



Whitefield News

FREE Thanks to our advertisers



Volume 3, Issue 12

Published Monthly

June 2016

Senior Tax Deferral Ordinance and Amendment to Wireless Communications Ordinance on June 14 ballot

By Sue McKeen, Dennis Merrill and Tony Marple

The question of whether or not the town should adopt a Senior Tax Deferral ordinance is back in front of voters for consideration on the June 14th ballot when the town will also cast votes for the RSU budget as well as an amendment to the town's Wireless Communications Ordinance.

Many comments have been made regarding the decision of the Board to put the ordinance back before the town after it was defeated at the town meeting in March. Peter Froelich, who originally approached the board regarding the Senior Tax Deferral Ordinance, asked the board to put the vote back before the town on the June ballot due to concerns about the manner in which the votes were counted at town meeting. The majority of the Board concurred and voted to return the question on the June ballot.

A public hearing was held on May 18th. It was sparsely attended, but several considerations were put forth. Listed below are some of the items discussed. First, the basic criteria for the program include the following:

(In order to qualify for the deferment)

- The taxpayer must be at least 70 years old
- They must have lived in their home for the last 10 years

- They cannot currently have overdue taxes
- Their household income cannot exceed 300% of the Federal Poverty Level. Household income is the combined incomes of all individuals residing at the home. (300% of the Federal Poverty Levels for a 1 person household, \$35,310.00, 2 person household \$47,790)

(Looking at both sides of the question, below are several points people should consider)

Pros:

- Would assist impoverished elderly residents, some of whom may have high medical expenses, and most of whom have limited options to improve their finances
- Deferred taxes will carry an accrued interest rate higher than market rates for mortgages (at least in the last ten years) and a lot more than the town earns on its surplus cash. The interest and principal are secured by the house and land
- Would allow homesteads to remain in the family
- Could be part of a larger plan to assist elderly residents
- Can be repealed in any future year; though deferrals in place at the time must be honored

Continued on Page 2

Grand opening of the new Sheepscot West branch trail

By Kit Pfeiffer

The Whitefield Trail Committee invites one and all to attend the grand opening of the new Sheepscot West Branch Trail on Saturday, June 4 at 9 AM (rain date Sunday, June 5 at 1 PM). Meet at the trail head on the North Howe Road (come down from Rte 17), adjacent to the discontinued bridge. Parking is at the Salmon Preserve lot. After a brief opening ceremony, committee members will take groups out for a walk on the trail. Wear sturdy shoes and comfortable clothing, and bring your camera!

The Sheepscot West Branch Trail starts with a brief uphill section that rises to a beautiful overlook of the falls just upstream from the bridge. According to local lore, a deep pool below the falls makes a good summer swimming hole. As the trail drops back down to the river, there are some hand-quarried rocks and sections of wire cable that are evidence of earlier settlers. Large flat rocks at the river's edge in several spots make for a great picnic spot. Watch for eagles and osprey who fish the river, as well as beaver, otter and fisher.

The riverine buffer protects stretches of important salmon habitat, and it also provides refuge for a diversity of aquatic and terrestrial animals such as frogs, salamanders and turtles. They feed on insects



Photo by Kit Pfeiffer

and other invertebrates in the river and share these dining areas with salmon.

The trail crosses two intermittent streams, traces several sharp oxbows in the river, passes several vernal pools and in about half a mile forms a key-hole loop which can be traversed in either direction. Part of the loop follows an old logging road. The total distance from

the Salmon Preserve park-

ing lot out and around the loop and back again is a moderately easy 1.5 miles.

Special thanks go to the Midcoast Conservancy (formerly Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association), which holds a conservation easement on the irregularly-shaped buffer zone along the river, and to landowner Ellis Percy, who purchased the property in 2012 and has graciously given permission for this trail to be opened to the public.

For more information about the new trail and activities of the Whitefield Trail Committee, contact kit_pfeiffer@yahoo.com or call 446-9768.

