



# BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

*Greetings from all of us on the Board of Selectmen. Here's what's happening in your town government ...*

## FIRST SELECTMEN'S MESSAGE.

We are emerging from a very wet winter and spring will be taking hold again soon. Not too much snow thankfully, but we still had our fill of ice, storms and fallen trees. We must thank the town crew for their long hours plowing and sanding the 40 miles of Lyme's roads and clearing the debris from our roads at all hours of the day and night.

The town recently completed the purchase of the Johnston property, adding 250 acres to our protected open spaces. Trails are being designed now connecting to many other trails in the town's preserves along with the Land Trust's and Nature Conservancy's properties. A dedication of the Johnston Preserve will be held following the addition of a small parking area off Route 82 to allow access to this parcel which includes the highest point in Lyme. The town was fortunate to be able to make this purchase with the assistance of a \$870,000 grant from the state's Open Space Program. Thanks to Don Gerber and his group of helpers for marking the boundaries of this parcel after a long series of many walks over ever-changing terrain.

Since the last *Selectmen's Newsletter*, the town has also completed a number of smaller projects that we hope were noticed by the residents. A new website has been launched under Third Selectman John Kiker's leadership that strives to keep residents better aware of major town initiatives. The site allows you to sign up for alerts during emergencies and we hope you take advantage of this new communication method. The town has also posted new signs at the entries to town along all the roads; installed signs at all town-owned cemeteries; and posted reflector safety strips on all stop signs in town. Thanks to Second Selectman Parker Lord for installing all of the reflectors by hand. These additions are intended to show pride in our town and make the town as safe as possible.

During the upcoming year, please be prepared for some road repairs. The state will be paving the entire length of Route 156 in town and there may be delays that are unavoidable. The state also intends to pave Route 82 from Hadlyme Four Corners northbound to the

town line and beyond. Our town crew will also be out making necessary repairs and improvements to our road infrastructure. Please be careful driving around any work areas as these are our friends and neighbors who are working on our behalf.

Some of you may have noticed that the town was required to close one of its smaller bridges on Birch Mill Road due to its unsafe condition. This bridge, built in 1940, will be replaced as soon as we can complete the process needed for state and federal approvals, and our qualification for a 50% grant toward the cost of replacement.

We are entering the budget season and once again the town's finances are in very good shape. The Boards of Finance and Selectmen are working to manage spending while adequately providing for the town's needs. We will be bringing forward a budget for next year that should again have only a very modest spending increase that will strengthen the infrastructure of our town. Please plan to attend the annual town meeting in May to have a voice in the budget approval and the other items for consideration that will be on that agenda.

In closing, I want to share with you part of a 1947 speech from Judge William Marvin – who served for a long time as Lyme's Town Clerk – which encapsulates the reason I enjoy serving as your First Selectman. Upon his retirement, he stated the following:

“Lyme is one of the smaller but the finest town in Connecticut.

Connecticut is one of the smaller but the finest state in the Union.

Our Union is not the largest, but it is the finest nation on Earth.

Earth is one of the smaller, but we believe the finest planet in the Universe.

Therefore, Lyme is the finest little town in the Universe.

And what makes it so? Not just its beautiful scenery, not its low tax rate.

Its greatest asset is its people.”

Even 72 years later, Judge Marvin's sentiment is still true and captures why I love this town. —Steven Mattson

**PROPERTY REVALUATION.** You will see a change in your tax bills this July due to the physical property revaluation that has taken place in the last year. This process is required by state law to be done every 10 years with a statistical revaluation 5 years in between.

On average, property market values have fallen 6.7% over the last 5 years in town. Each of your property values should have gone down close to this amount - with some more and some less, based upon your own unique circumstances.

This doesn't mean your taxes will go down this same 6.7% however. The funds the town needs to maintain roads and do everything else we do has not changed, so the same property tax revenue is needed. This means the mil rate will have to change to keep our tax receipts equal.

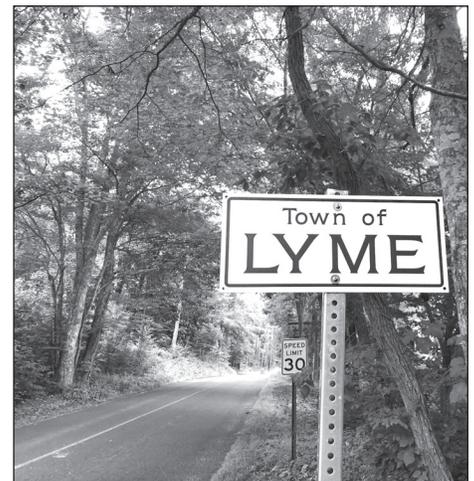
### EXAMPLE

Old market value of \$100,000 and a 70% assessment = taxable value of \$70,000

Old Mil rate of 18.6 mils (18.6/1000) = property tax of \$1,302

Current market value (6.7% lower) = \$93,300 and a 70% assessment = taxable value of \$65,310

To achieve the same property tax of \$1,302 now requires a mil rate of 19.55 mil





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**APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEER APARTMENTS.** We also would like to appeal to those of you with rental apartments to consider renting to one of our many volunteer firemen and emergency medical service volunteers who, as of yet, can't afford to buy a home in town, but serve us so well. There are many volunteers who need a place to live

in Lyme – especially if you are able to offer slightly below-market rental rates. If you have an affordable rental property to offer, please contact Town Clerk Linda Winzer at [townclerk@townlyme.org](mailto:townclerk@townlyme.org); she will share the information with the appropriate people at the Lyme Fire House and the Lyme Ambulance Association. And thank you.

**RETURN ADDRESS:**

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**Board of Selectmen:**

Steven Mattson, *First Selectman*  
Parker Lord, *Second Selectman*  
John Kiker, *Third Selectman*

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