

Goals Established by the Board of Selectmen for FY09

Public Works/Infrastructure

High Priority: Downtown Street and Sidewalk Improvements

Plans were submitted to the Board of Selectmen providing for significant improvement to the downtown area including new sidewalks, drainage, crosswalks, cutouts, signage etc. Public hearings were conducted. Funding came from unspent funds from the old center project and Chapter 90 funds. Project currently underway.

Medium Priority: Sanitary Sewerage on Rt. 125

A comprehensive sanitary waste management program was presented to the Board of Selectmen after numerous public hearings and meetings. The first priority of the study, encapsulated areas, was not endorsed by the Board. We are currently in discussions with Ozzy Properties regarding the most cost effective way to provide sewerage to Rt. 125 without impacting rate payers

Priority: Making North Andover a Green Community (Trees, Energy, Recycling).

Through the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission, the Town has joined with other communities to hire an energy consultant who is currently conducting baseline analysis to judge future energy conservation projects. Efficiency lighting change overs have occurred in several town buildings and solar panels will soon be installed at the water treatment plant. The Town's Solid Waste Advisory Committee has been reconstituted as the North Andover Sustainability Committee with an expanded scope of work to include energy issues. Members of the committee have been consulted regarding the design of the new police station and have been active in assisting the Schools Department in their recycling efforts. Single stream/weekly recycling has been implemented and the recycling drop off center has been relocated to Holt Road. Due to severe disease a number of trees had to be removed before they became a public safety hazard with the cost of their removal born by electric utility.. Grant funds have been secured to provide for their replacement

General Government/ Financing

High Priority: Employee Health Insurance Cost Control

In conjunction with the employee advisory committee, board of selectmen members, and school committee members an exhaustive review of the Town's health insurance program was conducted. This review included going out to bid for other health insurance plans,

comparing the Town's plans to the GIC and analyzing self insured versus fully insured options, with the end result being that the town's practice of providing a self insured plan administered by BC/BS was currently the most cost effective way to provide for health insurance. Other ways to control costs such as plan design or increased employee contributions are pending legislative approval or under negotiations with the various town and school unions.

Collective Bargaining Cost Control:

With the exception of Fire Union and the Dispatcher Union which are still in negotiations, all other municipal unions agreed to a zero percent increase for FY09 resulting in the Town not having to reduce service or lay off employees. Moving to FY10 and beyond, the intent is to tie any salary increase to increased employee health insurance contributions. A detailed spreadsheet capable of calculating these tradeoffs was developed.

Med. Priority: Disposal of Assets

The Director of Purchasing conducted numerous on-line auctions through out the year to dispose of surplus vehicles and department equipment. Four vehicles were sold at auction via ebay netting approximately \$12,000 and a surplus air compressor netting \$1,500. There are twenty vehicles which will be auctioned in the next few months as well as numerous surplus items identified by the School Department.

: Budget Monitoring (Monthly), Audits/Internal Controls

Monthly the Town Accountant provides detailed revenue and expense reports for all town funds and quarterly meets with the board of Selectmen to review those reports. In addition, due to mid year state aid reductions and an anticipated large snow and ice deficit, departments had to reduce their budgets in order to establish a internal reserve fund. The Town established a audit committee that solicited proposals from audit firms and awarded the contract to a new firm. There were no findings of significant problems in the last management report.

Priority: Stevens Estate Resolution

A request for proposals was developed for management services at the Stevens Estate, but only one firm responded and their response was determined to be non-responsive. We are currently in discussions with another company which has the capacity and knowledge of the industry to become our management company with the intent of reissuing the RFP and having them submit a proposal. In the meantime, the management of the estate is being monitored very closely to ensure revenue and expenditure goals are being met. The deficit of the Stevens Estate has been reduced by from FY08 to FY09 by approximately \$80,000 from a \$196,000 deficit in FY08 to an estimated deficit of \$116,000 in FY09..

Expense Reduction through Consolidation with Schools

Two consolidation efforts have been implemented. The hiring of a purchasing director for both the municipal and school departments has generated approximately \$140,00 in direct and indirect savings during its first year. By creating a joint information technology department and hiring one director, the town has avoided what many other communities have which is two separate IT functions, one for the schools and one for the municipal departments with the accompanying additional cost.. In addition the installation of a private fiber optic network system has eliminated the need to lease data lines saving approximately \$69,000 annually and consolidation of IT functions, primarily in the area of email has saved an additional \$63,000.

