

Welcome

North Smithfield's Town Charter requires that a summary Annual Report be prepared each September for North Smithfield residents. Each annual report reviews the previous fiscal year, in this case from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. I hope that you will find this report both useful and encouraging.

We all understand the challenges of the most difficult economic downturn in 70 years. We have seen the State withdraw millions of dollars in aid categories to cities and towns.

We have responded by finding new opportunities to work more efficiently within each department, among departments, and with neighboring towns. We have joined in a formal agreement with Smithfield, Gloucester and Burrillville to share resources. In the year ahead, we will continue our innovative efforts to provide services even more efficiently.

This report focuses on Town departments and three major themes:

* **Making government easier to use** and more transparent. We have developed the Town website to convey more information. We publish an email newsletter to which anyone can subscribe. Everyone should have equal access to public information. That includes North Smithfield citizens, visitors and potential investors.

* **Developing innovative ways to save money and improve services.** You will see repeated department references to using computers more effectively and conducting business by email. We finished the year with a small surplus of \$6,166 and decreased expenditures by 2.5% for the coming year.

* **Making North Smithfield a Green Community** with effective energy and

resource conservation initiatives. These improvements position the Town for success in the emerging green economy. We have begun a major energy conservation improvement project for school and municipal buildings. It is being funded by grants and energy savings at no cost to taxpayers.

This Annual Report is presented by department in alphabetical order, with references to selected boards and commissions that each department assists. For additional information about each department and a PDF copy of this report, please visit the Town website: www.nsmithfieldri.org

Note that all department heads have email addresses listed first, because that has become the most efficient form of communication.

We have focused on changes and improvements made during the 2009-10 fiscal year (FY2010). You may be pleasantly surprised to see how far we have come in the past 12 months. We would welcome any suggestions for improving the report format and content in coming years.

Best wishes,

Paulette Hamilton, Town Administrator

Building Inspection

Building Inspector: Robert Benoit
rbenoit@nsmithfieldri.org
(401) 767-2200 x311

The Building Department is responsible for enforcement of State and Local Building Codes. The department also ensures that building activities throughout the Town are in compliance with zoning laws and standards. Building Inspection issues

plumbing, electrical and other permits. All permit work receives one or more timely inspections to make certain everything is completed correctly to code.

Recent Work: Building Inspection stopped mailing finalized permits in 2008. This saves money on mailing costs. In 2009, we began scanning in permits and emailing to residents/contractors to expedite permit receipt. This also creates a back-up digital file for the process.

We are currently reviewing the newly released 2010 RI State Building Code, which also includes new energy conservation standards.

In general, new construction is down with the economy. However, permits for the Walmart Supercenter generated more than \$80,000 in revenue for the town. The store is scheduled to be completed by fall 2011.

We use email for correspondence to reduce paper consumption. We adjust blinds to allow solar heat gain depending on sun and temperature.

Our office works closely with the **Zoning Board of Review**, chaired by Vincent Marcantonio, in processing applications for variances and special use permits.

Emergency Management

EMA Director: Peter Branconnier
nsema@cox.net
(401) 767-2206

The North Smithfield Emergency Management Agency (EMA) provides services for emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters. We partner primarily with the Police Department to handle traffic control.

The EMA has 20 active volunteer members. Nearly all are Red Cross certified in CPR and basic First Aid. Most have completed Community Emergency Response Team training. Many have completed other training, such as the use of gas masks and other devices.

Recent work: During FY2010 we participated in operating or helping out at five Points of Distribution for the H1N1 flu clinics. We went to the aid of Bellingham, MA and worked with their local Health Department in the operation of their H1N1 flu clinic.

The March 2010 flooding provided our group with experience to man road blocks, field questions from the town residents on emergency problems, coordinate town public safety efforts during the flooding, work with First Student on school transportation problems related to road flooding, and work with both federal and state EMAs on flood-related issues.

This year we have participated in smaller unanticipated events primarily to help the police department, including a large funeral in town and a major bicycle race. We also helped with participation in rerouting traffic due to limbs or other debris on road surfaces.

We participated in parking and traffic control for high school graduations, and for special town events such as the Great Pumpkin Festival. We have also participated in search and rescue.

We man a single community based shelter - North Smithfield High School - that is also serviced by fire and police. We also man an emergency operations center (EOC) that can be fixed or mobile. It can communicate with the shelter and with the RI EMA, Red Cross, and other community EMAs.

We have participated in RI EMA sponsored exercises simulating vehicular disasters, such as chemical spills. We have participated in several point-of-distribution practice exercises in preparation for dispensing medications to members of the community in the event of an actual medical emergency.

