**2021 Town Report**

The Select Board would like to highlight a few budget items and articles for further clarification. It should be noted that many of the articles and budget increases reflected in the 2021 Warrant are the results of needing to postpone the 2020 Town meeting due to Covid-19 and operating under the constraints of the 2019 Warrant.

**Revaluation – Article 27**

*Article 27**To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a three-year contract with a certified assessing agent to conduct a complete revaluation of town property, totaling $80,000.00; and to see if the town will raise and appropriate $7,000.00 from Unassigned Surplus for payment during 2021. Note: 2022 and 2023 payments will each be $36,500.00.*

The Select Board is recommending that a revaluation be conducted in Montville, beginning in the fall of 2021. The completion would be scheduled in 2023. Please read the Assessing Agent’s letter in the Town report on page 49 for a clear and concise explanation of why this revaluation is essential.

**Highway and Public Works – Article 30 & 31**

*Article 30 To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board**to enter a lease/purchase agreement for a term not to exceed 5 years to acquire a dump truck, with or without a roller and/or rake, having a total purchase price not to exceed $50,000, on such other terms as they deem in the best interests of the Town; to raise $10,600 from Unassigned Surplus to fund lease payments due during FY 2021; and to authorize the Select Board**to execute any documents necessary to accomplish said purpose.*

*Article 31 To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to purchase two gravel pits located in the town of Montville to mine gravel for the town to use, for $47,500.00; and to authorize the Select Board**to execute any documents necessary to accomplish said purpose. One parcel is a portion of map and lots:* ***7/5+7/35****; the other is the entirety of map and lot* ***7/31.1****. Maps of properties are included later in this Town Report. Note: Payment for purchase is included in Gravel line item in Table C.*

The Town experienced substantial road damage, primarily to the gravel roads in the early Spring storm of 2020, costing the town approximately $50,000 for repairs. It became more apparent than ever that aggressive measures need to be taken to help mitigate these reoccurring problems. This year, the Road Commissioner plans to target several gravel roads that will receive ditching, brush cutting, tree removal in right of ways, culvert replacements, and/or additional gravel for road build up. The proposed budget reflects this plan of action.

The Select Board is supporting the Road Commissioner’s requests and is recommending Articles 30 &31. The costs of using only subcontractors to supply all the work needed on the roads is continuing to be a significant annual increase to the Town. To help mitigate this, the Board and Road Commissioner believe that we should invest in our own equipment and have more control over the budget and operations. The recent purchase of the grader and paying the Road Commissioner as a grader operator has substantially improved our gravel roads and costs.

**Article 30**, would authorize the Select Board to lease/purchase a dump truck, with or without a roller and/or rake so that work on the roads can continue to be an in-house operation.

**Article 31**, would authorize the Select Board to purchase two gravel pits so costs to purchase gravel, of which the Town needs in copious amounts to repair and maintain its approximately 30 miles of gravel roads, could be done at a drastically reduced cost to the Town. Currently, both pits will be mined within less than 5 acres and therefore, no State licensing will be needed at this time.

**Health & Sanitation – Articles 34-37 & 41**

**Article 34**

*Article 34 To see if the Town will vote to withdraw from the Unity Area Regional Recycling Center (UARRC) Interlocal Agreement.*

This article reflects an incomplete discussion that began a few years ago when the Town voted to send their municipal waste to then, Coastal Resources, in Hamden. This new facility had promoted their services to include an innovative single stream opportunity that was designed to automatically separate recycled materials and create value-added products. The discussion to contract with the Hamden facility included the possibility that at some point the Town might choose to change from our current “single sort” recyclable option to “single stream”. The facility closed in 2020 for multiple reasons and is now due to re-open with similar services and new owners later this year.

Montville has continued its membership with the Unity Area Regional Recycling Center (UARRC) for years but increasingly more questions about recycling and the cost to transport recyclables to UARRC have repeatedly come to the Board. Article 34 was on the 2020 Warrant but because there was no Town meeting, this article was carried over to the 2021 Warrant.

If the vote is “yes” to withdraw our Town membership from UARRC, then all recyclables will be mixed with the municipal waste and until the Hamden facility opens will be disposed of in the landfill. Articles 35-37 could then be passed over because they pertain specifically to the continuation of recycling program at the transfer station.

**Article 35-37**

*Article 35 To see if the Town will vote to eliminate Town transportation of recycling to the UARRC for a temporary nine-month trial.*

*Article 36 To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to purchase a closed trailer to haul recyclables to UARRC, and to see what sum, if any, the town will vote to raise and appropriate for said trailer.*

*Article 37 To see what sum, if any, the Town will vote to raise and appropriate for hauling recyclables to UARRC.*

If the vote on Article 34 is “no” and we maintain our membership with UARRC, then articles 35-37 will help define how the Town proceeds with its recycling efforts. Article 35 sets up a 9-month trial period, asking residents to take the responsibility to bring their own recyclables to UARRC in Thorndike, rather than have the Town pay for transport for all recyclables from the transfer station to UARRC.

