

REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
Year ended June 30, 2018

As I have done each year I would like to begin by once again bringing attention to the Town's dedicated department managers, employees, elected officials and numerous volunteers who serve on the many boards, commissions and committees for all their hard work and commitment. Paxton would not be the Town it is without the involvement of these people. I would like to especially thank the Board of Selectmen for their continued leadership of the Town.

The Town had another busy year including the following in fiscal 2018:

- ❖ The Town arranged and funded the installation of WIFI at the Paxton Center School.
- ❖ The Town Hall got a fresh coat of paint and exterior repairs were made along with improved landscaping. This certainly made a difference.
- ❖ The Water Department was awarded a MIIA grant of \$6,000 for a safety walk on the new Maple Street Water Tank. This will improve employee/vendor safety when needing to access the higher areas of the tank.
- ❖ The Town Hall staff hosted for the 7th consecutive year a visit from the Paxton Center School 3rd grade class. Employees enjoyed providing an insight into the fundamentals of their department and Anita and Richard Fenton provided the history.
- ❖ The Town implemented quarterly tax billing. This assisted the Treasurer with cash flow. We appreciate the cooperation of residents adjusting to this new payment structure throughout the first-year payment cycle.
- ❖ Several senior residents came before the Selectboard at various times throughout the year and addressed the Town Administrator in an effort to see improvements made in the basement of the John Bauer Senior Center. The stairwell was painted and carpeted. Unfortunately, efforts to improve the heating and remedy the occasional water in the basement, was not fully resolved.
- ❖ We negotiated in-house the first contract with the Police Dispatchers. A three-year contract was ratified in November 2017. Our hope is that this contract will encourage dispatchers to work for the Town of Paxton and in turn we see less turnover in that department.
- ❖ In December the Board of Selectmen accepted a policy presented by the Town Administrator to appropriate free cash for the Town's Stabilization Fund, Capital Depreciation Fund and OPEB account. We were unable to go along with this

policy at the May 2018 Annual Town Meeting, but it is in place for consideration each year; should we find the resources to implement.

- ❖ The Stormwater Coalition of which Paxton is a member received a grant for \$200,000 to assist in the education aspect of the new Stormwater Permit that is to be introduced in July 2019. Throughout the year the Town Administrator DPW Superintendent continued to attend Stormwater Coalition meetings in anticipation of this new Permit for clean water. This permit will be very challenging for towns and especially small towns like Paxton; who do not have engineer personnel dedicated to this topic. A Notice of Intent is due October 1, 2018.
- ❖ In May the Town utilized the Community Compact grant of \$13,000 to purchase new servers and migrate to Office 365. Employees did a great job being patient whilst our IT Director Michael Savasta and Gary Robidou (Robidou Consulting) worked diligently to complete the conversion. I also appreciate the contribution of resident Matthew Noponen.
- ❖ At the Annual Town Meeting in May 2018, the Town voted a Debt Exclusion for a new backhoe for the DPW and a Capital Exclusion for a new COA Van. The Town also accepted the Local Meal Tax option placing .075 per cent on prepared meals and beverages sold in Town.
- ❖ The Town voted to raise and appropriate from the Road Improvement Stabilization Fund of \$105,062. This
- ❖ The Holden Road Reclamation plan was accepted by MassDot and we moved forward at the Annual Town to accept easements and pay compensation to property owners. The project will be advertised in the 2018 fall.
- ❖ Deirdre (Dee Dee) Malone, our long time Treasurer/Collector retired in May and will be greatly missed. Kim Peloquin was previously the Assistant Treasurer/Collector and became the Treasurer/Collector. I welcome Kim to the position and I know that she is going to do an excellent job for the Town.
- ❖ Larisssa Kennedy was appointed as the Assistant Treasurer/Collector and has fitted in perfectly.
- ❖ Travis Thibault took over as Water Superintendent at the start of the year and did a great job. Travis secured a GAP Grant to conserve energy at the pump station and began the first year of installation of smart meters.
- ❖ To round off the year we held our seventh Paxton Days on the Common. The weather was beautiful and all who attended appeared to enjoy the music, vendors and food.

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; they make my job so much easier. I would also like to give a special thanks to Donna Graf Parsons, Executive Assistant for all the valuable help she provides.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol L. Riches
Town Administrator