

Annual Report
Of the
OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF
WORTHINGTON
MASSACHUSETTS

TERMS OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Term Expires

ASSESSORS: 3-Year Terms, 3 Members

Beverly Bowman (resigned 12/14)	2017
John Fosnot	2016
Jean Boudreau	2015

SELECTMEN: 3-Year Terms, 3 Members

Evan Johnson	2017
Christopher Powell	2015
Richard Wagner	2016

CEMETERY COMMISSONERS: 5-Year Terms

Pat Kennedy - Center Cemetery	2016
Willard Brown - Historical Cemeteries	2018
Diane Meehan - Ringville Cemetery	2019
J.P. Welch - North Cemetery	2015
Cindy Manley – Commissioner	2017

CONSTABLES: 3-Year Terms

Doug Wing	2015
Robert N. Spiess	2017

FINANCE COMMITTEE: 3-Year Terms, 5 Members

Alex Lak	2017
Joseph Boudreau	2017
Jeff Manley (appointed 2/15 to replace Grant Bowman)	2015
Tom Wisnauckas	2015
Paul Dunlevy	2016

MODERATOR: 3-Year Term – Sean Reagan

2017

PLANNING BOARD: 5-Year Terms, 5 Members

Joseph Best	2016
Doug Wing	2015
Jay Dwight	2017
vacancy	2019
Amy Wang	2018

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: 3-Year Terms, 2 Members

Gretchen Eliason	2015
Susan Levreault	2016

WORTHINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE: 3-Year Terms, 5 Members

Maria Bebee	2017
Alex Lak	2016
Alison Todd (appointed 2/15 to replace Amanda Brooks Clemeno)	2016
Deborah Carnes Reilly	2015
John McDonald	2015

TOWN CLERK: 3-Year Term - Katrin Kaminsky 2015

BOARD OF HEALTH: 3-Year Terms, 3 Members

Diane Brenner 2017
Katrin Kaminsky 2015
Camille Smith 2016

TREE WARDEN: 3-Year Term – Benjamin Brown 2017

CHOSEN BY TOWN MEETING VOTE

Almoners of the Whiting Street Fund

Beverly Bowman, Bruce Barshefsky, Sandra Epperly

Field Drivers and Fence Viewers

Darlene Millman, Antonia Lake, Kevin Porter

Surveyors of Wood and Timber

Keith Manley, Christopher Powell, Clarence Witter

APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES - 2014

One Year Terms:

Highway Superintendent	Cork Nugent
Building Inspector	Charlene Baiardi
Asst. Bldg. Inspector	Steve Reno
Chief of Police	Kevin Moran
Emergency Mgmt. Director-911 Coordinator/Assistant	Rick Scott(res 2/15)/Ryan Neuhauser
Custodian of Disposal	David Croke
Animal Control Officer	Elizabeth Mollison
Acting Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden	Kyle Challet
Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden	Richard Granger (resigned 2/15)
Gas Inspector	Donald Lawton
Plumbing Inspector/Assistant	Paul Graham/ Donald Lawton
Wiring Inspector/Assistant	James Lagoy/ Gary Cole
Inspector of Animals	Jerry Mollison
Administrative Assistant	Margaret O'Neal
Veteran's Agent	Tom Geryk
Town Counsel	Leonard Kopelman
Computer Technician	John Dearie
Westfield River Advisory Comm.	Carole Fisher(res 3/15)/Jim Dodge
Assistant Tax Collector	Susan McGrath
Assistant Treasurer	Kirsten Henshaw
Hilltown Resource Management Coop. (HRMC)	Adam Leach
Administrative Asst. to Fire, Police & Highway Depts.	Tammy Messeck
PVPC Representative	Jay Dwight
Wired West Delegate/Alternate	Ryan Neuhauser/Charles Rose
Recording Secretary	Suzanne Lemieux

ACCOUNTANT: 3-Year Term - Jane Thielen 2017

TAX COLLECTOR: 3-Year Term - Kirsten Henshaw 2016

TREASURER: 3-Year Term - Barbara Miller 2015

COUNCIL ON AGING: 3-Year Terms

Sandy Epperly, Coordinator	2016
Helyn Myrick	2017
Laurie McAnulty	2017
Laurence Mason	2016
Camille Smith	2016
Lorraine Kerley	2015
Pat Kennedy	2015
Helen Pelletier	2015

ELECTION OFFICERS: Appointed by Board of Registrars

Camille Smith, Beverly Bowman, Sandra Epperly, Patty Kimura, Althea Mason, Diane Brenner, Jan Roby, Antonia Lake, Mary Krupa, Deen Nugent, Helen Pelletier, Nancy Smith, Ed Pelletier, Barbara Pease, Nancy Brenner, Helyn Myrick, Tom Wisnauckas

HISTORICAL COMMISSION: 3-Year Terms, 5 Members

Janet Dimock	2016
Diane Brenner	2015
Vacancy	2017
Vacancy	2015
Vacancy	2016

BOARD OF REGISTRARS: Town Clerk and 3 Members, 3-Year Terms

Katrin Kaminsky, Clerk	
Camille Smith	2016
Althea Mason	2017
Sandra Epperly	2015

RECREATION COMMITTEE:

Susan Warner, Will Brown, Janine Modestow, Regina Hickling, Deb Carnes-Reilly

POLICE OFFICERS:

John Scobie, Sergeant	2015
Tim Balser	2015
Joshua Thomas	2015
Crystal Sampson	2015
Joseph Frost	2015
Scott Preston (resigned 3/15)	2015

WORTHINGTON CULTURAL COUNCIL: May only serve two 3 year terms

Hilary Costa	2015
Angela Flynn	2016
Kathryn Ewald	2015
Maria Bebee	2016
Jane Christensen	2016
Kevin O'Connor	2016

BOARD OF APPEALS: 5-Year Terms, 5 Members, 2 Alternates

Deb Kirk	2015
Sheldon Crocker	2015
Robert Epperly	2016

Stephen Smith	2018
Laurence Mason	2017
Kevin Porter (Alternate)	2018
Dan Matica (Alternate)	2018

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION:

Jerry Mollison, Kip Porter, Chet Kellogg, Cynthia Magrath, Karen Rida, Ron Sampson, Paul Sena. Alternates: Mary Beth O’Shea

CONSERVATION COMMISSION: 3-Year Terms, 7 Members

Andrew Madden	2016
Mary Gerken-Newcomb	2017
Edward Lewis (replaced Kathryn Ewald 7/14)	2016
Margaret O’Neal	2016
Dawn Flatt	2017
Jim Molyneux	2015
Adam Leach	2017

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Evan Johnson, Joel Upton, Patty Kimura

