

2004 Annual Report Town Manager

The Town's fiscal condition continues to remain stable.

Standard and Poor's Credit Rating Services assigned its 'A+' credit rating to the Town on June 28, 2004. The rating is two grades higher than the last credit rating received back in 1993.

The Town will sell Municipal Bonds in July 2005 to finance its 29% share of the costs to renovate the Memorial and High School. The expected Town's share amounts to \$2.9 million for the Memorial School and \$5.5 million for the High School.

Unfortunately, recent reductions in State Aid (Cherry Sheet) continued for a second consecutive year. The reductions amount to \$2.6 million and the loss of this revenue makes it difficult to maintain the level of services funded by the Town's annual operating budget.

Projects

Nantasket Pier:

Board of Selectmen awarded a twenty-five year lease to Steamboat Wharf Marina for the operation of a 105-slip marina with landside accessory facilities. Income to the Town will come from property taxes, boat excise taxes, mooring fees and 20% of the revenues from boat slip fees. In addition, the Town will receive rent payments based on a percentage of the appraised value of the pier including structures to be built on the pier. Public access and public parking will be provided by the Steamboat Wharf Marina.

Hull Wind II:

The October Special Town Meeting approved use of a portion of the landfill off Logan Avenue as the site for Town's second Wind Turbine. The Wind Turbine is expected to be operational by the fall of 2005 and will generate three times the electricity of Hull Wind I.

Main Street/Spring Street Project:

The \$3.2 million roadway reconstruction project finally received all the required permits and the Massachusetts Highway Department awarded the contract to Dow Construction, Inc. The project includes improvements to the seawall and parking areas at Pemberton Pier. Construction will begin in April 2005.

Pay As You Throw Curbside Collection:

Although the October Special Town Meeting authorized an enterprise fund for the operation of a town-wide curbside collection service for trash and recyclable materials, a sufficient number of residents did not enroll in the program by the December 2005 deadline. Based on the low bid from Waste Management, Inc., a minimum of 2,500 households would be required to pay an annual fee of \$180.00 in order for the program to be self supporting.

West Corner Bridge Replacement/Straits Pond Restoration:

The contract for the design and permitting of a new bridge and tide gate at West Corner was awarded to The Louis Berger Group. The Towns of Hingham and Cohasset each contributed \$25,000.00 towards this phase of the project.

The construction costs are expected to exceed \$1 Million and said funding is being pursued by Congressman William Delahunt, State Senator Robert Hedlund and State Representative Garrett Bradley. The Straits Pond Watershed Association has volunteered hundreds of hours of service organizing meetings, lobbying and monitoring the progress of this project. Special thanks go to this community organization.

Cellular Telephone Communications:

Recognizing the poor cellular telephone reception in several areas of town, efforts to address this problem came to fruition when an agreement was reached with Green Mountain Wireless, Inc. to install a Distributed Antenna System through the Town. This new technology involves the placement of small antenna's on strategically located utility poles which avoids the need for the placement of the conventional tall monopoles. All the cellular telephone service providers will contract with Green Mountain to use the new antenna system. Installation will begin in May 2005.

DCR Emergency Seawall Stabilization:

The Town was notified in March by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (the former MDC) that the Nantasket Beach Seawall between the Mary Jeanette Murray Bathhouse and the southerly end of the beach

was in jeopardy of collapsing and emergency stabilization was required. The DCR intended to place cobble along the entire length of the damaged seawall. The Town vehemently opposed the placement of cobble on the beach and lobbied long and hard for the large rocks instead of the cobble. The Town was successful in its efforts not only in preventing the placement of cobble on the beach but also in creating an awareness that the Town considers Nantasket Beach its most treasured natural resource.

My priority for the coming year is to address the Town's needs and resources for public works and care and maintenance of buildings and grounds. A Master Plan for the care and maintenance of roadways, seawalls, piers/wharfs, dredging, public buildings and grounds, is much needed.

I appreciate the support I have received from the Board of Selectmen. The Town of Hull is fortunate to be served by so many elected and appointed board and committee members who volunteer their services for the betterment of the Community.