

Manage Your Septic System Inspection Pumping Cycle

The Wastewater Management Office operates as part of the Public Works Department under Town Ordinance No. 210 and at the direction of the Wastewater Management Commission. The Wastewater Management program was initiated to protect our most important natural resources in Town, our groundwater and surface water bodies including our Salt Ponds.

All of Charlestown relies solely on groundwater for drinking water (through private and public wells) and every household and business in Charlestown relies on septic systems for sewage disposal. Therefore, malfunctioning and failing septic systems have the potential to significantly impact human health and the environment.

Proper maintenance and care of your septic system is of utmost importance. Charlestown's septic system maintenance program is designed to enhance your septic system performance and longevity, while minimizing costs by limiting unnecessary pumping and identifying potential problems before they manifest into large scale issues. The program tracks the status of all septic systems in Town through a required inspection process and records are maintained in a comprehensive database.

For conventional septic systems, an important element of the program is the flexibility of inspection frequency, which is based on your septic systems history. How often you have your system inspected can be adjusted in order to match the need for pumping, and thus can vary from one to five years. A baseline inspection (First Maintenance Inspection) for all new septic systems is required three years from the startup date.

Questions?? Call Matt Dowling at the Wastewater Management Office - 364-5030 or visit Charlestown's website and click on Wastewater Management for more

Charlestown F.O.P. 5K Road Race

The Charlestown Police F.O.P. Lodge #40 will be hosting our 7th annual 5K Road Race on August 28, 2011 in beautiful Ninigret Park. The race kicks off at 9:00 AM. T-shirts, awards and refreshments will be offered. New this year is a prize for breaking the course record - 15.13. Please contact Sgt. Philip Gingerella for more information at 401-742-0107 and visit our website at www.foplodge40.org for more details and entry forms.

Daily Entrance Beach Fees



Charlestown Beach	
Weekdays	\$ 10
Weekends/Holidays	\$ 10
Blue Shutters	
Weekdays	\$ 10
Weekends/Holidays	\$ 15

As of May 1, 2011 seasonal Beach passes will be available at the Town Clerk's Office. You may stop in or mail a letter of request to the Town Clerk along with your Charlestown property address, a copy of your vehicle registration and a self addressed stamped envelope.

Beach Sticker Fees 2011

Resident Beach Sticker	\$ 45
Resident Senior Citizens	\$ 25
Non-Resident Beach Sticker	\$ 90
Non-Resident Senior Citizen	\$ 45
Cottage Pass	\$360



Town Phone Numbers

364-1210 Administrator	364-1220 Transfer Station
364-1200 Town Clerk	364-6211 Cross Mills Library
364-1230 DPW	364-3878 Chamber of Commerce
364-1215 Building/Zoning	364-0815 Emergency Mgt.
364-1234 Tax Collector	641-3083 Harbor Master
364-1233 Tax Assessor	364-1211 Animal Control
364-1222 Parks & Recreation	364-1212 Police
364-1235 Treasurer	(non-emergency)
364-5030 Waste Water	364-0885 Ambulance
364-1225 Planning	
364-1233 GIS	
364-1076 Public Assistance	
364-6998 Sr./Community Ctr.	



TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN

The Pipeline

May 2011 Volume 145 No. 1

Charlestown Town Hall, 4540 South County Trail

Financial Town Referendum

At the June 6th Referendum you will be asked to vote on two items: To approve the 2011-2012 budget, and; 2. To authorize the construction of facilities at Blue Shutters Beach and Charlestown Town Beach. The two Referendum questions are presented at the end of this article in the exact wording. The budget summary is available on Page 2 of this Pipeline. The budget can be viewed in its entirety at the Town Hall or on the Town's website (in the upper right hand corner under quick links) at www.charlestownri.org. The link for the full presentation on the proposed Beach Facilities is located right below the budget link.

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Amy Rose Weinreich Appointed Charlestown's 29th Town Clerk

After 30 years of municipal service, April marked the departure of Jodi Lacroix to Chattanooga, Tennessee where she will assist her husband Paul in representing the North in Civil War reenactments and be a vocal member of Red Sox Nation.

With Jodi's strong recommendation and following interviews by a hiring committee, Amy Rose Weinreich was promoted to serve as the 29th Charlestown Town Clerk. Amy has worked in the Clerk's office since 2002 as the Deputy Town Clerk. She has been in charge of election activities and has worked in all areas of business within the Town Clerk's Department. We wish Amy great success in her new position.

New Name, New Hours for Charlestown Community Center

The Charlestown Community Center, formally known as the Senior/Community Center, is expanding its hours. Starting in July, the Center will be open Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

2011 Charlestown Flu Clinic Dates

Our annual Flu Clinic dates have been set for the 2011 season. Senior Center, Oct. 14 from 9:00 AM—12:00 noon
Town Hall, Oct. 21st from 10:00 AM - 12:00 noon

Greetings from the Town Administrator

By Bill DiLibero

Welcome to the May edition of the Charlestown Pipeline. The Pipeline has taken on a new format. The Town now has an electronic newsletter which we call the Pipeline e-newsletter. The primary benefit of an electronic newsletter is cost. One paper copy of the Pipeline cost Charlestown four thousand dollars to print and mail. The e-newsletter cost the Town under two hundred dollars per year to send as many electronic newsletters as we want.

