

BOARD OF SELECTPEOPLE - TOWN OF MACHIAS

MAY 25, 2023

A meeting of the Machias Board of Selectpeople was called to order at 6:02 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; Ben Edwards, Michael Hinerman, Dean Foster, Stephen Simmons, Alex Taylor, Danielle Imgemi, Ryan Maker.

1. MINUTES - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Carole Porcher, seconded by Jake Patryn, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2023 Board meeting.

2. WARRANTS - REVIEW AND ACTION

On a motion by Jake Patryn, seconded by Sandra Sinford, the Board
VOTED:

To approve payroll warrant #93 in the amount of \$13,766.75; to approve payroll warrant #95 in the amount of \$21,395.54; and, to approve payroll warrant #97 in the amount of \$23,268.06 .

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

To approve accounts payable warrant #94 in the amount of \$93,580.11; to approve accounts payable warrant #96 in the amount of \$48,162.60; and, to approve accounts payable warrant #98 in the amount of \$66,156.29 .

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Jake Patryn, the Board
VOTED:

To approve school warrant #051923 in the amount of \$279,608.07 .

3. AMBULANCE CONTRACTS - SIGNATURES

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that signed ambulance contracts have been returned from contract towns for the Board to sign. The Board signed ambulance contracts with Machiasport, Marshfield, and Whiting.

4. SECRET BALLOT ARTICLES

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that they are reviewing articles that allow for the election of a moderator and other town officials for municipal elections. After reviewing the documents, the Board signed the documents.

5. AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT - EMPLOYEE HIRES

Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that Sally Tayler has resigned from the Machias Ambulance Service and that Lois Libby has stepped down from the position of Ambulance Chief with the ambulance department. Mr. Kitchen noted that the ambulance corps held a meeting according to their by-laws and elected a new chief. Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that Ryan Maker was elected chief of the ambulance service.

Mr. Maker told the Board that he is requesting that Kendra Johnson and Jody McPhail be hired to serve on the ambulance service under the ambulance apprenticeship program.

On a motion by Jake Patryn, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board

VOTED:

To hire Kendra Johnson and Jody McPhail as EMT's under the ambulance apprenticeship program.

Mr. Maker commented on his continuing priorities for the ambulance service such as public safety and a commitment to high standards of care to patients.

6. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mr. Kitchen advised that Mr. LeBlanc will be starting as an officer in the police department a week from next Monday (June 5th).

7. FORECLOSURE PROPERTY - 54 WATER STREET

Mr. Kitchen reported that a house located at 54 Water Street had been foreclosed upon by the Town for non-payment of property taxes and unpaid sewer fees over the past three years according to municipal policy. He noted that there were repeated attempts to contact the property owner and repeated attempts to physically contact the person living in the home but to no avail. Mr. Kitchen told the Board that the son of the owner of the property, before it was foreclosed upon, came to the Town Office and asked if the Board would consider payments on the back property taxes and sewer fees. Mr. Kitchen noted that the only option would be that of the payment of all of the three years of back taxes and sewer charges being paid. Mr. Kitchen noted that taxes and sewer charges are owed for 2020, 2021, and 2022; he reported that as of April 21, 2023 the sum of \$7,177.06 is owed in back property taxes and \$634.75 is owed for sewer which comes to \$7811.81 and that there is an estimate of \$2400. for taxes and sewer fees for 2023. Mr. Kitchen reported that the resident, son of the property owner, has now offered to pay the Town the sum of \$10,000. to cover the costs. Mr. Kitchen noted that he has discussed the matter with both the Town Clerk and the Business Manager who recommended accepting the money for the Town and issuing a quit claim deed to the son of the former property owner.

Ms. Johnson-Rolfe pointed out that this is the second time the issue of tax and sewer fee delinquency on this property has occurred and she cautioned that the Town needs to be cautious in accepting money from anyone other than the original property owner, even though it is the son of the former property owner who is living on the property. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe also noted that the Town cannot show any favoritism to any resident. Mr. Patryn commented that he has concerns with accepting taxes after multiple attempts at contact. Mr. Kitchen advised that the Board can do whatever they wish to address this situation. Mr. Kitchen pointed out that the owner of the property has proven to be very unreasonable in addressing the unpaid taxes and fees. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe expressed caution in following procedures previously utilized and following policy. Mr. Edwards said that the Board should be cautious since this situation could be a legal quagmire. Mr. Patryn cautioned that the Town cannot get into a legal issue if money is accepted from a person who was not the previous property owner; he suggested that it is time to research legalities in this situation. Ms. Johnson-Rolfe said that her concern is for following policy. Mr. Patryn suggested that the son be allowed to follow-up with his mother and get something in writing from her regarding the property.

Mr. Kitchen said that he would research ownership questions and the Town's tax-acquired property policy. Mr. Kitchen noted that the original property owner claims that she does not have to pay property taxes. Mr. Patryn suggested that this item be paced on the agenda of the Board's next meeting and that in the interim to allow the Town Manager to research policies.

Mr. Foster thanked the members of the Board for their efforts.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Mr. Kitchen noted that the Blue Star highway marker has been restored by a local group and that next Tuesday, May 30th there will be a rededication ceremony.
- B. Mr. Kitchen advised that there will be a Board of Appeals meeting on May 26th.
- C. Mr. Kitchen advised the Board that the Sunrise Trail has reopened. He noted that many local businesses depend on the tourism dollars that come from people utilizing the trail.
- D. Mr. Kitchen reminded everyone that there is a May 31st budget meeting scheduled.
- E. Mr. Kitchen reported on recent fire department training and that the Public Works Department has been busy preparing for Memorial Day.
- F. Ms. Porcher commended the cleaning of gravestones in local cemeteries.
- G. Mr. Kitchen advised that the Board will be holding its reorganizational meeting on June 14, 2023.

9. DATE FOR ELECTIONS

On a motion by Jake Patryn, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board
VOTED:
To hold municipal elections on June 13, 2023 from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Sandra Sinford, seconded by Carole Porcher, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 PM.