

Report of the Town Administrator

The year 2017 began and ended sadly with the loss of two long-time friends and Town Officials. Barb Bassett left us in January and Trudie Butler left us December. Both were amazing women who did much for Fremont over the years and who I worked closely with during their time in various Town positions. They are dearly missed.

With another mild “early winter” (the months of November and December 2016), we were lulled into tranquility until February 2017 when it hit full force! (Right after we got both School and Town Deliberative sessions completed, thankfully!) Two back to back Nor’easters in mid-February were draining for all. Snowbanks exceeded the road width in some of the tighter neighborhoods, and patience ran thin. Trash delays and broken toters were the big complaint for the winter, and we had to truck snow out of the Riverside Drive neighborhoods because plows couldn’t get through, making for a situation too dangerous to leave unmitigated.



*Deliberative Session
presentation of the 2016 Town
Report Appreciation to Leon
Holmes Jr*

The 2017 Deliberative Session was held as scheduled on February 6. We had approximately 30 people in attendance, but the meeting was full

of interesting discussion and questions. Town Officials and the public alike had presentations and information to share on each of the articles, and the session was informative and interactive. The Warrant moved ahead to the Official Ballot as written, and 562 ballots were cast at the March Elections. Fremonters proved their sturdy dedication to the process as voters came out despite a March 14th blizzard. Much controversy existed about whether Towns have the ability to move elections and Fremont followed the letter of the Law and advice provided by State Officials in holding our elections. We thank all who made the effort to vote.

The drought conditions in Rockingham County were still listed as extreme, but a relatively slow melt and some spring rains helped. The melting and 50+ degree days we had at the end of February helped to make room for the additional snow which fell throughout March.

We put the balance of work out to bid for the Town Hall basement renovations in February. This was a lengthy process including numerous site meetings and a lot of work on drawings created through the work of Bob Meade. We thank Bob, and Fremont resident Rick Pinder who volunteered to help the Town through this process with construction oversight. The contract was awarded to low bidder and local vendor KTM in April and work began in earnest in May. We thank them for their help, expertise and donations including the kitchen countertop!

Much of our year felt consumed by the renovation work, but it has been worth the time, efforts and money. The finished space is far greater than anything we had previously, and affords a wonderful meeting room space, a greatly updated FCTV Control Room, office and Food Pantry space, and a bathroom. Many local contractors helped us through the project.



The proposed budget passed at the March 2017 Town Meeting, allowing us to plan and execute many projects and planned budget expenses this year. We thank the voters for their attention to the details provided, and took your votes to mean you approved of the work plans. The largest change to the budget was planned road maintenance and upgrades. Paving the wearing course of pavement on Whittier Drive and Sandown Road was completed in July, and new reconstruction/upgrade work began on three big sections of North Road. This was supplemented by an unanticipated NH Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$99,049 which was put toward added paving work on North Road.

Voters again supported several Capital Reserve Articles in 2017, which puts the Town in a better position to fund our long-term capital needs, and creates more of a balanced tax rate impact. These savings accounts help us fund large capital purchases.

Gene Cordes 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 March. This includes Kimberly Dyer from Parks & Recreation, Mike Nygren from the Budget Committee, Tom O'Brien from the Planning Board, Leo Danjou from FCTV and the Conservation Commission; Don Marshall as an RPC Commissioner; and Nathan Draney as the Emergency Management Director. We would like to thank everyone who gives so selflessly of their time to serve on the many volunteer Boards and Committees that keep Fremont running.

Our Annual Memorial Day Celebration was wonderful. We were outdoors for the parade and ceremony. We are thankful to our many Military Service personnel, past and present, for their contributions. Their presence makes this day so special. Guest Speaker Lt Eric Whicker, US Navy joined us with help from Mark DeVeber.





We made another special presentation to one of the long-standing participants in Fremont's Memorial Parade, Bob Frye, who has been marching in Fremont's Memorial Day Parade for 46 years. He comes from a long line of Fremont family members with nearly 100 years of history of participation in this parade. He is the son of Mildred Emerson Frye and Ellsworth Frye. Mildred is a Fremont native who served as a Navy WAVE during WW II (1941-1946) as one of only two women from Fremont to serve in the military during WW II. Bob is the grandson of Norine and Freeman Emerson Sr. Freeman marched in the parade for some 60 years prior to his death. Bob is a US

Army Veteran, Spec 5 E5 and we thank him for his service, and being an important part of this annual Fremont tradition.

Many thanks to Veterans who attend these events and share their experiences. We thank you for your sacrifice and your immense service to our Country. We are planning for the 2017 events, so please come forward early to see what you can do to participate in the ceremony. Jeanne Nygren does a great job organizing the event each year and would love to hear from you on how you can help!

Assessors were in the Selectmen's Office with greater frequency as they worked on quarterly reviews along with annual pickups and the various other assessing duties. Assessors are also in the field more often, checking data and listing information on neighborhoods. 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 six weeks in July and August and were lucky to have four Ellis School staffers to run the program. These ladies did a great job and some of them plan to return. Thank you to all of our staff members and volunteers for their leadership and for taking great care of our campers all summer! Watch for the new program information to come out in early spring. We will be getting the hiring process underway shortly.

