

FALL MINI NEWSLETTER

2017

TIME FLIES: Well I woke up this morning realizing that I have not sent a newsletter out in a bit, Facebook, I try to do quite often and with lots going on it is probably a good time to push this one out.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING! This is the hot topic today; the Union Board of Selectmen have set the date of December 12th at 7:00 PM to discuss the Thompson Community Building. There is lots going around on Facebook, but if you are on social media you know how a story can grow and people can say anything and make up anything, so here I will attempt to clarify the who, what and why!

For the past few years the Town insurance firm has been quite concerned about the deteriorating condition of the TCC and the lack of enforcement by this Board of Selectmen (BOS) and previous Boards, regarding the requirements of the lease.

The Board of Selectmen have a legal duty to protect the assets of the Town, according to the original lease documents. It has become apparent to the Board that history shows that the TCC organization is not able to raise enough funds to maintain the building at the level required by the lease. Yes, they do some great things and the Board needed to find a way to protect the taxpayer and continue the good work of the TCC.

The Board looked at many options, selling the building, transferring it over completely to the TCC, finding a private corporation and considering elderly housing. They chose the latter as it seemed to have the most benefits for the Town with the least impact on the taxpayers. They have had preliminary meetings with Penquis to see if they could meet the needs of the community and still allow us to have the food pantry, daycare, gymnasium and thrift store. Penquis was eager to work with the Town and meet these requirements in some form or another. The Board felt this option was the best for the long-term care of the building and would protect the taxpayers from eventual hundreds of thousands of dollars in maintenance.

It is important to note that the TCC WILL CONTINUE to operate but in a smaller capacity. The gymnasium side will still be available as well as the thrift store space. It will be less of a financial burden on the group and they can continue to do the major things they do now. Yes, some small businesses may have to find a new location that is not subsidized by the Town, but without the burden of maintenance this will not have an impact on the TCC's income.

Although Penquis has verbally agreed to work with Union, they have done preliminary feasibility studies that look good, they or anyone else would not put more money into the process until they are assured the taxpayers would agree for this to happen. Thus, the need for a special Town Meeting! The Town Meeting gives voters in Union the chance to ask questions, get more information and then decide on the warrant article, this is simply not just a vote yes or no. It is not much different than a public hearing other than there is a vote at the end.

Other things to keep in mind:

- 1: This is not anywhere near a done deal! There are Federal HTC credits that need to be approved by congress, if this is not included in the Senate bill, this and all rehab projects will be dead.
- 2: Penquis still must apply for the State and Federal Funds in a competitive application.
- 3: Even if all the above happens, there are many other obstacles to overcome and it will probably be about two years before they would begin.

You, the citizens and taxpayers of Union have the final say, and by coming to the Town Meeting you can decide what you would like to happen. DO NOT get your information from Facebook, many of the comments are way out of line and I simply do not have time to monitor all post to correct the inaccuracies.

Many want to make this a contentious issue, it should not be, the BOS are simply presenting you, the taxpayers, what they believe is the right thing to do for the long-term viability of the building. And to save hundreds of thousand of dollars in future taxpayer dollars. This can be a win-win for all.

FACEBOOK: As many of you know we push out information on our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/townofunion/>

We push out information and let everyone share on their own page or another page for the lengthy discussions and sometimes unpleasant comments. This eliminates hundreds of notifications that some may not be interested in, if they are they simply go to another page and follow it along.

SNOW: We have enjoyed a great fall weather wise, but it will snow, and we will plow and if your mailbox post is a bit rotted out, it will fail! You will get mad at us even though most of the time we do not even touch it, the weight of the snow will take the box down. You know your box is a bit wobbly so take care of it now when it is warmer.

DOGS: Dog licenses are now due, avoid the hefty late fee that the State mandates and make that doggie legal!

REMINDERS:

Closed December 22-26, we will re-open December 27th. The employees worked Patriots Day and exchanged it for the day after Xmas.

Closed January 1, open January 2

HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY

