**MEMORANDUM**

 TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council

 FROM: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

 DATE: April 3, 2017

 SUBJECT: Authorization for Culvert Assessment Grant

Introduction

The Town Council is requested to authorize application for a Coastal Zone Management Grant to perform a culvert assessment. The grant application is due April 28, 2017.

Description

The Wells Reserve met with Public Works Director Bob Malley and Town Planner Maureen O'Meara to learn about near-term culvert replacements contemplated by the Town. Depending on the location and condition of the culverts, the Nature Conservancy (partnering with the Wells Reserve) may consider partnership funding for culvert replacements where culverts are negatively impacting habitat. Scouring is becoming evident adjacent to culverts connected to the Spurwink Marsh, which is one area of interest to the Wells Reserve.

During the discussion, staff concluded that a culvert assessment would be a logical next step and that this assessment might compete well for a Coastal Zone Management grant. The grant proposal would include assessment of 20 culverts for a total cost in the range of $17,000. The coastal zone management grant includes a 25% local match requirement, which can be a mix of in-kind and cash match. The Nature Conservancy has indicated a willingness to help with the local match.

Conclusion

Both the 2015 Sea Level Rise Assessment and the 2016 County Hazard Mitigation Plan will strengthen the town's grant application. If the culvert assessment is conducted, it will not only guide future municipal infrastructure investment, it can also be used to attract partnership funding, particularly where culvert replacements are the most expensive, in the Spurwink Marsh. Savings in the marsh can then be applied to aging culverts in other parts of town.