Cons:

- Number of qualifying residents who would apply is very uncertain
- Taxes for non-qualifying residents, many of whom are impoverished, would increase in the short term
- The ordinance, under state law, cannot include an asset test
- Since there is very little experience in other towns with this law, it makes it very difficult to predict the future outcome, positive or negative
- Other alternatives are available: poverty abatements, select board working with resident to take no action, private financing such as home equity loans
- 300% of federal poverty level is high in a rural town such as Whitefield
- Possible adverse impact on next of kin who must pay the tax bill if applicant hasn't fully informed them
- Town could be stuck with poor quality properties or liabilities for clean-ups
- Properties do not have to be insured, putting town's equity at risk
- Mobile homes could be removed from town

Amendment to Wireless Communications Ordinance

During the public hearing on May 18th, several residents raised concerns about the impact of cell towers in town. The proposed amendment would make a single change in the existing ordinance to allow an increase in the height of wireless communication towers in town.

The maximum height would go from 120 feet to 199 feet, which is the maximum a structure can be without having lights to meet FAA regulations. Nothing else in the ordinance would change and the type of tower - a monopole - would remain the same.

Some considerations discussed at the hearing, include the following:

- The purpose of the change is to make it more practical for cell phone companies to locate new towers in Whitefield and thus improve cellular service to residents
- Since the present ordinance became effective in 2004, much has changed in telecommunications, and with cell phones now being such a large part of most people's lives, the need for full dependable coverage has become far more important
- Having more towers, whether in Whitefield or in the area, could help to fill in some of the gaps in coverage that affect people in town
- On the down side, taller towers can create a greater visual impact that is a concern for many people. At the hearing, a consultant working for a cell phone company indicated his client was considering installing a new tower in town and this ordinance change would be very important in finalizing that decision
- Any company wishing to locate a cell tower within the Town of Whitefield must submit an application to the Planning Board.

Kings Mills Fire Dept. Auction and Union Hall White Elephant Sale

Tired of those miscellaneous items cluttering your home or garage? When's that last time you plugged in that lava lamp or hopped on that old Nordic Trac and went for a "ski?"

Don't let these and other things overtake your home. Donate them to the Kings Mills Volunteer Fire Association for their annual Fourth of July auction. We are looking for usable items that others may still want. For more information, contact KMVFD President Jeff Newell at 207-624-2268.

If you have a donation for the Union Hall White Elephant Sale, contact Judy Maldovan at 549-5664

Kings Mills Cemetery Volunteer Work Bee

On Saturday, May 14, six community members met at the Kings Mills Cemetery to mend leaning fences, cut brush, and level loam.

Ernest Martin and Barry Tibbetts (right) can be seen preparing to pull the posts in. The fence posts had been embedded in cement years before, and the frost had tipped the fence toward the road. After digging down along the cement, the posts were pulled in level and back filled.



Lori Ford (right) has just finished leveling loam that Phil Russell kindly donated. His hidden shaded smile is due to his nearly being done with the shoveling and raking. Nearly a truck load of loam was used.

Gerry Gensell leveled loam and he and Phil Russell placed hay and grass seed on each site that was improved. Phil also cut brush up along the back of the cemetery, and Dan Joslyn hauled loam around for the leveling jobs.

On Tuesday, the following week, Whitefield School teacher, Karen McCormick, brought a student group to help Phil and Keith Sanborn place flags on all Veterans' stones. Over two hundred flags were placed in a flash, and the students will come back to help remove them before winter arrives.



Summary of recent Select Board activity

The Road Committee and David Boynton have agreed to send out a request for proposal to pave the Vigue Rd from the Howe Rd to the Windsor town line, the Somerville Rd, the east-end side of the Sennott Rd, and the Windsor Rd.

The Town will also be issuing a request for proposal for assessing services. The plan is to move from an employment arrangement to an independent contractor.

Concerns have been expressed by several citizens about areas in town where broadband internet service is unavailable. High speed broadband has become important for those working from home either with an employer located elsewhere or a local business. The Town is investigating options to try to solve the problem.

