

**TOWN OF MACHIAS PUBLIC HEARING
MAINE CDBG/NEXT STEP APPLICATION**

AUGUST 14, 2024

A public hearing to discuss an application to the Maine Community Development Block Grant Program to assist Next Step Domestic Violence was called to order at 6:05 PM by Chairman Jacob Patryn. In attendance were Board members Ben Edwards, Michael Hinerman, and Carole Porcher; interim Board Secretary Sarah Craighead Dedmon, Town Manager Bill Kitchen, Police Chief Mercier, Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker, and Assistant Ambulance Chief Stephen Simmons.

Chairman Patryn explained that the Department of Justice has provided \$500,000 in funding to bring domestic violence judicial services to Machias, enabling local law enforcement and victims to attend necessary meetings close to home. To assist Next Step employees traveling from Ellsworth to Machias for these meetings, a proposed CDBG application would allow the nonprofit Next Step Domestic Violence Project to provide reimbursement for their mileage, estimated to cost \$30,000 over the next three years.

To apply for the grant, Next Step requires a fiscal agent, which in this case would be the Town of Machias.

Next Step works closely with the Machias Police Department and Washington County Sheriff's Office. Chief Mercier said he supports the grant application.

The public hearing adjourned at 6:11 PM.

TOWN OF MACHIAS SELECT BOARD MINUTES

AUGUST 14, 2024

Chairman Jacob Patryn called a meeting of the Machias Select Board to order at 6:11 PM. In attendance were Board members Ben Edwards, Michael Hinerman, and Carole Porcher; interim Board Secretary Sarah Craighead Dedmon, Town Manager Bill Kitchen, Police Chief Mercier, Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker, and Assistant Ambulance Chief Stephen Simmons.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Ben Edwards and seconded by Michael Hinerman the Board voted to adopt the minutes of the July 24 meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Carole Porcher and seconded by Michael Hinerman the Board
VOTED:

To approve payroll warrant #7 in the amount of \$35,311.38; payroll warrant #9 in the amount of \$19,289.48, and payroll warrant #11 in the amount of \$24,480.98.

On a motion by Carole Porcher and seconded by Michael Hinerman the Board
VOTED:

To approve accounts payable warrant #8 in the amount of \$99,500.31; to approve payroll warrant #10 in the amount of \$36,560.07, and to approve payroll warrant #12 in the amount of \$128,699.22.

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

To approve school warrant #072624 in the amount of \$235,133.85, and school warrant #080924, in the amount of \$392,338.29.

3. SEWER RATE INCREASE

Mr. Kitchen updated the Board that there will be a rate increase for the Town's wastewater treatment and sewer customers. The Town considered including letters notifying of the increase with the October bills, but because that would push the increase out until January, the Town has determined to send a dedicated letter explaining the increase.

Mr. Kitchen said the last rate increase was seven years ago, and that the new rates are still substantially lower than the rates charged by other towns. He highlighted that sewage overflow events have been reduced by 90% since 2017, that the pump station improvement project is almost complete, and that the town will soon be expanding the sewer off of Dublin Street.

The debt service rate will remain at \$18.50, and the operations and maintenance charges will increase by \$15 from \$77 to \$92 quarterly, which changes the total base rate bill from \$95.50 to \$110.50

Mr. Kitchen said most customers can expect an annual overall increase of \$60.

4. INTERIM TOWN SECRETARY COMPENSATION

Mr. Kitchen asked the Board to approve paying Sarah Craighead Dedmon at the rate of the current town secretary, Cathy Lord, for the first two months of her employment (April 24 to June 24) and then at a rate of \$800 per month moving forward.

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

To pay interim town secretary Sarah Craighead Dedmon a rate of \$997 for the first two months of employment, and \$800 per month going forward.

5. MACHIAS POLICE DEPARTMENT CRUISER PURCHASE

Mr. Kitchen explained that, in the last fiscal year ending in June, the Board voted to spend \$47,025 in funds reimbursed to the Town by the Washington County Sheriff's Office, following its hiring of former Machias Police Officer Taylor LeBlanc. The Select Board authorized the use of the funds to purchase a new police cruiser, but because they were not spent by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, they were placed back into the general fund.

Because the police department would like to purchase the new cruiser as soon as possible, Mr. Kitchen said the Town should hold a Special Town Meeting to approve carrying forward the \$47,025 to expend for a police vehicle replacement. The meeting will be held in advance of the next Select Board meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 28.

6. CDBG - NEXT STEP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On a motion by Mike Hinerman and seconded by Carole Porcher the Board
VOTED:

To approve the Community Block Development Grant for the Next Step Domestic Violence Project.

7. MACHIAS POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Chief Mercier said that the police department was prepared for the upcoming Machias Wild Blueberry Festival, and that officer James Frauhenhoffer has completed his waiver and training process and is working alone.

Reserve Officer Amy Wells was hired in March and is in the Coast Guard. She graduated with her provisional certificate in early August and started to work with the police department on Aug. 13.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Kitchen said that this year's Town Report will be dedicated to former selectmen Les Haynes and Ed Pellon, two men who served the town in various roles over many decades of their lives. Both died in 2024.

Mr. Maker said that the Ambulance Service has an opportunity to hire another paramedic, Mark Elliot, who is currently working as a traveling nurse in the Down East Community Hospital Emergency Department. He approached the Ambulance Service and asked if he could be of assistance.

Mr. Maker said that the hiring of Mr. Elliot could provide relief for Mr. Maker, who is currently the only paramedic and is often required to come in on his days off. Hiring Mr. Elliot could also enable the Service to take more transfer calls.

Mr. Kitchen said the use of traveling health care personnel might be one path toward increasing the staffing of the Ambulance Service.

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

To approve the hiring of Mark Elliot to the Machias Ambulance Service.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

To adjourn into executive session at 6:47 PM as allowed under MRSA Title 1 Ch. 13, SS405 Paragraph 6A.

The Board voted to adjourn the executive session at 7 PM and return to open session.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ben Edwards and seconded by Michael Hinerman, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:04 PM.