



## Report of the Town Manager

May 9, 2016

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- **Financial Updates-**

- a. The Finance Committee approved all articles on the warrant on Tuesday evening. The final warrant is in your Board packets for your review and preparation for Town Meeting. There was some confusion on the intent of the School Committee's Article 4. Below is the article language and the e-mail I received from Superintendent Haddad

Article 4:

To see if the town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.71, s.71F to allow funds received by the School Committee for tuition payments for nonresident students and as state reimbursements for students who are foster care children to be deposited in a separate account to be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for educational costs in connection therewith; or act in relation thereto.

Explanation:

This article enables the SPED Tuition Revolving account. This account already exists and has been used for years, but since the DOE chart, attached, says "yes" for local acceptance, we decided it wouldn't hurt to have it approved at town meeting. If it had been approved years ago, we couldn't put our hands on a copy of the ATM that did it, so better safe than sorry.

This is unrelated to School Choice. As you can see on P.1 of the attached chart, "Revolving Funds for School Department Programs", Non-Resident Tuition is the fourth item, and School Choice is the sixth. They are enabled by separate statutes, for separate purposes. Non-Resident Tuition is an account for SPED tuitions received when another district places a student (or the state places a foster child) in the district for SPED services that can't be provided by the district where the student resides. We had one from Fitchburg, and one from Narragansett.

School Choice is tuition received when a parent in another district chooses to send their child to this district. With SPED tuition, the district makes the decision, and there is almost always a SPED component, and Winchendon is

paid directly by the district sending the student. School Choice is decided by the parent, there is generally not a SPED component, but there can be, and DESE manages the reimbursement process.

- **Personnel Updates-**

- a. I will be holding a hearing next week to determine if Librarian Brian Tata is medically able to return to work and perform his job duties.

- **Project Updates-**

- a. Al Gallant and I met with representatives from Graybar and Tanko Lighting regarding the acquisition of the street lights from Liberty Utilities. At your May 23<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting Al and I plan to present the acquisition proposal to the Board. If the Board supports the idea I would authorize an audit be completed by Tanko and Graybar to include reviewing the location of the lighting, identifying the bulb wattage needs in different lighting applications (street lights at intersections and crosswalks being brighter than lighting in neighborhoods) and determine a fair price for the purchase of the street lighting assets.
  - b. Public Works paved River Street and Rice Road on Thursday and Friday respectively. Bemis Hill Road will be paved on Monday.

- **Miscellaneous Updates**

- a. FEMA Region I has completed its review of the Montachusett Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Winchendon found it approvable pending adoption.
  - b. I have drafted an RFP for the development of a comprehensive pay and classification study which was one of the Community Compact best practices identified by Winchendon when applying to be a member of the Compact. The State will provide funding of \$25,000 for the study. I have asked for bids to be returned by May 18<sup>th</sup>. The project is expected to be completed in the late fall.
  - c. I met with representatives from Seaboard Solar regarding Winchendon's interest in purchasing net metering credits. They are currently working with 25 communities and housing authorities. I have been trying to connect with the Kopelman and Paige attorney that represented the Town when the agreement with SunEdison was drafted. I believe SunEdison has not complied with the terms of the contract and the Town can walk away but I would like the attorney to review the agreement and recommend an alternative path.
  - d. Representative Zlotnik approached me about a month ago asking if there were any small project that he could attempt to get funded as part of a larger capital bill being considered as part of the state budget process. I suggested \$100,000 for the Blair Square roundabout construction. Representative Zlotnik informed me last week that the Legislature included \$50,000 in their budget for the project. The budget still needs Senate approval.