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

BIRTHS

Persephone Annabel Carmen Gallagher	April 6, 2014	Kala Pierce & Rylan Gallagher
Avina Rose Jack	April 14, 2014	Sarah Freund & Andrew Jack
Benjamin Scott Tompkins	June 9, 2014	Ashley & Gregory Tompkins
Harlan Charles Sampson	June 16, 2014	Crystal & Joshua Sampson
Ayana Rhiannon Ryan	June 25, 2014	Cristin Kolosewicz & Charles Ryan
Emily Grace Labarre	July 1, 2014	Leah & Bryan Labarre
Bowen Daniel Battey	July 28, 2014	Courtney & Jason Battey
Allison Catherine King	August 4, 2014	Kimberly & Steven King
Elizabeth Marie King	August 4, 2014	Kimberly & Steven King
Maxwell Joseph Ricci	November 20, 2014	Jaime & Peter Ricci

MARRIAGES

August 16, 2014	Kendra Lee Strasburg & Steven Robert Blood in Worthington
September 21, 2014	Anna Osborne Welch & Christopher Martell Paschal in Worthington
October 31, 2014	Richard Glen Higgins & Sherrie Louise Keith in Worthington

DEATHS

March 26, 2014	Stanley Baker in Northampton
June 24, 2014	Roland Guy in Pittsfield
July 2, 2014	Cortney Wheeler in Worthington
December 15, 2014	John McGrath in Worthington

Respectfully submitted,
Katrin Kaminsky

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

As I write this submission, rain continues to fall which in my opinion is so much better than snow considering the snow and cold of the winter that is slowly slipping away. I also know Worthington has seen worse and New England weather will continue to provide surprises in the years to come.

This past year has been somewhat diverse, involving many aspects of the town. The much awaited decision concerning the withdrawal from the Gateway Regional School District was finally delivered following a final State Senate vote and signature by the governor, which was the final step in the establishment of the R.H. Conwell School. This decision was met with the celebration of Worthington residents and the consternation of the remaining member towns. At the time of this writing litigation which was initiated by the other member towns is still pending. In any event this matter, the largest financial venture the Town has ever under taken will be addressed. The dedication of our Ad Hoc Committee and School Board members is to be applauded.

Thru the diligence of Administrative Assistant Peg O'Neal and Selectmen Evan Johnson, the barns at the former Albert Farm were finally raised by Associated Building Wreckers this year. This occurred following many delays, removing a potentially dangerous situation and eyesore, at the same time, restoring the tranquility and aesthetics to the area.

Since last year's Town Meeting, Wired West has continued its effort to complete the "last mile" to provide high speed internet to potentially all individuals. Negotiations have centered around commitment of the State, future source of funding and interest of subscribers. At present a mailing is attempting to determine subscriber interest which will determine potential future Town involvement or the demise of the project.

A structural problem concerning the floor of the Town Hall has gone to bid and been approved. It is anticipated that by the time this is read or at least by Town Meeting we will once again be on firm ground.

What report would be complete without mention of the Moran property? It appears the demise of the property or I should say the house, is fast approaching. Efforts to sell the house and have it moved have gone without result. Partial sale and removal of components have been discussed but with no final resolution. Stay tuned for later developments.

All in all it has been a busy year and many other things have transpired that cannot be adequately addressed. I must applaud the Highway Department for the excellent road conditions we once again experienced this year. We have gotten so used to it I wouldn't want them to feel it goes unnoticed. Also thank you to all that have served the Town. The operation of the Town would not be possible without you.

During the year many board members have resigned for differing reasons and what is becoming more evident with the passage of every year is that it is getting more and more difficult to find replacements. The answer is not recycling the same people but to get more people involved. Granted, most positions are performed with little or no compensation but ALL are important. If anyone out there feels the urge to get involved, please do, you will not only be doing yourself a service but the Town.

Christopher K. Powell Richard Wagner Evan T. Johnson

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The intent of this report is to provide information on the results of operations on the most recently ended fiscal year, [Fiscal Year 2014], which closed June 30, 2014 and a status report on the current Fiscal Year 2015 budget.

FISCAL YEAR 2014

The tax levy for Fiscal Year 2014 was 2,280,928.27 with a resulting tax rate of 14.00. The town taxed under its levy limit (unused taxing capacity) by 209,984.73. The average single family residential value was 228,537.00 and the average single family tax bill was 3,200.00. Actual local receipts exceeded estimates by 127,335.00 and actual receipts not estimated totaled 27,209.00. Included in the receipts above was 38,840.00 in rental income received from the Conwell building.

The Reserve Fund is created by an appropriation at Annual Town Meeting pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.40, s.6. Its purpose is to provide funding for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. Transfers by formal requests are approved or disapproved by the Finance Committee. To approve a transfer from the fund to another appropriation, the Finance Committee must find that the request is for either an extraordinary or unforeseen purpose and not just because the appropriation is depleted or overspent. In Fiscal Year 2014, 10,000 was budgeted in the Reserve Fund and six transfers were approved that totaled 2,760.93. The following is a list of the approved Fiscal Year 2014 Reserve Fund Transfers:

No. 1	Central Hampshire Veteran's Services	38.93
No. 2	Election Expense	260.00
No. 3	Veterans Aid	1,300.00
No. 4	Computer Maintenance Labor	500.00
No. 5	Town Hall Maintenance	500.00
No. 6	Recording Secretary	162.00
	Total:	2,760.93

FISCAL YEAR 2015

The Fiscal-Year 2015 Annual Town Meeting and one Special Town Meeting held in October approved a total of 3,277,487.14 in appropriations. The town operating budget totaled 1,392,599.14, the Gateway school budget totaled 1,022,773.00 and vocational education totaled 314,793.00. This resulted in a grand total operating budget of 2,730,165.14. This was a 70,655.43 dollar increase and a 2.66 percent increase from the prior year. Gateway's budget represents 37.46 percent of the total town operating budget. If we add the vocational education amount to Gateway's total, the total education budget represents 48.99 percent of the total town operating budget.

In addition to the operating budget, the Town appropriated a total of 57,400.00 from the General Stabilization Fund. The amount of 2,000.00 was appropriated for repairs to the town hall roof and 1,975.00 for a structural analysis of the town hall floor. In addition, 25,000.00 was appropriated for legal defense against the lawsuit being brought against the town for leaving the Gateway school district. An additional

amount of 18,425.00 for the demolition of buildings on the Albert property and 10,000.00 for continued consultant services for the Adhoc Education Committee was appropriated.

The Town voted 191,665.00 from Free Cash into the General Stabilization Fund and the sum of 38,010.00 into the Conwell Stabilization Fund. The 38,010.00 amount represents the amount of rental income that was received from the Conwell building during FY2013. The Town also appropriated the sum of 30,000.00 from the Sale of Lots account for the expansion of the North Cemetery.