The Town will be establishing an Economic Development Committee. The goal of the committee is to encourage business development in such a way that will have minimal impact on the pastoral qualities of Whitefield. Business development would increase the Town's assessed value, thereby reducing the mill rate and taxes for homeowners. It could also provide local employment. If you'd like to participate in the committee, please contact Sue McKeen.

The Town has purchased a 2001 Caterpillar road grader for \$60,000, significantly below the amount approved at Town Meeting.

Residents of the Howe Road would like to have a foot bridge over the closed Northy bridge. The DOT plans to remove the bridge and will not fund a footbridge. Other options will be considered.

Discussions and plans for the elderly tax deferral and cell tower ordinance were major board discussion points and are covered in a separate article.

The Town approved a plan to have solar panels installed on the fire station to meet all of the Town's electricity needs. The plan was based on the concept of "net metering" which is currently in place in the state, but at significant risk going forward after the narrow failure of the legislature to overturn the Governor's veto of LD1649, the solar bill. Under net metering, any surplus power from the solar panels is sent back to the utility. The solar installation is given credits for that surplus to use during nighttime, rainy days, etc. Since net metering is definitely at risk, the board has decided to defer the solar project at least until the PUC clarifies their position on the issue.

Whitefield Historical Society "Just Yesterday"



Summertime card game (circa 1916)

This picture is on the lawn of the late Dr. Hutchinson's house at 433 East River road. The barn in background collapsed during a wind storm in 1922. The ledge is still visible from the road and the other barn is still there and is now painted red.

Left to right in the photo:

- Weston Lewis whose wife, Lena Tullock, was born in the house and she died there in 1955 at the age of 93. He was a teacher and then the principal at Williams school in Augusta.
- Stephen Hopkins from Newton, Ma, who graduated from Harvard and then enlisted in WWI. He was an aviator and was killed when his plane was shot down over France.
- Dr. Earl Hopkins, father of Stephen.
- Fessenden Turner (1846-1927) was a carpenter. He built Andrew Berry's house at 399 East River Rd for his daughter. It was in a room at that house that the 1st Whitefield Library was established.

Senior Scramble results for Sheepscot Links

May 9, 2016

Winning Team— Al Gifford, Glenn Bangs, Bob Bell, Ken Anderson
Long Drive Men, Terry Washburn
Long Drive Women, Heidi Washburn
Closest to the Pin #8, Laughton Jewett

May 16, 2016

Winning Team—Ken Anderson, Rich MacDonald, Carol Juchnik, Tom Atticks
Closest to the pin #2, Janet Ray.
Closest to the pin #8, Larry Sikora.
Longest Drive Women, Carol Juchnik.
Longest Drive Men, Terry Washburn.

May 23, 2016

Winning Team, Larry Sikora, Tom Atticks, Dave Davies and Clint Averill.
Closest to the pin #2, Heidi Washburn, 8'6".
Closest to the pin #8, Rich MacDonald, 11'10".
Long Drive Women, Janet Ray.
Long Drive Men, Terry Brackett.

Commercial Kitchen & Business Incubator Opens in Central Maine

by Stephen Smith

Food Forge, Maine's newest fully licensed shared commercial kitchen and business incubator has opened in Whitefield. The idea for Food Forge began in 2014, when Milva and Stephen Smith set out to transform an old, abandoned restaurant kitchen into a very unique facility.

After doing some research, they discovered there was a

growing need in Maine for affordable licensed commercial kitchen space that could be rented by food startups, caterers, food trucks, preppers and other specialty food producers who have outgrown a home kitchen. They also offer guidance and assistance with licensing and other small business needs. "My husband and I are big believers in supporting small businesses," says Milva Smith. "Between the two of us, we've owned and operated several small businesses.

The time for Food Forge has definitely come. We want to help food startups get off the ground and succeed."

They designed the kitchen to suit many different needs. It works equally well for hands-on cooking classes as for food packaging and recipe development. The equipment list is extensive and includes a commercial stove with hood, convection oven, fryolators, refrigeration, freezer, a meat slicer, and more. Other equipment is available on request.

