

2015 Highway Department Annual Report

The Highway Department staff includes the Superintendent, a heavy equipment operator and three driver/laborers and a part-time administrative assistant. This primary work force maintains eighty miles of public roadway. The department performs all highway maintenance including paving and resurfacing, sweeping of streets and sidewalks, repairs and/or replacement of subsurface drainage and culverts, replacing or repairing street signs, patching potholes, leaf and rubbish removal from town properties and roadside mowing and trimming. Plowing, sanding and snow and ice removal are done on a seasonal basis.

The department performs equipment maintenance and repairs on highway department equipment including all welding and fabricating repairs on plows, parts and trucks at a considerable savings to taxpayers. Our goal is to continue upgrading our equipment resulting in a department having a fleet of new and reliable multiple use vehicles. In addition to routine operations throughout the year the Highway Superintendent plans and coordinates road resurfacing and/or reconstruction projects and infrastructure repairs. Thank you to Mass. DOT for ensuring that state funds are allocated to support these projects for improvements to our town.

In January 2015, Governor Baker had released Chapter 90 apportionments statewide and \$156,437 was incorporated and added to our Fiscal Year 2016 apportionment of \$312,226 and accepted at the May 2015 Town Meeting. In April 2015 Government Baker had once again approved a Winter Road Recovery Program and Mass DOT released another \$46,931 for the repair of road damage due to extreme winter conditions. With the use of WRRP funds crack sealing and repairs to Stoddard, Mill and Downey Roads took place. During 2015 paving season beginning in July and August approximately 9,808' of reclaiming on Summit Terrace, Spring, Union, Mt. Guyot and Willow Streets also was completed.

Chapter 90 funds were approved by Mass DOT for the purchase of a Heavy Duty International Multi-purpose Catch Basin Truck to replace the 1969 Catch Basin. This vehicle is a valuable addition to the Highway fleet and will allow road construction and catch basin cleaning operations to take place timely and efficiently.

A collapsed storm water drain pipe on Gilbert Street due to tree root damage has been fixed. Tree removal was done with aerial equipment and stump removal allowing access and replacement of 200' of 20" pipe. Flooding issues due to storm water drain pipe which had to be replaced on Spring Street also had been fixed recently during this winter.

During the second half of winter 2015 road salt shortages through the entire Commonwealth put a strain on the town salt reserve supply. In October approval was provided to purchase salt to replenish our reserve supply in the event of early snow and ice.

In October an additional new hire was brought in, a driver laborer with CDL. Their hard work and dedication in meeting the challenges of the department does not go unnoticed. Thank you to the hard working employees of the Highway Department and part-time employees who are called upon to help in the long and enduring task of plowing roads and snow removal. Also, many thanks to various residents and town officials who take the time to send their acknowledgements and appreciation throughout the year and to Huck's Diesel & Towing Service for expert and timely service to our vehicles.

As we enter 2016 we look forward to the challenges of providing our community with the best service possible, always keeping foremost in our minds public safety on our roads.

Respectfully,

Gary A. Jean, Superintendent