

MANAGER'S REPORT  
February 28, 2019

Contract Negotiations – All three of our labor contracts with Fire/EMS, Public Works, and Police expire at June 30, 2019. I have reached out to the union stewards and the union representative to get some dates for this process to begin. I would like the contracts to be done prior to the adoption of our budget in mid-June.

Town Clerk Interviews – Interviews have been conducted with six candidates. Second interviews will be conducted at the beginning of next week and I hope to hire by midweek next week. We have some excellent candidates to choose from.

Diesel Grant – Our project to add diesel as a fuel source at the Marina as well as to upgrade the pumps will be starting soon. We are in the process of setting up a meeting with the granting agency in order to get the work completed before our boating season starts.

Budget – I have received budgets from Department Heads and am working on putting together the first overall draft. It should be ready for distribution to the Council by the second full week in March.

Chamber Annual Meeting/Dinner – The Annual Meeting of the Chamber is Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at the Bucksport Golf Club. Councilors interested in attending should let me know and I will make the reservations. There is a buffet dinner, games, and a program to announce the annual award winners.

Maine Water Notification – There is no general water rate increase planned for the period through June 30, 2020 according to information provided by Maine Water Company. However, the Water Infrastructure Charge will go from 11.22% of customer bills to 13.2% as of January 1, 2020 – an increase of approximately 2%. We see the biggest impact from this charge in cost for hydrant rental. A 2% increase on that bill will result in an increase for that one account of approximately \$4,100.

Main Street Bucksport – A recent update from MSB indicates that they have received a Poetry Express Grant from the Maine Humanities Council which will involve intergenerational poetry readings from a selection curated by the Maine State Library. All poems will be about logging, mills, and related topics. The series will culminate in a community poetry recitation. The events will happen in the fall and this series is in collaboration with the Buck Memorial Library. MSB is working with a consultant on their first strategic plan this Spring. The project was funded by a grant from the Maine Community Foundation. Over 500 runners have registered for the Bridge the Gap races scheduled for Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. Registrations will be capped at 600.

Parking Lot Plan – Olver has completed a parking lot plan and drainage improvements bid package for the former Nason property behind Main Street. The plans can be reviewed at the Infrastructure Committee meeting prior to the next Council meeting so that they can go out to bid soon. It would be great to get that project done early in the season.

LD 620 – Community & Economic Development Director Rich Rotella attended a legislative hearing today for a bill introduced by a Belfast legislator that could have negative impacts on the Whole Oceans project. A number of people from Belfast testified in favor of the bill but Belfast city officials as well as officials from State departments testified against it. While targeted at the Nordic development in Belfast, this bill if successful could have consequences for the project here. We will continue to monitor the bill's progress and work to insure that it is not successful.

News – Bucksport will be featured on the morning news with a story that has been in the works for the past month or so. Channel 2 is doing a story on communities with mill closures and Bucksport is part of that story. According to the writer who did the story, it will air between 5:30 and 6 am tomorrow morning as well as between 6:30 and 7.a.m. It will also be on Channel 2's website.