

Town Council Meeting
May 13, 2025

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Chair Ketch opened the Town Council meeting. All members were present. Town Manager Melissa Doane and Municipal Attorney Benjamin Worrell were also present.

Executive Session: Councilor Hatch made a motion to enter executive session pursuant to 1 MRSA § 405 6A, to consult with legal counsel, seconded by Councilor Lugdon, vote 5/0.

Councilor Ketch motioned to exit executive session, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Ketch made a motion to approve the minutes of April 29, 2025, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 4/0 (Councilor Clemons was excused April 29, 2025)

Citizens' Request: None

Managers' Report: Melissa reported that the spring clean-up went well with no issues; 11.8 tons of debris were disposed of.

Last week was Professional Municipal Clerks Week. April took Tuesday off and Cindy took Friday off; Melissa covered the counter when needed. She also gave them a hanging seasonal flower and a gift bag with candy and gift cards.

Melissa requested approval of the quitclaim deed to Richard Campbell. Mr. Campbell paid all outstanding property taxes, including the 2022 taxes subject to automatic foreclosure, on May 2, 2025. Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the quitclaim deed assigned to Richard Campbell for property at Soucy Court, identified as Bradley Tax Map 11 Lot 6, due to the payment of 2022 real estate taxes, which were subject to automatic foreclosure, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Melissa met with Maine Gravesite Maintenance last week. The company has not been operational for several years. However, the Town has been reserving \$5000 yearly for cemetery restoration. They will begin restoring gravestones at the Knapp Cemetery, starting at those closest to the road and working towards the river. They will also do one veteran stone for free.

The election for the Viola Rand School closure was yesterday, May 12, 2025. The vote was in favor of the school closure, 140 to 6. The Town Council will likely be expected to decide on retaining the school very soon. Melissa has spoken to Carpenter Associates, and they stated that the first step in determining if the back acreage is suitable for cemetery development would be to determine the water table. Melissa would like to contract with a site evaluator to make that determination. Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the soil test, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 5/0.

The annual town report was sent to the printers last week; Melissa is hopeful they will be ready by the end of next week. Melissa stated that the absentee ballots for the June 10, 2025, annual referendum

and election of municipal officers are available now. Melissa also noted that Charles Clemons returned nomination papers for the Town Council and Rebecca Kennedy returned nomination papers for the RSU board.

Melissa met with Eastern Maine Development Corporation to review the needed material for the upcoming Community Resiliency grant. Melissa has written a grant application to help fund the ballfield development. The grant is \$75,000; she used the cost estimate from the UMO students as a base price.

Melissa will visit Benton, Vassalboro, and Alna on Friday to observe the alewife harvest. She will also meet with a harvester and a fish agent in Benton.

Melissa provided an update for the record: That evening, the Town Council met with the municipal attorney in executive session to discuss 114 Cram Street. The Town will continue to move forward with the contempt of court proceedings.

Councilor Lugdon asked if the sidewalk sweeping had been completed. Melissa stated that planning board member Allan Smallwood and his daughter did the sweeping; it was completed last week.

Councilor Hatch asked if there had been any further communication with the Maine Forest and Logging Museum regarding the alewife harvest. Melissa stated that is why she is going to the harvest sites to bring back information to share with the museum.

Councilor Ketch stated that the clean-up went well. The site was busy, but the contractor and April did great.

New Business: Melissa presented the Election warrant for the June 10, 2025, municipal referendum and the municipal officials election. Melissa noted that there are four warrant articles. Article 1 is authorization for municipal expenditures, Article 2 is authorization to receive revenues, Article 3 is authorization to apply for and receive grants and other funding, and Article 4 is authorization for the Town Council to regulate the alewife fishery in 2026. Melissa also added that the public hearing for the referendum will be on May 27, 2025, at 6:30 pm. Councilor Wade motioned to accept the municipal election warrant, seconded by Councilor Hatch, vote 5/0.

Unfinished Business: None

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch motioned to accept the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Lugdon, vote 5/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting, which includes the public hearing regarding the municipal referendum, was set for May 27, 2025.

Adjourn: Councilor Ketch motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Hatch, vote 5/0.