

To: Chair Peacock and Members of the Town Council
From: James Smith, Town Manager *JS*
Subject: Extended Weekly Report for August 29, 2025

Public Works Director – Bethany Leavitt:

- Participated in the kick-off meeting with EPA for the YMCA – Brownfields Cooperative Agreement and held kickoff meeting.
- Initiated work on the Town Request for Proposal (RFP) for Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) services. Worked on development of a milestone schedule with key grant deadlines.
- Supported Finance with GIS position applicant interviews.
- Provided review and comments on the SS4A draft Safety Action Plan.
- Conducted a site visit with Conner’s Emmerson Contractor to review the opportunity to connect Oak Street water main to Eden Street.
- Met with owner of 127 Sand Point Rd to close out retaining wall project.
- Communicated with MDEP and met with Salisbury Cove property owner regarding the relocation of the Town’s stormwater outfall pipe.

Highway Section

- Continued ongoing equipment repairs; vehicle checks; trash pickups, street sweeping / washdown; and cold-patching.
- Performed afternoon trash runs all week.
- Continued to perform routine repairs on the winter plow gear, trucks and light plow trucks.
- Initiated preparation of snow plows and spreader equipment.
- Completed ditching and shoulder work on Crooked Road between Old Norway Drive and Norway Drive.

Parks and Recreation Section

- Contractor schedule changed and the tennis courts and basketball court were not resurfaced as scheduled. We are waiting for the contractor to provide an updated schedule.
- Removed home run fence from ballfield #1 and stored for season.

Wastewater Section

- Continued to operate the three Wastewater Treatment Plants and eleven Pump Stations within regulatory requirements.
- Cleaned Clarifiers and Contact tanks at Main Treatment Facility.
- Replaced air handling blower at Hulls Cove Pump Station.
- Prepared for MDEP inspection of the Maine Treatment Facility.
- Maintained lawn around the Main Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- Met with electrical Contractor to discuss the PLC replacement project at the Hulls Cove Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Water Section

- Continued to operate the Water Treatment Facility within regulatory requirements.
- Provided water use and sewer bills by quarter for select customers for the last four (4) years.
- Spoke with Birch Bay Village about a possible future irrigation service line.
- Installed meter communications equipment on Kebo Street.
- In preparation for the Maine sanitary survey, inspected clear well area, Duck Brook pump house, dam level, pressure tanks located at Mountain Avenue and Rockwood.
- Continued cross training distribution staff on running the water treatment facility.
- Developed a *tentative* schedule for October water and sewer bills:
- Investigated color water complaint. Customer ran the cold water and the colored water ran clear.
- Greased fire hydrants in the distribution system.
- Began reviewing applicants for the summer residential use discount. The program adjusts sewer fees in October billing based on average water use for the first and second quarter of the calendar year. To be eligible, applicants must live on the property year-round, not run a business or vacation rental out of the property, apply for a single-unit residence, and submit the application by September 15.
- Completed six (6) dig safe utility location requests.
- Installed one (1) seasonal meter and replaced one (1) meter.

Environmental Services Section

- Crews operated the municipal solid waste (MSW) and recycling facilities, including accepting 23 gallons of used motor oil, 9 empty propane tanks of various sizes, and 56 e-waste units.
- Six (6) MSW trailers and three (3) recycling containers were loaded and hauled for disposal.

Projects & Construction Highlights:

- Crooked Road / Norway Drive – Stream Crossing Culvert Replacement Project:
 - Installed the bottom culvert sections for culvert.
 - Performed daily inspections of the work progress.
 - Site continues to be dewatered.
- Athletic Field Life Flight Landing Zone – Helipad Project:
 - Contractor paved the landing pad.
 - Doner may have visited the site.

