

TOWN HALL MONTHLY: September

Writing this, the Selectmen have one more meeting scheduled for August although it seems safe to say that FEMA, compliance and personnel matters were foremost during the month.

Early in August it seemed that the site visits with FEMA and HSEM (NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management) were going well. The Town team consisting of our engineer, Erin Darrow, our Emergency Management Deputy Director, Jennifer Bland and our Road Agent, Mark McIntire and the FEMA and State teams were working well together. They completed inspecting and documenting the work on Crane Brook, Lynn Hill and Charlestown Roads. On August 18 FEMA sent a substitute team with no familiarity with Acworth and we were back to square one with new requirements for site visit preparation and no continuity with previously discussed understandings of the work done over the past year. We have requested the return of the original FEMA team and have site visits scheduled weekly through the end of September. It is important to know that changes of this sort have occurred numerous times during the past year of disaster recovery.

The Selectmen have been in contact with Mascoma Savings Bank which is the lender of the Town's two million dollar flood repair loan and let the Bank know that reimbursement for repairs has not yet started. The Board will be requesting a meeting with the Budget Committee to review options presented by the Bank as we move into the fall and planning for the 2023 budget. At this time we expect flood repairs to continue into 2025 and to total two or three times the amount of our original loan.

At every meeting Selectmen have some compliance issue to attend to. The Board tries to work with property owners who need additional time to comply with the Zoning Ordinance. This can involve a series of letters and then Notices of Violation which can become the basis for legal proceedings. The expense to all of Acworth's tax payers can become significant especially if legal proceedings are needed which is why it's better to avoid noncompliance whenever possible. If you have questions about our Zoning Ordinance please contact our office, 835-6879.

Our Road Agent, Mark McIntire, has left the highway department. At this time the Selectmen are providing support to our three man crew as they continue with summer maintenance. Decisions regarding the supervisory position will be taken up as we move into the fall budget season. If you have a road issue to report please leave a message on the department answering machine, 835-6866 or with Charlotte during office hours, 835-6879.

The Planning Board is beginning work on the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan. If you are interested in the Town budget this is where it starts. Planning meets the fourth Wednesday monthly and all meetings are open to the public.

School will be starting in a week and it will be great to hear the kids on the hill.

See you soon, Kathi