

## **TOWN HALL MONTHLY: June**

Most of you know that last July Crane Brook Road was completely destroyed by a severe rainstorm. As this Newsletter goes to press at the end of May we are expecting the initial work to reopen Crane Brook to be complete. This first phase of the road's reconstruction included extensive culvert repair and replacement and streambank stabilization which were allowed by an Emergency Authorization wetlands permit from the State Department of Environmental Services. With that work complete we can move onto restoring the paved surface which will be a two-step process. First the base and what remains of the pre-storm pavement will be ground, reclaimed and allowed to settle and then, finances permitting, the road will be paved in 2023.

FEMA, working through the State office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM), is now holding weekly meetings with us. What we have learned is that FEMA's own work volume pressure has led them to rely more heavily on the State in implementing disaster assistance. As we move from what FEMA considers emergency response to permanent repairs HSEM is acting as our guide. Our Selectmen and Emergency Managers have participated in online trainings to understand what is required as we engage contractors in the remaining permanent repairs. Because Acworth's damage was so extensive we are under a microscope in terms of adherence to federal requirements. We are not alone in this challenge. In an online meeting for Sullivan County towns with FEMA and HSEM this week representatives from Unity, Sunapee and Newport all expressed their frustration with conflicting advice regarding repairs. For us this will continue well into the 2023 budget and construction year.

The Culvert Inventory Project offered by our regional planning office and which was presented at the spring Joint Boards meeting was discussed by the Selectmen with consensus to ask the Planning Board to include it in the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Data from the inventory could be a valuable tool in preparing for the type of storm which caused the July 2021 damage. The Planning Board is reaching out to regional planning to fine tune the project proposal.

Charlotte has worked with our Municipal Resources assessor, Paul McKenney, on all of the updating needed for the first issue tax bills which are due out in June. In State law April 1 marks the beginning of the assessing year and any changes which took place over the previous year need to be entered into our billing system. Marianne will be mailing out bills by the end of May and if you have any questions, please contact our office Monday through Thursday, 835-6879.

As we noted last month, spring is a busy time. The Selectmen have had building permit applications to review and the Planning Board has had driveway permit applications. At each meeting we seem to need to discuss issues around Zoning Ordinance compliance. These range from unpermitted dwellings to clearing demolition debris. The Zoning Ordinance was voted in by us and is based on an image we all have of our Town. If you are not sure about a project you are considering contact our office or read the Ordinance on our website.

On June 4 James St. Jean Auctioneers will auction several Town owned properties. Auction registration begins a 9AM in the Town Hall.

Town boards' meetings are open to everyone. Stop by, all input is appreciated.

See you soon, Kathi