

# Report of the Town Manager

October 7, 2013

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## 1. Personnel Updates-

- a. **Board of Assessors-** As earlier advised (email of 8.27.13), the new GIS and property card web application has been up in test format for the past several weeks. It is now live and accessible to the public. Winchendon assessor's property records and parcel information is now available to the public online. This information may be easily accessed via [www.townofwinchendon.com](http://www.townofwinchendon.com), with links on the town website homepage and assessor's page. This will markedly change the way in which we serve the public from the Assessor's office as the public will now have access to our property maps and cards from anywhere in the world with a simple internet connection. Progress!

Action Requested- None at this time.

- b. **Assistant Accountant-** I regretfully accepted the resignation of our short tenured Assistant Accountant Laura Luoma. Given the critical nature of the position, particularly given the relatively recent start date of our Town Accountant Donna Allard, I have made an emergency appointment of Callie Beaton (resume and application materials enclosed). Ms. Beaton has worked with Donna Allard as her assistant in Westminster and also has Munis experience as a result of her employment in Gardner. Callie has been coming in evenings to assist Donna and has a start date of October 10, 2013. Ms. Beaton is hired as a non-union, non-contract employee at will.

Action Requested- If it would please the Board, a vote to affirm the appointment of Ms. Callie Beaton as the Assistant Accountant.

## 2. Financial Updates- None.

## 3. Project Updates-

- a. **Police Station Building Purchase** - I offer the following report pursuant to your voted direction that I facilitate the ministerial matters that may have remained involving the planned purchase of the former Winchendon Courthouse for the use as a new Police Station. I note that my role continued to be one of a ministerial nature and that all substantive discussions and/or negotiations in this matter were conducted by our Town Counsel with consultation of the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen as was required.

The closing has taken place and the respective deeds have been recorded. The town is now the owner of the Courthouse property as well as the additional side lot and Athol Savings Bank driveway parcel.

**Environmental** - Tighe and Bond, our consulting environmental engineers are onsite doing the first floor hazardous materials survey pursuant to the escrow

holdback that you negotiated with the former owner. Once the samples are retrieved they will be processed by a lab to determine if there is any material of concern. If there is nothing detected the balance of the escrow funds will be returned to the former owner. If there are positive samples we will contract with a remediation company to conduct the remediation and once complete we will return any balance of funds to the prior owner.

**Moving Forward-----(please see Town Counsel's road map enclosed)**

**Designer Selection-** Enclosed please find draft designer selection procedures that have been provided by counsel. The law requires that we adopt such a document in order to proceed with the project.

Action Requested- Please vote to adopt the Designer Selection Procedures.

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Owner's Project Manager (OPM)-** Next we will be required to issue a n RFQ to contract with an OPM. This will be our technical expert representing our interests throughout the construction.

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Designer-** Next we will issue an RFQ to contract with a design engineer to develop bid ready design specification plans.

**Request for Proposals (RFP): Construction Services-** Lastly, we will issue an RFP for a construction contractor to build out the project per the design specification plans.

- b. **Route 140-** The paving is complete. The roadway traffic lining is underway. The curb cut reconfiguration at the gas station is nearly finished.

Action Requested- None.

**4. Miscellaneous Updates-**

- a. **Streetlights-** [From John Deline] Initial list of lights to be turned on (those with a request from the public along with Police recommendation) has been submitted to National Grid.

Many need repair (have been damaged, such as being shot with BB gun) which may take a while to complete.

These are the numbers submitted to National Grid:

- 90 (temp. off) streetlights to be turned on
- 19 additional that are supposed to be on that require repair
- 1 turn-off - two other streetlights (more "strategically" located) at nearby intersections are being turned instead

Also note that two lights reported as off by citizens are, in fact, on at this time (have to be monitored in case there is a problem with them that is intermittent).

Still have not received list from National Grid of streetlights who are being paid for by private citizens (I continue to email requests to the National Grid contact).

Streetlight Committee will be reconvened once the initial list of lights have been turned on so that we may review the remainder of requests (these are near other lights that are being turned on or are really only for the benefit of one house) and develop a consensus whether the Town should turn them on (or, if being paid for privately, take over).

I am working on developing a highly visible marking system (such as metal tags) that is permanent/long lasting for utility poles with streetlights to identify which lights should be on so that we and the public can quickly identify a light that has burnt out or been damaged and get it back into service more quickly.

I am thinking something like this:



These were the largest (2" x 4") I could find in a quick search. We could put them up about 8-10 feet so that no one could easily take them off.

- b. **Library Project-** The Library Board of Trustees met last Tuesday night to follow up on their earlier meeting of the prior Friday with Gerry White. After consulting with Julia White-Cardinal and the architect, the Board has decided that the library project should not be included in the town's block grant application for this cycle. The Board determined that the restrictions on the amount available combined with the restrictions on the use of the block grant monies themselves make the execution of this plan very difficult. In addition, while they are willing to commit the library trust funds, they feel that they have an obligation to use them in the most effective way possible.

The Board expressed appreciation for Gerry's efforts and all of his work on the project as well as his assistance to the Board collectively and to them each as individuals. They understand the difficult task that Gerry has of balancing the restrictions of the block grant with their desire to have a project that meets their needs. This decision did not come easily or happily to them.

Action Requested- None.

- c. **Municipal Electrical Aggregation-** Still no word from the Attorney General's office.

Action Requested- None.