

Town of Shirley

BOARD OF SELECTMEN



7 KEADY WAY – SHIRLEY, MASSACHUSETTS - 01464-2812

Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator

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May, 2014

Dear Residents of Shirley,

It has been six months since being appointed your Town Administrator. In six months I have heard, listened, learned and most importantly acted. When hired, the Board of Selectmen were eager for a leader and someone who would not just present ideas but implement those ideas.

The first undertaking was the operating budget. Historically the municipal budget has been in a deficit. The town has been simply taking in less revenue than was being spent and using one-time monies to fund reoccurring costs. One of my charges was to look at health insurance. Seeking input from the towns finance team a report was finalized and given to the Board of Selectmen. In that proposal I made several recommendations that would save the town a substantial amount of money in Fiscal Year 2015. The Board of Selectmen unanimously chose to have me implement those recommendations. Thus for FY 2015 the health insurance expense line has decreased 23%.

The municipal operating budget, through the Departments efforts, will decrease. Leaving the schools aside; any decrease, did not come without some pain to the individual departments. Consolidations and proposed cuts needed to occur to achieve that decrease. Now that those decreases have been proposed I can say that the Town is bare bones in terms of its staff and any more cuts could lead to a decrease in services to the residents of Shirley.

Another task I began was in how the operating budget will be presented at Town Meeting. The FY 2015 budget has been grouped into functions, following a true Omnibus Budget. At past Town Meetings each Department was voted separately, but under an Omni Bus budget they are voted by Function. One Function for example would be Land Use; within Land Use are the following: Planning Board, Board of Health, Building Inspector, Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. One total sum for Land Use will be moved to the floor and then debate would follow. There will no longer be a vote up or down for each individual department. I am encouraged that this will be well received at Town Meeting and make for a more efficient process, minus confusion.

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee are unanimously in favor of the FY2015 Municipal Operating Budget for the Town. The Departments, aside from a few, are also in full agreement with the budgets being presented at Town Meeting. This consensus shows how hard everyone has worked to bring Town Meeting Members a unified municipal operating budget.

I encourage all residents to come to Town Meeting on June 2nd.

Sincerely,

Patrice Garvin,
Shirley Town Administrator