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things in the planning stages that would help. I'd like to see that addressed.

CM: Are there any areas of the town budgets that you'd like to see reduced or increased?

VM: I'd like to increase road and bridge repair. I'd like to reduce the solid waste budget, and I think it can be done.

CM: Waste disposal is a large chunk of our annual budget. What can be done to reduce our costs?

VM: Two things drive up our cost – the first is the number of tons we send to Penacook. The second is the tipping rate we get charged in Penacook. We're a member of the cooperative that built the plant in Penacook. The tipping rate we pay is determined by the profit that the plant makes by charging a higher rate to non-co-op towns and commercial haulers. The more trash that co-op towns bring, the less room there is for more profitable non-co-op trash, so the more we pay per ton.

So the answer to both tonnage and the rate we pay per ton is to get as much as we can out of the hopper. Paper weighs a lot and belongs in the big orange "rippable" bin. Glass bottles also weigh a lot. Getting them out of the hopper would save the town a lot of money.

The co-op will vote in May about single stream recycling (SSR), so we wouldn't have to sort our recyclables. It shouldn't cost us much at all to participate, because the co-op has set aside money to build the facility. Hopefully the ease of SSR would increase recycling in Andover and save us a bunch of money.

CM: How strongly should the town emphasize acquisition of conservation land, and how should that acquisition be paid for?

VM: I feel it's very important to be involved in the acquisition of conservation land. One of the things that makes Andover attractive is the open space. A lot of people hunt, fish, kayak, hike, or enjoy other outdoor activities. Conservation land sometimes saves money, because it doesn't require any town services like schools, roads, or emergency services.

The Hersey property is an excellent example of acquiring conservation land without it being on anyone's taxes. The Conservation Commission worked with the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust and other organizations to raise money through private donations and foundations. They were able to preserve the 267 acres of the Hersey Farm, which is a beautiful gateway into Andover.

CM: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

VM: I'd like to encourage people to be involved. There are lots of spaces opening up on boards. It's a wonderful way to participate in the community, and it can be very rewarding to be involved in the different boards and committees.

Howard Wilson

CM: Why did you decide to run for Selectman?

HW: I see several different problems, some of which originate with our benevolent state and federal government. We have other problems that impact the tax base. I'd like to try.

CM: What experience do you have that prepares you for this job?

HW: Two terms as Selectman and two terms on the Budget Committee, one as chair. I was also a Trustee of Trust Funds but resigned. I also worked at the Transfer Station.

CM: How would you define the job of Selectman?

HW: Father figure. Wise guy. Butt of

a lot of unseemly jokes. Unfortunately, the Selectmen have delegated so much to the Town Administrator.

CM: What do you think are the main powers the Selectmen have to get their job done?

HW: Their power derives from state law, backed up by policing powers if needed.

CM: How knowledgeable do you think the Selectmen need to be to manage the Road Agent?

HW: Very much. The roads are the major draw because otherwise we don't go anywhere.

CM: Would you recommend putting up more structures at the Transfer Station, such as a garage for the town grader or a shed for sand and salt?

HW: The Transfer Station is a better alternative than storing stuff outdoors. I would put up a building to store the grader and configure it so it could be added to, to house dump trucks if we go to a different system of choosing our Road Agent. There are mandates from the federal government about sand and salt storage and having a building to store them in so the salt won't leach into the water table. The Transfer Station has land area, but it's close to the water table. Location isn't the problem.

CM: Do you think the town should buy its own sand and gravel pits?

HW: If we bought land and put in a gravel pit, we don't need that. We need sand. We have gravel. If we're desperate for gravel, we could buy the adjacent land uphill. We need sand. We have three private pits in town at the moment. The only good sources of sand right now would be to subdivide some of the large lots along Route 11 and out onto the Plains because there's tons of sand for years there. Unfortunately, a lot of that is being put into housing.

CM: Since growth seems inevitable, how would you like to see the town grow?

HW: I would like to see a mix of residential and commercial, but it won't happen – there's too much "not in my back yard." Most of the good, buildable lots for business are already taken and would be too expensive for anyone to buy and develop. I don't see a lot of business coming into town unless we provide tax incentives, which I won't

agree to. When the new Master Plan comes up, I'll say "No" to it.

CM: Would you be for or against having more affordable housing in Andover?

HW: We have affordable housing. Some unsightly, some trailers. We don't have affordable land because we've restricted the number of building permits, and we have few parcels that could be divided and built on. If you put more people in town, you add to the tax base, but you put more kids in the school, which is a drain on the tax base.

CM: What problems facing Andover would you most like to see the Selectmen address over the next three years?

HW: Taxation is driven by want versus need and exacerbated by the federal government which prints money by the bale and reduces its value by that same bale down to zero. Until we can solve those three problems, we won't see any solution whatsoever.

CM: Are there any areas of the town budgets that you'd like to see reduced or increased?

HW: The Budget Committee does a very good job of questioning all the bodies that make budgets. Individual lines items could be cut here and there, but most people won't go along with that. The best the Board of Selectmen can do is to try to hold things down just a bit. That's all they can do. Too many of the drivers of the budget process are wants versus needs versus mandates imposed on us, all done with money that's worthless.

CM: Waste disposal is a large chunk of our annual budget. What can be done to reduce our costs?

HW: In addition to recycling more, there's one more component: the individuals who work at the Transfer Station. They don't educate. It would be worth putting two hefty policemen at the Transfer Station to rip open every bag and embarrass the hell out of people throwing glass and cardboard in particular into the hopper.

CM: How strongly should the town emphasize acquisition of conservation land, and how should that acquisition be paid for?

HW: Preserving for a possible future use is good, but it takes from the See Candidates on page 9

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