During the year we received grants through both Homeland Security and Emergency Management Planning for several projects. Homeland Security granted the police department \$21,680 for 800 mhz radios, while the town government received \$12,860 for radios for the town administrator, school superintendent, and public works director, plus an amplifier for the 800 MHz radio system.

RI EMA awarded us \$10,000 for an emergency response trailer. They also awarded a \$2,500 grant to purchase a used 2001 winch-equipped 4x4 ATV, and \$5,000 for a stipend for the part-time EMA director. The Rhode Island Foundation granted a \$1,100 match for a Res-Q trailer for use with our ATV.

The RI Department of Health granted us \$5,000 to pay Police, Fire and School workers during the H1N1 clinics.

There has been a slow but constant improvement in emergency communications within the organization. All members have cell phones with GMRS capability, and many keep their radios on to monitor the needs of the group. As long as there is power to the EMA repeater on Woonsocket Hill, this is an extremely effective way to get quick response.

We are currently working with the Red Cross to be part of an emergency member notification system that will contact EMA members using multiple communications routes. Approximately ten members are

radio amateurs and have shown their ability to use that medium for effective disaster communications.

We have also partnered with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service by providing a high altitude location for a digipeater for emergency digital communications. This facility uses our group's call sign, K1NSR, for its operation.

All members have both cell phones and home phone numbers. The EMA meets once each month to plan and organize. We also have a radio check-in on Sunday evenings.

Finance

Finance Director: Brian Silvia
bsilvia@nsmithfieldri.org
(401) 767-2200 x304

The Finance Director directs and coordinates the operations of various divisions of the Finance Department: Accounting, Accounts Payable, Tax Assessments, Human Resources, Information Systems, Payroll & Benefits, and Tax Collections.

The Finance Director also serves as Treasurer/Collector, Human Resource Director and Information Systems Administrator.

The primary responsibilities of the Finance Department include financial planning, procurement and investment of funds, collection of all taxes and fees, payroll and benefit administration, accounts payable, financial monitoring of the budget and maintaining comprehensive financial records.

Recent work: During the past fiscal year we placed our FY2009 audit on the Town

website, along with the Personnel Budget Supplement.

We placed the budget presentation on the Town website, along with the proposed and adopted budgets for FY2011.

Starting in July 2010, we are placing monthly expense and revenue reports for the town's general fund. All of these measures save paper, create easy access to pertinent information for all residents, and provide greater transparency in government.

The tax assessor has placed all bill payment information and previous tax assessments on line so that people can obtain information quickly.

Each call or inquiry is responded to personally by the Tax Assessor, Tax Collector and the Finance Office. Electricity has been reduced and the heating bill in both buildings is down.

Monthly copies of the expense and revenue report are provided to both the Town Council & Budget Committee.

Starting in FY2010, the Finance Office is providing a quarterly financial statement to the council & budget committee.

The format of nearly all the budget reports have been updated, which helped to further streamline the process, with more updates to come.

We work closely with the **Budget Committee**, chaired by John Zambarano. The five members are appointed by the Town Council, with each Town Council member appointing one.

The Committee is responsible for compiling the annual budget and delivering it to the Town Council and Town Clerk (for public review). The budget consists of funds

available and obligations pending. It looks at expected revenue and expenditures. The Budget Committee presents the budget to the Town Administrator and has the authority to modify estimates as needed.

Tax Assessor Chris Belair is responsible for the history, maintenance and storage of assessments as they relate to motor vehicles, parcels, buildings and business tangibles as required by state law.

We strive to provide easy and convenient access to all public records within our care and maintain an easy and accessible means of appeal to correct inaccurate assessments and information.

We have focused on updating our database and correcting many discrepancies in the previous mapping of property, which had been on the records for years.

We have reviewed each chain of title card, matched up the square footage or acreage to give us a more accurate assessment of land and property in town. Our GIS consultant and the Planning Department have worked together to design new integrated plat and zoning maps.

Our OPAL Data system had been underutilized. Consultation with that company and other municipalities, as well as accurate database building, has resulted in a web link that provides all tax bill records for the past 10 years.

Revaluations take place by state law. The Tax Assessors office has identified and consolidated data from 1973, 1983, 1993, 2003, 2006 and 2009 in that office. This allows for more efficient review of past revaluations in one place.

Permits are now in a computerized system. Each permit is now corresponding to the field card for the property, so an individual

or potential buyer can see the historical data on that property without having to do extensive research.

