



December 2008



Jodi Ross
Town Manager
978-692-5500

Town Offices Update



- Assessors
- Board of Health
- Collector
- Finance Dept
- Human Resources
- Town Clerk
- Town Manager

are at the Millennium Building at 23 Depot Street.

- Building
- Conservation
- Planning
- Zoning

are at the Highway Garage at 28 North Street.

There are no more scheduled moves at this time.

Visit westfordma.gov for the latest information.

Dear Westford Residents

December is upon us - a time of holiday celebrations, family gatherings, eating traditional delicacies and, for town department heads and committee members - final budget preparations! FY10 budgets were due to me in early November, and I have spent much of the past several weeks reviewing these budgets with the individual department heads who have taken my direction of conservatism seriously. Across the board, town departments have been able to meet their goal of a 1% reduction from last year's budget, and I have assisted with further cuts where I deemed appropriate. The school budget has not been submitted to me yet, but I know Bill Olsen, Superintendent of Schools, and the School Committee are working diligently on producing a budget with streamlined expenses and reductions wherever possible. As the largest budget in the town (comprised mostly of salaries), we know how difficult this is, and we are anxious to see what they propose that will maintain our excellent school system yet eliminate any unnecessary expenses.

The focus of this newsletter will be the 2009 final Town Manager goals that the Board of Selectmen agreed to at a recent meeting. I hope this helps give you an idea of what we hope to achieve over the next year. I am pleased to say that some of these goals are already well underway!

My best wishes to all of you for a joyous holiday season!

Sincerely,
Jodi Ross

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN - TOWN MANAGER FY09-10 GOALS

FINANCIAL:

Goal Statement:

The Town will continually evaluate revenue sources, cost reduction opportunities and the level of services it provides to achieve financial stability.

Objectives:

Budget Administration/ Framework

a) Develop FY10 base budget without an override (in order to assess the impact to town services). Implement cost-saving measures and propose reduced service levels if necessary. Reduce reliance on non-recurring cash reserves.

b) Budget funds to the capital improvement reserve fund on a yearly basis. Attempt to fund capital projects from reserve funds, rather than operational expenditures.

Strategic Cost Management

a) Negotiate all future union contracts so the cost to the town is covered by revenues we expect, yet we are remaining competitive with other towns so as to retain our employees.

b) Review and market health insurance benefit plans to check quality and costs, including consideration of regionalization, change in contribution etc.

c) Evaluate Town Counsel services, including using competitive bids, in-house counsel and improved management of legal request procedure to improve service and reduce costs.

d) Evaluate, analyze cost and cost-savings, recommend and implement measures to reduce solid waste management costs. Examine regionalization, business trash issues. Investigate and recommend program, i.e. assigning one large container to each household, recycling containers, PAYT for extra bags.

e) Consolidate Town departments where appropriate to improve efficiency and reduce costs. (Long range goal.)

f) Evaluate and implement measures to reduce the Town's energy costs, i.e. multi-town consortium, encourage green programs, i.e. form Energy Committee.

Stable Revenue Base Options

a) Resolve the issue of non-profit entities utilizing Town resources, i.e. Roudenbush & Sport Groups.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Goal Statement:

The Town will continually work towards increasing its affordable housing stock to provide more diversified housing in Westford and strive meet the state 10% goal at a minimum.

Objectives:

Town Sponsored Projects

a) Design and execute a town/developer sponsored affordable housing project on Boston Road, ensuring compatibility and minimizing cost to town. Includes entering into a new easement agreement with National Grid.

Continued on page 3.



Goals adopted by the Board of Selectmen on November 12, 2008



BOARD OF SELECTMEN - TOWN MANAGER FY09-10 GOALS Continued

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Goal Statement:

The Town will proactively strive to maintain and improve its current assets and address the long term capital needs of our community in a methodical, financially prudent manner.

Objectives:

- a) Implement consolidated vehicle maintenance and centralized all town and school vehicles at the highway garage to utilize the garage to its fullest extent.
- b) Develop and implement a long range plan for housing employees that were displaced from Town Hall.
- c) Centralize management and maintenance of all municipal facilities.
- d) Implement a capital improvement fueling committee.
- e) Assist with coordination and oversight of proposed expansion project of Senior Center.

GOVERNANCE

Goal Statement:

The Town will continually strive to improve the functionality of our governing bodies.

Objectives:

Communication/ Education

- a) Conduct an annual "State of the Town Address" to be presented at the annual town meeting to update Westford citizens on the Town's financial status.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Goal Statement:

The Town will continually work towards developing our employees and rewarding them for outstanding effort.

Objectives:

- a) Develop and implement a merit based pay increase system.
- b) Implement a system to ensure yearly performance reviews of employees.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal Statement:

The Town will continually evaluate its infrastructure to ensure plans are in place to meet the changing needs of the community.

Objectives:

- a) Create a business development plan for the Town and actively recruit the type and quality of businesses the Town would like to have, i.e. Fletcher quarry, IBM, Modern Continental.
- b) Manage the perchlorate issue to attempt to stabilize plume spread, minimize impact to both residents and town, implement corrective measures, and negotiate financial settlement with responsible contractor.



