



Town of Rockport, Maine

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Town Manager's Report & Update September 4, 2019

Tax Commitment

Assessor Kerry Leichtman committed taxes on September 4th with a tax rate of \$17.05 per \$1,000 of valuation. This is up from FY19's \$16.08 tax rate, which is 6.03%. Please see Kerry's press release attached to this report for additional details.

Harbor Concert Series

The third and final concert at the Marine Park is scheduled for September 15th 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. Please see the memo attached from Harbormaster Abbie Leonard for additional information.

EMS

While trying to best determine what level of emergency medical service is expected by Rockport residents and investigating a variety of service delivery models that can best provide that desired level of service, it's important to point out that this work does not preclude the Town from working with its current EMS provider to strengthen the current EMS service delivery system. I have had a positive meeting with NEMHS representatives and have scheduled monthly meetings to be able to review any issues that may arise over the life of the current contract.

The current contract requires the Select Board to make “a reasonable effort to deliberate among themselves and also seek public opinion at its Select Board meetings during or about the month of January 2020, at which time there will be a public consideration of extension of this contract, and/or consideration and assessment of other alternatives, for single or multi-year agreements with NEMHS or other emergency medical service providers”. Therefore, the Town should be deciding in January about extending the contract with NEMHS, amending it, or seeking a different provider.

Making a significant change to any municipal service requires a great deal of research, analysis, planning and communication. Rockport is in the early stages of research and while my role is to provide the best, most efficient services to Rockport, we do not operate in a vacuum with EMS. We have three other communities which need to be part of the conversation. These conversations are ongoing and will be over the next several months while we continue to work with NEMHS.

Town Office Sidewalk

Rhino Services began the sidewalk reconstruction at the Town Office on Monday August 26th. As of September 5th, the old concrete sidewalk and base has been removed, underdrain and new base material has been added and compacted, and granite curbs have been set in place. Next will be the fill for the base of the concrete sidewalk.

Wastewater Extension Project

Woodard & Curran are still working on obtaining an easement for the second pump station location and are currently in discussions with the owners of the preferred location. It is expected that this will be finalized within a few weeks. The project will be put out to bid most likely in November with a spring 2020 construction start.

LED Streetlight Project

The consultant for this project, Realterm Energy, has completed their inventory of the existing streetlights throughout the town. The next step is to compare that inventory with the inventory provided by Central Maine Power and reconcile the two. After that, the Town will receive an initial evaluation of purchase price against equipment age and industry norms to determine whether lights need to be replaced with newer hardware. This will then come to the Select Board for discussion and further action.

Code Enforcement Issues

Over the last few weeks, several code enforcement issues have been brought to my attention by residents or Board members. I want to ensure the Board, and residents, that I take code issues seriously and they will be reviewed and addressed, if needed, by the code department. All complaints should be directed to Code Officer Scott Bickford and Planner Bill Najpauer, as I am sure you are aware. However, I can also be copied on these complaints so that I am aware of the issues.

Administrative Assistant for Code Enforcement and Assessing

After reviewing this vacant position and discussing it with the assessor, code officer, planner and finance director, I have decided to advertise for a temporary part-time employee to fill this position. I am planning on a 24-hour per week position and it will be temporary so that when I start working on the budget for FY21, I can review all the staffing levels to see what will best suit the support needs of the staff. I expect that efficiencies may be found. In addition, I am in discussions with Camden about potentially expanding Caitlin's time in the assessing office from 8 hours per week to 16 hours per week which will allow the assessing office to have an assessor in the office at least four days per week to better assist residents.

Dark Fiber Lease Agreements

I am working with the Town's attorney on creating a contract for leasing the Town's dark fiber that can be used as a template for any company that wishes to lease the fiber. I expect that this should be a completed draft in a couple of weeks.

Pascal Avenue Road Closure

Pascal Avenue will be closed to traffic by the MDOT on September 10th 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for drainage improvements/repair by the wall in hopes of alleviating the water issue.

Paving Projects

Paving will start by the September 9th on South Street and then continue onto Rockport Park Center, Mt. Pleasant Road (west end), Beech Hill and Church Street.