



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FROM: TOWN MANAGER
DATE: February 7, 2014
SUBJ: GENERAL UPDATE

The following is meant to be a general update of activities of the Town Manager and staff. Should any member desire more information regarding any particular matter please contact me personally.

1. Financial – The budget proposal books have been distributed to the Finance Committee and books are available for the Board. The proposed school budget was forwarded last Friday. A summary document is being prepared for your books. We have schedule FINCOM meeting with departments and will continue to monitor the state budget process. As previously reported the Governor's FY 15 local aid proposal basically puts us at the same place as last fiscal year in terms of available revenue. Essentially the additional 2.5% and New Growth tax increase is the entire increase of available revenue. When you subtract the increase in Pension and (minimal) increase in health insurance and the fact that we used \$536,000 in stabilization in FY 14 you can see why we are currently looking at a bottom line revenue structure very similar to FY 14. Fixed personnel costs, additional staffing requests, etc. will be difficult or impossible to achieve without significant offsetting reductions. Obviously I will keep the Board informed as the process evolves.
2. Human Resources Audit – Meetings have been set up with all departments beginning the week of February 10. While we look forward to the project I am anticipating much work to be done in the near future and on an ongoing basis as a result in order to ensure compliance with all applicable laws.
3. MBTA – As a follow up to the previous noise complaint Mr. and Mrs. Burns have notified me that the matters for which they had complained have subsided. It is unclear as whether or not this is coincidental or related to the concerns that we expressed. We will continue to monitor.
4. Highland Street concern – You will recall that at the January 20, 2014 meeting the Board requested an update at this meeting regarding a citizen concern pertaining to the property at ___ Highland Ave. Since that time I have had discussions with the Chairman of the Conservation Commission, Denis Bergin, who has subsequently done further research into the history of the location and what jurisdiction that the Commission may have. At this time the ConCom has decided to conduct their own investigation into the flooding conditions to determine what their jurisdiction may be under Chapter 40 310 CMR10.1. The ConCom is in the process of dealing with the owner of the location and prepared to issue an enforcement order if cooperation is not sufficient. Because this determination by the ConCom is directly related to the complaints that caused the Board of Selectmen to request an investigation, I would recommend that the Board of Selectmen not pursue a hearing under the town's "nuisance" by-law until such time that the ConCom has completed its own investigation and possible permitting proceedings at this location.
5. Guide to Doing Business in Abington - After the request by Mr. Coyle at the last meeting Bruce Hughes was helpful in finding examples that may appropriate. Also, I was able to meet the time frame required by Old Colony Planning Council to apply for a District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant for to prepare such a guide. OCPC has reported to me that the application has been approved and

that they are in the process of strategizing how to proceed.

6. Green Community – In a recent meeting with members of the SAGE Committee I was brought up to date on the final steps necessary to becoming a so-called Green Community. OCPC has informed me that they are working with some communities to do just this and I have been encouraged to apply for DLTA for this too. In a previous email I reported to the Board that the two outstanding issues are acceptance of the Stretch Code and a zoning amendment addressing renewable energy facilities.



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FROM: TOWN MANAGER
DATE: February 21, 2014
SUBJ: GENERAL UPDATE

The following is meant to be a general update of activities of the Town Manager and staff. Should any member desire more information regarding any particular matter please contact me personally.

1. Financial – The budget meetings with the Finance Committee continue on schedule. While many departments have outlined the desire for additional staffing, etc, there is an understanding that FY 15 is not shaping up to be a year when there will be the opportunity to fund additional staff requests. Currently the FINCOM is scheduled to conclude their budget discussions the first week of March and it is my intent to provide a budget proposal almost immediately following.
2. Old Colony Planning Council – Per my prior update OCPC has approved the two technical assistance requests from the town: 1. Guide to Doing Business in Abington (and info for homeowners seeking permits); and 2. Green Community consultation services.
3. Peer to Peer project - This project is that in which the state funds approximately 40 hours of consulting services from a professional “peer”. This will begin next Wednesday and is intended to map out a strategy to address the issue of community aesthetics, etc. In my previous communications on this matter I have suggested that this may likely include recommendations pertaining to the towns sign and other by-laws, etc. If anybody wishes to discuss further let me know.
4. Veteran’s Service District – The Board of Selectmen in Whitman will be considering the draft application on Tuesday night with the expectation of approval. And, for the benefit of all I thought it best to provide a copy of that email (attached).
5. Human Resources Audit – Our Human Resources consultant through the UMASS Collins Center has now met with most departments that maintain records and will shortly be having a wrap up meeting with me and Dori to discuss a preview of the recommendations that we can expect to see in her report.
6. March meetings – We have our Landfill engineering consultant Steven Wright and a representative from our Audit firm set up to meet with the Board in March. It is likely that both meetings will be on March 24.
7. School DOE Audit – I have been asked to carve out time early afternoon on March 4 for discussions with a representative of the state Dept. of Education for the purpose of the DOE conducting a routine audit. The Chairman or another member of the Board may be asked to participate in the same so either me or Peter Schafer may be contacting a member(s) of the board regarding the same.