

To: Chair Peacock and Members of the Town Council
From: James Smith, Town Manager
Subject: Weekly Report for February 6, 2026 

Finance Director – Sarah Gilbert

- Attend Warrant Committee meeting and answer FY27 budget inquiries
- Continued PUC work for calendar year 2025 report
- Completed audit supplemental information for FY25
- Filed quarterly 941 payroll forms
- Municipal Building elevator is working/operable

Technology Section

- Completed Semi-Annual Server Support.
- Met with Contractor and Water Section personnel about new cameras at Duckbrook Treatment facility.
- Converted old email files for backup and access purposes
- Completed semi-annual server support.
- Continued deployment of new wired and wireless infrastructure/network changes.

Assessing Section

- Attended a 2-day virtual Property Tax Institute.
- Worked on more sales analysis and potential changes
- Scheduled a meeting with PeopleGIS regarding software

GIS Section

- Snow removal/snowplow street priority mapping, uploaded snow street priority layers to ArcGIS Online & created a short 'How-to-Use ArcGIS Online' guide for Public Works Department
- Analyzing potential housing criteria with special focus in town growth areas, creating layouts and full map portfolio of housing suitability criteria for the Planning Department.
- Prepping materials and agenda for Public Works-GIS meeting.

Police Chief – Dave Kerns

- Meet with Public Works to go over a draft traffic plan for the upcoming West Street Pump Station project.
- Worked with the Town Manager around citizen concerns about future federal immigration activity in Maine and possibly on MDI. The police department has and will continue to police our community based on principles and values in the 2017 resolve. We are comfortable with LD 1971, that passed without the Governor's signature last month. This law further supports how we have been policing our community all along.

- The Town Manager and I also discussed my response, as the District 7 Police Chiefs Representative, to media request around the license plate reader (LPR) project for Hancock County. Bar Harbor has been utilizing LPR technology since 2017 without community concerns and wanted to ensure that we clearly articulated our control measures for data/access for local law enforcement and that it is not used for federal immigration enforcement.
- Continued work on multiple FOAA requests
- Since the Small Animal Clinic located in Ellsworth determined they were no longer excepting stray animal contracts with law enforcement in 2026, we have signed a contract with the Town of Bucksport to utilize their municipally run shelter through the end of FY26. We will continue to research for a closer option in the future.

Harbor Section

- The boat that sank on a mooring in the harbor last week. It was brought to the surface, pumped out and towed back to Winter Harbor. DEP was on scene for the recovery and monitored the water during the process. No issues with fluids leaking from the boat.
- Harbormaster met with GEI to review the preliminary design plans for the ferry terminal.

Parking Section

- We are continuing to test and evaluate the coupon codes function in the parking system this week. We will need to purchase new kiosks soon if we want them to be operational for the upcoming parking season.

Town Clerk - Liz Graves

- Researched process and requirements for proposed upcoming school reorganization vote. Superintendent is set to update the Council at the 3/3 Special Meeting.
- Updated the Budget Review Timeline:
 - The Council will hold a budget workshop on 2/12 at 4:30 p.m.
 - On 2/24, at the end of the joint meeting with the Warrant Committee, the Council will tentatively adopt the proposed budget and schedule a budget public hearing for Thursday, March 12.
 - On 3/12, the Council will hold a special meeting for a public hearing on the budget. The other agenda items and public hearings, including LUO amendments, will still be held 3/17 as planned.
- Worked with the Warrant Committee and its subcommittees. Next week there are the two meetings for WC votes on recommendations to the Town Council to be presented at the joint meeting on 2/24.

- Deputy Clerk completed the knowledge test portion of her Certified Clerk of Maine application and submitted it to the Clerks' Association Certification Committee for review.
- Worked on a proposed update to the Council Policy on grants.
- Began planning for communications to help voters understand the June primary election. Unenrolled voters may participate in any party's primary but may not sign primary petitions for Democratic or Republican candidates. There are also timing restrictions on changing parties or unenrolling from a party. Voters are always encouraged to call our office if they have questions about their voter registration status.

Public Works Director – Bethany Leavitt:

- Met with Town's Attorney to gain input on proceeding with tree clearing for the West Street Pump Station project.
- Met with GIS specialist to review vision and priorities for Department.
- Discussed continued downtime of the new propane boiler at the Public Works Facility (PWF) with the Contractor.
- Revised personnel leave request form per attorney's recommendation.
- Worked with HR to advertise Wastewater Collections Technician I.
- Prepared new overtime policy and pre-approval for legal review.
- Processed payroll.
- Met with engineer on Phase 2 of the Main Street/MDOT project.
- Attending Public meeting on SS4A recommendations.

