Teens

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sleeves.

Weixel found this year's trip to be easier her second time around. She expressed pleasure in seeing families living in the homes she helped build in the area the previous year. Weixel helped teachers with the new volunteers, and offered advice when needed. "Some people did a lot of joking," she admitted. A few of the young volunteers showed little care about the quality of their work in the beginning, and refused to fix mistakes they made, she said. They protested that the house was not for them and they didn't care.

"That's the whole reason why we're here," Weixel remembered telling the young helpers. She reminded the workers about the motto of Rocky Hill School, "Know thyself." With encouragement, the attitudes got better as the week progressed, she added.

The goodwill gesture of the teenagers involved more than just a week off from school for the experience. Preparation started months in advance. The school contributed to their expenses, but the students put many hours into fund-raising as well. They sold snacks at school and sports events to raise money, and asked various organizations for contributions, Weixel said.

The first group of Rocky Hill students to help the Habitat movement participated two years ago. Weixel heard feedback from students that went on the initial trip, and knew then she wanted to participate as soon as she was old enough. "I really enjoy helping people," she said.

While they visited and worked in Hattiesburg, the Rocky Hill students realized they were the only high school students participating in the call for help. Other groups of benevolent ambassadors came from colleges and universities around the country.

When asked to reveal any problems or obstacles they experienced during the week, the volunteers shrugged. "We had great weather and no problems," Twombly said. "Except for the Farmers' Market we visited. It was deep-fried everything."

The two islanders worked hard, but agreed the experience was rewarding. They learned how to build a house, and experienced gratitude from the homeowners. Weixel wrote about her experience in essays for college applications.

Twombly plans to draw on the experience for a summer job in construction. A smile spread across his face as Twombly reflected on the week down south. "I've got the feeling that we did a lot," he said. "It was smooth sailing."

Budget

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Keiser said. "The cost for North Main Road alone is over $1 million."

Keiser estimated that approximately 20 percent of the roads will still fall into the fair to poor category after the allocation is spent. "We have to prioritize based on the worst cases first," he said.

Police department

A proposed $400,000 for improvements to the police station was added to the discussion in the capital spending category. "We currently have five sergeants sharing one tiny office and the detective's office was intended to be an interview room. It is no bigger than a closet," Keiser said.

The increase in the amount of equipment officers are required to carry, as well as the addition of female officers necessitate improvements to the current locker room facilities.

The total expansion would amount to an added 600 sq. ft. of space.

"Of the total cost, $100,000 is for the HVAC system. It never really worked properly and now it has reached the end of its life expectancy," Keiser said.

Councilman Robert Sutton asked if the department staffing numbers were expected to hold steady at 19 personnel to allow the expansion to be sufficient.

"Given the factors that do not allow for much expansion on the island, I do not believe our density is going to dictate an increased need," Keiser said.

Discussion on staffing numbers led into an analysis of police overtime and the possibility of a centralized dispatch for police, fire and EMS.

Keiser suggested a budget of $150,000 for police overtime, approximately $58,000 less than last year's expenditure.

Sutton questioned why, with the increased number of officers and dispatchers, so much overtime was necessary.

"It seems to me that if we increased the size of the police force, we should have less need for overtime," he said.

Keiser explained that some overtime was always going to be necessary because of the nature of the small force.

"For instance, we had three new recruits who could not fill shifts alone. So other officers had to fill in those shifts. There are also times when someone is sick or on vacation and an officer is filling in for them," Keiser said. "But, the cost of overtime is still less than if we hired people to fill in for those instances. We would not have enough for them to do when the staff is at full capacity and if we did, we would also have to figure in the added expense of benefits and retirement."

He pointed out that one way the town has saved in overtime costs is through the hiring of civilian dispatchers. "We really have not seen the full cost saving from that because the new contract just took effect on Jan. 1, but that accounts for a lot of the budget decrease in overtime," he said.

"Why don't we have one dispatch center for fire and police?" Councilor Barbara Szepatowski asked. "The second and third shifts handle the calls in one place. It doesn't make sense to break it into three during the day when it works on the other two shifts."

Fire Chief Jim Bryer said he has looked at the possibility and feels it would be a benefit. Both the fire and police departments need equipment upgrades, but having to upgrade only one system may not mean a significant savings, only a streamlined process.

"In anticipation of combining the dispatch for those departments, when we negotiated the new union contract we had the title changed from police dispatcher to public safety dispatcher," Keiser said.

Szepatowski also advocated the installation of a caller ID system at the police station.

"A lot of people call the police department directly instead of 911, and right now we have no way of knowing where those calls are coming from," she said.

