

Report of the Town Administrator

In January after a lengthy process, the Library Trustees hired Eric Abney as our new Library Director. Eric had formerly been a Library Trustee and has a long history in books. We welcomed him to work in the height of the winter season at the end of January. He was immediately faced with library building maintenance issues and finding a temporary replacement for our Children's Librarian Lynda Miller. Eric has adjusted well to his new position and is helpful in many aspects of community service.

Selectmen signed a contract with Vision Appraisal in January for the statistical revaluation of the Town due for April 1st property values. Our kickoff meeting was held on February 10th and laid out the groundwork. The revaluation contract of \$39,500 was completely funded from the Property Assessment Capital Reserve Fund and did not impact the current year tax rate.



The January 27th Blizzard made news for days. It was followed by storms several times a week throughout the month of February. Our snow removal budget was spent by the end of February and additional building maintenance funds were spent on snow removal from several of our roofs. We had water damage from ice dams, which also had to be repaired. It was

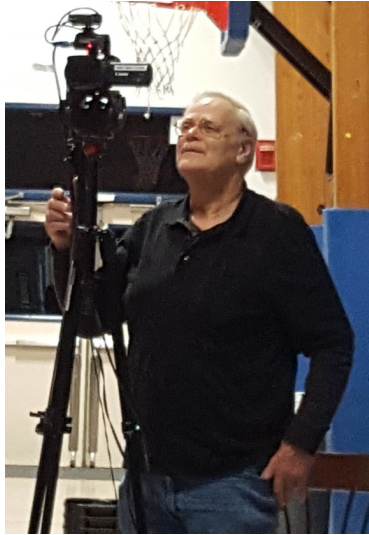


a tiring, snowy winter season for everyone. We offer our thanks to winter plow crews who did a great job under horrible circumstances. It was a community effort in February to clear roofs and take care of our buildings and streets, and several people stepped up to help us including local winter plow contractors, our Highway Department, and several of our Police and Firefighters at times when we did not have enough maintenance help. I truly appreciate all of our employees and volunteers, who go above and beyond the call of duty every day.



The blizzard made us eligible for FEMA reimbursement for some of our winter costs. Jeanne Nygren did these submissions in March, resulting in the Town's receipt of \$17,968 in reimbursement by year end. This offset some of the overages from winter maintenance within the Highway Department budget.

Our Deliberative Session originally scheduled for Monday February 2, 2015 was postponed for a snow storm, and held on Wednesday February 4, the planned snow date. We had 48 registered voters in attendance, and the meeting was full of great questions and discussion. Only one amendment was made to the posted Warrant, which moved forward to voters in the Official Ballot for voting on Tuesday March 10th.



In February the equipment for a cable broadcasting studio at the Town Hall was installed and we began a much more routine schedule of live broadcasting and taping of meetings and events. Cable Coordinator Bruce White has worked tirelessly on these endeavors and is seeing the fruit of his labors as people look for programming, submit more material for replay, and use the bulletin board for notices and information. A Cable Committee was appointed this summer as we adopted FCTV Operating Guidelines, and Bruce was joined by Cable Committee volunteers Karen Gehalo, Bill Millios and Alternate Leo Danjou. Karen resigned by year end due to time constraints and Leo has filled that spot. Nearing year end, we saw increased interest from volunteers and hope to report on even greater community involvement in the 2016 Town Report! I want to thank Bruce

again, along with RCTV Coordinator Kevin Woods for their dedication to this important project. It would not have happened without all their hard work. It is amazing to see what they have accomplished this past year.

We welcomed Maintenance Worker John Millett back to work in the spring. We also hired Maintenance Worker Mike Paradie to help in John's absence and catch up on some of the overdue maintenance projects. It has been helpful having a couple of part-time Maintenance Staff to "fill in" as needed. We were also fortunate to find resident Vinnie Morrison to assume the maintenance tasks at the Fremont Public Library early in 2015. With this help, we were able to paint the shed at Village Cemetery and sand/salt storage barn at the Highway Site, and also made progress on some work at the Town Hall to improve emergency access and replace a rotted door.

