

Town of Seymour



1st Quarter 2015

Executive Summary

Introductory Note

This is the second edition of the Town of Seymour's quarterly executive summary. Town department heads have been submitting quarterly reports since the beginning of 2013 to make certain that important information from each department is brought to the attention of the First Selectman. The standard format asks the department heads to set goals and evaluate their performance in the previous quarter to ensure that each department is constantly achieving and striving for improvement. It also allows for trends to be identified so that they can become involved in planning.

The process, because it is still relatively new, has been evolving and will see substantial changes in the near future. In order to provide more, relevant information for those interested, this document represents an attempt on behalf of the First Selectman's Office to condense the information provided in the quarterly reports into a more accessible format, a sort of quarterly FAQ from which overarching trends and highlights can be quickly identified.

As this is still only the second edition, I welcome suggestions for its improvement. Thank you for your consideration.



W. Kurt Miller
First Selectman

First Selectman's Office

- Preparation of 2015-16 budget
- Finalized sale of LoPresti School, earning \$335,000 to be spent on maintenance and improvement of Town buildings
- NVCOG senior citizens tax loan program feasibility study and GIS & Lidar upgrades
- Updated ordinances including disabled veterans tax exemption
- Progress and preparation for SHS athletic complex upgrades
- Preparation for \$5.6 million roadwork program

The first quarter of 2015 was a difficult one for the Town of Seymour. After a slow start, winter pummeled the Northeast, leaving us covered with more than three feet of snow. In spite of the challenges this presented by the foul weather, the Town continued making progress on several long-term financial initiatives and will be implementing several policies based on what we learned including stricter enforcement of snow removal ordinances.

In addition to winter weather, the first quarter always signifies the beginning of budget season. I began reaching out to department heads back in December urging them to put forward 0% increases for their budgets. The final Town budget endorsed by the Board of Finance represents a 0% increase with an additional \$549,000 in initiatives including \$110,000 for equipment for the Department of Public Works, \$250,000 for road work and \$80,000 for road repair to address the rapidly deteriorating roads in Town.

Additionally, this budget will see our fund balance raised to 8.7% with a new minimum of 8.5% being put in place. Fund Balance is a kind of financial reserve that money-lending institutions use as a gauge of financial security. Our current balance is substantially higher than 5.91%, where it was in 2011 when I took office. This represents serious progress towards our goal of 10%, the level preferred by ratings institutions like Standard & Poor's for municipalities with AAA ratings, the highest possible.

In other financial news, our capital plan will reach full funding this year with \$300,000 being put aside annually for large purchases and our road program will make more progress to full funding as we play catch-up after years of neglect. This year we were also able to create approximately \$350,000 annual savings on health insurance for Town employees through successful negotiation with union representatives.

Seymour's debt service ratio, or the amount of our budget that goes to paying off our existing debt, currently stands at 8.94%. However, with an eye to the future, we stand to shed \$370,000 in payments annually as of fiscal year 2018 and an additional \$1.2 million annually in fiscal year 2021. These significant drops will help us make necessary investments in infrastructure upgrades as well as stabilizing and perhaps even reducing taxation.

Although preparing the budget has been occupying most of our time, there have been several other advances. The sale of the former LoPresti School was finalized and the \$335,000 received from the sale will be reinvested in upgrades to aging Town buildings. In late 2014, Seymour joined the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG). They are conducting a feasibility study for a senior citizen tax loan program and working to improve the Town's mapping capabilities. The Board of Selectmen also made progress towards approving changes to 4 ordinances, including increasing the property tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans.

Last year, Representative Theresa Conroy worked to secure the Town of Seymour a \$1.895 million grant to upgrade the athletic facilities including John DeBarber Field, at Seymour High School. A committee was formed to execute the grant and this quarter, they signed a contract with an architecture/engineering firm, Nafis & Young. Work is slated to begin next quarter in order to realize some savings and ensure the project is complete before the fall athletic season. As a result, the Board of Education voted to move the graduation ceremony to elsewhere on the campus of Seymour High School.

Finally, the Town began preparing for the \$5.6 million in road work approved by voters at a referendum in November. This first phase of road work is scheduled to begin in May and go through September and will address portions of more than 40 roads. As the project progresses, the Town will create a webpage and utilize localized Code Red calls to give residents in the affected areas updates.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Kurt Miller', with a stylized, cursive script.

W. Kurt Miller
First Selectman

Finance

- Preparation of 2015-16 budget
- Continued providing information for MuniCast financial forecasts
- Completed bonding of \$5.6 million for road work
- Receipt of \$1.895 million from State for SHS athletic complex
- Receipt of \$400,000 in Small Cities grant for housing rehabilitation
- Receipt of \$375,000 in downtown grant for beautification
- Receipt of \$335,000 from sale of LoPresti School for Town Building upgrades

Projections

Revenues: \$54,358,653

Budgeted: \$54,391,274

Variance: -\$32,621

Expenditures: \$54,295,146

Budgeted: \$54,391,274

Variance: \$96,128

Unfavorable revenue variance is due to low trending building permit fees and budgeted fund balance use of \$50,000.

