

# HARPSWELL BULLETIN

News for Harpswell Residents & Property Owners from the Town Office – January '15

Town Web Site: [www.harpswell.maine.gov](http://www.harpswell.maine.gov)

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## Be Prepared for Emergencies

A big thank you goes out to all of our fire and rescue volunteers, Emergency Management Agent Rob McAleer, and Road Commissioner Ron Ponziani who put in long hours during emergency situations including the Thanksgiving power outage to make sure our community is safe and well protected. It's important to be prepared for emergencies, particularly during the winter storm season. Below is a list of basic items that each household should consider having onhand to be better prepared should an emergency such as a winter storm make roads impassable or cause widespread and prolonged power outages.

- Battery-powered flashlight and radio, plus extra batteries
- Extra bottled drinking water and a full tub for other uses.
- Non-perishable food that requires no refrigeration and is easy to prepare, a manual can opener
- Alternative heat source such as woodstove, fireplace, or kerosene heater—be sure to ventilate properly and have fire safety equipment nearby
- Medications and first-aid kit
- Cell phone
- Pet supplies

Remember that portable generators produce carbon monoxide gas. Carbon monoxide poisoning can lead to death in a very short time. It is odorless, tasteless and invisible, so you may be exposed without knowing it. That is why carbon monoxide is sometimes called “the silent killer.” Generators should always be run outside and never in a home or garage.

Check on neighbors, particularly those living alone, to see if they have the essentials—food, water, heat and necessary medications. Use 1-800-696-1000 to report an outage to Central Maine Power. For any emergency situation requiring law enforcement, medical or fire personnel, dial 911.

## Heating Assistance

Mary Coombs of Cook's Lobster House recently presented more than \$6,000 to the Town as a result of the restaurant's benefit event which raised funds for the Town's heating assistance program. This is the sixth year that the Bailey Island business has held such a benefit with the proceeds being used to heat Harpswell homes. The Town wants to ensure that its residents are aware of this program as well as two other programs which are available to assist low- to moderate-income residents with heating fuel costs.

**Harpswell Heating Assistance (HHA):** This is a Town-managed program that assists eligible households with up to 200 gallons of heating fuel per winter season. It has been funded by public and private sources including the generosity of local residents, businesses and churches. Call the Town Office at 833-5771 to inquire about eligibility.

**Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):** This is a federally funded program that provides heating assistance to income-eligible households. Appointments can be scheduled by directly contacting PROP (Peoples Regional Opportunity Program) at 1-800-698-4959. It can take up to 6-8 weeks for a new application to be processed.

**General Assistance (GA):** Every municipality in Maine is required to administer a general assistance program which provides public assistance for basic necessities, including heat. The Town is reimbursed 50% of its general assistance expenditures by the State Department of Health and Human Services.

### **Sea Level Rise Public Workshop – 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January 2015**

Have you thought about what Harpswell could look like in a generation? Tides in Portland Harbor are .62 feet higher than in 1912. A 1920's photo, published in the Harpswell Anchor, of a lobster business in Mackerel Cove on Bailey Island shows it accessible only at high tide.

Harpswell has one-third of all the shoreline in Casco Bay, approximately 216 miles. All that shoreline means approximately 20% of Harpswell acreage is within 250 feet of the water. What changes may occur in the Town if sea level elevates one to six feet? How might the elevation in sea level affect wells and potable water in the coastal areas? Will there be more or less coastal marsh? How might higher water levels affect roads and the ability of emergency equipment to pass during major storms or surges?

Regional Planner, Audra-Caler Bell of the Midcoast Council of Governments (MCOG), and the Planning Department will present a public interactive workshop the second week of January. Participants will be able to see how Harpswell will be affected by sea levels that rise by one, two, three and six feet, and examine how it will affect their neighborhood using Google Earth.

Using computer-generated geographic information system maps gleaned from State data and projects by the Casco Bay Estuary Project, Bowdoin College, and U. S. Department of Homeland Security (salt water intrusion and potable water models), various parts of Town under differing sea level rise scenarios will be examined.

The public workshop is planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January at the Town Office, 253 Mountain Road. The date and time will be announced shortly on the Town website. If you would like to receive email notice of the date, please sign up on the Town Website <http://www.harpswell.maine.gov>, *On line services, email subscriptions*, CHOOSE SEA LEVEL. For more information contact the Planning Office, 207-833-5771.

