

Report of the Town Administrator

The early winter was milder than the previous year, and brought some much needed relief to our budget and our staff. The money that was overspent on the prior horrific winter was redirected in 2016 toward paving efforts, all of which were cut short in 2015. The Highway



Department made the most of the allocated funds, redoing a portion of Sandown Road, and half of Whittier Drive.

This was a big



step for the Town toward catching up on long-overdue infrastructure needs. (Reclamation process shown in photo to the left – Sandown Road and on the right – Whittier Drive).

The 2016 Deliberative Session was held as scheduled on February 2nd. We had approximately 50 people in attendance, and the meeting was full of questions and discussion. The Warrant moved ahead to the Official Ballot as written, and 705 ballots were cast at the March Elections. We hope that all who were not able to attend were able to watch the broadcast to get the information needed to understand the Warrant Articles.

The February Presidential Primary brought 1,940 voters out, in what was a very busy election year. It is great to see so many people get involved in the process! Elections in November brought record numbers with a total of 2,791 ballots cast in Fremont for the General Election. The increased workload of the 2016 election cycle brought several more ballot clerks and election workers, and we thank all of these people for their help during a very busy season! Their hard work, patience and diligence made the election process very successful in Fremont. When all voters across NH were combined, it was a record turnout in 2016 at the primaries.

After a lengthy search, we hired Casey Wolfe in early March as our new Land Use Assistant. Casey came to us following an internship with Rockingham Planning Commission and is a UNH grad. She had big shoes to fill following the loss of our beloved Meredith Bolduc. Casey has done well learning her role, and assisting the Land Use Boards, each of whom had a busy year with several large scale projects before them for consideration.



The default budget passed at the March 2016 Town Meeting. With the default total, the Board rearranged some Department allocations to fit needs with the funding we received. Voters again supported Capital Reserve Articles in 2016, which puts the Town in a better position to

fund our long-term capital purchases, and creates more of a balanced tax rate impact. These savings accounts help us fund large capital purchases.

Recent Planning Board Chairman Roger Barham was elected to the Board of Selectmen in March. Roger brings a skillset and view to the Board that is helpful and productive. He continues to sit on the Planning Board as the Selectmen's Representative.



Our Annual Memorial Day Celebration was again 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. Our Guest Speaker was Gunnery Sergeant Bill Dolloff, USMC Retired. We also made a special presentation to one of the long-standing participants in Fremont's Memorial Day services, Dick Burleigh. He served as our Grand Marshal and also was presented with a plaque

commemorating his more than 50 years of service to the Fremont Memorial Day parade. Dick is a Fremont native who joined the United States Army in 1963, served two years of active duty as a Specialist Grade 4, in the 598th Transportation Company in Germany. He served four more years as a reservist. He has marched in this parade since 1965 when he came home from the Army, and was home on leave one prior May and marched then as well.



We had children marching, and do love to have the increased community participation in this important ceremony. Thank you one and all who help to make this day a real remembrance. The Parks & Recreation Commission had a picnic waiting at Ellis as we moved from the ceremonies at the cemetery, along with the Ellis

School Band. All of their energy and contributions are appreciated!



A huge thank you to our many veterans who come out for these events, to share your experiences and stories with us. We thank you for your sacrifice and 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 or participate.



Selectmen signed a renewal contract in July with MRI for the Town's continued assessing needs. This contract now includes quarterly reviews, which has long been recommended by the NH

DRA as the preferred method to keep assessing information up to date. Assessors are in the field more often, checking data and listing information on neighborhoods. They do ¼ of the Town each year and in the fifth year, statistical analysis will be completed and new values implemented. This is next due for April 1, 2020. If you have any questions about this assessing work, please feel free to call the Selectmen's Office and speak with Jeanne (x 11) or Heidi (x 10).

We were able to offer Camp Fremont again for six weeks in July and August and were thrilled to have four Ellis School staffers run the program. These ladies did an incredible job and we are thrilled to know that they are coming back and have the planning underway for 2017. Thank you to Melissa Olms, Carrie Parenteau, Kimberly Dyer and Hannah Kimball for their leadership and for taking great care of our campers all summer! Watch for the 2017 program information to come out in early spring.

The FCTV Committee met on a regular monthly basis much of the year. They have again increased programming and broadcasting/taping of meetings and events. Cable Coordinator Bruce White has worked tirelessly on these endeavors. The Committee expanded to five members and Felicia Augevich stepped in to assume one of those additional positions, and we still seek one additional member. Thank you to FCTV active participants Bruce White, Bill Millios, Leo Danjou, Felicia Augevich and Alex Coulombe. FCTV has great goals for next year as well, and we support their efforts to bring you more programming. The Selectmen have brought forward Warrant Article 18, so that FCTV can continue to be funded into the future. There is no tax impact, but the return of a franchise fee is needed to continue the valuable programming that FCTV provides.

Leaving Town employment this year were John Millett, Trish Coulombe, and EMD Nathan Draney (still an active EMT). Winter plow driver Peter "Butch" Porter stepped away from the regular duties but remains on our payroll for on-call as his availability allows. Volunteers and Town Officials moving on to other endeavors included Treasurer Kimberly Dunbar, Selectman Leon Holmes Sr (who stayed on as Planning Board Member); Parks & Recreation Member Sharon Muse, and Planning Board Member Phil Coombs. One of the founding members of Fremont's Energy Committee has stepped down because he has retired to a warmer climate! We thank Bob Larson for his help to this Committee (sometimes still offering ideas and research from Florida!) As many will remember, Bob has served Fremont in a variety of roles over many years of his living here. He is a talented and dedicated individual!



