



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memo To: Board of Selectmen
From: Blythe C. Robinson, Town Manager
Date: September 6, 2013
Re: Town Manager's Weekly Report

Warrants:

- Payroll: \$ 82,444.69
- Expense Warrant: \$ 224,305.26

For Your Information/Follow Up:

- Preparations are well in hand for the opening of municipal well field #3 next Tuesday. As you recall we will kick that off at 5 PM at the site which is located at #169 West River Street. DEP was on site on Tuesday of this week to perform the inspection and that went well. The controls worked as designed, and the water chemistry looked good. We anticipate a letter of approval prior to Tuesday, and will be easily able to resolve the minor corrections they have requested.
- As you may recall, part of the relocation of the water main to the new well field was an agreement to provide a water main to the proposed JR Estates subdivision (since we were no longer running a water main through that development to the well field). We installed the water main to the agreed location, based upon the plans we received from the developer's engineers. After that point we were notified that the elevations of the development had been lowered, and the water line is about five feet higher than it needs to be. We have informed the developer of this discrepancy, and that he needs to lower it to the new grade. We do not see this as a responsibility of the Town, other than to provide access and assistance to the work being done. I will keep you apprised of how this will be resolved.
- The milling of School, Fisk Ave and a portion of Mendon streets is complete. We are now awaiting word from the contractor on when the repaving will take place.
- To be released next week is a Request for Proposals (RFP) that seeks proposals from persons interested in the acquisition one or both parcels of land owned by the Town on Orchard Street. As you may recall, these parcels were created when the Town bought the Stephan's Farm parcel in 2004. The Town created four parcels and sold two of them a couple years later. We will seek proposals to sell the remaining two. Any proceeds derived from this sale must be used to pay off debt of the Town. Since the Stephan's Farm bonds will have already been paid off we will work with the Treasurer/Collector to determine which of the Town's outstanding debt should be satisfied next.
- On Wednesday we learned that the developer of Crosswinds brought in a paving crew to pave the development, and in doing so paved over the railroad crossing. This caused a Grafton & Upton Railroad train going from Hopedale through to Grafton to almost derail

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as it came upon the covered over rail bed. The railroad took action on Thursday morning to reopen the crossing so that their activities can continue. This action could have caused quite a catastrophe in terms of harm to the operators, public and perhaps worse if it had derailed. The Planning Board has been apprised of this issue and they will be discussing this issue and that of the issues DPW staff have with the other infrastructure in their meeting on September 10th. On behalf of the Departments I would strongly object to the developer being able to move forward and granted lots released until the Town's and railroad issues are addressed to our satisfaction.

- Work continues on the Town Hall project with the focus on the basement. Ledge removal is continuing, as evidenced by the large pile of rock in front of the building. Once it is out and shoring of the interior walls is in place to protect the structure, removal of the old steam boiler can be addressed. While that work continues the contractor removed the final safe from the building that used to be in the Town Clerk's vault. It had been installed around 1895 and was no longer useful in the vault, taking up valuable space needed for records storage. Unfortunately it had to be taken out in pieces given its size. Now that the dropped ceiling in the main hall is gone the contractor will be bringing in staging to begin work in that area. On the exterior the masonry work to be done will be started. Just a heads up that the small cherry tree on the side of the building leading to Nelson Street had to be removed as it would interfere with that exterior masonry work. We can consider a replacement after the project is done.
- The Personnel Board met this week and selected HRS Consulting to perform the update to the Town's classification and compensation plan. Once the contract has been executed meetings will be scheduled with all employees and with department heads to explain the process and get underway.
- It has been reported in the news that the Milford Board of Selectmen will sign a host community agreement with Foxwoods Massachusetts next week. The Town had sought a higher level of compensation than previously proposed by the developer, and in order to be able to provide that the developer had said they would increase the size of the facility by adding 150 more hotel rooms and more slots and gaming tables. Once the agreement is in place focus can turn to the developer negotiating surrounding community agreements. The planning agencies are scrambling to review and consider the change in size of the development that will most likely have a greater impact to the surrounding communities as well. We are continuing to work with the planning agencies to obtain their counsel on these issues and considering the next steps to take to make sure our concerns are adequately addressed in a surrounding community agreement.