**TA Update 08/05/2019**

**Committees**

 The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Committee is planning to install a much-needed new shed near the ball field, tentatively set for Monday, August 12. We are waiting for DEP clearance and some final paperwork to file with the Registry of Deeds and the Conservation Commission before the plans are finalized.

 **Departments**

 Based on an earlier conversation, I have looked into our septic loan rates and can report that we charge 5%, much less than the 15% we had feared. The bank’s fairly nominal administrative fee is on top of that as well. We could change the percentage, but it does not seem to be an unreasonable amount.

 There’s moderately good news regarding state aid: according to the conference committee figures, we’re scheduled to get $13,931 more in estimated receipts than we planned from the initial Governor’s budget—about $3,000 in Chapter 70, $5,000 in UGGA, and $5,000 in state PILOT payments. We also came out better in state assessments—we’re going to be charged $28,234 less than in the Governor’s budget. Together, this means we’re getting $42,165 **more** in state aid than anticipated.

 I have submitted our updates to MIIA for FY 2020. The Administrative Assessor requested that the personal property value for the Town Hall be increased, as there is more equipment there, and some newer items such as their copier. Since the values are not very different, I do not anticipate this will increase our premium by very much. We are also down one vehicle, as the Police cruiser was given to the Fire Department, and the existing Fire Department vehicle was traded in.

 Chief Baker, John O’Rourke and I met with our counterparts in Ashfield, who are wondering whether the two departments might work more closely in the future. The departments will consider the idea in the months to come.

 Unfortunately, the local designers working on both Highway facility projects are sufficiently busy that they do not feel they can work on a design for a new Town Hall lift, nor can Peter Jeswald, so I am looking for other designers who might be able to do the job (and I have asked them for recommendations).

 As I wrote in an e-mail on Thursday, I would like to place on the agenda at a future meeting discussion regarding a couple of on-going accounts, 122-5800, Elderly Housing ($475.00) and 122-5850, Batchelder property ($2,000), to see whether those can go back into the general fund. Those opportunities may have passed, but because they were started before I started work here, I need some direction from the Board to help decide whether they need to stay on the books.

 A man came into the office last week (who didn’t identify himself) and asked for “John O’Rourke, Town Counsel (Council?)” with three first pages of papers he said proved carbon dioxide was not responsible for global warming. A few minutes of searching the internet showed them not to be legitimate. You’re welcome to see them, and what I found, if you like.