

TOWN MEETING NEWS

Camden, Maine May 2010

Camden's **2010 Annual Town Meeting** will be held June 8 and 9. Residents may register to vote at the Town Office Monday through Friday between 8 am and 3:30 pm, until 6 pm on Tuesday June 1, or on election day at the polls with identification and proof of residency. Town Meeting is your opportunity to have a voice in Camden's future.

BALLOT VOTING Tuesday, June 8, 2010:

The polls will be open from 8 am to 8 pm at the *Camden Public Safety Building* for voters to act on *Articles 1 through 11* of the Annual Meeting Warrant. Absentee ballots for these articles are also available at the Camden Town Office between 8 am and 3:30 pm Monday through Friday, prior to voting day.

Article 1 is for the election of a moderator to preside at Town Meeting. The polls will open as soon as a Moderator has been elected.

Article 2 is for the election of the following:

- One Select Board Member for three years (Select Board Members shall serve as Overseers of the Poor, Assessors and Wastewater Commissioners). There is one candidate: Martin D. Cates. Voters may also write in candidates.
- One Director of Maine School Administrative District #28/CSD #19 for a three-year term. There are two candidates; Dale Landrith Sr, and Victoria Manzi. Voters may also write in candidates.
- One Personnel Board Member for three years. There are no candidates listed on the ballot. Voters may write in candidates.

Articles 3 through 8, described below, are proposed amendments/additions to the **Town Ordinances**. The full text of the amendments, if not printed entirely on the ballot, is available at the Town Office.

Article 3 This article includes four minor amendments required by Maine's Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Zoning Ordinances. The amendments clarify the definition of Functionally Water-Dependent Use, the date when shoreland zoning established minimum lots sizes, the addition of coastal wetlands to a soil disturbance performance standard and correction of an incorrect reference to footpaths.

Article 4 The edge of the coastal wetland (high water) is now determined by the highest tide level for the year. This amendment would require a surveyor to make that determination whenever a structure is proposed within 85 feet of the apparent edge of the coastal wetland (10 feet more than the required 75-foot setback).

Article 5 This amendment would change the current requirement to publish building permits in a local newspaper to posting the permits on the Town website within 15 days of the end of each month.

Article 6 The Zoning Ordinance does not require a permit when a new business occupies a commercial space, as long as it meets the same permitted use definition as the preceding business. This amendment would require a "new use" permit for any new business or change in majority owner, to ensure that the owner is aware of any restrictions that may apply to the use. For example, a new fast food restaurant owner may not realize that fast food is limited to 20 seats in the Downtown Business District (B-1).

Article 7 The Zoning Ordinance was previously amended to clarify the minimum side setback requirement in residential districts when the existing structure is nonconforming. This amendment provides the same clarification for the minimum side setback requirement in the Transitional Business District (B-3).

Article 8 The Zoning Ordinance allows an annual payment to the Parking Trust Fund, but the current administrative procedure requires prior approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The amendment would allow annual payments upon approval of the Code Enforcement Officer.

Article 9 The Town, on behalf of Mind's Eye Travel, plans to apply to the Community Block Grant program for a \$50,000 Public Service grant to support the expansion of sighted guide services and training for blind and visually impaired persons living in Maine. Grant funds will be dedicated to staff resources, development and implementation of a marketing outreach campaign, equipment, and the creation of education and training materials.

Article 10 The Town, on behalf of the Camden Affordable Housing Organization, has qualified for a

\$250,000 Community Development Block Grant for Housing Assistance and has been invited to participate in the project development phase of the CDBG application process. Grant funds will be used to provide up to \$30,000 in down-payment assistance for 8 to 10 low-to-moderate income homebuyers to bridge the gap between the price of each home in the Lupine Terrace subdivision and the amount each first-time LMI homebuyer can afford to pay for housing.

Article 11 Voter approval of this article would authorize the appropriation of up to \$700,000 for the upgrade of the Rawson Avenue Wastewater Pump Station. This pump station was constructed in 1970 and due to the high level of maintenance that it has received since then we have managed to get 40 years of service out of equipment that is typically only expected to provide 20 to 25 years. This upgrade will replace all the equipment in the building, improve electrical and ventilation systems to meet current code requirements and replace the 40 year old roof. We feel that this project is critical to ensure the continued reliability of this vital part of our wastewater collection system. If the funding is approved the work will be completed in 2010. Under the provisions of our Interagency Sewer Agreement the Town of Rockport will share in the costs of bond payments for this project based on its proportional percentage of total dry weather flows processed at the plant at the time of the bond issue.

BUSINESS MEETING June 9, 2010 at 7 pm:

Articles 12 through 23, including the proposed FY11 Town Budget, will be acted upon at the business meeting on Wednesday, June 9 at the *Camden Opera House* beginning at 7 pm. Please refer to the 2010 Annual Report, pages 77 through 83 for the articles and the budget detail.

