

TOWN MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT

The purpose of this report is to review the progress made by the Town over the past year related to the goals and objectives that were discussed by the Council at their meeting on February 1, 2018.

Goals & Objectives

1. *Waterfront development*

- *During 2018, the project to renovate the town dock shoreside facilities was completed. The contract was completed in a timely and cost effective manner and has improved both the aesthetics and the safety of the facility.*
- *The Marina added WIFI availability so that all seasonal boaters had access to workable WIFI for the 2018 season.*
- *The Town was awarded a grant to pay for 50% of the cost of installing diesel fuel capacity at the Marina along with replacement of the outdated gas pump and associated equipment. The work will be done in 2019 prior to the start of the marina season.*
- *The Town is in the process of making internet available along the waterfront. That project should be implemented in the 2019 season.*
- *The Town Council approved an upgrade to the camera system that includes the waterfront which will provide additional security.*
- *The Town received donations of three new granite benches for the Waterfront walkway.*

2. *Fire & Police*

- *The Town accepted and implemented a grant that funds 2 additional firefighter/EMS employees for the community for 3 years. Not only did the Town hire two employees, we also changed the staffing arrangement for the Fire/EMS department so that two full time employees are on duty on each shift. Staff members report that these changes are a welcome relief over the former schedule and that the additional staff members are helping to meet the increasing emergency medical staffing needs.*
- *The Fire/EMS department has added additional call personnel to help augment the need for ambulance drivers on emergency callbacks.*
- *The Police Department presented information related to the need to change the practice of buying a cruiser every other year to buying one each year. The high mileage put on these cars was resulting in extremely high repair and maintenance costs in the years before replacement. The Council implemented this change in the 2018 year.*
- *The Council approved an updated Camera system to be installed in the Public Safety building to replace the one that was no longer functioning as it initially did due to age.*

3. *Recreation*

- *The Council discussed a Splash Pad proposal but deferred that idea due to the need for significant repairs to the pool to prevent continued leaking. Some*

work was done in 2018 but it did not fully address the issue and more will need to be done prior to the 2019 swimming season.

- *The Council approved a Y Contract that added a middle-school after school program, a youth leadership program, and increased winter skating opportunities as well as improvements at the fitness facility at the Jewett School.*
- *The Council approved a plan between Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust and RSU 25 for signage and viewing platforms at the vernal pool off the Miles Lane Trails.*

4. Solar

- *The solar project at the public works garage was installed and is functioning with savings spread over 8 Town electric accounts.*
- *The Town Council approved the installation of a solar array at the new Sewer Treatment Plant that is being paid for from grant funds from that project. The contract was awarded to Revision Energy in 2018 with final construction to be completed by July 31, 2019. This project has the capacity to save the Town over \$20,000 annually on its electric costs.*

5. Sewer Treatment/Infrastructure/Public Works

- *During 2018 the Town met with John Wardwell to plan for the continuation of Park Street with a connection to Broadway. The Council budgeted \$250,000 for this project to extend Broadway to Park Street and install utilities. The project has been in review with DEP to address wetland mitigation on the part of the property owner but is anticipated to be constructed in 2019.*
- *The Town Council approved the purchase of a road edger to address the deteriorating roadsides on local roads. The purchase of this machine has resulted in significant improvement in the areas that were done during 2018 – and at a much faster and more long-lasting manner than could have been done manually.*
- *The Public Works department began making its own salt brine instead of purchasing the liquid. This change saves the community \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year.*

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6. Economic Development Plan

- *The ADAPT plan from the EPA Area Wide Planning Grant was completed and contains many proposals not only for the former mill site – but also in connecting that development to the downtown.*
- *Two lots were sold in the Town Business Park in 2018 bringing two seafood firms with significant investment to the community.*
- *The Business Park sign renovation was completed in 2018, giving the park a much more professional look.*
- *The Town approved microloans to three small businesses in Bucksport including Bookstacks for a façade improvement, Glenn’s Place which converted the former Ramona’s to a family style year-round restaurant, and funding to assist a candle-making company in Bucksport to help with inventory.*

