

Town Council Meeting
1/13/2026

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Ketch opened the Town Council meeting all members were present except for Councilor Hatch was excused. Also, present was Town Manager Melissa Doane and Fire Chief Gifford.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the minutes of December 30, 2025, seconded by Councilor Wade vote 4/0.

Citizens Request: Brenda Lansinger participated via Zoom. Ms. Lansinger, the granddaughter of Viola Rand, requested the return of a photo/print that had been displayed at the school prior to its closure. She explained that her mother created the original artwork and expressed her belief that the piece should remain with the family. Melissa stated that she has been corresponding with Ms. Lansinger via email and advised that any release of the photo/print would require Town Council approval, with a recommendation from the Historical Committee. Ann Delaware noted that the item in question is not an original painting but appears to be a photograph or print of the original artwork, and stated that she is not aware of any original painting in the Town's possession. The Council agreed that Melissa would arrange for the print to be digitally scanned and that the digital file would be provided to Ms. Lansinger.

Ann Delaware stated that on January 7 she hosted an event in which she displayed the historical committee's items, the weather was bad and there were 7 people in attendance. She added that Councilor Lugdon has agreed to make a sign for the cases that are in the Council room. There will be another event on February 11, 2026.

Ann Delaware also stated that the next senior luncheon will be on January 21st at St. Ann's Church.

Manager's Report: Melissa stated that the spring clean up has been set for May 2, 2026, the same cost and procedure as the fall which was \$20.00 for two pick up size loads; the time will be from 8 to noon.

Melissa reported that all 2023 real estate taxes were paid before the automatic foreclosure date, therefore no additional work is needed.

At the previous meeting, the Council held an extensive discussion regarding the property at 114 Cram Street and the exploration of alternative approaches. Following that discussion, Melissa sent a letter to Maine State legislative representatives Senator David Haggan and Representative James Dill requesting consideration of additional legislation related to mental health services, increased jail funding, and potential changes to laws requiring individuals with serious mental health issues to obtain treatment. The letter outlined the Town's ongoing difficulties in obtaining assistance with the resident at 114 Cram Street, including the court's failure to act on judgments and the Sheriff's inability to provide assistance due to lack of available jail space and courts action.

The Alwewife RFP has been advertised and posted, Melissa mailed 10 RFPs to harvesters within a 50-mile radius. They are due back on January 22, 2026.

Melissa stated that previously she had reported to the Council that she had made a banking change with the general fund checking to hopefully gain a higher interest rate. The typical amount of interest received prior to this change was \$300.00. The month of December in which the change occurred on the 18th, the interest earned was \$1952.85.

Melissa presented a memorandum to the Town Council regarding the Town's Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). The HRA currently has a balance exceeding \$11,500, with an additional \$1,000 deposit scheduled for this month. Under the existing benefit structure, the HRA reimburses 60% of eligible expenses, up to \$1,500 for single coverage and \$3,000 for family coverage, resulting in a maximum liability to the Town of \$6,000. Considering recent changes to the Town's health insurance plan that increased out-of-pocket costs for insured employees, Melissa requested that the Council consider increasing the HRA benefit to reimburse 80% of eligible expenses, up to \$2,000 for single coverage and \$4,000 for family coverage. Councilor Wade moved to approve the recommended increase to 80% reimbursement, up to \$2,000 for single coverage and \$4,000 for family coverage, seconded by Councilor Clemons. Councilor Lugdon inquired why the HRA funds were not being fully utilized. Melissa explained that the HRA is a reimbursement account rather than a savings account and is limited to expenses subject to the health plan's deductible, vote 4/0.

As per Melissa's contract her annual review is to be done in January. She provided the standard evaluation form used before; there will be an executive session the next meeting of January 27, 2026.

New Business: Councilor Ketch made a motion to approve an abatement submitted by the Assessing Agent Mark Gibson due to an error for a Homestead Exemption (\$25,000) omission for 305 Main Street Map 21 Lot 14, seconded by Councilor Lugdon, vote 4/0.

Ann Delaware reported that Bea Wentworth passed away this week. Ms. Wentworth was the holder of the Boston Cane. Ann noted that the Town will need to determine the next oldest living resident for purposes of transferring the Boston Cane.

Unfinished Business: Councilor Ketch asked if there was any update regarding 114 Cram Street trash, Melissa stated that it was the same. Councilor Lugdon noted that the truck cap that was on the property was covering the trash on the side of the road.

Melissa stated that the post office door is still not repaired; she contacted PDQ Door today, the repair is scheduled for Monday January 19th.

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch made motion to approve the warrants as approved, seconded by Councilor Wade vote 4/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for January 28, 2026.

Online Comment: No online comments.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn by Councilor Wade, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.