

STATE OF THE TOWN ADDRESS (February 6, 2012 Deliberative Session)

Town Manager Caron delivered the “*State of the Town*” address. He stated that “under our revised budget approval process as adopted by the voters this past March, the Council is responsible for submitting a recommended operating budget, which can be amended at this Deliberative Session. The voters in March would then vote to approve or reject the budget; if rejected, the Town would operate under the Default Budget.

The Council’s recommended budget for FY13 is the same amount as the Default Budget, which reflects an expenditure increase of 2.3% over this year’s operating budget. There are several initiatives in this year’s warrant to begin addressing equipment and staffing needs in the Fire Department, and a continuation of the reserve programs for vehicles, heavy equipment and town building maintenance which promotes tax rate stability.

Although the economy is improving, it is improving at a very slow pace, and we expect that to continue for the foreseeable future; however, staff continues to work on projects that will position the Town to capitalize on growth in the non-residential sector when economic conditions do improve. Last November the State opened the Airport Access Road, and with that milestone comes a greater appreciation by state and federal officials of the strategic location and abundance of commercial/industrial land at Pettengill Road. Town staff continues to receive a growing number of inquiries about the area’s development potential while also working with state and federal officials to secure non-local funding for the project which would reflect the Pettengill Road project’s anticipated benefits accruing to the region and the entire state.

Again this year I would like to direct your attention to the Town’s website; a feature which should be of particular interest to citizens is E-Alert, which allows residents and taxpayers to automatically receive as much information as desired, including emergency alerts, meeting agenda and minutes, road closures and similar pieces of information. We believe E-Alert will help us keep all of you better informed about the activities of your town government.

On behalf of the town staff, we thank you for your support and assistance.”