

To: Chair Peacock and Members of the Town Council
From: James Smith, Town Manager
Subject: Weekly Report for December 19, 2025 

Police Chief – Dave Kerns

- Attended a Spillman User Group meeting with other law enforcement administrators on our shared records management server.
- Continued to work through a personnel matter and spent time on several FOAA requests that we have pending.
- Met with Ellsworth PD as well as the District Attorney this week.
- The Islander is writing a piece for the newspaper on our Mental Health Liaison. The reporter sat down with Chief Kerns and Captain Wharff as well as our Mental Health Liaison in order to discuss how this program came to be and successes we have seen since it began.
- SRO brought in a student working on a project to interview officers about car-deer accidents on MDI

Harbor Section

- The Harbor Committee reached out to the University of Maine to get historical and future projection of astronomical high tides and sea level rise in Frenchman's Bay. A graduate student presented preliminary data and will continue to work on this project at no cost to the Town. The goal is to get data for consideration of current and future pier and float construction.

Parking Section

- Met with IPS to discuss the buy-back of our MS1 kiosks. They now have all the information they need on the older units and will be presenting us with an estimate of what they are worth.

Town Clerk - Liz Graves

- Prepared notices for Special Town Council meeting 12/29 at 6:30 for a public hearing on the moratorium extension.
- Processed two (2) General Assistance cases.
- Worked on budget binder redesign.
- Began receiving Cooperating Agency applications and answered questions from agencies.
- Worked with IT to troubleshoot the meeting Owl that was experiencing glitches and lags in the video feed.
- Worked with GIS Coordinator to review and certify abutters' list for Bar Harbor Oyster Co.'s renewal application for their aquaculture lease with the Department of Marine Resources.

Public Works Director – Bethany Leavitt:

- Worked on the water rate study analysis, including setting up data analysis template for data input.
- Attended a flow meter platform demonstration for future use with the combined sewer overflow (CSO) flow meter and inflow and infiltration (I&I) removal analysis.
- Reviewed sidewalks in the downtown residential area (School Street, Newton Way, First South Street, Pleasant Street, Cedar Street and so forth) to note condition, pole locations and other obstacles as we work toward being ADA compliant with future sidewalk improvements.
- Provided final FY27 Public Works operation budgets and CIP requests to the Finance Department.
- Provided Finance input on the proposed FY27 Public Works staffing and over-time funding levels.
- Discussed with contract engineer the goals of the Hulls Cove water and sewer system master plan to accommodate growth and CSO reduction in accordance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- Attended OSHA ten-hour construction site safety training sponsored by the Maine Department of Labor SafetyWorks Program.
- Held a welcome luncheon for new Public Works employees, promotions and appreciation for employees who have stepped up and carried the Public Works mission forward with reduced staffing levels.
- Performed in-house Cottage Street sidewalk excavation for conduit installation to power existing Town-owned light poles.
- Attended Acadia National Park transportation project coordination meeting with MDOT and the Planning Department.

Highway Section

- Completed equipment repairs, vehicle checks, and trash pick-ups.
- A trash run will happen at least twice a week as we currently have 17 trash cans placed out for the public this winter.
- The crew was called out at 4:30pm on 12/12 for plowing/salting.
- Resident sand piles are available at the Public Works Facility in Hulls Cove and at the salt shed (red building) on LedgeLawn Ave.
- The LifeFlight helipad was kept clear and salted.
- A Mt. Desert High School student continues participation in an internship with the Highway mechanics. He is taking diesel engine and equipment classes at the Hancock County Technical Center and will be working at the shop in the afternoons 2-days per week.
- Crews cleaned trucks, equipment, and the shop.
- Currently upgrading the pellet boiler with new propane boilers.
- The crew has resumed roadside tree trimming on the Town's subdivisions and will follow with trimming on the major roads.

- Saw cut the concrete in between the Town-owned light poles on Cottage Street and removed it so our contractor could run new wire and conduit. Concrete was re-installed on 12/18.
- Preparing for the high wind and rainstorm on 12/19 and we are anticipating the temperature dropping to the mid-20s at night.
- The PWF fuel tank replacement project is near completion. Selected fuel provider from the vendor offers for the Town's fleet and began account set-up and delivery arrangements.

Wastewater Section

- Operated the three Wastewater Treatment Plants and eleven Pump Stations within regulatory requirements.
- Prepped for the changing of a three-way valve and rotating assembly for pump #2 at Canadian National Pump Station. A septic pumping contractor assisted with bypass pumping.
- Upgraded old light bulbs with LED bulbs in the lab.
- Replaced the return activated sludge (RAS) pump #2 at the DeGregoire Park Treatment Plant.
- Met with engineering consultant on the DeGregoire Park Plant.

Parks and Recreation Section

- Prepared for and presented at the 12/15 P&R committee meeting.
- Drafted council order to accept a donation from the Witham Family Hotels Charitable Fund through the VIA for a temporary ice rink.
- The Village Green comfort station (attached to the Public Safety building) is the only comfort station currently open for the winter.

Water Section

- New Water Section Superintendent began work on 12/15.
- Collected manual water meter reads for January 2026 billing.
- Delivered thirty-six (36) waters disconnect warning notices for customers with past due water bills.
- Began updating hardware inventory with assistance from a vendor. This work will continue after the first of the year.
- Performed eight (8) dig safes.

