

TOWN HALL MONTHLY: August

Of the 4 FEMA flood repair projects remaining from 2021, one has reached FEMA's final review which means reimbursement should be soon. For another, Nye Road, Selectmen and the Highway Department are working on figures for sites to which that funding could be transferred under FEMA's alternate project program. At this time grinding costs for Derry Hill Road are being researched. If the alternate project becomes a reality it could provide an opportunity to tackle a substantial project like Derry Hill which exceeds damage due to flooding.

Of 13 projects from the 2023 flood, FEMA has now finalized three and reimbursement has been received for two of those. This is much faster than the first reimbursements for the 2021 flood and we attribute it to FEMA putting Acworth into a new program last year which provided a dedicated FEMA project manager rather than revolving personnel.

Regarding the State match of 5% of our FEMA reimbursements from the 2021 flood which was voted into law by the State legislature in 2022, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Robert Buxton has responded to our numerous inquiries. Director Buxton has let us know the rules governing the State disbursement were not fully completed until recently and now must be reviewed by various additional levels within our State government. He anticipated we would know more within a few months. Other towns are in a similar situation. The amount due Acworth is over \$100,000.

This year the Town experienced separate incidents of harassment of Town employees. This has caused the Selectmen to revisit the harassment policy which was adopted years ago and never put to use, until now, and has had several results. One was the drafting of a master letter to be used to correspond with members of the Acworth community who initiate harassment of Town employees. The purpose of having a master letter is to convey the Town's position and policy on harassment, and its consequences, uniformly from case to case. Another result was the installation of cameras in locations where Town employees serve the community including at the Transfer Station. It feels unfortunate to be needing to put our energies into safeguarding Town employees. The Harassment Policy is posted on our website.

Our Highway Department is working on ditching and culvert cleaning. So far there have been no significant washouts from this summer's rainstorms. If you haven't signed up to receive emergency alerts, check the notice that was included with your tax bill, click on the red NH Alerts icon on the home page of our website, or pick up a brochure next time you are at the Town office.

At each of their meetings the Planning Board continues to work on the Master Plan update, the Conservation Commission is in the planning stages of introducing its Conservation Plan to Townspeople and the Library has a summer reading program for kids. There's plenty to do and all meetings are posted on our website.

See you soon, Kathi