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Town of Frenchboro

One Executive Drive
Frenchboro, ME 04635
(207) 334-2933 (Phone)
(207) 334-2971 (Fax)

Email: frenchboro@gmail.com

Select Board

Joe Lunt
Chris Hodgkins
Myron Lenfestey
Jackie Mitchell
Larry Smith

Town Administrator

Rick Erb

Select Board Meeting

March 9, 2026
5:00 pm

Joe Lunt, Myron Lenfestey, Jackie Mitchell, Chris Hodgkins, and Larry Smith were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm

Minutes from Last Meeting: Motion to accept the 2/23/26 minutes by Larry Smith and seconded by Joe Lunt. Approved 5-0.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting will be on 3/23/2026 at 5:00 pm

Treasurer's Report: The warrant was presented to the Board. Motion to sign by Joe Lunt, seconded by Larry Smith and unanimously approved.

Treasurer Daniel Swain responded to questions about back taxes that are owed to the Town. For three tax years prior to 2024, the Town failed to put liens on properties. However, if taxes are still owed for any of those years, the Town is still covered. Under state law, any tax payments received are put toward the oldest year. Taxpayers do not have the option of only paying the taxes that have gone to lien. In this way, the Town of Frenchboro is protected and will be receiving taxes due for each year.

Planning Board Report: Planning Board Chair Kirk Emerson spoke with the Board about the status of the proposed Land Use Ordinance that is expected to be voted on at the annual town meeting. The Planning Board had additional discussion on the proposed ordinance with the Select Board and is scheduled to have a public meeting on the topic on 3/24/2026. Kirk reviewed specific sections of the proposed ordinance and there was considerable discussion on parts that would bring the Town into compliance with State law. It would also establish building setback requirements. The town currently doesn't have these, but this proposed ordinance would set setback minimums at 15' on each side. This led to discussion on the difficulty of obtaining valid surveys in Frenchboro. Concern was expressed about liability the Town might be taking on

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if the building permits are issued, based on a lack of survey data. It was generally agreed that it is the permit applicant's responsibility to verify the property lines, but there were concerns raised that uncertainty about lot lines might increase friction between neighbors, when the intention of setback requirements is to reduce the number of disagreements.

Questions were raised on who is responsible for proceeding with the land use ordinance vote and it was agreed that the Planning Board is responsible for sending the proposed ordinance to the Select Board, who are ultimately the ones who votes on what will be included in the annual town meeting warrant.

2026-27 Budget: Due to the lengthy discussion on previous agenda items, it was agreed that the Town Administrator will send budget information to the Board to be discussed at the March 23, 2026 meeting.

Town Roads: The Town Administrator reported that Austin Soucy may be interested in taking on some road maintenance jobs, including patching potholes. This led to discussion on what to do with roads that are beyond patching and will require an overlay. The cost of this may require the Town to consider bonding, as was done in the past. More information was requested on the amount still owed on the last bond and potential cost for paving roads that are in most serious condition, including Executive Drive and the Butler Road. The Board discussed the condition of Gooseberry Road and said that some immediate action will be needed to keep it passable.. It was suggested that Soucy could be asked for an opinion on how to proceed.

Head of the Harbor: Discussions with FEMA and MEMA went well and Jaime Wallace from Wright-Pierce has stated that a bid notice for the culvert replacement can be prepared for June or July. This may need to be released before environmental permitting is complete, but the window of opportunity is likely to require us to proceed with bids this manner.

Record Storage: The Town Administrator reported on state law regarding record storage and retention. There was general discussion on the current situation and ways to address the need to organize documents. Previous suggestions had included the services of an Island Fellow to carry out this task. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should be involved with any plan that is made.

School Reorganization Vote: Superintendent Mike Zboray has responded to questions raised at the previous Select Board meeting. He stated that he will be available to meet with residents by Zoom or in person before the June vote on reorganization. He also confirmed that there is adequate money in the school budget to reactivate the Frenchboro School if there are students on the island at mid-year.

The Board then voted to go into executive session to discuss real estate acquisition and possible litigation. Motion by Joe Lunt and seconded by Larry Smith. Unanimously approved.

Following the executive session, there was discussion on the sale of town properties, as approved at the special town meeting. New estimated values have been determined by Steve Shelton and the Board agreed to move ahead on the sale, starting with those prices. Chris Hodgkins moved

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to go forward with the sale as directed by the Town Meeting, using the revised figures from Steve Shelton. Seconded by Larry Smith and unanimously approved.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Joe Lunt moved to adjourn. Seconded by Larry Smith and unanimously approved at 7:05 pm.