Council President Julio DiGiando continued the workshop toMonday, April 7, at 7 p.m. because of the late hour. The workshop will continue with a discussion of municipal salaries.

Coyotes

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have good coyotes, you want to keep them. Bad coyotes almost always end up being destroyed, but not before they visit schoolyards during the day or eat several small pets."

She added that, "Since the Conservation Agency began the NBCS, we've followed 10 packs of coyotes on Aquidneck and Conanicut Islands, some good, some bad. Our GPS tracking collars reveal where each one goes every hour of every day."

Mitchell said that four packs of coyotes live on Conanicut Island, and that she has developed a 10-step plan designed to control the population, as well as their behavior. The plan includes recommending that municipalities develop ordinances for the proper disposal of road kill and other animal carcasses.

She said that 26 deer were killed on Jamestown roads in 2007 and there is no policy for disposal of those animals. At 150- to 200-pounds per animal, this is an abundant source of food for a coyote pack. Proper disposal of carcasses also applies to farmers. They need a disposal strategy for dead livestock. She said that ordinances are needed to control the feeding of feral cats, because coyotes will eat their food. "When the food is gone, the coyotes then turn to the cats," Mitchell said.

For more information about coyote management, Mitchell recommended visiting the Web site at www.theconservationagency.org/coyote.htm. She said the site gets as many as 40,000 hits a month, and has been one of their best educational tools.

"We started the education program with 15 schools," Mitchell said. "Now we have 35 schools involved, including the University of Rhode Island."

After she finished her presentation, the council was given an opportunity to ask questions. One of the questions raised by Councilman Robert Sutton was, "Is there a problem with rabies?" Mitchell said, "Yes. There's already been a case in Warwick."

Lori Gibson reported that last year the deer harvest amounted to 41 animals. She said that 24 were taken by archery and 17 by muzzle loader. She emphasized that those were the ones that were reported. She said they have no way of knowing how many were taken that were not reported.

Gibson said that the island currently supports a herd of approximately 472 animals. "That's about 40 per square mile, which is twice as many as we would like," she said. "We have to double the effort if we are going to be effective."

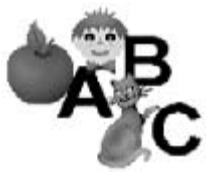
According to Gibson, the harvest has been about the same the last few years, and the herd has not diminished in size. "Fortunately, it's stayed about the same, and hasn't increased," she said.

To cull the herd, Gibson recommended increasing access to areas where the deer have established habitat, as well as extending the archery season at Beavertail. She also said that hunters should be encouraged to take antlerless deer. "Just eliminating the males is not going to reduce the size of the herd," she said.

Councilwoman Barbara Szepatowski said that efforts have been made to contact private property owners who have land that is large enough to be eligible for hunters. "But we need to do more than send out a flyer asking them to participate. We need to visit them one on one and assure them of the precautions that are taken to make the hunt safe," she said.

The council agreed, and Larry Mouradjian, associate director of DEM, who attended the meeting, said he would personally work with the council to better educate island residents about how hunting is handled.

Gibson also recommended increasing the acreage for hunting at Beavertail, as well as making more state lands available to hunters.



JAMESTOWN SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

KINDERGARTEN 2008 REGISTRATION
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2008
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008

4:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M.

2ND FLOOR HALLWAY OF MELROSE SCHOOL

Children must be five years old
ON OR BEFORE September 1, 2008
to enter Kindergarten

In order to register for Kindergarten you will need to bring the following **documentation with you** when registering:

1. **Proof of Residency (copy of utility bill or copy of lease with 2 signatures)**
2. **Birth Certificate**
3. **Current Immunization Record**

A RECENT PHYSICAL MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL NURSE BEFORE THE 1ST DAY OF KINDERGARTEN

INVITATION TO BID

Reseal all seams on EPDM roofing fields,
flashing and perimeter edge.

Specification sheets can be obtained at the Jamestown School Department Business Office at 76 Melrose Avenue between the hours of 8:00 a.m. –3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Bids should be submitted in sealed envelopes marked BID. Bids will be received until 11:00 a.m. on April 17, 2008, at the Jamestown School Department Business Office, 76 Melrose Avenue, Jamestown, RI 02835, at which time they will be opened publicly and read aloud in the Melrose Conference Room.

The Jamestown School Department reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive the informalities or irregularities in the bid procedure or bids.

Individuals with hearing impairment requesting interpreter services must notify the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at (401) 423-7020 seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the bid opening date.

Dr. Marcia Lukon
Superintendent of Schools
Jamestown School Department

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