

Bridgewater Updates  
Board of Selectmen  
June 2022

**Taxes:** In spite of very high oil prices, our budgets are in reasonable shape. Fund surpluses from 2020 and 2021 were good. There are some pressures from outside matters, but we are in, otherwise, good shape. No long term debt. Expenses relative to oil cost are impressive and inflation is a problem. Overall – OK

Tax bills have been issued and are due 7/1/22. Please remember to write your tax map/parcel no. on the memo line of your check.

**School District:** There was a challenge to modify or study the apportionment formula for school costs within our school district. We amended the article to study the matter. It is still under review. For details of the issue, see our winter newsletter.

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/1fe88111-8580-4a2e-bfae-899271219bdd/downloads/Winter%202022%20Vol.1.pdf?ver=1641475720823>

We are working with many groups but it is **very important** to be sure that as many eligible voters from Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton give their email address to their town office just in case this issue goes to the voters in the spring. **WE HAVE TO BE ORGANIZED.** The tax rate could change by a substantial amount and the results would not go to education. We would, effectively, subsidize other towns in this school district. In addition, such a change would impact the school building in our town and have a negative impact on teacher/staff jobs as well as children's education.

Please re-read the Winter Newsletter.

**Zoning:** The Town proposed a zoning amendment that proposed dividing the General Residential District into two districts and rename the Rural Residential as:

1. The Lake District (Currently named the General Residential District)
2. The River Road District (Currently named the General Residential District)
3. The Mountain District (Currently the Rural Residential District.)

The purpose of this proposed change will allow any future zoning amendment to affect only the Partitioned District. It avoids "one size (i.e. rule) fits all"

**This article passed at the Spring Town Meeting**

**Land use reminders:**

**Building permits** are required for building modifications. Repairs like re-shingling roofs or replacing a rotting garage door etc. do not need a permit. Setbacks from roads and property lines can be an issue. Call the office for advice. The days of "...better to ask forgiveness rather than permission..." are gone.

Shoreline protection permits are required on the Lake and Pemi River. Even some streams are involved. The Department of Environmental Services takes a dim view of violations and remediation of those errors can be costly.

**Box Trailers/Storage Containers** – Need a permit. They can be granted only a temporary permit

**Canvas storage buildings**, even though temporary, are structures. Setbacks apply and a permit is required.

**Converting the upstairs of a garage to living space.** It becomes an Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) and rules apply. (State Law) Among other issues about ADU, septic issues apply. Converting from seasonal to year round occupancy requires permitting. See the following:

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/1fe88111-8580-4a2e-bfae-899271219bdd/downloads/masterordinances-d-revised-02-26-18.pdf?ver=1651780863640>

Banks and insurance companies now review compliance of many of these issues. Adding an additional bedroom without upgrading or reviewing your septic capacity may make it difficult to obtain future financing or insurance coverage. Excessive driveway grades, private road access, private bridges can be problematic.

We are here to assist in your planning. Just give us a call. We will help you through the process: Zoning, while at times, is inconvenient, it helps control growth and taxes. It also protects your property value.

**Use of Golf Carts, ATV's and the like** in Whittemore Point area. Initially, we tried to allow this use. Alas, children driving, adolescent racing and driving far off this area has resulted in withdrawal of the policy. It is a public road and those categories of vehicles cannot be used any longer.

**RV's, popup campers and the like** are not permitted for occupancy on any lot in Bridgewater. There are a very few that were installed in the early days of our zoning. Beyond those, you can certainly store them on your property, but usage converts them into an additional dwelling unit which is prohibited and may initiate an enforcement action.

**Police Changes:** Our current Police Chief, George Hill, has decided to resign. He is retiring from police work after 31 years of service. We wish him well in his new endeavors.

We have hired a new Chief as well as a new part-time patrol officer for the Town. When the paperwork is complete, we will update you further on this matter.

**Terence Murphy**

**Skip Jenness Jr.**

**P. Wesley Morrill, Jr.**

**Selectman**