

Town Manager's Report Monday, August 6, 2012

To: Board of Selectmen
From Christopher Whelan, Town Manager

Following are some of the matters reported on this week by various Town Departments:

FINANCE

FY2012 Closing: The Finance Department is in the process of closing out the books for FY12, which ended on June 30, 2012. For the fiscal year that commenced July 1, 2011 the April 2011 Town Meeting had appropriated \$79 million for the General Fund operations of the Town, including Town Government departments and accounts under the Town Manager (\$34.9 million), the Concord Public Schools (\$28.5 million) and the Town's share of the regional high school assessments (\$15.6 million). Careful management of expenditures by all departments during the year resulted in about \$900,000 remaining unexpended (just over 1% of total appropriations). This amount will be returned to the General Fund balance, from where it may be used by future Town Meetings.

Finance Committee Issues Guideline Information Requests: As an early harbinger of fall, the Finance Committee's Guidelines Subcommittee issued its Annual Budget Data request to the Town Manager on August 3. This is the start of a process to establish guidelines for the development of the FY14 budget to be presented to the 2013 Annual Town Meeting. Town bylaw requires that the Finance Committee issue budget guidelines to the Selectmen, School Committees, Town Manager and School Superintendent by November 30 of each year.

The Town Manager will be gathering information from Town department managers and preparing his response to the Subcommittee's thoughtful questions in the coming weeks. An initial meeting with the Finance Committee has been set for Thursday, October 4, with a more detailed follow-up meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 1.

The letters sent by the Finance Committee to the Town Manager and the School Committee Chairs have been posted to the Committee's page on the Town website at concordma.gov.

FIRE

Lightning Strike & Fire: On Saturday night, the Department responded a lightning strike at 394 Monument Street. The lightning actually struck a tree and a nearby outbuilding (shed) which caught fire. The house was not damaged.

LIBRARY

Assistant Director Begins August 13: Deborah Ervin will begin as Assistant Library Director at the Concord Free Public Library next Monday. Deborah's strong interest in American history and literature drew her to this opportunity in Concord. She holds a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from Simmons College and an undergraduate degree in Political Science from Keene State College. Deborah has been a professional librarian for the past 24 years, serving as the Head of Reference Services at the Framingham Public Library for the past 14 years. Immediate goals for the position include oversight of the Reference Department, leading service changes based on community identified preferences, expanding programming, and assisting with team building among other duties in support of the Library staff and operations.

LIGHT DEPARTMENT

Spruce Mountain Wind: As previously reported, Concord Light has contracted for 9.5% of the output of the Spruce Mountain Wind Project, Woodstock, ME – this is about 3% of our annual energy needs. The contract is based on a flat rate of approximately 10 cents/kwh for 15 years and the buyers receive any and all renewable energy credits. For the period January-May, 2012 Concord Light received approximately 6 cents/kwh in renewable energy credits making our net cost approximately 4 cents/ per kwh, which is less than half our current energy cost.

POLICE

Operational Services: On Wednesday August 1, Officer Toumayan identified two subjects shoplifting at Nine Acre Convenience Store. Both subjects were arrested and transported to the station for processing. A stolen watch from North Carolina was also recovered, and one of the subjects was charged additionally with receiving stolen property.

On Friday August 3, officers responded to Lincoln to assist that police department and NEMLEC with the search for a missing person. The subject was later located at another location in Lincoln.

On Saturday August 4, officers responded to CCHS for a report of past vandalism. Officers located some graffiti near the lower gym as well as on several No Parking signs. Officer Shelley handled the preliminary investigation, indicating that the incident happened between 10:00AM and 12:00PM. Several leads are being followed up on.

Community Services: On Monday August 6 and Tuesday August 7, officers will be assisting with traffic on Thoreau Street as the Public Works repaving project is underway.

On Saturday August 4, Officer McGrath and Sgt. Goldman assisted the swim team from Heritage Pool with an escort to the Town Line. The team was en-route to Wayland for the championship swim meet.

Administrative Services: A candidate has accepted a conditional offer of employment as a Public Safety Dispatcher pending the successful completion of a background check and physical screening.

On Saturday August 4, a lightning strike disabled the main repeater (which controls the police and fire radios) on Annursnac Hill. CyberComm and Verizon were notified and responded to repair the problem.