

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The year 2006 was an important year for our public safety departments. In January, the Chief of Police position was filled. In March, our Volunteer Fire Department was recognized for the special efforts of the October 15, 2005 storm that was disastrous for the Town and individual families. At that time Hampden had no money to cover emergency expenses, a major illustration of the need for a healthy Stabilization Account. Events in Town placed additional pressures on our safety services and emphasized the importance of having a well trained and committed Fire Department and an equally well trained and staffed Police Department. These two departments are our first responders in emergency situations.

The Highway infrastructure override vote failed in June. The Board will aggressively pursue funding for the repair, replacement and maintenance of our aging roads and drainage systems in Town.

Although bridges were not part of the original infrastructure plan, a public hearing was held by State officials and the Town was fortunate to be notified that the project is on an eligible project funding list.

Both the Library and Senior Center hosted events to celebrate the re-opening of their respective departments in July.

The steps taken in FY06 proved effective and the residents voted to spend only what the Town could afford. By reducing the spending from previous years, Hampden's financial health was given a boost. The year 2006 was a State election year and some of the local aid was restored. All of these factors helped the free cash position of the Town. At the Special Town Meeting in October, we were able to put money (\$347,530) into our Stabilization Account, as well as taking care of some immediate needs such as repair of the Town House roof, replacement of a Police cruiser, and acquisition of a new Highway truck.

The reasons for our positive free cash position are:

- Motor vehicle excise tax collections were approximately \$100k higher than other years;
- The Treasurer's aggressive tax title collections brought \$50k into the General Fund;
- Closure of the Library and Senior Center which allowed the Town to manage other FY06 financial priorities;
- HWRSD received additional State aid.

On another positive note, the Green Meadows School bond of \$2,738,000 sold for 3.98% for fifteen years.

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

The State's supplementary budget of FY06 included a line item awarding \$100k for the Hampden Senior Center. We worked closely with the Department of Housing and Community Development to conform to all requirements in order to secure this grant. We were notified that the grant was fully approved.

The Board wishes to thank James D. Smith for his many years of service to the community. In the spring of 2006, he completed twelve years as a Selectman. His experience, commitment and dedication to the Town are truly appreciated.

Thanks to the members of the elected boards as well as the numerous appointed volunteer boards and committees who give so willingly of their time to serve the Town in various capacities. We are always in need of motivated people to serve in these positions.

The Building Inspector of ten years, Mark Feeney, stepped down from the primary position and agreed to be the Alternate Building Inspector. Our Electrical Inspector, Bob Lague also chose to work on that basis and become our Alternate Electrical Inspector. Their work over the many years has been commendable and we are grateful for the service they provided.

In June 2006, The Board established the Town Hall Building Committee, and appointed Ray Andree, Bob Burger, Gary Courtney and Gilles Tanguay. The Committee met a number of times, did a walk through of the entire building and issued a report detailing three phases of recommended upgrades to the Town Hall.

The first phase recommended the roof replacement of the Town House and this was brought to the Fall Town Meeting for funding approval. This renovation was completed in December.

The Committee continues to amend their list of proposed renovations/repairs and will issue additional recommendations to the Selectmen. The Board is most appreciative of their time and expertise.

Hampden is a rural community where people come together and support each other. The voters are very discerning about how they spend their tax dollars. In the summer of 2006, the Department of Local Services interviewed Town Department Heads to review Hampden's financial management. The Department then issued a report with their recommendations to improve the process. The report was favorable and may be viewed online at [www.Hampden.org](http://www.Hampden.org) and may also be viewed in the Selectmen's office.

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

It is important for the Town to be conservative in how we allocate our free cash in order to strengthen Hampden's financial position so we may continue to move forward in a fiscally conservative, pro-active and responsible manner.

Our Board wishes to share as much information as possible with the voters, and hope to see a full house at the Annual Town Meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted:

Duane E. Mosier, Chairman  
John D. Flynn  
Richard R. Green