

Year 2000 Annual Report Office of the Town Manager

I respectfully submit to the citizens of Hull the Year 2000 Annual Report of the Town Manager's Office. The year proved to be a challenging year. Every accomplishment has had input from a variety of individuals who share a common goal; to take those actions and make those decisions that are in the best interest of the community.

The members of the Board of Selectmen have provided support, guidance and knowledge that has made my job easier. Every Department Head and employee has contributed to the advances we have made.

As you review the Annual Reports from your Departments you will see that service requests and levels have increased steadily and consistently over the last several years. As an organization we have been able to meet the increased demand and improve services in a variety of areas by taking advantage of our strong financial position and greater cooperation and coordination amongst the various Departments. In short we are planning and executing our service delivery plans in a more efficient and effective manner.

The Town's financial health has not been better in many years. Our fiscal health is the result of the last eight years of conservative budgeting and the emphasis on stabilizing the Town's finances. The FY2000 Budget reflected the fact that we are pro-actively budgeting and addressing the general finance issues that face our Town.

The most significant feature of the FY2001 budget is that there were no new property taxes used to support the expenditure stream. What this means is that our tax rate declined from over \$17 dollars per \$1,000 dollars of property value to \$14.49 dollars per \$1,000 dollars of property value, a greater than ten percent decline and many taxpayers saw a real dollar decline in their tax bill.

Unfortunately, this effort is not sustainable over several years but is intended to recognize and to address, albeit in a small way the very real pressure that many of taxpayers feel as real estate prices escalate dramatically.

The second most significant event in the Town's financial outlook was the commitment of the community to refurbish our three public school buildings. This project is projected to cost \$38,000,000 dollars and will receive approximately a 70% reimbursement rate from the State. This commitment was made without a Proposition 2-1/2 override as is commonly done in most communities. This means that we will not levy additional taxes for this project beyond what is allowed under a Proposition 2-1/2. The financing plan significantly limits your tax liability and could not have been accomplished without the assistance of the Hull Redevelopment Authority and Hull Light Plant. The Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee coordinate their efforts to achieve this goal. You should feel proud of the their vision to bring our school system into the 21st. century in buildings that are safe, properly designed and provisioned.

Other budgetary items of interest include:

- The FY01 School Department budget is funded is \$10,220,776 dollars, a \$536,000 dollar increase over the FY00 appropriation.

- In conjunction with the School Department, a position for the community's first Director of Information Systems has been funded. This position is split between the School Department and General Government operations to assist in managing the data processing functions in the Town.
- A part-time Town Planner to assist the Planning Board with the land use issues confronting the community was hired.
- The pension obligation has increased by \$86,000 dollars.
- There was a \$100,000 dollar increase to our health insurance budget

Capital Improvement Program:

The FY01 Budget contains a limited capital improvements program:

- Funding \$25,000 for a new playground structure.
- Funding to replace docks and floats
- Funding to replace traffic control signage and signals
- Funding for one police cruiser
- General roadway improvements
- Seawall repairs
- Funds for Library Planning

I believe the trend of the community is positive and that we are all contributing a great deal towards improving the day-today quality of life. We are not managing by crisis but rather we are planning and executing. I would like to thank all Town Employees and in particular, Nancy Allen, Janet Bennett and Terry Herlihy in the Town Manager's/Board of Selectmen Office for their tireless assistance throughout the year. I thank you for the opportunity to serve the residents of Hull.

Sincerely,

Philip E. Lemnios
Town Manager