



From the Manager's Desk

It is hard for me to believe that I have been here two years already. When you enjoy what you are doing time flies by. I work with individuals who are second best to none and as a team we are constantly looking to provide you with the best services possible within the budget that you have approved.

We completed our last fiscal year within budgets after major cuts totaling \$421,000 were voted by taxpayers at the annual meeting. The Department Heads worked hard to keep our operational budgets flat for this fiscal year and the result was a flat line budget operationally. We developed a sustainable capital budget plan which required additional funds. Fortunately we received some additional revenue that helped us catch up and the total town mil rate was increased only due to additional needs of our school system. The town warrant was passed with little discussion and without a single no vote. Our intent is to use the same process we used for the present budget to create transparency by producing the facts, listening to feedback, and supporting modified budgets as long as they are not detrimental to the safety and needs of the general community.

One of our biggest achievements was the completion of the construction of our new library. We moved into the Great Hall in October. The Friends of the Library have continued to raise funds that allowed for the construction completion and the beginnings of outfitting your library as a world class library. With their help we have been able to stick to our commitment of no additional tax dollars being raised for

this project. My thanks to the "Friends" and to Karen Eger, her staff and volunteers for their efforts for a smooth transition from the previous library into our new library.

Now what about the rest of the Young Street Property? You allowed us to enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Avesta Housing of Portland, Maine to allow for the building of Senior Housing. There was energy around this decision from those that wanted the project and those that had concerns. The process was as transparent as possible and in the end I believe the concerns have been addressed. Unfortunately the project was not chosen this year during the grant process but we will continue our partnership with Avesta as they continue to seek funding in the next year.

The winter started out with a bang this year and we got a taste of what winter used to be like. The road crew worked hard to keep the roads open and safe for passage. We are fortunate to have a highway crew that can get the job done in the worst of circumstances.

You approved Capital Funding for roads at \$600,000 this year which is the minimum needed to just keep up for the next five or six years. Jon St. Pierre became a full time employee after being shared by two communities for the last two years. He worked with our highway crew to prep construction projects and the result was that more work was completed than has been in the total of the previous three years when funding was reduced. It is imperative that we stick with the roads capi-

tal plan. We will see reductions in the maintenance needed for these roads in the future.

We continue to look for areas of collaboration for services with other communities. This is an ongoing project that requires time and transparency. CHANGE comes with difficulty but with proper planning services remain the same with a reduced price tag. If you have ideas please stop by and discuss them with me.

The Town of South Berwick was chosen as the 2013 Best Place to Raise Kids in Maine. We should be extremely proud of all that we offer not only to children but to all. The volunteer groups here are the most active of any town that I have ever been associated with. My thanks to all who make South Berwick all that it can be.

In closing my door is always open. Stop by and introduce yourself. Our success will only happen if everyone communicates the issues and brings solutions to those problems. Please visit our website and sign up to be on the e-mail list. With our new video podcast which can be viewed on Town Hall Streams you can hear every word that is spoken during the Town Council meetings. Our budget process will be aired through this service. Tune in through your computer to get accurate information so that good decisions are made during this process and not debated once the budget warrant has gone to be printed.

Respectfully submitted,
Perry A. Ellsworth

Ways You Can Help Protect the Great Works and Salmon Falls Rivers

Did you know that as stormwater runoff flows over land, it accumulates debris, chemicals, or other pollutants that could adversely affect water quality? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines a watershed as "an area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes to the same place". The Town of South Berwick is located within two watersheds: The Great Works and the Salmon Falls. Stormwater runoff from the Great Works River Watershed drains to the Great Works River which flows to its confluence with the Salmon Falls River. Stormwater runoff from the Salmon Falls River Watershed drains to the Salmon Falls River which flows to its confluence with the Cochecho River and the Piscataqua River.

The Maine DEP lists the Great Works

River and Salmon Falls River as threatened from non-point source pollutants and they are listed on the MEDEP's Non-Point Source Priority Watershed list. Non-point source pollutants include fertilizers, pesticides, petroleum, sediment, pet waste, and road salt. These pollutants often originate from lawn treatment products, automobiles, erosion, and a variety of other sources. Anyone in South Berwick can help reduce these pollutants and protect our valuable water resources. For example, the "Six Easy Steps for a Healthy, Natural Lawn" (summarized below) are a great way to help:

Mow better. Set mower blades at 3" for vigorous roots and to shade out weeds.

Let the clippings lie. Clippings are a

high quality, free fertilizer.

Fertilize? Lawns older than 10 years need only clippings. Younger lawns need nitrogen. Look for 10-0-0 on the bag.

Got weeds? Liberally apply perennial ryegrass seed all season long.

Got bugs? Overseed with insect-resistant fescue grasses or use beneficial nematodes, fungi or bacteria.

Water wisely. If needed, water once or twice a week with a deep soak (1-1.5").

