

# *Public Facilities and Services*



## **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **Introduction**

The Public Facilities and Services section identifies and profiles Patten's public facility and service systems including general administration, public water and sewer, electric power, telecommunications, emergency and public safety response services, solid waste disposal and recycling, highway maintenance, education, cemeteries and health/social services.

This section addresses these systems in terms of their physical condition, extent, capacity and use to gauge how well they meet current demand; how well they will meet the needs of the projected population and, if necessary, what improvements or additions will be needed and estimate the general costs of those improvements or additions. This section also looks at the role Patten public facilities and service systems will play in shaping growth and preserving rural areas.

### **Municipal Administration**

#### Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectman-Town Manager form of local government combines the political leadership of elected officials in the form of a Board of Selectmen with the managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The Town Manager is appointed by the Board of Selectmen, who in turn appoints and manages all other town department directors. Patten has operated under this form of government since town meeting on March 17, 1941. Archer Scribner served as the first Town Manager.

The Town of Patten is governed by an elected five (5) member Board of Selectmen that have the authority to approve local laws, or town ordinances and set official rules, codes, and policies for the Town. The Board is the official governing body of the town and selectmen are elected to three (3) year terms. Elections are on a three-year cycle with two selectmen elected in the first and second years and one in the third year.

The Selectmen elect the Chairman from among its members following each election. The Chairman presides over all Selectmen meetings and acts as the Town Officer designated to represent the town in agreements with other governmental entities, but has no administrative duties except as required to carry out the responsibilities outlined in the Town Charter. The Selectmen also elect a Vice Chairman. The Town Manager serves as Secretary to the Board.

The Selectmen meet every other Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Town Office. Notice of the meetings and agendas are normally posted seven (7) days in advance at the Town Office, at the Post Office, at Ellis Family Market, and at Katahdin Trust Company. The intent is to also post agendas and minutes of Board of Selectmen meetings on the town website at [www.pattenmaine.org](http://www.pattenmaine.org).

## Town Manager

The Town Manager is the chief administrative officer of the Town of Patten, and is responsible for the management of all town affairs as provided for in the Town Charter. The Town Manager's office is in the Town Office at 21 Katahdin Street, Patten. Since February 19, 2016, the Town Manager has been Raymond A. Foss.

The Town Manager oversees each of the town departments, and is responsible for their performance. The Town Manager is also the General Assistance Administrator, the Administrator of the Ambulance, the Administrator of the Water and Sewer Departments, a Deputy Town Clerk, Treasurer, and the Tax Collector.

Patten also provides, since 2004, administrative services for the Town of Hersey and Moro Plantation. The municipal officers affirmed this arrangement at a joint meeting on July 26, 2017. The Patten Town Manager is the Town Agent, Treasurer, Tax Collector, and Town Clerk for Moro Plantation and for the Town of Hersey.

The Town Manager assumes responsibility for:

- Overseeing day-to-day operations.
- Hiring, supervising, and evaluating town personnel.
- Developing and administering town policies and procedures.
- Recommending policies or programs to the Board of Selectmen.
- Overseeing the preparation of the annual municipal budget.
- Attending and participating in Board of Selectmen meetings and various committee meetings, especially Budget Committee and Planning Board meetings.
- Ensuring citizen recommendations and/or complaints are handled in a timely and professional manner.
- Representing the Town at inter-governmental meetings, and serving on a variety of boards, committees, and commissions.

## Town Clerk

The Town Clerk is also located in the Town Office. The Clerk's mission is to accurately maintain all town records including vital statistics, conduct elections with professionalism in accordance with State Law, issue State and Town licenses and permits, and provide information to both Town Officials and the general public in a friendly, efficient, and confidential manner.

The Town Clerk conducts the following activities:

- Coordinates & supervises elections for the Town including absentee voting.
- Serves as Voter Registrar.
- Serves as Deputy Tax Collector & Deputy Treasurer.
- Serves as custodian for all official Town records & ordinances.
- Assists in the preparation of Annual Town Reports.

- Issues Licenses and Permits.
- Serves as Payroll & Accounts Payable Clerk.
- Prepares reports to IRS & Maine Revenue Services.
- Prepares reports to state agencies.
- Records & maintains Vital Statistics Records (Births, Deaths & Marriages).
- Issues Marriage Licenses.
- Serves as the Welfare Officer.

Part-time Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk

The part-time Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk works in the Town Office and assists the Town Manager and Town Clerk with their duties. This is an appointed position.

**Other Municipal Officers/Boards**

Title	Appointed (A) Elected ( E )	Duties
Health Officer	A	Assessing, planning and providing needed health related services; investigating complaints of health-related problems; coordinating investigations with appropriate town officials and maintaining records. Patten's Health Officer has been in this position since 1976.
Tax Collector, Treasurer, General Assistance Administrator	A	Collecting taxes due, accounting and reporting taxes received and billing. The Town Manager completes these duties.
Planning Board	E/ A	Facilitate and interpret land use ordinances and writing and updating the Comprehensive Plan
RSU 50 Directors	E/ A	Oversees the educational programs of Katahdin Valley Elementary, Middle and High Schools as well as Southern Aroostook Consolidated Schools.
Budget Committee	E/ A	Prepares and submits an annual budget through a budget summary, budget details and annual capital program to the Selectmen
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	E/ A	Developing, implementing, and administering the recreation programs for the town.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Appointed (A) Elected (E)</b>	<b>Duties</b>
Board of Tax Review	A	Reviews tax rates for the community.
Animal Control Officer	A	Enforcing Town and State laws and regulations in the control of pets and animals in the town. The Animal Control Officer also files animal related incident reports.
Plumbing Inspector	E/ A	Reviewing plumbing plans, inspecting buildings for compliance to the State planning code, issuing permits, and investigating possible violations.
Code Enforcement Officer	A	Enforcement of municipal codes and other applicable state and federal ordinances; enforcement of rules and regulations and initiating legal action in relation to town codes and ordinances; analysis of town codes and ordinances and making revision suggestions to the Planning Board.
Tax Assessors' Agent	A	Annually inspects and evaluates property for the eventual tax amount charged to the landowner. The Tax Assessor's Agent since 1985 has been Randy Tarr of Tarr Assessing.
Cemetery Trustees	E/ A	Oversee the operation of the Patten Cemetery.
Veteran's Memorial Library Trustees	E/ A	Oversee the operations of the Veteran's Memorial Library

Source: Town of Patten, 2017

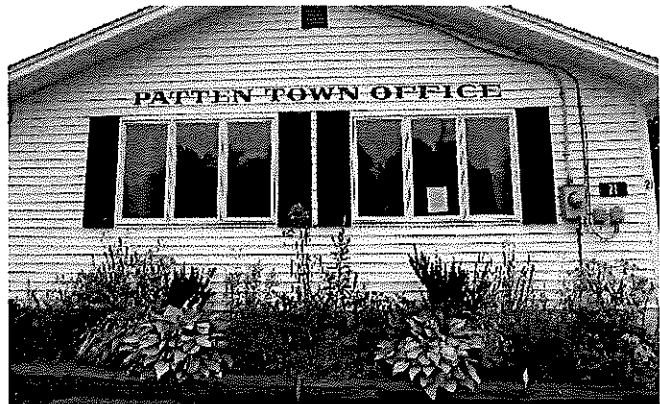
Patten, like many towns and communities in Maine, is very dependent on the vast amount of time volunteered by residents for local government. The above description shows elected and appointed positions that serve the Town of Patten. The product of tremendous time commitment of all town volunteers and paid positions is a plan for delivery of the efficient public services. In most instances, the appointed positions, as noted above, have been held by the same individual for several years which affords the benefit of consistency and continuity while limiting training costs. There were no issues or problems associated with these appointed positions other than recruitment.

