

Town Manager's Office – Stephen G. Eldridge, Manager

August arrived quickly and has gone just as fast. We finally got started on our long awaited paving projects. The Public Works Department did a great job ditching the roadways that would get paved. They also had many of the trees removed to provide for the ditches and to also give the roads more sunlight. On Diamond Hill, Wentworth, Pond and Beech Ridge Roads we ground the old pavement, mixed it with some stone and added gravel to improve the base. This year we put down a 2" base and we will come back next year to put down the 1 ½" top coat. We will also be looking at repairing or replacing the bridge on Diamond Hill Road.

The Town Hall Auditorium wall has been repaired. We put it out to bid and had two engineering firms attend a meeting to look at the job. Neither company submitted a bid so we hired a general mason and they took down the wall and replaced the brick. The mason found that the outside walls and metal infrastructure were fine. The walls have been sealed and are having gutters put up in that area to keep the roof drainage from pouring over the outside brick wall. We were grateful that everything went well for a lot less money than we had budgeted. The auditorium windows have been chosen and we hope to have them installed before the snow flies. The Clock Tower clock has been measured and details have been collected to order the clock replacements. These 4 clock drums will be custom made to fit the

openings that the current clocks fill. The new clocks will look similar to our existing face and arms and will be backlit. This should be completed by November.

The Prime Tanning site finally got underway this month. It took a long time to get the many different permits that are required but now, EnviroVantage is on site and tearing down buildings. They expect to have the Phase I section done by the end of October. Phase II of the site cleanup will continue into November and part of December. Mr. Kehaya and his wife, the owners, have been to Berwick recently talking with contractors and developers. They are very excited to get things moving on their end.

We closed on the PSNH property on Moulton Street; the 2+ acre site that fronts the Salmon Falls River. This property will be cleaned up and will become part of our MS-4 project and turned into a park with great views. We are hoping to qualify and be awarded the MDOT, Transportation Alternative grant to add a foot bridge over the river to Somersworth and split the cost using the same program in NH. This is all part of the Envision Berwick Committee's work.

Don't forget to read all the department head updates in the newsletter! Hope you all had a Great Summer!

Finance Office – Maureen Finger, Director

Tax Liens:

The Town filed 130 2016 tax liens. This was down from 150 filed in August 2015.

Tax Bills:

The Board of Selectmen, at their August 16th meeting, set the tax rate at **\$16.80** for the 2016-2017 tax year. The Homestead Exemption was increased to \$15,000 by the State of Maine and since the Town's certified ratio is 105%, Berwick residents with homestead exemptions will see a reduction of \$15,700 from their assessed values for tax purposes. The first half of the taxes are due October 17, 2016 and the second half is due April 18, 2017. **PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ONLY ONE TAX BILL WILL BE MAILED OUT EACH YEAR WITH TWO PAYMENT STUBS.** Also, if you have sold your property after April 1st, you need to forward the tax bill to the new owner. Otherwise, you could potentially have a tax lien filed in your name as you are owner of record on April 1st per State law.

End of the 2016 Budget Year:

The annual audit was completed the week of August 22nd and draft financial statements generated by the Town are being reviewed by the auditors. It is the goal to have completed financial statements for review by the Board of Selectmen by their first meeting in November.

Bond:

The Town is working to acquire funding as approved by the voters at the Town vote on June 14, 2016. We are reviewing various financing options and will be getting short-term financing bids, i.e. bond anticipation notes or BANs in early October. The Voter approved items included: the purchase and equipping of two new fire trucks, new windows in the Town Hall auditorium, repair of the brick wall in the auditorium, and new clock works for the clock tower. Permanent financing will be put into place with either the Spring Maine Municipal Bond Bank (MMBB) bond issue or the Fall MMBB bond issue depending upon obtaining final costs for these projects.



Police Department – Timothy Towne, Chief

The Police Department radio repeater was replaced on Monday, August 22nd. The process went smoothly with no serious concerns or issues encountered. The last repeater functioned for 16 years and we have been informed that the new one should have the same life span.

Officer Christopher Kearns began the Basic Police Training Program on Monday, August 15th. He has successfully completed his first two weeks and has adjusted well to the atmosphere at the Academy.

