

Machias Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, September 24, 2025 @ 5:04 p.m.
At Machias Tele-Business Center

In Attendance: Chairman Jake Patryn, Vice Chairman Ben Edwards, Michael Hinerman, Sandra Sinford, Town Manager Sarah Dedmon, Machias Police Chief Keith Mercier, Machias Finance Director Nicholas MacDonald, Machias EMS Director Ryan Maker, Tora Johnson, Paul Sylvain, Chris Meroff, Ignatius Waterman, Brent Hooper, Catherine Morse and Antoinette Horvath; via Google Meeting Link: Annaleis Hafford of Olver Associates, Justin Albee of 4 Shore Construction.

Jake Patryn called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to accept the minutes from the September 10, 2025 meeting as presented.

WARRANTS: On a motion by Ben Edwards and second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to accept the payroll and accounts payable as listed:

PAYROLL - 9/05/2025 #32 \$1,848.00, 9/12/2025 #35 \$36,865.50, #36 \$369.12, #38 \$950.64, 9/19/2025 #40 \$51,093.42, #41 \$408.51.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE - 9/5/2025 #33 \$1,946.21, 9/8/2025 #34 \$722.00, 9/12/2025 #37 \$67,798.07, #39 \$9,359.64, 9/19/2025 #42 \$68,896.00, 43 \$111,622.91, #44 \$2,700.00.

WARRANTS: On a motion by Ben Edwards and second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to accept the school warrants as listed: 9/19/2025 Payroll #76437 \$131,972.22, AP #76445 \$34,984.07.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. CLOSING OF TIF DISTRICT: There was no discussion. On a motion by Mike Hinerman, second by Ben Edwards, the board **VOTED** to amend the TIF district to allow for closure.

2. GENERAL ASSISTANCE ORDINANCE: There was no discussion. On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to adopt the Machias General Assistance Ordinance and Appendices A-H.

3. AMBULANCE BIDS: Three bids were received. Ryan Maker Director EMS explained this was a normally scheduled replacement of the oldest ambulance, a 2014 model. The bids were: Northeastern \$231,850; R Enterprises \$256,500; and three options from Autotronics, \$278,065, \$292,833, \$318,162. Ryan Maker said he would need some time to review all the specifications and Jake Patryn said the award would take place at the board's next meeting.

4. WEST KENNEBEC TRAFFIC: At least seven residents of West Kennebec Road appeared before the board to complain about speeding, an unsafe hill, lack of ditching, and early morning disruptions by delivery and service trucks to West Branch Farms. The residents, who have lived there for 33 and 53 years, said that with the establishment of West Branch Farms the road has become unsafe for walking and local traffic. Brent Hooper said there are 10 children in three houses on a hill where the street is 18', too narrow for large trucks and speeding vehicles. Cathy Morse stated there is traffic past West Branch Farms on the dead-end section of the road and the road is crumbling and cannot accommodate the heavy amount of traffic. The residents stated that trash removal trucks and delivery trucks are driving by before daylight. Antoinette Horvath said posting DEAD END signs past West Branch Farms could help. She stated her home is 400' from the road and she has frequently had out of staters in her yard. Cathy Morse asked if there could be a definite time for delivery and other large trucks. Jake Patryn said all of the suggestions will be looked into. Jake Patryn, who lives on the same road, said he agrees with the complaints and has firsthand experience of finding trespassers at his home. He said the ideas of white lines painted on the road, a decreased speed limit, a dead-end sign, including a reactive radar sign with lights, will be looked at. He said he would keep the residents apprised as the process moves forward. Tora Johnson of SCEC said it might help to engage a traffic planner regarding infrastructure issues as Sarah Dedmon said there are similar traffic issues in many other locations around Machias.

Chris Meroff, owner of West Branch Farms, stood and addressed the residents. "I am so sorry and feel bad we are terrible neighbors," he said. "I apologize. My only desire in establishing my businesses is to

provide jobs in this community. We want to do everything we can to address these issues and we will do better.” He said he has already ordered new signs that clarify the location of the Public House Restaurant and a sign at the end of their driveway that indicates the way to town is to turn right. Sarah Dedmon added that painting the white line and increased ditching are already planned.