All you need to do is sign-up. You can sign-up for the e-newsletter from the Town's website: www.charlestownri.org. If you are unhappy with this e-newsletter you can always unsubscribe. But I think you will be pleased with all the Town information that you receive from our e-newsletter.

The other new electronic feature that the Town has added is Clerkbases. Clerkbases is a computer application that provides information about Town meetings. The Town website now has a large blue Clerkbases icon. From Clerkbases you can watch a Town Council meeting when the meeting is taking place, or when the meeting is over. This process is called streaming video. A great feature that Clerkbases provides is that you can watch only the agenda item that you are interested in. You do not have to watch the entire Council meeting to find out about one item on the agenda. Clerkbases also provides Town Council meeting minutes and agendas. When you view an agenda, you can click on links that will show you all the information provided to the Council for a specific agenda item. Any material that the Council has, you can see as well.

The Town will continue to provide a printed version of the Pipeline every Spring, prior to the Town Financial Referendum. If you have any questions about the Pipeline, the e-newsletter, Clerkbases, or any other matter, please feel free to contact me by phone at 364-1240, or by email at wdilibero@charlestownri.org.

THE TOWN HALL PIPELINE

Charlestown Town Hall
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813

PRESORTED STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 34
CHARLESTOWN RI

Finanical Town Referendum

Continued from page 1

Budget information:

The proposed budget has resulted in an increase in the tax rate due to a number of factors. One factor has been the change in the Charlestown property values which are represented in the Town's "Grand List." The Grand List is the total value of all property in Charlestown. Charlestown was required by State Law to conduct a revaluation of all Town property in 2010. In March, the Tax Assessor mailed out the new property values to all Charlestown landowners that represent the 2010 Grand List. On average, we have seen a 15% decrease in property value. The FY 2009 Grand List of \$2,760,714,809 has been reduced to \$2,360,691,215 for 2010. This is a difference of approximately \$400 million. This amount will change as the assessments are still being adjusted.

Acc't.	Department/Commission	As Recommended
4100	Town Council	\$ 23,450
4200	Town Administrator	148,856
4300	Election Unit	6,250
4400	Treasurer	155,587
4500	Tax Assessor	122,051
4550	GIS	66,089
4600	Tax Collector	97,876
4700	Public Records	174,963
4800	Town Planner	108,741
4900	Central Service	228,520
5100	Police Department	2,091,766
5200	Building Inspector	151,143
5300	Emergency Management	28,822
5400	Animal Control	80,836
5600	Public Assistance	13,100
5700	Municipal Court	9,000
6100	Public Works Administration	125,138
6200	Highways and Roads	925,976
6300	Buildings and Grounds	288,436
6400	CRCC Mandated Monitoring	15,000
6600	Public Works/WWater. Mgt.	73,404
7200	Outside Agencies	18,200
7300	Local Agencies	378,550
7400	Boards and Commissions	24,100
8000	Senior Citizen/Community Ctr.	73,995
8100	Recreation Administration	133,129
8150	Recreation Programs	55,620
8200	Charlestown Beach	86,275
8300	Ninigret Park	33,800
8500	Blue Shutters Beach	68,675
9000	Debt Service	602,815
9200	Employee Benefits	1,907,013
9400	Professional Services	439,600
9500	Town Insurance	200,000
9600	Council Contingency	233,582
9900	Capital Improvements	563,914
9950	Transfers Out	1,579,713
TOTAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET		\$ 11,333,985
TOTAL CHARIHO BUDGET		\$ 14,270,862
GRAND TOTAL MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOS EXPE		\$ 25,604,847

The budget has two sources of income: The amount raised by **taxation**; and the amount raised by **revenues**. Revenues include State aid and municipal revenues. State aid has now been reduced to primarily school aid. Municipal revenues which had been declining since 2006 are now seeing a slow increase in all of the Town departments. With the exception of limited State and Federal grants, taxes make up the balance of the Town's income.

Due to the decrease in property values, \$1.30 was added to the tax rate (bringing the rate to \$8.78), to equal the revenue needed to fund the current (2010-2011) budget. The additional funds needed to account for the increase in the proposed budget (11-12) results in a tax rate of \$9.04. The reduction in the valuation of property values will diminish the impact of the tax increase.

**Vote Monday,
June 6, 2011 - 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM**
**Polling locations:
Town Hall in Council Chambers
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813**

BALLOT QUESTIONS: 1. "Shall the Town appropriate the FY 2011-2012 budget of \$11,333,985 for municipal services, as adopted by the Charlestown Town Council on May 9, 2011?"

