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The Town of Woolwich, Maine Newsletter

Woolwich Communications Committee

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The Town of Woolwich, Maine

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2017



Voters asked to consider solar panels

Woolwich residents will vote on whether to install solar panels that will be used to offset the Town's electric bill. Under a proposal submitted by ReVision Energy, one of the first solar installation companies in Maine, the company would install 80 solar panels on the grounds of the Town's closed landfill and tie them in

to the electric grid. The energy generated would offset nearly all of the Town's electricity usage, which currently totals about \$1000/month.

The proposal is a PPA, or Purchase Power Agreement, where ReVision would finance, build, own, and operate the solar array for 6 years. Consequently, there is no upfront cost to the Town for the array. During this period, ReVision would take advantage of federal tax credits (which are not available to municipalities) and the Town would pay its electric bill to ReVision. Beginning in year 7, the Town would be incentivized to purchase the system from ReVision at a discounted

cost of about \$47k. New, the system is \$79,397. Once the cost of the system is paid for, the Town's



Engineering rendering of panels on the landfill.

utility costs will be covered by the energy generated by the solar panels. The system is expected to generate over 29k kilowatt hours each year.

Under terms of the proposed contract, each solar panel is warranted for solar electricity for 25 years, which, according to ReVision, is about half of the "actual lifetime of the equipment."

The Selectboard was intrigued by the idea of putting the now-closed landfill property to use. As seen in the engineer's rendering, the array would not sit on the clay that caps the landfill. While the capped area is better situated for solar, the mounting system would be too expensive for a small system like Wool-

wich's. By siting the array on the ground leading to the capped land, the system will cost significantly less.

There are lots of questions to be asked, and there is a public informational meeting scheduled for Thursday April 13 at 6 pm at the Town Office.

In the meantime, stop by the Town Office to read the proposal, and for more information on ReVision Energy, visit www.revisionenergy.com which has, according to the web site, installed over 5000 solar energy systems in Maine and New Hampshire. In addition to residential systems, ReVision has partnered with several municipalities throughout Maine, including new solar farms on closed landfills in Portland and in South Portland.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 1 from 5-8 pm
8th grade Auction
Woolwich Central School

Friday, April 7, 6-8 pm
Rec. Comm. Cribbage Night
Woolwich Central School

Thursday, April 13, 6-7:30 pm
Informational Meeting on
Town Solar Panels
Woolwich Town Office

Thursday, April 27, 6-7:30 pm
Rec. Committee visits
Charlie Durfee, woodworker

Saturday, April 29 at 9 am
TOWN MEETING
Woolwich Central School

Saturday, May 6 from 9 am-1 pm
Household Hazardous Waste
Bath Public Works Garage

Saturday, May 20, 4:30-6:30 pm
7th grade Spaghetti Supper
Woolwich Central School

Monday, May 29 at 7 pm
Memorial Day event
Nequasset Meetinghouse

Town Meeting is Saturday, April 29 at 9 am.
Doors open at 8 am.
See inside this issue to find information on other issues to be discussed this year.

Bath Viaduct update — from Reed & Reed

Editor's Note: We asked Woolwich company Reed & Reed for an update on its progress on the viaduct.

Woolwich based Reed & Reed, Inc. was founded in 1928 in Days Ferry and has a long history in the Town of Woolwich. Under four generations of family leadership, Reed & Reed built a long-standing reputation as one of Northern New England's top heavy civil contractors.

In February 2016 the owners sold Reed & Reed to an ESOP trust and the company is now 100% operated for the benefit of its employees

One of Reed & Reed's more interesting projects is to replace the Bath Viaduct. On the eve of October 10, 2016 the Via-

duct was officially closed to traffic and the count-down started. In a mere 220 days the viaduct will be demolished, re-built and opened to traffic in time for the Memorial



Day weekend.

In order to meet the deadline, Reed & Reed crews worked around the clock for 26 days, (eleven straight in the beginning) to complete the demolition. This crew did a tremendous job of completing all the demolition safely and efficiently. But even before

demolition was finished, Reed & Reed crews were busy constructing new pier shafts and caps on top of the existing footings.

As of March 1st all 19 transition footings, pier shafts and pier caps have

been replaced along with re-facing and re-constructing both bridge abutments. The Reed & Reed crews have erected 17 of 20 superstructure spans which are comprised of four precast concrete NEXT

beams weighing about 120,000 pounds each. The company constructed all 19 precast concrete pier caps at its Woolwich Dockyard facility in Sagadahoc Ferry.

Once the final span is erected in early March the NEXT Beam sections will be connected using an ultra high strength concrete.

Curbs, bridge rail and final paving will complete the work for traffic to flow over the new viaduct. The company is currently about 3 weeks ahead of schedule and



hopes to open the bridge to traffic in early May.

