

Manager's project update: August 1, 2022 meeting

Below please find a brief summary and update of ongoing projects.

Highlights:

We are closely monitoring the lake due to growth of blue-green algae. The Health District issued a health advisory which suggests limits for private use of the lake and closed town beaches for swimming. I have authorized additional testing and monitoring. The Health District is taking additional samples and sending them to NEAR for testing. This is not a geese or Hydrilla treatment issue. It is most likely attributed to a mild winter and the lake did not stay cold enough to slow this growth. Chemical treatments are not recommended at this time. We are working on a September forum on this issue. At this point the lake does not appear to be getting worse....this week's tests showed improvements.

The Library renovation project is officially underway with work on the courtyard area.

Frontier is selling service for fiber to the premises and initial reviews have mostly been positive.

We are signing contracts to start the two school roofs projects, and are also coordinating with the solar team for a fall install. The bids were below the revised budget estimates!

In another surprise our CHS walls contractor had a schedule break and is actually working in some classrooms right now and will be finished with this phase in a couple weeks and finish the project over the Christmas holiday.

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.

Woodbridge Road drainage and pavement is complete with minor work on road sides still ongoing. 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 Lake area doing road improvements.

Major tree work is planned to start next week. We are bringing in the big equipment which cuts and chips at the same time for 3 days. Roads include: Cross Street, High/Flanders, Nathan Hale Drive 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 South Street road reconstruction and sidewalk project near the Homestead is underway. The drainage work is well underway and prep for the sidewalk should start soon. Stone wall work and landscaping is included in the bid. The dry weather has helped this project move along quickly.

The methane venting project at Miller Richardson football field has been hydro-seeded. This project included adding 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 start. 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 far exceeded our initial estimate this is fantastic news. 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 located on Bunker Hill Road and Parker Bridge Road. We have submitted two grant applications for this year's Local Bridge grant round and are still waiting for response. 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. 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 CROG will have a LOTCIP culvert round which covers 100% of construction costs, or the use of ARPA funding.

The Microgrid project (\$4,000,000 grant) is in a bit of a redesign to reduce the capitol expense and pricing. We are waiting for information on their negotiations with a new potential financing/operations firm. Time for the grant is running out, but they are starting a dialogue with DEEP. With the school roofs underway there will likely be additional solar on the High School roof in fall.

The new transfer station is under construction and proceeding swiftly. We expect the bids for the first Girls' softball field to be issued in a matter of weeks. I am finishing up a STEAP grant for submission in a week.

Woodbridge Road was cold recycled in place and now has been paved with the final wear coat. Some final touch up work on the road shoulders are underway. Prep work on Carver Lane and Loomis is complete prior to paving/reclaiming in August.

Public Safety - Police: Chief Eric Peterson is settling in. Interviews are set for a replacement for the Executive Assistant to the Chief for next week. 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 no date for delivery provided. A state law was passed to direct an increase to state Medicaid ambulance rates - we also have a rate increase request pending. The department has been extremely busy this summer with accidents and medical calls. They continue to work with the Farmers' Market on parking. Work is underway to develop cost reductions or revenue enhancements to make the ambulance service more sustainable. An annual Fire/EMS service recognition dinner has been set for August 6th.

Finance: Our new Accountant will be starting on August 8th. Favorable bids came in for the school roofs and work is scheduled to start. 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 two meetings on the local agreements required to allow an extension to the Bolton Lakes sewer system. We have a meeting coming up to gain approvals from the Town of Manchester to change the sewer service area to allow us to connect. A community funding request was selected by Congressman Courtney and has now passed the House budget process. It still needs Senate approval and the President's signature later this year. 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. It is very likely the State will fund 50% 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 participated in a CRCOG meeting to share this concept with regional towns to help build a market for food waste to electricity. PZC's moratorium on cannabis retail sales will be extended to allow the Commission to review our attorney's draft regulations. A late July public hearing is envisioned. After a public hearing on the affordable housing plan the Commission adopted the housing plan. 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 and have received final options. Cassidy Hill Vineyards has hired both an attorney and an engineer to prepare plans and assist them with our concerns of zoning compliance. An August public hearing on their application is envisioned. 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.

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 new Youth Services Coordinator, and Town Accountant, are in final interview stages for a Planning Assistant/Zoning Enforcement Agent and have interviews scheduled next week for 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 had surprise resignations of our recently hired Building Official and Senior Center Assistant. Working on finding coverage for the Building Official while we recruit and have cancelled some programs at the Senior Center.

Other projects:

DiBlasi Engineering completed final design work on wall repairs. The contractor has an unexpected opening and is at work at the high school now for a couple weeks and will finish over Christmas vacation. Quite the last minute scramble to get permits and special inspections scheduled. CHS and GHR roof came in well within our budget and contracts are signed to start work soon for with a pause and completion next year.

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

We met with DEEP on our Creaser Park plan and await follow up from them. 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 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. Meeting with an engineer to help on the section off our Nathan Hale road and the stream crossing. Our wetlands commission is discussing the other road section to consider allowing town crews to start upgrading the old roads this fall.