Police Chief – Dave Kerns

- School started this week, and our School Resource Officer has transitioned out of the patrol schedule and back into the schools.
- In order to be proactive with school safety, we coordinated with the AOS to ensure extra patrol presence for the first few days of school.
- Our newest full-time officer, which was attending the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, had a stressful first week. Members of the command staff and I met with her on Sunday to provide support and a plan to work through this stressful training. Unfortunately, she resigned on Monday morning. This was a Mount Desert patrol position, which we will be advertising. However, hiring will be on hold until our personnel integration proposal is finalized.
- One of our new hires who recently entered the Maine Criminal Justice Academy has stepped away from the program. The Academy is a demanding environment, and it is not uncommon for new cadets to realize early on that the training or career is not the right fit. This reality is one of the challenges all departments face in today's hiring climate. This resignation creates a vacancy in the Mount Desert patrol assignment. The position will be advertised, though hiring is on hold until the personnel integration proposal is finalized.
- The department is fully back online after the network outage. The firewall tunnel between Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, which connects to the Hancock County Records Management Server, had been attacked during Bar Harbors issues, but no access was gained. Out of an abundance of caution, we remained offline and, on a VPN, until we confirmed the system was secure. Dispatch and patrol operations have now returned to normal.
- Along with other department heads and the manager, we reviewed the SS4A draft Safety Action Plan for the Town and provided feedback.
- School Street has reopened for through traffic. We are working with contractors to keep it open as much as possible, though there may be days when it must be closed for construction. The library has coordinated well with neighbors throughout the project, and community support for the plan remains strong.
- I attended a meeting with United Diagnostic Services, the vendor selected to conduct first responder health screenings. This is a regional initiative involving other Mount Desert Island agencies. We are finalizing the scope of work and plan to hold the screenings at the start of the new year.
- Officers met with the Attorney General's Office this week regarding a fraud case our department investigated. The AG's office has taken over prosecution, with the trial scheduled for September.
- We met with a concerned resident of Albert Meadow regarding traffic volumes tied to the Grant's Park parking lot and congestion on the narrow road leading to it. We will continue to work with neighbors to explore options for improving traffic flow.

Harbor Section

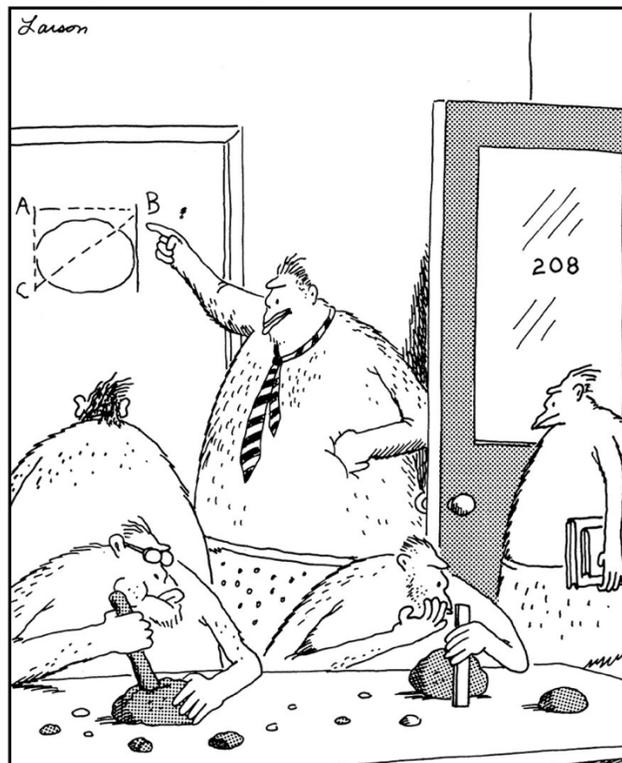
- One of the larger cruise ships grandfathered in prior to the passenger cap arrived this week. Operations ran smoothly, and we monitored activity closely, as this was the largest ship we've seen since last season.
- Transient yacht traffic has begun to slow somewhat in the moorings and towns float space, though overall volumes remain steady for this time of year.

Parking Section

- Parking enforcement operations continue to run smoothly. Seasonal staff remain in place through the end of the season. We are still seeking one additional person to work through October.

Town Clerk - Liz Graves

- Voters may now request absentee ballots for the November election (State Referendum with two questions and Special Town Meeting with four LUO amendments) online, by phone, or in writing. Ballots will be mailed out when they arrive in early October and in-person early voting begins Monday, October 6. Applications and text of local questions are on the Elections-November page of the town website.
- Attended final Warrant Committee meeting of the season. Committee voted to recommend adoption of all proposed LUO amendments.
- Prepared draft Warrant for November Special Town Meeting and Notice of Public Hearing for ballot articles to include as supplementary material in the September 2 Council packet.
- Attended state Voter Registration and Elections Training in Augusta.
- Worked on fulfilling FOAA requests.



