

MANAGER'S REPORT
October 21, 2020

5 Mount Olive Heights- I am so happy to report that the USDA has agreed to abate the interest penalty on the property and is working through an internal process to do so. Once that is completed, that deed will be released. Ms. Hallowell can then sell the property, pay off the local mortgage and the town's tax and sewer bills and retain the balance for herself. I have received an estimate for demolition of the building and cleanup of the property. If the Town were to have the demolition and cleanup done, I think that the lot would be much more marketable – and we would not be chasing someone else to clean it up after a sale. The cost of demolition would be added as a lien to the property and be cleared at the time of sale. I am looking for Council input on this as a possible next step in this process. I have spoken with the property owner and she is very grateful that the Town is working with her to get this resolved in the best way possible.

Baseball Field Wall Update – A map provided by Maine Water shows a major water line as well as a stormwater/sewer line going under a portion of the baseball field. According to the email received from Maine Water – construction would not be possible on any area from second base in to the edge of the field without the potential for impacting these lines – which are old lines and have not been updated since being installed. This would significantly the amount of property on which anything could be constructed unless these lines were relocated – which would be a VERY expensive process.

Absentee Voting – The last full day that absentee ballots are available from the Town Office for in person or take-it-with-you voting is Thursday, October 29th. The Town Office will be open for absentee balloting on Friday, October 30th from 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. If you have picked up or requested that an absentee ballot be sent to you – you can return it at any time prior to the election by putting it in the secure ballot return box at the entrance to the Town Office. As of this report, the Town has processed 1180 absentee ballot requests, which represents nearly 30% of our 4,000 registered voters. In 2016, there were 780 absentee ballots. The Town has installed a secure absentee ballot return box outside the Town Office which is checked frequently by staff. According to Town Clerk, Jacob Gran – there are still 250 absentee ballots that have not been returned. We encourage everyone who has gotten an absentee ballot to return it as soon as possible.

Bucksport – At the Bucksport Service Network meeting today there was a discussion of problems that seniors who do not qualify for Mainecare are encountering in getting rides to medical/dental appointments. HOME had a one-year pilot program that helped meet this need but it was not able to continue it due to regulatory requirements. DECP provides the rides for the medicare-eligible persons and has the capacity to do so for non-medicare eligible persons – but not the funding. Two years ago the Town budgeted \$5,000 for transportation needs beyond the bus/taxi arrangement that we have in Bucksport. According to DECP, that funding would provide approximately 100 rides for

seniors to medical or dental appointments. I think this would be a very good utilization of that funding. It can help to address the gap left by the reduction in rides available through the local CARES program. They could start the program on December 1st and by budget season we would know what the utilization of the program is. The HOME program, which served many of these individuals – had 96 trips in a year. Part of the need for trips to specialists is also being met by the Health Center which has set up a site at the Center where people can do telemedicine specialist visits. I am also happy to announce the DECP will be starting the monthly bus trip to Bangor for seniors in November and have also indicated that they will add a monthly trip to Ellsworth if there is sufficient interest. This is great news for our seniors who do not have transportation outside the community.

Update on Upper Long Pond Violation - Our Code Enforcement Officer Luke Chiavelli informed me that no formal court action has been taken at this time. The property owner vacated the property and took his dogs with him. At this time it appears he is attempting to comply with the order and therefore our CEO will hold off on court involvement. Should the situation change, the property owner is aware that the Code Officer has council approval to proceed with court action and he will not hesitate to do so.

Trunk or Treat at Bucksport High School – Public Safety Director Geagan has reviewed the plan for the Trunk or Treat at Bucksport High School from 1-4 on 10/31 and it is well organized and will be well supervised.