

Town Manager's Report
Tuesday
February 26, 2013

MDOT Light Paving Projects: We have been notified by MDOT of their paving schedule for light paving mix or about 5/8 inch for the following areas in and around Bridgton for this summer: Routes 93,35, 37, Knights Hill Road and South High Street. For more information please contact Rick Paraschak at 592-3132.

Communications Tower Moved to Shawnee Peak: The next phase of assuring the integrity of the Town's Communications system is almost complete. We started during the summer of 2011 when we changed over to the County Regional Dispatching Center and recognized that our current tower system and equipment was aging. With the approved funding and the agreement with Shawnee Peak we planned to have all radio communications come off the Mountain leaving our existing system as a back-up. By the end of this week the system will have been transferred to the mountain and fine-tuned to assure continued two way communications with the County. Both public safety Chiefs, staff members and Dirigo Communications, our contractor are to be commended for the implementation of this strategy that will serve our community.

Snow Removal Operations: The Public Works Department worked on primary snow removal from early Sunday morning to Sunday evening. Jim had a small team out sanding and salting the day before which save us some overtime. The actual snow removal started on Monday morning and continued through the day. We continue to do snow removal at straight time except in emergency or public safety situations.

Managing Freedom of Access Requests: Several local people including Georgiann and I attended the training sponsored by MMA last Thursday. As the designated Officer and Deputy for such requests, we have now been certified by the course and will continue to assist all departments which may receive such requests in the future.

Impacts of the Proposed State Reductions: Despite the political log jam that is occurring in Augusta, our efforts to anticipate a budget for June continues. At this point there is no change in the proposal nor do we have any numbers we can count on. I will be meeting with the Budget Advisory Committee on March 5 to further discuss this and will strategize with the Select Board how we may deal with the budget and the warrant articles. We are still facing upwards of a \$.42 per \$1000 of value tax rate impact as well as the impacts to our property owners and renters with the loss of the exemptions for those under age 65. If our citizens do not realize it yet, please understand that the proposal to balance the state budget is being placed upon property tax payers.

Property Tax Collections Update: February 15th was the due date for the third payment of property taxes. That sets a benchmark of 75%. Our actual collections were 70% for property taxes and 74.4% for personal property. Needless to say, we are working with folks to encourage their payments and to also minimize those who are on the automatic foreclosure list as is evidenced in the agenda under new business tonight.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mitchell A. Berkowitz
Town Manager