

Note: Before beginning the meeting, those assembled stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS

DECEMBER 8, 2021

A meeting of the Machias Board of Selectpeople was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Paula Johnson-Rolfe. In attendance were Board members Leslie Haynes, James Jackson, Sandra Sinford, and Carole Porcher; Town Manager Bill Kitchen; Secretary Cathy Lord; Finance Director Meghan Dennison; Police Chief Keith Mercier; Public Works Director Mike Schoppee; Tim Mace, Bruce Smith, Carol Chistianson, Kevin Brody.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by James Jackson, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2021 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by James Jackson, the Board
VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #38 in the amount of \$12,602.80; to approve municipal warrant #40 in the amount of \$16,531.07; to approve municipal warrant #42 in the amount of \$16,117.82; to approve municipal warrant #44 in the amount of \$19,252.94; to approve municipal warrant #46 in the amount of \$25,897.22; and, to approve municipal warrant #47 in the amount of \$14,091.34 .

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by James Jackson, the Board
VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #39 in the amount of \$216,515.00; to approve municipal warrant #41 in the amount of \$170,929.48; to approve municipal warrant #43 in the amount of \$76,219.49; and, to approve municipal warrant #45 in the amount of \$196,363.64 .

On a motion by James Jackson, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board
VOTED:

To approve school warrant #111921 in the amount of \$266,913.21 and to approve school warrant #120321 in the amount of \$283,212.06 .

3. PUBLIC WORKS - DRIVEWAY RECONSTRUCTION (SYLVIA POULIOT)

Mr. Kitchen informed the Board that Ms. Sylvia Pouliot had contacted the Town saying that water was coming off Bruce Street onto the side of Court Street and flooding out her driveway. Mr. Schoppee explained that Ms. Pouliot said that the water flooding onto her property causing damage to her driveway is the responsibility of the Town. Mr. Schoppee advised the Board that he looked at the property to see what was happening and saw that the water creating the problem is the homeowner's responsibility and in this case not the town's responsibility.

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board
VOTED:

That it is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain the driveway at the residence on Court Street.

Mr. Kitchen explained that the Town officials are the first to admit if something is the Town's responsibility but that in this situation the Town did not cause the problem and the Town did not change the driveway. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe said that she agreed with Mr. Kitchen's and Mr. Schoppee's assessment that the problem is not the town's responsibility.

4. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen noted that the police department has responded to an astounding number of calls from 11/1 through 12/8 - 86 calls handled, 32 calls handled by the sheriff's department, and 4 agency assists. He also reported that from 7/1 through 11/1 there were 295 calls with 231 of these calls handled by the sheriff's department.

Chief Mercier reported that the police department has been very busy pulling many hours responding to calls. He advised the Board that four new reserve officers have joined the force making a total of six reserve officers on the roster; he reported that Christy Verburgt is working one day per week at the school department (position is funded by Covid funds through the school). Chief Mercier advised that the offices in the police department are all set up and work has commenced on the department's training room. He added that signage will be placed on the public entrance to the police department and he is currently researching costs for this signage. Chief Mercier said that he is actively looking at filling the two full-time patrol officer positions.

Mr. Kitchen discussed hourly compensation tied to the employee's union contract needed to attract candidates to the full-time positions. He asked the Board to consider \$5000. sign-on bonuses. Mr. Kitchen explained that he, Ms. Dennison (Finance Director), and Chief Mercier had discussed financial options open to the Board to attract qualified officers. Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that \$191,000. remains in the police department budget (only 15% of budget has been spent due to no employee wages/benefits being paid out and no other police funds having been expended). Chief Mercier said that the addition of the two full-time officers would fully staff the police department. The Chief outlined that there would be a weekly additional amount in these two officers' checks and he suggested that the \$5000. not be paid out in a lump sum. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe said that her biggest concern is when the \$5000. runs out there would need to be some kind of contract negotiation to compensate the officers. Mr. Kitchen said that next year's police budget would need to reflect additional hourly compensation. Mrs. Dennison pointed out that the union should start negotiations. Chief Mercier commented that the additional compensation is more of a tool to attract candidates to the positions as a temporary fix with the long-range strategy of creating more competitive salary compensation. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe said that she is fearful that come July 2022 there will be no new union contract which would result in there being a reduction in pay for the officers. Ms. Dennison commented that it could be set up that hourly pay would be retroactive once the new contract is agreed to. Mr. Mace informed the Board that the police department is in the process of being represented by the Fraternal Order of Police and no longer represented by the teamster's.

