

August 22, 2018

Hello everyone,

It's been a while since our last Select Board report to you. It always seems as if day to day demands on our time and energy get in the way of organizing the information that we need to share with you. But as the end of summer approaches, it's appropriate that we take some time to report the results of our project work so far this year.

### **Well Water Quality Approval and the Role of the DES**

We have good news regarding the commissioning of our new water well. We are pleased to report that we believe that we have resolved the quality concerns that we have had with the water from this well. It appears that we failed to adequately flush all of the tanks, pipes, and taps that provide water to the Library, Town Hall, and Town Office during our initial attempts at doing the chlorine "shock" treatment of the water from our new well, leaving traces of bacteria to remain. After doing an additional chlorine "shock" and carefully flushing all of the plumbing, the water has tested free of bacteria.

Additional good news is that the well is over 500 feet deep, produces approximately 8 gallons of water per minute, and has a static level of 20 feet below grade. Consequently there is plenty of water to meet the needs of the three buildings that it supplies. An additional advantage is that this well is on Town property. Also, we have created a layout drawing of all the water supply and drain pipes, and all other utility lines buried behind the Library, Town Hall and Brick Schoolhouse. This drawing will be very useful for future reference.

We have shared our layout drawing for the utilities and our water consumption information with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. They have determined that our water usage levels cause the system to be categorized as a "Transient Non-Community Public Water System". As a result, the DES has inspected and approved the system and issued a registration number for it. Going forward, we must test water quality on a quarterly basis, 3 times per year for bacteria alone and once

annually for all contaminants. Having this testing regimen in place will help us all have more confidence in the safety of the water that we are supplying to the public.

## **Fire Code Compliance**

As we have previously reported, we have, at the direction of the State Fire Marshal's Office (FMO), installed full coverage alarm systems, and internal and external emergency lighting for all of our town buildings; Brick Schoolhouse, Library, Town Hall, Safety Building/Town Barn, and Granite Lake Fire Station. Per the FMO requirements we have also installed fire walls and doors enclosing the Maintenance Bay at the Town Barn, fire rated windows protecting the fire escape in the East end of the Brick Schoolhouse, and safety signage related to escape routes and alarm system status.

Chief Walter is the local official who must make the final determination of the adequacy of our work. He has made an inspection of all of our buildings. We are awaiting his report at the present time.

## **Energy Conservation Projects Completion and Rebate**

We have now completed all of the energy conservation projects that we began in 2017. We have added thermal insulation and sealed air leaks in the Brick Schoolhouse, the Library and Town hall, the Safety Building and Town Barn, and the Granite Lake Station. We choose the Newell and Crathern Company to do all of this work.

Bill Newell, of Newell and Crathern, enlisted the help of Dana Nute at Resilient Buildings Group to make applications for us for rebates on the cost of the work. These energy efficiency rebates are available from Eversource. We were surprised and extremely pleased to receive a rebate in the amount of \$16,932.53 for the work that was done on the Safety Building/Town Barn and Library/Town Hall. This amount was equal to one half of the cost of the project. Dana Nute has recently applied for the Eversource energy efficiency rebate for our most recent work at the Granite Lake Fire Station. He has applied for a rebate in the amount of

\$3,209.65 for this work. This again is one half the cost of the project. Hopefully, we will be as fortunate with this second application as we were with the first.

### **New Bulldozer**

Mike Tarr keeps track of U.S. government advertisements for surplus construction equipment. Last Spring he found a listing for a surplus Caterpillar D6 bulldozer, owned by the Army Corp of Engineers, on Cape Cod. We entered the lottery for it and the Town of Nelson won. This dozer is in excellent condition. It had only 73 hours on the engine hour meter when we got it. The purchase price was only \$3,000. The funds came from the Special Highway Block Grant money for unfunded projects that had been previously awarded to the town.

Mike and Nick are presently using the dozer to move materials in our gravel pit in Gilsum. We all owe Mike a thank you for his initiative and success in (now two) cost saving purchases.

### **Planning for Renewable Energy Projects**

Now that our town buildings are energy efficient, our Town Buildings Committee is considering long term plans for a grid-tied solar array that would supply an amount of energy sufficient to light, heat, and cool all of our town buildings. The general concept would be to install air sourced heat pumps, working in conjunction with our present furnaces, to heat and cool all of our buildings. Before we can specify the size of the solar array, we must know the energy demands of the heat pumps that we would need. Hopefully, there will be funds available in our budget to do the required engineering study this year. Also hopefully, we will have enough information available to us to be able to hold a public informational meeting this Fall to discuss our project plans with you.

### **Building Permits and Tax Exemption Application for Solar Arrays**

More folks everyday are having solar arrays installed on their property. That's a great thing to do and we applaud all of you who

have done so, or plan to do so. In addition to selecting a contractor and a design, please be aware that you will need to apply for a building permit for the array in order to comply with our zoning ordinances. Also you must apply to the Select Board for a property tax exemption if you do not want the assessed value of your system to be added to your property tax bill.

Building permits must be applied for and approved by the Select Board for both roof mounted and ground mounted solar arrays. For roof mounted systems, Article 5. Section 5:1 of our Zoning Ordinances requires that *"No structure shall be erected or externally altered without a building permit having been issued by the Selectmen."* Ground mounted systems are considered to be structures and as such must be located so as to comply with the *Lot Dimensions and Setback Requirements* described in Article 3 of the Ordinance.

Anyone who has installed a solar system should apply for the property tax exemption for it. As you may recall, the Nelson Town Meeting voted to approve an Article allowing the Select Board to grant property tax exemptions for solar arrays. DRA regulations require that folks must apply to the Select Board for this property tax exemption in order for it to be made effective. Please also be aware that this exemption does not "follow the land" so if any change in ownership occurs then a new application must be filed with the Selectmen for approval.

### Closing Comments

This concludes our mid-year report. We are looking forward to a routine rest of the year. We anticipate that our budget for 2019 will be similar to our 2018 budget. We are hopeful that we will be able to return enough money from Fund Balance to keep your property tax rates in 2018 similar to those we had in 2017.

Sincerely,

Dave, Maury and Gary