

Town Council Meeting
11/4/2025

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Lugdon, acting as Town Council chair, opened the Town Council meeting. All Council members were present except for Councilor Ketch, who was excused. Also, present was Town Manager Melissa Doane.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Lugdon made a motion to accept the minutes of October 21, 2025, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 4/0.3

Citizens' Request: Superintendent Matt Cyr attended the meeting to explain that RSU 34 has begun the FY27 budget process. He encouraged residents to share their feedback and ideas early to help the school board develop the budget. He emphasized that now is the time to submit feedback, not at the end of the process in May or June. The RSU 34 administration has created a survey for residents to complete and will also be hosting community listening sessions. Mr. Cyr noted that this will once again be a challenging budget year. He attended the Old Town Council meeting last night and became aware of a large expected increase in the Penobscot County budget. Mr. Cyr also discussed that there have been recent conversations about the possibility of the Town of Milford School Department joining RSU 34. While there has not been a formal request from Milford, the topic has generated considerable discussion. Mr. Cyr stated that it is unclear whether such a merger would result in cost savings for the RSU, as a higher student population and an additional school building would also bring additional expenses.

Councilor Lugdon thanked Mr. Cyr for attending and noted that the Town Council had recently discussed similar concerns about the difficult budget year ahead, particularly due to revenue losses and the anticipated increase in County taxes.

Councilor Hatch asked what RSU 34 hoped to gain from the surveys and listening sessions. Mr. Cyr responded that they would primarily help communicate the budget process and potentially identify alternative approaches.

Manager Doane suggested that the Town, County, and RSU collaborate to create a list of unfunded mandates and state-level policies that impact local budgets. She noted that the County faces a significant deficit due to underfunding and that similar challenges have long existed in special education. She also noted that she will provide the survey to Bradley residents.

Managers' Report: Melissa stated that the Municipal Waste Hub (formally MRC) facility in Hampden is now accepting waste as a transfer station from all but four of the member communities. This was discussed at the quarterly meeting held on October 22, 2025. It is expected that the facility will be fully operational with the MERF within the next 6 months, therefore increasing recycling and creating natural energy.

Melissa attended the County Commissioners meeting on Wednesday, October 29. The commissioners voted to fund the full 3.5 million jail budget deficit that has been occurring since 2021 in this year's budget. Also included in the funding was an additional \$600,000 to cover the current year's jail funding deficit. With the additional normal increases in the County budget of 4.26%, it is expected that the County Budget will increase by 20 to 21%. There is a final budget meeting scheduled for November 18, at which the budget committee will provide its final approval. Melissa does not believe that the Budget Committee has been established yet; she will continue to monitor the Commissioners' information. It may be prudent for municipalities, specifically municipal officials, to reach out to budget committee members and ask if there is an alternative to fund the continued jail deficit. She fears that communication will be difficult as they do not have an administrator.

Attorney Seth Harrow has agreed to accept appointment as attorney for Robert Wing. A conference via Zoom has been set for December 17, 2025.

The 2024-2025 municipal audit has been completed. The undesignated fund balance increased to just over \$1,900,000. Melissa has provided a copy of the audit to each Councilor and posted it on the municipal website if there are further questions.

Melissa reported that she had a conversation with a BACTS representative regarding the speed bumps on Highland Avenue and Cram Street. As part of the Safer Streets Grant project, consultants will be available to assist with design work for the Town. Once the design work is completed, it will be shared with the Town for final approval. Melissa recommended that, before placing any speed bumps, the Town conduct a community survey to gather resident input. Since the last meeting, she has received several comments from residents expressing opposition to the installation of speed bumps. In regard to placement, BACTS indicated that their staff could handle both the installation and removal of the bumps. However, it will be the Town's responsibility to monitor their condition and report any damage. Councilor Wade asked whether the speed bumps would be made of pavement. Melissa explained that she believed they would be made of a rubber material adhered to the pavement surface. She added that, since the Town contracts out road work, seasonal rubber speed bumps would likely be the more practical option. Councilor Lugdon asked how feedback from residents would be obtained. She stated that she would likely do a survey and make it available on social media and the website. He added that it will be hard to determine if the residents are from the roads that would be affected.

Melissa has been working with the Department of Marine Resources regarding an Alewife Harvest Plan, and she has done a draft RFP. She presented both documents to the Town Council and asked them to review them and bring forward any questions. Marine Resources would like her to reach out to the museum to see if there is a viable option to have the harvest there, which she has done. She is hopeful to hear something back in the next few weeks. She does

believe that there is adequate space at the Knapp Cemetery, while it may not be ideal, it will be for 9 days over a month period. Councilor Lugdon wondered what the Alewife return would be due to the drought and if they were able to leave Chemo Pond. Melissa stated she could as DMR.

New Business: Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve a supplement tax bill for \$2726.00 to Ginger Maxwell of Lakeview Shores Inc/HC Haines for Map 12 Lot 4 due to removing 2 acres of land from tree growth, seconded by Councilor Hatch, vote 4/0.

Councilor Wade stated that he has been researching the best ways to use the funds received from the sale of the Viola Rand School. He suggested that the Town Council consider using the funds to pay off the fire station debt in order to save on interest costs, while keeping a line item available to help offset the RSU assessment each year until the amount equal to the debt payment is used. He emphasized that the funds should ultimately benefit students, as the sale originated from the sale of a school property. Melissa believed voter approval would be required for this action, and the Town Council asked her to contact the municipal attorney for clarification.

Unfinished Business: None

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for September 18, 2025

Online Comments: Residents expressed concern regarding the sound quality of the live stream. Louise Magoon stated that the winter roads have been good, and the town should not jeopardize having to get another contractor due to road bumps.

Adjourn: Councilor Wade made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.