

Town Administrator Report
September 6, 2016

1. Projects Update:

Quinebaug Regional Technology Park Bridge, Road and Utilities Construction

- Project complete.
- Broadband Connection – Various contractors have approached Town to extend broadband connection off the state network to the Tech Park. Will go out to bid/RFP on this service. Meeting with CEN, the state internet organization, to tie into the state's fiber trunkline. Town committee will convene on this issue by end of August. Bringing broadband just to the Tech Park will cost a little over \$90,000.
- Appraisals completed and a forester has been contracted to determine how to make lots shovel ready. J&D Engineers are working on a gravel removal plan. Will soon conduct sampling to determine quality and quantity of gravel on proposed sites.

Water Line Replacement/Relining Project

- Contract 1 work is complete.
- Contract 2: B&W Paving and Work is finishing up in Grove and Mechanics Street areas. Work will soon be finishing up on Milton and Vandale Streets area. Work will be starting up next in Walnut Street area. Work is about a month behind schedule. B&W is bringing in more crews to get the schedule up to date. The remainder of proposed Contract 2 project areas:
 - Arthur Street, Brown Street, Canal Street, Centennial Street, Church Street (Pomfret to Woodstock), Eden Street, Edmond Street, Fenner Street, Florence Street, Frank Street, Furnace Street, George Street, Interval Street, Letters Street, May Street, Memorial Terrace, Olney Street, Pomfret Street, Sewer Plant Road, Tatem Street, Vine Street, Walnut Street, Wood Avenue (Church to Marshall)

Sewer Lift Stations

- Project complete and paid for.

Manganese/Iron Treatment Building

- WPCA has approved a new approach to restart the consideration of the Manganese/Iron Treatment building project at the Park Street wellfields. WPCA has selected the project team of Tighe&Bond/R.H. White Construction to proceed with project. Due to their bid price being \$2.4 million over the original appropriation, an additional \$2.95 million appropriation will be sought through town meeting/referendum process. This additional appropriation will not warrant an increase in the water rates.

Putnam High School Project

- Work is progressing in accordance with construction schedule. No change.

2. Conversion of Owen Tarr Park and Sabin Street/Woodstock Avenue properties. The town's original appraisal firm, Fishman Associates, is no longer doing appraisals and this information has put us behind in conducting the necessary appraisals for the land substitution for the Tarr Park and Sabin Street projects. A new appraisal firm, Platt Associates, has been selected and they have begun work on the property appraisals of the town's existing parcels and potential parcels needed to substitute for Sabin Street/Woodstock Avenue/Tarr Park. Messier Associates has completed work to determine the field needs on Sabin Street and construction of a bridge to site. Plans are available for review. Working with Committee to evaluate potential sites to provide the substitute land for passive and active recreation. Site evaluation is ongoing.
3. Armory. Mayor Falzarano, Town Attorney St. Onge, and I will meet again with NOW representatives, to see if negotiations could be reopened to devise a solution allowing NOW having a service agreement with the Town to include armory renovations at their cost and use of the property by NOW and other recreation groups in town. NOW has provided a draft Operating and Maintenance Agreement for the Town's review.
4. Sidewalk Reconstruction. To date, we have spent all of the \$750,000 previously appropriated from the Ash Landfill account. There may have to be further discussion about increasing these appropriation.
5. High Speed Broadband Fiber Installation. *No change.* Firms' under state contract are investigating cost of bringing fiber to Tech Park from the backbone line. Began discussion with Town's IT consultant on bringing high speed fiber installation to certain locations in town for economic development reasons, particularly to our Tech Park. Discussion will be framed as a town policy decision and not just for the sake of installing technology. Possible ways to manage installation could be as a public utility much like our water and sewer utilities. Some key questions to move this question forward are:
 - a. What's Putnam's policy?
 - b. Who are the champions to move this forward?
 - c. Who are community partners?
 - d. Who are the telecommunication carriers serving Putnam?
 - e. Identify key players and their roles?

Working with CEN, the state's internet organization, to devise a plan to bring fiber connection to the Tech Park by tying into the state's fiber trunkline. CEN has provided a proposal. Committee will meet now that it has been appointed by Board of Selectmen to provide recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on the broadband installation approach. Tech Park appropriation contemplated bringing fiber connection to the park.

6. Pomfret Sewer Line Connection. Putnam is reviewing a draft agreement with Pomfret allowing them to tie in to our system. Pomfret is looking to a possible spring 2016 construction start. *No change.*
7. Solar Project on Municipal Solid Waste Landfill. A review is continuing of Town's possible options since SolarCity has significantly reduced the scope and savings of their original proposal. Town is discussing possibilities with other solar firms.

8. Innovation Places. A new program has been initiated by the state called Innovation Places. Its intent is to support entrepreneurs and leaders developing places that will attract the talent high-growth enterprises need. The vision behind the program is: “Think of an area you walk to, bike to or take a train to where your mind comes alive with possibilities; where you can run into brilliant people solving big problems and inventing new technology; where the sidewalks and cafes are full of conversation; where are events and music venues brim with people making new friends – a place full of ideas.” To a large extent, that is what we have accomplished in downtown Putnam. Innovation Places grant would allow us to build on our success to attract new companies, new ideas and entrepreneurs. Delpha and I recently convened a meeting with Senator Mae Flexer and Killingly’s town manager and economic development director to discuss a joint effort to apply for a planning grant to conduct a strategic planning process to take advantage of the Innovation Places grant funding. Planning grants of \$50,000 are available. If our effort is successful, an amount of \$4.9 million is available for successful teams to augment private and public investments in programs and infrastructure likely to attract talented people and increase knowledge sharing that leads to innovation. Possible uses of funds are: attracting startup businesses and attracting anchor institutions; developing a business incubator or co-working place; events, community building, marketing and outreach; open space improvement, bicycle paths and improved technology infrastructure (broadband expansion). The planning grant application deadline is September 12, 2016. The Innovation Places proposal has been expanded to include Windham, UCONN and Mansfield.