



TOWN WHERE A U.S. FLAG WAS FIRST
RAISED OVER A PUBLIC SCHOOL. MAY, 1812

2014

Town of Colrain Annual Report



The Town of Colrain is a community of 43.2 square miles located in north central Franklin County. Per the 2000 Federal Census, the population is 1,813, of which 1,094 are registered voters. To the north, Colrain borders two Vermont towns: Halifax and Guilford. Leyden is to the east, Greenfield to the southeast, Shelburne to the south, Charlemont to the southwest and Heath to the west. State Route 112 is the major highway through the town, running roughly north to south along the North River. There are 86.58 road miles in Colrain, the third highest amount in the Franklin County. Approximately half of these roads are gravel. Colrain is primarily an agricultural and residential community. We have an open town meeting form of government, with a Board of Selectmen as the governing body.

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Dedication

Colrain Transfer Station Information/Hours

Located on Charlemont Road
Saturdays 8:00 am—4:00 pm
Summer hours 1st Tues in May—1st Tues in September
5:30 pm—7:30 pm

General Information

All trash bags must have stickers
13 gallon stickers-\$1.00/each
33 gallon stickers—\$2.00/each

Stickers are available at the Transfer Station
Bulky Waste open 3rd week in April until it is full in October

General Recycling

Paper and Plastics

Other Recyclables Collected

Scrap Metal	Free
White Goods and CFCs	\$10 each
Tires	\$2.00 each with no rims
Bulky Waste	\$5.00 to \$10.00
CRTs and TVs	\$0.25/lb
Construction/Demolition	\$40/cubic yard (\$20 minimum)
Donations	Salvation Army Box

Hazardous Materials Collected

Motor oil	\$0.50/gal
Oil Filters	\$0.75/each
Auto Batteries	Yes
Anti-Freeze	\$1.00/gallon
Paint	\$5.00 per gallon, \$1.50 per qt. No Latex
Flourescent	\$0.50/4 ft or shorter or compacts, \$1 per 8 ft.
House Batteries	Yes
Ballasts	\$5.00 each
Thermometer	Free
Thermostats	Free
Switches	Free
20 lb BBQ Tanks	\$5.00
1 lb LP Tanks	\$1.00
Larger LP Tanks	\$10.00

Items not accepted: leaves/yard waste, Christmas Trees, Brush Textiles

Town Officers, Boards, & Committees – Contact Information

	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
Agricultural Commission Chair, Kenneth P. Herzig	624-0215	
Board of Assessors, Assistant Alice Wozniak	624-3356	assessors@colrain-ma.gov
Board of Health Clerk, Coleen Worden	624-4728	officeclerk@colrain-ma.gov
Building Inspector, Shawn Kimberley	624-3356	shawnkimberley@hotmail.com
Conservation Commission Clerk, Coleen Worden	624-4728	townclerk@colrain-ma.gov
Council on Aging, Richard Herzig	624-8818 624-3417	
Dog Officer Jack Cavolic	624-3238	
Emergency Manager Director Jack Cavolick	624-3454	
Finance Committee Chair, Marybeth Chichester	624-3454	
Fire Chief, Nick Anzuoni	624-5528	
Griswold Memorial Library Betty Johnson, Librarian	624-3619	biblib3@aol.com
Highway Superintendent, Scott Sullivan	624-5500	hwysupt@mtdata.com
Historical Commission Chair, Robert Ramirez	624-3090	
Open Space Committee Chair, Ellen Weeks	624-5137	eweeks@umext.umass.edu
Personnel Committee Chair, Ellen Weeks	624-5137	eweeks@umext.umass.edu
Planning Board Chair, Sara Wik		
Police Chief - Business Only Jason Haskins	624-3038	police@colrain-ma.gov
Tax Collector Paula Harrison	624-5549	taxcollector@colrain-ma.gov
Town Accountant, Tracey Baronas	624-8859	accountant@colrain-ma.gov
Town Clerk Robin Hartnett	624-3454	townclerk@colrain-ma.gov
Selectmen/Town Coordinator, Kevin Fox	624-6306	bos@colrain-ma.gov
Transfer Station	625-9012	
Treasurer Paula Harrison	624-5549	treasurer@colrain-ma.gov
Tree Warden Michael Friedlander	624-3643	
Zoning Board of Appeals Chair, Rockwell Lively	624-3210	

Elected Town Officers

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Three year term)

Eileen D. Sauvageau, Chair	2014 - 2017
Mark A. Thibodeau	2012 - 2015
Jack Cavolick	2013 - 2016

TOWN CLERK (Three year term)

Robin Hartnett	2013 - 2016
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BOARD OF ASSESSORS (Three year term)

Nicholas M. Anzuoni, Chair	2013 - 2016
James J. Slowinski	2012 - 2015
Jonathan Lagreze	2014 - 2017

MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE

(Three year term)

Joseph M. Kurland	2014 - 2017
Nina Martin-Anzuoni	2013 - 2016

GRISWOLD MEMORIAL LIBRARY TRUSTEES (Three year term)

Michelle F. Hillman	2013 - 2016
Carol Agrillo	2014 - 2017
Jill Horton-Lyons	2014 - 2017
Lori A. Regienus	2012 – 2015
Carol Lively	2013 – 2016
Cynthia McLaughlin	Appointed 10-21-2013- 2015

CONSTABLES (Three year term)

Michael Friedlander	2013 - 2016
Scott F. Sullivan	2014 - 2017
Melinda A. Herzig	2012 - 2015

MODERATOR (Three year term)

Michael J. Slowinski	2012 - 2015
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Board of Selectmen Appointments

Agricultural Commission	Term Expires
Kenneth P. Herzig, Chair	2017
Kenneth W. Avery	2017
Robert P. Ramirez	2015
Joseph S. Hillman	2015
Animal Control Officer	
Jack Cavolick	2017
Alternative, Ed Grinnell	2017
Block Grant Housing Rehabilitation Program	
David W. Nims	2017
Board of Health	
Michael Friedlander	2017
Timothy P. Slowinski	2017
Jason Ferenc, Chair	2015
Jack Cavolick	2015
Diana Ditmore	2017
Board of Registrars	
Leah Coburn	2015
Karen M. Devine	2017
Eugenia M. Shearer	2017
Amy J. Herzig	2015
Paula Harrison	2017
Broadband Committee	
William H. Dornbusch	2017
Joseph M. Kurland	2017
Bill Cole	2017
Ed Stamas	2017
Rebecca Tippens	2017
Board of Selectmen	
Building Inspector (Three year term)	
Shawn Kimberley	2016
Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Representative	
Michelle F. Hillman	2017
Colrain Arts Council	
Heather Viens	2017
Cynthia L. McLaughlin	2016
Janice Jones	2016
Helen Call	2017
Ann Stanforth	2017
Eugenia M. Shearer	2015
Donna Cusimono	2016
Conservation Commission	
Clarence E. Wheeler, Chair	2017
Matthew G. Slowinski	2017
David W. Nims	2017
Carl A. Herzig	2017
Paul C. Lagreze	2017
William H. Dornbusch	2015
Marshall L. Denison, Jr.	2015

Council on Aging

Joan C. McQuade	2017
Richard R. Herzig	2015
Amy J. Herzig	2015
Bing Waldsmith	2015
Carl Herzig	2016
Mary York	2017
Russell Barnes	2017
Janice Barnes	2017
Kathleen A. Phelps	2017
Valeda R. Peters	2017

Emergency Management Director

Jack Cavolick	2017
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Fire Chief

Nicholas M. Anzuoni	2017
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Franklin Regional Transit Authority Representative

Mark Thibodeau	2017
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Franklin Regional Council of Governments Representative

Eileen D. Sauvageau	2015
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Franklin Regional Planning Board Representative

Eileen D. Sauvageau	2017
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Highway Department Liaison

Mark Thibodeau	2015
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Highway Superintendent

Scott F. Sullivan	2017
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Historic Commission

Robert P. Ramirez, Chair	2017
Joan C. McQuade	2017
Edward S. Stamas	2017
David W. Nims	2017
Jack Cavolick	2017
David B Rodgers	2017
Amy Herzig	2017

Inspector of Animals (Appointed March 31st)

Jack Cavolick	2014
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Memorial Hall Park Committee

Phil Sherburne	2017
Rusty Barnes	2017
Joan Rockwell	2017

Moth Superintendent

Scott Sullivan	2017
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Office Clerk

Paula Harrison	2017
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Open Space Committee

Ellen Weeks, Chair	2014
Robert Sand	2014
Marybeth Chichester	2014
Rita M. Thibodeau	2014
Ellen E. Doris	2015

Personnel Committee		
Kathleen A. Phelps		2014
Valeda R. Peters		2014
Christine L. Beausoleil		2015
Ellen A. Weeks, Chair		2015
Open position		2014
Plumbing & Gas Inspector		
Timothy J. Hartnett		2014
Herb Hohengasser		2014
Police Chief		
Jason D. Haskins		2014
Police Officers		
Srgt. Christopher E. Lannon		
Roger P. Williams, Jr.		
Joshua Lemay		
Gary Russell		
Dawn Haskins		
Justin Purinton		
Recreation Committee		
Heather E. Garey		2014
Roger J. Purington, Jr.		2014
Eileen D. Sauvageau		2014
Regional Dog Program Representative		
Jack Cavolick		2014
Alternate, Kevin Fox		2014
Solid Waste Management District Representative		
Jonathan Lagreze		2014
Alternate, Kevin Fox		2014
Special Constable		
Carl A. Herzig		2014
Tax Collector		
Paula Harrison	Appointed 9-19-13 - 2016	
Tree Warden		
Michael Friedlander		2015
Town Coordinator		
Kevin Fox		2014
Treasurer		
Kris Nartowicz Resigned 12-24-2014	Appointed 3-19-2013 - 2016	
Paula Harrison	Appointed 12/25/2014 - 2016	
Town Accountant		
Tracey L. Baronas		2015
Wiring Inspector		
James Slowinski		2014
Clinton Dodge		2014
Zoning Board of Appeals		
Marshall L. Denison, Jr.		2016
Howard R. Phelps		2014
Rockwell J. Lively, Chair		2015

Mark A. Thibodeau
James J. Slowinski
John Peters

2016
Alternate & Clerk of Board
2014

Moderator's Appointments

Finance Committee (a seven member committee)

Marybeth Chichester, Chair	2015
Charles D. Lappen	2016
Douglas Macleay	2016
Phil Sherburne	2015
Lori Regienus	2014

Franklin County Technical School District Committee Member

Nicole Slowinski	2015
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Planning Board (a seven member board)

Joan S. Rockwell, Chair	2015
Betsy Corner	2013
A Hale Johnson	2015
Sara Wik	2014
Tom Griffin	Sworn in 10-21-2013 -2016
William C. Cole	Resigned 11-1-2013
Megan E. McDonough	Resigned 1-1-2013

Town Office

Board of Selectmen

To The Residents of Colrain:

Please accept the following as the Board of Selectmen Annual Report for the year ended December 31, 2014.

It has been a very busy year for the Town of Colrain. The following summarizes the many accomplishments achieved during the year as well as an update on many on-going projects. The Select Board continues to be committed to investing in the Towns infrastructure. It has been our pleasure to serve the Town and we look forward to a productive 2015.