### **Town Office**

Patten's Town Office, built in 1984, is located at 21 Katahdin Street and is a small three-room facility. The Town Manager, Town Clerk, and Deputy Clerk are housed in the front office and

there is a small conference room where the Selectmen the Budget Committee and the Planning Board meet. Overall, the facility is in good condition and the building is ADA compliant.

Meeting space and storage is limited although town officials have recently constructed storage in the Fire Department building. Town officials should consider constructing a larger meeting room. At times, if there is large attendance at a Selectman's meeting, residents have to wait in the front office or outside. Larger, planned, meetings and the annual Town Meeting are held at the Fire Department or Recreation Center.



### Highway Department

Patten's Highway Department is responsible for summer and winter road maintenance of the 26.4 miles of road located in Patten. The Department employs one (1) full time employee and one-half time employee and is overseen by the Town Manager. Historically, there were two (2) full-time and 2 part-time employees. As budgets were reduced, staffing was decreased while road mileages remained the same, regulations increase, and additional duties added. In addition to the day-to-day activities associated with the Highway Department, the Highway Department Director also assists with the Recreation Department, library maintenance, and oversees the Water and Sewer Departments.



The Highway Department maintains a pickup truck, backhoe, and plow truck. The backhoe is also used by the Water and Sewer Departments and at the cemetery.

In 2017, Patten residents approved funding to begin the completion of road projects in the annual budget. Prior to that, the last planned road work was done in 2004, except for emergency work after flooding in 2012, and ditching, culverts, and cold patch annually.

Local roads are in fair to poor condition and town officials and the Highway Department Director are working to develop a road improvement plan. While the Roads Committee is in the process of completing a 20-year road plan, the Maine DOT Local Roads Center provides a "Road Surface Management for Maine Towns" training program, including Road Surface Management System (RSMS) software to identify which road maintenance techniques should be considered for individual roads or streets in a local street network. Introduced in 1990, it is being used by many communities to inventory their road network, record road surface condition data, interpret the surface distress information gathered, and "defend" their road maintenance budgets. The system is generic and provides an objective tool that a municipality can "customize" with its own repair

techniques and local costs. RSMS provides a report where the highway department can prioritize projects and develop detailed budgets. There may be assistance through the University of Maine's Engineering Schools to assist Patten with road surveys.

As stated above, residents approved funding for road projects in Patten in 2017 and ongoing, working to use excise tax for road repairs. As a result, an ad hoc Roads Committee made up of residents, Highway Department staff, and the Town Manager, is developing a Capital Improvement Plan. The committee initially utilized the following assumptions:

- a. Recognize that the Town last spent a significant investment in roads in 2004
- b. Large road/bridge costs in 2012 because of flooding.
- c. Putting down a ¾ inch layer of black top.
- d. This basically assumed 3 miles of road per year.
- e. Working on the worst roads first.
- f. Start with \$100,000 of excise taxes in 2017 (or one half of excise taxes), increasing by \$20,000 per year until 100% of excise taxes used per year.
- g. Repair the bridge on Waters Road.
- h. The plan would cover all roads, including dirt roads, in 7 years (or 2023).

A concern around that original plan was developed over a seven (7) year timeframe but has now been extended to 20 years. Town officials should consider an 8-10 plan for road maintenance and capital improvements with a continued longer-term review of road inventories to add to the 8-10-year cycle.

### **Police Protection**

Patten does not have a constable or municipal police department and, as of the drafting of this plan, is not considering the creation of one in the ten (10) year planning period. Police protection is provided by the Maine State Police and the Penobscot County Sheriff's Department. Protection is provided on alternating weeks (State Police one week, Sherriff's Department the next). The State Police handle calls including accidents, homicide and theft. The nearest State Police headquarters is located in Houlton, about 45 miles away. The Penobscot County headquarters is located in Bangor (90 miles south) but Deputies live throughout the service area. All are located south of Patten.

Residents have expressed a concern of increasing crime in town which is often associated with drug use. According to the Maine State Police and the Sheriff's Department a majority of the crime in Patten is considered "property" crime. Property crimes include burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson. These crimes do not involve the threat of violence, but entail property taken from one by another, or the destruction of property by arson. Overall property crime in Penobscot County decreased 7.7% since 2014

As stated above, residents have expressed a frustration concerning police protection in town and maintaining a municipal police department is extremely expensive. Between training, personnel costs, vehicle purchase and maintenance and other items, running a small police department is cost prohibitive. While both the State Police and Sheriff's Department respond to calls, they do not

necessarily have a day to day presence in the community. In the past, the Sherriff's Department had a Deputy who lived in the Patten area and oftentimes residents called upon him in time of need.

Town officials are considering several options to increase police protection in town. These options include:

- Funding a deputy for an 8-hour shift in the region. Patten could partner with surrounding Penobscot County towns to help fund the position.
- Development of a Neighborhood Watch program.
- Subcontract with East Millinocket and Millinocket for the improvement of police protection.
- Seeking individuals who may be interested in working for a "local police department". Town officials could work with existing municipal police departments to facilitate training and equipment needs.

If the level of crime does not abate after implementing one or more of the options listed above, Town Officials may have to consider the creation of a municipal police department.

## **Fire Protection**

Fire protection in Patten is provided by the Patten's Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Station has a three-bay garage and is located on Dearborn Street. The town is serviced by two pumper trucks, a tanker, an ambulance, and one utility vehicle. Patten provides fire protection for Moro Plantation, Hersey, and Crystal.



There is a need for a four-wheel drive min-pumper vehicle that can be used to fight fires in rural areas as well as the forestlands. Town officials are seeking funding for this vehicle. It was considered for inclusion in the 2016 budget and may well be included in the future.

The Fire Department is fully equipped with the required firefighting equipment and uniforms. The Thermal Imaging Camera detects electrical fires in walls and ceilings as well as helps seek out individuals who may be trapped in a burning building. The department is entirely volunteer.

There are currently 15 volunteer fire fighters for the town. The Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief are elected by the fire fighters and approved by Patten's Board of Selectmen. The Fire Chief reports to the Town Manager.

As in many small rural communities, firemen receive training through the National Fire Prevention Association standards and through the State Fire Association. The Department also conducts fire training drills throughout the year to keep abreast on fire-fighting, equipment reliability and team building techniques. They meet regularly for training on Sunday afternoons.



All fire calls (911) are dispatched through a dispatcher that activate an individual pager system. Response time to a fire is approximately 15 to 20 minutes to the furthest property in Patten. In 2016 the department responded to 27 calls broken down as:

Structure fires	8
Vehicle Fires	1
Vehicle Accidents	7
Snowmobile Accident	1
Chimney Fires	1
Fire Alarms	2
Grass Fires	3
False Alarms	1
Miscellaneous	3

### **Fire Hydrants**

The town of Patten has 29 fire hydrants administered by the Water Department. Pursuant to the formula of the PUC, Patten allocates \$29,000 for fire hydrant rental each year. Because of efforts to replenish the general fund in 2016, the town was able to pay the encumbered rental fees for 2014, 2015, and 2016, along with the 2017 cost in 2017.

### **Emergency Response and Ambulance Service**

Patten Ambulance Service is a municipal ambulance service run under the direction of the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen. As with other departments it has the same Employer Identification Number (EIN) for payroll tax purposes. The ambulance service has a Director who is responsible for billing and day to day operations as well as providing Advance Life Support as an on call Critical Care Emergency Medical Technician on a 24hour/7day a week basis. The Service has six other employees, including a Paramedic EMT, an Intermediate EMT, a Basic EMT and two drivers. There are three employees who remain on call on a 24/7 basis, at least one of which is licensed to the Advanced Life Support level.



