



Harpswell Bulletin

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HOW TO PAY YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL

There are several methods available for paying your property tax bill. 1) Cash—stop by and pay in person; 2) Check—in person or via mail; 3) credit or debit cards—in person only, with a 2.5% fee assessed for each transaction; and 4) a web-based payment service called AndroPay available through the Town’s home page by clicking the online services tab—a \$1 fee will be assessed for each transaction. The first installment of the 2018 tax bill is due on Monday, September 17 with the second installment being due on Monday, December 17. A 6% interest rate will be charged on the unpaid portion of any installment after its due date. For future reference, the Tax Collector is authorized to accept pre-payments of taxes as a service to taxpayers for anyone who wishes to pay taxes in advance of receiving a tax bill.

HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

Do you want to stay in your home as you get older and need home repair work that you are unable to do or cannot afford? If yes, please call the Town Office at 833-5771. The Town has partnered with Harpswell Aging at Home and Habitat for Humanity to do no-cost repairs and weatherization. A grant covers the material costs and skilled volunteers will perform the work.

DO YOU NEED SMOKE OR CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS?

The Town of Harpswell is excited to announce a program for Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detector installation at no cost to income-eligible residents. The intent of the program is to provide detectors to those who presently have no detectors and to improve coverage where there are not enough detectors presently installed. With carbon monoxide as a silent, odorless killer and fires growing much faster than years ago, detectors play a more critical role in home safety than ever before. To apply for detector installation, please call Linda Strickland at the Town Office at 207-833-5771. The program will be performed by the Town’s Department of Safety and Emergency Services firefighters and overseen by Town Fire Administrator Art Howe. This is a great opportunity to enhance the safety of you and your family at no cost, using detectors that have batteries that will last 10 years.



HARPSWELL HAS A LITTLE FREE LIBRARY!

The Recreation Department has installed a Little Free Library at the Devil’s Back Trail Area on Orr’s Island. This library is stocked with books for adults, teens and children. If you take a book and love it – you can keep it. If you want to return it, you can return it at any Little Free Library. If you want to put a new book in, make sure it is marked with “not for resale” on the inside, maybe even include a note about why you like the book! There are more little free libraries to come; the Recycling Center will be getting their LFL soon and Recreation is working to get another one installed on Route 123. You can find the location of all LFL’s at www.littlefreelibrary.org

2018 TAX RATE

The Selectmen/Assessors set the 2018 tax rate, or mil rate, at \$6.48 for every \$1,000 of assessed value. This is an increase of .3% in the tax rate compared to the prior year amounting to \$2.00 more in property tax for every \$100,000 of assessed value.

HARPSWELL’S PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Harpswell provides property tax assistance to qualifying persons who reside in Harpswell and who have applied for and received the State of Maine Residents Property Tax Fairness Credit. Residents must file Form PTFC with Maine Revenue Services. In addition, residents must also submit an application to the Town’s program by October 15 of each year. Please contact Deputy Town Administrator Terri Sawyer at tsawyer@town.harpswell.me.us or 833-5771 if you have questions about this program.

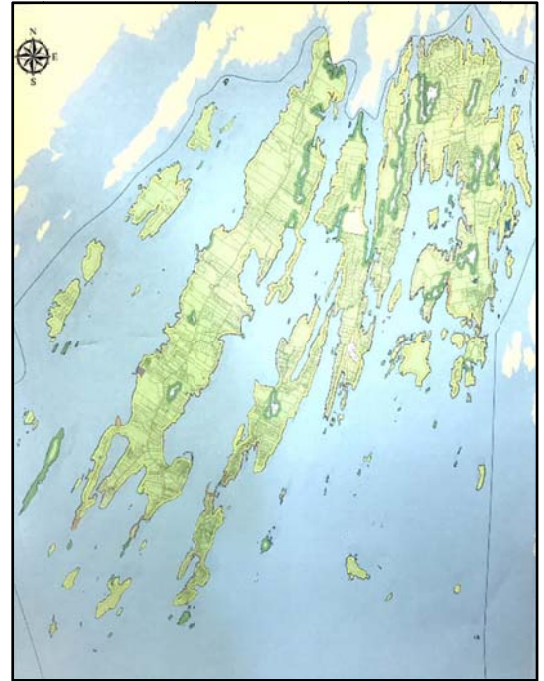
HARPSWELL FISHERMEN HAVE NO-COST DISPOSAL FOR CERTAIN FISHING GEAR

Harpswell’s commercial and recreational fishermen have a no-cost means of disposal of certain fishing gear. Any damaged or obsolete traps, netting, buoys and rope can be taken to the Transfer Station free of charge. All collected materials are either recycled or used to produce energy. This is a grant funded program that is made available in part through the efforts of the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association.

