

ANNUAL REPORT

Of the

Officers and Committees

Of the town of

ASHFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

For the year ending 2016



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Dedication

The 2016 Town Report is dedicated this year to an Ashfield couple who demonstrate again and again the community spirit and care that all hope for.

Phil and Doreen Nolan have been serving their community without accolade for decades. Quietly, whenever they are approached for a donation or other help, Phil and Doreen are always quick to lend a hand to any worthy cause.

Whether it is the Lions Club, snowmobile club, town baseball teams, the rag shag parade, or one of many other local organizations or events, Phil and Doreen's' generosity has touched most of our lives at some point.

The Town is forever thankful for their gift of an easement on their land to allow the town to perform required maintenance on the Ashfield Lake Dam and Belding Park lands.

Thank you, Nolan's, for all you do in the name of community service. It has not gone unnoticed and Ashfield is grateful.

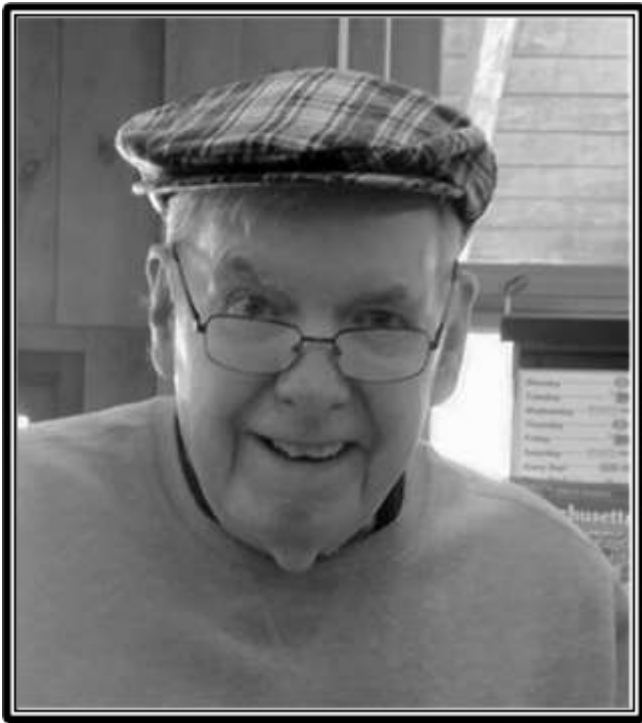


Photo 1 - Phil Nolan

Government Contact Information

GOVERNOR

Charlie Baker

Western Massachusetts Office of the Governor
State Office Building
436 Dwight Street, Suite 300
Springfield, MA 01103
413.784.1200
www.mass.gov

STATE SENATOR

Adam G. Hinds, Pittsfield

District Office
100 North Street, Suite 410, Pittsfield, MA 01201
413.344.4561 or 413.768.2373
adam.hinds@masenate.gov

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT

Stephen Kulik

District Office
The James Building
16 Main Street, Room 305
Williamsburg, MA 01096
Tel: 413.977.3580 – Fax: 617.722.2847
<https://twitter.com/repstevkulik>
Stephen.kulik@mahouse.gov

U.S. CONGRESS

Richard Neal

Springfield Office
300 State Street, Suite 200
Springfield, MA 01105
Tel: 413.785.0325 – Fax: 413.747.0604
www.house.gov/neal

U.S. SENATE

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Springfield Office
1550 Main Street, Suite 406
Springfield, MA 01103
413.788.2690

www.warren.senate.gov

Senator Edward J. Markey

Springfield Office
1550 Main Street, 4th Floor
Springfield, MA 01101
413.785.4610

www.markey.senate.gov

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director

12 Olive Street Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.774.3167 – Ext: 103

lindad@frcog.org

Town Officers

2016/2017

Town Office Staff

Appointed One-Year Term

Assessors' Clerk	Jen Morse
Assistant Municipal Clerk	Lynn Taylor
Town Administrator	Kayce Warren (<i>appointed November 28, 2016</i>)

Appointed Two-Year Terms – Expires in 2018

Town Clerk	Ann Dunne (<i>Resigned July 28, 2016</i>) Bridget Rodrigue (<i>Appointed October 11, 2016</i>)
Assistant Town Clerk	Lynn Taylor (<i>Appointed July 28, 2016</i>)
Town Collector	Laura Blakesley (<i>Retired November 30, 2016</i>) Lynn Taylor (<i>Appointed December 1, 2016</i>)
Town Treasurer	Laura Blakesley (<i>Retired November 30, 2016</i>) Rebecca Herzog (<i>Appointed December 9, 2016</i>)

Elected Officers

One-Year Term

Moderator	Stuart Eisenberg
Tree Warden	Thomas Poissant

Three-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Select Board

Todd Olanyk, Chair	2017
Ronald Coler, Vice Chair	2018
Tom Carter	2019

Board of Assessors

Donna Sarro, Chair	2017
Amy Shapiro	2018
George Stephan	2019

Finance Committee

Ted Murray, Chair	2019
Melinda Gougeon	2019
Tom Schreiber	<i>(Resigned May 7, 2016)</i>
Carl Satterfield	<i>(Appointed until May 6, 2017)</i>
Carol Lebold	2017
David Newell	<i>(Resigned May 7, 2016)</i>
Mary Fitz-Gibbon	<i>(Appointed until May 6 2017)</i>

Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee

Helen “Poppy” Doyle	2019
Emily Robertson	2018

Board of Health

Duncan Colter, Chair	2017
Carrie O’Gorman	2018
Karen Lavallee	2019

Constables

John LaBelle	2017
Warren Kirkpatrick	2018
Elizabeth Lesure	2019

Park Commission

Judy Haupt, Chair	2019
Kyle Taylor	2017
Sally Rice	2018

Sewer Commission

Nancy Hoff, Chair	2018
Tom Miner, Jr.	2017
Daniel Lovett	2019

Five-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Planning Board

Michael Fitzgerald, Chair	2019
Lauren Preston-Wells	2017
Jim Cutler	2018
Ken Miller	2019
Alan Rice, Clerk	2020
Megan Bowen, Clerk	

Library Trustees

Marcine Eisenberg, Chair	2017
Caroline Murray	2018
Esther Coler	2019
Renne Rastorfer	2019
Sandra Carter	2020

Appointed Boards & Committees

Terms run July 1 - June 30

One-Year Term

Green Committee

Brian Clark, Chair
 Mary Quigley
 Jen Williams
 Jim Cutler – Energy Manager – Appointed October 7, 2014

Information Technology Committee

David Kulp, Chair
 Juliet Jacobson
 Brian Clark
 Andrew Smith
 George Stephan

Town Hall Building Committee

Stuart Harris, Chair
 Doug Cranson
 Nancy Garvin, Secretary
 Mary Quigley
 Donna Scott, Custodian
 Kyle Taylor, Town Hall Steward

Three-Year Terms

Agricultural Commission

Faye Whitney, Chair	2018
Johanna Anderson-Pratt	2017
Dan Baker	2019
Robyn Crowningshield	2016
Steve Gougeon	2018
Barbara Miller, Clerk	2019

Zoning Board of Appeals

Mollie Babize, Chair	2018
Katharine Nysten	2016
Anne Yuryan	2017
Faye Whitney, Alternate	Appointed Annually
Susan Stark, Alternate	Appointed Annually

Conservation Commission

Lester Garvin, Chair	2019
Janet Clark	2019
Brian Clark	2019
Phil Lussier	2017
Anne Capra	2018

Council on Aging

Doug Field, Chair	2018
Steven Zamojski	2017
Franklin Wickland	2019
Anne Yuryan	2019
Nina Laurie	2019

Historical Commission

Steve Gougeon, Chair	2019
Bill Scaife	2019
Jody Hall	2019
Gerard McGovern	2019
Vacancy	2019

Personnel Board

Priscilla Phelps, Chair	2019
Melinda Gougeon, Finance Committee Member	2019

Thomas Carter, Select Board Member	2019
Jen Markens	2019
Wayne Farrell	2017
Kayce Warren, Town Administrator	

Cultural Council

Jane Willis, Secretary	2019
Carole Groman, Treasurer	2019
Wesley Fleming, Chair	2017
Andrew Kinsey	2017
Helena Leue	2017
Roberta Evans	2018
David Fessenden	2017
William Feinstein	2018

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update (*Until completion of charge*)

- Alan Rice, Chair
- Mollie Babize
- Anne Capra
- Duncan Colter
- Nancy Garvin
- Judy Haupt
- Barb Miller
- Anne Yuryan

One-Year Term

Registrars of Voter

- Muriel Cranson
- Susan Gambino
- Nancy Intres
- Ann Dunne, Alternate (*Resigned July 28, 2016*)
- Bridget Rodrigue, Alternate (*Appointed October 11, 2016*)

Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden

- Delmar Haskins, Chief

Police Chief

Diane Wilder (*Retired September 1, 2016*)
David Gendron (*Appointed September 26, 2016*)

Police Officers

Charlie Wilder (*Resigned September 1, 2016*)
Beth Bezio, Corporal
Conan Pelc
Jordan Zukowski (*Resigned April 8, 2016*)
Jarek Knopko
Mark Ruddock
Gary Sibia
Daniel Thibaul
David Shane Hill
Kristian Viise
Gretchen Gerstner

Auxiliary Officers

Fred Bezio
David Karbon
Elizabeth Lesure (*Retired February 8, 2016*)
Kyle Walker

Emergency Manager

Doug Field

Assistant Emergency Manager

Paul Monohon (*Appointed February 2016*)

Highway Department

Thomas Poissant, Superintendent
Alan Taylor
Todd Senecal
Jack Clark
Luke Pantermehl (*Resigned April 29, 2016*)
Nicholas Nye

Transfer Station Attendants

Phil Nolan
John LaBelle

Town Hall Custodian

Donna Scott

Animal Control Officer

Warren Kirkpatrick

Inspector of Animals

Martha Pantermehl

Fence Viewer

Alden Gray

Field Drivers

Roland Townsley

David King

FRCOG Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisor Committee Community

Richard Chandler

Frederick W. Wells Trustee

Molly Robinson

Carl Nilman Scholarship Committee

Sheila Graves

Other Resources

Health Agent

Claudia Lucas

Carl Nelke

Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program - FCCIP Building Inspector Program

Chris Brothers, Department Clerk
Jim Cerone, Local Inspector
Andy French, Plumbing & Gas Inspector
James Hawkins, Building Commissioner
Paul Lemelin, Zoning & Software Support Assistant
Tom McDonald, Electrical Inspector

Superintendent of Schools

Michael Buoniconti

Veteran Service Office

Brian Brooks - 413.772.1571

Local Veteran Service Agent

Wayne Farrell

Burial Agent

Ann Dunne (*Resigned July 28, 2016*)
Bridget Rodrigue (*Appointed October 11, 2016*)

Ambulance Service

Mike Rock, Highland Ambulance Director

Ashfield Burial Ground Association

Tom Graves, President
595 Smith Rd. Ashfield, MA 01330
Office hours: Wednesdays 9 AM – 10 AM & 9 PM – 10 PM

Report of the Select Board

2016 was a year of many personnel changes in Town Hall. Town Meeting approved a warrant article solidifying our Town Administrator position and Kayce Warren, who began in an interim capacity at the start of the year, is now signed on to a three-year contract. Bridget Rodrigue is our new Town Clerk replacing Anne Dunne who moved on to work for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). Long time Treasurer/Collector Laura Blakesley retired, and the Treasurer void has been filled by Rebecca Herzog. Assistant Town Clerk Lynn Taylor has taken on the additional duties of Collector.

Our Police Department has also seen some changes with the mid-year retirement of Chief Dianne Wilder. To maintain the department through the fall former Erving Chief and current Deerfield Academy Head of Security, David Gendron, was hired as our Interim Chief. We expect next year's report will show the hiring of a new full time Chief early in 2017.

Replacing town equipment is a never-ending process. Our capital expenditure planning anticipates new purchases as older equipment reaches the end of its service life. In 2016 it was time to purchase a new backhoe. This was approved at Town Meeting and we received delivery before the onset of winter.

Along with town equipment, town buildings are always in need of maintenance and repair. We have been battling water infiltration and subsequent mold issues in the Town Hall. Measures have been taken to stop the water infiltration and work to clean up and ensure the future health of the building and its spaces is ongoing. Remediation work is expected to be completed in early 2017.

Another major project the Town began in 2016 was the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) mandated remediation work at the town transfer station. With a starting budget of \$50,000 we contracted an engineering firm to complete the design work in preparation for the ground work to begin in 2017. Included in the required work will be removal of some overgrown trees and vegetation, recovering some exposed areas of the former landfill, and new fencing all around.

As has been noted in the local news, many towns are struggling with aging and failing bridges. Indeed, it is a statewide problem. Ashfield is no different in this regard; we currently have two bridges in town that have compromised decks. One on Apple Valley Road is in such poor condition as to require its closure through the winter months. We are continuously on the lookout for grant money opportunities to repair or replace our bridges. The cost of bridge replacement is so high that grant funding is the only conceivable option for dealing with this problem.

The proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline project, which reared its ugly head in 2014, created a groundswell of activism in Ashfield and many other towns throughout the state. Following a resolution of the people of Ashfield, the Town continued its opposition activities in 2016 through membership in the Municipal Coalition Against the Pipeline, testifying in front of the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU), and working side by side with numerous grassroots groups to stop the project. We were relieved in April when Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas halted the project.

We continue to pursue town wide broadband access. It has been a long and frustrating process for all involved. Residents who packed Town Hall at a special town meeting in the fall of 2015 to approve the borrowing of \$2.3M for our share of a network build-out, may have anticipated more progress by now. However, 2016 has slogged along with a pattern of fits and starts familiar to those intimately involved. We continue to be at the mercy of the state who holds the purse strings on \$1.4M in grant money needed for the project. Responding to repeated calls to action by many affected towns, the Baker administration replaced the leadership positions at the Mass Broadband Institute (the quasi-state entity in charge of administering the state grant funding) early in the year. As the new team settled in, gained understanding of the project, and began re-engaging with the towns, we felt energized. Thanks to the dogged determination of our Technology Committee led by Chair David Kulp, Finance Committee, and Town Staff, Ashfield was the first town to complete all legal and financial work required by MBI. Finally, early in the fall, the next step in the process, pole surveys, commenced. We felt were on our way. However, late in the year the Baker administration called on the MBI to execute a Request for Proposals to see if there were any companies who would

be interested in taking on the project. The outcome was predictable (no serious results), and will effectively delay our progress by perhaps six months. Aside from the routine day-to-day business of the town, this issue continues to be a top priority.



Photo 2 - Coler, Olanyk and Carter

In closing, the Select Board would like to thank all town volunteers elected or otherwise, Town Employees, and citizens who continue to give of themselves in so many ways to make our community a strong, vibrant, wonderful place to call home.

Respectfully submitted,
 Todd Olanyk, Tom Carter & Ron Coler

Annual Town Meeting- May 7, 2016

Pursuant to the Warrant, signed by the Select Board on April 26, 2016, Town Moderator Stewart “Buz” Eisenberg called the 2016 Annual Town Meeting to order at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 7, 2016 at the Ashfield Town Hall.

On May 7, 2016, at 9:50 AM, a flag ceremony and moment of silence was led by the Girl Scouts. At 10am the Annual Town Meeting was called to order.

Moderator Buz Eisenberg presided.

Select Board: Tom Carter, Chair, Ron Coler, Vice-Chair & Todd Olanyk

Finance Committee: Ted Murray, Chair, Tom Schreiber, Melinda Gougeon. Carol Lebold & David Newell.

Town Clerk: Ann Dunne & Interim Town Administrator; Kayce Warren.

Check-In: Sally Yates, Doug Cranson & Lynn Taylor.

Tellers: Faye Whitney, Betty Stewart, Caroline Murray, Sandy Lilly & Marcine Eisenberg

Town Clerk read the return of the warrant.

The Moderator read the list of deceased residents since last town meeting, and read the bylaws regarding conduct at town meeting.

ARTICLE 1: *OPEN THE ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION*

On a motion made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded, it was voted that the Annual Town Election be open to elect a MODERATOR and a TREE WARDEN, both for one year terms; a SELECT BOARD MEMBER, a BOARD OF ASSESSORS MEMBER, TWO FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, a SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER, a BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBER, a CONSTABLE, a PARK COMMISSIONER, a SEWER COMMISSIONER, all for three year terms; a PLANNING BOARD MEMBER, and a LIBRARY TRUSTEE, both for five year terms; a FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER for an unexpired term of one (1) year; and a CONSTABLE for a term of one (1) year.

And vote on the following questions:

Ballot Question #1

Shall the Town of Ashfield be allowed to assess an additional \$120,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of paying for town and school expenses for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand and sixteen?

Ballot Question #2

Shall the Town of Ashfield be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the purchase of a back hoe?

Polls to be closed at 6:00 PM.

