

2025 Annual Town Meeting Minutes

Friday March 27, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Portage Lake Town Hall, 20 School St.

AROOSTOOK, s.s.

STATE OF MAINE

The Annual Town Meeting was called to order by Town Clerk Danica Hartman, who affirmed that voting residents were properly notified & warned according to the Warrant to assemble at this day and time to act on the following Articles. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all attending.

There were 20 resident voters and 1 non-voter present.

ART. 1 It was moved and seconded to nominate Serena Bonville for the election portion of the bi-furcated Town Meeting on March 26, 2026. She is unable to resume her Moderator duties tonight, so she has appointed Jordan Beaulier from Ashland to assume the duties as Deputy Moderator to preside over the rest of the town meeting. Mr. Beaulier is sworn in by the Town Clerk.

ART. 2 To elect by secret ballot the following Officer(s):
Calvin Mokler was elected Select Board member for a term of three (3) years with 35 votes.
Haleigh Holmes was elected School Board member for a term of three (3) years with 34 votes.

ART. 3 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Select Board to appoint all necessary officers not elected by ballot for the ensuing year. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 4 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Select Board to expend an amount not to exceed 3/12 of the budgeted amount in each department of the Town's annual budget during the period from January 1, 2027 to the annual 2027 March Town Meeting. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 5 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Select Board, on behalf of the Town, to accept any gifts, donations, grants and all State funding or reimbursements, and exercise such authority as needed to implement grants.

ART. 6 It was moved and seconded to allow a 2% discount on taxes paid within 30 days of the mailing date and set an interest rate of 7% on unpaid taxes 60 days after the date of tax commitment, per 36 M.R.S.A. sec 505.4. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 7 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Tax Collector or Treasurer to accept prepayments of taxes not yet committed, pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. Sec. 506, and to pay an interest rate of 0% on those prepayments. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 8 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Board of Selectpersons to allow the Treasurer to waive automatic lien foreclosure when a request has been made by the owner before the notice of foreclosure has been executed and it is in the best interest of the Town. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 9 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Municipal Officers to sell or dispose of tax-acquired property via quitclaim deed after first offering the property to the former owner(s) or, if deceased, to his or her heirs/devisees/personal representatives within 30 days of the date of automatic foreclosure for a price equal to all taxes, interest, fees and costs owed; then if the former owner does not repurchase the property, the Municipal Officers may sell the property using the process authorized by 30-A MRS §943-C, provided that if the former owner does not request that process or the Board is unable to list or sell the property as required by §943-C(3), the Board may sell the property through a competitive sealed bid process in which a notice advertising sale of the property shall be published at least twice in a newspaper of general circulation in the County. For sales other than to the former owner, excess

sale proceeds, as defined in 36 MRS §943-C, shall be returned to the former owner. No discussion. Motion carries.

- ART. 10 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Select Board and Treasurer, on behalf of the Town, to advertise the proposed sale of any Town acquired property and Town owned personal property valued over \$500 under such terms and conditions as they deem advisable. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 11 It was moved and seconded to authorize the Select Board to appropriate \$25,000 from surplus as they deem advisable to meet emergencies that may occur during the calendar year. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 12 It was moved and seconded to accept all monies received from the Maine Department of Transportation Local Road Assistance Program for the coming year and deposit those monies into the Road Reserve account for future use. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 13 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$59,000 from other anticipated revenue sources, in addition to those appropriated in the following Articles, for the purpose of reducing the 2026 tax commitment. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 14 To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$60,000 from anticipated motor vehicle excise revenue for the Road Reserve account. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 15 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$30,000 from the 2026 Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) Reimbursement from the State for the following reserve accounts:
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|---|----------|
| Fire Department Equipment Reserve Account | \$15,000 |
| Public Works Equipment Reserve Account | \$15,000 |
- No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 16 It was moved and seconded to appropriate 20% of the Homestead Exemption Reimbursement received from the State in 2026 for the Town Hall Improvement Reserve account. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 17 It was moved and seconded to appropriate 80% of the Tree Growth Program Reimbursement received from the State in 2026 for the Revaluation Reserve account. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 18 It was moved and seconded to appropriate 100% of the Veteran's Exemption Reimbursement from the State for the Honor Roll Maintenance account. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 19 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$500 for the Scholarships general ledger account for scholarships to Portage Lake students graduating in June of 2026 who apply and qualify. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 20 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,560 for the Designated Legal general ledger account to bring this account up to \$5,000. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 21 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$29,510, in addition to \$13,990 carried forward for a total budget of \$43,500 for General Administration operating expenses, and to allow any other revenues and reimbursements to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 22 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$100,620 in addition to \$12,080 carried forward for a total budget of \$112,700 for Office Staff payroll (Town Manager, Treasurer, Town Clerk) and to allow any clerk fees, reimbursements, or other revenues to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.

