

Katie Green

The **Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee** met on Thursday, 10/15. They heard a presentation from the SpEd PAC on the group's goals and work for the year. The SpEd PAC recently emailed their updated population trends report to the Board, which I encourage everyone to review. The Committee also heard an update on the FY15 financials. They are anticipating being \$667k in the positive as of the end of the fiscal year. This is mostly due to two one time benefits including a refund from the CASE collaborative. Their Excess and Deficiency fund has not yet been certified, but they anticipate that it will be \$1,995,000. The Committee has also decided to pursue looking at an alternative vacation calendar - not for the 2016-2017 school year but potentially for future years. They will be reaching out to teachers, staff, parents, and students to gauge interest in this idea. Finally, the Committee discussed the citizens' petition that will be voted on at our Special Town Meeting in November. This discussion resulted in the school committee's statement which was circulated at the Tri-Board meeting.

I attended the **Tri-Board Meeting** but as everyone was present, there is no need to report on that. The **Acton Leadership Group** met this morning. There were no major updates from either the town or the schools on FY15 close outs or on FY16. The group reviewed the spreadsheet and discussed the initial revenue projections. Many of these will be updated as we get more information, particularly around the new growth numbers for FY15. The group also agreed that none of the boards would be pursuing an override vote this year.

Janet K. Adachi

Minuteman Regional Vocational School District

- Wednesday, 10/28 – Meeting of member-Town Selectmen representatives in Weston. Superintendent Bourquillon and Assistant Superintendent Mahoney also present. Discussion included proposal of Boxborough Selectman Vince Amoroso (who also represents Boxborough on Minuteman School Committee) to accommodate wish of some member towns to withdraw from District while also assuring approval of school building bonding; sufficient number of member-town Selectmen oppose proposed District-wide vote on bonding that School Committee might not have requisite votes to approve. Lexington (12/2) and Weston also will be having special fall town meetings, with Wayland request to withdraw on warrants. Other topics: prospects for recruiting sending non-District towns as members; prospects for additional financial assistance via state legislature (slim). Differing perspectives remain but town representatives interested in continued discussion and agreed to meet again.

Note: Minuteman breakfast meeting for member towns re bonding-approval process, Monday, 11/16, 7:30 a.m. Formal notification to member towns forthcoming.

- Friday, 10/30 – Telephone conference scheduled with Pam Nourse, Acton representative on Minuteman School Committee, re 10/28 meeting in Weston; and preparation for Special Town Meeting re Article 10 proposed amendment of regional agreement to allow withdrawal of Wayland from District. Ms. Nourse learned that Lexington Selectmen this week voted not to recommend the article on their 12/2 special town meeting warrant.

Harris Street warrant article, Thursday, 10/29 – Meeting scheduled with Natural Resources Director Tom Tidman in preparation for Special Town Meeting re Article 3.

Acton and Boxborough Diversity Coalition, Tuesday, 10/27 – Discussion included potential speakers for 2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast; possible international food festival (secular) in spring 2016 at Acton Congregational Church.

Franny Osman

Senior Center Study Committee 10-19-15

The committee looked over the preliminary drawings that the architect drew up for possible configurations of rooms for the Senior Center part and the Human Services rooms.

North South Rail Link Working Group 10-19-15

I attended the second meeting of this working group. Governor Dukakis continues to expand a group of supporters to promote development of this plan that will have a great economic effect on our area. I am trying to bring a slide presentation that I saw out to our area, hopefully with Governor Dukakis, if we can catch him before he goes to California for the winter. The Presentation includes interesting historic photos and maps that make clear the divisions and hurdles and separate train storage needs based on the two separate rail systems: North Station and points North—and South Station and points South.

Commission on Disabilities (COD) 10-20-15

The Town of Acton Commission on Disabilities Member Handbook has been newly edited and released, by Mady Harvey and Danny Factor, based on one originally done by Lisa Franklin and Deanne Bonner. MA Office on Disability was interested in Acton's handbook in the past to share with other COD's.

Access to Town offices at 33 Nagog Park, Douglas School, Lower Fields, Teamworks, and Pedal Power was discussed.

Three members of COD met with the area Clergy and heard about needs including in the areas of transportation and mental illness.

