



APRIL 2014

# About Town

- *Berwick's  
Administrative  
Newsletter*

TOWN DEPARTMENT UPDATES

## What's going on in Town?

By Patrick Venne, Town Manager

This newsletter is intended to keep Berwick's Board of Selectmen and the public at large abreast of how Town departments are functioning, i.e., what they have been up to, what obstacles if any stand in their way, and what they have planned for the future. It is intended to be a source of information for any and every person interested in learning more about what goes on at Town Hall and beyond related to the delivery of public services to the residents and tax payers of, and visitors to, the Town of Berwick.

### Police Department

The Department is completing a transitional modification of its software system prompted by the discontinuation of security updates for its previous operating system. This modification is a necessary but unanticipated expense.

The Department has also stepped up its monitoring and patrols of the downtown area in light of continuing work on the Route 9 Bridge and

Rochester Street and the new traffic patterns stemming from each. A patrolman was assigned the specific task of assisting confused motorists with the new traffic pattern for the first day of the bridge closure. A high visibility approach will be maintained in this area throughout the summer construction season.

The Department also continues to monitor out of state vehicle registrations for those living in Town. In the first quarter of 2014, 38 warnings and 5 summonses have been issued to motorists related to this effort.

Newly complying motorists/residents have generated an additional \$560.00 in excise tax revenue for the Town to date.



The Department will also be commencing its annual ATV patrols this spring in order to ensure heightened visibility and presence of law enforcement in the Riddlon Road and Hatfield's Pond areas of Town, amongst other places. This effort is coordinated and conducted in concert with the Maine Warden's Service. Additionally, the Department will be commencing bicycle patrols of the downtown area this summer to continue its successful approach to placing officers on the street in this high pedestrian area.

Lastly, the Department will be hosting another "Drug Take Back" day on

Saturday April 26, 2014 from 10AM – 2PM. Residents are permitted to stop by the Police Station on Wilson Street in order to drop off unwanted or unused prescription and over the counter medications during this event. This event will occur again in October.

### Fire Department

The Department presently has a staff of 31 with three part-time, on-call members attending recruit training until May 2014. Applications are being accepted for additional recruits in order to expand the call force throughout the spring. Interested applicants should contact Fire Chief Dennis Plante at the Berwick Fire Station (207-698-1174) or Town Manager Patrick Venne at Town Hall (207-698-1101).

Regarding administrative attempts to implement recommendations recently made by a study commissioned by Municipal Resources Incorporated, the Department is reviewing and updating its standard operating guidelines as suggested.

It also updated mutual aid “run cards” to inform the utilization of regional resources for specific events requiring assistance from neighboring towns. These cards establish response patterns and detail which forces will respond to which calls.

Moreover, the Department continues to update its overall table of organization to ensure greater effectiveness.

In an effort to address fire safety hazards before they become an issue, the Department also continues to

conduct woodstove and other fire safety inspections at the request of residents. Those interested should contact the Berwick Fire Station at 207-698-1174.

Department Staff responded to a total of 22 calls for service involving Fire & emergency medical service (EMS) provision between March 31, 2014 and April 20, 2014. A total of 9 calls for EMS were not responded to during his timeframe due to the lacking availability of EMS licensed staff during after-hour and weekend time periods. American Ambulance provided first responder service in all of these instances.

### Water Department

The Water Department has been busy maintaining its distribution system and associated components, and has also been working with management to facilitate presentation of options for demolition of its former Treatment Plant on Rochester Street to the Board of Selectmen for its consideration. The Board determined on April 15, 2014 that it would be appropriate to move forward with demolition plans for that site by utilizing available capital reserves of the Town and asking Town Meeting to replenish those reserves by transferring funding from the Water Department’s own capital reserve account at the June Town Meeting. That question will appear on the June Town Meeting warrant.

### Public Works Department

With the beginning of April came the beginning of (mostly) cooperative weather, allowing the Department to shift gears away from constant

plowing and maintenance toward other endeavors.

The Public Works crew has still been working toward addressing all known pot holes with cold patch until longer-term solutions are possible.

It has also been paying special attention to dirt roads in Town, including Diamond Hill Road and Riddlon Road.

The Public Works crew is also engaged in street, sidewalk and parking lot sweeping.

A request for proposals was released to the general public as well as area contractors for the repaving of Pine Hill Road following Board of Selectmen approval of a roads priority list and selection of Pine Hill Road as the first paving project to pursue this spring. The Board of Selectmen will be asked to act on any responses submitted to this request at its May 6, 2014 regular meeting.

The Public Works crew is also engaged in street, sidewalk and parking lot sweeping.

Moreover, it spent time recently moving snow at the Recreation Field to facilitate melting in time for spring sports after a winter with an uncharacteristically heavy snow fall and therefore snow accumulation.

### Recreation Department

The Recreation Department is engaged in coordinating the official and annual Town Cleanup day on Saturday April 26, 2014 from 9AM – Noon. Members of the public are

encouraged to participate and those with questions should contact Recreation Director Kim Taylor at 207-698-1101.

Berwick Youth Baseball will hold its opening day pm April 26, 2014 and is actively engaged in preparing Memorial Field for that purpose.

The Recreation Committee also continues to work with the Friends of the Riverfront Committee on issues related to establishing public access to the Salmon Falls River in or around the downtown area. The Committee most recently proposed access at the site of the former Town Water Treatment Plant on Rochester Street. The Board of Selectmen approved demolition of that structure at its April 15, 2014 meeting; however action on the installation of a boat ramp at that location was delayed indefinitely pending further research into the issues associated with such an effort.

Applications for Summer Camp counselor and counselor-in-training positions are now available from the Recreation Department. Counselors-in-training earn community service credit often required for high school graduation or other learning institution requirements.

### Finance Department

The Department continues to handle routine business related to the Town's finances and investments while also preparing for financial reporting related to the annual audit of the Town's financial condition and practices. The Town's audit firm, RHR Smith & Co., will be at Town Hall on Wednesday April 23, 2014

and Thursday April 24, 2014 handling interim audit work for fiscal year 14, which ends June 30, 2014.

### Planning Department

The Planning Board approved an application for a 2-lot minor subdivision on Old Sanford Road (two previous lots had been previously divided within the last five years, triggering subdivision review for this project).

In addition, the Board is presently reviewing the following projects: a conditional use application for a Saab parking facility at 16 Commercial Drive; a conditional use plan approval amendment for House of Hope at 6 Sullivan Street; a major subdivision on Old Pine Hill Road (Tax Map R-44, Lot 13); and a major subdivision on Wentworth Road (Tax Map R-61, Lot 2, 3b, 3A).

No applications are pending before the Board of Appeals.

The Planning Department is also actively reviewing RFP responses for an update of the Town's property tax maps in geographic information systems (GIS) format. Three responses were received to the Town's request for proposals, and the Town Planner is reviewing each in concert with Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission in order to provide a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen at its next regularly scheduled meeting on May 6, 2014.

The Town Planner will be attending the Maine Downtown Conference in Waterville, ME on May 2, 2014 and will provide a report upon his return

which should be useful as the Town pursues its own downtown renaissance.

### Town Clerk's Office

The Town Clerk's office has been busy assisting management and the Board of Selectmen with preparation of two Town Meeting warrants and associated legal requirements. One meeting will take place in June, and the other—the annual Town Meeting—is scheduled to commence on May 13, 2014. All official Town Meeting questions are available for public review online or from the Town Hall as well as elsewhere. With any specific questions, please contract Jo Anne Lepley, Town Clerk, at 207-698-1101.