Located in small a sheep farm, Food Forge also offers an attractive banquet room that can also be rented with or without the use of the kitchen.

Food Forge is located at 17 Mills Rd, Whitefield, Maine. For more information, call (207) 941-1199.

Check them out on facebook or visit their website

www.mainefoodforge.com

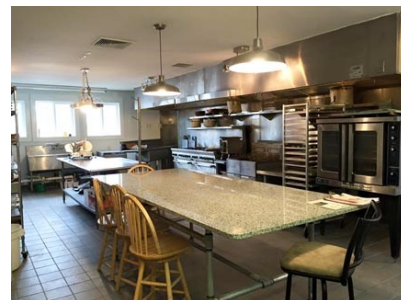
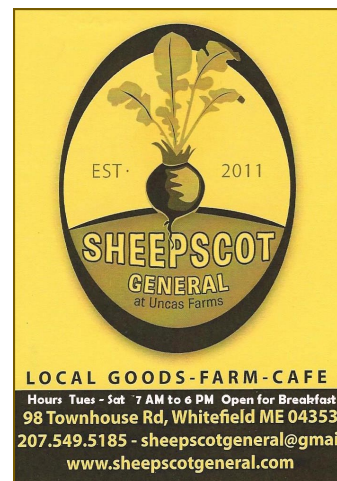


Photo contributed by Milva Smith

Lipman&Katz
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

5 Community Drive, Suite 3
P.O. Box 1051
Augusta, Maine 04332-1051
207- 622-3711 FAX 207- 622-7415
1-800-660-3713
www.lipmankatz.com

email@lipmankatz.com



JUNE 2016 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st** **ARLINGTON GRANGE MEETING**, 7 pm
WEDNESDAY WALKERS—Wednesdays from May 4 into the Fall, join a group of intrepid hikers, led by a rotating roster of guides, to discover new trails throughout the Midcoast area. Hike locations and times are emailed to members of the Yahoo Group; to sign up, go to https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/wednesday_walkers/info
WHITEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY meeting 6:30 pm
- 2nd** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 3rd** **WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY**, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
CONSERVATION MOWING FOR GRASSLAND BIRD HABITAT by Laura Suomi-Lecker, Somerset SWCD June 3, 2016 6:00 pm
- 4th** **HOOKED ON FISHING AT DAMARISCOTTA LAKE**, 9am – 3pm Damariscotta Lake State Park, Jefferson. Bring the kids to Damariscotta Lake for a free day of fishing! Equipment is provided and experienced anglers will take children ages 5-15 out on the lake to give fishing a try. Lunch will be provided by the Whitefield Lions Club and families are welcome to enjoy a day at the Park. Registration info at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hooked-on-fishing-2016-registration-24996869309>. FMI contact Garrison Beck: 207-389-5157.
- 5th** **WILDFLOWER WALK**, Hidden Valley Nature Center, 10 am—12 pm
- 6th** **COOPERS MILLS FIRE DEPT.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
KINGS MILLS FIRE DEPT., 7 pm
- 7th** **SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm
KINGS MILLS UNION HALL BOARD MEETING - Public Welcome 7 pm
- 8th** **WEDNESDAY WALKERS—SEE JUNE 1ST**
- 9th** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU SCHOOL BOARD MEETING Chelsea School, 6:30 pm
- 10th** **RECESS FOR HOMESCHOOLERS, TIME IN THE WOODS WITH OTHER KIDS!** Come join us for RECESS! For Homeschoolers—a chance to connect with each other for larger group games, just hanging out, and exploring the Nature Center trails, wildlife and water at the end of the week. This will be an open, casual, all-ages gathering where kids can decide how they want to pass the time. Each RECESS there will be the chance to join in a planned group game or activity, help out with a work project, hike, bike, canoe, or just be with friends— same goes for parents and caregivers! For more information on Hidden Valley Nature Center and for directions, go to HVNC.org We will meet at “The Barn” which is a half mile walk in from the parking lot, on the following Fridays from 1-3pm. . . Come to one or all, and you don't have to sign up. We will resume again when the Fall rolls around.
- 12th** **WHITEFIELD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
- 13th** **WHITEFIELD MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPT.**, Fire Station, 7 pm
- 14th** **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING VOTE ON THE TAX DEFERMENT FOR THE ELDERLY, AMENDMENT TO THE WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS ORDINANCE AS WELL AS THE RSU BUDGET VOTE. MAINE STATE PRIMARY ELECTION - WHITEFIELD FIRE & RESCUE ON TOWNHOUSE RD. 8 A.M. TO 8 P.M.**
WOMEN OF WHITEFIELD, Sheepscot General, 10 am
SELECT BOARD, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 15th** **WEDNESDAY WALKERS—SEE JUNE 1ST**
- 16th** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 17th** **OPEN-MIC NIGHT, featuring Pixie Lauer & Dan Townsend** Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 18th** **DRUMMING CIRCLE**, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm.
 Open to the public, all ages
- 21st** **SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 22nd** **WEDNESDAY WALKERS—SEE JUNE 1ST**
YOUNG AT HEART SENIORS, Whitefield Lions Club, Coopers Mills 12 pm
PLANNING BOARD, Fire Station, 7:00 pm
- 23rd** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 24th** **6TH ANNUAL CREAM SOLSTICE WITH LIVE MUSIC AND FREE ICE CREAM** Come help us celebrate Sheepscot General's anniversary! 5:00 pm
- 28th** **WOMEN OF WHITEFIELD**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
SELECT BOARD, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 29th** **WEDNESDAY WALKERS—SEE JUNE 1ST**
- 30th** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- Do you have an event?* Contact whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com



