MEMO

To: Town of Chebeague Island Board of Selectmen
From: Marjorie E. Stratton, Town Administrator
Date: April 1, 2020
Re: Town Administrator’s Report

Departmental Updates
I am still working at the Town Office daily. Chris Auffant is working at the office and from home. Vika Wood is working remotely from home. She is currently working to finalize the March 3, 2020 election results with the Secretary of States office. She also does payroll and monthly reports from home. Gloria is my research and website guru and is working from home. We are keeping things moving.

The Transfer Station is operating normally with everyone using social distancing. Public works is also operating normally. We had Affordable Well Drilling here last week doing the chipping at the Brush Dump. They have completed the job and will be moving the equipment out today and tomorrow.

The Harbor Master boat is repaired and was launched Tuesday. It will be moved as necessary with weather forecasts. The punt is in the water. We are working on getting the rest of the floats repaired and ready to install.

The Fire Department is having additional training for their staff in anticipation of increased need for medical transport. As you all know, CTC is refusing to transport any suspected or known cases of COVID-19. Our Fire / Rescue Department is preparing as much as possible and they are ready to respond.

Legal Budget for the current year
Please note that we are over-budget on legal expenses for the current year. We had budgeted $7,000 and have expended $10,722.08 to date. We have $16,000 left in Contingency.

Possible Motion: Move to transfer $5,000 from Contingency to Legal Services in our 2020 Budget.

Question about Change Town Meeting Date
We received an email from Jen Belesca about changing the date of the election and Town Meeting. My understanding is that the Board of Selectmen set the date of the annual town meeting. I know the meeting has traditionally been the first Saturday in June, but we could not find anything in the forming documents or otherwise that limits the Town of Chebeague Island to that date. Gloria Brown is researching the authority in Maine Law.

The Board will have to make some decisions about the budget and what other warrant articles to focus on soon. In addition to the budget, we have the approval for the exchange of property
Due date of Property Taxes
We have gotten a few questions about extending the due date of property taxes. I spoke with a Maine Municipal Association attorney. He said that there is no provision in Maine Law to alter the tax commitment. In other words, once the Assessor has prepared the Certificate of Assessment, Municipal Tax Assessment Warrant and the Certificate of Commitment to the Tax Collector, these documents cannot be changed. The due dates and interest rate are part of this document based on the votes at the annual town meeting. So, the Board of Selectmen have no authority to change the due dates nor can we just have another town meeting to amend the commitment of taxes.

Tax Acquired Property
The Town foreclosed on the property previously owned by the heirs of Mildred Coddington. The automatic foreclosure date was March 6, 2020. The property is on North Road at Map 103-Lot 008. The last contact we had for the heirs is Jim Coddington of Eastchester, New York. Lien notices are returned as Unclaimed, unable to forward.

According to the Tax Acquired Property Policy Statement, the policy is first to Convey property to the owner. The Owner will be given the opportunity to regain ownership of said property by adhering to the following process: A. Contact the Town of Chebeague Island Tax Collector in writing within the first ninety days after property owner has been notified of foreclosure and express an interest in regaining title to the foreclosed property. B. Meet with the selectmen within six months after foreclosure notification to develop a repayment plan for all costs including but not limited to principal, interest, legal fees, registry fees and administrative fees. Etc., etc.

The policy implies that we have to wait six months before taking any further action. Is that your understanding? If the property owner does not seek retention, at some point, the Town forms a committee to review the possible uses of the property.

Solid Waste Facility Ordinance
I had recommended some amendments to the Ordinance a couple months ago. My recollection is that Donna Damon was going to present additional amendments. I’d just like to know where we are with this process. The goal would be to take proposed amendments to Town Meeting in June.

