

Town of Searsport, Maine

Select Board Meeting

February 17, 2026

1. Call to Order: 6:00pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance: Doug Norman, Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call: Doug Norman, Chair, Mark Bradstreet Vice Chair, Steve Tanguay and Wes Norton are all present. Sandra Otis-Anderson is excused.
4. Announcements: The Municipal elections will be held at the Searsport Community Center on March 3, 2026 from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. The annual town meeting will be held on Saturday March 7, 2026 and will be upstairs in Union Hall at the town office.
5. Acceptance of Minutes: Mark made a motion to accept the minutes for the February 3, 2026 select board meeting as written, seconded by Steve. Vote : 3-0-1 Wes Norton abstained from voting.
6. Acceptance of the agenda: James added two eleventh hour agenda items. Steve made a motion to accept the agenda with the additional items added as 11th hour, seconded by Mark. Vote: 4-0-0
7. Public Comment: Toni Rowe spoke regarding Mosman Memorial Park Associations right of way. Janine Laveway spoke regarding the repair of the seawall at Mosman Memorial Park.
8. Old Business:

a. Citizen's Petition for Warrant: James notified the board that the petition has been certified.

b. Town Meeting Warrant: There are 3 items to be voted on separately.

Article 16: To see if the town will vote to appropriate up to \$80,000.00 to fund items within the 2026 municipal budget that would otherwise be raised by taxes. BAC approved 9-0-0. Mark made a motion to accept the article as written to be placed on the warrant for town meeting, seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0

Article 17: To see if the town will vote to appropriate up to \$100,000.00 from unappropriated surplus to the following reserve accounts: Ambulance \$20,000.00, Public Works \$75,000.00 and Fire Department \$5,000.00. BAC approved 9-0-0. Mark made a motion to accept the article as written to be placed on the warrant for town meeting, seconded by Steve. Vote: 4-0-0

Article 18: To see if the town will vote to raise \$77,500.00 for the following reserve accounts: Ambulance: \$7,000.00 Public Works Equipment \$38,500.00 and Police Cruiser \$32,000.00. BAC approved 9-0-0 Mark made a motion to accept the article as written to be placed on the warrant for town meeting, seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0

Article 14: Clay Slurry PPOVSA credit enhancement agreement is in its final year of the 20 agreement. James is looking for authorization to move forward and straighten this out over the next year.

Article 19: Spruce Knoll Lane

Article 21: CEO is recommending an adjustment to the solar energy systems large scale.

Article 22: To see if the town will vote to improve the mobile home rent stabilization ordinance as written.

Steve made a motion to approve the 2026 annual town meeting warrant so it can be posted for the public as soon as possible. Motion was seconded by Mark Vote: 4-0-0

c. EPEC/PERC Litigation: There is currently litigation filed by PERC against EPEC. Searsport is listed as an interested party in the lawsuit. The law firm of Rudman and Winchell is asking if the town is interested in joining the lawsuit as a litigant. Wes made a motion to table the request from Rudman and Winchell to determine our relationship status, seconded by Doug Vote: 4-0-0

9. New Business:

- a. Animal Control Compensation: Mark made a motion to approve creating a \$400.00 a month stipend for the animal control officer and also include mileage reimbursement. Motion was seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0
- b. Quit Claim Deed Map 4 Lot 9A Account #404: Steve made a motion to authorize the town manager to authorize a quit claim on the property located on tax map 4 lot 9A, account # 404 pending the receipt of the taxes and fees due. Seconded by Mark Vote: 4-0-0
- c. Bill Adjustment Wastewater Acct # 773: Wes made a motion to deny the abatement request for wastewater account #773, seconded by Mark Vote: 4-0-0
- d. Authorization to engage with Dirigo Safety Investigations: Doug made a motion to authorize the town manager to engage with Dirigo Safety Investigations at the town manager's discretion, seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0

10. 11th Hour:

- a. Waldo County EMA: mutual aid for the fire department: Wes made a motion to enter a mutual aid agreement for the Waldo County Fire Fighters, seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0
- b. Promotional Video: James explained a recent proposal to join a marketing campaign video for the town. The estimated cost would be \$1,000.00 a minute. No action taken

11. Correspondence:

- a. Letter from RSU 20 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laura Miller outlining the work the School Board of Directors has done and inviting a representative of the town to attend the upcoming budget workshops.
- b. Letter from PERC notifying the town of a recent claim that has been filed.
- c. Letter from CEO notification of new address at 48B North Searsport Road.
- d. Ambulance reconciliation report
- e. Notification from FEMA regarding an award to rebuild the wharf – roughly 1.2 million with a town match. James believes the town will receive just shy of one million dollars. He thinks he can go out to bid for the repairs now within two weeks.

12. Treasurer's Warrant. Mark made a motion to accept the Treasurer's warrant pending signatures by the Select Board, seconded by Doug Vote: 4-0-0

13. Department Head Reports: Fire, Police and Library have been received. Steve made a motion to accept the reports received as written, seconded by Mark. Vote: 4-0-0

14. Select Board Report:

Mark reminded everyone to vote on March 3rd at the community building and to attend town meeting on the 7th at Union Hall.

Steve announced mini golf at the Library on Saturday Feb 21st and the shellfish committee meeting for February has been postponed.

Wes talked about the well attended public meeting regarding the repairs to the wharf. The meeting is available online through town hall streams.

Doug has had several folks speak to him about raising the level of the granite blocks at the wharf in the parking area.

15. Public Comment and the Viewing Public Comment:

A.J. brought to the attention of the board a typographical error to the Map number in the quit claim deed request. It is map 4 not map 5. He also announced a surplus of rubber gloves that are available for free. They are at the public safety building.

James talked about attending the county budget meeting recently in Belfast. Commissioner Kevin Kelley then met in Searsport with him regarding the strategies they are using. The original increased county budget

reduction is now down to 13%. For Searsport this looks to be about a \$102,895.19 increase over last year. That works out to be roughly .40 added to the town of Searsport's mill rate.

16. Executive Session M.R.S.A. 1 § 405 (6) (F) Confidential – (General Assistance Matters and Poverty abatement requests) Mark made a motion at 7:05 pm to leave regular session and enter into executive session under M.R.S.A 1 § 405 (6) (F) Confidential – (General Assistance Matters and Poverty Abatement requests). Seconded by Doug. Vote: 4-0-0.

Mark made a motion at 7:20 pm to exit executive session and return to regular session, seconded by Doug . Vote: 4-0-0

17. Decisions from Executive Session;

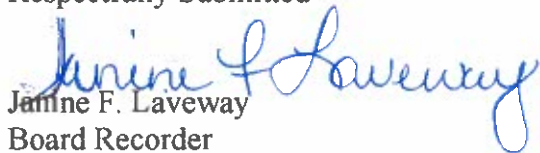
PA 26-01 Denied

PA 26-02 Abate taxes for years 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Mark made a motion to deny request PA 26-01 and approve PA 26-02 seconded by Steve Vote: 4-0-0

18Adjournment: Mark made a motion to adjourn at 7:24 pm. Second by Steve Vote: 4-0-0

Respectfully Submitted


Jamie F. Laveway
Board Recorder