Highway Section

- Maintained resident sand piles and emptied downtown trash cans.
- Assisted PD with ice conditions on Bridge Street for rescue effort.
- Removed snow accumulation at key intersections.
- Continued sidewalk salting and scraping, as well as snow drifts.
- Salted the Town Pier ramp for boat recovery.
- Followed up on winter road salt order for estimated delivery.
- Cleaned up downed trees at Oak Hill and Indian Point Road cemetery and chipped the debris.
- Chipped along Norway Drive intersecting roads.
- Cold patched roads downtown at Mount Desert Street & Holland Avenue, as well as up island.
- Installed "wrong way" signs on School Street for better visibility.
- Registered three staff members to attend a Practical Road Math workshop sponsored by MDOT's Local Roads Center.
- Tracked vehicle fleet fuel tank readings.

Parks and Recreation Section

- Held Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting on 2/2.
- Mailed approved Major Event permits to applicants.
- Cleared area of underbrush along the fence line at Park Street Playground; chipped the debris.
- Contacted Versant Power regarding the Athletic Field EV Car Charger account.
- Researched Pier comfort station high electricity usage during the winter shutdown. Thus far, the resolution is still to be determined.
- Maintained winter use of the sole open comfort station which is located at the Public Safety building on Firefly Lane.

Wastewater Section

- Prepared draft annual Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) report and annual CSO workbook for internal review.
- Greased bearings and inspected coupling for pump biofilter; changed seal filter, greased motor bearings, and exercised valve on pumps #1 & 2; checked bearings and seal oil on pump #3; and disassembled and unclogged pump #2 at the Main Street pump station.
- Exercised three-way valve at Albert Meadow pump station.
- Cleaned seal filters and exercised valves on pumps #1 & #2 at Hulls Cove, Hancock Street, Rodick Street and West Street pump stations.
- Installed a temporary heater to thaw and prevent refreezing of the north clarifier; thawed and installed foam insulation to prevent refreezing of flow splitter; repaired chlorine feed line; and worked on the programmable logic controller (PLC) upgrade, all at the Hulls Cove Treatment Plant.
- Inspected gearbox oil on the Main Treatment Plant bar screen.
- Completed an inspection on a grease trap installation for a private business on Main Street.
- Completed two (2) line locates for Dig Safe.
- Three employees attended a training conference for 2½ days.

Water Section

- Produced 18.4 million gallons of water in January, which is in line with our January 2025 total volume.
- Performed troubleshooting on ultraviolet (UV) CO₂ sensor.
- Completed mounting of a new lime pump.

- Met with vendor to review options to install surveillance cameras at the water treatment plant inside and outside to monitor high risk areas of the facility and improve physical security at the plant.
- Oversaw the Town's contractor's work to repair a water main leak on Edgewood Street. A partial repair was made and the work appears to have addressed the situation for now.
- Notified water customers via postal mail about the upcoming water rate increase and public hearing.
- Responded to freezing water service lines on Michigan Avenue and Wildwood Way.
- Turned off two (2) water curb stops.
- Implemented new online tracking system for recording incoming customer phone calls. Previously, all calls were tracked in paper notebooks, which made it difficult to research customer issues.
- Upcoming schedule for water bills:
 - Bill payments are due February 9th.
 - Disconnect notices will be mailed out February 23rd.
 - Shutoffs take place the week of March 9th.
 - April billing efforts begin the week of March 23rd.

Environmental Services Section

- Accepted (5) gallons of used motor oil, (2) e-waste units, (10) propane cylinders, (2) batteries, and (4) miscellaneous items.
- Two (2) municipal solid waste (MSW) trailers were loaded and hauled for disposal at Municipal Waste Solutions in Hampden and one (1) recycling container was hauled for recycling in Old Town.
- Contract technician repaired waste oil furnace and clean fuel oil (830 gallons) was delivered as there was not sufficient waste oil available.
- Cleaned up yard debris several times; greased skid steer; cleaned under compactor and trailer port holes.
- Scheduled scrap metal pick-up at the PWF via Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA).

Projects & Construction Highlights:

- MDOT – Cromwell Brook Bridge #3 Replacement Project:
 - Town crews fixed winter potholes on the bridge; Contractor work is on hold during the winter shutdown.
- Cromwell Harbor Road – Water Main Installation Project:
 - Construction activities continue during non-snow days; activities are monitored and coordinated.

- Monitored ongoing blasting activity / ledge removal.
- West Street – Dry Weather Pump Station.
 - Met with PD to review and comment on the proposed Traffic Control Plan for the West Street Pump Station work.
- Cottage Street – Sewer, Stormwater, Water & Streetscape Project:
 - Provided contract engineer with water and sewer data.
- Up-Island Ireson Hill Water Storage Tank Project:
 - Coordinated Contractor site preparation/ clearing.
 - Trees were removed and ready for site work.
- YMCA Parking Lot Brownfields Remediation Project:
 - Continued addressing EPA comments on the RFP for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).

