

Approved: January 8, 2015

Posted: January 12, 2015



## Town Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday December 18, 2014, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Chairman Harrington called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were Vice Chairman Mahon, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Dwyer, Councilor Koenig, Councilor Rothhaus, Councilor Woods, Town Manager Eileen Cabanel, and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Paul Micali.

### Pledge of Allegiance

Life Scout Ian Finken led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Announcements

Town Hall Offices will close at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24, 2014, and will be closed on Thursday, December 25, 2014 in observance of the Christmas holiday. The offices will also be closed on Thursday, January 1, 2015 in observance of New Year's Day.

Regular meetings of the Town Council will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2015 and January 19, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room. Budget meetings will be held on Monday, January 12, 2015, Thursday, January 15, 2015, and Monday, January 19, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room.

Chairman Harrington spoke of the Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline project noting this as the first public meeting of the Town Council since the process has been initiated. She informed the viewing audience of a call received in early December from Kinder Morgan wanting to meet with Council members to obtain information. At that point, it was decided a private meeting was not desired; there was nothing they were going to say to the Council in private that couldn't be said in public. A response was provided stating the Council would welcome an informational meeting, but it would be conducted in public. Since that time the Council has received word Kinder Morgan wishes to conduct a regional open house where they would invite the various towns involved to come together at one time in one location to be provided information.

Chairman Harrington stated she is officially asking that Kinder Morgan have a specific meeting for the Town of Merrimack. There are issues that will be involved with each Town, and citizens should have the right to discuss and ask questions on an individual basis rather than having to sit through discussion of issues involving other towns. As soon as the Council is provided further information, it will be passed along to the public. Documents received by the Town relative to this project have been posted to the website. Councilor Rothhaus questioned whether the Town Manager would be sending a letter requesting a meeting. Chairman Harrington stated that to be the desire.

The Merrimack Police Department is still taking applications for January's Citizen Academy. If interested, please contact Officer Rob Kelleher at 424-3774.

### Comments from the Press and Public – None

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

**1. Acceptance of Resignation of Phil Straight from the Zoning Board of Adjustment**

Submitted by Town Council Chairman Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Tom Mahon

The Town Council to accept the resignation of Phil Straight from the Zoning Board of Adjustment where he has served as a member since May 2006.

**MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Woods to accept, with sincere regret, the resignation of Phil Straight from the Zoning Board of Adjustment**

ON THE QUESTION

Councilor Boyd thanked Mr. Straight for his service on the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), and the commitment he made to serve the ZBA with tremendous credibility over the past 8 years. He remarked he looks forward to his continued service to the community up in Concord.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-1-0**

*Councilor Dwyer voted in opposition*

**2. Recognition of Employees for their Years of Service to the Town of Merrimack**

Submitted by Human Resources Coordinator Sharon Marunicz

Town Council will present awards in recognition of years of service to the following employees:

- **Finance, Town Clerk/Tax Collector & Treasury**  
Brenda DuLong (20-year plaque)  
Diane Trippett (25-year watch)

Chairman Harrington noted Ms. DuLong was unable to be in attendance. She thanked Ms. DuLong for her 20 years of Service to the community of Merrimack.

Town Manager Eileen Cabanel presented Ms. Trippett with a watch in recognition of her 25 years of service.

In doing so, she spoke of Ms. Trippett's dedication to the citizenry. It was noted Ms. Trippett became employed with the Town in May of 1989 as a Clerk/Typist. In August of 1993, she was appointed Deputy Tax Collector/Town Clerk. In May of 1995, she was appointed as Tax Collector/Town Clerk. In 1996, elections began to take place, and Ms. Trippett was elected as Tax Collector/Town Clerk. She is a certified Municipal Clerk through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. Town Manager Cabanel remarked that is quite an accomplishment and one that is not required for the position. It is a four-year program that requires participants to pass exams in order to attain certification. The recertification process must be undertaken every five years. Ms. Trippett is one of only 11 in the entire State of New Hampshire to have been awarded this designation.

Ms. Trippett has served as President of the New Hampshire City and Town Clerks Association and President of the New England Association of City and Town Clerks. She is currently serving as the

Education Chairman on the New Hampshire Tax Collectors Association Executive Board. Town Manager Cabanel expressed gratitude for the length of service provided the Town of Merrimack. Ms. Trippett expressed her gratitude for the continued support from her family, Councilors, past and present, Managers, Administration, and the public.

**- Fire**

Brian Borneman (20-year plaque)

Brian Dubreuil (20-year plaque)

Michael P. Currier, Fire Chief, spoke of two gentlemen that have been with the Fire Department for 20 years, and who were hired on the same day; Assistant Chief Borneman and Captain Dubreuil.

Chief Currier stated Assistant Chief Borneman was hired on July 2, 1994, and was assigned to A shift. He was promoted to Master Firefighter in 1999, Lieutenant in November of 2004, and then assigned to B shift. He was promoted to Captain in January of 2008; again moved and assigned to D shift. In July of 2013, he was promoted to Assistant Chief. He is now responsible for all shifts. He is a nationally registered EMT, Certified Firefighter III, Certified Hazardous Materials Technician, Certified Fire Officer I and Fire Officer II. He is also a Certified Fire Inspector, and has many certifications in incident command including ICS300, which is a very tough goal to achieve, but required by chief officers in our department. He holds an Associates Degree in Fire Science from the New Hampshire Technical College and a Bachelors Degree in Fire Science from Anna Marie College where he graduated Magna cum Laude.

He has been a Post Commander of the Honor Guard, and in 2010 was awarded the Class III Medal of Valor from the State of New Hampshire. He was the officer in charge of Engine 1 at a structure fire in Bedford, NH. Captain Borneman, along with Firefighter Heinz, was on hose line on the bravo side of the building during an exterior operation. While they were operating, the line Deputy Chief from Bedford was conducting a 360. While that was going on he was walking across the back yard where he encountered some ice, that ice gave way and he fell through into the water. With the quick thinking of Assistant Chief Borneman a mayday was immediately called, which put all resources at his beckoning call on the fire ground. Assistant Chief Borneman and Firefighter Heinz immediately headed towards the Deputy Chief and performed a rescue and as the mayday was called additional firefighters went to the rear of the building and were able to pull the Deputy Chief from the water saving his life. The Level III Medal of Honor was bestowed to Assistant Chief Borneman for not only providing his services for the rescue, but taking command of that rescue using the resources he had available and coming out with a positive outcome.

