

TOWN OF NEW CASTLE

New Hampshire

OFFICE OF THE SELECT BOARD

ISLAND ITEMS

AUGUST 2017

VOLUME 133

Greetings from Town Hall

Bill Stewart

Chairman New Castle Select Board

As Summer begins its transition into the beauty of fall and a new fiscal year begins, I thought it a good time to write and update you on our work. The Select Board, alongside staff, officials and volunteers serving the Town, have worked hard in recent months and accomplished a lot. Beyond the daily efforts of Town operations, we enhanced safety and access, maintained our special buildings, and improved our services and infrastructure.

Public safety:

- As roads become more congested with population and tourism growth in the seacoast, our focus is on how to keep everyone safe. We have begun work on an overarching comprehensive solution to traffic pedestrian safety. This includes such things as broadening of the shoulders on 1B, installing and maintaining additional paths, walkways or sidewalks and improving road surfaces.
- We recently met with NHDOT regarding resurfacing Route 1B throughout Town. The project is approved, State funded and slated to

begin shortly after Labor Day. This should greatly improve swerving bikes, twisted ankles and beat up shocks resulting from the current “pot hole” situation.

- The Town received additional Highway Block Grant Funds, above our budgeted allotment, in July of this year. We are currently looking at using the money to install additional sidewalks and removing ledge which impedes line of sight.
- The Select Board is working with the New Castle Conservation Commission to improve trail and off-road walking opportunities in Town. This includes connectivity routes to places such as MHT, the Common and high interest areas.
- For a second year, we received approval from the State to reduce the summer speed limit on Rte 1B in the School and Downtown areas. This coupled with new electronic monitoring has made people more aware and resulted in slower recorded speeds in Town.
- The Select Board has begun replacement of aging fire detection equipment in Town buildings. We recently replaced the fire panel in the Town hall and improved monitoring

capabilities. There is a plan to review and replace additional aging fire equipment in the recreation building and other locations during this fiscal year.

- Working with the Fire Safety Committee we have begun an outreach program to inform and educate residents on fire risks and fire safety. One of the best things residents can do is to ensure their fire detection equipment is up to date and enlist a monitoring service who will alert the fire department directly in the event of an emergency.
- The Town continues to improve its hydrant use and maintenance programs. This includes twice annual service and repair of the hydrants, and training with the fire department on valve use and procedures.
- The Town acquired three safety vehicles in the last year. We replaced an aging Police vehicle with a newer, smaller and more efficient one. We acquired a used Rescue Vehicle which is ten years newer and came at a net cost of \$7,500 after selling the old one. The Town also received a Fire Boat from Portsmouth (at no cost to acquire) which is docked at the end of Steamboat Lane. The boat provides a critical second source of water for fire emergencies in Town and a first source of water for a marina fire or boat incident. The boat is capable of pumping seawater through a hose system stored at the dock to reach several identified higher risk areas in downtown. *There will be a demonstration in late August or early September – stay tuned.*

Accessible buildings and upkeep:

- The Town installed a new handicap ramp at the Town Hall. The ramp is in the back of the building providing a better, safer solution. There is handicap parking in the back of the building as well.
- We improved the WIFI capabilities in the Recreation Building and Library this summer extending range to include the DPW building and the entrance to the Common. We also installed a security camera and new locks in the Recreation Building to improve safety.
- The Town removed old and ineffective insulation in the Town Hall building. During a study to identify upgrades to the building, it was recommended that we abate the current insulation. We are now working toward re-insulating for the winter months.
- The roof of the Recreation Building was in disrepair and in need of replacement. We recently shingled the front roof and cupola. The back roof will be shingled next year to complete the project. Once completed, the roof should last for about 20 years depending on storm events and wind (the shingles are technically rated for 30 years).

