



**Norridgewock Select Board
Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2024
6:00 PM
Conference Room, Norridgewock Town Office**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matthew Everett, Chair
Lindsey Lynch, Vice Chair
Kelsea Bickford
Ronnie Blodgett
Dylan Wentworth

STAFF PRESENT

Richard LaBelle, Town Manager
Todd Pineo, Fire Chief

Also present for all or parts of the meeting were Brenda Holt (via Zoom) and Jim Lyman.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mr. Everett.

2. Pledge to the Flag

3. Review/Approve Minutes of January 3, 2024

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve the minutes of January 3, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

4. Member Reports

Mr. Wentworth noted that there is a significant pothole at the intersection of Routes 2 and 201-A that poses a significant threat to motorists. Mr. LaBelle will continue to contact DOT about this issue.

Mr. Blodgett stated that he recently received an email from a resident who is opposed to the proposed declared write-in referendum.

5. Town Manager's Report

See Attached.

6. Discussion/Action on January 17, 2024 General Warrant 2023-24

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign General Warrant 2023-24 in the amount of \$39,012.71. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

7. Discussion/Action on January 17, 2024 General Warrant 2024-01

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign General Warrant 2024-01 in the amount of \$200,692.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

8. Discussion/Action on January 17, 2024 Airport Warrant 2024-01

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign Airport Warrant 2024-01 in the amount of \$6,186.68. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

*Matthew Everett, Chair • Lindsey Lynch, Vice Chair
Kelsea Bickford • Ronnie Blodgett • Dylan Wentworth*

9. Discussion/Action on January 17, 2024 Sewer Commitment

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign the January 17, 2024 Sewer Commitment in the amount of \$22,739.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Public Hearing on Proposed Expenditure of American Rescue Act Plan Funds for Purchase of Fire Gear

Mr. Everett opened the public hearing at 6:11 PM.

Fire Chief Todd Pineo presented the Board with a memorandum outlining his request for four sets of additional turnout gear.

There were questions about the new firefighters and their average response relative to current firefighters. There was also discussion regarding the use of shared equipment and the feasibility.

Mr. Everett closed the public hearing at 6:32 PM.

12. Discussion/Action on Proposed Expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act Funds

Ms. Bickford made a MOTION to authorize the expenditure of up to \$17,120.00 from the American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purchase of fire turnout gear. Seconded by Ms. Lynch. MOTION PASSED.

13. Public Hearing on March 4, 2024 Referendum Questions

Mr. Everett opened the public hearing at 6:33 PM.

Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. § 2501, shall the Town vote to be governed by 21 M.R.S.A. § 696(2)(C) and § 722-A, intending that votes for write-in candidates in municipal elections, beginning with the 2025 Annual Election, will be counted only if that candidate has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy with the Municipal Clerk?

Mr. LaBelle provided a brief overview of the proposal and information surrounding its source. It was also noted that in the original agenda, the proposed effective year was incorrectly listed.

Ward Hill Road resident Jim Lyman noted that there were two positive aspects of the proposal, which included an enhanced validation of the nomination process and a savings of ballot clerk time and resources. Generally, though, he is opposed to the proposed question. He noted concern with statute citations and stated that it should be further reviewed.

Wilder Hill Road resident Todd Pineo expressed general opposition to the question, stating that excluding write-ins “doesn’t account for life” (i.e., changes in personal situations that may encourage one to run in the proposed closed period).

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the expense of up to \$50,000.00 from the Unassigned Fund Balance (surplus) for the repair or replacement of the gazebo at Oosoola Park

Mr. LaBelle briefly discussed the proposal, stemming from the Parks Committee's request and the expansion of activities in Oosoola Park, including the Oosoola Park Music Series.

Mr. Lyman, who also serves as a Budget Committee member, spoke about the proposal and felt there was a lack of plan detail. He thought the condition of the existing gazebo was acceptable and also believed that there needed to be a greater vision for the parks.

Mr. Everett closed the public hearing at 6:53 PM.