Town Hall Staffing/Efficiencies

Due to budget reductions and constraints, existing staffing levels in Town Hall, as well as, other departments are currently at the minimum necessary to provide appropriate and adequate services to the community. In prior years, the elimination of the Finance Director position and the assumption of that position's duties by the Town Accountant, Assistant Town Manager and Town Manager and the shared clerical position between the Town Clerk and the Assessors are examples of steps taken to reduce costs and become more efficient..

Staff Accountability

Management employees are in the process of having their performance evaluations conducted for FY2009.

Community/Economic Development

High Priority: Downtown Revitalization (Bradstreet School, Merchants Association, Grants or Funding for Beautification)

Please see above notes regarding streetscape improvements in the downtown area. For many years, the Town has attempted to organize businesses owners to improve the downtown area. However, those efforts have been unsuccessful due to lack of action by the Town. With the actual brick and mortar work currently being under taken by town, we can point to our efforts to improve the downtown area as a catalyst to promote private investment as well. The Community Development Department is actively working with volunteers in the creation of a Merchants Association. A grant was received by the Town to upgrade the zoning in the downtown area to promote mixed use and economic development.

Priority: Rt. 125 Corridor Development

Zoning changes were recently approved at town meeting for this area of town to enhance and promote economic development. Discussions are ongoing with Ozzy Properties to extend sewer lines along Rt. 125 at no additional costs to rate payers through the use of betterments and grants.

Lucent/Ozzy Properties

Public Safety

Priority: Maintain Existing Service Levels

The Fire Department and the Police Department have been able to maintain existing staffing levels during these difficult financial times. The Police Department budget was increased for FY10 to make up for the anticipated reduction in community policing funds.

Rental Property Oversight

The Board of Selectmen adopted a policy that provides that landlords be notified by the police department when illegal activity occurs on their property.

Others:

High Priority: 4th of July Celebration/Grand Opening for Commons

The Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department and the Licensing Commissioners worked closely and actively with the Patriotic Observance Committee and the Festival Committee to expand and restore the town's traditional 4th of July Celebration which included the return of a popular road race, a well run beer tent, numerous concerts and other events and the donation of funds by Brooks School for the 4th of July fireworks that were actually held on the 4th.

Priority Good Public Relations

The Town continued to use its quarterly newsletter to provide timely and accurate information to town residents on town affairs. The Town's webpage was awarded by Common Cause with its E-Government Award with distinction for providing a easy to use, comprehensive and accurate web presence. Printing and distribution of an economic development brochure that highlighted the positive aspects of doing business in North Andover. The Police Department continued and expanded its community policing efforts through the National Nights Out event, neighborhood meetings and the Citizen Watch Program including email notices and block captains.

Appointment to Boards

Working with the Selectmen's appointment subcommittee, this year's appointment was a combination of reappointments of seasoned and knowledgeable volunteers and the recruitment of new residents will bring a fresh perspective to these boards.

Volunteer Handbook

This objective is pending.

Other work/projects accomplished during FY2009

Addressed mid year state aid cuts and largest snow and ice deficit in town history by establishing internal contingency funds and reducing expenditures, while maintaining services.

Recommended FY10 budget that, despite further state aid reductions and the worst recession since the depression, did not require lay offs or reduction in services and increased the amount of funds in the stabilization fund. The budget that was presented at Town meeting was a consensus budget of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee which was passed unanimously at the Town Meeting.

Purchased the former Merrimac Valley Federal Credit Union Building at 1475 Osgood Street for use as a police station, hired a project manager and architect. Project is currently out to bid.

Police Department submitted, and the board approved, updated departmental policies and procedures as part of the Department's efforts to become accredited.

Hiring eight police reserve officers and appointing six auxiliary police officers.

The Town adopted regulations for expedited permitting at Ozzy Properties under the Chapter 43 D law. Received grant funds for implementation.

Old Center Traffic Improvements Project was completed below budget. New drainage was installed in the Town Common.

Consolidated Recreation Commission and Youth Services Department into one entity.

Adopted investment policy for town funds.

Entered into an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Andover for their rental of North Andover's sewer jet truck.

