



**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**Town of Southwest Harbor**  
**Town Office & Via Zoom\***  
**5:30 p.m. ~ Tuesday, February 24, 2026**

**MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Burby called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Chair Noah Burby, Vice Chair Chapin McFarland, Carolyn Ball, Dan Norwood, Natasha Johnson, and Town Manager Karen Reddersen present in person. Finance Manager Becky Gatcomb present to take minutes.
  - A. **Excused Absences** (*if any*) None.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** *Request of the Town Manager for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.*

Johnson motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.

**4. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:**

Town Payables: W# 81  
Town Payroll: W# 0212, 0219  
Trust & Agency: W# 77, 80  
Conservation: W# 0224  
School Payroll: W# 78  
School Payables: W# 79

McFarland motioned to approve the warrants as presented. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

**5. REGULAR BUSINESS:**

- A. **LAND USE ORDINANCE:** *Request of the Town Manager for discussion regarding the amendment to the Land Use ordinance passed on November 5, 2025.*

Town Manager Karen Reddersen gave an overview of the Land Use Ordinance amendment approved at the November 2025 election, which requires soil testing within a half mile of uncontrolled sites. Code Enforcement Officer Jarrod Kushla explained that the amendment has caused some unintended challenges in enforcement due to vague language. He stated that the use of the term “uncontrolled sites” could result in approximately 17% of the town requiring soil testing for future projects, potentially reducing development activity and Town revenue. He also noted that some wording, such as “known substances”, is difficult to define, leaving gray areas in enforcement. The amendment is also unclear regarding responsibility for remediation. Kushla stated that his goal is to get to a “yes” when residents come through his door, but this ordinance amendment creates a challenge in doing so. Reddersen stated that she has spoken with The Musson Group about potentially working with them to clarify the language of this ordinance while still honoring the decision of the voters to adopt the amendment.

\* *To access the meeting using Zoom, please click the meeting link on the home page of the Town's website [www.southwestharbormaine.org](http://www.southwestharbormaine.org).*

Several residents voiced their concerns about the ordinance. Comments included concerns about potential environmental contamination and support for soil testing, as well as concerns about the potential cost and impact on property owners. Board members agreed that the language should be revised for clarity and enforceability while honoring the voters' decision to approve the amendment in November. They discussed possible timelines for revised language to be considered by voters. To appear on the June ballot, changes would need to be submitted in March. The Board asked Kushla to work on the revisions and aim for the June election. Kushla stated that he would attempt to have the changes ready for review at the next Select Board meeting. No motion was taken.

**B. MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT FOR ASSESSOR'S AGENT SERVICES:** *Request of the Town Manager to enter into a contract for Assessor's Agent Services between March 1, 2026-June 30, 2029 with Caldwell Municipal Assessing and Consulting.*

Reddersen presented the proposed contract with Caldwell Municipal Assessing and Consulting, covering the remainder of FY26 through FY29. Board members questioned wording related to scheduled days, electronic tax maps, and quarterly review of parcels. Reddersen stated that she would reach out to CMAC for clarification and place this issue on a future agenda.

**C. PEMETIC SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON:** *Request of the Town Manager to appoint Noah Burby to serve as the Town's liaison on the School Board for Pemetice Elementary School.*

Chair Noah Burby explained that he has been attending Pemetice School Board meetings, and that Board has approved a motion of ascension to place Burby in the role of liaison for the Town. The Board voted on two motions – one to confirm the appointment, and another to clarify the term.

Johnson motioned to appoint Noah Burby to serve as the Town's liaison to the Pemetice School Board. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.

Johnson motioned to define the term to be from February 24, 2026 to July 1, 2026. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.

**D. FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM REPAIR:** *Request of the Town Manager to accept quote to repair Town Office Sprinkler System.*

Reddersen explained that the Town Office sprinkler system had not been inspected for a number of years, and was found to be inoperable when inspected in 2025. The Town Office is currently under a Fire Watch arrangement approved by the State Fire Marshal, but this is a temporary solution. A quote was received by Eastern Fire, which the Town is contracted with for inspections, for \$54,995-\$59,995, with possible additional costs depending on repairs discovered during the project. The Municipal Building CIP Account (G1-221-68) currently has funds to cover this cost.

Johnson motioned to accept the quote to perform flushing and repair of the fire sprinkler system in the Town Office building provided by Eastern Fire with funding coming from G1-221-68. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.

**E. 2026 COASTAL COMMUNITY GRANT/SHORE AND HARBOR PLANNING GRANT AWARD:** *Request of Town Manager to accept 2026 Coastal Community Grant/Shore and Harbor Planning Grant Award for the Harbor Management Plan Update.*

Reddersen reported that the Town has received conditional approval of a \$50,000 Coastal Community Grant/Shore and Harbor Planning Grant to support the Harbor Management Plan update project, pending NOAA review.

Johnson motioned to accept the 2026 Coastal Community Grant/Shore and Harbor Planning grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Southwest Harbor Harbor Management Plan Update project. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.

**6. LIAISON REPORT:**

- School Board: Burby shared updates from the Pemetec School Board meetings. The school has repaired its phone and boiler systems. School Resource Officer Kristen Roulet is going above and beyond. The electric bus is experiencing issues, so the school is looking into leasing a gas-powered bus and only using the electric bus for field trips. The school budget was approved at about \$5.9 million, with a Town appropriation of \$5,131,582.
- Sustainability Committee: Ball shared that the committee has discussed bylaws and may return with updates or recommendations.

**7. MANAGER REPORT:** See attached Manager Report.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**9. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING:** *No action will be taken, other than to place the requested item on the next agenda.*

- CMAC Assessing Contract review
- Land Use Ordinance revisions
- Parking kiosk contract
- Public Hearings – Garage and Shoreland Projects
- Warrant Committee findings/recommendations
- Payroll frequency survey results

**10. NEXT MEETING DATE:** *Adoption of a motion to confirm the date of the next regular meeting for Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Office meeting room.*

McFarland motioned to confirm the date of the next meeting for Tuesday, March 10th at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Office meeting room. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

**11. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. Personnel Matter:** *Possible adoption of a motion for the Select Board to find that public discussion of this personnel matter could be reasonably expected to violate the employee's reputation or right to privacy, and therefore, to go into executive session to discuss the employment of an individual, as permitted by 1 M RSA 405.6.A.*

McFarland motioned to enter executive session at 6:52 p.m., pursuant to 1 MRSA 405 (6) (A) for discussion of a personnel matter related to the employment of an individual wherein the discussion of this personnel matter could be reasonably expected to violate the employee's reputation or right to privacy. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

Johnson motioned to exit executive session at 7:05 p.m. Seconded by McFarland. Vote: 5-0-0.


**12. ADJOURNMENT:**


McFarland motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 5-0-0.

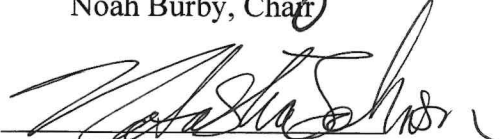
Respectfully Submitted,

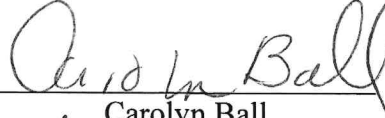
Becky Gatcomb  
Finance Manager

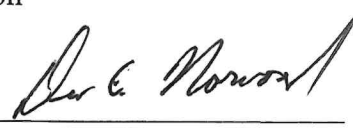
**APPROVED**

  
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Noah Burby, Chair

  
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Chapin McFarland, Vice Chair

  
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Natasha Johnson

  
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Carolyn Ball

  
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Dan Norwood