

## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Residential Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Disposal on Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 9:00 am – Noon. In conjunction with the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, & other communities, the Town of Pittsfield will host a Residential Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Event at the Pittsfield Recycling/Transfer Station located at 601 Peltoma Avenue. Pittsfield residents contact Recycling/Transfer Station at 487-3361 to pre-register. Non-residents who wish to participate must pre-register with the town they reside in. HHW includes old oil and latex based paint, gas, motor oil, pesticides, cleaners, pool chemicals, TVs, computers and other difficult to get rid of materials that could potentially harm people and pets. We will not be holding an annual unwanted prescription drug collection as the Town Office does have the great secure disposal box acquired through a grant from HealthySV (now known as Northern Lights) several years ago and HealthySV holds collection days. There is no reason for duplication.
2. Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> in the Pittsfield Municipal Parking Lot. Northern Lights (HealthySV) will be collecting E-waste items from 8:00 am until noon. Items to be collected include cellphones, computer towers, printers, televisions and monitors. The Pittsfield Police Department will be collecting unwanted or unused prescription drugs from 10 am until 2 pm.
3. The Husky Howl: Wheels and Coffee will take place on Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. This is a wheel show for the community to raise funds for JMG's Annual Giving Tree Charity. READ
3. The Pittsfield Community Trunk or Treat Event which was the long-standing highly anticipated Fire Department Halloween Party with the best doughboys in the world expanded last year to include additional partners - and has expanded further to have 3 locations this year: READ
4. The Waverly Street Bridge continues to be closed to through traffic as the State of Maine needed to work on the bridge.
5. The Town Council Chambers: Will be closed to meetings for Wednesday, October 23 and Thursday, October 24, 2019 as the new tiling will be installed along with the small area of carpet for the podium.
6. Digital Warrants: MMA has advised that the Town will not be able to have Councilors sign warrants digitally as the Legislature has continually turned down bills that would allow the Councilors and Selectmen to phone, dial, teleconference or utilize the computer to call in from a remote location and have their vote counted. So, a great idea, but still not legal yet.
7. Our 2020 Proposed State Valuation has arrived: The proposed valuation for Pittsfield is \$252,050,000 which is an increase of \$2,300,000 or .9%. Our 2019 valuation was \$249,750,000. An increase in the state valuation is what we want each year. This does not include Pittsfield Solar which was a massive increase of over \$20 million. If we had not captured that value, we would have had a large increase in our county and school assessments as well as a decrease in our state revenue sharing and educational subsidy that is reflected in the school assessment. When our next TIF opportunity arrives, we will review all of the scenarios to determine whether the value should be captured or not. One of our residents, Mr. Salley, who works for the State, is

quite knowledgeable in this area and has volunteered to assist. If there is a huge valuation change, it would need to be captured to avoid large changes that would affect the items listed, however, if the change is smaller, there are pros and cons to capturing all the value. This has been utilized as an economic development tool to attract businesses, which it has, and we need to look at the tax rate too.

8. TAP Notice: We had received a request to redeem taxes after the redemption period expired as well as all of the tax liens notices, tax notices and many other contacts. The Councilors were interested in doing this if it could legally be done. The Town Attorney advised that it could not be and that the prior owner needed to bid as all other parties would bid. The Town Council would then review all the bids and determine the “best use” for the property in accordance with the TAP Policy. There has been a lot of interest in the properties. Everyone should remember that yes, you can pick up a bargain and yes, anyone looking at a property needs to research this and understand that if he/she/it is the successful bidder, that a quit claim deed will be issued which means that the Town is quit claiming the interest that it has in the property. READ

9. Great News on the New Office Project at the Transfer Station. Our Transfer Station/Recycling Coordinator Don Chute stopped by the vendor chosen, Hill View Mini Barns. The unit is being built as we speak with an anticipated completion date of the end of the month. The price was much less than other vendors contacted. Updates will be provided so you will know when the unit will arrive and then we will need public notice just in case everything does not get done in the tiny window available. They will have two days to get the electrical and all controls changed over and everything hooked up.

10. Mil Rate Comparison of Pittsfield vs. Communities in the State of Maine: Councilors had asked for information regarding how the Town of Pittsfield’s tax rate matches up with other towns. While we always talk about how high our taxes are vs. other towns in the region and similar sized communities, we had not looked over the data for a few years. Many of us hear from the citizens about how our taxes are higher than other communities in the area, which is true, and how they do not want the taxes to increase. This has led to the Town having a lean budget and everything that goes along with that including having part-time department heads, relying on part-timers and community members work on items, lots of volunteers and committees and perhaps an overreliance on grants and special revenues. This was reported to the Town Council in September 2018. The prior data was from the State of Maine for 2016. *The Town of Pittsfield had the 58<sup>th</sup> highest tax rate in the State. Therefore, our tax rate was higher than 435 towns and plantations or higher than 88.2% of the plantations and towns.* This is why we have been told to hold the line over the years and have not added staff, built new buildings or had lots of capital expenditures beyond grants and special revenue. In the 2017 Municipal Valuation Return, the Town’s tax rate was the 83<sup>rd</sup> highest tax rate in the State so we went from being the 58<sup>th</sup> highest tax rate in the State to the 83<sup>rd</sup> so that was good.

11. Budget Calendar for 2020: READ. The meeting schedule was discussed.

12. The 2020-2021 Maine Department of Transportation Capital Plan includes the following: Safety and infrastructure improvements at the airport for design, permitting and construction of an 8 bay nested T-Hangar estimated at \$1,442,000; paving on Route #2, a lot of Bridge Rehabilitation on the I-95 overpasses; crack sealing at the Runway/Taxiway; and still includes the Main Street Rehabilitation at \$617,500.

13. Grant opportunities for the arts, recreation and possibly the skating rink are underway. Contact has been made regarding the possibilities for the skating rink.

14. Report on our largest grants:

CDBG for Innovative Specialties, LLC. at long last, we received the close out paperwork and have completed it, sending it to the Town Auditor to verify and then off to DECD. \$260,000 CDBG for Main Street, which we have successfully applied for an amendment as we are waiting for the MDOT Survey for the project, which was to arrive yesterday and we have asked for an update.

As soon as we can get the survey, CES, Inc. stated they would start immediately on the design, we will convene the CDBG Advisory Committee who were people who signed up from our other committees. We would tour the area, get ideas, set a timetable and then have a public session, etc. \$250,000

Northern Border Regional Commission: I have been working on this for several weeks and am now waiting for the Engineering component that we need to tie this out. The federal government has been very good about filing as it would have been ideal to have filed yesterday, however, we do not have the information needed from the engineer on the project. Up to \$250,000.