

## Town Manager Report

March 3, 2011

1. **FY 12 Local Aid** – As the Board is aware the Governor’s proposed budget, released in early Feb. increased our Ch. 70 aid by \$338,000. We have amended the revenue forecast to reflect this increase, but it is unknown what the House/Senate will do and ultimately the Conference Comm.
2. **Records Preservation** – The Rotary declined to fund this project as they are looking for a more publicly “visible” project. Consequently, I have put \$20,000 in the Town Clerk’s budget for this purpose.
3. **Police Vacancies** – I expect to have the civil service list shortly and will appoint two officers leaving one vacancy open in the event budget cuts are necessary.
4. **Fire Vacancies** – two vacancies are currently being filled while a third projected vacancy will be left open pending budget completion.
5. **COA** – We have completed a series of meetings with architects specializing in COA center design. We will now solicit formal proposals for a feasibility study of the Chestnut green laundry building and request that the friends consider funding the study.
6. **Intern** – Tim has been researching the meals tax issue and will present me with his findings early next week. I will provide a distilled report to the Board in time for our budget discussion on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Tim’s work on the departmental fee review has yielded over \$400,000 in new revenue for the Town so far and work continues. I expect to wrap the project up by the end of March and make a full report to the Board.
7. **Special Town Meeting** – The STM is set for this Monday night. Last night the AdCom completed their recommendations on all articles and those recommendations agree with the BOS with the following two exceptions: the AdCom does not recommend funding for the non-union wage/class plan update (they did say they would consider it for next year) and the article to authorize the Water/Sewer Comm. to enter into a 30-yr. lease. I have posted a BOS meeting for 6:45 pm at the high school so the Board can consider if they wish to revise their recommendations or not.
8. **Town Counsel** – *I will draft a policy regarding Town Counsel access in the next couple weeks – this project is still pending.*
9. **Natural Gas/Electricity Procurement** – The savings for these two initiatives are still being calculated.

10. **Planning Board** – The Town Planner has taken a position with the City of Brockton – we wish Marc well in his new endeavors. I have begun discussion with the Planning Board concerning the creation of a community development department consolidating all land use/inspection departments. We are moving ahead with the recruitment of a new Planner but will note in the advertisement our consideration of the new department. The advantages of consolidated plan review are obvious, as well as potential savings with consolidated clerical service.
11. **Hazard Mitigation Plan** – Chief Hatfield, Bill Casbarra and Bob Swanson did an excellent job in completing the plan. A copy has been given to each Board member and we will now seek capital/grant funding to implement the plan.
12. **Building Committee** – The architect and committee has completed several preliminary designs and a program audit. I expect to review those plans shortly and finalize them, and then arrange a presentation for the Board. ***Randy will advise when such a presentation is ready.***
13. **Town Building Space Analysis** – This project will become part of the master plan study ***for which we will seek funding at the ATM. It is hoped that completion of the master plan will raise our Commonwealth Capital score into the mid-seventies and qualify us for SFR funds, which can substantially reduce the cost of the regional sewer project.***
14. **Advisory Committee** – I have attended many meetings of the AdCom to participate in budget reviews and STM warrant article reviews. I have found their discussions lively and introspective. They do an outstanding job on behalf of Foxborough’s taxpayers.
15. **School Committee** – We have had the joint labor negotiating meeting that was suggested in my last report. In addition, Randy and I stay in constant touch with Chris Martes and Paul Jackson on budget developments and have conducted several joint meetings on that subject. Paul is doing a great job helping us calculate the savings associated with the electric and natural gas bids. ***I expect Randy will give me the results of that review in a week or two and we will integrate it into the budget plan.***
16. **Police/DPW Contract Negotiations** – The two-year Police contract is complete with an outstanding result and for that we should be grateful to the Police union for understanding our difficult financial situation and for being willing to share in money-saving strategies. I will resume negotiations with the DPW union shortly.
17. **Sewer District/Sewer/Advertising Agreement** – I have conducted one negotiation with a second one planned for this Friday. Details will be given to the Board in executive session Tuesday night.
18. **Budget** – As the Board is aware I have completed my budget which fell somewhat short of meeting the Board’s goal of level services, balanced with available revenue. I have presented the Board with two plans to close that gap. I am now preparing a

third option which will update a few changes in both costs and revenues that have occurred and will provide the Board with additional options to close the budget gap. That plan will be provided to the Board, School Committee and AdCom just prior to the joint BOS/School Comm. mtg on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