We are also in the process of placing all property deeds online, allowing property owners to determine the deed that belongs to their parcel. Town Administrator Paulette Hamilton noted that “These upgrades and revisions to our existing system are progressively bringing our database to a level of accuracy that had not been seen in years. I applaud the efforts of our Tax Assessor, as she single-handedly used her professional oversight to update our town records and maps.”

The Tax Assessor works closely with the **Assessor’s Board of Review**, which is comprised of three Town residents appointed by the Town Council for a term of three years. The board reviews appeals of property owners related to the assessed valuation of their property as determined by the market and the oversight of the Tax Assessor and revaluation company. If it is determined that a property value was incorrectly assessed, the Board has the authority to order a correction.

Assistant Tax Collector MJ Perry’s office is located at 575 Smithfield Road in the Municipal Building. This department is responsible for the collection of all town taxes including tangible, motor vehicle, and sewer as well as the water billing and collection. Please contact them at 767-2200 x511.

In the tax collector's office we have opened wider channels of communication and dialogue with the residents, offering them greater opportunity to understand the tax process and have their questions answered. We are doing more to educate residents in the multiple ways they can make payments; for example in person, by local mail, mail to lock-box in Boston, drop-box

after hours, as well as e-check and credit card on-line.

We make every effort to make tax payment methods as convenient as possible while maintaining a pleasant and informative environment to help with any additional tax information questions. We have also worked with residents to help them budget their payments. As a result, we have avoided sending properties to tax sale, while also collecting more back taxes.

The tax collection department works closely with the Building Department, Sewer Department and the Town Clerk’s Office to verify that all taxes are current before a permit or business registration will be issued.

The tax collection department also works with the state Department of Motor Vehicle placing and removing registration and license blocks until taxes are current.

Fire and Rescue

Fire Chief: Joel Jillson
jillson@nsfd.necoxmail.com
(401) 762-1135

North Smithfield Fire & Rescue Service, Inc. is a combination of methods, materials, physical assets and human resources strategically positioned to respond against the threat of fire, medical, hazardous materials, and all other emergency needs of the Town of North Smithfield and neighboring communities, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Our motto is “Save and Protect.”

History: On January 1, 2002, the North Smithfield Fire & Rescue Service Inc. came into being after a tryingly complex three-year merger of the now defunct North

Smithfield and Primrose Volunteer Fire Departments.

Presently we are a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation overseen by a seven-member civilian Board of Directors who contract annually with the Town of North Smithfield to provide fire prevention, inspection, code enforcement, plan review, and open burning oversight; fire suppression and mitigation; “Basic and Advanced Life Support” medical services, and Hazardous Material inspection and response mitigation. Integral to our system is a state of the art, computer-generated 24-hour-a-day fire alarm receipt and dispatch service.

Composition: Currently, we operate two fire stations, Station #1, 675 St. Paul Street and Headquarters Station #2, 1470 Providence Pike.

They are manned around the clock by 21 paid professionals, 20 of which are members of the International Association of Firefighters, Local #3984. They are fire and rescue technicians, cross trained at the highest level of license and certification.

NSFRS consists of: one Chief of Service, one Deputy Chief of Operations, one Fire Marshal, four Captains, four Lieutenants, and 10 Privates strategically positioned to provide the most skilled and efficient service response within our resource capability.

The Town of North Smithfield has ownership of all apparatus. The department maintains ownership of the land, buildings, and equipment. Thanks in part to the foresight of existing and previous administrations, along with a perpetuating sole source of funding from recurring third-party billing revenue, the Town has never had to expend tax dollars in a capital expenditure to upgrade their fleet during the tenure of our existence.

We currently run with two pumpers, one ladder truck, two water tankers, three rescues (one in reserve), one Hazardous Materials response vehicle, two inflatable boats for water-related emergencies, and three vehicles operated by the Chief, Deputy Chief and Fire Marshal, who remain on call 24/7.

Community services: Though emergency response remains our primary function, it is the department’s collective philosophy that rendering a host of wide ranging and diverse community services to our clients is equally important. Thankfully most citizens will never have the occasion to use our emergency service, but they very well may involve themselves in a host of other services we provide.

You may have cast a ballot at one of our station house polling places, used a station for a social or civic meeting, attended a Town board meeting or purchased a reflectorized address sign fabricated and sold at cost.

We cover leaking residential roofs during inclement weather, pump water from residential basements, run community-based CPR programs, provide fire and medical youth education, and serve as a host organization for court mandated community service hours.

NSFRS joined with the Town to receive a grant for energy conservation upgrades to their two fire stations.

We pledge to recommit ourselves to continue to plan, educate, train, and prepare to advance our skills in an attempt to provide the very best of fire and rescue service.

