



**Upcoming Town Council Meeting:
March 3, 2015
6:30 p.m.
Town Council Chamber**

A full listing of upcoming Town meetings and agendas is available on the Town's website at: www.freeportmaine.com

**2nd ANNUAL
EDIBLE BOOK FESTIVAL**

You CAN have your books & EAT them too!

On Wednesday, April 15th, Freeport Community Library is hosting their 2nd Annual Edible Books festival. Whether you are a professional chef or just like to play with your food, a child or an adult, you're invited to participate. All entries must be edible and based on a book or a poem. Community members are encouraged to attend and cast their vote for their favorite edible book. Full details will be available soon at www.freeportlibrary.com and in handout instructions at the library.



Last year's "Most Literary" Adult winner: "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" as imagined by the library's own Belinda Stewart.

ANNUAL BOOK SALE – April 4th – 9th, 2015

Mark your calendars and come enjoy the hunt for great books! Book sale hours start at the opening of the library each day and close 30 minutes prior to the library closing. If you want to donate books, drop off week is 3/30 – 4/4!

**Town Manager's Report
March 3, 2015**

At this evening's Town Council Meeting (3/3/15) there will be a discussion with the public regarding the proposed State Budget. Freeport's State Legislative Delegation will be in attendance during this discussion. Additionally, residents who have questions or concerns surrounding the Governor's state budget proposal will be given the opportunity to address the Town Council at this time. Below is a memorandum from the Town Manager regarding the proposed budget.

TO: Freeport Town Council
FROM: Peter Joseph, Town Manager
DATE: 02/26/15
RE: Municipal Impact of Governor's Proposed Budget on Town of Freeport

Below is a summary of the major sections of the current state budget proposal that would impact Freeport's municipal budget. This list is intended as a starting point for discussions at the Council meeting on 03/03/15. Town Assessor Robert Konczal will also be present to provide more detail on how these proposals could affect Freeport.

Revenue Sharing: The proposal would completely eliminate revenue sharing, which would be a loss of approximately \$316,000 in revenue to the Town of Freeport.

BETR/BETE Conversion: The conversion of certain taxable personal property from BETR to the BETE program would be phased in over 4-5 years. At the end of this period, Freeport would realize a potential loss in tax revenue as much as \$450,000 per year.

Homestead Exemption: Homestead exemptions would be eliminated for residents under 65. Homestead exemptions would be doubled from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for residents 65 and over. We do not have accurate figures on what this would mean to Freeport, since we do not maintain age records of property owners. We do not think the impact to the Town would be significant either way, as there are currently homeowners both younger and older than 65 who qualify for the current homestead exemption.

Continued on page two



**KICKOFF EVENT
FREEPORT TOWN HALL
SATURDAY, MARCH 7th at 9:00am**

Learn how Freeport homes and businesses are coming together to reduce the cost of solar

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.solarizefreeport.com or (207) 200-1360



TOWN OF FREEPORT - MUNICIPAL BULLETIN

FREEPORT OUTDOORS!

There are over 1,200 acres of open space in Freeport, owned privately, by non-profit organizations, by homeowners' associations, and public entities. The spaces open to the public provide opportunities to hike, swim, bike, camp, skate, snowmobile, picnic, and boat. There is a new page on the Town's website which provides a list and description of some of Freeport's natural resources that are open to the public and we invite residents and guests to explore and enjoy these open spaces! Go to www.freeportmaine.com and you will find "Freeport Outdoors" under Quick Links. On this page you will find trail maps, coastal access points and more!

Unclaimed Property Announcement

Every year, tens of millions of dollars are turned over to the state when account owners cannot be located.

Unclaimed property consists of bank accounts, uncashed checks, life insurance proceeds, and other financial properties.



This year alone, properties worth over \$20 Million were turned over to the Treasurer's Office. This is on top of the \$200 Million that has accumulated since the Unclaimed Property program began.

To see if you have any property on this list, go to the State's webpage at: https://www1.maine.gov/treasurer/unclaimed_property/online/. You may also get a town-specific list by emailing the State Treasurer's office.

Town Manager's Report

03/03/2015

Continued from page one

Taxation of non-profits: Taxation of most non-profits with real estate properties greater than \$500,000 in value would be mandatory. A very rough estimate shows that Freeport might gain between \$100,000 and \$150,000 per year in tax revenue from such a change. It should be noted that this additional tax revenue would NOT be sufficient to make up for the loss of revenue under the proposed revenue sharing and BETE/BETR conversions. In other words, even if we were required to tax these non-profits as proposed by the Governor, both the Town and the non-profits in question would end up worse off financially. The non-profits that we have identified at this time that may be subject to taxation under this proposal would be Freeport Historical Society, Freeport Community Services, Pine Tree Academy, Merriconeag Waldorf School, the YMCA, Freeport Housing Trust, and Wolfe's Neck Farm.

Other taxation changes: There are numerous other changes proposed under the Governor's budget that would affect residents but not municipalities. The most significant of these would be an increase to the general sales tax rate and reductions to the individual and corporate income taxes.

Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Schedule

- Tuesday, March 3, 2015 Manager Presents 5-Year Capital Program
- Tuesday, March 17, 2015 Council Workshop on 5-Year Capital Program
- Tuesday, April 7, 2015 Public Hearing on Capital Program
- Tuesday, April 14, 2015 Adoption of the 5-Year Capital Program
- Thursday, April 30, 2015 Manager Transmits Operating, Capital and TIF Budget to Council
- Tuesday, May 5, 2015 Manager Presents Operating, Capital and TIF Budget
- Wednesday, May 13, 2015 5:00 – 6:00 PM Department Head Public Informal Q & A Session
- Thursday, May 14, 2015 7:30 – 8:30 AM Department Head Public Informal Q & A Session
- Tuesday, May 19, 2015 Council Workshop on Operating, Capital and TIF Budgets
- Tuesday, June 2, 2015 Public Hearing on Operating, Capital and TIF Budgets
- Tuesday, June 16, 2015 Target Date for Budget Adoption – Capital, TIF, and Operating Budgets