



TOWN OF WINSLOW, MAINE

OFFICE OF TOWN MANAGER
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Monthly Report to the Town Council –March 2022 - Presented April 11, 2022

Esteemed Councilors,

Time marches steadily forward and budget continues to be the pressing issue. The bad news is that costs are up on everything from wages and benefits to utilities and commodities. The good news is that state revenue sharing is up as well. In the coming weeks we will be fine tuning the budget to come up with a final presentation and mil rate estimate. An increase is expected in order to fund critical infrastructure needs that have been deferred in addition to keeping up with inflation.

The March Coffee with the Manager meeting was held on March 2 at The Pointe Afta. This was the second attempt of an afternoon meeting to give folks who can't make morning meetings an opportunity to participate and for the second time it was not very successful. There was only one attendee from the public. She was a new attendee and had some great input, so all is not lost, but the hope is to have more participation. She brought up her desire to see more community events that focus on families and children and engaging the youth here in Winslow. The April meeting will be back to 9 a.m. and will be held on April 6.

The Facilities Committee met on March 1 with discussion focused on the Town Office building (including Fire and Police). The committee has charged the department heads with developing a list of requirements for housing their departments, to include needs for office space, sleeping quarters, locker rooms, break rooms and vehicle and equipment storage. We will be engaging the services of an architectural and/or engineering firm to guide us to various solutions.

Discussions continue around the Ticonic Bridge reconstruction project. Another meeting was held with MDOT on March 14. MDOT has done their traffic studies and doesn't believe closing the bridge completely will be beneficial to traffic flow. They are citing backups coming off the Carter Memorial Bridge into Waterville at Kennedy Memorial Drive. As to the duration and cost of the project, a full closure would save approximately 8 months and \$4 Million, which they deem to be "inconsequential". Relocating the utilities will take approximately 8 months regardless of the solution chosen and will have to be completed before any construction begins. MDOT is still planning on keeping east-bound traffic from Waterville to Winslow open during construction with west-bound traffic diverted to Carter Memorial or up to Benton. There will be reengineering of traffic signal timing and travel lanes throughout the project corridor to enhance traffic flow, and preemption signals will be in place to allow emergency vehicles to travel in the opposite direction of traffic across the bridge. Waterville and Winslow remain united in our desire to see the bridge closed and disagree with MDOT's assessments.

The KRDA First Park General Assembly meeting and budget vote were held on March 17. The budget passed with a single nay vote and includes repayment of individual town assessments at 100% for the year. 4 lots are currently under contract and there is a potential deal on 4 lots that have been previously undeveloped. Jim Dinkle, KRDA Director, reports that interest is ramping up and that inquiries are coming from out of state and even from overseas.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee reconvened for the first time in 9 months on March 23. The biggest factors in completing the plan are to determine where the growth area for Winslow will be, where the next industrial park will be and where new housing, including affordable housing, can be developed. Two issues continue to come forth as impediments. The first is the limits of water and sewer infrastructure limiting the areas of town that can reasonably be designated as “growth area”. This has already impeded development in the Industrial Park as sewer stops at Verti Drive. Additional land exists for development behind our current industrial park, but there are no services and installing this infrastructure is cost prohibitive, particularly as we are trying to rehabilitate the existing infrastructure of the Town. The second impediment is zoning. The vast majority of land in Winslow is in the Rural and Conservation zones. This encompasses major highways such as China Road which are ideal for commercial development, but which zoning prohibits in many cases. These factors must be considered carefully in finalizing the Comprehensive Plan and zoning changes are likely to be recommended.

On March 25 I attended the 2022 MTCMA Manager’s Interchange in Bangor where I was on a panel of presenters on solar projects, including Washington County manager Betsy Fitzgerald and representatives from Titan Energy and Revision Energy. This was a brief overview of what Community Solar is, options for municipal participation, and how to address citizen concerns. My assigned discussion points were on the latter having just gone through the controversies with the Cushman Road and Roderick Road projects. The presentation went very well and generated good questions and discussion.

Other topics of note from the Manager’s Interchange revolved around affordable housing and upcoming legislation on that topic. We heard from representatives from the Maine State Housing Authority, Levine Planning Strategies (a planning firm that focuses on this issue), a representative from Bernstein Shur, and an affordable housing developer. We also heard from Kate Dufour at MMA regarding LD2003 which implements zoning and land use requirements that will significantly impact local communities. The key takeaways is that it is zoning, not dollars, that is impeding development of affordable housing projects, and that the Legislature is attempting to remove those barriers, but doing so by overriding Home Rule and forcing local communities to implement land use strategies that will require multi-family dwellings on all parcels in every zone, eliminate any language in our zoning ordinances that limits growth or restricts the size of individual lots and require us to install sewer and water infrastructure where it does not currently exist. This equates to an unfunded mandate that could cost millions. I encourage all of you to familiarize yourselves with this legislation and contact our representatives to voice concerns. I should also note that Winslow is participating in talks to create a HOME Consortium which would link us to surrounding communities and bring in federal dollars for affordable housing development.