The revenue budget projected 407,754.00 in estimated receipts from state and local sources, 2,331,271.00 from property tax revenue, 229,675.00 from Free Cash, 57,400.00 from the General Stabilization Fund, 240,247.00 in "Chapter 90" state highway aid and 35,495.00 from other available funds.

The tax levy for Fiscal Year 2015 was 2,331,271.41 with a resulting tax rate of 13.94. The town taxed under its levy limit (unused taxing capacity) by 241,915.59. The average single family residential value was 233,260.00 and the average single family tax bill was 3,252.00.

While at this writing the Fiscal Year 2016 budget is still being finalized the following is a few words about that budget. By now we are sure that everyone knows what happened at that historic Special Town Meeting held last July where the Town formally voted to withdraw from the Gateway Regional School District and form our own school district. Our new school committee has developed and submitted our own school budget and its incorporation into the total Town budget still leaves a balanced budget. Although the Town's excess taxing capacity has been reduced, it was expected. It was estimated in July that forming our own school district would impact the average single family tax bill by approximately 400.00. At this time that estimate appears to be on target.

As always we hope that this report will help to inform you of Town budget actions. We again would like to remind you that in addition to this report the Finance Committee has developed a Finance Committee page on the Town's new web site. Posted on "our" page are various budget documents both past and present that we hope will provide you with a better knowledge of the Town's budget and finances. Also, you should find various publications on municipal finance and local government in Massachusetts. We welcome your feedback on "our" page and if you would like to see other information posted please let us know. The Town's web address is <http://www.worthington-ma.us>

In closing, we would also like to thank all town departments for their help in the budget process and hope to see you all at the Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted: Joe Boudreau (Chair), Paul Dunlevy, Alex Lak, Jeff Manley, Tom Wisnauckas

Report of the Ad Hoc RH Conwell Education Re-Use Committee

The Ad Hoc RH Conwell Education Re-Use Committee (henceforth the "Ad Hoc Committee") was formed in response to the closing of the Blandford, Russell and RH Conwell elementary schools by the Gateway Regional School District (GRSD) School Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee's charge was "to investigate various options for providing education to town residents, primarily to reopen a public elementary school in the RH Conwell building."

H3815 An Act Relative to the Withdrawal of Worthington from the Gateway Regional School District was passed by the Massachusetts House on December 16, 2013, and by the Senate on April 17, 2014. It was enacted and sent to the Governor's Desk on April 28, 2014, and signed into law by Governor Patrick on May 7th 2014 .

As requested by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), a Special Town Meeting was held on July 7th to take one final vote to withdraw from GRSD and to create a Worthington School Committee. With a record turnout for a Special Town Meeting, the vote to withdraw from Gateway passed by a 5 to 1 margin.

As part of the withdrawal process from GRSD and prior to the election of the Worthington School Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee along with its consultant Fran Gougeon began preliminary discussions with the Hampshire Regional School District (HRSD) in regards to administrative services and a tuition agreement for grades 7-12. Also, members of the Ad Hoc Committee along with members of the Selectboard and concerned citizens met with the Selectboards of the member towns of the HRSD to provide information about this process.

With the passage and signing of H3815 and approval of Worthington's Education Plan from the DESE, and the creation and election of the Worthington School Committee, the charge and job of the Ad Hoc Committee ended.

Ad Hoc Committee Chair Tom Wisnauckas facilitated at the first Worthington School Committee meeting and "passed the torch" once a chairperson had been elected. The Ad Hoc Committee held its final and dissolution meeting in November of 2014.

The Ad Hoc Committee would like to thank all of those involved in this process over the years and all of the citizens of Worthington who supported the reopening of a public school in town.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Wisnauckas Chair, John McDonald Co-Chair, Eliza Lake, Deb Carnes-Reilly and Paul Dunlevy

REPORT OF THE WORTHINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

In 1963, the Worthington School District was dissolved when it joined the Gateway Regional School District. On January 7, 2015, the Town of Worthington was granted the right to separate from GRSD to, once again, form its own school district. As a result, Worthington students, grades Pre-kindergarten to 6, will be able to attend public school at the Russell H. Conwell Elementary School on August 31, 2015. Older students will attend Hampshire Regional Middle and High Schools.

The Worthington School Committee, consisting of five members, was formed on September 20, 2014.

The first meeting of the Worthington School Committee was held on September 24. The committee had numerous tasks to undertake during its first year prior to the reopening of R. H. Conwell Elementary School as a public school. Of the most immediate tasks was gaining official approval from the Hampshire Regional School Committee as well as from the four Hampshire Regional elementary school committees to enter into a tuition agreement with the district to send Worthington students to its Middle and High Schools. In addition, the Worthington School Committee sought an agreement to contract with Hampshire Regional School District for administrative and shared teaching services. Upon gaining unanimous assent from the Hampshire committees, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education gave final approval for the Town of Worthington to withdraw from GRSD and to form its own district on January 7, 2015.

In addition to meeting the final requirements for withdrawal from the Gateway Regional School District, the Worthington School Committee worked diligently to set the stage for educating Worthington students beginning August 31, 2015. It has begun to set policy for the district, and has opened registration of students for R. H. Conwell Elementary and Hampshire Regional Middle and High Schools. The decision was also made to accept students from other towns via school choice. At the time of this printing, the interview process for principal is well underway. Upon selection, the principal will begin to hire staff and set curriculum for the R. H. Conwell Elementary School.

The Worthington School Committee adopted the FY 2015/2016 budget, consistent with the Educational Plan presented at the July 7, 2014 Special Town Meeting. This budget supports 4 multiage classrooms for students in Pre-kindergarten through grade 6, as well as providing for the education of students grades 7 to 12 at Hampshire Regional Middle and High Schools.

Families of students at all grade levels are encouraged to register as early as possible in order to facilitate effective planning for the upcoming school year.

- To register Worthington students in PK-6 grades at R. H. Conwell, go to http://www.worthington-ma.us/Pages/WorthingtonMA_School/info/index . Completed elementary student registrations can be mailed to the School Committee, Attn: Registration, PO Box 247, Worthington, MA 01098.
- Worthington students planning on attending Hampshire Regional Middle (grades 7-8) and High School (9-12) must *complete a new student registration form* at: http://www.hrhs.net/pages/Hampshire_Regional_School/Offices/Guidance (and click on “New Student Registration”)
- Those students who wish to continue to attend school at the Gateway Regional School District must apply to that district through the school choice application process.