On a motion by James Jackson, seconded by Carole Pooler, the Board
VOTED:

To extend the offer of full-time employment to two candidates who have applied for the full-time police department positions with the hiring agreement of the offer of a one-time sign-on bonus of \$425. per bi-weekly payroll effective to June 30, 2022 the date of the expiration of the current collective bargaining agreement at which point individuals will be paid as agreed to as outlined in the newly negotiated contract; if said contract is still in negotiation this bonus will continue to be paid as previously done not to exceed \$5000. per individual with written approval from the union.

Ms. Johnson-Rolfe commented that she is concerned that the union will object. Ms. Dennison suggested checking with the union steward to discuss the town's intentions to attract qualified officers.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESERVE POLICE OFFICER COMPENSATION

Chief Mercier expressed concern that the reserve police officer's compensation should be increased. He noted that there is a lot of dedication from the reserve police officers and he told the Board that he would like to see the reserve officers paid \$19.00 - \$20.00 per hour. Mrs. Dennison informed the Board that the current pay scale is \$18.75/hour (union) and \$16.86/hour (non-union). The Board discussed the affordability of increasing the reserve officer's pay scale. Ms. Pooler commented that the Board should look at future affordability; she pointed out that there are funds in the current year budget but there could be some concern for the next year. Mrs. Johnson-Rolfe agreed that there are serious financial decisions to take into consideration as well as concerns for the pay scale of all part-time employees. Mr. Kitchen noted that some police department wages are grossly out of line. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe suggested the need to look at salary data since the Board's decisions will be of a long-term nature; she noted that the Board needs to see more information before making any more decisions about salaries. Ms. Dennison added that salaries will be discussed during the budget process with the help of the budget committee. She pointed out that the County has a ten percent across-the-board increase in their budget. Ms. Pooler said that she would like to see salary and wage comparisons before the Board makes any more decisions about salaries.

6. POLICE DEPARTMENT - PURCHASE OF TASERS AND GENERATOR

Chief Mercier advised the Board that he wants to purchase six tasers for the police department; he explained that tasers are one of the steps utilized in the use of force continuum. Chief Mercier explained that the cost would be between \$10,000. - \$11,000. and are the same type used by the sheriff's department. He noted that the total cost of the six tasers and cartridges is \$13,799.; he added that there is only one company that makes the tasers and will be purchased directly from the company. Chief Mercier added that use of the equipment will be provided by an instructor at the sheriff's department.

On a motion by James Jackson, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board
VOTED:

To authorize the purchase of six tasers with cartridges in the amount of \$13,799. for the police department.

Mr. Kitchen noted that the tele-business center building needs a generator and is already wired for the equipment. The Board discussed the need for a generator. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe suggested proceeding with going out to bid for a generator the building. Mr. Kitchen gave a report on the status of tenants in the building.

Mr. Kitchen noted that automated external defibrillators (AED) are needed for all town facilities and should be purchased. Chief Mercier commented that this piece of equipment is an absolute need.

7. CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER HIRING

On a motion by Leslie Haynes, seconded by James Jackson, the Board
VOTED:

To appoint Kevin Brody as Code Enforcement Officer effective immediately.

Mr. Kitchen reviewed Mr. Brody's credentials. Ms. Dennison noted that the CEO has an annual stipend of \$6000. Mr. Brody advised the Board that he is also serves as CEO for Addison, East Machias, and Cutler. Mr. Brody advised the Board that he will discuss with that these towns the possibility of cooperating with Machias in providing benefits for the position.

8. TRANSFER STATION/PUBLIC WORKS SPLIT POSITION HIRE

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that Patrick Thomas Spencer has been hired to fill the position shared between the transfer station and the public works department and that he will start 12/17/21.

9. OSHA VACCINE MANDATE UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen reported that the OSHA vaccine mandate remains in the courts; he noted that the Town is doing what needs to be done while monitoring the legal challenge to the mandate.

