

# Memo

**To:** Mayor and Council  
**cc:** Department Heads  
**From:** Pat MacQueen  
**Date:** April 18, 2011  
**Re:** Manager's Report

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## **Laura Viger Receives Sylvia Evans Award**

We are most proud that Laura Viger was the recipient of the prestigious Sylvia Evans Award this year. It was awarded to her at a very nice ceremony at WMCC Friday before last. This award is given each year to a woman in the community who has demonstrated concern and devoted time and energy to the families of the Androscoggin Valley. The award is named after Sylvia V. Forman Evans. She was the first recipient of the award in 1981.

There can be no doubt that Laura is one of the most deserving recipients of this award given her long career of public service and giving of herself to others and the community.

## **State Assessing Feedback**

Attached is more correspondence from the State Department of Revenue Administration regarding their review of the City's assessing revaluation carried out by Avitar. Their findings all seem to indicate that they believe the revaluation met their criteria for quality.

### **WWTF Design Refinements**

Henry Noel, Mike Perreault and I have been going over design refinements with Wright-Pierce on a fairly regular basis now as the design improvements move forward. The Value Engineering process will probably occur in June or July, and at the moment, it looks like bidding for this major construction should occur probably in October or November.

### **BOP Conference Calls**

We continue to have our conference calls with the Bureau of Prisons about every three weeks. As the Council is aware, there currently is no money in the Federal budget for the new Prison to start its staffing ramp up as it had planned. Now it appears that that ramp up cannot really start until at least October. In some ways, this may help with our WWTF improvements schedule, but certainly from the point of view of providing an economic boost to the region it is another kick in the teeth.

### **Ambulance Contract**

Last week I met with Chris Dubey of Berlin Emergency Medical Services to review the contract and the budget. We agreed that the amount we show in the budget for BEMS of \$240,000 is the correct contractually agreed upon amount for the coming budget year.

### **Health Advisory Board**

Part of the Medicare requirements for operating a home health nursing operation such as we do requires that there be quarterly meetings of a Professional Advisory Board. Due to Laura Viger's absence, this Board has not met in quite a while. We re-established meetings of this Board and held a meeting last week. The Board is made up mostly of local health professionals who were appointed by the Mayor and Council.

### **K-Kids of Berlin, NH**

K-Kids of Berlin, NH is a student-led community service club in the Berlin, Gorham and Milan area operating under the Berlin Kiwanis Club. As part of their efforts they will on April 30<sup>th</sup> be doing a community service project working on cleaning up Community Park. We couldn't be happier to get this type of service from our youth.

### **Tax-Deeding Day**

The day for tax deeding this year has been established by the Finance Department as May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **North Country Ride Share**

Attached is a letter from the North Country Council regarding North Country RideShare. This is an initiative to promote ride sharing in the North Country. The program through NHDOT uses a computer matching system to match up riders. The goal of North Country RideShare (NCRS) is to provide public education and awareness about this DOT program. NCRS will presumably be meeting with us in the near future to go over it and publicizing events they have planned.

### **Highway Safety Grants**

I have attached the award letters for Highway Safety Grants for the following projects to be carried out by the BPD:

- Berlin Red Light Running
- DWI Hunter Patrols
- Operation Safe Commute Patrols
- Enforcement Patrols
- DWI/DUI Patrols
- Bicycle Patrols
- NH Clique Seat Belt Campaign

### **Legislative Matters**

**HB1&2:** This is the budget bill and its trailer. It has passed the House. It is now being reviewed in the Senate and I don't presume to understand all of the 'ins and outs' of it. The Senate will be holding public hearings on these two bills this Thursday.

**SB156:** This is the vehicle registration bill which the Mayor and Council opposed, which would allow auto dealers to register vehicles at the time of purchase through an electronic vehicle registration system. Presumably according to NHMA, the municipal concerns about the revenue and registration errors have been addressed in the current version of the bill. It will have a hearing tomorrow afternoon before the House Commerce Committee.

HB 464: This bill transfers \$89 million from the Group II (police/fire) specials accounts used to pay for COLA's to the pension system where it belongs.

HB 457: Happily, this bill which would have reduced by half unpaid property tax interest rates from 12% and 18% respectively to 6% and 12% was killed in the Senate.