

REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR  
Year ended June 30, 2015

I would like to begin by once again expressing my sincere appreciation to all the dedicated department managers, town employees, elected officials and numerous volunteers who serve on the many boards, commissions and committees for all their hard work and commitment. Paxton is a great place to work and live due to their involvement.

As a Town despite the continual budget problems we experience every year we still accomplished a great deal during fiscal 2015 including:

- ❖ Under Chief Conte and Captain Pingitore the Paxton Fire Department ran the first full year of the Town's Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance service. This service is running extremely well and I am very pleased with the progress made by the department this year.
- ❖ The audit for the Green Repair project that replaced windows and roof at the Paxton Center School was completed. The final cost was \$1,279,638 with a contributing grant of \$666,295 from the Massachusetts Schools Building Authority. The project came in \$55,493 under budget.
- ❖ The Paxton Shuttle continued to operate two days a week running between Anna Maria College and Union Station. The service still hasn't taken off to the extent that I would have liked but it is being utilized by AMC faculty and students, as well as the occasional resident looking to get into Worcester. This service is at no cost to the Town and I am hoping that residents will take the opportunity to ride the bus and meet Denis our bus driver.
- ❖ Selectboard and Finance Committee meetings began streaming live on the Town's local access channel 192. This was all made possible through the efforts of the Cable Committee members Nicholas Powlovitch, Scott Wilson and Gerald Ryan.
- ❖ CMRPC completed a study of Route 31 encompassing the stretch of road from Spencer through Paxton to Holden. The study provided information on problematic areas of the route including drainage, pavement, signage, traffic and accidents history. The study is comprehensive and will be useful as a future reference and for use with future grant submissions.
- ❖ The Conservation Commission successfully hired Mia McDonald as the first Conservation Agent for the Town. With Mia's wetlands knowledge she is able to lighten the volunteer commission's workload.
- ❖ The Town Hall staff hosted for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year a visit from the Paxton Center School 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class. Employees gave an insight into the fundamentals of their department and Anita and Richard Fenton provided the history.

- ❖ As a member of the Central Massachusetts Regional Stormwater Coalition we continued to participate in stormwater meetings and workshops. The CMRSC was awarded a 2014 STORMY award by the New England Stormwater Collaborative in recognition of "Regional Collaboration for Enhanced Stormwater Program Efficiency."
- ❖ Paxton regionalized with Rutland, Barre, Hubbardston and Auburn to share resources. The group known as the Central Massachusetts Regional Equipment Cooperative successfully acquired a grant to purchase a bucket truck; housed in Rutland. The Town Administrator and Mike Putnam, DPW Superintendent represents the town in this co-op and will work together in the future to pursue other grant opportunities.
- ❖ Winter was relentless and we saw many back to back storm events. The Town's DPW did an excellent job under the direction of Mike Putnam, DPW Superintendent. This led to a FEMA declaration, allowing cities and towns to claim for a 48 hour period. A claim for \$21,760 has been submitted for which we hope to receive 75% reimbursement.
- ❖ The Governor also recognized the bad winter and announced the Winter Recovery Assistance Program for the second year. This program awarded \$29,405 to the DPW for winter road repairs.
- ❖ Fiscal 2015 budgets also saw the effects of the severe winter, many accounts including Snow & Ice, Diesel, Heating Oil and Electricity had insufficient funds.
- ❖ Students from Baypath Vocational School completed updating the second bathroom in the Town Hall, a great improvement for which we are grateful to the students.
- ❖ At the May Annual Town Meeting the Town voted to purchase a new ambulance for the Fire Department and a Mack Heavy Duty Combination Dump/Sand/Plow Truck for the DPW. Both vehicles will replace aging pieces of equipment.
- ❖ Throughout the year the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee worked hard to provide events that residents could attend and celebrate Paxton's 250<sup>th</sup> year. Events included a birthday party, showing of the film "Glory", lecture and tour, concert, scavenger hunt with the main event being the Civil War Reenactment and Encampment. The finale will be the parade through Town in September and the enclosing of the Time Capsule in October. All these events were made possible due the generous donations of residents and businesses and the acquisition of a \$20,000 grant from the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism by Anita Fenton, committee chair

- ❖ In June work started on the new elevated water tank on Maple Street. It is anticipated that Statewide Aquastore Inc. will complete the \$1.7million project by the end of the year. The new tank will replace the eighty year old tank and will improve water quality.
- ❖ To round off the year we held our fourth Paxton Days at the former Wentworth pool area. We had good participation and attractions such as vendors, music, entertainment, games and food. This event was followed in the evening with local artists performing music at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Jam.

In closing I would like to once again thank all Department Managers, Town Hall employees and Town employees for their continued hard work and support. I would also like to give a special thanks to Donna Graf Parsons, Administrative Assistant for all the valuable help she provides on a daily basis.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol L. Riches  
Town Administrator