Article 1 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 2: *REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS*

Motion made by George Stephan, and seconded that the Town act on the reports of the Town Officers.

Article 2 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 3: *ELECTED OFFICIALS STIPENDS AND COMPENSATIONS*

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town set the stipends and compensations for all elected officials of the town (Select Board, Board of Assessors, Board of Health, Moderator, Tree Warden and Constable) as provided by MGL Chapter 41, Section 108, to be made effective as of **July 1, 2016**, as contained in the budget, or act relative thereto.

Article 3 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 4: *BORROWING AUTHORIZATION*

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the Fiscal Year beginning **July 1, 2016**, in accordance with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 4, and to renew any note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year, in accordance with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 17, or act relative thereto.

Article 4 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 5: *TAX ASSESSMENT*

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town assess an additional **\$120,000** in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of paying for town and school expenses for the fiscal year beginning **July 1, 2016**, or act relative thereto.

Article 5 passed by 2/3 majority

ARTICLE 6: GENERAL BYLAW – TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town adopt the following **General Bylaw** for the Town of Ashfield pursuant to the responsibilities and duties of the Town Administrator, or act relative thereto.

The Town shall establish and maintain the office of a full-time Town Administrator, who shall be the Chief Administrative Officer, and whose responsibilities and duties shall be described in the position description. The Select Board shall appoint, and may remove, a Town Administrator.

The Town Administrator shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town the duties of which shall include, but are not limited to:

- Prepare a comprehensive annual operating budget and capital improvement plan.
- Recruit, hire, and supervise department heads.
- Act as the liaison with state and federal government, local civic and business entities.
- Facilitate the flow of information between elected officials, employees, and citizens.
- Serve as the Chief Procurement Officer.

The Town Administrator shall perform duties as detailed in Town Administrator Job Description, and all other duties as assigned and commensurate with the job of Town Administrator.

Article 6 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 7: SCHOOL COMMITTEE EXPENSES

Motion made by School Committee member Emily Robertson, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds the following sums of money to pay for **SCHOOL COMMITTEE STIPENDS, REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPENSE, VOCATIONAL SCHOOL EXPENSES AND EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL EXPENSES.**

Educational Expenses	
School Committee Stipends (2@\$500)	1,000
Regional Education Expense	2,174,456
Mohawk Trail Capital Expense	56,814
Vocational School Expense	461,401
Total:	2,693,671

Article 7 passed by a majority vote

ARTICLE 8: AMENDED MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL AGREEMENT

Motion made by Emily Robertson, and seconded that the Town accept the amended Mohawk Trail Regional Agreement, to be effective July 1, 2016, or act relative thereto.

Explanation:

*This proposed Amendment makes a number of relatively small changes to the Regional Agreement, effective July 1, 2016. The most important of these would be to clearly establish the District’s authority to operate, and to assess District Towns for, a pre-K to 12 educational program. Accordingly, all references to “K-12,” or “K-6” in the existing Agreement would instead be changed to “Pre-K to 12” and “Pre-K to 6.” This amendment also would specify that, for purposes of calculating each Town’s operating and capital assessments, the District would begin including pre-K students in total enrollment numbers as of the **October 1, 2015** enrollment census and annually thereafter. (Free, half-day pre-K was made available to all pre-K students across the District in the fall of 2015.) A five-year rolling average of each Town’s total enrollment in District schools forms the basis for assessing Towns for operating and capital costs.*

Article 8 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 9: MOHAWK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – ADDITION OF ROWE

Motion made by Emily Robertson, and seconded that the Town accept the addition of the Town of Rowe as a 7-12 member of the District, to be effective July 1, 2017, or act relative thereto.

Explanation:

This proposed Amendment would permit the Town of Rowe to rejoin the Mohawk District as a Grade 7-12 Member Town (i.e., the same status as the existing District towns of Hawley and Charlemont), effective July 1, 2017. (Rowe Elementary School would not become part of the Mohawk District, but rather would remain part of the Northern Berkshire School Union.) Like all 7-12 District Towns, Rowe would elect 2 voting representatives to the Mohawk School Committee. Each Rowe member’s vote would represent 1.9% (or 3.8% in aggregate) of the total weighted votes (100%) of the Committee. Rowe would be assessed as are other 7-12 Member Towns for its share of the District’s 7-12 operating and capital costs, and Rowe would no longer pay annual tuition for its 7-12 students.

Article 9 passed by majority vote

ARTICLE 10: MOHAWK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Motion made by Emily Robertson, and seconded that the Town amend the MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – REGIONAL DISTRICT AGREEMENT, to be effective July 1, 2016, by striking certain language and adding other language related to how to amend the agreement and the closing of district schools, or act relative thereto.

Explanation:

*Currently, in order for any proposed Amendment to the Regional Agreement to become effective, it must be approved unanimously by all Member Towns, with approval being a majority vote at a Town Meeting. This proposed Amendment, to be effective as of July 1, 2016, would permit Amendments to become effective upon an affirmative vote of 2/3 of District towns (i.e., 6 of the 8 current Member Towns, or 6 of 9 towns, should the Rowe amendment pass). **There is one important exception.** Any amendment that requires closure of a District school must be approved by the Town (or Towns) whose school(s) would be closed, i.e., that Town (or Towns) would have to be among the 2/3 majority of Towns voting to approve the amendment. If an affected Town votes against the amendment, the amendment would fail.*

Article 10 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 11: BACKHOE PURCHASE

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town be allowed to borrow a sum of money, not to exceed \$60,000, to be expended under the direction of the Select Board to pay for the purchase of a back hoe.

Article 11 passed by a 2/3 majority vote

ARTICLE 12: FREE CASH TRANSFER – AMBULANCE SERVICE FUNDING

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town transfer from Free Cash, or otherwise provide the following sums of money to pay for **AMBULANCE SERVICE**.

Ambulance Expenses	
Highland Ambulance Assessment	51,923
Ambulance Radio Assessment	1,692
Ambulance Capital	1,062
Ambulance Capital Building	11,556
Total	66,233

Article 12 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 13: FREE CASH TRANSFER – RESERVE ACCOUNT

Motion was made by Ted Murray, and seconded that the Town transfer from Free Cash **\$3,000** to pay for the **RESERVE ACCOUNT**.

Article 13 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 14: GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSES

Motion made by Todd Olanyk and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$371,551** and transfer **\$5,000** from the Fred Cross General Fund, for a total of **\$376,551** to pay for **GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSES**.

General Government Expenses	
Appeals Board	780
Assessor Chair	1,500
Assessor 2 @ \$1250	2,500
Assessors' Clerk	16,306
Assessors' Expenses	33,874
Auditor	6,500
Energy Manager	3,506
Conservation Commission	1,380
Bonds	1,200
Property Insurance/Liability	54,906
Special Project Staffing	1,000
Information Technology Expense	17,200
Planning Board	1,000
Elections	6,200
Registrars of Voters	600
Town Administrator Salary	61,200
Town Administrator Expenses	2,000
Street Lists	850
Municipal Town Clerk	31,620
Assistant Municipal Clerk	26,488
Town Clerk Expenses	2,100
Annual Report	750
Collector	24,325
Town Collector Expenses	11,278
Legal Expense	6,000
Town Hall Expenses	14,075
Town Building Committee	10,000
Town Hall Steward	600
Town Hall Utilities	12,000

Select Board Chair	1,500
Select Board 2 @ \$1250	2,500
Select Board Expenses	2,000
Moderator	150
Treasurer Salary	15,198
Treasurer Expenses	3,465
Total	376,551

Article 14 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 15: CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$40,000** and transfer from Free Cash **\$50,000** for the following **CAPITAL EXPENDITURES**.

Capital Expenditures	
Backhoe Purchase Account	70,000
Cruiser Purchase Account	20,000
Total	90,000

Article 15 passed by majority

ARTICLE 16: PUBLIC SAFETY EXPENSES

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$167,000** and transfer **\$4,150** from the Revolving Dog License and Control Fund for a total of **\$171,205** for **PUBLIC SAFETY EXPENSES**.

Public Safety Expenses	
Animal Control Salary	2,300
Animal Control Expenses	1,850
Fire Chief	7,500
Fire Chief Expenses	340
Fire Department Expenses	45,400
Fire Department Fuel	3,109
Emergency Manager	600
Emergency Manager Exp.	1,000
Emergency Manager Asst.	375
Ashfield Lake Dam Inspection	2,000
Police Chief Salary	51,395
Police Department Exp. Was \$45,200	46,154
Police Fuel	4,700
Drug/Alcohol Testing	300

Emergency Call System	2,486
Inspector of Animals	350
Tree Warden	300
Tree Warden Expenses	2,000
Total	172,159

Motion included an amendment to increase “Police Dept. Expenses” by \$954, from \$45,200 to \$46,154, making the Public Safety total equal to \$172,159, instead of \$171,205 as published in the warrant.

Article 16 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 17: BELDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY RENOVATIONS

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate \$67,575 for **CULTURAL/RECREATIONAL EXPENSES** and transfer \$12,500 from Free Cash, to establish and fund a capital account to pay for **BELDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY RENOVATIONS**, for a total of \$80,075.

Cultural/Recreational Expenses	
Belding Memorial Library	45,017
Belding Memorial Park	12,058
Lake Invasive Species Removal	9,000
Historical Commission	500
Veterans Graves	1,000
Belding Memorial Library Renovations	12,500
Total	80,075

Article 17 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 18: TRANSFER STATION IMPROVEMENTS

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate \$149,413 for **SANITATION SERVICE EXPENSES**, \$50,000 of which, shall establish and fund a capital account for **Mandated Transfer Station Improvements**

Sanitation Service Expenses	
Hilltown Resource Mgmt.	8,328
Transfer Station	90,185
Transfer Station Utilities	900
Mandated Transfer Station Improvements	50,000
Total	149,413

Article 18 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 19: HEALTH SERVICE EXPENSES

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$2,250** and transfer from Free Cash **\$8,900** for a total of **\$11,150** for **HEALTH SERVICE EXPENSES**.

Health Service Expenses	
Health Agent	8,000
Health Board Expenses	900
Health Board 3 @ \$750	2,250
Total	11,150

Article 19 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 20: HIGHWAY AND ROAD EXPENSES

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$501,050** for **HIGHWAY AND ROAD EXPENSES**.

Highway & Road Expenses	
General Highway	100,000
Labor	169,095
Highway Fuel	50,000
Highway Superintendent	57,855
Snow & Ice Removal Exp.	110,000
Street Lights	3,100
Lake Dam Maintenance	3,000
Retention Wall Repair	3,000
Winter Sidewalks	5,000
Total	501,050

Article 20 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 21: HUMAN SERVICES EXPENSES

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$42,300** for **HUMAN SERVICES EXPENSES**.

Human Service Expenses	
Senior Center	26,419
Local Council on Aging	800
Veterans' District	2,721
Veterans' Benefits Local	12,360
Total	42,300

Article 21 passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 22: EMPLOYEE BENEFIT EXPENSES

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$167,975** for **EMPLOYEE BENEFIT EXPENSES**.

Employee Benefit Expenses	
Health Insurance	57,159
Medicare/FICA	11,000
Retiree Benefit - Health	7,536
Franklin Regional Retirement	76,280
Unemployment Insurance	3,000
Workers Comp	11,000
OPEB Stabilization	2,000
Total	167,975

Article 22 passed unanimously by voice vote

ARTICLE 23: FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXPENSES

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$51,761** for **FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXPENSES**.

FRCOG Expenses	
Core Assessment	14,824
Accountant	23,105
Procurement	2,798
Radio Maintenance	3,384
Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC)	150
Building Inspector	7,500
Total	51,761

Article 23 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 24: DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$135,880** for **DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES**.

Debt Service Expenses	
Short Term Interest	7,500
Highway Debt Garage	76,480
Highway Dump Truck	51,900
Total	135,880

Article 24 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 25: SEWER EXPENSES

Motion made by Nancy Hoff, and seconded that the Town vote to appropriate **\$147,816** from the Sewer Enterprise Fund to pay for Fiscal Year 2017 **SEWER EXPENSES**.

Sewer Expenses	
Salaries and Benefits	80,666
Fixed Operating costs	500
Volume Based costs	61,650
Emergency Fund	5,000
Total	147,816

Article 25 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 26: SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND USE

Motion made by Nancy Hoff, and seconded that the Town appropriate from the Sewer Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings a sum **not to exceed \$25,000** to fund the following:

- An Infiltration/Inflow Analysis required by 314 CMR 12.04 (2) (c) 1. to be submitted on or before December 31, 2017.
- An engineering report required to satisfy Supplemental Condition 16a of the Ground Water Discharge Permit and required for 2017 permit renewal.

Article 26 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 27: FREE CASH USE - TOWN HALL STEEPLE

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town transfer from Free Cash **\$20,000** to pay for repair of the **TOWN HALL STEEPLE**.

Article 27 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 28: BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town raise and appropriate **\$60,000** to establish and fund a **Broadband Development Account**.

Article 28 passed by a majority voice vote

ARTICLE 29: PIPELINE OPPOSITION/MITIGATION ACCOUNT

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town transfer **\$14,393** from the Grant Program Income for the creation of a **PIPELINE OPPOSITION/MITIGATION ACCOUNT** to be administered by the Select Board,

for expenses related to opposition and/or mitigation of the Northeast Energy Direct Project proposed by Tennessee Gas Pipeline, LLC.

Motion # 1 to amend was made by Will Elwell and seconded by Franklin Wickland.

To add the following language after “Tennessee Gas Pipeline, LLC;” “**or other intrusive industrial activity**”. Motion to read as follows:

*Motion was made, and seconded that the Town authorize the creation of a PIPELINE OPPOSITION/MITIGATION ACCOUNT to be administered by the Select Board, for expenses related to opposition and/or mitigation of the Northeast Energy Direct Project proposed by Tennessee Gas Pipeline, LLC; **or other intrusive industrial activity** and raise and appropriate, transfer from Free Cash, Grant Program Income, or otherwise provide the amount of \$15,000.*

After lengthy discussion Will Elwell withdrew his motion to amend, and Mr. Wickland was in agreement.

Motion #2 to amend was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Ben Markens

To insert the following language before Northeast Energy; “**pipeline project now known as (Northeast Energy Direct Project)**”. Motion to read as follows:

*Motion was made, and seconded that the Town transfer **\$14,393** from the Grant Program Income for the creation of a PIPELINE OPPOSITION/MITIGATION ACCOUNT to be administered by the Select Board, for expenses related to opposition and/or mitigation of the **pipeline now known as (Northeast Energy Direct Project)** proposed by Tennessee Gas Pipeline, LLC.*

Motion # 2 to amend passed unanimously

Article 29 Main Motion as amended passed by majority voice vote

ARTICLE 30: REVOLVING FUND ACCOUNTS

Motion made by Thomas Carter, and seconded that the Town authorize the following Revolving Fund Accounts pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, to account for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016.

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of fund	FY2017 Spending Limit
Dog License and Control	Town Clerk	Licenses, fines, and donations	Supplies, animal care, bylaw permitted expenses	\$5,000
Park	Park Commission	Program fees, donations	Park Expenses	\$1,500
Library	Library Board of Trustees	Fees, rental	Library Expenses	\$2,500

Article 30 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 31: AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT GRANTS/GIFTS

Motion made by Ron Coler, and seconded that the Town authorize the Select Board to accept and expend any grants and/or gifts that may become available, or act relative thereto.

Article 31 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 32: DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY

Motion made by Todd Olanyk, and seconded that the Town authorize the Select Board to dispose of any unused town-owned equipment and/or property.

Article 32 passed unanimously

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:36pm passed unanimously

A True Copy.

Attest: Ann Dunne, Town Clerk

Special Town Meeting – June 13, 2016

On Monday, June 13, 2016 at 7:03pm a Special Town meeting was called to order by the Moderator at Ashfield Town Hall.

ARTICLE 1: ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – PLANNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Motion was made by Michael Fitzgerald and seconded by Tom Carter to amend the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws, to add an associate member to the Planning Board for purposes of acting on Special Permit Applications.

Add the following to Ashfield Zoning Bylaws, in

Section VIII: Administration, Part E. Special Permit Granting Authority, as a new paragraph after existing paragraph:

Per M.G.L, Chapter 40A, Section 9, the Ashfield Planning Board, as Special Permit Granting Authority, shall have up to one associate member, who shall sit, when necessary, on the Board for the purpose of acting on Special Permit applications. This position will be filled by appointment by the Select Board upon recommendation of the Planning Board, and the term shall be for up to three (3) years.

Article 1 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 2: ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Motion was made by Michael Fitzgerald and seconded by Todd Olanyk to approve certain changes to the Telecommunication Facilities sections of the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws.