- ART. 23 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$6,740 in addition to \$2,560 carried forward for a total budget of \$9,300 for Assessing of Real & Personal Property and fees for Registry of Deeds, and to allow any fees from lien costs or other revenues to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 24 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$31,000 for Municipal Building operating expenses and to allow rental fees, reimbursements, and donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 25 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$860 in addition to \$240 carried forward for a total budget of \$1,100 for the Planning & Appeals Boards. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 26 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,805 in addition to \$14,545 carried forward for a total budget of \$17,350 for Code Enforcement activities, and to allow permit fees, fines, and other revenues or reimbursements to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 27 It was moved and seconded to appropriate up to \$16,300 from BETE reimbursement for Discounts on 2026 property taxes. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 28 It was moved and seconded to appropriate up to \$2,200 from Overlay to cover Abatements approved in the budget year. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 29 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,350 for annual membership dues to Maine Municipal Assn., Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce, and Greater Fort Kent Chamber of Commerce, and to appropriate up to \$310 from the Designated Tourism Account for Maine Tourism Assn. dues. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 30 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$67,360 in addition to \$8,905 carried forward and appropriate \$25,760 from Stumpage Reserves for a total budget of \$102,025 for Insurances & Benefits expenses, and to allow any reimbursements and dividends to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 31 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$165 in addition to \$4,135 carried forward for a total budget of \$4,300 for General Assistance operating expenses and to allow any reimbursements to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 32 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$23,555 in addition to \$8,545 carried forward for a total budget of \$32,100 for Portage Lake Fire Department operating expenses, and to allow any reimbursements, fees, or donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 33 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,455 in addition to \$445 carried forward for a total budget of \$2,900 for Animal Control operating expenses, and to allow any dog license fees and fines to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 34 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$53,870 in addition to \$18,130 carried forward and to appropriate \$35,000 from Motor Vehicle Excise tax revenues for a total budget of \$107,000 for Public Works operating expenses, and to allow any revenues or reimbursements to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.
- ART. 35 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$80,911 for Aroostook Valley Solid Waste Disposal District (Ashland Transfer Station). No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 36 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$350 in addition to \$850 carried forward for a total budget of \$1,200 for expenses related to the Portage Lake Transfer Station, including the annual reporting and licensing fees and maintenance of the old dump site. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 37 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$2,105 in addition to \$2,595 carried forward for a total budget of \$4,700 for the maintenance of the Portage Lake Municipal Cemetery, and to allow revenue from lot sales, burial fees, and donations to be used for the same.

Discussion:

Brian Cote: Headstones that are laying down...is that homeowner or relative that helps take care of that?

Corrine Routhier: Yes, unless it's a really old stone and there aren't any relatives around.

Brian Cote: So, if we have nobody in town...there has to be permission from the family?

Corrine Routhier: Yes.

Motion carries.

ART. 38 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$945 in addition to \$855 carried forward for a total budget of \$1,800 for the Beautification department, and to allow any donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 39 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$465 in addition to \$835 carried forward for a total budget of \$1,300 for the Portage Lake Recreation Department and to allow any revenues and donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 40 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$12,655 in addition to \$3,195 carried forward for a total budget of \$15,850 for the maintenance of the Town's Parks, Public Beach, Seaplane Base, and Pavilion, and to allow revenues from rentals, reimbursements, and donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 41 It was moved and seconded to carry forward \$4,385 for Campground and Boat Landing operating expenses, and to allow revenues from camping permits, boat excise taxes, reimbursements, and donations to be used for the same. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 42 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$500 from anticipated Boat Excise Tax revenues for the support of the Lake Stewards of Maine to help protect the health of our lake and its watershed areas. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 42 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$9,700 for Street Lights. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 43 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$300 for the Portage Lake School Board member stipends. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 44 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$67,390 for subsidy to the Town of Ashland for Ambulance services. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 45 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$11,816 for subsidy to the Town of Ashland for the use of their Public Library.

Discussion:

Arthur Routhier: What did we appropriate last year for that? For the library?

Corrine Routhier: It didn't pass at town meeting, so nothing was appropriate. We had a special town meeting and uh, I believe it was \$8,000.