For easy to follow directions on how to aerate, topdress, manage insects, and wisely water your lawn, please visit the following website:

www.cumberlandswcd.org/yardscape/factsheets.htm

South Berwick Public Library

The first word of people visiting the library for the first time is often “Wow!” The library has come a long way since last fall. Books, movies, and audiobooks are happily settled into their new shelves and furnishings are starting to come in for the children’s area and the small study area. People are bringing in their laptops and enjoying the library Wi-Fi, tutors and students are finding quiet corners to do their work, babies, twos and threes, and three to six year olds are using the new community room for Storytime programs, Kundalini Yoga sessions are underway, and during April’s Money Smart Week @ Your Library we will host a “De-Cluttering Your Finances” program.

If you received an e-reader or listening device over the holidays come in to start a membership so you can borrow digital books from the Maine Infonet Download Library for free. We would like to add to our local history collection by having both Marshwood High School and Berwick Academy yearbooks (pre-1955 when B.A. was the town high school) available in the library. Do you have an old yearbook you are willing to donate?

There are still many ways to join our effort to furnish and equip this new library. Visit the Friends of the South Berwick Public Library website for information about volunteer opportunities and learn about the many options available to donate to the Community Campaign. www.friendsofsouthberwicklibrary.org

Volunteer Network

The South Berwick Volunteer Network (SBVN) offers free medical transportation within a 15-mile radius of town with no requirements except South Berwick residency & 48 hour notice. This program supplements services offered by York and Wentworth Douglass Hospitals, and York County Community Action. Wheel-chair van service is also available, thanks to individual and civic group contributions. Current needs of residents have created an urgent need for more volunteers. In January alone, volunteers provided an average of nine rides per week. For more information, please call (207)384-3311.

Online Tax Payments

Beginning March 1, 2013 residents will be able to pay their real estate and personal property taxes with a single click of the mouse. The online payment and e-bill service will offer more flexibility in paying bills and help the environment at the same time. The system is easy to use and bills can be paid via a checking account or credit/debit card. No registration is required to view an online replica of the paper bill or to pay the bill. Payment receipts are sent via email or can be printed directly from the computer screen. To find your bills online, go to www.southberwickmaine.org and click on the tax check out button.



Cemetery Association

The South Berwick Cemetery Association is a non-profit organization that has been responsible for maintaining the cemeteries of South Berwick for over 100 years. The association cares for 3 burial sites: Woodlawn, Pleasant Hill and Portland Street. We are making great positive strides, but unfortunately, our expenses still exceed our income. We welcome contributions to the South Berwick Cemetery Association c/o

Bruce Whitney
40 Portland Street
South Berwick, ME 03908

Capital Campaign for the New LIBRARY

GOAL \$1.1 million

\$1 million
\$900,000
\$800,000
\$700,000
\$600,000
\$500,000
\$400,000
\$300,000
\$200,000
\$100,000

Save the Date!
Upcoming events to benefit the Building Fund

Mar 22: **Diva Night**
Mar 30-31: **Gold & Silver Drive**
May 4: **Susan Poulin "Ida"**
July 13: **Blossoms for Books Garden Tour**
July 21: **Slaid Cleaves**

Tickets to all events will be available at the Library and online

THANKS!

www.FriendsOfSouthBerwickLibrary.org

New Property Owners

Why is the previous owner on your tax bill?

Maine Law requires the taxes to be committed in the name of the owner(s) of record as of April 1. If you purchased your property after that date and we have received a deed indicating transfer of ownership we typically send tax bills “in care of.”

Please notify us with your change of address if town correspondence or the tax bill was forwarded via an old address.

Conservation Commission

The final draft of the Open Space Plan is available by visiting: www.smrpc.org. The Town Council will review and vote for adoption. Many thanks to the Open Space Sub-Committee and to those who responded to the survey and the map that was on the wall in Town Hall.

Volunteers are needed to restore and create more trails in the town forest during the summer. If you like to hike, cross-country ski or snowshoe this is a great place for those activities. In the winter the Public Works Dept. will plow part of the road to create some parking.

Coming events:

Earth Day clean-up: April 20th

Well water testing: May 18th

For more information please contact the Conservation Commission by phone 384-3300 ext. 336 or prnel@comcast.net. Look for details on special events at:

www.southberwickmaine.org

Keep SoBo Warm

Give the Gift of Warmth Raffle

At SoBo Tique, enter to win a beautiful handmade alpaca blanket. Tickets on sale through March 16th; drawing at 3 pm.

SoBo Tique is located at 439 Main Street

Tickets are \$1/ea. or 6 for \$5.00. All proceeds will be donated to the Keep South Berwick Warm Fund.



2013 Spring Concert: With Voices of Singing

65-voice chorus with singers from throughout the Seacoast, based in South Berwick, performing with string ensemble.

A concert of Mozart, Vivaldi, Holst, Daley, and more.

with guest choir

The Sandpipers Seacoast Children’s Chorus

A concert of Classics, Current works and Collaboration!

Saturday April 13, 7:30 PM

Christ Episcopal Church, Exeter NH

Sunday, April 14, 3:00 PM

Marshwood High School, Kennedy Arts Center, South Berwick

Old Berwick Historical Society

We are 300 years old!

On this anniversary of our community, join the Old Berwick Historical Society for fascinating local history programs on Thursday nights at 7:30 pm at the Jeppesen Science Center at Berwick Academy. Free—donations appreciated.

The full program of events can be found at: www.olderberwick.org