

SELECTBOARD REPORT - 2011

Another year has passed and the Selectboard would like to take the opportunity to update town report readers on significant projects, accomplishments and events of the previous 12 months. As in the past, we wish to begin this report by thanking our dedicated and hard working Town of Plainfield employees and volunteers for their work to make our town function. The various offices, departments, boards and committees all contribute vitally to our community as a whole. Without the collective efforts of many good people, Plainfield would not be the great town it is today. Listed below, in no particular order, are some of the items we wish to detail. Of course the written minutes of all Selectboard meetings are available to give you even more detail of just what we do. These minutes may be found in the monthly issues of Plain Facts, on our town website: www.plainfieldnh.org or by viewing them at the Plainfield Town Office

- Willow Brook Road Phase 3- A majority of work on the third section of this road was completed this past year. From the “Baptist Pool” to a spot approx. 2 miles north (near the Fadden Residence) where we left off the previous year, our highway crew completed drainage work, brush trimming and road resurfacing. Much of this work was paid for by the Federal Emergency Mgt. Agency (FEMA) through Hazard Mitigation Grant Funds. While we had hoped to complete the replacement of two large culverts in this stretch, the major Tropical Storm Irene caused us to postpone the final work until the summer of this year (2012). We have a contract for this work and an approved/permitted design in place.
- Wage and Salary Study- Working with the NH Municipal Assn. (Local Govt. Cntr.), we did a comprehensive analysis of our compensation and benefits packages for town employees. This meant collecting detailed data from not only our town, but also from many other towns in both NH and VT. This allowed us to compare the remuneration for all our positions with similar positions elsewhere. Based on what we learned in this study, we will make necessary updates to our pay grade and scale system. We are certain this work will help us to attract and retain highly skilled staff.
- Significant Weather Events- An ice storm in March and a Tropical Storm in August were some of the most consequential weather events Plainfield has seen in decades. Our Highway Crew, Police and Fire Departments all performed critical service in these times of need. Many roads were washed over and damaged by unprecedented rainfall totals. Trees and powerlines were brought down by ice ,requiring many man hours of cutting and chipping. Unfortunately, it is our view that these kinds of storms will be more frequent going forward, causing us to plan for all sorts of emergencies.
- Zero Sort Recycling- After consulting with our Solid Waste Committee and the region’s leading trash concern (Casella Inc.), the Selectboard adopted a “Zero Sort” Recycling Program for the town. This meant a change for the public from having to keep items separate in bins for curbside pick-up to now no longer sorting at all. The new system means just co-mingling all recyclable items in one or more containers for removal to a regional sorting

center. We have already seen cost savings from this program and increased public participation which is exactly what we had hoped for.

- Plainfield's 250th Celebrations- It truly was a special time for Plainfield this past August. We celebrated 250 years of our town's history with numerous events and gatherings. A good time was had and we set the gold standard for this kind of celebration. The Selectboard would like to thank the 250th Anniversary Committee for their successful planning for this occasion. The members of this committee were Margaret Drye, Donna Beaupre, Doug Chapman, Dewey Jones, Elizabeth Lurie, Nancy Norwalk, John Stephenson, Breck Taber, Bev Widger and Steve Taylor.
- Old Main Street Discontinuance and Covered Bridge Land Acceptance- Beginning with a vote of town meeting at the 2011 gathering, the Selectboard has been seeing to discontinuing a section of old Main Street near the Mill Bridge adjacent to the Forman/Toms residence. As part of this process, we were approached by Kimball Union Academy to accept the donation of their property that surrounds the Mill Bridge and the historic former mill site. We held a public hearing as required by our town policies, and have since taken steps to formally acquire this land for future generations to enjoy.
- Blue Mtn Forest Assn.- Working closely with our town assessor, the Selectboard was able to update the tax data for the Corbin's Park property this past fall. The Selectboard and staff were able to arrange on site inspection of this property to see to making tax valuations for this large parcel more accurate. We mention this here not to single out a property holder, but more importantly to show the importance of getting the property tax system updated and as close to fair as possible for all. This highlights the concept of an accurate inventory for each land parcel. Annually we ask all landowners to see that their property's information is up to date and accurate. This is one of the most important things we all must do for the town and the failure to notify the town of any changes will have consequences that may be costly. Permits are easily issued for new construction, and not obtaining these necessary approvals may come back to haunt you.

As always, we welcome your input and feedback. The Selectboard meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month. We also welcome the opportunity to visit specific sites of interest. We call this outreach, and it is important to get out and see the town in person. If you would like to host a meeting of the Selectboard or if have something you wish to say, you can forward it to us at the Plainfield Town Hall, Attn "Selectboard", PO Box 380, Meriden, NH 03770 or simply email our town administrator, Steve Halleran, at plainfieldta@plainfieldnh.org

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