

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

BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS

DECEMBER 14, 2022

A meeting of the Machias Board of Select-people was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chairman Paula Johnson-Rolfe. In attendance were Board members Sandra Sinford, Carole Porcher, and Jake Patryn; Town Manager Bill Kitchen; Secretary Cathy Lord; Police Chief Keith Mercier; Superintendent of Schools Scott Porter; Nicole Ball, Jane Blackwood, Nicole Case, Bob Berta.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2022 Board meeting, to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2022 Board meeting, and to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2022 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board
VOTED:

To approve municipal payroll warrant #34 in the amount of \$17,355.14; to approve municipal payroll warrant #36 in the amount of \$18,944.72; to approve municipal payroll warrant #38 in the amount of \$461.75; to approve municipal payroll warrant #39 in the amount of \$13,047.61; to approve municipal payroll warrant #41 in the amount of \$21,352.32; to approve municipal payroll warrant #43 in the amount of \$17,845.36; to approve municipal payroll warrant #45 in the amount of \$52,947.88; to approve municipal payroll warrant #47 in the amount of \$13,543.38; and, to approve municipal payroll warrant #48 in the amount of \$2,585.8 .

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board
VOTED:

To approve municipal accounts payable warrant #35 in the amount of \$56,082.57; to approve accounts payable warrant #37 in the amount of \$407,335.88; to approve accounts payable warrant #40 in the amount of \$53,895.42; to approve accounts payable warrant #42 in the amount of \$76,464.91; to approve accounts payable warrant #44 in the amount of \$1,446,615.86; to approve accounts payable warrant #46 in the amount of \$161,127.30; and, to approve accounts payable warrant #40 in the amount of \$260,098.99 .

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board
VOTED:

To approve school warrant #110422 in the amount of \$339,339.54; to approve school warrant #111822 in the amount of \$284,706.96; and, to approve school warrant #120222 in the amount of \$400,589.57.

3. DUBLIN STREET PROPERTY

Ms. Nicole Ball, real estate agent for Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate, noted that she had previously discussed an offer to sell a piece of property located on Dublin Street by the Smith family to the Town at another Board meeting (11/9/22). Ms. Ball told the Board that she would answer any questions the Board had about the property and the offer. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe pointed out that the owners of the property owe back taxes in the amount of \$37,000. She added that the Town cannot afford to purchase the piece of property for this amount. Ms. Sinford commented that this would be an expensive purchase and that the Board needs to take into account the Town's finances. Ms. Ball noted that the Board could make a counter-proposal. Mr. Patryn pointed out that the Board had not discussed a counter-proposal.

Ms. Johnson-Rolfe suggested that the Board could discuss a counter offer. She noted that the Smith family would still need to pay the back taxes on the property. Mr. Patryn commented that the Board could examine what funding is available and discuss funding with the Town's finance director.

4. PRESENTATION ON ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM BY JANE BLACKWELL

Ms. Jane Blackwell, Executive Director of Washington County Adult & Community Education, provided information on adult education services. She reviewed services offered for those interested in obtaining a high school equivalency, a high school diploma, college transition, digital literacy, English as a Second Language, workforce training, and career exploration. Ms. Blackwell explained the funding of the program and she advised the Board that the program has difficulty getting towns to pay their funds in a timely manner. Ms. Blackwell explained the cash flow problem with the program. Mr. Porter noted that the key issue is cash flow and he explained the State's unwillingness to up-front funding for the program. Ms. Porcher commented that it is difficult at the current time to pull money from another area without being previously budgeted in the municipal budget. Mr. Porter explained that if Machias up-fronts funding of the program there would be a financial liability. Mr. Kitchen noted that the Town is constantly up-fronting money and being reimbursed funds and that funds are constantly flowing through the Town. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe commented that the Board is very concerned but is not sure what they can do. Mr. Patryn noted that the program is definitely important. Ms. Blackwood advised the Board that she has a grant for a consultant to develop a long-range strategic plan for the program. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe thanked Ms. Blackwell for her presentation.

5. MACHIAS MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL PURCHASE OF FURNACE FOR GYM

Ms. Nicole Case, Principal of Machias Memorial High School, advised the Board that she had a heating expert evaluate the school's heating systems and it was recommended that the system in the school gym be replaced. Mr. Porter noted that the boiler in the gym is thirty-six years old and that a propane-based system is being sought to replace the current system. Mr. Porter estimated the new system would cost \$65,000. and that funding for the system would be allocated from the school's surplus. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe noted the urgency of the situation and that this needs to be done as soon as possible. The Board reviewed the article to authorize the school committee to establish a capital reserve fund for maintenance of the plant and minor remodeling of the school facilities, to transfer \$65,000. from the school's reserve fund balance to the capital reserve fund, and to expend up to \$65,000. from the reserve fund to pay costs of a boiler replacement at the high school.

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board
VOTED:

To proceed with scheduling a public hearing on 12/28/22 to discuss purchasing a replacement heating system for the high school gym.

6. COUNTY BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen gave the Board a data sheet outlining county taxes this year for their review.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. The members of the Board signed two sewer discharges approved at their 11/9/22 meeting for 131 Court Street and the Machias Savings Bank operations building on Main Street.

B. Ms. Porcher advised the Board that she has written letters to several veterinary colleges advising of the need for a veterinarian in the Machias area

8. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Chief Mercier updated the Board on officer trainings, the upcoming Christmas parade, and the status of state-mandated training.

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM.