

## **2010 Annual Report Office of the Town Manager**

I respectfully submit to the citizens of Hull the Year 2010 Annual Report of the Town Manager's Office. The state of the general economy continues to take its toll on our citizens and our operations. Our employees continue to manage and produce high quality service despite several years of diminished resources and increased demand.

In January, the presentation of the proposed fiscal year 2011 Budget was made to the Board of Selectmen. The budget presentation kicked-off the first stage of the Annual Town Meeting process that culminates in May.

In February the Board heard an update on the Regional Dispatch Center. The Center involves the Towns of Hingham, Hull, Cohasset and Norwell. Collectively we have received 2.1 million dollars in state grants to build out the center and procure the necessary technology. The Center is anticipated to open in the summer of 2011 when opened it will be the first of kind in Massachusetts, and will provide for enhanced emergency medical dispatch.

The months of March and April were consumed with budget meetings and Town Meeting preparation. The Town Manager and staff met frequently with Advisory Board to review Town Meeting articles.

In May, Town Meeting approved the FY11 Budget. The FY11 Budget key elements included the following:

### **EXPENDITURE SUMMARY:**

The FY11 Budget is a level services budget with one exception, the Library. This means that budgetary increases were made with the intent of providing the same level of service as in FY10. For the larger operational departments there were minor adjustments made to non-personnel line items reflecting known increases. Most departmental budgets changed as a result of negotiated wage increases. On the General Government side of the budget, union personnel received a wage increase after two years of no increases. It should be noted that General Government nonunion personnel (primarily Department Heads) did not receive a wage increase in FY11.

- The FY11 General Government Budget (all operating departments except the School Department) was funded at \$8,968,716. An increase of 443,092 dollars or 5.2% above FY10 funding levels of \$8,525,624.
- The FY11 School Department budget was funded at \$12,500,000. This was an increase of 623,125 dollars or 5.25% above FY10 funding levels of \$11,876,875.
- The percentage share of the operating budget between the School Department and the General Government remains virtually unchanged from previous years, with

the Schools receiving 58% of the operating budget and the General Government 42%.

- The Library budget in FY11 was funded at \$220,000. This was a significant restoration from a funding level of \$100,000 in FY10. The Library Trustees, staff and private Foundation labored to maintain library services with donations and creativity. The restoration of funds allowed Hull residents to continue to have borrowing privileges in neighboring communities. This budgetary change was the only significant deviation from the level services concept applied to this budget.
- The General Reserve Fund was being level funded at \$50,000. This represented a decrease over FY10 and a return to a funding level consistent with previous fiscal years.
- The employee health insurance portion of the budget increased by 4.75% or \$180,743 dollars. As part of continuing efforts to control this cost center effective July 1 all retirees were treated equally, paying the same percent cost for their health insurance. This represented no change to our retirees over age 65, which is the majority. Those retirees under the age 65 saw an increase in their premium contribution consistent with state law.
- The FY11 Budget funded anticipated claims for veteran's services. For past several years this line item has grown dramatically for a variety of reasons. Returning veterans are in need of assistance due to a poor economy and employment opportunities. In addition, World War Two veterans, spouses and widows are utilizing more services. FYI 1 was the first year in several that funding was in place at the commencement of the fiscal year to cover anticipated costs as opposed to being in a reactionary mode at the end of the fiscal year.
- Pension costs increased 2.9% from \$2.93 million dollars to \$3.02 million dollars.
- Debt costs decreased by \$95,000 over FY10 costs.
- Capital Spending: The FY11 budget had \$188,777 dollars allocated for capital spending. This allocation provided for replacement of two police cruisers, the second year payment for the newly purchased ambulance, funds to rehabilitate public works vehicles to extend service longevity, funds for limited seawall repairs and funds for school technology improvements.

The FY11 budget increased by \$645,223, a 1.8% increase and was in balance.

June brought with it a variety of requests for public events in Hull. The Police, Fire and Public Works Departments all played a role in providing services to a variety of charity road races and events. The three departments spent a considerable amount of time pre-planning the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend to ensure that everyone could have safe and enjoyable holiday.

The summer heat months brought many daily visitors to Town to enjoy our beaches, restaurants and waterfront. This was the time of the year that our departments were in full swing, our public safety employees are handling a wide variety of calls for service, Public Works employees are out in force cleaning beaches, maintaining roads and ball fields. They did a great job.

September brought to a conclusion the majority of the work for the replacement of the West Corner Bridge project and a re-dedication of the tide gates located at the bridge. It should be noted that this project included the complete rebuilding of the bridge, tide gates that are larger and automated to help maintain the ecological balance in Straits Pond.

October, brought news from Representative Bradley and Senator Hedlund that they had passed legislation that would allow the Town to lease a portion of DCR property. The lease term is for not less than 99 years and the use must be for economic development. The DCR parcel includes the old police barracks and current maintenance facility (across the street from the Mary Jeannette Murray Bath House). This significant development represents the first opportunity in over one hundred years that the Townspeople may have an opportunity to directly impact uses on DCR controlled parcels. The Selectmen established a re-use committee to formulate the Town's options.

In November a presentation on the FY12 budget was made to a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Advisory Board. At that meeting an overview of the Town's current and prospective finances were provided. FY 12 will be similar to FY 11. We very well may have bottomed out and are beginning to see hope on the horizon.

December brought the first heavy snows and a winter storm on the 26" that lashed the community. Damage was reported in the Gunrock area, Point Allerton seawall and the Stoney Beach seawall. Our Emergency Preparedness staff, in particular Chief Robert Hollingshead and Deputy Fire Chief Russo, did a great job of coordinating both planning and post storm efforts.

As always, the end of any year brings with it an opportunity. A new year begins and with it fresh opportunity. As we move forward that which is in the best interest of the Town will always guide the actions of this Office.

I would like to thank all Town Employees and in particular, Nancy Allen, Janet Bennett and Terry Finneran in the Board of Selectmen/Town Manager's Office for their tireless assistance throughout the year. It is an honor to serve the residents of Hull. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Philip E. Lemnios  
Town Manager