If Article 35 passes, then Articles 36 & 37 can be passed over and the transporting of recyclables will be reassessed at next year’s Town meeting. If Article 35 fails, and the Town is continuing to provide transportation of all recyclables to UARRC, then Article 36 needs to pass for the Town to continue hauling recyclables to UARRC. The box truck, which did provide storage and transportation for recyclables has been retired. The Select Board recommends purchasing an enclosed trailer to replace the box truck. If Article 30 (purchase a dump truck) passes, then the trailer will be hauled to UARRC using the Town’s newly purchased truck. If Article 30 fails, then it will be necessary to pass Article 37, which provides funds to pay a subcontractor for hauling the trailer.

**Article 41**

*Article 41 To see if the Town will vote for one of the following two options for the Montville Transfer station.*

1. *To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to sign a one-year contract with the Town of Freedom for disposal of Montville’s municipal waste in their packer truck. Note: The agreed amount of $36,000 for one year also includes tipping fees, this is included as “Solid Waste Disposal” in Table D below.*
2. *To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board**to enter a lease/purchase agreement for a term not to exceed 5 years to acquire a solid waste compactor, having a total purchase price not to exceed $40,000, on such other terms as they deem in the best interests of the Town; to raise and appropriate $8,750 from Taxation to fund the down payment and lease payments due during FY 2021; and to authorize the Select Board**to execute any documents necessary to accomplish said purpose. Note: Tipping fees and site preparation costs are included as “Solid Waste Disposal” in Table D below.*

Last year the Board was faced with making some challenging decisions without the input from a Town meeting. Due to the unexpected closing of the Hamden facility and the decision to retire the packer truck, we were able to arrange a one-year contract with the Town of Freedom to haul our municipal waste. The negotiated price of $36,000 included the use of their packer truck, wages for their employee to be on site at the transfer station for our Saturday hours, and tipping fees.

In the interim period, the Board looked at various options that included purchasing another packer truck, buying dumpsters to place at the transfer station, and a lease/purchase option to buy a compactor. After comparing costs and meeting with a representative from DEP at the transfer station, the Board recommends the compactor as the best option. Even with costs for site work, paying the loan for 5 years plus the annual hauling and tipping fees, there will be a savings to the Town.

Passing Article 41 A, would authorize the Select Board to contract again with Freedom for another year if the Town prefers to wait to make any changes to the current operations at the transfer station.

If Article 41 A fails, then the Select Board recommends passing Article 41 B, which will authorize the Board to enter a lease/purchase agreement for a compactor.

**LD5151 – “An Act to Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayers Money”**

The Select Board would like to mention LD5151, a bill that is currently being considered in the State legislature. If passed, LD5151 would require producers of packaging materials to pay into a fund, managed by an independent organization. These funds would be used for municipal recycling programs, waste management, and consumer education. The Select Board signed a letter of support for this bill. If this bill passes, Maine will be the first state to implement such a law. There will be an update on this bill at Town meeting, which may have some influence on Articles 35-37.

**Table A**

**20 -Town Office**

 **625 Repairs/Maint**

The Select Board is recommending that the roof on the Town office be replaced. This appears to be a sizeable increase in the table from $500 budgeted in 2020 compared to the recommended amount of $11,000, which is the estimated cost for a new asphalt roof.

**30 – Town Hall**

**625 Repairs/Maint**

The Select Board is recommending that the two main doors into the Town Hall be replaced, as well as, some foundation work may have to be addressed. This appears to be a sizeable increase in the table from $500 budgeted in 2020 compared to the recommended amount of $4000, which is the estimated cost for repairs.

**Table B**

**130-150 Elected Officials**

The Select Board is recommending that wage increases be considered for the Clerk and Treasurer/Tax Collector positions. Research was conducted in neighboring towns for a wage comparison and we learned that Montville’s wage allotment is considerably lower than neighboring towns. Even with the requested amounts for 2021, we will still be below the average rate.

**Other recommended wage increases:**

Additionally, the Board is recommending a wage increase to $13.00 per hour for all Town employees currently making a minimum wage of $12.15/hr and the transfer station supervisor to be given an increase to $13.50 per hour. These wages are reflected under Health & Sanitation, Table D, 170- Wages and Protection & Enforcement, Table E, 170 – Wages.

If employee wage increases for elected officials and Town employees are approved, line items for Town FICA and Medicare will also show an increase compared to the 2020 budget.

**Table F**

**30 – Planning Board**

The Select Board, as per a request from the Planning Board, recommends that the 2020 budgeted amount of $200 be increased to $1000 on the 2021 budget. These funds are used primarily for legal fees.

**Please don’t hesitate to call the Select Board’s office at 342-5543 if you have additional questions on the Warrant. We hope to see you at Town meeting on June 5th, 10:00am, at Mount View High School!**