

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

## **BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS**

**JANUARY 12, 2022**

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 (via Zoom), Sandra Sinford, and Carole Porcher; Town Manager Bill Kitchen; Secretary Cathy Lord; Finance Director Meghan Dennison; Police Chief Keith Mercier; Josh Rolfe (via Zoom), Sarah Craighead Dedmond (via Zoom).

### **1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION**

On a motion by Leslie Haynes seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2021 Board meeting.

Vote On Motion: 4 members voted to approve; Mr. Jackson abstained from the vote

Ms. Johnson-Rolfe explained that Mr. Jackson is participating via Zoom for tonight's meeting since he is out of state at the current time.

### **2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION**

On a motion by Leslie Haynes, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board VOTED:

To approve municipal warrant #49 in the amount of \$16,853.02; to approve municipal warrant #51 in the amount of \$12,806.68; to approve municipal warrant #53 in the amount of \$25,863.28; to approve municipal warrant #54 in the amount of \$5,557.55; and, to approve municipal warrant #56 in the amount of \$13,159.02 .

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

To approve municipal warrant #48 in the amount of \$420,988.01; to approve municipal warrant #50 in the amount of \$1,660,603.04; to approve municipal warrant #52 in the amount of \$99,355.50; to approve municipal warrant #55 in the amount of \$508,659.29; and, to approve municipal warrant #57 in the amount of \$55,101.69 .

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

To approve school warrant #121721 in the amount of \$210,281.15 and to approve school warrant #123021 in the amount of \$284,772.93 .

### **3. APPOINTMENT OF PLUMBING INSPECTOR**

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by Leslie Haynes, the Board VOTED:

To appoint Kevin Brodie as Plumbing Inspector for the Town of Machias.

### **4. OSHA VACCINE MANDATE UPDATE**

Mr. Kitchen noted that the United States Supreme Court recently heard arguments on the legality of the federal government's vaccine mandate and that everyone is awaiting a decision from the judicial body. Ms. Dennison noted that she had sent the members of the Board an update on the vaccine mandate received from the Maine Municipal Association. She advised the Board that there will be a meeting of several state agencies on 1/18/22 at 9:00 AM to discuss the

mandate. Ms. Dennison said that she had reached out to neighboring communities such as Calais to gain information on what they are doing; she informed the Board that many other municipalities are holding off on a policy pending the judicial decision.

Ms. Dennison reviewed vaccination data for Machias employees. Ms. Dennison advised the Board that Machias had a total of 234 employees in 2020 (school and municipal). As for municipal employees, Ms. Dennison advised that 74% of employees are vaccinated (42 out of 57 municipal employees). Mr. Kitchen pointed out that this number includes firefighters.

The Board discussed providing Covid-19 testing to employees. Ms. Porcher said that she believes that testing is important to provide to employees. She added that there are also many questions regarding testing procedures. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe commented that there are many things that need to be included in a testing policy. She pointed out that insurance will pay for the cost of up to eight tests per month per individual. Ms. Dennison pointed out that there are many questions including who needs to be tested - part-time employees, people on boards and committees, and anyone who works for the Town. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe commented that this is a tough, tough situation for everyone. She pointed out that there is a \$14,000 fine for violating the mandate. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe pointed out that the Town will do whatever is needed to comply.

Ms. Dennison pointed out that everyone is awaiting the Supreme Court ruling. Mr. Kitchen explained that Machias is making an effort to comply with the spirit of the standard. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe, Ms. Sinford, and Mr. Haynes all agreed that the entire Covid problem is a very difficult situation to deal with. Ms. Porcher said that she does not believe in mandating the vaccine; she added that the Town should offer testing. Mr. Jackson commented that alternatives need to be offered to people.

#### **5. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL - HELEN'S RESTAURANT**

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

To approve a liquor license renewal for Helen's Restaurant.

#### **6. SEWER ACCOUNT CORRECTION**

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board of a mistake in sewer billing - Account #671 in the amount of \$15,929.50

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

To ratify as uncollectible municipal sewer account #671 in the amount of \$15,929.50 and discharge responsibility for debt collection.

#### **7. DISCUSSION OF STORM CLOSURE**

Ms. Sinford asked about clarification regarding the procedure followed when there is a storm event that impacts employees. Mr. Kichen explained that in the past the town manager would discuss the situation with the public works director and make a decision. Ms. Dennison noted that in the past procedure varied and she added that it usually became a judgement call. She pointed out that it becomes a worker's compensation issue if the Town puts employees on the road and there is an accident. The members of the Board discussed the issue.

Ms. Porcher asked about looking into broadband funding in Machias.

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM.