

Working together is success.

— Henry Ford



Town of Merrimack Facilitation Report

June 20, 2018



Promoting Excellence in the Public Sector

DRAFT

Purpose and Intended Result of the Session

The intent of the June 20, 2018 session with the Town Council and Senior Administrative staff was to review the progress the Town of Merrimack made over the year on any of the outstanding goals, and to look forward to the upcoming year. Primex³ was pleased to be a part of this process to assist the Town in this important endeavor. The report is not intended to be a verbatim account of the discussion, but rather to capture these major points and concepts.

Participants

Finlay Rothhaus, Chairman

Thomas Koenig, Vice Chairman

Peter Albert, Councilor

William W. Boyd III, Councilor

Nancy Harrington, Councilor

Barbara Healey, Councilor

Eileen Cabanel, Town Manager

Paul Micali, Finance Director

The exercise was facilitated by:

Rick Alpers, Risk Management Consultant, Primex³, and
Toni Flewelling, Member Services Consultant, Primex³

2018 Goal Review Discussion

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

- Draft letter to include highlights of intentions. EPA meeting will be held on Monday, June 25. Need to research and modify results if needed. As a Council, do we encourage and support active regulation?
- Ancillary relationships – sub-agencies within federal government that need to sign off.
- Finish analysis review to issue initial draft report. Be a conduit to information for the public.

Wastewater

- Concerns about Town's compost. Discussions with Saint Gobain for filtration for wastewater. Filter at interceptor where wastewater comes out. Doesn't contribute to Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and compost.

Watson Park

- Soil management plan was endorsed by State on June 19, 2018. Can't see park from road; closer to road will attract people. The majority is OK with the location of the park.
- Need to seek out alternatives to clean up and enhance beautification. (Milford Park example).
- Town historical donation from Mr. Watson did not want fields; wanted an open park for spontaneous activities, to pitch, play frisbee, etc. Fields would go against Mr. Watson's intentions as outlined in deed. Will state consider this to be passive recreation?
- Expanding parking lot – what are options to do so? Council would like Public Works Director Fox to make a presentation with suggestions for parking options.

Basketball Court

- The Town would like the School Board to request the Town to remove the Basketball Court. After July 30, 2018, removal could occur. School board should vote to have Town remove basketball court. Possibility to rebuild court at Merrimack Youth Association?

Skateboard Park

- Should have discussion with School Board to see if skate park should be under purview of Town under a new lease.
- Finance Director Micali will be meeting with Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell on June 23, 2018 for skate park inspection for liability concerns.

Wasserman Park

- Director of Parks and Recreation Casparius has enhanced programming and more advertising is taking place.
- Town Manager Cabanel provided update of building accomplishments.
- Councilor Albert asked if Town could get rid of most of cabins and restore to natural state.
- Town Council would like a presentation of building maintenance priorities and suggestions. What buildings should stay and which should go? Council will need to decide.

Docks and Waterfront

- Town Manager Cabanel reported Council did not have enough information to put money in budget.
- Council needs to provide guidance around budget time. Need to identify what are the priorities? May need separate presentation as part of Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) presentation.

Conservation Properties

- Conservation Commission Chair is reviewing listing of properties to identify which parcels should be enforced for off-roading and Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) use.
- Council feels there is currently enough conservation land. If the Commission would like to add conservation land in the future, they will have to make the case before the Council.

Sklar Property

- OHRV Enforcement continues to be challenging. Signs will be reposted to restrict the property's usage. Officers will have the ability to issue trespass warnings when appropriate.

Trail Maintenance

- Town Manager Cabanel reported Conservation Commission would like the Town to take over maintenance of trails. Chairman Rothhaus feels Conservation Commission should retain maintenance. **All agreed.**

Roads, Bridges, and Sidewalks

Roads

- The DPW Interns will be surveying all the roads in Town to evaluate which roads needs repairs or reconstruction. \$2.1 M will be needed for repairs in first six (6) years and \$1 M every year after to continue maintenance.
- Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is used to determine how roads are rated.
- Councilor Albert commented that Pearson Road is in need of repair; road is crumbling and can't repave. Liability concerns exist. Town Manager Cabanel reported Town has set money aside for reconstruction and planning is underway.

