

TOWN OF MACHIAS
SELECT BOARD MINUTES

JANUARY 22, 2025

Chairman Jake Patryn called a meeting of the Machias Select Board to order at 6:02 PM. Also in attendance were Board members Ben Edwards, Carole Porcher, Michael Hinerman, and Sandra Sinford; Police Chief Keither Mercier, Officer Tim Mace, Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker, Deputy Ambulance Chief Stephen Simmons, Bob Berta, Paul Sylvain, and Board Secretary Sarah Craighead Dedmon.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

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

To adopt the minutes of Jan. 8, 2025, with no modifications.

2. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

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

To appoint Julie Barker and Josh Spencer to the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

3. WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S LETTER

Chier Mercier told the Board that the Washington County Sheriff's Office has notified towns with municipal police departments that beginning in February it will be scaling back coverage to only the most urgent calls that are matters of public safety or felony-level crimes in progress.

Chief Mercier told the Board that Machias will be largely unaffected by this change because the Police Department currently staffs between 5 a.m. and midnight seven days a week.

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Patryn commended the Police Department for its preparedness.

4. SURVEY BID OPENING

Mr. Patryn opened a bid from Haley Ward in response to a bid request for surveying the Grove Street Recreation Area.

Haley Ward proposed an initial rate of \$12,500, with subject and abutter research available for \$1500 each, and a vernal pool survey and protected natural resource survey available for additional costs.

The Board determined to push the discussion to the next meeting in order to learn more from Haley Ward and surveyor Andrew Mulholland.

5. SEWER ABATEMENT - 138 COURT STREET

The daughter of a local homeowner requested an abatement of his sewer bill after a faulty toilet ran unnoticed as he was being treated in a Bangor healthcare facility.

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

To permit the clerk to abate the sewer bill to the historical average of the past year.

6. BUDGET COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Board discussed two candidates for the Machias Budget Committee. Joshua Rolfe completed a three-year term last year and indicated a willingness to serve again. Mr. Rolfe serves as the director of the Regional Communications Center and has previously served as the Machias Select Board Chairman.

Mark Contard has previously served on the Machias Budget Committee as well as the Board of the Machias Chamber of Commerce, as a former local business owner.

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

To appoint Joshua Rolfe and Mark Contard to the Machias Budget Committee.

7. HARBOR MASTER

Bill Kitchen was the former harbor master of Machias and Mr. Patryn explained that normally in the past there was not much activity for the Harbor Master due to the Town's lack of a working harbor. However, there is increasing interest in water activity in Machias waters.

Mr. Edwards nominated Mr. Patryn as Machias Harbor Master citing his experience in aquaculture, work with other area harbor masters, knowledge of the Maine Department of Marine Resources, and work drafting the Machias Shellfish Ordinance.

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

To appoint Jake Patryn as the Machias Harbor Master.

Mr. Patryn recused himself from the vote.

8. AMBULANCE NEW HIRE - PARAMEDIC

Chief Maker updated the Board that he has found a qualified paramedic to fill the vacant full-time position. Bradley Morris has 20 years EMS experience including 10 years as a paramedic, and based on interviews Chief Maker and Deputy Chief Simmons feel he would make a great addition to the team.

Chief Maker requested a hiring rate of \$27 per hour and the advertised \$10,000 signing bonus to be paid out in two installments: 50 percent after 30 days, and 50 percent at the completion of the six-month probationary period.

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

To approve filling the position of a full-time paramedic with Mr. Bradley Morris.

9. AMBULANCE CONTRACT UPDATES

Chief Maker shared that after research into the per capita rates of surrounding towns his recommendation is to raise the rates of the MAS to \$80 per capita beginning in 2026. The current rate is \$50 per capita.

At the new rate, the service's total subsidy from area towns, including Machias, will be \$580,000, up from \$362,500.

The Board was provided with a letter of intent to raise rates the Mr. Maker has communicated with all of the service towns. Mr. Patryn commended Chief Maker and the service for proactively communicating the rate increase so that towns may plan their budgets accordingly.

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

To approve the Machias Ambulance Service per capita rate increase from \$50 to \$80 for the 2026 ambulance budget year.

10. PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT - 146 KENNEBEC ROAD

At the meeting held on Jan. 8, 2025, the Board agreed to abate taxes on a decrepit trailer located on the land of Danny and Rose Bowker, once the trailer was removed. The taxes were accrued by previous tenants who had since vacated the property and signed the trailer over to Mr. and Mrs. Bowker.

The trailer has been fully removed.

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

To abate \$391.77 in property taxes on 146 Kennebec Road.

11. POLICE DEPARTMENT UNION UPDATE

Sarah Craighead Dedmon updated the Board that an initial meeting with the Machias Police Department and its Union representative is set for Tuesday, Feb. 11, at 9 AM. Board member Michael Hinerman has volunteered to represent the Board, and Board member Sandra Sinford will also attend schedule permitting.

Sarah Craighead Dedmon and Finance Director Meghan Dennison will attend from the Town Office.

12. SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Sarah Craighead Dedmon updated the Board that it's time to consider organizing Bill Kitchen's summer concert series at Bad Little Falls Park.

The Board discussed possible solutions to protecting the bands from drizzle and rain during the concert series. Ms. Sinford said Bill hesitated to put up a permanent structure over the current bandstand due to the possibility of blocking the view of the Falls.

Ms. Dedmon shared a renaming suggestion from Hailey Cates-Wright, to make it the Kitchen Concert Series. The Board agreed to rename the series to honor Bill Kitchen.

Ms. Dedmon said she would like to form a committee to help coordinate the series and consider options.

13. 7 COURT STREET UPDATE

Sarah Craighead Dedmon told the Board she is in the process of finalizing the bid request and bid specifications for repairs to the Town Office located at 7 Court Street.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

At 6:55 PM to enter into executive session in accordance with Title 1 Chapter 13 MRSA §405
Paragraph 6A.

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

To exit executive session with no decisions at 7:37 PM.

15. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Sandra Sinford and seconded by Michael Hinerman the Board
VOTED:

To adjourn at 7:38 PM.