

# BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS

**APRIL 10, 2024**

A meeting of the Machias Board of Selectpeople was called to order at 6:05 PM by Chairman Jacob Patryn. In attendance were Board members Carole Porcher, Sandra Sinford, Ben Edwards, and Michael Hinerman; Town Manager Bill Kitchen; Secretary Cathy Lord; Town Clerk Sandra Clifton; Police Chief Keith Mercier; Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker; Fire Chief Joey Dennison; Stephen Simmons, Amanda Fielder, Dave Saquet, Peter Griffin.

## **1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION**

On a motion by Ben Edwards, seconded by Michael Hinerman, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2024 Board meeting with the following corrections:

**Item #3**, Paragraph #1 should be corrected to read: "Mr. Kitchen advised the Board of a resignation by Mr. Taylor LeBlanc from the Machias Police Department effective March 30, 2024. Mr. Kitchen asked Mr. LeBlanc for the reason for his resignation but Mr. LeBlanc chose not to answer the question. Mr. Kitchen asked Mr. LeBlanc why he was resigning after having agreed to stay for a period of two years when he was hired? Mr. LeBlanc chose not to answer the question. Officer LeBlanc proceeded to leave the meeting and Ms. Sinford asked where he was going. Officer LeBlanc did not reply but left the meeting. Mr. Kitchen noted that Mr. LeBlanc has refused to answer any questions about his resignation."

**Item #5**, Paragraph #2 should read "Mr. Edwards advised that he had researched police officer wages and found that Machias has the best pay scale in Washington County. He noted that it is difficult to compare wages to those of larger cities such as Bangor. Mr. Edwards suggested thinking about increasing the number of steps on the wage scale from six steps to ten steps. Mr. Patryn recommended that in the interim the Town proceed with advertising for full-time police officers. In summary, Mr. Patryn noted that the wage scale adjustment would be revisited when negotiations commence and that the Town would advertise for full-time police officers. Chief Mercier agreed to proceed as suggested."

## **2. AMBULANCE CONTRACT - TOWN OF WHITNEYVILLE**

Mr. Kitchen noted that this is the last outstanding ambulance contract; he informed the Board that he and Mr. Maker had made a special presentation at Whitneyville's town meeting to discuss the operations of the ambulance service. The members of the Board signed the contract.

## **3. UPCOMING GRANT APPLICATIONS - AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker advised the Board that he will apply for a competitive grant in July for the purchase of a Polaris UTV which would allow ambulance personnel to access areas where it is difficult to get an ambulance. Mr. Maker noted that there would be no matching monies expected from the ambulance service.

#### **4. MACHIAS ARTS COUNCIL**

Representatives of the Machias Arts Council provided a presentation on the activities of the non-profit organization outlining activities for the upcoming year.

#### **5. IMK TIF DISTRICT AMENDMENT**

Mr. Kitchen noted that IMK Construction has requested that its TIF agreement be amended. Mr. Kitchen explained how a TIF district operates and he noted that it is a tool to foster economic growth and stimulate future investments. Mr. Kitchen noted that amendments are a common occurrence and that TIFs have to be approved by citizens at town meetings. He added that municipalities use TIFs to increase targeted development and that a TIF is designed not to increase taxes.

#### **6. 7 COURT STREET**

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that he has received a detailed insurance report on storm damage to the town office. Mr. Patryn commented that it was appropriate to wait for the information before moving forward. Mr. Kitchen reflected that the Board will have to figure out how to award the contract for the necessary repairs and he noted that this is still an emergency situation which does not require the Board to utilize a bid process. It was suggested that the Board look at mitigating future potential for flood events when accessing repairs. Mr. Patryn noted that there is a "build back better" question the Board needs to consider. Mr. Kitchen noted that the insurance report is a tool to use in determining how to proceed.

#### **7. 17 STACKPOLE DRIVE**

Mr. Kitchen reported that the physical move to the location of the new town office has been accomplished. He reported that there has been a great deal of carpentry work in designing the new town office with more improvements coming. Ms. Clifton commented that the new design is much more comfortable and town office personnel are able to work more smoothly.

#### **8. CANNABIS ORDINANCE - FINAL REVIEW OF DRAFT**

Mr. Patryn noted that critical feedback of the draft ordinance is important. Mr. Kitchen suggested that a two week period be utilized for feedback. Mr. Edwards added that it is important to encourage store owners to give their recommendations on the draft wording of the ordinance. The Board reviewed the document making necessary changes to the language of the ordinance. Mr. Patryn noted that information will be provided to store owners as necessary.

#### **9. AMBULANCE DRIVER HIRE UPDATE**

Chief Maker advised the Board that the ambulance service has not hired ambulance drivers but he noted that the service does technically hire drivers.

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by Ben Edwards, the Board

VOTED:

To allow the ambulance director to advertise for ambulance driver candidates.

Mr. Edwards commented that advertising will provide a stable of drivers who would be on call. Mr. Maker noted that he would perform background checks on applicants and provide qualified candidates for the Board to consider hiring.

#### **10. AMBULANCE TRAINING GRANT & MATCH**

Ambulance Service Chief Ryan Maker advised the Board of the award of a training grant in the amount of \$142,783.03 for attendance to a paramedics school with a zero matching amount from the Town. He advised the Board that he will form a selection committee to choose candidates for the program.

On a motion by Ben Edwards, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board  
VOTED:

To accept the training grant from the State of Maine Department of Public Safety Maine EMS Stabilization Program in the amount of \$142,783.03, and authorize Mr. Maker to sign the grant agreement, with the understanding that participants will be expected to commit to a specified term of employment.

#### **11. MACHIAS AMBULANCE SERVICE - MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

Chief Maker introduced Dr. Dave Saquet as Medical Director for the Machias Ambulance Service. Dr. Saquet provided a synopsis of what he provides to the service and he expounded on the challenges being met by rural emergency medical services everywhere. Dr. Saquet explained that EMS services are challenging throughout the country. Mr. Maker noted that it is important to have a medical director at a local level to rely on.

#### **12. MACHIAS POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Chief Mercier provided a brief report on the activities of the Machias Police Department. He noted that the department is advertising the vacant full-time officer position.

#### **13. SUNRISE TRAIL REPAIRS**

Mr. Kitchen reported that bid specifications are currently being developed for the repairs to the Sunrise Trail and that the specifications will be publicly advertised as soon as they are finished. He noted that the Army Corps of Engineers is not interfering and is allowing the work to proceed as fast as possible. Mr. Kitchen advised that he expects the specifications to be put out to bid next week. He told the Board that the repairs is a complex job.

Mr. Kitchen pointed out that the ATV jamboree would be scheduled to take place during the last weekend in June. He also indicated that ATV users are utilizing the Scott's Hill Road as an alternate route while the Sunrise Trail is undergoing repairs.

#### **14. SCHOOL BUDGET**

Ms. Clifton informed the Board that they must consider when to schedule their consideration of the school budget now that the annual town meeting has been rescheduled. She noted that the school board will also need a date when they can present the school budget. Mr. Edwards

stressed that the Board will need a copy of the school budget in advance of the meeting. He pointed out that the school budget is very complicated.

The Board discussed appointing a new budget committee member and discussed the current make-up of the committee.

#### **15. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Michael Hinerman, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board

VOTED:

To adjourn into executive session at 7:41 PM in accordance with Title 1 Ch. 13 MRSA 405 Paragraph 6A.

Note: Mr. Maker, Mr. Stephen Simmons, and Dr. David Saquet attended the executive session.

The Board voted to adjourn the executive session at 8:19 PM and returned to open session.

#### **16. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Michael Hinerman, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM.