

Selectboard Report

Dear Penobscot Residents and Those Who Hold This Town Dear,

As we reflect on the past year, it's amazing to look back on all the wonderful things that have gone on around town. Here are some of the key highlights:

One of our most significant achievements this year is the successful acquisition of the public access to Wight's Pond. It took months of negotiations with neighboring landowners, attorneys and surveyors, all doing their part to untangle the ages old puzzle, but finally, this public space was officially secured by the town so it can continue to provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, enhancing the natural beauty and accessibility of our town's outdoor resources.

And let's take a moment to give ourselves a little pat on the back. It was discovered while on a zoom call this past fall with a program manager from the Greenfield Penobscot Estuary Remediation Trust that Penobscot has been recognized as one of the top ten towns nationally for climate resilience. Our commitment to reviving our estuaries and alewife runs is an example to many.

And the back patting doesn't stop there. Let's give a warm round of congratulations to Penobscot Community School for being ranked #6 in the state for elementary schools. This ranking is not just for small or rural schools, we were measured against every elementary school in the state, period! This remarkable achievement is a testament to the hard work of our students, teachers, and staff. We extend our sincere thanks to the taxpayers for funding the school and supporting the educational endeavors of such a special learning place.

Of course, a year in Penobscot would not be complete without our amazing community events, Some tried and true and some newcomers. Here's a rundown of some Penobscot happenings in 2024.

- Spring Clean-Up Day: Thank you to all the hearty souls that participated in our annual Spring Clean-Up Day. A bounty of garbage was cleaned off our roadways and deposited in its rightful place at the transfer station. It was a great opportunity to come together and take pride in our community. If you have not yet joined in this spring clean up effort, we highly recommend it. It's quite an eye opener!
- Penobscot Day: Another very successful Penobscot Day was had by all! Whether you participated in or took advantage of any of the fun-filled events, we're so glad you could make it part of your summer fun. From the parade, the Historical Society Yard Sale, PVFD Chicken Barbeque, all the way to the Fireworks extravaganza you

couldn't help but feel the warmth of this close-knit community! This year there were a few new additions to the day. The Castine Band came and entertained us, setting up in front of Town Hall and playing as the parade passed by, what a treat! We hope to see them again in 2025. Another fun event was the addition of a dog show in the afternoon, behind the school. This was quite an impressive show of skill and agility. It seemed like a new fan favorite! With fun for all ages, Penobscot Day Is always a great way to celebrate our community spirit.

- **Historical Society Events:** The Penobscot Historical Society hosted many lively events throughout the year. Please read their letter to the town, in this report. They are actively on the hunt for new members! It's time for the next generation of proud Penobscot residents to continue the legacy of this organization, which is such a very important part of our community! Become a member and join in the fun, while helping to preserve our town's rich history.
- **Universal Waste Pick-Up:** Proper disposal of universal waste is essential for a clean environment. A group of dedicated townspeople formed a group and planned for months to organize Penobscot's 1st annual Universal Waste Pick-Up Day. To say it was a success is a huge understatement! Their hard work in researching and planning for this day definitely paid off! They were able to rally the town to bring their universal waste to the school parking lot where they filled 8 large containers to the brim with their old batteries, tv sets, monitors, cell phones, and other hazardous waste that they didn't know what to do with. The event was by donation, raising just enough to pay for transportation and disposal of all this waste. You can bank on seeing this event again. Way to go Penobscot!
- **Fall Festival at Northern Bay Commons:** We had the pleasure of another successful Fall Festival at Northern Bay Commons. The town enjoyed seasonal activities, local vendors, and community camaraderie. And all this was hosted by Eaton Holdings LLC, to support the efforts of PCS 8th grade and their challenge to raise money for their class trip.

What a worthy community event!

While we had the pleasure of celebrating these many positive Penobscot events, there were also challenges. In true Penobscot fashion, met them head on, and are currently working diligently to right our ship.

It was discovered that through a series of miscommunications and oversites between the town and state, Penobscot does not have an active license to run the transfer station at this time. After discovering this lapse, the town has been working closely with the state to remedy the situation and obtain proper licensing. We have made substantial progress, hiring a very capable engineering firm to conduct many necessary studies and help us

navigate through this very long and arduous process. We will complete everything with the highest standards and be back on the up and up as soon as possible. In the meantime, we have permission from the state to continue business as usual as we go through this process, so your rubbish is safe with us!

Now let us turn to the future and exciting projects around town for you to watch out for. We are delighted to announce that this past year, Penobscot, in conjunction with Maine Coast Heritage Trust, has been awarded significant grant money. These monies will be used to fund several exciting projects happening around town. These projects include;

- Plans to replace the failing culvert at Mill Creek, between Pierce Pond Road and the existing Sand/Salt pile
- Adding more fish weirs to the outlet at Pierce Pond.
- Moving our existing sand & salt pile to our town land on the Western County Road.
- Transforming the lot where the sand & salt pile is presently, into a safe parking and wildlife educational area.
- Installing heat pumps and solar panels at the town hall.

This financial support is a testament to our community's commitment to healthy stewardship of our infrastructure and environment, while holding fast to our treasured heritage.

As this letter ends, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who generously gave and continue to give their time and effort to support our town. Your willingness to pitch in and help with everything from stuffing the tax bill envelopes to planting and keeping the bountiful flower boxes in front of town hall looking so beautiful, is so very much appreciated! Your dedication and service are invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for all that you do.

To all our community members, thank you for being an integral part of what makes Penobscot a wonderful place to live. Here's to another year of having the privilege of being a part of such a special town.

Warm regards,

The Penobscot Select Board

Harold Hatch, Chair

Sara Leighton

Phil Rapp