Chief Currier presented Assistant Fire Chief Borneman with a plaque recognizing his 20 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Assistant Fire Chief Borneman expressed his gratitude to the Town Council, Administration, past and present, the citizens of Merrimack, and the rank and file membership of the Fire Department without whom he could not do what he does.

Chief Currier turned the microphone over to Assistant Chief Borneman to present to Captain Dubreuil a plaque recognizing his 20 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Assistant Chief Borneman commented he and Captain Dubreuil have come up through the ranks together. Hired on the same day, July 2, 1994, he was also assigned to A shift. He was promoted to Master Firefighter in August of 2001, to Lieutenant in August of 2006 and assigned back to A shift. Captain Dubreuil, other than a short time on B shift, has spent almost his entire career on A shift. He was promoted to Captain on October 31, 2010. As A shift Commander, he is a nationally registered EMT Basic, Certified Firefighter III, Hazardous Material Technician, Fire Officer I and II, and also Certified ICS 300. He holds an Associates of Applied Science in Business Administration from New Hampshire College and is the current Commander of the Honor Guard. He has served as Vice President of the Local and is currently serving as the President of AFSCME 93 and Local 3657. He was the year 2000 VFW Firefighter of the Year based in part on a rescue he was involved with earning him a New Hampshire Class II Medal of Valor.

On January 29, 2000 a building fire was reported at 225 Naticook Road in South Merrimack. Firefighter Brian Dubreuil responded along with Master Firefighter Wayne Perkins at assigned Engine Company II. They encountered smoke coming from the home upon arrival. They were met by the homeowner who advised them that his Wife and two Grandchildren were still in the home. Without hesitation, they entered the structure without the protection of a hose line or any backup, and proceeded to search for the victims. They immediately located Mrs. Granger and her seven-year-old Grandson on the stairs to the living room. While Firefighter Perkins assisted them from the building, Firefighter Dubreuil continued up the stairs into the home and searched through thick smoke and near zero visibility. He stopped to listen and heard faint coughing coming from the hallway. He crawled down the hallway and located a five-year-old Granddaughter. He carried her from the home to the arriving ambulance. The swift and decisive action demonstrated by Firefighter Brian Dubreuil under extreme conditions resulted in all three people being saved from the fire. For that rescue he was awarded the Class II Medal of Valor for the State of New Hampshire.

Chief Currier presented Captain Dubreuil with a plaque in recognition of his 20 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Captain Dubreuil expressed his gratitude to the citizenry of Merrimack. He thanked the members of the department noting they give 110% every single day.

**- Police**

Denise Roy (20-year plaque)  
Dean KillKelley (25-year watch)  
Peter Albert (30-year clock)

Mark E. Doyle, Chief of Police, stated Lieutenant Roy currently serves as the Department's Criminal Investigation Bureau Commander. She is the leader of the investigative division of 5 Detectives. She came to the Department in 1991 and was appointed as a Special Police Officer, became a Patrolman in 1994, a Sergeant in 2007, and a Lieutenant in 2008. She also served as a Detective, a Juvenile Officer, and in the Legal Division as a Legal Officer/Prosecutor. She is a Merrimack resident. She currently serves on the Board of Directors at the PLUS Co. and was also a member of the Hiring Committee for the Child Advocacy Center. She also served as an Investigator for the Attorney General's Drug Task Force, as a member of the Department's Honor Guard, is currently the Co-Commander of the Department's Containment Team, worked on the Bike Squad, is a Masters Degree candidate at Granite

State College in Leadership, is a member of the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association in the command training aspect, is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, a member of the New Hampshire Police Precision Task Force, is currently trained in critical incident management and national incident management system, is slated to attend the FBI National Academy in the fall of 2015, and although not a Police Officer of the Year, it is certainly on her list of goals to attain.

Chief Doyle read a letter received from the Chief of Police of Stony Point, NY. In his letter the Chief commended Detective Lieutenant Denise Roy and the Detective Bureau and Street Crimes Unit noting the assistance they provided his department in locating a wanted for a double rape and robbery. The letter remarked the Detectives and Street Crime Unit, under her direction, went above and beyond in their effort to assist investigators. The suspect was eventually caught, arrested, charged, and is currently incarcerated and awaiting trial. The Chief ended the letter stating Lieutenant Roy is a credit to your agency and the law enforcement profession.

Chief Doyle presented Lieutenant Roy with a plaque recognizing her 20 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Lieutenant Roy expressed her gratitude. She thanked her co-workers and remarked they are all part of her family, and that it is because of them that she has been able to be successful.

Chief Doyle stated Lieutenant KillKelley is currently assigned as Patrol Squad Commander, became a Special Police Officer with the Merrimack Police Department back in 1983, a Patrolman in 1989, was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2007, and became a Lieutenant in 2008. He also worked as Detective and as a Juvenile Officer. He is a Merrimack resident, and was a volunteer all through the high school years of his Son, Robert, as a member of the MHS Robotics Team. He was one of the founding members and had been serving as a member of the Honor Guard. He is currently Commander of the Accident Investigation and Reconstruction Team, was the Police Officer of the Year in 1993, is a member of the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association, was trained as a Police Prosecutor, has attended the Supervisors Leadership Institute, has attended the Supervisors Academy, is trained in Critical Incident Management and National Incident Management System, is a trainer Homicide Investigator, and was one of our very first Field Training Officers when the department started having people go through that program many years ago.

Chief Doyle read a quick synopsis of an incident Lieutenant KillKelley was involved in. "On 28 July 1996 Officer Dean KillKelley was on a routine patrol on Route 3 in Merrimack. Officer KillKelley observed a vehicle parked near the roadside, and went to that car and observed a female on her side in the front seat. Officer KillKelley called for medical assistance. It was 5:00 a.m., and he was able to gain entry into the car on his own to find the female unresponsive. The victim had an asthmatic inhaler in her hand, and Officer KillKelley administered the contents of the inhaler and the female began to revive and regain full consciousness bringing her back from a potentially life threatening condition."

Chief Doyle presented Lieutenant KillKelley with a watch in recognition of his 25 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Lieutenant KillKelley thanked the Councilors, Town Manager, and Assistant Manager. He thanked his Wife and Son for the years of sacrificing holidays, nights, weekends, and anniversaries.

