

MANAGER'S REPORT  
June 24, 2021

Tim Emery Municipal Pool – I am sooooo happy to report that the Tim Emery Municipal Pool is open and operating. According to the Y – things are going very well there and there were more than 200 people who enjoyed the pool in the first two days of operation alone! The new pump has resulted in crystal clear water, the repair has resulted in no water loss through the lines, and the newest paint job allows people to visibly see where the side slopes end on the side and the bottom of the pool begins.

Fishing Pier – The fishing pier renovation should be completed by the beginning of next week. The pilings are all in and leveled and the deck surface will be placed next. Gardner has done a good job with this project and we look forward to the public being able to use it once again.

Retaining Walls – The retaining wall bid results will be on the July 8<sup>th</sup> council meeting to move that project forward this year.

New Employee – I have hired Cassi Allison for the Front Office position at the Town Office to fill the vacancy created by Roxann Clapper's retirement. Cassi is a lifelong Bucksport resident and started work on Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. She comes to us with great office, organizational, and cool-under-pressure skills and she is catching on quickly and already working the front counter.

Road Project – Year 2 – The reclaim, grade, pave project on the Millvale portion is well underway and the binder coat should be down by this Friday. It has been some time since we have had a town-dig-up-the-road project here in Bucksport and there was some unhappiness with the reclaim/grade part of this project. Initial flagger issues for the contractor created some issues, dust created another – but the project should result in a much better base and travel surface. The Silver Lake portion is in year 3 along with the downtown work.

Road Project – Borrowing – I have requested bids on a bond anticipation note that would cover both year two and three of the road project. Following the end of the year three project – the amount used on the note would be financed through the Maine Bond Bank for seven years since that is generally the lowest borrowing rate for municipalities, and it is likely that the current interest environment may change. Bid results for the note will be on the July 8<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Retirement – Roxann Clapper is retiring from the Town Office and her last day of work is Thursday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. We are having an open house in the lobby from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. for members of the public who would like to come and wish Roxann well in her well-earned retirement.

Investments – I met with our investment advisors from The First that the Council chose to do some cash/equity investment in 2014-15. I am pleased to report that the undesignated funds investment which is 75% cd's and 25% equities has earned 8.5% interest since January of 2020. The Maine PERS funds that the town received from the Public Retirement System which are invested at a 50% bonds/cds and 50% equities has earned nearly 21% interest for the same period. That fund, which started with \$434,000 in 2015, now has \$685,000 – which is a great return for a five year period. The goal when the Council took the step of investing that money was that within 5-10 years that some percent of the earnings could be used annually to help offset the cost of employee retirement. At this time, if the Council chose to – it could use 4% or so annually and the fund would still grow at a healthy rate – making that 4% a higher amount each year. They would like to meet with the Finance Committee of the Council at one of your September meetings to discuss the possibility of adding more funds to the 75%/25% group. The current cd rates are worse than awful and this would provide the potential for better interest.

Spring Fountain Update – The Town has received a filing from the attorney for the owner of the Spring Fountain asking for a Trial of the Facts related to the Dangerous Building Order issued by the Council. This motion is based on the fact that the owner contends that there was bias against him in the process of this issuing this order. Our attorney has provided the Town's response to this request. The owner now has 14 days to respond and then the Court will decide whether to grant or deny that motion.

Volunteerism in Bucksport – I attended a meeting of the Senior Resource Committee on Wednesday and one of the topics of the meeting was how to encourage more people to volunteer, since the pool keeps shrinking. It was suggested that the Town Council could be helpful in this effort by helping to encourage more volunteers to step up to assist the host of local organizations that we have. A few years ago we had a volunteer 'fair' at the high school as part of Heart & Soul with many organizations represented and encouraged the public to come and visit and talk with these groups to see if there was any group that a person might be interested in volunteering to help with. Is this something that the Council would be willing to sponsor and participate in?