Article 12: The proposed Inter Agency Cooperation Agreement (commonly referred to as KCLES) will permit law enforcement agencies of Knox County to cooperate by compiling and sharing information relating to the law enforcement services. It allows each agency access to the data and information gathered and maintained by the others. The Cooperative is intended to create an electronic data base of public safety information to provide more effective and efficient public safety and law enforcement services to the communities of Knox County.

Articles 13 through 17 are *annual housekeeping articles* which set the tax due date and fix the interest rate for unpaid taxes for the upcoming year, authorize the Select Board to apply for and accept grants, gifts etc. on behalf of the town, authorize the Select Board to

transfer funds between budgetary categories, authorize the Board to dispose of tax acquired property (except the Apollo Tannery property), and authorize the disposal of personal property.

Article 18 covers the *revenue side of the proposed FY11 Budget*. It designates the estimated non-property tax revenue to offset the proposed expenditures, thereby reducing the property tax commitment. See pages 80 and 81 of the Annual Report for detail of the estimated revenues.

Revenues overall have been adjusted based on several years average and known changes in revenue projections. Due to the economy, estimated revenues remain low in a number of lines, particularly vehicle excise taxes, building permits, and State Revenue Sharing. Of particular concern is the State's continuing inclination to balance the State Budget on the backs of municipalities. This down-shifting of State deficits undermines the Town's ability to control the costs of basic local services. Overall, estimated revenues are 2 % higher than FY10, but still far below historical levels.

Article 19 contains the *expenditure side of the proposed FY11 Budget*. If approved, along with the designation of revenues in Article 18, the 2010-2011 proposed budget represents a 2.6% increase in the estimated municipal tax (*The projection is based on an estimated total tax base for the upcoming year*). This budget is for municipal services only and excludes assessments from Mid-Coast Solid Waste, Knox County, and the School Districts.

Following are some of the highlights of the proposed budget, listed by budgetary category. See pages 82 – 83 of the Annual Report for further detail.

Overall, most of the increase in the total proposed *Expenditures* is covered by the small 2% revenue increase. Wages do not include a COLA for non-union employees. Police union wages are estimated pending negotiation of a renewal contract. We have locked in a fuel oil price for the fiscal year at \$2.349 per gallon, compared to the current year price of \$2.055 per gallon.

General Government: General Government expenditures are basically level funded prior to the addition of the Development office and staff person. This category reflects the additional \$85,000 for this purpose. Please see the recommendation on page 4 of this newsletter from the Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC) regarding the addition of a Development Director to town staff. General Government also includes some overlap in

salaries due to the retirement of the Codes Officer/Town Planner.

Public Safety: The Public Safety budget provides for continuation of the current service level and a continuation of a commitment to training for both Police Officers and Firemen. The *Police Department* budget includes estimated wages for slightly less than full staffing, due to one officer on military leave for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year. The *Street Light* budget reflects a more stable pricing in energy supply costs and energy delivery costs. *Hydrant Assessment* includes a proposed 23% increase in water rates in September 2010 as a result of the new storage tank in the system and the new filtration plant now under construction at Mirror Lake.

Highways, Streets, and Bridges: The *Public Works* budget reflects the need to cover increased costs of maintenance items, while maintaining the level of service. As a result of increased costs and a level budget, there is not much planned for paving or infrastructure improvement projects. The infrastructure projects we do need to complete this season are the bridge and drainage work on Molyneaux Road and Steamboat Landing. These projects are included with Capital Improvements.

Health & Welfare: *General Assistance, Provider Agencies, and Community Services* are funded close to FY10 levels. We continue to be able to meet the needs of some agencies through the Town's trust funds. Most outside appropriations are recommended for level funding.

Leisure Services: The Trustees for the *Camden Public Library*, understanding the Town's budget restrictions, have requested a level appropriation to offset the expenses of the Library for FY11. This request mirrors the reduced level of funding that was approved for FY10. It is anticipated that *Harbor* revenues will fall short of previous years this season; however, the projected expenditures remain within the revenue generated by harbor rates.

The *Recreation* and *Parks* budgets reflect a continuation of services. Costs for full time staff with both the Parks and the Recreation Departments are, of course, charged to the Snow Bowl during the winter season. As in past years, the budget includes funds for the *Snow Bowl's* operating cost. This contribution is meant to match the Toboggan Weekend fund-raising efforts in support of the Snow Bowl. The Snow Bowl capital appropriation request is found under Capital Reserves. Both the Match and the Capital Reserve for the Snow Bowl are recommended at a reduced level for FY11.

The *Dam* budget covers Camden's share of repairs and maintenance to the lake dams and repairs for the Montgomery Dam. The budget also now includes the monitoring of the Seabright Dam. Wastewater staff manage the operations of Seabright Hydro. The Parks staff takes care of all town cemeteries and the mowing of *Harbor Park*. The cost of the Harbor Park mowing is offset with revenue from the Library budget.

