

Town Manager's Report
October 21, 2014

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

--NUCLEAR METALS SUPERFUND SITE INC.--

The Proposed Remedial Action Plan for the Nuclear Metals Superfund Site is scheduled to be released for review in the next few weeks. Public comment and involvement regarding this plan will be the focus of two upcoming events. They are:

A **Public Meeting** on the Proposed Remedial Action Plan for the Nuclear Metals, Inc. Superfund Site will be at **6:30 PM on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at the Concord Town Hall Meeting Room (22 Monument Square, Concord, MA)**

The **Public Hearing** on the Proposed Remedial Action Plan for the Nuclear Metals, Inc. Superfund Site will be at **6:30 PM on Wednesday, December 10, 2014 at the Concord Town Hall Meeting Room (22 Monument Square, Concord, MA)**

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

- **Youth Services**
 - Youth Services in collaboration with Healthy Concord and Center for Parents and Teachers, kicks off the **“Taking Care of Ourselves and Our Teens”** parent series on October 21st. This four-session wellness program for parents of adolescents teaches self-care skills to help cope with stresses of everyday life and aims to leave parents with a renewed sense of control and well-being. This program is appropriate for parents of middle and high school students. Only a few openings remain at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/taking-care-of-ourselves-and-our-teens-tickets-13005468707>



- **The Concord-Carlisle Youth Card** is a "plasticized" wallet-sized card with resources to help youth in unexpected situations and to generally help them stay safe and healthy. Cards are available at no cost at the Youth Services office. Contact Jennifer Clarke at 978.318.3043 or jclarke@concordma.gov
- **Community Services-**
 - Community Services met with 5 Concord residents during the week to work on issues related to applying for fuel assistance, applying for food stamps, housing resources and mental and behavioral health resources.
 - The Community Services Coordinator received 17 phone calls and 24 emails related to service requests.
 - The Community Services Coordinator attended and provided an informational presentation at the St. Vincent De Paul Society meeting at the Holy Parish church office in West Concord.
 - The Community Services Coordinator attended a meeting of the Town of Concord Hoarding Task Force.
 - Community Services distributed 10 Beacon Santa applications to Concord residents who requested an application.

- The deadline for the **Beacon Santa** application is October 31st, 2014. Please contact Aileen Buford, MSW for an application and information about the program. 978.318.3034 abuford@concordma.gov
 - Anyone under the age of 60 interested in receiving more information or applying for the **SMOC Fuel Assistance** program, please contact Aileen Buford, MSW at 978.318.3034 or abuford@concordma.gov
- **Recreation Programs-**
 - The Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan will be presented at the Selectmen's meeting October 20, 2014. Barbara Heller of Heller and Heller, Consulting, Inc. will be presenting with the Recreation staff in attendance.
 - The Recreation Department has begun taking registration for the youth Basketball and Ski programs. These programs serve the 1st through 8th grade population.
 - The Recreation staff had a positive meeting with the Lamont Family who were the sponsors of the Concord Open Golf Tournament. They were happy to consider sponsoring another Recreation Event in 2015 which may be the Spring Family Event, "Touch a Truck".
 - Both the After School program and the Preschool program will be hosting event tables at the Concord Carlisle Community Chest Annual Pumpkin Fest which will be held on Sunday, October 19th from 2:00-4:00 at Emerson field. This is a fun-filled family event hosted by the Community Chest.
 - The 6th Annual Halloween Party will be held on Friday, October 24th at the Hunt Recreation Center. This 'dance' is for 6th grade and is the first of three Middle School events this year.
- **Veterans Services –**
 - Veteran pursuing VA benefits in need of a copy of her State of Massachusetts benefits. "Notice of Determination" faxed to veteran.
 - Ninety year old veteran requesting information on transportation to the COA for Veterans Day breakfast.
 - Concord veteran/ UMass Lowell student looking for assistance with Library of Congress project recording permanent records of local veterans.
 - Town of Concord retiree requesting copy of his military records.
 - Assist Concord veteran residing in public housing with the rules and regulations of the housing authority.

- Assist Concord veteran with application for service connected disability.
- Assist Concord veteran recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's apply for veteran benefits- re: social security award letter, military records, bank statements, mortgage payments, etc.
- Assist Concord veteran obtaining his military records for public housing assistance.