Add to Section II: Definitions (additions shown in *italics*)

Telecommunication Facilities: Includes towers, antennas, buildings, and accessory structures designed or modified to provide personal communication services, radio and television broadcast or reception, microwave communications, or similar communication services *that exceed the height dimensions as outlined in Section IV*. Not included are antennas used for personal television and radio reception or radio facilities actively used under an FCC (Federal Communications Commission) amateur radio license. *Antennas that do not exceed the dimensional requirements for residential buildings outlined in Section IV shall be allowed without a special permit.*

Add to Section VI: Use Regulations, F. Telecommunication Facilities

Conditions:

The applicant shall be prepared to install the most appropriate and up-to-date camouflage if it will lessen impacts on the neighborhood character.

Towers shall be set back 10x their height from existing public school buildings, boundaries of existing town-owned parks, and the Ashfield Plain Historic District.

Towers shall be set back 5x their height from existing residences and other existing buildings, unless a right-of-way is obtained from the landowner.

Special Permit Submittal Regulations, Telecommunication Facilities:

If a NEPA study or any other impact study is required for FCC approval, then the results shall be submitted with the application.

Collocation on existing conforming structures shall not require a special permit so long as the antenna does not make the structure non-conforming.

Collocation on existing non-conforming structures shall not require a special permit so long as the antenna does not make the structure substantially more non-conforming.

Article 2 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 3: MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD

Motion was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ron Coler to vote to instruct the Select Board pursuant to MGL Chapter 41, Section 21, to place a ballot question for the Annual Meeting as follows;

“Shall the Town vote to have its Select Board act as the Municipal Light Board pursuant to MGL Chapter 164, Section 55?”

After lengthy discussion the motion was amended as follows.

Motion was amended to read as follows:

“to vote to instruct the Select Board pursuant to MGL Chapter 41, Section 21, to place a ballot question for the Annual Election held on the same date as the Annual Meeting as follows;

“Shall the Town vote to have its Select Board act as the Municipal Light Board pursuant to MGL Chapter 164, Section 55?”

Article 3 main motion as amended passed by majority vote.

ARTICLE 4: VOCATIONAL EXPENSE TRANSFER – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Motion was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler to vote to transfer from Vocational Expense, or otherwise provide \$4,000 to the Information Technology Account.

Article 4 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 5: VOCATIONAL EXPENSE TRANSFER – HIGHWAY EXPENSE ACCOUNT

Motion was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Tom Carter to vote to transfer from Vocational Expense, or otherwise provide \$10,000 to fund a Fiscal Year 2016 appropriation shortage in the General Highway Expense Account,

Special recognition was given to David Newell – former Finance Committee member for all of his hard work on the Vocational School Budgets, allowing for the availability of surplus funds this fiscal year.

Article 5 passed unanimously

ARTICLE 6: VOCATIONAL EXPENSE TRANSFER – ASHFIELD LAKE DOCK

Motion was made by Judith Haupt and seconded by Ron Coler to table this Article “To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Vocational Expense or otherwise provide \$4,000 to fund repairs to the Ashfield Lake Dock.”

Judith explained the fund raising was successful and they have reached their financial goals.

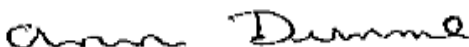
Motion to table article 6 passed unanimously.

Article 7: VOCATIONAL EXPENSE TRANSFER – CLASSIFICATION/COMPENSATION STUDY

Motion was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ron Coler to vote to transfer from Vocational Expense, a sum of money up to \$10, 000 for a classification and compensation study.

Article 7 passed unanimously

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm passed unanimously



A True Copy:

Attest: Ann Dunne, Town Clerk

Special Town Meeting – November 15, 2016

Pursuant to a Warrant signed by the Select Board on October 31, 2016 and posted on November 1, 2016, Town Moderator Stewart “Buz” Eisenberg called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at the Ashfield Town Hall.

Mr. Eisenberg thanked those present for taking the time to participate in this important function.

Mr. Eisenberg introduced the Town Clerk, Ms. Rodrigue, and asked her to read the Service of the Warrant.

At 7:06 pm after the reading of the Service of the Warrant, the meeting took up the first order of business.

ARTICLE 1. ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – PLANNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The following **MOTION** was made by Michael Fitzgerald and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to amend the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws, to add an associate members to the Planning Board for purposes of acting on Special Permit Applications.

Add the following to the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws:

Section VIII: Administration, Part E. Special Permit Granting Authority, as a new paragraph after existing paragraph:

Per M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 9, the Ashfield Planning Board, as Special Permit Granting Authority, shall have up to one associate member, who shall sit, when necessary, on the Board for the purpose of acting on Special Permit applications. This position will be filled by appointment by the Select Board upon recommendation of the Planning Board, and the term shall be for up to three (3) years.

Planning Board Chair Michael Fitzgerald explained this article corrects the timing defect determined by the Attorney General’s Office after Special Town Meeting in June. He also stated two public hearings were held to discuss this amendment.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 1 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 2. ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT – TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES

The following **MOTION** was made by Michael Fitzgerald and duly seconded:

That the Town approve certain changes to the Telecommunication Facilities sections of the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws, as specifically set forth in Article 2 of the Warrant, a copy of which has been distributed at this meeting.

Add to Section II: Definitions: (additions shown in *italics*)

Telecommunication Facilities: Includes towers, antennas, buildings, and accessory structures designed or modified to provide personal communication services, radio, and television broadcast or reception, microwave communications, or similar communication services *that exceed the height dimensions as outlined in Section IV*. Not included are antennas used for personal television and radio reception or radio facilities used under FCC (Federal Communications Commission) amateur radio license. *Antennas that do not exceed the dimensional requirements for residential buildings outlined in Section IV shall be allowed without a special permit.*

Add to Section VI: Use Regulations, F. Telecommunication Facilities:

VI. F. 2. Conditions:

m. The applicant shall be prepared to install the most appropriate and up-to-date camouflage if it will lessen impacts on the neighborhood character.

n. Towers shall be set back 10x their height from existing public school buildings, boundaries of existing town-owned parks, and the Ashfield Plain Historic District.

o. Towers shall be set back 5x their height from existing residences and other existing buildings, unless a right-of-way is obtained from land owner.

VI. F. 3. Special Permit Submittal Regulations, Telecommunication Facilities:

h. If a NEPA study or any other impact study is required for FCC approval, then the results shall be submitted with the application.

i. Collocation on existing conforming structures shall not require a special permit so long as the antenna does not make the structure non-conforming.

j. Collocation on existing non-conforming structures shall not require a special permit so long as the antenna does not make the structure substantially more non-conforming.

Planning Board Chair Michael Fitzgerald explained this article also corrects the timing defect determined by the Attorney General's Office after Special Town

Meeting in June. He also stated two public hearings were held to discuss the change.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 2 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 3: BACKHOE PURCHASE

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to raise and appropriate a sum not to exceed \$60,000 to be expended by the Select Board for the purchase of a backhoe, provided however, that no amounts shall be borrowed or expended hereunder unless and until the Town votes at an election to exempt from the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 59, Section 21c, Proposition 2 ½ so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds or notes.

Mr. Carter explained there is a defect in the language on the debt exclusion article to purchase a backhoe from the Annual Town Meeting. This article would correct the language on this ballot vote from the May 2016 Annual Town Meeting. The Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 3.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 3 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 4: ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – UNPAID FY16 BILL

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Fund \$61.78 to fund Fiscal Year 2016 unpaid bills in the Zoning Board of Appeals Account.

Mr. Coler explained this money will pay a Fiscal Year 2016 bill for newspaper publishing requirements identified after the fiscal year was closed. Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 4. Prior Fiscal Year bills require a 9/10 approval.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 4 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 5: PARKS COMMISSION – UNPAID FY16 BILL

The following **MOTION** was made by Judy Haupt and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Fund \$270 to fund a Fiscal Year 2016 unpaid bill in the Parks Commission Account.

Ms. Haupt explained the Parks Commission found a bill for June's mowing in August, after the fiscal year end. Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 5. Prior Fiscal Year bills require a 9/10 approval.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 5 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 6: POLICE DEPARTMENT – UNPAID FY16 BILL

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Fund \$69.18 to fund a Fiscal Year 2016 unpaid bill in the Police Department Expense Account.

Mr. Olanyk explained this money will pay a Fiscal Year 2016 bill for newspaper publishing requirements identified after the fiscal year was closed. The Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 6. Prior Fiscal Year bills require a 9/10 approval.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 6 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 7: HIGHLAND AMBULANCE EMS, INC. LOAN PAYMENTS

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Fund \$3,123 to fund unanticipated Fiscal Year 2017 loan payments for the Highland Ambulance EMS, Inc. building construction costs.

Mr. Carter announced that the Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 7.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 7 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 8: FREE CASH TRANSFER – TOWN HALL MOLD REMEDIATION

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer up to \$20,000 from Free Cash for mold remediation at Ashfield Town Hall.

Mr. Coler explained the Ashfield Town Hall is an old building and mold is a health issue that needs to be addressed. He stated this mold remediation may include money for consultants and/or equipment. The Select Board and Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 8.

After a lengthy discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 8 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 9: POLICE CHIEF SALARY TRANSFER

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$14,000 from Police Chief Salary to the Police Department Expense Account.

Mr. Olanyk explained the Town has incurred more costs for part-time officer patrols since the retirement of the Police Chief. The Select Board and the Finance Committee both recommended affirmative action on Article 9.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 9 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 10: PIPELINE OPPOSITION MITIGATION FUND TRANSFER

The following **MOTION** was made by George Stephan and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Fund \$3,000 to the Information Technology Account for the purchase of hardware and software.

Mr. Stephan explained the Technology Committee is looking to replace failing equipment in Town Hall departments. This includes battery backups, a computer, and software. Both the Select Board and the Finance Committee recommended affirmative action on Article 10.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 10 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

At 7:36 pm, upon a **MOTION** duly made and seconded, the Special Town Meeting was adjourned and dissolved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget S. Rodrigue

Town Clerk

ATTENDANCE: 23 registered voters

Agricultural Commission Annual Report - 2016

The Agricultural Commission has been meeting on a monthly basis since reorganizing in mid-2016. New members Dan Baker, Barbara Miller, and Faye Whitney, joined Robyn Crowningshield, Johanna Pratt, and Steve Gougeon in setting goals and priorities.

Ashfield's farm brochure was the first project undertaken by the Commission. All farmers listed in the previous brochure were contacted and their information was updated. Several new farm operations were also contacted and are now listed in the brochure. Printing of the brochure was paid using grant funds. The brochure can be found at various locations around town or can be obtained by emailing agcom@ashfield.org

The Commission is currently working on two projects. A grievance procedure, which will serve both farmers and non-farmers in the case of farm-related disputes, is being updated. The Commission is also working with the Open Space Planning Committee to identify parcels of land that are being actively farmed, even if those parcels are not in conservation, APR, or Chapter 61 programs.

In the future the Agricultural Commission hopes to be able to provide assistance to the town's farmers and to represent agricultural interests to the other town Boards and Committees.

Aside from some remaining grant funds, the Commission has no budget and receives no town funds.

Ashfield has a Right to Farm bylaw, which is available at Town Hall.

In 2017 the Commission will be meeting on the fourth Tuesday of the month at Town Hall. All meetings are open to the public and are duly posted at Town Hall and on the town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashfield Agricultural Commission

Dan Baker

Robyn Crowningshield

Steve Gougeon

Barbara Miller, Clerk

Johanna Pratt

Faye Whitney, Chair

Animal Control

Animal Control in Ashfield is always challenging, and often very interesting. In mid-April, I picked up and disposed of a three foot long River Otter hit by a car on Route 112 near Lilliput Road. I have never seen one this size in Ashfield, however, I am sure they inhabit this area.



Photo 3 - River Otter

In June, a pair of wild peacocks showed up in Ashfield. These are not native to this area, and they seemed to have disappeared as quickly as they appeared.

In July, Ashfield joined the Franklin County Dog Kennel Association. The Franklin County Dog Kennel Association provides a certified, safe

place to keep stray dogs while their owners are located. Neuter and spay services are also provided, as well as necessary veterinarian care. If no owner is found, the kennel will put the dogs up for adoption.

A new Ashfield Animal Inspector was appointed in July. Long-time resident, Martha Pantermehl, will handle the state quarantines, as well as the Farmers Barn Books. I feel Martha is an ideal candidate for this position as she is both qualified and efficient and I look forward to working with her on animal disease control in Ashfield.

On Christmas Eve a homeowner found very large cat tracks on their property. The paw prints measured 5 and one half inches across. These tracks likely belonged to a mountain lion or cougar.

Lastly, I need to mention the humorous Ashfield News story in the April issue regarding a Walrus being captured in Ashfield Lake and sent to Boston. This made interesting reading, and resulted in many concerned citizen's calls to me, however, it was an April Fool's joke on their readers.

As a reminder, all dogs six months and older must be licensed by April 1st. of each year. In order to obtain a dog license, an up-to-date rabies certificate must be presented to the town clerk. This can be done in person, by mail, through the drop box in front of the town hall, or online. Payment can be made in the form of cash, check, or credit card. Cats six months and older are also required by state law to have an up-to-date rabies shot. In addition, Ashfield has a year round restraining order. Dog owners are fully responsible for all damages done by an unrestrained dog.

I want to thank all the people and organizations that have supported and assisted me in performing my duties as the Ashfield Animal Control Officer. Anyone having questions or concerns can reach me at 628-3811. Lost and found notices are posted at Neighbors Store, the post office, and Ashfield Hardware.

Dogs Confined	6	Dogs Placed	6
Cats Confined	4	Cats Placed	4
Other Animals Confined	1	Animal Bites	2
Phone Calls	2394	Mileage	686
Labor Hours	938	Fines Collected	0
Expenses	\$708.76		

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Kirkpatrick

Board of Assessors

The Town of Ashfield had a single tax rate for Fiscal Year 2016 of \$16.44 per \$1,000 of real estate and personal property value. The average single family tax bill in Ashfield went from \$3,791 (FY2015) to \$3,929 (FY2016) a difference of \$138.

The tax rate is set based on voter approval of the budget at annual town meeting. The town is allowed to increase annually by 2 ½ % plus an allowance for new growth construction. Amounts over the levy limit for debt exclusions or overrides are approved by a vote of town voters. Assessors are responsible for assessing property taxes, the major source of revenue for most communities, as well as miscellaneous excise taxes, such as the motor vehicle.

Values in Ashfield and throughout the Commonwealth are determined according to practices certified by the Department of Revenue. The Town of Ashfield uses an independent appraisal service to inspect properties and analyze sales – Mayflower Valuation LTD.

In 2016 two term Assessor Sandra Lilly chose not to seek reelection. The Board of Assessors thanks Sandy for her time, energy, and dedication. George Stephan was elected to the Board in May and completed the required Massachusetts Department of Revenue Course 101 in August. All three board members are certified according to state requirements.

Total assessed values for each major class of properties, the number of parcels and their share of the tax levy are shown below.

Class	Parcel Count	Valuation	% of Levy
Residential	939	\$204,621,363	90.90
Commercial	304	\$8,236,899	3.66
Industrial	6	\$973,858	0.43
Personal Property	32	\$11,282,496	5.01
	1281	\$225,114,616	100.00

The total exempt value was \$18,382,403.

Summary of Monies Raised by Taxation and Receipts:

	FY'14	FY'15	FY'16
Total Amount to be Raised	\$4,479,832.29	\$4,591,778.34	\$4,790,087.32
Annual Tax Levy	\$3,485,277.86	\$3,577,849.66	\$3,700,884.29
Total Property Value	\$215,673,135	\$224,035,671	\$225,114,616
Tax Rate Per \$1000	\$16.16	\$15.97	\$16.44

It is your responsibility to ensure that your property card is correct. You can view a synopsis of your property at www.axisgis.com/AshfieldMA/. If you have questions about your assessed value or if you want a copy of your full property card to review please contact Jenn Morse, Assessors Administrator or email assessors@ashfield.org

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sarro (term expires 2017)

Amy Shapiro (term expires 2018)

George Stephan (term expires 2019)

Belding Memorial Library Trustees

Those of us who live in older houses are well aware of the time and dedication that goes into caring for and maintaining an old building. Our library, which is 103 years old, is certainly no exception.

As most of you know in 2015-16 the Trustees began a 3 year capital campaign to repair, restore, and modernize the Belding. With the front steps scheduled for restoration this spring, and the problematic roof finally repaired, Phase 1 of our campaign will be completed. The total cost to date, met through donations and appropriations from the town is \$91,451.62.

The Trustees are currently seeking bids for Phase 2, which will be the installation of an HV/AC system. Our ambitious goal for this next phase also includes the upgrading of existing electrical systems and the restoration and painting of the plaster. Although this is a daunting process, we continue to have strong support from the town and many donors.