Favorable expenditure variance is due to garbage contract savings, decrease in Community Services Dept. trips and deferred personnel hiring in spite of unfavorable balances in Town buildings and health insurance.

Total Variance: \$63,507

Economic Development

- Contract executed for phase 1 of Greenway Trail
- Filled all existing Adopt-a-Spot locations
- Assisted in closing of sale of former LoPresti School

Seymour Schools

- Held several budget presentations to inform public of where education dollars go
- Board of Education voted to move graduation from DeBarber field to facilitate field renovation project

Seymour Police Department

- Received new canine unit with help of donation – to be trained by July
- Seymour officers represented SPD at funerals of 2 assassinated NYPD officers
- Officer Kevin Miceli won Seymour/Oxford Rotary Award for community service

- Involved in seizure of over \$100,000 in heroin
- New school resource officer, Corey Tomasella
- Received \$26,000 JAG grant to purchase iPads for officers
- Investigating body cameras for officers
- 3 officers retired
- Completed negotiations and signed new police union contract

Fire Department

- Purchased new 15.5 foot inflatable boat with 10-person capacity for Great Hill
- Finalized purchase of utility truck to replace Engine 18
- Repairing damage from electrical fire.
- Engines 10 & 18 removed from service and surplussed.
- Firefighters attended Metro North training drill
- March 8th ice rescue drill
- Extrication training with Seymour EMS for EMT training program
- Annual OSHA training has begun and is ongoing
- Captain Chris Edwards recognized by Rotary Club for Community Service
- Completed cancer awareness session for members

Responses

Total Calls:	150	Elevator:	2
Total Fires:	11	HazMat:	9
Vehicle:	4	CO:	6
Structure:	3	Service Calls:	29
Rescues:	35	Good Intent Calls:	11
Vehicles:	33	False Alarms:	34
Extrications:	3		

Recreation

Current Programming

- Youth basketball
- Family swim night

Future Programming

- Lego Summer Camp
- US Sports Institute lacrosse camp
- Multi-sport camp
- Movie-making camp
- Men's over-30 Saturday morning basketball
- Mrs. Jean Banks food collection drive

Seymour Public Library

- Looking into energy conservation grant at recommendation of State Library
- Preparing for National Library Week from 4/12 to 4/18 – planning events

Circulation		Total Holdings:	82,408
Adults:	10,56	Computer Sessions:	2,831
Children:	5,434	Registered Users:	10,063
Inter-Library Loan			
Borrow:	1,055		
Lend:	600		

Human Resources

- Hired new Community Services Director
- Working to restructure Community Services Department
- Brought Town Hall staff to CCM customer service seminar
- Planning employee benefits fair
- Preparing for open enrollment in second quarter with new high-deductible health insurance plan

Tax Collector

Taxes Collected		Taxes Outstanding:	\$1,420,728.41
January:	\$12,446,260.10	Collection Rate:	97.30%
February:	\$2,107,936.44	Back Taxes Owed:	\$1,170,384.56
March:	\$382,281.10	Collected Using Card:	\$323,221.44
Total Taxes Collected:	\$14,936,477.64	Percent Using Card:	2.16%

Building Enforcement

Fees Collected		Permits Issued	
January:	\$6,024	January:	45
February:	\$5,478	February:	38
March:	\$2,140	March:	22
Total:	\$13,862	Total:	105

Fire Marshal

Current Projects

- 225 West Street – 2 renovations completed (Pub 67, Pizarro Pizza)
- 30 Great Hill Road – renovation underway (Total Sports Academy – indoor sports complex)

- 29 Maple Street – renovation underway (former LoPresti School)
- Working with State Rep. Conroy and State Sen. Kane to update blasting regulations

Inspections

New Construction:	25	Fire Code Complaints:	13
Initial Existing Buildings:	26	Detail Code Reviews:	3
Reinspections:	9	Detail Follow-up Activities:	5
Underground Tanks:	0	Burning Permits:	1
Blasting Complaints:	0		

Fires

- 26 DeForest St. – Citizens Engine Co – Electrical fire, working with Eversource to resolve
- 11 Prospect St. – car fire under investigation
- 14-16 Clifton St. – structure fire investigation resolved

Inland-Wetlands Enforcement

- \$33,240.50 in fees collected

Town Clerk

To-Date

Dog Licenses:	798	Hunting Licenses:	188
Marriage Licenses:	16	Recording Income:	\$3,634
Vendor Licenses:	14	Mail-in Ballots:	145

- Began preparations for 2015 Municipal election
- Began preparations for budget referendum'

Assessor

- Began Preparations for 2015 revaluation
- Prepared 2015 Grand List for 2015-16 budget