

# Town Manager's Report Monday, July 16, 2012

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

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

## FINANCE

**Meals Tax and Room Occupancy Tax Revenues Hit New Peaks for FY12:** Following affirmative action by the 2010 Annual Town Meeting on Articles 31 and 32, the local three quarters of one percent (0.75%) local meals tax and the 2% increase in the existing 4% local room occupancy tax (hotels, motels, etc.) went into effect on July 1, 2010. These taxes are administered by the State and distributed to participating municipalities quarterly. They are both General Fund revenues supporting the overall Town government and education budgets, and are not earmarked.

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012, preliminary data shows a 39% increase in meals tax revenue and a 21% increase in room occupancy tax revenue:

	<u>FY11</u>	<u>FY12</u>	
Meals Tax	\$208,952	\$290,004	+39%
Room Tax	\$229,461	\$277,592	+21%

The FY11 Meals Tax distribution from the State represented just 11 months of collections, (July 2010 through May 2011). The FY12 distribution thus represents a full twelve-month time period, June 2011 through May 2012. With this adjustment, the apparent year-to-year increase is 27%.

The FY11 Room Occupancy tax distribution from the State represented one month at the 4% rate and 11 months at the new 6% rate. Allowing for this adjustment, FY12 revenue on a comparable basis is an apparent 17% increase over the prior (\$46,265 per each tax percent, vs. \$39,533 per each tax percent in FY11). The local 4% room occupancy tax was first effective July 1, 1986, following adoption at that year's Annual Town Meeting. On a comparable basis, peak revenue was reached in FY2002 (ten years ago) when tax revenue was \$51,439 per percent. FY12 is the highest revenue from this source, on a fully comparable basis, since FY08.

Revenue from these two local tax sources exceeded the FY12 budget estimate by approximately \$138,000.

**Jet Fuel Excise Tax Revenue Increases by \$162,000:** The four Hanscom area towns share equally the jet fuel excise collected from commercial operations at Hanscom Field. This excise tax is collected by the State and distributed to Bedford, Lexington, Lincoln and Concord quarterly. Concord participates in accordance with a vote of the 1987 Annual Town Meeting.

For many years, this revenue source produced about \$100,000 annually. Since FY2008, revenues have increased sharply, related both to increased commercial aircraft activity at Hanscom and to increases in the cost of jet fuel. The tax rate is 5% of the average price per gallon (subject to a minimum tax rate of \$0.05) as determined by the Commissioner of Revenue quarterly. The current tax rate is \$0.157 per gallon. The average quarterly tax rate for the past three fiscal years is:

FY10	\$ 0.08600
FY11	\$ 0.11125
FY12	\$ 0.15525

FY12 revenue from this source was \$445,559, up almost 70% from the prior year and 2.5 times our FY10 revenue. Thus, about half of the revenue increase over the past two years can be attributed to the tax rate, while the other half is apparently the result of increased use at Hanscom. However, the state does not share any underlying data with the four Hanscom towns.

## **FIRE**

**Training:** Some may have noticed the CFD out on the Sudbury and Concord Rivers with our Rescue Boat. All companies have been training on the boat operations as part of the department's periodic water rescue training.

**Picnic in the Park:** As in past years, the CFD participated in this year's Picnic in the Park July 4 celebration.



The flag was proudly displayed from the Concord's new ladder truck (below photo), and the house prop (above photo) was again very popular with the children (and some adults too!)



## LIGHT DEPARTMENT

**Truck #4 Replacement:** Concord Light took delivery of a new International TerraStar dump truck to replace the aging 1990 International 4900 dump truck. The new truck is smaller than its predecessor and incorporates the latest innovations in emissions control technology making it much more environmentally friendly. Concord Light crews were able to provide extensive input into its configuration so, even though it is a smaller vehicle, it will be used much more effectively. During the warmer months, this truck will be used primarily by the underground construction crew working to install conduit throughout Town and, during the winter, it will assist with snow removal.

## PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT

### Natural Resources Division

**Natural Resources Commission:** Last Wednesday, the Commission heard the following matters and made the resulting decisions: the Amendment Request for Concord-Carlisle High School to install a water line was closed and an Amended Order was issued; the Notice of Intent for Keypoint Partners to install drainage improvements and repave Crosby's Markets' parking lot was closed and an Order was issued; the Amendment request for 1385 Old Marlboro Road was continued to July 25 for additional information; the Notice of Intent for 253 Sudbury Road to demolish and reconstruct a single family house was closed and an Order was issued; the Notice of Intent for 495 Monument Street to construct an in-ground swimming pool, pool house, and other amenities was continued to July 25 for additional information; the Notice of Intent for Milldam Nursery School to replace the playground equipment was closed and an Order was issued; the Notice of Intent for Nashawtuc Country Club to construct three paddle tennis courts was continued to the July 25 meeting to close and issue an Order; the Notice of Intent for Middlesex School to construct five faculty houses and tie into the sewer line was continued to July 25 to close and issue; the Notice of Intent for 333 Bedford Street to demolish and reconstruct a single family house was continued to July 25 for additional information; the Amendment Request for 42 Ridgeway Road to move the proposed new single family house was closed and an Amended Order was issued.

Additional matters to be heard at the July 25 NRC meeting include the Notice of Intent filed by Concord Public Works to replace a culvert and clean out a second culvert in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery and the continued hearing for 1112 Main Street to demolish the existing gas station and construct a TD Bank.

