

**Town of Mount Desert
Selectboard Minutes
February 26, 2024**

Selectboard Members Present: Chair John Macauley, Wendy Littlefield, Geoff Wood, Rick Mooers, Martha Dudman

Town Officials and Department Heads Present: Town Manager Durlin Lunt, Town Clerk Claire Woolfolk, Tax Assessor Kyle Avila, Public Works Director Brian Henkel

Members of the Public were also present.

I. Call to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Macauley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2024 Meeting

MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Mr. Mooers seconding, approval of the February 5, 2024 Minutes as presented.

Motion approved 4-0-1 (Littlefield in Abstention).

III. Appointments/Recognitions/Resignations

A. Consider appointment of Colby Hamor to the position of Buildings & Grounds effective March 11, 2024, at the six-month probationary rate of \$23.28 per hour

MOTION: Ms. Littlefield moved, with Mr. Wood seconding, appointment of Colby Hamor to the position of Buildings & Grounds effective March 11, 2024, at the six-month probationary rate of \$23.28 per hour as presented.

Motion approved 5-0.

B. Recognition of the appointment of Justin Kelley to the Mechanic B position of the Highway Division of Public Works

MOTION: Ms. Dudman moved, with Mr. Wood seconding, recognition of the appointment of Justin Kelley to the Mechanic B position of the Highway Division of Public Works as presented. Motion approved 5-0.

C. Recognition of the resignation of Decatur French from the Mechanic B position of the Highway Division

MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Littlefield seconding, recognition of the resignation of Decatur French from the Mechanic B position of the Highway Division as presented.

Motion approved 5-0.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes from January 30, 2024

B. Thank you note from Mount Desert Nursing Association

1 C. Letter from Emmaus Homeless Shelter

2 D. Maine Department of Health and Human Services acknowledgement of General Assistance
3 Statutes compliance

4 MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, acceptance of the Consent Agenda
5 as presented.

6 Motion approved 4-0.

7
8 **V. Selectboard's Reports**

9 Ms. Littlefield reported on a letter she'd received and shared with other Board Members
10 requesting they allow a taxpayer to remain on the tax plan, in light of extenuating circumstances
11 regarding a missed payment deadline.

12
13 It was deemed the Board could vote on the issue without going into Executive Session.

14
15 MOTION: Ms. Littlefield moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, the Board allow the taxpayers
16 in question to remain on the tax plan, in light of the extenuating circumstances around their
17 missed payment deadline.

18 Motion approved 5-0.

19
20 Ms. Littlefield would apprise the taxpayers in question of the decision and get a copy of the letter
21 to the Town Clerk and the Tax Collector as well.

22
23 **VI. Unfinished Business**

24 No Unfinished Business was presented.

25
26 **VII. New Business**

27 A. Presentation of Service Groups/Non-profit Agency Funding Requests Budget FY 2025

28 **Aid Society of Otter Creek**: The Aid Society is requesting \$10,000.00 for new windows and
29 basement casements for their building. The total estimated cost for the work is approximately
30 \$20,000.00.

31
32 Warrant Committee member Katrina Carter asked whether there was further need for building
33 repairs beyond the windows and casements. Chair Macauley affirmed there was additional work
34 needed. Likely they would need an engineer's opinion on some of it. Mr. Wood asked whether
35 the Aid Society had received estimates for the work. Chair Macauley explained the amount
36 requested was based on what the Town Offices paid for their window work.

37
38 **Bar Harbor Food Pantry**: The food pantry is requesting \$3,500.00 for food costs. This is the
39 same amount asked for in the past three years. The pantry gave away approximately
40 \$500,000.00 in food last year.

41
42 **Downeast Community Partners**: Downeast Community Partners is requesting \$5,574.00; the
43 amount is a percentage of the cost of services provided to the Town. The request has not
44 changed in recent years.

45
46 Warrant Committee member Carmen Sanford asked for clarification regarding transportation
47 provided. Representative Melissa Maddis explained that 60 people/households were served.

1 Those served were provided numerous rides. Mr. Wood asked about rising costs of services.
2 Ms. Maddis noted the Emergency Rental Relief Program was a high expense, but a temporary
3 increase during the pandemic. Ms. Maddis explained that the aging in place programs allow
4 residents to stay in their homes as they age. Support services include things like grocery
5 deliveries or rides to appointments. One person in Mount Desert used this service in the past
6 year.

7
8 **Downeast Horizons:** Downeast Horizons assists adults and children with developmental
9 disabilities through both day and evening programs and services and group homes with 24-hour
10 care. 55 people and their caregivers in Mount Desert are served.

11
12 **Eastern Area Agency on Aging:** The agency is requesting \$750.00. This amount is the same as
13 last year. The agency offers home-delivered meals through a partnership with MDI housing
14 authority. Last year just under 1500 meals were delivered to homes in Mount Desert.

15
16 **Great Harbor Maritime Museum:** The museum is requesting funding to maintain the only
17 public restrooms on Main St. Northeast Harbor. These restrooms and the ones on Sea Street are
18 used heavily during the visitor season.