On March 5th Police Officer Derek Franek was honored for his lifesaving role in the tragic events of May 12, 2014 which claimed the life of Brentwood Police Officer Steve Arkell. The Red Cross "Heroes Breakfast" ceremony was held in Manchester and saluted these officers, among other community heroes. In May, Officers Franek and Artimovich and Sergeant Larochelle travelled to Washington DC when Officer Arkell's name was added to the Law Enforcement Memorial. Officer Franek and Chief Twiss were honored again at the Union Leader/Citizen's Bank Hero Awards Ceremony in Concord on May 6th.

On March 10th voters moved forward the proposed operating budget totaling \$2,548,921 and supported Warrant Articles to fund several Capital Reserve and Expendable Town Trust Funds, which are savings accounts for the future. Voters also supported Mosquito Control (\$49,550);

and the long-awaited purchase of a fire truck (\$470,455). The fire truck contract negotiation took us until late May, but was approved on May 28th with a prepayment arrangement that saved taxpayers \$15,067 on the total cost of the truck with a final price of \$455,338. That sum was returned to the General Fund.

The support in 2015 for Capital Reserve Articles puts the Town in a better position to fund our long-term capital purchases, and creates more of a balanced tax rate impact. The revaluations since 2005 have been completely funded by this savings account, and if we can continue to fund it annually (currently \$10,000), we should be able to maintain that status. Thus we would not have a bump in the tax rate every fifth year when we are required to revalue properties.

Also at March elections, we bid a fond farewell to Brett Hunter who has served the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Budget Committee and Fire Rescue Department for many years. Brett thankfully transitioned to become a member of the Fremont Planning Board, continuing to share his experience with that Board. Nearing year end, Brett retired from the Fremont Fire Rescue Department to pursue an advanced degree. We thank him for his many years of service to the Town in many roles and hope that he will continue serving the Planning Board.



and Committees.

Our former Police Chief Neal Janvrin was elected to the Board of Selectmen in March. Neal's diverse background made him a quick study for the position. We appreciate his vast experience with many municipal matters, and the Board continues to work well together and with our many Department Heads, Officials,

The Fremont Police Department won the 2015 CAC Bowling Event in March to help "Strike out Child Abuse." This annual event raises money for the Child Advocacy Center of Rockingham County and provides an amazing service to endangered youth in the Seacoast. Pictured here are Ellen Arcieri, Jon Twiss, Jason Larochelle and Kurtis Boissonneault. It was a great event for a great cause.



Our beloved Children's Librarian Lynda Miller passed away in early May after having been out of work since January. The Library held a Memorial Service on Sunday June 28th that was a lovely tribute to her and her time in Fremont. Lynda built many of the Children's Programs at the Fremont Public Library. We were so happy to be able to have this tribute to Lynda and are

thankful for her many contributions to our Library programs since the new building opened in 2002.

On May 19th, our Police Chief Jon Twiss quietly celebrated the fact that he has been in law enforcement for 30 years. Many of you have met Chief Twiss, who joined us in August 2013, coming to Fremont from a 28 year career with the Derry Police Department. We thank Chief Twiss for his many years of service to law enforcement and all he has done to continue on the foundations laid, and continuing to build the Fremont Police Department to the recognized agency it is today. DARE Officer Greg Huard held a more formal DARE Graduation, and aspires to do more in the future to celebrate the Ellis youth completing this important program.

In late May we hired our new Children's Librarian Nancy Mason, having advertised for a temporary position. This finally returned our Library staffing to its regular level. We had a great Summer Reading Program, kicked off by the Heroes Event on Saturday July 18th. We continue to see increased usage of our Library, and that will continue to grow as it is now a satellite location for FCTV broadcasting, and a comfortable, accessible place to hold meetings and events.

Our Annual Memorial Day Celebration was wonderful. We had a beautiful Memorial Day on Sunday May 24th. Weather was perfect for the parade and the outdoor events. We are thankful to Tom McGall who stepped in with only a moment's notice, to be our guest speaker to cover for illness of the planned speaker. Tom is a crowd favorite with his soft and earnest expression of dedication to the armed services, his many friends, and our honored service men, women and war dead.

