

**Machias Board of Selectpersons Meeting
Wednesday, August 13, 2025
Immediately following Public Hearing
At Machias Tele-business Center**

In Attendance: Chairman Jake Patryn, Vice Chairman Ben Edwards, Michael Hinerman, Carole Porcher, Town Manager Sarah Dedmon, Machias Ambulance Director Ryan Maker, Machias Police Chief Keith Mercier, Machias Fire Chief Joe Thompson, Machias Finance Director Nicholas MacDonald, Tora Johnson and Stewart Atwood

Chairman Jake Patryn Called meeting to order at 5:07 PM.

MINUTES: On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Michael Hinerman, the minutes of August 6, 2025 the board

VOTED to accept minutes as proposed without amendment.

WARRANTS: On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Carole Porcher, the board

VOTED to accept the following warrants as presented:

Payroll: #10 \$44,259.69; #12 \$32,327.55; #14 \$42,658.01, #15 \$1,301.31, #17 \$2,018.50.

Accounts Payable: #11 \$177,234.80; #13 \$142,938.46; #16 \$471,878.79, #18, \$2,000.10.

School: #75870 \$189,738.69 Payroll, #75875 \$211,605.92 AP; #75934 \$233,757.17 Payroll, #75938 \$89,524.60 AP.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. SOLAR AND WIND ORDINANCES MORATORIUM:

Acknowledging the objections made by Stewart Atwood, Chairman Jake Patryn said the board's intent was not to stonewall anyone but that the board must make a thorough review of all options. He said issues such as the use of pesticides and property cleanup must be addressed. He said the board will be seeking a sustainable way to deal with solar and wind farms without impeding progress. Sarah Dedmon said that such farms cannot be locally banned in Maine, however it is the board's responsibility to regulate them. She said both ordinances will be voted on separately by town citizens and will be created by the Planning Board. On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Carole Porcher, the board

VOTED to extend the current wind and solar moratorium for an additional 180 days.

2. 241 DUBLIN STREET, FORMER BLUEBERRY FORD: Realtor William Milliken brought a proposal to the board regarding the property, which is for sale. He said he was aware the town might be able to use the building and land as a municipal complex. He said the building is of high quality, has great visibility and would make a home for the Town of Machias departments, including town offices, police, fire and ambulances. In discussion. Police Chief Keith Mercier, Ambulance Services Director Ryan Maker and Fire Chief Joe Thompson agreed that egress onto Route 1 would be preferable to the current locations for emergency response. The town has been searching for enough land for a municipal complex, which Ryan Maker said has been estimated at \$5 to \$7 million to build. Jake Patryn said the purchase is a really good idea but there remains a lot of questions, such as the cost of retrofitting the buildings and finding adequate funding. Sale of the current services locations could help fund as well as grants. Tora Johnson offered SCEC's services to help with the property assessment. William Milliken said he would like to enter into a non-binding agreement with the town, which would give them first position in purchasing, which would be based on town approval and securing adequate funding. He said this agreement could protect both the buyer and seller. The board agreed to have all department heads and town officials meet at the site for a tour and discussion before moving ahead and investigating the proposed purchase. No date was set for that tour.

3. 2 HANSCOM LANE AND 88 DUBLIN STREET SEWER ABATEMENTS: Jake Patryn explained that debts by each property owner needed to be abated because they were based on erroneous water readings by the Machis Water Company. On a motion by Carole Porcher, second by Ben Edwards the board

VOTED to abate sewer fees of \$462.02 for 2 Hanscom Lane and \$425.04 for 88 Dublin Street.

4. NEW FINANCE DIRECTOR/BANK SIGNATURES: After a brief introduction of new Finance Director Nicholas MacDonald, on a motion by Carole Porcher, second by Ben Edwards, the board

VOTED to add Nicholas MacDonald as a signer on Machias' bank accounts and to authorize him access to the Maine Municipal Association's legal services.

5. 48 FREMONT STREET: Homeowner Frank Weston appealed to the board to purchase his home back from the town, which became tax acquired property in 2023. He said problems with his mail delivery left him unaware of the foreclosure. He said he was willing to pay what he owes, including fees. Jake Patryn said the town would investigate how much is owed and for how long and place the issue on the August 27th board agenda for a vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Tora Johnson updated the board on progress with the stormwater inventories and said maps will be developed in September and then all data will be supplied to the University of Maine engineering faculty for compilation, further map refinement and a creation of a 3D model of the Machias watershed. They will also make recommendations for upgrades.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Ambulance Chief Ryan Maker reported that the third paramedic has been hired, putting the Ambulance Service at capacity for 24 hours a day, 6 days a week.

TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE:

1. Sarah Dedmon asked the police chief, ambulance director and fire chief for an update on readiness for the upcoming Wild Blueberry Festival and noted that the fireworks display has been cancelled because of severe drought conditions.

2. Sarah Dedmon updated the board on the proposed 30% water rate increase by the Machias Water Company. All board members voiced their displeasure of the blatant disregard by the water company to discuss the issue with the town and the decades-old poor working relationship between the town and the company. Sarah said the lack of cooperation is particularly onerous since Machias is the company's largest water user with an annual fire department water bill of \$150,000. She said the proposed increase will raise that to \$200,000 annually. The board formally agreed to signal their opposition to the rate increase but Jake Patryn said they would continue to try to repair the relationship between Water Company officials and the town.

AJOURN: On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Michael Hinerman, the board VOTED to adjourn at 6:13 p.m.