

## **Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 12/03/2013:**

**1. The FYI Folder:** FYI Folder which contains items that come in between the Town Council Meetings has the following this evening: READ List.

**2. Somerset Avenue Mill and Fill Project:** The Town has received an official public notice that MDOT is planning to design and advertise the Somerset Avenue project in the Winter-Spring of 2013-2014 with construction scheduled for Spring-Summer of 2014. I will be meeting with a representative of the Heart of Pittsfield tomorrow evening to discuss traffic improvements for Somerset Avenue and traffic calming ideas that people have been collecting. MDOT has advised that the State would have a limited amount of funds for traffic improvements.

**3. Sebasticook Regional Land Trust Farm & Habit Ride:** The Town has been contacted by representatives of the Land Trust to start the collection of information for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Farm & Habitat Ride. This year, the group is going to check all schedules to try to plan the ride on a day that another significant bike ride is taking place. This will lead to more participants as many of the regular bicyclists were at a large biking event. As soon as the date is chosen, we will start to promote and publicize the bike ride and padding event.

**4. Tax Liens for 2011 Matured Monday, 12/02/2013:** The Town now owns three properties through the tax lien automatic foreclosure process. All other property owners paid off their 2011 taxes. The three properties acquired by the Town were formerly owned by James Bank – burned apartment building on Middle Street; formerly owned by Robert Hackley – lot off Estelle Street with demo debris on it after a house fire several years ago; and property formerly owned by the Heirs of Roscoe Sanborn, a house off Livingston Street in which one of the heirs lives. Due to liability and unkemptness, these properties should be put out to bid as soon as possible. The TAP Sale process will be put together for the next Council Meeting. One of the properties has a residence, therefore, we have several steps to complete and have offered a tax payment plan to no avail. Under the TAP Ordinance, the former owner does have the right to redeem the property that has been acquired by the Town and put out to sale by paying up all taxes, interest, and costs in full within a specific timeframe. We will proceed forward. We really emphasize to property owners that it is much easier to pay the 1 year's worth of taxes and keep ahead of the foreclosure process than to miss the date and end up having to pay up 3-4 years worth of taxes in order to obtain the deed back. This is very difficult to do and stressful so keeping ahead of the foreclosure process is really emphasized. At this point, we will proceed forward with a TAP sale for the Town Council's review.

**5. New Playground Equipment at Hathorn Park:** The Town has been receiving a lot of compliments about the new playground equipment at Hathorn Park. It is a very attractive area and will be highly used next Spring during Little League Games and during the summer. We purchased the equipment late in the season in the hopes of a good deal and it worked out really well with 4 pieces of equipment received rather than 1-2.

**6. Technology Petting Zoo:** READ Announcement

**7. Free Christmas Movie:** READ Announcement

**8. The Best Towns in Maine for Young Families:** The Mayor found a listing on the Internet of the "Best Towns in Maine for Young Families". Of the 15 towns identified in the State of Maine, Pittsfield was ranked 13<sup>th</sup>. The list is based upon: Does the Town have good public schools? Can you afford to live there? Is the Town growing and prospering?

**9. Grant Funding Programs and Projects:** The Grant Summary Report for 2003-2013 has been updated as of 10/31/2013. To date, the Town has received \$10,631,054 in grant funding through 113 grants. We have some pending activity and other projects on-going so the Town has a total of nearly \$12 million in grant activity since 2003.