Bridges

- Bedford Road Bridge is in final design stage and construction will begin in Spring 2019.
- US 3 Bridge (Pynenburg) – construction is expected in 2023.
- US Chamberlain Bridge – timing is dependent on available funding in the State Aid bridge program. Project could occur in 2027.

NH DOT Update

- Town Manager Cabanel provided update of widening project to the Everett Turnpike. Route 3 – proposal is to widen road to 3 lanes in each direction; construction expected to begin in 2020.
- Baboosic Lake Road Bridge and the Wire Road Bridge will be replaced and upgraded.

Culverts

- Town Manager Cabanel provided update on culvert replacement projects underway.
- Interns will be reviewing culverts. Cameras will be used to look at infrastructure.
- \$200,000 is budgeted every year for drainage.

Sidewalks

- Majority of sidewalk poll respondents feel sidewalks should be constructed along D W Highway.
- Council feels that people do use the sidewalks for running and walking.
- Need to determine where to add more sidewalks.
- When road reconstruction occurs, sidewalks should be addressed.

Merrimack River Boat Launch

- Project not funded yet.
- Need to locate the agreement to have public access over right of way over the railroad tracks.

Town Buildings

- Town Manager Cabanel provided update of building maintenance projects completed or planned.
- Several building projects have been accomplished such as updated dispatch center, exterior doors painted, new sidewalk outside of Town Hall, new key fob system, etc.
- New HVAC project starting in July 2018.

Public Safety Building

- Money in budget to complete space needs study for Police and Fire Stations.
- Possible funding sources for construction:
 - Shedd Harris Fund (could name Shedd Harris Fire Station in memory).
 - Merrimack Premium Outlets (MPO) \$650,000 from Mall
 - Fund Balance
 - School District Land – 3 acres of school parcel – *should Town approach school to see if school would give additional land?*

Library Update

- No new building talk at this time.

Fund Balance

- Current policy is to allocate one-time amount of money. Does Council want to use certain amount every year or should a portion be allocated to Public Safety Building?
- Offset taxes or let community/voters decide. Find opportunities to educate public on ways to reduce tax rate.
- May want to review results of public safety building space needs study first.

Wastewater

- Phase III will cost approximately \$17-\$19M (initially thought to be \$12M).
- Replacement of two pump stations and rehabbing current equipment.

AB Perlite

- Received study back of investigation of various filtration systems.
- Oberlin Press is most effective technology available for the removal of spent perlite filter aid material.
- No agreement yet with AB.
- Need for permit coming up in the future.

Storm Water MS-4

- NH is waiting for federal government to issue permit.
- Very costly - \$3.6M over next 5 years and \$1 M every year after.
- 2017 MS4 permit, which goes into effect on July 1, 2018, is based on water quality data from prior to 2014. The result of these delays is that permit requirements can be based on outdated data which could cause the municipalities to expend funds where compliance may already exist.
- NH delegation has not supported these bills.
- DES does not want to take this on.

Comcast

- Finance Director Micali reported the Town has the ability to negotiate on certain items. Comcast could be changing “bundling” in the future – could pay more for internet access.

Employee Recognition

- Based on years of service, employees can pick their own gift from a catalog. No tax implications.

Budget Issues

- NHRS – Employer portion increasing.
- School Resource Officer (SRO)/Middle School – Beginning 9/19 – grant is expiring soon. Chief would prefer for Town to pay for the officer – could utilize SRO for other duties.
- Union Contracts – Six contracts in total; five contracts renew at the same time to ensure fairness and consistency across all employee groups, particularly if any changes to health insurance cost sharing. Dialogue / ground rules discussion has begun. Finance Director Micali stated the Town needs a game plan for future contract negotiations for difference cycles.

Concluding Thoughts

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this important process. Primex³ appreciates the opportunity to provide assistance to members with goal setting, and to help governing bodies develop paths to achieve their visions. A forward-looking community that is deliberate, disciplined, and strategic in developing and accomplishing its goals illustrates how “good management is good risk management.”

Center for
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Advancement

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