Colrain Board of Selectmen

Eileen Sauvageau, Chairman

Mark Thibodeau

Jack Cavolick

Massworks Grant (Jacksonville Road)

The Town is the recipient of a Massworks Grant for \$1,000,000 which will be used for a much needed full- depth reclamation and paving of up to two (2) miles of Jacksonville Road. This road was targeted in the grant application due the heavy volume of traffic it receives year round (both local and otherwise) as well as its importance as an emergency evacuation route and for the delivery of emergency services. We expect the work on this project to occur in the summer of 2015.

Community Development Block Grant

The Town was successful in its recent Community Development Block Grant application submitted along with the Towns of Buckland and Shelburne. Funding to be provided from this grant includes; 1) A reconstruction of River Street (\$243,614), 2) Funding for the West County Emergency Food Pantry (\$50,000) and 3) Funding for the Housing Rehabilitation Program (\$71,600). The Town will again be applying with the Towns of Buckland and Shelburne for CDBG funds in 2015.

CDBG-DR

Town was awarded a Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant in the amount of \$997,000 for renovations to the Highway Garage. The town was eligible for these funds due to damages incurred during Tropical Storm Irene. As part of the application process the Town contracted with an engineering firm to do a damage assessment and conceptual design along with a preliminary budget analysis. If all goes as planned the Town will be conducting a designer selection process which will result in a final design. Once this process is complete the Town will be prepared to advertise the project for bid. The renovation could happen as soon as the summer of 2015 but the process may take significantly longer.

Sewer System

As many are aware the Town has begun exploring options for a public sewer system to serve the Village Center. The process was aided by a Feasibility Report (available on the Town Web-site) funded by a USDA grant. The report resulted in a recommendation for a forced main, variable gravity system with an initial estimated cost of approximately \$3.2 million. At this point the Select Board is continuing to explore various options as well as steadily pressing forward on this project. As the process unfolds we expect numerous public meeting to be held in order to evaluate the project as well as to get residents input. The Town was fortunate to be the recent recipient of a \$2.5 million legislative earmark towards the funding of the proposed sewer project. The Town anticipates seeking USDA funding

for the remaining financing needed. It is the intention of the Select Board to present a plan that results in a sewer system entirely funded by user fees. The Select Board is also in discussion with the Griswoldville Sewer District about a possible expansion in order to accommodate the proposed system for the Village Center.

Fire Truck

The Town's new fire truck was delivered in late November and is now road ready. The truck was funded by three sources; USDA loan (\$375,000), USDA grant (\$35,000) and local fire dept. stabilization funds (\$50,000).

Cell Tower

The town entered into a 10 year lease agreement with AT&T which allows them to erect and operate a cell tower at the Town's Transfer Station. The lease calls for AT&T to pay the Town \$2,000 per month for 10 years (with a 10 year extension option) with a 3% increase per year. The Town will also receive 18% of the gross revenue resulting from any co-location revenue generated from the tower. AT&T has commenced with preliminary work and construction of the tower is expected in the spring of 2015.

Highway Department Vehicles

The Highway Department will have two new vehicles for plowing this winter, both glider kits. The vehicle purchased last year was not ready for plowing last year due to a manufacturer's delay so this will be its first year with a plow. The glider kit purchased this year has been assembled on schedule and is available for use this year. The glider kits were largely financed using Ch. 90 funding. Additionally, the Highway Department purchased a new wood chipper using Ch. 90 funds.

Village Center Intersection Improvement (TIP)

The Select Board approved a contract with Weston and Sampson for a portion of the engineering work required to access federal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds for the Village Center Intersection Improvement Project (\$55,000). This work was funded using Ch. 90 funds. This work is almost complete and includes the required surveying and preliminary design work. The next step in this process will be to consider moving forward with Phase 2 of the project which will involve wetland

Town Office Network Project delineation as well as further design work. The ultimate goal is to have a design ready in order to access federal funding when available

The Town Office Networking Project was successfully completed. The Town Office now has fiber optic internet access through the MBI network. Additionally, much needed new equipment was purchased. The project came in under budget by \$2,578 (8%). As part of the process a new voice over internet phone system was installed. The Town also now contracts with Northeast IT for managed IT services (3 hours per month) which provided the town with professional IT support as well as continuous off-site back up. Many thanks to the students at Franklin Technical School who did all of the wiring and electrical upgrades required at no cost to the Town. The Select Board may be seeking funding for a Phase 2 of this project during the FY 16 budget process which will involve a similar upgrade for the Fire Station.

New Smoke/Heat Detection - Library

The library recently installed new smoke/heat detection equipment for which funding was approved at the FY 15 Annual Town Meeting. The new equipment, which was recommended by the Town's insurance carrier will provide additional protection for the Griswold Library and the valuable collections it houses. The project was completed on budget.

Central Air Conditioning – Library

This project required Central Register advertising and formal bid specs. All of this was completed with bids due on 11/17/14. Unfortunately no bids were received. The Town has been working with the Franklin Technical School HVAC Program with the hope that the students will be willing to take on this project.

Accountants Reports

	Balance Sheet				
<u>ASSETS</u>	General Fund	Special Revenues	Trust & Agency	Long Term Debt	
Cash, Petty					
Cash, Pooled	479,897.16	185,562.57	439,006.40		1,104
2014 Personal Property	713.91				
2013 Personal Property	130.72				
2012 Personal Property	136.38				
2011 Personal Property	380.84				
Prior Year	2,712.64				
Total Personal Property	4,074.49				
2014 Real Estate	162,478.48				
2013 Real Estate	81,431.63				
2012 Real Estate	19,912.74				
2011 Real Estate					
Prior Year					
Total Real Estate	263,822.85				
2014 Allow for Abate/Exempt	-9,029.40				
2013 Allow for Abate/Exempt	-13,837.04				
2012 Allow for Abate/Exempt	-10,424.75				
2011 Allow for Abate/Exempt	0.00				
Prior Year	-2,225.35				
Total Allow for Abate/Exempt	-35,516.54				
Tax Liens	243,045.38				
Tax Possessions	37,368.25				
Deferred Taxes	1,358.55				
Veteran's Benefit Receivable	2,816.79				
2014 Motor Vehicle Excise	17,212.61				
2013 Motor Vehicle Excise	4,962.81				
2012 Motor Vehicle Excise	1,958.43				
2011 Motor Vehicle Excise	1,296.06				
Prior Year	3,115.54				
Total Motor Vehicle Excise	28,545.45				
CSMP Betterment Due		8216.18			
Amt. To Be Provided-CSMP				22158.99	
TOTAL ASSETS	1,025,412.38	193,778.75	439,006.40	22,158.99	

<u>FUND EQUITY</u>	General Fund	Special Revenues	Trust & Agency	
Res. For FY15 Encumbrances				
Reserve for FY15 Carryforwards	78,375.31			
Reserve for Exp.-Free Cash	0.00			
Reserve for Overlay Deficit	0.00			
Reserve for Approp. Deficit	0.00			
Overlay Surplus to Balance				
Budget	8,759.91			
Undesignated Fund Balance	389,945.42			
Highway		-22,113.00		
Revolving Funds		45,527.24		
Special Revenue Funds		-209,742.30		
Sewer Betterments		38,068.62		
Receipts Reserved		6,389.71		
Capital Projects		69,432.30		
Stabilization			306,571.27	
Audit Stabilization			10,039.39	
Fire Vehicle Stab			129.85	
Highway Truck Stab.			20,190.12	
Assessors Stabilization			8,015.69	
Transfer Stat. Stab			16,016.02	
Technology Stab			4,000.67	
Police Vehicle Stab			20,004.50	
Trust Funds			8,574.75	
TOTAL FUND EQUITY	477,080.64	-72,437.43	393,542.26	0.00
TOTAL LIAB & FUND EQUITY	1,025,412.38	193,778.75	439,006.40	22,158.99
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

<u>FUND EQUITY</u>	General Fund	Special Revenues	Trust & Agency
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Res. For FY15 Encumbrances				
Reserve for FY15 Carryforwards	78,375.31			
Reserve for Exp.-Free Cash	0.00			
Reserve for Overlay Deficit	0.00			
Reserve for Approp. Deficit	0.00			
Overlay Surplus to Balance				
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TOTAL LIAB & FUND EQUITY	1,025,412.38	193,778.75	439,006.40	22,158.99
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet

Board of Assessors

The New Year started out with the Assessors conducting inspections of building permits, demolitions and properties on the town's cyclical inspection list. The Department of Revenue (DOR) requires the Assessors of Massachusetts to visit every property in each town once every nine years. Several years ago, the Assessors decided to start a rotation of visiting the properties themselves rather than hiring an outside contractor at a substantial fee to the town. Since many of the contractors are from outside the area, the board felt that keeping the work "in house" would give them a better handle on errors for the future.

In the spring, Jonathan Lagreze ran unopposed for Assessor and was re-elected to the position in the May election. Also in September, our Assistant Assessor, Alice Wozniak went to two continuing education seminars, including one for DOR updates. The Board of Assessors is the only elected board that is required within two years of taking office to successfully complete a 30 hour course and examination. Failure to do so jeopardizes the DOR approval of the town's tax rate.

In Fiscal Year 2014, the office granted 12 abatements in the amount of \$353,700 of value which translates into \$6,285.25 of tax dollars. There were no appeals filed at the Massachusetts Appellate Tax Board (ATB) for Fiscal Year 2014. Many of the properties in town have been inspected over the last few years, which have greatly reduced our number of abatements. This does not mean that the property record cards are flawless-some can go undetected for years. We encourage all residents to check the information on their property record cards periodically, especially after any building permit or demolition work has been completed.

In August, the office was readying to set the Fiscal Year 2015 tax rate. This year was an interim adjustment process which entailed much less work but still time consuming. By early October, the Town of Colrain was the 23rd town in the Commonwealth to set their tax rate and the Colrain Fire District was the 4th district in the Commonwealth to set their rate.

The Colrain tax rate for fiscal year 2015 was \$18.09/per \$1,000.00 of valuation.

The Colrain Fire District tax rate for Fiscal Year 2015 was \$3.61/per \$1,000.00 of valuation.

The Town of Colrain's parcel count, total assessed values for each major class of properties and their percentage of the Levy Limit is as follows:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Valuation</u>	<u>%</u>
• Residential [1,080 parcels]	\$139,814,760	84.3865
• Commercial [321 parcels]	\$ 4,771,025	2.8796
• Industrial [14 parcels]	\$ 3,471,400	2.0952
• Personal Property [33 accounts]	\$ 17,626,650	10.6387

Total amount of 2015 Property Tax Levy	\$165,683,835	100.00%
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There are several property tax exemptions for the elderly varying in amounts from \$175 to \$500. Each exemption is based on income guidelines and as economic times become more difficult, we encourage the elderly to contact the office to see whether you may qualify. Any information that is provided to qualify for these exemptions is strictly confidential and is not available to the general public. Also available are exemptions for the blind and veterans.

