

News from the Desk of the Town Administrator

By Stephen Halleran

Assessing vs. Federal Census: Spring assessing work is now fully underway; the annual goal is always to complete the major changes to the grand list in time for the first tax billing. We have consistently heard from taxpayers that for planning purposes earlier notices of value changes are preferable to having the entire increase show up in the final bill late in the year. Regardless of when the work is done, all property is assessed based on its condition as of April 1st for any given year. As most residents know the town's assessor is George Hildum from Concord NH. George is a seasoned New Hampshire appraiser with very broad knowledge of assessing issues and practices, he also happens to have a great way with people. Before he gets started with his tape measure he will always knock on the door and explain why he is visiting your property. Unfortunately, this has not been the case with some of the Federal workers doing the census work. These data gatherers are using hand held GPS devices to determine building locations and often inexplicably have not extended homeowners the courtesy of a knock on the door and an explanation of their work. Unfortunately, several residents have assumed the guy/gal standing in the back yard with the held hand computer is working on behalf of the town, which is not the case. In most cases the town office does not even know the days they will be in town. If you have experienced this first hand and or have concerns about the work, the regional census office is in Boston with a phone number of 1-617-223-3610.

Gravel Pit: The Selectboard have spent a lot of time this spring working with Road Ken Stocker and local contractor Scott MacLeay on gravel pit planning/maintenance. This project builds on some gravel pit boring we had done back in 1997 to inventory the pit. Included in the current work has been some reclamation efforts, slope management, and some continued long range planning on how best to utilize this very valuable town asset. Mining road sand and gravel from the pit is a much more complex undertaking than you might expect. It is by no means just a matter of running the loader bucket into the face of the pit and scooping the material out. Both the good usable winter sand and the road gravel run in veins or lifts of material and are at times as much as 14' of unusable silt or overburden material stands in our way of reaching the needed products. Our plan is to stay entirely within the original gravel pit boundaries until that area is exhausted of sand and gravel. Any opening of the adjacent land that was gifted to the town a few years ago remains years away.

Clean Up Day: Our Solid Waste Committee is actively planning the annual Father's Day Clean Up event. As in the past the event is held on the Saturday of Father's Day weekend (June 20th) at the Highway Garage 351 Stage Road. Keep an eye out for a mailing that will leave the office in early June included will be information about this event, and the two household solid waste collection days (Saturday July 25th at Saturday October 10th) that are open to Plainfield residents. Both days are to be held at the Lebanon Solid Waste facility on Route 12A.

Voluntary Trust: Also included in this mailing will be a flyer outlining local resident Bill McGonigle's continuing efforts to establish a voluntary trust fund (Article 10, 2009 Town Meeting) to provide alternative funding for some projects around town. The fund needs an oversight committee and of course some funding. The Selectboard continues to fully support this effort as an example of someone coming up with a great idea and then following through to make sure its carried out and is successful. So whether or not you want to make a contribution to the fund, if you'd like to help with the project consider making yourself available to assist with the committee. Not to date us too much, but those who remember the mini taxpayer revolt of 1990/91 commonly referred to the "Auction Barn Crowd" because meetings were held at the Smith Auction Gallery will remember that one of the very helpful and energized subcommittees that came out of those discussions was an alternative revenue group that was looking for ways to take some of the pressure of the local property tax. This effort that Bill is working on is very much in line with what that group was trying to accomplish.

If you have not already done so, take the time to sign up for the Town News E-mail list. We continue to have a solid response to this offering. To sign up go to www.plainfieldnh.org/mail.html

Enjoy the wonderful weather and stop in if we can be of help.

Steve

