

## First Selectman's Report

March 11, 2023

**Budget season** is in full swing and a draft budget for fiscal year 2023-2023 was presented to the Board of Finance by the Board of Selectmen showing an approximate **\$119,000 reduction** in the Town side of the budget. Currently, Region 6 is asking for an approximate \$282,000 increase in the school budget. The Board of Finance is now asking various town departments to come in and explain any changes in their departmental requests. The Board of Finance will be meeting every week for the time being on Tuesday nights at 7:00. The meetings are available on ZOOM. Please check the Town website @ [townofmorrisct.com](http://townofmorrisct.com) for agendas.

**The Highway Department** has been dealing with the spring snow and ice events and at the same time preparing for warmer weather. With the lack of snow the crew has been able to catch up on much needed maintenance and mowing/brush removal in certain areas. Tree trimming and removal is ongoing. We have received the new 2023 Mack Granite HD Highway truck which is replacing the 2001 International Highway truck currently advertised for sale.

**East Shore Road:** Bids were recently opened for the reclaim and paving of East Shore Road. The low bid was from S & S Asphalt Paving for the amount of \$663,309.30. This will include the reclaim and paving of the entire road and curbing and driveway aprons where needed. Funding for this project will come from a **\$500,000** Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grant obtained by the First Selectman and the balance of \$170,000 from Capital Non Recurring Unassigned was approved by the Board of Finance at their last meeting and will be brought to a Town Meeting for approval as well.

Another project on East Shore Road which we hope to complete is the replacement of the culvert under the road at the entrance to the Town Beach Road. We are waiting for Request For Proposal responses to see exactly how much funding is needed for the project. If we can move forward on the culvert replacement project, we hope to have the culvert replaced in early summer and do the paving in the fall.

**Looking Glass Hill Road:** We have completed the engineering on this road to determine the extent of drainage and rebuilding this road is in need of. With the engineering complete, we have submitted an application through the North West Hills Council of Governments (NWCOC) for a grant from the Connecticut Department of Transportation Rural Improvement Grant Program (TRIPS). If awarded this grant, we would begin working on the drainage in preparation for rebuilding this road.

**Animal control:** The Board of Selectmen signed an interim agreement with the Town of Harwinton to have the Harwinton ACO cover the Town of Morris for animal control. Once we have all the details, the new ACO phone number will be put up on the website and on Facebook. We will be bringing an inter-local agreement to a Town Meeting for approval in the near future. This would codify the working arrangement and duties of the ACO into a formal agreement between the two towns.

**Transfer Station:** We will begin Sunday hours once again beginning in early May. We are also looking to begin a food waste composting program at the Transfer Station. Residents and commercial businesses would be able to bring their food waste to the Transfer Station where it would be composted on site. Food waste accounts for approximately 40% of the weight in our household garbage. If we can remove that from what gets hauled out of the Transfer Station, we could see substantial savings in the fees we pay.