

TA Report 4.12.13

SOLAR PRODUCTION

Town Hall – 1st quarter 3,272.1, Jan. 1088.60, Feb. 851.60, Mar. 1331.90 kWhrs!

Fire Station 1st quarter 4,743.6, Jan. 1856.6, Feb. 1181.3, Mar. 1705.7 kWhrs!

Total 1st quarter for town hall and fire station is 8,015.7 kWhrs!



The 250th daffodils saw sleet and hail in front of Shutesbury town hall today.

Friday, April 12, 2013

ALL EYES ON THE STATE HOUSE

HOUSE LEVEL FUNDS LOCAL AID AND CHAPTER 70 EDUCATION AID TO CITIES AND TOWNS

Yes, it is true the House budget does increase education aid a little bit, \$25 per student per town. For Shutesbury that is \$3300. The Governor's budget increased chapter 70 by \$23,514 and local aid by \$9028. The Governor's budget also supported an increase in chapter 90 money for Shutesbury's town roads by \$70,000, to \$203,000 per year. The House budget does not do that.

The Governor's budget was full of vision for long term solutions for transportation, investments in early childhood education, and higher education while funding the state healthcare system, parks, open space, and broadband development.

The House budget raises revenues \$500 million but almost nothing goes to cities and towns. The House is terrified of raising taxes. Local politicians receive hate mail at the mention of possible tax increases. When the sales tax increased a few years back Massachusetts legislators received death threats. In the beginning of March I heard local legislators speak at a Mass Municipal Association legislative update in Whately. They spoke of not being included in the crafting of the Governor's budget. They were working hard to analyze it, dissect it, to fully understand how the revenue is raised and what the long-term impacts will be. They report 44 exemptions eliminated in the income tax package. The elimination of a college credit would be in conflict with a goal of greater access and affordability to education.

I understand criticism of the Governor's budget. But I do not understand a House budget that does nothing to address the greatest pressure on property tax (in our local towns), the funding of cities and towns local aid and education and regional transportation.

If our shared vision of the future is a dynamic economy supported by a Massachusetts transportation system that one-day rivals China and Europe, and a high quality education system preK through college, it will require long-term investment. We count on our legislators to work with the Governor to secure these investments. The disagreements on how the revenues need to be created and how we balance our priorities needs to be sorted out. We need a budget plan that secures ongoing increases in chapter 70 education funding and stop passing the buck to the property tax payer for financing of charter schools and school choice. The House budget addresses only a small part of the vision and much more work needs to be done.

The Council on Aging's **MED RIDE PROGRAM is up and running.**
Call 259-2123

The Med Ride Program is available to Shutesbury seniors age 55 and older who are unable to drive or have no means of transportation. Seniors needing rides will be matched with Shutesbury Council on aging volunteer drivers. Drivers will wait for you during your appointment unless requested or arranged otherwise. Riders must be totally ambulatory; no walkers or wheelchairs can be accommodated. If a person needs assistance or is hesitant about going alone, they may be accompanied by a friend, relative, aide or person of their choice. Council on Aging members David Dann and Linda Scott are administering the program. Call 259-2123 for information or with questions.

SENIOR POT LUCK LUNCHEON

(55 AND UP, Yes, I qualify and you may too!)

Marilyn set the table with spring green place mats, and white vases with colorful flowers. We had wonderful food and conversation. This week we dined on David's grilled vegis, Susan's apple bread cinnamon pudding, Gabe's chicken parmigiana, Ken's apple cake, Becky's 3-cheese lasagna, Linda's carrot and beet salad, Noreen's au gratin potatoes, Ellen's apple salad, Marilyn's baked beans and garlic bread. **Join us May 7, at noon.** Call Marilyn Tibbetts 259-1976, by Monday, 5/6/13. Give her your name and tell her what you are bringing.

TOWN MEETING IS MAY 4, 2013, SATURDAY at 9:00am at the Shutesbury Elementary School. Put it on your calendar. New England representative government at its best! Come learn about your town, participate and find a place to volunteer.

Becky Torres, Shutesbury Town Administrator, townadmin@shutesbury.org 259-1214