Continued the goal discussion. The COD chose Mental Illness as the Self-Education topic for 2016. The previous year's topic was Independent Living.

Lowell Regional Transit Authority 10-22-15

The Board approved the agreement underway between the Town of Lowell and the LRTA where Lowell will park 11 tour buses daily, while tourists visit the sites, in a new lot built on a land area near the Gallagher Terminal that is fairly neglected at present time.

Minuteman Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RCC)- October 26, 2015

Representatives of Westborough, MA came to this meeting to present on the Westborough Shuttle, a model for our new fixed route shuttle. In attendance from Westborough were the Economic Development Officer, the Town Manager, and Jonathan Church of the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission. I know that Doug Halley, CrossTown Connect's Scott Zadakis, and all the attendees learned a lot about the process, successes, and challenges of Westborough's shuttle. That shuttle takes business employees from the train to the business park across town, then goes back and forth on Main St. a while before doing more train shuttling. That town's population of 19,800 increases to almost 60,000 during the day with the influx of workers. While that is not analogous to Acton, it is similar to what happens in our multi-town region.

Raise the Bar HIRE 2015 Work Without Limits Disability Work Conference- October 27, 2015

Lisa Franklin and I attended this conference, my third year. The keynote speaker was Bob McDonald of IBM; hearing about all of IBM's efforts to hire and promote growth of employees with disabilities, I am inspired to reach out to Littleton IBM and see if we can get some communication going between Acton and IBM about job opportunities for Acton residents with (and without) disabilities. Work Without Limits has a new job board: www.jobswithoutlimits.org. I spoke to the company AISquare which owns Zoomtext and has the ability to make our Town website accessible for people with hearing and visual impairment, by allowing the user to zoom in very close and has a screen reader. It would be about \$1000 a year for Acton to have this, said the salesperson.

Metropolitan Area Planning Council Fall Council Meeting (MAPC) October 28, 2015

Lightning Presentations by MAPC staff. Very interesting, including:

- MAPC supporting a bill that will allow local municipalities or regional groups to use a tax to promote local initiatives: S1474/H2698- An Act Relative to Regional Ballot Initiatives. They asked people to call our legislators to support this. An example of this type of bill in use included an Schoolcraft County, Michigan, where they used such a funding process to support public transportation.
- an Immigrant Small Business Story Tour in Framingham as part of a Transit-Oriented Development Study. MAPC made recommendations to Framingham which were passed by Town Meeting.
- Planning in Chelsea
- Decreasing municipal electricity costs by decreasing use on the regional PEAK day. That day's use is used to determine how much they are charged. Check with our supply contract to see if we are one of the towns whose billing method indicates we can reduce our load and cost in this way.
- Quincy: Planning and Preparing for Climate Change. Undeveloped coastline protects.

- Reimagining Halls Corner: Economic Development in Duxbury

Cemetery Commission- October 28, 2015

The Commission discussed 176 Central St. The Commission hopes to provide some funds toward the purchase if the Town, through appropriations and/or Community Preservation Funds. Nina Pickering-Cook came from Town Counsel's office to answer questions. We await Conservation Commission's decision on this land, most of which is wetlands. This meeting drew at least fifteen interested residents even at 2 pm on a Wednesday. Several letters were written by residents as well, in support of the Town conserving this land.

RITE Collaborative Grant meeting- October 28, 2015

Sheryl Ball convened this second meeting of human service volunteers and employees from around town, including three members of the Commission on Disability. We are working to figure out how to use the \$18,000 in funds from Community Health Network Alliance (CHNA) toward reducing isolation of certain populations in town who are identified as vulnerable to isolation. RITE is for "Reducing isolation" and two other words. Don't bother googling it as I did; it is a Doug Halley invention.

Chingsung Chang

Cable Advisory Committee met on 10/15. A new survey going out to Acton users was discussed. Method of distribution as well as advertising and participation was discussed.

HDC met on 10/20. A variety of applications were reviewed. Also met with Fran Arsenault, who is looking to become a member of the HDC.

Tri-board meeting was on 10/27. Goals for Fin Com, School Committee, and BoS were presented. All three boards appear to be close to the same page.