Around Town Hall:

- The Town welcomed a new accountant and HR coordinator, Christiane McAllister and a new assistant director of Public Works, Ben Jankowski. Stop in and say hello, they both bring a high level of cheer and competency to their work.
- Pam Cullen, Select Board Secretary, with the help of the document retention committee, completed a large-scale document retention

project. We have scanned, catalogued and stored most of the important documents, maps and related items securing our information and memorializing it for the future.

- The Select Board continues to look at how the Recreation Building, Town landing, Common, and other properties are used to improve the quality of the experience for residents. We have new volunteers, Wendy Poulin and Andrea Pruna, who have stepped up to help develop more programming through the recreation department. Len Seagren is in the process of reviewing the sound system at the Recreation Building with an eye toward improving meetings and encouraging school and recreational use.
- We recently implemented two policies to clarify road and line of sight maintenance which cover plowing, brush cutting and related items. Both are aimed at improving communication with neighbors, clarifying work done on roads and Right of Ways, and improving safety.
- We transitioned the Town's insurance for its Workers' Compensation, General Liability and Employee Health. We achieved better coverages with reduced premiums resulting in significant cost savings to the Town.
- The Town, under its existing budget, purchased new computer and printing/scanning resources for the accounting department, building inspector and improved those of the Secretary. All to improve efficiency and reduce operating costs.

- We are in the midst of a Human Resource project with the help of volunteers, Nancy Jackson and Laurie Chandler, to develop a better understanding of roles and responsibilities of Town employees and boards. This will help inform board appointments, future hiring decisions and assist in defining employee programs and policies.

Sewer and Water Infrastructure;

- The Town completed comprehensive studies on its Sewer and Water infrastructure. The Studies identified several critical maintenance items and upgrades necessary in the coming years.

Sewer System:

- The Town owns and operates three primary sewer pump stations. The stations consist of six large pumps, electric controls and SCADA (information gathering equipment). The Study noted that all the stations are below sea level, have no by-pass structure in the event of failure and have reached the end of their useful lives (prone to failure). Based on the study findings, the Select Board and the Water Sewer Commission determined that by-pass structures should be installed and that a plan for pump stations equipment replacement be undertaken.
- In July, by-pass structures were fabricated and installed for all three pump stations paid for from Sewer Funds on-hand. We are now in the process of replacing the pumps (submersible) and all electrical controls (locating them above ground), and installing new remote monitoring SCADA for the three stations. Funding for this project was voted on at Town meeting and is a combination of debt financing repaid by sewer customers and on-

hand sewer funds. The project is expected to be completed by calendar year end.

Water System:

- The Town completed a comprehensive study of its water system with the goal of improving water quality and fire flows in Town. The Study came back with a clear recommendation to upgrade the size and quality of pipes transmitting water to and distributing water in New Castle.
- Three public information sessions were held including Town meeting on the necessary upgrades. We recently completed engineer segment phasing work and have planning stage cost estimates. We have met with Portsmouth and those meetings have New Castle and Portsmouth working on parallel tracks. Both the Town and the City will work toward getting approvals and appropriating funding in the 2018-2019 budget and beyond. The Select Board recently sought and received a State grant to access low cost loan funds for the project through the State Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund should we choose that option. This opens the door to project financing currently offered at a fixed rate of 2.424% for 20 years.
- At this point, we have completed all the study work, developed planning stage cost estimates and secured a low-cost funding option. The next step is to move forward with a Town vote on the project. The Select Board is looking at the possibility of holding a special Town Meeting on the subject sometime this fall (October/ November).

The amount of work we have accomplished and look to accomplish is

a direct reflection of the contributions volunteers, those who serve in office, and the employees of New Castle make every day. Thanks for all your support and help. We look forward continued success this fall and beyond.

New Castle Public Library

“There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all.” ~ Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

This summer our library was filled with the sounds of children participating in our summer reading program “*We Are All Connected*”. We launched the program with a visit from the Center for Wildlife on June 21st and several live animals - a peregrine falcon, eastern screech owl, porcupine, three-toed box turtle, and a corn snake. We got to see and touch more live animals when *Explore the Ocean World* came to teach us about all the creatures living in the ocean around us. Other programs included an art day and a visit from Digby, a R.E.A.D. certified dog (Reading Education Assistance Dog).

