

Eliot Town Manager Report

January 27, 2022

Submitted by

Michael J. Sullivan

To

Eliot Selectboard

Please accept this abridge report of activities and projects I and the dedicated staff have been working on in Town Hall these past few weeks.

Town Hall Hours. As you are aware I recently made the managerial decision to adjust the schedule of Town Hall public hours. Eliot Town Hall will be open Monday through Thursday 8:30 AM (except holidays) until 3:30 PM beginning February 1st. We also will make staff available to the greatest extent possible to accommodate appointments made in advance, particularly when there are extenuating or emergency situations.

We also continue to offer curbside when it is requested and we are able to accommodate. This does not affect the required work hours of the staff. However, right now we are doing a great deal of “coverage” due to one key open position, staff absences (legitimate) and without previous training there is certainly a loss in service.

In making this managerial decision I weighed the causal effect to the public, the patterns of customer access to Town Hall, how we can augment access and service and the capacity to provide quality service. We continue to encourage patrons to call ahead if they intend to visit a specific person or department to ensure they will be available.

Citizens are most upset when they expect service and for various reasons mentioned above, we cannot do so. This hopefully will match our capacity closer to the stated schedule and within reasonable range of the expectation. Thank you for understanding.

Town Hall Building Project. DigSafe was on site Wednesday January 26, 2022 to flag and mark subterranean utilities to allow the geotechnical test boring to take place on Monday January 31st at Town Hall. There will be a report to follow which will determine if there are and areas of soil contamination and if any further action is warranted to move forward in considering the plan.

Hopefully the predicted snow for this weekend will not interrupt the plan s to testy the soil, again. After the report is received the Chair Swanson has indicated he will call a meeting to discuss the findings and the updated drawings from Port City.

Treasurer/Finance Director. The vetting panel has interviewed several potential candidates and have a few more to consider. Although it will be difficult to replace Mr. Miles, Melissa Albert our HR Specialist has indicated to me there have been some potentially qualified candidates who have expressed interest. She and the panel hope to have a recommendation to me very soon for my consideration and final interview.

This will be followed by a conditional offer of employment based, a background check, appointment me as Town Manager and then approval by the Select Board. I am hoping my appointment will be before you for ratification by the February 10 SB Meeting.

The former Treasurer continues to provide valuable support and has agreed to do so for at least a few more weeks. It is a true credit to his professionalism as he learns his new position and continues to aid his former employer.

Tax Foreclosure Properties. It is always a gut-wrenching moment when after years of trying to assist residents in paying taxes the train runs out of track for some. Recently we foreclosed on five properties for by way of a tax lien and looks like the first ever for a sewer lien.

It is certainly our hope all these properties will be redeemed during next 60 days and revert back to the former owners. The Town of Eliot does not want these properties, but we are tasked with collecting taxes equitably.

When one considers there are over 3,000 taxable properties in Eliot having only a handful of foreclosures is commendable effort on the part of Collector Brenda Harvey and others who make every effort to avoid bringing it to this point. If we just cannot come to terms, we may have to make the properties available for auction, let's hope it does not result in such an action.

Eliot Agriculture and Food Security Commission (EAFSC). I apologize about the weeks delay in getting the information out in regards to EAFSC, but we now have formally announced via a press release and information on our website. We are hoping there will be some excitement from farmers, hobby farmers, gardeners, nutritionist, people who know logistics and people who think logistically.

There is more information on the Eliot Town website about this exciting project and I encourage anyone with interest to send an email to townmanage@eliotme.gov with questions or letters of interest.

Absence. As you know I was out of work unexpectedly last week with a sciatic nerve attack, something I have never experienced. It was painful to say the least. I have returned with the use of my pink walker. I was able to get in Saturday January 22 to work with Jordan Miles and if the weather cooperates and they have snow tires for my walker to be in this Saturday as well.

I am sorry this has happened at a critically inopportune time, but I will redouble my effort to catch up.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Manager, Eliot