The Houlton Ambulance Service, East Millinocket Ambulance Service or Island Falls Ambulance Service provide backup emergency service. Patten Ambulance Service has three ambulances which are housed on Potato Row and a fourth located at the Fire Department. The Patten Ambulance Service is equipped to respond to snow sled accidents with the rescue-boggan, snowsled and trailer which are housed at the station on Potato Row. The ambulance is dispatched from the Penobscot County Regional Communications Center in Bangor accessed by dialing 911.

The Patten Ambulance Service responds to approximately 250 to 300 calls per year. Most patients are transported to either Houlton Regional Hospital or Millinocket Regional Hospital. The Patten Ambulance Service, on occasion, does respond to requests from Houlton Regional Hospital or Millinocket Regional Hospital to execute transfers to other hospitals throughout the state.

The Patten Ambulance Service's long-range goals include providing educational opportunities to service personnel with the intent of having a greater number of advanced life support personnel while continuing the education program that ensures all service members remain proficient and up-to-date with their respective training and duties.

Patten also provides ambulance service for a number of communities including Stacyville, Hersey, Sherman, Crystal, Mt. Chase, County of Aroostook (Benedicta, Moro Plantation, Silver Ridge, T2R4, T3R4, T1R5, and T1R4), and Penobscot County (T1R6, T2R7, T2R8, T3R7, T3R8, T4R7, T4R8, T5R7, T5R8, T6R6, T6R7, T6R8, T7R6, T7R7, T8R6, T8R7, and T8R8).

### **Post Office**

Patten's Post Office is located at 24 Main Street in the middle of the business district of the town. The Post Office counter is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm but closed from 11:30am to 12:30pm for lunch. On Saturday, the counter hours are 8:30am to 11:30am. There are counter services providing postage and parcel services and residents can apply for passports. There are 753 post office boxes for rent in the post office. Also provided are package and parcel supplies at the counter. The Post Office employs five personnel including local mail delivery drivers and processes in excess of 68,000 pieces of incoming mail and packages annually to town residents.

### **Churches**

Patten is home to the Patten Pentecostal Church, St. Paul's Catholic Church (seasonal in the summer months with the main parish located in Benedicta), and the Stetson Memorial United Methodist Church. There is a Congregational Church located in Sherman and Baptist Churches in Stacyville, and Island Falls.

### **Sand and Salt Storage**

Patten's salt shed is located on Lovejoy Road. Sand and salt is available to the road maintenance crew and the winter maintenance contractor who care for Patten's roads in the winter. Salt supplies are purchased through a Penobscot County sponsored cooperative bulk purchase program. Moro Planation and Hersey utilize the sand/salt storage shed as Patten administers a consolidated winter road plowing contract with those communities.

### **Street Lights**

Patten's downtown is well lit by street lights. Presently all lights are 4,000 lumen high pressure sodium. In an effort to protect Patten's dark skies, there are no plans to install additional street lights or extend the current number of street lights. 2016 budgeted cost for street lights is \$18,500.

There are in excess of 50 street lights lighting the downtown area streets. Street lights are felt to provide adequate lighting at this time. There have been no identified areas where additional street lighting is requested.

In order to help maintain the dark skies Patten is becoming known for, town officials are looking at the type of lighting in the downtown and as development occurs. Town officials will work with EMERA and possibly develop a Light ordinance as part of the zoning ordinance that regulates the type and wattage of light fixtures and hours of operations (dimming after hours).

Patten Academy Park had light fixtures in the past which were unfortunately vandalized and subsequently removed. Bases and wiring are still in place and town officials are considering re-installing decorative lighting in the future.

There is also an annual decorative display lining Main Street that includes snowflakes, bells, trees, snowmen, and candy canes.

### **American Flags**

Since 2006, Patten's Main Street(s) are lined with American flags. Currently there are approximately 100 flags that are displayed. Flags are maintained by volunteers and the project is supported through fund raising efforts and donations. Flags are displayed on light poles going in and out of the town and at the cemetery where a display of seven flags fly (US Flag and a flag representing each of the branches of services). Branches of service flags are also flown along Founders and Houlton Streets.

Over the years the town residents have felt pride and patriotism as they see these flags be erected each spring, near Memorial Day, and continue flying over the summer into November for Veteran's Day. Beginning in 2016, the town has budgeted \$1,000 to help keep these flags, poles, ropes, and manpower going. The display of the American flag certainly makes Patten unique.

### **Education**

Currently (2017), Patten is part of Regional School Unit (RSU) #50 which is comprised of Katahdin Elementary School (PK-6), Katahdin Middle/ High School (7-12), and Southern Aroostook Community Schools (PK-12). The RSU currently serve approximately 700 students and offer adult education programming as well. The RSU was formed in July 2011 and encompasses the former SAD 25 and CSD 9 school districts. The district lies in Northern Penobscot and Southern Aroostook Counties and is approximately 460 square miles, making it one of the largest geographic school regions in Maine. The RSU serves the twelve communities of Crystal, Dyer Brook, Hersey, Island Falls, Merrill, Moro Plantation, Mt. Chase, Oakfield, Patten, Sherman, Smyrna, and Stacyville.

The RSU School Board is made up of 16 members who are elected by communities within the RSU. Patten has two members serving on the Board. School buses transport students to Katahdin Elementary, Middle and High School. Education comprises a large portion of the Patten town

budget which is typical of many small towns in Maine. Patten has experienced an increase in the per pupil expenditures partly due to the loss of State Aid to Education, loss of state revenue sharing (local), declining enrollments, and compliance with federal and state program guidelines. The cost of maintenance of school buildings has been a major concern for the town as well as surrounding towns who utilize Katahdin Elementary, Middle and High School. The Katahdin Elementary, Middle and High Schools are located 1.4 miles south of the Patten town line on Route 11.

The following table shows school enrollments from 2011 to 2016. Patten school children make up between 16 and 19 percent of the total enrollment in the RSU. As also noted, the number of students from Patten has declined by 46, a 29% reduction, since 2011.

**RSU School Enrollment**

Year	Total Enrollment	Patten	Percent of Total
2011	799	158	19.8
2012	758	146	19.3
2013	736	146	19.8
2014	717	134	18.7
2015	677	118	17.4
2016	692	112	16.2

Source: RSU 50, 2016

The following table shows projected school enrollment through 2025. According to Planning Decisions, RSU 50 is projecting a 14 percent decline in all students to the year 2025.

School Year	PreK -6	Grades 7-12	Total	Percent Change
2016-17	357	303	660	-1.79
2017-18	346	293	639	-3.18
2018-19	336	294	630	-1.41
2019-20	324	293	617	-2.06
2020-21	324	284	608	-1.46
2021-22	312	281	593	-2.47
2022-23	320	263	583	-1.69
2023-24	320	254	574	-1.54
2024-25	317	249	566	-1.39

Source: Planning Decisions 2015

**Katahdin Elementary School**

Katahdin Elementary School, located at 805 Station Road in Stacyville, ME was built in 1967 for \$500,000 and provides space for 19 faculty and up to 400 students from kindergarten to grade 6. The school contains classrooms, library, gymnasium, and kitchen facilities. School enrollment has been on the decline over the last few years.

## Katahdin Middle-High School

Katahdin Middle-High School located at 800 Station Road in Stacyville, was built in 1975 for \$2.2 million with a student capacity of 425 students and 21 faculty. At one time, Katahdin Middle/High School was the 99<sup>th</sup> largest public high school in the State and the 17,894<sup>th</sup> largest nationally. The student ratio is 9.9 to 1. In the 2016 school year enrollment for grades 7 through 12 was 178 students. Of these, 3% were minority, 64% were economically disadvantaged. There were 16 full time teachers. Graduation rate in 2016 was approximately 83% with test scores ranging from the low 40s to 50s in subject proficiency.

