



Town of Sudbury
Town Manager Newsletter

June 8, 2012

Message from the Town Manager

Greetings!

The cycle of Town business continues, and with June comes a myriad of activities for your Town government. Since our fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30, each department is carefully tracking finances to be sure that all financial transactions related to Fiscal Year 2012 are completed on a timely basis. The Accounting Department in particular has heavy demands put upon them as they work to close out one fiscal year and begin the next. For other departments, such as Recreation and Public Works, the summer season is particularly busy. Recreation runs our very popular summer camp program and other opportunities for residents to be outside and enjoying the fine weather and beauty of this Town. And for DPW, the good weather allows for many of the paving and construction projects to go forward. Thus far, the State Government has not released the Town's Chapter 90 paving funds, but those projects are ready to start whenever the approval letters from the State arrive.

On behalf of the Town employees, our congratulations to all the L-S graduates! We wish you every success in your future. Many Town employees have watched you grow up. You have worked as camp counselors or swim instructors, and you have done beneficial community service projects for the Town. I am pleased that we have a number of L-S graduates working for the Town, and appreciate their on-going commitment to what is best for the Town of Sudbury.

The NSTAR tree clearing/vegetative management Issue

Perhaps you have been hearing about this issue that affects properties in Sudbury, Framingham and Wayland. In a nutshell, NSTAR is required by the federal government to develop a plan for managing vegetation that grows under the area of their transmission wires. NSTAR owns easements that give them the right to enter private property and carry out reasonable actions to maintain the reliability of those wires. However, the federal requirements don't set standards to guide utilities such as NSTAR in what constitutes reasonable actions. In past years, NSTAR took the approach of working with homeowners whose properties contained the easements, and they selectively removed or "topped" off trees that grew too close to the wires. Now, NSTAR has apparently changed to a policy of attempting to clear all trees and other vegetation right down to ground level, even if the property owner objects or feels the tree will not harm the wires at any time. And at least in Sudbury, NSTAR indicated that after removing trees and other vegetation, they would leave the stumps of removed trees and areas of no vegetation for the homeowner to deal with.

The Town governments have no jurisdiction over the work that NSTAR is conducting on private property, but Sudbury Selectmen have conveyed to NSTAR personnel their expectations that NSTAR work with the individual Sudbury homeowners to discuss and document what work they believe is necessary and what provisions have been made to address any safety concerns in connection with this work. We have also reached out to our State legislators for help in holding NSTAR accountable for ensuring that any vegetation removal is only what must be done for reliability and not simply for the convenience of the utility, and that homeowners are not stuck with unsightly and unsafe backyards after

the cutting is done. Representative Conroy and Senator Eldridge have been very responsive in conveying to NSTAR the concerns of area residents.

Sudbury Town government does have jurisdiction over the vegetation planted along the road crossings in this area. Pursuant to a commitment made to the Sudbury Board of Selectmen by Boston Edison in 1970 “tree plantings will be made along the public ways at the line crossing to screen the power lines and right of way” in connection with the construction of the 230KV line crossing through Sudbury.” Trees were planted at Pelham Island Road and Stock Farm Road at that time. Unfortunately, in 2006 NSTAR violated this agreement and cut down the trees they had planted nearly 40 years earlier. NSTAR apologized for this error on their part and re-planted the screenings as per the earlier agreement. The Town has put NSTAR on notice not to repeat this mistake again and that the Town must consent to any clearing or cutting of trees in the area of these roadside screenings.

There has not been a Selectmen’s meeting since the last newsletter, so will report on the next one in my next newsletter.

Sincerely, *Maureen G. Valente, Town Manager*

From the Selectmen’s Office

With Town Meeting now behind us, we’re addressing the usual events and issues covered by the Board’s meetings. One of this month’s events is updating the Limousine and Taxi licenses which will be a part of the Board’s next meeting on June 26th. Additionally, we are updating the Board of Selectmen’s calendar of events – items which by mandate or option occur annually.

Board of Health

Well before the school year comes to an end, recreational camps, semi-public and public swimming pool facilities and the Sudbury Health Department are preparing for the summer season. All recreational day or sports camps for children and public pools must be licensed and inspected by the local board of health. Under State-mandated regulations, camps are performing CORI checks for each staff person or volunteer, verifying camper and staff immunizations, and providing proof of appropriate training, certification or experience for staff conducting specialized activities.

All documentation is reviewed by the Health Department before a license is issued. Additionally, the Building Inspector and Fire Department must inspect camp facilities. The Fire Department conducts fire drills as well.

Many hours of planning, preparation and inspections occur before children can enjoy camp season. State regulations or additional information concerning recreational camps for children is available at www.mass.gov/dph/dcs

Building Inspector

The Sudbury Energy Committee has partnered with the Towns of Lincoln and Wayland to bring Solar PV opportunities to Sudbury Residents. For more information, click on the following link: http://sudbury.patch.com/blog_posts/solarize-mass-a-golden-opportunity-to-buy-solar-energy-for-your-home

The Committee recently took advantage of an opportunity for 10–15 municipalities to receive technical assistance consulting services for solar electric (photovoltaic or "PV") power purchase agreements and energy savings performance contracts. DOER (Dept. of Energy Resources) will cover 100% of the cost for a DOER-selected consultant to assist the municipality with project development and oversight through 9/15/2012.