Project Updates:

The new Town Website. Exciting news! We had our content editing training on March 29 and the individuals that have been designated as website managers in each department have started cleaning up the content and getting ready to go live. The ball is in our court now. We just need to do the final content editing. You can preview the new site at <https://cms5.revize.com/revize/townofwinslowme/>.

Phone System Upgrade. The new phone system has been completed. There were some delays due to a need to install fiber at Public Works and some other minor infrastructure issues, but everyone is on line now.

Dude Solutions. Now that we are almost done with budget we are picking up this project again. We have two full-day sessions scheduled with the developer on May 4 and 5. Prior to those meetings I will be meeting with the key department heads (Police, Fire, Public Works and Parks) to finalize our data structure.

Junior High Environmental Study. Craig Wilson has not responded to any communications. I will be looking into other potential firms to perform this study.



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Food Waste Pilot. The February collection numbers are attached.

Agriculture Commission Report to Council – See attached.

Operations continue to be busy with spring upon us. I look forward to finalizing the budget and moving forward with other initiatives that have taken a back seat.

Respectfully submitted by,
Erica LaCroix
Town Manager

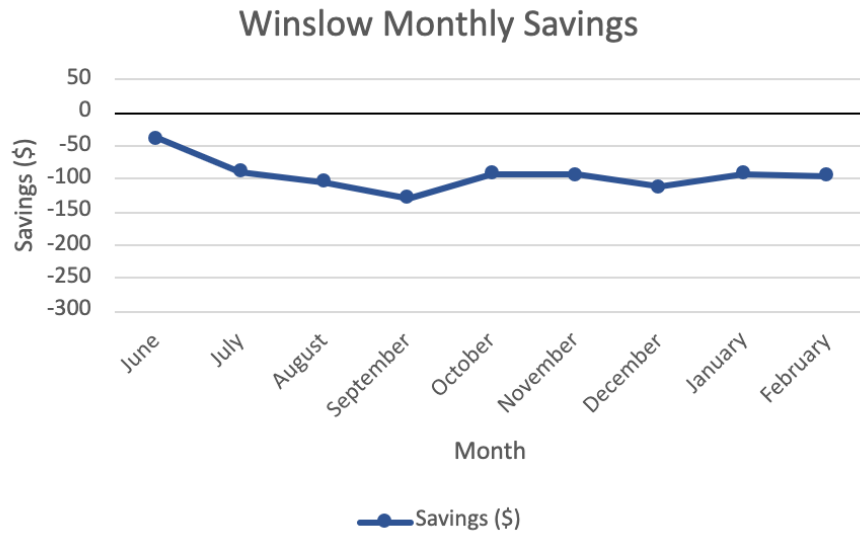
Town of Winslow: Food Waste Diversion Report (June 2021 - February 2022)

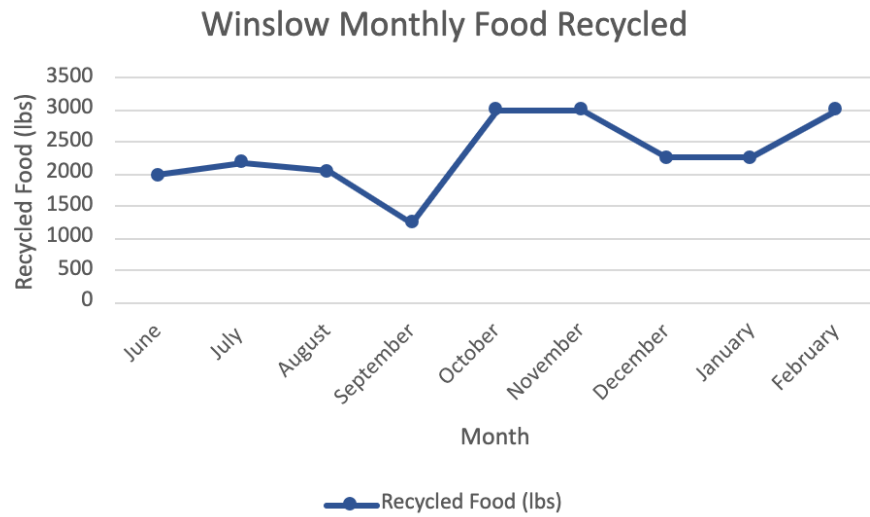
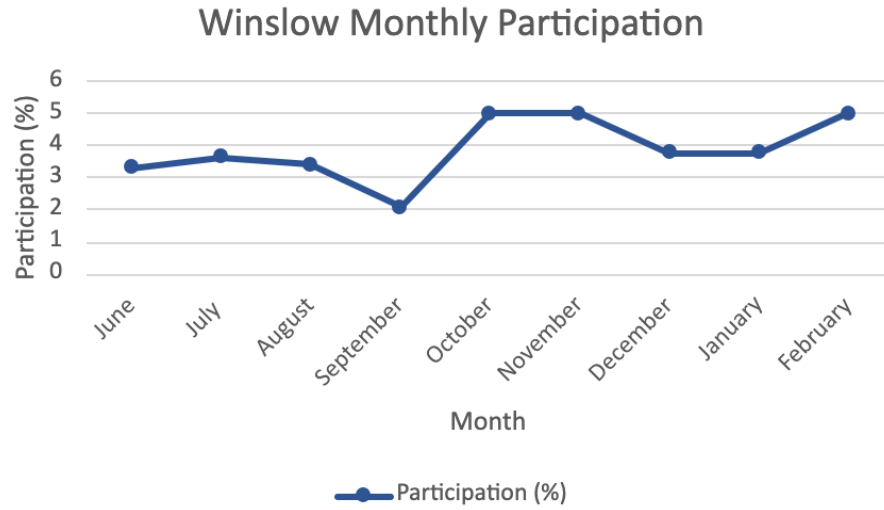
Summary Statistics:

