

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT FOR 04/03/2018:**

### **Town Manager's Report: Town Council Meeting of 04/03/2018:**

**1. Somerset County Budget Process:** The Town has been notified by Somerset County that the FY 2018-2019 Budget Process is moving along quickly with the public hearing on the proposed budget scheduled for Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 6:00 pm in the Superior Court Room, 41 Court Street, Skowhegan. This budget will cover the period of July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019. The Town's proposed assessment which would be due in November of 2018 would be \$584,718.92. This is an increase of \$3,699.55 or .6%. The proposed budget has been placed in the FYI Book in case you would like a copy.

**2. Recycling Program Handouts:** As the Town enters the higher cost requirements for waste disposal, we have created a new handout to encourage recycling. The Recycling Program waste disposal cost will be increasing from \$48.00/ton to \$62.00/ton. This is an increase of \$14.00/ton or 29.2%. The Town was able to obtain the \$62.00/ton cost by switching from the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) to the Crossroads Landfill in Norridgewock. We had been able to amend our agreement with the Landfill to add waste disposal. Other communities are paying over \$80.00/ton. It is imperative that we recycle more. The funds approved to be utilized from the Recycling Reserve are already saving the Town money. We have two of the old containers repaired so they can be utilized longer. We are now working on the glass crusher and finding that there are very few companies that sell this type of unit and the company with best unit for our facility for the best deal wants payment in advance. The Town never does this so we are working with the company to see if this requirement can be waived.

The new Recycling Program handouts are very popular. They have a brief history of the program, the issue at hand which is the cost increase, current savings from the program, the amount of recycling, recycling fun facts to engage people and the recycling tips for handling materials.

**3. Trash To Treasure Re-Use Center to re-open later in April 2018:** More information coming! The new Trash to Treasure Re-Use Center will open for the season on Saturday, April 21, 2018 if the ground is firm enough at the building and if not, then definitely on Saturday, April 28, 2018. The Re-Use Center is located in the former Veterans of Foreign Wars Building opposite the Transfer/ Recycling Center. The facility is open 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.

**4. Citizen Concern on Peltoma Avenue:** I forwarded a response to the citizen who contacted the Town Councilors and myself regarding Peltoma Avenue, explaining out the history of the paving, ownership of different sections of the road and the project that we would be looking at this summer to start to inventory the roads. A copy of that letter is in the FYI Folder.

**5. Maine Department of Transportation Paving and Bridge Milling:** The Town has

received notification that Lane Construction Corporation has been selected for light capital paving and bridge milling work in 18 communities including Pittsfield. The work will begin this summer. In addition to the I-95 bridge work, most of this work is bridge work such as the Eelwier Road and Snakeroot Road as well as culvert and drainage improvement on Route #100 toward Detroit. Waverly Road Bridge substructure rehabilitation was listed although we have not been contacted yet.

Good news for the Airport, as an 8-bay nested T-Hangar is listed for 2019/20 for \$797,220 which requires figuring out how to address the engineering/environmental work.

**6. Construction Zone on Snakeroot Road Bridge Rehabilitation:** The Town was contacted by MDOT, as we are all for projects in Town, to allow their vehicle to run over the legal weight limits. The Town has never approved this over the decades and especially now, the Public Works Foreman has said definitely not. Running really heavy weights over the Snakeroot Road would not be a good idea. I wanted to let you know that this request had come in as the State MDOT had come to the Town Council Meeting last Fall to update the Council on the project.

**7. Main Street Streetlights, Traffic Lights and Municipal Parking Lot Lights:** The Public Works Foreman continues to troubleshoot the major blowout of the lights. The conduit covers were exposed and the whole conduit was flooded with water. The Traffic Lights were the first priority and by separating this, these lights were fixed. They thought that the parking lot lights were fixed, however, when I attended the Theatre Committee Meeting last week, there were alas, no parking lot lights. One parking lot light is now on, however, the others will not come on so the Public Works Department is renting a lift to check out all of the photo cells in the parking lot lights that might have all blown out when the system went down. We are also going to fix the Industrial Park Sign lights at the same time and anything else we can think of that needs a lift. The lift was utilized today and the problem was not found so we have eliminated more items. The PW Foreman today believes that a neutral has blown.