FEMA FLOODPLAIN MAP UPDATE

The following paragraph is an official notice regarding the agency’s intent to update flood maps.

“The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has issued a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), and where applicable, Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report, reflecting proposed flood hazard determinations within Cumberland County, Maine (All Jurisdictions). These flood hazard determinations may include the addition or modification of Base Flood Elevations, base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area boundaries or zone designations, or the regulatory floodway. Technical information or comments are solicited on the proposed flood hazard determinations shown on the preliminary FIRM and/or FIS report for Cumberland County, Maine (All Jurisdictions). These flood hazard determinations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that your community is required to either adopt or show evidence of being already in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. However, before these determinations are effective for floodplain management purposes, you will be provided an opportunity to appeal the proposed information. For information on the statutory 90-day period provided for appeals, as well as a complete listing of the communities affected and the locations where copies of the FIRM are available for review, please visit FEMA’s website at www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe or call the FEMA Map Information eXchange (FMIX) toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).”



The Town of Harpswell, in conjunction with other Cumberland and York County communities, has retained the services of Ransom Consulting Engineers to develop a more precise coastline model in an effort to provide FEMA with more accurate flood data. The Town plans to submit the modeling work of Ransom Consulting Engineers to FEMA during the 90-day appeal period. In addition, there are 14 transects in Harpswell which were selected, in consultation with Ransom, for further evaluation and it is the Town’s intention to submit information about these 14 transects to FEMA as well during the 90-day appeal period. Individuals may also submit appeal information to FEMA through the Town of Harpswell; however those appeals will not be submitted to Ransom for incorporation into its work product.

Once the 90-day appeal period has ended, a scientific review of the submitted appeal materials will be conducted by FEMA to verify their validity. Final maps will be determined by FEMA and then the Town must consider adopting those maps and a revised Floodplain Management Ordinance at a Town Meeting, most likely in March of 2019 with an effective date of summer 2019, to remain qualified to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

To understand how your property is impacted, you may view the proposed flood maps at the Town Office or on the Town of Harpswell’s website at www.harpswell.maine.gov, under Town Departments and then the Code Enforcement Office. Property owners are encouraged to call the Office at 207-833-5771 if they have any questions.

<p>INVESTING IN WATERFRONT INFRASTRUCTURE AT MACKEREL COVE The Town is moving forward with a new concrete-plank boat ramp at Mackerel Cove on Bailey Island. This location is one of the Town’s most frequently used launches for commercial fishermen and recreational boaters. The new design increases the width from 16 to 20 feet and replaces the existing 140-foot long paved ramp with concrete boat planks. Not only is the concrete ramp expected to last longer than an asphalt one, but it is also better for the environment.</p>	<p>HOUSE NUMBERING IS ESSENTIAL Can you clearly read your house number from the street? Can you read this at night during a heavy rain or snowstorm? These are the conditions your public responders are faced with too often, and the consequences may be life threatening. Time is precious during an emergency so help us get to you as soon as possible. Please post your house with numbers that are easily read and are preferably reflective. If your house is more than 50 feet from the road, put your number on BOTH sides (not the end) of your mailbox or on a post at the end of your driveway.</p>	<p>POSSIBLE FEE INCREASES Periodically, the Town reviews its fees to see if they are keeping pace with the cost of providing certain services. As part of the fee review process, the Budget Advisory Committee has made some recommendations to the Board of Selectmen that will be discussed in the coming months. The Town is considering fee increases for moorings, shellfish licenses, building permits, et al. Please visit the Town’s website for details.</p>
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