

Town Council Meeting
September 8, 2026

Open Town Council Meeting: Council Chair Duane Lugdon opened the Town Council meeting; all Town Council members were present except for Councilor Wade who was excused. Council members were present. Also, present was Town Manager Melissa Doane and Fire Chief Eric Gifford.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Clemons made a motion to accept the town council meeting minutes from August 11, 2026, seconded by Councilor Lugdon vote 4/0.

Citizens Request: None

Manager's Report: Melissa reported that the snow plowing contracts for both the municipal roads and the parking lot have been signed. She has given Greg Harvey, the road plowing contractor, the go ahead to order the sand.

Melissa also reported that the contract for the Alewife Harvest for the 5-year period has also been signed.

Melissa spoke with John Milligan regarding the ditching concern on Cram Street. He stated there is not enough spacing for guardrails. He too noted that the ditch is not any deeper than it was prior, the vegetation has been removed. John suggested that we monitor the area and could possibly add temporary posts with reflectors. Melissa stated she has not had any concerns brought to her.

On Monday August 24, 2026 a mental health docket hearing was scheduled regarding Robert Wing. Melissa was not able to participate in the hearing because it was not directed to the case involving the Town. She did receive information that a continuance regarding the mental health concern is scheduled for October 26, 2026.

Melissa provided information to the Town Council that the RSU board has approved placing a bond question on a ballot for the November 3, 2026 election. The bond question asks for approval for the board to issue a bond or note in the name of the RSU in an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000 to make renovations to the Old Town High School. The public hearing will be held on October 2, 2026 at the Leonard Middle School Cafeteria. Councilor Lugdon asked if there had been any communication with the Town regarding this. Melissa confirmed that she had been asked about election timelines.

Melissa provided the Town Council with a memo regarding the open position in the Town Office, noting that Cindy's last day will be September 18. She explained that the position has been advertised as part-time in an effort to reduce staffing costs while continuing to meet the operational needs of the office. Melissa stated that she had been hopeful the part-time schedule would generate interest; however, to date, only two applicants have municipal experience. She intends to interview both candidates to determine their qualifications, availability, and scheduling flexibility. Melissa noted that, based on past experience, it can be difficult to fill a part-time municipal position, as many qualified applicants are seeking the stability of full-time employment and health benefits. She added that she and April feel they can manage the day-to-day operations of the Town Office on a temporary basis. However, coverage may

become challenging when either or both have other work-related commitments or obligations. Councilor Wickett asked where the position had been advertised. Melissa stated that the position was posted on Indeed and through the Maine Municipal Association.

Melissa also provided the Town Council with a memo regarding the 2001 GMC Pumper. The memo outlined the substantial repairs recently required for the truck, totaling \$7,669.69. Of that amount, \$4,707.91 was necessary to be drawn from the Fire Department Capital Reserve account to cover a portion of the repairs. Melissa noted that, given the age and condition of the truck, additional repairs are anticipated. Chief Gifford explained that the pump failures were discovered during required testing and provided details regarding the repairs that were completed. He stated that the department will continue to maintain the truck; however, replacement parts are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain due to its age. He referenced the daytime running lights as one example and also noted that metal filings have been discovered in the rear end. Melissa asked the Council to consider approving the replacement timeline outlined in her memo. The proposed plan would allow the Fire Department to begin developing specifications and obtaining price estimates for a replacement pumper, with voter authorization for a lease/purchase to be requested at the June 2027 Town Meeting. The current tanker lease will be paid off in March 2028. Melissa explained that, allowing time for voter approval, the RFP process, and delivery of a new truck, she anticipates the first lease payment would not be due until approximately June 2029. This timeline would result in minimal impact to the budget by avoiding significant overlap between the two lease payments. Councilor Wickett asked whether grant funding might be available for the replacement. Melissa stated that the Town has applied twice to FEMA for funding to replace the pumper and will continue to pursue grant opportunities. She noted that the Town previously received FEMA funding for the purchase of the brush truck, which she believed was supported by the significant amount of rural woodland within Bradley. She added that pumper replacement grants are highly competitive, particularly because many departments with greater call volumes are also seeking funding. Councilor Lugdon asked Chief Gifford what could be expected regarding future repairs. Chief Gifford reiterated that the department will continue to maintain the truck as long as possible but noted the increasing difficulty in obtaining certain parts. Councilor Lugdon also asked whether the existing truck would have any value upon replacement. Chief Gifford estimated its value at approximately \$55,000. Councilor Lugdon asked about the current balance of the Fire Department Capital Reserve account. Melissa reported that the balance is approximately \$138,000 and stated that she would prefer to preserve capital reserve funds for equipment purchases rather than ongoing repairs. Councilor Lugdon made a motion to approve the replacement timeline outlined by the Town Manager and to authorize the use of \$4,707.91 from the Fire Department Capital Reserve account toward the recent repairs to the 2001 GMC Pumper. Councilor Wickett confirmed that the requested reserve funds were specifically for the repairs. The motion was seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote 4/0.

New Business: Councilor Lugdon noted the notice of an upcoming Penobscot County meeting that had been placed in the Councilors' boxes. Melissa explained that the meeting is being held to caucus and select elected officials interested in serving on the County Budget Committee. She noted that, by legislative requirement, the County Budget Committee must be comprised of elected officials. Melissa also reported that she recently attended a meeting with other municipal managers regarding the County budget process. County staff and their consultants provided an overview of changes that have been implemented, the timeline for budget approval, plans to communicate the need for a new jail, and the proposed change to the County's fiscal year. Melissa stated that she believes the County is making positive changes and moving in a good direction.

Councilor Wickett asked if the Jones political campaign should be contacted about removal of signs. Melissa stated she would remove the signs and dispose of them.

Unfinished Business: Melissa stated that, during her most recent conversation with BACTS representatives, they indicated that only two additional survey responses had been received regarding the flex post installation. She noted that the posts are frequently disturbed and require ongoing attention and maintenance. The posts are expected to remain in place through October. Councilor Wickett stated that he would be interested in knowing what the cost of the project would have been had it not been funded through a grant. Councilor Lugdon added that he would also be interested in reviewing the data to determine what, if any, changes in vehicle speeds have occurred since the installation of the flex posts.

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

Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for September 22, 2026

Online Comment: Louise Magoon asked what the impact would be for the OTHS bond to Bradley taxpayers. Melissa stated that the public hearing would provide that information. She added that if any written information is provided, she will make sure it is distributed for taxpayers. Jeff Farley asked how often the truck was used on a yearly basis. Chief Gifford estimated that it was used 75 times a year, Melissa added that it is also used for regional mutual aid. Erika Booker stated that the speed sticks make it unsafe for kids to ride bikes or walk and suggested speed bumps. Kimberly Shaw noted that Penny Lane is much quieter with the new pavement. Louise Magoon asked if there was any speed data and noted that when people hit the posts at night it is very loud and the speed doesn't seem to change.

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