Though legally separate and autonomous, we act and feel every bit an integral entity of the Town of North Smithfield. Our doors

remain open to our citizens and we remain readily visible, accessible, and involved. If there are questions or concerns, feel free to contact the Chief directly at 762-1135.

Library

Library Director: Carol Brouwer
carolbrouwer06@yahoo.com
(401) 767-2780

The North Smithfield Public Library is a separate public service corporation with its own **Board of Trustees**. The Town pays 75% of the Library's operating costs; the state pays 25%. Virtually all recent capital expenditures have come from foundation grants.

Recent work: In FY10, North Smithfield Public Library was open 51 hours per week to serve the public. We experienced a seven percent increase in circulation and an 18 percent increase in traffic. The Library offered 200 programs with total attendance of 3,799.

The children's department continues to offer such quality programming as the Summer Reading Program, which allows youngsters to retain their reading skills while away from the classroom.

Our membership in Ocean State Libraries provides us with circulation, cataloging, statistical tracking, technological assistance when needed, network lines and Internet stations as well as numerous databases. We provided 18,568 items to other consortium members and received 10,407 requests for North Smithfield patrons

North Smithfield Public Library met all 54 standards required by the state Office of Libraries and Information Service, and the Town level-funded the library so that we could qualify for grant-in-aid.

Through the generosity of the Champlin Foundations, we were able to get new shingles for our roof. We joined with the Town to receive a grant for energy conservation upgrades to our building.

Library information and the Ocean State Libraries catalog are available at www.nsmmlibrary.org.

Planning

Town Planner: Robert Ericson, AICP
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(401) 767-2200 x312

The Planning Department guides development and growth throughout the Town based on state and local law and regulations for land use and planning.

The Planning Department reviews subdivisions and land development project proposals. We maintain the Comprehensive Community Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. We prepare the Community Development Block Grant application and a range of other grant applications for open space, energy conservation, historic preservation, and environmental restoration.

The Town Planner coordinates stormwater and floodplain management programs, US Census data, and state affordable housing data. We provide staff support to the Planning Board and other boards/commissions as needed.

Recent Work: The Planning Department has worked with developer Brian Bucci to make Dowling Village smarter and greener. Its low-impact stormwater management system will be more advanced than any retail village in New England.

The project will also have advanced weather and traffic monitoring with a focus on

energy conservation. That may well include a 1.8 MW wind turbine on conservation land behind the site to provide electricity to the retail stores.

We reviewed 17 land development and subdivision projects during the year. This includes Marshfield Commons, a 38-unit affordable townhouse village. After final plans are approved, we work with Public Works to monitor and inspect construction.

We have redesigned the office process to provide review of PDF files sent by email. That allows us to identify problems and discuss design solutions before the applicant submits multiple copies of paper plan sets.

We also manage a range of grant awards, including the following:

- * \$535,000 in grants from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation block Grant Program. Much of this is being used for energy efficiency improvements in municipal services buildings, including Fire and Rescue and the North Smithfield Library. The work is being done by Johnson Controls, Inc.

- * A \$174,000 grant from a federal program managed Department of Environmental Management is being used to create a new wetland along the Branch River to improve water quality from stormwater discharge in Branch Village. It will be constructed on land to be donated by Sam-Man Realty.

- * An \$80,000 grant from DEM to pay up to 90% acquisition costs for land near the library that includes the raceway dam.

- * A \$32,000 grant to research priority heritage landscapes in North Smithfield, Lincoln, Smithfield, Gloucester and Burrillville. Our consultants will make connections across the region and provide advice on methods for protecting the sites.

- * Smaller grants will help us collect wind/weather data on the highest hill, update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan, and develop an energy component for the Comprehensive Plan.

- * The Philip Silva Estate donated 69 acres of conservation land to the Town. The land abuts Route 146 near Greenville Rd intersection. This land will provide extraordinary value to the Town for Cherry Brook stormwater management.

- * Planning assistant Bobbi Moneghan worked with the Tax Assessor and the GIS consultant to design a new plat and zoning map set. Designing the maps in-house saved thousands of dollars and gives us better quality control.

We work closely with the **Planning Board**, chaired by Scott Gibbs, to provide plan review and recommendations. Under state law, the Planning Board has the responsibility of approving or denying almost all development proposals with the Town. The members also review all zoning ordinance amendments for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

We work with the **Conservation Commission**, chaired by Paul Soares. The members have reviewed and recommended proposed land donations. The commission also makes recommendations on natural resources to the Town Council, Planning Board and others.

