

TOWN HALL MONTHLY: November

In November we can expect the construction season to wind down, budget drafting, fall tax bills and an election.

Derry Hill Road paving is due for completion by November. As we've noted, asphalt prices have increased. In its recent meetings the Select Board supported using a portion of funds saved shimming Cold Pond Road if needed to complete the Derry Hill project. FEMA work has been completed on Sam Putnam Road pending approval of final documentation for reimbursement eligibility. There are three projects still in planning. The Forest Road Bridge replacement right of ways have been finalized and our engineers are working on contract and bidding documents. The scope of work for Thayer Brook Road has been finalized and FEMA is working on a timeline for that project. Crane Brook Road's scope of work has reached draft form. As expected, Crane Brook has a lot of moving parts. The Town has had input from contractors and residents who have either direct knowledge of the Brook or career experience with water project planning. It is important to remember that after receiving unattainable estimates from engineers FEMA allowed the Town to take both the Thayer Brook and Crane Brook projects in-house and our Highway Department has coordinated with our own contractors and local resources to create each scope of work.

One more flood work note: Judy Aron's term in the State legislature will end this month. Since 2022 when the legislature passed the RSA requiring towns be reimbursed in part by the State for flood damages, Judy has worked on our behalf to collect the over \$200,000 owed to our Town. Only recently the State finalized the rules around towns collecting their reimbursement. This is after we provided all the documentation previously required and most other towns have given up applying. The new rules are onerous and they include a warning that any perceived discrepancies will cause the applicant to forfeit future funding. Judy has reached out again for us noting the new rules are too much, too late and outside the spirit of the original legislation. We will see what happens next.

From now until the end of the year the Select and Planning Board agendas will include budget discussion. Meetings are posted and public. If you have questions, information or ideas, now is the time to share them. We can only fix what we know about.

The NH Department of Revenue calculates our tax rates. In recent years the Town has received the rates in late fall following the Fall Mountain School District completing their financials. Ideally, tax bills are mailed in November. This will be our second year of bills reflecting the 2025 revaluation. Between revaluations property values normally remain level unless there was an application for new building or a land subdivision. When you receive your bill notice the TAX RATE box. Your Town rate is listed as *Municipal*. The other three rates are *School* which funds our School District, *State* for NH education funding and *County* for costs like the County Home, the County Sheriff and the Registries located in Newport. If you have questions, please let us know.

On November 3 we will hold the midterm election. This is an opportunity to see your neighbors, eat some good food and exercise your precious right to vote your choice in matters near and far.

Thanks for being there, Kathi