

Town Manager's Report Monday, April 4, 2011

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

Following are some of the matters reported on this week by various Town Departments:

COUNCIL ON AGING

New Director: Virginia (Ginger) Quarles will begin work as Concord's new COA Director on Tuesday, April 26. Ginger brings to Concord her many years' of experience as COA Director for the Town of Harvard, and will take over for Mary Anne Mortenson who retired last Thursday.

FIRE

Station 1 Renovation: As this project nears completion, Department staff report that they are expecting a certificate of occupancy this week with a moving date immediately thereafter. This will signify an end to the floor 2 renovation and the beginning of what will probably be several months of additional work on floor 1 and outside the .

LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Power Supply: The Light Plant successfully completed an RFP with power purchases from Next Era & Constellation Energy for 2013 - 2015. This RFP was for 2013-2016 using a "shaped block method". This approach was used so that we can start filling in both peak and base load. The final prices were as expected (see below) and are significantly lower than our existing power supply contracts.

Calendar 2013: \$56.45 Next Era - 27,384 MWhrs
Calendar 2014: \$59.45 Next Era - 14,888 MWhrs
Calendar 2015: \$61.60 Constellation - 12,856 MWhrs

The All-in weighted average price for over 36,000 On-Peak MWh and 19,000 Off-Peak MWh was **\$58.46/MWh**. While this cost is slightly higher than the fall prices, we need to keep in mind that the fall purchase was only base load and had no peak load included. That said, it was a successful spring purchase. While noted that CMLP requested pricing for 2016, it is still too far out for all of the suppliers to give pricing; that said, we did not move on 2016 but do expect results for 2016 in the upcoming fall purchase.

Power Outage: There was a power outage on Friday morning at approximately 8:30 AM, with approximately 80 customers without power. The outage resulted from the heavy snow which caused a branch to break and damaged the overhead power lines on Ridge Road. The following roads were affected: Ridge Road, Walnut Street, Chestnut Street, Authors Road, Wayside Road and Revolutionary Road. CMLP crews worked hard to repair the power lines while also responding to several isolated service calls in other parts of Town. All power was restored at approximately 10:30 AM.

PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

Building and Inspections Division

141 Keyes Road Construction Project: Last week staff continued installing a new second entrance to the first floor meeting room at 141 Keyes Road. This work should be completed within the next couple of weeks after which the room can be used for additional seating under the building code.

Longview Meadow Emergency Access: Last week, staff from Building and Municipal Light met with Longview Meadow Housing project construction staff to confirm the scope and nature of the emergency access road that will cross through the CMLP substation site located on Forest Ridge Road. This new road will provide the second and third emergency access routes directly from Concord if needed by the Concord Fire Department.

Natural Resources Division

Caesar Robbins House Move: This week Natural Resources staff signed off on the application to move the Caesar Robbins house from 324 Bedford Street to 1261 Monument Street (near the North Bridge) on behalf of the Commission. In accordance with APP #23 (Building Move Procedures), several Town departments and boards, as well telephone and cable companies, are required to sign off on the application to move an oversized structure on a public way. The move is scheduled May 14 or May 21, between the hours of 7am and 10am. Once all signatures are obtained, the Drinking Gourd Project will apply to the Board of Selectmen for approval to move the home to its new site.

New Development: Preconstruction meetings were held for the following developments this week: 266 Main Street, 709 Bedford Street, and the Concord Riverwalk public trail at 1631/1641 Main Street. Work should commence on these project next week.

Concord Cleanup: The Natural Resources Office continues to receive numerous volunteers signing up for the Town-wide clean-up scheduled from April 2 to April 10.

Planning Division

Community Preservation Committee: On Wednesday night, the CPC held their last regular meeting before Town Meeting to review the presentation and handouts for Town Meeting. The CPC also voted to close three of its completed projects (the Emerson Umbrella Safety Improvements Project, the Town's Affordable Housing Production Plan, and the Barrett Farm Restoration Project) and received an update on all of its currently open

projects. The CPC will have four vacancies beginning on June 1 this year and has contacted the appointing organizations (Board of Selectmen, Natural Resources Commission, Historical Commission, and Housing Authority) to make them aware of this issue.

