



## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR *update*

2018 Spring Edition

As Millville's first Town Administrator, I am pleased to introduce residents to the inaugural edition of the "Millville on the Move" newsletter which seeks to provide additional communications about important town issues, initiatives and events! This edition can also be found on our website at [www.MillvilleMa.org](http://www.MillvilleMa.org). The launching of this newsletter is part of a broader organizational strategy to enhance public communications. This strategy has included community forums, newspaper articles, presentations, videos and the revamping of our soon to be launched new website and facebook page.

Stabilizing government operations, implementing financial management best practices and pursuing numerous grant sources continue to be leadership priorities to address financial challenges which have restricted the level of services provided to residents and stifled progress on strategic municipal projects. The successes of Millville are real and many state officials, agencies and even our Lt. Governor Karyn Polito recognize we are a community that is on the move by embracing change and innovation.

After being ordered to vacate the former Town Hall due to structural safety issues, the entire municipal operations finally moved out of the Police Station into a beautifully remodeled new Town Hall at 290 Main Street. After months of tough insurance negotiations and in kind labor from BV Tech, the costs for the entire renovation and relocation effort was done at NO COST to taxpayers! This amounted to nearly \$1 million dollars in savings. This relocation has allowed us to streamline departments and offer an innovative business office "one-stop" model to more efficiently deliver services to residents. Stop by and check it out!

Appointing Millville's first Finance Director has allowed us to implement the recommendations outlined in the Millville 2016 Division of Local Services Report, including the modernization of accounting practices, procedures and technology. The Town has replaced a 28 year old financial software program which links our accounting, assessor and treasurer/collector departmental data. We have also automated payroll and adopted rigorous tax collection

strategies which have resulted in a 98% tax collection rate which is the Town's highest. Despite running a very lean operation with limited staff, the Town can no longer balance the budget with one-time revenues. At the Annual Town Meeting, a balanced budget contingent on the passage of a \$1.0M operational override was overwhelmingly approved by residents in an effort to right size the Town's budget and reset its tax rate over a number of years. The major differences concerning operational expenditures maintained in the budget contingent on the override passing include the following:

### VERRIDE BUDGET

- Keeps Town Trash Service
- Funds Senior Center
- Funds Certified Library
- Funds 3% School Supplemental Increase
- Cuts Unfilled Non-Essential positions
- Keeps Street Lights On

### NO OVERRIDE BUDGET

- Cuts Town Trash Service
- Closes Senior Center
- Closes Certified Library
- Funds 3% School Supplemental Increase
- Cuts/Reduces Essential & Non-Essential positions
- Shuts Street Lights Off

I have also vigorously pursued building new external partnerships along with sound grant proposal development which has resulted in over \$2.2 million in funding assistance for crucial projects which cannot be met through the annual operating budget. Such assistance will continue to yield positive results in addressing aging infrastructure, producing strategic plans to guide the Town forward and providing the community with improved services.

Despite many of these challenges, the community has recognized the need for innovative thinking which embraces the possible over the impossible. I am optimistic about the future of Millville for it has demonstrated the necessary resolve to succeed in the face of crisis. The energy which has surfaced as a result of coming together to embrace the change necessary to move the community forward is both real and focused on building a community which is sustainable for future generations to come.

— Jennifer Callahan



# Serving & Protecting Millville

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our officers, Millville continues to be one of the safest communities in the Commonwealth. Our department operates quite creatively in order to provide this wealth of knowledge, compassion and exceptional service on which our citizens can depend. In a community like ours, enforcing the law is only a small part of our job. Our greatest responsibility is developing a relationship with community members and offering hands-on support to those in need. Our officers are accessible, caring, and always willing to go above and beyond to resolve issues.

Because of our size and financial constraints, we are agile, frugal and innovative in our approach to serving our citizens. Our mixed team of 6 full-time and several well-trained, professional part-time officers are so committed to our community that they have agreed to work for less than their counterparts in other towns in order to maintain a sensible budget. We actively seek out and apply for grant

opportunities to help reduce the burden on the town. We implement creative funding and operating methods to save money. For example, our Regional Dispatch has been recently renegotiated to save Millville more than \$230,000. Each year we produce a lean budget

to avoid cuts to service. Our department must maintain a quality of life and keep our Officers safe, as society in general is becoming more aggressive and violent. We know our town is changing and we are facing new challenges, but reducing manpower is truly not a sustainable answer to our problems. While some believe our department could merge with another to save money, I believe we would gain nothing by losing our autonomy, control and identity to another town. Quite simply, our department gets the job done professionally, effectively and efficiently, for way less. True cost analyses must look beyond just public safety and personnel costs. It needs to include salaries, pensions and other benefits, union contracts, equipment and more. When looked at as a whole, it is quite clear just how difficult it would be for another town to provide the same service, care and support for less.

