

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
Don Lowe



The year 2011 was a year that will be remembered not only as a challenging year economically but an extreme weather year as well. We were hit by a tropical storm in August which originated from the remnants of Hurricane Irene and an October snow storm which left the Town of Bolton with 10 inches of heavy wet snow and no electricity for anywhere from 4 – 7 days depending on the section of town in which you live. Our town departments (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Emergency Management, and the DPW) all worked very hard as a team to make the town as safe as possible. We activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which is located in the Training Room at the new Public Safety Building, in order to have a command center which was able to track any and all events taking place in the town. The EOC was activated for both weather events, which marked the first time we conducted such activity in the new Public Safety Building.

Our Town Accountant and Town Treasurer were both relocated from the Emerson School to the first floor of the Town Hall. This move, which was part of the final report that we received from the Space Needs Committee, allowed us to have all Town Hall support functions located under one roof. To accommodate this move, it was necessary to place these offices in the space which had previously been used as the large meeting room in the Town Hall. To offset the loss of this space another recommendation of the Space Needs Committee was followed. Bolton Access Television Corporation (BatCo) started work on the renovation of the Houghton Building. This will afford BatCo the opportunity to obtain the additional space which they require. Part of this project included the creation of a new large meeting room in the Houghton Building. This new meeting room will be completely wired and equipped to support broadcasting meetings live. It is anticipated that this work will be completed in March of 2012.

The planning for the final resolution of the Fyfeshire Dam issue continues. I, along with State Senator Jennifer Flanagan and State Representative Kate Hogan, and our local Conservation Administrator Carol Gumbart, worked with the Department of Conservation and Recreation as

well as the Office of Dam Safety to arrive at a solution which would be fair to all. I anticipate having this solution presented at the Annual Town Meeting to be held on May 7, 2012.

I would be remiss if I didn't offer a special acknowledgement and thank you to our long-time Fire Chief John Stephenson. Chief Stephenson retired in June after serving the town for 36 years as Chief. It was an honor and a pleasure for me to work with him. I greatly respect his many contributions to the Town of Bolton. In September, Deputy Chief John Mentzer was appointed as our new Fire Chief. I am sure Chief Mentzer will serve the town well for many years to come.

The town budget for 2011 was \$19,313,554, an increase of 1.02% over 2010. The Advisory Committee and the Board of Selectmen worked extremely hard to produce a budget that maintained the same level of town services as 2010 but did not require an operating override. Expenses were reduced and operating efficiencies were achieved wherever possible. However, the town was able to produce a balanced budget without reducing hours for the services that we provide to our taxpayers.

The Capital Planning Committee was very involved in the early budget planning process for Fiscal Year 2012, which begins in July 2011. They met several times to review the capital needs of any town department which would cost more than \$25,000 and which would also have a five-year functional life span.

Our Town Planner, Jennifer Burney, applied for and received the following grant award in 2011:

Way Finding - The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), awarded the Town of Bolton a Way Finding grant in the amount of \$3,000. This award was based on a grant proposal which documented the need for more consistent and aesthetically pleasing signage for our agricultural and recreational business destinations.

At the 2011 Annual Town Meeting, the voters funded the following articles:

- \$290,000 to purchase a conservation restriction on the Weatherbee land.
- \$25,000 to replace the existing Town Hall boiler.
- \$28,500 for the ongoing testing and reporting associated with the oil leak at the new Public Safety Building.
- \$36,346 to purchase pagers for the Fire and EMS Departments.
- \$75,000 to purchase a used 6-wheel dump sanding truck for the Department of Public Works.

Subsequent to the Annual Town Meeting, the ballot for the annual town election had the following proposed borrowing questions:

Question No. 1: Shall the Town of Bolton be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two and one-half so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to acquire a perpetual Conservation Restriction on land owned by Paul and Barbara Weatherbee.

Question No. 2: Shall the Town of Bolton be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two and one-half so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued for the purchase of a used 6-wheel dump body sanding truck for use in the Department of Public Works?

Question No. 3: Shall the Town of Bolton be allowed to assess an additional \$44,000.00 in real estate and property taxes for the purpose of funding the Town's enrollment in the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011?

At the end of 2011, I was nearing the end of my third year as your Town Administrator. We were able to successfully manage our way through another difficult year. This level of success would not be possible without the continued involvement and support of the townspeople who offer so much of their time in volunteering on various boards, committees, and activities to help make Bolton the wonderful community that it is. I consider myself to be very fortunate to work for the people of Bolton.

**Financial Statement
July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011**

Salary

Appropriated	\$ 93,192.00
Expended	<u>\$ 93,191.76</u>
Unexpended balance returned to general fund	\$.24

Wages

Appropriated	\$ 57,124.00
Expended	<u>\$ 57,123.33</u>
Unexpended balance returned to general fund	0.67

Expenses

Appropriated	\$ 8,300.00
Transfer	<u>(3,721.66)</u>
	\$ 4,578.34

Expended	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Longevity</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 550.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability Insurance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,850.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In-State Travel</td> <td style="text-align: right;">649.69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dues</td> <td style="text-align: right;">785.51</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Miscellaneous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">376.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meetings</td> <td style="text-align: right;">345.00</td> </tr> </table>	Longevity	\$ 550.00	Disability Insurance	1,850.00	Supplies	20.85	In-State Travel	649.69	Dues	785.51	Miscellaneous	376.76	Meetings	345.00	<u>\$ 4,577.81</u>
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\$.53