

## **Manager's project update: August 15, 2022 meeting**

Below please find a brief summary and update of ongoing projects. (As of 8/8)

### **Highlights:**

We are closely monitoring the lake due to growth of blue-green algae. The Health District issued a health advisory which as of this writing remains in effect. The lab test results are significantly better but based on visual standard, precautions are still required. We are working on a September forum on this issue.

The high school roof work is underway and GH Robertson will start on Monday.

I made temporary arrangements for plan reviews and building inspections to have coverage while we seek a new Building Official.

Held a preliminary meeting with the Town of Manchester to allow the sewer connection through Bolton to have some sewer at the town line. The Federal funding is in the House budget bill pending reconciliation with the Senate budget.

The CHS walls work on some classrooms is underway and the project will be finished over the Christmas holiday.

The girls softball field is out to bid with an August 23<sup>rd</sup> bid opening.

### Public Works/Engineering

LOTICIP grants: The Swamp Rd/Rt. 44 project is paved and temporary detour in place. Still waiting on fall delivery of signal posts. Minor make-ready work is still underway.

Our prep of Loomis and Carver is mostly complete and we are waiting for outside contractors for final milling and paving. We are back into the Lakewood area doing road improvements.

Major tree work is planned. We are bringing in the big equipment, which no local company owns, which cuts and chips at the same time... Roads include. Cross Street, High/Flanders, Nathan Hale Dr. and Nathan Hale Road, and Judd. The next scheduled work planned is for Lewis Hill, Wrights Mill and Grant Hill.

Todd Penney continues to work toward getting the plans and specs for the Community Connectivity grant for sidewalks on Main Street from Hemlock Point Lane to approximately Cheney Lane. Starting to seek the required easements from the State and neighbors. It is still hoped to be a fall 2022 construction project, but time pressures are a concern.

We are trying to select an engineer for the LOTICIP grant for the intersection of Swamp and South, including the South Street curves, and a dip in Swamp Road. Construction is hoped for the summer of 2023. The balance of the engineering expense will come from the savings from the Hop River Bridge match.

The South Street road reconstruction and sidewalk project near the Homestead is underway. The dry weather has helped this project move along quickly. We are considering extending the sidewalk to the Strong Porter museum with some savings of the local match for Hop River Bridge.

The methane venting project for the Miller Richardson football field has been hydro-seeded. This includes a smaller recreational softball field in the rear left corner, and an extension of the practice field to a full second football field. Due to lack of rain additional seeding will be required in fall

The State-designed Hop River Road Bridge replacement is nearing a fall bid. The project will start with utility work in fall and materials ordered for a spring construction. GM2 will be our construction inspectors. The State will be using Federal funds to pay 100% of the project costs including inspection. Since the construction budget estimate now far exceeds the funds we allocated from the last road bond this is fantastic news. This will free up the balance of the past bonding for eligible projects covered by the scope of the bond. This is likely in the \$700,000 range. We will evaluate alternative eligible projects. After our first pre-bid meeting we discussed concerns of needing assurance this will be a one-season bridge closure. We have agreed to allow longer work days to assist in reaching that goal.

We need to replace two culverts, one located on Bunker Hill Road and the other on Parker Bridge Road. We have submitted two grant applications for this year's Local Bridge grant round and are still waiting for a response - now expected in late August. The grants, if we are awarded one or both, require a 50% match. Our share will need to be bonded and could be over a million dollars. This needs to be a Council discussion. These two projects are complicated by a pending Andover bridge replacement on Bunker Hill Road scheduled for this summer. We need to coordinate the three projects to assure access to houses and proper traffic detours. We also have to fully replace the Broadway culvert, which will not be eligible for State funds. We will need money for design, and this will also need to be added to a future bonding package. There is a possibility CRCOG will have a LOTCIP culvert round which covers 100% of construction costs, or we could consider the use of ARPA funding.

Had another productive meeting with the company considering acquiring the Microgrid project (\$4,000,000 grant). They have asked for a meeting with CT DEEP to discuss modifying the project to include the solar now anticipated on CHS roof and right sizing the CHP units.

The new transfer station is under construction and proceeding swiftly. We will open bids for the first girls' softball field on August 23. A STEAP grant application for the second field has been submitted. We will now also need to plan the best uses for the \$500,000 of anticipated State bonding for Miller Richardson park, ADA and equity projects.

Woodbridge Road was cold recycled in place and has been paved. Some final touch up work on the road shoulders is underway. Prep work on Carver Lane and Loomis Dr. is complete. Waiting for the pavement contractor later this month.

