

Board of Selectmen

# Town of Upton

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# Massachusetts

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Kenneth E. Picard, Chairman**

**James A. Brochu**

**Robert J. Fleming**

**TOWN MANAGER**

**Blythe C. Robinson**

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[brobinson@upton.ma.us](mailto:brobinson@upton.ma.us)

Memo To: Board of Selectmen  
From: Blythe C. Robinson, Town Manager  
Date: August 24, 2012  
Re: Town Manager's Weekly Report

Warrants:

- Payroll: \$ 79,846.74
- Expense Warrant: \$600,819.52

For Your Information/Follow Up:

- A new process has been put in place for the submission of weekly expense warrants. Up to now, when a board/department turned in a warrant to the Town Accountant they had to include each invoice to be paid, as well as a copy of each invoice. The copy was needed so it could be stuffed in the envelope with the check back to the vendor so they knew what they were being paid for. As it came time to order new checks, we chose ones that have a stub, and have made some software change to include on the stub the vendor's invoice number. Thus with few exceptions copies no longer need to be made by staff, and there is less work by the Treasurer's Office to stuff and mail payments. It's a small efficiency but one especially appreciated by those who have had to make all those copies up to now! Thank you to Fred for making this happen.
- The free paper shredding day has been moved to September 15<sup>th</sup>, and will be held in the playground parking lot on Route 140 next to the VFW from 9 AM - Noon. As you may recall this is being put on by the Board of Health as part of our overall recycle efforts. The event will be run by E. L. Harvey.
- This week we received two complaints from residents of Grove Street, unhappy about the level of noise that is a result of the rock crushing and removal of this material from the railroad's land adjacent to the tracks. We have checked with the DEP regarding the amount of noise created, and unfortunately because the noise being omitted on Grove Street is construction, there isn't a lot we can do. If they were was operating a rock crushing or aggregate business 365 days of the year, then we could enforce the noise regulations. Because this is just a temporary construction operation there is nothing enforceable. We have asked the railroad to adjust their hours of work to start at 8:00 AM to reduce the burden on the neighbors and they have agreed to do so. It is

our understanding that they plan to complete the operation by the end of September and are using the rock created to ballast their tracks and areas of the site on Maple Avenue.

- Work continues on the new website. We had an all-day workshop last week at which a number of boards and departments met directly with Virtual Town Hall to talk about their pages and how to set them up. We've made a decision to change our domain name in the future to [uptonma.gov](http://uptonma.gov), which is the trend for governments to use going forward. We are also talking to several vendors about expanding our ability to take on line payments for the sorts of licenses and services we sell in order to give residents more options when they do business with us. We've tentatively targeted an end of September launch of the site.
- Bids are due for the chip seal application to Chestnut Street and Grafton Road on August 30<sup>th</sup>. We intend to use a rubberized material this year.
- Proposals are due on August 30<sup>th</sup> from architects and engineers interested in working with the town on the possible design of the South Street Park project. Our intent is to select a firm who would be ready to begin work if funding for the project is approved in November.

## **August 28<sup>th</sup> – Agenda Background Information**

### **Invited Guests:**

- 6:15 PM Michael Campbell – Rose Garden: Mr. Campbell has been invited with regard the application he has made for an Entertainment License for the Rose Garden. All abutters to his establishment have been notified of the meeting.
- 7:00 PM Treasurer/Collector and Finance Committee – the Treasurer/Collector and Clark Rowell, the Town’s Financial Advisor to be present to answer any questions that you may have on this topic. The Finance Committee has also been invited to participate in the discussion regarding setting a Town Debt Policy.

### **Discussion Items:**

- 1. Review Progress on the FY 10/11 Auditor’s Management Letter Recommendations**  
Enclosed with your packet is a spreadsheet outlining the items that the Town’s Auditor recommended we change or improve that were included in their management letter. I believe we have made good progress on these, and would be happy to go over them with you in detail on Tuesday.
- 2. Review Cultural Council Resignations/Applications/Appointments**  
Included with your packet are four applications from residents interested in serving on the Cultural Council. By state regulation the Council can have up to 22 members! Currently there are 6 members, but with one resignation and four new appointments all of these would bring it to a total of nine. The chair of the Council recommends all four candidates be appointed.
- 3. Motion to Pre-Approve Chip Seal Contract**  
As part of our road work being paid for with Chapter 90 funds this year we have put out a bid for chip sealing of Grafton Road and Chestnut Street this fall. At the time the bid was advertised, the Board was regularly scheduled to meet on September 4<sup>th</sup>, thus the bid opening was set for August 30<sup>th</sup> so we would be ready to present a recommendation. As the meeting has moved to August 28<sup>th</sup> I am asking for your approval in advance to award a contract as long as it is from a responsive and responsible bidder, and within the \$72,000 dollar amount advertised in the bid. We have specified a rubberized chip seal product that must be put down as soon as possible, so time is of the essence. A copy of the advertisement for bid is in your packet as background.
- 4. Review Town Hall Renovation Committee –Building Committee Mission Statement**  
Enclosed with your packet is a draft mission statement from the THRC as was requested by the Board at the last meeting. The mission statement is in compliance with the requirements of the Town’s General By-Law on building committees. We would like to discuss this with you and find out if this is what you are looking for on this topic.

