



Manager's Memorandum
September 2, 2025, Selectboard Meeting

To: Selectboard
From: Tony Ward, Town Manager
Date: 08-28-2025
Re: Selectboard meeting 08-19-2025

Below are notes for agenda items for August 19, 2025, meeting

5. Managers' Update

- A. The Town recently posted a vacancy in the Public Works Department. The posted position is for a truck driver laborer, and applications are being accepted until September 18th.
- B. The Town is still awaiting the final tax commitment from Cumberland County Regional Assessing. Once this information is received, the Town will set the tax due date 45 days thereafter, as authorized by Town Meeting. We currently anticipate the first tax payment will be due in mid- to late October.
- C. I spoke with the Region 1 Engineer of Maine DOT regarding Meadow Road (Route 121). This roadway is classified as a Priority 4, the lowest rating for non-local roads. For comparison, Webbs Mills Road is classified as Priority 4, Poland Spring Road is classified as Priority 3, and Roosevelt Trail as Priority 1. Roads at Priority 4 level are not typically scheduled for full reconstruction; instead, they generally receive a Light Capital Paving (LCP) treatment. Meadow Road is currently scheduled for LCP work in the 2026 work plan. The engineer is reviewing the roadway to determine whether minor modifications to the plan could provide more substantial improvements while remaining within the limits of a Priority 4 roadway work plan.
 - Meadow Road Average Annual Daily Traffic-2,500 vehicles
 - Poland Spring Road Average Annual Daily Traffic-6,000 vehicles
 - Roosevelt Trail Average Annual Daily Traffic-10,450 vehicles
 - Webbs Mills Road Average Annual Daily Traffic-1,650 vehicles

For more information on Maine DOT information please go to

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer/>

- D. The following is a status update on projects and purchases approved at Town Meeting:
 - Edwards Road Box Culvert Replacement – Project completed.
 - Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) – To be ordered; expected delivery within the next month.
 - Braun Ambulance – Ordered; delivery anticipated in 2027.

- Casco Community Park Fencing – Installation scheduled with TT Fence with completion anticipated this fall.
- Municipal Fiber – See Agenda Item #6 for details.
- Ford F600 and Plow Gear – Purchase completed and delivered.
- Public Works Radios and Repeaters – Initial purchase completed.
- FY26 Road Projects – Remaining projects to be determined.

On-Going Business

6. The Selectboard will consider a fiberoptic installation agreement with Sebago Fiber.

Included in the Selectboard packet is a proposed fiberoptic installation agreement from Sebago Fiber. The agreement was reviewed by Drummond Woodsum Murray, who requested Town clarification on certain provisions. The version provided in your packet is a revised, red-lined draft with comments from Cliodhna O'Malley. The proposed changes noted on pages 7 and 8 are incorporated into this revised document and the addition of the meeting house on page 5 under town buildings.

Staff thoughts are additionally highlighted in the comment section of the proposed agreement.

7. The Selectboard will discuss the Foreclosed Property Policy.

Included in the Selectboard packet is a draft policy regarding tax-acquired properties. This policy has been prepared in compliance with Maine law. The Selectboard will need to determine the level of review and any nuisance considerations associated with the policy.

8. The Selectboard will discuss liaisons with committees and periodical updates.

The Selectboard will discuss the possibility of liaisons and committee chairs providing periodical updates of committee/board activities (i.e., quarterly, or semi-annually).

9. The Selectboard will discuss the updates to the Meeting House.

The Selectboard will discuss possible alternatives for progressing forward with the Meeting House.

10. The Selectboard will discuss the status of the Capital Improvement survey.

The Capital Improvement Ad Hoc Committee will hold a community forum on September 9th at 6:00 PM at the Casco Community Center. The committee, along with Town leaders, seeks clarification and prioritization of the data received from the recent survey. The goal of the forum is to provide Town leaders with community input to help guide the prioritization of the Town's future Capital Improvement Plans. Included in the Selectboard packet are the raw survey data and two summaries related to this project, prepared by the Greater Portland Council of Governments

.New Business

11. The Selectboard will discuss road maintenance projects being coordinated by Public Works

Mike Genest will be present at the meeting to provide updates on up coming minor road maintenance projects.

12. The Selectboard will discuss the RFID system at Bulky Waste.

The Town of Casco will be transitioning from a coupon system to an RFID system at the Bulky Waste facility. The Town of Naples has been using this system since May and has experienced some challenges, which are also anticipated in Casco. Both towns are working with BTek to resolve these issues, and solutions are expected in the near future.

Updated scanners and software upgrades are underway, along with additional staff training on the system. During this transition, we respectfully request that the public remain patient with both Town Office and Bulky Waste staff as adjustments are made.

13. The Selectboard will discuss the schedule of the zoning work group.

The members of the Zoning Work Group have been identified by their respective committees and boards, with the exception of the planner position, which remains vacant. The group will hold its first meeting on September 10th at 6:00 PM.

At the outset, the group is expected to meet on a monthly basis to review the current Casco Village zoning ordinance and to facilitate dialogue with their respective committees and boards. The group will then work with the new planner to draft potential zoning modifications, followed by community forums to gather feedback and refine any proposed changes.

It is anticipated that any proposed zoning changes for the Village would be brought forward for consideration at the **June 2026 Town Meeting**.

14. The Selectboard will discuss future planning options.

With the change in planning services, the Selectboard will need to provide guidance on the Town's future planning service structure. Discussions should focus on the preferred model—contracted services or full-time position—as well as budget opportunities or limitations, and the scope of duties. Key considerations include support for the Planning Board, zoning updates, and assistance to volunteer committees.

The Town currently has \$75,000 budgeted for planning services, with some flexibility through discretionary funds. For context, the 2024 MMA Salary Survey is included in this

packet. While not a comprehensive study due to the limited number of participants, the survey provides a benchmark for planner compensation, with a reported mean of \$84,381 and a median of \$81,003. This information was provided because of the overlap between contracted planning services and municipal planner positions.

Pros and cons of options

Contracted Planning Services

Pros:

- Flexible: Services can be scaled up or down depending on workload and budget.
- Cost control: Predictable expenses tied to contracted hours or scope of work.
- Access to specialized expertise that may not be feasible to hire in-house.
- No long-term employment obligations (benefits, retirement, etc.).

Cons:

- Limited availability: Contractor may not always be accessible when urgent matters arise.
- Less continuity: Potential turnover if the contract is not renewed.
- Less direct integration with staff, boards, and community.
- May not provide the same level of long-term planning vision.

Full-Time Town Planner

Pros:

- Dedicated resource with consistent availability.
- Stronger integration with Planning Board, Selectboard, committees, and staff.
- Greater continuity and institutional knowledge for zoning updates and long-term projects.
- Ability to proactively address planning issues rather than working project-to-project.

Cons:

- Higher overall cost when including benefits, retirement contributions, and overhead.
- Less flexibility if workload fluctuates.
- Recruitment challenges, given competitive market, and limited candidate pool.
- Long-term budget commitment.

Following Selectboard guidance, I will proceed with either preparing a Request for Proposals for contracted planning services or posting a vacancy for a full-time Town Planner.