

TOWN OF MACHIAS
SELECT BOARD MINUTES

JANUARY 8, 2025

Chairman Jake Patryn called a meeting of the Machias Select Board to order at 6 PM. Also in attendance were Board members Ben Edwards, Carole Porcher, Michael Hinerman, and Sandra Sinford; Officer Tim Mace, Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker, Deputy Ambulance Chief Stephen Simmons, Paul Sylvain, Bob Berta, Jim Lenke, Dr. Tora Johnson, and Board Secretary Sarah Craighead Dedmon.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Michael Hinerman and seconded by Ben Edwards, the Board
VOTED:

To adopt the minutes from the December 11, 2024 meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

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

To approve payroll warrant #50 in the amount of \$30,277.11; #52 in the amount of \$22,678.04; #54 in the amount of \$43,727.02, and #56 in the amount of \$21,398.16.

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

To approve accounts payable warrant #51 in the amount of \$676,321.20; #53 in the amount of \$251,714.23; #55 in the amount of \$62,294.53, and #57 in the amount of \$86,507.44.

On a motion by Michael Hinerman and seconded by Ben Edwards, the Board
VOTED:

To approve school warrant #121324 in the amount of \$178,472.91 and #122724 in the amount of \$606,641.77.

3. TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST - 146 KENNEBEC

The Board discussed a request to abate \$457.24 in taxes on a trailer standing on land owned by Rose and Danny Bowker at 146 Kennebec Road. The trailer has been signed over to the Bowkers, who intend to remove it from the property due to its decrepit nature, and they have requested the former owners' taxes be abated.

The Board requested that the trailer first be removed before they abate the taxes.

4. RE-APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM OPERATIONS MANAGER

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

VOTED:

To renew Sarah Craighead Dedmon's 45-day contract again beginning on Jan. 21, 2025.

5. BID PROPOSALS - 7 COURT STREET

Sarah Craighead Dedmon updated the Board that she has been consulting with Public Works Director Mike Schoppee and James Jutras of Sunrise County Economic Council to put together a bid proposal for repairs on 7 Court Street, which was damaged in the floods one year ago. She hopes to have the bids ready to go out near to the next Board meeting.

6. MUNICIPAL BUDGET TIMELINE

Sarah Craighead Dedmon told the Board she has begun to schedule meetings with Town department heads in preparation for the upcoming municipal budget season. The Board discussed the pros and cons of moving the Town meeting to September, as was done in 2023 and 2024, versus returning it to June as has been customary.

Mr. Edwards and Ms. Porcher said that they appreciated the opportunity to see the Town's final spending numbers before finalizing the budget, but the Board acknowledged that by moving the meeting to September there were some unintended consequences for Town Office personnel.

Mr. Edwards said he would also like to see the Town have a fully staffed budget committee to assist with the process. He asked the Town Office to prepare as though for a June meeting, and the Board will decide when to hold the Town meeting at a later date.

7. AMBULANCE CONTRACT RATE INCREASE

Chief Ryan Maker told the Board he would like to finalize the per-capita rate for the service's 2026 rate increase this month, in order to notify member towns. Mr. Edwards said he would like to see a rough projected budget for the service, and how the possible rates of \$75 and \$80 per capita compare to comparable services.

Chief Maker said he would gather that information and revisit the question at the next Board meeting.

8. VACANT FULL-TIME AMBULANCE POSITION

Chief Ryan Maker updated the Board that EMT Alana Poirier has resigned from her full-time position but will continue to serve in a per diem position.

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

VOTED:

To accept the resignation of EMT Alana Poirier from a full-time position with the Machias Ambulance Service to a per diem position.

Chief Maker asked the Board to appoint EMT Sarah Morad to the full-time ambulance position, and noted that she has experience with a different ambulance service, is professional and well-liked by her peers on the Machias Ambulance Service.

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

VOTED:

To appoint Sarah Morad to a full-time EMT position for the Machias Ambulance Service effective Jan. 19, 2025.

9. CEO APPOINTMENT

Following the recent resignation of Code Enforcement Officer Kevin Brodie, former Machias CEO Betsy Fitzgerald stepped in to serve as interim CEO, and agreed to be appointed to the position of CEO and Licensed Plumbing Inspector until a permanent CEO and LPI could be hired.

On a motion by Ben Edwards and seconded by Sandra Sinford the Board

VOTED:

To appoint Betsy Fitzgerald as the Machias Code Enforcement Officer and Machias Licensed Plumbing Inspector.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Machias Memorial High School Teacher Jim Lenke asked the Board to consider the placement of a tidal water measurement pole for use by his classes who will be studying changes in the area of the confluence of the Machias and Middle Rivers over the next three years.

The Board was enthusiastic about the project, and said they would further consider ways to attach the measurement pole safely near the Machias Dike or in that vicinity.

Dr. Tora Johnson updated the Board that the first meeting of the Upper Machias Bay Master Plan Leadership Committee was scheduled for Monday, Jan. 13, 2025

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Ben Edwards and seconded by Mike Hinerman, the Board

VOTED:

To enter executive session in accordance with Title 1 Chapter 13 MRSA §405 Paragraph 6A at 7:04 PM.

On a motion by Mike Hinerman and seconded by Ben Edwards, the Board

VOTED:

To exit executive session at 7:38 PM.

12. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ben Edwards and seconded by Mike Hinerman, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:38 PM.