The library is now getting ready for the start of the 2017-2018 school year. As the school librarian, I visit the school throughout the year and the students come to the library during the winter months. Library programming includes book discussion groups, pairing fiction and nonfiction, library etiquette, how to use the library, author studies, how to be a lifelong learner, animal research unit, health unit, and poetry month. Once again this year I will be presenting a Book Talk the first Friday of each month to the students and staff at MHT. I bring about 50 books to the school for kindergarten through sixth grade students. After I present all the books the children check out any books they are interested in. The Book Talks typically have

a theme each month – holidays, series, classics, biographies, Black History, poetry, Earth Day, celebrating science, graphic novels, great summer reads. We are excited to start a new school year and celebrate books with our MHT students.

For our children under age five ... please come to the library to sign up for ***NH 1000 Books Before Kindergarten***. Join our group of young children getting a great start to their reading journeys.

Introduction to Bridge Fundamentals will be back in October. Session 4 will continue to build on previous skills, but players of all levels are welcome to join our enthusiastic group. Stop in at the library if you are interested in learning more about this program.

Library Bus Trips – The library will host its fifth bus trip on Wednesday, October 18th to Ogunquit. We are having lunch at the Cape Neddick Inn and then heading over to the Ogunquit Playhouse to see *From Here to Eternity*. Please let me know if you are not receiving our announcements and I will add you to our email list.

New Materials at the Library –

DVDs: The Light Between Oceans, Hidden Figures, Lion, Fences, La La Land, Hell or High Water, To Walk Invisible, Denial, Moonlight, The Durrells in Corfu, A United Kingdom, National Geographic's Gender Revolution...

Family Movie Night: Moana, The Gruffalo

New Books: *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* by Lisa See, *Hallelujah Anyway* by Anne Lamott, *Horse Dancer* by JoJo Moyes, *Anything is Possible* by Elizabeth Strout, *The Book of Joy* by Dalai Lama, *Earthly Remains* by Donna Leon, *Edgar and Lucy* by Victor Lodato, *Fast and Loose* by Stuart Woods, *The Fix* David Baldacci, *Option B* by Sheryl Sandberg, *Rather Be the Devil* by Ian Rankin, *Stars Are Fire* by Anita Shreve,

Thirst by Jo Nesbo, *Saints For All Occasions* by J. Courtney Sullivan, *Make Your Bed* by William McRaven, *Testimony* by Scott Turow, *Warnings* by Richard Clarke, *Camino Island* by John Grisham, *My Italian Bulldozer* by Alexander McCall Smith, *Dragon Teeth* by Michael Crichton, *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann, *Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by Arundhati Roy, ...

New Audio Books on cd: *Palace of Treason* by Jason Matthews, *A Fall of Marigolds* by Susan Meissner, *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles, *The Little Paris Bookshop* by Nina George, *A Piece of the World* by Christina Baker Kline, ...

Library Hours:

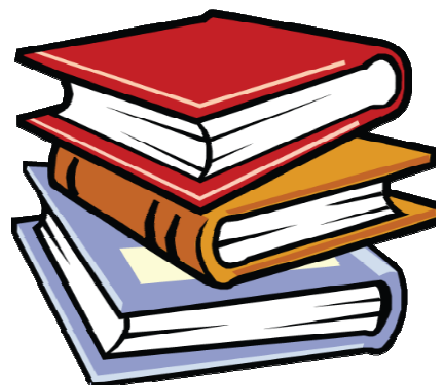
Tuesday 12–5
Wednesday 12–5
Thursday 9–3
Friday 12–5
Saturday 9–12

Story Times: Thursdays at 9:30am & Saturdays at 10am

Drop in for a Stitch Knitting Group:
Tuesdays at 3pm

Adult Library Book Group: 1st Wed. each month at 3pm

Happy Reading!
Christine Collins, Library Director



TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR

TAXES:

