

TOWN OF THOMASTON
 P O BOX 299
 THOMASTON, ME 04861



MARCH



MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
25-Feb	26-Feb	27-Feb	28-Feb	1-Mar
4-Mar Shellfish Committee 6:30pm W. H. Fire Dept. 6:30pm Fire Station	5-Mar Ambulance Dept. 6:30pm Fire Station	6-Mar Comp Plan 6:30pm Watts Hall	7-Mar Historical Resource Group 7:00pm Watts Hall	8-Mar
11-Mar Cemetery Site Mtg. 5pm & Select Board 7:00pm Lura Libby	12-Mar	13-Mar Historical Resource Group 7:00pm Watts Hall	14-Mar Joint Clam Board 6:00pm Watts Hall	15-Mar
18-Mar	19-Mar Planning Board 6:00pm	20-Mar Comp Plan 6:30pm Watts Hall	21-Mar Solid Waste Committee 7pm	22-Mar
25-Mar Select Board Policy Wksh. 6pm & Select Board Mtg. 7:00pm	26-Mar	27-Mar	28-Mar	29-Mar

ALL MEETINGS LISTED ABOVE ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND MAY BE CANCELLED IF THERE IS NO BUSINESS

Town of Thomaston Will Be Offering Credit Card Payment Options and Rapid Renewal Services Soon!

The Town of Thomaston is pleased to announce that we will be offering InforME Payport soon, a credit card processing service that enables the Town to accept American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa at the Town Office. Thomaston residents can now make payments with a debit or credit card for items such as fishing and hunting licenses, permits, sewer bills, property taxes, and vehicle registrations.

InforME PayPort is a third-party payment processor operated by InforME, the State of Maine's e-government provider. An InforME administrative cost is added to each payment made through the service of 2.5% or a \$1.00 minimum. The administrative cost pays for the operation of the service so that there is no cost to the municipality to accept credit cards. All customers will be informed of the additional cost amount before their payment is processed, and may choose an alternate form of payment (check or cash) if they do not want to pay the additional cost.

InforME has been processing electronic payments for Maine state and local government since 1999. All private customer data is handled securely according to the most up-to-date and stringent security standards. InforME is CyberTrust-certified, the industry gold standard for securi-

Through **Rapid Renewal**, citizens can quickly and easily renew their vehicle and trailer registrations online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Residents can print off temporary registration from home that is good for 21 days and is an acceptable form of documentation until the resident receives their physical registration and stickers from the BMV.

Rapid Renewal may be accessed through www.sosonline.org, the Secretary of State's site.

Nomination Papers Available

Nomination papers are available starting Monday, March 4, 2019. The following elected municipal officer's seats are coming up in June:

One 3-year Select Board Member (Incumbent William Hahn)

One 3-year Select Board Member (Incumbent Peter McCrea)

One 3-year Board of Assessor Member (Incumbent Joan Linscott)

These nomination papers must be filed with the Town Clerk on or before **Friday, April 12, 2019 at 2 p.m.**

Nomination papers must contain not less than 25 or more than 100 signatures of registered voters of the Town of Thomaston to be placed on the June ballot. Please stop by the Thomaston Town Office to pick up nomination papers.

Commercial Shellfish License Applications Available

Commercial Shellfish license applications are now being accepted at the Thomaston Town Office. *The Thomaston Town Office must receive applications for the 2019 drawing by Friday, MARCH 29, 2019 no later than the close of business on that day – 2:00 pm. Postmarks will not be accepted.* The allocation of licenses will take place at the Thomaston Town Office on May 1, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. Licenses may be picked up beginning May 6, 2019, and **MUST** be picked up no later than Friday, May 31, 2019, by the close of business that day – 2:00 pm.

Proposed 2019/2020 Municipal Budget

It is an honor and privilege to present the proposed budget as I, Valmore Blastow Jr., enter my 27th year as Town Manager.

The current 2018/19 budget is \$3,443,270.24. The 2019/2020 budget is initially proposed at \$3,583,550.63. This is an increase of \$140,280.39 or a 4.07% increase as presented. The total includes reinstatement of the Select Boards stipends of \$11,925.15 plus a 3% employee wage increases of \$28,430.88 totaling \$40,356.03 of the increase.

The remaining balance of \$99,924.36 is the increases for all the Departments as listed for the general operating budgets by department.

There are two major operational issues facing the Town of Thomaston: staffing the existing or a new expanded night time per diem coverage Ambulance Service and the staffing of the existing Police Department or considering an alternative operation for the Public Safety component.