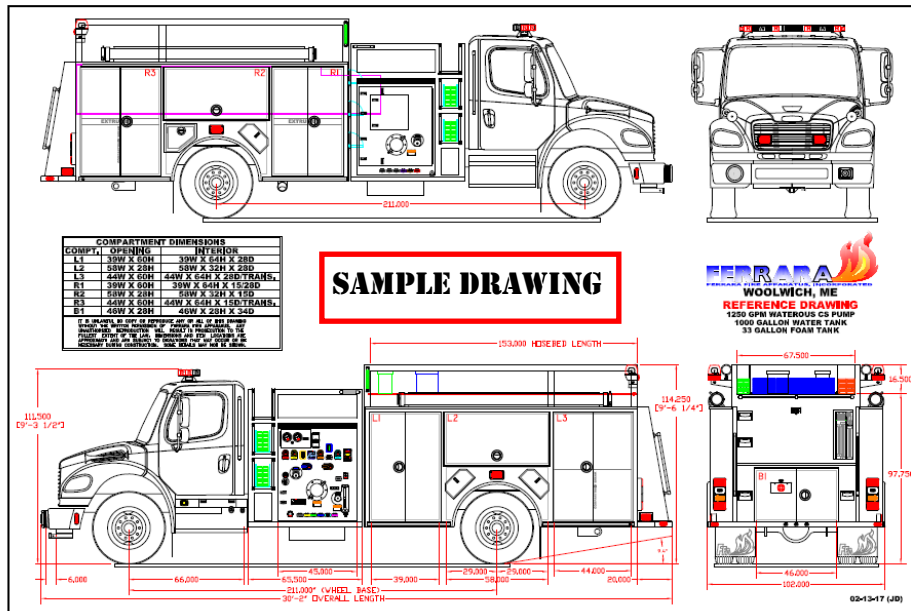
In addition to the Bath Viaduct project, Reed & Reed has contracts to replace bridges in Howland-Enfield, Milford, Mariaville, South Thomaston and Sabattus, Maine and also to replace two major I-91 bridges in Rockingham, Vermont. The company, which is the New England leader construction of wind power, has wind projects in Canton, Maine and Deerfield, Vermont. Reed & Reed will begin work later this spring on a project to replace the Scarborough Toll Plaza with a new Open Road Toll plaza. And a contract to rebuild a major electrical substation in Lewiston is set for a spring 2018 completion.

Reed & Reed is proud to be a Woolwich company.



WOOLWICH FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS:

Residents consider fire truck purchase at Town Meeting



by Fire Chief Mike Demers

This year at Town Meeting with the support of the selectboard the fire department is asking for your support to replace our 1985 GMC Tanker truck that is stationed at our North station. A committee was formed late last year to review our apparatus, their current conditions, uses and what safety standards they were lacking.

Our primary engine, Engine 3, a 1998 pumper, is approaching 20 years old which is the recommended age to replace or repurpose a front line truck. Tank 1 stationed at the North Station is 32 years old and beyond its service life. Tank 1 is a water hauling truck and is not for handling structure fires or other emergencies. It only has a small fire pump and carries very little equipment. Another downfall is that Tank 1 has an older style standard transmission and most members are unable to drive it.

After reviewing the current apparatus and looking at what would be best for the department and the citizens moving forward we make the following recommendations:

(1) Replace Tank 1 with a new Commercial Class A pumper that meets all of today's current standards. This pumper will have the latest in fire-fighting technology and safety features that will benefit both the members of the department and the citizens. The new pumper will be stationed at the central fire station.

(2) Move the 1998 pumper, Engine 3 to the North Station. This will greatly increase the firefighting capabilities in the north end of town. We would now have a fully equipped pumper able to handle structure fires and other emergencies instead of a truck that just carries water. Moving Engine 3 to the North Station would also decrease its demand for use, thus prolonging its service to the town.

(3) Sell Tank 1 and the 2001 Pickup truck. The pickup is used to carry additional gear that we don't currently have room for on the other apparatus. The new engine has more storage capabilities. Therefore we will be able to carry more equipment on our first

due truck eliminating the need for the pickup. Replacing Two apparatuses with one will reduce operations cost on maintenance and fuel.

This will be the first new apparatus purchase since 2008 when Engine 4 was purchased. Prior to Engine 4 it was Engine 3 in 1998. So we have fallen into an every 10 year replacement plan which is spacing the major purchases out to ease the financial burden to the town.

The price for the new pumper is \$356,000. Purchasing can be done through a 10 year lease purchase program with 3% or lower interest rate, or with a bond. This could result in approximately \$40k to \$48k per year payment having a very little to no effect on individual taxpayers each year depending on tax revenue.