Public Safety - Police: Chief Eric Peterson hosted an interview panel for the Executive Assistant to the Chief and second round interviews are scheduled for the week of the 15<sup>th</sup>. He will start working on Sergeant promotions, and we are also very close on the Captain promotion. We are still looking for part time dispatchers.

Fire EMS: The replacement fire truck ordered last year is expected in September. Our alternative ambulance replacement has been ordered, with bad news on the delivery date and a substantial price increase. Work is underway to develop cost reductions or revenue enhancements to make the ambulance service more sustainable. An annual Fire/EMS service recognition dinner was held on August 6<sup>th</sup>.

Finance: Our new Accountant, Stephanie, started on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Favorable bids came in for the school roofs, and work on the high school started with Robertson scheduled for a start on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The possible middle school renovate-as-new concept discussion is postponed until fall to allow the State to provide guidance on the new HVAC grants. School walls work actually is now underway for some areas with the

balance postponed until Christmas break. We continue to work with the Finance Committee and Town Council on the complicated American Rescue Plan funding planning.

Development Group: We held our first meeting in a while with the Town of Manchester on the local agreements required to allow an extension to the Bolton Lakes sewer system. A community funding request for this project was selected by Congressman Courtney and passed by the House. It is now up for consideration in reconciliation with the Senate budget. Manchester feels that a decision timeframe of October is reasonable. We are also paying attention to the treatment plant in hopes of getting Federal Rescue Act funds for a connection to Windham, with a positive first meeting held. We have hired Tighe and Bond to update a sewer facilities plan. The first meeting with DEEP was held to further detail the scope of work for the plan. We believe we will get State funding of 50% of the cost of the study. This study could lead to future Federal Infrastructure funding. We continue to meet with developers and finance groups interested in the Bolton town line area. Hytone Farm has started construction for the approved anaerobic digester. We have held several meetings to discuss a second stage to assist in food waste management and talks will continue. We helped host a meeting of CROCOG towns on this subject. PZC's moratorium on cannabis retail sales has been extended to allow the Commission to review our attorney's draft regulations. The affordable housing plan was adopted on July 25. The four-town Economic Vitality group is meeting to work out a regional events calendar and submitted an ARP grant for economic development consulting. We held a meeting to fine tune a proposed logo. Cassidy Hill Vineyards has hired both an attorney and an engineer to prepare plans and assist them with our concerns of zoning compliance, with a public hearing on their application scheduled. A proposal for a new dentist office next to Dollar General was approved with construction anticipated this summer. The Economic Development Commission created a subcommittee to focus on the future development at the Bolton town line. New regulations will be required.

HR issues:

We have conducted several negotiations sessions for all Town and School AFSCME groups for pension and now have revised cost estimates which will allow us to re-engage. We started negotiations the Public Works unions. We hired a Town Accountant, are considering an applicant for a Planning Assistant/Zoning Enforcement Agent, and conducting second round interviews for a Police Executive Assistant. In the interim we have hired Kevin Roberto to assist remotely for up to 20 hours a week for Police, and hired an engineering firm to provide 6 hours a week of zoning help. We are recruiting again for both a Building Official and Senior Center Assistant after employees left for better pay and working hours.

Other projects:

DiBlasi Engineering completed final design work on CHS wall repairs. Some work is underway now with the balance planned for Christmas vacation. CHS and GHR roof bids were awarded. 50,000 SF at CHS is underway and will be done this month which will allow the solar work to proceed. The balance is planned for next summer and will tie into the high school ventilation project. GHR roof will start August 8<sup>th</sup>.

Work is underway for the housing unit renovations at Orchard Hills under the CDBG grant.

We submitted a Creaser Park plan to DEEP for review and a meeting took place on site to review our proposal. We are still waiting for a formal response. Our plan is to demo the front two cabins in phase one since they are not really savable. The back cabin is on a slab, and it will be gutted and converted to a storage building likely with a garage door. The cabin nearest to the pavilion can be converted into public bathrooms and a small meeting space, and can be rented out with the pavilion to have a better level of service for events like weddings. It may be something to consider if ARPA money is available. The final

building will be stabilized while the condition is further assessed, options discussed, and funding allocated.

The Microgrid project continues to be analyzed for financial viability and discussions are underway with a new financing partner. We held a very productive meeting, and are looking to propose ways to reduce the upfront capital expense and try to coordinate the CHS solar into the project to reduce the amount of natural gas used.

We are trying to work on getting the Trails grant permits ready for some DPW work on the Bear Swamp section of road (not the stream crossing) for late summer. Some wetlands permissions are underway.