Battle Road Scenic Byway Open House: On Thursday night, the National Park Visitor's Center in Lincoln hosted an Open House for the Battle Road Scenic Byway's Corridor Management Plan. Representatives from MAPC and the member communities were present to answer questions about the Plan and its recommendations. The public was given the opportunity to comment at the open house, and MAPC will be taking comments and questions on the plan through April 15. Comments can be emailed to project coordinator Manisha Bewtra at mbewtra@mapc.org.

Planning Board: Among its business on March 22, the Planning Board met briefly with petitioners to discuss warrant articles 37 and 39, but took no position on either. After discussion, the Board voted to support petition article 56, Extended Stay Hotel. The meeting concluded after a brief discussion of Town Meeting presentations and the West Concord land acquisition article.

Solar Siting Committee: At their Friday meeting, the Committee decided to use a simplified approach to determine which sites make the first cut (A = good; B = good but regulatory issues; C = good but change in use may be required; D = already set aside for or used by another public investment; E = physically unusable); this short list would then be evaluated in terms of the more detailed criteria list. Site visits may be appropriate to gather more information. The Committee completed its review of both Town-owned, non-conservation land inventories (with and without structures), and briefly discussed the list of Town-owned, non-conservation lands between 1 and 5 acres with contiguities to other Town-owned or vacant lands.

Walden Pond Reservation Public Forum: The March 24 public forum sponsored by Massachusetts DCR and held at the Hunt Gym was relatively well attended. The discussion focused on design and aesthetic considerations for a new visitor center and how best to accommodate those summertime visitors who come from far distances and want to see and experience Walden Pond, but not go swimming in the pond.

Health Division

Grants Update: Acton's Health Director notified our Health Division that the Metrowest Public Health and Nursing District grant proposal has been awarded \$30,000 for a Regionalization Planning Grant. While less than the requested \$40,000, it should be adequate for the work that needs to be done. The next step will be hiring a consultant to assist; proposals are due April 8. Additionally, the Town of Westford invited Concord to participate in seeking a grant to reduce tobacco use and underage use of alcohol. Westford, Concord, Chelmsford, Acton, Lincoln and Tyngsboro have all expressed interest in this regional program.

POLICE

Operational Services: On Tuesday, March 29, officers arrested a woman for second offense of driving while under the influence of liquor. The Department had received a call for a female asleep behind the wheel of her vehicle, which was running, and responding officers determined she was impaired.

On Tuesday March 29, Officers responded to Walden Pond for a report of a suicidal person who was going there to die. Concord Fire and officers from NEMLEC agencies, including several K-9 officers, responded to Walden Pond to assist in the search. The Department of Public Safety's Air wing was also used to assist in the search. The woman was located by officers on the west side of the Pond. She was transported to Emerson Hospital for treatment.

On Wednesday March 30, Concord Officers responded to the area of Emerson Hospital for a patient who had walked away from treatment and was suicidal. Officers learned that it was the same subject that had been dealt with on the previous day. She was quickly located and transported back to Emerson. She was later moved to another facility that was better prepared to provide secure treatment.

On Friday April 1, officers responded to several trees and power lines down throughout the Town. This was a direct result of the spring storm that produced heavy wet snow in Concord and other communities.

Community Services: The Department's Certified Car Seat Technicians (Officers) have been performing daily car seat installations during their shifts for Concord's residents. The Police Chief reports that car seat installation is one of the Department's most popular programs.

