

## **Student Government Day 2010**

### *Following a Selectman*

By James Teixeira

Student Government Day was a really memorable experience. It was an honor to be able to take part in Acushnet's sesquicentennial celebration by following our town's leaders. Following a Selectman, I learned much more about their job as to what they do and what types of decisions they make for the town.

My day started off with a meeting of the Selectmen (Jacob Bolarinho and I) and the Town Administrator (Zachary Boulds). We even got a meeting agenda book to get us even more into our job for the day. We discussed problems that were in the agenda and made decisions together called to the board by the Police and Fire Chief. This was a great way to actually get to know what a meeting is like for the Selectman.

At the meeting, I learned what decisions Selectmen make such as paying off town debt and making changes to the town. I also found out that problems or suggestions from residents of the town are discussed at these meetings as well. Guests come to speak to the Selectmen too, as we found out when we discussed an issue of a leak with the Fire Chief and the safety of children using bike helmets with the Police Chief. Selectmen also have input on decisions for the state as well such as the letter we read from Representative Koczera.

The letter stated the idea of establishing casinos in Massachusetts to provide financial aid to impacted communities. Jacob and I, as the Selectmen, read the letter and discussed our feelings on the issue. We made decisions such as these, too, and learned that the most important question referring to a decision is how much it will cost.

After the meeting was over, we took a tour of the town hall, meeting everyone working there. This really gave me a feel as to what the Selectmen are dealing with. I met everyone that the Selectmen work with at the town hall. As they spoke of what goes on around the town, I learned that a lot of what I thought about town decision-making was

wrong. In order to make most decisions you need consent or input from other people at the town hall. As we walked around meeting all of the different people working in different departments, I felt that everyone in the town hall almost worked together as a family. From my day of working as a Selectmen, I almost felt that it had shaped my career for the future. I always knew that I had an interest in being a part of government, but from now having this small experience, I am more into that decision than ever. I am extremely happy that I was able to take part in Student Government day.