A building is only as good as its heart. I am proud to say that the heart and soul of our library is strong, and continues to be better with every year as demonstrated by the following statistics:

Year	Circulation	Patron Registration	Meeting Room Use
2013	16,828	953	95
2014	20,605	998	138
2015	24,963	1099	170
2016	29,385	1161	182

The lion's share of the credit for this must go to our director Martha Cohen and her able staff of Irene Branson and Sherrie Scott.

Some of the many accomplishments worth noting this year were the expanded children's audio collection endowed in honor of Ruth Crafts, another successful Summer Reading Program with workshops by community volunteers, and several programs funded by the Cultural Council. The Friends, Nina Coler and the wonderful group of volunteers also deserve our sincere thanks for all they do.

As with old houses, there is much essential work that is accomplished but rarely seen. The Trustees, Caroline Murray, Sandy Carter, Renee Rastorfer and Esther Coler, put in countless hours with little recognition to make the Belding Library a vibrant, community-centered asset to the town. I think Milo Belding would be smiling and proud.

Marcine Appel Eisenberg, Chair

Board of Health

	2016	2015	2014
Title 5	13	13	10
Perk Test	8	7	3
Construction	4	7	4
Well	3	0	0
Fees Collected	\$3,360.00	\$4,160.00	\$3,175.00

2016 was another moderate year for construction with eight perk tests, four septic system construction permits, and fifteen title five inspections. Three well permits were issued, mostly due to low water table and drought conditions. A total of \$3,360.00 was collected in fees for the year.

Carrie O’Gorman pulled together another successful flu clinic with the help of Rite Aid – Thank you!

Also, thank you to fellow board members Carrie O’Gorman and Karen Lavalley and Health Agents Carl Nelke and Claudia Lucas.

Respectfully submitted,

Duncan Colter

**Ashfield Burial Ground Association
Burials in Ashfield Cemeteries**

January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

Name	Date of Death	Date of Burial	Cemetery
Douglas E. Howes, Jr.	03/31/2016	07/23	Plain
Martha B. Pauig	03/20/2016	07/23	Plain
Eleanor (Pollen) Cranson	03/31/2016	07/31	Plain
Scott Bowen Lemee	06/09/2013	07/31	Plain
Lois (Godfrey) Graves	07/22/2016	08/05	Hill
Barbara (Viehmann) Kuhns	07/30/2016	08/06	South Ashfield
Isabelle (Decker) Graves	08/05/2016	08/12	Plain
David S. Lanoue	09/17/2016	09/23	Spruce Corner

Conservation Commission

Conservation Commissions in Massachusetts have regulatory responsibility stemming from legislative passage of three acts: Wetlands Protection Act, Riverfront Act and Natural Heritage, and Endangered Species Act. We review permit applications for activities within Resource Areas, conduct site visits, advertise and hold hearings, make determinations, and issue permits which allow these activities with certain conditions attached. We also have the responsibility to review Forest Cutting Plans.

Our budget is driven by fixed costs relating to scribe services for our twice per month meetings, and membership in the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissioners, which keeps us current with changes or proposed changes in our regulatory responsibilities. Our variable costs are determined by the number of permits we process which entail legal ad fees for hearings and costs for required certified mailing determinations. These fees are paid by the applicant and are returned to the Town's General Fund. When we issue an Order of Conditions (OOC) for activity in a Resource Area, the applicant is required by law to register the OOC at the Registry of Deeds. After the work is completed, the applicant can request the Commission to inspect the work and issue a Certificate of Compliance which removes the lien from the deed. In 2016, eight (8) Request for Determinations and three (3) Notice of Intentions were filed with the Conservation Commission.

The Town of Ashfield owns conservation land adjacent to the trail to the Lookout across Hawley Road from The Trustees of Reservations' Bear Swamp trailhead. Approximately 15 acres were given to the town by Esther D. and Philip H. Steinmetz in 1977. The sign at the entrance to the property reads, "Brewer Tatro Memorial Woods". The Commission seeks to build awareness of this property and encourage appropriate recreational uses.

The Commission continues to work with the Board of Health on the resolution of problems caused by beaver activity. The Board of Health Agent can issue a permit to remove beavers if the flooding caused by the dams impacts wells, septic systems, and residences.

In addition to the regulatory responsibility cited above, we assist applicants with Chapter 91 Licensing. Ashfield Lake is over 10 acres in size and defined as a "Great Pond" which requires that all new docks and anchored floats be licensed. We review and sign off on applications for land conservation efforts of organizations such as the Franklin Land Trust and The Trustees of Reservations. We support the preservation of habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species. We have concerns about the impact of invasive species and how we as a Commission can pursue programs to halt their advance.

Council on Aging

It is our pleasure to give the Annual report of the Council on Aging to the residents of Ashfield. This past year we've had a lot going on down at the Senior Center and in Ashfield.

Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne share the Senior Center in Shelburne Falls, plus Ashfield has a luncheon meeting the first Thursday of every month at the First Congregational Church at noon, and everyone is welcome to come and meet your fellow seniors from Ashfield. At the luncheon we have various speakers, presentations and entertainment. We have bag lunches- you bring a sandwich or we have pot luck and the council supplies the dessert and drinks.

The past year, we had a luncheon at the lake house, a picnic at Belding park, a luncheon at Elmer's a holiday dinner at the Curtis house and the students at Sanderson invited Ashfield and Plainfield seniors to a luncheon and entertainment for Christmas.

The Ashfield Council on Aging hosted one of the debates for the Massachusetts State Senate between

Democrat Adam Hinds and Republican Christine Canning – Wilson. Approximately 100 people attended the event.

We gave up the van this year due lack of use and the fact that the Senior Center has three buses to get seniors around.

Please join us or pass on any suggestions for programs or services for our older residents.

We want to thank the staff at the Senior Center and Ashfield Select board for their continue support.

Douglas Field Chair
Steven Zamojski
Nina Laurie
Anne Yuryan
Franklin Wickland

Cultural Council

In 2016-17, the Ashfield Cultural Council partially or totally funded 23 projects from 34 applications and dispersed \$4863. The recipients included regularly planned and annual events as well as some new projects. Three poetry projects, including "Poetry on the Ashfield Trails" were funded. Four local theater productions received support. There are several musical events including a music educational program for 3rd and 4th graders and a concert at the Lake House sponsored by the Senior Center. Pothole Pictures film series, Ashfield's Winter Solstice Celebration and the town's early December Arts festival received grants. "Songs and stories for a better world", a puppet show at the library and art projects at the Art Garden are funded. Monthly programming to promote racial justice - held on first Saturdays at Greenfield's First Congregational Church was funded. We hope everyone has a chance to enjoy many of these offerings.

Our voting meeting was held on 11/28/2016. Present at the meeting were Wes Fleming (exiting Chairperson), Helene Leue, Jane Willis (Secretary), Carole Groman (Treasurer), Andrew Kinsey, and 3 new members, Bill Feinstein, Louise Neidle (Chairperson starting in 2017), Rebecca Hartka.

The goal of the grant program is to support projects involving the arts, the humanities and the applied sciences. Our guidelines are to give priority to locally-run projects that will be held in, or near, Ashfield and enjoyed by many in our community. Every few years the council has a Community Input session to help inform our decision-making. We encourage more applications as well as interest in being on the council. Cultural Council applications are due on October 15 of each year. It is important that a venue be previously arranged when applying.

For further information on the Massachusetts Cultural Council programs and the Ashfield Cultural Council visit www.mass-culture.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Willis, Secretary

Emergency Management

It is our pleasure to give the Annual report to the residents of Ashfield. There wasn't a major storm/disaster this past year (2016) for the emergency personnel to have to respond to. But we still have to be ready for any storm that may come our way.

I have to go to training and keep up on all the new laws that come out. This year it was about service animals and how to handle them in a case of an emergency.

We still have our one call system (Blackboard Connect) that we use for emergencies and any town happenings that may come up. Remember that when you get the call it will come up on your caller ID as town of Ashfield and we will always ID ourselves. The emergency manager, town clerk and town administrator are the only ones that can put out the call.

Just remember, if you do lose electricity and it is cold; the Emergency Team (Emergency Manager, Assistant Emergency Manager, Fire Chief, Police Chief and their department personnel) will always be out to help you or you can call the Emergency Operating Center

(Fire Station) 413-628-4441 Ext #2.

We want to thank the Select board, Town Administrator and town clerk for their support throughout the year.

Douglas Field – Ashfield Emergency Manager

Paul Monohon – Ashfield Assistant Emergency Manager

Finance Committee

Two projects during the year are of note. David Newell stepped down from our Finance Committee, and the Select Board appointed him Ashfield Vocational Education Coordinator. In this new capacity, he has continued to work with the Vocational Education Advisory Committee (consisting of representatives from Ashfield, Hawley, Charlemont, and Plainfield) to streamline van routing and monitor fuel usage to ensure that we minimize vocational transportation costs for Ashfield and our partner towns. That committee is also now working more closely with the Mohawk Trail Regional School District to fashion uniform policies about school choice for the vocational schools.

In response to a May meeting with representatives from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), we worked with members of the Select Board, Technology Committee, our Town Administrator, a consultant from FRCOG, and our town's Financial Advisor from Unibank to devise a financing plan for the development of Ashfield's anticipated broadband system. We plan to use bond anticipation notes (BANs) for 10 years, followed by the use of a 5-year serial State House loan note. Moreover, a measure of protection against interest rate risk was established by voting a \$60,000 Broadband Development Account at our May 2016 Annual Town Meeting. In addition, a few citizens and Ashfield's Financial Advisor discussed the idea of using long-term loans from private investors at below-market fixed rates to save the town some debt service costs and further protect against rising interest rates.

However, there has been little forward movement in developing a broadband system because of delays and a lack of meaningful forward momentum by MBI. Its policies have changed as it continues to re-examine alternative means for achieving broadband service in our area. We need further clarification about how MBI might adjust its cost sharing allocations before we can estimate how our financial plans will be affected.

As part of Ashfield's Community Compact Agreement, during the year we worked with our Town Administrator and a consultant from Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to develop a new, updated set of Financial Policies. These were discussed with and approved by the Select Board, and they now reflect best practices and guide the financial management of our town. (They can be found on the town website under the Documents and Forms quick link; see Finance Committee's Financial Policy Manual.)

We have followed the work of Mohawk's BEST (Building Education Sustainability & Trust) Committee as they analyze several issues related to the finances of our school system. In addition, we are studying projected financial

needs associated with an aging population in town. Ultimately, we plan to create a 5-year budget for the town.

At present (January 2017), we are pleased to report that the town's financial position is very sound: our Stabilization Fund stands at \$489,780 and our available Free Cash position is \$385,291. The combined amount of \$875,071 represents reserves of approximately 20% of our town's \$4.5 million annual budget, and our policies call for it being at least 10-15%.

Finally, we wish to thank both David Newell and Tom Schreiber for their years of faithful service. Each had to resign because of increasing scheduling conflicts, but we have been fortunate in having the Moderator appoint Carl Satterfield and Mary Fitz-Gibbon as replacements. We welcome them to our committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Murray, Chair
Mary Fitz-Gibbon
Lindy Gougeon
Carol Lebold
Carl Satterfield

Fire Department

This has been another busy year for the Fire Department. The Fire Department responded to five mutual aid calls and also participated in a training exercise with neighboring towns that involved burning down two building.

Three new junior firefighters have joined our department – Malik Johnson, Nicholas Vight and Jaymes Colby. The department also saw the departure of firefighter Jake Niquette, who relocated to another town. Current firefighter Colleen Walker was promoted to Lieutenant.



Photo 4 - Walker, Vight, Johnson and Colby

The Fire Department has applied for three grants this year. A fire safety grant for both elementary school age children and seniors, one to replace a twenty-seven year old fire truck, and a grant to replace fourteen sets of old turn out gear. The department received \$5,000 for the fire safety grant and is waiting to hear on the fire truck and gear grants.

Year	Fire Calls	Medical Calls	Total Calls
2016	83	101	184
2015	72	102	174
2014	87	107	194
2013	71	92	163
2012	71	89	161

As shown above, the Fire Department responded to one hundred and eighty-four calls this year of which eighty-three were fire calls and one hundred and one were medical calls. March was found to be the busiest month with a total of twenty-three calls, Tuesdays the busiest day with thirty-two calls, and 9 am - 3 pm was the busiest time for calls with a total of eighty.

Respectfully submitted,

Delmar Haskins
Fire Chief

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments provides a variety of services and programming to the municipalities of Franklin County and to the greater Franklin County region. The FRCOG's 2016 Annual Report, which will be available in April of 2017 and on www.frcog.org shortly thereafter, will highlight our work over the past year. Specific services to the Town of Ashfield in 2016 included the following.

Administration and Special Projects

- Ashfield participated in the regional sign-making program, sharing equipment with ten other towns in Franklin County.
- Staff worked with the Selectboard, Finance Committee and the Town Administrator to develop wide-ranging Town financial policies as part of the Baker-Polito Community Compact Program. By formally accepting the policies, the Town has earned points toward future state grant opportunities.
- Town staff participated in on-going discussions for a new multi-town project to share professional human resource services. Grant funds will be used in 2017 for consulting help to move the project toward completion.

Collective Bidding & Purchasing Program

- Ashfield contracted with the FRCOG to receive cooperative bid pricing for up to 24 different Highway Products and Services. Total estimated highway needs for FY17 is \$595,909.
- The Town participated in the Diesel Fuel bid, and the Belding Library participated in the Fuel Oil bid.
- Ashfield participated in the Elevator Maintenance collective contract.
- The Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) issued a bid for a Wood Pellet Boiler for Sanderson Academy.
- The CPO issued a bid for construction services for Belding Library roof repairs.

Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program

- Staff issued 154 building permits, 65 electrical permits & 49 plumbing/gas permits for Ashfield in 2016. Seventeen (17) Certificates of Inspection were issued.

Partnership for Youth

- Staff conducted a Teen Health Survey to assess teen attitudes and behavior among middle and high school students. Staff reported to Mohawk Trail Regional School administrators on results from 137 Mohawk students, representing 63% of the 8th, 10th, and 12th grade classes. Survey data meets federal requirements for the school and is valuable for grant-writing and program planning.

Planning and Development Department

- Staff completed two chapters for the update of Ashfield's Open Space and Recreation Plan, and participated in a Public Forum.
- Staff analyzed and summarized the results of a Hilltown CDC Transportation Survey.
- Staff worked to permanently protect prime farmland on the Route 112 Scenic Byway with funding from the Scenic Byway Land Protection Project.
- Staff prepared a Draft Business Plan and Legislation for the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Project for 11 West County towns, including Ashfield, with specific recommendations and projects to support Natural Resource Based Economic Development, Forest Conservation & Municipal Financial Sustainability.
- Staff provided technical assistance on the FERC permitting process for the proposed KM-TGP NED pipeline project.
- Staff conducted roadway traffic counts as requested on Baptist Corner Road, Williamsburg Road, and Apple Valley Road.

Regional Preparedness Program

- Staff conducted quarterly contact drills and a site notification drill to test the Mohawk Emergency Dispensing Site Plan.
- Staff attended an Ashfield Board of Health meeting to discuss local surveillance for infectious diseases and to provide current risk information from the CDC.
- Ashfield entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the FRCOG to recognize the Multi-Agency Coordination Center as the official organization to assist them with emergency management needs.

Town Accounting Program

- Staff produced biweekly vendor warrants, and provided monthly budget reports to all officials and department heads.

- At year end, staff completed Free Cash certification, and Schedule A was submitted. In addition, staff provided assistance in completing the Recap for tax rate submission.
- Customized reports for committees and departments were developed and distributed.
- Staff assisted with the annual audit.
- All accounting data was accessible over a secure internet connection to a server at the FRCOG office. Staff completed backups daily and there was no unscheduled down time.

Workshops & Training

The following list represents the FRCOG workshops and training sessions that Ashfield public officials, staff, and residents attended and the number in attendance.

Municipal Official Continuing Education Series

- The Shifting Marijuana Landscape — 1
- Commercial Scale Wood Heat & Air Quality Impacts — 3
- Public Records Law — 2
- Municipal Farmland Leasing and Protection — 1

Partnership for Youth

- Advanced LifeSkills — 1 representative of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District

Cooperative Public Health Service

- ServSafe/Choke Saver/Allergen Training Series — 2

Regional Emergency Preparedness

- Multiple Casualty Incident Exercise — 2
- Intro to Public Health Emergency Preparedness Capabilities — 1

Cooperative Building Inspection Program

As you know, your town receives building, plumbing, gas, and wiring inspection and zoning enforcement services through the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program (FCCIP), a forty-one year old shared service housed at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). We thank your town for your continued participation in the FCCIP, which allows small towns to have access to professional staff and state-of-the-art technology.

2016 was a busy year, permit wise, for the program. We issued 2,773 permits, including a significant number of insulation upgrade, solar array and wood/pellet stove permits. The number of permits was higher in 2016 than in the previous year, the fees collected were also slightly higher. A total of 26 new dwelling units were constructed in our 15 member towns.

