



Town Manager's Report to the Town Council

Submitted by:
Michael W. Heavener
April 4, 2012

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

PROPOSED FY 2013 BUDGET SUMMARY

In your packet is Budget Order No. 6-2012, which reflects the changes made to the FY 2013 proposed budget. The only budget adjustment not yet reviewed by the Council since the last budget workshop is an increase in School Revenues of \$3,862.90 from the State.

Currently the proposed FY 2013 Budget calls for a half (1/2) Mil increase from 15.50 to 16.00. The Mil increase represents a 3% tax increase and would cost the average homeowner an additional \$69.00 (*the average house is valued at \$137,500*). Property taxes have not increased over the past four (4) years. Town surplus funds of \$650,400 are being used to support the budget.

Although the overall budget (*school & municipal combined*) has decreased by 3% or \$517,662 when compared to last year, the Town's share of Education has increased by 14% or \$718,000. This increase is due to a loss of Education Revenues totaling \$1,397,744. The School budget was reduced by 5% or \$679,744 to help mitigate the impact to the Municipal budget due to the loss in revenues.

The overall increase in the Municipal budget is 7% or \$880,082, which reflects the increase in the Town's share of Education and an increase of 2% or \$162,082 in Municipal operation costs. Contributing to this increase is a Sewer Line reconstruction project totaling \$144,000.

The only matter not yet resolved, which could have an impact on this proposed budget, is finalizing the scope of the Police Department Addition/Renovation Project. I am hopeful the scope of the project can be finalized at Monday night's meeting before the first reading of this Budget Order.

FORMER PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE UPDATE

In 2007 we received a Brownfield Phase I Assessment grant from KVCOG. The purpose of the grant was to conduct an environmental impact assessment at the site of our former Public Works Garage. This impact study was necessary for us to determine what uses would be suitable for the site in the future. The final Phase I Assessment was completed in 2010.

The Phase I Assessment concluded there was enough concern about soil contamination at the site to warrant a more thorough Phase II Brownfield Assessment. We applied for and received a Brownfield Phase II Assessment grant from KVCOG. The Phase II Assessment began in late 2010 and was completed in December 2011. The Assessment concluded harmful vapors may be migrating from two locations on the site to neighboring properties.

On March 9, 2012, I met with representatives from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) to discuss the results of the Phase II Assessment. The MDEP has made two recommendations. The first is to install a sub-slab vapor mitigation system beneath the former PW Garage to lower the vapor intrusion risk potential to both onsite and offsite properties. Our Public Works Director is working on a system design and cost estimates.

The second recommendation is to conduct further testing at test site SB/SV 101 to determine if vapor migration is actually an issue at that location. MDEP representatives suggested I apply for funding through them to conduct the further testing.

I will keep the Council informed as to the progress of this project. Once the issues with the site have been addressed we can move forward with deciding what to do with the property.

TOWN CDBG APPLICATION UPDATE

At the last Town Council meeting I indicated I would be submitting a Letter of Intent for a CDBG Economic Development (ED) grant. The grant would help pay for the cost of some improvements at our Industrial Building. I also indicated that we would be using 4 of the 25 new jobs planning to be created by Orion to help meet the job creation requirement of the ED grant.

I recently learned, however, that Johnny's Selected Seeds was in need of more space at our Industrial Building and acquiring the needed space would allow them to create approximately 25 new jobs. As a result, I have delayed the submission of the Letter of Intent until I have met with representatives from Johnny's to determine their space needs.

On Friday, April 6th, I am scheduled to meet with representatives from Johnny's and Orion to discuss the space needs of both businesses. Darryl Sterling of the Central Maine Growth Council will be participating as well. The results of this meeting may have some influence on the scope of the Industrial Building project and our ED grant Letter of Intent.

ELECTRICITY COSTS DECREASING

In your packet is Order No. 5-2012, which is sponsored by Councilor Kenneth Fletcher and if approved would likely reduce our electricity costs by thousands of dollars (*approximately \$10,000*). Due to the fluctuation of electricity pricing I will be asking you to waive the second reading so that we can lock in on favorable rates.

TOWN OFFICE ENTRANCE CONCERNS

This past winter we had a customer sustain a minor head injury after she fell coming into the Town Office through the front entrance. Over the past 5 years we have had 10 people fall coming into the Town Office through the front entrance.

I have asked the Public Works Director to give me some options of eliminating the step at the entrance to the Town Office since the step appears to be a common factor in the falls. I will then share those options with the Town Council to determine if there is a viable option.

VACATION

I am planning to take a vacation from April 11th to the 20th and I expect to be unreachable during part of that time.

Therefore, with Town Council approval, I will submit a letter to the Town Clerk designating Paul Fongemie as administrative officer with the powers and duties of manager from April 11th to the 20th.