



Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

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Report for January 18, 2024

Happy mid-January. The storms can stop any time now! More on that later in the report. Our town was relatively fortunate during yesterday's storm. Only 3 fire department responses were requested. The shorefront parks took a beating, though, and my home lost power overnight. According to Versant the entire town has been restored as of 1:30 pm today (1/11/24)

I'm writing this on Thursday, January 11th – the 31st anniversary of the day that I started in this position. We had a wild party at the town hall (not really, I'm leaving early to referee in Brewer).

A reminder that Monday the 15th is a holiday, so the office will be closed. You've got kind of a busy agenda for the 18th.

Minutes – January 4, 2024 – Please look them over. Written corrections are most welcomed.

Expenditure Warrant 17 – You'll notice a lot of payments to our volunteer firefighters. This is reimbursement through a grant the City of Ellsworth initiated for firefighter recruitment and retention. They will be reimbursing the town for these payments – we just have to pay them first. We will have to move funds from the investment account to the checking account to cover the expenditures. I'll know the amount next Wednesday. The warrant will be periodically updated on the website.

Cash & Budget Reports – These will also be updated periodically and printed the day of the meeting. As of today, things look very strong for half way through the year.

Foreclosure List – The automatic foreclosure date is two days after your meeting. I'll place the current list in your packet and update it on Thursday. We still have six who have not paid, though mortgage holders on two properties have contacted us and will pay two of them.

Transfer Station – Bill Fennelly will be in to meet with you to discuss hours of operation which came up at your last meeting. We don't have a set contract with Bill as he took over in the middle of things last summer. I prefer having employees under contract because that way we know the expectations on both ends. I'd also advocate for a pay increase to boost him closer to market rates.

Town Meeting – March - At the previous meeting you set a public hearing date for this meeting on the MacQuinn Road Discontinuance. Their lawyer was supposed to get a notice prepared for us and advertised in the Ellsworth American. I've not seen anything. I e-mailed them and left a phone message while writing this report. I'm thinking that your February 1st meeting will have to be the public hearing date.

The Planning Board has proposed its ordinance change in reaction to the moratorium. It has been drafted up and reviewed by Dan Pileggi. I would note that this would effectively ban any hotels, motels, campgrounds and resorts from the entire town, and Dan noted in his review that might not be constitutional. The Planning Board plans a public hearing at their February 5, 2024 meeting.

We've not had anything submitted yet for the affordable housing amendments. This is going to have to wait until the school budget town meeting.

Map 3 Lot 2 Sale – I've put a printed report from our realtor in your packet on efforts to market the property. So far, no offers.

Community Action Grant – There are two lengthy documents courtesy of Larissa in your packet on this grant. I'll have Larissa explain it. I believe there is something that needs to be signed.

Efficiency Maine – I viewed the webinar on the new whole building rebate package from Efficiency Maine. Frankly, this is not needed, as we have all the heat pumps we need at the town hall and fire station. And, if it should involve removing the furnace, I am strongly opposed. The main opposition reason is that the generator at the town hall will not run the heat pumps, nor will the fire station generator. Given the long power outages we have, this would not be conducive to keeping the buildings open.

Resignation/Appointment – Mark Harris would like to step down from the Facilities & Infrastructure Committee. He has recommended Amy Duym take his place, and Amy has agreed to do so.

Storms – I'll write up a separate report on the January 10, 2024 storm. The biggest damage is to Marlboro Beach Road. Richard McMullen was removing the debris that blocked access to the beach. The road itself is badly buckled and basically impassable onto the beach. I've asked him for an estimate to repair it so that we can submit a claim to FEMA. We also have some debris cleanup at Lamoine Beach to take care of.

The required reports to FEMA for the December 18, 2023 storm have been e-mailed to them, and they've received it. Not sure how long it will take to get reimbursement.

Town Report Draft – It's coming together very (VERY!) slowly. I'll print what is done for your packet and more for you on meeting day.

That's what I've got for the agenda. See you on Thursday the 18th.

Stu