We want the general public to know that assessing is a very complicated field and the DOR sets forth very strict guidelines with which our office must comply. With that said, our office is open to the public for any questions Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-4:00 p.m. and our board meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Assessor's office. If you would like to set up an appointment to meet with the Board please call the office at 624-3356.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Assessors
Nicholas Anzuoni, Chairman
James Slowinski
Jonathan Lagreze
Alice Wozniak, Assistant Assessor

Tax Collector's Report

As of June 30, 2013, 92% of the 2013 real estate taxes were paid. To briefly explain, 92% percent of the amounts on the Warrants to Collect were either abated, exempted, transferred to a tax title account, or paid before June 30, 2013. This is a 1% increase in "prompt payments" from 2012.

The interest rate is 14% on outstanding real estate and personal property tax balances. The interest rate for tax title is 16%. It would be in the taxpayer's best interest to work with their financial institution to resolve back taxes. Interest rates are low and refinancing or taking a home equity or personal loan is bound to be less expensive than entering into tax title.

Residents who have unpaid taxes and are not on payment plans, or who are not honoring their payment agreements are placed on the "delinquent list". Residents on the delinquent list will be denied town permits, licenses, etc., until the issue is resolved. I would urge anyone who is struggling with tax payments to please contact me. If the Collector doesn't know your situation he/she can't help you. If the Collector receives no communication, he/she has to assume you do not intend to pay. Please also understand that Colrain is a community that relies on its tax base to pay its bills. There will be increased pressure to collect back taxes because the town needs this money to operate.

If you have a question after you receive a tax bill, please read the back of the bill. If the answer is not there, call the Collector only if your question pertains to the payment of the tax. Questions regarding the assessed value or the amount of the tax must go to the Assessing Department. Any question regarding abatements, exemptions, chapter land, etc... are to be directed to the Assessors. It is always a good habit to request a copy of your property card from the Assessors Office to check it for accuracy.

There is a state informational website www.sec.state.ma.us for Citizen Information regarding taxes that provides detailed information regarding taxes that you may also access.

As I have given my notice to seek employment elsewhere, please know I've considered it a pleasure to have served the Town in the capacity of Collector these last 11 years.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Coburn, Collector

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

REAL ESTATE

2012	Real Estate	\$ 2,497,110.57
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 2,284,504.46
	Abatements/Exemptions	\$ 15,813.09
	Refunds	\$ 4,125.70
	Refunds Possible	\$ 250.08
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 2,12,528.92
2012	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 200,499.58
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 87,361.36
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 11,081.44
	Refunds	\$ 1,499.62
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 102,715.21
2011	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 97,131.98
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 28,336.79
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 10,401.45
	Refunds	\$ 374.90
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 58,768.64
2010	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 62,337.40
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 22,580.88
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 10,207.75
	Refunds	\$ 10.18
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 29,558.95
2009	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 14,783.29
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 5,663.46
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 6,006.69
	Refunds	\$ 495.47
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 3,608.61
2008	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 6,013.06
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 1,229.33
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 4,628.52
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 155.21
2007	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 2,144.63
	Transfer to Tax Title	\$ 2,004.98
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 139.65
2006	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 147.22
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 147.22
2005	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 139.06
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 0.00

	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	139.06
2004	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2013	\$	17.47
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	17.47
2003	Real Estate forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	124.82
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	124.82

PERSONAL PROPERTY

2013	Personal Property	\$	180,730.85
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	179,696.57
	Abatements	\$	630.56
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	130.72
2012	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	664.06
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	527.68
	Balance as of June 30, 2012	\$	136.38
2011	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	380.84
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	380.84
2010	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	382.12
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	382.12
2009	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	487.29
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	487.29
2008	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	523.48
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	523.48
2007	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	607.05
	Payments to Treasurer	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	607.05
2006	Personal Property forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$	712.70
	Payments	\$	0.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$	712.70

MOTOR VEHICLE AND TRAILER EXCISE

2013	Warrants to Collect #1, #2, #3	\$144,605.22
	Payments to Treasurer	\$128,595.88
	Refunds	\$ 889.17

Refunds Possible	\$ 73.33
Abatements	\$ 2,482.18
Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 14,489.66

2012	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 11,118.62
	Warrants to Collect #4, #5, #6, #7	\$ 17,928.39
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 24,274.39
	Refunds	\$ 1,740.01
	Abatements	\$ 1,692.00
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 4,339.47
2011	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 3,068.37
	Warrant to Collect 6A	\$ 9.69
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 1,019.08
	Refunds	\$ 61.25
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 2,120.23
2010	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 1,825.85
	Apply to Interest from tax	\$ -.55
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 529.98
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 1,295.32
2009	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 1,439.91
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 27.19
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 1,412.72
2008	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 1,075.41
	Payments to Treasurer	\$ 9.58
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 1,065.83
2007	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 586.36
	Abatements	\$ 586.36
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 0.00
2006	Balance forwarded from June 30, 2012	\$ 539.37
	Abatements	\$ 539.37
	Balance as of June 30, 2013	\$ 0.00

Town Clerk's Report

In efforts to continue preservation of our historical documents, we had several books professionally bound. Preservatytions of Town Records form the Late 1700's, 2 Pauper Registers from the late 1800's.

5 voter registration sessions held in 2013
3 Special Town Meetings, State Primaries and State Elections

21 Businesses renewed or opened a new business in town this year

There were 15 Births, 12 Deaths and 7 Marriages in 2014.

I would also like to thank all the Election Workers for their dedication. *Thank you Paula with covering the office and election duties when needed. I will miss Paula as my assistant Clerk. But the town is gaining a very conscientious tax collector/treasurer. Look forward to adding our newest town employee Colleen Worden as Office Clerk*

Next year I hope to be able to continue on with restoring the records and also organize the Vault so the records that have been restored may be properly stored.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robin Hartnett

Town Clerk

Treasurer's Report

I would like to introduce myself, I am Kristi Nartowicz, your new Town Treasurer. Leah Coburn has left to work in the private sector after many dedicated years with the Town of Colrain. She will be missed.

I started on October 23, 2013 and was quickly brought up to speed.

The Town Accountant and I balance every month and seem to be making some progress with streamlining some areas.

The new Tax Collector, Paula Harrison, and I are working very hard with all the Tax Title Accounts. The Town has adopted a more pro-active approach with delinquent tax payers. We have hired a great attorney, Berenson & Bloom from Easthampton, MA., they are making great progress. Colrain is a small town and the budget is based on all taxpayers making their payments on time. We understand that for some this is hard but in order for your voice to be heard you must come to the Annual Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristi Nartowicz, Treasurer

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Balance as of July 1, 2012 \$ 863,781.04

Location of Funds:

People's Bank	General	\$ 863,842.61
People's Bank	SSRP	\$ 40,485.65
People's Bank	CSMP	\$ 38,197.27
People's Bank	Covered Bridge	\$ 22,397.90
People's Bank	Katywil	\$ 43,672.53
Berkshire Bank	General	\$ 1,050.59
MMDT	General	\$ 3,256.60
MMDT	MSCP B85 trust	\$ 26,270.09
MMDT	MSCP B86 trust	\$ 65,952.21
MMDT	Arts' Council	\$ 3,990.15
Unibank	General	\$ 1,400.72

Balance as of June 30, 2013 \$ 1,110,516.32

TRUST FUNDS ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Balance July 1, 2012 \$ 427,936.14

Location of Funds:

Bank of Western Massachusetts

Martha Babbitt Fund	\$ 760.77
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MMDT

Meetinghouse Cemetery Fund	\$ 202.88
Annie Browning Trust Fund	\$ 202.88
Miller-Denison Lots	\$ 202.88
Grace A Teney Fund	\$ 101.68
East Colrain Cemetery Fund	\$ 1,015.07
Davenport Relief Fund	\$ 6,072.05
Stabilization Fund	\$ 291,801.85
Stabilization Audit Fund	\$ 2,027.40
Stabilization Fire Fund	\$ 50,115.74
Stabilization Highway Fund	\$ 19,180.55
Stabilization Assessors Fund	\$ 3,506.81

Total Trust Funds June 30, 2013 \$ 375,190.56

Annual Reports

Animal Control Officer

It was a year of minor import for Colrain's domestic animal population. Lost and stray dogs were fun to deal with. Aggressive dogs were not so much fun.

Calls still peak every spring, concerning lost dogs. Most lost dog calls in the spring involve male dogs that are unneutered, who feel the need to explore their neighborhood.

It is wise to keep identification attached to your dog—tags for rabbies, dog license, and name tags with a phone number are what most dog owners use to identify their dogs—so that when I pick them up I can locate their owners. When dogs can be identified, I can avoid a trip to the regional dog kennel in Montague, which will save owners the time and cost that will be incurred to claim your dog at the kennel. Lost dogs are not kept kenneled in Colrain.

Please keep your rabbies vaccinations and dog license renewals up to date. Under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 140, Section 145B, all dogs *and cats* must have a current rabbies vaccination. There is a \$50 fine for unvaccinated animals.

In addition to dog control, I also respond to animal complaints regarding ferrets, bats, snakes, and reptiles. I also deal with livestock who roam, including cattle, pigs, goats, horses, llamas, and sheep.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding your dogs. I am available 24 hours a day, all year, to deal with domestic animal needs at 624-3238.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Cavolick, Animal Control Officer

Animal Inspector

This past year has seen an increase in domestic animals that have been bitten by an unknown source. It appears that our cat population has suffered the most. Many have wounds to their hind quarters. Be aware that outdoor cats or indoor cats that roam outdoors are the most susceptible to this type of attack. Please give some thought to your decision to letting your cats live outdoors.

Because rabid animals continue to be reported in our state, please act swiftly in tending to your injured animal, and observe quarantine procedures.

The annual inspection of livestock that I make each year gives our state agriculture department important information regarding health and disease trends. I thank all the owners of livestock in Colrain for their care and effort to keep the creatures that are in our care safe and healthy.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Cavolick, Animal Control Officer

Board of Health

Building Inspector

During the period of January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013, there were 58 building permits issued in the Town of Colrain.

New Homes	3	Demolition	4
Additions	0	Roof	6
Renovations	15	Insulation	2
Accessory Buildings	12	Ret. Wall	1
Wood Stoves/pellet - Stoves/chimneys	12	Photo Voltaic	3

The Town collected \$2,128 in permit fees on construction valued at **\$ 584,967.**

A building permit is required by the State Building Code to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, remove, or demolish a building or structure, or to change the use or occupancy of a building or structure. If you are not sure whether your project will require a building permit, please call before you begin construction.

Many homeowners don't realize that their pressure treated decks only have about a 30 year life expectancy. That means that many of the houses with decks built in the mid eighties have reached the point where replacement was to be expected when they were built. Homeowners should inspect their decks periodically. The most important area to inspect is the connection between the deck and the house. You want to make sure the deck is not pulling away from the house, that nails are not withdrawing from the wood and that joist hangers are not corroding. You will also want to make sure that the supports on the opposite side of the deck are plumb and that the connection between the posts and sono tubes are structurally sound. If a homeowner will spend 5 minutes a year looking at the structural integrity of their decks it could prevent a deck collapse which may result in injury or death.

My office hours are every Wednesday night between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the new town hall. My office telephone # is 624-3356, I can also be reached at home, weeknights before 9 p.m. at 624-9621.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Kimberley
Colrain Building Inspector

Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund

Colrain Central School
Report of the Principal

Colrain Firefighters' Association, Inc.