Most notable in our staffing changes is Building Inspector Bob Meade, who announced at year end that he would retire as of January 31, 2017. Bob has also been our Health Officer and Code Enforcement Officer, Safety Committee Chair, and done a great deal to progress the Town Hall renovations to their current position. He is an extremely talented individual who did a lot more than his designated "jobs." He is missed.

Jared Butler has taken on an increased role in Highway Department operations in Butch's absence, and in filling a need the Town has had for some time. Jared has worked in the

summer for the Town for several years, and we need more help as the Town's one full-time employee isn't safe working alone as much as he does, and is inefficient when having to move equipment or seek rides to get back to a truck or the shed. Jared is working some additional hours, especially this busy winter season, and the 2017 proposed budget would provide for additional part-time hours year-round in the Highway Department.



We welcomed maintenance worker Michael Malloy to our staff in July. He is an asset to our staff and primarily cares for the Safety Complex, but has been a great help in various other projects in Town. Sam Meade also joined us this summer to help with basement renovations.

Work continued throughout 2016 on the Town Hall basement renovations. The heating system is nearly complete, with condensers placed late in the year, and some final hookup work due in the spring of 2017. Just into 2017, we received an energy efficiency grant of \$1,400 for that work, thanks to Bob Meade. Bob and a team of Town maintenance folks worked on the renovations about 10 hours a week through the summer and fall. We appreciate all they have completed. A special thank you to the Fremont Food Pantry, who has been displaced by our work in the basement, and are running their operations from the third floor of the building. We thank them for their patience. They provide an incredible service to our residents and the volunteers are to be thanked for all their hard work. It would not be possible if not for the generous donations of Fremont residents and the Food Drives sponsored by our Scouts and Ellis School.

Veteran's Open House was held on Thursday November 11th. As always, we had a wonderful crowd and nice service with Veteran's of all ages sharing stories and history. This event, our annual Memorial Day event, and Wreaths Across America, are truly special for Town Officials and the community to gather and show our thanks and support to Veterans and active service personnel of all generations.

In September, our new fire truck arrived in Fremont. The FFRD Truck Committee worked tirelessly on specifications and the order was placed in the summer of 2015 following the March Town Meeting approval. The truck took nearly a year to make and after fit-up, arrived in our yard in late September. Members spent several more weeks training and outfitting the new truck, and it is ready for service. Thank you for your support of this important purchase.



The Selectmen and I met weekly with the Budget Committee from September through November, presenting the budget for 2017. We do this annually and these meetings are a good way to learn more about the budget details. Due to the schedule conflicting with the Planning Board meetings on Wednesday nights, not all are live broadcast, but they are taped (when not aired live) and rebroadcast. The rebroadcast schedule is published on the FCTV Bulletin Board.

New construction and other property improvements increased the Town's overall assessed valuation from \$389,025,519 to \$399,735,833 for the September 2016 tax rate setting process. More condos were constructed within the Black Rocks Village project, and construction is nearly complete within the second phase of the Spaulding and Frost subdivision, along with new homes on Thunder Road, Jacob's Cove, and in the Governor's Forest Park.

Parks & Recreation held a Christmas Fair in December at Ellis School, to promote local businesses during the holiday shopping season. They also sponsored a map for town-wide yard sales in the spring and fall, and the seasonal events around Easter, Memorial Day, Halloween and Christmas. The Fire Rescue and Police Departments escorted Santa around Fremont on a snowy Saturday right before Christmas as well.



Just into the new year, at the time of Town Report preparation, we lost our dear friend, co-worker and long-time Town Official Barbara Bassett. Barb was Town Treasurer for 20 years, the Town's Librarian for 27 years, and taught Ellis School Children in the third grade for 27 years. Barb was talented in so many ways, and a teacher to the end, sharing as many life lessons as she did standard educational programs. I will always look fondly of the years we worked together, and the friendship we forged. She was a true gem and will be dearly missed. She gave endlessly to the Fremont Public Library and is one of the reasons it is the successful facility we know today.

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 Highway Department employees and contracted vendors who handle the Town's winter maintenance operations. This is a thankless job and includes endless tiring hours. Thank you for your patience and dedication to Fremont's safety!



Town Highway equipment (one ton, all plows and sanders) and contracted winter trucks, ready for service before the snow began!

Other groups like the Wednesday knitters at the Library, who knit for anyone who needs warm hats and mittens, and Gerry Tilley who spends countless hours organizing Wreaths Across America to honor our veterans, Scouts, Youth Athletics, Town and School Committees are a big parts of what make Fremont a special place. Thank you all!

We thank everyone who gives so 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.

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, Conservation Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, and always room for Energy Committee and FCTV Volunteers. Special event organization with the Parks & Recreation Commission is another short-term commitment you might also consider. We are looking for folks to help with elections setup and takedown. We do need your help!

Late in 2016 a new initiative for Economic Development got underway. Contact that Committee at fremontedc@gmail.com for more information and meeting dates. They have been meeting on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm in the Spaulding & Frost Community Café on Spaulding Road.

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 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 10 or by email at FremontTA@comcast.net.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator



The Bolduc family and friends attending a Selectmen's Meeting in early 2016 accepting the Town Report Dedication to Meredith Bolduc.



Photos courtesy of Leo Danjou, Bob Meade, Leon Holmes Jr,
Dennis Howland & Mary Kaltenbach and Heidi Carlson