied. We're analyzing the cost estimate for that so it can go forward as well.
- The State budget continues to move towards resolution. This week the house passed a budget that is fairly close to what was proposed in early April, in fact the numbers for Upton remain unchanged. The Senate begins deliberations in a few weeks.
- Just a reminder that Monday is the annual town election at Nipmuc High School. Copies of the Town Report will be available, as well as the Finance Committee Report/Warrant, and text of the articles. Town Meeting is of course on Thursday evening beginning at 7:00 PM in the auditorium.
- The Finance Committee held its Annual Budget Hearing on Wednesday. Attendance was light with three people attending in addition to staff that was on hand to answer questions.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
James A. Brochu, Chairman
Robert J. Fleming
Kenneth E. Picard

TOWN MANAGER
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- We received two bids for the exterior repairs to the Police Station on Wednesday. Both are higher than the amount previously set aside, but with some amendments to the plan and some additional dollars we are optimistic this project can be completed this spring.
- The DPW Director and I interviewed five engineering firms on Thursday as a step in the process to retain a firm for a variety of on call engineering services. Our next step is to narrow the field down to perhaps three firms for further consideration, and our first project will be to start the sewer master plan that is funded in this year's budget.
- We had 10 bids for the 10 wheel dump/plow truck that has been replaced by the refurbished vehicle obtained from FEMA last year. The high bid was \$6,600, exceeding the reserve by \$600. We're just waiting for the buyer to pay the auction site so he can pick it up.
- There are two positions advertised for the Town on our website. Barbara Robertson in the Treasurer/Collector's office has announced her retirement after 16 years and so we are seeking candidates for that job. We are also taking applications for the new full-time laborer position to support DPW's takeover of the maintenance of the cemeteries in July. Applications for both are due in our office on May 15th.
- As part of the Landfill project on Maple Avenue, Upton Development Group had to obtain a Conservation Management Permit from Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program. One condition of that permit was for UDG to put \$30K into an escrow account to be used for wood turtle conservation in Upton. The Conservation Commission was given three years to utilize the funds. That period ends this spring. In April the Commission solicited quotes from consulting firms to do a wood turtle monitoring project starting in May. Last week the Commission voted to go with the low bidder, Goddard Consulting. The NHESP has approved the wood turtle monitoring project for \$15,000. The results of this study will help us determine how to best utilize the remaining funds for the benefit of wood turtles in Upton.
- Beaver activity is once again prevalent in the bog on Southborough Road near the entrance to the state forest. An emergency order of conditions has been approved so that the dam may be breached to avoid public safety issues, and additional work to one of the culverts to try to avoid this issue going forward is also planned.
- The Board of Health will also be holding a paper shredding day on May 31st. That event will be in the parking lot on Route 140 in front of the playground.