

Report of the Town Administrator

The news of 2014 is topped by Fremont's 250th Anniversary Celebration. A dedicated and hard-working Committee worked for the past four years on the celebration which was focused in June 2014, around the actual anniversary of Fremont's Birthday. The Committee produced a varied schedule of events culminating in an extended weekend of festivity. Weather was gorgeous and rain-free for a week straight, allowing for preparation, the event, and clean-up all to be under blue and balmy skies.

This group of people who are your friends and neighbors, did a wonderful job of planning and executing the events for the 250th celebration. They are to be lauded for their work, which will live on in our hearts and memories for a long time to come. It was a proud time for Fremonters new and old alike. The community came together in a most wonderful way.



An old fashioned baseball game took place on a sunny Saturday June 7th at Memorial Fields. The Miss Fremont Scholarship Pageant, the first of its kind since Jane Turner was crowned in 1964, was the culmination of weeks of hard work, practice, and poise on the part of Director Mary Wheaton-Pinder, Assistant Director Jennifer Picone; and candidates Amanda Arsenault, Ashley Buchanan, Madison Burke, Tiffany King, Megan Mission, and Gabrielle Studley.

Jane Turner LaBelle returned to share Fremont history of the first pageant and stories of Fremont from yesteryear. It was a beautiful day on June 15th (thanks to all who came out on Father's Day to honor the event!) and the young ladies were amazing. Every one of them deserves credit for their hard work and character.

Amanda Arsenault was crowned Miss Fremont, with Megan Mission being the first runner up, and Ashley Buchanan being awarded the People's Choice Award. All of these ladies showed poise and made us proud to be part of their lives. (See the Miss Fremont Scholarship Pageant Report on page 115 of the Town Report).



The behind the scenes work involved in all of these events is incredible, and was a wonderful opportunity for a new group of volunteers to meet, meld, and form lasting friendships. Congratulations and hearty thanks to all of them for their work and dedication on our behalf. We again offer thanks to the Peterson/Lennon/Barthelemy Family for their hospitality and having

thousands of people on the farm on Saturday June 21st. What a perfect day!

The Deliberative Session originally scheduled for Wednesday February 5, 2014 was postponed for a snow storm, and held on Thursday February 6th, the posted snow date. We had 57 registered voters in attendance, and the meeting was full of great questions and discussion. Voters moved forward the Budget Committee's proposed 2014 budget of \$2,505,364.



Ballot voting took place on Tuesday March 11, 2014 at Ellis School. Voters supported the proposed budget, which was less than the default budget. Voters supported Warrant Articles to fund the Bridge Capital Reserve fund (\$15,000); Mosquito Control (\$49,550); and the Fire Rescue Department SCBA replacements (\$47,088). The lack funding to

save ahead in Capital Reserve Funds makes it more and more difficult for the Town to fund long-term capital purchases, and creates more of an adverse tax rate impact. Saving ahead for future capital purchases creates a more balanced effect on the tax rate instead of large capital outlays all at once. Please consider these long term goals when voting at the polls.

The Town purchased two new police cruisers to replace aged units when voters authorized the Selectmen to expend from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund, in addition to funds in the Police Department operating budget for a lease/purchase. The Department removed four old vehicles (two cruisers and two special use vehicles) from service, saving money on insurance and repairs. Two new Ford Explorer interceptor units were ordered, outfitted, and placed in service in June. The Town has been significantly behind in cruiser replacement, causing high repair costs to keep cars in response-ready condition. Thank you voters for your attention to these needs.



Nicole Cloutier was elected Fremont's first ever Town Clerk Tax Collector and set off on the adventure of learning from scratch the rules and laws of tax collections, and improving her skills and learning the many additional facets of the Town Clerk's Office. It takes several years of being a Town Official to learn all of the tasks of a particular position, considering many things

only happen once or twice per year. It is helpful that residents can get a greater number of services during their one visit to the Town Hall.

After a recruitment process in April, Cheryl Bolduc was hired as a clerical worker and appointed as the Deputy Town Clerk Tax Collector in May. Cheryl then began the process of intense training, attending the NH DMV training seminar (four days in Concord), as well as the other required sessions for Town Clerk tasks. She continues to learn the many aspects of tax collection. Thank you for your patience as the office has grown and learned throughout this past year.

Our Annual Memorial Day celebration was well-attended and we were joined by new resident Bill Dolloff as our guest speaker. He enlisted in the Marine Corp in 1977 and served over 20 years active duty, retiring in 1999. Gunnery Sergeant Dolloff received numerous medals and awards for his service including 3 meritorious unit commendations medals, a Commandant of the Marine Corp Certificate of Commendation, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, United Nations Medal, the NATO medal, and the National Defense Medal.



