

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen has had a year of challenges triggered by all sorts of causes. It started out with the town recuperating from damages of the December 2008 Ice Storm, a default budget, (for the second year), and many meetings with FEMA. In a difficult economy, we were faced with "what do our town's residents want and how do we accomplish it in these trying times"? Our work has been exciting, demanding, controversial, and enjoyable. It's the hard work and long days that our employees put in, that make this town a pleasant place to live.

Our Town Office is staffed by Nancy Wrigley, (our Town Administrator), and Mary Winglass, (our Board of Selectmen Office Manager). The persistent and dependable work by these two employees has been demanding at times. With the towns growing population, legislative changes, meetings, dealing with the public, completing policy's and job descriptions, assisting employees, they continued to show the ability to effect change and provide resources to residents, not to mention dealing with three selectmen with different schedules & viewpoints. I value your leadership and feel lucky to have such dedicated and professional people working for us.

Our Bookkeeper, Kim Hughes, has once again gone above and beyond her job description. Kim has the ability to run her department under difficult circumstances. She started the year by being inundated with invoices from the ice-storm, a default budget, a Treasurer that had resigned, a Deputy Treasurer that had to step in to play catch up, and an Audit company looking for the books to be completely reconciled by the end of January. The Board of Selectmen is extremely thankful that Kim is such a dedicated Newton employee.

Deputy Treasurer Brenda Fiers is yet another employee that stepped in to assist the town in a complicated situation when the Treasurer resigned. The new Treasurer Jennifer Gaines was elected and did her best to work with the other departments to meet the required deadlines. With time restraints not on her side, she and Brenda worked to get the job done. She is another example of employees going above and beyond.

The Building Department had additional challenges. In a down economy, they worked with the Selectmen to adjust fees, add hours available to the public, input information into the new Building Department computer, (allowing them to work closely with the Assessor), and help us with plans for buildings at the transfer station, and the sprinkler pump building at Town Hall. In addition to this they had to fill in as our Code Enforcement Officer after he resigned, until the position was filled halfway through the year. Just to put the final touch on the challenges, the Building Department, Bookkeeper, Health Officer and Treasurer share the same office space of approximately 14'x14'. We have not made their job easy, but we appreciate their perseverance.

Andrea Lewy, our Town Assessor has continued to show her professionalism as she is swamped with residents, (usually unhappy), about their tax bill and assessed value of their home. In a down market, as people have lost jobs and dwindling salaries, it takes a special kind of person to listen to complaints and explain the relevant formulas and tools of assessing. Our Town Assessor has to share the office of the Town Administrator, making it difficult as residents make appointments with the Assessor.

Our Town Clerk /Tax Collector, Mary Jo McCullough and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cheryl Saunders add to a fabulous team at Town Hall. They have assisted the other departments, when the work load made it impossible to complete. They have re-organized their office, put policy's in writing, and even came in on their own free time to paint their office and give it a face lift. More proof that a well selected team encourages positive energy, even in tough times.



Our Welfare Agent, Tina O'Rourke and Deputy Welfare Agent Brian O'Rourke are like secret agents. They deliver and assist people in need in all kinds of weather and during holidays. With trying times, their service is in demand. If you have items in good condition that could be used by a Newton resident, take the time to call Tina. You may think it's not important, but you could make someone very happy. The fact that we are in a default budget again, has affected this department too. With costs going up, it's difficult to assist families. The board appreciates all that Tina & Brian do for our town.

There are just not enough words to thank our Road Agent and his crew. I worked very closely with Mike Pivero on many issues. We worked on labeling problematic culverts, road repairs, scenic road issues, wetland soil problems and FEMA documents and certifications. He has organized and mapped out the town roads into zones, and documented problem areas based on severity and safety. Thank you just doesn't seem to justify your value to the town.

The Police Chief Larry Streeter & Fire Department Chief William Ingalls along with their employees are faced unfunded demands, more calls, older equipment, pay scales that should be raised, increased population, more roads and homes to watch over, ever changing legal requirements causing a tremendous strain on our public safety personnel. How do you say thank-you to the people that put their life on the line, everyday that they go to work? They protect us without question at all costs, and are always there when you call. Updating their Education is a requirement to the job so they can keep abreast of the latest changes. They work in buildings that are too small with limited technology and older equipment. My gratitude is never ending.

