

Town Manager's Report for March & April 2020

As everyone knows, the Coronavirus has become an issue throughout the state of Maine. With the Governor's declaration of a State of Emergency mid-March, things at the Town Office have changed a little. We first started just closing the doors and did transactions over the phone, through the mail, and by appointment. April 1st, things changed again, and only "essential" employees were recommended to work, according to the Governor. We changed office hours to Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 8-2, for office clerks, and sent the librarians home. I stay in the office until 4:30 on those days. I also come in on Monday and Friday to get some work done, and answer the phones. We are trying our best to adhere to the six foot distancing and being closed to the public – doing business over the phone or through the mail. Public Works is considered essential, so there were no changes there.

In the meantime, truck bids have been sent out for a new Town truck. They are due back to be awarded at the April 22nd Board meeting. I have also sent out the fuel bids, due back May 27th. I have contacted Plymouth Engineering to complete a reconstruction design for Fernald Avenue. Once that is received back, I will send out invitations to bid for the Fernald Ave reconstruction project. When we know how much we will be spending on Fernald Ave, we will know how much of the \$1.5 million will be left for paving and I will send out the paving bid.

I have spoken with two engineers regarding getting the Sunken Bridge project underway. I'm waiting to hear back from them on cost of completing the DEP grant for the Town of Corinna. Once that is received, we can get moving on that grant. There is also a possibility that I may be able to work with the Nature Conservancy to get additional funds for that project.

I have also spoken to an engineer regarding the cost of a reconstruction design to convert the Fernald Market to a new fire station.

I have contacted two more businesses regarding updating our tax maps. Due to the zoning being changed at Town Meeting, we will also need a new zoning map created. I will be asking the other companies that I have already given a tax map price to add a price for creating that new zoning map.

I have spoken with ABM regarding somehow rewiring the elementary school to give us manual control. He will look into it and get back to me with more information if it's possible and a price.

I passed along the Food Sovereignty ordinance and MMA Legal's response to my question regarding the necessity for such an ordinance to the Planning Board chairman. Again, due to the restrictions of COVID-19, it may be a month or so before they have a chance to meet and discuss the ordinance request.

In the process of applying for a grant for the Boardwalk, it was determined that we will not qualify. First, the tennis and basketball courts were created using a grant from the same organization and were to be maintained in perpetuity. Because they haven't been kept up, we will not qualify for a grant for the Boardwalk. We can apply for a grant to repair the courts, even so much as eliminating the courts and putting in something else that is more community oriented. The new committee that will be appointed will have to work on this project. Also, the Boardwalk may qualify for a grant from the recreational trails program, but once again, not until we have updated the courts. Catch-22 all the way around.

Let's hope May bring more flowers than showers. ☺
Respectfully Submitted, Lois A. Jones, Town Manager