14. Discussion/Action on Grant Acceptance

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to accept a grant in the amount of \$20,000.00 from Somerset County and to deposit the funds into the Emergency Management account for future disaster-related/planning use. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION FAILED, 3-2 (Lynch, Wentworth in favor; Everett, Bickford, Blodgett opposed).

The Board had a discussion regarding the allocation of funds to future disaster-related management/prevention or to individuals who filed claims with MEMA. Copies of the current claims will be e-mailed to the Select Board members, and an agenda item will be set for the next regular meeting to consider the appropriation of funds.

Ms. Bickford made a MOTION to accept a grant in the amount of \$20,000.00 from Somerset County. Seconded by Mr. Blodgett. MOTION PASSED, 4-1 (Everett, Bickford, Blodgett, Wentworth in favor; Lynch opposed).

15. Discussion/Action on Cemetery Quitclaim Deed

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign a cemetery quitclaim deed releasing the southern half of Lot 267 at Sunset View Cemetery to Keith Clark. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

16. Discussion/Action on 2024 Budget, 2024 Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. LaBelle reviewed the Budget Committee's recommendations on the proposed 2024 budget, and the Board considered their recommendations and reasoning.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant administrative town meeting articles, Draft Articles 1, 4, 5, and 27-42. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 43: Shall an ordinance entitled "*2024 Amendments to the Town of Norridgewock Sewer Use Ordinance*" be enacted? Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 6 (Administration) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$451,700.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED, 4-1 (Everett, Lynch, Blodgett, Wentworth in favor; Bickford opposed).

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 7 (Elected Officials) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$18,100.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 8 (Tax Assessing) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$26,600.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 9 (Public Safety) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$131,010.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 10 (Fire) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$318,426.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 11 (Public Works) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$753,675.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 12 (Cemeteries) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$6,650.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 13 (General Assistance) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$5,600.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 14 (Recreation) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$32,325.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED, 4-1 (Everett, Lynch, Bickford, Wentworth in favor; Blodgett opposed).

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 15 (Parks) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$30,380.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 16 (Library) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$51,280.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 17 (Code Enforcement) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$46,100.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 18 (Planning Board) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$2,200.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 19 (Local Philanthropy) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$8,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED, 4-1 (Everett, Bickford, Blodgett, Wentworth in favor; Lynch opposed).

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 20 (Summer Grounds Maintenance) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$45,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Blodgett. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 21 (Debt Service) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$93,423.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 22 (Unclassified) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$31,536.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 23 (Contingency) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$10,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 24 (Capital Reserves) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$1,060,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Blodgett. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 25 (Anticipated Revenues) as presented, with a recommendation to approve the stated amount of \$2,370,232.00. Seconded by Mr. Blodgett. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 26 (Unassigned Fund/Surplus) in the amount of up to \$500,000.00, with a recommendation to approve up to \$500,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION FAILED, 4-1 (Lynch in favor; Everett, Bickford, Blodgett, Wentworth opposed).

Mr. Blodgett made a MOTION to warrant Draft Article 26 (Unassigned Fund/Surplus) in the amount of up to \$550,000.00, with a recommendation to approve up to \$500,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED, 4-1 (Everett, Bickford, Blodgett, Wentworth in favor; Lynch opposed).

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to remove Draft Article 2: *To vote by secret ballot on the following question: Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. § 2501, shall the Town vote to be governed by 21 M.R.S.A. § 696(2)(C) and § 722-A, intending that votes for write-in candidates in municipal elections, beginning with the 2025 Annual Election, will be counted only if that candidate has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy with the Municipal Clerk?* Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to remove Draft Article 3: *To vote by secret ballot on the following question: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the expense of up to \$50,000.00 from the Unassigned Fund Balance (surplus) for the repair or replacement of the gazebo at Oosoola Park.* Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to sign the 2024 Town Meeting Warrant. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

17. Other Business

The Board reviewed draft covers for the annual report, and the consensus was to feature the Grange, as its exterior was rehabilitated with the use of Town grant funds, and the project was completed in 2023.

18. Adjournment

Ms. Bickford made a MOTION to adjourn at 8:06 PM. Seconded by Ms. Lynch. MOTION PASSED.