Emergency Management Director, Larry Foote and Deputies Mike Giordano & John Walsh have done an exceptional job this year. Our Emergency Management Department has received FEMA money and grants that will enhance our capabilities to function during an emergency. Some of the items purchased are computers, generators, and much needed supplies. In addition to this they were instrumental in the search for an Ambulance, that we were able to purchase. My hope is eventually it will be an additional source of revenue for the town. The Ambulance is not replacing our contracted ambulance service, but instead will be a back up ambulance for our town. In emergency situations, minutes can make a difference in life or death, so this is a huge addition to our safety fleet. This has been a very controversial issue and I would like to add "there are two sides to every story", so don't judge till you hear all the facts. I totally support giving our Fire Department and Police Department, the best equipment to do the job for the residents of the town. We have many good employees and without the equipment to do the job, we become a training ground with limited hope of employee retention.

How do you thank the Transfer Station Manager Kevin Jolicoeur for creating an orderly and clean facility? Kevin and his crew work regardless of weather conditions to enhance the Transfer Stations' ppearance. The employees have been working on their credentials, education and certifications. Keep up the good work. The entire crew is an asset to our town.

Trustees of the Gale Library have many issues to hurdle including an old building, inadequate parking, limited funds, and yet they remain positive and address these challenges head on. Stop by to say hello to them. You won't want to leave and don't forget our reading dog "Reilly".

Let's not forget so many other employees of the town; Moderator, Robert Dezmelyk, Supervisors of the check list, Cemetery Trustees, Trustees of the Trust Funds, Cable Committee, our IT Person Sylvania Maddock and our Health Officer Bob Leverone. These people may not be in the spot light, but the town could not function without them.



I want to thank the many volunteers serving on our boards and committees. Their never ending energy is the source of our accomplishment. The Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Appeals and Recreation committee exceeded my expectations while working on the Plan NH. This combined effort, under the direction of Ann Miles, was a massive undertaking. This project is in its infancy, and will continue to expand. I encourage residents to participate in the elite group that is working on this project. The secretaries Lisa Babcock and Jeannette Clark should be given the "MVP" award for outstanding performance. They have the patience of a saint.

How do I thank the Conservation Commission and Stewardship Committee? I have been a member of the conservation commission since 2000, and thoroughly enjoy the ability to protect our natural resources, open space, protected species and our watershed districts. We are extremely lucky that residents have volunteered their time and talent for the benefit of the town. We look forward to our productive meetings and have developed a bond that is worth every minute of my time. To me, the Conservation Commission is my extended family. Our Secretary Kim Lowther is extraordinary. Not every committee can say they became aunts and uncles during their involvement on a committee, but we can. Kim had a lovely baby girl in 2009, and worked up to the week she gave birth. It was not easy for her, yet she never complained. She came to work, as if it were just an ordinary day.

On a final note, the selectmen participated in 43 selectmen's meetings, 2 site walks and 3 hearings, 5 ice storm de-briefings, 6 meetings with FEMA, 4 Safety committee meetings, amnesty weekend at the transfer station as well as the Hazard Mitigation Plan meetings, plus individual time assisting other committees and site walks. I would encourage people to join a committee they may have interest in. We need your help. Don't be afraid to think out of the box. New ideas and forward thinking will develop new roads to travel, so test the waters; it might be a good thing. When you want to try something different, the answer shouldn't be, "Well, we have always done it this way". The more positive energy we have the more we will accomplish for the town. Look at the full picture, and know where you are going. Remember to take small steps, "Inch by inch is a cinch, yard by yard is very hard". Bear in mind that we all come from different walks of life with different opinions, and that's okay. Conflict can lead to creative solutions, so "agree to disagree" in the beginning, without anger and threats. My advice is to encourage positive energy, because negative people can consume you. We are here to help the residents of the town while making Newton a marvelous place to live. I am proud of everyone that has made this town a better place to live.

Respectfully submitted,  
Trisha Collins McCarthy, Chairperson  
Board of Selectmen