As usual property taxes will be due in early December. We do not have the exact date nor the rate. Please let me or Pamela Cullen know (in writing) if you have any change of address for your tax bill before September. If for some reason you do not receive a property tax bill, please contact me and I will send one to you. If you have an escrow account for taxes, please be sure to send your lender a copy of the bill. We do not bill lenders for property taxes. We do send dunning letters per state law the taxes are not paid within a month and this may lead to a lien on your property and a hefty increase in the interest rate if they are not paid within three months. No one wants that.

MOTOR VEHICLES:

TOWN FEE: The state has increased the amount towns may charge for each registration transaction from \$3.00 to \$5.00. We expect this change to go into effect by the end of the year. This money goes toward municipal transportation funding.

RENEWALS:

The Department of Revenue prepares the renewal reminders that we send to you. They are not always complete and may not include a car you recently purchased. Also some residents do not receive a reminder, which will always be a mystery to us. The DMV regards these reminders as a courtesy, not an

invoice or bill. They insist it is the owner's responsibility to renew their vehicles on time, while BJ and I are much more understanding.

NON-RESIDENT VEHICLES:

Residency is a hot topic with regards to voting privileges and there is some effect on motor vehicle titling and registration. If you vote in another state, then your vehicles titled in New Hampshire must be designated as non-resident. If you are a resident of another state and have a vehicle registered in New Hampshire, the status is "non-resident." The state has some strict rules about these vehicles: they may not spend the night out of town. I do not make this stuff up.

VOTING LAWS:

There is a new state law on its way with the purpose to more clearly define "resident" and requires additional pieces of paper to show proof of residence for voting purposes. This will impact anyone who registers to vote within 30 days of the election or on Election Day. For details on voting laws visit the Secretary of State website <http://sos.nh.gov/Elections.aspx> The next election in New Castle is the Town Meeting in May. The next state election will be the primary in September.

Priscilla Hodgkins

Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Conservation Commission's Monthly Tip-

"Keeping Our Waters Healthy and Clean"

Beaches, Wetlands, Pet Waste and Pollution

Credit: RI StormwaterSolutions.org

This month we are asking you not only to think about keeping your pets happy, hydrated and safe but also to think about keeping our local waters safe from pet waste!

Pet waste doesn't just decompose. It adds harmful bacteria and nutrients to local waters, when it's not disposed of properly. When left on a paved surface, dog waste becomes yet another contaminant that stormwater (the water you see flowing down the street during a heavy rain) can transport to local waters. When heavy rains wash down the sidewalk and street, and right over dog waste, they pick up particles of that waste. That stormwater then flows either directly to local waters such as down storm drains and then to your nearby waterways. Fortunately, picking up after your pet is easy if you're prepared. Simply carry a plastic bag with you on every walk with your dog, and you'll have the equipment to remove your dog's waste. Then bring it home and throw it in the trash can (**never down a storm drain!**), and you're done. There are even compact, refillable bag dispensers that you can attach right to your dog's leash.

...Beaches, Wetlands, Pet Waste and Pollution Credit: RI Stormwater Solutions.org This month we are asking you not only to think about keeping your pets happy, hydrated and safe but also to think about keeping our local waters safe from pet waste! Pet waste doesn't just decompose. It harmful!

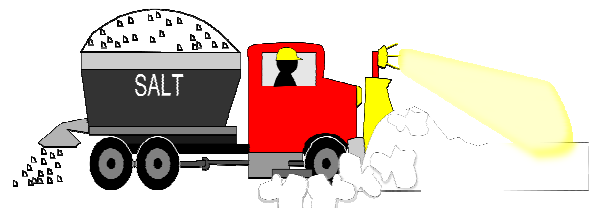
WINTER POLICY APPROVED

The Select Board approved a "Winter and Inclement Weather Policy" at their Monday night meeting on July 24th. This policy discusses the plowing of town streets during the winter season. Below is a section devoted to "Damage to Private Property" for those property owners who have either paved, planted grass, flowers, bushes, placed large rocks, granite posts, or put down brick, granite or artificial pavers etc. that are in the town's right of way.