The following tables are developed from information from the Maine Department of Education, and illustrate trends in budget, State and local funding appropriations, and per pupil operating costs. RSU 50 was formed in 2011 and SAD#25 information was provided before that.

<b>RSU 50</b>	<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>Local Contributions</b>	<b>State Contribution*</b>	<b>Adjusted State Contribution**</b>	<b>State Share*</b>	<b>Adjusted State Share**</b>
2016	\$7,372,315	\$2,499,283	\$4,873,032	\$4,849,388	66.10	65.78
2015	\$7,313,547	\$2,504,933	\$4,808,614	\$4,787,671	65.75	65.46
2014	\$7,535,358	\$2,447,843	\$5,087,514	\$5,039,468	67.52	66.68
2013	\$7,359,849	\$2,464,398	\$4,895,451	\$4,857,586	66.52	66
2012	\$7,130,558	\$2,329,964	\$4,800,593	\$4,825,865	67.32	67.68
Average	\$7,342,325	\$2,449,284	\$4,893,041	\$4,871,996	66.64	66.32
<b>SAD #25</b>	<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>Local Contributions</b>	<b>State Contribution*</b>	<b>Adjusted State Contribution**</b>	<b>State Share*</b>	<b>Adjusted State Share***</b>
2011	\$3,576,817	\$979,800	\$2,597,017	\$2,531,540	72.6	70.78
2010	\$3,533,635	\$935,596	\$50,346	\$2,553,692	73.52	72.27
2009	\$3,382,074	\$902,391	\$2,479,683	\$2,496,933	73.32	73.83
2008	\$3,361,055	\$1,002,540	\$2,358,515	\$2,393,165	70.17	71.2
2007	\$3,084,994	\$899,460	\$2,185,534	\$2,185,534	70.84	70.84
2006	\$2,748,930	\$935,445	\$1,813,485	\$1,849,095	65.97	67.27
Average	\$3,281,251	\$942,539	\$1,914,097	\$2,334,993	71.07	71.03

Source: Maine Department of Education, 2016

\* Includes Debt Service adjustment, Minimum Special Education adjustment and Minimum State Allocation adjustment.

\*\* Includes Audit adjustments, MaineCare Seed adjustments, etc.

\*\*\* Includes Audit adjustments, Laptop Payment adjustment, Emergency Bus Replacement adjustment, Transition adjustments, etc.

## Historical Comparison of per pupil costs- RSU 50

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
\$8,750	\$9,633	\$9,154	\$10,203	\$11,084

Source: Maine Department of Education, 2016

The table above shows that per pupil operating costs have increased, a 26.7% increase in cost, four (4) out of the last five (5) years and with State projections indicating that the school age population continue to decrease in each of the RSU's communities, costs will continue to increase. As property values increase and enrollment drops, the State appropriation will decrease, widening the gap that must be filled by the local share.

In the Fall of 2017, Patten voters will voice their opinion whether to withdraw from RSU 50. A Withdrawal Committee, made up of members from Patten, Mt. Chase, Sherman, and Stacyville met on a regular basis and have developed a reorganization plan. The plan identifies:

- Program for grades pre-kindergarten through 12 at the Katahdin Elementary and High Schools;
- Numbers of Board members for Patten, Sherman, Stacyville, and Mt. Chase;
- Fiscal obligations for each of the communities;
- Disposition of real and personal school property;
- Assignment of personnel contracts and other related contracts and agreements;
- Disposition of existing school funds and existing financial obligations; and
- A Transition Plan

The Withdrawal Committee also developed cost sharing for the proposed RSU. The proposed RSU may raise money, in addition to the required local contribution for educational purposes. The additional local costs of operating the RSU shall be shared among all the municipalities within the RSU on the basis of the following formula:

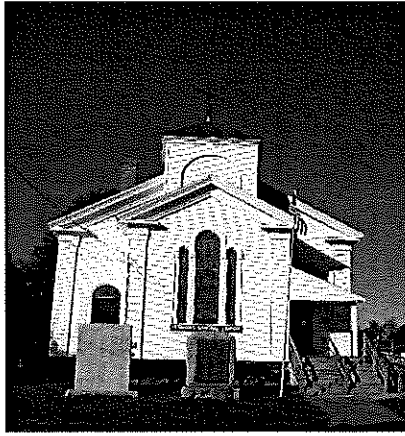
Town	Initial Year (2018/19) Share of local Additional	Second Year (2019/2020) and Subsequent Years Share of Local Additional
Patten	31.5%	35.0%
Sherman	31.0%	30.0%
Stacyville	14.5%	15.0%
Mount Chase	23.0%	20.0%

Source: Reorganization Planning Committee, 2017

This local cost-sharing formula applies only to the amount, if any, of additional local funds and non-state funded debt service raised by the RSU. It does not apply to the required local contributions raised by each municipality.

## **Veterans Memorial Library**

The Veterans Memorial Library was established in 1927. The Patten library currently has nine trustees. The library currently holds hundreds of books, videos, DVDs historical information, magazines for loan to town residents. Residents can also pick up tax forms at the library for filing Federal income taxes. The goal of the library is to increase patronage and provide up to date books and materials for loan. The library is served by one librarian. The duties of the librarian is to provide research, answer questions, keep track of the vast array of books and materials and provide on loan services from other libraries in the state. The circulation numbers for the years 2016 include the loan of 3,400 books, 350 videos and DVDs, 45 magazines, 15 books on tape and 105 inter-library loans.



The library has three computers with high speed internet access, wireless access and printer capability for the convenience of town residents and over 650 people utilized the computer system in 2016. Other services include: large print books, videos and DVDs, books on CD historical information, and tax forms and assistance filing taxes on-line. The library relies on the generosity of the community for financial assistance conducting an annual book sale to raise funds for new books. Many patrons donate used books to the library specifically for this book sale.

The town provides funding for library expenses including building maintenance and taxes and office supplies. The Patten Area Woman's Club provides books and the Highway Department assists in keeping the sidewalk and stairs shoveled during the winter months. Several volunteers assist with landscaping and lawn care.

In 2017, a \$94,500 gift was received. This gift can be used for all library operations except day to day maintenance.

## **Veteran's Memorial Monument**

This landmark is located outside the library on Main Street (Route 11) in the business district of Patten. The Memorial lists the names of Veterans from Patten who served the Country in the military.

In 2016, the town voted to spend \$6,645.50 from the Veteran's Monument Reserve Fund to add names to the existing Veteran's Monument and/or construct a new Veteran's Memorial Monument. This budget has been reaffirmed in 2017.

## **Patten Cemetery**

Patten Cemetery (22 acres) is located on Route 11 north of the business district. Current cemetery lot prices (2017) are: ½ lot \$200, full lot \$400, and cremation lot \$100. Burials are conducted between May 15 and November 15 of each year. Access to the Cemetery from Route 11 is excellent and there is adequate burial space for the planning period. There is also a veteran's memorial located at the Patten Cemetery. Through a volunteer effort, seven flag poles were constructed, six (6) representing the branches of service and POW/MIA and one (1) with the US flag. There are also benches and stones memorializing those who served



## **Public Services**

### Television

Patten is served by WLBZ2 in Bangor, WABI5 in Bangor, WAGM-TV Channel 8 in Presque Isle, and WMEM PBS. These stations are available to residents of the town of Patten who have television sets.

