

To our fellow Washington residents:

February 2015

We are still looking for qualified residents to serve on the Board of Health and as Tax Collector.

Thanks to Representative Pignatelli and Senator Downing for meeting with us at DOT District 1 on January 6 to convince DOT that the bridge that spans the CSX tracks on Summit Hill Road needs to be made passable by emergency vehicles, oil trucks and our snow plows! For the present there is a six ton vehicle limit on the bridge.

- We have also reached out to CSX to see what they can do to help.
- The Middlefield Select Board also attended to protest the length of time it was taking to approve the temporary bridge we secured for Middlefield Road. DOT approved it, although for a very low weight limit, just before the meeting; the bridge is now open.

Engineering work for permanent bridges on Middlefield Road and Cross Place Road is proceeding. Once we have construction estimates for those two structures and the Town's supplement to the \$788,350 grant from FEMA for Eden Glen, we will be making a proposal for borrowing authority at a Special Town Meeting.

- We still have not heard from any of you regarding the preservation or removal of the Eden Glen Dam. Please let us know!

We received a 50% increase in our Chapter 90 allotment for road maintenance. This amounts to almost \$85,000 for a total of \$254,512.

The new owners of Bucksteep have proposed activities that, according to the Planning Board, fall outside of both anything done by the Saccos and our zoning laws. The Select Board has also heard allegations that events have been held despite an explicit ban and in contravention of public health standards. The Board is continuing to investigate.

We hope all of you have gotten and responded to the letter about the WiredWest project to bring high-speed internet to all of Washington's households. Everyone who uses the internet, watches television or has a land-line telephone will get better service, most likely at a lower cost, and a boost to their property value.

The agreement we have entered into with Hampshire Council of Government for lower-cost electricity is moving forward. Anyone interested in going through the rather lengthy document will find it posted on the Town's website.

Annual Town Reports for 2010 and 2011 are (finally!) available at the Town Hall and on our website. We expect that 2012, 2013 and 2014 Annual Town Reports will be available as soon as we are able to close the 2014 books with MA DOR.

- This is the last Fiscal Year on the old accounting software. Our Town Accountant, Dan Parnell, has been working on a new software suite for all Commonwealth communities thanks to a CIC (Community Innovation Challenge) grant. Whatever our user's fee will be in the future it will be far lower than anything available through the private sector.

Belated thanks to our Council on Aging for the great job done decorating the Town Hall – as they do every year!

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Shaun Lennon
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board