The Main Street Streetlights are much more complex as the conduit boxes were unfrozen and cleaned out, however, the entire conduit has to be dried out so this will take time. The conduit is very small so we can not get a camera down it to see where there is a problem. Each streetlight will have to be examined until the problem is located. The electrical conduit has been in place since 1976. We only needed 1.5 more years until next summer/fall when the Main Street project was started.

**8. Management Plan while Public Works Foreman is away this Summer:** The Public Works Foreman will be away for a bit over 2 months this summer on personal business in the Philippines. While Steve Vance is away, Timmie McCarthy will be in charge of the Garage and regular work. Assistant Water/Sewer Superintendent Scott Noble and Transfer/Recycling Coordinator Don Chute will be in charge of all other business, working with the Town Manager. We will all be glad when Steve returns.

**9. Mosher Bridge and Sebasticook Street Culverts Project:** The Public Works Foreman has been able to review the large book of repair requirements for the bridge/culvert projects. I had put this on the agenda last year for approval to go out to bid once the bid documents were

approved. Steve has just reviewed and approved the bid documents. We have requested that the engineering firm get the project in gear so that it can be put out to bid and advertised. These projects need repair and are failing, but they are not in dangerous condition. Therefore, if repaired now while they are still in fair condition, the Town will come out ahead. The Mosher Bridge is on the Crawford Road. The Seabasticook double culverts are on Seabasticook Street. The bridge will have abutment work completed while the culverts will be lined. If the project is put out to bid now and bids are due in late Spring, then the project would realistically take place when the water levels are lower in July-August of this year if the bids come in within budget. If there are any funds remaining in the loan after the projects are completed, we can purchase some large culverts for highway projects for 2019.

**10. Paving Program & Major Road Repairs:** I had assisted John Dickson, former Highway Foreman, with the paving when we used to have paving every year (and at the time, we just did not realize what a luxury that really was). I am consolidating all of the information on exactly where the paving took place up the last few years when we have not been able to afford paving. This information will be very helpful for the Public Works Foreman when he goes out to evaluate each of the roads. We have purchased a road management system from the State Local Roads Program. The road information is inputted, the roads are evaluated and then calculations can be made specific to each road which determines its ranking and the cost to fix the road.

**11. Sidewalk Plow:** The Public Works Foreman has major repairs coming up for the two sidewalk plows so he will be in later this year for the purchase of a newer plow that can more properly address having 3 or more major storms over 12". With the last couple of winters especially the 2017-2018 strange winter, a larger sidewalk plow would definitely help. There were too many storms too close together that led to too much accumulation that froze and then the sidewalks could not be easily cleaned. Interestingly enough, the sidewalk plow cut through some areas that were higher and deeper but could not get through other areas where there was less snow. It may also have something to do with how the snow was plowed back in addition to the width of the road. But with these types of storms and the age of the sidewalk plows requiring hefty repairs, a new sidewalk plow is the answer.

**12. Theatre Fundraisers:**

More information will be available shortly. The Theatre Committee will be holding several fundraisers beginning in May through this Summer to supplement the operational revenue.

**13. Theatre Golden Ticket Sale:** Although Christmas is over with, we still have the Theatre Golden Tickets that can be a gift or even for yourself: Purchase a book of 10 Gift Certificates at \$55.00. Come and enjoy the Pittsfield Community Theatre!

**14. Date Night at the Theatre:**

WED: DATE NITE: 2 ADMISSIONS+ 2 MED FOUNTAIN DRINKS+ 1 LARGE POPCORN FOR \$18 + SENIORS \$14.