Chief Doyle stated Captain Albert was before the Council in recognition of his 30 years of dedicated service to the Town of Merrimack. Currently, Captain Albert is the Commander of the Patrol Operations Division. He became a Patrolman in 1984, was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 1994, promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, and promoted to the rank of Captain in 2007. He has served in the department in many capacities; first as a Detective, Detective/Lieutenant, Administrative and Support Services Division Commander, and was the Prosecutor/Legal Officer for a number of years. He is a Merrimack resident and long-time volunteer for the Merrimack Youth Association amongst other activities associated with the Town of Merrimack. He was the Police Officer of the Year in 1991, currently oversees not only the entire operations of the department but the containment team, is a founding member of the Bicycling Patrol, and is also a graduate of the Babson College New England Institute of Law Enforcement Management. He is a member of the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association, will receive his Bachelors Degree from Granite State College in the spring, is FEMA trained in Critical Incident Response and National Incident Management System, is a trained Homicide Investigator, trained Narcotics Investigator, and a trained Evidence Technician.

Chief Doyle spoke of an incident Captain Albert was involved in when he was a Patrolman, dated 12 January 1989: "Detective Peter Albert, while on a paid detail on Society Hill, interrupted a burglary in progress. Detective Albert apprehended two suspects by himself without any backup and assisted in the capture of a third. This was the second time Detective Albert has stopped a burglary in progress at that location." It was at the time the Society Hill Condominium complex was being constructed. A total of five suspects have been arrested in these burglaries due to Captain Albert's dedication, attention to detail, and his perseverance in these investigations. In the letter, Lieutenant Westholme stated his opinion Detective Albert should be commended for excellent police work for that incident and the time it occurred the year prior. He added Detective Albert exhibits the type of aggressiveness and professionalism we all strive to attain. Detective Albert represents the caliber of Police Officer that we here in Merrimack and one the citizens of Merrimack are proud to call one of their own.

Chairman Harrington presented Captain Albert with a clock in recognition of his 30 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Captain Albert remarked it has been his honor to serve the Town of Merrimack. He added in 30 years he has had the opportunity to work with and for great people. For that he is very thankful. He expressed a special thank you to his children. For their patience he stated his appreciation. He thanked his Wife Kathy whose love and support helps him do what he does every day.

- **Public Works**

- Philip Meschino (30-year clock)
  - Ernest Doucette (20-year plaque)
  - Robert Lovering, Jr. (25-year watch)
  - Steven Doumas (25-year watch)
  - Robert MacGrath (25-year watch)

Chairman Harrington noted Messrs. Doucette and MacGrath were unable to be in attendance.

Rick Seymour, Jr., Director, Public Works Department, stated he has known Mr. Meschino for the past 6 of his 30 year tenure as a Custodian of Buildings & Grounds and a Foreman for the Town of Merrimack. He has come to realize he is one of the most dedicated and hard-working employees here. He commented he is flexible, funny, and a very interesting person to work with. He is well known for tackling any red flags that come along the way like a bulldog. He starts his day at the Merrimack Y in order to, as he says, "Limber up and strengthen himself for the physical day ahead at the Town offices."

Director Seymour remarked everyone that works in the Town Hall complex, the Police Department or the Senior Center appreciates his high level of service whether getting someone's ice cold heating system to start, salting the icy walkways, fixing a stubborn door lock, or just keeping the grounds as beautiful as possible. We all continue to benefit from his employment with the Town.

He is also a very dedicated Town resident. In fact, in lieu of being given a clock by the Town he has asked that the money the Town would have spent on the clock instead go to a local church food pantry. Director Seymour remarked on occasion he will ask Phil if he ever thinks of retiring to which he responds "I'm too young for that."

Director Seymour thanked Mr. Meschino for his 30 years of service to the Town of Merrimack. In lieu of a clock he presented Mr. Meschino with red flags.

Mr. Meschino thanked the Town Council and Administration for the recognition. He spoke of enjoying the time he has spent working for the Town.

Adam Jacobs, Operations Manager, Department of Public Works, stated Mr. Lovering has served the Town of Merrimack for 25 years. He started in 1989, and moved up through the ranks to become the Senior Equipment Operator III at the Highway Division. He operates every piece of equipment the department has; most notably the motor grader, which is very difficult machinery to operate. He grades all of the 24 gravel roads in town. He is a very dedicated employee who is always there to answer the call in emergency operations such as the storm the Town experienced the night before Thanksgiving and back in October of 2011. He was one of the few employees that volunteered to stay after about 36 hours or so and answer the call. Everyone else was ready to drop. He caught a few winks but did have a few calls throughout the night to go help ambulances through, etc.

He is there to answer the call for emergencies, but also for community service. He and his Wife, Cathy, are highly involved in community theatre in Nashua with the Children's Theatre. He is extremely dedicated. Mr. Jacobs noted it was Mr. Lovering's Wife's Birthday and he was at the meeting.

Mr. Lovering is the resident trainer for CDL licensing. He helps members of the Public Works Department (PWD) and Fire Department attain their commercial licenses. He is also a Master Road Scholar through the University of New Hampshire Technical Transfer Center, the highest level of Road Scholar in their training program.

He thanked Mr. Lovering and his family for all of the nights, weekends, and holidays he has assisted the Town whenever the call came in.

Director Seymour stated Steven Doumas has been with the Town of Merrimack for 25 years. He is an enthusiastic team player who is very dedicated to the daily operations of the Transfer Station. His attention to detail and process management is extraordinary. Steve has changed and adapted operations many times over the years to promote greater efficiency with a limited number of crew members. He managed both the winter dump and both phases of the main landfill operations and closures. He successfully transitioned the old segregated recycling system into the new single-stream recycling system.

Mr. Doumas managed the installation setup of the new swap shop for usable discarded items. He has also changed the management of brush and yard waste to make it more efficient and user-friendly. He recently installed new video surveillance cameras in the transfer station to enhance facility security. Steve's sense of humor is evident on a daily basis, and is necessary to cope with the breakneck speed of disposal at the recycling and the transfer station centers especially on Saturdays. Without his sense of humor, Steve would not have lasted as long as he has. Director Seymour remarked he is always sure that Steve's mastery of the operations of the transfer station ensures that this operation is in good hands.

Director Seymour presented Steve Doumas with a watch in recognition of his 25 years of service to the Town of Merrimack.

Mr. Doumas thanked the Council, Town Manager, and his co-workers.

Chairman Harrington congratulated all of the recipients on their many years of service, and, as a citizen, expressed her gratitude.

***There being no objection the Council recessed for five minutes at 7:53 p.m.***

***The Council reconvened at 7:58 p.m.***

#### Appointments

#### **1. Annual Review with the Town Center Committee**

Submitted by Town Center Committee Chairman Nelson Disco

Per Town of Merrimack Charter Section 6-6, at least annually, there should be an annual review with the Town Center Committee. This agenda item is to highlight the committee's significant actions, current projects, anticipated actions, and to raise any concerns the Council should know or could act on.