We also work with the **Historic District Commisison**, chaired by Alison Peirce. This commission reviews and approves external construction projects within the Town's two historic districts. The HDC is leading the effort for a third district in Saltersville, the proposed site of a multi-site National Park that would include Slater Mill in Pawtucket and the Ashton mill village in Cumberland.

Police

Chief of Police: Steven E. Reynolds
sreynolds@nsmithfieldri.org
(401) 762-1212

A full-time Police Department was implemented in 1934. The North Smithfield Police Department currently has 21 sworn members and 7 civilian employees.

Composition: The department has multiple units. The *Uniform Patrol* is under the direction of Capt. Tom Lafleur, who oversees the Patrol Unit and Personnel. Patrol is made up of (3) eight- hour shifts.

Investigative Services is under the supervision of Capt Lafleur and Lt. Stephen Riccitelli. This Unit includes Prosecution and Adult/Juvenile Investigations. The *BCI Unit* is under the supervision of Lt. Tim Lafferty. It is responsible for processing and gathering evidence at a crime scene.

Accident Reconstruction is under the supervision of Sgt. William Merchant. This unit is responsible for all serious injury and fatal accident investigations.

The *Traffic Unit*, under the general supervision of Officer Greg Landry, is responsible for coordinating and organizing the overall traffic safety program for the Department.

The *K-9 Unit* under Officer Jared Salinaro is used to provide back-up patrol for efficient drug search capability, criminal and missing person tracking, and high profile police presence. Officer Salinaro was named Officer of the Year (2009) and received the "Chief's Award" as a result.

Under the general supervision of Capt. Lafleur, the *ATV Enforcement/Search and Rescue* unit is responsible for planning and

coordinating the special undercover operations, search and rescue efforts, and maintenance/repair record keeping as time permits.

In addition to line units, the department has support units for technical information management, grant writing, fleet management training, firearms, property/evidence and records.

Community Policing: Everyone in the Department has the responsibility to work with and within the community. Community policing includes visiting the Housing for the Elderly during all shifts. It also includes monitoring all parks, recreation facilities and businesses in North Smithfield. Officers gave community presentations during the year, including on DUI awareness to the High School and safety to elderly housing residents.

Recent work: Our activity report for the fiscal year included the following:

Calls for service:	10,500
Motor vehicle stops:	2,019
Incidents/complaints:	1,282
Arrests:	542
Citations/tickets:	2,032
Accidents investigated:	579
VIN checks:	146
Background checks:	155
Fingerprint checks:	155

During FY2010, non-traffic offenses rose by less than 5 percent. The largest category increase was in simple assault; the largest decrease was in vandalism. Arrests rose by 12 percent, and traffic accidents decreased by more than 10 percent.

The Department received more than \$70,000 in grants for emergency management radios, tasers, computers, bullet-proof vests, Municipal Court start-up, and support for

programs. We are working closely with the Municipal Court and Judge Aram Jarret, Jr.

The Fleet Management unit under Sgt. Merchant improved its methods for coordinating vehicle age with mileage driven. Hereafter, the Department will use cruiser detail receipts to fund replacement and/or rebuilding of vehicles.

Public Works

Public Works Director: Raymond J. Pendergast Jr.
rpendergast@nsmithfieldri.org
(401) 762-0541 x341

The Department of Public Works maintains existing facilities, including roadways, drainage systems, bridges, culverts and town parks. The staff of the Public Works Department works closely with other divisions such as Parks and Recreation, Water and Sewer Department, and the Police Department in order to best maintain our Town.

This Department provides the following services: sidewalk construction/repair, roadway reconstruction/ paving, street sweeping, snow plowing/sanding, drainage maintenance/repair, pothole repair, brush cutting and animal control.

Recent work: The Public Works Department has made a concerted effort to maintain services despite reductions in staffing and budget. The team worked with FEMA to get roads accessed and back into shape after the floods. We coordinated debris clean-up for residents for weeks after the flood, maintained the parks and fields in town, and addressed residents' needs as quickly as possible to provide a safe environment.

Our mechanic continues to find ways to keep old vehicles going. We have a history of replacing major components, including rusting cabs, and making timely purchases at a fraction of market value. These include a 1988 aerial bucket truck that looks like new after significant rebuilding, including painting at the ACI.

We work closely with the **Parks and Recreation Commission**, appointed by the Town Administrator and approved by the Town Council. This commission is responsible for the operation and management of public parks and other recreational properties and equipment within the town, except those under the jurisdiction of the school department.