Fire Chief – Matt Bartlett

- With fluctuating temperatures, we responded to three separate commercial properties with burst pipes. Two of them were sprinkler systems that required sprinkler systems to be shutdown.
- We have been informed of issues with battery-powered rescue equipment during cold weather incidents. During rescue efforts by Bangor Fire at the plane crash, they experienced problems with their battery powered rescue equipment in the cold. We contacted the vendor who sold us our battery powered tools, and they reassured us that the batteries are rated to operate at -20 degrees.
- We have been monitoring LD 2173, An Act to Update the Laws Regarding Housing Developments and Accessory Dwelling Units, with respect to fire protection.
- Bid requests were sent out to replace our current self-contained breathing apparatus. Bids are to be delivered by February 13th.
- Met with the MDI Housing Authority to assist them with updating their emergency action plans.

EMS Section

- B-shift had a successful cardiac arrest outcome. The initial response was that the patient had trouble breathing but went into cardiac arrest when they were placed into the ambulance. The patient was initially treated at MDI Hospital and then transferred via Lifeflight to Bangor.
- Attended the Maine EMS Board Meeting. Discussions included national interest in EMS personnel wearing body cameras, blood transfusions in the field, and EMS's continuing challenge of limited OB access in the state.
- EMS legislation: LD 2128 An Act to Reorganize the Emergency Medical Services' Board to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue-Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in

the State. LD 2119 An act to expand reimbursement for treatment in place, paramedicine, and alternative destination transport.

- Held a community CPR class through MDI Adult Education; five citizens attended. Staff also held a CPR class for those who hold a maritime license to comply with US Coast Guard regulations.
- BHFD received a call and letter from Senator Collins' office with a status update on the \$125,000 in federal funding for a new ambulance. The Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill passed both the House and Senate. The bill now goes to the President's desk to be signed into law.

Planning Director – Michele Gagnon

- Coordinated, attended, and facilitated Sustainable Tourism meetings.
- Halfway through completing the zoning consistency template project. This will consist of a set of 40 spreadsheets (one for each of the 40 zoning districts), organizing each district in the same format. This is the first step for us to start looking at reducing the number of districts. For example, we can look at all the seven “residential districts” and do a side-by-side comparison of dimensional requirements and allowed uses, to begin the process of creating one (maybe two) type of residential district with one set of regulations.
- Coordinated, attended, and presented at the 2/4 Planning Board Meeting on the proposed Land Use Ordinance Amendments. The Planning Board supported all amendments unanimously with the exception of the Minimum Area per Family which was, after a significant amount of discussion, supported with a vote of 5-1.
- Met with Federal Highway to discuss possible projects to enhance active transportation to and around national parks. Bar Harbor is now one of 5 finalists to be selected for this project.
- Safe Streets for All Engagement Meetings. Three meetings were held this week. One on 2/4 at the Jesup Library to have a discussion with the YMCA, Connors Emerson School, the Jesup, the Housing Authority, and Healthy Acadia. The other two meetings were on 2/5 one at 1PM and the other at 6PM. The 1PM meeting was for an advisory group of community leaders to provide feedback on the Draft Safety Action Plan. The 6PM meeting was a public engagement event held at the Annex at Side Street Café.
- Attended a virtual meeting with the coordinators for the Housing Opportunity Program to learn more about the municipal ordinance development grant to aid implementation of LD1829
- Met with the Housing Opportunity Program coordinators one-on-one to discuss the implementation of LD1829
- Continued preparing visuals for minimum area per family.
- Continued work on the timeline for the Town Hill housing project.
- Worked on scope of work to help the town determine a housing target (as outlined by the comprehensive plan).

- Continue work to follow up on the Town Council policy solutions workshop that happened in order to address concerns raised during the moratorium work and beyond what will be on the ballot in June.
- Working on engagement strategy for proposed LUO amendments.
- Met with GIS manager on the housing suitability analysis.

Code Enforcement Section

- Issued 16 electrical, plumbing, building and/or other permits.
- Issued 41 LTR registrations.
- Issued 19 STR registrations.
- Conducted 25 onsite inspections.
- Conducted walk-throughs of the hospital & school projects to discuss ongoing work and progress.
- Discussed a possible expansion project with YMCA representatives.
- Issued three (3) temporary or final occupancy certificates.
- Met with five (5) project representatives to discuss property development projects.
- Attended the State Electrical Inspectors meeting.
- Participated with an 80K hearing at the County District Court where the Town was awarded fines and fees.
- Provided Building permit information to Finance Director
- Completed End of Month Reports
- Worked with iWorQ vendor to correct technical issues.
- Assisted multiple property owners with permit questions.
- Attended the Planning Board meeting to discuss proposed land use amendments.