PUBLIC WORKS

Stormwater Regulations and Concord Public Works Design Standards and Details: The new Town of Concord Stormwater Regulations and Public Works Design Standards and Details were adopted by the Public Works Commission in a public hearing March 15, consistent with the requirements of MGL Chapter 83 Section 10. The standards and regulations clarify stormwater management plan and erosion control plan submittal requirements for projects requiring staff review or clearing one or more acres of land. The standards and regulations also increase the Town's compliance with the NPDES MS4 permit minimum control measures. Town counsel reviewed the documents and provided recommendations which were incorporated into the final version. CPW also conducted public outreach with local developers and engineers prior to the hearing, in addition to providing the Concord Journal notice of the availability of draft review copies of the documents at CPW and Town Clerk offices.

April 1 Winter Snow Response: A late season winter storm brought accumulating snow to Concord on Thursday March 31 through Friday April 1. Six Highway Division crew members were dispatched at 3:00 AM for treatment of main roadways due to deteriorating conditions. Excluding the April 1 response, fiscal year total expenditures for winter

maintenance operations are approximately \$63,500 over the \$495,000 base appropriation and \$160,000 deficit funding allowance.

Minuteman National Historic Park (MMNHP) Shade Tree Removal: CPW has been working closely with staff at the MMNHP following the inadvertent removal by National Park contractors of public shade trees within the Town right-of-way on Lexington Road. The MMNHP has been extremely cooperative in reaching a resolution that includes a plan designed by a historical landscape architect, along with ongoing maintenance requirements for the replacement plantings to be coordinated by the Park. An “after the fact” shade tree removal public hearing consistent with the requirements of MGL Chapter 87 § 3 is scheduled for April 13, 2011 at 7:15 PM during the Public Works Commission meeting.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity: Town staff continue to refine the wastewater capacity evaluation matrix to be used as part of the Wastewater Planning Task Force alternative analysis for the creation of additional wastewater treatment capacity. The feasibility of a groundwater discharge system at the current wastewater treatment is presently being evaluated which will include soil investigations, ground water mounding analysis, percolation testing and monitoring at both the filter beds and open field areas. Exploratory field work is scheduled to take place over the next several weeks in an effort to have minimal impacts on agricultural activities.

In addition, staff has been meeting with property owners of both the 50 Beharrell Street and 300 Baker Avenue projects to discuss potential options to allow for increased wastewater discharges resulting from the proposed projects at each site. Since wastewater flows from each project exceed the maximum threshold of 1,000 gallons per day (Title 5 flow) for administrative approval, any application would result in an administrative denial and a potential appeal from the applicant to the Public Works Commission (PWC). The increased wastewater flow request would then be evaluated based on established criteria including: 1) consistency with the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan; 2) availability of wastewater treatment capacity or, in lieu of available capacity, a mechanism established to serve as a capacity relief valve as required in the approved “capacity allowance model”; 3) the project must meet the requirements within MGL 83; and 4) the best interests of the Town are served by the project.

Artificial Turf Fields Parking Lot Improvements: The field project contractor has mobilized on site for warranty repairs to the geogrid parking lot. The repairs include the removal of all geogrid material and placement of a 3/8” minus topping material with low fine content over a stone base material. A test plot was installed last year using this method and evaluated for performance. Following a full years evaluation it was determined that this product functions much better than the previous system.

Lowell Road Sidewalk Extension and Sidewalk Program Update: Allied Paving Corp. will continue with the 2010 sidewalk improvements contract beginning with the extension on Lowell Road. Sidewalk layout is planned to begin this week. Additionally, the contractor will be digging test pits to verify soil conditions and groundwater depths to allow for improved drainage mitigation on Lowell Road. During the week beginning April 11, the contractor will

continue with the Lowell Road sidewalk extension. This work consists of grubbing and prepping of subsurface soils and placement of a gravel sub-base and the first of two courses of pavement. Miscellaneous pavement improvements will also be done in areas where the edge of pavement is cracking and in various states of degradation. Allied Paving is also evaluating options to bring in additional crews to begin work on the rehabilitation of the other sidewalks within their contract.