Charter/Spectrum provides cable service to Patten. Town officials have negotiated a ten (10) year contract with the company. Not all residents are served by cable television as lines do not extend to all locations in Town. Extending cable television to the more remote locations of the community is cost prohibitive.

Dish and Direct-TV as satellite stations are another option for those not being served by Spectrum.

### Radio

There are no radio stations located in Patten with the closest stations being located in Millinocket and Houlton. Radio stations broadcasting from Canada also service the Patten area both in English and French. These stations are owned by the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC).

### Newspapers

Patten is served directly by The Houlton Pioneer Times, a weekly paper with news from Southern Aroostook area; one daily paper The Bangor Daily News and one weekend paper The Bangor Daily News weekend edition.



## Telephone

Patten is serviced by local and long-distance telephone through Verizon or Fairpoint. Many residents have disconnected their land lines in favor of cell phones.

## Electric

Emera Maine (Maine Public District) provides electrical service to Patten. In 2017, the standard offer for small was, medium Commercial Class ranges between \$0.07 and \$0.09 kWh) and 0.08 kWh for large commercial class. Commercial rates vary depending on the size and make-up of the business and if it is located in a special zone (Pine Tree Zone, Economic Development zone, etc). Three-phase power is available on all arterial routes that lead to and enter the town center. Many local businesses utilize 3-phase and availability can serve new development in existing commercial zones and future industrial sites.

Eastern Maine Electricity Cooperative (EMEC) also provides power to Patten. EMEC is geographically the largest American owned electric utility in the state. EMEC is a private not-for-profit electric utility with a consumer elected Board of Directors. Board members are elected in each zone (Patten is zone 11) and serve a three-year term. The current Zone 11 Board member is from Mount Chase. EMEC's service area is approximately 3,000 square miles and serves 77 communities in Washington, Aroostook, and Penobscot Counties.

As of March 1, 2017, rates are as follows:

Base Delivery Charge- Includes delivery of the first 50 kiloWatt-hours (kWhs) per month.

- \$7.04 per month, effective until February 28, 2018;
- \$9.00 per month, effective from March 1, 2018 - February 28, 2019.
- \$10.96 per month, effective March 1, 2019 and afterward.
- \$0.080551 per kiloWatt-hour (kWh) for the delivery of all kWhs in excess of 50 kWhs per month.

## Telecommunications

Wireless, cable and fiber optic technologies are available throughout northern Maine depending on the desired bandwidths, speed and cost. DSL, ISDN, ATM, Frame Relay, T1, T3, OC48 can be readily accessed and Verizon has deployed SONET ring technology providing redundancy and reliability throughout the state, even in the most rural areas. Most of Maine's school systems are networked by a high bandwidth ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) system that can simultaneously transfer voice, data and video at very high speeds. Maine's telecommunications backbone is 100% digitally switched and long-distance POP (point-of-presence) locations and are strategically located throughout the state. Fairpoint Communications is the telecommunications provider serving Patten and many surrounding towns.

There are two registered cell phone towers located in Patten. One is located approximately .77 miles south of the downtown and owned by United States Cellular and the second approximately 4 miles north.

### Three Ring Binder

The Three Ring Binder project proposes to create an open access fiber-optic network extending to the most rural and disadvantaged areas of Maine. The project proposes a 1,100-mile network that will pass through more than 100 communities make broadband more readily available to 110,000 households, 600 community anchor institutions, and a number of last mile service providers. The public-private partnership expects to provide 100 Mbps broadband capabilities for University of Maine campuses, community colleges, government facilities, public safety departments, the MaineREN research and education network, and rural healthcare clinics and hospitals. The project plans to benefit clinics and hospitals by allowing for more immediate contact with clinical healthcare specialists and by increasing the collaboration of local community-based healthcare providers with specialists in major metropolitan areas.

This project proposes to:

- Provide middle mile fiber for broadband service providers to bring cost-effective, high-speed broadband services to areas without access.
- Connect 51 anchor institutions – 10 campuses and outreach centers of the University of Maine System, three community colleges, and 38 government facilities.
- Attract businesses by establishing geographically diverse, fiber-optic routes through Western Maine to Northern New Hampshire and Vermont, and through Eastern and Northern Maine to New Brunswick.
- Create the infrastructure necessary to support existing and diversified industries.
- Enable and promote interconnection of local fire, police, safety, and emergency management agencies.

### **Public Water and Sewer**

#### Patten Water Department

Patten has operated a municipal water department since December 1977. There are two sources of water supply located in different parts of the water system. Both sources are located in fractured bedrock. The Creamery Well (well #1) is located between Katahdin Street and Dearborn Street and is 265 feet deep while the School Yard Well is located on Main Street and is 161 feet deep. Well #1 can provide a total of 90-100 gallons of water per minute and well #2 provides a total of 85 gallons of water per minute. Two 10 horsepower submersible pumps each with a capacity of 75 gallons per minute at 100psi are installed in each of the wells

The Town has not experienced any problems with the quality of the present source of water. In 2011 and on-going, due to it's effort to protect the water supply, Patten Water Department was granted a 'Synthetic Organics Waiver.' This is a three-year exemption from the monitoring/reporting requirements for the following industrial chemical(s): herbicides, carbamate

pesticides, toxaphene/chlordane/PCB and semi-volatile organics. This waiver was granted due to the absence of these potential sources of contamination within a half mile radius of the water source. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services Drinking Water Program grants a waiver only upon a finding that “it will not result in an unreasonable risk to health.”

In 1992, an upgrade to the water system was completed consisting of the installation of a new 10” diameter transmission main. The transmission main is connected to the wells and serves the Patten downtown area. From the transmission system, water is distributed through distribution mains varying from 8” to ¾” in size. The system comprises approximately 7,700 linear feet of 10” diameter water main; 1,140 linear feet of 8” main and 750 feet of 6” main. There are 29 fire hydrants located throughout the service area. The renovation of the water system also consisted on the construction of a water reservoir and valve chamber and a new water level control system.

The Water Department supplies over 8 million gallons of clean, safe drinking water to its approximately 180 customers and there is sufficient capacity to meet the daily needs of customers, including fire protection. The Department maintains several days of back up water supply for emergencies.

Patten has a Wellhead Protection program that was developed in 2010. The Source Protection Plan inventories known and potential sources of contamination in the wellhead area and developed a series of regulatory and non-regulatory strategies designed to help manage sources of contamination. The Plan also develops a contingency plan for future development in the wellhead protection area. This Plan calls for the creation of a wellhead protection ordinance.

System wide capital improvements identified by Water Department staff include:

- Replacement of galvanized pipes located on Valley Street
- Line extension along Katahdin Street
- Replacement of pumps.
- Clean and make identified repairs to the reservoir.

### **Patten Sewer District**

In 1991, Patten applied for and received a license to operate a subsurface wastewater disposal system involving pre-treatment, storage and slow rate irrigation of municipal waste waters. The waste water treatment facility, located on Lovejoy Road, has a 40-year life span. The facility consists of two parcels. Three stabilization lagoons and the operations building are located on the east side and the site of effluent spray irrigation is located on the west side of the former Bangor and Aroostook railroad tracks. The treatment system has an influent capacity of 30,200 gallons per day and an effluent capacity of 103,700 gallons per day. Currently the system serves the entire downtown area including all business and industry. The downtown is served by approximately 7,460 linear feet of 8” sewer main collection system and approximately 2,430 linear feet of force main. The system has a total of 33 manholes and two pump stations.



Sewer Department personnel have battled with the improper disposal of materials into the sewer system for many years. These items often clog the pumps and result in unexpected and costly repairs. Town officials have developed fliers, provided information in the annual Town Report, and with other Town officials to educate the public about the proper disposal of certain sanitary items.

