

## December 2010 Update

The Town Charter and General Bylaws of the Town require the Town Administrator to submit a capital and operating budget to the Board of Selectmen and Advisory Committee for its review and approval. The Advisory Committee held its first budget reviews with town departments on December 16 and the Selectmen begin their reviews on December 21. This work will continue through February 15 and then the final preparation for the April annual town meeting warrant begins. The deadline for receipt of all warrant articles is December 21.

The FY 12 budget document is prefaced by a Budget Message that will be posted here next week. It details current budget challenges and what has been cut in this year's operating budget. We are working on posting the FY 11 town budget and FY 12 proposed budget on the website as well. I urge you to review the Budget Message and the budgets as they contain much more information about town services and programs aside from just revenues and expenditures.

The Town is in the process of reviewing applications for the newly created position of IT Director. This critical position will assist greatly in coordinating all of the Town's technology functions and insuring our data is safe and secure. It is quite uncommon for a town not to have to this type of position given the role technology plays in municipal government.

The Department of Public Works has been gearing up for snow plowing and removal activities. This year the Town is implementing a new salt brine treatment program that is designed to pre-treat roads before ice and snow can build up. This method is used by Mass DOT and will almost completely reduce the use of sand, saving additional costs in spring street sweeping.

The Town was recently notified that it is now one of 53 communities that has been designated a "Green Community." This designation will allow the Town to receive grants to be applied against energy improvements. One of the goals of the Town is to become as energy efficient as possible, and this designation, along with the Energy Savings Contract (ESCO), stretch code and solar array approved at the fall special town meeting will bring Scituate to the forefront of communities in our approach to green technologies and energy efficiencies. Also, the wind turbine is slated for construction in July of 2011. This will be preceded by the construction of a roadway off the Driftway to bring in the parts and this will begin shortly.

One of the benefits of having worked in previous towns is that I can appreciate the certain services or special things that make the community a great place to live. Scituate seems to have a special place in Santa's heart! He has been to our community quite frequently during the past few weeks and has arrived by boat, train and helicopter. I understand he even took some time to call a number of children in town to make sure he knew what was on their Christmas lists. How fortunate the Town is to have this special treatment, and witnessing it has been a new and gratifying experience that I have never seen in the

communities I have served. It is this kind of volunteerism and community spirit that sets the Town apart. From our harbor to the amount of conservation and athletic fields, Scituate has a lot going for it. However, many of these services that make our Town so appealing also have rising costs to maintain. The FY 12 budget can only try and maintain current levels, and is reducing some. How we move forward will be the real challenge for 2011.

I wish all of you Happy Holidays and a safe and healthy 2011.

Patricia A. Vinchesi  
Town Administrator