

Town Council Meeting
March 10, 2026

Open Town Council Meeting: Councilor Ketch opened the Town Council meeting; all members were present also present was Town Manager Melissa Doane

Executive Session: Councilor Ketch made a motion to enter into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A § 405 (6) (E) for consultation with legal counsel regarding pending litigation, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Councilor Ketch made a motion to exit executive session, seconded by Councilor Wade, vote 5/0.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Wade made a motion to accept the minutes of February 24, 2026, seconded by Councilor Clemons vote 4/0. (Councilor Ketch excused 2/24/26)

Citizens Request: None

Manager's Report: Melissa reported that on Friday, March 6, 2026, she issued a Notice of Violation and Cease and Desist order to Robert Wing of 114 Cram Street for placing a significant amount of trash and debris within the Town's right-of-way. This notification outlined the several violations of the land use ordinance and state laws. The Town's attorney provided guidance during the meeting that the Town may proceed with cleaning up the area without additional court action since the materials are located within the Town's right-of-way. The attorney also plans to file a nuisance complaint in Superior Court rather than continuing the land use motion in District Court. The intent is for the matter to be heard by a different judge and potentially result in a different outcome. Melissa will work on securing a contractor to clean up the ditch area.

As previously noted, the spring cleanup has been scheduled for May 2, 2026. The contractor has reported that residents have been attempting to dispose of propane tanks and batteries in the regular trash, which is not permitted. As a result, these items will instead be accepted as part of the spring cleanup. Residents who plan to dispose of batteries are asked to notify staff at the time they submit payment for disposal.

Melissa reported that she spoke with Mike Weatherbee, President of the Maine Forest and Logging Museum, last week regarding the proposed alewife harvest on museum property. Mr. Weatherbee expressed support for the project and plans to schedule a board meeting at which the harvester will be present to answer questions from board members. It is hoped that the full board will support the proposal. Melissa has offered to host the meeting at the Town Office. In addition, the contract with the harvester has been signed.

Melissa reported that a social media post had raised questions about municipal office hours. She noted that the office hours have remained the same since 2021, when Tuesday hours were extended to remain open until 6:00 p.m. Current hours are Tuesday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Melissa also stated that she is available to schedule appointments outside of regular business hours for residents who are unable to visit during those times.

She further clarified that there have been no unexpected or storm-related closures of the office, despite comments suggesting the office had been closed.

New Business: Councilor Lugdon made a motion to allow the town manager to expend whatever is needed to secure a contract to clean up 114 Cram Street right of way area from trash and debris, seconded by Councilor Ketch, vote 5/0.

Councilor Lugdon made a motion that a request be made by the Penobscot County Sheriff's Office that a deputy be present during the clean up of 114 Cram Street right of way area, seconded by Councilor Hatch, vote 5/0.

Councilor Lugdon asked whether the name of the proposed development at the Viola Rand School site had been determined and how many apartments were planned. Melissa stated that she was not sure of the name but could easily find out. She noted that she was not present at the Planning Board meeting; however, she had spoken with Dean that morning. Dean reported that the Planning Board did an excellent job reviewing the application and ultimately granting approval. He also mentioned that seven members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.

Councilor Ketch noted that the road postings had been done, Melissa stated she did the postings before she went on vacation.

Unfinished Business: Melissa stated that a decision is required regarding the placement of flex posts on Cram Street to address speeding concerns. She previously provided the Town Council with survey results, which included 42 responses, and noted that no additional responses have been received. It was discussed that the flex posts would be placed along both edges of the road and in the center at three different locations on Cram Street, from Highland Avenue to Deer Run Lane. Signs will also be installed to notify drivers of the change in the traffic pattern. Melissa noted that there will be no cost to the Town for the project, as installation will be completed by BACTS. However, she will be responsible for monitoring the posts. Councilor Ketch asked how the posts would be installed. Melissa responded that they would be glued to the pavement. Councilor Lugdon commented that it is unfortunate that the project is necessary, but acknowledged that there have been concerns raised about speeding on the street. He also noted that Highland Avenue is an area of concern as well. Melissa explained that Cram Street was selected because there had been nine accidents on the street over a ten-year period. Councilor Clemons made a motion to move forward with the project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lugdon and passed with a vote of 5-0.

Melissa stated that the only change to the budget was the final amount due to the County, which was \$237 higher than her original estimate. With this update, the municipal budget remains \$3,916.60 below the self-imposed budget cap. Councilor Ketch noted that there is a budget item for cemetery restoration. Melissa explained that this account was established several years ago to restore cemetery stones, starting with veterans' graves. Last summer, work totaling just over \$9,000 was completed. She expressed hope that the annual \$5,000 appropriation will continue, allowing restoration work to be carried out gradually over time. Melissa also noted that she has not yet completed a full review for any additional carryforwards; this review is typically done just prior to the public hearing in April.

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

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for March 24, 2026

Online Comment: Planning Board member Allan Smallwood stated that the proposed development will include 13 apartments, consisting of one- and two-bedroom units, as well as a few efficiency units.

Kim Shaw commented that the Cram Street project has added extra work and urged that people should slow down.

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