Correspondence from Brenda Lapoint
We received a letter from Brenda Lapoint offering to sell her property to the Town. This is on North road at Map 106, Lot 026B abutting the Rec Center and near the School. I haven’t done a lot of research on the property as this is probably something that will have to be addressed at a later date. The property is assessed at $46,200.
RESOLUTION
of the Town of Chebeague Island
Regarding Emergency Medical Transports

WHEREAS, the Town of Chebeague Island, the nation and the world are now facing a global pandemic of unheard of proportions, and;

WHEREAS, the Chebeague Transportation Company (CTC), a 501(c)(3) corporation, has saved many lives transporting rescue patients from the unbridged island of Chebeague to the mainland for almost fifty (50) years at no cost to the patients, and;

WHEREAS, CTC has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Chebeague Island (09/18/2008) stating that “CTC will transport by boat any sick or injured patients being in the care of Chebeague Island Fire & Rescue,” and;

WHEREAS, CTC received an approximate $60,000 sales tax forgiveness from the State of Maine in recognition of CTC’s emergency medical transportation services, and;

WHEREAS, CTC already transports non-rescue passengers who may test positive for the COVID-19 virus, with or without the passenger’s knowledge;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Chebeague Island implores CTC to continue to safely transport all rescue patients, including COVID-19 patients, using appropriate personal protection equipment and protocols on either the Independence or the Islander.

GIVEN BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF ITS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
April 1, 2020

DECLARATION OF APPRECIATION
of the Town of Chebeague Island
Regarding Emergency Medical Transports

On behalf of the Citizens of Chebeague Island, Maine, we hereby express our sincere appreciation to Janet Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, and to all the State people and departments who are working towards securing safe transportation for COVID-19 patients from the unbridged island of Chebeague to the mainland for emergency medical care. We pray that such transports will never be necessary, but if they are, we know that this critical transportation link will help to save lives.

GIVEN BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF ITS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF CHEBEAGUE ISLAND
April 1, 2020
CTC policy as of today is that they “will not knowingly transport suspected or known Covid 19 passengers or rescue patients. All others will be allowed to ride.” They tell us that their insurance carrier would cancel their liability coverage and that they are unwilling to risk losing their coverage. So, where does this leave the residents of the Island? Rescue patients with Covid 19 symptoms will be transported on the LIF&R boat. While we are very grateful for their offer of assistance, it will be limited by their needs, time, and resources. Please see the Town’s Resolution dated March 25, 2020 regarding how you should individually protect yourself and your family.

If you have been directed by your PCP to go to the mainland for testing please use the Casco Bay Lines Ferry and follow their instructions until we are able to resolve the transportation issues with CTC.

What is our Town doing to solve this problem? The BoS has met several times with CTC representatives and not been able resolve the central issues: insurance, crew acceptance of the Town’s 911 Emergency Rescue Procedures, and Coast Guard sign off on the use of the Independence for Covid 19 transport. Following Julia Maine’s outreach to Gov. Mills we have been in touch with Maine DOT and others in State government trying to find solutions. Like the virus it is a work in progress, but we hope to have some resolution soon.

Please remember Maine CDC tells us that physical distancing is primary to protecting ourselves. Watch the CDC daily press conference around 11:30, it is extremely informative. If you have any medical concerns call your PCP and stay in place. Wash your hands often. If you need assistance with food call the food pantry for help. Many forms of help are available. Get in touch with the Chebeague Emergency Advisory Committee chaired be Melissa Yosua-Davis and David Hill. Call your friends and neighbors-keep socially close, just not physically close.

The BoS is meeting every Wednesday evening at 6PM on ZOOM. All are invited and encouraged to attend.
Carol White Public Comment for 4/1/2020: I am submitting these in writing to make it easier for the Selectman in Zoom meeting format.

There are three issues I would like to have the Selectman address in tonight’s meeting in relation to COVID-19.

1. Please report on the status of CTC’s refusal to transport individuals for COVID-19 testing or EMS services. The guidance on the Town’s website says that CBL will transport individuals from Chebeague for COVID-19 testing. How would this be done with the extremely limited CBL schedule, when island residents have no transportation upon arrival in Portland and taxi and public transportation is very limited to non-existent?