As has been the proud tradition of R. H. Conwell, parental and community involvement will be welcomed and valued. Some of the many ways people can be involved will include:

- attending school committee meetings
- becoming a member of the R. H. Conwell School Council and/or attending School Council meetings
- joining the PTO
- contacting the classroom teacher or principal to learn about in-school opportunities

Respectfully submitted, Maria Bebee, Alex Lak, Deborah Carnes Reilly, John McDonald, Alison Todd

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Gateway Regional School District March 1, 2015 census reports that there are 40 Pre-K – 12 students enrolled at Gateway schools. Of these, 15 students are at Littleville Elementary School, 11 of them at the Middle/Jr. High Schools, and 14 students are at the High School. Worthington has 58 students attending other public schools outside the Gateway District. This gives us a total of 101 non-vocational public school students. This represents 9.546% of the total public school student population of the Gateway District. (This includes students who choice out of the district to charter schools or other public schools but does not include the vocational, private/parochial or home schooled students.)

The town pays for its vocational students separately. Currently 12 students are attending Smith Vocational High School. There are also 17 home schooled students in Worthington, and 11 students attending private or parochial schools such as the R.H. Conwell Community Education Center which services students Pre-K thru sixth grade. Private, parochial and home schooled student expenses are not paid for by the town.

The FY'15 Worthington assessment for the Gateway Regional School District, which includes support for all non-vocational public school students, was \$1,022,773. This consists of a minimum payment of \$740,470, an above minimum payment of \$128,487, and non-foundation payment of \$153,814.

At Worthington's 2012 Annual Town Meeting, townspeople voted to request that the Gateway Regional School District draw up an amendment to the Regional Agreement setting forth the terms by which Worthington would be allowed to withdraw from the District. On July 7, 2014, the Town of Worthington held a special town meeting, and took a historic vote to separate from the Gateway Regional School District and form its own single town school district. As of this writing, on July 1, 2015 Worthington will no longer be a member of the Gateway Regional School District. Starting fall 2015 (2015/2016 school year) the Worthington School District will offer public education for grades PreK – 6 at the R.H. Conwell School. Worthington students in grades 7 – 12 will be offered education in the Hampshire Regional School District through a tuition agreement.

Although Worthington will not be part of the Gateway Regional School District starting FY2016, the town will continue to pay a percentage of Gateway's outstanding capital obligations including a portion of the \$9,000,000 bond issued by the GRSD for the building project, and a portion of the payback due to the Massachusetts Building Authority for grants forfeited when GRSD closed three elementary schools (this is re-categorized as debt in the GRSD budget). The final payment for the \$9,000,000 bond is scheduled for 2/1/2025. The balance of the 9 million dollar bond is \$6,455,975; of that amount Worthington's portion is 9.5463% (\$616,306.74) or \$61,630.67 annually. Worthington will also be responsible for 9.5463% of the MSBA payback through 11/1/2023. The current amount of the MSBA payback is \$2,948,890, but this may be reduced due to the planned reopening of the R.H. Conwell and Russell elementary schools.

As of this writing the Gateway School Committee along with the six other towns of the district, have joined a suit filed by a Russell citizen seeking to prevent Worthington from leaving the Gateway District. Your Worthington GRSD School Committee members voted against joining the suit.

Some Gateway Highlights

The graduation ceremony for the Gateway Regional High School Class of 2014 on June 6th marked the end of the year-long celebration of Gateway's 50th anniversary. Superintendent David Hopson and School Committee Chair Gretchen Eliason presented diplomas to 71 graduating seniors, including one student from Worthington, Willis Pollard, who was also a GRSD 2014 Golden Achievement Award Nominee.

Gateway's Model UN (MUN) club turned one year old on November 6th and headed off to their first Model UN conference of the year at the University of Connecticut. Gateway MUN is a program of the Gateway International Relations Council which, along with its sister program Gateway SAVES (Student Activism, Volunteer Efforts and Service), seeks to develop global awareness and promote civic engagement. With over three dozen members, Gateway MUN continues to be the largest and most active student organization at the high school.

Two teams of girls from the Gateway Junior High School took part in a Girls Connect robotic event. Girls Connect is an all-girl introduction to the FIRST LEGO league. Teams of girls join professional computer scientists and engineers and learn how to build and program LEGO robots to complete real-world tasks. The program is part of a study by Dr. Florence Sullivan in the College of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. While women have been increasing in fields of medicine and mathematics, participation is much lower in fields such as engineering. Computer science is one of the most underrepresented fields for women. The study is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, with a goal of developing better teaching materials and practices to help girls become interested and successful in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

Gateway senior Casey Pease won a round of applause from Western Massachusetts school leaders when he testified before a committee tasked with looking at the foundation budget formula in the state of MA that “Education is not a mechanical system. It’s a human system”. He then spoke about his concerns regarding the 9-C cuts to Regional Transportation that were going to mean the elimination of seven teaching

positions. (The Gateway teachers voted to accept a furlough day, saving the seven teaching positions Casey spoke about in his testimony.)

To our Worthington community, we say “Thank you” for supporting our efforts as Gateway Regional School Committee members. It has been our privilege to serve the town.

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Eliason & Sue Levreault

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Having said farewell to fellow board member and friend, Beverly J. Bowman late last December when she and husband Grant moved from town to settle into a *real* and well deserved retirement, we are now anticipating this year’s elections as we will welcome a new member to our ranks just in time to begin the field work involved with the 2014 building permits and yet another round of “cyclical” inspections. We anticipate mailing reminders to those property owners advising them when we will be in their neighborhoods.

Final certification of the FY15 state mandated revaluation was received, as expected, in early December and the tax rate was approved, as submitted, shortly thereafter. These actions were preceded by a public disclosure period from early to mid-October during which all those taxpayers who live outside Worthington received mailers giving their new proposed assessments and an additional timetable when the board members would be available to discuss the new figures either by appointment or over the phone. Counter listings also were available both at the post office and in town hall to provide residents ample opportunities to check their values and those of their neighbors and attend any of our meetings to discuss any questions that might have arisen. It should be noted that this public disclosure was a “preview” of the proposed values and had no effect on the abatement application process. As the third quarter bills were mailed prior to December 31, 2014, the filing deadline for an abatement application was Monday, February 2, 2015.

Although sales within town are by no means booming, it should be noted that values are no longer flat across the board and have begun to rise. This was reflected in the new assessments for FY15. When looking through the Counter Listing that follows this report a couple of things should be noted. The listing contains the names of those persons who owned property in Worthington as of 1 January 2014, as that was the assessment date for FY15. Any transactions that took place during 2014 are not reflected in this list including not only changes in ownership but also lot splits, where only a portion of the land was transferred to another party. Also, the Counter Listing provided here matches the online property record cards and maps that are available at our website assessors@worthington-ma.us .

