



Eliot Town Manager Report

October 20, 2022

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.

Sewer Expansion Project. The Town of Eliot has passed a major milestone for this long-awaited expansion of the municipal sanitary sewer system. Finally, we have hammered out the final construction terms and have entered into an agreement to allow Defelice Construction to begin their work.

This substantial public investment in water and sewer infrastructure will have environmental and economic benefits for generations for the citizens of Eliot. The expansion will allow a more diverse assortment of business enterprises to consider Route 236 for their investment and growth.

There will be a pre-construction meeting in November with Maine DOT, Unitil, Consolidated, other utilities and project partners to start to map out the project schedule. If the weather cooperates there may be some minor site work along Beech Road throughout the winter. In early March we expect to have one more construction partner meeting closely followed by a meeting where the public will be encouraged to attend (also in March).

There will be more disruption in traffic as we proceed and there are other projects anticipated which will add to the travel misery. We try our best to coordinate the projects to alleviate

conflict, but given the infusion of infrastructure money, the scarcity of qualified contractors, the shortage of materials and whatever mother nature throws at us, it is nearly impossible.

Comcast Contract. We have received the final version of the contract for review. As discussed at the Select Board Meeting where the draft was approved in September. This is an eight-year agreement, will add a 3% surcharge to each Comcast customers cable bill (about \$3 a month), allow the governmental access channel to be activated giving the 1,853 households in Eliot who receive cable from Comcast to view public meetings. Under FCC rules and guidelines the funds are overseen by the municipal executive branch (Select Board).

The streaming service will continue and we will still be using remote participation through Zoom when appropriate and as we have been doing. The dependability and quality of the broadcast (including the sound) will be greatly improved on the cable access channel, the agreement covers the cost for additional and better equipment from Comcast.

As we try to improve communications with all citizens this will be a significant tool for more than two thirds of the households in town to receive information. We hope to add to the public meetings by adding safety information and local events to the greatest extent possible.

MSAD #35. The October monthly meeting with Superintendent Caverly, other school/municipal officials from South Berwick was hosted in Eliot Town Hall recently. We had a discussion about the grant opportunities the district is pursuing for nutrition, mental health and STEM. The Superintendent was very positive and enthusiastic about the grants and how they will enhance education in the district.



I did plant the seed (see what I did there:) to bring the Eliot Agriculture and Food Security Committee together with the district's Director of Food Services. Hopefully this relationship will bear fruit (and vegetables) and bring the farm to the cafeteria.

Long run it would be great if we could also create some "farm" curriculum in hopes of getting students interested in farming. Thank you as always to Leslie Stevens (EAFSC) for being such a great facilitator.

The group also lightly touch on the MSAD#35 budget for FY 24 and it should come as no surprise given the state of fuel and labor costs the budget will increase. However, I am confident the leadership, including Superintendent Caverly and the school board are and will continue to do everything they possibly can to deliver quality education at the most resourceful cost-point.

Halloween. The night of tricks and treats is almost upon us and I would like to remind drivers, to be especially careful and ask parents to remind their children to enjoy the activities safely.

Town Hall (Police, Fire, Public Works) Telephone. It is looking more likely the new phone system being installed by Consolidated will actually happen, maybe even this year. Beginning December 7th the new equipment will start to be installed in Eliot Town Hall with the other locations in days shortly thereafter.

There will be interruptions in service at each address during the process, we will work to keep them to a minimum. Please be assured we are taking every step to ensure there is no interruption in emergency phone services. If you have any concerns, please contact me prior to December 7th and I will do my best to assuage those concerns.

Tidbits.

Congratulations to Maine Market (formerly Meet Market) on their reno and opening!

October 28 @ Regatta there is a fundraiser for the Eliot Fuel Fund call the Regatta for more details.

October 22 the Eliot Conservation Commission is hosting a Clean-up at Dead Duck be there at 11 AM if you can help.

Thank you to Kris Bisson for organizing the Veteran's Day Celebration call 439 1399 for more info

Respectfully submitted
Michael J. Sullivan
Town of Eliot, Manager