



**Town of Southwest Harbor  
Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, February 18, 2026

6:00 – 7:40 p.m.

Town Office conference room and via Zoom

**Draft**

1. Chair Anne Trotter, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and took roll call: Mark Amstutz; Lydia Goetze; Don Lodge; Ellen Pope; Colin Samuel (via Zoom); Bryan Stevens; Anne Trotter; Town Manager, Karen Reddersen; and Director of Finance, Becky Gatcomb (via Zoom). Alan Rosenquist and Carl Wrubel were absent.
2. Adoption of the Agenda: Mark Amstutz moved to approve the agenda, with a modification to have Karen Reddersen speak to changes to the budget, seconded by Lydia Goetze. Following a discussion, Lydia Goetze moved to further modify the agenda to have the review of the Dispatch Division follow the review of the Police Department, which was seconded by Ellen Pope and approved unanimously.
3. Approval of the Minutes: Don Lodge moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ellen Pope and approved unanimously. Colin Samuel abstained.
4. Changes to the Budget: Karen Reddersen spoke to recent changes to the budget. The Southwest Harbor property tax revenues are now estimated to increase by 8.5%. The total Education budget is estimated to increase by 6.0%, down from an original 9.3% increase. There were also modifications in the County Tax Assessment, Municipal Solid Waste, Dispatch Division budget, Tremont allocation of the Police Department budget and Wage & Benefit Reserve.
5. Police Department: Chief J.D. Hall and Karen Reddersen reviewed the Police Department budget. The Police Department revenue is currently negotiated to be split to 60% Southwest Harbor / 40% Tremont, less chief salary/benefits, plus chief stipend. The split is negotiated annually. The discussion focused on personnel. In its budget, the Police Department had requested a fourth patrol officer position, which would allow the Department to have two officers on duty 24 hours a day. While the Southwest Harbor Select Board did not initially approve the fourth patrol officer position, the Tremont Select Board believed a fourth patrol officer is important and would like the Southwest Harbor Select Board to reconsider its decision. The budgeted cost of a patrol officer is approximately \$179,000, resulting in Southwest Harbor being responsible for \$107,400. Following a discussion, the Warrant

Committee may consider the following language when it approves the warrants at a future meeting: “Fund the fourth officer position if the Southwest Harbor Select Board can”.

6. Dispatch Division: Chief J.D. Hall and Karen Reddersen reviewed the Dispatch Division budget.
7. Modification to Agenda: Lydia Goetze moved to modify the agenda to now review the Southwest Harbor – Tremont Ambulance Service, which was seconded by Ellen Pope and approved unanimously.
8. Southwest Harbor – Tremont Ambulance Service: Andy Cline, Kristin Hutchins and Theresa Cousins reviewed the organization and its budget. The SWH-Tremont Ambulance Service is requesting \$218,000 for FY 2027, an increase of \$58,000 or 36% from the prior fiscal year. One reason for the large increase is to enhance patient care, the SWH-Tremont Ambulance Service is now scheduling two EMT providers on shift as often as possible, rather than relying on its traditional mode of one EMT provider plus a non-EMT driver on call. In addition, the SWH-Tremont Ambulance Service will also be hiring a full-time director.
9. Fire Department: Karen Reddersen reviewed the Fire Department budget.
10. Other Business: There were no items discussed under Other Business.
11. Next Meeting Date: The Warrant Committee will hold its next meeting on February 26, 2026. Anne Trotter reviewed the possible agenda items with the Committee.
12. Adjournment: At approximately 7:40 pm, Mark Amstutz moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bryan Stevens and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Amstutz, Secretary