

Town Manager's Report

October 14, 2014

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

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

- **Community Services** - received 15 assistance request phone calls, 41 emails and had 4 home/office visits with Concord residents. Requested assistance issues were for emergency housing, fuel assistance application process, emergency fuel, holiday gift program application, rent payment, application assistance for disability and housing. To provide services to Concord residents, the Community Services Coordinator collaborated services with The Concord Police Dept, SVDP, HCT, The Concord Library, The Concord Council on Aging, The Salvation Army, SMOC, 1st Parish Church, Open Table, Eliot Human Services Homelessness & Outreach team and Concord Cares.
 - **SMOC FUEL ASSISTANCE:** Community Services received 4 new requests for information about the fuel assistance program. The SMOC Fuel Assistance program is designed to help lower income people and families afford the cost of heat during the winter months. Eligibility is based on gross annual income and household size. Eligible households receive assistance paid directly to their heating vendor. Heat types include oil, gas, electric and propane. If you are interested in learning more about the program, determining your eligibility or would like to request an application packet, please contact: If you are under the age of 60: Aileen Buford, MSW - Community Services Coordinator –at 978-318-3034 or abuford@concordma.gov If you are over the age of 60: the Concord Council On Aging 978.318.3020.
 - **BEACON SANTA :** Community Services distributed 15 Beacon Santa applications. The deadline for the Beacon Santa applications is October 31st. Anyone interested in applying for the Beacon Santa program please contact Aileen Buford, MSW for an application. 978.318.3034 or abuford@concordma.gov Families who are Concord residents are eligible for the program. Each application must be signed by a professional in the community, such as a social worker, clergy member, school nurse, teacher, housing authority director, etc. Each application must be accompanied by a letter explaining the need for help.

- **Concord Municipal Light Plant -**

- **Rate Study** - CMLP has initiated a rate study as part of its budgeting and planning process for 2015 and beyond. The study is being performed by Energy New England, a public power-owned company in Foxborough. Under review are electric rates and charges for residential and commercial customers alike. The study will provide assurance that electric rates are set at the right levels to maintain financial stability for CMLP and that they are equitable for the citizens and businesses of Concord. CMLP staff will work closely with the Municipal Light Board to review the results and propose needed modifications in keeping with Town values and initiatives. A public hearing is expected in January, 2015 with any rate changes going into effect in February, 2015.

- **Veterans Services –**

- Veteran memorial planning (financial, location, type, etc.) at Concord Housing Authority, Everett Gardens.
- Requests for Concord Silent Fund.
- Veteran requesting information on nursing care—assisted living.
- Former Concord resident/veteran requesting assistance with placing veteran’s information into the Library of Congress.
- Chap 115 client requesting information the effect returning to school would have on her 115 benefit if she receives a housing stipend. Client also in need a copy of her benefits – re: application for school.
- 90 year old WWII veteran requesting a WWII veteran’s bonus that he claims he never received. Notification made to state house.
- Resident requesting information on disposing of retired American flag.

- **Concord Public Works**

- **2014 Pavement Markings** – The contractor, Markings Inc. of Pembroke, has completed most of the planned pavement markings contract for the 2014 construction season, including center lines, fog lines, crosswalks, stop bars, and other miscellaneous markings Town-wide. The only remaining pavement marking work will be required for roads currently being paved under the annual Roads Program. Specifically, this work will include the transition of the single yellow centerline on Powder Mill Road to a double yellow

centerline. Although at one time considered an acceptable practice, single yellow centerlines are not permitted by the federal regulations governing the application of pavement markings. This is detailed in the regulations known as the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (MUTCD Section 3B.01) MassDOT has also highlighted the requirement for the removal of single yellow lines on state aid funded projects. [Both the MUTCD regulation and Chapter 90 State Aid approval letter can be viewed by selecting this link.](#) The Town's annual paving program utilizes approximately \$675,000 in state aid. CPW will be developing a transition plan for the remaining single yellow centerlines in Town, as well as a targeted public outreach program for residents on the effected streets for the 2015 Pavement Marking Program.