Fire Chief – Matt Bartlett

- Last Friday, the decision was made to shut down all outdoor burning, including campfires. This decision was based on the State Forestry Fire Danger report, which predicted dry weather conditions throughout the weekend. Staff met with all the campgrounds to inform them of our decision and we received positive feedback and continued cooperation from all. On Monday, after receiving rain, we made the decision to re-open burning for campfires only. We also informed the campgrounds that we will continue to monitor the fire danger and weather daily, and if needed, we may shut down campfires again.
- Staff are actively monitoring drought conditions through the Hancock County by receiving information from the county EMA Office and the National Weather Service.
- Attended the monthly construction coordination meeting with Hospital Staff and their contractor.
- Met with Paul Pottle, Hailey Bondy, and Chief Kerns to review a draft of the Safety Action Plan in order to ensure the accuracy and alignment within the plan.
- Staff continue to work on planning and coordination efforts for training program(s).
- The department received notification from a fire alarm monitoring company that two commercial properties they monitor were not communicating daily, as designed. The commercial properties have been notified and will work with their alarm monitoring company to resolve fix the issue.

EMS Section

- Attended a Maine EMS interfacility transfers meeting. Continued discussion on the challenges faced by EMS in providing interfacility transfers between hospitals and a conceptual conversation on having a state-wide interfacility dispatch center.
- Conducted a car seat safety event in Eastbrook. Providing literature and education to the community.
- All staff attended a chest trauma webinar put on by Maine Medical Center.
- Firefighter/Advanced EMT Wyatt Smith has begun his paramedic class and we anticipate that he will become a licensed paramedic sometime next spring.

Finance Director – Sarah Gilbert

- Our payments on the bond for the Conners Emerson school consist of an interest only payment each spring and a principal plus interest payment each fall. Staff finished processing our fall payment (principal and interest) in the amount of 2.2MM.
- Assisted in processing Assessing Valuation letters and mailings.
- Began employment interviews for GIS/Technology position

Technology Section

- Resolved outgoing email issues with Munis ERP Software.
- Resolved Helpdesk email issues.
- Setup new central management server.
- Continued working with vendors on setting up a new VPN solution.
- Reviewed Cybersecurity Assessment and filled out forms/created policies for review as needed.
- Reached out to CrowdStrike for update on Letter of containment.
- Installed new administration software for Domain computers.
- Filled out documents for MMA regarding email clearance and insurance.

Assessing Section

- Prepared and mailed 2025 Property Assessed Values letters.
- Uploaded 2024 assessed values successfully into Vision software.
- Finalize 2025 property valuations for both Real Estate and Personal Property.

Planning Director – Michele Gagnon

- Submitted a grant application for \$75,000 from the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and Future’s Community Action. If awarded this grant will work to support our review of septic systems impact outside the Northeast Creek watershed in Bar Harbor. This will complement the recently awarded grant for similar work within the watershed.
- Working with Placer AI to gain permission for our consultant to have access to data for the Sustainable Tourism Task Force work.
- Pulled Appeal’s Board packet together including notices, agenda, and the staff report for their 9/9 meeting.
- Attended Warrant Committee meeting where they voted on the proposed Land Use Ordinance amendments. All four (4) proposals were supported unanimously with the exception of Site Plan and Subdivision Plan which was a 13-1 vote in support of the amendment.
- Continued work on moratorium residential conversion work. There will be a presentation of the PB on 9/8 and one to the TC on 10/7.
- Presented an update of the Town Hill project to the MDI Town Managers.
- Worked on a pay requestion submittal to the State for the Town Hill affordable workforce housing project on work accomplished to date.

- Updated the Comp Plan webpages in response to comments that the Land Use Ordinance amendments were hard to find.
- Printed final copies of the Comp Plan that were certified by the Town Clerk. Updated the website to reflect the certification.
- Preparation for Planning Board meeting on 9/3. There will be a Completeness Review, Compliance Review, and Public Hearing for SD-2025-01 Eastern Bay Estates
- Conducted Northeast Creek Volunteer River Monitoring on Thursday morning, where we took sampling at four (4) locations that were dry due to the draught.
- Received staff comments for the Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan and began incorporation.

Code Enforcement Section

- The CEO will be speaking to MDI Adult Ed on a series of topics
- Issued 21 electrical, plumbing, building and/or other permits.
- Conducted 23 onsite inspections.
- Issued ten (10) temporary or final occupancy certificates.
- Met with seven (7) project representatives to discuss property development projects.
- Conducted 78 phone/email discussions with property owners or representatives concerning building codes, regulations, short-term rentals and land use ordinance questions.
- Worked with ANP and their Site Evaluator to review a new engineered subsurface wastewater system prior to permitting.
- Attended the Maine Building Officials Board meeting.
- Attended the Warrant Committee meeting.
- Prepared for the Appeals Board meeting.
- Attended online training workshops for Lead Poisoning Prevention and for Residential Ventilation & Indoor Air Quality Regulations.
- Attended the monthly MDI Hospital project meeting.