It should be noted that all abatement and exemption applications along with descriptive brochures and other helpful information are available online 24/7 at our website as well. It is worth the visit from the comfort of your home or office.

Because your assessments are only a piece of the puzzle when it comes to calculating what we all pay in taxes, we would strongly suggest that you consider actively participating in this year’s Annual Town Meeting, where we will be considering our “new” school budget and perhaps the Wired West initiative to bring high speed internet on fiber optic cable to our town in addition to other important issues.

The Fiscal Year 2015 Tax Recapitulation breakdown follows:

Local Expenditures:

Appropriations	\$	3,291,672.26
Overlay Deficits		19.88
Cherry Sheet Offsets		2,070.00
Other - Board of Health Agent Compensation Deficit		107.50
State & County Cherry Sheet Charges		2,137.00
Assessors' Overlay		<u>20,020.89</u>

Gross Amount to be Raised \$ 3,316,027.53

Estimated Receipts and Available Funds:

Cherry Sheet Estimated Receipts	\$	244,654.00
Local Estimated Receipts		163,100.00
Free Cash		229,675.00
Other Available Funds		<u>347,327.12</u>
<i>Total Estimated Receipts & Available Funds</i>	\$	984,756.12

Gross Amount to be Raised \$ 3,316,027.53

Total Estimated Receipts & Available Funds - 984,756.12

Net Amount to be Raised \$ 2,331,271.41

Real Property Values \$ 161,778,113.00

Personal Property Values 5,458,000.00

Total \$ 167,236,113.00

Fiscal Year 2015 tax rate is \$13.94 per thousand, a decrease of \$0.06 from last year.

As always you are most welcome to stop in during our Tuesday evening meetings beginning at our earlier time of 6:30 PM with any questions or concerns or you can contact us by phone at 238-5577 extension 104. Voice mail is available.

Respectfully submitted: John Fosnot, Chairman and Jean Boudreau

REPORT OF THE RECREATION COMMITTEE

On a very hot summer day, Jennifer Lee brought her tee-pee to the ball field behind Russell H. Conwell and, in character, taught people about Native Americans, funded by your Recreation Committee.

The annual Halloween party took place again on Halloween. An influx of youthful exuberance resulted in a Spook Walk of scary proportions. Following a pizza party for the decorators, Amanda Dewey and her crew of family and friends created a basement complete with stalking clowns and screaming victims. While many children were too scared to finish the course, others reveled in being frightened and returned several times. In the main hall, Dale Griffith provided music for all ages while on the front steps, carved pumpkins glowed. Julia Sharron and Pat Kennedy served coffee, doughnuts, and cider, and a pumpkin carving contest on the stage resulted in ribbons and smiles for the winners—far better than the scary visages on the jack-o-lanterns! The Wisnauckas/Modestow and Drawe/Coon families traveled again to Ed Malinowski's farm in Hatfield returning with free pumpkins available on the porch of the store with the idea that the pumpkins would reappear—fully carved—on the Town Hall steps at Halloween. While many did return, the hope is that next year, more will be added to the display. That was part of the bargain. In 2015, add your pumpkin and increase our total!

In November, Ron Woodland provided a lesson in stargazing behind R.H. Conwell attended by over 50 people who looked through two telescopes and consulted astronomy charts to make sense of the nighttime sky. Despite an uncooperative wave cloud, everyone seemed to enjoy the evening.

In December a busload of townspeople and children jingled bells and sang beautifully, delivering Christmas carols and good wishes to the occupants of ten different homes and Liston's. A potluck dinner was held afterwards at R.H. Conwell, and everyone loved the food. Watch the *Country Journal* for dates and times for next year. You can sing, or you can request a song to be sent to someone you care about.

Our numbers are dwindling. Our ideas are fading, but there is money funded for enthusiastic people to spend on creative ideas for recreation in Worthington. Please either: A) join the recreation committee—there's room, or B) bring us your ideas and volunteer to make them become reality. If you'd like, join with a group of friends and you can become the committee in its entirety!

Respectfully submitted, Susan Warner, Chairperson, Janine Modestow, Secretary, Debbie Carnes-Reilly, Gina Hickling, Willard Brown

REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission is responsible for administering the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) (M.G.L. Ch. 31, Sect 40) and its regulations, 310 CMR 10 in the Town of Worthington.¹ The WPA requires that anyone considering work in or near a wetland, perennial stream or river follow certain procedures before starting the work. The first step in this procedure is notifying the Commission so it can review the proposed work; provide guidance regarding the proposed activity and whether or not the activity and parcel of land would be subject to the provisions of the WPA. Frequently, the commission will suggest that the proponent file a formal Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) of the WPA with the commission. Occasionally, a proponent will already be aware that their proposed work is the subject of the WPA but wishes that the commission endorse a formal wetlands delineation. Proponents initiate the endorsement process by submitting an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD). If the commission determines that proposed work is subject to the WPA and requires a formal permit (Order of Conditions) the commission will request that the proponent submit a formal Notice of Intent (NOI). Following a public hearing process, the commission generally issues or denies a permit (Order of Conditions.).

The commission received one RDA for work proposed at 123 Capen Street. for the proposed rehabilitation of an underground wastewater system (Title 5 septic system). The commission ruled that the work could proceed without the need for the proponents undergoing the complete permitting process.

The commission received on ANRAD involving wetlands delineations along most of the route of SH-143 from the Peru Town Line to the Chesterfield Town Line. The commission held an initial public hearing on September 16. The commission anticipates issuing a formal ruling in 2015 after the snow is melted. The Worthington Highway Department through its agent CHA Engineering of Norwood, MA submitted the ANRAD.

Some forestry activities conducted in wetlands areas are exempt from the WPA permitting process. The commission received three forest cutting plans. It intervened in none of the plans, requiring submission of additional information or permit applications.

The DEP is the commission's lead partner agency in administering the WPA. The commission is also a member of the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC). The DEP provides

consultancy and education services as well as assistance with enforcement. The MACC provides education services and advocacy for conservation commissions.

Respectfully submitted: Edward N. Lewis, PE, Secretary

¹Copies of the WPA and its regulations are available from the DEP Internet web site at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/>

REPORT OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Board of Appeals handled two matters during the past year:

- (1) A petition for a front yard setback variance filled by John D. Fosnot and Nancy A. Brenner concerning their premises at 169 Indian Oven Rd. [Assessors' Map 413, Lot 53]. Following posting and publication of legal notice, a public hearing was held. Thereafter, at a public meeting of the board, the requested variance was granted by unanimous vote.
- (2) An Application for Special Permit filed by Marjorie H. Johnson affecting premises at 10 Conwell Road. The applicant sought to expand the existing non-conforming residence. Following posting and publication of legal notice, a public hearing was held. Thereafter, at a public meeting of the board, the special permit was granted by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Smith, Chair

REPORT OF ALMONERS - WHITING STREET FUND

Mr. Whiting Street, a thrifty 19th century shipping agent, willed trust funds to 22 western Massachusetts communities to be used, in the language of that era, "for the relief and comfort of the worthy poor." Mr. Street's Last Will and Testament granted Worthington \$3,000. For over 135 years prudent distribution of the interest from this bequest has benefited many individuals and families in our town who were temporarily in need of some financial assistance.

