



Town of Rockport, Maine

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Town Manager's Report & Update March 17, 2021

American Rescue Plan

As you may be aware, the President signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) on March 11, 2021. Part of this plan provides funding to municipalities for COVID-19 relief. The details are still being developed, but early estimates show that Rockport will be receiving approximately \$335,000. Municipalities, through their municipal legislative bodies, may choose to use ARP funds to respond to the coronavirus health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including by establishing programs to assist households, small businesses, and non-profits or to assist impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality. The ARP funds may also be used to replace lost municipal revenue and to make necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. The first payment is expected by June 11, 2021 with a second equal payment 12 months later.

Seasonal Road Posting

As of March 16th Town roads in Rockport have been posted against heavy loads to protect them as the frost leaves the ground. The length of the posting is unknown but based on weather conditions as usual.

Wastewater Lien Legislation (LD 256 – “An Act to Adjust Sewer and Wastewater Lien Fees”)

I am pleased to report that LD 256, the legislature submitted by Representative Doudera on our behalf was voted unanimously “Ought to Pass” from the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee. In addition to the increase in the lien fee for wastewater liens, the committee amended the bill to include an annual CPI increase going forward.

LD 94 “An Act To Allow Municipalities To Exempt Volunteer Firefighters from Paying Excise Tax on Their Vehicles Used To Respond to Fire Calls”

Rep. Doudera also sponsored this legislation on our behalf and the public hearing on this bill is scheduled for March 31st at 9:00 a.m. before the Taxation Committee. If anyone would like to provide written testimony or testify in person, please contact me for information on how to do so.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Study

The Wastewater Treatment Plant Study is progressing. The engineers focus this past week has been on compiling flows and loads (the basis of sizing the new facility) and targeting all the potential properties in Town where the facility could be located. Once that is settled, they will start estimating the cost of the new facility based on the treatment technology they select that would be appropriate for the size of the flows the facility will receive.

I expect a final presentation of the study to the Board in May which will allow enough time for the engineers to complete the report, review findings with staff, incorporate changes and have a final product to review with the Board.

Old Nutt Farm Road and Shibles Lane

The Town received a request from the neighborhood association on these two private roads for the Town to accept the roads as municipal roads and assume maintenance of them. Old Nutt Farm Road is located off Beech Hill Road and Shibles Lane is connected to Old Nutt Farm Road. The Municipal Road Acceptance Ordinance details the process that needs to be followed. Staff are working with the association representatives to have this item on the June Town Meeting warrant.

Northeast Mobile Health Services (NEMHS) Update

Chief Peasley and I have continued our monthly meetings with the NEMHS local supervisor, Jonathon Powers over the last several months. We both have been pleased with the increased performance of NEMHS since Mr. Powers has been the local supervisor in Rockport. The issues that we were experiencing have ceased, response times have been solid, staffing issues have been resolved and communication has increased. In our most recent meeting, Mr. Powers notified us that they will be having a “fly car” located in Rockport that will be able to quickly respond to calls and other situations where an ambulance may not be needed or to transport personnel to a scene. This is a welcome addition and one we fully support. In addition, a new ambulance has been ordered for the Rockport location and is expected to be in service this spring.

Library To Be Showcased

Camden Real Estate reached out to Library Director Ben Blackmon and wanted to do a 360-degree photo tour of the building to be used as part of their marketing the area to potential new residents. The photos were taken on March 17th. The Town will receive a link to the tour that we can use at no cost. Camden Real Estate just asked that we credit them for making the tour possible.

Once we receive the link, we will post it on the Town’s website, share it with the Library Foundation, post it on the Library’s website and Facebook page.

Cramer Park

The Public Works Department has trimmed trees and brush at Cramer Park over the last couple of weeks. This park has not had regular maintenance completed and has been overlooked by residents and visitors alike. Improvements to the park road and increased parking are next on the schedule as the weather conditions allow.