

Report of the Town Administrator

At this time of year it is always so difficult to believe another full year has come and gone. We began 2018 with a milder winter season through the month of February. There was a near 70 degree day on February 21 and it was good to get refreshed before winter came back to remind us with March blizzards, that Mother Nature is in charge!

The 2018 Deliberative Session was held as scheduled on February 5. We had about 40 people in attendance and again had much interesting discussion and



debate. Town Officials and the public alike had presentations and information to share on each of the articles, and the session was informative and interactive.

A 2.7 magnitude earthquake was recorded southwest of Exeter on February 15. We heard it more than felt it here at the Town Hall, and there was a lot of excitement until learning what it was. This is just another reminder to be prepared for any situation. Go to www.ReadyNH.gov to learn what you and your family can do to be prepared.

Bob Meade had stepped in to help us when Rick Foye resigned in November of 2017, and stuck to his promise that he would re-retire in February of 2018. He helped in the search for a new candidate, and continues to be a great asset to the Town and our Building Department. We welcomed Gregg Arvanitis to the position in March, and he continues to learn about Fremont and brought some 20 years of inspection experience to us.

The Town Warrant moved ahead to the Official Ballot with only one amendment from Deliberative Session. A total of 594 ballots were cast at the March Elections, despite the snow storm. In Fremont we do not have the capacity to move Tuesday voting schedules because Ellis School works diligently with us up to two years in advance to get voting days worked in to the school calendar, and can't just move it and cancel school on an alternate day. We also do not have the staffing to man the polling hours or do the setup and takedown on a moment's notice. Much of our help takes a day off from their regular work to do the elections. We sincerely appreciate your hearty efforts to get to the polling place in our New England winters!

Neal Janvrin ran successfully for re-election to the Board of Selectmen in March, so there were no changes to the makeup of the Board. Several people stepped down or did not seek reappointment in 2018. This included Kathy Miccile from the Budget Committee, Rick Pinder

as a Cemetery Trustee, and Carla Smith as our Deputy Health Officer. We thank them all for their time and contributions!



Our Annual Memorial Day Celebration was another notable ceremony. The weather was cool and fair; but made marching comfortable and did not rain on our parade! We are thankful to our many Military Service personnel, past and present, for their contributions. Their presence makes this day so special. Guest Speaker was resident Jack Mullen. Many other residents spoke and participated, and our youth group participants help to make the event special as well.

We are planning for the 2019 events, so please come forward early to see what you can do to participate in the ceremony. Jeanne and Kathy worked together planning the 2018 events, and it's not too soon to let us know what you can do to participate!

Assessors were in the Selectmen's Office about once weekly, working on quarterly reviews along with annual pickups and the various other assessing duties. Assessors are in the field more often checking data and listing information on neighborhoods based on sales information received. They have MRI identification and a letter from the Town with their name and vehicle information. If you have any questions about this work, please feel free to call the Selectmen's Office and speak with Jeanne (x 303), Kathy (x 302) or Heidi (x 301). We have a list of properties they are checking on any given day.



We offered Camp Fremont again for a five week program in July and August and were lucky to have two seasoned Ellis School staffers joins us to run the program this year - Shona Emery, Director, and Martha Abney, Assistant Director. Thank you to all of our staff members and volunteers for their leadership and for taking great care of our campers all summer!

Several other Town employees resigned for other opportunities this past year, and we wish them all good luck in their various adventures! This includes Jesse Emery, Steve Henderson and Erich Lutz from the Police Department, and James Saltzman is pursuing full-time military employment. Nancy Mason left the Library in May, and Peter "Butch" Porter left the Highway Department in early November.

