

## Report of the Select Board

At the 2021 Town Meeting a Warrant Article to change the title of the “Board of Selectmen” to “Select Board” was approved. That change is reflected in the title of this report.

Unfortunately, the COVID challenges of 2020 continued throughout 2021. Major differences were that vaccinations became available and as a community, state and nation we had more scientific information available. The Select Board followed recommendations that were provided by the State and Federal Public Health Officials. Elected and Appointed Officials, Department Heads, Employees and Volunteers worked hard to cope with the pandemic and at the same time deliver the services that are expected, and to operate within the budget. The Select Board wishes to thank them all for their service and commitment to the Town of Fremont and our residents.



In March, Neal Janvrin was re-elected to the Select Board for a three-year term. The current Select Board members have worked well together for six years, are very dedicated and collectively have many years of experience in Town Official capacities. (Photo taken for the 2021 Ellis School Graduation and encourages the class to “Be Leaders”)

Once again, some Town events did not occur because of the pandemic. Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day events did not occur as they have in the past. However, the Wreaths Across America event occurred in December. This event remembers our past and current military service members during the holiday season. We are hopeful that all these events can occur again soon. Due to the immense time requirement of planning and executing them, decisions have to be made well in advance of the actual event. As a community we are thankful to all who put themselves in harms way to protect our freedom, safety and health. This includes our Police and Fire Rescue Departments.

Early in the year we met virtually and in person with the Town of Epping relative to the use of Shirkin Road in Fremont as it relates to Epping businesses. The effort energized a lot of residents in the area and the Town of Fremont spent funds for legal and engineering services. The Town of Fremont formed a Committee at Epping’s request, to serve as a joint delegation. This involved our Police, Highway and Land Use Departments as well as citizen representatives. Only one fully joint meeting was held prior to Epping pulling away from the discussion. We expect this to come back to the discussion table in the future.

We are pleased to remind everyone that the 20 year bond used for the construction of the Fremont Public Library was paid off in 2021. We are most appreciative of the leadership of the Library Trustees and staff in the expanding role of the Library in the Fremont community.

Accomplishments in 2021 include:

- We got through 12 months of the COVID pandemic. Fremont's Emergency Management Director and Health Officer kept the Town informed on the COVID information, guidance and information from State of NH officials and guidance and clarification on assistance available to NH municipalities. Our Town Administrator has been focused on having Town buildings and operations as safe as possible. We are all aware that an outbreak of COVID in any of the Town's Departments significantly impacts the Town's ability to function including the delivery of services. The Select Board wishes to thank everyone who has made the effort to get vaccinated and practice the safety guidelines available.
- Our Town Moderator successfully planned and guided us through a Town Meeting vote process at a time when vaccines were just becoming available to limited risk groups. He has kept Town Officials informed of requirements and options as we look ahead to upcoming Deliberative Session and Town Meeting voting.
- In 2021, at the suggestion of the Budget Committee, funds were included in the Highway Department operating budget for road rebuilding and repaving. In the past the larger improvements were proposed as individual Warrant Articles. Under the leadership of the Road Agent a complete reconstruction of all roads in the Mast Tree Estates Development (Kelsey Drive, Kristen's Landing, Deer Run) was completed. The final overlay was completed on Chester and Bean Roads as well.
- It should be noted that we all have become accustomed to a standard of winter maintenance that keeps our roads open and safe as quickly as possible, making it possible for residents to get to work and go about their day by minimizing the impact of winter weather conditions on our roads. We are most appreciative to the Road Agent, Highway workers and the Highway winter maintenance contractors for their diligence in keeping our roads safe. (Photo from November 2021 with our Highway and Police Staff testing and checking on the status of emergency light towers used in emergencies).



November 2021 with our Highway and Police Staff testing and checking on the status of emergency light towers used in emergencies).

- Our Police Department had an additional full-time position funded at the 2021 Town Meeting. The Select Board is most appreciative that this additional public safety capacity could be added to our Police Department. At year end the Department had filled all the vacancies that it had entering 2021, that occurred within 2021 and the new position. All new officers were trained and working a schedule except for the latest hire, who just completed the NH Police Academy training in December 2021. We are grateful for Chief Twiss's steady leadership during the staffing shortage and turnover.
- With funding from subscriber franchise fees, Fremont Community Television's (FCTV's) capacity and role within the community continues to be strong and evolving. The FCTV Committee has a strong commitment and vision for FCTV's role in Fremont and the Select Board is thankful for their large contribution. Late in the year they expanded their coverage to include livestreaming options on YouTube for our public meetings. Check out their page and become a subscriber!
- Last year we reported on the progress of the paid on-call EMS shifts. In 2021, the second year of the initiative was successful, but it is noted that sign-up for the on-call EMS shifts did not as readily occur as in 2020. In 2022 the Select Board will be working with the Fremont Fire Rescue officers to assess how the paid on-call EMS shifts are working and what strategies to consider in order to expand upon the success.



#### Year end 2021 encumbrances included:

- Restoration of Public Meeting Records and a computer for the Town Clerk
- Leavitt Cemetery Fence
- Library HVAC Engineering Design
- Police Department cruiser radio, replacement weapons and ammunition, less lethal weapons and training ammunition
- Fire Rescue Department portable radios
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) batteries
- Replacement of the roof on the 1800 Historic Meetinghouse
- Retainage on the 2021 paving work
- Highway Department replacement backhoe, concrete blocks for Victoria Farm / Sandown Road wall repair and paving work on Clough Crossing



Inside the Town's Historic 1800 Meetinghouse



Additionally we are proposing to fund two Town Expendable Trust Fund savings accounts from unreserved fund balance. These are Town Meeting votes and do not have any further impact on taxes.

On the 2022 Town Meeting Warrant there are some Articles we would like to bring to your attention:

- Article 6 asks for \$100,000 to be placed Bridge Construction and Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. It is very important that this be approved as the Town is currently eligible for 80% reimbursement for the Martin Road Bridge Replacement. If this is not approved the Town may lose its eligibility for the NH Bridge Aid reimbursement because it does not have its 20% share.
- Article 9 asks for approval to enter into a lease / purchase agreement for a new six-wheel dump truck for the Highway Department. The intent is to replace an existing 2001 International dump truck in order to avoid costly repairs and maintain our Highway Department's equipment related capacity.

In summary, 2021 was a challenging year. The Select Board wishes to express appreciation to the voters / taxpayers for the Budget and Warrant Article approval that occurred at the 2021 Town Meeting. The Select Board is most appreciative of the Town's employees, Department Heads, Elected and Appointed Officials and the ever-present volunteers. Without all of you we could not make municipal government work.

The Select Board is pleased to have the opportunity to serve the Fremont community and we look forward to working with everyone again in 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Cordes, Chair

Neal R Janvrin

Roger A Barham



Select Board members attended meetings of the Public Safety Departments in 2021 to thank them for all their hard work and dedication during the pandemic. This photo from the Fremont PD training (instructed by Fire Rescue Captain O'Connor at rear right) that the Board attended.

Photos courtesy of Heidi Carlson, Bill Millios and Michelle Gallant