

To our Washington neighbors:

October 2016

Congratulations to our Assessors. For two years in a row they placed Washington among the earliest municipalities to have a certified tax rate, projected as a 2+/- % increase for next year.

On a sad note, our Assistant Tax Collector, Sue McGrath is leaving us to spend more time as tax collector in Savoy. Sue joined us in 2008 and has done a terrific job working down the unpaid tax backlog. We will miss her.

The Annual Sons & Daughters Reunion at the Old Town Hall on September 11 was a great success with reminiscences, good food and music. If you missed it, plan on being there next year!

The Berkshire County Education Task Force, comprised of educators and civic leaders including Selectman Mike Case, has been working for over a year to address three trends – falling student population, rising costs and lower government subsidies - that unless reversed mean degradation of our still excellent schools. The Task Force has now secured funding to develop plans for improved diversity, breadth and quality of education for all our children so they are fully prepared for college, career and a life here in the Berkshires. This will likely be achieved through consolidation of schools, improved use of technology, partnerships and regional agreements. The Task Force has pledged to respect and maintain the unique identity of each Berkshire community to ensure that our citizens remain fully connected to and engaged with our schools,

It appears that we now have a three-person committee for the design and financing of an expanded Veterans' Memorial. Anyone interested in being on the committee please contact Jodi.

Road & Bridge:

- Congratulations to Adam Southard for becoming our third DOT Road Scholar!
- Line painting and guard rails for Washington Mountain Road will be done this month.
- Blotz Road will also have lines painted in the near future. Thanks again to our road crew whose prep work saved the Town over \$10,000.
- The new Cross Place culvert is on schedule to be done this fall; there will be a public hearing on moving utility poles.
- DOR delayed the bid opening for the construction of the Frost Road culvert over Depot Brook until October 3; we do not expect any construction until spring.
 - The silver lining is that we should know whether our grant request for funding the removal of the Eden Glen dam has been approved long before that so that any work will be integrated with the culvert construction. We will hold a Town meeting to determine if our citizens will accept the money for removal or have the Town fund restoration of the dam.
- We are still waiting to hear whether funding for the Middlefield road bridge through either a MassWorks grant or the new small bridge program will be available.
- There will be three public hearings on October 17 regarding utility pole placement for Cross Place, Eden Glen and the Summit Hill bridge construction.

While the pole survey to prepare the installation of fiber optic cables appears on schedule for this fall, the Board still has serious questions regarding the financing.

See you all at the Pumpkin Walk on October 28!

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Tricia Drugmand
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board