



Town of Newcastle

www.NewcastleMaine.us

Kevin L. Sutherland - Town Manager

4 Pump Street
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Tel. (207) 563-3441
Fax. (207) 563-6995

FROM: Kevin L. Sutherland, Town Manager
TO: Newcastle Select Board
CC: Town Staff
DATE: March 11, 2024
RE: Town Manager Report

GSB CSD to GSB RSU

AOS#93 is holding a public meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at Great Salt Bay School, 559 Main St, Damariscotta, to discuss the formation of the Great Salt Bay Regional School Unit (GSB RSU) which is a consolidation of the following School Boards/Committees: Great Salt Bay CSD, Bremen School Board, Damariscotta School Board, and Newcastle School Board.

More information including an organization chart and a letter from Lynsey Johnson, AOS #93 Superintendent explaining the proposal is available online at <https://www.aos93.org/page/strategic-vision-2025>. Interested residents are also welcome to stop by the Superintendent's Office, 767 Main Street 1A, Damariscotta or by contacting your local School Board members.

Letter of Support and Joint Application for Housing Grant

One of our top priorities is working to address housing needs in the two communities.

Last Thursday, the Town of Damariscotta submitted a grant on behalf of both Towns (with drafting assistance and actual submission by LCRPC). The Town of Newcastle provided a letter of support which is attached to this report.

The goal of this grant is to hire a firm to identify 4 sites (2 per town) and develop some site plan designs / layouts for workforce housing (specifically for first responders). Of those 4 sites, we'd also look to develop some concept drawings / rendering on 2 (1 per town).

This grant is for \$125,000 (we are able to ask for this higher amount because we are submitting jointly). There is some in kind contribution related to this, but the majority of it will be staff time. If awarded, I believe the actual dollar amount we might have to contribute will be around \$1,250 of a match for another ASK grant to get LCRPC involved in some of the research work. So, if awarded, I will bring this to the board for their acceptance (and recognition of potential financial responsibility).

Why are you only hearing about this now? We met with the fire departments to talk about housing needs a little over two weeks ago after learning about the opportunity. We met with LCRPC last Friday when Andy and I both realized we could use some additional support to get this done, and managed to pull it together in between our budget and packet preps. A big thank you to the Fire Chiefs John Roberts and Casey Stevens, to Andy Dorr, Town Manager in Damariscotta, and Emily Rabbe and Laura Graziano from the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission for helping us get this across the finish line.

PSAC Meeting

Last week, Michael and I met with the Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility Collaborative, a group of mostly Damariscotta residents who advocate for updates to multi-modal infrastructure. With some of the recent discussions about improvements in the Newcastle downtown (ie – the Village Partnership Initiative), they're interested in connecting with more Newcastle residents. If Newcastle residents are interested in getting involved with the group, they can reach out to Anton Lahnston at antonlahston@aol.com. Note: PSAC is not a municipally recognized organization but is a local collaborative made of residents advocating for and promoting walking and biking in the area.

Nomination Papers

This June there are several open seats on the ballot for local elected official positions. Two seats for the Select Board/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor, one seat for the School Board, and one seat as a Great Salt Bay Sanitary District Trustee.

Nomination Papers are available at the Town Office and the filing deadline is Friday, April 12, 2024, no later than 12:00 pm (noon). Submitted signatures need to be not less than 25, and not more than 100. Public Notices have been in the local newspaper.

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.

Update on Priorities

Believe it or not, it's been almost 4 months since we last reviewed this. Providing an update on 3/25 will put us in line with the next review at the first meeting of the new select board session.

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

In summer of 2023, the Select Board met with Newcastle's representative to the Damariscotta Mills Fish Ladder Restoration Committee to begin discussions on an interlocal agreement. There seems to be some reluctance to formalize anything at the moment. Jim and I are still working toward a solution. We'll have a more comprehensive update for the second meeting in March.

Harbor Management Ordinance

This item was discussed in a joint workshop with Damariscotta in mid-January. We're just waiting to get through the budget process to begin reviewing the suggested changes for a late summer/early fall goal of a Joint Special Town Meeting to address this Ordinance and hopefully any changes to the Shellfish Conservation Ordinance.



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March 7, 2024

Ben Averill
Housing Opportunity Program Coordinator
Department of Economic and Community Development
housing.decd@maine.gov

RE: RFA# 202312254 – Housing Opportunity Program Municipal Grants Joint Application for the Towns of Damariscotta and Newcastle

Mr. Averill,

The Town of Newcastle would like to express its support for the Town of Damariscotta to be the lead applicant on our joint application for the Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) Housing Opportunity Program Municipal Grant (RFA# 202312254).

