

2014 Public Works Annual Report

The public works department completed many projects in 2014. The largest project this year was the installation of a new corrugated poly lined culvert under Bailey Rd. at the intersection of Woodpecker Rd. The existing 36" steel culvert had failed and was inadequate in size for significant rain events to handle the flows. It was replaced with a new metal culvert measuring 8 feet wide by 6.5 feet tall and will meet the 100 yr flood flows required today by the State Wetlands board. Being constructed of polymer coated steel it has a 40 year or more life expectancy. All work was completed by the public works department which significantly reduced the project costs. This project resulted from flooding rains in July 2012 that collapsed the existing culvert. Public works applied for mitigation funds through FEMA and was awarded \$17,000.00 dollars towards the replacement of the culvert.

Washington endured 5" inches of rain in 2 hours from a major flooding event in early August this year causing several road closures and damaged culverts. With the help of other town departments and several local contractors, we were able to open all roads in two days. Washington Emergency Services activated the Emergency Operations Center which coordinated the response from all town departments. The flooding was not county wide therefore we were unable to meet the threshold for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to declare a federal disaster for Sullivan County. Washington sustained \$46,000.00 dollars in damages and was unable to qualify for federal reimbursement funds. I would like to thank all the Town departments and first responders as well as the local contractors for their outstanding dedication to our Town during these disasters.

Roadside ditching was completed before another mile of East Washington Rd. was overlaid with 1 inch of hot mix asphalt last summer. This will surely reduce the road salt required to melt snow and ice this winter as well as shedding water from the cracks in the roadway. A two mile stretch of East Washington Rd was chip sealed and will provide a flexible membrane to seal cracks in the road helping to reduce frost heaves. We propose to finish the last mile of East Washington Rd. with a hot mix overlay and chip seal the entire length of Washington Drive in 2015.

The public works department is responsible for maintenance on 9 bridges in the Town of Washington. The State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation inspects all town bridges on class V highways. The frequency of the inspections depends on the condition of the bridge. At the very least they will be inspected every two years and red listed bridges are inspected every year. A red listed bridge means it has a deficiency to some degree that was found during an annual inspection. Two of our bridges are still on the State of NH Municipal Red List. Ayers Pond Rd. bridge and the Smith Pond Rd. bridge remain to be rehabilitated in the future. The Ayers Pond Rd. Bridge will be designed and permitted in 2015 with replacement options scheduled for 2016 or 2017.

The Valley Rd. culvert at Barden Pond outlet has NH DES wetland permit approval and will be replaced in 2015 with a new 34 foot long by 24 foot wide timber bridge with new abutments and guardrails. The existing 8 foot diameter culvert pipe is rotted at the invert and is substantially undersized for the rain events that are all too common these days.

Public works partnered with the NH Department of Transportation last fall to stabilize the Mill Pond shoreline and East Washington Road shoulder embankment. High water and poor road drainage resulted in sloughing of the embankment and it was beginning to undermine the roadway. NH DOT provided the wetlands permit and paid for a hired excavator while Washington public works supplied miscellaneous materials and boulders from the town gravel pit. This was a successful cooperative effort that resulted in a stable rock retaining wall with built in granite steps for the occasional trout fishermen to enjoy.

The public works department has a long history of replacing equipment with the aide of the Federal Surplus property program. This practice dates back over 30 years and has been an overwhelming success for the department and the tax payer. This year was no exception. The Department's 30 year old loader was in need of major brake work that was going to cost more to repair than the value of the machine. We were able to purchase a much newer John Deere loader that was like new for \$25,000.00 dollars. The old loader will be retired and sold as soon as the new one is placed in service. A new loader of equivalent size and capacity would have cost the town well over \$200,000.00 dollars.

Likewise the Department's two dump trucks are 17 and 30 years old. A 2010 Freightliner all wheel drive truck with only 800 miles on it became available in the US and was purchased by the town for \$3,500.00. An additional \$2,500.00 dollars was spent to truck it to Washington from New York. The public works crew stripped the truck, painted, fabricated and outfitted the chassis last summer. We repurposed the salt spreader and plow hitches from an older truck and put the truck in service last winter. Total cost to the taxpayer was about \$40,000.00 dollars. A new truck outfitted with this equipment would have cost in excess of \$180,000.00 dollars.

The departments backhoe is scheduled for replacement next year. The town has historically replaced the backhoe every 10 years. We have been doing this since the late 70's. This year however we propose to put off the replacement of the backhoe for 5 more years and purchase a rubber tired excavator. We believe that purchasing an excavator will reduce the daily demand on the backhoe and allow us to keep it for a longer period of time. We would like to use the capitol reserve fund for highway equipment to make payments to fund the excavator. We currently fund the capitol reserve account annually with \$40,000.00 dollars and a purchase would not increase the tax rate beyond what is presently funded annually. The town has never owned an excavator but after renting one for a month last Fall feels it will be a very valuable asset. The efficiency and portability allowed by a rubber tired excavator is unmatched when it comes to culvert repair and replacement, lifting, roadside ditching, and general excavation activities.

I would like to thank our employees, other departments and the townspeople for their continued support of the public works department.

Respectfully Submitted, Edward G. Thayer, Public Works Director