Recycling provides solid evidence that North Smithfield has gone green in important areas. These include implementation of a new Waste Not program in November 2009, achievement of the best recycling rate yet (31.8% vs 27.8% in the previous year), and reduction of solid waste tipping costs by \$15,000 from the previous year.

Residents are also diverting more and more items out of the trash stream. The diversion rate for FY2010 was 37.8 percent.

We held the first "Green Business" competition this year, with Brigido's Fresh Market winning first place and six others receiving honorable mentions. More town businesses are contacting us for information on ways to go green.

The **Water and Sewer** Departments are operated and managed through an enterprise fund. The Water Department is licensed by RI Department of Health, PWS #1615614, to operate and manage the water system. It is also known as the Slatersville Public Supply.

Our water system services customers in Slatersville, Forestdale, parts of Great Road, Mendon Road and the Industrial Park area. Water is supplied and purchased from the City of Woonsocket.

Our wastewater is sent via the wastewater collection system to the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Plant. Our work includes managing assessments and connections for new sewer phases.

Sewer Administrator Jim Wilcox has scanned sewer plans into PDF files and organized both the existing records and the office process.

We work closely with the **Sewer Commission**, chaired by Shawn Kane. The commission consists of five members appointed by the Town Council for five-year terms. The commission is responsible for construction, alteration, repair, maintenance and operation of North Smithfield sewer systems.

School Department

Superintendent of Schools: Stephen F. Lindberg
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(401) 769-5492 x2205

It is our belief that *your* schools are one of *your* most important “assets” in *your* community. One of the most significant factors attracting people and business to a community is the quality of the local school system.

We believe your investment in education is an investment in future “taxpayers” as well as economic growth that will have an impact on our future as a society and on your future financial security.

We also believe the community is receiving a tremendous “value” for the dollars expended (next to last in per pupil spending in the state) in support of education in North Smithfield. Community use of school facilities is astounding (use of facility analysis report can be found on our website) as well as the outreach, as far as the number of attendees at events within our schools, which is literally in the hundreds when you total the significant community programs and events we host.

Also, we would like to thank so many of the community volunteers that have significantly contributed to our progress and success - just to name a few; Capital Improvement Advisory Group, Facility Use Advisory Group, PTO, and school related “booster” organizations, especially the Northmen Athletic Club and the newly formed North Smithfield Education Fund.

We appreciate being included in the *Annual Report* and realize that space limits the information we can share with you, so we encourage you to visit our website for more information on our accomplishments. There you will find information on a 12-district comparison, enrollment and class size, past reductions, per pupil cost of education and more.

Accomplishments: The accomplishments of our students, both academically and extra-curricular, continue to be numerous and significant.

We have more than 50 extra-curricular organizations with more than 65 percent participation, as well as numerous programs that enhance learning through various clubs and teams that participate in state and national competitions.

Our students have been recognized consistently throughout the years for academic and extra-curricular activities.

These include statewide and national recognition for our music and chorus programs, *We the People* representing the state, community service, a girls basketball championship, and contributions to many charities.

Strategic Plan: We have made significant progress towards achieving our strategic plan goals in curriculum and assessment and technology:

A **language arts** curriculum has been developed and is being implemented in kindergarten through grade five.

Teachers in grades six through twelve are in the process of developing curricula for English/language arts instruction.

* The adoption/implementation of a core reading series three years ago.

* The implementation of a quarterly reading assessment system.

All have been major factors in an increase in Reading NECAP scores at the elementary and middle school levels.

* Development and implementation of a **mathematics** curriculum in the elementary and middle schools.

* The implementation of a consistent assessment system in grades kindergarten through eight.

* Significant professional development for elementary teachers in mathematics instructional techniques.

* The adoption of a new text series in grades six through eight.

* A focused effort to improve mathematics instruction.

All have been major factors in the NECAP Mathematics scores increase over the last two years. It is anticipated that our new elementary mathematics program and curriculum development efforts at the high school will support continued improvements in this area.

During the 2009-2010 school year, the district has begun to address the area of **science**. Elementary, middle school and high school science teachers have received professional development in inquiry-based science instruction and the use of science notebooks. During the spring semester and throughout the 2010-2011 academic year, a hands-on science program will be phased in at the elementary level. This program, which replaces textbooks that were published in the 1980s, uses science kits and science inquiry to help students become actively involved in their learning.

Throughout the implementation process, teachers will be provided with professional development to ensure that the new program is implemented consistently within grade levels and across schools.

