

Harpswell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Thursday April 9, 2026
Harpswell Town Office
APPROVED 4-23-26

5:00PM The Select Board held a workshop regarding proposed changes to the Town's Animal Control Ordinance.

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; Margaret McIntire, Town Planner; and Katie Neal, Recreation Director.

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

1. **Adoption of Agenda:** Approved with no changes.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Select Board Announcements:** Selectman Chipman reminded the public that pop-up business signs along the roadways were not allowed by ordinance and should be removed.
4. **Town Administrator's Report:** Administrator Eiane addressed the following topics:

- **Heating Assistance Program:** At the 4-2 Select Board meeting, it was reported that Town staff may ask the Board to consider some changes to the Program allowing for flexible use of resources beyond the April 15 end of season. Town staff believes that there is enough flexibility in the existing policy; which will allow for some exceptions this year on a case by case basis. Additional review can occur prior to the start of the next winter season. The Board agreed there should be flexibility.

Katie Neal, Recreation Director, said that she really appreciated the flexibility that was already afforded to address resident's requests. Generous donations allow the Town to serve its residents and there were twenty five (25) new households in the Program this year. There is a huge and growing need, particularly as heating oil costs have spiked. The challenge is to respond to immediate needs flexibly, while protecting the bulk of available resources for the winter season when the need is acute.

- **Workshop Scheduling:** The Select Board will need to prioritize and schedule workshops related to the following initiatives: 1) Negotiation of Cable TV Franchise Agreement; 2) Recycling Center Project; 3) Select Board Goal-Setting; 4) Comprehensive Plan Implementation. After some discussion, the Town Administrator was asked to schedule time the following week for a workshop on the Cable TV agreement, and another workshop prior to the 4-23-26 Board Meeting (5 PM) regarding the Comprehensive Plan. Scheduling the other two workshops would be deferred for now.

5. **Grant Application for Housing Consultant:** Margaret McIntire, Town Planner, reminded the Select Board that the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) was offering up to \$10k in grants to assist municipalities to make changes in ordinances that respond to new housing legislation (LD1829). MOCA

is no longer requiring municipalities to identify a specific consultant prior to applying for grants. This will allow the Town to simultaneously issue RFP's for consultants and submit its application. The Town Planner asked the Select Board to authorize these steps. Selectman Chipman made a Motion authorizing the Town to send out an RFP and submit an application for the grant funding. Selectman Gilley seconded. The Motion was passed unanimously 3-0.

- 6. Proposed Amendments to Animal Control Ordinance for June 9 Municipal Ballot:** Administrator Eiane asked the Select Board to authorize the Town Clerk to bring an amended Harpswell Animal Control Ordinance in front of voters in June. The amended ordinance would clearly stipulate the Select Board's authority to set rules for control of dogs on Town property – and to set fines for non-compliance. It would also expand the authority to write tickets beyond the ACO – to include Cumberland County Sheriff's Deputies; and, to assign that right to additional individuals by vote - as became necessary. Selectman Chipman made a Motion to approve the amended article and bring it to a Town vote. Selectman Gilley seconded. The Motion was passed unanimously 3-0.
- 7. Cribstone Holdings Lease for Harbormaster Office and Berthing Lease:** Administrator Eiane asked the Select Board to approve and sign a renewal lease for Harbormaster office space at the wharf located next to Cook's Lobster & Ale House. The Town leased a small, remote office and berthing location for the boat for the Harbormaster to use from April 15 to December 15 in 2025. The cost was \$500 per month. The contract language and cost for 2026 is identical to 2025. Selectman Chipman made a Motion to approve the lease. Selectman Gilley seconded. The Motion was unanimously approved 3-0.
- 8. Selection of Banking Institution for Tax Anticipation Note Financing:** Town Treasurer & Deputy Administrator, Terri Gaudet, reported that four banks responded with bids in response to the Town's annual Tax Anticipation Note Financing. The Note will be for up to \$5 million, with funds drawn as needed prior to anticipation of property tax receipts this fall. Treasurer Gaudet recommended the selection of Androscoggin Bank at an interest rate of 4.62%. Selectman Chipman made a Motion to authorize the selection of Androscoggin Bank and that a vote entitled a 'Vote to Authorize Issuance of a Tax Anticipation Note for Fiscal Year 2026' be approved in the form presented at this meeting and that an attested copy be included with the copies of the Minutes for this meeting. Selectman Gilley seconded the Motion. The Motion was passed unanimously 3-0.
- 9. Orr's Island Bridge Wharf Leases & Policy:** Administrator Eiane asked the Select Board to identify priorities for vetting applications for an upcoming lottery program for two Orr's Island Bridge leases. The existing policy restricted applications to only those people having a "commercial fishing or marine related business." Town staff is asking if the Select Board wishes to establish further criteria.

The Selectmen identified the following levels of preference for applicants: 1) residents; 2) taxpayers; 3) non-residents with significant long-term (5 years plus) connections to the Town; 4) Non-residents.

The Select Board asked that the lottery be done in stages similar to what is done with shell fishing permits; with only applications from residents included in the first selection round. If necessary, additional applications from non-residents could be added to successive lotteries until two lessees had been determined.

Administrator Eiane said that Staff would come back to the Select Board with new language in the policy that reflected their desires. Deputy Administrator Gaudet indicated that the Town would go ahead to place advertisements in the interest of time – and reflect the priority that will be placed on residents or those with substantial ties to the community.

10. Treasurers Report: Deputy Town Administrator & Treasurer, Terri Gaudet, presented the first quarter's Treasurer's Report. The full report is attached.

11. Authorization of the Warrants: The Select Board unanimously approved warrant #15 in the amount of \$1,184,611.94 and payroll warrant #14 in the amount of \$29,383.73.

12. Public Comment: None.

13. Other Business: None.

14. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 6:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Hubbard
Recording Secretary

Attachments: Treasurer's Report

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