

SS Nicholson

Kudos to Pomfret's DPW

I want to commend Pomfret's Department of Public Works for their excellent work. Fall is here and we will begin to ready our fleet for the coming winter. Now is a good time to reflect on the accomplishments of the recent construction season. Over the past several months our road crew has resurfaced several roads and is in the process of full depth reclamation of Kearney Road. River, Quassett, Peterson, Ayers, Anderson, Amberg, Day, and Dennis Roads have all had some surface preservation work done, guard rails have been repaired and installed in several locations, our ROW's mowed (twice), and many hazardous trees have been taken down throughout town. A significant construction project was completed on Carter Road, parking installed on Wrights Crossing for Air Line Trail access, safety crossings marked for the Air Line Trail at Covell and Babbitt Hill Roads, and drainage improvements were made on North Road. Our unpaved roads are high maintenance and require constant attention to keep them in safe, passable condition. The rains of the past summer have added to the challenges of maintenance and created scheduling disruptions.

When you see our road crew out and about, give them a hearty thumbs up. Regularly maintaining our infrastructure reduces the cost over the long run. Each year we strive to upgrade 7 miles of our approximately 65 miles of road. Thanks to Road Foreman John Hopkins for his leadership. Congratulations to John Scandalito for successfully completing the Connecticut Public Works Academy Program at the T2 Center (UConn's *Training & Technical Assistance Center*). And a shout out to our entire Department of Public Works; John, Brian, Dave, John, Kevin, and Brian.

Snow is Coming

That brings me to snow and snowplows. Please give snowplows, all snowplows, town and state, a wide berth. They are working to make the roads safer and should be given the same respect as any emergency vehicle. Do not pass or tailgate a snowplow. You could be in a blind spot and create a very dangerous situation. When they are spreading sand or salt, getting too close could damage your vehicle or interfere with their work. Let's give them the space, time, and respect needed to make our roads safe.

Change is Coming

Pomfret is entering into a period of transition. Retirements will begin in the coming year, and we will be losing a good deal of talent and institutional knowledge as long-time employees retire. As we adjust and plan for the future changes, we know that it will be challenging to replace the devoted personnel that have served our community so well. We have been fortunate to have dedicated employees that are familiar faces and make visits to the Town Hall very welcoming.

A New Transfer Station is Coming

Sometime next year we should begin utilizing a new transfer station at the end of Nora Lane. Working with our town engineer, Syl Pauly, and Winston Averill, our Regional Recycling Coordinator from SCRRRA (Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resources Recovery Agency), we have a plan of the facility. We have consulted with the Pomfret Green Team and Willimantic Waste (now Casella). It has been approved by the state and our Planning and Zoning Commission after a Public Hearing was held in August. I have partnered with CRCOG (Capital Region Council of Government) to utilize their ezIQC® Construction Job Order Contracting program, which is a competitively-bid, on-call service for construction projects. This program will facilitate the construction of our Transfer Station by providing the services and expertise needed to construct the proposed facility.

We have two STEAP grants, revenue from a timber harvest on the Murdock property, and town funds set aside to cover the cost of this project. In the coming months, I will put out a survey for residents to determine days and hours to have the facility open and to begin working on a budget for the facility. We are currently spending approximately \$30,000 a year for 6 days of bulky waste collection. I anticipate this new facility will be open more than 6 days a year to accommodate residents needs at less cost and we will work to increase the range of recyclables collected. The transfer station will not be accepting household trash.

HHW Collection Day is Coming

The upcoming HHW (Household Hazardous Waste) collection day is Saturday, November 11th at the Woodstock Town Hall. We partner with Winston Averill of SCRRRA, and the Town of Woodstock to hold this event every other year, alternating locations in Pomfret and Woodstock. This year the Town of Brooklyn will participate to provide their residents with a way to safely get rid of hazardous materials and spread the cost of the event over three towns.

The long-term problem of only holding a HHW collection once every 740 days (two years) needs to be addressed. The Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments is holding discussions on how to address this issue on a regional level. Pomfret pays about \$9,000 and Woodstock for 4 hours of HHW collection every two years. All towns in NECT hold temporary collections days every few years because there is no permanent facility to safely address this environmental issue. We need a regional facility to collect and safely dispose of hazardous household chemicals to prevent careless disposal, spills, and environmental contamination and destruction.

Thanksgiving

Wishing all a happy and family-filled Thanksgiving. Having recently travelled abroad, I am aware of how fortunate we are to live in a beautiful community, in a free county. In this growing climate of division, take time to recognize our common humanity and be thankful for all the values we share.

