

Town Manager's Report

Monday, October 26, 2009

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

1. FY2010 Preliminary Budget Guideline. The Finance Committee's Budget Guideline Subcommittee issued Preliminary Budget Guidelines last week for the Town and Schools. The Guideline Subcommittee voted to recommend that the Finance Committee adopt a preliminary Guideline which allocates \$1,203,447 within the levy limit in the following way to support the operating budgets.

Operating Budgets	FY10 Budgets	FY 11 Proposed Guideline	share of incremental funds	
			amount	% change
Town Government	\$17,352,013	\$17,905,013	\$553,000	3.2%
CPS	27,699,200	\$27,699,200	\$0	0.0%
CCRS D Assessment (wo debt)	13,442,936	\$14,093,383	\$650,447	4.8%
Total	\$58,494,149	\$59,697,596	\$1,203,447	2.1%

I will meeting again with the Sub-committee on Thursday, November 5 to provide a reaction to this proposed guideline and to discuss how town government operations and services would be impacted by this allocation.

- 2. State Budget Shortfall.** Governor Deval Patrick has announced plans to cut \$600 million from the State budget in the current fiscal year. In addition to his planned cuts in Executive Branch State operating budgets, he has requested authorization from the Legislature to make "9C" cuts in State Aid accounts such as Lottery funds for cities and towns and Chapter 70 education aid. It will likely be necessary to freeze a portion of town government operating budgets approved by Town Meeting last April in order to address this mid-year cut in State aid. This was accomplished successfully last year, when the Commonwealth also cut its promised level of local aid.
- 3. New Valuations Approved.** Town Appraiser Lynn Masson reports that the State Department of Revenue has approved the new property valuations for fiscal year 2010. This allows the Selectmen to schedule the annual "Classification Hearing" to determine whether or not to "shift" any tax burden toward the commercial/industrial sector. The Board will also essentially set the

tax rate once the “residential factor” is determined. The Classification Hearing with the Board of Assessors is scheduled for Monday, November 16 at 7:45 p.m. in the Selectmen’s Room of the Town House. The preliminary estimate for the FY2010 tax rate is \$13.09 per thousand in valuation.

4. **Willard School Dedication Ceremony. (photo).** The School Committee will host a dedication ceremony for the new Willard School on Sunday, November 1st at 1:00 p.m. The public is invited to help celebrate the successful completion of this extraordinary, high performance building which is certain to win several design awards in the coming years.
5. **Flint Bridge – Monument Street. (photo).** Zoppo Construction is nearing completion on the Flint Bridge on Monument Street. If the guardrail system is delivered and installed in the next few weeks, the general contractor can install the top course of pavement and reopen the bridge for traffic. This is not guaranteed to occur, and the contract with Mass Highway allow Zoppo until April of 2010 to complete the work. But the contractor is making great efforts to reopen this bridge before winter.
6. **Concord Unemployment Data**

Labor Force and Unemployment Data Selection Criteria: Geographic Area: City or Town Area: Concord Time Frame: Most Recent 13 Months Not Seasonally Adjusted Data

Month	Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Area Rate	Massachusetts Rate
September	2009	7,672	7,125	547	7.1	9.3
August	2009	7,791	7,285	506	6.5	8.9
July	2009	7,799	7,296	503	6.4	8.9
June	2009	7,757	7,250	507	6.5	8.7
May	2009	7,640	7,192	448	5.9	8
April	2009	7,638	7,222	416	5.4	7.8
March	2009	7,581	7,196	385	5.1	8.2
February	2009	7,582	7,188	394	5.2	8.3
January	2009	7,609	7,217	392	5.2	8.1
December	2008	7,668	7,331	337	4.4	6.5
November	2008	7,718	7,403	315	4.1	5.8
October	2008	7,707	7,425	282	3.7	5.4
September	2008	7,688	7,368	320	4.2	5.6

7. Public Works Department

Administration and Engineering

- **Sudbury Road Culvert Replacement (Photo)** - Installation of the new concrete box culvert to replace the existing corrugated metal pipe culvert on Sudbury Road has been completed. The culvert is located within an area scheduled to receive a mill and overly pavement treatment within the 2009 Roads Program. Pavement work in this area will begin within the next few weeks.

