

## TOWN HALL MONTHLY: June

FEMA, road work, a Catalyst Program Grant and updating Town plans were under discussion in May.

Twenty-two months after the flood, which wiped out Crane Brook Road and damaged 28 other roads, the Town has still not received any reimbursement for the repairs which have been completed. The Town has submitted everything it has been asked for. FEMA and their State partner, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) admit to delays due to staffing shortages, and to information misfiled and/or lost during personnel changes. The Town has engaged the Governor's office and Senator Jeanne Shaheen. Without reimbursement the Town is limited this year to spending the relatively small amount budgeted for repairs. Remaining work includes two large projects, restoration of the Forest Road Bridge and paving Crane Brook Road, and numerous smaller projects which includes completing work on Derry Hill Road. The Town continues to meet with FEMA and HSEM weekly.

The Highway Department has been clearing winter blow downs and beginning road grading. The need for a third man became evident and Road Agent Collin Crosby and the Selectmen met with Acworth resident Brian Clough who will come onto the crew in June. Brian brings broad equipment operating and maintenance knowledge from his prior work. Collin and Ed Baker have both been certified under the Department of Environmental Services culvert maintainer program. This is a time and money saver for the Town considering the number of culverts needing replacement in a typical construction season.

Last winter County Commissioners met with Selectmen to describe their range of services. New this year is a grant writing program in which grant writers are made available to towns. As we noted last month, Gregg Thibodeau is working with one of the grant writers along with John Tuthill, Helen Frink and myself to apply for a grant to fund paving Cold Pond Road. Our Letter of Interest filed in April resulted in an invitation to actually apply and the application is due June 2. The grantor is the Northern Border Region Commission and their money is federal. As with other federal grants the application is comprehensive, including 27 attachments and scores of detailed questions. Application approvals will be released in the fall and the work would be scheduled for 2024.

At the Planning Board's spring Joint Board Meeting the Conservation Commission described its work developing a Conservation Plan for the Town and Mike Aron spoke about the Planning Board's update of the Town's Master Plan. At the Planning Board's May meeting there was follow up discussion about how the Conservation Plan could fit into the Master Plan update and the use of a citizen questionnaire to document current needs. The 2018 questionnaire results supported maintaining the Town's rural character and life style and the need for broadband. The broadband piece has been implemented. Will there be a new need? Watch for the questionnaire.

All Town boards' meetings are open to the public. Selectmen meet the first, third and fifth Mondays monthly and the Planning Board meets the fourth Monday. Our schedule is posted on Town bulletin boards and the website.

See you soon, Kathi