5. JAKE BRAKES IN DOWNTOWN AREA: A short discussion was held regarding jake brake use, but Sarah Dedmon said that she had researched with truck drivers and feels they cannot be safely banned, especially coming down College Hill and making the hard right before the bridge. Chief Mercier agreed that banning them would create a safety issue. There was no public discussion.

6. EVENT ORDINANCE PROPOSAL: Sarah Dedmon said the ordinance is still in its draft stage.

7. PURCHASING POLICY UPDATE: Sarah Dedmon said the current policy is outdated and unworkable. She asked the board to approve increasing department heads' spending limit from \$500 to \$2500, along with other similar increases. Nicholas MacDonald explained that there would be an exclusion for urgent items and approved grant funds, and the policy will be reviewed annually. On a motion by Mike Hinerman, second by Ben Edwards, the board

VOTED to adopt a new Procurement Policy.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. SEWER RATE INCREASE: Sarah Dedmon explained that Machias rates are currently too low to offset expenses and proposed a 15% increase. The Sewer Department currently has a gap of \$79,000. Annaleis Hafford of Olver Associates, the firm managing the Sewer Treatment Plant, said the rate is still reasonable although the increase will affect people who use a lot of water. She said this would average out to a \$72 a year increase. On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to increase sewer rates by 15%, with a base rate increasing from \$9.24 to \$10.68, and a rate increase from \$75 to \$80 per 1,000 gallons for septage.

2. MACHIAS VALLEY AIRPORT HANGAR LEASE RATES: Sarah Dedmon said the town is getting near to creating lease agreements and they are under review by town attorneys. She suggested a rate of 12 cents per square foot per year, which would be just short of \$500. She said real income would come from property taxes and the economic benefit of housing a number of planes in Machias. The board agreed to wait until the draft lease is created and then vote on its approval.

3. EAST KENNEBEC WEIGHT LIMITS: Jake Patryn outlined a proposed temporary road use permit that could be acted upon as a case-by-case issue. There would be a \$100 yearly fee and various conditions including an assessment of current road conditions as well as conditions when the permit expires, hours of operation, time limits, bond, and adherence to the road closure postings in the spring. Sarah Dedmon said she will also be drafting a companion policy. After Justin Albee of 4 Shore Construction stated he had no problem waiting until the board has time to review the new permit, the board opted to take the proposal under consideration and place it on their next agenda.

DEPARTMENT HEADS UPDATE:

1. Police Chief Mercier said that overnight 24-hour coverage has begun and on its first night there were two calls for assistance after midnight. The on-duty officer was on scene in two minutes. He also said a meeting with the Town of Roque Bluffs about providing contracted police coverage to that community was well attended and well received.

2. Nicholas MacDonald reported he is working on the budget and policies and corroborating with Washington County on financial issues.

3. Ryan Maker said one ambulance is in the repair shop after it struck a deer and will have a deer bumper installed when it is repaired. His department also provided medical supply bags to the police department.

TOWN MANAGER UPDATE:

1. Sarah Dedmon reported that the fire department is looking to install a dry hydrant at the Water Street parking lot to assist with water supplies should there be a serious fire in the dense downtown area. She said a \$5,000 grant has been received for wildfire suits for the fire

dept, Machias and Machiasport are collaborating to bring Firefighter I and II classes here.

2. Sarah said She, Nicholas MacDonald and Carole Porcher will be attending a Grow Smart Maine conference in Houlton for two days. The subject is grant writing and funding research.

3. Sarah said Catherine Morse has been appointed to the AOS 96 school board.

4. The town will be set up in Norman Nelson Park for Trick or Treat on Main Street from 3-5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, 2025.

ADJOURN: On a motion by Ben Edwards, second by Mike Hinerman, the board

VOTED to adjourn at 7 p.m.