

SELECTBOARD REPORT 2009

2009 was busy and productive year for the Plainfield Selectboard. Working closely with our various department heads, we sought to keep the town on an even keel in the difficult economic climate of the just completed fiscal year. The Board has outlined some specific priorities and areas of work from 2009 and listed them below. As always, we wish to thank our dedicated staff who has continued to perform the important roles in the governance of our Town with the utmost competency and aptitude.

Road Department

- Our Highway crew performed extensive improvements to many gravel roads in town. Major work was done on Dodge Road, Hayward Road, Old County Road, Mill Village Road and Center of Town Road to name a few. The Selectboard decided to dedicate summer schedule time to the business of rehabbing some gravel roads. Maintenance included ditching, brush clearing, adding new gravel and re-grading.
- Working with a local gravel pit expert, we had extensive improvements made to our Town gravel pit. This work included stump disposal, sloping and overburden removal. Much of this work was meant to expose useful material. We are pleased to report a good supply on hand of "bank run" and crushed gravel. Plainfield is blessed to be in such a position. We are pleased to report that this work was completed with a zero sum impact to taxpayers. The sale of unwanted overburden material provided the funds to make possible the heavy excavation required.
- The paved section of Freeman Road was reclaimed and new drainage installed. With the addition of more/better gravel, the driving surface up this steep roadway is substantially improved. Further upgrades will continue in 2010.
- School Drive (the PES driveway) was completely topped with new blacktop. The School board used the opportunity to upgrade some other areas around the School as well
- With some support from the Plainfield School Board, the town purchased a new snow pusher to mount on the Town's loader. This new system has improved both the efficiency of snow plowing at the School and the quality of the job.

Town Government

- Throughout 2009, the Selectboard maintained communication with our state representatives as well as County officials. The purpose of this effort was to keep the channels open between Plainfield and New Hampshire officials. We are concerned with increased burdens on our taxpayers while our returned financial support from Concord diminishes.

The County was made aware of our extreme frustrations with their skyrocketing budgets. They indicated that the painful County tax increases should subside in the future as they get their affairs in order.

- The Selectboard remains committed to keeping our facilities up to date. In 2009 we upgraded heating systems in the Plainfield Town Hall and the Meriden Library. The issue of accessibility at the Meriden Library is still in question. The Selectboard met with Library Trustees to discuss their facilities needs. We will continue to work this issue to the best of our ability. The Town Meeting's retention of our reserve fund for this purpose is a good start.
- The Selectboard completed a tax sale, by sealed bids, of a property on Willow Brook Road. By early 2010 the property will be current on taxes and privately owned.
- The Town continues to defend itself in a lawsuit brought by several residents regarding the Planning Board's approval of the Townline Equipment expansion. This court case cost the taxpayers well over \$25,000 to date and has no sign of going away. The Selectboard wishes to communicate our frustration with this issue. We will continue to defend the Town, but have little hope for a quick end to the process.
- The Selectboard continued its effort to reach out in the community with an "Outreach Night" program. This plan has the Board visit various businesses and town properties to meet with taxpayers and hear firsthand how things are going. Let the Selectboard know if you are interested in a visit to your location.
- The Town completed a review of current use eligibility for all concerned properties. The Selectboard felt strongly that only those that completely qualify for the maximum tax reduction receive it.
- The Selectboard updated the Town's longevity pay program to more fully reward those that have worked for the Town for 10+ years. It is our strong belief that the institutional knowledge and stability of operations merit some additional remuneration.
- The Selectboard and the Conservation Commission have worked together on a plan for the Rt 12A- Home Hill Trail near Puckerpod Swamp. The trail improvements will include a new trailhead parking area and improved signage as well as better trail maintenance.

The Selectboard meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month. All meetings are open to the public and all who wish to be heard will have the floor. Please feel free to contact the Town Office to schedule a more formal meeting with the Board and add your items to our meeting agenda. We always appreciate hearing from residents and will continue to do our best to serve you.

See you at Town Meeting,
Judy Belyea, Tom Williams Jr, Rob Taylor