

To our fellow Washington residents:

June 2014

Thanks to all of you who took the time to vote in our Town election; congratulations to all the incumbents returned to office and to our new member of the Finance Committee, Kent Lew.

Thanks also to everyone who participated in the Annual Town Meeting. The by-law banning commercial wind power passed unanimously as did the authority to borrow \$100,000 towards a new 4-wheel drive large plow truck.

- Beginning next year the ATM will be held on the Wednesday prior to the second Saturday in May; this change was approved by the voters at a Special Town Meeting last June but not done this year due to a collective lapse of memory.

This month the Select Board will be making appointments and reappointments to various Town offices and boards. Our Town works as well as it does because so many of our citizens serve as volunteers. That volunteer spirit extends even to positions that involve a wage or stipend since the Town pays at rates well below market. Anyone interested in serving please let us know. The more help we have the better for everyone!

Although we have had a very good response to the letter in the April *Tracks* requesting information about business being conducted in Town, the Select Board wants to have as complete a picture as possible before we begin drafting changes to our by-laws. We have asked our Administrative Assistants to begin calling those of you who have not responded.

Many of you have expressed concern over the "Northeast Expansion Pipeline" which would connect to an existing large pipeline in Richmond and continue ENE across the Commonwealth to the New Hampshire border north of Lowell. The proposed builder, Kinder Morgan, has provided only vague details; our best guess is that the route would cut through the northwest corner of Town. Even though this may not directly affect any of our citizens, it does raise environmental questions beyond the construction itself - which is tentatively set to begin in April of 2017. Berkshire Regional Planning is going to host a planning session to help determine how we and our sister communities should respond. The Board will attend and keep you informed.

To take advantage of the broadband internet connection to the Town Hall the Board has contracted with Crocker Communications to provide phone service through the internet. After an initial outlay of \$2300, our projected savings are over \$250 per month so the new system will pay for itself in less than a year and save us \$3000 every year after that.

Our expenditure last year for a hydrological study of Eden Glen to support a grant application for the reconstruction of the dam and bridge has borne fruit: Massachusetts Emergency Management (MEMA) has recommended the project for federal funding. If approved, the Town will have to fund at least part of the construction costs.

We were told that the \$25,000 in supplemental DOT funding could not be used at the Transfer Station, so our Highway Crew will use the money for spot road repair ("potholes").

Washington Mountain Road is being resurfaced by DOT; this should last until the complete rehabilitation of the road. We are working with DOT and our sister towns on the Metropolitan Planning Organization so that the project is scheduled for funding in 2018.

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Shaun Lennon
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board