Community Food Recycling Winslow								
Month	Residential Food Waste						Participation	Donation
	Number of Totes	Weight of Totes (LBS)*	Weight of Totes (Tons)*	Cumulative Costs (\$)	Cost of Landfill Disposal of Diverted Waste (\$)*	Savings (\$)*	Average Participation **	Food Donations (lbs)
June	16	1990	0.995	\$ 205.15	\$ 64.68	-38.725	3.32	NA
July	10	2185	1.0925	\$ 160.38	\$ 71.01	-89.3675	3.64	NA
August	12	2050	1.025	\$ 171.68	\$ 66.63	-105.055	3.42	NA
September	12	1240	0.62	\$ 177.56	\$ 40.30	-128.485	2.07	NA
October	12	3000	1.5	\$ 189.04	\$ 97.50	-91.54	5	NA
November	12	3000	1.5	\$ 191.56	\$ 97.50	-94.06	5	41,351
December	9	2260	1.13	\$ 184.73	\$ 73.45	-111.28	3.77	47,351
January	9	2260	1.13	\$ 165.67	\$ 73.45	-92.22	3.77	17,148
February	12	3000	1.5	\$ 191.80	\$ 97.50	-94.3	5	20,373

* Data collection not complete for June, July, August, and Septmeber. Thus, weight values and savings for these months is underrepresentative of reality.
 **Participation is a measurement of the percent of food waste diverted out of the total food waste generated.

Charts:





Data Analysis:

Data for February had a positive trend.

- The amount of food recycled increased by 740 lbs.
- Participation increased by 1.23%.
- Food donation increased by more than 3000 lbs.

The participation and recycled food waste levels increased from the previous dip in December and January. The current participation and recycled food waste levels are back to where they were in October and November. This is promising for the future. It shows that our communication efforts, though unmeasured, are having positive impacts on the participation of the community with the program.

Food donation levels increased in February from previous months. While donation levels are not what they were in November and December, the uptick in donations is promising. It is likely that the high levels we saw in November and December were due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays which tend to drive food donation levels higher.

Despite the increase in recycled food and participation, savings did not increase. There are a few reasons for this.

- There were no totes picked up during the first pickup of the month. The collection fee is charged regardless of how many totes are picked up.
- We are still in the first year of the program, thus collection levels still need to increase to the level necessary to generate positive savings.

Overall, the data for February is promising and shows that our communication and community engagement efforts are working. We hope to see this trend continue in the upcoming months.

April 2022 - Monthly Agriculture Commission Report

To Town Council

The Agriculture Commission met at 10:00am on March 3, 2022 in the Town Council Chambers. The March 2022 monthly report has already been submitted.

One issue that has come up in the past month which we will be investigating is the need for Liability Insurance for any programs sponsored at Fort Halifax Park. Specifically we are looking at a limited Farmers' Market. This may also affect the programs like Fort Halifax Days also held at the Park.

We have a meeting planned for April 7, 2022 with the following agenda.

Open Meeting

Secretary's Report:

1. Minutes of March 3, 2022

Old Business:

1. Winslow Town Forest – Update
2. Sisters of St. Josephs' Garland Road Property
3. Attacking the Brown Tail Moth – current status and future prevention
4. Budget status

New Business

1. Liability Insurance – Farmers Market and Fort Halifax Days

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Newkirk, Chair

Town of Winslow Agricultural Commission

4/4/2022