2. "Shall the Town Treasurer and the President of the Charlestown Town Council be authorized, pursuant to RIGL 45-12-2, to issue and refund from time to time, bonds, notes or other evidence of indebtedness in an amount not to exceed \$1,190,000 (One Million, One Hundred Ninety Thousand Dollars) in order to finance the construction, furnishing and equipping of permanent stick-built beach structures with showers, toilet facilities, and septic systems at both Charlestown Town Beach and Blue Shutters Beach, the terms, details and conditions for such bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness to be set by resolution of the Town Council?"

Explanation: This referendum will allow the Town to construct new toilet and shower facilities at both the Town's Blue Shutters Beach and Town Beach.

Shoreline Access

On January 20, 2011, Chief Jack Shippee hosted a group of State and local officials to address public access to the Coastline. The group included department heads and legal representatives from the Department of Environmental Management, Coastal Resources Management Council and the Attorney General's Office, as well as local management and law enforcement officials representing Charlestown, Westerly and South Kingstown.

The two main questions raised were 1. What area of the beach is public?; and 2. What activities are allowed by the "public along the shore?" A two-hour spirited discussion transpired led by Laura Miguel representing the CRMC Enforcement Division.

What is Public Access?

Ms. Miguel began by stating the Rhode Island Constitution provides the right of the public to access the shoreline for fishing, gathering seaweed, swimming and passage along the shore. These, however are examples and not the sole limiting uses. So persons can stop and place a towel in the public access area and go for a swim. They can stop and swim, picnic, fish or collect seaweed. If not prohibited by law, they can drive their vehicles along the shore.

What Part of the Shore is Private?

The group followed by discussing: On what part of the shore can the public pass? First we discussed what "legally" was determined to be the "ordinary high water mark" or "mean high tide" on which the public could pass. We were instructed to look at the Rhode Island Supreme Court decision of *State versus Ibbison*. This is a 1982 court case where the Court provided a lengthy and complex method to measure the mean high tide mark. This method is a very expensive way to determine the public access line and not one that most residents or communities can afford. The discussion was followed by the need to establish a simple baseline which could be used to define the mean high tide line below which the public may access. From this discussion it was determined that land above the average seaweed line, or "wrack line" was private land. Without an *Ibbison* survey, which would likely move the mean high tide line closer to the water, the seaweed or wrack line is a good general indicator of the area of public access.

Protecting Private Property:

The group also discussed how residents can protect their private property. CRMC has guidelines **and permitting requirements** for permanent fencing. (See their website: <http://www/crmc.ri.gov/>) Temporary signs can be posted but cannot be permanent. A sandwich board type sign was suggested provided it was not permanent. The Town of Charlestown will post signs designating the Town and public beach areas at Charlestown Town Beach each day.

Finally, it should be noted that the Legislature create the laws, the courts determine the law and the Office of the Attorney General advises the State and local enforcement authorities (DEM Environmental Law Enforcement, CRMC Division and local police departments), on enforcement of the law.

Compost Bins Take the Mess Out of Composting

Backyard Compost Bins Available for sale at the Charlestown Residential Collection Center Sand Hill Road, Charlestown, RI.

**Beginning
Saturday, May 14, 2011
Hours: 8:00am-4:00pm**

Most of us have heard of composting, and know that it is a process which decomposes organic material, as evidenced constantly in nature. Vegetable food scraps and lawn clippings may be composted to rich soil for your yard or garden. It has been estimated that up to thirty percent of waste generated by the average home may be composted and not thrown in the landfill.

Have you considered composting kitchen and yard vegetable waste, but thought it was too messy? One new solution is now available at the CRCC. Backyard compost bins, with a capacity of 1.5 cubic yards, are now available at the CRCC at a cost of \$40.00 (paid by check to CRCC). The bins will help you compost *and* keep the tidy appearance of your yard. We have started the program with a limited number of bins (10), so it is advisable to call the Collection Center @ (401) 364-1220 first to check for availability. We hope and expect this initiative to continue, and grow as neighbors pass on to others the value of compost as a soil nutrient.

If you have additional questions regarding composting please contact the URI Master Composter/Master Recycler Program @ (800) 448 1011.

A Reminder... ID. Stickers for the Charlestown Residential Collection Center located on Sand Hill Road, expire annually at the end of the calendar year and must be renewed. You may renew your sticker personally at Town Hall, or mail a copy of your registration(s) and a ten dollar (\$10.00) check made out to CRCC for each sticker. Please call Alan Arsenault at (401) 364-1230 weekdays with questions.

Joe Warner New Building Official

December marked the hiring of Joe Warner to replace John Matuza as the Town's Building and Zoning Official. John retired from his position after nearly nine years of service to the Town.

Following twenty-two years in the building industry, Joe was hired by the Town of South Kingstown and served as their Building Inspector for over four years. Joe was ranked at the top of a group of well qualified candidates. Joe is doing a great job keeping the wheels turning in our busy Building and Zoning Department.