19. **Board of Health Employee Issues** – I have attended multiple hearings and settlement meetings on this issue in the months of Jan. and Feb. I will advise the Board in executive session on the status of those meetings Tuesday night.
20. **Compost Facility** – Bob Swanson and I have met with a number of people on this possibility and have obtained a copy of the Canton RFP which privatized their highly successful compost facility. I have assembled a small group of interested citizens to assist with the drafting of the RFP and have asked those same persons to review the proposals received. I expect to issue the RFP in March, receive proposals in April and award a contract to begin operations on or about July 1<sup>st</sup>.
21. **DPW Creation** – Detailed plans to create the DPW were written and approved by the Water/Sewer Commission in January. I am currently attempting to locate a licensed person to serve as a system operator after Leo retires and prior to the hiring of permanent qualified staff.
22. **Public Outreach** – I taped another cable TV show with my host Charlie Maisson a few weeks ago. In addition, Randy and I will tape a new show with him regarding the budget this week. I have also had meetings to present the budget PowerPoint presentation to the Library, Police, Fire and Public Works unions. ***I will make additional presentations to the AdCom, town board/committee members, non-union employees, the seniors, school parents and employees and hopefully any civic groups willing to listen.*** If the Board knows of any groups that might like the budget information, please let Sandra know and she will schedule the presentation. I believe these presentations are extremely beneficial in letting our citizenry know that the budget crisis is real, and that we are working many alternatives to close the budget gap and preserve services. I also believe these presentations will make town meeting smoother as most of the budget info will already be out in the community.
23. **PEWD Project** – Rep. Barrows is continuing to press our case for restoration of the lost PWED funds but has not yet been given a definitive answer. Work on the parking lot began but had to be suspended with the onset of unfavorable weather in Jan. Work will resume as soon as weather allows. When the parking lot is complete, I will release a new Bid spec for the remaining street work. That work will be extremely limited in scope unless Rep. Barrows' efforts are successful.
24. **Housing Authority Taxation** – I have attended several meetings on the subject of how Housing Authority property is taxed. After due deliberation it is my opinion that we should defend the case currently before the Housing Appeals Board. The Board was

briefed on this matter in executive session and has endorsed this recommended position. *I would like to recognize and commend the Board of Assessors, Hannelore Simonds, and Randy Scollins for his excellent work on the Town's behalf re. this issue.*

25. **SAFE Group** – I have been invited to join the SAFE Grp. monthly meetings by Chief O’Leary and the group as well. I attended my first meeting at the high school and was most impressed by their work to prevent the many forms of substance abuse. I will continue to be a participant at monthly meetings and an enthusiastic supporter of their work. *Chief O’Leary has completed some excellent work on behalf of this group and his enthusiastic support is greatly appreciated by all.*
26. **COA Men’s Breakfast** – I attended the Jan. monthly COA Men’s breakfast and enjoyed giving them a presentation on my experiences while deployed to Afghanistan in 2007-08. I enjoyed the time with them immensely and especially the opportunity to meet several veterans of WW II and Korea (people for whom I hold the deepest respect and admiration – I will always be humbled by what those folks did in our behalf – I fully agree with Tom Brokaw that there’s was the “Greatest Generation”!).
27. **Town Hall Project** – Randy continues to do a terrific job representing Town Hall occupants on the preliminary design effort. The program analysis was completed in Jan. and the first preliminary design completed and a cost estimate for construction prepared. Unfortunately it was our collective opinion that this design was unaffordable. We conducted a meeting with selected town hall employees and many reductions in project scope were made. The architect is currently completing a new preliminary design and we will review that new design when it is ready.
28. **Job Descriptions** – I have hosted several meetings to consider job descriptions for the Vet’s Agent, Town Engineer, HR Director and DPW Director. I expect to have completed job descriptions, wage surveys and classification recommendations ready by the end of next week. I will then meet with the Wage and Personnel Board to present the findings and seek their approval.
29. **Mass. Municipal Association** – I attended the MMA annual meeting on Friday-Sunday Jan. 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. I focused on several sessions re. solar/wind power and visited with a number of vendors at the trade show that specialize in those installations. The information I obtained will be invaluable in designing and RFP for solar panel installation at the closed landfill and on the roofs of several town buildings. I believe the potential income to the Town is in the several hundreds of thousands!
30. **Ambulance Fees/Collection Service** – I have met with the Chief, CFO, Fire Clerk and our ambulance collection service and have implemented several changes in our procedures intended to increase collections. In addition, we conducted a survey and found our ambulance rates to be the lowest in the region. As these bills are primarily

paid by insurance companies, our failure to charge competitive rates deprives our community of important revenue. In addition the Chief brought to my attention that we had, some years ago, contracted with BCBS for them to receive a rate discount in return for referrals. Since we are strictly an emergency ambulance service, referrals are of no consequence to us. I terminated the contract with BCBS and increased rates to a competitive level. As a result of these changes, we will receive estimated ambulance revenue increases of over \$100,000 annually! ***We will review the actions that other towns take on ambulance rates annually (on or about July 1st each year), and increase our rates as indicated by the market. I would like to commend Chief Hatfield for his work in identifying these revenue enhancing opportunities.***