The telephone system replacement was completed on August 19th and is now the same system that the other Town departments had installed. It will take us some time to learn all of the new functions, however, it has been a smooth transition thus far. It has been over 15 years since we have had a phone system upgrade. We were finding that components for the old system were virtually impossible to find. The last additional telephone added was located on an eBay site.

We began our concentrated ATV patrols in the rural areas of our community. This is funded through the Maine Warden Service. We have participated in this program for over ten years. This has made a significant positive change for the rural areas that had been regularly misused. There are still isolated occurrences but far less frequently than prior to the inception of the program. The Maine Warden Service participates in some of these patrols during the course of the program. We will also be replacing the department's ATV which was purchased in 2006. We are currently working on compiling the specifications that the new ATV should have in order to meet the demands of our use.

We have started the search for the newly approved position which will be used for 50% investigations and 50% community relations. This is a unique skill set so a multifaceted police officer will be needed. We are excited and grateful for the community's support of the new position.

Fire Department – Dennis Plante, Chief

Present Staff Levels: 26 & 2 juniors.

One resigned due to personal reasons.

One out on medical leave.

Apparatus / Equipment Status:

Our Annual Apparatus pump testing has been completed with all pumps passing.

Annual Truck 1 Aerial Ladder and all ground ladder testing is scheduled for September 2016.

Annual Fire hose testing of all fire hoses was completed.

New Fire Apparatus vehicle specifications are still being developed and should be completed by mid-September, at which point, specifications will be sent out for bid quotes.

Fire Department Study Recommendations:

We are continuing the process of updating and adding to the Department's Fire Pre Plans and establishing a more formal in-service fire inspection program as recommended by the Fire Study Team, when staffing and funding levels are available.

Recruitment:

Effective July 11, 2016 the department started 24 hour shifts M-F. This change in schedule allows a transition period for our career staff. Once our new hire is fully trained, 24/7 shifts are planned to be started which will also cover Saturdays & Sundays. This is anticipated to occur around mid-September 2016.

July 27, 2016 Joel Barnes was hired as Berwick's newest career Firefighter/EMT.

Training

Firefighter Turner has finished her basic EMT program and is awaiting National Registry testing opportunities.

One members was enrolled in a February 2016 EMT program which was provided by American Ambulance as part of their contract with the Town of Berwick. That person has now completed that program and is awaiting final testing with the National Registry.

Maine Department of Labor requires all Fire apparatus Driver / Operators to be recertified every 3 years. This continues to be a priority and is an ongoing effort in getting those individuals recertified on Driving Apparatus.

Fire Prevention:

We conducted Wood Stove / Fire Safety Inspections, when requested by residents. This month we issued, inspected, and approved 46 open burning and seasonal camp fire permits for residents and one wood stove inspection.

Calls for Service:

Berwick Fire Department Staff responded to 65 calls for service involving Fire & EMS from July 25, 2016 to August 28, 2016.

No calls were missed for EMS services during this time period. The staffing of 24 hours shifts M-F has greatly helped with this effort.

Town Emergency Management Activities:

We received updated copies of MSAD 60 crises response plans for all 3 Berwick schools. Over a period of time, these plans will be insert into the Town's Emergency Management Plan.

Station:

The last remaining task for this year's station upgrade involved closing off the stairway leading to the second floor. That task has been started as of August 3, 2016.

Other:

Public Safety 2-way radio repeater system has been replaced at the water tower as of August 22, 2016.



Town Clerk's Office – Patricia Murray, Clerk

ELECTION WORKERS NEEDED!

November 8, 2016 is the General Election and Referendum Election with polls open from 6:00am to 8:00pm.

Ballot Clerks are needed for the November 8th election. Please contact the Clerk's office if you are interested in working! 207-698-1101 ext. 110. We can accommodate your schedule!

Permitting & Licensing in Berwick

Anyone interested in starting a business in Berwick should first call the [Code Enforcement Officer](#) or [Town Planner](#) to confirm that the proposed business/use is permitted by zoning at that location.

The Codes and/or Planning Staff would be happy to assist you with determining if the use is permitted and what level of review that use may require. Once you've been certified by Codes and/or Planning you will want to see the [Town Clerk](#) to acquire an official business license.