Resident Harold Emerson Snow led the Parade as Grand Marshal. US Navy Machinist Mate Third Class Snow served on the USS Satterlee 626 (Gleaves Class Destroyer). During his deployment his ship provided support for the 82nd Ranger Division during the Normandy Landings. He received the World War II Victory Medal, American Theatre Medal, European, African, Middle Eastern Medal, and the Good

Conduct Medal.

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.

Construction on the Highway Department building continued throughout the summer, as the former shed was converted to a fully functioning maintenance building. Now our employees and winter plow contractors can use a restroom and wash their hands, and our Highway employees can work on equipment and stay dry! This has been a long time coming for the Town. An Open House with a ceremonial ribbon cutting took place on October 30, 2014 with a good crowd of residents and guests present. The Town's snow plow contractors and employees took to cutting the ribbon with Road Agent Mark Pitkin.

Annual Veteran's Open House was held on Tuesday November 11, 2014. 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 the Wreaths Across America Program are truly special times for Town Officials and the community to gather and show our thanks and support to Veterans and active service personnel of all generations.

On November 30th the Fremont Police Department held their first annual Awards Ceremony. This was a well-attended event, thoughtfully noting many important achievements of Fremont Police Officers. There is a full report beginning on page 152 of the Town Report. It was a proud day for the Fremont Police Department.

The Town is still trying to fund a needed fire truck for the Fremont Fire Rescue Department. While Town leaders know that this is a large expense, the longer it waits, the more expensive it becomes, and the more money we spend repairing the current fleet to keep them response-ready. The Department replaced the tank on Tank 1 and is still trying to address leaks and major disrepair on Engine 3. The time is overdue to address this situation to give our responders the needed equipment, and as with the Police Department, be able to remove old and beyond repair units from our fleet. This will save money on insurance and repairs. Tank 5, the large tanker that had been in service for more than 30 years, was sold by sealed bid last fall.

The Town continues to work at overdue building maintenance items as well. The Library roof which had been leaking, was found to be more than ice dams, due to a problem with the shingles and chimney area on the north tower. We replaced a large portion of the roofing which had a bad batch of IKO shingles, and late in the year, repaired the then-located damage to the chimney areas. Funds were encumbered to finish the roof, so it will be done in 2015 without additional appropriations. Some interior repair and painting work will be paid for with insurance funds as well as some additional encumbered operating funds.

The Town Hall heating system is down to only one working furnace. Late in the fall Selectmen did an RFP for heating systems that did not yield enough data for us to proceed with an award of the work. Specifications were revamped and the Selectmen hired an HVAC design engineer to assist us in thoroughly reviewing the building and its needs, as well as to help design what will be an efficient and good long-term solution to the building's HVAC needs. We began working with the engineer early in 2015 to come up with a design that will then go out to bid for construction. The Town has money saved in a Capital Reserve Fund for the Town Hall basement renovations, and needs to continue saving as the heating system will use some of those funds. Closing off and finishing basement space will also help us with heating efficiency, and the overall best use of the space available.



Town Officials worked with the Budget Committee this fall to come up with an operating budget that addressed some of the Town's needs, and keeps the taxpayer in mind. If the operating budget is approved, we will have some additional funds to allocate to other buildings which need maintenance as well. One building that has not had any significant upgrade or repair in more than 20 years is the Historic Building at 282 Main Street. We had a flying squirrel infestation in the building this summer, and

it led us to identify additional needs. Our new maintenance person John Millett rebuilt the steps at the front door which were dilapidated and had become unsafe. Roof shingles and some trees need to be addressed in 2015. This retains many old Fremont artifacts, and holds historical significance due to its location in the center of town and should be kept in working order.

Additionally it will fund a partial year of one new officer for the Fremont Police Department. As you know from the media coverage this past year, it has been a tough one for Fremont and many families. We are not alone, in that Rockingham County as a whole is considered to be suffering from a heroin epidemic. This is felt in all aspects of public safety and has affected our police officers, fire and EMS personnel alike. Fremont saw its first homicide, several suicides, and many other tragedies in 2014. In some way, this affects all of us.