31. **Building Energy Audits** – I have commissioned a free audit of all town facilities' electric utility usage and opportunities for savings. The audit has already revealed a savings of approximately \$8,000/yr. in the Water Dep't. and this change has been implemented. Additional savings will likely emerge as the audit progresses. ***I would like to recognize and thank Leo Potter for his work in assisting with the audit and in identifying the savings opportunity.***
32. **Regional Sewer Plant** – I am now attending the bi-monthly regional sewer meetings, and will continue to assist the Water/Sewer Comm. to favorably conclude these negotiations. We are currently analyzing the proposed intermunicipal agreement and the proposed finance plan.
33. **Regional Health Grant** – We have applied for a grant to study the possible creation of a regional health department with the town's of Franklin and Walpole. ***I commend the Board of Health and Pauline Clifford for being willing to consider this opportunity.***
34. **Southeast Regional Service Group** – this group conducts regional purchasing as well as other regional cooperation initiatives and I have begun attending meetings of the Board of Directors. This was an initiative I began over ten years ago while TA in Easton. It is a pleasure to see how much the project has grown and what excellent work they are completing on behalf of the member communities. The Town saves thousands of dollars each year as a result of SERSG's regional DPW supplies and services bids as well as office supplies bids.
35. **Presentation** – I was privileged and proud to represent the Town in providing presentations to the Mass. Fire Chief's annual meeting in February and the Mass. Association of Conservation Commissions in February. Our own Commission sent several members as well as the Conservation Director to the conference.
36. **Town Planner** – Marc Resnick, our Town Planner for a decade has accepted a new position in Brockton. We wish Marc well in his future endeavors. I have met with Kevin Weinfeld and Bill Grieder from the Planning Board to plan the temporary help to

replace Marc as well as the recruitment of a permanent replacement. It has been suggested to me that this position remain open until the FY '12 budget is completed. I believe however, that this position is critical to the Town's success and the Planning Board's ability to discharge its duties so I have proceeded with the recruitment.

37. **Library Addition Project** – I have hosted two meetings to discuss a dispute between the Library Trustees and the Municipal Building Committee concerning the addition project. The MBC has requested agenda time with the Board re. this issue and it has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. I have invited the Library Trustees, Building Insp. And CFO to the meeting as well. ***I will assist in any way with resolution of the dispute once the Board hears the MBC's concerns.***
38. **Employee Health Ins. Discussion Group** – I have convened a group of school/municipal managers (School Sup't., School BA, Town CFO and Town Treasurer) to meet with our health insurance consultant as well as representatives of MIIA to discuss our long and short term opportunities for employee health insurance cost-containment. I am extremely pleased with the progress we have made so ***far and I look forward to presenting the Board with our plans, once complete, in the near future.***
39. **Town Hall Clean-up** – on Friday, Feb, 25<sup>th</sup> all Town Hall employees worked Friday afternoon after closing, to conduct a Town Hall clean-up. While we have not yet completed this work (and will likely schedule another clean-up), the results of the work completed was impressive and the general results in all offices is readily apparent. ***I would like to commend all employees for their willingness to inconvenience themselves in staying at work after closing on a Friday afternoon to complete this effort!***
40. **Special Town Meeting** – I met with Randy and Frank Spillane to review the STM motions and other STM issues. They briefed me on Foxborough's town meeting procedures and I completed the motions needed late last week. ***Sandra prepared the first draft of the motions and thanks to her work there was very little editing for me to do – her long experience is a true asset to the Town.***
41. **FY '12 Budget Issues** – per the Board's directive, Lynda and I met with Mr. Heydecker and reviewed his list of concerns. The first of these is scheduled for this Tuesday night (town report) and other budget issues will be scheduled for the 29<sup>th</sup>.
42. **Mr. Intoccia Delinquent Taxes** – Randy, Lisa Sinkus and I met with Atty. Shelmerdine to discuss Mr. Intoccia's delinquent property taxes and the status of his liquor license. We explored several options and Atty. Shelmerdine will discuss these with his client. A follow-up meeting was scheduled.
43. **Negotiations with the Kraft Group** – the first meeting was conducted on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Board has been individually briefed on the results and further discussions will be

conducted in executive session Tuesday night. These negotiations have, and likely will continue to consume an extraordinary amount of my time.

This concludes my report to date. Due to the extraordinary time required in Jan/Feb. to complete the FY '12 budget I have fallen behind on the production of these reports. With the budget now (largely) completed, the Board will see more timely TM reports. We have also begun to place these reports on the Town's web page.