Westford's Storm Strategy

The Town of Westford Highway Department has over 175 miles of roads to maintain. In an effort to make the snow season as safe as possible, we offer the following tips and information. Please remember that each storm is different so our strategy must be adjusted accordingly to achieve the best results.

The Highway Department staff is well trained and dedicated to plow around the clock if necessary, to keep the roadways open and passable. Please be advised that Littleton Rd. (Rte 110), Route 495, Powers Rd. and a portion of Boston Rd. are maintained by Mass Highway.

Residents should not be concerned if they do not see their roadway plowed during the early part of a snowstorm. The Highway Department follows an assigned route plan where main roads and hills are plowed first. Please be patient, all town owned roads will eventually be plowed.

Town Right-of-Way

Homeowners should be aware that in most instances they do not own the land up to the edge of road pavement or sidewalk. The Town generally owns the land from the edge of roadway up to 15 feet back depending on the particular road. There may be underground utilities within these areas and homeowners should be careful as to what they place in these areas.

- ◆ Trees, shrubbery, fences, lawn sprinkler systems or gardens within the right-of-way may be damaged during snow removal operations.

- ◆ The Town will not be responsible for damage to such items within the right-of-way.

Winter Parking Ban

Residents are reminded that a winter parking ban is in effect from November 1st until April 1st.

- ◆ On-street parking is prohibited overnight or when snow operations are in effect.
- ◆ Vehicles that are illegally parked will be ticketed and towed at the owner's expense if they interfere with snow removal operations

When The Snow Begins

When a snowstorm begins the Department responds by treating all roads with deicing chemicals. Treating the road surfaces serves two purposes - preventing snow and ice from bonding to the surface and to keep traffic flowing. Treating the roads takes approximately 2 1/2 – 3 hours.

During The Storm

Plowing operations begin when there is an accumulation of 2 to 4 **inches of snow** on road surfaces. Each vehicle is assigned to a pre-determined route and will remain there until the storm subsides unless an emergency occurs that requires reassignment of equipment from one location to another. The main objective is to keep all roads passable during the storm. Unfortunately, it is not possible to keep the roads free of snow without filling in many driveways; therefore, when you clean the end of your driveway, deposit the excess snow to the downstream side of your

driveway. This will minimize the redeposit of snow into the cleared opening when the plow makes its next pass.

- ◆ Please do not shovel, plow or blow snow or ice into the roadway. It is not only illegal, but can be a serious traffic hazard.
- ◆ If you have a private contractor plowing your driveway please make sure to remind them of this as you will be held responsible for their actions.
- ◆ The Town of Westford does not perform winter maintenance on sidewalks. Residents are encouraged to clear sidewalks in front of their property.

Following The Storm

After plowing is completed, roads are given a final treatment of deicing chemical. In the days following a storm, scraping and treating of roads continues depending upon weather forecasts. If colder weather is forecasted streets must be scraped of snow and slush to prevent icing of the surface when the temperature drops and also to widen the road edge so that drainage structures are exposed if the temperatures rise and melting occurs. As time allows, snow is removed from intersections where sight distance is a **concern**.

Sand and Salt

A mixture of sand and salt is available to residents (no contractors) at the designated area located outside of the gates at the Highway Garage on Beacon Street.



As we head into the snowy winter months, we again ask for your assistance in keeping access to fire hydrants clear. It is so important to public safety to keep the hydrants accessible. After storms, it can sometimes be a few days before Town crews can clear the snow away, so any help you can offer is greatly appreciated.

On behalf of the Westford Highway Department, we wish you a happy and safe winter traveling season.



Remembering Harold A. Fletcher

On Thursday, December 4, 2008, the Town of Westford celebrated the life of Harold A. Fletcher, Sr.

The consummate public servant, Harold was a past Captain of Westford Fire Department Company 1, Water Department Superintendent, and Water Commissioner.

Harold proudly served the Westford Water and Fire Departments for more than 50 years.

A lifelong resident of Westford, Harold began working for the Westford Water Company in 1947. In 1955, the Town purchased the Water Company, creating

the Westford Water Department. Harold was hired that same year, was named Superintendent in 1970, and then retired in 1991. But even in retirement, Harold continued to contribute as a Water Commissioner and was named Honorary Water Commissioner in 2007.

Harold began his firefighting career as a volunteer in high school, continued as a call fireman and EMT, eventually became a Captain, and was instrumental in laying the ground work for the Westford Ambulance Service.

The Westford Fire Department proudly

honored Harold through fire department traditions which reflect honor and respect to those who have given so much and who have served so well. The fitting remembrance will always be on the hearts and minds of those who attended, especially the family.

Harold was laid to rest in a lovely and poignant service at St. Mark's Church following a procession around Westford with stops at the Water Department and Fire Department. Thank you to all who came to honor Harold, and to the Honor Guards and Pipes and Drums for their dedication.

