

TO: Hampden Town Council
FROM: Sue Lessard, Town Manager
DATE: September 16, 2013
RE: Manager's Report – September 16, 2013

The past month has been an extremely busy time for town operations. The following is a summary of the highlights, but beginning the first meeting in October, the Council will be receiving monthly reports from Department Heads for activities in their respective operations.

Administration

- 2013-2014 property tax bills went out on August 28th. I am happy to report that we have started to see payments coming in in advance of the first half due date of October 2nd.
- Tax liens were placed on unpaid 2012-13 property taxes on August 19th and we have seen significant payments made on those as well. A little less than 2% of the property taxes assessed for 2012-2013 went to lien for nonpayment.
- The audit for the 2012-2013 year was conducted from September 3rd through September 5th. The auditors were complimentary about the condition of the records and the cooperation and professionalism of the staff. The final report should be received from them within a month.
- Tax due date is Wednesday, October 2nd. Staff will once again be providing refreshments for residents who come to the office that day to pay. The Tax Due Date sign will also be appearing shortly on the front lawn of the municipal building.
- The closing was held on September 6th for the sale of the Old Hampden Academy property to Historic Hampden Academy LLC. We look forward to the revitalization of the property by its new owners.
- We received an insurance rebate from both property and casualty and worker's compensation coverage totaling \$10,642 because of good loss experience.
- Finance Officer Tammy Ewing is working to insure that the Town meets the requirements of the Affordable Health Care Act, the first of which need to be done by October 1st.
- With the lease of the Skehan Center finalized, some offices at the town office were switched. The Economic Development Director is now located in the former recreation office, a small unused office was converted to storage for the new voting machines received from the State, and the former conference room adjacent to the council chambers was restored to its original function.
- The first home built by Habitat for Humanity is now completed and occupied. It is located on Cottage Street and thank to all who participated in this project.
- The next edition of Hampden Highlights Newsletter will be going out at the end of September/beginning of October. It will contain information regarding this year's budget, candidate information for the November election, a summary of the sale of the old Hampden Academy property, plans for the upload of Council/Planning Board meetings to a Hampden You-tube account, and the establishment of a Hampden Twitter account.

- Plans are underway for a Candidate Forum for the candidates for local office, to be held in early October and replayed on Cable Channel 7 during the month preceding the election.

Elections

- There are three candidates for the at-large Council position – Greg Sirois, David King, and Katherine Cavness. There is one candidate for the District 1 seat – Ivan McPike. There are two candidates for two school board seats – Amanda Sidell, and Cindy Mitchell. There is one five year seat available for the Water District Trustees but no candidates took out papers. There is still time for someone to declare as a write in candidate for any of the positions. The deadline for declaration as a write-in candidate is Thursday, September 19th.
- Town Clerk Denise Hodsdon attended the annual training held by the Secretary of State's Office for elections during the week of September 9th through the 13th.
- New voting machines were received this fall from the State of Maine and will be used in the November 2013 election.

Public Works

- The public works department has been working on screening winter sand, cutting brush at the Marina Boat ramp, working on the shoulders on Emerson Mill Road cleaning up accumulated sand by guard rails to allow better drainage, mowing the snow dump, mowing fields and drainage areas, getting equipment ready for the winter season.
- This season the crew also did work to correct drainage problems on Elm Street East.
- This is the last week for seasonal workers to work for the town in the cemeteries and athletic fields mowing.
- The Town is no longer paying a disposal fee for brush that is taken to the transfer station. The former \$58/truckload fee has been discontinued.

