

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Town of Newton continues to grow. With that growth, the need for change is inevitable. Change in our way of doing business as a Town, and how we service that growth. One need being addressed this year is the Safety Complex Bonding Warrant Article. You, the Newton voters will be asked to put your stamp of approval on this \$2.9 million dollar bond to address the shortfalls of our present facilities. As times change and Newton, (as most southern NH communities have) grows, the challenge of serving the residents of Newton becomes more challenging. With that growth, comes a price. It is a continuous struggle to keep costs minimal, while providing services at an expected level.

Another constant challenge is the ability to maintain our current buildings. Our town hall and library are outdated and do not meet continually changing requirements, for both accessibility and functionality. We are stressed for storage space and workspace. The need to look at these buildings' futures will need to be addressed as well, as the town continues to grow.

The Board of Selectmen recently authorized Municipal Resources to conduct an internal controls assessment of the town, to determine areas that are lacking in accountability, automation, efficiency and level of service that the Newton taxpayers deserve. The Town of Newton is policy starved! The Board this year will take the results of this assessment and implement its' results to become more efficient and accountable to you, the taxpayers.

Our Master Plan Committee has been struggling to update our Master Plan. The Master Plan is an invaluable tool to towns to shape their futures. The Master Plan Committee received only approximately 65 surveys of the town. Please fill out a survey by obtaining one at Town Hall or from Newton's' website, www.newton-nh.gov. We need your input and help shaping Newton by returning a survey or attending meetings, which are also posted on the town's website above.

One area of concern is the lack of recreation facilities within Newton for both our young and elderly. We need to determine our future needs and secure parcels of land before it is too late to do so. Our conservation committee has been working hard to conserve open space by identifying these areas and securing them by purchasing them and/or conservation easements.

Special thanks to Town Treasurer Cheryl Nelson, Planning Chairwoman Kim Petit, and member Kim Valliant for working tirelessly to reconcile the Town of Newton Planning Boards' NPREA account. There have been policies put into place and invoicing done to get this important piece to the Planning Board's operation in order. This account allows engineering and professional review of future development, without the need to raise and appropriate funds to do this important work.

The Newton Board of Selectmen has worked very hard this year to continue to keep the Town tax rate down, while supplying the need for ever increasing services and costs, such as health care increases, competitive wages, and fuel costs. We look forward to the upcoming year.

Finally, get involved with your town government by joining one of its many boards and committees, which are an integral part of running a small, growing town. It is both challenging and rewarding. There are constantly openings and help is always needed and appreciated.

Respectfully,
Gary F. Nelson, Chairman
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