We had more children than usual 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 did the return march, and 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 your immense service to Our Country. We are already planning for the 2016 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!

Our dear friend and co-worker Meredith Bolduc took a partial leave in May, but was able to work through much of the summer. When she could not get into the office she continued to serve as my advisor and guide to handle the Town's Land Use matters. None of this was to the level she could provide, but the goal was to keep the door open until she could return.

When she passed away on October 10th Fremont lost a true gem, genuine friend, and a wealth of knowledge about Fremont, and Planning and Zoning in general. She had been a volunteer and employee for nearly 40 years in some capacity or another, and had more institutional

knowledge of Fremont's Land Use than anyone I know. She continues to be missed here at the Town Hall on a daily basis. Her warm smile, kindness, friendship and support have been an important part of my life for greater than 20 years.



In June we held the first ever "Little Miss Fremont" Pageant as a fundraiser for the Miss Fremont Scholarship Pageant. These young ladies dazzled us with their energy and spirit. I was amazed with their talents, and lack of stage fright! Erica Smith, Tessa Donigian and Jordan Cloutier were delightful in

their presentations. Tessa Donigian was crowned Little Miss Fremont and participated in many events throughout the year.

Another field maintenance project took place during the summer, resulting in cleanup of the area adjacent to the driveway all along Main Street. This volunteer effort was organized by Doug Brown and assisted by Mike Rydeen, Bob Sabatini and Jeff Lescizka. Thank you all for your dedication to Fremont youth! The efforts of the FAA and our part-time maintenance staff is greatly assisted by all of these volunteers. We sincerely appreciate all you do!

Work continued through the summer and fall on replacement of the Town Hall heating system. The engineer finished drawings and we put the work out to bid and it was awarded to Fremont vendor Ideal Temp HVAC. Two new furnaces were installed in October and are working well. Money for additional work was encumbered and work will continue this spring. Bob Meade continues to work with maintenance staff on items for the basement renovations, and we expect with his capable leadership that much of the work will be done in-house with significant savings in the overall cost.

On August 1 we watched another beautiful Miss Fremont Scholarship Pageant at the Historic Old Meetinghouse. It was a perfect venue for orchestration of the girl's hard work preparing. Our Miss Fremont 2014 Amanda Arsenault crowned our Miss Fremont 2015 Ashley Buchanan, and Megan Mission was the runner up. They presented themselves well and my hat is off to these talented young women for their courage and spirit! Director Mary Wheaton-Pinder does an amazing job putting it all together! (Contestants Megan (L) and Ashley (R) were escorted by Fremont Police Sergeant Peter Morelli for the evening wear competition).



In September a subcommittee formed to begin work on the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). It included two representatives each from the Planning Board and Budget Committee, and one representative each from the School Board and Board of Selectmen. The group worked with our Circuit Rider Planner Jenn Rowden through December to come up with a CIP document which will be presented by the Planning Board this spring. The CIP must be updated annually and looks out for six years of capital costs anticipated by the Town and School District. This will be an important budgeting and planning tool as we continue to build our Capital Reserve Funds and plan for future capital needs. The goal is to effect some balance on the tax rate while supporting the Town and School District capital needs and infrastructure.

Planner Jenn Rowden is covering some hours in the Land Use Office on Tuesdays from 12:30 to 3:30 pm pending hiring of a Land Use Administrative Assistant. You can reach her through the office at 895 3200 x 17 or FremontPZ@comcast.net.

The first-ever Ellis Community Fair was held in September on Open House Night and was a great gathering of many Fremont groups and organizations, with our largest population, school families. It was a nice venue to see people and talk about the many ways to get involved in Fremont. Our Parks & Recreation also held their first Christmas Fair on December 12th, to promote local businesses during the holiday shopping season.

In October, the "New Seniors" group began to take shape, organized by Suzanne Wicks. This group meets monthly at the Fremont Public Library and welcomes seniors of all ages, with their motto "70 is the new 50"! They plan an event monthly on a variety of topics. Consider coming out for one of their meetings, usually the second Tuesday of the month.