2. Day tripper’s and Recreational Visitors to Chebeague

   Last weekend, as observed by many community members, day trippers came over on the CTC ferry to Chebeague to ride bikes and visit our beaches. A group of three brought their bikes over and back on Saturday on the stern of the Independence. This is despite the Town of Chebeague Resolution that calls for “Travel to and from the mainland only for essential reasons” and the State of Maine State of Emergency enacted by Governor Mills. A day trip to Chebeague for a hike or a bike ride does not qualify as essential. Some individuals have to ride the ferry back and forth to work or complete essential tasks on the mainland and it is unfair to subject them to this potential exposure. CTC’s disregard for the safety of their employees and the public is reckless and disappointing. Should CTC stop selling day trip tickets? You bet. Today Governor Mills enacted a Stay at Home Order which includes even more restrictions on travel. If CTC is unwilling to comply with the Town’s Resolution and the Governors Stay at Home Order, I ask the Selectman to take the action necessary, including enforcement, to protect the crew and community from this type of unnecessary exposure.

3. Freight Delivery at Casco Bay Lines

   The uncontrolled situation at Chandlers Wharf during a Casco Bay Lines freight delivery needs your attention. Many households are shipping groceries and supplies via CBL to Chebeague. Folks are congregating on the wharf waiting before the ferry arrival and descending on the CBL crew as they unload freight. For the health of the CBL crew and the community this system needs a little structure and organization. Perhaps people should be instructed to either stay in the vehicles or keep the minimum 6-foot distance from each other while on the wharf. Islanders should keep their distance from the CBL crew and let them unload the freight without interference. Folks could grab their freight in groups at a time rather than the current free for all.

Carol White
250 North Road
Chebeague
From:         Julia Maine <julia.e.maine@gmail.com>
Sent:        Wednesday, April 1, 2020 9:39 AM
To:           Herb Maine; drhill@chebeague.net; markdycr@chebecug.net;
              publicservantone@gmail.com; jhorson@outlook.com;
              townadmin@townofchebeagueisland.org
Subject:     Public Comment for 4/1 Selectmen’s Meeting

Good morning,

I’d like to start by thanking all of you for what you’ve done over the last several weeks to address our current public health crisis. I know you have taken on added stress and responsibilities as we navigate these uncharted waters and I appreciate your commitment. I’d especially like to thank Marjorie. Now more than ever, we are so lucky to have such an experienced and dedicated Town Administrator.

I am submitting the following as public comment to be considered during the meeting this evening:

1) First, I urge the Board of Selectmen to vote _tonight_ to declare a civil state of emergency as the City of Portland, the Town of Brunswick, and the State of Maine have already done. Doing so will empower the Town with more effective control to address community emergency and public health related issues, including transportation.

Below is the definition for “Disaster” outlined in the Town of Chebeague’s _Emergency Management Ordinance_. Global pandemic certainly fits this definition. I believe that many feel a false sense of security out here, but as residents of Cumberland County (not to mention the influx of individuals from out of state) we are at risk. It would be prudent to _act now_, so you are not forced to react under stress when an emergency arises.

_“Disaster. "Disaster" means the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or man-made cause including, but not limited to, fire, flood, earthquake, wind, storm, wave action, oil spill or other water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, epidemic, air contamination, critical material shortage, infestation, explosion or riot.”_”

2) Second, can the Board confirm that there is a mechanism in place with CDC to inform the Town if a resident becomes infected, and if so, can you clarify how that mechanism works? There are also a fair number of individuals on the island currently who are not residents. How will the town be notified if any of these individuals become infected? Finally, how will the community be notified when someone becomes infected?

I understand that these are difficult times, but this is a strong community and we are strongest when we stick together. Fourteen years, four weeks, and one day ago I testified in front of legislature asking them to grant us the privilege to govern ourselves. I did it because I believed in this community and I still do. As Mabel Doughty said, “it’s time to row our own boat,” so let’s get rowing.

Thank you and stay healthy,
Herb
I’m addressing you as the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen as I do have trouble loading some others emails. So hope this goes out to all. I’ve cc’d Steve Auffant as the Chebeague Fire/Rescue Administrative Assistant. To Marjorie Stratton as Chebeague’s Town Administrator. And to Ralph Munroe as Chebeague’s Fire and Rescue Chief.

