

REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

As directed by the board of selectmen, in addition to the routine duties associated with the operation of our local government the town office worked on the following projects during 2008:

Service Memorial: This multiyear project was completed in 2008. The centerpiece of the memorial is a 5' x 8' piece of New Hampshire granite cut in the shape of our town. The memorial was dedicated at the Fourth of July celebration and is intended to honor all forms of national service.

Property Assessment Update: This project was completed by the October 1st deadline and resulted in an average increase in assessments from 2003 of 26%. The previous year's tax rate would have risen from \$25.75/\$1,000 to \$27.30/\$1000, but as a result of the update the new rate was established at \$22.00/\$1,000. While the assessment methodology has remained the same, the new assessment manual is designed to provide even greater information to taxpayers on how assessments were calculated.

Brook Road: Phase one of this project was completed by Morrill Construction of N. Haverhill NH. The project cost was just under \$300,000 and was funded from current tax dollars, a FEMA hazard mitigation grant and the town's own Transportation Improvement Fund. The selectboard hopes to continue the project in 2009.

Bonner Road/School Street Land Purchase: As approved by article 6 of the 2008 warrant, the Selectboard was able to acquire the small field directly adjacent to School Street and the Plainfield Elementary School. The project involved the conversion of \$78,000 (\$75,000 purchase price, \$3,000 legal/survey work) of the town's cash fund balance into this 2.4 acre parcel.

Plainfield Village Street Lights: Using the help of a committee of Route 12A residents we were able to use the PSNH Smart Program to install more energy efficient street lighting in Plainfield Village that also satisfies the town's dark sky requirements for outdoor lighting.

Highway Garage Lighting Upgrade: Here too we were able to improve the quality of work lights for the crew, gain compliance with our own land use regulations and reduce the town's monthly electric bill for the highway garage.

Meriden Town Hall Generator: The Meriden Town Hall serves as our administrative hub, our police headquarters and the town's emergency operations center. The building is now equipped with a propane powered generator that will run the entire facility for several days in the event of a long-term power outage.

Closing of the drop off recycling shed: Through a strategic alliance with the City of Lebanon we were able to broaden the menu of items that Plainfield residents can now recycle in addition to the curbside program. The Lebanon recycling facility located on Route 12A is fully permitted, staffed and operates six days every week. This change should save the town some operation monies on an annual basis and has put an end to the illegal dumping that was taking place at the highway garage on a weekly basis.

Removal of the former Berwick Residence 360 Route 12A: At the request of our emergency service providers, the selectboard made the razing of this abandoned building a priority in 2008. While a formal process is outlined in the state statues, we were able to accomplish the task working cooperatively with the out of state owner. As a result no legal fees or court proceedings were necessary.

Building Permit Fees: After research on our cost to process new buildings, holding a public hearing and checking fees in other communities the Selectboard approved a fee increase for building permits that insures that all the costs for setting up a new home or outbuilding are covered by the applicants and not the general taxpayers.

Outreach Program: The selectboard started a program of going out into the community on a monthly basis and meeting with business and institutional taxpayers to learn more about the challenges that they face. Discussions at these information sessions typically center on the topics of regulation, taxation and municipal services.

Submitted,

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Town Administrator