Patten's sewer system has become a financial burden on the Town and as a result, all taxpayers are subsidizing the 45 users of the system. It would be easy to write that the solution is to mandate that all of the properties located within the service area of the department hook to the system. It is just as easy to have the conversations to close the plant and allow those using it to return to the use of private septic systems. For a number of reasons, this will not happen.

Approximately 25 years ago, Patten applied for and received a Small Community Grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP). These funds were used to replace faulty septic systems in the downtown area. Around the same time, officials began working with the MDEP in an effort to construct a sewage treatment plant as MDEP determined that the efforts were not cost effective nor environmentally sound. So, it became a double-edged sword, the town had a new sewage treatment plant facility and many of the potential users of the system had brand new septic systems. Today, these systems are nearing the end of their life expectancy.

Closing the existing sewer plan could create a financial hardship on business, industry, and residence in the downtown as they would be forced to seek private and costly alternatives. This could include the need for engineered systems for commercial and industrial development and the need to purchase additional land for residential users.

By all accounts, Patten has seen new development in its downtown. This can be attributed to a variety of reasons including new industrial development, the creation of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, economic and community development efforts of town officials, and an overall renewal of interest in the Patten area.

A public sewer system is a vital economic development tool for the town and officials are faced with the hard question of how to increase the number of users of the systems and/or should the sewer lines be expanded to reach additional areas of the downtown. Ultimately, the more users on the system decreases the cost per user. Town officials need to work with the MDEP and seek funds for the development of a feasibility study concerning sewage treatment in the downtown. This plan needs to have specific costs association with plant upgrades, line extension, and user fee information.

Capital improvements identified by the Sewer Department include:

- Replace liners in the lagoons
- Replace pumps located on Gardner and Lovejoy Streets
- Replace piping inside of pump station
- Rebuild identified manholes.

#### Water and Wastewater Technical Assistance

For both the water and wastewater systems, Town officials should consider the use of Check Up Program for Small Systems (CUPSS) Asset Management Tool. CUPSS is an asset management that helps small utilities develop:

- A record of assets,
- A schedule of required tasks,
- An understanding of the utilities financial situation, and
- A tailored asset management plan.

Free technical assistance can be provided by the MDEP and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the use of this tool. CUPSS can be used to develop a long-term capital improvements program that works within the Town's municipal budget. EPA also has a large technical, managerial, and financial capacity resource programs for small drinking water systems. This program is designed to help with the long-term sustainability and compliance with national safe drinking water regulations.

#### **Septage Disposal**

Septage is disposed of at a licensed site located on the Happy Corner Road, on land owned by Robert and Louise Guptill. This is a 6-acre site that is roughly broken up into two (2) three acre disposal fields. One site is due for relicensing in 2018. There is also a septage disposal tank located on the Lovejoy Road. This tank is utilized during the winter months when land spreading is not an option. Septage disposal is adequate for the planning period.

The town is exploring the possibility of acquiring another site if the current site were to be sold.

#### **Solid Waste Disposal**

Solid waste is disposed of at the Northern Katahdin Valley Waste Disposal District (NKVWDD) located in Dyer Brook. NKVWDD serves the communities of Amity Crystal, Dyer Brook, Hammond, Hersey, Island Falls, Merrill, Moro, Mount Chase, New Limerick, Patten, and several unorganized townships.

The transfer station accepts a variety of solid waste including Universal wastes, scrap metal, recyclables, tires, wood and demolition debris, batteries, and white goods. Residents of Patten either need to take their solid waste to the transfers station or pay a hauler on a monthly basis.

Town officials may consider a one-day amnesty for solid waste that would allow residents the opportunity to clean up their properties.

Town officials also may consider the creation of a public solid waste hauling service for residents. This may help eliminate some of the need to travel to Dyer Brook to dispose of solid waste.

## **Health Care Services**

### Mountain Heights Health Care Facility

One of Patten's oldest landmarks now known as Mountain Heights Health Care Facility, a five star health care facility, was built in 1910. The home is one of the finest in the area. It was built for H. P. Gardner who served in Maine legislature for several years. In 1951 the home was sold to Bob and Opel Goodall. It was at this time that the building became a nursing home known as Resthaven. In 1966 the home was sold again but continued as a nursing home facility. The facility has undergone many changes over the years including being renamed to Mountain Heights Health Care Facility. New codes and State regulations required a new addition that brought security to stay in business and allowed the operation of a nursing home to the area for many years to come. Today, the home is owned by Dr. Steven Weisberger of Jonesport, Maine and managed by North Country Associates in Lewiston, Maine.

Mountain Heights Health Care offers senior housing in a 25-unit housing facility for seniors. Mountain Heights Health Care offers nursing home care. They can provide care for people who are severely infirmed and require assistance with daily activities and who need to have frequent access to medical services. Mountain Heights Health Care has been registered with Medicaid and Medicare since 1994. In the latest Medicare report, they received 5/5 stars based upon a collective criterion of personnel evaluations, overall quality, and health investigations. Upon annual State review in 2016, there were no total penalties applied, no fines applied, 2 deficiencies reported, no payment denials, and no complaints made within this reporting year.



### Katahdin Valley Health Center

Katahdin Valley Health Center has two facilities located in Patten. The goal of KVHC is provide good health. This Center is a provider of high quality, cost effective primary health, dental, podiatry, optometry, substance abuse, pharmacy (including mail order), and mental health care to the residents of the greater Katahdin region. Katahdin Valley Health Center (KVHC) is a nonprofit business governed by a board of directors, comprised of area volunteers, funded by a federal grant under Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Its mission is to provide community accessible quality health care with compassion and dignity. KVHC includes two buildings in Patten; one for outpatient clinical services and the other is administrative. The outpatient clinic building is providing ample parking available. Approximately 10,500 patients are served annually by 12 providers. Medical services provided are community health, behavioral health, family health and primary care health. Laboratory services are available at all clinics. Patten Office personnel are available to make appointments and answer questions. In total KVHC employs over 50 people at its facilities in Millinocket, Island Falls and Patten. There are six KVHC clinics locally; in Ashland, Houlton, Brownsville, Millinocket, Island Falls and Patten employing 92 staff members serving 37,400 patients annually. A patient portal is available for patients to access their personal health record and renew prescriptions on line.



A newly constructed KVHC building in Patten is solely administrative. Total square footage of this new building is 8,640 with a main building, two canopies and a back section. In the future, the building has ample space to incorporate a community center. It is the hope of KVHC to bring more services to the community. Patients must travel to Houlton Regional Hospital or Millinocket Community Hospital for x-rays, CAT scans, MRIs or other specialized services if ordered by their primary care physician. Katahdin Valley Health Center also provides a shuttle service for those needing to go out of the area for medical appointments.

Houlton Regional Hospital

The Houlton Regional Hospital (HRH) is a modern, 91-bed, acute care hospital that is fully accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations and licensed by the State of Maine. The hospital offers complete obstetric, general medical, surgical, pediatric and psychiatric services in addition to operating a 45-bed long term care facility. The Houlton Regional Hospital has arranged for specialists to offer regular clinics at the hospital to meet her needs of area patients. A Clinical Social Worker is available for counseling by appointment. Physicians are available in the Emergency Department on a 24-hour, 7-day a week basis. The emergency room is staffed by highly trained and skilled personnel who address a wide array of emergency medical problems. Patients are transferred to Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor if their condition warrants. HRH also offers a diabetic support group, a cancer support group, quit smoking support, weight loss group, and narcotic anonymous.