Over the years, the Select Boards of Newcastle and Damariscotta have continued to explore ways to share resources, complete regional projects, and communicate with each other on opportunities to enhance the "Twin Villages". Last fall, the two boards actively decided to hold quarterly meetings to discuss the needs and priorities of Damariscotta and Newcastle. In October of 2023, the two boards met to identify their top three priorities to work on collaboratively:

- Addressing Housing Needs
- Coordinating our Future Land Use Development
- Finding Solutions to Transportation Challenges

The number one priority for us is addressing housing needs. Something else we heard from staff was the challenge of recruitment and retention of first responders and travel times for existing staff and volunteers. When we became aware of this Housing Opportunity Program through the Department of Economic and Community Development, it seemed like a great fit in our joint effort to identify and scope possibilities for a first responder workforce housing project and locations in the two towns. If awarded, these funds would assist us in the feasibility of potential sites, work to garner community support, and begin to develop a program. Taking us several steps closer to making these concepts a reality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Sutherland
Town Manager, Newcastle



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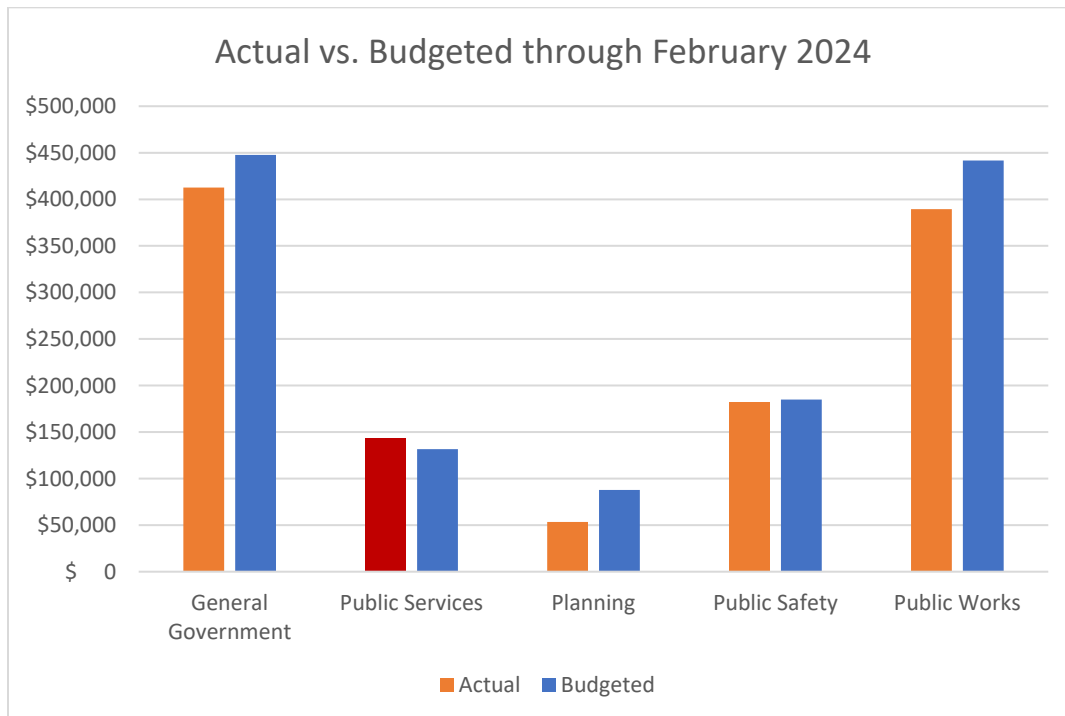
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FROM: Kevin L. Sutherland, Town Manager
TO: Newcastle Select Board
CC: Town Staff
DATE: March 11, 2024
RE: Town Manager Monthly Financial Report

We've now reconciled our accounts through eight months of the fiscal year (July – February). This memo was developed to show a quick snapshot of Actual spending compared to Budget.

After eight months or 66.67% of the fiscal year (represented below in the blue bars for each of the spending categories), there is only one category which we're currently over budget (red bar) – Public Services.