- **Beede Center Report**

- The Beede Center had a relatively normal week with business as usual including having served 2,290 members and program participants for the week. Compass Facilities Services continues to keep the Center neat and clean from the start of the day at 5:30 am to the close of business at 9:00 pm. Compass has been doing an excellent job with the added responsibility of cleaning all areas affected by the construction.
- The new membership card scanner is now functioning. Again many thanks to Leslie Koplou from IT, who spent many hours making this happen.
- With the upgrade to the registration software this month's membership renewals were automatically emailed to members with October invoice dates. Renewal payments can now be made via the web by going to the Recreation page on the Town's website www.concordma.gov/recreation and clicking on Registration. Once a member is logged into their account; they click on my account and in the drop down menu click on pay old balances. New memberships may also be purchased online.
- Construction this week saw the large pit, beside the parking lot, created for the area way back filled bringing the landscape back to grade. The area way is being created to provide fresh air for the new additional air handling unit which is being installed to service air circulation/exchanges and dehumidification in the natatorium. The unit will be delivered on October 31, 2014. This necessitates closing the pools all day until 5 pm as large sections of the unit will need to be brought across the pool decks to be assembled on site. The fitness room will remain open.

- **Concord Police Department –**

- CPD welcomes new Officer Gregory Mailloux who will be starting his employment with the Department on Wednesday October 15, 2014. He will report for roll call on the day shift, followed by administrative duties. He will then be assigned to Officer Shelley and Landers for Field Training.

- On Sunday October 19, Officers assisted with Pumpkin Festival which took place at Emerson Field. Officers assisted with the event which included deploying the portable speed board for their use.
- **Concord Fire Department –**
 - Concord police, Fire-EMS and Public Health departments have been meeting as the Emergency Management Team to plan and coordinate town readiness to deal with any impact from the Ebola issue. While considered very remote we are participating in state and federal conference calls and coordinating with Emerson hospital and other applicable agencies/ organizations. We are confirming the continued viability of our protective clothing inventory and conducting refresher training on using same. By coordinating as one unified group we will be better able to plan and operate seamlessly should we need to.
- **Department of Planning and Land Management**
 - **Planning Division**
 - Community Preservation Committee: The Committee met on Saturday, October 18th to conduct project site visits of this year's applications, starting with the Old Manse and continuing on to the Warren Tavern, MCI Concord Reformatory Building Fountain, Warner Pond, Junction Village, Peter Bulkeley Place, the CCHS Fields, and the Natural Playscape at Ripley. The Committee will begin its first round of project reviews on Wednesday, October 22, when they meet with representatives of the MCI Concord Fountain Restoration project, the Phase II Fields Renovations at CCHS, and the Peter Bulkeley Terrace Phase II renovation project. Later this fall, the Drinking Gourd Project plans to open the Caesar Robbins House (recipient of past CPA funds) for a site visit by the Committee.
 - Planning Board: At the October 14th meeting, the Board discussed moving forward with a tree preservation bylaw which is intended to protect larger trees on individual house lots during construction of new homes or large additions. The Board was provided examples from other communities and will continue discussion on this topic at their meeting on October 28th. Additionally, the Planning Board will be conducting a site visit for the Ingham Lane PRD at 1888 Main Street on Thursday, October 23rd at 5:30 pm.

- 740 Elm Street/Best Western: Assistant Director Lori Capone and Town Planner Elizabeth Hughes met with representative from Best Western to discuss their proposal for construction of a new hotel lobby, bank and restaurant. The existing lobby would be demolished and a new lobby constructed on the east side of the building. The new bank with a drive-thru teller window and drive-thru ATM and attached restaurant would be constructed as a separate building in front of the hotel on the west side of the property. Staff provided input on potential impacts to adjacent wetlands and opportunities for improvements that would be acceptable to the NRC, as well as, comments on the potential conflict points within the layout of the parking lot and travel lanes.
- **Health Division**
- Community planning for Ebola: The serious events involving the spread of the Ebola virus elsewhere in the United States has prompted staff to begin planning efforts in the event that a case of Ebola occurs in the Boston area. Public Health Director Susan Rask met last week with Emergency Management Director Mark Cotreau and Police Chief Joseph O'Connor to plan the town's coordinated response. The Health Director has been participating in weekly statewide conference calls with MDPH and attending meetings of the Emerson Hospital pandemic planning committee to better understand how the hospital and town can coordinate responses in the event there is a case of Ebola in our area.
- Board of Health tobacco regulation: The Board of Health's revised tobacco regulation, which requires that tobacco and nicotine delivery products may not be sold to persons under age 21, becomes effective November 1. Health Division staff have been visiting licensed tobacco retailers to provide a packet of information about the requirements of the new regulation, including new signage to be used by retailers. The Lincoln Board of Health is also considering revising their regulation to raise the minimum legal sales age to 21 for tobacco and nicotine products.
- Septic betterment program: The Health Division would like to remind residents that loans are available for upgrade of failing septic systems. The Septic Betterment program allows residents to borrow up to \$30,000 at 2% interest for a period of 10 years to cover costs associated with replacement of their septic systems. Residents are encouraged to