Nelson Disco, Chairman, Town Center Committee, spoke of the Committee's Charge to implement the recommendations that were made in the iTRaC study. Recommendations included sidewalks, trails, etc. in the Town Center area. The Town Center area, as defined for this study, was the land between Fraser Square and Front Street along Route 3 and East of the F.E. Everett Turnpike. The Committee is not funded, but works on ways of implementing funding through other means.



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The Committee consists of 9 members. Mr. Disco presently serves as Chairman, and is also the Planning Board representative. Peter Flood is the Vice Chairman. His Wife, Jackie, is the Committee's Secretary and the representative from the Watson Park Committee. Christopher Ortega is currently the representative from the School District; however, he will soon be replaced by Davis Powell. Karen Freed represents the Library Board of Trustees. Mary Hendricks is the representative from the Merrimack Chamber of Commerce. Debra Huffman and Bill Wilkes are citizen representatives. Finlay Rothhaus is the Town Council representative.

The Committee meets monthly, and is assisted by Ms. Lelia Mellen, an advisor from the National Park Service. Deputy Director Kyle Fox is the local advisor from the Public Works Department.

This year the Committee's main focus has been on two of the recommendations; Safe Routes to School Study and improvements to the Souhegan River Trail. With regard to Safe Routes to School, a considerable amount of work was performed in the past few years with a survey and a study that was completed by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) for the middle school and high school area, which is part of the Town Center. A committee was formed, which received a great deal of input from parents, school administration, and teachers. The takeaway from that study was we would do more if we could get there safely. Encouragement for walking is spreading nationwide.

Federal funding was supported by the State through the Safe Routes to School Program. After funding was reduced, that program was combined with a couple of other programs and consolidated into what is now called the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), which is administered in New Hampshire by the Department of Transportation (NH DOT). The NH DOT advertised, and received about \$30 million worth of requests for funding from across the State. They are funded at the level of \$5 million. The School Administrative Unit (SAU) is considering an application in 2015. However, the Town Center Committee has an application in place.

The Souhegan River Trail is a hiking trail which, when finished, will extend from Watson Park to Wildcat Falls along the Souhegan River. It will go, via an old Sluiceway, under Route 3 and along the Souhegan River. It will connect with the footbridge that was constructed across the Souhegan River at the time the Merrill's Marauders Bridge was rebuilt on the F.E. Everett Turnpike, and then continue on to Wildcat Falls. Easements were acquired from the SAU, which owns the majority of the land. The right-of-way for the Sluiceway was donated by the Pennichuck Corporation. The Town now has ownership of all of the property.

During this past year, a small wooden foot bridge was constructed by an Eagle Scout. Along with that portions of the trail were relocated to get them away from the very edge of the river. Subsequent to that trail markers were placed along that section of trail. The school cross country team has utilized some of that trail this year. The Committee is planning for a sign to be placed on the foot bridge that crosses the Souhegan River, which will identify the Merrill's Marauders Bridge. Some help has been provided by the Merrill's Marauders Society.

Mr. Disco remarked the big piece that is missing in the trail is the connection from the Sluiceway to the School District land. The Town has a safety issue with the sidewalk on the east side of Route 3 at the Chamberlain Bridge. He noted it has been in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for some time, and stated his belief rebuilding that section of sidewalk is in the CIP for next year. Using that as a

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stepping stone, the Committee has applied for Advanced Transportation Plan (ATP) funds to build the other piece of trail on the west side of the Chamberlain Bridge that will connect over to the School District land. There is some heavy work involved there; concrete to be removed, etc. With the help of Deputy Director Fox, the Committee has put together an application for ATP funds. The application was submitted in September. The Town contribution for this is identified as the east side commitment. Application results are expected to be received by the end of January. If unsuccessful, other means of funding will be sought.

Some survey work has been completed in the area. In order to perform the work, a State permit is required for work in the Shoreland Protection Area of the Souhegan River. The permit application requires a survey of existing conditions. Steve Keach of Keach-Nordstrom Associates, Inc. has volunteered to work with the Committee at his cost (\$1,500). The Committee received a \$1,000 grant from the National Park Service, and a Merrimack citizen donated \$500. The survey is complete, and the data is in the hands of Deputy Director Fox and available when the time comes to make that application.

A donation was made of monies (\$327) remaining from fundraising efforts associated with the construction of the footbridge. A reserve account has been established, which will likely be utilized towards signage, etc.

The recommendation to build a sidewalk to Wire Road is on hold pending the Wire Road/Route 3 intersection improvements.

For 2015, the Committee is hoping to implement the Souhegan River Trail through the ATP Grant. If the application is unsuccessful, other funding sources will be sought. The Committee continues to support the School District in its application for ATP funds and to seek safety improvements to the Safe Routes to School routing so that people can take more advantage of that. One of the goals is to increase public awareness of the Committee's efforts.

Mr. Disco spoke of a recommendation included in the Master Plan to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for sidewalks. The Committee recommends that be done. Mr. Disco spoke of assistance provided by a group by the name of Healthy Eating and Living (HEAL) New Hampshire, which offers support in terms of training, education, etc. Several members have attended their free workshops.

Vice Chairman Mahon questioned, and was informed the requirement for matching funds, should the grant application be successful, is 20%. It is hoped monies allocated to conduct the work on the east side will be acceptable as the match, which would well exceed the required 20%. When asked if the grant application utilizes a scoring system, Deputy Director Fox responded the process is being run through the NH DOT Decision Lens software. The goal of the software is to take the political and emotional side of project choice out of the equation and make it a more merit based process. It is a two-step process for all projects within each Regional Planning Commission.

The NRPC scores all of the projects from our region. That scoring is used as part of the NH DOT's scoring (6%). The software looks at all of the numerical categories, but also looks at all different funding sources and best fits as many projects as possible to the available funding. From the most recent census, the Nashua area became a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) due to a

population over 200,000. The NRPC has jurisdiction over a certain amount of funds themselves. Some funds are guaranteed for the Nashua region, which Derry and Auburn are included in, and perhaps Pelham as well, none of which are normally NRPC communities. There are some funds guaranteed to come to this MPO area and other dedicated funds from the statewide program; all of which we are in competition for.

Councilor Koenig questioned the amount applied for with the grant application. Deputy Director Fox stated as part of the criteria for the application, projects have to have a minimum cost of \$200,000 and a maximum cost of \$800,000. He stated his recollection the application was in the \$550,000 range for both phases. The project on the east side is listed in the CIP in the \$200,000 range. Deputy Director Fox noted in the application it is necessary to state the amount of federal aid being sought. The full 80% was requested. Should the grant application be successful, the Town would save funds on the east side project as the Town would pay the 20% of the total amount.