I sent out an open email letter last week to the general public asking that the CTC withdraw their policy of not allowing to transport positive COVID-19 patients on their vessels. I had nothing but positive feed back from the general public in agreement to my open letter. I wasn’t looking feed back as much as a point of information for many. I still strongly believe that reversing their decision is absolutely the right thing to do for this community at this time. We probably can debate for some time about insurance companies, Coast Guard, Long Island etc. I can throw the HIPPA act in there too, which would really put a spin on the situation. I won’t though. (although I think I just did) To date I haven’t heard word one from the CTC to the general public. Maybe rumors of a discussion among their board members. But certainly no changes to that policy for better or worse. I can only conclude that the CTC is not going to change their policy. If this isn’t moving in what I deem a positive direction, I am puzzled by what is going on. At this point in time I would ask the Board of Selectmen to consider in a statement or resolution, that you disagree to the policy o’t the CTC (and this is only if the majority of you feel that way). And that you’ll take action against the Chebeague Transportation Company to reverse this decision with whatever means possible. We need their service. If we’ve been doing this wrong all these years, let us address that at a later date.

I realize that you all by fate, have been thrown into a most unenviable situation. I wish nothing but the best of outcomes for all involved.

Thank You,

Doug Ross
214 South Road
Chebeague Island,  ME 04017
Town Admin @ townofchebeagueisland.org

From: John Rent <johndrinkwaterrent@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 3:38 PM
To: David Hill; Jay Corson; Marjorie Stratton (townadmin@townofchebeagueisland.org)
Cc: Carol Sabasteanski; Matt Ridgway; Michael Hollander
Subject: CTC Update

David, Jay

I will follow-up with a call to David. CTC has the brief update below for tonight Selectmen's Meeting.

CTC's Policy of 3/18/20 remains unchanged.
CTC has retained counsel to assist CTC in reviewing its contractual and legal obligations under maritime law.
Discussions with legal counsel are on-going.
CTC is working on an updated notice to the community.
We are also working on additional ways for community members to go to the mainland for Covid-19 testing.

John Rent
TO: BOS  
FROM: Donna Miller Damon  
RE: Emergency Alternative Plans/Nathan Doughty  
DATE: April 1, 2020

Today I had a long conversation with Nathan Doughty. I had read that he had offered his lobster boat as a backup in case of a Covid-19 issue that couldn't be handled in any other way. I also understood the EMS Chief had concerns about his offer. I wrote to the BOS and Marjorie a few days ago asking about a follow-up. My thought was that someone could reach out to Nathan and find out what he was offering and what EMS’s concerns were to see if the concerns could be mitigated. To my knowledge no one responded to my email.

So this morning I called Nathan Doughty. He is definitely a plan C after Long Island but B if Long Island and the Coast Guard are unavailable. Nathan assured me and gave me permission to share our conversation with the BOS tonight. He assured me that he can secure his stern, and it would take a very short time to install clips to hold the stretcher. This is a much better alternative to the boatyard workboat. The Boatyard boat should not be taken out of the equation, but it is small and iffy for a stretcher and less comfortable than Nathan’s boat for an ambulatory patient, but it would be better than nothing (maybe plan D/E).

We need as many options as possible. But right now until CTC works out its insurance issues and with only 4 crew members on staff, we have no plan A. Hopefully, in the next few days they will have the answer that they have been trying to find re: insurance and the fact that they only have 4 full time boat crew 2 on 2 shifts, which if they get sick, raises other issues. But until that time, I think we need to have as many tools in the tool belt as possible.

I suggest that Marjorie and EMS sit down with Nathan Doughty and find out what he can provide, hear what questions he has, if EMS concerns can be mitigated, and work with him to come up with next steps. If Nathan’s boat is a viable B,C, or D, Nathan and Marjorie should meet with the folks at the Boat Yard to arrange for the boat to be launched asap.

As I said, this is not ideal, but it is necessary in the event that a patient needed to be transported and issues have not been resolved with CTC’s insurance carrier/the crew all gets sick, and neither Long Island and nor the Coast Guard are able to respond.