Veteran's Open House was held on Wednesday November 11, 2015. We had a wonderful crowd and nice service with Veteran's of all ages sharing stories and lore. This, along with our annual Memorial Day event, and Wreaths Across America, is 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.

The 2015 operating budget included funding half a year of one new full-time officer for the Fremont Police Department. The hiring process began in March, and we hired Erich Lutz over the summer and he attended the 169th NH Full-Time Police Academy which began August 31st. He returned to patrol the streets of Fremont in December and will continue field training with another officer for a few more months. We also replaced the part-time vacancy with Joseph Wyner who attended the part-time academy over the summer and fall, and continues to do field training with Fremont officers.

The Selectmen and I spent September through November meeting weekly with the Budget Committee presenting the budget for 2016. 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

live) and rebroadcast during the weeks that follow. The rebroadcast schedule is uploaded weekly to the Town's website, and is also published on the FCTV Channel Bulletin Board.

New construction and other property improvements, coupled with the recertification process, increased the Town's overall assessed valuation from \$382,722,639 to \$389,025,519 for the September 2015 tax rate setting process. Many more new homes were constructed within the Black Rocks Village project, and construction continued in the second phase of the Spaulding and Frost subdivision, along with new homes on Thunder Road and Jacob's Cove. The recertification process was completed in late August and values did not change too much overall. Certain neighborhoods saw increases based on sales values, but the overall effect was that most values were similar to the prior year.

We continued to chip away at overdue building maintenance items. Funds were encumbered from 2014 to finish the north and south sides of the library roof and that work was done in May 2015. We had ice dams from the front rounded roof section, and also got that repaired in 2015.



Additionally, funds were budgeted for the painting and reroofing of the Fremont Historic Building at 282 Main Street. This was put out to bid and awarded in May to KTM Properties. A new window box, stairs and a landing were done by Town maintenance staff and made a big difference in the appearance of the building.

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.

In November, Selectmen appointed AEMT Nathan Draney as the Town's Emergency Management Director. He is just learning the many facets of this position, and we look forward to working with him on updates to the Town's Emergency Operations Plan in the coming year.

Prior to his starting, we did finish updates to Fremont's Hazard Mitigation Plan (updates to both plans are required every five years).

Thank you to others not already mentioned, who left their service to Fremont in 2015 including 15 year veteran of the Fremont Police Department Corporal Robert Allore; and five-year Road Agent Mark Pitkin. Tyra Vargas left the Budget Committee, as did Neal Janvrin when he was elected Selectman. Leon Holmes Jr completed his term as a Cemetery Trustee and continues to serve as our Road Agent. Police Detective Lieutenant Ellen Arcieri left in the summer to pursue employment elsewhere. Jackson Rowell went off to college and Jess Downing is pursuing full-time employment elsewhere.

EMD Joyce Booker-Janvrin did not pursue reappointment and also left her position on the Fire Rescue Department, as did Nate Perry, Trevor Coish and Jode Lennon. A special thank you is offered to the members of the Fire Rescue Department for hundreds of cumulative hours annually dedicated to Fremont's Fire and EMS needs for very little pay, and many volunteered hours. The training and time required to maintain EMS licensure and remain proficient at these important roles is immense. It is one of the greatest labors of love one can take on, from my own personal experience. A big thank you to all of our Public Safety Officials for all they do every day to keep Fremont safe and secure.

Two long-standing Food Pantry volunteers stepped down in 2015, and we offer many thanks to Debbie Burke and Stephanie Sim-Valliere for all the work they have done for the community in that role. We were pleased that Debbie was able to return to the Pantry late in the year! The Fremont Food Pantry provides 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.

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 Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board (Alternates), Conservation Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, and always room for Energy Committee and FCTV Volunteers. Event planning and



execution 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, as well as other short-term election/voting duties. We do need your help! There are also some part-time positions posted within the community and we are looking for experienced people to come forward and apply.

The Town can use your help, and 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!

Thank you for your patience and support in these difficult economic times. We do understand the hardship families are facing, and continue to work hard to do as much as we can for all of our residents. 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

Photos courtesy of Bob Meade, Mary Wheaton-Pinder and Heidi Carlson

