

Eliot Town Manager Report

March 21, 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.

Eliot Garden Club.

Town Planner Jeff Brubaker and I recently meet with the Skip DeVito, Retta Fitch, Barbara Longstaff from the Eliot Garden Club recently. I conveyed how appreciative to Town of Eliot is of their efforts to bring beauty to public spaces, whether along 236 or at the Boat Basin.

There was discussion about ensuring the Garden Club has a seat at the table whenever possible as plans for 236 improvements are developed. I assured them we would do our best to keep the GC apprised of any plans or activity with MEDOT for road improvements and include them directly in any meetings which are appropriate. I reaffirmed to them they Eliot Select Boards support for their efforts to find places along the route to beautify such as the median near the Beech and Dow Highway intersection.

They also asked and were granted permission to add planting to the various gateway signs welcoming people to Eliot. Like the one across from White Herron or as you come into South Eliot on 103. Their passion for flowers and making everyone's day a little brighter is palpable.

Municipal Fees.

The sub-committee appointed by the Select Board has had an initial discussion about the proposed adjustments to the various fee schedules from department managers. There was progress made towards a recommendation to the full board, however in order to give a comprehensive response to all the changes I have been tasked with gathering additional information.

There also was a good conversation about how we may increase education of the public about ways each of us could reduce waste costs by utilizing existing recycling programs, getting more out of what we use or I know it is hard.....but doing without.

We will likely meet in April again and work to get a final schedule before the Select Board for the April 27th or May 11th meetings.

Tax Title Takings

As the Select Board is aware we recently have taken possession of four properties (map/lot 29-37, 38-30,74-13, 74-05). We have been alerted, after asking Town Counsel to review the takings, there was a flaw in the process. It seems we sent out the notification four days early, so if someone was to call the takings into question it may present a problem when perfecting a deed.

The remedy is we need to send out an additional letter and allow the listed owners or their estates to redeem the property. The redemption period extension will last for thirty days and at which time the Town will have clear title if the taxes are not paid in full.

This is a hiccup in the process and I expect there will be attempt to redeem the properties by any of the owners of record, as they have been notified several times.

Boat Basin



As anyone who has traveled through the Boat Basin recently and seen the floats for the boat launch lying in dry dock or dry rot depending on your perspective can readily see the condition of the individual floats give pause to their ability to provide safe access for boaters.

These docks are twenty years old according the representative from the Maine Department of Agriculture Bureau of Parks and Lands who actually built the floats.

William Cunningham has worked for the State of Maine for 48 years building docks and managing properties and structures from Lubec to Eliot and every river, lake, pond or Atlantic Ocean exposed dock across the great State of Maine.

His experience and grasp of the challenge facing Eliot in this instance was and is a life raft for the boating access at Dead Duck in Eliot. If not for his intervention I am unsure what we would do as some of the floats are beyond repair and the remain ones are treading water, so to speak.

The Town of Eliot missed the deadline for a grant request to get new floats last year (deadline is October) to get new floats this year. We have applied for the 2024 boating season and will receive five new floats, as thankful as we are Director Tom Linscott and his staff for approving our 2024 grant application that does not help us for 2023.

However, after explaining our dilemma and lack of options the bureau went into action and sent Mr. Cunningham to Eliot to problem solve and assess the need. He found the need was great and immediately constructed a solution on the spot. William offered to move two brand new floats and one slightly used float to Eliot that were scheduled for another location. This will allow us to rebuild remaining floats, the State will also supply the material for the rebuild.

The Public Works will rebuild three of the floats, two to be used and one to be retained as a back-up. The two most distressed will be scrapped after being stripped of useful hardware and or useable components.

Thank you to the State of Maine of Bureau Parks and Lands for their help in solving this problem and thank you to Representative Michelle Meyers for advocating for this program, encouraging the department's cooperation and always supporting Eliot!

Public Works Department

All parties are still dealing with the loss of Steve Robinson, the emotional and organizational stress is significant, daunting, crushing, pick an adjective to describe it and it is insufficient to start. I have taken on the role of Interim/Acting Director as we try to piece together a strategy short term and long-term moving forward.

The staff, has stepped up to the plate big time, Jim Roy as Highway Foreman, Jordan Tweedie is back running administrative issues and Craig Brown continues to have control over the vehicle and garage operations. The balance of the staff is confident in continuing their duties as previously instructed.

Each of the full-time employees and I have met to discuss the present and the future of the operations, the open laborer's position and the Director's position has been advertised. I will also be seeking an experienced Public Works consultant to help on-site at the operation.

Melissa Albert has also been extremely helpful in this difficult situation. She has been going to the garage (will be there Friday) to oversee and manage some of the workload. I cannot thank everyone for meeting with me (including Don Sylvester, what a great resource). We will never be able to replace Steve Robinson, but we must forge ahead with delivering the service he took so much pride in offering to the public.

Respectfully submitted

Michael J. Sullivan

Town of Eliot, Manager