



From the Manager's Desk

Summer seems to have barely started yet another winter is approaching. Last year's winter was harsh due to both excess snow and extreme cold. It reminded me of the winters when I was much younger. In those days we used sand with little salt. Today's operations are much different. We use salt to pre-treat the 69 miles of roads that we plow. The average cost of storm plowing and cleanup costs between 10-15 thousand dollars whether we get two inches of snow or a foot. The same applies when we get freezing rain. A large storm, such as our big storm last winter, can cost the municipality \$45,000. We are thankful that storm was declared severe enough so we will receive FEMA funds to cover most of it.

Avesta Housing continues construction on the senior housing project on Young Street. The building structure is up and the siding is being installed. The parking lot has been prepared and paving will take place before you receive this newsletter. After the grand opening takes place in October, there will be 28 affordable apartments available for seniors to rent from Avesta. This building will generate \$20,000 plus in new tax revenue for the Town. We have reinvested a portion of the \$335,000 sales price of the land back into the parking lot, the adjoining sidewalks, and parking lot lighting. The remainder of the funds will be applied as four annual payments of \$34,220 to pay off the original land purchase bond.

The Route 236 project has been delayed a year and construction will start in the spring of 2016.

Recently Councilman Kareckas and I testified before the State Appropriations Committee pertaining to Revenue Sharing. The result of our testimony along with many others was that Revenue Sharing to municipalities remains in the state budget for the next two years. We are scheduled to receive approximately \$350,000 for each of the next two years. This is roughly a third of what we should receive (\$900,000+) but still equates to 50¢ (per thousand) that we do not have to raise through local taxation.

Revenue streams continue to dry up from Augusta and our valuation growth has been stagnant at less than a half million dollars each of the last three years. Department Heads continue to "think outside the box" and have worked hard to control costs. We have returned three to five percent of the budget annually by watching what we spend and making the right investments in infrastructure and equipment. Due to these efforts, our undesignated fund has grown to 3.4 million dollars of which you have the opportunity to choose how to use portions of it at the Annual Town Budget Meeting. Our fund balance is healthy, and we do not anticipate the need to borrow in the upcoming years.

Our Town Code Book is the tool that we need to adhere to as the ordinances lend

guidance to any and all things that take place within our community. We have heard some recently voiced frustrations with some of our processes or our decisions but be assured that it is our intention not to deviate from the Code of the Town of South Berwick. Since it's inception, there have been many changes, additions and revisions to the Code as the needs of South Berwick change. There are areas which will require further review and continued revising and updates as we strive to satisfy the ever changing demands of our community. Please take time to read my separate article on ordinances included in this issue of the Quamphegan.

Our goals for the rest of this year include the following: completion of the Young Street parking lot and the grand opening of the Avesta housing project; paving the Railroad Avenue parking lot; implement findings of the Parking Committee; complete paving projects on Emerys Bridge Road, Ogunquit Road, and Oldfields Road; and continue looking at future collaboration opportunities with other communities.

My door remains open for you to stop by or give me a call if you have questions. My Team and I thank you for your support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Perry A. Ellsworth

Ordinances and Zoning

Some have asked the question of how to get an ordinance to a public vote or how to overrule an ordinance passed by the Town Council. The answers to these questions can be found in Article VIII—Initiative and Referendum of our Town Charter. The Town Charter can be found on the Code Enforcement page on the Town website under Zoning Ordinances.

According to Article VIII, ordinances shall be subject to overrule by a referendum as follows: If, within 10 days after the enactment of any such ordinance, resolution or vote, a petition signed by not less than 10% of the registered voters of the Town of South Berwick is filed with the Town Clerk requesting its reference to a referendum, the Council shall call a public hearing to be held within 30 days from the date of the filing of such petition with the Town Clerk and shall, within 14 days after said public hearing, call a special town meeting for the purpose of submitting to a referendum vote the question of adopting such an ordinance, resolution or vote. Pending action by the town meeting, the referred ordinance, resolution or vote shall be suspended from going into operation until it has received a vote of the majority of the voters on said question.

A much simpler way is to come to us with an issue that you and other residents believes requires an ordinance. Based on the issue, the Town Council may take a look at it administratively or direct the Planning Board to look at it if it is a land use item. Regardless of where it goes, we can't help you unless you let us know what is on your mind. If you have questions, comments or suggestions, you are welcome to stop by and talk to me anytime. My door is always open.

Tax Rate

The tax rate for 2015-2016 has been set at 17.80 mils. This equates to \$17.80 per \$1,000 valuation or approximately \$22.70 on the average home value of \$227,000.

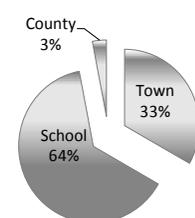
The tax rate is comprised of three separate assessments as shown in the graph. The School District assessment is the largest at 64%, the Municipal portion represents 33% and the County assessment is 3%.

An Important Safety Message From Public Works

Be sure to always use your headlights to see and be seen when driving in the snow.

Don't assume plow truck drivers can see you. A safe distance from the truck is at least 70 feet back – four (4) car lengths. Passing a plow truck is extremely dangerous and is discouraged. The wing plow blades extend 2-10 feet beyond the width of the truck and are hard to see when pushing snow. If you must pass, do so cautiously and make sure you are able to communicate your intentions with the plow truck driver. Never attempt to pass on the right. Think Safety. Act Safely. Arrive Alive.

2015 Tax Assessment



Nomination Papers

Here is your chance to get involved! Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerk's Office for anyone interested in running for Town Council or the School Board. There is (1) 3yr Town Council seat and (1) 3yr School Board seat open.