During 2014, the association has been active supporting the department and members. The Association held several fundraising drives throughout the year including 2 pancake breakfasts, 1 auction, 2 boot drives, and an open house. We also continue to host softball games throughout the summer at the fire station.

The delivery of our new engine has been the driving force behind this year's fundraisers. The plan was to have the truck delivered fully equipped with new equipment and ready for service. During the last 2 years the department has slowly been purchasing equipment for the new truck. The goal was to have a new engine with new equipment, and not put 30 year old equipment on a brand new engine. The association also assisted with the purchase of an AED, and a GPS unit for the new engine. Total costs for the equipment is about \$2,000, and the association is currently awaiting word on a grant to defer the cost of the AED.

Also during the year the association voted to have 2 new turnout gear racks built for the fire station. A lot of our firefighters and all of our junior firefighters keep their gear at the fire station. We had a single 6 bay rack for about 12-15 sets of gear, most of which was on the floor. Local fabricator Joe Hillman designed and built 2 rolling double sided 8 bay gear racks for the station. Now all the gear is off the floor, out of the water and organized enabling the firefighters to quickly gear up and get on the trucks. The association also purchased a second GPS unit for our utility truck, map books for Franklin County and southern Vermont for our 3 engines and with the ambulance association replaced the burners on our donated gas grill.

We are currently planning a tractor pull fundraiser for this year that will raise funds for our association, and the juvenile diabetes foundation. We will also be hosting an open house when the weather improves, most likely in the spring so residents can come and meet the firefighters, EMT's, and view our apparatus and equipment. Our pancake breakfasts will be in the spring and fall again, with an auction being held at the fall breakfast. We would like to thank all of the businesses, farms, and residents that have donated syrup or auction items for these breakfasts. Without your continued support these events would not be possible.

In closing, we would like to thank the Town of Colrain, Colrain Volunteer Ambulance Association Inc., Boy Scout Troop 121, Colrain Community Church, Pine Hill Orchards, Marty's Repair and all of the citizens and businesses that have supported our organization in our efforts to provide aid and assistance to the Fire Department and its members. We look forward to earning your continued support in 2015.

Board Of Directors: Kevin Worden II, Jim Martin, Jeff Bache
President: Rachel Martin / Vice President: Chris Melnic

Council on Aging

Cultural Council

Emergency Management Director

Finance Committee

Currently made up of five members, the Finance Committee encourages anyone with finance or business experience to request consideration for appointment to our committee. The time required is not excessive and varied knowledge and experience will enhance our abilities. Our primary responsibility is to make recommendations on Town financial matters, including the annual budget.

The budget process for the last couple of years has been a collaborative one with the Board of Selectmen. We express our sincere gratitude to Kevin Fox for his coordination of this effort as well as to the Selectmen and all department managers who provide so much information at budget time, which helps us make the best decisions to balance our budget needs with the desire to limit tax increases.

For the last two years the budget has been set lower than the allowable levy limit. What that means is that the amount budgeted is less than the 2.5 percent increase allowed per year without an override. This is no small feat and has come at the expense of some budget requests and capital improvement needs.

As we look ahead, we believe that taking a longer term view of capital needs will help us plan for the future. To that end, a sub-committee is going to developing a Capital Improvement Plan that will evaluate the Town's capital needs over a longer period of time. Used to plan for equipment needs such as highway maintenance and police vehicles, this process can also be used to evaluate and plan for future capital investments such as the idea of a public safety complex to house town offices, police, fire and highway equipment. Another benefit of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) could be to ensure proper maintenance of Town owned buildings. This is only an exploratory process at this point and any final plan would go through all required approval processes before being budgeted. Many departments and committees will be approached for input to this plan and we thank you in advance.

We also look forward to the recommendations of the Long Range Planning Committee that is developing a plan for the long term sustainability of our regional school system. The school budget is a large piece of our total budget

Submitted by
Marybeth Chichester

Fire Department

The Colrain Fire Department experienced another very active year. Shelburne Control dispatched 229 calls for the fire department from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014. These incidents are sorted as follows:

Structure fires	1	Vehicle accidents	14
Vehicle fires	0	Brush fires	0
Power lines down	37	Medical assistance	98
Hazardous material	3	Non-permitted burns	9
Mutual Aid given	30	Chimney Fires	3
Miscellaneous	27	Mutual aid Lucas calls	7

The fire department took delivery of a 2014 HME all-wheel drive pumper in November. We have placed it in service in December and are using it as our first out engine. Thanks to all those that supported us in our efforts to provide firefighters with this important piece of apparatus.

We have over twenty members on our roster and many of them are also Emergency Medical Technicians. Firefighters require mandatory first aid, CPR, and hazardous material training in addition to basic the Firefighter 1 class. The fire department also has an active junior firefighter program for members 14-17 years of age. This program allows juniors to receive first aid and CPR training in addition to an opportunity to observe and train with the regular firefighters. Many of our junior firefighters become members of the Colrain fire department when they turn the required minimum age of 18.

The online burning permit system will be available again at www.fcburnpermits.com. The open burning season runs from January 15 to May 1, 2013. Trash or construction materials are not permitted under the Massachusetts open burning laws. You may also contact Shelburne Control at 625-8200 to obtain a permit. Please use caution when burning and keep the fire a minimum of 75' from any structure, maintain a clean fire break around the burn area and keep at least 5 gallons of water on the site.

It is mandatory that all residential homes that heat with combustible fuels, such as wood, oil, coal or gas, to have carbon monoxide detectors on all inhabited floors. Real estate transactions require a carbon monoxide and smoke detector inspection prior to closing. This "silent killer" has resulted in numerous fatalities and close calls throughout Massachusetts, and Colrain is no exception. Detectors are inexpensive and easy to install. Please contact the fire department or the Massachusetts Fire Marshall's office for more information or assistance. Please note that with the coming of winter it is important to have your house number visible to emergency responders. This is important to homes with long driveways that may be difficult to see, especially at night.

In closing we thank the Selectmen, town office staff, finance committee, personnel committee, Colrain Ambulance Association, police department and the

highway department for their continued support throughout the year. Our gratitude also goes out to the residents of Colrain for your continued support of the Fire Department in so many ways. We wish you all a safe 2015.

Respectfully,
Nicholas Anzuoni
Fire Chief

Franklin County Technical School District

We submit this annual report for 2014 on behalf of the Franklin County Technical School District and its administration, faculty, staff and students.

Total enrollment as of October 1, 2014 was 519 students with town breakouts as follows:

Bernardston	21	Erving	31	Montague	70	Sunderland	10
Buckland	10	Gill	5	New Salem	7	Warwick	8
Colrain	23	Greenfield	113	Northfield	39	Wendell	9
Conway	5	Heath	7	Orange	78	Whately	8
Deerfield	15	Leyden	12	Shelburne	5	Non-District	43

Franklin County Technical School awarded 113 diplomas to our seniors in June of 2014. Massachusetts students are required to pass the MCAS in order to receive a high school diploma and once again our students were very successful in meeting this high academic standard. FCTS has maintained level 2 Accountability status from last year. Our overall PPI moved from 17% in 2012 (level III) to 21% in 2013 (level II) to 31% in 2014 (level II). We were 1% point away from level I Accountability Status. The graduates also earned their vocational certificate along with their diploma. 41% of our graduates planned to go on to either a two or four year college, 36% joined the area work force, 6% planned to join the military, 4% went on to a post-secondary trade/technical school, and 13% were unsure as to which of the above options they would pursue. We are proud of the accomplishments of the Class of 2014.

The teachers and students have been busy with projects that are used as learning opportunities during this latest school year. These authentic work projects are critical in developing the skills of the students, inspiring and motivating the students, developing empathy and social commitment and, of course, are beneficial to our sending communities.

As learning activities, these projects are not treated as production work that would be done by commercial entities. Project work is treated as learning activities, with guidance and direction of instructors. With alternating weeks of shop time, that increases the duration of a project. But, with that said, costs associated with a project are less than those conducted by a commercial company, resulting in towns and students benefiting in the end.

The electrical program has been active in a number of communities throughout Franklin County. Electrical work and networking work has been done in Charlemont with the Hawlemont school barn and greenhouse built; at the Warwick Community School with an LED lighting conversion; repairs to the Bernardston Elementary School parking lot lighting, and also at the Bernardston police department. Electrical students have worked in Buckland with police department lighting retro-fits and exterior security. The Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum has benefited from student electrical work at that facility, with future work projects in the plans. Another Shelburne activity was the fall clean-up of Hill Cemetery by the landscaping program.

In Wendell, the Town Hall emergency kitchen has had the electrical shop, carpentry shop, and primarily the plumbing shop, busy with renovations to their facilities. Due to new regulations

imposed by the State Plumbing Board, this project was held up for nearly a year, but through persistence on our end, the approvals were finally authorized and the work is nearly complete. Changes in the State Plumbing Board regulations will continue to have a negative impact on plumbing programs in all vocational schools throughout the state, but we will develop methods to work within the restrictive guidelines.

The community of Deerfield saw the completion of a pavilion at the elementary school. Further activities will take place for landscaping of the pavilion area in the spring – at this point it is being discussed. The pavilion was built by the carpentry program students and instructors. Along with that work, carpentry is beginning work on the Regional Animal Shelter that will serve the town of Orange, along with other communities. By the time the project is completed, the electrical and plumbing programs will also be heavily involved in the expansion of the building.

The Greenfield Town Hall is having bookcases built by the underclassmen carpentry students. This learning activity is just beginning and students are looking forward to the planning and production of the bookcases/shelving. Greenfield also received the services of the landscaping program with the sodding of Vets fields, a great learning opportunity for the students. In the spring of 2015, carpentry students will be building a Community Garden shed in New Salem, and in Leyden the Town Hall will have a rear portico built. Carpentry students will pre-fab the walls for the portico in the shop, and work will follow in the spring by the Leyden DPW, with construction taking place.

Also for the town of Leyden, the Collision and Repair program is doing work on a Crown Vic for the Leyden Police Department. Another community receiving Collision and Repair work is a vehicle for the Colrain fire department.

The Welding program is doing work for two communities, Northfield and Shelburne – both library box drops. A new book drop is being built for Northfield and repair of a book drop for Shelburne.

Our relationship with area communities is important to FCTS. We try and focus primarily on municipal and non-profit organizations for our educational projects. Human Services organizations that service multiple communities, such as the Greenfield YMCA, have had Cosmetology and Culinary Arts students participate in special events, and the Soup and Game night hosted by Hope & Olive in Greenfield, receives soup and bread freshly made by the Culinary Arts program. Even school wide activities such as our food drives for area food pantries, collecting winter clothing for area needs, pet supplies for Dakin and area shelters, all feed into our strong partnership with Franklin County communities.

The District has been selected to participate in a renovation project for new windows and doors through the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). We are currently in the design and cost analysis stage and should have an estimate on costs at your town meeting. As with all projects selected by MSBA the State will reimburse the District a portion of the cost based upon several factors; our projected reimbursement rate is just a little more than 73% of costs.