We welcomed new staff members Don Bourassa who was hired to fill the Parks & Recreation maintenance position. This position was expanded as part of the budget process for 2017 and

addressed many overdue maintenance items at the ballfields. Don has filled in whenever and wherever we needed him and has been a welcome addition to our staff. We also welcomed Lloyd Bishop to assist with Cemetery Maintenance, filling another great need. The Library welcomed several new and fill-in part-time staff members including Anne Beliveau, Bridget Abney, Emma Edwards, Emily Abney, Patty Turner and Rachel Edwards. Chris McKee joined the Police Department part-time, and Joe Parisi joined the Fire Rescue Department.

The Selectmen and I spent most of August through November meeting weekly with the Budget Committee presenting the budget for 2019. We do this annually and these meetings are a good way to learn more about the budget details and overall process. Most are live broadcast, and they are taped when conflicting with another live meeting, for rebroadcast during the weeks that follow. The rebroadcast schedule is published on the FCTV Channel Bulletin Board.

FCTV has put out a wealth of information this past year as they continued to expand their broadcasting capabilities. Virtually all of our meetings are live broadcast, and we also welcomed the Fremont School Board to the new basement meeting room this year to hold their regular monthly meeting. FCTV efforts have been spearheaded over the past five years largely by Bruce White. Their progress would not be possible if not for his dedication. He continues to teach others and is largely responsible for the success and growth of FCTV! We sincerely thank this small group of dedicated individuals for their work to bring Fremont local government home to you!



The Fire Rescue Department spent a lot of time this year with consultants from MRI working on a strategic plan for the future. The Department is experiencing some growing pains as they work hard trying to cover all of the

Department calls and do all the work and training involved in running the Fire Rescue Department.

Selectmen and I also met with members of the Department several times



throughout the year (March monthly meeting shown here). We appreciate all of their efforts and time spent on this important work. Fire Rescue Members are to be commended for their dedication to the project, and continuing to grow as a Department. They are basically volunteers and on call virtually 24/7. We are always looking for new members. Becoming part of public safety is a true calling, and we welcome you to explore what it might have to offer you!

After the departure of two full-time Police Officers in May, we again had to recruit. We hired Philip Houten and Christian Hight after several months of process and necessary testing. They began the NH Police Academy August 27. They returned from the 16 week program after graduation in late December, where they continue their on the job training through the spring of 2019. They are seen here as Chief Twiss presented them to the Selectmen for appointment on July 26. We worked several months on updating the pay matrix to increase the likelihood that we can recruit and retain qualified candidates for these positions. The recruitment, training and equipping of a new police officer is more than \$40,000, making turnover very expensive and difficult on remaining staff to fill shifts. Thank you to all of our staff members for your selfless dedication to the Community, and your profession.



Beginning in 2017 we worked on replacement generators at the Safety Complex and Town Hall due to age and other operational issues; and a new unit at the Highway Shed so that the Department can access the building and equipment during power outages. We had saved significant funds in the Emergency Management Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and that, coupled

with some encumbered 2017 funds, enabled us to complete all of these projects without additional impact to taxes. In the same effort, we had encumbered money to convert the aging (20 years) oil burners to propane and thus eliminate the oil tank buried at the rear of the Safety Complex and have only one fuel source. Three 1,000 gallon propane tanks were installed and



all of the heating system and generator installation work completed in June of 2018. Pictured are Highway Crew members Leon Holmes Jr and Butch Porter with Maintenance Staffer Mike Malloy. They were all instrumental in getting this work done!

New construction and other property improvements increased the Town's overall assessed valuation from \$405,960,200 to \$409,848,681 for the September 2018 tax rate setting process. A few more new homes were completed on Thunder Road, nearly completing that project, as well as on Jacob's Cove. Commercial development continued as Altaeros built a hangar in the old gravel pit at 663 Main Street, and Fremont Land LLC continues to expand other commercial ventures at that same site.



We had a busy election season with primary and general elections in September and November. There is significant preparation work throughout the election season. Photo left taken on November 5 as we set up for the November 6th General Election. We work closely with

Ellis Staff for setup and take-down, all done within hours of beginning and ending the actual polling day. With so many elections in 2018, we also greatly expanded our election worker roster! Thanks to all who stepped up to help!