Thomaston Ambulance Department

In my opinion, the dilemma the Town faces is simply an extension of the past 15 years. Citizens are no longer energized to be a component of the volunteer (paid) service of the past. Staffing the Ambulance Department is therefore an issue. The Town has moved incrementally towards a 24 hrs. per day paid service. The paid per diem's currently staff the service 12 hrs. per day. Internally, the current staff is emphasizing a request of expanding it to 24 hrs. per day 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. There are three issues with the 100% staffing: the first is staff, the second is increased cost and lost revenue if it is not successful and the third is the current facility.

Thankfully, the City of Rockland has covered the calls when Thomaston either fails to respond or no one was on the daytime per diem shift. Some calls require a higher level of Professional Certification, such as a Paramedic. In 2014/2015, Rockland covered 28 or 6% of the 475 calls. This has steadily increased by fiscal year to 11%, 13%, and 23%. For the first half of the 2018/2019 fiscal year, 52 calls or 34% of Thomaston calls were covered of the 152 responses.

This is all further compounded if the Town were to go to night per diem. Approximately 17% of Thomaston's calls are at night for the first 6 months of this year. Without daytime per diem shifts being filled, the total calls Rockland responds to could double along with the further reduction in ambulance billing receipts for those calls.

The third item is the facility; it was never designed to be a 24 hr. per day operation facility. This could initiate major Dept. of Labor issues with working conditions plus labor cost if time-and-a-half requirements are triggered with staffing over the allowed limits per week. Another option, without going to a full time operation in a new facility, is to hire a full time Director with all volunteer staff paid \$75.00 per hour with a 2 hour minimum per call. This would staff the responses to 430 calls at \$300.00 per call or \$129,000, annually. The cost of \$129,000 and the annual operating & reserve costs of \$62,050 totals \$191,050, of the \$287,918.18 Ambulance Department current revenues.

Proposed 2019/2020 Municipal Budget *Cont'd*

The option of having an outside agency such as Rockland, take the entire operation over also should be considered.

Another option would be to consider regionalizing the Thomaston Ambulance Department. The towns of Camden, Rockport, Hope, and Lincolnville are currently in discussions of regionalizing their ambulance services. Rockland is the hub for Thomaston and the only agency with full-time staffing that is practical.

Thomaston Police Department

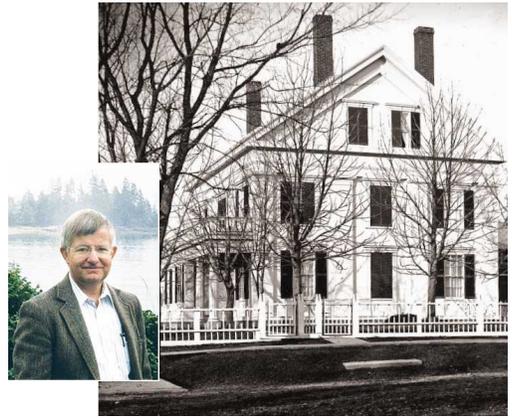
The other major Department issue is the Police Department staffing. The Town has hired five Police Officers since July of 2017. Within 18 months, four have resigned as of 3/3/2018. The Town advertised positions twice and received zero applicants. Currently, the Chief, one Police Officer and Reserve Officers are covering the Police department, along with assistance from Knox County.

In December, Knox County Sheriff Tim Carroll, submitted a proposal for an estimated \$420,000 to contract management of the law enforcement services.

The Thomaston Select Board authorized the Budget Committee to evaluate the comparative services and cost of the Police Department and the Knox County proposals for the required services based on current costs. Thomaston Police Chief Timothy Hoppe submitted a letter of tasks necessary to compare services.

At the Budget Committee Meeting held February 28, 2019, a motion was made that the Select Board obtain a draft contract from Knox County Sherriff's Department with the exact costs, Also to research the numbers of what is required for the Thomaston Police Department to become a competitive department in services, wages and benefits in contrast to the Knox County Sherriff's Department.

(See website: www.town.thomaston.me.us)



Historic Thomaston Research Group Presents:

Christopher Glass Lecture on Architecture and Historic Preservation

Christopher Glass will speak on his nearly half-a-century long career as an architect and his activities related to historic preservation in Maine. The talk will take place on Wednesday, March 13, at 7 p.m. at Watts Hall, 174 Main Street in Thomaston. This talk is postponed from February.



THOMASTON RECREATION

SENIOR POT LUCK

NOON LUNCHEON

The Last Friday of Each Month:

March 29TH

April 26TH

May 31ST

Federated Church

8 Hyler St, Thomaston, ME 04861