Our new online permitting program went live on July 1, 2011 and has issued 13,508 building, electrical & plumbing/gas permits since then. The program allows you to apply, pay for, and track the progress of any permit online, saving you time and visits to our office in Greenfield. The program has 4,080 registered users. You can find it at www.frcog.org under the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program. Our website also includes helpful information on inspection requirements, permit costs, and contractor licensing.

In 2016, the FCCIP processed the following permits for Ashfield:

Residential Building Permits	106
Commercial Building Permits	14
Sheet Metal/Duct Permits	1
Electrical Permits	65
Plumbing Permits	23
Gas Permits	26
Certificates of Inspection	17
Solid Fuel	14
Fire Protection	1
Tent	18

We would like to remind all residents of the importance of applying for permits for work done. Building, Electrical and Plumbing/Gas permits are required by law and are an essential step in ensuring the safety of our communities. Please free to call our office with any building or zoning questions at 774-3167, extension 2.

Franklin Regional Retirement System

The Franklin Regional Retirement System is a government agency that serves the 503 retirees, 51 beneficiaries, 951 active employees, and 557 inactive members of the towns and agencies in Franklin County. We are organized under Chapter 34b, and subject to the provisions of Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. We receive oversight on the state level from the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC), which audits our operations and financial records every three years. We are also audited by independent auditors in the two intervening years, as well as a complete actuarial valuation every two years.

The retirement benefit we provide replaces participation in the Social Security system and is described as a “defined benefit”, which means that we pay monthly retirement benefits based on the age, salary, and number of years worked at the time a member of our system retires. To be a member, an employee in one of our government units must be working in a permanent position scheduled at 20 hours or more per week and earning \$5,000 or greater annually. Funding of these benefits begins with deductions from the member, and, combined with matching funds from the employing unit, are invested in a mix of stocks, bonds, and indexed funds. Investment earnings are a large part of the funding of retirement benefits, and the allocation of those funds are spread to a variety of sectors to take advantage of positive activity as it occurs in each sector.

Up until 1988, we were a “pay-as-you-go” system. In 1988 it was legislated that we begin saving to become “fully funded” over the ensuing 40 years. Fully funded means we have enough in reserves to pay for all the current and future potential benefits of our present membership. At the end of 2015, we are 78.2% funded at 27 years (67.5%) into the 40 year mandate. Our fiscal year is the calendar year, therefore our annual report is not filed until May of the subsequent year, and as a consequence the information provided herein will be a year old by the time you read this.

Current reports and information can be found on our website:
www.FRRSMA.com.

Sandra A. Hanks Board Chair Paula J. Light Council Member Paul J. Mokrzecki Appointed Member David R. Gendron Vice Chair Mary A. Stokarski Elected Member Dale C. Kowacki Executive Director. The full PERAC report can be read on the “Finances” page of our website.

Green Communities

This year the energy savings that have resulted from this committee's work done in earlier years has become clear. Energy used for heating town buildings in 2016 was down 45% when compared with 2010, the year before we made any changes. Some of that was due to the mild winter, but a peek at energy use in the long, cold winter of 2015 shows a 12% reduction even for that year. This means that the insulation, air sealing, and new heating systems installed in several town buildings has really reduced the energy needed to heat those buildings. Meanwhile, electrical usage is also down, after we replaced lights, refrigerators, and other other equipment with more efficient options. To continue reducing the electrical power used, new, efficient LED lights were installed at the wastewater treatment plant this year. In addition, the town entered into an agreement with HCOG to buy more of our electrical power from solar arrays in Hatfield and Hadley at a 15% discount from Eversource prices.

Ashfield collaborated with Buckland and Plainfield to take part in the Solarize Mass program, which supported private homeowners in installing photovoltaic arrays on their houses. 110 households took part in our three small towns, adding over 900 KW generating capacity of locally captured renewable power.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Clark
Mary Quigley
Jim Cutler
Jen Williams

Highland Ambulance EMS Inc.

Operations - Highland Ambulance is the primary ambulance service provider for the towns of Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield and Williamsburg. Highland also provides primary back-up in the town of Worthington in support of Hilltown Ambulance of Huntington. Paramedics are on duty at Highland's station in Goshen from 6 AM until midnight seven days a week. During the midnight to 6 AM time period, Highland EMT's are assisted by Paramedics from other ambulance companies when the service of a Paramedic is required. Highland's active roster as of June 30, 2016 consisted of 36 members including 19 Paramedics and 17 EMT's.

Dr. Raymond Conway, our long term Medical Director, retired and is replaced by Dr. Peter Morse, MD.

Mission – The mission of Highland Ambulance EMS, Inc. is to provide the full range of emergency medical services to the member communities. These services include:

- Providing training and certification testing for all first responders
- Providing mandatory inoculations for all first responders
- Running blood pressure clinics for residents of the six towns
- Developing and practicing emergency response plans with the schools and camps in the member towns
- Conducting health and safety classes for the schools
- Working with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Homeland Security to develop emergency response plans for the member towns
- Providing mutual aid and paramedic intercept services to the neighboring communities
- Providing transport services
- Providing standby service for major emergency situations, e.g. house fire
- Providing standby service for major community events such as the Chesterfield Parade, the Ashfield Fall Festival and the Cummington Fair
- Responding to all 911 calls that may require emergency medical services

Emergency Responses - During FY 2016 Highland responded to 652 emergency calls of which 150 were no service. These are broken down by town as follows:

Ashfield 118	Chesterfield 101	Cummington 78	Goshen 75
Plainfield 60	Williamsburg 178	Other 42	Total 652

Out of these responses, 341 required advanced life support (ALS) services.

Training – The following special training events were held:

- CPR trainings for Emergency Service Personnel, Police, & firefighters.
- New National (NCCR) EMT recertification classes for area EMTs.
- Medical Management Classes.
- ALS/BLS interface classes for area EMTs.
- Paramedic transition class to conform to National Core Curriculum.
- Patient lifting and moving class for Ashfield fire personnel.
- Basic EMT refresher courses.
- Paramedic refresher courses

Community Involvement – Highland provided support to our communities including:

- Ambulance Coverage for Community events including the Chesterfield 4th of July Parade, the Cummington Fair, the Ashfield Fall Festival, Hilltown Junior Olympics, the Ashfield Klondike Fair.
- Evacuation drill at the Sanderson Academy in Ashfield
- Lock down drill at the Anne T. Dunphy School in Williamsburg and the New Hingham Elementary School in Chesterfield.

<u>Operating Expenses in FY 2016</u>	\$522,235.01
<u>Cash on Hand June 30, 2016</u>	
Building Fund	\$79,228.89
Cash Operating Account	\$10,730.19
Cash Payroll Account	\$5,000.00
Ambulance Fund	\$150,684.46
Memorial Fund	\$24,710.80
Dresser Fund	\$3,702.83
Cap Reserve	\$7,022.78
Total Checking/Savings	\$281,079.95

Grants – \$25,400 from the Assistance to Fire Fighters Grants for the purchase of two automated CPR devices called LUCAS IIs. They can help improve the chance of survival for cardiac arrest patients. \$1,200 from Florence Savings Bank towards the construction of our new facility.

Building Project – During this fiscal year, Highland Ambulance initiated the building of our permanent facility for its operations. From its very beginning, it was clear that Highland Ambulance was “borrowing” the Goshen Fire House and would need to eventually establish itself elsewhere. Highland Ambulance chose a lot at 12 Williams Drive in Goshen for its facility. At the end of the Fiscal Year, the project was nearing completion and a dedication/open house was scheduled for July 17th. The Board of Directors decided to dedicate the building to the memory of our long-term president of the Board, Christopher (Kit)

Smith. Anticipated costs of the entire project will be in the range of \$800,000 with a mortgage loan for up to \$600,000 from Greenfield Savings Bank. The Board and staff are deeply appreciative for all the dollar donations and in-kind services we received over the year to make possible the construction of our new facility.

Respectfully submitted,

Highland Ambulance Board of Directors:

Ashfield	Patricia Thayer
Chesterfield	Spencer Timm
Cummington	Amanda Savoie
At-Large	Cassandra Morrey
At-Large	Douglas Mollison

Goshen	Donald Boisvert
Plainfield	Edward Morann
Williamsburg	Leslie Smith
At-Large	Bernard Forgea

Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) was created in 1989 to help small towns attain both sustainability and environmental objectives. Each member town appoints two representatives to serve on the board. Board Officers for FY16 included: Joe Kearns, Chair (Middlefield); Paul Wetzels, Vice Chair (Williamsburg); and, Tom Martin, Treasurer (Westhampton).

The HRMC has been helping member communities manage their solid waste through municipal waste hauling and disposal bid administration, recycling, hazardous waste, DEP compliance monitoring and technical assistance, and sustainability services. In FY16 those services included:

- Liaison between towns and MassDEP on compliance matters.
- Execution of an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event.
- Program management of Transfer Station Recyclables including collection, hauling and recycling of tires, electronic waste, universal waste, and Freon removal from appliances. Oversight of the Call2Recycle re-chargeable battery collection service. Additionally, the Town of Westhampton became a regional Thermostat Recycling Center (TRC) for HRMC community transfer stations. Both the Call2Recycle Battery Program and the TRC programs are cost-free that save the member-Towns the expense of including these items in their universal waste recycling.
- Transfer Station operations and compliance monitoring including informal HRMC site visits, as well as the formal, annual DEP 3rd Party Inspection and Reporting.
- Preparation and submittal of DEP annual surveys and reports.
- DEP Grant Administration including grant writing and reporting.

In addition to managing the day to day business and program operations, the HRMC Administrator also serves as a representative to the MRF Municipal Advisory Board, the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee, and the Western Mass Regional Recycling Coordinators; advocates with local, regional, and State officials; and, is available to serve as a liaison to the DEP on transfer station operations and compliance related issues.

In FY16, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced their Small-Scale Initiative Grants under the annual Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP). All ten HRMC member towns received a small-scale grant award of \$500. In addition, eight HRMC Towns were the recipients of additional grants under the Recycling Dividends Program. In total, HRMC Towns received \$ 18,200.00 in grant funding - an increase of \$10,900.00

over the previous year. Grant applications for FY17 were submitted in June for a total of more than \$24,200 in funding requests.

The HRMC has an annual assessment that is approved at Annual Town meeting. The annual assessment budget is based on tonnage and population. In FY16, the combined assessment for all ten towns was \$39,487.56. The assessments are intended to offset base operating expenses. Recycling program/collection costs (other than MRF) are pass-thru expenses from the HRMC to the towns to best maximize the economy of scale and to enable the HRMC administrator to have review and oversight of vendor relations, and program operations. In FY16, the HRMC acquired two new MRF containers in an effort to remove containers from the HRMC fleet that were no longer road-worthy.

During the past year, HRMC member towns collectively diverted 1,000.79 tons of recyclable materials to the Springfield MRF. In addition, Plainfield diverted bulky rigid plastics; Cummington, Plainfield, Westhampton, and Williamsburg commenced diversion of EPS (Styrofoam); & Huntington and Williamsburg began diverting clean pellet bags. Williamsburg also continued to serve as the HRMC regional mattress recycling facility and Westhampton served as the host-site for the Household Hazardous Waste Collection event.

The HRMC looks forward to continuing to assist the member Towns during the upcoming year. If you have questions about HRMC programs, call us at 413-685-5498 or by email at hrmc@hrmc-ma.org.

Respectfully submitted,

HRMC Administrator: Kathleen A. Casey

HRMC Member Towns:

Ashfield	Middlefield
Chesterfield	Plainfield
Cummington	Westhampton
Goshen	Williamsburg
Huntington	Worthington

Highway Department

It was another busy year for the Highway Department.



Photo 5 - New Backhoe

Chapter 90 resurfacing and related work was done on portions of Spruce Corner Rd; Plainfield Rd; Murray Rd; Beldingville Rd; Bellus Rd; and Williamsburg Rd.

Engineering, design and survey work is ongoing at the Transfer Station to bring our Transfer Station up to compliance and provide general improvements.

We are in a pilot project with the Department of Fish and Game Division of Ecological Restoration for design and technical services in support of a culvert replacement to be in compliance with Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards and Mass DOT requirements. The project is on the segment of Baptist Corner Rd between the intersections of Beldingville Rd. and Phillips Rd.

A small bridge that carries Apple Valley Rd over Upper Branch of Clesson Brook has suffered severe damage resulting in the bridge being restricted to one lane. We have applied for funding through a new Mass DOT program that would provide funding for small bridges not eligible for federal aid for the replacement of this structure.

Routine road maintenance is an ongoing operation and we continue on a daily basis to repair equipment and perform general road maintenance with a goal to keep Ashfield roads in a state of good repair.

In December we took delivery of a new John Deere backhoe.

I would like to thank the many Boards, Committees, Departments and Town Hall staff for their support throughout the year, it takes a lot of cooperation to make a small town work.

Thank You to Alan Taylor, Jack Clark, Todd Senecal, Nick Nye and Luke Pantermehl for your good dedicated work.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas G. Poissant

Mary Priscilla Howes Fund

The Mary Priscilla Howes Fund was established with initial funds of \$11,116 during 1989 in memory of a much-loved Ashfield resident. The Finance Committee administers the fund. Income from the fund is to be used for cultural and historical projects and events that will benefit the citizens of Ashfield.

The balance of the Mary Priscilla Howes fund as of year-end for FY2016 was \$12,096. To ensure we do not risk over-spending from the fund, the Finance Committee in 2015 passed a motion to ensure that 25% of annual interest would be re-invested in the fund to preserve and grow the principal. The other 75% would continue to be available for grants for future projects and events.

This past year the committee received no applications for a grant.

Applications for a grant may be obtained at the town office or the Finance Committee, and they should be submitted to the Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Murray, Chair
Lindy Gougeon
Carol Lebold
Carl Satterfield
Mary Fitz-Gibbon

Mohawk Trail Regional School District Report of the Superintendent

Hawlemont Regional School District

I have had the good fortune of serving the wonderful communities of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and Hawlemont Regional School District since 2005. My journey with Mohawk began with severe fiscal crisis, and my journey with Hawlemont soon became a similar challenge. Over the next decade, both Mohawk and Hawlemont underwent organizational transformations that resulted in both districts performing at historically high educational levels in 2016.

In June, Mohawk High School was awarded a silver medal by U.S. News & World Report in their 2016 ranking of the best high schools in the United States. On a national level, U.S. News & World Report ranked Mohawk 2,567 of 28,561 high schools in the United States, which places Mohawk among the top 9% of high schools in the nation. On a state level, U.S. News & World Report ranked Mohawk 74 of 353 high schools in Massachusetts, which places Mohawk among the top 21% of high schools in the Commonwealth. Two key principles underlie the U.S. News comprehensive rankings methodology: (1) that a great high school must serve all of its students well, not just those who are college bound and (2) that the high school must be able to produce measurable academic outcomes to show that it is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators. We are very proud of our students, educators and families who have all contributed significantly to this noteworthy achievement. Congratulations!!

With Mohawk's commitment to pre-school programing district-wide, enrollment of three and four-year olds increased to a new high of 122 students in 2016. The largest increase in preschool enrollment occurred at Sanderson Academy, which now has three preschool classes! We are hopeful that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future, which would bode very well for the district long-term. In 2016, both Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School (BSE) and Colrain Central School (CCS) experienced increases in enrollment. BSE enrollment increased 8% to 279 students, and CCS enrollment increased 13% to 117 students. In contrast, Heath Elementary experienced a precipitous drop in enrollment from 50 to 29 students. As a result, both the Mohawk School Committee and the Town of Heath are exploring the viability of Heath Elementary and are considering closing the school and tuitioning the Heath elementary students to another Mohawk elementary school, Hawlemont Regional Elementary School, or Rowe Elementary School.

In 2016, Hawlemont entered into the equivalent of a school renaissance. With its exciting agriculturally-based curriculum **H**awlemont, **A**griculture, and **Y**ou (HAY) just beginning to take shape, Hawlemont's enrollment spiked 23% to 125 students. Most of this growth was due to an increase in parents' choosing to enroll their students into Hawlemont from other districts. In fact, for the first time ever, more students school-choiced into Hawlmont than school-choiced out of Hawlemont. This amazing turnaround from very difficult circumstances only a few years ago is due to the extraordinary efforts of the entire Hawlemont school community. Kudos all around! Another important highlight during 2016 was the installation of a wood pellet heating system in Hawlemont, which is projected to save considerable budget dollars over the long term. This renewable heating system also presents exciting learning opportunities for our students, particularly in the areas of science and math. For example, we will begin tracking Hawlemont's new carbon footprint, which we anticipate dropping considerably from the level previously generated by the former oil-based heating system.

On behalf of our students, I thank the entire Mohawk and Hawlemont school communities for your dedicated support of our children's education. THANK YOU!

