

June 7, 2010

To the Honorable City Councilors

Regionalization of Municipal Services in Claremont

Frequently the City Council and City Manager are approached with some version of this question: "Can't the city save money or become more efficient by joining with other communities to provide services or share equipment?" Another phrase that is used in this context is the "regionalization of services". Claremont, like many other communities in New Hampshire, has found that given our common financial constraints, we must work together with our neighbors to become more efficient and effective in our service delivery.

The State of NH's Bureau of Purchase and Property's prime responsibility is to purchase goods and services for all state agencies and institutions unless they are specifically exempted by law. Doing business with the State is an opportunity to participate in providing economic, high quality and efficient services to state agencies, political sub-divisions and non-profit organizations. The Bureau of Purchase & Property maintains a list of existing, new, extended and amended contracts that are available to all State Agencies, Municipalities, Political sub-divisions, State Colleges and Universities. The Bureau is dedicated to providing fair and equitable opportunities for both state agencies and the vending public in accordance with the laws of the State of New Hampshire.

Some current examples of this regional approach to service delivery in Claremont include:

- A variety of mutual aid agreements exist between Claremont and our neighboring towns to provide police, fire and ambulance services when circumstances require more resources than an individual community can muster. A situation where this may arise is a large fire where emergency units from surrounding municipalities respond to assist in putting out the fire or providing back up.
- The City has entered into compacts with other communities to provide specialized services that a community could not economically support on its own. Some of these compacts include the Police Department's participation in the NH Attorney General's Drug Task Force to provide for team responses to drug activity. The police department also collaborates with Sullivan County and other communities in the following areas:
 - Sullivan County Alcohol Task Force;
 - Sullivan County Shared Radar Trailer;

- Cornish Police Department Dispatching Agreement;
 - Sullivan County Radio Tower Association and related grants;
 - Sullivan County Mobil Command Post; and
 - Sullivan County Special Operations Unit Equipment.
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- The Fire Department collaborates with Sullivan County to share resources such as a mobile command trailer, communications equipment and equipment to deal with man-made as well as natural disasters. In addition, they have partnered to bring health hazard planning and vaccines to the residents of Claremont.
 - Claremont participates in the Hazardous Waste Cleanup and Disposal events which provide disposal services for hazardous materials and waste.
 - Recognizing that disasters, both natural and man made, do not respect political boundaries, Claremont is a participant in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Advisory Council to provide for regional response planning to these types of incidents.
 - Similarly, the Fire Chief is a member of the State's Emergency Management Team which was created to address region wide health concerns such as a flu pandemic and emergency shelter
 - The Fire Chief is also an active member of the Granite State Airport Manager's Association. This network promotes all aspects of general aviation including state & federal legislation that provides airport improvement project funds.
 - Our community is an active member of the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission. Regional planning efforts recognize that what one city does in its community can have a significant impact on its neighbors particularly in the areas of traffic and the environment.
 - Our Public Works Director actively works with the NH Public Works Standards & Training Council and the NH T-Squared Program which develops and provides employee training in the public works arena. He is also the City's representative on the Transportation Advisory Committee for the UVLSRPC. He is also on the NH Highway Commissioner's Municipal Advisory Transportation Task Force.
 - The City collaborates with the School, Tolles Home, Claremont Development Authority and two other towns to purchase fuel and propane (297,000 gallons) at a reduced rate. This has saved the taxpayers many thousands of dollars over the past 10 years.

- We also benefit from reduced insurance rates (health, dental, workers compensation, unemployment and property/liability) by belonging to a risk pool with many other communities and school districts in the state.
- Parks & Recreation participate in a number of collaborative efforts including:
 - Bulk purchasing with the School District
 - Non-Resident Program Shared Services (in 2009 these generated \$32,000 in revenues)
 - Program collaboration with many youth organizations that work directly with the Department including NHIAA, Tiger Sharks, Claremont Youth Baseball/Softball Assoc, Claremont Youth Soccer, Family School Connections and the NH Community Technical College.
 - Corporate Sponsorships to help defray the cost of the programs as well as provide scholarships. Corporate sponsorships also includes large capital donations. Examples are the field restoration at Monadnock Park by Lowes. Capital pledge of \$3 million by Claremont Savings Bank to the N3C committee. The donation of the track and field facility and its equipment by an anonymous donor and several local individuals and businesses. The donation of the new scoreboard at Monadnock Park and Barnes Park by the Kiwanis Club and several local businesses. The completion of the new skateboard park.
 - Special Events done with the Chamber of Commerce in several community wide events which assists agencies involved with advertising, promotion and event support. The Claremont Fall Festival and Winterfest are two such programs.
 - Parks & Recreation also hosts many seasonal events that entertain our own community but also brings thousands of visitors to the City. 4th of July Celebration, Chili Cook-Off (Fall Festival), Hallowesta, Lollipop Carnival, Western NH Trail Run, 5K Road races, Winterfest, Twin State Valley Basketball Tournament, Egg Hunt, American Band Concerts and the Claremont Farmers Market.
 - School Collaboration – the athletic programs utilize many of the City's recreational facilities. The GCC indoor facilities, Monadnock, Barnes, Veteran's, Arrowhead and Moody Parks for athletic competitions in sports such as football, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, track & field, baseball, soccer and swimming. All these athletic competitions are hosted by the

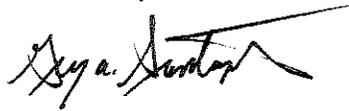
Department and our facilities. The athletic completion brings a tremendous amount of non-residents to our community as players and spectators.

- Parks & Recreation on many occasions will also use the school gyms and multi-purpose facilities. In particular, the gyms are used during our Basketball season for weekend practices and competitions. The cost to use the school facilities are waived due to the cost sharing and often waived facility uses of the parks.
- Non-profit agencies utilize and collaborate with the use of community public parks as well as for fundraising and community awareness events. The Claremont Farmers Market, Back to School Festival and many non-profit events bring the community together and attracts out of town visitors.

During the next few years one initiative that should be studied is regional emergency dispatching.

As the above examples have shown, the benefits of joining together with our fellow cities and towns to work cooperatively on matters of mutual concern far exceed any perceived drawbacks. Working together makes good sense, increases efficiencies and improves and expands collaboration. Thanks go to the departments who continue to be innovative with ways to help improve efficiencies and save money.

Sincerely Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Guy Santagate", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Guy Santagate