### Houlton Regional Hospital

Millinocket Regional Hospital

Millinocket Regional Hospital (MRH) is a 25-bed facility with the availability of swing bed and special care services. MRH features a medical staff of Family Practice, General Surgery, Internal

Medicine, Nurse Practitioners, Orthopedics, Pediatrics and Physician Assistants in full-time practices. Visiting consultants include Cardiology, E.N.T., Oncology, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Podiatry, Pulmonology, Radiology, and Urology. Millinocket Regional Hospital offers a wide range of comprehensive services featuring highly skilled staff; from modern diagnostic imaging and laboratory services to healthcare education to physical, occupational and speech therapies.

MRH primarily services the Katahdin Region of Millinocket, East Millinocket and Medway. Providers attend outreach clinics in Patten and Lincoln. MRH offers acute inpatient and outpatient hospital services including 24/7 emergency care, rehabilitative services including a swing bed program as well as outpatient physician services.

Other medical centers are located in Bangor and provide services to residents.

### **Social and Human Service Agencies**

There are many social service programs and facilities who serve Patten.

#### Penquis County Action Program (PenCAP)

Penquis provides social and other support services to low income individuals and families throughout Penobscot, Piscataquis and Knox counties in order to alleviate and eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty. Some of the services include installing above ground heating oil storage tanks, replacing central heating systems, providing home heating assistance and assisting income eligible households with home heating costs and energy assistance programs. Volunteer drivers are also available for appointments.

In 2016, Penquis provided the following services to Patten residents: Above Ground Storage Tank replacement, Central Heating Improvement, Emergency Crisis Intervention, Friends and Family miles, Good Neighbor Heating Assistance, Low Income Home Energy Assistance, and volunteer driver miles. The estimated value of these services is \$54,200.

#### Eastern Area Agency on Aging

The Eastern Area on Aging provides support to seniors in Patten and surrounding areas by providing transportation and companionship. This agency is vital to helping elderly residents age 65 and older stay in their homes. Services include Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Congregate Meals, EZ Fix, Family Care Giver Services, Furry Friends, Home Delivered Meals, Information and Assistance, Legal Services, Nutrition Improvement Program, Pantry Partners, and Transportation.

#### American Red Cross

The American Red Cross conducts periodic blood drives in the Katahdin region and provides disaster services to those who experience major losses.

#### Bread of Life

The Bread of Life program provides meals to those going through hardship.



Methodist Church Food Pantry (Heaven's Blessings Cupboard).

In 2017, Stetson Memorial United Methodist Church opened. It is open Tuesday through Friday, 9am to noon.

Agape Food Pantry

The Agape Food Pantry is food shelf serving Patten and surrounding communities with the goal to combat hunger for low income residents.

Upper Valley Economic Corporation (UVEC)

Located in Sherman the UVEC operates a food pantry serving the communities of Patten, Sherman, Stacyville, Benedicta, Silver Ridge, Crystal, Hersey and Island Falls. Since its inception in December of 2008 UVEC has assisted 75 households of which there are 34 elderly, 94 adults and 45 children totaling 173 individuals from the Town of Patten served through this program. Patten is not a member of UVEC.

**Patten Community Organizations**

There are a number of community organizations located in Patten that are led by a dedicated group of volunteers. These groups include:

Patten Little League (PLL)

PLL is a part of the Katahdin Valley Little League which includes the town teams for Patten, Island Falls, Oakfield and Sherman. PLL helps to maintain the ball fields located in the Patten Recreation area.

Patten Historical Society

Located on Main Street in Patten the Historical Society works to preserve the history of Patten and surrounding areas. Tours of the Historical Society are available.

Patten Area Women's Club

Active in the Patten Pioneer Days, the Club plays a vital role for annually planning this event. The Women's Club plants flowers along Main Street, helps maintain the Alumni Park, completes fundraisers for scholarship programs, and provides books to the Library.

Patten Senior Citizens

Supporting the Senior Citizens of Patten this group provides help to our senior citizens by way of supporting affordable senior housing in Patten. Seniors helping Seniors is a popular part of the Patten Senior Citizens group.

United Methodist Women

The women of the Methodist Church are an organization who promote fundraising for the Methodist church including holding church suppers, yard sales and food sales among other special events.

### United Methodist Men

The United Methodists Men meet monthly with a speaker series. The sponsor a spaghetti supper during the Patten Pioneer Days to help raise funds.

### Neighbors Helping Neighbors

A town program of neighbors assisting neighbors with basic needs that arise on a temporary basis such as providing transportation, food or child care services.

### Rockabema Snow Rangers

The Rockabema Snow Rangers maintains more than 100 miles of trails through 10 township and two counties. This social club is open to membership from everyone, not only those who snowmobile. They meet on the second Saturday of each month from September through May. Additional information is found in the Recreational and Historic and Cultural Resources sections.

### Patten ATV Club

The Patten ATV club consists of those members who operate ATVs. There are 100 miles of ATV trails in the Patten area maintained by the club. ATV trails run through private properties and property owners provide permission to the club to maintain these trails. Maintained trails include cutting trees and clearing the trails for safe operation of ATVs.

## **Public Facilities and Services Analysis**

There had been times when it seems that Patten has been adrift during the last several years and oftentimes vital municipal functions haven't been completed. The last complete Comprehensive Plan was in 1969, with an update in 1970. This is not the case today and there has been a genuine enthusiasm to "get things done" and to be purposeful in charting our way forward.

Patten's residents have always taken great pride in their community as evidenced by the number of boards, groups, and organizations in town. These range from Little League, ATV and Snowmobile Clubs, playground committee, men's and women's clubs and others. This enthusiasm has carried over to municipal government.

The process of identifying the issues facing the town's facilities/services over the next ten years involved participation from all department heads, except for recreation, which is addressed separately in the recreation section. Department heads have direct knowledge of the day to day workings and challenges of managing their facilities. This allowed many significant issues related to capacity, maintenance, energy use, staffing and training to be identified. They agreed that the burden of cost needs to be distributed fairly among the beneficiaries including residents, developers, tax-exempt organizations, and neighboring communities.

The location and type of development occurring in Patten impacts most departments in some way. However, the development of land use regulation or ordinances must be done in a way that does not deter growth. Determining public facility and service investment priority is always difficult and is even more so in a down economy and with steady population.

Every facility/service requires investment but some may be prioritized based on cost benefit. Investments should help improve efficiency, control long term operation and maintenance costs particularly related to energy use, attract new residential, commercial, or industrial development and create tax or customer base. These considerations help establish priority.

Today, municipal administration appears to function well. As is typical with most communities in northern Maine, the increased property tax burden is symptomatic of a declining population trying to maintain and pay for a level of services to which is has grown accustomed, and is absolutely necessary. Patten must vigilantly look for ways to reduce the local tax burden through increasing efficiency in delivering its public services, as well as broadening the tax base to spread costs out over more taxpayers.

The Town of Patten is projected to continue losing population which will worsen its fiscal situation. However, projections can be reversed if the municipality takes measures that create opportunity for new residents to locate in Patten. These measures could include prepared sites and facilities for new business, increased tourism, or residential development.

The big issues in Patten are: education, roads, sewer treatment, and police protection, and the potential for change where tourism increases as an economic driver. As town officials are discovering there are no easy fixes to issues associated with their infrastructure and remedies will take time. Residents are starting to voice concern over public safety and what is perceived to be increased criminal activity.

While Patten does not have a police department, it is looking at steps to improve police protection within the community. Town officials are working with the Maine State Police and Penobscot County Sheriff's Department to increase patrols. They are also looking at working with East Millinocket and Millinocket to determine if there is a possibility of increased police patrols in Patten.

