

WINDOWS ON WAKEFIELD GOVERNMENT

Traditionally, summer is a time of relaxation and vacation. Not so at Town Hall. This summer has turned into a time of action, planning and implementation.

Some of the highlights of the last month include:

The town and the unions agreed to a change in health insurance, which will lead to a savings of \$750,000 on an annual basis.

The town and the unions agreed to a settlement on contracts through June 30, 2009 (We are continuing the negotiation process with police and fire).

The process has begun to hire a new fire chief as long time chief David Parr announced his retirement effective Sept. 1.

The town balanced the fiscal 2009 budget on June 30.

Coordination of efforts in the area of technology continues between Town Hall and the School Department.

Concurrent with these specific items is the ongoing efforts to identify, review and implement the policy decisions of the Wakefield Board of Selectmen as well as prioritizing the concerns of the many citizens and citizen groups I have had the privilege of meeting with during the last 30 days.

VOICE MAIL IS COMING

Starting in late July, callers may leave voice mail messages for town employees after hours or when employees are away from their desks.

All town employees will continue to answer their phones when they are at their desks however, soon the public will be able to voice their concerns at their convenience. This new voicemail service is part of a scheduled upgrade of the phone system.

BETTER USES OF TECHNOLOGY

Voice mail is not the only technological enhancement at Town Hall. All job descriptions are being updated to better reflect how the many advances in technology are being utilized to serve the public. Training is to be provided to employees where appropriate. This will help us better serve the public. Each department head has been working diligently and will be presenting cost saving ideas. For example, the new billing system for water and sewer bills will allow customers to receive their bills via e-mail. This may seem like a small savings in the scheme of the cost of paper, toner, envelopes and postage, however it is also a green solution, which contributes to everyone's bottom line. The e-mail bill will be optional.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department will enter a new era with the retirement of Chief David Parr. The chief is an icon and is a well-respected town employee. He will be sorely missed as a chief, as a person and a friend. We wish him well in his future endeavors. Starting Aug. 1, Captain Michael Sullivan will serve as the interim chief. Mr. Sullivan is the senior captain and has been a Wakefield firefighter for 23 years.

As your Town Administration, I would like Wakefield residents to know that I have an open-door policy. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns, or issues that you may have. I can be reached at 781-246-6390 or via e-mail at smaio@wakefield.ma.us.

Best wishes to all citizens to enjoy the beautiful summer days.

Stephen P. Maio

Town Administrator