Cemeteries: The Trustees of the *Cemetery Association* have requested a level appropriation to offset the expenses of the Cemeteries for FY11. The *Cemetery Maintenance* budget is the third year contract amount of a three year contract awarded by the Cemetery Trustees. The maintenance budget is completely offset with funds from the Association and is shown as revenue.

Debt, Capital, Contingency: *Debt Service* payments are separated by *Principal and Interest*. New for FY11 is a partial debt payment on the proposed Rawson Avenue Pump Station improvements. The bond issue question in Article 11 is for this project, and if approved, the bonds will not be sold until the Fall 2010. Therefore, there will not be any principal payment due on the debt in FY11.

The *Capital Reserves and Capital Improvements* budgets reflect the largest impact of a tight budget year. Very little of the Capital Improvement Plan is funded, in particular the plan to set aside funds in reserve accounts for many future planned expenditures, and funding for various public works equipment.

Article 19 relates to the State law, known as LD 1, regarding *spending limitations*. The law limits how much the municipal portion of the property tax commitment (excluding school and county costs) can grow from year to year. The limit is established by adding the average real personal income growth (a % that is calculated by the State for this year to be 1.78%) to the property growth factor (a % derived by comparing new value to total value, computed to be 0.27%) in a community. To calculate the limitations for this year these factors are to be applied to the FY10 tax commitment using 4/1/09 assessment information.

Camden's LD1 spending limitation growth has been calculated to be \$156,346. *The net tax increase of the FY11 budget as proposed by the Budget Committee and the Select Board is substantially under this limitation.*

LD1 includes provisions to increase the spending limitation if needed by a vote of Town Meeting. That exact limit will need to be calculated just prior to the vote based on the actions of the voters on all money

articles. The vote on this question, if needed, must be by written ballot.

Articles 21 through 23 cover the election of officials for the Pascal Fund Trust, the Budget Committee, and the Budget Nominating Committee. All candidates are nominated from the floor at Town Meeting.

For Reference:

FY10 taxable value:	1,099,962,681
Mil rate:	13.21/thousand (.01321)
Municipal portion:	26% or 3.43/thousand (excludes MCSW & overlay)

Therefore, the tax on each 100,000 property value is \$1,321. The municipal portion of that tax is \$ 343.

FY11: If we assume a net taxable value of 1,100,000,000, the following applies:

	<u>Taxes raised</u>	<u>Tax on 100,000 value</u>
1 cent on tax rate:	\$11,000	\$
1.00		
\$1.00 on rate:	\$1,100,000	\$100.00

***Creating a Vibrant Camden:
Why We Need a Development Director***
By CEDAC, March 2010

Camden is at a cross-road. We can either sit back and accept whatever economic future comes our way or we can decide what we want and make it happen. Creating our own future won't be easy and it won't happen by chance.

CEDAC's vision of Camden as a unique and dynamic harbor-side community is multi-faceted. Both a strong sense of community and a vibrant downtown are key ingredients. To build this vision, we will need to retain and attract responsible businesses that provide well-paying, year-round jobs. We would all like to see our children have job opportunities to make Camden their town. Expecting companies with the right qualifications to simply find their way to Camden is unrealistic.

Changing regional transportation infrastructure can be expected to bring many more tourists to our town; people arriving in Rockland on large cruise ships and the railroad from Portland and Boston and the

inevitable expansion of the airport will make Camden more accessible. We can also expect the state's Gateway 1 initiative to improve access to our town. The effect of these changes should not be left to chance; they are part of the change that needs to be managed as the competition for tourists' visits and dollars becomes ever keener.

CEDAC is committed to identifying programs and solutions that will create the exciting and successful future Camden deserves. It is clear, however, that an ever-changing group of part-time volunteers lacks the resources, time and continuity to do the job. We need a strong leader in the position of Development Director — a champion whose full-time focus and commitment will ensure that Camden remains a vital place to live, work and enjoy the natural wealth of mountains, lakes and the sea.

Finding the right Development Director is key to our future economic health and security. That individual must have abundant energy and enthusiasm, along with a variety of skills. This includes the ability to identify and secure development grants to finance appropriate projects, to encourage investments in town, and to manage the recently enacted Tax Increment Financing districts which were overwhelmingly approved by the voters of Camden last month.

Additionally, a competent development program can provide economic stimulus over time that will be measurable well beyond the cost of the position. The paybacks will cast a wide net of opportunity that becomes evident in a healthy escalating business environment, and ultimately gain what we are all seeking, quality job growth for our town. Importantly, a Development Director must effectively represent Camden, as other towns in the mid-coast region increase their efforts to compete for limited state and federal resources, and represent employers seeking the special environment we offer but need help in promoting.

CEDAC respectfully requests your support and endorsement for this proposal. Now is the time for us to continue forward movement in our efforts to rejuvenate our economy.