



January 29, 2021 Edition

TOWN MANAGER HIGHLIGHTS

The new COVID-19 vaccination information page is live on the Town's [website](#). We will keep this up to date and encourage you to use the resources found here to schedule an appointment for vaccination as soon as the vaccine is available to you.

Like many of you I spend quite a bit of time reading news headlines about COVID. It is tiring. I am always a bit tired in the winter, my whole being prefers blue skies, warm air, and all the colors spring, summer, and fall can create. But this winter is especially exhausting. Last March I had just purchased new yarn to make a sweater for my daughter when the world shut down. The sweater was a complicated one with multiple stitch patterns and tailored details. I cast on three times, ripped it out three times, and finally put it aside. I spent the spring knitting a solid blue blanket in simple garter stitch instead.

It's budget season now and there are snowstorms coming and bids to post and a Comp Plan process to get underway and signs to purchase. None of these things can be put aside while I find comfort in the municipal equivalent of a garter stitch blanket. But I can't deny that the constant presence of COVID and the uncertainty it brings aren't making me wish I could. Instead, I've been in the woods every day I can find the daylight to do so, and I've decided to indulge in the comfort of milk and sugar in my tea.

What is the point of this self-reflective ramble? Please find a way to care for yourself that helps you safely through the fatigue of a COVID winter. Find a place to restore yourself, move your body if you can, and treat yourself in ways that feel nourishing. And remember, it's okay to not be okay and to ask for help if you need it. [The Maine Crisis Hotline](#) is available 24/7 if friends or family aren't around.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2/1/2021

Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting @ 7PM

2/2/2021

Board of Selectmen Workshop & Meeting @ 5PM

2/3/2021

Pine Ledge, Robinson & Ridgetop Neighborhood ZOOM Meeting @ 6PM

EASTERN TRAIL MANAGEMENT UPDATE

We are on the verge of contracting trail feasibility studies through the Maine Department of Transportation's Partnership and Planning Initiative. These exciting opportunities will support our Over the River campaign for improved trail through downtown Biddeford and Saco, as well as our Blazing the Trail South campaign to build new off-road trail south of Kennebunk. The goal of the trail feasibility studies is to better understand the on-the-ground situation of the Eastern Trail corridor where new trail would be built including specific trail conditions such as elevation, road and water crossings, and environmental permitting requirements. These studies will also provide valuable information about the costs associated with building new trail in the given locations. We are excited to consider options for improving the safety and overall experience of walking or biking through the Cities of Biddeford and Saco, as well as creating entirely new trail starting in Kennebunk through Wells and into North Berwick. Thank you to our partners at Maine DOT, the Cities of Biddeford and Saco, the Towns of Kennebunk, Wells and North Berwick, and Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission. We will know much more by summer 2021 about the important details and costs so we can consider future design and construction!

Jon Kachmar, Executive Director

CONSERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

The Wells Conservation Commission has recently completed purchase of three properties that were approved for acquisition by voters last summer at Town Meeting by a wide margin. The largest is a 74-acre parcel east of the Sanford Road especially valuable for its diverse habitat. It also provides a travel corridor between the Fenderson Wildlife Commons and the Blueberry Barrens in Wells and Kennebunk, critically important for animals that roam. The Fenderson-Blueberry Barrens Connector also abuts the proposed course of the future Eastern Trail, which is how the public will access the parcel in the future. The second recent acquisition is 40 acres that extends the Fenderson Commons south. This parcel protects the Merriland River and its excellent Brook Trout Fishery. The third acquisition lies on Bill's Lane where six acres will provide visitor parking and legal access to the 130-acre Getchell Pasture Wildlife Commons, an old farm and forest that the Town acquired in 2018, and which now can be equipped with trails to welcome the public. Trails have been greatly expanded. The Ghost Meadow Wildlife Commons, a gift from the Gowen family, now has access on the Meetinghouse Road to a trail that carries on to the Clark Road. New roadside signs, including twelve-foot tall yardarm posts, were fabricated for Fenderson East, Fenderson West, Tilton Homestead, Hobbs Brook, Getchell Pasture and Perkinstown. The Wells Public Works Department deserves thanks for helping install the heavy signage and grading our trail access parking areas.

Owen Grumbling, Chair

WELLS RESERVE UPDATE

Some trails at the Wells Reserve had to be closed in early December so the water district could replace the waterline serving Drakes Island. Cooperative weather helped the crew work at a rapid pace, putting them ahead of schedule. Some closed sections will reopen this weekend, though a section of the Barrier Beach Trail will remain closed until early May. The reserve's education program has opened registration for summer camps. These day camps are designed for three age groups, with 16 dates available for ages 6 to 9, two week-long camps for ages 9 to 12, and a single week for ages 12 to 15. Requests for financial assistance are welcome thanks to generous donors to Laudholm Trust, the reserve's nonprofit partner. Details and a brochure are available at wellsreserve.org/camps.

Scott Richardson, Communications Director