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Buoniconti, Superintendent of Schools

Sanderson Academy

It is my pleasure to continue to serve as the Sanderson Academy principal. 2016 saw generally strong academic performances from students, some staffing additions, and work continuing on a number of mandates from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our enrollment as of the end of the 2016 was 148 students in grades preschool through sixth grade. The number of students at each grade level was as follows: 37 children in the preschool, 11 children in kindergarten, 17 children in first grade, 15 children in grade two, grade three had 19 students, fourth grade had 12 students, fifth grade had 13 students and 24 students were in our sixth grade class. All classes were grouped heterogeneously.

The faculty for the 2016-2017 school year consisted of ten full-time classroom teachers, one special education teacher, one full-time reading teacher, and one full-time math interventionist. Specialists providing services in our school include a psychologist three days per week, a speech/language pathologist that services students three days per week, a full time nurse, and occupational and physical therapists, each for less than one half day per week. We have part time art, music, and physical education teachers who provide students with one hour of class time weekly in each subject area. Additional time is offered for band and chorus students in the upper grades. We also have a part-time library manager and nine paraprofessionals. We welcomed Kathleen Wyckoff as the third preschool teacher. Sarah Forbes and Jennifer Lagoy transferred from the Heath Elementary School to teach kindergarten and fourth grade. We welcomed Susan Fuller and Becky Gougeon as paraprofessionals. We also welcomed Julia Shippee for one day a week to teach classroom music and chorus. Denise Sessions joined our staff as the Cafeteria Manager. In addition, we have two part-time before and after-school staff. The program allows students in grades preschool through second grade to receive care from 7:30 to 8:30 and 3:00 to 5:30 each day for a daily rate.

The spring of 2016 saw Sanderson Academy students again performing well on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System (MCAS) tests. In the three areas assessed, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology, our students performed at levels, which were similar to or better than the performances of other students in our District or State. About 74% of our students performed in the advanced and proficient category in English Language Arts and about 67% of students performed in the advanced and proficient category in mathematics. 62% of students performed in the advanced and proficient on Science and Technology assessment.

The Sanderson Academy Safety Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis to address school safety. We continually revise our safety binders. We have monthly fire drills, at least three lockdown drills a year, and school evacuation drills. Many of these drills include local and state emergency service personnel. The trail that connects the school to the town garage, our evacuation site, is complete.

Thank you citizens of Ashfield and Plainfield for all you do to support your community school!

Respectfully submitted,

Emma Liebowitz M.Ed., Principal

Special Education and Pupil Services

The Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Regional Special Education Department serves students in the Sanderson, Colrain, Hawlemont, Buckland-Shelburne, and Mohawk Middle and High Schools. The primary function is to ensure that students with an IEP or a 504 are being serviced at a level required to make effective progress with supports outlined in their IEP or 504. According to state data, The Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Districts have about 19% of their student population receiving special education services. Those services are in several areas: speech and language, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), counseling and academics. Every school has at least one special education teacher and an OT and PT who spend about one day a week in each school. Mohawk has a full time Speech Language Assistant and a part time Speech Language Pathologist. BSE has a full time and part time Speech Language Pathologist and Assistant. Colrain and Hawlemont share a full time Speech Language Pathologist and Assistant. Heath has a one day a week Speech Language Pathologist and Sanderson has a four day a week Speech Pathologist. Sanderson has three days of a Clinical School Psychologist. BSE and Colrain share an Adjustment Counselor and each has a School Psychologist. Hawlemont has a three day a week School Psychologist and Heath has a two day a week School Psychologist. The Middle and High Schools have a full time Adjustment Counselor and School Psychologist. The level of services in each building is based on population and the level of services legally required by an IEP.

With the support and initiative of several parents, the district was able to support a SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council). The council created by-laws, held monthly meetings and reached out to parents looking for support. We hope this year enables us to continue the support those parents created.

Over the last year, the districts had 12 students who were educated outside of the school district. Those students attended a school out of district for several reasons: 1) The district does not have a program that meets the student's level of need or 2) The student attended an out of district school prior to moving to the district and legally then is allowed to continue their placement in the school or 3) The last known address of the parent of the student was in our district and the DCF (Department of Children and Families) has placed the student in a residential school, requiring the district to pay for the educational component of the program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leann Loomis, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Mohawk Trail Regional High School Annual Report of the Co-Principals

Mohawk was recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as a Silver Medal school in 2016. Schools are ranked based on student performance on state testing as well as other factors (including attendance and graduation rates) that indicate how well they prepare students for college. Using a variety of measures, *U.S. News and World Report* places Mohawk in the top 21% of schools in Massachusetts and top 9% of schools in the country. Two key principles inform this ranking process: that a great high school must serve all of its students well, not just those who are college-bound, and that it must be able to produce measurable academic outcomes to show it is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators.

Mohawk educators innovate to create rich learning experiences for our students. One example is the new Integrated Arts and English course collaboration between visual arts teacher Rachel Silverman and English teacher Rachel Hoogstraten. Ninth-grade students had the option to select the English 9 section that was partnered with an arts course so that they examine connections with the visual arts as they engage in exploration of literary works as diverse as Elie Wiesel's *Night*, Marjane Satrapi's memoir *Persepolis*, and John Steinbeck's novella *Of Mice and Men*.

After several years in development as a pilot course, this year the Senior Capstone Seminar is a graduation requirement for all seniors. Four educators collaborate in offering sections of the course throughout the day: English and History teacher Bill Drake, English teacher Erik Sussbauer, French and English teacher Michelle MacInnes, and Science and Computer Science teacher Downey Meyer. The Capstone course is designed to provide students with structured support as they pursue a substantive project based on their personal interests and passions; in many instances students choose a project that is associated with a field of study or career path that interests them. The following is a sampling of these diverse projects: Max Carr is building a weather balloon; Angela Szewczyk is creating a line of clothing and plans on having a fashion show as her final project; Tyler Rice is conducting a social media experiment about phone usage and people's emotional response to having their phones taken away; Sophie Raphael has been studying how using music can help students learn and retain vocabulary words and she has spent time working in a middle school teacher's classroom to test her theory; Brendan Gerry is working on fabricating a pig roaster; Rebecca Scranton is exploring mathematics teaching by observing math classes; Mahalia Dean is building a web site to share her family's long history in the region; Emma Musante is putting together an art show; Christina Tiberii is documenting her work as an

assistant director for the production of the play “The Mouse That Roared” that was staged December 16; Christina Lively is setting up a 4-H club at Mohawk; Torsten Sloan Anderson is working on creating genetically modified bacteria that glows; Adam Hallenbeck, Zeke Rodriguez, and Sarah Paige are writing and recording their own songs to record a CD; and Autumn Smith is developing a business plan for setting up a bakery business.

Mohawk continues to expand offerings in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) with Robotics and Exploring Computer Science available to all high school students. Math teachers increasingly use Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) approaches to math instruction which emphasize active engagement and problem-solving and high school science teachers use Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning approaches. Seventh grade science teacher Samantha Rutz was honored by the Massachusetts Association of Science Teachers (MAST) as the Franklin County Science Educator of the Year.

Mohawk students pursue advanced study in a wide range of subjects. In 2016 students took Advanced Placement exams in the following subjects: Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, Comparative Government and Politics, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, European History, Human Geography, Macroeconomics, Physics, U.S. Government, and U.S. History. Members of the Class of 2016 are continuing their education at Brandeis University, Campbell University, Clarkson University, Endicott College, Elms College, Fitchburg State College, Franklin Pierce University, George Washington University, Greenfield Community College, Green Mountain College, High Point University, Holyoke Community College, Keene State College, Mount Holyoke College, Oberlin College, Occidental College, Regis College, Rochester Institute of Technology, Smith College, Stonehill College, Southern Connecticut State, St. Lawrence University, Syracuse University, University of Massachusetts - Amherst, University of New England, University of Advancing Technology, and University of Tampa.

Technology continues to enrich student learning. The Class of 2016 gave 3-D printers as a class gift, and we have expanded our use of Chromebooks in the classroom. This year School Librarian Emily Willis began teaching Digital Literacy courses to middle school students, emphasizing responsible and informed use of online resources and media literacy. Teachers throughout our building focus on critical thinking and literacy skills to prepare students to be informed citizens.

Mohawk’s extensive athletic program offers many opportunities. Athletic Director Fred Redeker notes that 79% of the graduating Class of 2016 played at least one sport while at Mohawk. Of those 57 students, 52 played at the

varsity level of their respective sports, and 90% of those who played varsity participated in post-season play.

Our school uses Restorative Practices such as restorative circles, mediation conversations, and school-based community service assignments as part of an integrated approach to student discipline. Mohawk teachers and students have engaged in dialogue circles to support conversations regarding school culture and climate, and topics such as the role of technology in students' lives.

At the mid-point of the 2016-2017 school year, enrollment in grades 7-12 is 430. The seventh grade has 81 students and the eighth grade has 93 students. There are 57 students in grade 9, 68 in 10th grade, 69 juniors, and 62 seniors. Four students are enrolled in our post-graduate program.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Dole and Marisa Mendonsa, Co-Principals

Ashfield School Department

Vocational, Technical and Agricultural Education

Ashfield maintains a town school department for vocational education students, grades 9 to 12 inclusive. It is financially separate from the Mohawk Trail Regional School District. Our town tuitions these students to the Franklin County Technical School (Turners Falls) and Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School (Northampton). Ashfield is responsible for the cost of tuition and transportation of our students, and received state education aid from the Commonwealth (chapter 70 funds) in the amount of \$93,413 which covered only around 20% of eligible cost. Chapter 74 Vocational Ed Transportation Reimbursement was reinstated for FY 17, with Ashfield receiving \$40,577 (54.6% of expense).

Student Enrollment – Recent enrollment at the two schools slightly declined in FY 2017, and remains at 17 as of April 2017. Enrollment for FY 2018 will increase substantially.

Franklin County Technical School

School Year	# Grade 9	# Grade 10	# Grade 11	# Grade 12	Total 9-12
2015-2016	2	2	6	2	12
2016-2017	2	2	4	3	11

Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School

School Year	# Grade 9	# Grade 10	# Grade 11	# Grade 12	Total 9-12
2015-2016	1	5	1	0	7
2016-2017	0	1	4	1	6

Congratulations to Franklin Tech graduates Kyle Johnson and Hailey Perkins McCraw who graduated in June of 2016.

Appropriation and Estimated Expense for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017. – The town appropriated the following amounts for vocational education at the May 2014 + 2015 annual town meetings:

[For FY 2016: Smith School Base Tuition @ \$17,556. Franklin Tech Base Tuition @ \$17,550]

Item	FY 16 Appropriation	FY 16 Expended	FY 17 Appropriation
Regular Base Tuition	\$379,648	\$274,223	\$343,548
Special Educ. Tuition	24,602	8,380	15,500
Transportation	86,063	75,976	102,353
total	\$490,313	\$358,579	\$461,401

Estimated expense for 2016-2017 will likely be around \$371,000.

Oversight – Currently, the Finance Committee is responsible for the administration and oversight of the town vocational school department. Each year the committee appoints one of its members to serve as department coordinator.

Vocational Education Advisory Committee – Representatives from Ashfield, Charlemont, Plainfield and Hawley continue to coordinate and oversee the vocational-ed programs of the four 'tuitioning towns'. Two years ago, the committee implemented a cost-savings program using gasoline from the Ashfield Highway Facility. The pilot was again successful and saved the four towns over \$25,000 in FY 2016. It is being continued this year. VEAC is working closely with the state Dept. of Education and Mohawk officials, endeavoring to implement improvements in operations and administrative changes.

Starting in FY 2016, Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the four towns implemented a new method of transportation payments, made by Mohawk and assessed to the member towns – a simplified and time-saving change. Looking ahead to FY 2018, enrollments are expected to increase by 29% which will necessitate the increase in tuition and transportation expense, as two additional vans will be needed for the four towns.

Poppy Doyle is Mohawk's member to the committee. Kaycee Warren serves as Ashfield's member and Lynn Taylor has been appointed as alternate. David Newell continues to serve as the VEAC Clerk and administrator.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Newell, Vocational Education Advisory Committee Clerk

Mary Lyon Foundation, Inc.

The Mary Lyon Foundation is a 501(c)(3) community-based, non-profit organization that provides innovative support for education in our nine West County towns. Named in honor of Buckland-born educator Mary Lyon, who founded Mount Holyoke College in 1837, the organization continues to provide programs and services that greatly enhance the quality of local education.

This year was highlighted by a gala celebration of the Mary Lyon Foundation's auspicious 25th anniversary. On August 6, at the Mary Lyon House in Buckland, 25 doves were released to commemorate the 25 successful years the foundation has provided services, programs, scholarships, mini-grants, and professional development opportunities to enhance local education. Opening remarks were given by Dr. Bruce Willard, and Susan Daniels, a Mount Holyoke graduate, delivered the keynote speech. Bruce Willard, Jack Williams, and David Newell were honored for their vision and early support of the Mary Lyon Foundation. The launch of the Putnam Hill Legacy Society with 15 founding members was officially announced. Our annual George Needham Business Award for extraordinary support of local education was presented to Blackmer Insurance Agency, and the Mohawk Outstanding Graduate Award was presented to Danny Field, formerly of Shelburne Falls, for his community contributions.

In September with our library partner, Arms Library, we distributed thousands of bookmarks at the Franklin County Fair and parade to kick-off our NEA Big Read of Luis Urrea's *Into the Beautiful North*. Funded by MassHumanities and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts' Franklin Fund, in October our Big Read hosted a vibrant *Spirit of Place Community Day* at Greenfield Community College (GCC). With support from GCC, Holyoke Community College (HCC), and generous cultural partners, we engaged families with music, storytelling, dance, art, poetry, a Dia de los Muertos altar, and a community meal. Afternoon panel discussions began with dynamic keynote speaker Sienna Wildfield of *Hilltown Families*. We also brought Mariachi Mexico Antiguo and the 1960 film version of "The Magnificent Seven" to Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls and will host the author at GCC and HCC in April 2017. We were the only organization in MA to receive one of the 77 coveted grants awarded this year by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Mary Lyon Foundation once again raised significant funds for mini-grants for innovative, educational projects in our local schools. The 11th annual Community Spelling Bee was held on November 10 at Mohawk Trail Regional School; 30 teams representing public and private schools, youth groups, senior citizens, civic organizations and businesses were led by Master of Ceremonies

Jill Connolly and Spell Master Art Schwenger. A warm welcome was provided by Superintendent Michael Buoniconti, and Shelburne selectman Joe Judd convened a prestigious panel of judges. Winning the Grand Championship was the Cash Cow spelling bee team comprised of Samantha Rutz, Anneka Dunnington and Lauren Binger.

We greatly appreciate the support of the Myrtle Atkinson Foundation, TransCanada, Mayhew Steel Products, local financial institutions and businesses. We continue to provide warm clothes, food, eyeglasses, and other basic necessities for children in need through our ongoing Harper Gerry Student Assistance Fund, and we are grateful for the support of the United Way of Franklin County, the generous payroll deductions of school district staff, People's United Community Foundation, and many individual contributions that help us support children and their families.

Members of the Board of Directors for 2016 were:

- Sylvia Orcutt, President
- Hugh Knox, Vice President
- Karen Fairbrother, Treasurer
- Katherine McKay, Recording Secretary
- Sharon Hudson, Corresponding Secretary
- Robin Morgan Huntley, Joanne LaCour, Susan Schuman, Peter Stevens, Marion Taylor (Past President) and Lawrence Wells
- MTRS Student Representatives: Eli Shearer and Lilly Wells

Business Manager is Gina Sieber, and volunteer Office Manager is Sandy Gilbert. The Board of Directors joins us in thanking the many generous individuals, businesses, and organizations in our community for making 2016 a highly successful year.

Sheila Damkoehler and Susan Samoriski, Co-Executive Directors

Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund

The fund was established under the provisions of the will of Carl H. Nilman for the purpose of providing scholarships. Recipients shall reside in the School District and be graduates of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School who desire and are deemed worthy of post high school education or training and who are in need of financial assistance.

This year the Awards Subcommittee read 77 applications; 28 were from seniors and 49 were from graduates. \$33,350 was our allotment for scholarships which we used 30% for seniors and 70% for graduates. The Committee feels that seniors have multiple scholarship opportunities from other sources while graduates have fewer resources. 23 scholarships totaling \$10,000.00 were awarded to seniors (82% of applicants) 40 scholarships totaling \$23,350 were given to graduates (82%) of applicants.

From 1991-2016 a total of \$909,975.00 has been awarded in scholarships. Mohawk seniors have received \$280,775.00 and \$629,200.00 has been awarded to Mohawk graduates.

The same formula for determining what percentages of the fund should be distributed as scholarships, which had been established by the School Committee and the management firm of Bartholomew and Co., was used again this year.

Once again the applications is available on line to the graduates and seniors can pick up their application at Mohawk

Press releases were published in both the Independent and the Greenfield Recorder in March containing information about the Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund.

