



Report of the Board of Selectmen

The economy and issues faced by our residents continues to be a Board focus. Voters supported the default budget at the 2012 Town Meeting and the Board allocated these monies among the various Departments based on Department need and the initial budget submissions.

We underwent our first audit with the new firm of Plodzik and Sanderson. The Board felt it was time for a “new set of eyes” on the Town’s financial records and accounting systems. They made several recommendations for updates to our practices and policies, the majority of which have been incorporated as of year end.

The Conservation Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee were instrumental in the final plans resulting in the purchase of the Smith Land, a combination of three parcels totaling 76 acres for conservation. Commissioner Pat deBeer worked tirelessly writing grants, and the project came to a close with the Town borrowing a short term note for \$65,000, that was then completely reimbursed by grants. The entire balance of the project was funded with monies previously saved in the Land Use Change Tax Fund, managed by the Fremont Conservation Commission.

In April, the Town purchased a used backhoe that will suit the Town’s needs for years to come. The purchase of this backhoe has alleviated the need for some of the rented equipment that we have paid for in past years. The Board felt, based on the recommendations of the Highway Study Committee, that this was a prudent decision moving forward. The Committee recommends the long term savings for taxpayers if we own and maintain equipment versus lease or renting it. The Board of Selectmen also replaced the aging one ton highway truck this spring. The maintenance and repairs on the 2005 truck were becoming cost-prohibitive, and a new truck was ordered at year end 2011. It was brought into service in the spring of 2012. Both of these purchases were funded from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, and had no impact to taxpayers.

The Memorial Day Parade was a great success. Our guest speaker was Army Sergeant Matt Jordan, currently a resident of Epping, but with Fremont family ties. Matt, 24, was retired from the Army when he was injured by a roadside bomb while patrolling in Iraq. He later lost his lower right leg to his injuries. Matt shared a heartfelt story with everyone in attendance at our Memorial Day Ceremony, and we thank him, and so many others for their service. The more local people who are involved, the more special it is for all of us. We are thankful to the many organizations and committees that sponsor events that involve the community.

The conversion to bi-annual tax billing has substantially improved the Town's cash flow. We have saved thousands of dollars in interest payments, compared to years when taxes were billed annually.

The Board continued their work on the adoption of policies that are necessary to provide protection and transparency as part of their fiscal responsibilities. Following recommendations made by our new auditors, a Capital Assets & Depreciation Policy was adopted in March; and a Records Retention Policy adopted in September. Policies are reviewed annually, and the Board has managed to maintain this schedule. A Credit Card Policy was adopted in July, and the Safety Policy underwent updates in September and November. Voters adopted a Conflict of Interest Ordinance at the March 2012 Town Meeting, which has become part of the Town's Policies and Procedures as well.

The new website went on line in April 2012 and has thus far been well-received. The staff members who are trained continue to get new items posted, and facilitate information being available. You must sign up for items such as the Newsletter, News Items, and Minutes. You can do this by clicking on the left hand navigation bar "Subscribe to E-Alerts." You will have to complete the information, submit it, and then reply to the confirmation email to have your name and email placed on these lists. Once enrolled, you will receive an email when a pertinent piece of news, minutes, or other information is posted, depending on what you sign up to receive. If you have any questions, please contact Heidi Carlson in our office at 895 2226 extension 10.

The Boston Post Cane was bestowed upon Cecelia O'Connell on August 2, 2012. Cecelia was born in Salem NH in 1919. Her family moved to Chester, and she later graduated from Raymond High School. She married James O'Connell in 1955 and moved to Fremont, where she has lived for the past 57 years. Jim was the Fremont postmaster for 32 years. Cecelia had been actively involved in Fremont as a former Deputy Town Clerk, Census Taker for the School System, Assistant 4H Leader, and as a member of the PTA, Community Club, and Grange. Her daughters Gail O'Connell and Elaine O'Connell Bradley, son-in-law Gary Bradley and grandson Daniel Bradley were able to join in the presentation held at the Town Hall.

During the September tax rate setting process, the Board voted to use Unreserved Fund Balance to keep the tax rate lower. Our vote used much of what was in our reserve, and thus it will not be available in future years. The Board felt it was important to try and keep the tax rate

as low as possible for residents. We also moved into the 2013 budget process very conservatively and can report that the proposed 2013 budget is less than the default budget.

Kathy Arsenault resigned from her position as Tax Collector on September 13, 2012 to pursue full-time employment in the Derry Tax Collector's Office. We wish Kathy good luck in all of her endeavors. Deputy Christine Goudin assumed the position of Tax Collector as of Kathy's last day.

In early October, Town Clerk Lori Holmes also announced her resignation, to pursue a full-time position with the State of NH. As she did not have a Deputy, the Town Administrator worked quickly to find outside assistance. The Town was very fortunate to have the assistance of Sue McKinnon, the Town Clerk in Newfields; and Desiree Mahurin, the Town Clerk in Hill. They helped us through this transition, once Lori left office on October 30th. MRI also helped the Town by providing other clerical assistance during a very busy election time, through the November General Election.

A recruitment process yielded the appointment of resident Shannon Bryant as the Town's new Town Clerk. She began on October 31, 2012 and is becoming trained in the areas of registration and record-keeping done by the Clerk's Office. We thank the community for your patience as Shannon has become trained, and began a more regular work schedule of office hours at the Town Hall as of January 1, 2013.

We had a record-breaking voter turnout of 2,502 residents for the November General Election at Ellis School. We would like to thank the Fremont School Board and School Administration, along with the Election Officials (Town Clerk, Moderator, Supervisors of the Checklist, and our many election workers) for their assistance in setup and take-down for each of our elections.

The Election was a vast undertaking for the new Town Clerk, and Lori Holmes and many other Town Officials and employees joined in to help. Great job election workers!

We again held a Veteran's Open House on November 11, 2012 that was well attended, and a wonderful tribute to Veterans and all of the Men and Women of our Armed Forces, past and present. We dedicate this Annual Report to all of the people who protect our freedoms and serve Our Great Country, past, present, and future.

The People's United Methodist Church led the Town in the Second Annual Wreath Across America Program on Saturday December 15th. This program places wreaths on Veteran's graves and town monuments during the holiday season. This program was well-attended, and a fitting tribute to all of our Veterans. We hope it will continue as annual observance. On that day, the Town was presented with "A Resolution for participation in Wreaths Across America honoring our Armed Forces, teaching both young and old the true cost of freedom" by Senator Russell Prescott, District 23.

The 250th Celebration of Fremont is one year closer. The 250th Committee is working diligently to make this a wonderful event for the Town in June of 2014. We hope the Town chooses to support this special event. Anyone interested in being involved should contact the Town Historian Matthew Thomas. There are many tasks to be accomplished to provide a fitting tribute for the 250th Birthday of our Community!

It has been a pleasure serving you and we look forward to the challenges ahead for 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Annmarie Scribner, Chair
Brett A Hunter
Greta St Germain

Boston Post Cane Presentation to Cecelia O'Connell
02 August 2012

L to R: Brett Hunter, Annmarie Scribner,
Cecelia O'Connell, Greta St Germain

Photo Courtesy of Gail O'Connell
& Elaine O'Connell Bradley



"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction.

We didn't pass it on to our children in the bloodstream.

It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children what it was once like in the United States when men were free."

~ Ronald Reagan