

**Town Council Meeting**  
**2/11/2025**

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

**Michael Brown Maine Department of Marine Resources-Alewives Harvest:** Michael Brown (via Zoom) and Mitch Simpson from the Maine Department of Marine Resources attended to inform the Town Council that the Town of Bradley may apply to the Department for alewife harvesting rights. He explained that the fish count has been documented and is at the appropriate to allow. The harvest provides revenue for the sale of the fish or the harvest itself. Mr. Brown detailed that the town would have to have voter approval to do so, and a committee would need to be created to assist with the harvest, the data collection, and the creation of a harvest plan. Mr. Simpson provided information on how the harvest is done and details on the alewives in Blackman Stream and Chemo Pond. It was suggested that the Town coordinate with the Maine Forest and Logging Museum and perhaps inquire if the Towns of Clifton and Eddington are interested; he would like to know how the Town wishes to proceed by the end of April. Mr. Brown will provide information to Melissa, including the towns currently being harvested and the documents needed.

**Review of Minutes:** Councilor Wade motioned to accept the minutes of 1/28/2025, seconded by Councilor Clemons, vote of 4/0 (Councilor Ketch was excused on 1/28/25).

**Citizens Request:** Resident Ann Delaware announced that there would be a senior luncheon on February 19<sup>th</sup> at Saint Ann Church. Mrs. Delaware also stated that she had read the report supplied by the students regarding the ballfield. She asked if the Town could get an estimate to create the walking path. Melissa said the students would do that work in their final presentation.

**Managers' Report:** Melissa presented a new Dog Ordinance for the Town Council's review; the last approved ordinance was done in 2008. She explained that recently, the Town had to assist the Sheriff's Department with removing 14 dogs from a home in Bradley. There was no room at the Bangor Human Society, so the Animal Control Officer was forced to take them to facilities in Southern Maine. Due to the number of dogs and the travel distance, Melissa estimates the cost to the Town is around \$1400. There were no criminal charges, so there is no opportunity for restitution. Before this event, at the same property, there were complaints about excess barking from the adjacent property owners. The ACO expressed her concern for the current ordinance and the ability and cost to enforce the ordinance. Melissa's draft provides a reasonable time limit of 30 minutes within one hour for barking. The new ordinance also includes a mechanism by which the Town can invoice the owners for transport, care, and costs. In addition, it better defines the warning guidelines and allows the offender to pay fines directly to the Town rather than go to court. If the offender does not pay fines, the ordinance provides that it is the Town Council's decision if it is sensible to proceed with a court proceeding. Councilor Hatch questioned if the penalties should be increased as the amount presented of \$200 was the same as prior. Councilor Wade noted that the ordinance should include domestic animals such as cats; therefore, billing could occur if the ACO needs to transport them. Councilor Ketch also asked if the Town could limit the number of dogs a resident had. Melissa stated she would like authorization to review the

ordinance with the municipal attorney; she could present these questions to him. The Town Council authorized Melissa to do the review.

Melissa recently met with an Eastern Maine Development Corporation representative regarding broadband expansion in Bradley. The Town is not eligible for grant funding as most of the Town has access to high-speed internet. She did become aware of a program offered to all Maine properties without internet service, which allows them to receive free equipment for Starlink. She has reviewed Bradley's coverage area, which only appears to be approximately 20 eligible properties. She is going to have April work on getting these property owners the information on the program. In regards to broadband expansion, there is a possibility that a vendor may be interested in serving Bradley if there is enough customer support. She is meeting with Pioneer Broadband from Houlton and Consolidate/Fidum this week. She will provide more details as she learns more.

**New Business:** Councilor Clemons asked if Melissa had any information regarding the new EMS bill, LD 176, which seeks to establish a regional EMS department in Penobscot County. Melissa did not have any information; however, she would contact the bill sponsor for more information.

Councilor Ketch affirmed that the next step for the alewife harvest would be for Melissa to gather information from the Department of Marine Resources and the other towns doing the harvest. Melissa added she would contact the Maine Forest and Logging Museum. She also noted that she would like to see an actual harvest to know what is needed for land.

**Unfinished Business:** Councilor Lugdon asked if there had been updates regarding 114 Cram Street; Melissa reported no. Resident Ann Delaware wondered if there was anything new with the Coulter property on Highland Avenue. Melissa noted that the Town Council had authorized a survey to be completed on the property; however, with the winter weather, that is not possible.

**2025-2026 Municipal Budget:** Melissa stated that since her original presentation, she had received final information from the city of Old Town; the cost of the ambulance service was \$180,155.96, which was \$7,788.00 less than she presented. She indicated that the Fire Chief in Old Town did present her request to include average use in the cost-sharing formula to the Old Town City Council. The meeting on February 3 is on the city's website if the Town Council wishes to review the presentation. In short, the city denied her request. Another change was that the Maine Revenue Service has updated the Municipal Revenue Sharing figures; this amount is \$12,004.00 less than she anticipated. She explained that Revenue Sharing comes from the state-collected income and sales tax; the state expects a loss of this revenue. Also included in the new information was the budget from the Fire Department, which was \$7,858.00 more than her original presentation. Due to these changes, the budget is now \$120,233.28 over the budget cap.

Melissa explained that she had never had a budget be this much over the self-imposed cap. She provided a few considerations the Town Council could make to lessen the budget. One option would be to not fund the road account at the 90,000 she had requested. She wants to continue building on a \$400,000 reserve in that account now, but this line item is one of the few flexible. She received a cost estimate for the shim and chip seals on Cram Street and Boynton Street. This pavement maintenance

has been effective with the roads that the Town had done prior, and the municipal roads are in good condition. This cost was estimated to be \$200,000. Another consideration regarding road maintenance is that the town could request voter approval to use the fund balance to complete a specific project in the future. Melissa also stated that a municipal capital reserve of \$21,000 and a fire department capital reserve of \$21,000 are included in the budget. These reserves are used for capital projects. In the past few years, these have included the replacement of the roofs on the municipal building and post office, sealing and painting the municipal complex parking lots, and funding grant match requirements for fire department equipment. Melissa said she likes to build reserves rather than request big projects from the budget or fund balance transfers. However, those line items also have flexibility in adjustment.

Councilor Lugdon asked Eric what he found while doing his budget. He stated that the most significant change is how much more things cost. He also reported that several hose failures were found during testing last year. That hosing needs to be replaced, and he anticipates more failures this year. This is mainly due to the age of the hose. Councilors asked Melissa if she could provide them with an impact on the tax rate. She stated she would work with Mark to get approximate figures. She also noted that the budget must be completed on April 22, 2025.

**Municipal Warrants:** Councilor Ketch moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilor Lugdon, vote 5/0.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting was set for February 25, 2025

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