**5. Motion to Set a Date for a Special Town Meeting**

We have checked with the school and the officials that need to participate in a town meeting and have determined that one can be held on Wednesday, November 14, 2012. Thus I would ask that you vote to open a warrant at this meeting which will be closed on Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. This will allow us sufficient time to complete the warrant for the Board's review and approval on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

**6. Motion to Close out the Local Community Housing Partnership Committee**

With the approval of the Affordable Housing Trust at the Annual Town Meeting this Committee can officially be disbanded. I would recommend that you take this action.

**7. Motion to Approve Town Debt Policy**

At our last bond rating meeting with Standard & Poors they indicated that they would like to see the Town adopt a policy on the use of debt as a financing tool. Enclosed with your packet is a copy of the policy as drafted by the Treasurer/Collector. We would like to have a discussion about this with the Finance Committee and the Financial Advisor to determine if this policy accurately reflects the Board's position on debt.

**8. Motion to Certify the Useful Life of the SCADA System**

As part of the bond sale for the 3<sup>rd</sup> well field project we need the Selectmen to officially vote on the value of the SCADA system being installed as part of this project. Because the system is considered equipment it has a shorter life span and the bond deal must be structured to pay off that portion of the debt by the end of its useful life. As you will see from the form included in your packet the value of the system is \$163,000 and the useful life is five years.

**9. Motion to Approve Compliance Policy**

The Treasurer/Collector has provided this policy to us and asked that the Board review and approve it. He will be present at the meeting to discuss it with you. The purpose of the policy is to ensure compliance with federal tax law and regulations pertaining to the use of tax-exempt governmental purpose bonds and to the use of property, projects and equipment funded with tax-exempt governmental purpose bonds. This is another step towards the goal of having a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for our financial operations. I recommend that this policy be approved.

**10. Motion to Approve Fraud Risk Policy**

As you will recall from the Auditor's Management letter they would like to see the Board adopt a policy on the topic of fraud risk. Attached is a draft policy that has been provided by the Auditors for this purpose. The policy, if adopted, will be distributed to all employees and will inform them about fraud, how to go about reporting it, and the penalties that may be levied if the Town confirms that an act of fraud has taken place. Like the previous discussion item, this is part of our policies and procedures regarding finance.

### **11. Motion to Approve Ambulance Write Off Policy**

As you will recall from the Auditor's Management letter they would like to see the Board adopt a policy on the topic of writing off uncollected ambulance receipts. Attached is a policy that has been drafted by Chief Goodale which addresses our collection procedures, and how to handle the two main sources of uncollected receipts – those for which the individual has informed us that they have a hardship, and those where despite the best efforts of the billing agency need to be referred to a collection agency, and may after that need to be written off as uncollectible. The Chief will be present at the meeting to discuss this with you. In particular we want to make sure that you are comfortable with assigning responsibility to deciding whether or not to write off some revenue is appropriate.

### **12. Review Policy for One Day Liquor Licenses**

For the first time in quite a while we have been approached by an organization wanting to obtain a one day liquor license for an event. That has caused us to review the procedure for that and we have realized that the State law on alcohol licenses leaves the topics of whether or not to require liquor liability insurance and whether or not to charge a fee for the license up to the Board of Selectmen. Attached with your packet is a policy we have drafted that we would like you to consider on these topics. Sandy and I will be able to provide you more feedback at the meeting as to the reasoning behind the policy as presented.

### **13. Request for Letter of Recognition – Commissioning of the USS Michael Murphy**

Enclosed with your packet is an email from a resident in Town asking for letters of recognition from the highest elected board or mayor from each community from which those who serve on this ship come from as part of the commissioning of the ship. I would like to know whether or not you would like to submit one on behalf of the Town of Upton.