Please feel free to contact Chief Demers at fdr1q@yahoo.com with any questions or more information.

**Woolwich
Fire
Department**
 13 Nequasset Rd. Woolwich, ME 04579




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Help Us Help You!

Bath Food Bank seeks Woolwich donation

Woolwich voters will be asked to support the Bath Area Food Bank this year. Volunteers circulated petitions and submitted enough signatures of Woolwich residents to get the request on this year's Town Meeting Warrant. The organization requested \$1500, and the Selectboard voted to support \$1000 on the Warrant.

The Bath Area Food Bank serves residents of Bath, West Bath, Phippsburg, Arrowsic, Georgetown, and Woolwich, and includes a Food Pantry, a Soup Kitchen (now known as the Kitchen Table), and a mobile food truck. The Food Pantry is open Tuesday and Thursday from 5-7 pm, and the Kitchen Table is open from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Both are located at 150 Congress Street in Bath.

According to the petition, the Food Bank serves 45 "unique families" from Woolwich, out of a total of 600 families who used the Food Bank, or 8% of the total number of clients. Overall, towns provide only 3.6% of the Food Bank's total budget, with nearly 67% of the organization's financial support coming from individuals and events. Churches provide 10% and businesses provide another 15%. The total budget last year was \$96,000.

The organization also relies heavily on food donations, which totaled over 80,000 pounds last year and was valued at

\$134,278. Linda Hinkley, Woolwich resident and currently the Chair of the Food Bank Board, estimates that expenses last year per Woolwich client were about \$198.

According to Hinkley, Woolwich has been involved "for many years." "My father-in-law, Wallace Hinkley," she writes, "was one of the original members of the food bank, when it was started as a faith-based organization. I remember getting many phone calls, when I got home from work from him or my mother-in-law saying, 'We have a lot of bananas from the food pantry, that need to be made into banana bread real soon. Can you make some?' Of course I made some, even though I don't like bananas."

She later ran the Clothing Exchange in Bath, which was also started by her father-in-law. She notes that there have been a lot of changes since she first got involved: "The board transitioned from faith-based to community

based. The food pantry model changed from providing a box of emergency food to a grocery style pantry where clients

choose what they need. They are offered more meat, fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, cheese, and special diet items."

In addition, Hinkley says, "The pantry supplies food to Morse High School's two pantries, snacks to the other area schools, assists social workers in ensuring food is available to their clients, helps with the monthly mobile food trucks, including mini food trucks every other month in Phippsburg. Bread and food is also provided to Washington House and Bath Housing for people unable to get to the pantry or mobile food trucks." The Food Bank currently provides food and snacks to the Woolwich Central School Food Bank.

The Kitchen Table now provides more fresh fruits and vegetables because more farms donate more vegetables and fruit. Also, volunteers glean vegetables and fruit for the food bank from Maine farms.

Hinkley admitted that she circulated the petition seeking Woolwich's financial support because, in her words, "I've heard rumors that the board might have to restrict usage to only the communities that support the

food bank. I didn't want to think that residents of my town might not be able to obtain food from the Bath Area Food Bank." She welcomes questions and encourages residents to contact her if there are any other ways the food bank can help the residents of Woolwich (phone 207-522-8595).

The Food Bank asks for proof of residency when people come. Also, if you have non-perishable foods to donate, they can be dropped off 7 days a week between 7 am and 8 pm. Head through the double glass and there is a large wooden chest to the right. Leave your donations there. For more information: <http://www.bathfoodbank.org/>

BATH AREA FOOD PANTRY



Photo courtesy of Food Bank.

Woolwich residents who need help with housing rehab can count on Woolwich volunteers

Working with Habitat for Humanity/7 Rivers Maine, Woolwich residents are eligible for up to \$1500 in free home repairs. According to Woolwich resident and Habitat volunteer Tim Mellen, “the labor is free.” (\$1500 refers to the materials available and supplied by Habitat, much of it through donations.)

Mellen and a small group of Woolwich volunteers called the



“regulars” provide the labor to repair housing throughout the midcoast area, and have worked on many Woolwich residences. “We do a lot of ramps,” according to Mellen, and general weatherization to make houses more energy efficient. The group also has an electrician available.

One goal of the program is to keep senior residents and the physically disabled in their homes, but the weatherization aspect also serves to keep all residents

able to spend less on energy costs. “That helps all of us,” said Mellen. The only requirement is that applicants be eligible for the federal Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Interested residents should contact Habitat for Humanity/7 Rivers Maine at 207 504-9333. Then Mellen goes to the house – which includes housing and mobile homes – and assesses the best use of funds, in consultation with the residents.

“We are local people,” Mellen stresses, “doing weatherization and repair.”