- **Plainfield Road Drainage and Roadway Rehabilitation** - Drainage work in conjunction with the 2009 Roads Program will began on Plainfield Road the week of October 19th. The reclamation and binder course pavement are planned to be installed during this construction season, with top course pavement installation deferred to 2010 to allow for settlement following the winter freeze/thaw cycle.
- **Main Street (Route 62) Main Street Project** - To date Mass Highway has installed drainage and base and binder course pavements from Water Street to the Acton town line. This week's work includes the installation of a dry stone retaining wall along the sidewalk near Hayes Road, installation of granite curbing and edging and raising of all castings to binder course pavement grade. The roadway will remain at binder course pavement grade for the winter with top course pavement being installed during the Spring of 2010 to allow for any settling over the winter.
- **Concord Center - Road and Sidewalk Improvements** - The mill and overlay for Main Street downtown will occur during the week of October 25th. The paving work will be conducted during night time hours to minimize disturbance to residents and businesses, beginning Thursday, October 29. This project also includes reconstruction of handicapped ramps to eliminate ponding of stormwater at the ramps. Contractor D&R Paving completed reclamation and binder course paving of the Vanderhoofs Parking this week. Installation of the new concrete sidewalks, from the Sally Ann's to Stow Street is nearing completion. . The work will include the installation of new street trees, tree grates, and handicapped ramps.
- **Carr Road Sidewalk Installation** - Representatives of the Fenn School have approached Concord Public Works to discuss the installation of a sidewalk on Carr Road to be funded privately by the school and gifted to the Town. A design is currently being reviewed by CPW in addition to an agreement which would stipulate the Fenn School's long-term and winter maintenance responsibilities for this section of sidewalk.
- **Community Preservation Committee** - CPW and Natural Resources staff met with the Community Preservation Committee to present the Mill Brook Footbridge Project, to be located behind Main Street's Café. The project is a joint submittal between the two departments having been identified by the Board of Selectman as one of the priority projects for CPA funding.

Highway and Grounds

- **Bike Rack Installations** - CPW Park and Tree staff are completing installations of bike racks at various locations throughout Concord. Bike racks were procured by the Department of Planning and Land Management through a MAPC grant.
- **ORNAC at Rollingwood Walking Path** - CPW Highway and Grounds staff are completing the installation of a walking path between Rollingwood Lane and the adjacent conservation land. Work included excavation, installation of a low stone retaining wall and construction of a stone dust path.

Solid Waste and Recycling

- **October 17th Drop-off Swap-off Event** - The fall DropOff-SwapOff was held on Saturday, October 17th. New Drop Off items included unwanted medications / SHARPS and Non-perishable foods. Collection figures are currently being tabulated, and based on the number of calls received at CPW over the past few weeks, this event will likely be

of the larger ones. The event was staffed by upwards of 100 volunteers, in addition to CPW staff.

Water and Sewer

- **Department of Environmental Protection Sanitary Survey** - The DEP performed a sanitary survey of Concord's water system operations and facilities to evaluate compliance with state and federal regulations, policies and guidelines. The survey included a detailed evaluation of cross connection control plans, chemical treatment and water quality monitoring and reporting activities. The inspectors did not inform CPW of any imminent problems and formal findings will be forthcoming. These surveys are performed every three years and provide the DEP with a mechanism to require additional measures to be taken by a system as "guidance" recommendations.

16. Department of Planning & Land Management

Planning Division

- **Community Preservation Committee:** The CPC held their second round of application reviews for recommended funding at the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. CPC members met with representatives of the Concord Free Public Library on their proposed renovations for the Fowler Library, and with Lili Ott from the Concord Art Association on their proposal to complete educational materials based on the research gathered on the history of the John Ball House at 37 Lexington Road. The CPC held an extensive discussion on this second application, intimately agreeing that while they support the efforts of the CAA on this project, educational materials cannot be funded under the Community Preservation Act as it is presently written. The CPC will next meet on Saturday, Oct. 24, at 7:45 AM to conduct site visits to nearly all of this year's applicants and will be holding their third round of project reviews on October 28.
- **Historic Issues:** The Historic Issues Group met on Tuesday morning with representatives from the Drinking Gourd Project to discuss their project to save the Caesar Robbins House at 324 Bedford Street. Maria Madison and Polly Atwood led the discussion which centered on the history of the house and the roles of its early residents in the community. Members also discussed the current project to save the building and its proposed new location. While several other items were originally on the agenda for this meeting, interest in the Caesar Robbins House was so extensive that no other topics were discussed at this meeting.
- **Facility Managers Meeting / Sawyer Trust Fund projects:** At its regular monthly meeting facility managers met with members of the Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee (CSEC), Senior Planner Julie Vaughan and Energy Conservation Coordinator Jan Aceti to discuss potential energy projects recommended by the Town Building Energy Audit and by the CSEC that could receive full or partial funding from the Sawyer Trust. The facility managers agreed to pursue two main initiatives - comprehensive lighting upgrades and a Town building weatherization sweep that includes building envelope audits (which were not performed by American Development Institute as part of the Town Building Energy Audit). Jan then went over the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant and High Performance Building Grant that could be funding sources for potential solar projects in Town. The meeting concluded with a discussion of upcoming Sawyer Trust projects: the new boilers at the West Concord Fire Station and renovations to the Police & Fire Station.
- **Massachusetts Institute for Transportation Coordination:** Director Marcia Rasmussen participated in a Transportation Coordination Institute at the invitation of the Acton Team, which included representatives from Boxborough and Maynard. The Team's focus was on implementation of a suburban mobility grant and how to extend transportation opportunities to