### **Eagle Island Becomes a National Historic Landmark**

In September, the National Park Service announced the designation of Eagle Island as a national historic landmark recognizing it as a place that possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Until this point, the Town had one National Historic Landmark (NHL), the Old Town Meetinghouse at Harpswell Center. Alexandra Lord, the Branch Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Program, in a letter to the Harpswell Selectmen, indicated that the NHL Committee had recommended this designation to the National Parks System Advisory Board which has the responsibility of advising the Secretary of the Interior on NHL designations. She noted that Harpswell could be proud that a relatively small community would have two such designated landmarks within its borders. The island is owned by the State of Maine and is one of the State's more popular historic sites according to Willard Harris of the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. Visitors to the site are able to get a real feel for the life of one of this country's most intrepid explorers, Admiral Robert E. Peary, and learn about a great period of exploration to the North Pole. Not only is Admiral Peary's home historically significant, but its unique placement on Eagle Island in Casco Bay adds to its attraction. A new visitors' center enhances the educational experience.

## **Mitchell Field Boat Launch and Pier Public Input Meetings**

The Mitchell Field Committee would like public input on a couple of issues relative to the implementation of the Mitchell Field Master Plan. The plan calls for a public boat launch to be constructed. Committee members have been discussing this possibility for some time and, before they go further, it is important that they obtain guidance and input from Townspeople. The Committee plans to hold several meetings in January at convenient locations around Town. You'll see signs announcing these meetings and it is planned to have Harpswell community television broadcast these meetings so others who are unable to attend can be involved as well. Following the January meetings, the Committee will compile the input gathered and will present those findings at a follow-up meeting later in the year.

A boat ramp with adequate parking can be a nice addition to the Town; it can also be a significant expense. The Committee needs to understand what people would like to see and if they feel it is appropriate to shoulder the expense. Grant monies may be available to help with the funding but these grant monies may come with strings attached. The Committee is interested in your thoughts about this aspect as well. A further issue is the condition of the Mitchell Field pier and the proximity of the pier to the possible boat launch. Thus, the Committee would like your input on the best course of action relative to the pier.

Please plan to join the Committee for one or more of these meetings. Your input will be greatly appreciated. Meetings are scheduled as follows:

January 26, 2015 at Cundy's Harbor Community Building, 6:30pm

January 27, 2015 at Harpswell Coastal Academy, 6:30pm

January 28, 2015 at Orr's Island Schoolhouse, 6:30pm

February 10, 2015 at the Town Office, 6:30pm, snow date

Check the Town website for any updates.

## **Single-Stream Recycling**

August 2014 marked one year since operating under Single Stream Recycling. As a result of your diligence at the Recycling Center, Harpswell's recycling rate increased by over 7.5%.

In order to improve on this success, we ask you to pay particular attention to the following:

- 1) Only plastics marked with a recycling symbol can be recycled through the program. Styrofoam and plastic bags are considered trash.
- 2) Only glass bottles and jars can be recycled through the program. Plate glass, mirrors, ceramics and porcelains cannot be accepted through the single stream program.
- 3) Only food cans are recycled through the single-stream program. All other metals can be recycled by placing them in the Metal Slot (10 pound limit) or taking them to the Transfer Station as required.

An increasing number of hypodermic needles have been found loose in the trash. They are a safety and health hazard if not properly packaged. Please place them in a hard plastic container. Seal the lid with tape, and mark the container "SHARPS" and then throw it with your trash!

### **Join a Committee**

Do you have a special interest or skill set to share with the Town? Are you interested in becoming more involved in Town government? Do you want to roll-up-your sleeves and work on policy development? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you should consider joining a Town Committee.

Most committees meet monthly and offer stimulating opportunities for working on substantive matters that eventually come before the Board of Selectmen for possible action. Committees cover matters such as land use, energy, recreation and recycling. To learn more about the mission of each committee, visit the committee section of the Town's website at [harpwell.maine.gov](http://harpwell.maine.gov). An online committee application is available there or you can pick one up at the Town Office. Fresh new perspectives are welcome.

### **Annual Town Meeting Date is Set**

The Board of Selectmen has set the Annual Town Meeting for Saturday, March 14, 2015, with polls to open at 9am and the business meeting to start at 10a.m. The budget for fiscal year 2015 as well as various ordinance amendments will be proposed for consideration. Also, there will be secret ballot elections for Selectman, Road Commissioner and School Board Director—each of these positions will be for a three-year term. Nomination papers are now available from the Town Clerk's Office and need to be returned to that Office by January 28, 2015.