10. BAY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen reported on the Christmas parade and the purchase of toys for local children. Mr. Kitchen told the Board that the Chamber will have an ice rink installed at the Southside Field before Christmas. He advised that the Chamber is developing plans for an ATV rally and a town softball game.

11. BERRY AVENUE PROPERTY UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen reported that the deed for the Berry Avenue property given to the Town has been filed and that the Town owns the property.

12. MOTIONS ON CORPORATE RESOLUTION/AUTHORIZED BANK SIGNERS

Ms. Dennison asked the Board to update the corporate resolution and authorize bank signers for the Town's financial accounts.

On a motion by James Jackson, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board
VOTED:

To authorize the Chairman of the Board of Select-people (Paula Johnson-Rolfe), the Town Manager (William Kitchen), and the Finance Director (Meghan Dennison) to sign documents on behalf of the Town of Machias (the corporation); and,

- (1) That Bangor Savings Bank, Machias Savings Bank, and Bar Harbor Bank & Trust are designated as depositories for the funds of this corporation
- (2) This resolution shall continue to have effect until express written notice of its rescission or modification has been received and recorded by these financial institutions
- (3) All transactions, if any, with respect to any deposits, withdrawals, rediscounts, and borrowings by or on behalf of this corporation with these financial institutions prior to the adoption of this resolution are hereby ratified, approved, and confirmed
- (4) Any of the persons named (Chairman of the Board of Selectmen - Paula Johnson-Rolfe, the Town Manager - William Kitchen, and the Finance Director - Meghan Dennison) so long as they act in a representative capacity as agents of this corporation, are authorized to make any and all other contracts, agreements, stipulations, and orders which they may deem advisable for the effective exercise of the powers indicated from time to time with these financial institutions, concerning funds deposited in these financial institutions, moneys borrowed from these financial institutions, or other business transacted by and between this corporation and these financial institutions subject to any restrictions stated
- (5) Any and all prior resolutions by the Board of Selectmen of this corporation and certified to these financial institutions as governing the operation of this corporation's account(s), are in full force and effect, unless supplemented or modified by this authorization

(6) This corporation agrees to the terms and conditions of any account agreement, properly opened by any authorized representative(s) of this corporation, and authorizes the financial institutions named, at any time, to change this corporation for all checks, drafts, or other order for the payment of money, that are drawn on these financial institutions, regardless of by whom or what means the facsimile signature(s) may have been affixed so long as they resemble the facsimile signature specimens that this corporation files with these financial institutions from time to time and contain the required number of signatures for this purpose

Any person listed here: Chairman of the Board of Selectmen (Paula Johnson-Rolfe), the Town Manager (William Kitchen), and the Finance Director (Meghan Dennison) is authorized to:

- (1) Exercise all the powers listed in #2 through #6
- (2) Open all deposit or checking account(s) in the name of the corporation
- (3) Endorse checks and orders for the payment of money and withdraws funds in deposit with these financial institutions,
- (4) Borrow money on behalf and in the name of this corporation, sign, exercise, and deliver promissory notes or other evidence of indebtedness.
- (5) Endorse, assign, transfer, mortgage, or pledge bills receivable, warehouse receipts, bills of lading, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other property now owned or acquired by this corporation as security for sums borrowed, and to discount the same, unconditionally guarantee of all bills received, negotiated, or discounted, and to waive demand, presentation, protest, notice of protest, and notice of non-payment.
- (6) Enter into written lease for the purpose of renting and maintaining a safe deposit box in these financial institutions.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Mr. Bruce Smith asked about progress with broadcasting meetings by Zoom. Mr. Kitchen reported that he is getting the equipment needed to offer meetings on the Zoom platform.

Mr. Smith said that he wanted to make everyone aware that young people are huffing substances.

B. Mr. Kitchen reported that the Public Works Department put up the Christmas decorations in town.

Mr. Kitchen reported that Bad Little Falls Brewery have hired seven employees.

Mr. Kitchen and the Board discussed the Christmas decorating contest.

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that CPR training was recently conducted for the fire department.

Mr. Kitchen told the Board that the Town is fully staffed.

C. The members of the Board discussed their meeting schedule. It was agreed to cancel the 12/22 meeting and that the next meeting will be on 1/12/22.

D. Mr. Kitchen informed the Board that the police department will hold an open house on 1/13/22.

On a motion by Leslie Haynes, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 PM.