Boxborough, Concord and Maynard. A follow up report is being prepared to share with policy makers and stakeholders in the four towns.

- **West Concord Task Force:** The WCTF Working Group met in an open meeting with developer Ross Hamlin to discuss his approach to development of several key parcels of land in West Concord. Mr. Hamlin is considering his options for developing 108 units of residential housing with some commercial retail space on land with frontage on Commonwealth Ave. Master Plan consultant Ted Brovitz also presented his draft conceptual plan to the Working Group and then met later in the week with the WCTF Chair to define the information to be presented at the November public forum.

Health Division

- **Mass Decontamination Unit Exercise:** The Health Division and the Concord Medical Reserve Corps participated in the annual joint Mass Decontamination Unit exercise at Emerson Hospital on Thursday. The Medical Reserve Corps provided staffing for the Victim Reception Center at 57 ORNAC to continue to hone the Concord-borne concept of a non-residential shelter for those patients who are “deconned” but not admitted for further evaluation at the hospital. While Environmental Health Inspector Stan Sosnicki provided chauffeur services in the COA van for the “victims”, Public Health Director Brent Reagor served as an exercise evaluator for Emerson Hospital, providing critical and constructive feedback on their patient decontamination operations.
- **H1N1:** Tuesday afternoon, Public Health Director Brent Reagor provided the monthly “in-service” training for the public and private school nurses in Concord. Of course, the topic of discussion was H1N1 influenza and it’s potential for recurrence this fall. After a presentation on the current national and statewide situation in regards to H1N1, discussion turned to what efforts can be deployed in Concord to protect the public. It was agreed, and a date was later set, that a Community Information Night would be held at the CCHS Auditorium on Tuesday, November 3rd at 7pm with panelists from the Health Department, Schools, and Emerson Hospital (hopefully). The session would be broadcast live on CCTV and WIQH, and would be rebroadcast on CCTV as allowed by the schedule. Director Reagor will work with the school nurses to coordinate the presentations and panel discussion.
- **Wastewater Alternatives RFP:** Public Health Director Brent Reagor has been working with the Water and Sewer Division to review the responses received to the recent RFP for Wastewater Alternatives Analyses for the Wastewater Planning Task Force. Responses have been reviewed, and Director Reagor will participate in the respondent interviews with Water/Sewer Superintendent Alan Cathcart and Operations Engineer Elena Proakis-Ellis on Friday afternoon.

Building and Inspections Division

- **First floor meeting room at 141 Keyes Road:** John Minty met the week with Bill Dickenson, an architect with Nashawtuc Architects, to discuss the design proposal to add a second door to the first floor meeting room at the DP&LM building. An additional egress door would allow the occupancy of that space to be increased to allow room occupancy of more than the current limit of 49 persons.
- **Permit tracking software:** The Building Inspections Division has been involved in the Finance Department’s search to find a new financial software package to replace the financial management software (VADAR etc.) that is currently used. The Building Inspections Division is involved with this process with the hope that the software provider will also be able to provide integrated software modules for Building Inspections, Health, Planning, Historic Districts, Engineering, CMLP and Water-Sewer.