Public Hearing - None

Legislative Updates from State Representatives - None

Town Manager's Report

The Nashua Regional Solid Waste Management District's Household Hazardous Waste Program has completed collections for this year. There were 5 collection events held at the Nashua Highway garage and one held in Milford. Two hundred and six Merrimack households took advantage of this program, and Merrimack disposed of 10,800 pounds of hazardous waste this year. Six more collection events are proposed for next year. The next event is scheduled for April 18, 2015 in Nashua. For additional information please contact the Merrimack Solid Waste Division at 424-2604.

If you have received an eReader, tablet or smartphone for the holidays but need some guidance on how to use it, the Library will be holding a Technology Drop-In Session on Monday, December 29th from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. for anyone who would like some help learning how to navigate it. Let us introduce you to downloadable music and eBooks. If you can't make that session, call the Library to set up a 30-minute appointment during our business hours.

The Annual Holiday Parade & Tree Lighting was held on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. Despite the chilly temperatures; the parade was well attended and more than 400 people were in attendance at the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Town Manager Cabanel remarked as part of the agreement with the Merrimack Youth Association (MYA), the financial records of the MYA are to be made available. The MYA has not yet provided their audited financial statements in accordance with their contract. The contract states in part that for each fiscal year the following October 31<sup>st</sup> the audited financial statements need to be prepared on a certain financial basis by a Certified Public Accountant.

Chairman Harrington questioned when the report was due to the Council. Town Manager Cabanel stated the year ended on June 30, 2014 and the Council was to be provided the report by October 31,

2014. Chairman Harrington asked Town Manager Cabanel whether she or Director Micali has been in contact with the MYA regarding the delay. Director Micali responded he reached out to the President of the MYA in mid to late November, and was informed an audit would be forthcoming. He was in contact with the auditing CPA firm yesterday as they require information from the Town. He provided the information, and questioned when the report would be available. The response he received was that the auditor does not see it in the near future.

Chairman Harrington questioned, and was informed in the previous instance the Council withheld the quarterly payment until a report was made available. Town Manager Cabanel stated the next quarterly payment would be due on January 2, 2015. The document itself states if the MYA does not fulfill the obligations of the agreement that the "Town shall submit to the MYA a written notice of such unsatisfactory performance or default. If the MYA fails or refuses to remedy said unsatisfactory performance or default within thirty calendar days after receipt of the Town's notice, the Town may declare this Agreement to be immediately terminated."

Councilor Boyd asked for clarification, if the Council determined not to take action at this time, a check would be cut to the MYA on January 2, 2015. Town Manager Cabanel stated that to be correct, and noted she does not have the authority not to. Councilor Boyd questioned, and was informed the amount of the quarterly payment would be \$18,000.

**MOTION made by Councilor Mahon and seconded by Councilor Boyd to submit to the Merrimack Youth Association written notice of non-compliance and notification the penalty will be in the form of withholding payment**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**7-0-0**

*There being no objection, the Council went out of the regular order of business to take up Item #1 under New Business.*

**1. Eagle Scout Project Presentation**

Submitted by Life Scout Ian Finken

Life Scout Ian Finken seeks Council approval of his proposed Eagle Scout project which entails installing 8 new navigational signs throughout Wasserman Park. The Parks and Recreation Committee is recommending this project for approval.

Life Scout Ian Finken, Troop 401, remarked he was before the Council seeking approval of his Eagle Scout project. He spoke of assistance he has received from the Parks and Recreation Department, and expressed his gratitude.

Funding for the project will be generated through fundraising efforts (100%). Life Scout Finken displayed a 3D model of the proposed signage as well as a display of locations for placement of signage within Wasserman Park.

He commented as a camper in his early years he found it difficult to locate different buildings and areas of the park. His desire is to add three main signs (10' with 2' underground); one at the entrance, one at the exit, and one further down past the Parks and Recreation office. These signs will provide

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general directions to the different locations throughout the park. Four smaller signs (8' with 2' underground) will be placed down the trails leading from the non-visitors parking lot to the athletic field and from there to the beachfront area. He remarked the non-visitors trail is a bit newer and users don't always know those trails go all the way to the beachfront.

Sign posts will be pressure treated. The individual boards will be pine. The signs will resemble current signage throughout town (brown with yellow painting). The standard, National Park, font will be utilized. Although 7 signs in total, 1 will serve as a replacement for an existing, worn sign.

Fundraising efforts will consist of a Soup & Salad, which is anticipated to generate the total cost needed of \$400.

Life Scout Finken thanked the Council for the opportunity to present his Eagle Scout project, and requested approval.

Councilor Koenig questioned the timeframe for the project. Life Scout Finken stated his hope he will be before the Eagle Board in the January/February timeframe, and able to begin the project prior to April. He stated his hope he will have assistance from his fellow scouts with regard to fundraising efforts. Due to BSA regulations regarding the use of power tools, etc. his fellow scouts would not be able to assist with the actual construction.

Councilor Boyd questioned how the letters would be carved into the wood, and was informed there is a template, which will be utilized.

**MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Dwyer to approve the proposed Eagle Scout project of Life Scout Ian Finken, which entails installing eight (8) new navigational signs throughout Wasserman Park. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0**

*The Council returned to the regular order of business.*

Consent Agenda - None

Old Business

#### **1. Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaws**

Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matt Casparius

The Town Council will revisit the Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaws as discussed at the August 21, 2014 Town Council meeting.

Matt Casparius, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, stated after the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Committee reviewed and revised proposed changes to the Bylaws. In order to change the Bylaws, it is necessary to also change the Charter with regard to membership terms.

Director Casparius commented the issue faced by the Committee is that of vacancies (4 at present). Membership consists of 12 full members and 2 alternate members with representation from the MYA, Senior Center, School Board, and a student representative. Seven are required to make quorum. The

proposed language would reduce membership to 10, which would include a full member and an alternate member from the MYA, Senior Center, and School Board. The requirement for a quorum would be reduced to 6. The student representative requirement was removed from the proposed language due to little interest over the years.

Chairman Harrington noted in order for a change to the Charter, the issue would have to go before the voters. Director Micali stated, if the Council chose to move the item forward to the Ballot, a Public Hearing would have to be conducted in the January timeframe. When asked if there is sufficient time available to meet all requirements, Director Micali stated he was uncertain. Vice Chairman Mahon stated his belief there would be a sufficient number of meetings in January to address the requirements for posting, public hearing, etc.