7a. The Town of New Castle assumes no responsibility for damage to private property that is located within the public right-of-way or on Town land, as such property is deemed an encumbrance and is not permitted. The right-of-way (ROW) is often 50 feet wide and is often mistaken by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends 10 to 20 feet either side of the paved or gravel surface of a road. Homeowners often cultivate lawns, granite posts, fences, or stone walls in these areas, which improves the appearance of the road greatly, but may obstruct or interfere with maintenance being conducted on the roadway, including winter maintenance. The Town will not be responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged property with no exception.

The entire context of the policy is available at the Town Hall.

New Castle Select Board



**ALTHOUGH THIS ARTICLE WAS
PUBLISHED PREVIOUSLY, THE
TOWN FEELS IT IS WORTH
REPEATING**

**TREE CUTTING IN
NEW CASTLE**

The removal and maintenance of trees and brush from a property is sometimes necessary. The Conservation Commission would like to remind our community about the importance of preserving as much of our native vegetation on the island as possible. Not only does native vegetation contribute to the beauty of our island and to the wildlife that are supported by it, native trees and shrubs protect our shoreline and freshwater wetlands. Native vegetation that buffers our shoreline prevents erosion and reduces pollution entering the waters by allowing rain to seep into the ground before entering waterways/wetlands and the ocean. When cutting trees on your property the town has strict guidelines on what can be removed. Be sure to ask your tree removal service prior to any cutting if they are familiar with our town ordinances. There are 2 local buffer zones you need to consider prior to cutting any vegetation:

WATERFRONT BUFFER ZONE

- A 100ft waterfront buffer zone is established from the highest observable tide which includes land that borders on tidal waters such as banks, bogs, and salt marshes.
- A 100ft waterfront buffer zone is established from the edge of our class A wetlands which include: Lavenger Creek, Secret Pond, Quarterdeck Lane, Pit Lane "A", and River Rd salt marsh.
- A 50ft waterfront buffer zone is established from the edge of our class B wetlands. All wetlands in our town may be referenced in the New Castle Zoning Ordinance, and the map is located in the town hall under the Wetlands Study, Oak Hill Environmental Services, 10/2005.

**Within the WATERFRONT BUFFER
ZONE:**

- Branches may be trimmed, pruned and thinned.
- Vegetation less than 3 feet **MUST** be left intact to control erosion along the water's edge.
- Tree removal **MUST** follow a grid system designated by NHDES. Please call the Town Office and leave a message for the Conservation Commission, (a volunteer Commission member will get back in touch with you as soon as they are able) or call NHDES, Pease Office, Wetlands Bureau at (603) 271-2147 for guidance.
- Any stump from a fallen or cut tree **MUST** remain intact within the wetland buffer.

NATURAL WOODLAND BUFFER:

A NATURAL WOODLAND BUFFER ZONE is 150ft from both the shoreline/tidal land and freshwater wetlands.

- If your lot is larger than ½ acre, 50% of this zone **MUST** be left in an unaltered state.
- If your lot is ½ acre or less, 25% of this zone **MUST** be left in an unaltered state.
- Any stump from a fallen or cut tree **MUST** remain intact within 150ft of the wetland.

An unaltered state means existing natural native vegetation is allowed to grow without cutting, limbing, trimming, pruning, mowing and other similar activities except as needed for plant health, normal maintenance and renewal.