There are fifteen members on the Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Committee; one from each of the nine member towns in the district, three at large members appointed by the School Committee, plus a past School Committee, current School Committee member and the chairman of the School Committee. Members from the nine towns are: Sheila Graves (Ashfield), Marion Scott (Buckland), Marge Porrovecchio (Charlemont), Michelle Hillman (Colrain), Jonathan Diamond (Heath), Alice Parker (Hawley), Allen Irvine (Plainfield), Marion Taylor (Shelburne) and Rowe (open). Suzanne Crawford is the representative to the School Committee.

Officers: Marge Porrovecchio and Robin Hartnett, Co-Chairs and Marion Scott is Secretary. Subcommittees are: Finance, Marion Taylor, Robin Hartnett and David Engle/Eric Sumner. Scholarship: Marge

Porrovecchio, Sheila Graves, Michelle Hillman, Marion Scott and Allen Irvine.

The Mohawk community owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Nilman for his foresight in supporting higher education for the students of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School. The committee members are honored to bring the wishes of his will to fruition.

Students of any age who are graduates of Mohawk (and were living in the nine town area at the time of graduation) are encouraged to apply for scholarships to help meet their continuing education needs. Please call the Guidance Office at Mohawk for information regarding requirements and deadlines.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion E. Scott, Secretary

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee

Full updating of the Ashfield Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) got underway in April, with the re-convening of the OSRP Update Committee – a dedicated and talented group representing seven Town boards and commissions. As originally intended, the updated Plan will serve as an effective guide for boards, commissions and committees in balancing conservation/recreation projects with agricultural/forestry practices and specific development proposals. Also, the Plan will enable the Town to apply for key grants related to recreational activities and/or conservation measures.

The Committee was boosted by a grant from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), which helped with work on key chapter revisions, as well as new and revised mapping data. Introduced or expanded topics include those on scenic resources, cultural history, water quality and resources, agricultural lands, invasive plant species, and climate change.

As we move into 2017 the Committee looks to continue its progress, with the assistance of another grant from FRCOG and expertise from Pat Smith, FRCOG Senior Land Use Planner, as well as guidance from Town administrator Kayce

Warren. Inventory of lands of conservation and recreation interest, community goals and objectives, analysis of needs, seven-year action plans, and public participation/forums are all on the agenda.

It is our hope to have the revised Plan completed by late 2017 or early 2018.



Respectfully submitted,

Alan Rice, Chair

Mollie Babize

Anne Capra

Duncan Colter

Nancy Garvin

Judy Haupt

Barb Miller

Anne Yuryan

Park Commission

2016 was celebrated at the Park with the installation of a new dock for our beach. More than \$16,000 was raised by townsfolk, near and far with donations coming from California, Montana, and Colorado! Along with monetary donations, many hours were spent by volunteers picking up the sections, assembling and floating the dock, all spearheaded by Stuart Harris, Tom Carter, the Pantermehl boys, Mike Dufresne and others. We then immediately set about raising more funds for the design and creation of the ladders and diving board for next summer.

Kudos to the many volunteers who helped out at our Spring and Fall cleanups, saving the Commission much needed funds for other projects.

Our lifeguard team included Amar Abbatiello, Kory Rankin, James Harrison and Ella Deters. We were not able to hold swim lessons due to the late dock installation and a lack of instructors.

Thanks to folks' prompt removal of their boats, we were able to avoid the annual auction of vessels left behind for the winter.

The Upper Park hosted 2 weddings and several large group and family picnics. And the bluebird houses hosted 2 families over the summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Haupt, Chair
Sally Rice
Kyle Taylor

Personnel Board

One of the charges to the Personnel Board is to “describe the duties and responsibilities of municipal positions.” This charge was acted upon several times during 2016 as there were several changes within town personnel providing the opportunity to take a fresh look those positions.

Early in the year the vacant and available administrative leadership position was filled by Kayce Warren initially on an interim basis. Other positions soon became available as long-time employees Ann Dunn (Town Clerk) and Laura Blakesley (Treasurer) moved on to other challenges or retired. With each change the board reviewed and revised those positions to fit current requirements. Whenever possible the departing occupant of the position was included in the process. We now have updated job descriptions for Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Highway Worker.

It was our plan to turn our updated Personnel Policy over to counsel for her review, but she had other ideas. Attorney McNicol presented us with a policy which she had written for another town and suggested that we could save the town a lot of money if we were willing to adapt ours to that one. So, that is what we are doing. It’s turning out to be an interesting process. We have discovered a number of labor-related items that have either changed or are newly enacted.

At some point we hope to work with the Town Administrator on developing a classification of town positions with a wage range policy that will be equitable for all.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Phelps, Chairperson

Thomas Carter, Select Board Representative

Melinda Gougeon, Finance Committee Representative

Wayne B. Farrell, Member at Large

Jennifer Markens, Member at Large

Kayce Warren, Town Administrator

Planning Board

The planning board consulted with many citizens with concerns and questions about land use in our town. Issues discussed included telecommunication, senior housing, the pipeline, and green development.

We continue to work with the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee in an advisory role.

An increasing number of property boundary changes were brought to us for ANR signatures.

One special permit hearing was held for the purpose of expanding an existing special permit.

Our long term planning efforts continues to look at encouraging senior housing Ashfield. This effort included a public opinion survey of citizens. We hope to present town meeting with a proposal to help facilitate senior housing in town

The Planning board recommended two bylaws to town meeting this year. These included an associate member bylaw updates to our telecommunications bylaw.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Fitzgerald, Chair

Alan Rice, Clerk

Lauren Preston-Wells

Ken Miller

Jim Cutler

Police Department

In 2016 the Ashfield Police Department continued to serve the citizens of the Town in a professional and courteous manner.

House checks are done regularly on shift. If you are going on vacation and want to have your house checked please call the police station with the information. All information obtained is confidential.

During 2016 the prescription drug box kiosk was installed in the outer lobby of the police station at the town hall. This program allows residents to drop off their prescription and non-prescription medications without question for destruction. The kiosk is available during open town hall hours.

In September of 2016 Chief Diane Wilder retired from service. The Board of Selectmen then appointed David Gendron, retired Chief, as Interim Police Chief during this transition period.

The October Fall Festival was a great success; Officer's worked diligently to assist residents and visitors during this event. As in the past, the event was well organized and it was our pleasure working with the Fall Festival Committee.

Several new officers were appointed to continue the level of service during the last months of 2016; Officers Gretchen Gerstner, David Shane Hill, Dan Thibault, Mark Ruddock, Robert Holst, Kritjan Viise and Gary Sibilia. Auxiliary Officers; David Karbon, Fred Bezio and Kyle Walker were appointed as well. Auxiliary Officers donate their time to assist the Department.

Officer's Conan Pelc and Jerry Konopko continued to serve the community as in previous years.

I would like to thank all the Town's residents who have supported this department past and present.

I am looking forward to a prosperous and safe new year for our community and our residents. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (413) 628-4441 extension 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Ann Bezio
Interim Police Chief

Senior Center

It has been another busy year for the Senior Center. All three member towns continued to show an increase in use of services and programs. Ashfield increased usage both within Ashfield, at the Center in Shelburne Falls and with use of the FRTA Van Service. We have welcomed some new Ashfield residents who have made use of available programs with some visiting regularly. 171 Ashfield individuals utilized programs and services 3,731 times. Thank you to the First Congregational Church for hosting our monthly events.

A monthly drop-in session for residents to meet with Outreach Coordinator Leanne Dowd is available at St. John's Corner. We are grateful to St. John's for the use of their facility for this program and the Healthy Bones and Balance weekly exercise class led by local volunteers. Leanne is available in Ashfield and at the Center for drop-in meetings or by appointment and provides support for caregivers, information on services and assistance with applications. She will also make a home visit for people unable to travel outside their home. This year we welcomed new Council on Aging members Nina Laurie and Anne Yuryan. They join Doug Field Steve Zamojski and Wayne Wickland in representing Ashfield seniors. COA members are also part of the Council on Aging Advisory Board with members of all three towns. Together the Board works with the Director and Selectmen to best serve residents needs and interests.

In addition to programs and services at the Senior Center the Ashfield COA members had a luncheon at the Lake House, a picnic at Belding Park, a holiday dinner at the Curtis house and the students at Sanderson invited Ashfield and Plainfield seniors to a luncheon and entertainment for Christmas.

The Ashfield Council on Aging hosted one of the debates for the Massachusetts State Senate between

Democrat Adam Hinds and Republican Christine Canning – Wilson. Approximately 100 people attended the event.

Transportation is available for medical appointments Monday through Friday to anywhere in Franklin County. Riders call the Center to request rides, reservations are taken and one of our van drivers picks up at the residents (60+years) at their home. Curb to curb service is offered. Small fees are charged per contract to defray costs of the service. FRTA has provided a third van for our fleet to meet these needs. Due to the availability of the FRTA vans, Ashfield gave up their van this year. It was no longer being used and in need of repair.

After numerous studies and consideration, the Senior Center is working with the towns to expand their space. The current space is no longer adequate. The Senior Center Foundation, a nonprofit group dedicated to supporting the mission of the Senior Center has begun a Capital Fund and campaign to solicit donations for this effort. The three towns are now working together on the best way to move forward with this project as well.

Please contact your COA members or staff at the Center for any additional information. A free newsletter is available for pick up, by mail, and on our web pages at www.townofshelburne.com/departments/seniorcenter. Join us and share what is available to other Ashfield residents.

We also wish to thank the one hundred volunteers who helped make all this possible throughout the year!

Respectfully submitted,

Cathleen Buntin, Senior Center Director

Sewer Commission

The operation of the treatment plant was routine in 2016 and flows were consistently normal. There is little of significance to report for the year, except how we are positioning ourselves to meet future demands.

The Sewer Commission signed a contract in August with DPC Engineering to provide us with both a Facilities Report required for permit renewal in 2017 and an Inflow & Infiltration study to fulfill the requirements of 314 CMR:12.04 (2) which requires all treatment plants in the state to complete an Inflow & Infiltration analysis by the end of calendar 2017.

These two studies should provide information that will help the town plan for capital improvements. The facilities report may help the town to better gauge the life expectancy of the current treatment plant and to project when major upgrades may be required. The Inflow & Infiltration study should assist the town in determining to what extent ground water and other clean water sources enter the collection system and what type of remediation will be cost effective. Sewer rates have increased somewhat this year to cover the costs of these studies and prepare for future expense. Most of our equipment is now twenty years old, so we can anticipate increasing replacement costs in future years.

Small improvements have been made to the plant this year, including a shed to store small equipment in. We have found that neither the corrosive atmosphere of the headworks nor the extreme temperatures of the greenhouses are beneficial to small engines. We have also replaced two variable frequency drives used to operate the blowers because parts were no longer available.

The biggest cost increase we have seen this year involves the disposal of sludge. Montague is no longer able to accept sludge, so it is being trucked to Cranston, RI. Hauling & disposal cost has doubled.

As always, we are indebted to Michele & Rebekah Novak for their very reliable weekend and holiday coverage. Sadly, we expect to see some personnel changes in the coming year. We are also indebted to the Fall Festival committee and festival goers for their continuing use of porta-potties.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoff
Dan Lovett
Thomas Miner Jr.

Town Accountant

FY2016 General Fund Revenues Budget to Actual Summary

<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Taxes	3,874,194	3,913,929	-39,735
Licenses and Permits	500	603	-103
Intergovernmental	290,745	299,382	-8,637
Charges for Services	58,000	70,236	-12,236
Fees and Fines	7,000	16,824	-9,824
Unclassified	2,500	10,579	-8,079
Transfer from other funds	7,900	0	7,900
Total Revenues	\$ 4,242,339	\$ 4,313,748	\$ -71,409

FY2016 General Fund Revenues Expenditures to Actual Summary

<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
General Government	437,301	323,907	113,394
Public Safety	237,685	228,051	9,634
Public Works	758,784	689,760	69,024
Community Services	171,274	126,352	44,922
Education	2,562,560	2,454,825	107,735
Insurance and Fringe Benefits	153,110	135,484	17,626
Unclassified	122,413	122,264	149
Total Expenditures	\$ 4,595,544	\$ 4,226,509	\$ 369,035

Ashfield Special Revenue Funds FY2016

30-Jun-16

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>YTD Revenues</u>	<u>YTD Expenses</u>	<u>Balance</u>
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Highway Funds

218 MA Highway-C90 FY08	-373,814.39	373,814.39	-356,304.20	-356,304.20
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Revolving Funds

231 Wetlands Protection Fund	4,164.35	0.00	0.00	4,164.35
232 Dog Revolving Fund	12,917.61	1,879.00	-809.65	13,986.96
235 Youth Comm Revolving Fund	571.50	0.00	0.00	571.50
236 Library Fees Revolving Fund	3,434.45	1,980.00	-2,500.00	2,914.45
237 Swimming Program Rev Fund	741.45	860.00	-1,369.00	232.45
238 Lake Dock Donations	0.00	15,612.70	-4,529.95	11,082.75

Other Special Revenue Funds

255 Opp Against Pipeline	0.00	1,271.00	0.00	1,271.00
256 Town History Book Sales	6,610.29	5,013.19	-9,470.44	2,153.04
258 Recycling Grant	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
261 Food Inspection Grant	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
262 Employee Wellness Grant	642.36	0.00	-85.00	557.36
263 Tree Donations	1,494.87	0.00	0.00	1,494.87
264 Flu Clinic Donations	1,429.00	0.00	0.00	1,429.00
265 Sanderson Barn-Ins Donation	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
269 Con Comm Clerk Donations	77.87	0.00	0.00	77.87
271 Human Relations	12.87	0.00	0.00	12.87
272 Record Preservation	3,505.48	0.00	-1,934.00	1,571.48
273 Police Donations Fund	753.54	50.00	0.00	803.54
274 O'Donnell Donations	101.34	0.00	0.00	101.34
275 Steeple Donations	2,686.82	0.00	0.00	2,686.82
276 TH Preservation & Renovation	14,711.18	625.00	-400.00	14,936.18
277 Ambulance Donations	995.24	0.00	0.00	995.24
279 Grant Program Income	14,392.80	0.00	0.00	14,392.80
280 Cultural Council Donations	431.22	250.00	0.00	681.22
281 Septic Repair Program	75,008.65	25.62	0.00	75,034.27
282 Belding Endowment-Library	2,816.95	309.54	0.00	3,126.49
283 Library Investment Earnings	9,699.24	9,697.98	-12,941.54	6,455.68
284 J Donald Art Fund	483.97	0.00	0.00	483.97
285 Belding Endowment-Park	1,087.70	0.00	0.00	1,087.70
287 Green Energy Grant	-2,116.30	37,370.00	-2,469.72	32,783.98
288 Solarize Mass	2,287.61	0.00	-1,971.89	315.72
289 K-9 Support Fund	58.87	0.00	0.00	58.87
291 Library Donations, Fundraising	15,694.78	1,418.90	0.00	17,113.68
292 Town History Fund	4,803.96	0.00	-4,803.96	0.00
294 T H Floor Preservation Fund	4,401.54	0.00	0.00	4,401.54
295 Insurance Proceeds	0.00	3,667.40	-3,667.40	0.00
296 Historic Commission Donations	300.70	0.00	0.00	300.70
298 WMRLS Grant	689.52	0.00	0.00	689.52
301 Town Hall Employee Fund	140.26	30.00	-47.50	122.76

State & Federal Grants

410 FEMA Snow Emergency Funds	363.54	0.00	0.00	363.54
411 FEMA Storm Emergency Funds	4,517.97	0.00	0.00	4,517.97
412 Council on Aging Grant	3,761.50	4,500.00	-4,500.00	3,761.50
414 Library State Aid	0.00	2,774.69	-2,774.69	0.00
415 Cultural Council	3,169.44	4,905.00	-4,071.07	4,003.37
419 Failed Septic System Grant	10,064.08	0.00	0.00	10,064.08
420 Fire Dept SAFE Grant	1,269.08	5,754.00	-6,409.81	613.27
421 Volunteer Firefighters Grant	389.26	0.00	0.00	389.26
423 EDS Grant	670.99	0.00	0.00	670.99
425 Agricultural Innovation Gr	566.95	0.00	0.00	566.95
427 Forest Fire Grant	2,806.85	1,444.00	0.00	4,250.85
429 Small Scale Recycling Grant	0.00	2,600.00	-308.04	2,291.96

Enterprise Fund

610 WWTP Fund	105,218.65	117,025.13	-122,160.83	100,082.95
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Capital Projects

710 Capital Project-Highway Garage	1,640.43	0.00	0.00	1,640.43
715 Capital Project - Highway Grader	0.00	167,000.00	-167,000.00	0.00
716 Capital Project - Library	0.00	30,292.33	-10,743.60	19,548.73

Trust Funds

811 Mary Priscilla Howes Fund	12,295.93	49.95	-250.00	12,095.88
812 William Hathaway Fund	41,847.46	79.61	-5,048.00	36,879.07
813 Susan Howes Fund	8,099.00	13.84	0.00	8,112.84
814 Major King Fund	18,953.98	34.61	0.00	18,988.59
815 Eliza Miller Fund	36,228.09	69.22	0.00	36,297.31
816 Whiting Street Fund	9,078.92	20.77	0.00	9,099.69
817 Henry Taylor Fund	20,089.93	45.00	0.00	20,134.93
818 Salmon Miller Fund	38,301.33	83.07	0.00	38,384.40
819 Fred Cross General Fund	38,029.35	96.29	0.00	38,125.64
820 Other Cemetery Fund	1,250.00	0.00	0.00	1,250.00
821 Mabelle Jordan Fund	42.81	0.08	0.00	42.89
822 Fred Cross Library Fund	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
823 Fred Cross Cemetery Fund	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
824 Belding Endowment-Park/Library	20,522.38	0.00	0.00	20,522.38

825 Net Fund Cash	5,071.07	10.17	0.00	5,081.24
830 Stabilization Fund	421,429.79	68,350.40	0.00	489,780.19
831 Capital Stabilization	0.00	2,004.19	0.00	2,004.47

Agency Funds

889 Custodian Fees	11.04	0.00	0.00	11.04
890 Retirees Health Ins	0.00	10,328.67	-10,328.67	0.00
891 Off Duty Police Detail	-218.00	18,056.50	-17,861.50	-23.00
892 Firearm ID Cards	5,587.50	2,087.50	-2,477.50	5,197.50
893 TH Steward Fees	0.00	175.00	-175.00	0.00
894 Fire Dept Fees	68.00	1,330.00	-930.00	468.00
896 Collector's Demands	0.00	6,126.00	0.00	6,126.00
897 Collector's MLCs	259.00	0.00	0.00	259.00
898 Deputy Collector's Fees	2,255.00	2,991.00	-3,227.00	2,019.00
899 Water District Fees	0.00	122,066.61	-87,572.96	34,493.65

Town Clerk

Staff

During 2016 the Department was staffed by Town Clerks Ann Dunne and Bridget Rodrigue and Assistant Town Clerk Lynn Taylor. The Department was able to function smoothly during the transition due to the effort and commitment of Lynn Taylor, which is noted and appreciated.