Awards were made on a first-come, first served basis for complete applications. On May 11th The Energy Committee submitted the grant application. Sudbury was the fifth community to do so. The DOER awarded the Town a \$10,000 grant last week.

Finance Department

The property tax billing and collection cycles:

Sudbury's Fiscal Year begins on July 1 and ends June 30. Real Estate tax bills are issued twice a year, 30 days before the First and Third Quarter due dates. The combination bills include payment stubs for two quarters. During the month of June each year, the Treasurer-Collector's office sends out the first demand notice to all property owners who are delinquent in paying their outstanding real estate or personal property taxes for fiscal year. A demand fee of \$10 is added to the bill along with interest charges accruing at the statutory 14% until the tax principal is paid in full. If needed, a letter of advertising notice will be sent out by September, followed by the required legal advertisement in the local newspaper of any remaining delinquent real estate tax amounts later that month. This is followed by the recording of Tax Takings (lien processing) at the Registry of Deeds. The annual tax lien process generally concludes by late October.

As of the printing of this newsletter, we can report that of the more than 6,800 Real Estate bills issued in FY12 approximately 500 accounts remain unpaid and may require the further collections process described above. The total amount of the FY12 Real Estate tax levy remaining outstanding as of June 6th is approximately \$1.4 million which is about 2.2% of the original tax levy. It is important to note that all taxes levied, net of exemptions and abatements granted by the Board of Assessors, are either collected soon after the fiscal year ends or secured by enforceable lien. Since a majority of the properties that contain dwellings also have mortgages, we are generally successful in collecting delinquent taxes once a tax lien is filed. However, as a means of last resort, the Town can and will pursue seriously delinquent accounts in Land Court. Foreclosure suits may be initiated by a municipality no sooner than 6 months after a valid tax taking is recorded and may take as many as 24 to 36 months to be resolved; during which both the Town and property owner(s) may incur significant legal fees.

Fire Department

The Town of Sudbury has a few Bylaws that relate to the Fire Chief's ability to protect the lives and property of residents. One of them regulates the use of Underground Storage Tanks for residential heating oil.

Highlights of the Bylaw include the requirement that owners of such tanks are to register them with the Fire Department. Any underground tank that was installed before December 31, 1971, is to be removed. The removal is supervised by the Fire Chief and requires a permit from the Fire Department. This process includes an inspection of the soil to be sure no contamination exists around the area of the tank. Also, the tank must be disposed of properly at a licensed tank yard and a receipt must be provided to the Fire Department.

Tanks installed after January 1, 1971 shall be removed no later than 30 years following the date of installation. In the event the tank develops a leak while in service, the owner must empty and remove the tank.

If you have an underground fuel storage tank on your property and have a question about your responsibilities, feel free to call the Fire Department at 978-443-2239.

Library

BRAIN FOOD FOR FINALS - At the Goodnow Library--

Enjoy free snacks and great study spaces. Searching for the perfect spot to study during finals week? Look no further! Come to the Goodnow Library for free granola bars, pizza, and other delicious treats, as well as great individual and group study spaces. Enjoy complimentary snacks in the Community Meeting Room Monday, June 18 through Wednesday, June 20 until 11 PM.

VOLUNTEER AT THE GOODNOW LIBRARY!

The Goodnow Library couldn't operate without our many wonderful volunteers, and we are always in need of more. Our volunteers commit to a regular morning or afternoon session weekly from two to four hours. Our staff provides a volunteer with the initial training and on-going support to carry out one or more regular tasks. The tasks with which we need the most help are handling materials coming from or being delivered to other libraries, shelving returned items, calling patrons about reserves, and making sure material is in order on the shelves. Volunteers work both in the adult and children's areas. In addition, volunteers help with special tasks that might arise. If you are interested, please fill out a [volunteer application](#) and return it to any of our service desks.

PROGRAMMING

Do you have a skill or an interest you'd like to share with the community? We already have some book discussion groups, but there's always room for more—or what about a movie group? Would you like to meet up with fellow photographers, knitters, genealogists or writers? Let us know. Please call or email Karen Tobin (978-443-1035 x228, tobink@sudbury.ma.us) to discuss!

SPECIAL PROJECTS

If you have an interest in history or genealogy, we are looking for help to continue working with Reference Librarian Brenda Castino, inventorying the library's historical collections of books, maps, artifacts, photos, and ephemera.

Our collection of the Sudbury *Town Crier* goes back to 1915. We are beginning a project of retrospective, indexing articles and items contained in this collection. With your help, we can begin work on the extensive and valuable work of indexing people, organizations and events that make up the history of our Town.

