

Town Council Meeting
December 16, 2025

Open Town Council Meeting: Council Chair Mark Ketch opened the Town Council meeting; all members were present. Also, present was Town Manager, Melissa Doane and Fire Chief, Eric Gifford.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Wade made a motion to accept the minutes of November 4, 2025, seconded by Councilor Hatch vote 4/0. (Councilor Ketch was excused)

Citizens Request: None

Managers' Report: Melissa requested approval and signatures regarding the 2026 regional animal control contract with Penobscot County. Councilor Wade made a motion to approve the contract, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 5/0.

Melissa stated that on November 26, 2025 she met with Terry Coulter the former owner of 43 Highland Avenue and provided him with the excess funds due to the sale of the tax acquired property. The amount was \$20,463.35. The remaining amount of \$24,536.65 covered the legal expenses associated with the foreclosure and sale, maintenance on the property while in town ownership, outstanding taxes, and a small administrative fee.

Melissa also reported that the approved land transfer for the small parcel of land on Pine Street that was owned by the Town has taken place. As requested, the amount of the sale was to cover legal fees which totaled, \$1,118.00.

Melissa stated that she received notice from the Department of Conservation that the Town was not awarded the trail grant for the ballfield development. Melissa reported that the grant recipients' projects are listed on Department of Agriculture website; there are many similar projects. She has learned of another program through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. She has filed the notice of intent to apply with that program and received confirmation that they will set up a meeting with her in January.

Ann Delaware has requested that additional books of Growing up Bradley be printed, Melissa suggested that 50 be printed at this time. Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the printing, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Melissa reported that she processed 30-day notices regarding automatic foreclosures for 2023 outstanding real estate accounts on December 2, 2025. The automatic foreclosure date is January 2, 2026 and the 4 accounts effected are still currently outstanding.

Melissa stated that the municipal software upgrade was completed on November 19th with no issue.

Melissa confirmed with the municipal attorney that voter approval is needed to expend

the funds that were received from the sale of the school. There was discussion about using the funds to pay off the fire station debt and save an estimated \$83,725.00 in interest at a prior meeting. The other discussion was then creating a line item in the budget that would be dedicated to decreasing the RSU assessment. For the attorney to provide the warrant article she will need specific guidance from the Town Council. The Town Council determined that they should move forward with asking to use the funds to pay off the fire station; once the real savings is known they will determine how to move forward. The amount of the pay off in November was \$385,646, there will be a payment in June of 2026 as it is an annual payment. In addition, a line item will be required in the 26-27 budget as the voter outcome will not be known, the Town Council will determine how to use those funds if not needed for the loan payment.

Melissa added that she had requested the funds of \$396,500 which represent the net proceeds of the Viola Rand sale be placed in a 6-month treasury bond with a rate of 3.76%. During that discussion with Camden National she learned of a new product available for municipal fund general checking that will daily sweep funds not being used for current items payable into a higher yield investment account to provide additional interest. The investment account will be 1% below the federal funds target rate, which is currently 3.75%.

Melissa provided to the Town Council the final draft of the RFP for the Alewife Harvest. She has not been successful in getting Maine Forest and Logging Museum on board with participating. She did add to the RFP that if a more suitable site is found on Blackman Stream the Town will consider it. She has spoken to one potential harvester from Eddington, so she believes there will be interest. She would like to get the RFP ready to get out in the new year. Councilor Wade asked if there were considerations regarding it being at a cemetery, Melissa stated there were site provisions added to the harvest plan that include, no parking during non-harvest times, no harvest during a funeral and that the area must be clean at all times. Councilor Hatch stated it was disappointing that the museum did not want to participate, Melissa agreed adding that the Department of Marine Resources wanted them involved as well. Councilor Wade made a motion to release the alewife harvest RFP, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 5/0.

Melissa has been participating in the County budget process as much as possible. The original budget meeting held on November 18th did not present a lot of changes; however, the budget committee did do some work and another meeting was held on December 11th. The committee voted to have the commissioners lower the expenses by 1 million and recognize additional revenues presented. Melissa is not clear what the final number was as the motion became very confusing. She listened into a meeting this morning in which the commissioners seemed to be working towards the intent of the budget committee, though they can override the budget committee's recommendation. There will be another meeting tomorrow December 17 and a final public hearing on the 23rd. Councilor Wade noted that some changes need to be made as the County is borrowing money at the beginning of their fiscal year which is costing money. Councilor Lugdon stated that the push back from the committee is good because in the past there was none. Melissa agreed adding that the issue is not only with Penobscot County and this a good notice to the Maine Legislature that changes are needed in county budgets. Councilor Hatch and Lugdon spoke about having the County budget go to referendum county wide. Melissa stated that without the decrease the appropriation to Bradley is estimated to be \$63,000,

Councilor Lugdon noted that even with the decrease it is expected to increase 16%, that is difficult to absorb; the taxpayers will blame the municipal budget not recognizing the large county budget increase.

There is brief hearing tomorrow via zoom regarding 114 Cram Street to get an update to what is going on with the case and the new attorney appointed.

Melissa reminded Town Council of the holiday schedule, the office will be opened until noon on 12/24, closed 12/25 and 12/26, the trash pick up will be on Friday. New Years week, the office is opened until noon on 12/31 and closed on 1/1, the trash pick up will also be on that week.

New Business: Resident Ann Delaware asked if a reserve could be established for development of the ballfield area, to be used for a grant match; she suggested using Viola Rand sale funds. Melissa stated that it would take voter approval to use those funds. Councilor Ketch suggested that the creation of a reserve be discussed during the budget process.

Councilor Lugdon made a motion to provide the staff with year end bonus that match what was given last year, Councilor Ketch seconded, vote 5/0.

Motion to approve the supplementary assessment prepared by Assessing Agent Mark Gibson for James Higdon, Map 8, Lots 14-2 and 14-3, in the amount of \$500, due to noncompliance with the Tree Growth Tax Law for failure to submit an updated Tree Growth application made by Councilor Wade seconded by Councilor Clemons vote 5/0.

Unfinished Business: Councilor Hatch suggested that it be noted that the meeting of December 2, 2024 did not occur.

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch made a motion to approve the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for December 30, 2025.

Online Comment: No online comments

Adjourn: Councilor Wade made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 5/0.