

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
Jodi Ross

The year 2005 was an eventful, productive year – one in which the town underwent many changes. The town hall staff, in conjunction with our appointed and elected officials, worked extremely hard together and contributed to several noteworthy accomplishments.

With the efforts and cooperation of all, we were fortunate to be able to control expenses and present a balanced budget for fiscal year 2006 without the need for an operating override. The town faced several large capital decisions, including a variety of land purchases and a proposed library expansion. Although these substantial proposals were defeated, the residents did vote to support other new requests - including increasing the accident insurance coverage for our firefighters, police officers and EMTs, authorizing the design of a sidewalk along Main Street for our new senior housing residents, establishing the Bolton Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and purchasing new replacement trucks for the DPW.

During the course of the year, we implemented several new town policies and procedures, including employee timesheets for tracking sick leave and vacation usage, mileage reimbursement forms, Family Medical Leave Act procedures, exit interview forms, electronic employment applications, and electronic town budgeting. In virtually every department in the town, employees established goals with their supervisors or boards, and received performance reviews for the first time since their employment with the town.

Being a town administrator in a small town requires wearing several hats. What I find most rewarding about this is the constant learning that takes place while being involved in so many diverse issues. These projects ranged from assisting with bringing government meetings into the homes of residents via cable television, to negotiating the terms of an Administrative Consent Order (regarding the school septic issues) with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

In response to the DEP Administrative Consent Order, the selectmen appointed a Wastewater Treatment Plant Committee, of which I am a member. The committee developed a Request for Proposals for the design and construction oversight of the project, and ultimately recommended the selectmen award the contract to Tata and Howard, Inc. The project will be presented to residents for funding at the May 2006 annual town meeting, and pending appropriation, will be completed by April of 2008.

Some other accomplishments we were able to achieve for the year included:

- Selling the two acre Moen parcel – which sold for \$262,000 after three rounds of Request for Proposals. The net revenue to the town will be used to offset the debt from the original purchase of the Moen conservation land.
- Implemented quarterly tax billing to improve the town's cash flow.

- Coordinated a finance team, which meets quarterly to address financial issues of the town and make recommendations to the selectmen and Advisory Committee.
- Increased fees, which resulted in greater revenue for the town.
- Established an Ambulance Receipts Reserve account to better track billings and reimbursements, and to help offset future ambulance department expenses.
- Sought quotes for insurance, which helped to lower town premiums.
- Reduced legal expenses from \$100,000 per year to approximately \$50,000.
- Hired an assistant tax collector/treasurer to assist these departments and improve financial procedures for the town.
- Created separate budgets for specific departments (such as Management Information Systems and insurance) to better control expenditures.
- Participated as a member of the Police Chief Search Committee.
- Continued to develop and improve the town's website www.townofbolton.com.
- Regionalized the veterans' agent position to include Berlin, Lancaster and Clinton.
- Assisted with the formation of an agreement with Bolton Access Television Company (BatCo).
- Relocated the senior center to the Bolton Country Manor.

Although our town employees work extremely hard delivering the services they do, we also had some fun this year. Several of our staff meetings included some sort of refreshments (contributed by the employees themselves) including breakfasts and cookouts on the town hall lawn. On Halloween, we dressed in costumes and offered candy and snacks to Trick-or-Treaters from the local pre-schools. In December we hosted a holiday luncheon for our well-deserving seniors – and next year we hope to include a visit from Santa!

As I complete my second year as your town administrator, I reflect on the many reasons why I find Bolton a challenging and rewarding community to work in. The diversity, the unique rural culture, the passion of the residents to protect the beauty and natural resources of our town, the challenge of coordinating the varied interests and concerns of many (without upsetting too many folks) – all contribute to making this a wonderful town to work in. I thank the Board of Selectmen and Advisory Committee for their continued support and guidance, the entire town staff (who are so committed to the best interests of the town), and all of the other volunteers and residents who help to make this work. Thank you, again, for the privilege of serving you, and most especially for making Bolton a town we can all be so proud of!

Financial Statement
July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

Salary

Appropriated	\$82,399.00
Expended	<u>\$82,018.94</u>
Unexpended balance returned to general fund	\$ 380.06

Wages

Appropriated	\$62,661.00
Transfer	<u>3,143.00</u>
	65,804.00
Expended	\$64,197.10
Unexpended balance returned to general fund	\$ 1,606.90

Expenses

Appropriated		\$39,600.00
Expended	Training	\$2,890.00
	Disability Insurance	967.12
	In-State Travel	45.94
	Dues	712.00
	Meetings	379.00
	Supplies	1,546.79
	Purchase of Services	15,964.84
	Software Support	79.90
	Web Services	1,420.55
	Miscellaneous	78.74
	Equipment	5,226.78
	Travel	300.00
		<u>\$ 29,611.66</u>
Unexpended balance returned to general fund		\$ 9,988.34