

Harpswell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Thursday January 15, 2026
Harpswell Town Office
APPROVED 2-5-26

This meeting was held in the Select Board Meeting room at the Town Office and was available remotely by Zoom. Instructions were included on the published agenda and on the Town's website. Links to a video recording of the meeting are also available on the Town's website.

Selectmen Present: Chairman Kevin E. Johnson; Selectman David I. Chipman; Selectman Matthew Gilley

Staff Present: Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator; Terri Gaudet, Treasurer & Deputy Town Administrator.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda:** The agenda was adopted with no changes.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Select Board's Announcements:** None
4. **Town Administrator's Report:** Town Administrator Eiane conveyed a message from the Town Clerk; to remind the public that January 31 was the deadline for the annual registration of dogs.
5. **Approval of March 14, 2025 Ballot & Set Public Hearing for February 10, 6 PM:** Town Administrator Eiane asked the Select Board to approve language for two Warrant articles that will be voted on by secret ballot referendum at the March Town Meeting. The first will be to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate funds for Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. The second will be to see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into an agreement with the Maine Department of Agriculture regarding the Town's management of State conservation land at Clark Cove. By voting via referendum, the Articles will not be voted on or discussed on the floor at Town Meeting. Instead, a separate Public Hearing for the Articles would be held around February 10, 2026 at Harpswell Community School - a date subject to the Select Board's input and approval.

Selectman Chipman asked if by voting to approve the language, the Town would lose the opportunity to modify the agreement being negotiated with the State. Town Administrator Eiane indicated that it would not. Ronny Weston of Harpswell Neck asked the Select Board why they chose to put the Clark Cove question on a secret ballot versus letting it be determined at open Town Meeting. She felt this was contrary to the spirit of how questions like this are traditionally deliberated by voters in New England and she opposed its use. Chairman Johnson and Selectman Gilley indicated that referendum votes generate higher participation rates among voters and were thus appropriate for matters of great significance. And, they noted that the issue has been vetted publicly on numerous occasions and that the Public would now get additional opportunity to express their opinions at the Public Hearing in February.

The Select Board voted unanimously to authorize the language of the Articles as written. The Select Board also voted unanimously to establish a Public Hearing date of February 11, 2026 - subject to the availability of the Harpswell Community School – with a back-up date of February 17.

Town Administrator Eiane asked the Select Board members to indicate if they recommended the articles, which will be printed on the ballot. Chairman Johnson recommended the Curtis Memorial Library article and did not recommend the Clark Cove article. Selectman Gilley did not the Curtis Memorial Library

article and did recommend the Clark Cove article. Selectman Chipman recommended the Curtis Memorial Library article and did not recommend the Clark Cove article.

- 6. Set Shellfish License Lottery Dates for March 31, 5 PM:** The Select Board unanimously approved setting the date of the Shellfish License Lottery for March 31 at 5 PM.
- 7. 2025 Carryover List:** Terri Gaudet, Treasurer & Deputy Town Administrator, asked the Select Board to authorize the carry-over of unspent 2025 funds related to a list of special projects, capital reserves and other reserves. The carry-over would total \$3,380,991. Selectman Gilley inquired about \$3,505 reserved for Harpswell Home Repairs. Treasurer Gaudet provided some historical background, explaining that this was the remnant of funds originally approved in order to supplement grants that were capped at \$5,000. Selectman Chipman asked Chairman Johnson about the status of funds approved for 'Land Purchase Map 42, Lot 6'. Chairman Johnson said he would seek an update from the homeowner. The Select Board unanimously approved the carry-over list as published and recommended by the Treasurer.
- 8. Public Comment:** None.
- 9. Other Business:** None
- 10. Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:24 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Hubbard
Recording Secretary

Attachments: None

[Attachments are available at the Town Clerk's Office or by email at harpwell@town.harpwell.me.us]