

## SELECT BOARD REPORT

Plainfield works as well as it does as a community because of the work of many of its citizens. Our professional staff, the volunteers who give so generously of their time to serve on boards and committees, and the residents who choose to involve themselves all work together to try to realize their vision of what Plainfield should be. Thanks to all who choose to participate in that work. Good people can have honest disagreement about most issues arising in our town. A cornerstone of good government is civil debate and respect for one another. The Selectboard appreciates the fact that this is the norm in our town. Here is an update of some of our 2019 work. Complete minutes of 2019 Selectboard meetings can be found at the town website, [www.plainfieldnh.org](http://www.plainfieldnh.org).

The residents of Plainfield continue to expect round the clock coverage from our police department. The recruitment and retention of police officers is a national problem, and we have seen that reflected locally. Following the resignation of Matt Foss, one of our fulltime officers, we were able to hire Kyle Dawson as a part time officer. After attending the Police Academy in April, 2020, Officer Dawson will be eligible for a full time position. We have also added resident Roland Daniels to the department as a part time officer.

Moderator Paul Franklin has been working with town and school officials and the NH Secretary of State's office to explore changing the scheduling of school and town meetings. The goal would be to maximize citizen participation.

On March 20, 2019, the Plainfield and Meriden Fire Departments officially became a municipal fire department under the direction of Chief Bill Taylor.

Our highway department, with the assistance of Facilities Manager Brad Atwater, has been working on improvements to the town garage. This has included replacement of some of the siding, installation of a fire escape, renovation of the lunch/break room, and general clean-up of the property. We are looking at options for the purchase of a new highway truck, and we have purchased a new pickup truck for our road agent. This replaces a 2006 pickup donated to our town three years ago by TransCanada.

2019 paving projects included the Camp and Hauser Lane bridge approaches, Daniels Road, Hell Hollow, and Mill Village.

When a section of 12A just north of River Road was closed due to a slide, farmers, business owners and residents were worried that a state proposed detour would have a negative impact on their businesses and on residents' travel. State officials were responsive to the residents and town government officials and created the least disruptive solution possible, implementing a short section of single lane traffic on 12A during the repair process. This was a good example of state government, local government, and citizens working together successfully.

The Town Office is now set up to accept credit cards for any payments made to the town. Cash and checks continue to be an acceptable method of payment.

In the effort to make Selectboard meeting attendance as convenient t as possible for the greatest number of citizens, the Board voted to adjust the meeting venues. The first Wednesday meeting of each month will be held at the Meriden Town Hall. The third Wednesday of each month meeting will be held at the Plainfield library.

Our Solid Waste Study Group has been hard at work looking at the best economic and environmental options to deal with trash and recycling in town. With the market down for recyclables, costs are going up. A mail-in survey was returned by over half of the residents. Results showed that 86% of respondents favored continued curbside pickup of trash and 96% favored continued curbside pickup of recycling. This will be discussed further at Town Meeting.

The town's building permit process has been streamlined. Selectmen are no longer part of the approval process. All permits are still reviewed by at least two town officials, (Zoning Administrator and Building Inspector) and the Selectboard is made aware at least on a weekly basis of all permits issued.

Our part time Facilities Manager continues to provide valuable service by helping us to assess repair/replacement needs, future planning, and energy efficiency upgrade possibilities.

Our 30 old voting booths have been at or near the end of their functional life. We have purchased new booths. They should be in use by the time you read this.

Following the sad and untimely death of Library Trustee Nancy Liston, the Selectboard appointed Rosemary Mills to serve as Library Trustee until March, 2020 Town Meeting.

In December, the Selectboard and a number of other town officials went to the home of Libby Bakofen in order to present her with the Boston Post Cane, given to the oldest resident in town. Libby was born on April 22, 1924. This tradition began in 1907 when the Boston Post gave canes to the Selectboards of 700 New England towns. These were to be awarded to the oldest male resident. In 1930, after considerable controversy, eligibility was opened to women as well.

As always, we invite you to join us at our meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The more citizen participation we have, the greater the likelihood that our community will reflect the hopes and wishes of its residents. We would welcome your engagement.

Select Board Ron Eberhardt, Chair, , Rob Taylor, Eric Brann