Woolwich Town employees are planning retirement this year

Long-time Town employee Lynette Eastman is retiring this year from serving Woolwich. In 1996, she became the Town’s Tax Collector and treasurer, and since 2007, has served as the Town’s Treasurer, Town Administrator, and General Assistance Administrator.

“It will be hard to replace her,” says Selectboard Chair David King. “We’ve come to rely on her



institutional memory with regard to Town affairs.”

“I’ve really enjoyed working in Woolwich,” Eastman says. What will Eastman do with her hard-won free time when she steps down at the end of June? That’s easy: camping, spending time with grandchildren, and bicycling with her husband George.

Also retiring this summer is Janice Bradford, who’s been the Town Clerk, as well as the Deputy Tax Col-



lector and Deputy Treasurer. She’s worked fulltime since 2012, but had been filling in part-time when the town was short-handed. “She’s handled some big elections in recent years,” says Selectperson Allison Hepler, “and all have been conducted professionally.” Bradford plans to leave in August.

The Town will soon begin the process of hiring replacements.

Woolwich Central School has big plans for spring!

Mark your calendars for the weekend of March 24-26 so you and your family can come see our **Spring Musical production of Seussical, Jr.** Lead roles include Oscar Hennin as the Cat in the Hat, Tallulah Im as Jo-jo, Natalie Emmerson as Horton, Lauren Buczkowski as Gertrude, Iris Hennin as Mayzie and Jordan Stanley as the Sour Kangaroo. Performance times are: Friday at 7:00PM and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 PM

The **Annual 8th Grade Auction** will be held on Satur-

day, April 1st, from 5-8 PM. This auction helps fund the 8th grade class trip to Washington, DC. There will be over 300 items in the live or silent auction - all generously donated by local businesses, staff, and family members.

Ready for a great meal? The **Annual Spaghetti Supper** will be held on Saturday, May 20th from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. This supper supports our 7th graders as they start raising funds for their DC trip in 2018. More details forthcoming.

Spring 2017 Household Hazardous

Waste Collection Day

*Do you have materials in your home that you no longer use that you think might be hazardous? Take advantage of the upcoming collection event instead of throwing these items into your regular trash, where they will be buried in the landfill and possibly contaminate the environment. **Saturday, May 6, 2017 from 9 AM – 1 PM at Bath Public Works Garage, 450 Oak Grove Ave.** Pre-registration begins April 24 by calling 1-888-958-2255 and is required.*

Notes from Woolwich Community Recreation Board

by Beth Harrington

We are over halfway through our first official year and we've had quite a success-



ful start. Our coed fall youth soccer program had 85 participants in grades K-6, winter basketball and clinic sessions had over 70, cheering almost 50 and we are looking forward to offering spring tennis and lacrosse clinics and a full t-ball and baseball season. The board is quite excited to offer three summer camp programs this year as well - Coed Basketball, Theatre Camp and Adventure Camp. Please look online to see more information and to register at www.woolwichrec.org.

On the "Adult Enrichment" side we had some AMAZING workshops and demonstrations

through the last 6 months. We started with a "Canning the Harvest" class with Claudette Tainter,

learned "Composting Basics" with Jonathan Apleyard, from the Solid Waste and Recycling Committee, made "Market Baskets" with Darcy Emerson and then discussed the basics of "Beekeeping" with Tim Forrester. Ben and Molly Coombs invited us to watch a "Glassblowing Demo" at their shop and artist John Gable allowed us into his studio to learn his history, see what he

is currently working on and to view his fantastic art work.

Our next demo will be on **Wed. April 27th** from 6-7:30 when will meet with Charlie Durfee and

learn how he makes his fine wood products by hand. There are also plans to host adult Yoga sessions at WCS - so stay tuned! We are always looking for other adult enrichment activities. If you have a special talent you would like to share with our community - let us know!



Finally, our board has organized two successful community suppers and look forward to our Family Cribbage Night coming up on April 7th from 6-8:00 p.m. at the WCS cafeteria. There are also plans to host a Family Fun Run the

weekend of June 3rd to fund-raise for our scholarship program. A special thank you again to all of our community members, grandparents and parents that have supported our first year as an official Recreation Department and we look forward to helping

Woolwich residents and visitors "live life better" for many years to come.

To end on a fiscal high note, we are not asking the Town for any financial support this year since fees have covered all of our expenses.



Send your ideas for future articles to us! E-mail: administrator@woolwich.us OR aheplerwoolwich@gmail.com

SIGN UP! Newsletters will be available electronically. Be sure to sign up on the Woolwich Website to receive your copy. Contact us if you'd like a copy mailed to you. Communications Committee members: Roger Baffer, J. Collins, Allison Hepler, Rebecca Roche, Caelie Smith, Barry Todd