The tragic shooting of Brentwood Officer Steve Arkell in May stunned that small town, and reached far and wide across Fremont, the County and the State. Fremont Officer Derek Franek and Chief Jon Twiss along with many others, were deeply involved in this incident as well. They are to be commended for their brave acts that fateful day, and are undoubtedly forever changed by it. I am proud to stand among the public safety servants in this community and my home department, and thank the Town for all the support you offer to Fremont's dedicated group of first responders.

Officer Franek was also honored on November 6th at the Chief Michael Maloney Night of Heroes Ceremony in Hampton. This was another event where public safety officials came together to honor local first responders, career service, and acts of true heroism.

New construction and other property improvements increased the Town's overall assessed valuation from \$373,723,497 to \$382,722,639 for the September 2014 tax rate setting process. Many more new homes were constructed within the Black Rocks Village project, and construction began in the second phase of the Spaulding and Frost Subdivision, which included extending Spaulding Road and a conservation area and trail on the common land. The developer worked with the Conservation Commission to install kiosks at both ends, and the Open Space and Conservation folks have posted trail maps and held a hike to orient the public to the area. This is a nice walk for hikers of any age or ability!

The Town auctioned off the tax deeded lots within the commercial section of the former Cooperage site on Main Street, returning them to the rolls of taxable property. It was exciting to see existing businesses and owners purchase these lots to expand on their real estate within the Cooperage Complex, and to hear of their plans for this site, which is a large part of Fremont history. Again the reports of overall market activity are still somewhat improved from prior years.

We will shortly begin the work of the 2015 recertification process. Just into the New Year, Selectmen signed a contract with Vision Appraisal for the work of all updating all property values as of 04/01/2015. Watch the newsletter and the website for updates and information on what is happening. They will not likely need to visit every property, but there will be much more activity by appraisers than in a non-revaluation year, including review of properties that have sold in the past two year period.

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. I post trash delays, office closures and other important notices here. 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.

Another asset in 2014 was the resurrection of Fremont's Cable Channel bulletin board. This happened early in the year as Fremont volunteer Bruce White spearheaded the effort with the help of Kevin Woods from Raymond Community TV. Their combined time, dedication and technical expertise got the bulletin board slides up and running, and then they began on the equipment necessary to tape and broadcast town events and meetings. Volunteers Glenn Glazebrook, Corey Carter, and Officer Greg Huard also came forward to help. The first event broadcast was the Memorial Day Parade, followed by the Miss Fremont Scholarship Pageant and lots of events from the 250th Celebration. Over the summer and fall we did RFP's for all of the equipment for a cable broadcasting studio and as I write this, work is being completed on the installations. Bruce White has worked long and hard on the taping and rebroadcast of meetings, and by the time spring arrives, I expect they will be live broadcasting the weekly Selectmen's Meetings. Thank you especially to Bruce and Kevin for their dedication to this important project. It would not have happened without all their hard work. Watch FCTV on Comcast Channel 22 to see these meetings and the bulletin board notices. You can also send any notices to FremontCTV@gmail.com for posting. A PowerPoint slide of your notice works best.

Thank you to the others not already mentioned, who left their service to Fremont in 2014 including Charles Kimball who retired from the Budget Committee after 20 years of service. Elizabeth Rosa and Beth Swanson stepped down from the Parks & Recreation Commission; Police Officers Scott Cole and Paul Hanley and EMT Brenda Silva left to pursue other interests.

Long-time Ballot Clerk Betty Stanley stepped down in September after holding this position for many years since her retirement as Town Clerk in 1997. In October, Carolyn Carr also stepped down from her Ballot Clerk position. Eric Abney resigned as Library Trustee in the fall.

I offer a belated thank you to Reese Bassett for his 18 years of service to the Town of Fremont Police Department. Reese had taken an extended leave of absence beginning in the fall of 2012, and resigned in April 2013. He worked his way from Animal Control Officer to Deputy Chief of the Department. I would like to thank him for his service to the Town over many years.

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. As some volunteers move on, this opens doors for new volunteers to join our ranks. 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 Cable Committee, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Energy Committee. Event planning and execution with the Parks & Recreation Commission is another short-term commitment you might also consider. We do need your help! Thank you to all who serve Fremont in so many ways!

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 Board of Selectmen continues to meet weekly to address the Town's business, at 6:00 pm on Thursday evenings in the basement meeting room at the Town Hall.

As I write this, my 20th Fremont Annual Report, I reflect on having been a part of this community for the past 20 years. It has been a thrilling challenge full of ups and downs and I am amazed at how the time has flown. The projects the Town has undertaken and the progress we have made is rewarding. Thank you for allowing me to serve you. I consider Fremont my adopted hometown.

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