



Town Manager's Report to the Town Council

Submitted by:
Michael W. Heavener
December 8, 2009

Town of Winslow - In the heart of Central Maine representing People, Pride and Progress.

UNITY COLLEGE PRESENTATION

Over the past few months, Unity College Professor Lois Ongley and some of her students have been studying the Chromium levels in the newly emerged land along the Sebasticook River.

Professor Ongley and her students will be giving a presentation on the results of their study at the December 14th Town Council meeting. The presentation is expected to last 30 to 45 minutes.

ORDER # 20-2009

In your packet is Order # 20-2009, which if adopted would permit me to convey the newly acquired riverfront land to the abutting owners. Attached to the order is a document outlining four options for assessing a fee for the land to be conveyed. Please keep in mind that the payment options assume 100% of the abutters will acquire the abutting property from the Town. The total number of lots to be conveyed figure used in the formulas is an estimate since I have not received the final figure from the surveyor. The total town cost figure is also an estimate since all of the costs have not yet been received, such as the legal fees to convey the land.

The order also requires that the Town retain the flowage rights, which will be beneficial if Hydro Power becomes an option in the future.

The surveyor, Elwood Ellis, is expected to have a lot map of the riverfront land to be conveyed by the meeting on December 14th.

RESOLUTION # 49-2009

If approved, Resolution #49-2009 will authorize me to accept Federal grant funds of

up to \$78,000.00 for a Safe Routes to School Project. The acceptance of the funds requires an 11% local match of up to \$10,000.00.

The School Department is committed to providing the required match and will have representatives at the Council meeting on the 14th to answer any questions.

RESOLUTION #48-2009

The acceptance of this resolution will permit me to renew our call handling agreement with the Somerset County Communication Center. With this new agreement our costs will increased \$1,935.75 to \$9,678.75. The cost is still considerably less than what it would be if we contracted with the State's regional dispatch center at a rate of \$12.76 per capita. With this new agreement our proposed combined rate with Waterville and Somerset County is \$5.12 per capita for call handling services.

HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS WILL INCREASE

Our health insurance premiums with the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust will increase 8% in January. The increase represents an additional cost to the Town of \$30,124 annually.

I have included some material in your packet, which explains the increase.

Our dental premiums increased as well by \$645 or 4%.

OVER

SIX MONTH COUNTY TAX

In your packet is Resolution #50-2009, which if approved would allow me to extend payment of our six month transition county tax over a five year period (see enclosed letter from Kennebec County). This additional tax payment is the result of Kennebec County converting to a July—June fiscal year.

Our six month transition tax payment is \$241,092. If we extend our payment over a five year period our annual payments will be approximately \$48,218. The interest rate on the unpaid balance for this year will be 1.5%.

I am recommending we begin with a five year payment plan because of unstable revenues and rising costs. As our economic outlook improves we can revisit our transitional tax payment and pay it off sooner if

we choose.

I will need to notify Kennebec County of our decision by February 15, 2010.

TOWN MANAGER'S CONTRACT

When the new Charter amendments go into effect on January 1st, my position with the Town becomes contractual. Therefore, I am requesting that two Town Councilors work with me to draft my employment contract that can be acted on by the full Council on January 11, 2010. The contract will likely need to be approved with a Council Order so it will not be finalized until February.

CHRISTMAS EVE

If there are no objections by the Council, I would like to close the Town Office at noon time

this year on Christmas Eve, which would be followed by an employee pot-luck lunch here at the Town Office. After lunch I would like to give the employees the remainder of the day off to spend with family or to travel to their Christmas destination.

CHIEF GRINDALL RETIRING

As you know, Police Chief Richard Grindall will be retiring on December 11, 2009 after 33 years of service on the Winslow Police Department.

Dick began his law enforcement career here on August 5, 1976. He worked his way up through the ranks and became the Police Chief in 2006.

Winslow is a better place because of his service and we wish him a happy and lengthy retirement.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season