Technology: Advancements in technology have enabled teachers to enhance their students' educational experiences. Interactive white boards, multimedia tools, and student response devices obtained through competitive grants and the Town's Capital Budget are available and in constant use in all buildings. Additional laptop carts and classroom computers have given our students access to local and online resources. With over 1000 computer devices in the district, we have achieved a 3:1 student to computer ratio, well exceeding the local and national standard. Cisco donations from Bryant University have allowed our school district to offer wireless access to all constituents.

The continued implementation of Infinite Campus (IC), a student information system, has allowed our district to grow.

During the past year we revamped our Registration/Enrollment process (including all forms) to be consistent across the district. This streamlined process allows secretaries time savings and consistent data within IC.

We have linked IC with AlertNow to not only facilitate emergency and event reminders, but also to conduct our daily attendance calls automatically - thus saving hundreds of secretarial hours by eliminating the need to call parents in response to their student's absence.

We have also incorporated all HS/MS teachers into utilizing the IC powerful electronic grade book. This consistent method of tracking grades gives instantaneous current information to guidance staff and administrators on how any particular student is performing on any given school day.

Finally, the opening of the Parent Portal will ultimately enhance our communications with parents. For the first time in our district, parents will have access to up-to-date school notices/messages, attendance, health records, and grades.

The adoption of IC, once fully implemented, will result in easy access to data that can be used by district staff to identify weak instructional areas and to develop strategies to address these areas of concern.

We have also revamped our website. The process has taken our Web site, which had not been redesigned in six years, into the 21st century by eliminating the need for a webmaster. Instead, we have a dynamic site where personnel can update their portions of the site on a regular basis. Websites cost some districts thousands of dollars to

support every year; ours costs us very little to start up and almost nothing for support.

Instruction: Realizing that instruction is the key to student success, the district has taken steps to improve upon the high-quality instructional practices already in place in our classrooms.

Our special education program has been reorganized to enable special educators to provide more focused, direct instruction to their students while still allowing opportunities for special education students to be integrated in regular education classes.

In addition, two groups of teachers have been trained in a cadre of instructional techniques proven to support student achievement.

Four high school teachers have been trained in the STEPS program which helps content area teachers infuse reading and writing skills into their instruction. The four trained teachers have trained the entire high school staff in the use of these techniques which are being implemented in all classes.

A second group of teachers representing all grade levels have been trained in Classroom Instruction That Works (CITW), a comprehensive set of teaching strategies that have been found to be effective in increasing the academic achievement of all students at all grade levels. Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, the teachers who have been trained will begin training their colleagues in the use of these strategies. All North Smithfield students will benefit from consistent, predictable instructional strategies throughout their educational careers.

During the past year it has been wonderful to read about the significant improvement in the Middle School NECAP test scores. These scores are a result of "cumulative

work” over the last three years by our teaching and support staff specifically in the areas of English and Math curriculum development and instruction K-8. These scores are also a direct result of the fact that we opened a Middle School 24 months ago, resulting in substantially improved middle school programming for our 6-7-8 graders.

Although the elementary NECAP scores are improving, the High School NECAP scores are not where we want or need them to be. We are simply not meeting our expectations. To a large degree, we have not aligned the RI state grade span expectations to our student expectations, core curriculum, and assessments across all disciplines. The reductions in the budgets affect available funds to accomplish or make substantial progress on these tasks.

The Commissioner of Education has cited the North Smithfield High School Diploma System for having “significant gaps that must be addressed in order to progress towards meeting the 2012 criteria” that will allow us to issue state-approved diplomas. This approval is also connected to the above tasks. The reductions in the budgets affect available funds to accomplish or make substantial progress on these tasks [e.g., the lack of any PBGR support, common planning time, etc.]

Facilities: This past year we addressed substantial physical plant issues at the high school and NSES as well as addressing the organization of the department.

After two years of work, we were supported by the School Committee and Town Council to move forward with implementation of an initiative called “Performance Based Contracting.” After a comprehensive energy audit and review of proposed facility energy conservation improvements, we began work that will save the district hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy costs over the

coming years. More information on this initiative and others within facilities can also be found on our web site.

Fiscal Consciousness: The school department budget was “level-funded” for FY2009-10 (\$4.00 increase) and was substantially reduced for this coming year, which necessitated drastic reductions. You should know that your school district has initiated and accomplished a significant number of cost saving measures over the last several years. A few examples of what we have achieved are:

- * Health Care benefit program management that has resulted in over \$500,000 savings with continued annual benefit cost savings going forward.
- * Long-term contract for electricity use and an outstanding contract for propane, both of which have saved the district thousands of dollars.
- * Research and negotiations regarding the purchase of heating oil.
- * Intensive review and restructuring of bus routes and stops moving to a “neighborhood” or plat bus stop system.
- * Collaborative purchasing of school, office, and custodial supplies.
- * Purchase of diesel fuel for school buses, saving on taxes as well as the “up charge” by a contractor.
- * Collaboration with Smithfield on a student information system, saving the district between \$20,000 and \$30,000.
- * District technology leadership that has resulted in the most cost-efficient energy use methods for system configurations of computer hardware.