Code Enforcement Officer:

Joseph E. Rousselle, CEO & LPI

(207) 698-1101 ext. 122

code@berwickmaine.org

Town Planner

John Stoll, MCPD

(207) 698-1101 ext. 115

planning@berwickmaine.org

Town Clerk

Patricia Murray

(207) 698-1101 ext. 110

pmurray@berwickmaine.org

Office of Community Development and Planning – John Stoll, Director

Prime Tanning Brownfields Project Update:

EnviroVantage has begun demolition of the Prime Tanning property site. They will take down the wooden buildings around the site and then start on the cinder block center of the Southern Lot known as Lot 4. The last building to come down on this part of the project will be the lower wooden building in Lot 6 known as the Carpenter's Shop (This is currently serving as a barrier control).

Federal Funding will be available for the second grant project that will address the Northern part of the site in October. We are hopeful that EnviroVantage will be able to remain on site to minimize cost and begin demolition work in October on the second project.

Planning Board:

1.) The Planning Board granted preliminary approval to a Major Subdivision application

regarding two proposed apartment buildings containing 6 units each. The project is proposed at 119 Cemetery Road.

2.) The Planning Board approved a conditional use application submitted by House of Hope to move their current operation from downtown to 25 Sawmill Hill (Former Catholic Church). The proposed conditional use includes a church, restaurant, and function facility all within the old church structure. No use has been proposed for the former rectory at this time.

3.) September 15 the Planning Board will begin reviewing a proposed Elderly Housing facility at the former Estabrook School – 20 Wilson Street, behind the existing Police Station.

Board of Appeals: No appeals pending at this time.



Public Works Department – Robert Perschy, Foreman

The month of August started with us finishing up road work on Wentworth Road which included completing ditching and replacing cross culverts and driveway culverts. This is in preparation for reclaiming and paving. Once completed we were able to get caught up on some jobs that we couldn't do, due to the road work like crosswalk stripping, maintaining dirt roads, maintenance on vehicles and filling washouts from heavy thunder storms. While Diamond Hill Road was being reclaimed the crew hauled stone to place in front of the reclaimer to strengthen the base of the road, several tons of stone were required. Both

Diamond Hill Road and Beech Ridge Road were paved in August.

We continued fixing more washouts and ditching throughout August.

I would like to thank the full-time and part-time employees for their dedication to make all this happen throughout the hot summer days.

I also would like to thank Ian Dudley who did an excellent job in maintaining all the Town owned properties this summer throughout Town. He was a great asset to the Town. Ian had to leave us to attend his final year of school. Good luck Ian!



Recreation Department – Kim Taylor, Director

Recreation Events:

- * Plans for the Annual Halloween Event (Trunk-n-Treat) are underway. This event is Sunday October 30 from 5:30-7:30 at Town Hall and downtown area.
- * Berwick and Somersworth will be combining for the Holiday Parade this year on Saturday December 3 at 2:30pm.

Events at the Town Hall:

Rec. Commission:

- * The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19 at 6:30 pm. (This is one week later than usual, due to scheduling conflicts)
- * There is one regular member (3 year term) and one alternate member (1 year term) openings. Please contact the Recreation Director if interested.

Events at Memorial Field:

- * We had another great year for summer camp for grades K-8th grade. Total enrollment was 183 (K-2nd=45, 3-5th= 74, 6-8th= 64). The staff worked hard to bring lots of fun, games and activities to the kids. The

6 weeks of camp included basic skateboarding, water games, field trips to water parks, movies in the rain, kayaking at Berwick's own riverfront for the oldest group and a visit from Wildlife Encounters with really cool animals. Congratulations to an awesome staff and a successful summer program.

- * Football and cheering for all ages (K-8th) have begun. Travel soccer practices take place on weeknights on the lower field and Berwick Youth Soccer games will be on Saturday mornings. Fall baseball is also using the field for practice.

Upcoming/ongoing Offerings:

- * www.berwickrec.com
- * Recreation is offering a program on the MSAD#60 Early Release Thursdays for grades K-5 at the Hussey School.
- * Discount tickets were available for York's Wild Animal Kingdom, Water Country, Funtown/Splashtown Combo passes and Splashtown only.