Councilor Woods question whether the request was being made for a revision to the Charter. Director Casparius responded the requested revision to the Bylaws cannot occur without a change to the membership section of the Charter.

The following additional amendments were offered by the Council:

#### **Article I** - Name, Purpose, Functions and Policy

Section 1 - Name; quotation marks should be placed before and after the word Committee.

Section 2 - Purpose; the paragraph is conflicting and does not clearly identify the purpose. Councilor Koenig stated his impression the intent is to state the Committee cannot report to the Town Council independently, as sub-committees, or opposing factions on the Committee. If coming before the Town Council it has to be as a whole body. He explained further if there is division the Committee cannot have a descending report come to the Town Council. The idea is that the Committee comes together as one unit to makes it presentations, and does it through the Parks and Recreation Director as the primary contact.

Councilor Boyd stated his preference for the explanation provided by Councilor Koenig, and questioned whether Director Casparius could simplify the statement before bringing the proposal back for a first reading. It was suggested the paragraph could be divided into two sections.

#### **Article II** - Membership

Section I - Members and Terms; amend the second sentence by removing the words “for three year terms”.

Amend the 6<sup>th</sup> sentence to read: “Each of the three organizations may also select an alternate member who shall serve, in the absence of the full member”.

Divide the paragraph into three sections.

**Section 4** - Secretary; add an apostrophe to the word “Clerk’s”

Councilor Dwyer remarked the biggest challenge of the Committee has been with the size of membership as dictated by the Charter, and stated his opinion it may be that 8 is a more reasonable size and perhaps increasing the number of alternate positions. He also suggested a discussion around the particular groups from which representation is required. It was suggested the individual organizations currently having representation on the Committee be contacted, in writing, to determine interest in continued participation, and that a deadline be identified for response.

Councilor Woods stated his opinion Parks and Recreation is a Town function. The Council has allocated some funds for parks, which is an effort he expects will continue. He stated his opinion the Town should be making the necessary decisions. Councilor Rothhaus questioned the level of participation that has been seen. Councilor Dwyer commented there is nothing that prevents a member of any of the particular organizations or the citizenry from volunteering to serve on the Committee. He clarified what he is interested in is a debate on whether or not there should be a requirement for representation from specific organizations.

### New Business

#### **2. Road Acceptance of Dumas Lane**

Submitted by Public Works Deputy Director Kyle Fox

At the Planning Board meeting on December 2, 2014, per Subdivision Regulations Section 5.01.1(f) the Planning Board has released the performance bond in favor of the two year maintenance bond and recommended acceptance of Dumas Lane by the Town Council. Acceptance of the road is conditioned upon receipt of the two year maintenance bond in the amount of \$44,603.50.

Deputy Director Kyle Fox stated Dumas Lane is a new road constructed over the past few years, and is located off of Briann Drive, which is off of Bean Road near West Road. It was part of a larger project called Butterfields Subdivision. Work on the project completed earlier this year. The PWD was involved in all inspections, and recommends acceptance of the road. Upon acceptance, the PWD would take over maintenance of the road.

**MOTION made by Councilor Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Mahon for acceptance of Dumas Lane conditioned upon the receipt of a two-year maintenance bond in the amount of Forty Four Thousand Six Hundred Three Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$44,603.50). MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0**

#### **3. Wasserman Park Presentation**

Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Casparius

Parks and Recreation Director Matt Casparius will present the Council with his recommendations for Wasserman Park improvement funds.

Director Casparius commented the park is an untapped community resource, and one most towns do not have. Ones he is familiar with utilize the amenity through the running of programs 7 days a week, which can generate significant revenue. The desire is to maintain the rustic nature of the park while increasing the number and type of community events that can take place.

He commented 99% of the time, municipal day camps are run in schools, and do not have the connection to the outdoor environment that Merrimack has. He stated the desire to increase access to the park for residents. Some of the types of programs considered include environmental nature based activities such as project wild, teacher training with biology, natural sciences, etc. but also activities such as canoeing, sailing lessons, cross country skiing, wilderness first responder, wilderness EMT, etc. Director Casparius remarked he happens to hold a certification as a first responder, and for his initial certification he had to travel to Colorado. He received recertification in Maine. The cost of the first responder certification is approximately \$700 and the EMT is a few thousand for one person to attend. Those types of programs could do well in Merrimack. He spoke of the Police Department conducting training at the park in recent weeks, and suggested the Town could be a regional resource for those types of activities.

He spoke of a walking program that began in the fall, and noted he will lead snowshoeing activities during the winter months.

A group of residents has approached the Parks and Recreation Committee about the idea of putting in a disc golf course on the land where the tree clearing was conducted last spring. A proposal is being prepared to bring before the Council.

Director Casparius stated one of the items he will be requesting in his FY16 budget is funding to support the restoration of weekend lifeguard coverage. The park is getting a fair amount of use during weekends. On any given weekend there are between 100-200 people in the park, half of which are at the waterfront. If there were lifeguard coverage another potential offering would be renting of the canoes and sailboats owned by the Town, and utilized by the summer camp. Income could be generated to support their replacement when the time comes.

Director Casparius spoke of his previous employment where the Town had film productions that would rent space to store trailers, etc., endeavors which generated between \$3,000 and \$30,000 a year.

The buildings are without sprinkler systems, which limits use. Although the Town is allowed to utilize them for its events, the facilities cannot be rented out. There will be the desire, at some point, to restore sprinklers to at least the function hall as it would be a revenue source. Director Casparius remarked he spoke with the Fire Department and is aware if there were sprinklers in the function hall, the downstairs could be fixed up and used as classrooms.

With the allocation of \$55,000 the Parks and Recreation Committee has developed a four phase list of projects. Phase I is what is being proposed for the \$55,000 and addresses the critical health and safety issues, and providing impact that will do the most good. The Phase I project lists consists of the following:

1. Creation of a New Lower Parking Area/Cabin Demolition

This would increase accessibility to the waterfront. Director Casparius commented discussion of this began with Councilor Dwyer, Rick Seymour, and Adam Jacobs around whether it is feasible to put in a parking lot down where the dining hall used to be. It would be an option. He remarked it is likely the biggest concern he hears from users of the park on a routine basis. What would be proposed is a gravel base parking lot that would hold roughly 22-24 cars with 2 additional spaces on the current pavement



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for handicapped parking. The entrance road would be widened by 4' from the Park & Recreation Office down to the intersection where the existing turnoff is to the old dining hall site. That would allow for two-way traffic. Barrier access gates would be placed on the turnoff to the function hall and another below the parking area.