Public Safety

- In addition to their regular duties, the Police Department is working on a new program to assist families of persons with alzheimer's in the community. In addition two members of police and fire attended a week long training on Critical Incidence Response on how to respond to incidents where persons have mental health issues. It is the goal of the department to have all personnel certified in this training.
- Chief Rogers attended the Maine Chief's Meeting during the week of September 9-13th which included a seminar on Police Response to Critical Incidents and how to keep officers and the public safe during such events.
- The Policy Review portion of the post-shooting protocol which involved officer Bailey was held on September 16th and included Chief Perry Antone of the Brewer Police Department, Lieutenant Dan Scott of the Maine Warden Service, Major Chris Grotton of the Maine State Police, Garry Gilpatrick of Hampden Gilpatrick Funeral home, as well as Chief Rogers and Sargent Scott Webber of the Hampden Police Department. The purpose of the review is to analyze whether the policies in effect to cover both the

event which occurred and the aftermath of that event are adequate to cover all requirements and whether or not the officers involved followed them. It is anticipated that the Attorney General's Office will be releasing their review of that event in the near future.

- The Fire Department held a training session on emergency response to Bangor International airport this past month. The department holds at least monthly training activities.
- Thanks also go to the department for preparing the successful grant application that resulted in the ability to acquire the air-fill system for the SCBA tanks.
- Lieutenant Frank Coombs has organized a flu shot clinic for Town Employees on October 3rd. There is no cost to the Town for this event. The entity holding the clinic will bill individual's health care plans.

Recreation

- Programs currently in operation through the Recreation Department include, for adults;
 - Reshaping Retirement (morning program at Skehan Center)
 - Line Dancing
 - Yoga
 - Whole lotta hoopin'
 - Coed Adult Volleyball
 - Coed Adult Basketball
 - Leash Walking your dog

For children, the following are currently in operation;

- Kid's Korner
- Cheerleading
- Soccer
- Flag Football
- Afterschool Science
- Beginners horseback riding
- Art Club
- Field Hockey
- Little Sports Stars

The Recreation department will also be sponsoring a Halloween Open House at the Skehan Center on October 31st from 4-6 pm. The department is also working on other programming for Skehan Center, which the Town now leases from Historic Hampden Academy LLC.

Lura Hoit Pool

The Lura Hoit Pool is in their fall schedule and the following programs are in operation;

- Swim Lessons
- Gentle aerobics
- Senior Swims
- Family Swims
- Lap Swims
- Aqua Exercise

- Pool Rentals for parties
- Business Rentals

The pool did its annual spruce up this year at the beginning of September and the dinosaur slide was repaired, and the lobby and the men's and women's restrooms were painted.

Edythe Dyer Library

The library is offering three children's programs during the fall season – Play and Learn, Pre-school Story Time, and Toddler Story Time. The library also is offering a session on October 8th concerning Planning for Retirement and afternoon and evening book discussions during October as well.

In addition to the library's internal collection of books - the Library is also a Wi-Fi hot spot, and has several computers which may be used by the public. There is an active inter-library loan program and the facility can get books/materials from libraries all over the state of Maine. The Library also has a program by which residents can download books via computer.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Director has been working with the Planning & Development Committee on a proposal submitted for the Business Park on Route 202, with the Ammo Park owners for the possibility of a sewer/water extension to their park, and on completing the paperwork so that work on the Marina Park can begin in the Spring of 2014.

GIS/Planning/Code – Stormwater Management

The requirements of the MS4 Stormwater Program have been on the front burner this fall in a big way. The GIS/It specialist, planner and Code Officer have been working on information necessary to submit the annual report for the town's MS4 stormwater permit as well as working on data for the new 5 year permit which needs to be completed within the next few months. Shaw Brook is currently an impaired water body as defined by the DEP/EPA and it appears that Sucker Brook will attain that classification within the next year. The Town has collaborated on a grant with the City of Bangor for data collection and assessment regarding Sucker Brook and has recently applied for a second grant for additional work that is required of the Town, again in collaboration with Bangor since Sucker Brook is also within their boundaries.

Assessing

The Assessor will be on the agenda for the Finance Committee at the first meeting in October to discuss planning for a community property revaluation. The Town still has a very good rating by the state, but it has been a number of years since a full revaluation was done. The Assessor also staffed a Board of Assessment Review appeal of personal property valuation that was filed recently. The Board affirmed the decision of the assessor.