

REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Mark A. Pearson, J.D., Town Manager



2019 was a year that many projects were either completed or advanced. I think the Southern New Hampshire Regional Waterline Project Agreement, for potable water, and the official signing of the agreement in April of 2019 was a once in a lifetime opportunity for the Town of Plaistow. This concept was discussed for decades and I am proud to be the Plaistow Town Manager, at this time, to help complete this project in the next few years. I mention this topic here as the

Town Manager, but also as the Water Superintendent overseeing the engineering, designing, permitting, grant writing and coordinating the overall construction and transition of the current fire suppression system to potable water.

In addition to signing the Southern New Hampshire Regional Waterline Project Agreement, the project engineering and designing has moved from 30% to 90% recently, we purchased an easement in Atkinson for the Pump House, and the Atkinson Water Tank is being built which holds 500,000 gallons of storage for Plaistow. We received grants for the Water Ordinance and RFP (Request for Proposal) for Water Contact Operations (\$29,396), Atkinson Pump House Easement (\$23,000) the Manchester Water Works Allocation charge (\$368,000), and Engineering (\$350,000).

We are holding monthly "Potable Water Workshops" to work on establishing the Water Ordinance, Contract Operations, Water Rate, and overall project development and coordination with residents and businesses that are able to connect to the "new potable water system" under construction. We expect the connection to "potable water" to be in 2021.

The Westville Road Bridge Replacement took place this year during the summer months and was opened in time for the busses to roll over the bridge in time for school opening. Included in the engineering, design and funding was an 8" water line for future potable water connections across the bridge.

Smith Corner Road experienced a culvert and road collapse that required emergency permitting and culvert replacement. This caused the road to be closed for a couple of days, but the replacement was a long time coming. The 2019 Contingency Fund came in handy for this "unanticipated expense."

Turning the page into 2020, we have worked on the engineering, designing and permitting for the Pollard Road Culvert Replacement. We secured an Aquatic Resources Mitigation (ARM) grant for \$135,000 and drafted a 2020 Warrant Article for

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\$90,000. that will allow for the construction in the summer of 2020. Again, this is a long time coming project that has been known for several years and needed to be brought forward to mitigate the undersized culvert that results in street flooding and closure in high water events.

The new "Public Works Garage" Phase 1 & 2 have been completed. We constructed a new 10,000 square foot building with offices, garage and mezzanine for the Highway and Water Departments respectively. We did this with the past two (2) years of voters support to use the "General Fund, Unassigned Fund Balance" which included "Water Funds" that were transferred to the General Fund to build with "cash" instead of taxation or bonding. We built this "in house" using the "design build" model to save the town a substantial amount of money. The total cost for Phase 1 & 2 was \$950,000. which is \$95.00. a square foot as opposed to the commercial building rate of \$175. - \$250. a square foot. I believe the savings are between \$800,000 - \$1,550,000. This new building will likely last for 40 or 50 years and can be added onto if more space is needed in the future.

Phase 3 of the Public Works Garage is to "design build" a Salt Shed with solar panels. This is a 2020 Warrant Article for \$350,000 and includes installing 3000 square feet of solar panels on the roof to supply power to the Public Works Garage and net meter to other town buildings. The existing Salt Shed is located on top of the Old County Road Landfill and does not meet the current regulations for storage of salt. The location in the center of town is also an access benefit and the ability to purchase salt in the off season at a lower price.

We subcontracted for the drainage swales at Plaistow Area Recreation Complex (P.A.R.C.) to be excavated to allow the water to properly drain from the playing fields. These swales have not been cleaned out or maintained for several years. We are engineering, designing and scheduling Requests for Proposals (RFP's) to construct a new softball field, add additional drainage and access to the rear parcel of the town property at P.A.R.C. This access is also for the construction of additional recreational trails in the Mt. Misery town parcels using the Land, Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant for \$51,500. We believe the construction will commence in 2020 for these three (3) projects.

We continue to work on the "post-closure" engineering, design and permitting to fix the landfill cap at the Old County Road Landfill. The landfill has settled over the past thirty (30) years and requires substantial work to "fix or correct" the cap. We drafted a 2020 Warrant Article to ask for initial funding to start this project in 2020 that will lead to construction in subsequent years to fix this landfill cap.

We developed a comprehensive maintenance program to address the Route 125 Islands and Sidewalks to be in compliance with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Agreement from 2010. The Police Chief has coordinated the extra labor from the Rockingham County House of Correction to assist with the town workers to "maintain" a much better appearance of the Route 125 Corridor during the Spring,

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Summer and Fall. We hope that you will see a dramatic improvement to the esthetics of the main corridor in town. We created a town-wide winter sidewalk plowing policy to keep the sidewalks usable.

We held the "Sale of Town Owned Land" in December of a property at 33 Garden Road and sold it to collect back taxes, with interest and expenses, and to put this property back on the tax rolls again. We also finished up the previous parcel on Timberlane Road from the previous auction.

2019 was also a year where we successfully negotiated two (2) Collective Bargaining Agreements and renegotiated the AT&T Cellular Carrier Agreement.

I have been very fortunate to have the support of the Board of Selectmen, Budget Committee, and other town committees, the employees and department heads, the residents and the businesses in Plaistow over the past few years. I have made a commitment to continue to serve in my capacity into the future and look forward to ***turning the page*** into 2020 and completing many more projects while balancing the financial budgeting framework of the Town.

Finally, I would like to thank all the town employees and department heads who work every day to keep the town running. There are many one (1) person departments that stay dedicated to the mission of providing community service, many of them doing more than one job for the town.