In addition the District is in need of other major renovations that were either not selected by MSBA, (a roof repair) and/or would not qualify for funding, (repaving of our drive and parking areas, and possible repair and upgrade of our track.)

This will be the first time since the inception of the District in 1974 that we will be asking the towns to grant the District the authority to borrow monies to upgrade our infrastructure. The approval process as outlined in our regional agreement calls for a district wide election which falls outside of the annual town meeting approval process. As we define the scope of the projects/costs and work with the governing body in each of our member community's additional information will be made available on both the cost and the process.

Respectfully,



Mr. Richard J. Kuklewicz
School Committee Chairman



Mr. James M. Lavery
Superintendent-Director

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

To the Residents of the Solid Waste District:

The Solid Waste District was formed in 1989 to help Franklin County towns manage all aspects of their solid waste – recyclables, organics, hazardous waste, wastewater treatment sludge, and trash. We continue to provide assistance to twenty-two member towns through administrative support, professional consultation, trainings, and outreach to residents and businesses.

A review of recycling tonnage for 2014 shows almost an identical amount compared to 2013. District residents recycled over 1,700 tons of paper and over 1,100 tons of mixed containers, which were processed at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility. Although market prices for recyclables remained low all year, District towns received a total of \$66,000 in revenue for their recyclables.

In 2013, the District sponsored spring and fall “Clean Sweep” collections for bulky items, electronics, tires, appliances, and anything too big to fit into a trash bag. Over 63 tons of material was recycled or disposed of from the two collections. A total of 560 households participated in these collection events.

We held our annual household hazardous waste collection in September 2014. This event allows residents to properly dispose of toxic cleaners, automotive products, pesticides, and other toxic products. A total of 325 households participated in this event. 42% of participants were using the collection for the first time.

We received a \$60,000 grant from the State to set up a recycling collection for wood pellet bags and for plastic waste generated at agricultural operations. We also helped member towns implement \$12,000 worth of small-scale initiative grants from MassDEP.

We continue to manage the recycling and composting program at the Franklin County Fair and to assist other events with waste reduction efforts. We continue to work in each school system helping with waste management bids and with fostering sustainable waste reduction programs.

If you have questions about District programs, call us at 413-772-2438 (MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 TTY/TDD), visit our website at www.franklincountywastedistrict.org or visit us at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield.

Jan Ameen - *Executive Director*

Chris Boutwell, Montague - *Vice-Chair*

Jonathan Lagreze, Colrain - *Chair*

MA Swedlund, Deerfield - *Treasurer*

Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority

ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority is a public body politic and corporate, created by the Massachusetts legislature in 1973 to serve the residents and communities of Franklin County. HRA has all of the powers and responsibilities of a local housing authority and a redevelopment authority in all 26 communities of Franklin County. Our services include housing education; development, ownership and management of affordable rental housing; administration of housing subsidies; programs for homeless families; homeownership and foreclosure prevention education and services; and Community Development Block Grant application and administration for Franklin County towns.

Housing Consumer Education Center

HRA is part of a statewide network of nine regional Housing Consumer Education Centers that provide information, education, counseling, and referrals to individuals, families, organizations and businesses with housing-related questions or problems. HCEC staff work closely with social and human services providers to coordinate assistance to individuals and families in need, and conduct outreach to local banks, schools and utilities to provide information on housing-related resources.

HCEC staff served more than 3,200 clients in Franklin County in FY 2014. Types of clients included:

Tenants	65%
Homeowners	14%
Homeless households	8%
Other agencies and client advocates	4%
Homebuyers	4%
Landlords	3%
Other	2%

HCEC offers educational programs on housing-related topics and financial literacy. This year's workshops included:

- First-time homebuyer classes with 52 graduates.
- Outreach to regional lenders providing information on housing-related programs and services.
- Two educational workshops for landlords with 24 participants.
- A Do-it-Herself Divas workshop for women homeowners with 11 graduates.
- A rental housing search workshop for tenants with seven participants.
- Massachusetts Housing Partnership-sponsored Homesafe Post-Purchase Workshop, which served 11 first-time homebuyers.

HRA manages the Massachusetts HomeBASE program, which helps families avoid homelessness and provides re-housing services for families in the state's family shelter program. HomeBASE is available to families that are eligible for the state's Emergency Assistance shelter program. HCEC

provided up to \$4,000 in HomeBASE Household Assistance to 19 families, which allowed the recipients to stabilize their housing. HRA provides a year of housing stabilization services to these families. In total, HRA provided stabilization services to 41 families in FY 14, and HCEC staff assisted 31 homeless families in locating new housing.

The Residential Assistance for Families in Transition Program also provides homelessness prevention and re-housing assistance to families with very low incomes. HRA assisted 69 families through the RAFT program in 2014. A total of approximately \$160,000 in RAFT funding was used to pay rent, utility and mortgage arrears, security deposits, assistance with rent, and transportation-related expenses. Payment of rental arrears accounted for more than half of total RAFT spending. The need for assistance exceeded available funds, and some eligible families were turned away.

HCEC continues to offer foreclosure prevention services to Franklin County homeowners through a partnership with the Western Massachusetts Foreclosure Prevention Center run by HAPHousing. This fiscal year, 47 homeowners at risk of foreclosure were referred to HAP for foreclosure prevention services. These services are most successful when homeowners seek assistance as soon as they know they are having difficulty making mortgage payments.

HRA staff also sought private donations, worked with other agencies, and coordinated volunteer activities to improve the lives of homeless and extremely low income families and individuals. In 2014, the housing authority partnered with Community Action's Center for Self Reliance to deliver food twice a month to homeless families receiving shelter in Franklin County motels. All homeless children receiving shelter in motels in Greenfield received backpacks and school supplies thanks to donations from United Way and private individuals. Homeless children also received winter clothing with assistance from Warm the Children, Community Action, Salvation Army, and donations. Thanks to the generosity of BJ's Wholesale Club, students at Deerfield Academy and individual community members, we were able to provide holiday gifts to 193 children receiving shelter in motels and to families who were recently homeless. HRA's non-profit affiliate, Rural Development, Inc., received \$10,000 in funding from the United Way of Franklin County; 100% of the United Way funds are used for direct assistance to homeless households. In addition to other purposes, these funds were used to send eight homeless children to summer camp. HRA volunteers also hosted three community meals, including one for homeless families.

Sources of funding for the Housing Consumer Education Center in FY 2014 included:

- Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development
- Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- The Massachusetts Attorney General's office
- United Way of Franklin County
- F.M. Kusmeskus, Inc. (in-kind donation)

A special thanks to the individual donors who contributed funds HRA's non profit affiliate, Rural Development, Inc., to assist homeless children.

Asset Management

In FY 2013, HRA managed 254 units of affordable rental housing, including:

- 117 units of state-assisted public housing for elders and persons with disabilities located in the towns of Bernardston, Gill, Montague, Northfield, and Shelburne.
- 27 units of state-assisted public housing for families located in the towns of Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Northfield, and Orange.
- 48 units at the Crocker and Cutlery Block buildings in Montague.
- 26 single-room occupancy units for individuals in recovery from substance abuse at the Moltenbrey Building in Montague.
- 18 units at the Ashfield House in Ashfield.
- 8 double-occupancy units for men in recovery from substance abuse at the Orange Recovery House in Orange.
- 6 units at Prospect and Grove Apartments in Orange.
- 2 units for elders at the Smikes House in Whately.
- 2 fully-accessible units for people with disabilities at the Wisdom Way Solar Village in Greenfield.

Sources of revenue for property management include rent, subsidies, and laundry income. Rent at public housing properties is set as a percentage of tenant income. At these properties, the state pays the difference between what tenants can afford and a maximum level of subsidy set by the Commonwealth each year. Unfortunately, the combination of rent and state subsidies is not sufficient to cover the costs of managing HRA's public housing properties, which results in long-term maintenance issues and strains on the agency's budget.

There were a total of 50 vacancies at properties owned or managed by HRA in 2014, excluding the Orange Recovery House. Turnover is highest at the Moltenbrey Building, and higher at properties designed for families than at elderly/disabled developments.

Capital improvements to rental properties managed by HRA in 2014 included:

Stratton Manor, Bernardston (public housing for seniors & persons with disabilities):

- Completed energy efficiency upgrades, including new lighting, refrigerators, hot water tanks and insulation funded by Western Massachusetts Electric Company

Squakheag Village, Northfield (public housing for seniors & persons with disabilities):

- New roof, funded by DHCD capital funds and Town Community Preservation Act funds

Stoughton Place, Gill (public housing for seniors & persons with disabilities):

- Energy efficiency upgrades, including new lighting and refrigerators funded by Western Massachusetts Electric Company
- Heating system repairs, funded by DHCD capital funds

Winslow Wentworth House, Montague (public housing for seniors & persons with disabilities)

- Energy efficiency lighting upgrades
- Replacement of stovetops funded from operating budget
- Shared shower replacement funded by DHCD capital funds
- Driveway replacement funded by DHCD capital funds

Family public housing, Orange

- Deck replacement funded by DHCD capital funds
- Roof replacement funded by DHCD capital funds
- Driveway replacement funded by DHCD capital funds
- Tree removal funded from operating budget

Highland Village, Shelburne (Shelburne Housing Authority public housing for seniors & persons with disabilities)

- Sidewalk replacement with Community Development Block Grant funding awarded to the towns of Buckland and Shelburne by DHCD
- Exterior ramp installation with Community Development Block Grant funding awarded to the towns of Buckland and Shelburne by DHCD
- Siding repairs with Community Development Block Grant funding awarded to the towns of Buckland and Shelburne by DHCD and DHCD capital funds
- Drainage improvements funded by DHCD capital funds
- Energy efficiency upgrades, including new lighting, refrigerators and insulation, funded by Western Massachusetts Electric Company

Ashfield House

- New energy efficient propane fired boiler funded by the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust
- New energy efficient commercial washing machines funded by the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust
- Low flow toilet installation funded by the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust
- Limiting thermostats funded by the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust
- Energy efficient lighting upgrades funded by Western Massachusetts Electric Company

Orange Recovery House

- Exterior painting funded by the Franklin County Sheriff's community service program

Smikes House

- Exterior painting funded by the Franklin County Sheriff's community service program

In addition, HRA received funding for a new dump truck from DHCD.

Leased Housing

HRA administers a total of 606 federal and state subsidies that allow individuals and families with low income to rent privately-owned housing or purchase their own homes.

In 2014, HRA served 29 families through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program. Thirteen vouchers are project-based, which means that they are connected to a particular property. These vouchers subsidize rent for clients of a program run by Franklin County DIAL/SELF, Inc., which assists young adults to become self-sufficient, and the Positive Parenting Program run by the United ARC, which helps stabilize at-risk families. The Ashfield House was awarded three additional vouchers in July 2014 and a lottery was conducted for the subsidies. All of these units are now leased. HRA is also administering 13 mobile vouchers, which can be used in any property statewide that meets health and safety standards. Seven voucher holders are renting units in Greenfield, four in Turners Falls, one in Florence, and one in Amherst.

