

**Board of Selectmen**  
*Extension 109*  
**Town Administrator**  
*Extension 109*  
**Town Accountant**  
*Extension 120*  
**Town Clerk**  
*Extension 114*  
**Tax Collector**  
*Extension 113*  
**Treasurer**  
*Extension 112 or 110*  
**Board of Assessors**  
*Extension 111*  
**Land Use Office**  
*Extension 117*  
**Planning Board**  
*Extension 121*  
**Conservation Commission**  
*Extension 115*



Animal Control  
 Board of Health  
 Building Commission  
 Conservation Commission  
 Council on Aging  
 Cultural Council  
 Electrical Inspector  
 Gas & Plumbing Inspector  
 Historical Commission  
 Municipal Planning  
 Parks & Recreation  
 Planning Board  
 Zoning Board of Appeals

**PHONE:** (978)-827-4100  
**FAX:** (978) 827-4105

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM**

*Town Hall, 32 Main Street  
 Ashburnham, Massachusetts 01430*

*OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR*

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**  
**March 21, 2011**

• **TOWN COMMITTEES**

Currently there are openings on the Conservation Commission (2), Council on Aging (2), Historical Commission (1), and Advisory Board (1). These are all listed on the Town's website under Volunteer Opportunities.

New member of Council on Aging is Natalie Hollowell – welcome

• **WATER TANK**

Schedule is on track:

High Street

Bid awarded	#1	Pump mod., #2 Site work
Bid awarded	#3	Tank
Bid awarded - USDA		Alt # 1 Transmission Radio tower
Bid not awarded		Alt # 2 Install water lines down Cushing Street
Bid awarded		Alt # 3 Demolition of old tank

Start of Construction	May 30 <sup>th</sup>
On line	September 30 <sup>th</sup>

Gardner Hill

Design	May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Bid	June 1 <sup>st</sup>
Repairs Complete	November 30 <sup>th</sup>

• **FY12 BUDGETS**

Town has received assessment letter from Treasurer of AWRSD District. The School Committee voted to apportion the assessments based on the District method on a

\$28,383,628 FY12 budget - \$7,401,316 which is an increase of \$732,677 from FY11 or **11%**.

Town also received the assessment letter from Treasurer of Monty Tech based on the Statutory Method. The FY12 assessment is \$329,892 an increase of \$1, 676 or **.5%**

On Friday March 11<sup>th</sup> I attended an MMA FY12 budget briefing session in Barre. Senator Steve Brewer and Representative Richard Bastien were in attendance and painted a grim picture for FY12 and believed that due to the Governor having to put out a budget early, there will likely be negative changes.

- **CAPITAL PLANNING**

I met with the IT Advisory Board to review their capital plan to finalize costs associated with their requests.

I also met with the Water and Sewer Commissioners where we reviewed a request to purchase a platform bed truck as a part of the capital plan to replace two other vehicles.

Governor's budget has set the Ch90 monies at **\$368,000**. Steve Nims and I met to develop a priority on how monies are to be spent.

- **WORCESTER REGIONAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

Sylvia contacted Kevin Blanchette the CEO of Worcester Regional Retirement System to come and talk to the Board on March 21<sup>st</sup>, about our assessment calculation to the system and how the system works.

- **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

I met with Anne Cervantes, Nancy Haines, and Ed Vitone to review and discuss the request of the Light Department to keep status quo the financial model currently in place. Another meeting is planned in the next couple of weeks after which there will be a recommendation made to the Board of Selectmen.

I also met with my financial team Harald Scheid, Linda Couture, Carla Clifford, Nancy Haines, Anne Cervantes and Sylvia Turcotte on Thursday March 17<sup>th</sup>. We discussed:

**Assessor:** Harald stated that this year they would begin the Triennial Certification process which is very involved. He stated that they would begin the process around the third week in September and that the DOR had set new mandates and requirements geared to a simpler methodology which means that they need to have clear market support and that this would require a major database clean-up.

Once the abatements are done they would add the new parcels to the database and then at that point Linda would start the database clean up process to prepare for the Triennial Certification. He also noted that this mandates that they ramp-up period inspections to satisfy the DOR, with a potential of 400 to 500 properties involved. He noted that this would not increase property values but may decrease the number of

abatements, adding that Ashburnham has a very high number of abatements and his goal would be to diminish this number by about half.

**Accountant:** Nancy stated that the Assessors should look into releasing some of the excess from previous years to cover some of this year's deficit. Nancy also stated that she was working on IT issues with the IT Advisory Board and also on cell phone policies.

**Treasurer:** Anne stated that the Land Auction was set for April 9<sup>th</sup>. She stated that any property that is not sold would be deeded to the Town and that the attorney would process this. Carla stated that on properties that are sold she would collect the 2011 taxes and they would have ten days to pay. Nancy stated that the Schedule A is done but that it needs the DOR approval. She stated that she went to a class for the past two days and there really wasn't any good news and that they were told to be very conservative.

**Collector:** Carla stated that she was finishing the vehicle excise tax collections and it was pretty close to the same amount as last year at this time. She noted that once she gets back from vacation she would send out demands. She also added that she would have two more commitments before the end of the year.

Carla noted that the real estate taxes will start coming in April 1<sup>st</sup>.