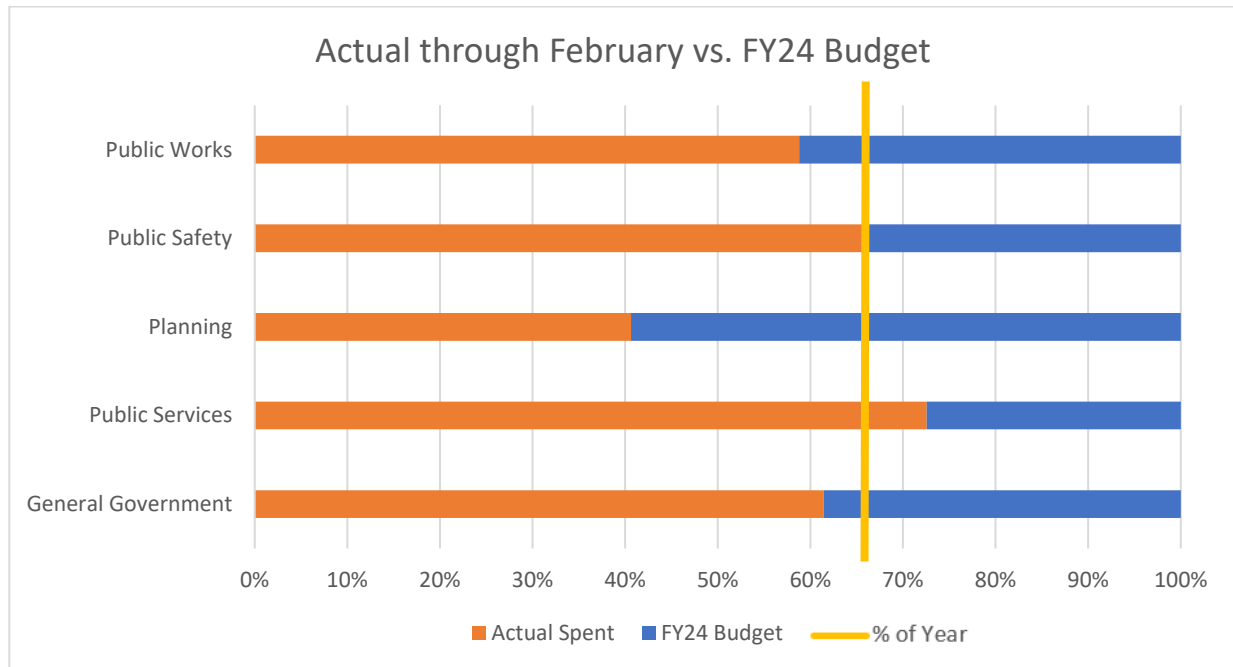
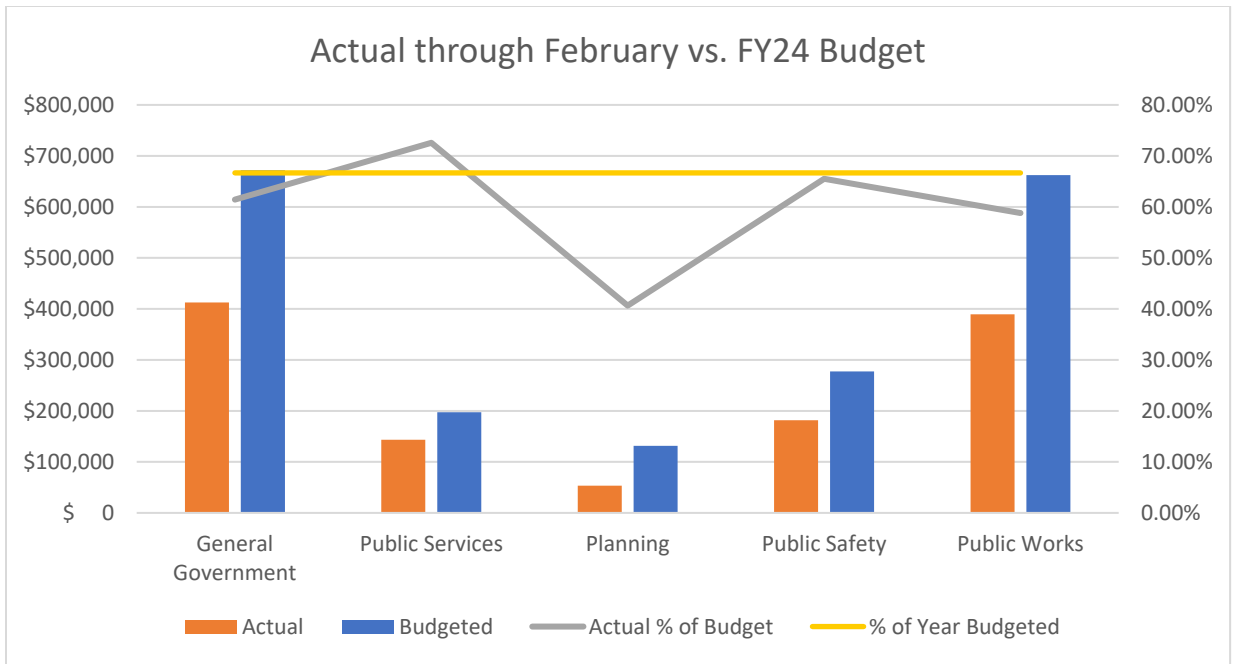


Public Services

This category is over the eight-month budget as the provider agencies have all received their contributions. If we were to amortize those payments, we would be at 61.40% of the Public Services category actual expenditures for eight months. Below the budgeted 66.67%.

Overall

The sum of Budget through February is \$1,293,712 (66.67% of budget) and the sum of Actual through February is \$1,180,709 (60.84% of budget). This has Newcastle under budget through February by \$113,003 (or 5.82% under budget).



	FY24 Budget	Actual thru 02/24	Remaining
General Government	\$671,665	\$412,660	\$259,005
Public Services	\$197,542	\$143,352	\$54,190
Planning	\$131,651	\$53,504	\$78,147
Public Safety	\$277,311	\$181,678	\$95,633
Public Works	\$662,399	\$389,516	\$272,883
TOTAL OPERATING	\$1,940,568	\$1,180,709	\$759,859