Environmental Services Section

- Continued to operate the Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and recycling facilities within regulations, including acceptance of 8 gallons of used motor oil, 46 e-waste units, and two (2) MSW trailers and two (2) recycling containers for hauling / disposal at Municipal Waste Solution in Hampden.

Projects & Construction Highlights:

- MDOT – Cromwell Brook Bridge #3 Replacement Project:
 - Met with construction contractor and resident engineer to review site conditions, equipment storage, and material and equipment to be removed before the winter shutdown from 12/22 to April 2026.
- Cromwell Harbor Road – Water Main Installation Project:
 - Held monthly construction meeting on 12/16 with engineer and construction contractor.
- West Street – Dry Weather Pump Station.
 - Reviewed value engineering comments with contract engineer regarding potential cost saving measures on the West Street Dry Weather Pump Station project. Also prepared and submitted MDOT highway opening permit and special permit for utility installation work associated with this project. Contractor intends to mobilize in early January 2026.
- Up-Island Water Storage Tank Replacement:
 - Pre-construction meeting to be scheduled soon.

Fire Chief – Matt Bartlett

- Firefighter/Paramedic Samantha Dixon has completed the fire instructor course. Sam is now a certified fire and EMS instructor.
- Prepared for the forecasted high winds and rain event. All vehicles were fueled, the public safety building generator was run, and portable generators and pumps were fueled and the incoming crew was briefed on the plan to handle storm-related issues.
- We have submitted a grant to the Maine Forest Service for forestry equipment and hose. This grant requires a 50% match, and the matching funds will come from our equipment purchase line item within our operating budget.
- The temporary cell tower was removed from the public safety building.
- Met with Chief Bender of Mount Desert Fire to review our mutual aid arrangementsrd.

EMS Section

- Moderated the monthly MDI EMS meeting. Discussions included updates from MDIH on construction progress and the expected readiness of a new ambulance entrance.
- Infection control update shows a minor increase in Flu A patients.
- MDIH will continue to allow Paramedics to enter the operating room to perform airway intubations. The hands-on training provides a valuable opportunity for Paramedics to improve their airway management skills and enhances their field skills.

- When responding to EMS calls, we sometimes encounter at-risk patients, and we perform follow-up visits to ensure these individuals receive additional support from local agencies. We connect recognized at-risk patients with supportive services through existing partnerships with organizations such as the PD mental health liaison, MDIH social services, local churches, and nursing agencies.

Planning Director – Michele Gagnon

- Looking into parking and mobility needs for the downtown, especially as they may relate to form-based codes.
- Prepared for the 1/7/26 Planning Board meeting.
- Presented LUO amendments at the 12/16 PB Workshop.
- Worked on LUO amendments draft order.
- Prepared for an SS4A engagement planned for January/February.
- Sent RFQ emails to potential consultants to assist in the Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant for Northeast Creek.
- Attended a meeting with ANP, Federal Highway, and MDOT to discuss ongoing transportation planning projects in and around Bar Harbor.
- Drafted notes for Design Review workshop held on 12/11.
- Continued project master list by application type for internal use.
- Finalized Sustainable Tourism Task Force minutes for 12/10 meeting.
- Coordinated with DRB on application forms and a Findings of Deliberation checklist.
- Posted on Facebook regarding the presentation provided to Council to help spread public awareness on the upcoming June amendments
- Reviewed and provided comments on the proposals to help Bar Harbor with its website re-design

Code Enforcement Section

- Issued 18 electrical, plumbing, building and/or other permits.
- Conducted 36 onsite inspections.
- Issued six (6) temporary or final occupancy certificates.
- Met with five (5) project representatives to discuss property development projects.
- The Local Health Officer responded to a health concern at a Housing Authority property.
- Prepared a draft 2026 Code Enforcement work plan.
- Contacted property owners on unregistered long-term rentals.
- Worked with Info for ME to get our IP address unblocked as we use this site to confirm business standings.
- Updating various forms for the new year.
- Gathered property information for new owners.

Finance Director – Sarah Gilbert

- Wrapped up our field work with the Auditors.
- Preparing a presentation to Council on proposed water rate increase.

Technology Section

- Met with CrowdStrike to add new updated prevention policies to domain computers.
- Fully migrated public works to new switch infrastructure.
- Installed new printer for Highway Foreman.
- Installed new software for network and wireless infrastructure management.

Assessing Section

- Analyzed a property with comparable properties for an abatement.
- Issued one (1) abatement.
- Conducted a site visit with a taxpayer.
- Worked with a taxpayer to research deeds.
- Assigned one (1) new address
- Sent Senior Taxpayer Assistance info release forms to the State for verification (awaiting a response)

GIS Section

- Completed a mapping project for the Planning Department that allows analysis of different dwelling units as well as zoning districts and generated statistics for these maps.
- Prepped Public Works data for transfer to online ArcGIS online mapping software. This requires isolating characteristics of layers so that each service section in Public Works has all of the functionalities with their own data sets (Examples: splitting up every water main by pipe material, diameter, and seasonality, so that the Water Section can view pipes of certain desired characteristics.) Transferring all this data also serves to prepare the Town for a transition to CAI which is a more functional online software to our current use of MapsOnline.
- Completed a brief mapping project & layout of the Bar Harbor Oyster Co. Leases for the Clerk's Office.