Arthur Routhier: The only reason I ask—have they adjusted their hours at the library or are they running the same amount of hours they were previously?

Michelle Johnson: Same hours. Monday, Wednesday, Friday.

Arthur Routhier: They are. Ok. I wasn't sure of their hours.

Motion carries.

ART. 46 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$16,805 for subsidy to the Town of Ashland for the use of their Recreation building and activities. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 47 It was moved and seconded to raise and appropriate \$3,744 for the following requested financial social services assistance:

American Red Cross	\$500
Aroostook Agency on Aging	\$300
Aroostook County Action Program	\$143
Ashland Food Pantry	\$664.13
Catholic Charities of Maine	\$100
Homeless Services of Aroostook	\$1,077
Life Flight Foundation	\$359
Maine Families Aroostook	\$200
Maine Public Broadcasting Corp.	\$100
Martha & Mary's Food Kitchen	\$100
Northern Maine Veteran's Cemetery	\$200

Discussion:

Brian Cote: Who sets...? Us?

Michelle Johnson: They request it.

Brian Cote: They request it. Ok. Thank you.

Motion carries.

ART. 48 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$1,000 from anticipated Boat Excise Tax revenue to the Portage Lake Association for the Town's share of matching funds for a grant to aid in the identification and education of invasive aquatic plants in, or on, Portage Lake. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 49 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$2,500 from Homestead Exemption Reimbursement to support the Portage Lake Historical Society (pursuant to Title 30A, Ch 223, Sub Ch. 4, §5726(6)). No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 50 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$2,500 from Homestead Exemption Reimbursement to the Portage Lake Snowmobile Club for aiding in the maintenance of public-use local snowmobile trails, and to pay 100% of the snowmobile registration fees reimbursement from the State in 2026 to the Portage Lake Snowmobile Club. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 51 It was moved and seconded to appropriate \$2,500 from Homestead Exemption Reimbursement to the Portage Lakers ATV Club for aiding in the maintenance of public-use local ATV trails. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 52 It was moved and seconded to allow expenditures from the Summer Round-Up account and Fireworks Fund account as needed for the purpose of hosting the annual Summer Round-Up weekend. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 53 It was moved and seconded to appropriate up to \$1,600 from surplus to purchase an updated computer for the Code Enforcement office.

Discussion:

Arthur Routhier: Were there quotes on that computer?

Corrine Routhier: Yes.

Arthur Routhier: Will there be enough for what she needs?

Corrine Routhier: Yes.

Barry "Beech" Kenney: Do we have a Code Enforcement Officer in place?

Corrine Routhier: Margaret, still, as interim. But the computer in that office is about 8 to 10 years old, so it's time.

Motion carries.

ART. 54 It was moved and seconded to appropriate up to \$1,800 from surplus for a new office desk for the Town Clerk. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 55 It was moved and seconded to appropriate up to \$12,500 from the Town Hall Improvement Reserve account to purchase an Amish storage shed to replace the red barn and smaller green shed currently used. No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 56 It was moved and seconded to adopt the following addition to the Portage Lake Shoreland Zoning Ordinance:

"16. Administration

C. Permit Application

(5) When an excavation contractor will perform an activity that requires or results in more than one (1) cubic yard of soil disturbance, the person responsible for management of erosion and sedimentation control practices at the site must be certified in erosion control practices by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. This person must be present at the site each day earthmoving activity occurs for the duration. The name and certification number of the person who will oversee the activity causing or resulting in soil disturbance shall be included on the permit application. This requirement does not apply to a person or firm engaged in agriculture or timber harvesting if best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control are used; and municipal, State, and federal employees engaged in projects associated with that employment."

No discussion. Motion carries.

ART. 57 It was moved and seconded to adopt the following amendment to the Portage Lake Land Use Ordinance:

"Minimum Lot Size

Section 2. Zoning

5. Dimensional Requirements: Dimensional Requirements Table

Newly created lots (lots created after the adoption of this proposed change) would have a minimal lot size of 20,000 square feet, which aligns with Maine Subsurface Wastewater Rules."

Discussion:

Herb McPherson: Wasn't that always the size? 1 by 2?

Corrine Routhier: It was, except it wasn't written anywhere on the chart that Maggie refers to. The dimensional chart.

Herb McPherson: Wasn't it in the original packet for Shoreland Zoning?

Corrine Routhier: Nope, it's in wastewater. But it's not anywhere written in our land use ordinance. Motion carries.

Prior to adjournment, Haleigh Holmes and Calvin Mokler were sworn in to their respective elected offices.

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, /Corrine Routhier/