AP ALBISON'S PRINTING
 Quality Printing Since 1932
 Offset & Digital Printing
www.albisonsprinting.com
 124 Riverside Drive, Augusta 622-1941

Whitefield Country Preschool
 Serving the area's 3 - 5 year olds since 1981
 1 - 5 days of instruction per week Sept. - May
 Register year round
 For information, please call
 Joan Kierstead - 549-5019

Country Corner's Store
 549-3135
 Mon-Fri 5:30 AM - 9 PM
 Sat 6:30 AM - 9 PM
 Sun 7:30 AM - 9 PM
 Gas, Groceries, Deli, Pizzas, Sandwiches,
 Meats and MORE!

Nails & Toes
 Manicures, Pedicures, Acrylic and Shellac
 Shannon Mills
 Licensed Nail Tech
 17 Mills Rd
 Whitefield, ME 04353
 Cell 207-446-3255

207-549-7921
 open 7 days a week

North Whitefield Superette
 Since 1976
 Pizza, Sandwiches and Groceries

ELMER'S BARN & Antique Mall
 45 Dealers and growing!
 Come check us out;
 new treasures weekly!
 Something for everyone!
 Tools, Furniture, Coins, Glass,
 Jewelry, Collectibles
 Open year 'round
 Summer hours 9-5ish
 Winter hours 9-4ish
 Rt. 17, Coopers Mills, ME
 107 Rockland Rd., Whitefield
 (207) 549-7671

Millers Garage and Bodyshop
 474 COOPER RD
 WHITEFIELD ME 04353
 GARAGE, BODY SHOP, TOWING,
 RECOVERY, USED VEHICLES
 ONE CALL DOES IT ALL
 207-549-7549 207-446-6412
 Used Vehicle Annex at the corner of Cooper Road and Rt. 17

THE ALNA STORE

 Groceries, Produce, Pizzas,
 Beer & Wine
 Lunch Counter Mon.-Sat.
 586-5515
 • Albee Farm Produce •
 • Head Tide Oven Bread •
 • Chase Farm Baked Goods •
 Summer Hours:
 Mon. - Thurs. 6-7 • Fri. 6-8 • Sat. 7-8
 Sun. 9-1 (No kitchen on Sun.)
 Corner of Rt. 218 & Dock Road, Alna, ME

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the month. Email whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com

You can receive the newsletter by email by signing up at www.townofwhitefield.com/Newsletter.html