19
20 **Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County:** Hospice Volunteers is requesting \$1500.00. This
21 amount was requested last year. Two patients in Mount Desert were served in the past year, and
22 a third was provided equipment. Hospice Volunteers receives no funding from state or federal
23 government; they rely on donors, fundraising, grants and municipal support.

24
25 **Island Connections:** Island Connections is requesting \$2500.00. This amount was requested
26 last year. They provide transportation for the Meals on Wheels program, deliver meals through
27 Open Table MDI, and partner with the food pantry as well.

28
29 **Island Housing Trust:** The housing trust is requesting \$7900.00 for the Island Housing Trust's
30 Hope program which provides bridge funding to homebuyers who lack the funds for a
31 downpayment and closing costs on a home.

32
33 Ms. Carter asked if the funding the Town provides stays within the Town of Mount Desert.
34 Housing Trust representative Natalie Osborn noted such a stipulation can be specified if funding
35 is granted. All Island towns are asked. \$7,900.00 is requested from both Mount Desert and Bar
36 Harbor, and \$5,000.00 is requested from both Southwest Harbor and Tremont.

37
38 **LifeFlight:** LifeFlight is requesting \$1,000.00. This request is the same as last year's. 2,460
39 patients were lifeflighted in 2023, 9 of which were Mount Desert residents. More than 38k
40 patients have been cared for since 1998.

41
42 **Mount Desert Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber is requesting \$28,500.00, the same
43 amount as requested last year. 100% of these funds are used locally. 75% is used for visitor
44 center operation, and the rest is used for in-town way-finding signage and printing the map and
45 visitor guide. 6,652 visitors to the town were helped. 82 vehicle passes and 7 annual park passes
46 were sold.

47

1 **Mount Desert Community Development**: The group is requesting \$5,000.00. The Community
2 Development Corporation works as a vehicle for private fundraising for community projects. In
3 the past year the group's been assisting with skating rink project fundraising. They've raised
4 hundreds of thousands of dollars for what is a major upgrade to the facility. The amount
5 requested would cover administrative and bookkeeping costs.

6
7 Ms. Carter pointed out that their application states they have ample funds on hand. Treasurer
8 Dan McKay affirmed the group has funds. The funds on hand are contributions for the skating
9 rink. Mr. McKay did not feel it was appropriate to use funding received for the skating rink for
10 administration costs like liability insurance and other overhead expenses.

11
12 **Mount Desert Island Campfire Coalition**: The Coalition is requesting \$3,000.00. 100% of the
13 funding is used to purchase heating fuel or equivalent heat for needy homes. 108 households
14 were assisted last year for a total cost of \$64,000.00. All island Towns are asked for \$3,000.00.

15
16 **Mount Desert Nursery School**: The school is requesting \$20,000.00 to replace doors and make
17 other improvements to the building. 37 students attended the school last year. Currently there
18 are 11 students enrolled, 3 from Mount Desert and 2 from families working in Mount Desert.
19 Plans are underway for expanding the program to include infants to five-year-olds. This coming
20 year two-year-olds will be attending. There are costs involved in expanding the age range served
21 and classroom reconfiguration.

22
23 Ms. Sanford asserted the application states that the school's fundraising efforts came to only
24 \$516.00 last year. Expenses are noted as \$583.00. Ms. Sanford was concerned the school was
25 doing no fundraising. School director Sarah Hinckley believed there must be some confusion in
26 the paperwork presented. The school's fundraising surpassed \$15,000.00. It was confirmed the
27 paperwork showed additional fundraising income.

28
29 Additionally, Ms. Sanford stated that last year's request was for \$20,000.00 for doors. The
30 school's letter states the doors will be installed in 2025. Door replacement has been delayed due
31 to the difficulty in scheduling a contractor in the past few years, but Ms. Hinckley confirmed a
32 contractor has now been found. Work must be scheduled around the school schedule to work
33 around the students' presence for safety's sake. Several present at the meeting spoke in support
34 of the service the school provides. Ms. Littlefield applauded their foresight in expanding
35 attendance to include younger students.

36
37 **Mount Desert Nursing Association**: The funding the Association is requesting has not changed
38 since last year. The Nursing Association served 133 patients in Mount Desert with a total of 867
39 visits. They host flu clinics and blood pressure clinics. An additional 49 Mount Desert residents
40 have used the association's medical and adaptive equipment. The Nursing Association requests
41 funding from all the towns they serve.

42
43 **Northern Light Homecare and Hospice**: The organization is requesting \$1,200.00. This
44 amount has not changed in recent years. In the past year they made 149 visits to 11 people
45 residing in Mount Desert. Due to nursing shortages, they partner with the Mount Desert Nursing
46 Association.

1 Warrant Committee member Kathy Miller asked for clarification on who they serve.
2 Organization president Colleen Hilton explained that most of their services are hospice services
3 at this time. They recommend new patients to Mount Desert Nursing Association. This is an
4 effort to spread the resources to better serve everyone.