Our Magazine collection needs ongoing attention to keep the current issues in order, pull older issues for storage and make changes in the computer as to their status and location. We have several data entry projects currently and coming up. If you have good attention to detail and computer skills, this project might be for you.

TEENS

The Goodnow Library Children's Department is seeking High School student volunteers at the Library this summer. Opportunities include; shelving materials, assisting with children's programming, decorations, crafts, and other duties as needed. Students able to make a commitment of 1-2 hours per

week for 6 weeks will be given first priority. Please contact Heather Wilkinson, Children's Librarian, for information at 978-443-1035 ext. 226.

Office of Planning and Community Development

Construction activities have begun at Landham Crossing, 192 Boston Post Road (at the corner of Landham Road). This is an approved 31-unit condominium development by Trask Development and will be very similar to the development on Old County Road next to the BMW dealership. All units will be for homeownership, and 8 units will be sold as affordable units to qualified households.

Construction is also underway at the new TD Bank site at 407 Boston Post Road (at the corner of Raymond Road). The site plan for this development was approved by the Selectmen in November of 2011.

The Planning Board recently approved Phase 2 of the Mahoney Farms project on Nobscot Road, which will enable the developer to construct the last 11 senior condo units at that site. An additional 5 senior condo units have been proposed to be added to the Maple Meadows development on Maple Avenue, and the Planning Board is holding public hearings on this application currently. The next hearing is scheduled for June 27, 2012.

The next public hearing on the Johnson Farm 40B development is scheduled for June 18 at 7:30 pm at Town Hall. The ZBA will be reviewing the proposed 58-unit plan at that meeting, and discussing conditions of approval with the developer.

An application is being completed for a LAND grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for the Pantry Brook Farm preservation project. Grants up to \$400,000 will be awarded to successful applicants, and communities will be notified in the fall of 2012.

Public Works Department

Work continues on walkway maintenance and ditch drainage. Repairs to Sherman's Bridge will be made this Thursday, June 7. We are installing Leach Pits and Catch Basins in Gerry Drive and Old Lancaster Road. We continue in the maintenance of the Peakham Road walkway from Homestead Street to Hudson Road.

Town Clerk

After the May 8th dissolution of the Annual Town Meeting (ATM), the Town Clerk's office certified and recorded the votes and proceedings. Vote certificates (the final wording and vote of a motion) were created for each article and distributed to all relevant committees and departments. Additional documentation was sent to State agencies (including Department of Revenue, Public Records, Secretary of the Commonwealth, State Library and Division of Local Services) as required by law. Finally, voted changes or additions to the Sudbury Zoning and General Bylaws were submitted to the Attorney General for approval. Minutes from ATM will be edited and prepared for the Proceedings, which are published at the end of the calendar year.

The Town Clerk's office would like to thank everyone involved for their support of Town Clerk Historic Document Preservation at ATM. The Community Preservation Commission article was voted unanimously on May 8, 2012.

Also on May 8th, the Town Clerks' office welcomed residents interested in becoming election workers to attend a group meeting that informed applicants about general practices and provided an opportunity to answer questions. Six energized candidates attended the meeting, and each of them will make an excellent addition to the current roster of 142 dedicated election officers. The next training for election workers will take place in August with an additional preparatory session before the November Presidential Election.

Sudbury Water District

NOTE: *The Sudbury Water District is not a part of the Town of Sudbury municipal structure. It is a totally separate entity with its own elected board and its own Chief Executive, Al Renzi, Superintendent. I invited Mr. Renzi to add information about the Sudbury Water District to this newsletter.*

It is with sincere appreciation that we thank the residents of Sudbury for your cooperation and patience as we come close to completing our spring 2012 water main project. By eliminating dead-end water mains on French, Dutton, Morse and Pantry Roads, water quality will have been improved by allowing for continuous flow.

Pantry Road water main is scheduled for activation (May 30) after 12 p.m. As the new pipe is filled, homes and businesses within close proximity to this area may notice a temporary drop in pressure or experience discolored water which is normal and caused by mineral sediments built-up in existing water mains lifting and flowing with the water. Side effects similar to water main flushing may be experienced and should subside overnight. For advice when dealing with the effects of mineral deposits please visit our website.

Morse Road: Pipe installation and paving is 100% complete, new water pipe is active (live).

French Road: Pipe installation and paving is 100% complete, new water pipe is active (live).

Pantry Road: Pipe installation and paving is 100% complete, water main is active (live).

Dutton Road: Pipe installation and paving 99% complete; the new pipe on Dutton Road between Wayside Inn Road and French Road is active (live).

Pipe installation on Dutton Road between Hop Brook and 245 Dutton Road (General Federation Women's Federation Club) is anticipated to be activated (brought-live) during the week of May 28th.

Project Conclusion: Anticipated the week of June 8th including site clean-up and final grading.

Our email address is: customerservice@sudburywater.com