contact Administrative Assistant Karen Byrne at 978-318-3275 for more information about the program.

- **Natural Resources Division**
 - Natural Resources Commission: At the October 15th meeting, the NRC heard the following matters: the continued Notice of Intent (NOI) for 299 Estabrook Road to conduct invasive species removal; the continued NOI for 105 Walden Street to construct a second floor addition; the continued NOI for Middlesex School to construct a new residence hall, guard house, make improvements to the boathouse, and implement a vegetation management plan; and a Request for Determination of Applicability for 359 Old Bedford Road to construct a second story addition and deck. The following matters were continued to November 5th without discussion: an NOI for 165 Balls Hill Road to construct a driveway; an NOI to construct a 22-unit Planned Residential Development at 140 Commerford Road; and previously continued NOI to construct a seven unit Planned Residential Development at 1888 and 188B Main Street.
 - DEP Site Visit: Staff attended the Department of Environmental Protection's site visit regarding the appeal of the Commission's Determination permitting pot holes to be filled in Off-Harrington Road. A decision should be rendered in the next month or two.
- **Concord Finance Department –**
 - **Town Clerk's Office Getting Ready for State Election**
 - The Town Clerk's Office has been busy during the past several weeks registering new voters and distributing absentee ballots for the November 4, 2014 State Election. Since the September 9th State Primary, 263 new voters have been registered in Concord, bringing the total of voters eligible to participate in this Election to about 12,850. This includes 37 first-time voters (18 and 19-year olds).
 - Concord consistently has a high voter registration rate of around 94% of eligible residents, including about 80% of 18-year olds. The latter is in part due to the Office's 17-year practice of sending birthday notes with voter registration cards as residents turn 18 years old. Thanks also go to the League of Women Voters, who capture new residents at Picnic-in

- the-Park on July 4th and at Back-to-School Nights at the Schools in September and October each year.
 - Absentee ballots are now available for the November 4th Election, for those residents who will be away from Concord during polling hours (7:00 am to 8:00 pm), or are otherwise unable to get to the polls in person on Election Day. Absentee voting may be done in person at the Town Clerk's Office, or by mail. A written request for a mailed ballot must be received as soon as possible, to allow ample time for mailing. Contact the Town Clerk's Office or check the web site for further information. Over 400 absentee ballots have been either mailed or completed in the Office, including over 30 ballots distributed to overseas voters.
 - For further information, including a sample ballot and information about the ballot questions, check the web site – www.concordma.gov – click "Elections & Voting" from the front page. From this site there are also links for voters to check their voting status, precinct location, and the status of their absentee ballot. The Town Clerk's Office may also be reached via e-mail at townclerk@concordma.gov or telephone at 978-318-3080.
- **Board of Assessors –**
 - 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.
- **Biennial Citizen Survey to commence-** Every two years, the Town conducts an anonymous survey of its residents to measure how residents feel about the programs and services provided by the Town government.

- On Wednesday, October 22nd, the Town will send out the 2014 Town Government Survey to the 6,935 residences in Concord and will request that residents answer the questionnaire in one of the three following ways:
 - By calling a toll-free telephone number and completing the survey over the phone
 - By visiting a web site and completing the survey online
 - By mailing or bringing the completed paper copy of the survey to the Town House

- For statistical purposes, there is only one survey response per household. Each survey has a unique PIN Number which allows only one respondent to complete one survey by any of the three methods. The PIN Number can only be used once.

- The open survey period will be from Thursday, October 23rd through Friday, November 7th. During that time, it is estimated that the response rate will be between 10% and 20% of households.

- A report of the results will be available in January 2015.