

Message 08/02/2012

Fire Department Pumping of Basements

To answer a question that was asked at the last Board of Selectmen's meeting about the Fire Department's pumping of water out of basements, the Chief reports that the department has always pumped flooding basements at no charge to residents in *emergencies only*, if and when departmental resources are available. The Fire Department sees it as a public safety matter, and will inform residents that they must hire a private contractor to pump if the job is anticipated to take longer than a short period of time. It is always best if residents contact a private contractor to pump basements; but if they do not have the resources to pay for such work or time is of the essence, they may call the Fire Department to help with an emergency.

Cell Phone Reimbursements

A question was also asked at the last Selectmen's meeting about amounts paid for cell phone reimbursements to Solid Waste personnel and Public Works personnel, as one amount was twice the amount of the other. The Solid Waste reimbursement was for two months, and the Public Works reimbursement was for one month. Backup information is shown on the invoices.

Public Works Activities

This week Public Works crews have been working on Summit Springs Road and Jackson Road installing driveway culverts. They have also swept roads and mowed cemeteries and ball fields. Public Works purchased a trailer to use with the new lawnmower at a cost of \$864. The crew was also preparing to sweep the parking lots in preparation for Mechanic Falls to paint lines, but the line painter broke down and the painting did not get done today. A motor in one of the transfer station compactors died, so transfer station personnel are working with one compactor while the other motor is being rebuilt at a cost of about \$800.

AVCOG's Services

I sent an email to Executive Director, Bob Thompson, July 18th which asked him to assemble a detailed report of AVCOG's accomplished and planned services for Poland. I have not yet received a response to that request, but I did receive two other reports from him after I returned from vacation. He reported that AVCOG has continued to meet with the MTA about the proposed turnpike toll increases to offer more equitable solutions. He also reported that AVCOG has written a letter to the Surface Transportation Board in support of acquisition of RailAmerica by Genesee & Wyoming Inc. (GWI). This action supports our local railroad.

Water & Sewer Project

Wright-Pierce Engineer, Dan Flaig, reports that Bryan Foster of K & K Excavation met with Tim Morin of Shaker Hill Nursery to discuss his issues with water project restoration work along the nursery's property line. Mr. Foster agreed to re-loam and seed the area in question, although the area is within the MDOT right-of-way and not on the nursery's property. This work will be done in mid-August or early September because Mr. Foster thinks it is too dry for grass seed to take.

Historical Society's Building Expansion Project

Excavation work is progressing for the Historical Society's building expansion project, and the excavator pulled out quite a few boulders from the hillside. The Recreation Director conferred with the Public Works Director about using the boulders for landscaping, but the PWD cautioned that the boulders placed in the desired locations would inhibit snow removal too much. They agreed that two smaller boulders could be used for landscaping – one between the two trees in front of the Town Hall and another near the back entrance of the Recreation Director's office.

New England Management Institute

This year's New England Management Institute will be held at Sunday River August 22-24. This meeting is a gathering of municipal and county managers in New England and is usually held at a coastal location. We are fortunate that western Maine will be highlighted this year and thus will experience less expensive conference costs to boot. This year's Institute, as always, will provide the time for the Maine Town, City, and County Managers'

Association (MTCMA) annual meeting, as well as the opportunity to recognize the special achievements of our peers. The conference enables networking and provides professional development and continuing educational opportunities.

This year's agenda includes a keynote speech from Paul Mellor about ways to improve our memories. (I can't wait for that one!) Later, in concurrent sessions we will learn more about the changes in Maine's Freedom of Access Act from Edmond Bearor, Esq., of Rudman & Winchell, and a legislative potpourri will be presented by Durward Parkinson and Leah Rachin, attorneys at Bergen & Parkinson. They will discuss a variety of current changes in laws pertaining specifically to municipalities.

Extensive leadership training will be provided by Felicia Logan, Director of Leadership Development at the ICMA – International City and County Managers' Association. Ms. Logan hails from my alma mater at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and has participated in and graduated from several leadership institutes. She also has a Master's degree in Communication from UVA.

The last day of the Institute will focus on health insurance for municipal employees. The sessions are entitled, "Bending the Health Insurance Trend," and are meant to provide an enlightening discussion of how Maine employers, hospitals, and health plans are collaboratively addressing the issues of insurance costs, quality of care, and payment reform. Elizabeth Mitchell, CEO of Maine Health Management Coalition, will present these sessions on how employers can use performance, consumer engagement, and payment reform information to ease the burden of rising health care costs.