Town Officials consider education a pass thru expenditure, it is the largest expenditure in the municipal budget. School District #RSU 50 has experienced a general decline in enrollment over the last decade and a per pupil cost increase. With decreased enrollment comes an increase in education funding gaps assuming the cost of education continues to increase. Patten officials and the School Board should proactively look at possible ways to consolidate education services and facilities with neighboring towns. Additionally, Patten residents and officials should encourage legislative representatives to work for a better school funding formula or funding system that places less strain on small rural communities.

Patten's voters will decide whether to withdraw from RSU 50 in the Fall of 2017. A withdrawal committee made up of members from the former SAD#25 has been formed and are completing a withdrawal plan. Town officials should continue to review these efforts as well as provide input into the planning process.

Patten's roads are considered to be in poor to fair condition. It is difficult to provide large scale projects with the small Highway Department but the road committee has begun to look at the

development of a road improvement plan. Initially this was a 7-year plan but the reality of costs and the expense of bringing roads back to good condition extended that plan to 20 years. This plan should be expedited whenever possible. Additionally, town officials should partake in any trainings and other programs offered by the Maine Department of Transportation's Local Roads Program.

Patten's water and sewer system is an economic development asset. Unfortunately, the system is underutilized and costing all taxpayers in the community. Town officials are working with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to develop a feasibility study that looks at increasing the number of users on the systems. There will be some difficult decisions that need to be made but the end result should indicate that more users lower the costs for all. Patten's downtown is well served by water and sewer and as growth occurs, restaurants, laundromats, hotels/motels, and bed and breakfasts need a consistent and safe water and sewer system.

As Patten residents continue to age the local availability of additional elder services will become increasingly important. Patten should consider which senior services can be most efficiently and effectively be delivered to its elder residents in the future. This may be accomplished by working in partnership with service agencies such as the Department of Human Services and the Area Agency on Aging to develop regional strategic opportunities to improve service delivery in Patten through offering cheaper health care through outpatient or mobile screening units.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES**  
**Goals, Policies, and Strategies**

**State Goal**

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate growth and economic development.

**Local Goal**

Maintain and improve Patten’s facilities and services in a manner that is cost effective and efficient and that helps support job creation and population growth.

<b>Municipal Government Policy and Strategies</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Maintain and, when justified, improve department capacity in the areas of communication, equipment, staffing and training.	Continue to budget for annual expenses related to all town owned building maintenance.	Town Officials	On-going
	Continue to update computer systems and software every 3-5 years to improve speed and reliability.	Town Officials	On-going
	Develop the Town’s information database and technology to include the following online services; vehicle registrations, hunting/fishing licensing, electronic funds transfer for property tax, and other fee payments, submission of building permit applications, real estate assessment data and expand over the next 10 years.	Town Clerk and Town Manager	On-going
	Continue to control costs by utilizing access to State/Federal grant programs and surplus sites for some heavy equipment purchases.	All Departments and Town Officials	On-going

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
	Explore options for regional coordination of needed local services such as but not limited to highway department, town office services, police protection, recreation, emergency management, fire and ambulance services, and code enforcement.	Town Officials	On-going
	Continue to participate in existing cooperative purchasing programs.	All Departments and Town Officials	On-going
	Actively recruit new members to community and municipal boards. Work with families and schools to instill a culture of civic pride and understanding of the importance of civic participation.	Town Officials	On-going

**Water and Wastewater Policy and Strategies**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Maintain water and wastewater facilities and staffing to protect the health of users, water quality, control operating and maintenance costs, and support economic and community development.	Seek funding for the creation of a feasibility study that examines the increased usage of the water and sewer system, user fee structure, potential extensions, and capital improvements.	Town Officials	2018
	Implement the findings of the water and sewer system feasibility study	Town Officials	2019
	Increase the number of users on the sewer system.	Town Officials	On-going
	Continue to apply for Small Community Grant funds that replaces faulty septic systems.	Town Officials	On-going

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
	Utilize the Check Up Program for Small Systems (CUPSS) asset management tool to help develop an asset management plan for water and wastewater systems.	Town Officials	2018
	Apply for USDA and CDBG infrastructure funds to provide water/wastewater service to new business and industry as opportunities emerge.	Town Officials	On-going
	Annually review and update, as needed, the Source Protection Plan	Water Department	Annually
	Periodically review user fees with other southern Aroostook or northern Penobscot County municipalities as a basis for rate adjustment and report to the Selectmen	Water and Wastewater Dept.	2018 and on-going
<b>Public Safety Policy and Strategies</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Maintain and, when justified, improve department capacity in the areas of communication, equipment, staffing and training.	Continue to budget for annual expenses related to all town owned building maintenance.	Town Officials	On-going
	Replace fire vehicles and equipment outlined in the Town's capital improvement plan. Continue to raise funds through the use of incremental contributions to reserve accounts and application to Homeland Security and other Federal and State grant programs.	Fire Dept. and Town Officials	On-going

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
	Participate in a regional firefighter training and recruitment program with automatic/mutual aid departments and seek funding under FEMA-Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) and other sources.	Fire Department	On-going
	Work with the Maine State Police, Penobscot County Sheriff's Department, Millinocket, and East Millinocket Police Department to improve police protection in Patten.	Town Officials	2017 and on-going
	Partner with surrounding communities to increase police protection.	Town Officials	2017 and on-going
	Continue to negotiate to reduce the long response time by the Sheriff's office and State Police.	Town Officials	On-going

**Highway Department Policy and Strategy**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Improve the efficiency of operations and control costs of services delivered by the Highway Department	Evaluate Highway Department equipment for refurbishing or replacement to help decide either to upgrade or extend the life of the equipment.	Highway Dept.	2017-18
	Research the design and cost of road improvement projects and work to expedite the 20 Year Capital Plan.	Highway Department	2017 and on-going
	Develop a Plan for road improvement projects. Expedite projects listed in plan when feasible.	Town Officials	2017-2018
	Continue to participate in regional cooperative purchasing programs	Highway Department	2017 and on-going.



<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
	Address future funding needs for new and replacement items through the Capital Improvements Plan. Provide a listing and cost estimated annually to the Town Manager.	Highway Department and Town Manager	2018 and annually
	Implement the road improvement plan developed by the Road Committee	Highway Department, Town Officials	Annually
	Annually budget for road improvement projects	Town Officials, Highway Department	Annually
	Convert part-time Highway Department staff to full-time position.	Town Officials	2018 and on-going
	Investigate grant opportunities that help meet the goals for the road improvement plan.	Highway Department, Town Officials	On-going
	Collaborate with the University of Maine Capstone Project when feasible.	Highway Department	On-going
<b>Health Care Policy and Strategy</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Continue to provide adequate levels of health care that improves the overall well-being of Patten's residents.	Continue participating in plans to provide access to both primary health care and specialized services for residents by working with area providers to assure that the town's needs are articulated.	Town Officials	On-going
	Continue programs such as Agape Food Pantry, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and other programs offered by Penquis County Action Program and Eastern Area Agency on Aging.	Town Officials	On-going

<b>Service Organization Policies and Strategies</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Encourage non-profits and entrepreneurs to provide new community services, when appropriate, as a means of creating jobs and serving local needs.	Publicize the need for new local services through the Town's website and contact with non-profits and entrepreneurs.	Town Clerk Town Manager, and all Depts.	On-going
	Continue to seek grants and provide local funds for non-profits and new service businesses.	Clubs and Town Officials	On-going
	Work with the Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce to promote the need for new services.	Town Officials	On-going
	Seek and provide CDBG and other grant funds for non-profit and new services businesses	Town Officials	On-going as needed
<b>Solid Waste Disposal</b>			
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Provide adequate levels of solid waste disposal for Patten's residents and visitors	Consider the creation of a publicly funded solid waste department	Town Officials	2019