The FCTV Committee met on a regular and continues to increase their programming. There was a major disruption caused by the basement renovations, but thanks to the dedication of Cable Coordinator Bruce White, many things continued to be taped and broadcast throughout the summer. Neal Janvrin stepped forward to fill a vacancy and one additional member is still being sought to fill Leo Danjou's vacancy. Thank you to FCTV active participants Bruce White, Bill Millios, Felicia Augevich and Alex Coulombe who bring us all sorts of meeting and events!

Leaving Town employment this year were Bob Meade, who retired on January 31, 2017. Bob had given us notice such that we were able to hire a replacement who had a few days to train

with him before he left, and he continued to assist us during a transition period with the many projects he had underway at the time. Sam Meade left in January, Leon Holmes Sr. retired from the Fremont Planning Board in February due to health issues. His many contributions are missed, having a lot of institutional knowledge predicated on his lifelong Fremont residency. Tom O'Brien also left the Planning Board in November.



Fran Armstrong stepped down as our Representative to the SRRDD 53-B Committee. Long serving and extremely dedicated Conservation Commission Members Patricia deBeer and Janice O'Brien both completed their terms in March 2017 and did not accept reappointment. Pat has been a tireless grant writer and Janice the driving force behind many of the Town's Open Space projects for more than a decade. At year end, Pat returned to an open spot on the Conservation Commission!

*Winter on the Barred Owl Trail with Open Space Volunteer
Dennis Howland*

We hired Rick Foye as our Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer and Health Officer in February 2017. He was with us through November when he left to pursue full-time employment elsewhere. Bob came back from retirement to help us, and at the time of this writing, he is retiring again, but has again graciously offered to help us train someone new in this role.

In the midst of the February blizzards, we were fortunate to hire Jordan and Alex Coulombe to help with building and winter maintenance. Their assistance was extremely timely, and I thank them for their hard work! Jackson Rowell also came home from college to help through the summer and winter seasons. At year end we hired Kathy Clement to assist in the Selectmen's Office, so she is another face you will see at our counter!

We also said good bye to other Town employees including Andy Artimovich (PD), Jared Butler (HW) and Hunter Gilman (FRD). We wish them all good luck in their various adventures!

Tom Ryan 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. We learned at year end that he was pursuing full-time employment elsewhere and we are interviewing for this position now.

The Selectmen and I spent September through November meeting weekly with the Budget Committee presenting the budget for 2018. We do this annually and these meetings are a good way to learn more about the budget details. Due to the conflicting schedule with the Planning Board meetings on Wednesday nights, not all are live broadcast, but they are taped (when not

live) and rebroadcast during the weeks that follow. The rebroadcast schedule is published on the FCTV Channel Bulletin Board.

In the fall we began looking at options to assist the Fire Rescue Department in its quest to investigate alternative staffing and compensation options, as well as look at our overall response abilities and operations. This led us to MRI who we are working with on a consulting basis. At year end we received feedback on the first phase of this work. We anticipate that we will spend a good deal of time and energy working on these matters in 2018. The Chief Officers and Selectmen are meeting more often to review concerns and operational matters to strengthen the Department and best utilize our resources. This Department is our largest Town Department and has significant responsibilities to the community every day. I am an AEMT and firefighter myself and know well that becoming involved in this type of activity is one of the most rewarding activities you could ever undertake. If you have the time and energy, contact Chief Butler, or visit the station on a Monday evening, when the Department conducts their meetings, trainings, and the Chief has office hours.

Veteran's Open House was held on Friday November 10th. We had a small group this year and it was a nice service with some new Fremonters participating, and all of 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.

Selectmen making the 2017 Town Report Appreciation Presentation to Marlene Emery, a 35 year town employee



New construction and other property improvements, coupled with the recertification process, increased the Town's overall assessed valuation from \$399,735,833 to \$405,960,200 for the September 2017 tax rate setting process. The last of the condominiums were constructed within the Black Rocks Village project, construction is complete

within the second phase of the Spaulding and Frost subdivision, and a couple more new homes were built on Thunder Road, Jacob's Cove, and in the Governor's Forest Park. Commercial development began in the old gravel pit at 663 Main Street.

We also saw two Fremont businesses celebrate milestones! Fremont Pizzeria celebrated 20 years in its present location, as did Fremont Glass & Garage Door. Both are a big part of the Fremont Community.

The Fire Rescue and Police Departments escorted Santa around Fremont on December 16th. This is fun for residents of all ages to see Santa and all of our safety personnel!

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 all of 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.

We 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 on the Planning Board, Parks & Recreation Commission, and FCTV. Special event execution with the Parks & Recreation Commission is another short-term commitment you might also consider. We are looking for help with elections setup and takedown as well. We do need your help!

Community service is one of the most rewarding things you will ever do. There are so 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 we are able to increase our cable programming, you can watch even more of what is happening in Fremont on FCTV Channel 22!

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



Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Carlson, Town Administrator

approved. Please let us know what else you would like to see posted and available as we are always trying to reach out with more information that people want to see.

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.

Photos courtesy of Dennis Howland and
Heidi Carlson