**Donation by the Flynn Family:** This week the Division received a generous donation from Peter Flynn in memory of his mother and father, Ann and Jack Flynn. The Division is very grateful to Peter for his generosity.

### Building and Inspections Division

**The following major construction projects are currently under construction in Concord:**

- Fenn School Library & Science Center: The renovation and replacement of Robb Hall with a new Library & Science Center - **\$5 million**.
- Welch's corporate offices moving to 300 Baker Avenue, 85,000 sq. ft. renovation project, mid-July construction start - **\$2.1 million**.
- 300 Baker Avenue, Vanguard, 50,000 sq. ft. medical office building - **\$7.1 million**
- Concord Mews, Mill Creek Development, Alexan, Nathan Pratt Drive, Long View Meadow, 350 unit rental project, 40B project. Project is two-thirds completed - **\$54 million**
- Concord Academy fields project on the former Arena Farm land - **\$3 million**
- Peter Bulkeley Building, 115 Stow Street, Concord Housing Authority project, 24 unit building - **\$5.2 million**
- Concord Country Club; maintenance facility expansion - **\$1.2 million**

## Health Division

**Bats Found in Residences = Rabies Concerns:** So far in July, the Health Division has received three requests from residents to submit bats for rabies testing. Fortunately, all three bats tested negative for the rabies virus. Residents are reminded that bats are potential carriers of rabies. Any time a bat is found in a home, and there has been direct contact with a person or pet, the bat should be submitted for testing. The bat should also be submitted for testing if contact was possible: the bat was close to an unattended child, a person who was sleeping, a person with sensory or mental impairment, or a pet. In these cases, the bat should be captured and kept alive if possible. If the bat is dead, use gloves to place it in a plastic bag and refrigerate the bat until Health Division staff can pick it up. It is important that bats be submitted for testing promptly after exposure, as accurate rabies testing can only be done for a limited number of hours after a bat dies. Residents with questions may contact the Health Division at 978-318-3275 for further information.

**Mosquito Update:** The Eastern Middlesex Mosquito Control Project tests mosquito pools throughout the summer for the presence of mosquitos carrying West Nile virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine encephalitis (EEE). To date, no mosquitos positive for either WNV or EEE have been found in Concord or surrounding towns. Nonetheless, residents are reminded to take precautions to reduce exposure to mosquitos.

**Viral Meningitis in Sibling of a Child Attending Camp:** The Health Division received a report of a child attending camp who had a younger sibling hospitalized with a probable diagnosis of viral meningitis. Both nursing staff from Emerson Hospital Homecare and Public Health Director Susan Rask contacted the epidemiologist at the MDPH Bureau of Communicable Disease to ensure that proper procedures would be used, if needed, for notification and treatment of other children attending the camp. Viral meningitis is significantly less risky than bacterial meningitis, and MDPH advised that no notification of campers' families and no medical treatment or prophylaxis for campers was required.

## Planning Division

**MAPC/MAGIC Meeting in Concord:** This fiscal year, the Town of Concord will be hosting six daytime meetings of the MAGIC sub-region in an effort to offer planners and other MAGIC representatives an alternative to regular night-time meetings. The FY13 Work Plan was reviewed and approved – potential projects include Transportation (next steps in suburban mobility project), Agriculture (planning project underway), Housing (regional housing services office), Smart Growth (outreach and education about growth impacts, best practices, integration with other major planning documents), Environment (stormwater), Aging Populations (municipal services and housing issues), Open Space Planning (connectivity between communities) and Legislative Action.

**Planning Board:** Last Tuesday night, the Planning Board met with the development team for the proposed TD Bank at 1112 Main Street. After a lengthy discussion, the Board continued the application to allow the development team time to look into some of the issues identified by staff, the public, the Board and the Natural Resources Commission. The Board

then endorsed two Approval Not Required plans, one for land of Bradford Street LLC and Fordbrad LLC at 8A, 23, 33, 43 & 53 Bradford Street, and one for land of Marchal and Gutierrez at 162 Revolutionary Road and 120 Ridge Road.

**Zoning Board of Appeals:** Last Thursday night, the Zoning Board of Appeals accepted the continuance requests for the Millbrook Tarry application for 91-107 Lowell Road, the Arista Development application for 1112 Main Street and the application for 113 Commonwealth Avenue, and accepted the withdrawal without prejudice for the Concord School District application for the Sanborn School at 835 Old Marlboro Road. The Board then granted the following special permits: to allow an on-site subsurface disposal system in excess of 440 gallons per day in the Groundwater Conservancy District at 316 Heath's Bridge Road; to allow the creation of a hammerhead lot at 695 Barrett's Mill Road; and to allow the reconfiguration of a previously approved hammerhead lot at 115 Independence Road. The Board also granted the special permit, site plan and variance for the Bradford Mill project at 8A, 23, 33, 43 & 53 Bradford Street.

## **POLICE**

**Rotary Paving:** On Sunday July 15, the Massachusetts Highway Department was to begin a resurfacing project in and around the Route 2 rotary circle. The project was delayed due to weather, but is expected to take four nights to complete. All work will be done between 8PM-5AM. Some of the nights will entail road closures and traffic detours around the rotary. On these nights, all traffic on Route Two will be detoured. Therefore, Barrett's Mill Rd, Commonwealth Ave and Route 2A (Elm St) will not be accessible from the Rotary. There will be designated detours to guide motorists around the work zone, as well as Police officers present to assist motorists. All inquiries regarding this project may be directed to Mass Highway District 4 office at 781-641-8300.