



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memo To: Board of Selectmen
From: Blythe C. Robinson, Town Manager
Date: July 17, 2015
Re: Town Manager's Weekly Report

Warrants:

- Payroll: \$ 90,758.39
- Expense Warrant: \$ 32,054.95

For Your Information/Follow Up:

- It is anticipated that the Governor will address the budget today, and that it will be signed.
- When our legislators were at a recent meeting you spoke with them about supporting legislation that would require that payments for use of our EMS ambulance services be sent to the Town rather than the patient. While this doesn't happen often in Upton, it has been a problem when the patient then does not want to then pay the Town. Unfortunately the legislation failed. While both the House and Senate concurred that this practice needed to change, the Senate also wanted to require communities to get state approval on their ambulance rates rather than setting them locally. MMA strongly opposed this as did we. MMA will pursue this again next year.
- Our summer paving schedule begins next week. Both Cross Street and Railroad Avenue are scheduled for full depth reclamation starting Wednesday the 22nd. Maple Avenue, Southborough Road and a section of Mendon Street will be milled and overlaid and that is planned beginning August 3rd. All of this is subject to weather of course. Residents of these streets will be notified in advance in hopes of minimizing impact on them. We are awaiting a schedule from the Grafton & Upton railroad for the crossing upgrades at Williams Street, Hartford Avenue South, Maple Avenue and Pleasant Street, also due to take place this summer.
- The DPW Highway division has made several repairs to the upper portion of Hartford Avenue South. We are seeking to keep this section of road in a safe condition while we monitor the development plans for the parcel of land at the Town line.
- In your packets this week you will find a PowerPoint presentation on the State's new program, the Community Compact. The State is offering technical assistance in a number of areas as a way of improving best practices across the Commonwealth. Each community can decide what area it would like to focus on, and an added benefit will be credit towards future grants the State may offer. Please look at the overview so we can discuss further whether you'd like to pursue this.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Kenneth E. Picard, Chairman
James A. Brochu
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- The MMA sent out an alert this morning regarding State legislation to strengthen the public records law act. The act would put much more stringent requirements on us as to how we maintain our records, how quickly we respond to requests, and there would be a reduction in what we can charge for the records. While the intent of the law has always been good, the cost implications in the future and the challenges it will present, especially to a small community are at issue. Frustratingly, the legislature seems intent on continuing to exempt themselves from the law. I suggest that we urge our legislators not to support this.
- Interviews went well this week for the Water/Wastewater Operator in Training. Second interviews with a short list of candidates will take place next week.
- As you've heard, the State has gone through a personnel reduction with early retirements. I attended a meeting yesterday at which the head of DOR's Division of Local Services told us that this has hit their area fairly hard and they have to adjust their workload accordingly. One of the changes to be made is that they will not be certifying free cash for any community that does not need to use those funds at a fall Town Meeting. Since we usually do, to some extent, we will need to be in touch with the State to make them aware of that so that they can address it.
- We have executed a contract with Virtual Town Hall for the upgrade to the Town's website. We plan to begin the work in the coming weeks, which also will include rolling out paperless meetings, which is the ability to post to the website the complete agenda packet for any Town board or committee.
- The Library/Council on Aging feasibility committee will be interviewing all four architectural firms that submitted proposals. Those will take place on July 21st.