— Chief Landry

## In 2017 Millville Fire & Rescue responded to...

- 271 Fire Calls • 112 Medical Emergencies

Our team includes 2 certified full-time firefighters (55+ years combined experience!) working M-F 8am-5pm and an on-call and volunteer staff for nights & weekends who earn only \$75 for an entire 12 hour shift to maintain public safety!



## The Millville Senior Center

While only open 3 days/wk the Millville Senior Center provides many opportunities for citizens to access needed services, socialize and explore new interests.

We see visitors from other towns regularly because our Center is such a welcoming, friendly resource. We are so much more than bingo and parties, we encourage you to visit!

- We have directly assisted 177 different Seniors in 2018!
- With no local dental or medical offices or drug stores, our Van is a vital link for Millville seniors and disabled residents. (*This year, we have given 20% more rides than last year!*)
- Younger town residents can come to apply for fuel assistance or find resources for an elderly relative.
- We loan canes, walkers and wheelchairs & other assistive devices
- We offer stimulating & informative classes.

— Jill Anderson

**STOP BY OR JOIN US FOR LUNCH!**

Call 508-883-3523 • email [sr.center@millvillema.org](mailto:sr.center@millvillema.org)



[www.MillvilleMA.org](http://www.MillvilleMA.org)

# Around the Town

## FROM THE BUILDING COMMISSIONER

I believe there is a right way and a wrong way for a Building Department to be run. It was not that long ago there was a perception Millville did not care what homeowners, contractors or developers did. Work without permits was the norm. Inspections were frequently not done. Too often, the Town did not follow through with zoning enforcement and the revenue loss was significant.

In the last 6 months our Building Department has made huge strides in doing things the right way. Building permit applications are up. Inspections are done consistently. Zoning enforcement is being seriously pursued. Blighted properties are getting cleaned up. Abandoned and vacant properties are being pursued through the court system. **In 6 months, we have received over \$20k in fines and have another \$44k we are pursuing. Public perception is changing.**

I think the same can be said for the rest of town government. There is a concerted effort to turn around a ship that has been steering a crooked course for too long. Real change cannot happen overnight and it will not happen with only volunteers. Dedicated professionals working hard in a positive environment will make the changes and get it done.

— Lincoln Barber



## CLERKS CORNER

### THE "HUB" OF MILLVILLE TOWN HALL

The Office of Town Clerk is probably one of the oldest in municipal government. Town Clerks need to stay compliant with the ever-changing state and federal laws, which is not an easy task. The level knowledge needed to be a Town Clerk is immense. The Clerk is like the "hub" of government information and oversees many important functions for compliance with state & federal laws such as:



## TOWN PLANNER NOTES

Since becoming Town Planner in 2016, we have accomplished many significant professional planning objectives for Millville - most had been long overdue! To often this has led to haphazard, confusing and inefficient permitting procedures. Grant funding and professional expertise in this department have made the following possible:

- Updated fee schedules & 12 new online applications
- Several unfinished subdivision projects completed
- 1st Development Guide for business & residence
- 1st Zoning Diagnostic to strengthen bylaws & code enforcement
- 1st Open Space & Recreational Plan
- Comprehensive Marijuana Bylaw for Millville
- Completed Master Plan

— Hillary Young Carney

## IMPORTANT DATES

**JUNE 19** BALLOT ELECTION

**JUNE 23** FREE SMOKE ALARM INSTALL

**JUNE 25** PLANNING BOARD HEARING ON SOLAR ARRAY

**JUNE 27** SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

**JUNE 30** LIBRARY SUMMER READING KICK OFF







*The Vinacco Family*



On June 14, 2018 we held an official opening and dedication ceremony for the new Joseph D. Vinacco Playground at Millville Elementary School

## Tune In for Town News!

We have 3 Millville TV Stations on **Charter Cable Channel 191, 192 & 194** to help keep you informed! Watch Selectmen's Meetings, see town events & announcements and more! We also post Meetings to YouTube & Facebook. Search for Millville Cable Access.

# Millville

**ON THE MOVE**



## Keeping You Informed

### Property Tax Relief Program for Seniors

*Coming Soon!*

The town is aggressively working to establish, for the first time, a **Senior Property Tax Abatement Program**, which would allow senior property owners, aged 60 and above, the opportunity to volunteer services to the town in exchange for a property tax reduction of up to \$1,000.



Download a copy of our 2017 Annual Report from our website and check out all the vintage Millville photos!

## NEW COMMUNICATION CHANNELS COMING

We are diligently working on a variety of new communication channels to help citizens stay informed.

- New Town Website & an official Millville Facebook page this summer
- Quarterly Newsletters, like this one, available in print & electronically



[www.MillvilleMA.org](http://www.MillvilleMA.org)