

HARPSWELL *BULLETIN*

News for Harpswell Residents & Property Owners from the Town Office – August '13
Town Web Site: www.harpswell.maine.gov

2013 TAX RATE

The Selectmen/Assessors set the 2013 tax rate, or mil rate, at \$5.78 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value. This small increase of .3% will add only \$2.00 to a property tax bill for every \$100,000 of assessed value. Harpswell's property tax rate remains one of the lowest in Maine.

PAYING YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL

AndroPay. A web-based payment service called AndroPay is available through the Town's banking relationship with Androscoggin Bank. This service allows property owners to pay taxes online, 24/7, by an electronic transfer from a savings or checking account. One does not have to be a customer of Androscoggin Bank to use this service. Go to the Town's home page at www.harpswell.maine.gov and click the online services tab. A \$1.00 charge will be assessed for each transaction.

Credit or Debit Cards. The Town accepts credit and debit card payments in person only. There is a 2.5% fee assessed to each transaction.

Cash or Check. You may stop by in person and pay your property taxes with cash or by check, or mail a check to the Town of Harpswell, P.O. Box 39, Harpswell, ME 04079.

SINGLE-STREAM RECYCLING IS HERE

Single-stream recycling is in effect at the Arthur J. Moore Recycling Center. You no longer have to sort your recyclables by category. There is one designated compactor for all recyclable materials and one designated compactor for non-recyclable household waste. Your recyclables, including all plastics from #1 through #7, can be deposited in one location. We ask that your recyclables be put in paper bags or cardboard boxes; do not use plastic bags as they are not accepted by the service provider. The conversion to single-stream is expected to increase recycling rates by making it easier for folks to recycle. While there will be additional costs for transportation, those costs are expected to be offset over time by savings in personnel, equipment and capital.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) FLOODPLAIN MAPS

This September FEMA plans to release its new digitized preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the Town of Harpswell and many other coastal municipalities in Maine. Harpswell has received working drafts of the preliminary maps which seem to indicate that more properties will be affected by FEMA's revised flood hazard areas. Robert Gerber of Ransom Environmental, a consultant to the Town, has performed a review of the work maps and will be providing his expertise to the Town throughout the map review and adoption process. An appeal period is slated to occur which affords municipalities and individual property owners the opportunity to submit information through the Town to FEMA which may cause FEMA to make changes to the preliminary maps. Property owners may come in now to review the work maps, but until the

preliminary maps are received, the information is not appealable. The Town will announce its receipt of the preliminary maps, so that property owners may come in at that time to view the proposed designation of their property and determine whether they want to submit information to FEMA as part of the appeal process. The new maps will not be effective until FEMA has issued its final revisions and the Town Meeting has accepted the updated maps as part of Harpswell's Floodplain Management Ordinance (possibly by March 2014). The Floodplain Management Ordinance enables Harpswell property owners to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. This flood insurance is required by most lenders for mortgages, reverse mortgages, mortgage refinancing and construction loans involving a structure in a mapped floodplain. Please see Jason Marshall in the Code Office for more information.

HARPSWELL GUIDE TO OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Town of Harpswell, in collaboration with the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust, has issued the third edition of the *Harpswell Guide to Outdoor Recreation: Trails, Town Lands, Landings, Biking Areas and Historic Locations*. The Guide makes it easy to find these places with updated maps and information, and is available at the Town Office, online at www.harpswell.maine.gov and at various locations throughout the Town. Explore and enjoy the many opportunities for outdoor recreational activities in Harpswell. Many thanks go out to Recreation Director Gina Perow for her leadership and creativity on this project. To see what's happening in Harpswell Recreation visit the Town's Recreation page on facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Harpswell-Recreation/331741290266806

WEST HARPSWELL SCHOOL LEASED TO HARPSWELL COASTAL ACADEMY

The Board of Selectmen signed a one-year lease with Harpswell Coastal Academy (HCA) for use of the former West Harpswell School. HCA is a public charter school authorized by the State Charter Commission to open its doors to students this fall. In its first year, there will be approximately 60 students in grades six and nine. Expansion is expected to occur over the next several years to eventually include all grades from six through twelve. Provisions of the lease include (1) the Town receiving \$20,000 in rent; (2) the Town undertaking certain improvements and upgrades; (3) the parties agreeing to allow time to negotiate a purchase and sales agreement (note that any sale of the premises is subject to Town Meeting approval); (4) HCA being given the authority to sub-lease and by all accounts the presence of Ash Point Community Library will continue in the building; and (5) the Town retaining the option to use the building for Town-related purposes.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Board of Selectmen entered into a contract in the amount of \$832,714 with Harry Crooker & Sons of Topsham, Maine for capital road work to be performed on the following five roads: Long Point, Hildreth, Wharf, Shore Acres and Thompson. Work is expected to begin in August and be completed by late fall. The Town has entered into a contract in the amount of \$154,170 with Atlantic Mechanical of Woolwich, Maine for the replacement of a major culvert on Bethel Point Road. This project, which required special permitting from the Army Corps of Engineers, is expected to begin in early October and take approximately 6-10 weeks to complete. The Contractor expects to allow one-way vehicular traffic throughout the duration of the project.