

Eliot Town Manager Report

July 6, 2023

Submitted by

Michael J. Sullivan to the Eliot Selectboard

Honorable Select Board, this is an abridged accounting of some of the projects and issues I and the dedicated municipal staff have been working on lately for the benefit of the Town of Eliot and its citizens.

FY23 to FY 24 Budget Transition.



The annual transition has begun to switch the “books” over from FY 23 to FY 24. We will have the preliminary expense/receipt report out later next week which will give us a glimpse in to how the budget fared. As we have discussed several times the “budget” is fluid, every attempt is made to stay within the budgeted funds for the assigned expenditure, overall, but as we all know the only thing you can expect is the unexpected.

By way of example, we will likely exceed the budgeted amount for General Assistance, the efforts of the GA Administrator were admirable, but ultimately the increased cost of rents, fuel and other allowable costs were greater than expected. As this is a stand-alone department budget there is no room to adjust with other lines. This expense is 75% reimbursable from the State of Maine, so the net effect will be less than \$500 to the Town of Eliot and it will have a negligible effect on the budget.

As is true each year, there will be some departments which will return unused funds to the municipal treasury. There is a number of reasons for these returns including but not limited to, contract timing, unfilled positions, material shortages, even on rare occasions lower quotes for planned work. At the end of the day, I am confident the budget will be contained within the FY 23 parameters set by the voters with excess returned to the GF.

We should have accurate and final balances by early September or sooner, depending on when vendors submit their final invoices for FY 23 services and any other minor adjustments we may need to consider.

Transfer Station Kittery-Eliot.

As a result of my conversations with Kittery officials, I am going to have to pronounce this idea DOA or at least on life support. I appreciate the Kittery Town Manager’s enthusiasm and allowing me to have open conversations with Kittery DPW staff about the possibilities.

The conversations certainly did not provide me with a any indication the possibility of consolidating the two Transfer Station operations was going to move forward or be designed in any manner acceptable to KDPW. I think everyone would agree, unless there is true buy in up front we are headed to a hard “no”.

There were concerns expressed in our conversation about capacity and lack of uniformity in the two operations and a few other real or imagined obstacles. I truly believe these hiccups could be resolved if all the parties were engaged. Being a realist, I needed to make the decision the mountain was too much to climb at this time and would rob other projects of time and attention, so for now I will set the “good idea” aside and patiently wait until the opportunities may evolve or at least the thinker’s thinking evolves.

Aging in Place AARP Award.



Congratulations to the Town of Eliot and especially to the Aging in Place Committee on receiving from AARP their designation as an Age Friendly Community 2023. The diligence and resolve of this ad-hoc committee continues to benefit all of Eliot.

The AIP is not waiting until Town Hall is renovated, as they move ahead with programming for the Fall in Town Hall.

I have committed to the AIP fearless leader to do everything I can to make the existing space and any future improved space available for programming. They also should be congratulated for their continued ability to find grant opportunities through multiple sources, much appreciated.

Town Hall July 4th Schedule.

The recent schedule changes to accommodate customers heading into the Fourth of July extended weekend by opening on Friday June 30 for 7:30AM to noon was moderately successful. While there was few residents or visitors it did allow the skeleton staff working to catch up on other tasks.

As always, we greatly appreciate the patience and understanding of the Eliot public. Your kind gestures and comments go a long way in offsetting the rare acidic comment leveled by the small minority of citizens we serve. Having the right people in place for the most common requests is a balancing act of staffing. Luckily, we have some wonderful versatile and dedicated employees who are willing to adjust when they are able to do so.

November Warrant Requests

It is hard to imagine, however we have begun to prepare for the November state election and the local warrant that will piggyback the ballot. There will be some new ordinances likely proposed from the Select Board and the Planning Board.

I will also be asking the Select Board to consider some substantial investments of undesignated funds for a range of projects. This may include replacement of Engine #4 at the Fire Department. Making this appropriation now for the down payment will allow the vehicle to be

ordered after the appropriate bids. Presently the two primary companies who build these specialized pieces of equipment are 800 days out from the day you order. Yes, that is over two years. While #4 useful life is stretched at this point, the Chief Muzeroll is relatively confident Eliot will make through the two-year wait. The cost of the new vehicles has risen over 25% from last year, waiting another six months to get the process started would be dangerous if not irresponsible.

Included in my request to the board will be funding for improvements to Murray Rowe Park, and Town Hall. It will also address Public Works, Police Department vehicle/equipment needs. Once the request is approved by the Select Board, I will recommend it be sent to the Budget Committee. While sending this to the Budget Committee is not required, as the requested expenditure comes from existing funds, therefore these appropriations have no direct budgetary impact, it is prudent and respectful to have the BC review the proposals.

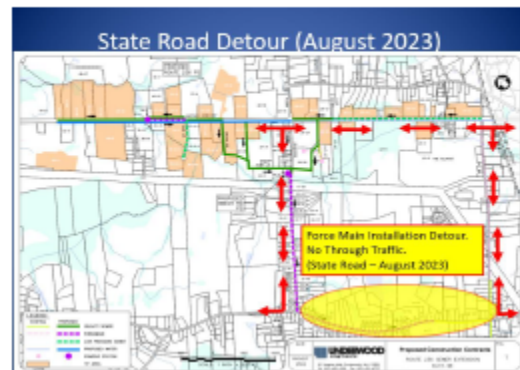
Even after, if these proposed expenditures are approved there will be more than healthy balances left in reserves to protect the Town of Eliot against any unforeseen and/or extreme circumstances. I look forward to more public review on these proposals, once they are more developed.

Route 236 Water and Sewer Extension.

The project continues to move forward and we encourage residents to follow information posted on the town website.

Next Two (2) Weeks

The following work is expected to take place along State Rd. and Route 236 (Harold Dow Highway) between Beech Rd. and Bolt Hill Rd. (See Page 1 showing the location and progress of the work).



- State Rd. will be closed to thru traffic during the regular work hours of 7AM – 5PM
- Thru traffic will be detoured around State Rd. using Bolt Hill Rd., Route 236, and Beech Rd.
- Normal traffic patterns will be restored at the end of each workday and over the weekend.
- Emergency personnel will be able to access State Road.

You also can sign up for updated information at rt236project@eliotme.org . Please note blasting of ledge in the area of State and Beech is schedule to commence July 13th, again more information can be found on town website and questions can be sent to email address listed above. As always, thank you for your patience.

I hope everyone is enjoying the temporary respite provided by the 4th of July break, we have been informed the work will resume today. It was nice while it lasted!

Website “Refresh”.

We have had our first meeting with CivicReady, to introduce us to the functionality of the CivicReady component platform for our new website. This feature will provide us with a superior public communications tool. Residents and others will be able to sign up and receive news and announcement on your computer or tablet, by voice message or text. It will also allow you to choose the notifications you want to receive. However, in emergency situations determined by the Police, or Fire Chief or Town Manager an emergency message will be sent to everyone listed in the system, no matter their preference with the related information.

We have another meeting with our “separate” web design team from CivicPlus next week. This will be a four-month project, but the behind the scene construction has already commenced. We are all very excited about possibilities. One small feature will be that anytime a meeting is streaming from the Town Hall main meeting room you will be able to simply go to the website home page and click on the front-page livestream button and view the proceedings. We continue to attempt to make it easier and provide multiple means of communication to our shared constituency.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

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Town of Eliot, Manager