A park perimeter fence would be installed going down the access road as a barrier for kids to keep them from running into the street, etc. If necessary, temporary speed bumps could be installed. As part of this project, cabin 13 would be demolished. It is the structure in the worst condition, and one which has been closed for 3-4 years.

Between the cabin and the theatre is the old stone pump house, which is boarded up and has a roof that is caving in. The first project would encompass the parking area, the cabin, and the pump house. The cabin is right on the turn-around, and taking it down would make it much easier for motorists to navigate.

Total cost of those three items, utilizing labor from the Public Works Department, is \$21,300. Of that, \$8,000 is the cabin and the stone pump house, leaving \$13,300 (actual cost) to put the parking lot in and improve accessibility for residents. That cost does not figure in labor time. Mr. Jacobs has stated it would require 6 employees and 2 weeks' time. Estimated value of their time is between \$12,000 - \$14,000. It would be two weeks' time where you wouldn't have 6 employees doing other things in Town. If the project were undertaken it would have to occur in the fall as the spring time is too busy.

Vice Chairman Mahon questioned whether those amounts would be captured. He commented if other sources of funding, e.g., grants, etc. were to come down the road, those costs could be cited as matching funds. Director Casparius responded he has not yet identified any grant funding; however, those costs could be tracked and attempts made to acquire grants. Director Micali stated the cost of in-house labor could be tracked separately.

Councilor Boyd questioned whether the workload of the PWD is known for the fall timeframe. Director Micali spoke of the requirement for all fields to be closed, preparatory work for the winter months performed, etc. That time of year is busy; however, not as busy as the spring time. Director Micali noted from June 15<sup>th</sup> until August 15<sup>th</sup> no work is done at the camp. Since work cannot be performed in the summer, it was deemed most appropriate to do the work in the fall.

Councilor Dwyer stated his opinion the work should be done either in late winter or early spring. He commented he would not wish to wait another year before the parking lot is constructed. He suggested an open mind be kept towards allowing the weather to dictate when the work will be completed. Councilor Boyd stated his agreement, and noted the winter carnival is the only event that occurs at Watson Park during that time. He is of the belief the winter season is a better opportunity to get the work done. Chairman Harrington questioned whether certain weather conditions could prevent the work from being done during the winter.

Town Manager Cabanel responded they will discuss it with the PWD, and see what can be done with the understanding that is the desire of the Council.

## **2. Function Hall Exterior Improvement**

A good deal of siding, window trim, flashing, etc. is rotted. Town Manager Cabanel remarked the function hall now serves as the dining hall as well, and is an integral part of the camp program. Director Casparius stated funds would address the issues. The building is heavily used during the summer. It is also used for the Winter Carnival, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween party, etc. The building could be winterized and heat added down the road. Estimated cost of repairs is \$10,000.

## **3. Theatre Improvements**

The building is in good shape overall. There are 4-6 small roof leaks. It is believed the leaks are occurring in the area where the screws are placed in the metal roof to hold it into the structure. The metal roof heats and contracts. The same issue was seen on the day camp office this past summer, which was fixed utilizing in-house resources.

Councilor Rothhaus questioned whether the leak over the stage has created more of a problem for the stage. Director Casparius stated it will, and noted they have placed a tub in the area of the leak.

## **4. Arts & Crafts Building**

The building has fallen into significant disrepair. It is utilized a good deal during the summer. It has four rooms and can house a lot of people for different offerings. It could be utilized even more once repaired. The side walls have been painted. The sheetrock in the ceiling needs to be replaced. There is a small leak around the roof vent. It needs new flashing. The exterior needs to be painted. Director Casparius remarked he has been approached by a Girl Scout wishing to repaint the interior and paint murals.

One side of the building has an old rusted railing that will be addressed as well as minor repairs that are necessary for a ramp on the other side. Total anticipated cost for this building is \$5,000. When asked if there are any concerns with mold in this building, Director Casparius stated he is not aware of any. Director Micali noted this was one of the buildings addressed in the last renovation. It was reviewed, and no mold concerns were expressed.

## **5. Demolition of Stone Pump House**

## **6. Parks & Recreation Office Accessibility**

The office is not currently ADA accessible. The steps that go into the office are too high for current building codes. Being proposed is an ADA accessible ramp. There is ample room to avoid extending the ramp into the parking lot. Cost is estimated at \$6,700.

## **7. Day Camp Office/Camp Health Center Accessibility**

The office also houses the camp Nurse. Numerous complaints are received during the summer monthly about the concrete steps that go into that main office door. In order to construct a ramp to make the building ADA accessible one would either go up to the building, jet to the left and go into the

main entrance door or turn one of the windows into a door, which would be a straight shot into the building and likely less expensive than the proposed option that has an estimated cost of \$6,500.

#### 8. Cabin 12/Bear's Den

This is the first building on the left after going down the hill past the tennis courts. It has been closed for 3+ years. It needs the least amount of work; mostly electrical updates, exterior painting, addressing small leak in back corner of building, etc. The building could serve as a future home for new programs. Estimated cost is \$4,500.

The total cost of all projects identified in Phase I is \$55,000. The items are identified in order of preference. If projects came in at a greater cost some would be postponed, and if coming in under estimates, additional projects would be undertaken (Phases 2 -4).

Councilor Boyd remarked the memo that was provided outlines a plan of attack for Wasserman Park over the next 3-5 years. He thanked him and all who were involved in the effort.

Councilor Dwyer stated his hope it would not take 3-5 years to address the issues included in the memorandum. He stated his belief the jewel that gets such programs going, e.g., inviting EMT classes and certifications, etc. is the function hall. The function hall should be a 12-month facility. He stated his belief if it were it would be generating revenue and he would expect return on investment to be less than 3 years' time. Councilor Boyd questioned the potential for cost savings if addressing sprinkler systems at the theatre and function hall simultaneously.

#### **MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Dwyer to endorse Phase I of the Casparius Wasserman Park Renovation Plan**

#### **ON THE QUESTION**

Councilor Woods stated concern with the accuracy of the estimates. Director Casparius stated he conducted a site walk with Roger Blais, a contractor the Town does a good deal of work with. Also considered were costs associated with recent repairs performed. Councilor Woods suggested, if able to save funds, the boat house project should be completed.

#### **MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0**

#### **4. First Quarter Financial Update**

Submitted by Finance Director Paul T. Micali

Finance Director Paul Micali will review the key financial information of the quarter ending September 30, 2014.