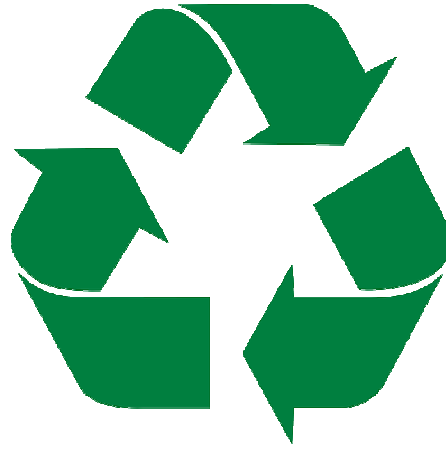
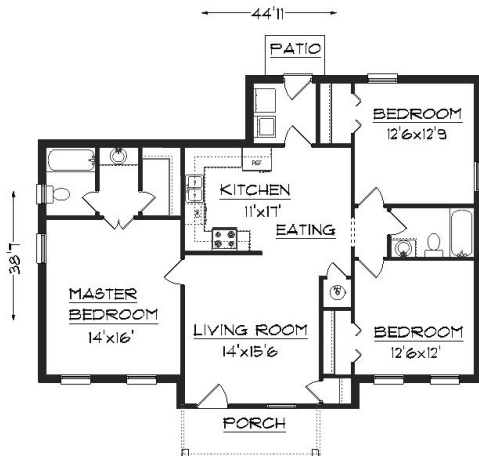
For more information on wetland buffers and tree cutting, please refer to the New Castle Zoning Ordinances in section 9.2.8 or contact the Conservation Commission at the town hall.

Lynn McCarthy, Conservation Chair

TOWN PLANS/MAPS

The Select Board recently had their 4000 stored maps and plans purged from the archives on the second floor of the town hall.

It was decided that house plans would not be scanned. If you think your plans might be here, please come and look. The town will offer these to the property owners until September 1, which at that point they will be discarded. The plans are available at the town hall on the table outside the conference room.



2017 GREEN WASTE DATES

Saturday	-	August 19
Saturday	-	September 9
Saturday	-	October 14
Saturday	-	November 18

The green waste dumpster will be available to island residents one Saturday each month during the 2017 growing season. The dumpster is located at the Common next to the library. Green waste volunteers will be on duty from 8am to 11am. No after-hours dumping is permitted. Because plastic bags are not biodegradable, these must be emptied and reclaimed. Using Disposable paper bagging keeps the clothes clean and dispositions cheerful.

THERE IS NO POOP FAIRY

Please watch for the new signs that have been posted throughout the town about DOG WASTE and the adorable dog fairies.

See the entire article about the POOP FAIRY in the August issue of ISLANDER.

Please clean up after your dog. Dog waste can contain harmful organisms. It is a town ordinance to clean up after your pet.



New Castle Public Library – Survey

Our mission is to be a welcoming community and school library sharing relevant resources in order to promote the enjoyment of reading and lifelong learning in a comfortable gathering place.

The Library Trustees, in order to better service our patrons, ask that you take this brief survey. It will help us to grow our library services and enrich our community. Thank you for your patronage. We value your opinions. Please take a moment to answer the following questions.

On a scale of 0-5, 0 meaning “I don’t know or not applicable, and 5 as excellent, please rate the following:



1. Service quality

2. Collection (books, DVDs, newspapers...etc)

3. Programs (classes, bus trips...etc)

4. ILL (interlibrary loan)

5. Computers and printers

6. Internet access

7. Hours of operation

8. What do you value most about the library?

9. How could the library or its services be improved?

10. Overall how would you rate the library?

Please return survey to the library, thanking you in advance for your help in this survey.

If you are interested in learning how you can volunteer or would like to be included on our email list for events, a name, email address and/or phone number are welcomed.

Name: _____

Email: _____

**NEW CASTLE RESIDENTS ABOUT
TOWN**

Deb Schulte holding a sign for the Strawberry Social.

Michael McAndrew who wears many hats from the Representative to Rockingham Planning Commission to Mr. Helping Hand in the neighborhood.

PHOTOS

A great big thank you to Jim Cerny for his marvelous talent as a photographer. is pictures on this page are a tribute to his photogenic eye.