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Town of Sudbury
Town Manager Newsletter
March 30, 2012

Message from the Town Manager

Greetings! If you drove through Town Center on Wednesday or Thursday, you might have wondered if you were still in Sudbury. Thanks to the work of a film production crew, Sudbury's Town Center was transformed into Underhill, Vermont for the day in connection with a film starring Tom Hanks, based on Captain Richard Phillips book, *A Captain's Duty: Somali Pirates, Navy SEALs, and Dangerous Days at Sea*. Phillips was captaining the *Maersk Alabama* on April 8, 2009, when Somali pirates captured the merchant ship. Film producers felt Sudbury looked much like the Vermont home of Captain Phillips and "borrowed" our Town Center for the day. As this newsletter is being written, the film producers were unclear if they would actually include footage from Sudbury, but we all enjoyed being in "Underhill" for a few days!

Fire Chief Bill Miles, Police Lt. Scott Nix and I met with NSTAR staff to hear their plans for improved communication with towns in major events which result in widespread power outages. Sudbury public safety officials and members of the Board of Selectmen have joined with me in expressing our extreme displeasure with NSTAR communication and decision-making in the two major events of 2011. NSTAR has appointed a new liaison for each town and promise that in the future they will be quicker fixing our highest priority emergency situations related to downed wires, as determined by each Town's public safety personnel. Their previous policy dictated that they would assign trucks and manpower to Sudbury after the needs of larger communities had been addressed. While we hope that there will not be any future widespread, multi-day power loss events to test this new approach, we will continue to monitor NSTAR's readiness to be better communicators with Town residents and businesses as well as our Town staff and better able to quickly respond to major power outages in Sudbury.

Sincerely, *Maureen G. Valente, Town Manager*

Highlights of the 3.20.12 Board of Selectmen Meeting

- The Selectmen approved Sudbury joining in with Lincoln and Wayland to apply for participation in the Green Community program which would increase education and outreach regarding residential solar PV installation.
- The Board also accepted the donation of a flagpole from HOPEsudbury, to be erected at the Goodnow Library.
- A Public Hearing regarding a grant of location for installing conduit on Raymond Road was postponed until April 3rd.
- A question of approving the status of special municipal employee for Special Counsel who can advise the Energy and Sustainability Green Ribbon Committee on their work developing a solar power generation facility at the Landfill was also put off until the next meeting, in order to develop responses to questions raised by the Board.

- The Board held one of their periodic *Town Forums* to review activities and plans with the following two committees: the Conservation Commission and the Community Preservation Committee. Town Forums are public meetings the Selectmen have with other Town committees and Department Heads from time to time. Among the items presented by the Conservation Commission: the hearings they have conducted on the proposed housing project on the Johnson Farm land, which they noted have been well attended and televised for cable broadcast: the upcoming popular program of guided walks on Conservation land on Friday mornings, which will begin in early April and can be accessed through the Lincoln-Sudbury adult education program; and their reminder to residents to be careful driving on rainy nights as it is vernal pool season, and frogs and salamanders are out crossing roads. The Community Preservation Committee described their history in Sudbury since the adoption of the CPA in Sudbury, and gave details on the 10 articles they have recommended for approval at the 2012 Annual Town Meeting. More information on these articles can be found on the Town's web site.

The next Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for April 3rd, and they will be meeting with two of our state legislators – Representative Tom Conroy and Senator Jamie Eldridge – as part of their efforts to meet with our legislative delegation at least once per year. In particular, they will be discussing Sudbury's Senior Tax Special Act. Also scheduled is a public hearing for site plan approval for a planned new project at the Village Green complex on Hudson Road. The Board will hear a presentation from the developer, receive reports from Town Staff, and have the opportunity to ask the developer questions as the regard to the site plan approval process. Finally, the Board will be signing the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting in preparation for its printing and mailing to all residents. The Warrant lists all articles to be considered at Town Meeting, and also includes the report of the Finance Committee.

Remember – the Selectmen's meetings are televised live on Public Access TV and then replayed later during the week. And you can watch past meetings on the SudburyTV.org website.

From the Selectmen's office

The 2011 Annual Town Report is nearing completion and will be available for distribution – and on the Town's website – the week of April 17. We are pleased to announce that this year's stunning cover is a photo entitled "The Wayside Inn at Night." It is the work of talented resident and Conservation Commissioner John Sklenak, who has given permission for the Town to use the photo, which was originally a Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) award winner for their 2012 calendar.

Speaking of April 17th – just a reminder that Town Offices will be closed on Monday, April 16, in honor of Patriot's Day – a day for watching the Boston Marathon.

