

To our Washington neighbors:

February 2017

Four candidates have applied for our open Tax Collector position and have been interviewed. We expect to be able to make an interim appointment within a few weeks.

- We are still considering whether to refill the position to assist the Tax Collector and the Treasurer. The position was held by Sue McGrath before her departure a few months ago and is funded through June 2017.
- We are hopeful that a qualified Washington resident will run for Tax Collector next spring.

Road & Bridge:

- A pre-construction meeting for the Summit Hill Road bridge over the CSX tracks was held at DOT District One in Lenox on January 17. The plan calls for the bridge to be closed from April 29 to August 29. Traffic will be detoured through Hinsdale along Middlefield Road, Fassel Road and East Washington Road. DOT once again assured us that the detour route road surface will be improved. There will be signs posted all along the route and a map of the detour will be posted next month in TRACKS. Tully Construction has been awarded the contract.
- We are pursuing a number of potential funding sources for bridge and culvert replacements on Middlefield Road, Lower Valley Road and Frost Road. These sources include a new DEP grant program, MassWorks, the Small Bridge program and inclusion on the Transportation Improvement Plan
- The schedule for the new culvert at Eden Glen still has not been determined but work should be completed early in the year.
- The Select Board has received a number of comments about the condition of our roads this winter and it adds up to our road crew doing a better job than our neighbor communities! Thanks to Tom, Dave and Adam for their continued good work.

After the survey to determine if any work needs to be done to the Town's utility poles to adapt them for fiber optic cables we are still waiting for MBI to provide support for bringing high speed internet to every address in Town. MBI appears to be biased against the WiredWest model in favor of privatization. The Select Board finds it hard to understand how imposing a profit-driven enterprise on us will lower costs or hasten construction. We continue to push for immediate action.

We urge anyone considering signing up with Syncarpha Solar for solar-generated power at a 10% discount from Eversource rates to make sure that they understand all aspects of their contract.

The Town Hall roof has frequently leaked over past winters and this year is no exception. The Board is considering replacing the membrane roof with a peaked structure more suitable to Berkshire weather. The roof could be fitted with solar panels to generate all of the power used at the Town's buildings at a lower cost than a separate installation.

Anyone interested in the surplus cabinets, etc. at the Town Hall, please let Jodi know.

Winter will keep us in its grip for another few months yet, so keep an eye out for your neighbors and remember that at least some of what the weatherman says is true.

Jim Huebner  
Select Board Chair

Tricia Drugmand  
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case  
Select Board