Veteran's Open House was held on Friday November 10th. We had a small group this year with a nice service. We enjoy our Veterans sharing some of their stories and history. We love the community gathering to show thanks and support to Veterans and active service personnel of all generations. Thanks again to Jeanne and Kathy for all the prep work on this event.

Several events took place on Saturday December 15th. This included the Annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony. The church and local residents help to organize this meaningful event. It was coupled this year with a special presentation of the Boston Post Cane. A full report of the day can be found at the front of this Town Report.

Our Fire Rescue and Police Departments also escorted Santa around Town that day. This is fun for residents of all ages to see Santa and all of our safety personnel! Our safety folks love it too!

I encourage residents to sign up for the items available by email subscription from the website. You can receive an email notification of the posting of the monthly Town Newsletter, Emergency News, items posted to the homepage, and other minutes and information. All you have to do is visit the website, sign up for email alerts (or other lists), reply to confirm your information, and you will then be sent an email notifying you of postings of the requested items. This can be done from the left hand navigation bar at www.Fremont.nh.gov in the "Subscribe to E-Alerts" section.



A big thank you to our Public Safety Officials for all they do every day to keep Fremont safe and secure. Another big thank you to the employees and contracted vendors who handle the Town's winter maintenance operations. This is a thankless job and includes many long hours in

the worst winter conditions.

I also want to thank everyone who gives freely of their time to volunteer service in Fremont. Our dedicated employees, and all of the Town's many talented volunteers are invaluable to the day to day function of Town Government. We could not do it without you! If you have some time and the desire to be involved in a role within the community, please come forward. There are unfilled positions right now on the Parks & Recreation Commission, and within FCTV on the Committee as well as Camera Operators. Special event execution is another short-term commitment you might also consider (Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, Bulky Day and seasonal recreation events). We are always looking for help with elections setup and takedown as well. Reach out to a Board that interests you, and don't hesitate to call me with any general questions.

Community service is one of the most rewarding things you will ever do and there are many opportunities to get involved in Fremont. Participate in the annual meetings and find a Committee or Board that interests you. Come on out and see what is going on! As FCTV continues to increase the cable programming, you can watch even more of what is happening in Fremont on FCTV Channels 22 and 13! The second channel expansion happened mid-year,



and we would love to see more of your programs. The second channel will allow for even more events and local information to be broadcast.

On January 10, 2019 we received a letter from NH DOT directing that we shut down, or restrict to one lane, the Sandown Road Bridge Overflow (which is the last bridge prior to the Sandown Town Line). This came one day after our Public Budget Hearing and has become a major focus for our

2019 work, as I write this report. The photos depict each side of the bridge, which was slated for guardrail repair in the Highway Department 2019 operating budget. We are now getting in to a much larger repair project, and voters amended the Bridge Capital Reserve Warrant Article at Deliberative Session to be able to address the repairs. The beams (you can see at the edges in both photos, taken on January 10, 2019) are deteriorating and need replacement.



Please review the Warrant and information carefully to understand the process. We would like to get this work done and minimize the restriction and closure as much as possible. Additional information is available on the homepage of the Town website at www.Fremont.nh.gov.

The Selectmen continue to meet weekly to address the Town's business, at 6:30 pm on Thursday evenings in the basement meeting room at the Town Hall. Our

meetings are live broadcast, and minutes for all Boards and Committees are posted to the Town's website once approved.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for general information at 895 2226 x 301 or by email at FremontTA@comcast.net.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator

We also had a visit at the Town Hall from Fritz Wetherbee in May, to purchase a copy of the
*"History of Fremont NH Olde Poplin
An Independent New England Republic
1764 – 2014."*

Photos courtesy of Heidi Carlson, Ellen Douglas
and Bob Meade

