



# Town of North Andover Quarterly Newsletter

APRIL 2011 - Issue 19

## News from Division of Public Works

### Spring Clean Up



Spring collection of sticks, twigs, and branches that have fallen into yards during the winter will take place during **week of April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup>** this year. Only branches less than 2 inches thick and less than four feet in length will be accepted. These should be placed curb side with butt end out during these two weeks and will be collected and chipped by the DPW as time permits.

Wood chips from this will be available free to residents at the Cyr Recycling Center on Sharpeners pond Road starting in May .

A third week of collection will be done during the **week of April 25<sup>th</sup>** by our collection contractor, North-side Carting. This week residents may put out leaf and yard waste in degradable paper bags, similar to what is done in the fall with leaf collection.



## News from the Police Department

### NORTH ANDOVER POLICE HEADQUARTERS OPEN HOUSE MAY 14, 2011

Chief Richard Stanley, North Andover Police Station Building Committee and members of the North Andover Police Department will be hosting an "Open House" of the new Police Headquarters located at 1475 Osgood Street. The event will be held on Saturday May 14, 2011 between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm.

Tours will be conducted by the Building Committee mem-

bers, Neighborhood Watch Block Captains and Officers of the police department. Refreshments will be provided. Also, police vehicles and equipment will be on display. The invitation is open to the residents of our community.

The men and women of the North Andover Police are very proud of their new headquarters. We wish to thank the Town Manager, elected officials, Building Committee members and the residents for the facility.

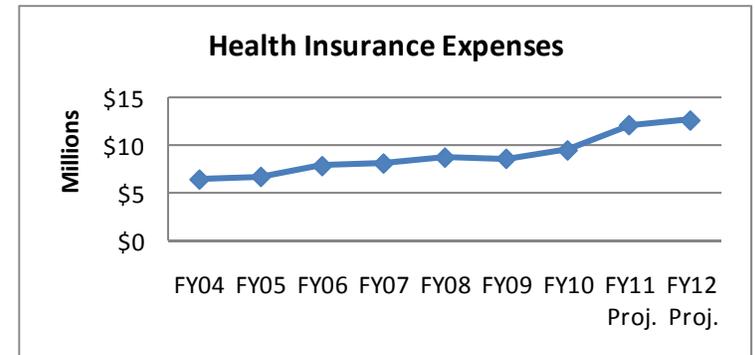
## News from the Town Manager's Office

### The FY12 Budget and Employee Health Insurance

While many other communities in Massachusetts over the past few years have had to lay off employees, reduce services and spend down reserves due to the economic recession, North Andover has been fortunate to be able to avoid those problems through a combination of good management, employee concessions and (it has to be acknowledged) good luck. Quality management has been exhibited in the form of consolidation of municipal and school services, improved productivity through initiatives such as the Public Works Department pavement management plan, and conservative budgeting practices. Employee concessions have been in the area of zero to low percent wage settlements in recent years and increased percentage contribution for health insurance. Our good luck has primarily been with our self-funded employee health insurance program. For the three year period FY07 to FY09, our total health claims expense averaged only a 3.2% increase per year, well below federal and state averages, and our health insurance trust fund balance increased from \$648,000 to over \$4 million.

While the town continues to exercise sound financial management (Standard & Poor's recently changed its outlook of the Town from "negative" to "stable") and our employees continue to make sacrifices, unfortunately our luck has run out in regards to employee health costs. In FY10 our total health claims expenses increased by 10.27% to \$9.5 million and are projected to increase by 27% or \$12.1 million in FY11. As a result, the percentage of the total Town budget that pays for the employer portion of health insurance costs has climbed from 10.9% in FY09 to 12.6% FY12.

With total revenues projected only to increase by 1.5% in FY12 (or \$1.16 million) and employer health insurance costs



increasing by \$1.57 million, one can see why the town is facing the prospect of cutting back on services and staffing in the upcoming budget year. This situation would have been even more dire had not \$416,000 in health insurance expenses been shifted from the Town to the employees by increasing the percentage the employees pay from 15% to 25% over a period of time from FY10 to FY13.

To try to address this problem going forward, the Town and School Department, in conjunction with our insurance carrier, have embarked upon an employee wellness program and we have revisited the stop-loss insurance component of our employee health program. We also continue to advocate for the ability to change deductible and co-pays (plan design) without having to collective bargain for those changes. But the real problem will not be solved by cost shifting from the employer to the employee, although that would certainly help, but by efforts at the state and federal level to reign in overall health insurance costs.