5
6 **Seal Harbor VIS:** The VIS is requesting \$55,000.00, which covers approximately 30% of their
7 budget. This amount has not changed in the past two years. The organization maintains Seal
8 Harbor beach, parking lot, comfort station, village green, monuments, and trails. They have 3
9 salaried employees, one full-time and two part-time. There is an additional seasonal assistant as
10 well. There has been extra work clearing storm debris in the area this year, and traffic and
11 visitors to Seal harbor rose in 2023. Most of the budget is covered by private donations. VIS
12 Vice President Chris Willis reported meeting with Town Manager Lunt who agreed having the
13 Town do the work would be far more costly.

14
15 Ms. Carter asked if the amount requested would be enough to reclaim the beach after the storms.
16 Mr. Willis explained their work involves maintenance tasks like raking the seaweed off the
17 beach and trash removal. In terms of restoring the beach, it's a bigger project than what the VIS
18 can do, likely to be handled by FEMA funds or the town. Public Works Director Henkel
19 reported work will continue to repair the recent storm damage and erosion. The VIS employees
20 are a great resource for the Town.

21
22 *B. Request from Camp Beech Cliff to be included in the Town Report*

23 Camp Beech Cliff Director Debra Deal requested that Camp Beech Cliff be included in the
24 Annual Report. Camp Beech Cliff is a self-sustaining organization and therefore does not ask
25 for third-party funding. The organization provides many services to the community, and they'd
26 like to communicate that to the Town through the Town Report. Services include summer camp
27 programs with free transportation, camperships benefitting over 80 campers, 65 staff are
28 employed including local kids, work done with Mount Desert Elementary School and the high
29 school and a fifth-grade-wide safety day, pickleball for adults, Friday night family fun nights,
30 and outdoor education/mental health training for school aids and other interested adults.

31
32 Ms. Miller noted the deadline for including a letter has passed. Manager Lunt noted the deadline
33 wouldn't necessarily apply because Camp Beech Cliff isn't eligible to have a letter in the Town
34 Report. Adding Camp Beech Cliff to the Town Report is a policy decision voted on by the
35 Selectboard. The policy is in place because there are many organizations that would like to be
36 included. Third-party request groups can include information in the report.

37
38 MOTION: Mr. Wood moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, to allow a report from Camp Beech
39 Cliff to be included in the Town Report.
40 Motion approved 5-0.

41
42 *C. Discussion of a new contract with EMR in Southwest Harbor for solid waste handling
43 services*

44 Director Henkel reported the auto renew timing for this contract is in March, likely because the
45 Town Meeting used to be in March. The change to Town Meeting timing means the auto renew
46 occurs before the Town Meeting. Director Henkel would like to revise the date.

1 Additionally, Director Henkel has asked for a legal opinion from the Town Attorney regarding
 2 the necessity of taking a contract of this type to Town Meeting. He's conferred with EMR and
 3 voiced his intent and questions. There's no substantive change other than these two items. If the
 4 contract does not need to go before Town Meeting, then the March renewal would make no
 5 difference.

6
 7 **VIII. Other Business**

8 *A. Such other business as may be legally conducted*
 9 There was no Other Business.

10
 11 **IX. Treasurer's Warrants**

12 *A. Approve & Sign Treasurer's Warrant as shown below:*

Town Invoices	AP#2452	02/27/2024	\$215,012.11
Total			\$215,012.11

13 MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, approval and signature of
 14 Treasurer's Warrant as shown above.
 15 Motion approved 5-0.

16
 17 *B. Approve Signed Treasurer's Payroll, State Fees, & PR Benefit Warrants as shown below:*

State Fees & PR Benefits	AP#2449	02/07/2024	\$46,975.17
	AP#2450	02/15/2024	\$123,108.61
Town Payroll	PR#2420	02/16/2024	\$156,427.44
Total			\$326,511.22

18 MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, approval of signed Treasurer's
 19 Payroll, State Fees and PR Benefit Warrants as shown above.
 20 Motion approved 4-0-1 (Littlefield in Abstention).

21
 22 *C. Acknowledge Treasurer's Town Voided Disbursements & School Board AP/Payroll*
 23 *Warrants as shown below:*

School Invoices	AP#8	02/07/2024	\$203,411.66
School Payroll	PR#16	02/16/2024	\$196,660.93
Voided Disbursements			\$0
Total			\$400,072.59

24 MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Dudman seconding, acknowledgement of Treasurer's
 25 Town Voided Disbursements and School Board AP/Payroll as shown above.
 26 Motion approved 5-0.

27

Grand Total			\$941,595.92
--------------------	--	--	---------------------

28
 29 **X. Adjournment**

30 MOTION: Mr. Mooers moved, with Ms. Littlefield seconding, to adjourn the meeting.
 31 Motion approved 5-0.

32
 33 Meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

Respectfully submitted,



Geoffrey Wood