As mentioned above, the Official 2012 Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting (starting May 7th) will be signed on April 3rd by the Board of Selectmen and sent to the printer the following day. Copies will be mailed to all residents for receipt no later than April 30th.

Office of Planning and Community Development (PCD)

Site plans for renovation of the Village Green development, located at 29 Hudson Road, are under review for the scheduled public hearing at the Board of Selectmen meeting on April 3, 2012, 8:15 pm at Town Hall. The plans propose changes in the exterior architecture of the buildings, including adding front porches, new windows and doors, and enclosing the 2nd and 3rd floors at the rear of the large building, as well as the addition of a small parking area in the front of the site.

Preliminary discussions have taken place between staff and potential developers for the Colonial Auto site located at 430 Boston Post Road. The proposal is to tear down the existing building on the site and construct a new bank building with drive-through.

The Johnson Farm 40B application deadline has been extended until April 30 to allow the Zoning Board and applicant to further refine the alternative plan. The applicant agreed to continue to make further changes to the plan at the March 28 meeting after hearing from concerned abutters.

The Regional Housing Services Office, staffed by the Planning and Community Development Department, will expand its membership to include the Town of Acton beginning July 1. Acton will join the towns of Bedford, Concord, Lexington, Lincoln and Weston in receiving affordable housing services through this innovative regional approach.

The Planning Board welcomes newly-elected member Patricia Brown to the Board. Ms. Brown's term will start after Town Meeting. The Board extends best wishes to Eric Poch and thanks him for 8 years of service to the Town, including his positions as Planning Board Vice-Chairman, Route 20 Sewer Steering Committee Vice-Chairman, member of the Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee, Economic Development Committee and Strategic Planning Committee.

Fire Department

According to Wayland Public Safety Officials, the Pelham Island Road Bridge has temporarily reopened. They expect the bridge to be closed again on either April 16 or 17. Wayland will keep us posted as information becomes available.

Outdoor burning is regulated by the State and will continue through May 1. The Sudbury Fire Department has the authority to deny permission to burn on any given day due to unfavorable conditions. We base the decision on warnings issued by various agencies, the most typical being the National Weather Service in Taunton. When the NWS issues a Red Flag Warning, they expect that "Critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now or will occur shortly. A combination of strong winds and low relative humidity will create an elevated fire spread potential." We pay close attention to these forecasts in an effort to prevent small permitted fires from becoming out of control brush fires. These incidents have threatened property and can tax our financial resources, consuming funds that are earmarked for more productive efforts. Your cooperation is appreciated.

We recently signed contracts to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred by the Town during Tropical Storm Irene last August. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has a schedule of allowable costs and will reimburse at a 75 % rate. The process is somewhat deliberate but allows us to recover funds for emergency protective measures provided by Fire, Police, and Department of Public Works. Sudbury will receive approximately 43,000 dollars from FEMA to offset overtime and other expenses related to the storm. The paperwork for the October snow storm is still being processed. The criteria is somewhat different but we are expecting a future FEMA reimbursement for that event.

Our recently hired Firefighter/Paramedic, Bill Francis, will graduate from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy on Friday, March 30, 2012. Bill joined the Sudbury Fire Department on July 1, 2011. To complete the rigorous 12 week program, students must demonstrate proficiency in search and rescue, water supply, pump operations, fire attack, ladder operations, and life safety. We are looking forward to Bill rejoining the Department and serving the citizens of Sudbury.

Firefighter Timothy Howe is the Department's Fire Prevention Officer. His duties include talking to Sudbury students from the Pre-K level to Grade 8 about fire safety issues. I recently received a note from an acquaintance of one of Tim's Pre-K Students:

"Last night I didn't even have two feet in the doorway before she was talking all about "Fireman Tim". She was pumped, and talked about your lesson for about a half hour non-stop. I am the Fire and Life Safety Educator for Bedford Fire, so hearing that from her, at her young age, was awesome. I just wanted to say thanks, and keep up the good work with your public education in Sudbury."

Firefighter Howe's extensive efforts are funded by a state grant program known as SAFE, Student Awareness of Fire Education.

