Town Administrator
2014 Report

Every day brings another challenge that the town is working on and 2014 was no exception to the rule.

The Town was once again working with two collective bargaining units to iron out agreements that could be supported by the Board of Selectmen. I can say that all parties felt that the agreements reached provide a healthy balance for our employees and the needs and affordability of the town. The agreements entered into in this process will provide alternative years of negotiating so the Board can focus on one each year. I want to thank all folks involved in the process for their efforts.

This year the Town also experienced a revaluation of properties. What was discovered is that the Towns overall value was adjusted from roughly 475 million to roughly 439 million. This process that we just experienced occurs every five years and is in place to insure that all properties are treated fairly and equitably so owners pay their fair share in taxes owned to cover the town's voter approved expenses. The tax rate of $24.36/1,000 includes the $7.18/1,000 of the rate to pay for your Municipal Services.

As always, the movement of employees from working status with the Town is nothing the Town can predict. This year the Town had multiple transitions that required modification of employee status along with the hiring of personnel either on a full-time or contractual basis. The Board of Selectmen are fully involved in this process from resume screening to the actual interview process. In all cases their selections were well thought out. In July Fire Chief Peter Lamb was selected and in September Police Chief John Drury, I wish to thank them and all of our employees for their service to Farmington.

The Town continues to work on Long Range Planning. In some cases this planning involves Capital Purchases and Investments in our infrastructure. These efforts are never easy and like all communities we continue to find a balance of need to affordability. Work continues with the CIP Committee to submit proposals to the Board for consideration and the Board of Selectmen themselves identifying the need of a Public Safety Building and working together with Department Heads to find a reasonable solution.

The Board of Selectmen worked hard to identify tax deeded parcels and began a process of hiring an auctioneer to work with the town to sell these parcels and place them back on the tax rolls. Hiring an auctioneer was a new venture for the town and the Board experienced some growing pains with the process. The Board now will assess the process to determine if this effort yielded the results they desired. From my vantage point I felt we had some challenges but our ability to maximize our return far outweighs the growing pains experienced.

Finally I want to thank the Board of Selectmen for their continued support in allowing me to serve Farmington. The Farmington employees continue to be the unsung hero's of the services provided to the citizens, I want to thank them for all their hard work and efforts that make Farmington a great place to live.

Respectfully,
Keith M. Trefethen
Town Administrator