**Bowdoinham Community Development Advisory Committee**

**Notes from the Meeting on Nov. 1, 2022**

**Members present:** Jean deBellefeuille, John Scribner, Wendy Rose. Plus Eric Ferguson and Jenn Curtis

The September minutes need to be corrected to read Todd Woofenden.

1. **PFAS:**

Guest, Eric Ferguson of Harvest Tide Organics Farm briefed the committee on research he has done about PFAS contamination in Bowdoinham. The key points he made included:

* Full knowledge about PFAS is just beginning. A lot of information is coming in quickly, but they still do not know a lot. For instance, the State and the Feds have different guidelines for contamination and aren’t really sure what a safe level is.
* When sludge spreading began, it was considered a safe practice. They didn’t know about PFAS then. It is important to refrain from blaming the property owners who chose to have it done.
* The sludge in Bowdoinham came from the Brunswick Sanitary District. This is different from sludge that was used in the Fairfield area which was the waste from a manufacturing process. There seems to be greater contamination in the manufacturing sludge.
* Testing in Bowdoinham has shown no contamination of PFAS on land on the intervale. Some contamination has been found in other locations in Bowdoinham, however. Active sampling and testing continue. So far, there is no contamination in any food products.
* PFAS has been found in Merrymeeting Bay. Ed Friedmann has done a report on this. It appears that the Brunswick Naval Air Station is a source for this.
* The State currently has a moratorium on any sludge spreading.
* There are extensive maps of the state which show where sludge was spread. The State is taking a proactive role in contacting any home owners near those fields. They will come and test the wells for free. If contamination is found, the State will provide a filtering system for free.
* The Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture are aware that their approval of the initial program has created problems they didn’t anticipate. They are working hard to get on top of the problem.
* It is important, at this point, to be clear about our message: everything is at very early stages; Bowdoinham is getting thoroughly tested; tests so far have found no contamination of food products; wells that may be affected are being tested; until safe/unsafe levels have been determined, we can’t be sure; sources of contamination need to be identified so they can be mitigated.

Many thanks to Eric who provided us with excellent information.

1. **Business Directory.** The website and the operating procedures are complete for now.
2. **Welcome packets.** 50 welcome packets for new businesses and 50 packets for new residents have been assembled and are ready to be used in the town office.
3. **Priorities for the coming year.** We reviewed the items that we can work on in the coming months:
4. Do we want to work on a brochure that has the purpose of attracting businesses to Bowdoinham?
5. We need to prepare for a Town Meeting vote on extending the CMP TIF.
6. What steps can we take to further implement the walkable village plan?
7. Are there things we can do to encourage a bike lane on Route 24 when it gets re-paved? It looks like DOT is preparing to do that work—maybe next year?
8. Is anything needed, at this point, to further the work on the waterfront property?
9. **Economy Analyses Questions.** The group looked over a set of questions that is meant to help the creation of the economic section of the new Comprehensive Plan. We had some initial thoughts on the 9 questions.