Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FROM: TOWN MANAGER
DATE: July 31, 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. Veteran's Services – We have had initial interviews with candidates for the position of Director and have final interviews with two candidates scheduled for next Tuesday. I am very pleased with the finalists and expect that we will have the position offered by the end of next week.

2. Rail Trail – The Rail Trail project that will link up to the Rockland end of the trail should be completed in approximately two weeks. Other towns have had a ceremonial ribbon-cutting and it has been suggested that Abington do the same. After some informal discussions with officials at the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation a possible date of Sunday, September 7 has been suggested as this would provide ample time for any minor delays. We will keep you updated.

3. DHCD Housing Rehab Grant - Fortunately we have been successful in having our Community Development Block Grant funded again by DHCD. This $780,216 grant primarily funds the Abington – Whitman Housing Rehabilitation program. Please let me know if anybody wishes to have further information.

4. Memorial Arch – The Orders of Conditions with the Conservation Commission for the Masonry contractor (Chapman Waterproofing) are now in place and the only remaining approval is a sign off from the Historical Commission. Chapman hopes to be mobilizing in approximately two weeks. As I stated in my last update the bronze restoration piece was at that time still in the bidding process. This has now culminated and Daedelus was the successful bidder (and within anticipated budgetary range). I know that we are all anxious to get this project moving.

5. Ladder/aerial Truck – The Chief's research on appropriate vehicles has led him to 2 vendors who build a truck that would fit in our current station and serve the operational needs of the department. The Chief is on vacation next week but when he returns we will be having internal discussions on the appropriate procurement process and some updated projections on cost and financing options – as well as timing options for financing.

6. Library Non-Union increases – I have been informed by the Library Director that the Trustees wish to provide a 3% cola to their non-union staff – and that it has been several years since there has been any non-union adjustments. Currently the Library Trustees are the appropriate authority to set those wages but the goal is to keep these consistent with the bargaining agreements recently settled and funded by the town. Purely from a technical perspective the payroll office does not make changes to payroll without an appropriate Personnel Change Form approved by the town manager. Since I have no authority with regard to setting wages for the library non-union staff, and, the increases are in line with those approved by the Board of Selectmen for bargaining groups, I plan to approve these increases. Be advised that there is no "power play" of any sort as the Library Director has researched

her ability to fund the increases (approximately $2,500 in total) from the existing budget and state aid. Deb Grimmett and Henry DiCarlo wanted to make sure that I informed the Board of Selectmen IN ADVANCE as to the intent of the Library Trustees. I do appreciate the courtesy, and, the proposed actions of the Library Trustees are in line with recent decisions of the Board of Selectmen, but, it does raise the issue for Charter Review purposes as to whether or not in the future there should be more than one authority responsible for pay structures for non-school employees. In any event, I believe that it is important that the Board members are aware of this matter even though it is not specifically within yours or my authority. The relationship between the Board and Trustees and my office and the Library Administration is very strong and I intend to do what I can to maintain that.

7. DPW Legislation - The offices of Sen. Keenen and Rep. Diel have consulted to strategize the most expeditious manner in which to process the towns recently voted request for special legislation to create a DPW. They agreed that the best approach would be to substitute this new request as an amendment to a prior request for legislation voted in 2012 by the town. That prior request was intended to essentially absorb the park and recreation operations into the highway department. Although I do not have an estimate on when we can expect final approval this will shorten that period substantially.