

Report of the Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectmen, Department Heads and the Town Administrator have worked hard throughout the year to meet the Town's needs and while at the same time, live within the Town's budget. New Hampshire small town government and communities depend significantly on volunteers and those who seek public office for little or no compensation. The Board of Selectmen wishes to thank everyone who makes it possible: elected and appointed officials, Department Heads and employees and the ever present volunteers. Thank you for all your service and commitment to the Town of Fremont and our citizens.

In March, Neal Janvrin was re-elected to the Board of Selectmen for a 3-year term. The current Board continues to be very dedicated and collectively has many years of experience in Town Official capacities.



Events within the year included, the Memorial Day parade and ceremony at the Village Cemetery, the Veteran's Day event in the community room at the Fremont Library and Wreaths Across America ceremony at the Fremont Town Hall. These three events honor our past and present military services members.



As a community we are thankful and respectful of the work and sacrifice of all who put themselves in harm's way for our safety and protection. This includes our Police and Fire Rescue Departments.

The Boston Post Cane was also presented to Fremont's Oldest resident Ethel Edna Tilley on December 15th.

A full report of this New England Tradition is located on page 4 of this Town Report.

Former Cane Holder Ellen Horsburgh moved from Fremont in 2018.

Wreaths Ceremony & Boston Post Cane
Presentation photos are courtesy of
Amy Bean Photography



Accomplishments in 2018 included (some funds were encumbered in a prior year):

- Replacement of shingles on the Safety Complex roof
- Converted furnace fuel at the Safety Complex to LP
- Purchase of additional portable radios for the Fremont Fire Rescue Department
- Repair of the pump on Fremont Fire Rescue's Engine
- Repair of the Safety Complex Fire Alarm Control Panel
- Completed the installation of replacement standby generators (LP fueled) at the Safety Complex and Town Hall; installed a new standby generator at the Highway Shed – special thank you to the crew at the Highway Department for their help with this work, including digging up and removing the old oil tank and prepping and installing the LP tank location
- Continued with the use of a Fire Rescue Services consultant to aid in Departmental planning
- Replaced the computer servers at the Town Hall and Fremont Police Department
- Finalized remaining work for the Town Hall basement renovation project



Other accomplishments in 2018 included:

- Under the leadership of the Road Agent, the final wearing course paving was completed on the remaining section of North Road, a complete rebuild (drainage, shoulders, subsurface layout / regrade and repaving of base and wearing hot top surfaces) was completed on Beede Hill Road and similar complete rebuild (did not include the final wearing course of hot top) was completed on Red Brook Road. These were significant road improvements to some of our busiest streets and have been very appreciated by the driving public. Funds for this work were in the operating budget and two separate warrant articles that were approved. Additionally, we received an additional NH Highway Block Grant Aid in 2017 that funded additional improvements to North Road (beyond what had been budgeted and paid for by local taxes).
- Updated the Police Department pay scale for uniformed personnel to be competitive with departments in similar communities in our area. This was necessary for personnel retention and to be able to recruit for replacement officers.
- With funding from the subscriber franchise fee Fremont Community Television (FCTV) continues to live broadcast and record for later broadcast public meetings and community events. A fourth camera was added to the Town Hall basement meeting room. FCTV's role and importance to the Fremont community continues to evolve and grow in importance. As with many things, a few strong contributors are making a large



contribution to FCTV and its development. The Board of Selectmen thanks them for their vision and commitment. Elsewhere in the Town Report there is an FCTV report.

- Using consulting services from MRI, the Board and members of the Fire Rescue

Department met several times throughout the year to address the continued need for Fire Rescue services and a plan for moving into the future. The time is fast approaching that Fremont will



need additional paid services and we are looking at more comprehensive pay plan, per diem services, and ultimately at when it will be time to move to full-time staffing.

Year End 2018 encumbrances for Spring 2019 projects include:

- Roof shingle replacement on the Highway Department shop building.
- Installation of Heat and Air Conditioning on the top floor of the Town Hall. (The renovations to the Town Hall were phased to address the highest priorities within the available funds at the time. The heating and air conditioning of the top floor is the last scope of work. There is an increasing need to use the top floor in all seasons, and there is currently no HVAC at all on that floor.)
- Crack sealing the Town Hall parking lot to preserve existing pavement.
- Continued contract work with MRI on the strategic planning for the future of Fremont Fire Rescue.

We looked at trying to encumber monies to fix the increasing problem at the Safety Complex with the paving, but the cost to cure it is over \$100,000. Over time, the lot continues to settle and needs to be addressed. Only a binder coat of paving was done in the lot when the building was built in 1998.

On the 2019 Town Meeting Warrant there are several articles that we would like to bring to your attention:

- **Article 11** request authorization to hire an additional full-time police officer. Fremont is understaffed by recommended standards and compared to similar communities in our area. The Fremont Police Chief is once again making this recommendation in the interest of public safety. A similar Article was proposed last year and was narrowly

defeated. We feel that all of us recognize the need for an adequate police force for the safety and protection of our community.

- **Article 12** requests funding to pay \$7.25 an hour (NH's minimum wage) to on-call EMS / Fire Rescue staff to be available and on call to respond to calls in the overnight and weekend hours. Fremont, like other communities in New Hampshire and across the country have experienced significant growth in calls for EMS services. As a result, the demand for available qualified responders is increasing while the availability of individuals on volunteer basis is diminishing. There have been calls for service that have not been responded to by volunteers. The funding in this Article is to fund one of the recommended strategies to address the availability and response of qualified first responders.
- **Article 15** requests authorization to enter into a 5-year agreement with Waste Management for the curbside pick-up and disposal of our trash and recyclables. Waste Management is our current contractor and was the low bidder in our recent request for sealed bid proposals. In order to continue to provide the same level of service it is critical that Article 15 be approved. The first year of the contract is in the operating budget, and it is also critical that be approved in order to maintain the same level of weekly pickup service and bi-annual Bulky Day collections.
- **Article 19** is for road improvements to Chester Road. It is a scope of work that is recommended by an engineer and similar to what occurred this past year on Red Brook Road but over a longer road. Fremont has over 40 miles of streets. Generally, the useful life of a paved surface is about 20 years. Therefore, it is important that we routinely address the maintenance and repair needs of our streets. Deferring needed road work means the needs will be greater in the future and Town will have deteriorating road conditions until they are repaired.

Additionally, we were notified on January 10th, the day after the Public Budget Hearing, by NH DOT that the Sandown Road Bridge overflow needs to be addressed immediately. We are investigating our options and will have an amendment on the floor of Deliberative Session to increase the appropriation into the Bridget Capital Reserve Fund (**Warrant Article 17**) to be able to address the deficiencies. As we write this report we have engaged an engineer and will have more comprehensive information at Deliberative Session.

Once again, we are thankful for the past support of the Town's voters / taxpayers. The Board of Selectmen is grateful for the opportunity to serve the Fremont community and looks forward to working with everyone again in 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Fremont Board of Selectmen

Gene Cordes

Neal Janvrin

Roger Barham

Photos courtesy of Mary Wheaton-Pinder and Heidi Carlson