

## **Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 06/21/2011:**

**1. The FYI Folder:** FYI Folder which contains items that come in between the Town Council Meetings has the following this evening: NONE this meeting.

**2. Sludge Removal Project:** The sludge hauling continues at the Treatment Plant. This means that the Town will be closing on the final loan this summer and that means that a sewer rate increase will go into effect on July 1, 2011. Over the last 30 years, the Town made the choice to not put away funds for this project that is needed so that the Lagoon System can continue to function appropriately and not be clogged up. Therefore, the Town did not have a pay as you go philosophy so the only way to pay for the project is with our future bills. The bills that have been issued have a notice on them so that people will have several months to prepare for the rate increase. Citizens are able to make payments during the quarter and not wait for the bill if this is an easier way for people to pay. Effective July 1, 2011, the sewer rate will be \$7.25/1,000 gallons. Many people are aware of this due to the extensive newspaper coverage of the sludge removal project planning.

**3. 2010 Sewer Rates in the State of Maine:** The results of the Maine Rural Water Association's Sewer Rate survey was released this week. There were 125 Towns or Districts that funded their sewer systems with utility billings that responded including Pittsfield. There were a few towns that fund their sewer systems with taxation so I excluded them. Of the 125 Towns or Districts that issue sewer bills, 106 or 84.8% were higher than Pittsfield, then there was Pittsfield and 18 or 14.4% were lower than Pittsfield. The rates were converted to 8,000 cubic feet. Pittsfield's bill for this would have been \$284.24 per year. The Average State-wide rate is \$450.60 per year. So through 06/30/2011, we remain in the lowest 20% of sewer rates in the State of Maine.

**4. 2010 Water Rates in the State of Maine:** In March, I reported the results of the 2010 Maine Public Utilities Commission Water Rate Publication. There are 155 Water Districts/Departments including the Pittsfield Water Works. 23 Districts/Departments have water rates less than Pittsfield or 15%, then there is Pittsfield, then there are 131 Districts/Departments that have water rates higher than Pittsfield or 85%. This was after the Town's water rate increase was implemented after not having one for 10 years. While we were updating our rate, many other Districts/Departments went in also for rate increases. Therefore, we are still in the lowest percentage of water rates in the State of Maine.

So basically, for both water and sewer rates, 85% of the Districts/Towns in the State of Maine had rates higher than Pittsfield's water and sewer rates in 2010.

**5. Town Council Summer Meeting Schedule:** The Town Council Regular Meeting schedule for the Summer is scheduled as one meeting in both July & August as July 12, 2011 and August 16, 2011.

**6. Safety Enhancement Grants Awarded:** The Town of Pittsfield has been awarded two grants from the Maine Municipal Association for Safety Enhancements. The first is \$522.73 which is 2/3 of the cost of a Flammable Cabinet to store materials in for the Fire Station/Municipal Building. The second is \$1557.08 which is 2/3 of the cost of eyewash stations for departments and an emergency shower for the Fire Department.

Congratulations to Donnie Chute, Safety Coordinator, who wrote the grants.

**7. Town of Pittsfield 2011 Board/Committee Openings:** Positions expire every year on the Town's many boards and committees. The Town has over 20 boards and committees. Positions remaining available are the following: 1 Opening on the Board of Appeals; 2 openings of the Board of Assessment Review; 1 Opening on the Board of Ethics; 1 Opening on the Economic Development Team; 1 Opening on the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Committee; and 1 Opening for an Alternate member of the Planning Board.

**8. Pittsfield Earth Day 2011 Backyard Compost Bin Sale:** READ Announcement. We are still accepting orders.

**9. AARP Driver Safety Program:** READ Announcement.

**10. Trash To Treasure Re-Use Center:** The new Trash to Treasure Re-Use Center is open on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. The Grand Opening Ceremony held on Saturday, May 06, 2011 was great. A page has been set up in the Photo Gallery at [www.pittsfield.org](http://www.pittsfield.org). The Re-Use Center is in the former Veterans of Foreign Wars Building opposite the Transfer Station and Recycling Center. The facility is on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Those who have completed their yard sales and have items left over that they do not want to take back to their homes might consider donating the clothing to Pennywise and the other items to the Re-Use Center. The Town has a comprehensive list of items that can be donated at the facility available at the Town Office.

**11. Central Maine Power Company Installing New Meters:** CMP has sent a letter to advise that the company will be beginning work in our area shortly for the installation of new meters. CMP has contracted with VSI Meter Services to install the "Smart Meters". CMP along with Bernstein Shur Government Solutions has offered to be placed on a public meeting agenda to discuss the Smart Meter Project. A package of materials was in a prior FYI Folder. Is there any interest in having CMP attend an upcoming Council Meeting to make a presentation on the "Smart Meters" which will be installed here in the near future?

**14. LD 79 – Proposal to cut Municipal Excise Tax:** The newest proposal to cut municipal revenues is LD 79, to cut 5% of the Town's excise tax. This bill would reduce municipal revenues by \$10 million dollars statewide, being added to the \$42 million loss in Revenue Sharing for next year proposed by the Governor and Legislature. This is the latest in a line of bills looking to cut municipal revenues passes. If it passes, the Town would lose approximately \$25,905. Please note that this would be in addition to the State Revenue Sharing that the Town will lose in the next fiscal year. In 2010, the Town lost \$40,419 in SRS from 2009. In 2009 the Town lost \$167,230 in SRS from the prior year.