HRA has 579 federal Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. Households with Section 8 vouchers pay a minimum of 30 percent and a maximum of 40 percent of their income toward housing and utilities at initial lease-up or move-in; the program pays for the remainder. Subsidies may be used to pay rent (or a mortgage in limited cases) for apartments and homes that meet federal guidelines for affordability and safety. HRA's Section 8 program served 626 families in FY 2014, with a turnover of 87 families over the course of the year. The agency's Section 8 vouchers can be broken down into the following categories:

- 453 are mobile
- 126 are project-based
- 340 are held by families where the head of household or the spouse is disabled
- 151 vouchers are held by families with children
- 114 vouchers are held by households in which the head of household is elderly

Mobile Section 8 vouchers can be used anywhere in the United States for housing that meets health and safety standards and federal rent reasonableness regulations. In 2014, HRA's Section 8 vouchers were being used in the following areas:

- Franklin County – 88%
- Hampshire County – 6%
- Other MA counties – 5%

- Outside MA – 1%

As of September 30, 2014, there were approximately 265 households on the HRA waiting list for Section 8 mobile vouchers and the housing authority is issuing new vouchers to families on its waiting list. The waiting list is currently closed. HUD regulations give priority for mobile vouchers to families who complete a year of successful tenancy in project-based units. HRA also gives priority for available Section 8 mobile vouchers to eligible veterans and to tenants in project-based MRVP apartments when landlords choose to opt out of the MRVP program.

In February 2014, HRA was notified that it received a score of 100% on the HUD Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for FY 2013. This is a remarkable accomplishment that entitles the agency to receive the highest level of administrative payments possible for the Section 8 program.

HRA collaborates with Greenfield Housing Authority in offering a family self sufficiency (FSS) program for Section 8 voucher holders. Holders of Section 8 vouchers are required to pay 30 percent of their income in rent. In general, when income rises, program participants are required to pay more rent. The FSS program allows participants to save increased earnings to achieve specific goals, such as earning a higher education degree, starting a small business, or purchasing a home. In FY 2014, 38 of HRA's Section 8 voucher holders were enrolled in the FSS program, with 21 participants contributing to escrows on a monthly basis. It is also very important to note that five families graduated from the FSS program in FY 2014. The FSS program has a Director of FSS and Homeownership who spends one day per week at HRA. HRA's homeownership program has 11 families who own their own home and continue to use their Housing Choice Vouchers to assist with the mortgage payments.

Community Development

The HRA Community Development Department provides application preparation, program implementation and administrative services to Franklin County towns in connection with Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). CDBG is a federal funding source designed to benefit people with low and moderate income. Cities and large municipalities receive CDBG funds on an entitlement basis directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Smaller communities may submit competitive applications to the Commonwealth. Eligible activities for CDBG funds include public infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, social services, architectural/engineering design, architectural barrier removal, and planning projects.

In FY 2014, HRA administered the following Community Development Block Grants:

- FY 2012 regional grant to the Town of Erving, including the towns of Colrain, Deerfield, and Gill, for housing rehabilitation loans and delivery of Meals on Wheels.
- FY 2012 grant to the Town of Montague for housing rehabilitation loans, improvements to Unity Park, delivery of Meals on Wheels, and an early childhood literacy program.
- FY 2013 regional grant to the Town of Bernardston, including the towns of Conway, Shutesbury, and Sunderland, for housing rehabilitation loans and delivery of Meals on Wheels.
- FY 2013 grant to the Town of Montague for housing rehabilitation loans, an early childhood literacy program, a study to document slum and blight conditions in Millers Falls, and a planning study for a new senior center.

- FY 2013 grant to the Town of Ashfield for reconstructing a retaining wall badly damaged during Hurricane Irene.
- FY 2014 regional grant to the Town of Heath, including the towns of Ashfield, Charlemont, and Hawley, for housing rehabilitation loans and supplemental fuel assistance.
- HRA will also provide housing rehabilitation loan program services to the towns of Buckland, Shelburne, and Colrain as a subcontractor on a grant awarded to these communities.

In FY 2014, HRA administered CDBG-funded housing rehabilitation loan programs benefitting 25 households in eight Franklin County towns. Income-eligible participants in these programs can borrow up to \$35,000 at zero interest to make health and safety improvements to their homes, including but not limited to repair or replacement of septic systems, wells, heating systems, plumbing and roofing and abatement of lead paint. Fifty percent of each loan is forgiven gradually over a 15-year period as long as the property owner remains in the home. The remainder is due and payable upon sale or transfer of the property.

In FY 2014, CDBG-funded housing rehabilitation programs loaned approximately \$663,500 to help Franklin County households comply with current building and sanitary codes. The average loan was \$26,540. All the work is done by local contractors selected by private property owners.

CDBG-funded Housing Rehabilitation Projects, FY 2014		
Town	# units committed in FY 14	Funds committed in FY 14
Bernardston	8	\$150,753
Colrain	2	\$90,102
Conway	3	\$93,075
Deerfield	3	\$85,085
Erving	0	\$4713*
Gill	0	\$5,958*
Montague	5	\$115,330
Shutesbury	4	\$118,480
Total	25	\$663,496

* indicates additional funds committed to projects in progress in prior fiscal year

HRA also administers a housing rehabilitation revolving loan program for many communities in Franklin County. This program receives the proceeds of previous CDBG loans when the loans are repaid. These funds are then made available for the same purpose to income-eligible households in the same town. HRA updated its agreements with towns for administration of this program in FY 2013. The following towns are currently participating in the program with new agreements: Ashfield, Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Heath, Leverett, Leyden, Monroe, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Shutesbury, Sunderland, Warwick, Wendell and Whately. Fifteen homeowners in nine towns took advantage of this program in 2013.

Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund Projects, FY 2014		
Town	# units committed	Funds committed
Buckland	1	\$11,439
Charlemont	2	\$39,375
Colrain	3	\$18,640
Erving	2	\$68,000
Heath	1	\$21,875
Leverett	1	\$4,671

Montague	2	\$60,308
Wendell	3	\$15,540
Total	15	\$239,848

HRA is working with the Town of Leverett to use its Community Preservation Act funding to assist households with low and moderate income with homeownership in town.

HRA is assisting the towns of Greenfield, Montague, and Orange to identify and address distressed properties with funding from the Massachusetts Attorney General's office. The housing authority has been working closely with municipal staff to develop an inventory of troubled properties in each community, and has communicated with lenders to request plans for bringing the units up to code and restoring occupancy. Results to date have been encouraging, with 200 properties added to the inventory, and a third of cases resolved.

Town	Distressed properties identified	Cases resolved
Greenfield	97	20
Montague	40	19
Orange	63	27
Total	200	66

With funding from the Institute for Cooperative Economics and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, HRA staff have been assisting the Pioneer Cooperative of Franklin County with developing a plan to address longstanding financial challenges. PCFC is a scattered site limited equity housing cooperative with 26 affordable units in Greenfield and Montague. Work on this project included assistance with refinancing, a basic capital needs assessment, a member survey and recommendations on leadership, property management, and financial management.

The Community Development department administers several other small programs, including Get the Lead Out, Moderate Home Rehab for Disabled Homeowners, and municipal septic loans.

Housing Development, in partnership with Rural Development, Inc.

HRA works to develop affordable housing in Franklin County in partnership with its nonprofit affiliate, Rural Development, Inc. HRA's Executive Director serves as the unpaid Executive Director of RDI. RDI pays HRA for other personnel and administrative services.

Orange Teen Housing

RDI has signed an agreement with a newly-formed single purpose non-profit corporation, Orange Teen Housing, Inc., to acquire and develop a property in Orange to provide ten units of housing for homeless teens and young adults. Construction is projected to begin in fall 2014. HRA will manage the property, and Franklin County DIAL/SELF, Inc. will provide resident support and programming.

Our House

RDI is providing development consulting services to Domus, a non-profit agency based in Westfield, on a project that will provide 10 units of supportive housing with a live-in manager for youth enrolled in Westfield High School. HRA staff prepared a successful application for a new state funding program that combines development financing and rental subsidies with funding for supportive services.

Administration and Finance

HRA commissions an independent annual audit. HRA's audited financial statements include revenue and expenses that are passed through the agency to other parties, such as the revenue that the agency receives from the federal government for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which is paid to landlords on behalf of voucher holders. Capital assets and depreciation are also included in the audited statements. *Because HRA has an October 1 fiscal year, the most recent audited financial statements are for the FY 13 fiscal year, which ended September 30, 2013, so the figures reported below are from the previous fiscal year.* The FY 2013 HRA audit reported no findings or deficiencies.

Copies of HRA's audited financial statements are available upon request.

For FY 2013, the agency's net position totaled \$4,433,348, a decrease of \$292,803 from the previous year. The reduction includes a decrease in capital assets of \$228,779 (representing building improvements of \$47,311 less depreciation of \$276,110), a decrease in restricted net position of \$44,288 (representing restricted reserves used for Section 8 rent payments), and a decrease in unrestricted net position of \$19,736.

Revenues for FY 2013 totaled \$7,852,735, which was \$195,165 more than in FY 2012, an increase of three percent. FY 2013 expenses totaled \$8,145,538, which was \$256,668 more than in FY 12, an increase of three percent. Administrative salaries increased by \$62,978 in FY 13. There were no across-the-board increases in compensation or cost of living adjustments in FY 2013, representing the fourth consecutive year of a general wage freeze. Maintenance staff received compensation increases as a result of a required increase in state prevailing wages. Compensation was increased for three other positions as a result of changes in responsibilities.

In November 2013 the HRA Board of Commissioners approved a FY 2014 annual operating budget showing anticipated total revenue of \$3,122,922 and total expenses of \$3,285,450, with an overall deficit of \$162,528 to be funded through use of \$169,622 from reserves. Budgeted use of reserves exceeded the projected deficit due to the fact that surpluses in some programs could not be used to fund revenue shortfalls in others. While operating results are not available for FY 2014, internal financials through August 30, 2014 suggest that the operating deficit will be significantly less than the deficit in the approved budget.

HRA changed the way it accounts for indirect expenses in FY 13 by implementing a central office cost center. All indirect salaries, benefits, and other overhead are now allocated to the cost center, and all programs, grants, and properties pay management fees into the cost center. This system has helped the agency to allocate overhead to programs and properties on a more rational basis.

Many thanks are due to HRA's hard-working staff. The agency has approximately 30 full time equivalent employees, most of whom live in Franklin County. Our employees are deeply dedicated to achieving the mission of the housing authority and do a great job of assisting clients with limited resources.

Board of Commissioners

HRA has an 11-member Board of Commissioners. All commissioners reside in Franklin County. Nine members are appointed by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for five year terms; none of these appointees may be from the same community. Two commissioners are appointed by the Governor and serve until they are replaced. The Board of Commissioners meets once a month, generally on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls. All meetings are open to the public and are posted on HRA's Public Notice blog, www.fcrhra.blogspot.com.

Board of Commissioners

Jessica Atwood, Greenfield (Vice-Chair, Governor's appointee)
Jane Banks, Greenfield
Leslie Brown, Erving (Treasurer)
Sharon Cottrell, Montague (Chair)
Sara Cummings, Deerfield
Sonya Hamdan, Charlemont
Linda Hoer, Leverett
Bruce Parkin, Shutesbury
Jo-Anne Sherburne, Colrain
Jonathan Tuttle, Shutesbury (Governor's appointee)

*The Housing Authority expresses its gratitude to Commissioner Caryl Connor, who left the Board in 2013.