Vitals

Recorded Vital Statistics			
1916 & 2016			
Year	Births	Deaths	Marriages
1916	16	19	10
2016	12	13	6
1916 Town Clerk – Allison G. Howes			
2016 Town Clerks – Ann Dunne (Resigned July 28, 2016) Bridget Rodrigue (Appointed October 11, 2016)			

Licenses

We had another good year for dog licenses, with 402 licenses issued during the year.

Voter Registration

The Town Clerk’s Office continued to utilize the State Voter Registration Information System for voter registration. This system connects Ashfield with Town Clerk offices across the state to avoid duplication of registrations, and allows residents to register to vote or change their address or party affiliation at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This system also supports online voter registration.

Census

The Town Clerk’s office printed and prepared the census forms in-house, as has been done in years past. These forms were then distributed to residents for updating. The 2016 population per the Town Census was 1,711.

Town Profile			
Population As of January 1, 2016 Census		Political Party Affiliation As of December 31, 2016	
Population by Age Group		Recognized Parties in MA	
Under 20 years	293	Democrat	443
20-29 years	156	Republican	83
30-39 years	171	Green- Rainbow	7
40-49 years	199	United Independent	6
50-59 years	262	Unenrolled	798
60-69 years	395	Political Designations	
70 years and over	235	Libertarian	4
Total	1711	Total	1341

Town Election

The Annual Town Election was held on Saturday, May 7, 2016. There were only 216 ballots cast, for a turnout of only 16%.

Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting was also held on Saturday, May 7, 2016 and featured 32 Warrant Articles. There were also two Special Town Meetings held during 2016. The June 13, 2016 meeting featured 7 Warrant Articles, while the November 15, 2016 meeting featured 10 Warrant Articles.

Note: An excerpted copy of the proceedings for Town Meetings are included elsewhere in this report.

**Town of Ashfield
Annual Town Election – May 7, 2016**

Registered voters 1364
Ballots Cast 216
% Turnout 16%

Position	Name	Total # of Votes
Moderator	Stewart Eisenberg	184
	Blank	32
Tree Warden	Thomas Poissant	188
	Blank	25
	Robert Abbatiello	1
	Walter Cudnohufsky	1
	Harry Dodson	1
Select Board	Thomas Carter	191
	Blank	24
	Paullette Leukhardt	1
Board of Assessors	George Stephan	168
	Blank	47
	Judy Haupt	1
Finance Committee	Edwin Murray	188
	Blank	28
Finance Committee	Melinda Gougeon	185
	Blank	31
Finance Committee	Carol Lebold	176
	Blank	40
School Committee	Helen "Poppy" Doyle	184
	Blank	32
Board of Health	Karen Lavallee	174
	Blank	42

Constable	Elizabeth Lesure	191
	Blank	25
Constable	John LaBelle	191
	Blank	25
Park Commission	Judith Haupt	185
	Blank	31
Sewer Commission	Daniel Lovett	171
	Blank	45
Planning Board	Kenneth Miller	177
	Blank	39
Library Trustee	Esther Coler	186
	Blank	30
Ballot Question # 1	Yes	140
2 ½ override	No	75
	Blank	1
Ballot Question # 2	Yes	143
	No	70
	Blank	3

TOWN OF ASHFIELD PRESIDENTIAL/STATE ELECTION -- NOVEMBER 8, 2016 UNOFFICIAL RESULTS -- NOT INCLUDING PROVISIONALS OR OVERSEAS BALLOTS	
REGISTERED VOTERS	1,400
TOTAL VOTES CAST	1139
% of Registered Voters	81.36%
OFFICES OF PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT	
BLANKS	23
CLINTON & KAINE	820
JOHNSON & WELD	52
STEIN & BARAKA	44
TRUMP & PENCE	184
WRITE-INS	16
TOTALS	1139
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS -- FIRST DISTRICT	
BLANKS	83
RICHARD E. NEAL	772
FREDERICK O. MAYOCK	91
THOMAS T. SIMMONS	192
WRITE-INS	1
TOTALS	1139
COUNCILLOR -- EIGHT DISTRICT	
BLANKS	244
MARY E. HURLEY	895
WRITE-INS	0
TOTALS	1139
SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT	
BLANKS	51
CHRISTINE M. CANNING	176
ADAM G. HINDS	912
WRITE-INS	0
TOTALS	1139
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT -- 1st FRANKLIN	
BLANKS	151
STEPHEN KULIK	987
WRITE-INS	1
TOTALS	1139

SHERIFF -- Franklin County	
BLANKS	223
CHRISTOPHER J. DONELAN	916
WRITE-INS	0
TOTALS	1139
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE -- FRANKLIN	
BLANKS	341
JAY D. DiPUCCHIO	798
WRITE-INS	0
TOTALS	1139
QUESTION 1 -- EXPANDED SLOT-MACHINE GAMING	
BLANKS	42
YES	202
NO	895
TOTALS	1139
QUESTION 2 -- CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION	
BLANKS	25
YES	247
NO	867
TOTALS	1139
QUESTION 3 -- CONDITIONS FOR FARM ANIMALS	
BLANKS	34
YES	689
NO	416
TOTALS	1139
QUESTION 4 -- LEGALIZATION, REGULATION, & TAXATION OF MARIJUANA	
BLANKS	47
YES	751
NO	341
TOTALS	1139

Election Workers

Constables

John LaBelle, Betty Lesure, and Warren Kirkpatrick

Wardens

Nancy Garvin, Lynn Taylor, Sally Yates, and Anne Yuryan

Precinct Clerk

Duncan Colter

Election Workers

Honey Boyden, Irene Branson, Jean Cherdack, Doug Cranson, Poppy Doyle, Wayne Farrell, Diane Field, George Stephan, Kyle Taylor, Lynn Taylor, Beverly Williams, and Sally Yates.

Tally Sheet Counters

Laura Bessette, Buz Eisenberg, Marcine Eisenberg, Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Nancy Hoff, Sandy Lilly, Phil Lussier, Kyle Taylor, Lynn Taylor, Betty Stewart, Virginia Wiswell, and Faye Whitney.

Hand Count Votes at ATM and STM

Nina Coler, Marcine Eisenberg, Sandy Lilly, Caroline Murray, Priscilla Phelps, Betty Stewart, and Faye Whitney.

A special thank you to all our Election Workers who served our community during all of the 2016 elections and town meetings.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget S. Rodrigue

Town Clerk

Town Collector

The following table shows balances owed as of June 30th, 2016:

	Real Estate	Personal Property	Motor Vehicle
2016	\$104,356.34	\$2,987.76	\$9,539.27
2015	\$16,541.06	\$1,812.84	\$3,019.29
2014	\$10,223.74	\$2,146.82	\$1,354.54
2013	\$3,898.20	\$1,159.27	\$812.89
Prior to 2013	\$2,911.03	\$2,505.17	\$793.03
Total	\$137,930.37	\$10,611.86	\$15,519.02

Overall Total Owed: \$164,061.25

All payments are due on the quarterly system, with due dates as follows:

1st Quarter: August 1

2nd Quarter: November 1

3rd Quarter: February 1

4th Quarter: May 1

To keep postage to a minimum only two mailings are done with 2 quarters in each mailing.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Taylor, Town Collector

Town Hall Building Committee

The Town Hall Building Committee was organized and appointed by the Select Board in March 2010. Our charge is to ensure the building is properly preserved, while remaining a useful asset to the citizens of the Town. We are charged with making recommendations to the Select Board and/or finding volunteers to do what is needed to make the Town Hall more efficient and accessible for Town employees and Ashfield citizens. At the suggestion of this committee the Select Board immediately appointed a Town Hall Steward to serve on this committee. The Steward works with this committee to ensure the physical maintenance of the Town Hall as well as overseeing its use for municipal and private events.

In 2016 members of this committee have accomplished the following: 1) sent to the Select Board a list of repairs which need attention; 2) revised the Town Hall Use Application to make it more user-friendly and to address concerns regarding public use of the building for certain events. This revision was approved by the Select Board in January and posted on the Town website; 3) purchased user-friendly hardware and door latches for the three front doors; 4) placed anti-slip strips on the side entry stairs; 5) installed donated valances in front of the overhead lights on the stage; 6) met with piano restorer, Dennis Ainsworth, to assess the condition of the two pianos on the stage. The Winter and Co. piano was not repairable and the Select Board agreed the piano should be removed; 7) replaced the dead battery in a fire exit light and removed the latches on the upper hall doors, as required by the state fire inspector; 8) repaired the disabled motion detectors on the fire exit stairs; 9) implemented ADA requirements for upper Town Hall seating; 10) attended meetings and made suggestions to the Select Board regarding mold abatement concerns.

The Town Hall Steward has done the following in 2016: 1) met with each applicant to be sure they understood and agreed to the procedures for use of the Town Hall; 2) checked the Town Hall after each use to see that windows were closed and the building secure; 3) repaired many aging window panes in the lower and upper halls; 4) made repairs as requested by Town Hall staff; 5) helped install an accessible prescription drug take-back box for the Police Department.

Items we need to address in 2017 include:

- 1) Install the front door hardware and add weather-stripping
- 2) Repair the roof slates
- 3) Repair the antique wooden chairs in the upper hall
- 4) Replace the entry stair treads with new non-slip treads

- 5) Replace the outside door in the meeting room with an energy-efficient one
- 6) Remove the unusable piano from the upper floor stage
- 7) Work with the Town Administrator to get a proposal from an engineer, so we can finalize the budget for repairing the steeple
- 8) Replace the stones at the fire exit landings on the south side of the building, as required by the building inspector
- 9) Paint the rest rooms

Note: This committee welcomes donations to the Town Hall Restoration Fund, so we can purchase storm windows to protect the historic sashes. We need volunteers to help repair the antique wooden chairs in the upper hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Town Hall Building Committee:

Stuart Harris, Chair

Kyle Taylor, Town Hall Steward

Nancy Gray Garvin, Secretary

Donna Scott, Custodian

Mary Quigley

Doug Cranson

Town Treasurer

Reconciliation of Treasurer’s Cash

Balance of Cash as of July 1, 2015	\$1,508,145.81
Cash Receipts:	\$5,525,556.86
Cash Disbursements:	\$5,511,048.37
Cash Adjustments:	<u>\$20,638.26</u>
Balance of Cash as of June 30, 2016	<u>\$1,543,292.56</u>

Financial Institutions

	General Funds	Special Revenues	Trust Funds
People’s United Bank			
Payroll Account	\$90,213.42		
General Fund-CD	\$1,950.72		
Fred Cross Library Trust Fund			\$5,000.00
Fred Cross Cemetery Trust Fund			\$2,000.00
Consolidated Trust Fund			\$172,994.82
Septic Repair Program Account		\$51,181.23	
Stabilization Fund			\$489,780.19
Cemetery Trust Funds			\$1,250.00
Mabelle Jordon Trust Fund			\$42.89
Mary Morrill Elwell Sands Memorial Trust			\$5,081.24
Fred Cross Trust Fund			\$48,125.64
Easthampton Savings Bank			
Vendor Account	\$51,712.59		
OPEB Trust Fund			\$4,004.47
Library Donation Account		\$115.53	
M. M. D. T.			
General Fund	\$49,889.33		
Mary Priscilla Howes Trust Fund			\$11,895.88
Bank of America			
General Fund	\$91,531.68		
UniBank			
General Fund	\$355,610.75		
General Fund Online Banking	\$110,184.77		
General Fund Online Banking	\$727.41		
Total: \$1,543,292.56	\$751,820.67	\$51,296.76	\$740,175.13

Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District

2016 is the first full year our district has been in existence. We continue to be the largest district by community count and square miles covered in the state. Below are just some of the programs and services we help veterans' and their departments with:

- M.G.L. Ch. 115 Benefits – Need based program of financial and medical assistance to eligible veterans and their dependents.
- Assistance to veterans and dependents to help file for health care, pensions, and service-connected disabilities.
- Homeless prevention assistance to veterans and their families.
- Employment help with job searches, resumes, and job interview skills.
- Burial assistance to include government markers, flag holders, internment, and VA burial reimbursement.
- Massachusetts annuities and tax abatement assistance.
- Veteran records retrieval and storage.
- Referral to other public and private agencies to include housing, fuel assistance, employment, training, and education.
- Attend outreach events (fairs, festivals, health care expos).

We have continued to work hard helping veterans and dependents file for VA benefits due them. Our awarded claims have kept pace with CY16, bringing in close to \$300,000 in new claim money for our clients. Overall the district has over \$1,500,000 in VA awards flowing into our towns on a monthly basis.

After seeing a large reduction in M.G.L. Ch. 115 payouts in CY15, we have leveled off this year. We forecast this caseload to remain flat for the foreseeable future of our towns. Although reimbursed back to town at 75%, this takes over a year to get back from the state, so reducing payments up front has free up funds for the member towns.

For the coming year, we will continue to assist veterans, conduct outreach events, and will emphasize programs for the dependents of veterans, particularly the elderly population.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Niejadlik, Director

Zoning Board of Appeals

Applications and inquiries come to the Zoning Board of Appeals when the Building Commissioner at the Franklin County Council of Governments denies a building permit because the proposed construction would be in violation of the Town's Zoning Bylaws. In most cases, this occurs when the building and/or the lot do not conform to minimum 25' building setbacks, minimum lot frontage of 200' or overall lot size of two acres. The non-conforming properties were created prior to the adoption of Ashfield's zoning bylaws.

In contrast to FY2015, when the Zoning Board of Appeals filed decisions on four Special Permit applications, the ZBA acted on just one such application.

Case 2016-1: The owners of a property on Bronson Avenue wanted to replace an existing addition to a lawfully non-conforming building on a non-conforming lot with a new addition and single car garage. The new addition would include a new foundation and would decrease the setback from the side property line from 21'-5" to 11'-0". Other setbacks would not be reduced. Following a site visit and review of submitted materials, the Board determined that an existing outbuilding already exists at that 11' setback, and the abutting property is a town-owned parking lot that will not include a building in the future. No homeowner would be adversely affected by the addition. This change would not additionally burden town services, and traffic safety would be improved by moving the driveway further from the intersection of Bronson Avenue and Buckland Road. There were no public comments opposed to this proposed change, which is in a neighborhood of similarly non-conforming lots. The Board approved the Special Permit. Sitting for the Board were Mollie Babize, Katharine Nylen and Anne Yuryan.

At the time of this report (FY2017) Michael Melcher has stepped off the board, and we welcome Faye Whitney as Alternate.

Respectfully submitted,

Mollie Babize, Chair
Katharine Nylen
Anne Yuryan
Susan Stark, Alternate
Faye Whitney, Alternate