

Town Manager Report/Updates. March 4, 2021
Stephen Delaney

Veterans' Services

We have been able to secure interim assistance from a veterans' agent from another community. She will be able to access our accounts and will be working with our local veterans to make sure that they continue to receive necessary services and benefits.

We will continue to explore options for filling the position on a longer term basis, including establishing or joining a regional veterans' service plan.

FY 22 Budget Preparation

Budget preparation/finalization continues with the goal of submission of the updated plan at the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee on March 22nd.

Other Items of Interest from Planning

Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$34 Million in Community Development Block Grants to 41 Communities

WINCHENDON will receive \$715,510 for Railroad Street infrastructure improvements and to provide fuel assistance.

The **Railroad Street Project** will repair the infrastructure of Railroad Street, 610 LF roadway in Downtown Winchendon. Reconstruction includes a total reconstruction of sub-surface drainage and storm water management system and sewer lines and total surface reconstruction including and the installation of 9 new shade trees and 1 metal outdoor bench. Water lines were not included in the project as the maximum dollar amount allowed would have been exceeded. Construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2021. **The Fuel Assistance** program will supplement the existing LIHEAP program by providing an additional one-time tank of oil to those qualifying under the LMI guidelines.

Trails assessment: MRPC has included Winchendon's request into their Unified Planning Work Program (UPWU) to assess the potential connection of the North Central Pathway to New Hampshire as well as the Ware River Trail and Worcester County Rail Trail systems. New Hampshire officials are actively pursuing the connection to Winchendon.

ROW acquisition Central Street TIP Project. All but 5 property owners have donated a temporary easement to the Town. Two property owners of the 5 outstanding easements have requested an appraisal, The US Post Office, 160 Central St. and the Unitarian Church, 128 Central St. The three property owners, Soutana Panagiotidis, 51 Central, Win Mass Realty, LLC (Walgreens) 250 Central & CVS, 301 Central have either been non responsive or not followed through with the town. It is expected that appraisals will begin within the next few weeks to keep the project on track.