



Town of Newcastle

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Kevin L. Sutherland - Town Manager

4 Pump Street
PO Box 386
Newcastle, ME 04553
Tel. (207) 563-3441
Fax. (207) 563-6995

FROM: Kevin L. Sutherland, Town Manager
TO: Newcastle Select Board
CC: Town Staff
DATE: December 11, 2023
RE: Town Manager Report

Mills / Main Drainage Improvements

Pratt & Sons, the contractor for the MDOT drainage improvement project is continuing their work on Mills Road. They will hopefully be far enough up Mills Road to only need two flaggers and leave Main Street open in the next day or two.

Streetlights

At the end of November, I hosted a community meeting at the Harriet Bird Building in Sheepscot to gather some feedback from residents about streetlights and help to introduce myself to some more of our community members. Nine residents attended and shared their concerns and frustrations about prior work in the area. I working with some of them to develop a process for changes to modifications to which and when lights go on and off. Additionally, we're working to open better lines of communication between neighbors and their local government moving forward.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant

Last month, the Town of Newcastle Fire Department submitted a grant application through the Maine Forest Service to help offset the purchase of Booster hose and firefighting coats. Unfortunately we found out today that we were not awarded this grant.

Upcoming Agenda Items

Item 10 on the Select Board Agenda is a list of items staff hope to bring to your attention at a future meeting. This section of the Manager's Report tries to provide some initial background information to that list.

Fire Engine Bid

Due to the complexity of this item and the desire for additional parameters for the decision makers, we decided to delay this discussion to another meeting.

Comprehensive Plan State Approval

In the [Manager Report from September 25th](#), I mentioned the comprehensive plan and how Michael and I were looking to bring to your attention the changes we'd need to make to the current document to get state approval. We are nearly complete with our review and are still working on the recommendations we'd suggest changing.

Posted Road Application

This item stems from the request by residents to post North Newcastle Road shared at the [November 27th](#) meeting. Based on the conversation at that meeting, I intend to bring you a draft process in January

Ground Lease Agreement

This item is related to the conversation we had on [November 13th](#) about the potential for a Cell Tower on our landfill. Just keeping this on the near-term list as we work through details with legal.

Fish Ladder Agreement

Earlier this summer, the Select Board met with Newcastle's representative to the Damariscotta Mills Fish Ladder Restoration Committee to begin discussions on an interlocal agreement. I believe we'll be ready to present this agreement and other documents for your consideration at an upcoming meeting.

In the meantime, the committee is continuing to make improvements in the area. The next step is to remove some trees and tree limbs near the new bridge. They received two quotes around \$5k and Newcastle's share would then be about \$1,650.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

This item was discussed at the [October 23rd](#) meeting with a request to postpone until after the New Year. I've placed it on the future agenda items as a reminder that the Select Board needs to make a decision about what they would like to do with the draft ordinance.

Harbormaster Ordinance

This item is on the Ordinance and Policy Review Work Plan for January. The Harbor Committee previously worked on making changes to this ordinance back in the Spring of last year and I'll be working with both Damariscotta Town Manager and legal to further review (as this is a joint town ordinance) before bringing anything forward.