Director Micali provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the financial results of the prior quarter. Included were charts comparing; overtime by department, auto registrations, interest and building permits, health insurance, and the New Hampshire Retirement System from FY09 through FY15. The last slide provided was an Expenditure Report summarized by department. It was noted the charts compare the first quarter only for each of the fiscal years.

Director Micali stated health insurance is a major cost for the Town, running about \$3 million a year. It has steadily increased over the years. This year the first quarter numbers are slightly below those for the same time period in the last fiscal year (approx. \$3,700). Although there was a rate increase of about 3.7%, there was a reduction due to the number of retirements and the delay between retirements and new hires.

Cost associated with the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) is one of the largest expenses the Town has. Overall the cost is approx. \$2,000 under where it was at this time last year. There have been a significant number of retirements and with that the buy-out on the back end bumps up some of the health insurance costs. The NHRS rates are for a two-year period. The Town is in the second year of a two-year cycle. Although rates have been flat for the current fiscal year, The Police Department numbers are running slightly higher because of the step increases. Although the contract did not result in raises, there are step increases included. Fire Department numbers are down due to retirements (5 in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter). The reason Group 1 is up slightly is related to the way compensated absences are calculated (all in General Government).

With regard to overtime, the costs are about \$7,000 below the first quarter of the prior fiscal year. The majority is due to the large turnover in the Fire Department. Overtime rate is less than prior years. Overtime for the Police Department is down approx. \$1,000. Communications overtime is up significantly (approx. \$4,000 or 50%) over last year. The reason being two part-time positions are vacant. Currently those part-time shifts are being filled with overtime.

Highway is down slightly. Solid Waste overtime is up about \$8,000 or close to 90% over last year. That is unique for Solid Waste. When that department has a vacancy it is always backfilled with overtime because of their operations. Most employees are off on a Saturday. The people they backfill from is the highway garage, and they already had their 40 hours. The employee assisting at the transfer station on a Saturday (one of their busiest days) is on 100% overtime. There was some overtime when the cabin and the red house were taken down and there was the need to get those loads to the transfer station without impacting the rest of the operation. An individual was brought in on an overtime day (Monday) to put in 8 hours running the truck.

With regard to revenues, Director Micali stated there is a small bump in interest being seen (0% to 0.02%). He stated, over the past two days, the 401Ks have gone up due to what the Feds have said with regard to interest revenue, e.g., will not look at making a rate change until late next year (likely the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY16).

Building permits have come down to normal levels. In the first quarter of last year Atrium Medical came in with a lot of building permits, which bumped the revenues up to \$61,000. We are back down to the \$30,000 range this year, which is what is consistent with what is budgeted. Director Micali stated the belief the \$100,000 estimate will be reached. Director Micali stated it likely the Town will not hit the \$75,000 goal in the area of interest - pooled cash. However, other revenues have far exceeded the goal for the first quarter, and will more than make up for that difference.

Director Micali remarked auto registrations are the highest they have been in the first quarter during his tenure with the Town. Revenue generated is nearly \$1.1 million. That uptick continued from the fourth quarter of last year where in June alone the Town received \$400,000.

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Director Micali noted he is working with the Auditors. They will be in-house on the 22<sup>nd</sup> to help finalize the June 30, 2014 audit. The fund balance has increased, and is up over \$3 million.

Councilor Boyd questioned whether the Auditors have communicated anything that would be irregular. Director Micali responded their communications have been unofficial, e.g., no management letter this year. There will be a comment letter sent out with the audit to the Council. There were no findings. It was noted this was the first year with a new auditor, the process went smoothly, and the auditors were happy.

The Town's unemployment rate is lower than that of the State. Developments are occurring on both ends of the D.W. Highway. The Town has sufficient cash reserves. Revenues are strong. There was a bit of a windfall with the insurance rebate from NHMA and Health Trust; more than what was projected last year. The Rooms & Meals Tax revenue came in higher than projected. The State kept its word and provided the additional monies promised in years past. They began paying back what was owed for upgrades of dewatering, sewer line interceptor, etc. that were on hold because of a moratorium. That was lifted and the Town received the funds.

Town Manager Cabanel commented there are two large revenue sources the Town receives from the State; Rooms & Meals Taxes and the Highway Block Grant. Often times the State will fall short on the Highway Block Grant. Director Micali noted some of the funding the Town is receiving for bridge aid is a result of the \$.04 tax that was put on gasoline and what is projected for revenues.

### Minutes

Approve the minutes from the December 4, 2014 Town Council meeting.

The following amendments were offered:

Page 5, Line 30; add a comma after the word "FY11"

**MOTION made by Councilor Woods and seconded by Councilor Boyd to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting conducted on December 4, 2014 as amended. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0**

Comments from the Press - None

Comments from the Public

Debra Huffman, 60 Amherst Road

Thanked the Council for its decision to hold the Kinder Morgan presentation in public and for posting the documents online. She requested the Council do whatever possible to encourage discussion of the project throughout the community before the Kinder Morgan presentation. She commented most people don't yet know what is involved with the project, and think Merrimack will get more natural gas or that it is simply a regular pipeline.

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There is the need to provide accurate information to the citizenry and to ensure businesses are kept informed. The proposed route runs next to several of Merrimack's largest employers. It is necessary to remember the Kinder Morgan presentation will be a sales pitch. They are legally required to meet with us, but their job is to convince us that this is the only alternative, and that it is good for Merrimack. We have to do our own research.

She remarked after Hollis, Fitzwilliam, Rindge, and many other towns did their own research, their Selectmen voted not to support this project. She requested the Council include the pipeline on future agendas to encourage the discussion, and as new pieces of factual information pertinent to Merrimack are learned, they be added to the website.

#### Comments from the Council

Councilor Boyd wished the citizenry a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

Vice Chairman Mahon echoed the remarks, and wished the citizenry of Merrimack a happy holiday season.

Chairman Harrington wished the same to the Town employees.

Councilor Rothhaus wished all a happy holiday season. He informed the Council and viewing audience of a Merrimack native, Tim Schaller, who has the opportunity to play for the Buffalo Sabres.

Councilor Woods stated his appreciation to all of the employees who were recognized earlier in the meeting for their service to the Town. He commented he would be remiss if he did not say a special word about Steven Doumas commenting he was privileged to be an employee of his for 10 years and watched as he worked through what had been an established dump to a very well run and well put together transfer station. He wished the community-at-large and his colleagues on the Council a happy holiday season.

**MOTION made by Councilor Mahon and seconded by Councilor Boyd to adjourn the meeting.**

**MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0**

The December 18, 2014 meeting of the Town Council was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan