

Town Manager's Report – 1.13.22

Onboarding:

- Mr. Angotti and I spent valuable time together, discussing aspects of the manger position, ongoing projects, traded keys and passwords, and toured the facility. I very much appreciated the download and his offer to remain in contact with me if I run into any questions regarding work he had done while serving as interim manager, the same for code enforcement. He has twice now stopped what he was doing to run over and help me figure out a situation at hand. I thank him for his willingness to provide me with support as a settle in.
- The department heads and staff have been incredibly helpful in my first week on the job. I can say with certainty that, functionally, this municipal staff is a well-oiled machine and works great to support one another. Lori Santerre, Diana Lakeman, and Mary Alice Cullen have been especially helpful in their roles, bringing me up to speed on various items and processes.
- Our arrangement with Peggy Daigle is proving to be a worthwhile investment so far. She is such a wealth of knowledge on the operational and technical aspects of municipal government, as you know. I appreciate the opportunity to work with her as I begin my work as Town Manager.

Dept. Head Meeting:

- My initial meeting with department heads went well. It was a great opportunity to meet with the entire group. We discussed each department in overview, what challenges they are facing, and what they need from me. This gave me a good understanding of each department. Soon, I will be scheduling more time with each of them to do a deeper dive, one on one, to discuss further.

CDBG Bid Opening:

- Jared Merry from Haley Ward and I had the bid opening for the CDBG project this past Friday afternoon. We had received one bid. This bid is from Underwood Electric and came in at \$489,400.00, roughly \$190,000.00 over the original project. We are all aware of the rise in cost and availability of materials, labor shortages, etc. all related to the current covid pandemic. Understanding the timeline of this project, that is not a surprise. Jared and I did reach out to the contractor to request further breakdown of cost, separating the Veteran's Park piece and the Penobscot Avenue lighting piece. We feel it may be possible to complete half of the project within the original budget at this time and seek additional funding for the remainder of the project. The contractor did agree to do that for us and we are waiting to see that information. At that point, we will consider all aspects, gauge feedback, and look to make a recommendation to the council for decision.

Mobilize Katahdin:

- I have continued participation with the Mobilize Katahdin Coalition, having been involved in prior roles. We heard last week from MRH CEO Dr. Peterson spoke about the current surge of covid pandemic and cases locally. There was discussion of possible action to take locally

regarding masking, etc. for the Town of Millinocket. I was joined by Councilors Pray, Pelletier, and Danforth. Danforth of course with her hat Thrive Penobscot hat on as host.

Code Enforcement Needed:

- Stemming from input of councilors, I am researching the possibility of a full time Code Enforcement Officer. I do believe a full-time position is justifiable, knowing the amount of currently back logged CEO related work and the potentially for far more work moving forward as we see more development on the former mill site and throughout town. I have spoken with Town Mangers in similar communities (Maddison, Lincoln), regarding salary, full-time/part-time, benefits, etc. All have agreed that it is difficult to find a CEO these days and that the position needs to be attractive enough by way of salary and benefits to attract and retain them. My recommendation would be post full time in the **\$48,000 to \$55,000** salary range, full-time, with benefits. The total cost to the town associated with a position like this in this salary range would be upwards of **\$88,000 to \$90,000** when adding in the cost of a benefits package. That total number can vary, of course, depending on what health insurance package they were to choose, and so on.

We received a nice thank you letter from Maine Public in response to the Town of Millinocket's recent donation of \$200. I have attached a copy of that letter for you to see.

Respectfully Submitted,



Peter Jamieson, Town Manager.

Department Updates:

Public Works:

- Loaded pails of sand and delivered to the Fire House for "Age-Friendly Project" Public Use.
- Plowed small storms the month of December. Rain was an issue as ground temperatures were cold.
- Fleet Maintenance- All fleet vehicles running well.
- Budget expenses year to date are: PW Admin 0402 = 42% spent, Garage Maintenance 0403 = 27% spent, and PW Roads 0407 = 38% spent.

Transfer Station:

- Submitted some work on Recycling costs to the Manager.
- MSW is going into PERC Plant as the MRC has worked with us to make sure our garbage does not go to landfilling due to the New Facility in Hampden is currently shut down.
- The Electrical service upgrade from Emera to the Compactor Building and yard has been completed as a capital budget project approved last year.
- The metal pile in the yard has been reclaimed and the expected revenue based on today's market value and tonnage may be between \$20k and \$30k.
- Budget Expenses are in check at 48% spent year to date, and Revenues will be in the 60% collected range after the metal pile checks come in.

Cemetery:

- Closed until May 2022. Budget expenses are 58% spent year to date. Revenues will be over the top due to sale of plots and 85 burials this past summer.

Respectfully submitted,
Ralph Soucier, Director of Public Works

Human Resources Director

- Personnel
- Assisting new Town Manager and Department heads
- Office Responsibilities
- Preparing for 2022
- Ronald Preble retired on 12/31/2021 from the transfer site
- Drug/Alcohol Testing

General Assistance Director

- Assisted individuals to meet their unmet needs
- Submitting reimbursement

Bookkeeper

- Processed payroll for Town and Wastewater employees, to include the warrants for the taxes.
- AP warrants for this week's council meeting
- Month End warrants for benefits

Lori Santerre, Human Resource Director.

Recreation Dept.

Ice skating Rink should be ready for Saturday the 15.

We are keeping busy with youth basketball.

Working on the all-star teams schedule. We start our games this weekend.

Working on Winterfest

Working on the Katahdin Snow Down with Age Friendly Katahdin

Jody

Airport:

Operations

1. The G.A.R.D. system has recorded 30 aircraft operations this month to date.
2. The Airport has been plowed twice so far this month, runways are currently ice covered due to freezing rain.
3. Had a couple of electrical issues with the snow blower. Repairs have been made and it seems to be rectified.

Safety

1. Attended Department safety meeting on 12/29.
2. Completed monthly fire extinguisher inspections.
3. Completed bi-monthly fuel farm inspection.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Campbell, Airport Manager

Town Clerk/Tax Collectors Office:

Totals include December 21st, 2021 through January 7, 2022, Receipt Summary report which provides by receipt type, the number of transactions and total dollars processed at the Town Office. In summary, \$2,191,237.22 were collected, which involved 1418 transactions processed in Trio. **Attached*

- Finalized all council meeting minutes.
- Sharon processed current Motor Vehicle weekly report, submitted up to date.
- Tax payments have started to come in for the second half tax bills, due date is January 13, 2022 with interest to accrue on January 14th.
- December month end reports for both departments have been reconciled, submitted, and mailed to all State agencies.
- Diana preparing for new Wastewater billing quarter, anticipate bills to be mailed by end of January.
- Staff is making courtesy reminder phone calls to unregistered dog owners, our attempts in hopes to get through the 27-page list prior to 1/31/2022.

\$25 late fee will begin 2/1/2022.

- Fulfilling requests of tax information as well as providing normal daily requests of motor vehicle and wastewater account balances via e-mail, fax and phone calls.
- Processing daily mail, online, phone, and drop box payments.
- Creating Agendas, posting advertisements of public hearings, Ordinance notifications and local paper advertisements, Email correspondence, returning phone messages and inquiries of account details and totals.

Election:

- Updates daily to voter registration additions, deletions, and corrections.

Other Items:

- **2022** Dog tags for registrations available October 15th as the current registrations expire December 31, 2021

Mandatory Late Fee: February 1, 2021

****Proof of Rabies Vaccination Certificate is Required for Registration****

- **2022** Snowmobile Registrations available.
- **2022** Transfer Site Stickers are now available: *Annual Fee: Town \$20, County Twps. \$10.00*
- **2022** IF & Wildlife Game Licenses are available as of December 1st.
- Roxanne and Amber continue to improve the preservation of vital records by indexing, inserting the records into acid free sheet protectors, and storing.

Respectfully, Diana M. Lakeman Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector, Sharon A. Cyr Tax Collector/Deputy Clerk

Town Treasurer:

FY21 Audit – I have been reviewing the preliminary report and working the auditors on outstanding items most of this week. A revised report will be sent next week for continued review.

Liens

- Foreclosure notices mailed 12/22/21 to 13 accounts for unpaid sewer liens recorded July 27, 2020 on unpaid sewer bills dated 4/24/19 to 9/19/19. Liens will mature 1/27/2022.
- Foreclosures notices will be mailed next week to 25 accounts for unpaid FY20 property taxes for approximately \$25,933 in outstanding taxes, which excludes interest and fees. This lien will foreclose 2/21/22.

Year-End – I will be tied up most of the month working on the year-end tax reports due by January 31.

American Rescue Plan Act – Town received an additional \$260.88 of reallocated funds from this plan. The check was dated 12/30/21.

Wastewater Operations:

- The treatment facility and pump stations are all currently functioning well. As needed, routine maintenance along with required lab work is being performed on a daily basis.
- Currently we are in the process of installing a new fuel tank system for the generator at the treatment facility. This tank will replace the old skid mount tank which was seeping fuel on a regular basis.

James Charette, Superintendent

Fire:

- Monitoring crew and making sure that everyone is trying to keep safe and mentally conditioning during stressful times.
- Reminded crew to wear masks and keep station locked down.
- Demand on staff has increased with constant uptake in COVID cases in our community, working to keep everyone safe and healthy.
- Working with Dept. heads on upcoming Winterfest Parade and activities working various other organizations.
- Attended Annual Maine Ambulance Association meeting via ZOOM.
- Working on annual required OSHA/DOL trainings for town employees.
- Placed new Scott Air Packs in service received from MacKenzie grant.
- New air compressor and materials have arrived awaiting Fire Tech and Safety to do installation.
- Placed order through Penobscot County Emergency Management Agency for additional PPE items that are being made available through FEMA.
- Have provided information to requests on new Gas Alarm Law that took effect on Jan. 1st 2022.
- Meet with company that is interested in starting a business in Millinocket and what requirements they would have to meet per Code.
- Followed up on trash complaint and made sure that landlord was following guidelines that they were given on disposal of trash.
- Have one FF/EMT out of work awaiting test results for COVID.

Chief Thomas Malcolm AEMT, FLSE, JFS II

FIRE AND AMBULANCE RUNS REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2021:

AMBULANCE

Local BLS: 22

Local ALS: 27

Local No Transport: 10

Out of Town BLS: 2

Out of Town ALS: 2

Out of Town No Transport: 0

Police Stage: 0

Public Assist: 8

Lost Calls BLS: 5

Lost Calls ACLS (Paramedic): 15

Lost Calls ACLS (Required Nurse): 0

FIRES

False Activation: (1-Broken Sprinkler Line, 1-Cooking)

Grass/Woods: (1-Car on Leaves)

Chimney: (1-Plugged Chimney (Mlkt. Lake)

Smoke Check: (1-Assist stove pipe issue)

Structure: (1-Microwave)

Electrical: (1-Connection to House, 1-Outlet)

Furnace: (1-Flooded Oil Burner)

CO Alarm: (1-Faulty Alarm-Old)

Chief Thomas Malcolm

Millinocket Fire Department

Police Department:

Staffing / Schedule / Training

- We have received some applications for the open Patrol Position. A hiring poster has been created for social media and will be posted soon. Hiring process will begin within the next few weeks.
- In-House Sergeant Position has closed. Process was delayed due to an officer testing positive for COVID and being out of work for several weeks.
- Four Officers attended training in January that was recently postponed due to COVID. The training, Street Smart Cop / Pro-Active Patrol Tactics, is highly regarded nationwide and focuses on drug interdiction.
- All Officers have completed yearly mandatory training and many officers have completed well more than the required elective hours during 2021.

Equipment

- Cruiser MDT replacement update – Panasonic is now no longer providing updates on arrival. Chip shortage is leading to supply issues.
- Car 5 (Ford Taurus) suffered water pump failure. Car was able to be repaired locally and saved thousands of dollars compared to other quotes received.
- We are waiting to hear if our application was accepted to receive gun locks to be dispersed to the community at no cost to citizens.
- Waiting on more information about possible grant funding for AED's for police cruisers.
- Car 7 (Ford Explorer) had check engine lights on. Appears to be sensor issued that have been fixed.
- Car 2 waiting for repairs, believe shocks are bad.

Call Notes (December 16th – January 8th)

- 256 Calls for Service in Millinocket
- 612 Total Calls for Service
- 114 Traffic Stops
 - - Notable Millinocket Stats
 - o 1 Assault
 - o 5 Bail / Probation Searches
 - o 1 Dead Body
 - o 4 Family Fights
 - o 1 Drugs
 - o 6 Operating After Suspension
 - o 3 Theft
 - o 14 Arrests / Charges Include
 - 4 traffic offenses
 - 2 warrants
 - 6 operating after suspension
 - 1 assault
 - 1 theft
 - 3 violations of bail
 - 1 drug possession

Notable Items

- We would like to congratulate Peter Jamieson as being named the next Town Manager for the Town of Millinocket. We look forward to working with Mr. Jamieson and have been welcomed by him in his first week in his new position.
- Officers conducted a drug search warrant. Investigation is ongoing, charges forthcoming for related charges.
- Officers have seen a very drastic increase in Mental Health related calls in recent weeks which has not only put a strain on PD staff but also hospital staff as well.
- Officers have been working with Public Works to try and educate citizens about parking ban and getting vehicles moved and issuing reminders to citizens so they can avoid tickets and/or vehicles being towed for snow removal.
- Court cases are being pushed out several months due to rising COVID cases and very large back log of cases. We are also still feeling the effects of limited admissions at PCJ.
- Cpl Fitzgerald is working on compiling 2021 statistics. This should be completed in a few weeks, but it is a very time-consuming task. Preliminary over 9600 calls for service were handled, over 2700 traffic stop conducted, and over 525 arrests.

- We have received “thanks” from State of Maine Uniformed Crime Reporting for our accurate, timely crime statistics. This too is very time consuming for Cpl Fitzgerald to complete.
- We are nearly completion of our Standard Operating Policy updates to conform with the changes from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and our local policies. So far Cpl Fitzgerald has well over 50-man hours in this task.