**Town Manager Update**

*September 9, 2024*

The amount for the Town Hall HVAC engineering exceeds the amount in the Engineering budget by $1,800, but I have asked the Finance Committee for a reserve fund transfer to cover the remainder and a little extra in case of contingencies.

I regret to say that the last Highway Department hire did not work out, so we are back to needing two Equipment Operators, or at least one Equipment Operator and one Laborer.

In better Human Resources news, we have interviewed two candidates for the Assistant Health Inspector position, at 8 hours per week, and are planning to make an offer soon, so I may have an appointment for your ratification at the next meeting.

On Walker Brook, I’ve been preparing the Request for Proposals for getting a FEMA BRIC grant. One of my final steps was to attach the relevant FEMA flood plain map, and I found that, presumably because Walker Brook is culverted through town, it is not considered in a flood plain. FEMA is updating their maps, but if my reasoning is right, I am checking with MEMA about the likelihood of getting funded before putting out the RFP.

On a closely related note, I recall that during the preliminary engineering, a remote scoping device found that the current culvert is largely blocked by debris. I don’t know whether that might be causing the blockage of flow, or whether it would be possible to remove the debris, but it could be that if we were able to do so, we might not need a new culvert. I plan to look into that possibility before moving forward with the RFP and have let the DPW Superintendent know my concerns.

I’m pleased to announce that the Town has been awarded two Community Compact grants: One is for $20,000, to update and revise our Employee Handbook (though it may end up costing less than that). Our current handbook is out of date, as well as lacking a number of general “best practice” policies, such as a social media policy and civility policy, and the obligations and benefits need to be spelled out in accordance with current labor law. I may also make some suggestions to revise the benefits and obligations.

For the second grant, we have gotten $25,000 to mitigate nitrogen stormwater pollution, a best management practice, required by our Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. We have been working with BRPC as our MS4 technical consultant and our National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) reporting agent for our stormwater system and I look forward to working with them on this infrastructure project.

I understand the Historical Commission does not believe that it will be able to contract for the $5,000 in ARPA money it was granted by the end of December. I will confirm that and, if true, bring it to the Board next week for rescission.