Staff

MJ Adams, Director of Community Development
*Christopher Austin, Staff Accountant
Joanie Bernstein, Assistant Executive Director
Nathaniel Best, Housing Rehabilitation Specialist
Tana Bloom, Housing Placement and Stabilization Worker
Lynn Cournoyer, Community Development Administrative Assistant
Melanie Croteau, Housing Management Assistant
*Linda Davenport, Director of Leased Housing
Charity Day, Housing Consumer Education Center Director
Anitra Ford, Housing Counselor
Mark Fortier, Maintenance Mechanic/Laborer Working Foreman
*Hilary Graves, Leased Housing Representative
Tammy Greene, Leased Housing Administrative Assistant
Patricia Holloway, Receptionist
Bruce Hunter, Infrastructure Coordinator
Wayne Jackman, Maintenance Mechanic/Laborer
Erik Jernstrom, Maintenance Mechanic/Laborer
Eric Kershaw, Accounting Clerk
Lawrence Knowlton, IT Specialist
*Robert Lauwers, Leased Housing Representative
Matthew Leger-Small, Administrative Coordinator
Debra Little, Community Development Program Manager
Brian McHugh, Construction Coordinator
Tracy Miner, Director of Asset Management
*Derian Mary Olmo, Housing Placement and Stabilization Worker
Enrique Pacheco, Affordable Housing Property Manager
Pamela Parmakian, Director of Leased Housing
Katelyn Reardon, Leased Housing Representative
*John Redeker, Staff Accountant
Todd Seavey, Maintenance Mechanic/Laborer
Robin Sherman, Executive Director
Jonathan Wasilewski, Leased Housing Inspector
Autumn West, HCEC Assistant
Amanda White, Leased Housing Representative
Kerry Wyman, Senior Staff Accountant

*Employee left HRA in FY 2014

Franklin Regional Retirement System

Annual Report for the Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2013

To the reader:

The Franklin Regional Retirement System is a government agency that serves the 487 retirees, 42 beneficiaries, 946 active employees, and 561 inactive members of the towns and agencies in Franklin County. We are organized under Chapter 34b, and subject to the provisions of Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. We receive oversight on the state level from the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC), which audits our operations and financial records every three years. We are also audited by independent auditors in the two intervening years, as well as a complete actuarial valuation every two years.

The retirement benefit we provide replaces participation in the Social Security system and is described as a "defined benefit", which means that we pay monthly retirement benefits based on the age, salary, and number of years worked at the time a member of our system retires. To be a member, an employee in one of our government units must be working in a permanent position scheduled at 20 hours or more per week and earning \$5,000 or greater annually. Funding of these benefits begins with deductions from the member, and, combined with matching funds from the employing unit, are invested in a mix of stocks, bonds, and indexed funds. Investment earnings are a large part of the funding of retirement benefits, and the allocation of those funds are spread to a variety of sectors to take advantage of positive activity as it occurs in each sector. Please make note of our investment performance percentages in the chart on the next page.

Up until 1988, we were a "pay-as-you-go" system. In 1988 it was legislated that we begin saving to become "fully funded" over the ensuing 40 years. Fully funded means we have enough in reserves to pay for all the current and future potential benefits of our present membership. At the end of 2013, we are 84% funded at 25 years (63%) into the 40 year mandate.

Our fiscal year is the calendar year, therefore our annual report is not filed until May of the subsequent year, and as a consequence the information provided herein will be a year old by the time you read this. Current reports and information can be found on our website:
www.FRRSMA.com.

What follows is a synopsis of our annual report, as filed with our State oversight commission, PERAC. The full report can be read on our website.

Balances

Cash
Investments
Receivables
Payables
Annuity Savings [members)
Retirement Reserves

Retirees' Average Pension

Disabled Members' Average Age

Disabled Members' Average Pension

CY 2013

CY 2012

CY 2011

3,187,508	3,224,578	3,202,132
5,605,588	5,202,569	5,009,154
439,735	375,647	382,475
20,752	66,657	9,161
18,879,116	11,727,623	434,442
7,437,506	6,840,923	6,158,541
373,095	398,662	356,933
657,782	538,484	472,198
960,334	723,503	740,517
396,387	541,614	594,635

Revenues

Member's contributions
Towns, Schools, Agencies
Retirement Cost Sharing
Miscellaneous Revenue
Investment Income (net)

Expenses

Retirement Benefits
Operating Expenses
Investment Expenses
Retirement Cost Sharing
Refunds to Members

7.88%	7.88%	7.88%
8.59%	8.21%	8.02%
7.28%	7.04%	4.78%
13.33%	2.69%	2.28%
19.80%	13.39%	0.92%

Investment

Performance

Target

Since 1984

10 years

5 years

Current Year

01/01/2014 01/01/2012 01/01/2010

48.30	49.00	48.10
10.50	10.90	10.10
33,249.00	32,333.00	30,400.00
72.10	72.10	71.90
14,164.00	12,931.00	12,109.00
56.40	n/a	n/a
26,052.00	n/a	n/a

Demographics

Members' Average Age
Members' Average Service
Members' Average Salary
Retirees' Average Age

Dale Kowacki
Executive Director
Franklin Regional Retirement System

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Friends of the Griswold Memorial Library

Griswold Memorial Library

Highway Superintendent

Using Chapter 90 funds this year Warner Bros. completed our paving projects. We paved the lower half of Ed Clark Rd., Maxam Rd., lower Adamsville Rd. up to Leon Herzig Dr., Lively LN. and Leon Herzig Dr. We also used Chapter 90 funds to buy gravel to add to some of the town's gravel roads.

At last year's ATM, funds were appropriated to hire an additional Highway Department employee. Our new employee is Samantha Armakovitch. She was hired on August 7th and has proved to be a valuable member to our department.

Also at last year's ATM, funds were appropriated to buy an All Season Body for a new ten wheel dump truck. Chapter 90 funds were used to buy the Cab and Chassis and some of the body. Chapter 90 funds cannot be spent on anything that deals with snow or ice removal (plows, sanders etc.). The town's mechanic will be assembling this truck and body as he did with the six wheel dump truck last year.

We are continuing to get slammed by Mother Nature. We have experienced a few weather events this year that have washed roads out. This makes it difficult to keep up with the routine maintenance we do every year and takes its toll on our General Highway Maintenance account. I want to thank everyone for your patience with a special thanks to the residents that donate their time to help, even if it is clearing the catch basin in front of their home. The more time we spend chasing smaller projects is more time not spent on the major ones.

We started a stabilization account two years ago for the purchase of a new trash compactor and receiver. We purchased a new receiver this year because it deteriorated beyond repair. Hopefully the compactor can last a couple more years.

Respectfully Submitted,
Scott F. Sullivan

Mary Lyon Foundation

Mary Lyon said, "Take care of your reading, writing and singing."

Since 1990 the Mary Lyon Foundation has been providing innovative support for local education to the schools and communities in West County. We are grateful for the incredible generosity which makes it possible for us to not only sustain a myriad of programs and services, but expand and strengthen them. We especially appreciate the continuing financial support of the Myrtle Atkinson Foundation, Cleveland Dodge Foundation, The Recorder, Bristol Myers Squibb, the Harper Gerry family and the many other generous donors who provide support for local education.

The 9th annual community spelling bee held on November 13 raised over \$7,000 for the Mini-Grant program for innovative, educational grants for local schools. The Grand Champions this year were the Spelling Beans (Curtis Rich, David Henry and Erin Morrissey) sponsored by Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters. The winners of the best dressed costume award were The Artful Spellers (Nancy Baker, Nina Coler, and Denny Baker) sponsored by the Shelburne Falls Arts Co-Op, and the Queen Bee sponsor of the event was the Greenfield Savings Bank. It is a tribute to strong community spirit that teams from private and public educational, religious, political and civic organizations come together for this unique fundraiser.

Our annual spring Lyonnaise, a celebration of excellence in local education, was held in May at the Shelburne-Buckland Community Center and featured a powerful presentation by the 2014 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, Anne Marie Osheyack. A special tribute was paid to the very first Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, Roy Frude, who taught science at Arms Academy. John Sloan received the Pat Kerrins Career Award; Kevin Hollister was honored as the Outstanding Mohawk Graduate; Leslie and Ed Grinnell received the Jim Boulger Spirit of Adventure Award sponsored by The Textile Company, and Berkshire East was the Business Award recipient.

The Mary Lyon Foundation sponsors scholarships and a wide variety of projects, programs and services including, for example, an annual Gift Catalog or wish list of requested school supplies, a Children's Literature Festival in August for grades K-6 and the Harper Gerry Student Assistance Fund which provides warm clothing, eyeglasses, food and other basic necessities for children.

The Board of Directors was Marion Taylor, Past President; Stefan Kostka, President; Hugh Knox, Vice President; Sharon Hudson, Corresponding Secretary; Suzanne Conway Lagreze, Recording Secretary; Karen Fairbrother, Treasurer, Beth Bandy, Larry Wells, Robin Morgan Huntley, Sylvia Orcutt, Susan Schuman and Amy Love. Gina Sieber is the Business Manager, and Bruce Willard, past president, is an Honorary Lifetime Member. We remain grateful to the school district for a classroom at the Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School where our office is located. Thank you also to the many generous donors and volunteers who continue to help us make a positive difference for local education initiatives.

Susan Samoriski, Ed.D.
Executive Directo

r

Mohawk Trail Regional High School Principal's Report

Collaboration, initiative, and innovation have been major themes at Mohawk in 2013. This year our school system adopted a calendar that increased opportunities for educators to work together; students were released early on many Wednesday afternoons for a Professional Learning schedule that permitted staff time to work together for professional development, curriculum writing, and collaboration. This is the second year that Mohawk has participated in a state-wide Professional Learning Communities (PLC) initiative and our faculty are working together in new ways to support student learning and their own professional growth. With the introduction of the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) period into the high school schedule this year, students can meet with teachers to receive additional support or pursue enrichment opportunities during the school day.

The arts, athletics, and other extracurricular activities enrich students' learning experiences. This year Mohawk staff and students produced "The Hobbit" in March, a medley of short plays in June, and Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" in December. Our music program is dynamic, with the introduction of Strings Ensemble, Rock Band, and Percussion Lab courses in addition to the core vocal and instrumental courses. The Mohawk Music Association generously supports our music programming.

Mohawk student-athletes had a strong year with increasing levels of student participation. Nearly half of our student body, 246 student-athletes, participated in our fall 2013 athletic program. Through their involvement with Varsity M, our student-athletes volunteer in the elementary schools to read to younger students and serve as role models. The Mohawk Athletic Association generously supports our athletic program through their fundraising initiatives, including this year's Doug Turner Memorial Walkathon which raised over \$13,000.

Students are demonstrating initiative and leadership to make improvements for their school. Over the past two years Mohawk has established a composting program, introduced hydration station water dispensers for filling water bottles, and created a student newspaper, *The Mohawk Independent*. The Student Council, composed of representatives from all grades, is taking on a greater role in the school, serving as a forum for advocacy as well as organizing activities for the school community. Students with the Anti-Bullying Youth Council organized a number of events within the school and the community to improve communication and strengthen the sense of community.

