

**To: Hubbardston Board of Selectmen**

**From: Raeanne Siegel, Town Administrator**

**Date: November 28, 2016**

**Re: Town Administrator's Report**

**Ragged Hill lots and Cell Tower lease:** The Request for Bids for the lots has been posted, and realtors have been notified of the lots being for sale. The viewing for anyone interested will be held on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Bids will be opened on December 20<sup>th</sup>. The RFP for the cell tower lease has been posted, with the bid opening on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Online permitting:** This year there is a Community Compact Grant for regionalization and efficiency, IT, as well as best practices. Since we received three grants last year for best practices, we are ineligible to apply for any in this area this year. However, we are eligible for the IT grant, which opens in March 2017, and the regionalization and efficiency grant. The downside of this grant is it is for implantation of regionalization, not for any type of consulting or study. However, I did apply for the grant, in the area of efficiency, for online permitting. This would allow for 24/7 access for the public, which is one of the trouble areas with the office hours that we currently have in this area. In addition, it will allow the employees working in these areas to go paperless, and have a more streamlined process for completing the permits. We have had a few employees go through the webinar, to get a sense of what the process would be like with this new software, and it seems it would work well. If the grant is denied, there is another round that opens in January, as well as other grants that will be available.

**MART Contract:** MART has made the executive decision to postpone all contracts between MART and the member communities indefinitely, due to too many unresolved issues, especially with the insurance requirements. MART will be holding upcoming meetings to discuss the issues, as well as keeping the communities involved as they have further discussions with their insurance agent, carrier and legal counsel.

**Ambulance revenue:** Ambulance revenue, when compared to the prior year, is up over \$4,000 as of October. This is due to the higher rates, and that the department is seeing a higher call volume, setting a record in September. The new ambulance has arrived, and has been in service since November 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Bridge updates:** Tim spoke with the TEC people on a grant application for the BRI bridge program, in regards to bridges on Williamsville Road, Ragged Hill Road and Pitcherville Road. They are willing to go ahead and file the application at no cost to the town, and if we are awarded the grant, they will do the design and engineering for it. It could involve up to three bridges. The next application deadline is February 28<sup>th</sup>, and that is what TEC will aim for. In addition, Tim spoke with MassDOT, as the two bridges on Route 62 are programmed to be replaced in FY 2018 as part for the bridge replacements program. Tim expressed his concern regarding the current condition of the bridges, especially after the latest bridge report. MassDOT will be looking into trying to speed up the design and engineering for the bridges.

**Safe Routes to School:** Tim and I have been looking into ways to perform the much needed repairs to Elm Street. One avenue that we are pursuing is Safe Routes to School, which would provide funding for improving roads near schools so that students will have a safe means to walk or bike to

school. It must be in cooperation with the school district, therefore I have notified QRSD, and have sent the paperwork to be reviewed, and if approved, signed.

**Complete Streets:** Tim and I are also working on the steps for the Town to become a 'Complete Streets' community. Tim has attended the required two classes, and the Planning Board will be discussing approving the Tier 1 letter at their next meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>. If approved, I will present this letter to the BOS for approval, and we will be able to continue to move forward in the process. One note of caution – once a street have been deemed 'complete streets', it cannot be removed from the list. When the time comes for the Board to approve which streets to list, we can have a more in depth discussion. Currently Tim and I have Main Street, Gardner Road, Worcester Road and Elm Street as possible streets to consider. This could help in repairing Elm Street, if there are issues with the Safe Routes to School program.

**MIIA grant:** MIIA has awarded the police department a grant to fund the purchase of a dash camera for one cruiser. While the Chief was hoping for dash cameras for all the cruisers, this is a start. Unfortunately, the grant application for the DPW, for external security cameras for the garage, was denied.