- * In-district development of special education programs.
- * A revised/upgraded phone system that has produced immediate and substantial savings.
- * Implementation of a revised use of facilities policy and regulations that should allow some degree of cost recovery.
- * Implementation of an energy management system for the new middle school.

Going forward, a few examples of initiatives this year have been:

- * The formation of the Northwest School District Consortium – North Smithfield, Smithfield, Burrillville and Lincoln – for the purposes of collaborative bidding as well as collaboration/sharing of goods and services between all four districts in the area of facilities, curriculum, business department, and technology.
- * A school buildings task force initiative has been approved by the Town Council to study options regarding Halliwell School and possible reconfiguration.

We believe that all of these efforts benefit the entire community and not just the school community. Quality of education adds value to homes and other properties.

Communications: We invite you to visit our website and review the various pages in use and development throughout the year especially administrative reports that illustrate how the district’s work in curriculum, instruction, and professional development has evolved over time.

We are in the process of re-evaluating how best to communicate with all of our “constituents” and customers, which will result in an effort to reach more people more often.

We work closely with the **School Committee**, chaired by Robert Lafleur, to develop an annual budget, negotiate contracts, and develop educational policies. Individual members also meet with special-purpose committees such as the Capital Investment Advisory Group.

Town Administration

Town Administrator: Paulette Hamilton
pahamilton@nsmithfieldri.org
 (401) 767-2200 x301

The Town Administrator serves as chief executive officer for the Town. Duties include municipal contract negotiations, serving as Director of Public Safety, developing the annual budget, managing multi-departmental projects, and working with our legislative representatives at the town, state and federal level.

With the development of an integrated professional Finance Department, we have overseen one of the most challenging budget cycles in the Town’s history and emerged with no deficit for the second year in a row.

During FY2009-10, we received legislative approval for a Town Municipal Court, as well as a Redevelopment Agency that will serve as an economic arm for future development.

We have improved recycling so that our town now has the 4th highest rate in the state. We continue to provide more energy efficiencies in town and school buildings through energy grants and cost-saving measures. Our streets received resurfacing funds through a federal grant, and our bond rating is sound and stable.

I would like to thank the entire team of professionals in each department for their dedication to the goal of improving and

serving our town. They are the ones who make things happen.

The Town Administrator works closely with the **Town Council** members and President David Lovett. As the legislative members of town government, they pass ordinances, grant a range of licenses, approve contracts, and appoint the Town Solicitor.

Together we work with Town Solicitor Rick Nadeau, who provides timely legal advice and manages the litigation we inherited.

The Town Administrator and the Finance Director work closely with the **Personnel Board**, which has the authority to create job classifications, develop personnel policies, make salary recommendations, and participate in interviews for Town job applicants.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk: Debra A. Todd
dtodd@nsmithfieldri.org
(401) 767-2200 x326

The Town Clerk's Office is located at 575 Smithfield Road in the Municipal Office Building shared with the Police Department.

The Town Clerk's department is responsible for seven major categories:

Board of Canvassers
Boards, Commissions and Committees
Land Evidence Records
Licenses and Permits
Probate Court
Town Council Meetings
Agendas and Minutes
Vital Records including marriage licenses

This office is responsible for the maintenance, indexing and storage of all of these records as required by State Law.

Recent work: We have worked in several ways to provide better services with lesser resources as follows:

- * Contributed to reducing expenditures within the town by lowering the heat in the winter, turning off lights, and purchasing fewer supplies.
- * Assisted Tax Collection office when they were short-handed.
- * Began publishing each town council agenda on the Town website.
- * Published Charter and Ordinances on our web site, for easy review and transparency.
- * Recommended that the Town Council approve a waiver of recording fees for those residents impacted by the March flooding.
- * Installed a software program for probate files that will enable us to scan in the documents for historical preservation

Recording Clerk Connie Klockars continues to scan land evidence records into the computer, saving paper costs for the Town, making information available digitally, and providing back-up files for long-term security

We work closely with the **Board of Canvassers**, a bipartisan canvassing authority elected by the Town Council as provided by the constitution and laws of the state. The Board is responsible for ensuring fair elections, beginning with review of candidate petitions with required signatures.