- CPW is also evaluating the implementation of recommendations from the Healthy Concord Initiative and the document titled "Creating a Shared Vision for Safer Roadways". One of the recommendations is the installation of fog/edge lines on as many streets as possible. The intent of the marking is to provide bicyclists some room for the use of town's roadway network. CPW will be performing analysis to determine which roads warrant installation of the fog/edge line markings. CPW will also be piloting the installation of the edge lines on Powder Mill Road. Again, CPW will develop a targeted public outreach program for residents on which are proposed to receive new edge/fog lines in the 2015 Pavement Marking Program.
- Questions on the Pavement Marking Program can be addressed to CPW's Engineering Division.
- **Sign Management** – In order to meet Federal Requirements for the management and maintenance of traffic signage, CPW completed a Townwide Sign Inventory in 2013. A parallel project track was also identified, which would update the Town's Traffic and Parking Regulations document. Updates to the Traffic and Parking Regulations are approved through a hearing process with the Board of Selectman.
- Significant discrepancies with the parking regulations and signs were known to exist which precipitated CPW's plan to update the Town's Traffic and Parking Regulations document. After comparing the field data collected to the written regulations, numerous discrepancies with the speed regulations in Town were also identified.
- CPW and Police Department are in the process of developing an implementation plan to correct the identified discrepancies. In addition, CPW and CPD are jointly developing an outreach plan to notify residents on the affected streets of the proposed changes. It is anticipated that several

on-site meetings will be held with residents on the affected streets over the course of October/November, and a presentation will also be made at the November PWC meeting.

Questions on the Pavement Marking Program can be addressed to the Concord Police Department Traffic Safety Officer and/or CPW's Engineering Division.

- **2013/2014 Road Program** - Final schedules are being confirmed with contractor this week for program completion. Tentatively, CPW anticipates that the remainder of the work for this year will be: reclaim and pave (to binder) the two end sections of Powder Mill Rd (Stone Rt – Old Pickard and Plainfield – Sudbury), reclaim and pave (to binder) Seven Star Ln. , mill and Pave Monument St. from the Square to Flint's bridge, and finally install drainage and pave (to binder) the intersection of Church St and Main St. Work will resume towards the end of next week on Powder Mill Rd and Seven Star Ln. The contractor will then proceed to Monument St. and intersection improvements at Church St. and Main St. are planned to follow. This schedule will be finalized over the next several days and is subject to weather delays.

- **Concord Fire Department --**
 - Friday night at 6:59 pm CFD responded to a chimney fire on Lowell Road. On arrival companies found a wood shake roof burning around an operating chimney. The fire was contained quickly. Mutual aid responded to the scene from Acton FD and Lincoln FD.
 - Saturday night at 10:50 pm companies responded to an alarm at Concord Greene. On arrival they found a smoke condition in a second floor unit. Lincoln, Acton and Weston responded to the scene. Source of the smoke was a heating unit.
 - Lastly after an comprehensive interview process LT. Bill Whalen was awarded the Communication specialist position vacated by retired LT Jon White. This is an important position at the CFD responsible for our Radio communications system and critical infrastructure. Good luck LT. Whalen.

- **Board of Assessors announces proposed property values for FY15 tax purposes; sets public review period**
 - Following almost seven weeks of examination by the Department of Revenue (DOR), Concord's Assessing Division has been granted

preliminary approval of its proposed fiscal 2015 values. Once every three years, each municipality in the state has to have an on-site examination of proposed property assessed valuations carried out by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Bureau of Local Assessment. In order for the Concord Board of Assessors to proceed, this examination must conclude with a finding by the Bureau of Local Assessment that the proposed assessed valuations meet all state procedural and statistical standards.

- Fiscal 2015 which began on July 1, 2014 is a re-certification year for the Town of Concord. Preparation of the values began in January of 2014 with the development of a work plan covering the major components of the re-certification and time frames to get everything completed. The valuation of residential and commercial property is based on an analysis of property sales that occurred in calendar year 2013.
- On August 25th, the representative from the state DOR came to the Concord Assessing office and began the review of the proposed values and supporting documentation. Preliminary approval by the DOR allows us to commence the public disclosure period. This is a time for property owners to review the proposed value of their property and ask questions of the Assessors. The disclosure period started Friday the 10th and runs until Thursday the 23rd.
- The FY15 proposed valuations are available for review on the Town's website at:
http://concordma.gov/Pages/ConcordMA_Assessor/FY2015
- Copies of the proposed value listings are also available for public use at the Main and Fowler branch libraries, the Council on Aging office at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center and the Town House first floor counter. A copy of a property record card is available upon request from the Assessing Office, 978-318-3070 or via e-mail at assessing@concordma.gov.
- The Board of Assessors will conduct a Public Forum at the Town House Hearing Room, Thursday, November 6th, beginning at 7 PM.
- The tax rate for FY2015, the current budget year concluding June 30, 2015, is expected to be \$14.28 per thousand, compared to the rate of \$14.45 set for FY2014. This rate is based upon the budgets voted at the May 2014 Annual Town Meeting. A Public Hearing regarding the setting of the FY2015 tax rate is set for the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, November 17th at 7:00 PM, at the Town House.