7. Historical Society Building & Memorial to Papermaking

- *The Council approved a contract to do a conceptual design for the Historical Society building to be relocated nearer to Main Street and a first floor added for possible use as a papermaking museum and public rest rooms.*
8. *Drainage solutions – Woodland Heights & Main Street*
 - *The Town Council contracted with Olver Associates to do drainage evaluations of Woodland Heights, Forest Hills, and the Nason Lot that impacts the businesses in front of it on Main Street. Woodland Heights had some ditching improvements done to improve flow in areas where there had been winter backups. Forest Hills drainage issues are being addressed by maintenance being done to the detention pond/drainage area owned by RSU 25, and design plans are being done to construct the parking lot on the Nason Lot and to include drainage systems to capture the runoff and direct it to underground drainage. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2019.*
 9. *Chamber Building upgrade*
 - *The Town Council approved the sale of the former Chamber building to Knox Masonry who is locating their business on Main Street. The Chamber of Commerce contracted with the Grange for use of the adjacent building for Chamber offices.*
 10. *Food Sovereignty Ordinance*
 - *The Town Council approved a local Food Sovereignty Ordinance in 2018.*
 11. *Continued review of town code and ordinances*
 - *The Council completed the review of Chapter 2, 12, and Chapter 5 of the Town Code, made some updates to Appendix k, and added Chapter 13.*
 - *The Council changed its Committee Structure - from 9 Committees to 4 regular ones plus Economic Development*
 12. *Redevelopment of the former mill site*
 - *Maine Maritime has a purchase and sale agreement with AIM development for a mariner training facility at the site with final sale anticipated in February of 2019*
 - *Whole Oceans land based salmon farm has a purchase and sale agreement with AIM Development for 120 acres of the site. The project has received its DEP permit and is in the 30 day appeal period (which ends December 21st). Once that license is final, Whole Oceans will complete the sale of the property.*
 - *The gas generation turbine and associated generators at the mill site are now part of the ISO New England backup grid and designated as a Black Start location, stabilizing the valuation of the power plant assets for the community*
 - *The final ADAPT plan from the EPA area-wide planning grant identifies numerous other business opportunities adjacent to the site*
 13. *Housing*
 - *The Town is working with John Wardwell to complete the Park Street project to provide an area for more housing.*
 - *The Town sold two unoccupied, foreclosed multi-family units in the downtown area in 2018. When renovated these units will provide much-needed rental property space*

- *Economic Development Director Rich Rotella has contacted housing developers to see if there is interest in constructing in Bucksport*
14. *Bike Lanes/bike racks*
- *The Town installed bike racks at the pool facility in 2018 and the Y provided free helmets to some children through a grant programs*
 - *The Police department has additional bike racks and those will be installed in 2019*
15. *IT Needs*
- *The Town contracted with RSU25 to provide IT staffing and support for Town operations. This contract covers all computer operations as well as the camera systems, internet access projects, copier, and phone contracts.*
16. *Increase participation in local government*
- *Interest in the idea of a plastic bag ordinance has resulted in a citizen committee looking at the subject*
 - *The Town now broadcasts all Town Council, Planning Board, and Town Council Committee meetings both on the local cable channel as well as via computer video streaming. In addition, the meetings are available for viewing via computer at a later date as well as when the meeting is in progress.*
 - *The Parade of Lights continues to grow. In its third year, turnout by people of all ages to participate was outstanding.*
 - *The Reggie Ginn field saw dramatic improvements this past year from volunteers interested in insuring that the softball program had a good field. These local volunteers also have made substantial improvements at the Little League field.*
 - *The Senior Resource Committee continues to attend Council meetings and volunteer their time to help Bucksport maintain its designation as an AARP Age & Ability Friendly Community.*
17. *Budgetary Goals–*
- Mil rate at the same or lower*
- *The mil rate for 2018 went down another ten cents, bringing it to \$16.30 – and overall reduction of 80 cents since it was raised in the 2015-16 budget.*
- Continue to provide essential services*
- *The Town has not cut services in any department in 2018*
- Review local cable broadcast improvements*
- *Changes made to some equipment have provided some improvements in visual quality but sound improvements are needed*
18. *27 Main Street*
- *The realtor with the contract for this site has had interest but none that has committed to a development there*
19. *Health Insurance*
- *The union contracts are set to be renegotiated at the end of this fiscal year and health insurance alternative options will be discussed as part of those negotiations.*
20. *Storage Needs*

- *Storage needs for waterfront equipment will be addressed by the purchase of a trailer which can be located next to the Town Office. In the off season or in the event of a festival, the trailer can be taken to the Town Garage.*
- *An evaluation of the needs of Public Works and Public Safety for storage will be done in 2019*

21. *Abandoned rail lines along the waterfront*

- *The ADAPT plan completed in 2018 contemplates the cleanup of this area for recreational and business purposes.*

Other items for 2018/19 include:

- The purchase of two replacement trucks for the highway department
- The purchase of two police cruisers for the Police Department
- Approval of the purchase of a new Ambulance for the Fire/EMS department
- Purchase of ballistic vests and body cameras for the police department
- Adoption of an evaluation policy for non-municipal entity budget funding requests
- Approval for use of an alternate LPI in the absence of the Code Enforcement Officer
- Approval of a contract zone off Central Street for a housing project
- Adoption of the value statements developed through the Heart & Soul process.
- Development of Safety Committee recommendations for improvements at the Town Office
- Sale of tax acquired properties that were not primary residences of the property owners
- Receipt of grant funding for police & fire equipment.
- Completion of a community broadband grant study
- Application to ConnectMe for completion of internet availability via cable on Bucksmills & Millvale road
- Resolution of walkway/gating issue
- Bucksport Next meetings facilitated by Councilor Carmichael to continue collaboration between groups working on the future of Bucksport
- Completion of an exception-free audit for the 2017-18 fiscal year

This report discusses goals and objective work and other Council related activity. In addition to this, the Town Departments worked hard this year on their work plans and our commitment to provide exceptional customer service to the residents of Bucksport. I would like to thank each and every town councilor, town employee, and town resident who volunteered for local committees and worked so hard for their efforts this year. Bucksport truly is a special place, and is doing a lot of good things to insure a bright future for the community.

Respectfully submitted,
 Susan Lessard
 Town Manager