**15. Theatre Movie Line-Up:**

Mar. 23-29 BLACK PANTHER PG-13  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM

Mar. 30-Apr. 5 EARLY MAN PG  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM  
Matinee Wednesday at 10 AM also plays at 7:30 PM

Apr. 6-12 GAME NIGHT R  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM

Apr. 13-19 A WRINKLE IN TIME PG  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM  
Matinee Wednesday at 10 AM also plays at 10 AM

Apr. 20-26 TOMB RAIDER  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM

Apr 27-May 3 PACIFIC RIM UP RAISING PG-13  
Matinee Sunday at 2 PM

**16. Maine Venture Fund: A Match Made in Maine:** A common theme among growing Maine companies is the difficulty in finding, attracting, and hiring talented employees. Some companies resort to hiring out-of-state remote workers and have even opened offices in Boston and beyond. This is certainly a drag on Maine's economic growth, and a complex problem with no one solution. However, one program, aimed squarely at this problem is making a difference – the Innovate for Maine Fellows Program.

The program's goal is to match talented college students with Maine's growing companies for an internship of 400, 200, or 100 hours over the course of a summer. Companies are selected for the program based on their interest in innovation, a desire for scalable growth, and ability to provide fellows with a meaningful learning experience. Student interns must either be enrolled in a Maine-based college or be a Maine resident attending school outside of Maine. All selected fellows are expected to live in Maine and work on-site during the internship.

The program is designed to add no extra burden to the companies. The Foster Center for Student Innovation at University of Maine handles all recruiting, screening, matching, payroll, and initial innovation and workplace training. This allows the company and paired fellow to focus on achieving workplace goals.

Several Maine Venture Fund portfolio companies have successfully used this program which had a number of students intern with them, many of whom have later been hired on full-time. Companies are finding what worked best for them was to have the interns work alongside employees on real-time problems, as opposed to having them focus on independent work projects.

**17. Maine Municipal Association's Hometown Heroes:** There was a nice article in the Maine Townsman that just came out describing the efforts of MMA to assist communities as there are vacancies throughout towns. At a meeting earlier this month, there were 124 towns represented and we were asked that towns raise their hands if they had vacancies. Almost everyone put up their hand – all but the really small towns where they have just a few people. We did become a part of that effort and are advertised for the Administrative Assistant's position.

JobLink, the State's free job service has located the error that resulted in the Town receiving strange applications. We had inputted the position details as well as pay. Our copies printed out and going in through the Employer tabs/section of the webpage showed everything as fine. In the job seekers section the job had gone, as other positions, to a \$10.00 minimum wage. Therefore, that explained why we were getting unqualified candidates. That was discovered by Michael Shirley, who assists with the Regional Job Fair. Dana Hamilton, our other partner on the Regional Job Fair, has sent out the position to all of her contacts and former citizens to assist us.

**18. Somerset Cultural Plan:** The [Wesserunsett Arts Council \(WesArts\)](#) is a regional nonprofit that works to build cultural connections in Somerset County through visual and performing arts, heritage, agriculture, education, and recreation and has been working with Skowhegan Main Street. The two groups were working on a strategic plan for raising awareness of cultural offerings, enhancing cultural education and creating cultural opportunities and experiences in Somerset County. The Heart of Pittsfield will be reviewing this plan at a future meeting. This discussion had been planned for the March meeting, however, was moved to their April Meeting. I placed a copy of the Cultural Plan in the FYI Book in case you would like to receive a copy.

**19. Easter Egg Hunt:** Greater Pittsfield Area Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, March 31 at 9:00 am at the Pinnacle Ski Club at 271 Waverly Avenue, Pittsfield. A great time was had by all.

**20. Greater Pittsfield Area Kiwanis Yearly Bike Rodeo will be held on Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 10 am:** The Bike Rodeo has been here in Pittsfield for a couple of years so it now needs to move over to Newport. The rodeo will be held at Nokomis Regional High School. The event is educational, fun and there are prizes.