Unfortunately, the small size of the bequest means that not every need can be met. Residents of Worthington are invited to follow Mr. Street's generous example and help out some neighbors in need either by making a donation now to Worthington's Whiting Street Fund or by including the fund in their will.

Balance July 1, 2013	\$8574.83
Interest Earned	16.15
Disbursements	666.90
Balance June 30, 2014	\$7,924.08

Respectfully submitted, Beverly Bowman, Bruce Barshefsky, Sandra Epperly

REPORT OF THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

The majority of all dogs picked up have no collar or identification at all. The Town requires all dogs must be licensed and wear their issued tags. Please be responsible owners and take whatever necessary precautions to keep your pets safe. If you leave a phone message please include all specific contact info.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Mollison

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board had a rather quiet year with responsibilities mandated under Title V. A total of six perc tests were witnessed by health agent Barbara Curran, mostly involving systems in need of repair. During 2014, seven new systems or repairs were permitted. Eight individuals/companies were licensed as septic installers and/or haulers. The Board also issued two well permits. Health Agent Joseph Rouse conducted routine inspections at the campground and the swimming pool. Health Agent Claudia Lucas conducted inspections at all local restaurants and food purveyors. Claudia has also been increasingly called upon to perform housing inspections following tenant/landlord complaints.

Respectfully submitted, Diane Brenner, Katrin Kaminsky, Camille Smith

REPORT OF THE TREE WARDEN

Trees identified as "hazard trees" were removed from Scott Rd., Sam Hill Rd., Witt Hill Rd., Cummington Rd. and from the grounds of the R.H.C. school. Tree removal contracts are also currently underway on Ridge Rd., Kinne Brook Rd., and Old Post Rd.

Interacting with the electric utilities to seek their assistance where their equipment is involved and considering their concerns is ongoing.

I have also heard and responded to various questions concerns and complaints of residents.

Respectfully submitted, Ben Brown, Tree Warden

REPORT OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS

North Cemetery (Cold Street): Mowing, weed whacking, and leaf cleanup completed. The clearing of the new section has been completed and we are about to go out to bid for the second half of the job, putting in a roadway. Access to the new section will be through the existing cemetery.

Center Cemetery (Sam Hill Road): Mowing, weed whacking, and leaf clean up completed.

Ringville Cemetery (Witt Hill Road): Mowing, weed whacking, and leaf cleanup completed. Green burials will be permitted in the northwest corner of the new section of the cemetery. To purchase a plot, please call Diane Meehan.

Historical Cemeteries (Converse, Benjamin, and Brewster): Weed whacking and leaf cleanup completed. Stones were straightened and repaired in Converse Cemetery. Thanks to Devon Wolf for straightening and repair of historic metal military flag holders.

Plans for summer include cleaning and straightening of stones. To volunteer, please call Pat Kennedy: 238-5560.

The Worthington Historical Society summer hike series will include a program about Worthington residents buried in North Cemetery on the evening of August 29, 2015.

Reminders:

Please remove all non-biodegradable flowers, planters, etc. by Nov 1. Planting of trees and shrubs is not allowed. Planting of annuals and perennials is encouraged.

New plots are available for purchase in Ringville Cemetery only.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Kennedy

REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Following the departure of the former chair, Kip Smart, the Planning Board has treaded water. Disparate work and travel schedules of the four remaining members conspired to prevent their meeting. This will be resolved. The sole item on our agenda is an accessory apartment bylaw.

Respectfully submitted, Jay Dwight

REPORT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thanks to the Select board, Towns people for your continued support.

2014 Calls

- Well being checks - 5
- Alarms - 12
- Larceny under \$250. - 1
- Larceny over \$250. - 2
- Disabled vehicle/accidents - 6
- 911 misdials/hang-ups - 8
- Death - 1
- Threat/Harassment - 2
- Domestic /disturbance - 8
- Psychological Emergency - 4
- Investigation - 4
- Animal Complaints - 8
- Assist other agency - 6
- Medical - 10
- Officer wanted - 8
- Motor vehicle stops/complaints - 125
- B&E/Investigated - 2
- Elderly Assist. - 2
- Missing person - 1
- Paperwork service - 6
- Unwanted person - 4
- Fire - 3
- Suspicious person/vehicle - 4
- BOLO - 1
- Amber Alert - 1
- Identity Theft/Credit Card Fraud - 6

Officers: John Scobie, Joshua Thomas, Tim Balsler, Crystal Sampson, Joe Frost

Administrative Assistant: Tammy Messeck

Please remember in an emergency DIAL 911 for other business call 238-0400.

Respectfully submitted, Kevin Moran, Chief of Police

REPORT OF THE FIRE-RESCUE DEPARTMENT

The Worthington Fire Rescue Department responded to 127 calls in town or mutual aid to other towns in 2014, of these: 70 medical calls, 12 structure fires, 4 brush fires, 10 hazardous conditions, 8 motor vehicle accidents, and 23 service / other calls.

As a result of a federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award, 5 firefighters each completed 160 hours of training to national Firefighter I/II standards – Congratulations to Mike Dewey, Mike Dondiego, Vinnie Dondiego, Mike Frazier, and Cameren Granger.

This training, coupled with many members also completing several other county-level training classes and practical exercises, totaled to over 1300 hours of firefighter training time. We thank the department members for their time and selfless dedication to these efforts.

Also from the AFG award, we put into service a new breathing air compressor and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) filling system at the fire station; which greatly improves our readiness and training capabilities.

We thank the townsfolk for the new E-1 engine/pumper; it greatly improves our capabilities and we are training with & using it regularly.

The department wishes to recognize and welcome aboard the following new members: Tyler Limoges, Nate Chevalier, and junior members Jed Henry, Larry Henry, and Tyler Henry.

Regrettably, the department laments the unfortunate departure of several key, long-serving members:

Chief Rich Granger; Assistant Chief / EMT Rick Scott; Medical Officer / EMT Ginger Scott; former Chief Gary Granger; Lieutenant Taylor Granger; Lieutenant Cameren Granger, and FF Mike Frazier.