## News from the Fire Department

The burning season started in January and runs through May 1, 2011. Rules and regulations can be found on the town's web site. Please be courteous to your neighbors, keep the smoke down by burning allowed materials only. If the smoke drifts toward your neighbor's property think about burning at another time. Fires have to be monitored at all times and a water source needs to be present. If the wind picks up it is your responsibility to extinguish the fire. Be smart and be safe. Keep the vegetation clear of homes and other structures. Smoldering mulch fires around foundations and other structures can quickly turn into building fires. If your fire gets out of control call 911 immediately before attempting to extinguish, better to be safe than sorry.

With spring approaching comes the BBQ season. Make sure all grills are in a safe location away from structures. If cooking with charcoal, do not discard the coals in any con-

tainer other than metal, these coals can ignite material many hours later. Gas grills should be inspected annually for wear and tear. Under no exceptions should propane be stored in the home or garage. When transporting cylinders from filling stations it is good practice to drop the tank off at home prior to running others errands. A filled propane cylinder subject to heating and sun light can increase in pressure resulting in a release of gas.

Change your clocks **CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES**. It is that time of year to change the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The fire prevention bureau would be glad to assist you with any questions or concerns in where to place these devices. Owners of rental property are responsible for providing and maintaining fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

## News from the Town Clerk's Office

### **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – BEGINS TUESDAY MAY 10, 2011**

The Annual Town Meeting will be held at the North Andover High School beginning Tuesday May 10, 2011 beginning at 7:00PM. The report of the Finance Committee with a full explanation of all warrant articles will be available April 19, 2011. This report details all budget information and the recommendations of the Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Planning Board. We have a new bylaw that allows us to distribute the warrant at the Town Hall, Stevens Memorial Library, and on our web site. If you wish to have a copy mailed to you, please contact the Town Clerk's office at (978)688-9502. We will update any new information on our web site and copies will be available at Town Meeting. You must be a registered voter by April 20, 2011 to vote at Town Meeting and the Town Clerk's Office is open until 8:00PM on that date. Please attend this very important meeting.

The Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, School Com-

mittee, and Planning Board will be holding meetings to discuss the Town Budget, Capital Improvement Plan and other issues.

### **MEETING NOTICES**

All meetings of public bodies must be posted with an agenda 48 hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays). The notice of the meeting and agenda are posted in the Town Clerk's Office, in the Main Street Fire Station for 24 hour access, and on our web site.

### **PASSPORTS**

The Town Clerk's office continues to be a passport agency. We process passport applications Monday through Friday 9:00AM until 3:00PM. We will also be participating in Passport Day in the USA on Saturday April 9, 2011 from 10:00AM until 2:00PM. Forms and information on passports are available at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) and in our office. Please be certain to use the new forms dated 12-2010. You can call (978)688-9502 or e-mail [jbtradeshaw@townofnorthandover.com](mailto:jbtradeshaw@townofnorthandover.com).

## News from Youth & Recreation Services

### **SUMMER 2011 IS EXPECTED TO BE OUR BEST TO DATE:**

With all the snow on the ground it is hard to believe that summer is on its way but it is! The Youth & Recreation Department is in the planning stages to provide some new and old programming for Summer 2011.

Stevens Pond will open in late June and with the renovations we have made over the last three years we expect big crowds and a lot of fun. On Sunday nights during the summer we will host our Sunday Night Concerts on the common. Expect to see some of the annual crowd favorites along with a couple of new acts. Tuesday and Thursday mornings we will host the Children shows on the common. Music, Comedy, Jugglers, and Story tellers will fill the air and we expect the usual large crowds and smiling faces.

Old Standbys like the popular Summer Fun six week playground program returns with age appropriate sites at Atkinson school, Reynolds Park and the Youth Center. The annual Joseph Walsh Summer league basketball leagues will return as

well as Field trips, Sports programs, Girls only programs, Cooking class, Fitness programs and adventure programs. The Youth Center skate park will be open as well as afternoon and evening hours at the Youth Center.

All summer programming will be announced on Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>. Programs fill up fast so don't miss out on all the excitement. Please follow us on our website. [www.nayouth.com](http://www.nayouth.com).

