

2014 Annual Report

Office of the Town Manager

I respectfully submit to the citizens of Hull the Year 2014 Annual Report of the Town Manager's Office. I would like to thank the Board of Selectmen for providing guidance and support to make Hull a vibrant and successful community. In addition, the cooperative efforts of many citizen volunteers, employees and residents provide the needed resources to ensure that Hull continues to progress. Over the past several years, Hull, like most communities, has confronted a difficult financial period. 2014 was the first year where we began to see and experience a positive change in the general economic outlook. We are beginning to look forward again. We have come out of the most recent economic period a leaner and more efficient operation. Our employees continue to seek to innovate and offer exemplary service

In January, the presentation of the proposed fiscal year 2015 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 each year.

In March and April budget meetings and Town Meeting preparation were the focus of activity. Staff met frequently with Advisory Board to review Town Meeting articles and to discuss the implications of various financial and non-financial articles. The work of the Advisory Board involves many meetings and analysis of Articles. The Town is fortunate to have a group of citizens that vigilantly analyze issues on behalf of Town Meeting and to provide guidance on those issues.

In May, Town Meeting approved the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget as illustrated below:

Revenue Summary	FY14	FY15	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Maximum Allowable Tax Levy	25,266,047	26,024,885	758,838	3.00%
Projected Net State Aid	5,982,882	6,098,732	115,850	1.94%
Total Local Receipts	4,754,609	4,612,915	(141,694)	-2.98%
Total Enterprise Fund Revenue	3,215,927	3,473,743	257,816	8.02%
TOTAL RECEIPTS	39,219,465	40,210,275	990,810	2.53%
Expenditure Summary	FY14	FY15	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Total Services Costs	34,351,683	35,139,761	788,078	2.29%
Enterprise Fund Expenditures	3,215,927	3,473,743	257,816	8.02%
Other Total:	591,423	545,000	(46,423)	-7.85%
Intergovernmental Total	1,060,433	1,051,771	(8,662)	-0.82%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	39,219,466	40,210,275	990,809	2.53%
NET EXCESS/(DEFICIT)	(0)	0	0	

Additional articles of note at Town Meeting were:

Town Meeting approved a Sewer Department Bond for \$4.5 million for the remaining costs to rehabilitate the Plant. Repair items include the HVAC system and step screen at the plant.

Town Meeting approved an \$850,000 bond article for Public Works vehicles, the purchase of a new ambulance and command vehicle for the Fire Department. Vehicles to be replaced are listed below:

- One ton dump truck (purchased in 1999),
- Trackless multi-use tractor (purchased in 1997),
- Truck with plow and sander (purchased in 1997),
- F750 Ford Cab and Chassis with sewer jet (purchased in 1984)
- Ambulance, and Fire Department Command Vehicle

Town Meeting approved a \$500,000 Cemetery Bond to purchase prefabricated structures for interment of ashes (columbarium). The bond will also allow the creation of new burial spaces in the section that is currently vacant.

The arrival of summer brought thousands of visitors to enjoy the quintessential New England summer experience. The Town welcomes all who come and our staff is quite busy making sure that the beaches are clean, the waterways are well patrolled and safe and that the all our recreational sites are ready for play.

We also had the arrival of Piping Plovers in Adams-Coburn area of the front beach. Plovers are federally protected birds. As such, certain sections of the beach were closed until the fledglings took flight. Our Police Department, Conservation Administrator Herbst and Public Works staff worked well together and with Mass Audubon to create an effective plan to protect the birds. In addition the Beach Management Committee and Anne Herbst did a great job organizing a group of "*Plover Ambassadors*" to monitor the nesting sites and provide the public with educational information.

In the spring and fall Surfside Roadway Improvement Project was underway. By the end of the fall new sidewalks had been poured, the base coat of roadway completed and new street lights installed. The project, under the guidance of Community Development Director Robert Fultz, will be completed in the spring of 2015. The new streetscape between Water Street and Anastos Corner is a critical link between the HRA property and the front beach business district. It is a welcome improvement; all costs were provided to the Town through a grant.

In December, the Hull Redevelopment Authority (HRA) hosted several meetings to present redevelopment concepts for the HRA land. The Utile Consulting Group was hired by the HRA, Town and Mass Development to prepare market feasible planning concepts. After an extensive period of stake holder meetings and numerous meetings with staff, the concepts were presented by the Utile Group. The main characteristics of the Plan calls for mixed used development (housing and commercial uses) that will be arranged in one acre blocks. Each block would be bounded by cross streets that run from Hull Shore Drive to Topics Road. The Plan is modular and can grow over time. Full development would occur over several phases with the goal of creating a neighborhood with commercial and residential components, open space and viability for year round activity. It is an intriguing plan that deserves consideration. The HRA was created by Hull Town Meeting in 1961.

In December, long serving Fire Chief Robert Hollingshead retired. Chief Hollingshead served the Town for many years starting as a young firefighter. Over the years, Chief Hollingshead became proficient at all aspects of Fire Science and Administration. Chief Hollingshead's professional guidance and deep love of Hull were always evident in his approach to each situation. Chief Hollingshead created a strong, stable department with great service and caring for the citizens of Hull. We all wish him well in his much deserved retirement.

In closing, I would like to thank all Town Employees for their continued dedication and thoughtful service. In particular, I would like to recognize and thank 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