At the midpoint of the 2013-2014 school year, enrollment in grades 7-12 is 501. There are 89 students in the seventh grade and 89 students in the eighth grade. There are 67 students in the ninth grade, 82 in the tenth grade, 90 students in the junior class, and 79 students in the senior class. Five students are enrolled in our post-graduate program.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn R. Dole
Principal

Mohawk Trail Regional School District – Special Education and Pupil Services

A three-step process determines eligibility for Special Education services. Initially, the student has to have a specific, identified disability. The student then needs to fail to make effective progress in appropriate curriculum after general education interventions have been delivered. Lastly, the student must demonstrate the need for specialized instruction or related services to access the curriculum. Related services, including speech and language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, assistive technology and counseling are provided in each of the three districts. The Mohawk Trail Regional School System has made a commitment over the last year to implement tiered instruction. Tiered instruction is a regular education service provided to all students. Teachers and staff collect and utilize data to determine intervention groups. Intervention groups are often short term and target a specific identified area of concern. Student data is tracked to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. Historically in order for students to access support they were required to be identified for special education. The Professional Learning Days have enabled teachers and staff to meet on a regular basis to analyze data and determine groupings.

The number of students receiving special education has fluctuated minimally. While the student population in our districts is on a downward decline, many factors influence special education. Our districts have a high rate of mobility for both foster children and families who struggle with housing. In addition, for the small districts one or two students can impact the percentages.

Data collected from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education indicates the following:

	2010	2011	2012	2013
MTRSD	19.5%	20.1%	20.6%	19.7%
Hawlemont	26%	24%	26%	27%
Rowe	10%	16%	14%	17%

Rowe and Hawlemont School Districts participated in the CPR (Coordinated Program Review). CPR includes staff and teacher interviews and record reviews. Both districts received no corrective action for student related services. They were cited for excluding newly required language in their school handbooks. The changes were made in the school year 2012-2013 handbooks. In addition, all districts are required to support a Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Please contact Leann Loomis if you are interested in participating. Mohawk Trail Regional School District will begin their CPR in March of 2014.

Leann Loomis
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Mohawk Trail Regional School District – Superintendent’s Report

Hawlemont Regional School District

The educational improvement planning of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and Hawlemont Regional School District is aligned to the District Standards and Indicators adopted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This report highlights progress made by Mohawk and Hawlemont during 2013 toward achieving these performance standards.

Standard 1: Leadership, Governance, and Communication. Mohawk and Hawlemont are developing and implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at both the district and school levels. PLCs are collaborative structures used to distribute leadership and cultivate high performing school districts.

Professional Learning Communities: The districts continued their PLC initiatives. Administrative Council developed and implemented a PLC-based structure to facilitate its weekly meetings. This structure has been used to facilitate professional development in fundamental educational matters, such as educator evaluation. In their second year of implementation, Mohawk Middle-High School, Buckland-Shelburne Elementary (BSE), and Sanderson Academy made significant progress toward institutionalizing a culture of PLCs. BSE made the very important step of transitioning from administrator-led PLCs to teacher-led PLCs. Colrain Central School, Heath Elementary, and Hawlemont launched PLC initiatives.

Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction. Mohawk and Hawlemont are re-writing their curriculums to align with the revised Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The districts are using a common web-based platform to promote collaboration, vertical alignment and continuous improvement. The curriculum is being written according to the Understanding by Design (UbD) model, which focuses on teaching for understanding.

Curriculum: For the elementary schools, the districts purchased Houghton Mifflin Math Expressions, which will be used in grades K-5. Sixth grade teachers wrote three science units, thus completing the new Earth Science-based 6th grade curriculum. The teachers worked in coordination with seventh and eighth grade science teachers to create a meaningful and inclusive scope and sequence. For the middle and high school, the District purchased an Algebra 1 program. The middle and high school teachers received guidelines, structured Professional Learning time, and individualized support to continue writing UbD curriculum units.

Instruction: The districts created a crosswalk document linking the new Educator Evaluation Rubric with the Characteristics for Standards-Based Teaching and Learning Continuum of Practice adopted by the MA DESE. This crosswalk provided educators with examples of evidence and observable practices of proficient teaching.

Standard 3: Assessment. Mohawk and Hawlemont are using student assessment results, local benchmarks, and other pertinent data to improve student achievement and inform all aspects of educational decision-making.

Collecting Assessment Data: Mohawk and Hawlemont established three assessment windows during the school year: fall, winter and spring. Assessments for English Language Arts include the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Benchmark Assessment System. Math

assessments include the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

Using Assessment Data to Inform Instruction: In all of the districts' elementary schools, data team meetings were instituted to facilitate the use of student assessment data to inform instruction. The elementary teachers focused on DIBELS, Benchmark Assessments, and NWEA MAP data. The PK-6 Curriculum Director worked with the elementary principals after the fall data collection period to deliver professional development helping the teachers to analyze student data and form intervention groupings. At the middle and high school, the teachers focused on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data and NWEA MAP data. PLCs were used to conduct data-based inquiry.

Standard 4: Human Resources and Professional Development. The Mohawk School Committee and the Mohawk Educator Association reached agreement on the new educator evaluation system required by MA DESE. Similarly, the Hawlemont School Committee and the Hawlemont Teachers' Association reached agreement. Both districts began implementing the new evaluation system with fidelity.

New Educator Evaluation System: Administrative Council completed administrator training for the new evaluation system and took responsibility for training all staff. Central Office purchased a software application designed to facilitate the new system electronically. Principals met with all educators to assist in self-assessment and setting goals. Educators submitted self-assessment and proposed goals. Principals met with educators to establish educator plans. Principals completed most of the educator plans and first observation of each educator. Educators have submitted some evidence supporting their performance.

Standard 5: Student Support. The districts' new Professional Learning Days structure is designed to increase educator effectiveness and thus support students. All administrators are focused on scheduling as a way to improve student learning.

Mohawk and Hawlemont recognize that teacher support is essential to student support. With this connection in mind, the districts introduced Professional Learning Days (PLDs). PLDs replaced traditional half days and focused on educator training. Within the Mohawk Middle-High School, an Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) short block was negotiated by a Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) and implemented. The ELO structure introduced a time frame within the school day to provide academic support to all students, including at-risk students. Some elementary schools created after-school enrichment on Wednesday early release days. Additionally, Mohawk introduced summer enrichment camps.

Standard 6: Financial and Asset Management. Mohawk and Hawlemont continued to struggle with financial sustainability. Both School Committees have charged Administration with the responsibility of proposing and operating affordable budgets that support quality education.

Chinese Tuition-Paying Students. Mohawk worked with the Department of Homeland Security to become eligible to receive international tuition-paying students. The District researched various models to develop an international program and selected a sister school model. Mohawk contracted with an intercultural consulting firm. The high school principal traveled to China with this firm and procured two sister school agreements. School Committee authorized the District to move forward with a summer program in 2014 and preparing to receive 1-2 Chinese students during the 2015-2016 school year.

Hawlemont Agricultural Program. Hawlemont applied for a \$325K Community Innovation Challenge grant. The purpose of the grant is to reconstitute and rejuvenate Hawlemont by providing an innovative elementary education through hands-on, experiential learning that combines agriculture and community involvement with traditional curriculum. A financial goal of this initiative is to increase choice-in revenues and reduce choice-out expenses, which would support the district's financial sustainability.

In 2013, the Mohawk and Hawlemont School Districts made substantial progress toward meeting and exceeding the MA DESE District Standards and Indicators. These performance standards were set higher than ever. Indeed, the more rigorous MA Curriculum Frameworks and the new educator evaluation system reflect how extraordinary times have become within public education. After having served the Mohawk and Hawlemont school districts for nine years, I am extremely optimistic about the future of our children's education within this increasingly demanding environment. There is a remarkable resilience that characterizes our communities, our educators, and our students. Mohawk and Hawlemont are ready for today's challenges and tomorrow's. On behalf of our students, I thank our entire school community for your steadfast support of our children's education. Because of you, the future remains very bright for our students!

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Buoniconti
Superintendent of Schools

Planning Board Colrain Planning Board 2014 Annual Report

The Planning Board began its 2014 agenda with carry over work and issues from 2013.

The Board continued to work with the Large Solar Array by-law sub-committee on creating a new by-law for large solar array systems. In addition, the Board recommended two new definitions be added to the Colrain Zoning By-laws; campers and campgrounds, and a new section (XVII) describing Commercial Campgrounds.

Other work that the Board undertook included;

- A review of two ANR (Approval Not Required) applications, one for JCC Colrain LLC and one for Russell Coombs
- A request from Katywil Eco-village to amend their subdivision permit to re-configure three lots and relocate another, and
- An application from AT&T mobile for a cell tower on town owned land at the transfer station.

Limited professional technical assistance and time prevented the Board from completing the Large Scale Industrial Wind Systems By-law. Though close to completion, the Board recommended a temporary 12 month moratorium by-law on large scale industrial wind systems be put in place. The Board also recommended that a temporary 12 month moratorium on a Medical Marijuana by-law be put in place, as well.

The Annual Town Meeting voted for the two new definitions, Section XVII, the Large Solar Array by-law, and the two twelve month temporary moratoriums.

After many years on the Colrain Planning Board, in December, I decided it was time to step down from the Board and focus on other interests. Many many thanks to my wonderful planning board colleagues, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Shawn Kimberly, the Colrain Building Inspector, for their interest, guidance and support for the Colrain Planning Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rockwell
Chair

Planning Board Members:
Joan Rockwell, Chair
Betsy Corner
Sara Wik
Hale Johnson
Thom Griffin

Personnel Committee

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Police Department

Veterans Services

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

The Central Franklin County District was formed in 1940 and provides Veterans Services for twenty three towns within Franklin County. Currently we are providing support for 76 veterans who reside in your district

The mission of the Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) is to be the chief advocate for the nearly half-million veterans of the Commonwealth and their families.

Under Chapter 115 of Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L. ch. 115), the Commonwealth provides a uniform program of financial and medical assistance for income eligible veterans and their dependents. Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, housing supplies, and medical care in accordance with a formula which takes into account the number of dependants and income from all sources. Eligible dependents of deceased veterans are provided with the same benefits as they would were the veteran still living.

Leo and Mark held our first annual Job Fair for Veterans at the French King Bowling Center with great success; as well as, a Veterans Administration Health Fair.

November 13th 2014 most member towns voted to dissolve this district and become a member of the new regional veteran's district, Upper Pioneer Veterans Services District 294 Main Street, Greenfield, Mass 01301. The new phone number is 4132-772-1571.

Many Veterans have been calling looking for the VA Web Sites here are a few for you.

Educational Benefits: www.gibill.va.gov **Home Loan Guaranty:** www.homeloans.va.gov

Federal Jobs: www.usajobs.opm.gov **Returning Veterans:** www.seamlesstranstion.va.gov

VA Home Page: www.va.gov **Government Jobs:** www.usajobs.gov/opm

Massachusetts State Veterans Services: [MassVets Advisor](#)

Leo J. Parent, Director

Mark Fitzpatrick, VSO

Volunteer Ambulance Association

WiredWest