Deadline is 1pm Friday 9/18/15
Election Day 11/3/15

South Berwick Fire Department

We are strengthening our Inspection Program in conjunction with the Code Enforcement Officer by performing inspections on all apartment buildings in Town. This is in response to the fire on Noyes Street in Portland on November 1st which caused the highest fire loss in over 40 years. To reduce the risk of an incident of that or any magnitude here, we will work to ensure proper life safety procedures and codes are being strictly followed. Inspections will be done in the common areas during reasonable hours looking for any safety issues, escape routes and smoke detectors. Written permission from occupants of individual apartments will be obtained and the inspections provided at no cost to renters. Reports will be on file at the Fire Station on Norton Street and is public information. If you are interested in having your individual apartment inspected, please contact the Fire Department at 384-2731 or email Inspector Brian Roy at brian.roy3899@gmail.com.

Strawberry Festival

Great weather greeted thousands of visitors to our 40th very berry year. We thank the citizens of South Berwick for the 750 volunteer hours and a special thank you to the Strawberry Festival Committee Members without whom this event would not be possible. Over \$10,000 in grants were awarded to local organizations. For information on getting involved in 2016 visit www.southberwickstrawberryfestival.com

Conservation Commission

'Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook'

You are invited to come visit the Town Forest & the trails that run along the Great Works River. Dedicated volunteers continue to improve the trails, bridges & signage. The area is perfect for exploring in the fall & snowshoeing/skiing in the winter.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact Greg Tuano at greg210@comcast.net.

If you would like to get information on or participate in the Open Space Committee, contact Pat Robinson at 384-3310 x336.

Community Chorus South Berwick
Rehearsals start September 14. New members are always welcome. If you would like to join us, contact Music Director Harry Moon at (207) 384-7059 or visit www.CCSB-SING.org.

Tax Club Applications Deadline 8/30/15

Pay taxes in eight (8) equal payments with a payment book issued upon approved application. The 1st payment is due on Sept 15th. To qualify, you must be current on your taxes and cannot have a tax escrow account with your bank/mortgage company. You can get an application in the Town Clerks Office at 180 Main Street or online at www.southberwickmaine.org by clicking on the Assessor's Department. You can also call Nancy Crowley at 384-3300 Ext 102 or call Beverly Hasty at 384-3006 for more information.

Pay Taxes Online

The Town offers residents a fast, easy & safe way to conveniently pay your tax bill online. Go to www.southberwickmaine.org. Click the Online Services Button and choose tax check out. Here you can view an online replica of your tax bill or pay the bill. No registration is required.

South Berwick Public Library

Have you ever wanted to turn those home video clips into a real family movie, make a short film or animation? The Friends of the Library have purchased professional video-editing software (Final Cut & Motion) for our new iMac computer stations which the public is welcome to come and use. We have also added animation software (Animationish by Fablevision) on two computers. Introduction to video editing classes are planned for next winter.

South Berwick Youth Center

November 14th

15th Annual Penny Sale & Bake Off

This is our most important fundraiser each year to keep the Center open for the youth of South Berwick. Local business are asked to donate new items or gift cards for the raffles and the theme baskets. The annual Bake-Off is for all ages with a \$2 entry fee. There are 3 categories: 1. cakes & cupcakes 2. pies & 3. cookie bars & brownies. Doors open at 8am and judging starts at 10am. If you would like more information or are interested in being a judge for the Bake-Off, Call Louise at 216-3046.

We are planning a new project featuring a Town Cook Book. We would like to feature favorite recipes from right here at home. If you have a great tried & true recipe you want to include or would like to help, send an email to Louise at loukev86@gmail.com. Please be specific and include your contact information. Helpful tips, advice & photos welcome.

We appreciate your support!

South Berwick Firefighters Association
Penny Sale

October 4th at the Community Center. Doors open at 9am and drawing begins at 4pm (must be present to win).

Important Tax Information From
The Assessor

Your tax bill is comprised of three (3) separate assessments reflecting your portion of the costs associated with the school district, county government & local government. If you have questions regarding the cost of school funding, contact the Superintendent's Office at 439-2438; the County portion, contact the County Commissioner's Office at 324-1571 or for the local portion, contact South Berwick Town Hall at 384-3010 or 384-3015.

Recreation Department

We are excited to offer free programming to Great Works School kids! Once a month on early release Thursdays, presentations will be made by Mad Science, Skytoyz Kite Adventures, Wild Animal Encounters, Frisbee Fun and a guest chef cooking class. The first presentation will be on 9/10. These programs are made possible by a grant from the Strawberry Festival.

Other upcoming events will include breakfast with Santa, the Valentines Day Father Daughter Dance, and the Easter event. Our Senior Center provides programs to enrich the lives of area adults who are over the age of 50 and facilitates connections to healthcare.

To find out more about any of these programs or other exciting events contact Sharon at the Community Center 384-3306 or check out the Town website.

Old Berwick Historical Society

Flag Pole Fundraising is underway! We have a "Chefs at the Counting House" series planned for Sundays 10/11, 10/25 & 11/1 at 2pm. A talk by Katie Moose on early Maine food and herbs followed by other fascinating topics by Jim Haller and Kathy Gunst, our own South Berwick culinary greats. Requested donation is \$10 at the door to help us "Rally Round the Flagpole". Visit www.olderberwick.org, our Facebook page, twitter @OBHS-Maine or call 384-0000 for more information.

LIBRARY**NEW EXTENDED HOURS**

Tuesday: 10 am to 5 pm
Wednesday: 10 am to 9 pm
Thursday: 10 am to 5 pm
Friday: 1 pm to 5 pm
Saturday: 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 384-3308

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

SEPTEMBER 12th from 9am to 1pm
South Berwick Regional Maintenance Facility at 534B Rt.4 in Berwick. More information is on the Town website.