We salute them all and are deeply grateful for their years of dedicated service to the department, the Town and its citizens; and look forward, as much as possible, to working with them again in the future.

As always, we very much appreciate and are grateful for the Town and citizens' continued support of our efforts.

Respectfully, The Worthington Fire Rescue Department

REPORT OF THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Repairs to River Road Bridge were completed

Sam Hill Road Bridge has been closed

Back road maintenance continues

Regular back road maintenance includes bringing materials in to each road which have washed away over time.

- Culverts have been replaced in many areas
- 35 Snow events

- 14 Ice/Rain Events

Thank-you to: Worthington Residents for your continued patience and support.

Employees: Devon Wolf, Jared Salvini

Respectfully Submitted, Albert “Cork” Nugent , Highway Superintendent

REPORT OF THE WORTHINGTON LIBRARY

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

The Library added many new books, graphic novels, magazines, movies and audio books to the collection. Up-to-date Lenovo computers were installed, providing patrons with high-speed fiber-optic internet access. Wi-Fi is available during non-business hours.

Our Annual Meeting featured the sculptor James Kitchen, along with Ben Tobin, who screened his documentary about Kitchen’s art and process.

In other programs, Arnold Skolnick spoke on his career designing book covers (he created the iconic Woodstock Festival poster); Michael Ponsor discussed his novel *The Hanging Judge*; Greg Maichack taught pastel painting, and Andy Myers recounted his adventures hiking the Appalachian Trail. Tone Nunes, the “technology circuit rider” for the Massachusetts Library System, gave a talk, and John Dearie of Data Harmonics offered a Tech Help Day. The Hilltown Roving Spinners, Hilltown Artisans Guild, and others held meetings in the Library.

Sam Morrison, to earn his Eagle Scout badge, volunteered to build new bookshelves in the Children’s Room. Dr. Joanne Morrison raised funds tirelessly, and Sam’s father David Morrison, a skilled carpenter, pitched in. The results are beautiful. The Morrisons inspired other helpers and donors, and the Children’s Room is improved beyond all expectations.

Artists on view at the Library in FY14 included: Robert Abel, Sherry Loomis, Arnold Skolnick, Bob LaVigne, Joan Hicks, Wynne Llewelyn, Bob Mason and John Mollison; students at the R.H.Conwell School, and Westfield River Wild & Scenic’s collection of suitcases painted with landscapes by various artists.

Library Director Leona Arthen traveled to numerous professional workshops this year, on video conferencing, genealogical data, e-books, and a Digital Commonwealth training for document preservation. Leona, in addition to overseeing ordering, labeling, shelving and circulation of thousands of items, also ensures that we receive State Aid to Libraries, and grants from organizations like the Libri Foundation’s for new children’s books. She makes possible the Summer Reading program, the Book Club, and much more.

We are grateful for the ongoing bequest honoring Connie Dorrington; also to Caleb Harris, CPA; Craig McAuslan, Joan Mendelsohn, Hillside Electronics, Worthington Gardeners for plantings and upkeep, and to Friends of the Worthington Library, for another successful Book and Bake Sale in April. Special thanks to Hattie Plehn for years of fine work on the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Directors: Sue Arthen, Susy Brown, Carol Ann Cushman, Eileen Daneri, Jaclyn Gauger, Sheila Kinney, Michael Meehan, Lynne Scott.

REPORT OF THE WESTFIELD RIVER WILD & SCENIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee works to preserve, protect, and enhance the special qualities and outstanding natural resources of the Westfield River Watershed in concert with local communities.

Through Riparian Conservation and Community Grants program, the Committee provides small grants to support projects in the ten Wild & Scenic communities. To date, funds have helped protect over 420 acres of forests, farmlands and rivers, including a recent Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on 54 acres in Chesterfield which allowed a family farm to remain viable and working for years to come. An additional 199 acres of riparian lands are set to be placed under a permanent conservation easement within the next year.

Community grants have been used to inventory and improve stormwater runoff along the river, provide engineering assessments of deteriorating bridges and culverts, and to solicit additional grant funds. In 2013, the Town of Becket received a small grant to develop preliminary designs and to apply for a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant to replace a culvert with a more flood resilient, fish friendly crossing. In Fall 2014, the Town received word the project will receive \$399,375 in FEMA funding.

A small dam on Kinne Brook in Chester was removed. Trout Unlimited previously received funds from the Committee to support the removal of the dam and the replacement of two culverts. When completed, the project will eliminate three stream barriers opening up 10 miles of coldwater habitat for Eastern Brook Trout.

In collaboration with the Westfield River Invasive Species Partnership, the Committee printed Invasive Species Guides and distributed them to Town Highway Departments, Conservation Commissions and volunteers in the watershed. These guides are intended to raise awareness, especially of some of the early-detection species which have not been well-established in the watershed.

On September 27, 2014, 58 community volunteers, committee members and specialists gathered along the banks of the East Branch of the Westfield River for the first Watershed Blitz. Teams led by wildlife and river experts recorded observations and noted problems, cataloged assets and recommended priorities for action on over 20 river miles. The community spirit and the opportunity to share knowledge and expertise among the various participants infused the day with enthusiasm and excitement.

Several volunteers who surveyed other sections of the Westfield River recruited their neighbors and friends to survey tributary streams flowing through their backyards. Groups have surveyed Yokum Brook (Becket), Walker Brook (Becket/Chester), Kinne Brook (Worthington/Chester), and Dead Branch (Chesterfield/Huntington). In 2015, volunteers are launching a Stream Team on the Little River (Worthington/Huntington). Each Stream Team receives training, GPS units digital and wildlife cameras, maps, and plenty of opportunities to explore their rivers and streams!

Thank you to the 120+ volunteers who lent a hand surveying river reaches, constructing brochure boxes for our kiosks, and tidying the East Branch and Keystone Arch Bridge Trails.

Our committee meets once a month and all meetings are open to the public. We encourage you to take part in any of our sponsored activities, including stream teams, river clean-ups, land protection, and workshops. To learn more about what is happening in the watershed, visit our newly updated website at www.wildscenicwestfieldriver.org.

For more information contact coordinator@westfieldriverwildscenic.org or (413) 579-3015.

Respectfully submitted, Carole Fisher, Town Representative, Jim Dodge, Town Alternate

Report of the Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) was created 26 years ago by a group of dedicated volunteers who had the vision to seek a regional solution to help small towns with volunteer local boards attain sustainability and environmental objectives.

The member Towns that comprise the HRMC includes: Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. Each Town appoints two representatives to serve on the HRMC Board. Board Officers for FY14 included: Joe Kearns, Chair (from Middlefield); Adam Leach, Vice Chair (from Worthington); and, Tom Martin, Treasurer (from Westhampton). Eric Weiss, HRMC Administrator has been managing and operating the HRMC as a half-time contractor since its inception. In June, Eric announced that he would be leaving the helm of the HRMC to serve as the Executive Director of the MHEC.

