



FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

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207-785-3658

TAX BILLS:

OK, so let's get down to the nitty gritty and why this tax bill is up significantly. What follows are appropriation amounts, or what we need to raise additionally.

- 1) RSU #40 handed us a \$253,989.00 or 11.57% increase!
- 2) Knox County \$20,685.00 or 9.5% increase.
- 3) Knox Dispatch \$5,539.00 or 9.1% increase.
- 4) Tri-County Solid Waste \$8,065.00 or 15.53% increase (estimate).
- 5) Town of Union \$12,980.00 or less than one half of 1%.

Please note the total Town budget was up more than above, but our net increase in taxes was \$12,980.00. With additional interest and other income, the Town's share of the tax increase is miniscule. School and County already have their additional revenues included in the assessment amounts.

Also note these figures were written before the final warrant was signed and may be off by a few dollars when finalized by the Board of Selectmen.

WHAT THE SELECTMEN CONTROL:

The Board of Selectmen only controls #5 above. All others are assessments from the agencies listed.

If you have concerns about the Town budget, please contact me or any member of the Board of Selectmen. Our contact information is found on our website at www.union.maine.gov.

Your School Board members are:

Erik Amundsen, erik_amundsen@msad40.org, 542-1404
Matthew Speno, matthew_speno@msad40.org, 542-6375
Robert Williams, robert_williams@msad40.org, 992-6824

Your County Commissioner is:

Rick Parent, rparent@knoxcountymaine.gov, 594-0420

Your Tri-County Solid Waste Representatives are:

John Shepard, jshepard@union.maine.gov, 785-5250
Jim Bailey, 273-2218

SO, WHAT IS ACTUALLY CAUSING ALL THE INCREASES?

There are multiple factors that drive the increases in our schools, county, and local assessments. Here are a few things to consider:

- 1) State subsidies have continually decreased or been raided. State law says they'll pay 55% toward education; it has never happened. State revenue sharing for the Town of Union should be around 300K, while we get about 96K.
- 2) Local voters approved \$25 million for a new vocational school.
- 3) State voters approved a minimum wage increase of \$1.00 an hour for the next three years. This usually relates to all wages increasing, not just those receiving minimum wage.

We do our best to stay non-political, but if you are concerned about property taxes it would be a good discussion to have with those you are considering voting for. Do they want to keep it in Augusta, or is the local municipality the best place?

THE GOOD STUFF!

- 1) We now offer license plates at the Union Town Office.
- 2) Our 10-year road plan is working. We have no paved roads in poor condition.
- 3) Though our audit is not yet finalized, it will show us spending much less than budgeted. Many thanks to all Department Heads for keeping expenses down.
- 4) Summer is not over.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- 1) Check your mailbox for a rotten and/or loose post. Give Public Works a call at 785-3411 if you need to relocate your mailbox; we do not want the snow load to damage them. We work directly with the Post Office and will assist you in placing your mailbox in a nice snug place.
- 2) Dog licenses will be available on October 15. Do it early and save us \$\$\$\$ on calls, letters and visits from the ACO. Deadline to register your dog(s) is on or before January 1. A late fee of \$25 will be assessed on February 1.
- 3) Online payments are available for many services. Go to www.union.maine.gov for more details.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped the Town of Union and all the related organizations. We always have room for more volunteers, so please contact the Town Office if you are interested.

Sincerely,

Jay Feyler
Town Manager