Police Department

The Sudbury Police Department is in the process of installing a new radio system. This system replaces a 22 year old system. The current system no longer had the ability to be repaired. Parts no longer were available, leading to a breakdown in the system that lasted for five days. It became necessary to utilize the backup system. However, with the backup system, there is diminished capacity especially when officers attempt to use portable radios in certain parts of town particularly the 117 area. This is caused by the backup radio having less capacity to connect with receive sites strategically located around town which are designed to improve the effectiveness of the overall system. Subsequently, due to the length of time it took to find the parts, the Department requested a new system. The system was funded primarily by grants and contributions from other departments. This system can accommodate two dispatchers which corresponds with the combined dispatch initiative.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department is currently overseeing the installation by the Water Department of a water main by the Water District on Dutton Road from Wayside Inn Road northerly to the Women's Federation. Residents should plan their travel route accordingly.

The DPW Department is also planning on sweeping the streets beginning April 2nd. They will start in north Sudbury and head south until completed.

Sudbury Senior Center

The Sudbury Senior Center continues to enjoy a great deal of participation by older adults in Town.

The Sudbury Council on Aging, the advisory body to the Senior Center, met on March 13, 2012. Senior Center Director, Debra Galloway shared with the Council some of the upcoming programs at the Senior Center: Poetry of Robert Frost series, Irving Berlin series, a caregiver class from the Alzheimer's Association and the Safe Driving Class. The Current Events group remains popular. There will also be a Men's Breakfast on April 11th.

The Council on Aging will be meeting on Saturday, May 19th for a planning session.

The intergenerational collaboration with Lincoln-Sudbury High School is moving forward with a limited pilot program. A group of Seniors will volunteer to help students with the development of a small business in the Economics class of teacher James Raffel.

Treasurer Sam Merra shared two financial reports with the Council regarding the latest expenditures of the Senior Center. Grant possibilities are being discussed and researched.

Finance Department

FY12 fourth quarter tax bills are due May 1st. Each quarter the Town relies on property tax collections of over \$17 Million in order to fund Sudbury's budget obligations. The Town has more than 6,000 real estate parcels. The Tax Office processes well over 26,000 property tax payments each year.

A home rule petition for a means tested senior citizen property tax exemption was accepted by the Town at a Special Town meeting held January 19, 2011. Shortly thereafter the Special Act (H.3435) was duly submitted to the House's Joint Revenue Committee for consideration as part of the 2011/2012 legislation session. On March 15, 2012 the Committee reported out favorably on H.3435 but with several revisions to the original text. The Town under the direction of the Board of Selectmen will draft omnibus revisions to the current text to be submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee who is scheduled to vote on H.3435 no later than July 31, 2012, the end of its current legislative session.

The mission of the Finance Division is to support the Town and all its departments by providing high quality financial, accounting, and other administrative functions, so that they may perform their missions more efficiently, effectively, and innovatively, both now and in the future. The Division includes the following departments: Accounting, Assessors, Information Technologies, Tax and Treasury. In addition to their direct duties and functions for the Town staff members of the Division provide ongoing support to several Boards and Committees.

Library

The Friends of Goodnow Library proudly announce that its Annual Book and Bake Sale will take place on Friday, March 30 (9am-4pm), Saturday March 31 (9am-4pm) and Sunday April 1 (2pm-4pm) in the Community Meeting Room at the Goodnow Library. Admission is free and all are invited to stop by and stock up on fantastic reads at incredible prices. The sale also will also feature delectable treats made by Sudbury's finest home bakers. All proceeds from this sale support the programs and resources of the Library.

Town Clerk

The 2012 presidential election year was off to an exciting start with the first two elections held in March. Both election days ran smoothly thanks in large part to Sudbury's dedicated election workers, Police staff and Building Department. The March 6th Presidential Primary had a 17% voter turnout and the Annual Town Election had an impressive 29% turnout. The results of both elections can be found in the Documents> Elections section of Town Clerk's page: <http://sudbury.ma.us/departments/Clerk/#docs>

Next on the election calendar is the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 7th and the State Primary on Thursday, September 6th. New voters must register to vote by August 17, 2012 to be eligible to vote in the September Primary (April 17, 2012 is the cutoff for Annual Town Meeting registration). Maintaining an active voting status for current voters is as simple as returning your annual census. All households without a current census on file will be inactivated from the voter list on June 4, 2012. If you haven't received your census, please contact the Town Clerk's office at 978-639-3351.

Included with the census is the bright yellow dog licensing form. The deadline to license your dog is April 2, 2012. The Town Clerk's office will be open from 9am to 8pm on April 2nd to accommodate residents' schedules. Starting April 3rd, a \$25 late fee will be added to licensing renewal costs for the year. The dog license form can be found here: <http://sudbury.ma.us/documents/download.asp?id=1333>. To date, the Town Clerk's office has issued 1,834 licenses and we anticipate at least 600 more this calendar year.