

Lincoln Board of Selectmen--2002 Annual Report

The year 2002 was one of change for the Town of Lincoln. At the March Town Meeting voters reinstated the town manager form of government. After a thorough recruitment process, the selectmen introduced three candidates to local residents at a public forum. After considering input from citizens who attended the forum, the selectmen offered the position to Ted Sutton. Years of service on the Lincoln Budget Committee, a career as a firefighter in the Andover, Massachusetts Fire Department, extensive experience representing the local ski industry at the state and national level, an understanding of local water issues, and contacts with National Forest representatives and state officials were major factors in our decision to hire Mr. Sutton, who started in his new position in August.

Earlier in the year Bill Conn resigned his position as selectman due to personal reasons. We thank Bill for his service and for his suggestions during the water project planning. Peter Moore filled the vacant position on the board. Peter has lived in Lincoln for 27 years and has served as Library Trustee for many years. His enthusiasm and desire to make a positive contribution to the town has made him a valuable addition to the Lincoln Select Board.

The Police Union contract was ratified on July 1, 2002. The contract includes a step plan pay scale that, over the course of three years, will bring the department's wage scale to competitive levels. This plan adhered to the financial guidelines approved at Town Meeting. By September staffing within the police department reached six officers, allowing for more stable and consistent coverage. Dispatch also reached full staffing levels. As a result, we can now consider providing dispatch services to nearby communities.

In August Jane Duguay announced she would resign as selectman as she and her family were relocating out of town. Thank you, Jane, for your service to the town as selectman, health officer, ambulance squad member, and recreation advocate--to name some but not all of your contributions to our town. Patricia McTeague filled the vacancy on the board. Patricia has lived in Lincoln for 29 years. She served on the Lincoln Planning Board for over 10 years and was also a member of the Lin-Wood School Board for many years. Patricia's many years as a businesswoman and her planning background make her a valuable addition to our board.

Thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of Library Director Carol Riley, along with some active committee members and many generous sponsors, the Town of Lincoln served as the only community in New England to host *The Great Experiment: George Washington and the American Republic*. We appreciate everyone's efforts to bring this wonderful exhibit to our town. Special thanks to North Country Center for the Arts, the Upper Pemigewasset Historical Society, Citizens Bank, and Loon Mountain Recreation Corp. for the part they played in bringing this unique event to Lincoln.

With years of service to their credit, four members of the Lincoln Planning Board announced their intentions to leave the board in late summer and early fall. They cited personal reasons and the realization of certain goals as primary reasons for stepping down. Thank you Patricia McTeague, Tom Adams, Paul Beaudin II, and Ivan Saitow. Welcome aboard Pat Romprey, James Spanos, Mike Bovarnick, Ron Siekmann, and John Hettinger, who join existing board members Joe Chenard and Daryl Lavigne. We are gratified that citizens are willing to contribute to the town in this way.

We offer our appreciation to the members of the budget committee who committed much time and effort in considering the financial needs of this community. Your concerns about the impact of this budget on the taxpayers were evident throughout the process.

We congratulate former Selectman Edmond Gionet on his election last fall to the State House of Representatives, District 11. We are confident that Edmond will represent the town's interests with the same energy, dedication and commitment he displayed during his many years as a Lincoln Selectman.

Top on the list of project priorities assigned to the town manager in August was to develop a fair and equitable way to approach water usage costs and financing options to better manage our water system and move ahead with improving our aging infrastructure. Ted Sutton's previous work experience and understanding of Lincoln's water issues were invaluable in integrating recommendations in the Lincoln Water Study with our more immediate water needs. This resulting plan will be presented at a public hearing and at Town Meeting. Similar presentations will be made to outline plans to deal with sewer lagoon issues. Voter support on these issues will allow Lincoln to move forward in planning sensibly for the future.

During Town Meeting time a year ago, the selectmen established several goals: to work towards implementing the recommendations in the Lincoln Water Study; to use a team approach that would bring together local citizens, department heads, and employees; and to foster better communications when dealing with these challenges. These goals were accomplished in part through the efforts of existing and new staff members. Welcome to our new employees in administration, bookkeeping, the tax collector/town clerk's office, public works, police, dispatch, fire department, and to our new health officer. Thank you for using the team approach as you serve the community.

More challenges lie ahead, not just for Lincoln but for towns and cities throughout the state. These include incorporating new auditing requirements known as GASB 34, and adopting new assessing standards established by the state for certification by 2006. Water infrastructure and sewer projects will need constant oversight, and employee commitment will be integral to successful completion of these projects.

Carol Rannacher and Deb Moody are in our thoughts. We appreciate all the contributions they made along the way.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Deanna Huot
McTeague

Selectman Peter Moore

Selectman Patricia