

SELECT BOARD REPORT -2018

As always, we wish to thank all of the people who work to make Plainfield the vibrant community that it is: Our dedicated professional staff, the volunteers who give so generously of their time and expertise to serve on boards and committees and the citizens who come to meetings or make their voices heard in other ways.

Here is an update of some of our 2018 work. Complete minutes of 2018 Select Board meetings can be found at the town website, www.plainfieldnh.org.

Our highway department did paving work on Willow Brook Road, High Street and Jenney Road this year. A major project was the replacement of both the Camp Road and Houser Lane bridges. The two projects cost about \$230,000; \$99,000 was paid by monies received from the state of New Hampshire, SB 38.

There has been some public support for a crosswalk on 12A between the library and the town hall. Traffic on Route 12A is about 3,000 cars per day. Typically the threshold is 9,000 per day for crosswalks to be considered. The town would be responsible for constructing and maintaining landings and lighting at both ends of the walk. After consideration, we chose the option of using signs and cones when there is an event being held at the library or the town hall. This seems to have the desired effect of calming traffic and creating a safe environment for crossing.

We continue to discuss pedestrian safety on Bonner Road. Measures taken to date include police patrols, speed trailer, fog lines and new road signs. These have helped to slow traffic speeds. Flashing lights might be the next step but due to cost, this would have to wait for a new budget cycle.

The Select Board has approved a revised fee schedule for building permits. Most fees increased by between \$15 and \$50 depending on the scope of the project. The last update to these fees was in 2008. In developing the new fees the goal is to capture the costs of inspecting, listing and mapping the project covered by the permit while at the same time keeping the cost of permits reasonable. For example, the base fee for new homes was \$300 and will now be \$350. A renewal of permit was \$35 and will now be \$50.

We now have a web-based interface for the town's GIS data. This gives us a digital way to utilize our tax maps, allowing for the viewing and printing of the town's GIS data on line. Tax maps can be overlaid with other GIS data, like satellite imagery, flood plain maps, zoning maps, assessing data. This is a culmination of efforts begun by the Conservation Commission in 2003.

The Selectmen supported the Library Trustees approved plan to place Town Facility Manager Brad Atwater in the role of point person for the Meriden Library replacement project. Brad has worked with the Meriden Library building committee to prepare a plan, with anticipated costs, for the removal and replacement of the existing Meriden Library building. This will be presented at the 2019 town meeting.

The Select Board has been considering the idea of raising income limits for senior property tax exemptions. We hope to gain voter approval to raise the income limits for the seniors to receive tax exemptions at town meeting this year. Currently a single person

making more than \$23,500 or a couple making more than \$30,000 cannot qualify for local property tax relief.

Our police department continues to spend time and effort trying to protect our residents from fraud and scams, educating residents about the dangers of sending money orders or payments for services not yet received. Please contact our police department if you have any questions or concerns about solicitations or “too good to be true” opportunities.

Avitar Associates has completed our town wide property assessment update. The goal of the update was to accurately reflect market values in Plainfield as of 4/1/18.

The town meeting approved creation of a single municipal fire department from our two private fire departments is nearly complete. The assets of the two departments are scheduled to be transferred to the town on February 20th with the official appointment of a fire chief and fire fighters to follow by statute one year from the date of the enabling vote taken last March. Both private associations plan to continue to exist and will support our new fire department.

Stephanie Schell continues to maximize our limited Human Services resources through her dedication, creativity and generous use of her time. Check out <https://www.plainfieldnh.org/humanservices.htm> to get an idea of some of the ways our Community Resources Director can assist those in need."

The Select Board voted to make the two official posting locations for public meetings the Town Offices and the town website. State law now allows the website to be one of the required two. We will still try to post at the Plainfield Town Hall bulletin board, but it is no longer one of the two official posting sites.

Since we voted overwhelmingly at Town Meeting last year to join over 100 towns and cities in the U.S. in committing to use 100% renewable energy for electricity by 2030 and 100% renewable for all energy use by 2050, we have been working on ways to achieve that goal. The Energy Committee has been invaluable in helping us to determine how best to move forward. In order to plan for our town’s energy future, they have recently recommended that we form a stakeholders committee to focus on this issue. We will be discussing this matter at upcoming Select Board meetings.

The Select Board was pleased to work with resident Virginia Drye on several projects related to the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI. See the inside of the town report cover for more information.

As always, we invite you to join us at any of our meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. We meet at the Plainfield Library on the first Wednesday of each new quarter. Contact any of us or call the Town Office if you want to express any concerns or opinions. The Select Board has been exploring how best to engage more of our citizens in the democratic process. Whether you just decide to vote in every election, attend meetings or join or form committees, your voice will be welcome. The higher the level of citizen participation, the greater the likelihood that Plainfield reflects the visions of its citizens. See you at Town Meeting.

Select Board ~~Judy Belyea~~ Chair, ~~Ron Eberhardt~~, ~~Rob Taylor~~