Natural Resources Division

- **A Marathon Session of the NRC:** While many people have run from Hopkinton to Copley Square in less time than it took for Wednesday's meeting of the NRC to run from start to finish, the meeting was productive. The meeting, which ran from 7:00 PM to 11:45 PM, involved holding six hearings and issuing three permits in addition to conducting other NRC business. The NRC approved the project for Middlesex School to construct a new outfall for treatment plant effluent to Spencer Brook, including a plan for invasive species management to mitigate project impacts. The NRC also approved the multi-purpose synthetic turf field at Fenn School and will issue a permit at its next meeting on November 4.
- **Regulation Workgroup Making Great Progress:** The Workgroup developing draft regulations for the local Wetlands Bylaw met again this week and agreed on minor language changes to the document being developed for eventual approval at Town Meeting. DNR staff is updating the working document to reflect the workgroup's discussions, and will meet one more time before presenting a draft to the NRC at the November 18th meeting. The NRC expects to hold a public hearing on draft regulations the week of December 7th in order to have a final document ready for the warrant.



Entrance to new Willard School – Dedication Ceremony Set for November 1, 2009



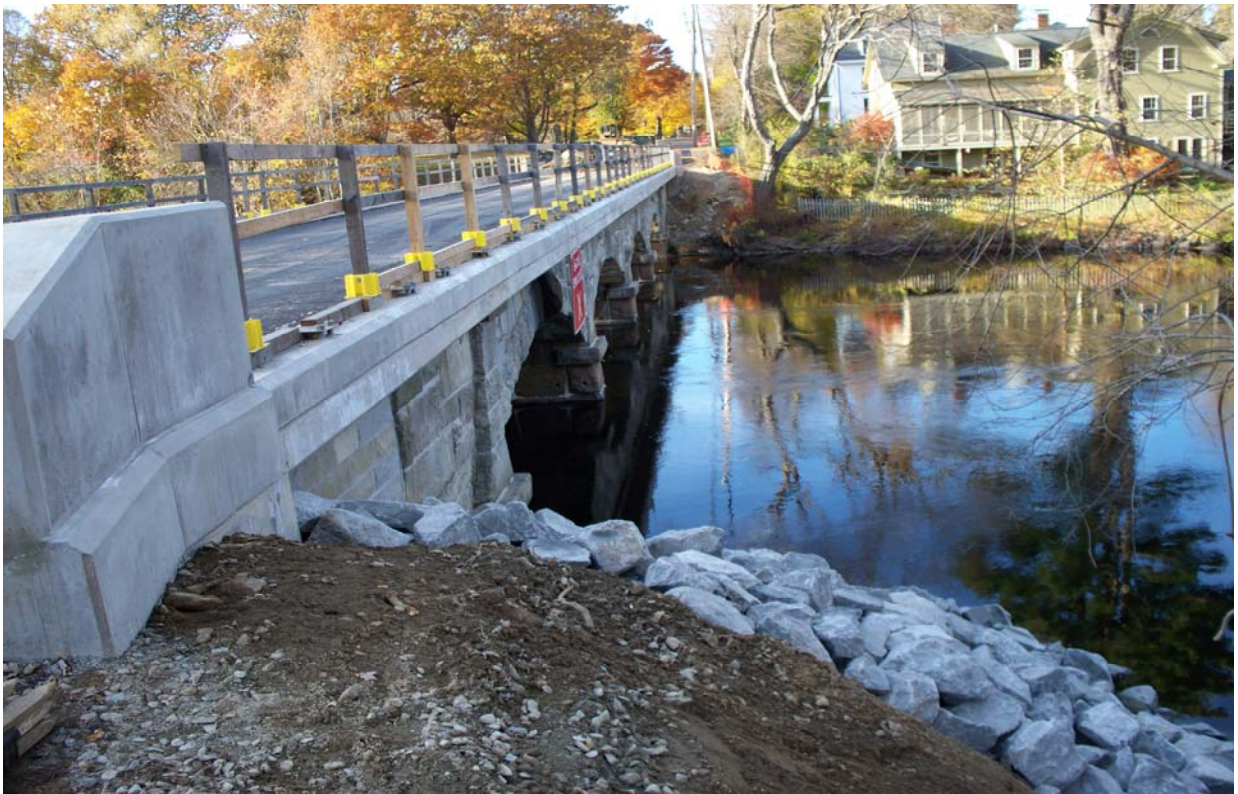
Grass Beginning to grow in playing field area at new Willard School.



Work Nearly Completed on Nashawtuc Bridge – Reopening Expected By November 30.



Resetting and repointing of granite walls on Nashawtuc Bridge nearly complete.



Work nearly complete on Monument Street Bridge – Re-opening expected this fall.



Flint Bridge on Monument St require Railing System and top course of pavement. Some off-road work will carry forward into the Spring of 2010.



New box culvert installed on Sudbury Road near Suter Field.