The HRMC has been providing guidance to its member towns on recycling, municipal waste disposal hauling and disposal, and compliance assistance and sustainability services. In fiscal year 2013 those services included:

- Monitoring of Municipal Recycling Facility (MRF) program hauling
- Monitoring of Municipal Solid Waste Hauling and Disposal
- Negotiating a new MRF contract with DEP and Waste Management
- Sponsoring an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event
- Program management of Transfer Station Recyclables including collection, hauling and recycling of tires, electronic waste, universal waste (i.e. fluorescent lights, compact fluorescent lights, ballasts, and non-alkaline batteries), and Freon removal from white goods (appliances)
- Transfer Station operations monitoring
- Preparing bids and contracts for transfer station equipment
- Preparing bids for environmental monitoring activities

For the past 2½ years, the HRMC has managed a regional recycling and hauling contract for its 10 member communities.

In addition to the managing the day to day operations of the HRMC, the HRMC Administrator also serves as a representative on behalf of its member Towns to the MRF Municipal Advisory Board; provides technical assistance on DEP and compliance related issues, advocates with local, regional, and State officials, and researches and drafts grant submittals.

In FY13, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced their Small-Scale Initiative Grants under the annual Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP). Every HRMC town received a grant award of \$500. Collectively, the grant awards totaled \$ 5,000, which was pooled to acquire a new roll-off container for regional rotation. In addition, in the Municipal Advisory Board provided free blue recycling bins that were distributed to the member Towns.

The HRMC has an annual assessment which is approved by each Town at their annual Town meeting. The annual Assessment Budget is based on tonnage and population. In FY13 the combined assessment for all ten towns was \$39,487.56. After two years of budget reductions, the Assessment Budget has remained level funded for the past 4 years. The HRMC also receives grant and recycling revenues to supplement its budget and the program efforts on behalf of its member communities. Many of the program costs are passed through the HRMC to have oversight of contracts and enable the HRMC administrator to have review and oversight on program operations.

In fiscal year 2013, the HRMC member Towns collectively diverted 1,042.61 tons of recyclable materials (paper, and bottles/cans) to the MRF and earned \$20,363.35 in recycling revenue.

Why recycle?

- Recycling saves energy, which helps slow climate change
- Recycling saves natural resources and wildlife habitat
- Recycling provides nearly 19,000 jobs in Massachusetts
- Recycling Saves Money by avoiding disposal and tipping fees

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.

Kathleen A. Casey, HRMC Administrator

Central Hampshire Veterans' Services

The mission of the Central Hampshire Veterans' Services District is to aid, support, and advocate for the veterans and their families within our communities. A secondary mission is to collaborate with the Veterans Council in support of veteran holiday event planning. Currently our district serves the communities of Northampton, Amherst, Pelham, Hadley, Williamsburg, Chesterfield, Goshen, Cummington, Worthington, and Middlefield.

Central Hampshire Veterans' Services has 3 full-time staff members who work together to ensure that all veterans within our district receive the best services available. Steve Connor has been the Director for the past 10 years. Rebecca Twinning is another Veterans Service Officer based out of our main office in Northampton who has been working with Steve for the past 8 years. Their combined experience and support has been vital in speeding up my learning curve as your Veterans' Agent over the past year.

I view my position as much more than simply reviewing who is eligible or not eligible for veteran's benefits, programs, and services. Beyond veteran specific benefits there are a lot of other federal, state, and non-profit resources that I have used in support of helping veterans overcome their hardships. My goal is to use appropriate resources to help others manage a sustainable living situation. Sometimes it's as easy as contacting a friendly neighbor or volunteer who is willing to help an elder with basic household chores. In other cases it makes more sense to file a VA claim for Aid and Attendance. No matter what the issue is, there is no problem that is too big or too small to bring to my attention.

In Worthington, over the past year I have been able to help several veterans in various ways. For example, I have helped seek aid via the VA and The Holyoke Soldiers home for 4 local veterans. Also, I have been able to retrieve service records for 6 local veterans. Also, I have had 3 speaking engagements. In many cases I have been successful in referring local veterans to other agencies to address their needs.

My objective over the next year for our "Hampshire Hill Towns" is to identify more community residents who are willing to volunteer to help their neighbors if or when there is a need. I would also like to have more veterans appointed to the Hampshire Hill Town Veterans Council. Once we have more members on our council we will be able to utilize their talents to become more active in our veteran communities. We would also like to support our local veterans clubs in their efforts in making a positive impact in our towns.

In closing, community outreach is paramount to accomplishing our mission at Central Hampshire Veterans' Services. If you would like me to attend a community event, please send an invitation email to: vetadmin@northamptonma.gov For any questions or to schedule an appointment with me please call 413-587-1299. As always feel free to stop by and see me during my regularly scheduled hill town hours.

Best Regards,
Tom Geryk, Veterans' Agent

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Cover art: Worthington Library – Original photograph by Ed Pelletier

The Worthington Library was founded in 1884 by the Rev. Frederick Sargent Huntington, whose bequest, together with other contributions, was used to build a library on land donated by the Rice family. Volunteers from the town broke ground in August, 1914. The building was dedicated on September 2, 1915 and named for the Rev. Huntington.

The Library has had few renovations since then, except for the creation of a children's room in the basement in 1978-9 and other minor improvements such as the addition of a restroom and a ramp.

In 1939, the Rice family donated books and family mementos, including artifacts belonging to Brigadier General James Clay Rice, who lost his life in the Civil War. In 2004 many of these items were lent to the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and in 2006 the remainder of the Rice Collection was lent to the Worthington Historical Society to become part of their archives.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

STATISTICS

Established: June 11, 1762, Plantation No. 3
Incorporated: June 30, 1768
Area: 33.5 square miles
Type of soil: Mica, slate and talcose slate
Developed land: 2,812 acres
Miles of Town roads: 58 miles
Miles of State highway: 6 miles
Elevation at Town Hall: 1,493 feet
Population: 1,156 (2010 Federal census)
1,220 (2014 Town census)

U. S. Senators: Elizabeth Warren
Room 2400, JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 565-3170

Ed Markey
1 Bowdoin Square, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-8519

U. S. Congressman: Richard Neal
78 Center St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-0946

State Representative: Stephen Kulik
State House, Room 238
Boston, MA 02133
(617) 722-2380
email: Stephen.Kulik@MAhouse.gov

District Office
1 Sugarloaf Street
S. Deerfield, MA 01373
(413) 665-7200

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Worthington Town Hall: 238-5577
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