**Town of Blue Hill**
**Select Board Meeting**
**Monday, December 15, 2025**
**Minutes**

**Call to Order: 5:30 PM.**

**Attendance/Quorum**
E. Best (Chair), S. Miller, B. Adams, J. Wootten, A. Woog, D. Goettler (Town Clerk, Minute Taker).

**Approval of Minutes**
Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 4/0 with one abstention to approve the minutes of December 8, 2025.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 4/0 with one abstention to approve the minutes of December 12, 2025.

**Public Comment**
A representative from a community solar program inquired about the Town's current solar commitment and was told that the Town's electricity consumption is currently covered under a similar contract.

**Business**

1. **AA Field/Flagpole/Steve Johnson**
   J. Wootten spoke in favor of either dedicating a light to illuminate the flagpole at the AA Field to the memory of Steve Johnson and/or renaming the whole field in his honor. The Board discussed the precedents set by other named locations in Town and agreed to place the question on the warrant of the next Town Meeting. B. Adams agreed to discuss a sign design with the rest of the Little League Board.

2. **Wastewater Treatment Plant**
   S. Miller distributed a draft Notice of Award to Apex Construction Inc. for a $3,473,997 contract and outlined his minor concerns about risks to the project. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to authorize S. Miller to sign the Notice of Award to Apex Construction on behalf of the Town of Blue Hill.

   S. Miller summarized the history of, and damage to, the recently failed outflow pipe at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Olver Inc. estimated a repair cost of between $2,500,000 and $3,000,000, about $1,000,000 of which may be able to be redirected from the existing upgrade grant funds. Due to Army Corps of Engineers/MaineDMR regulations, the repair work cannot begin until November 2026. The Board discussed how to appropriate the remaining funds with the goal of avoiding significant changes to real estate taxes.

3. **Disposal of Old Fire Equipment**
   J. Chapman has had three inquiries about purchasing the recently-replaced fire rescue truck with a self-contained breathing apparatus. The Town of Penobscot is interested in

purchasing the air apparatus for $2,000, while an individual has offered $4,000 for the truck itself. The Board discussed whether they have the authority to authorize the sale without a Town Meeting. S. Miller agreed to draft a warrant for a Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, December 29, 2025, at 5:30 PM.

4. **Harbormaster Appointment**
   S. Miller reported that N. Niehoff will not be reappointed as Harbormaster in 2026. J. Wootten and the Marine Resources Committee have been struggling to find volunteers to fill the role. The Committee suggested appointing J. Wootten as interim Harbormaster to handle the outdoor aspects of the job while a member of the Committee handles the administrative side. The final decision was postponed until after the scheduled executive session.

5. **Town Employee Policies**
   A. Woog circulated a clean copy of her proposed edits to the Employee Policy handbook. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to approve the revised handbook.

6. **Stavola Building Lease**
   A. Houghton's lease on the Stavola Building expires at the end of December 2025. S. Miller proposed offering the lease renewal as-is but with reduced rent due to the continuing poor conditions of the windows. A. Houghton requested that all major repair work take place between January 15 and April 15, while the store is closed, and mentioned that the roof is beginning to leak. J. Wootten agreed to follow up with a contractor who previously agreed to make the repairs, with the status of the repairs and the renewal to be discussed at the December 22 meeting. In the meantime, A. Woog volunteered to draft a renewed lease.

7. **Town Hall Visitor Conduct Policy/Process**
   A. Woog summarized a few incidents at Town Hall in which belligerent visitors caused staff to feel unsafe and highlighted the absence of a person on-premises with the authority to fully address the issue. E. Best stressed the difference between irritating and dangerous encounters and repeated an attorney's opinion that there are few options other than walking away that do not risk escalation. A. Woog agreed to draft a policy to guide the staff.

8. **Chamber of Commerce Membership**
   The Select Board was solicited to renew its Chamber of Commerce membership for $100. They discussed what benefits are conveyed by membership and what hypothetical benefits would make the $100 more explicitly worthwhile.

9. **WWTP Upgrade Update**
   Addressed in agenda item 2.

10. **Phone Update**
    The new Voice Over Internet phones are scheduled to be installed on January 7 and 8, 2026. S. Miller is continuing to discuss details of how the system will work.

**Other Business**
Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to approve an abatement in the amount of $1,116.39 for Map/Lot 035-028-5.

The veterinary hospital with whom the Town has long since contracted to take stray animals will not be renewing those contracts in 2026. The Town's contract with the county Animal Control Officer is also due to be renewed. E. Best will review the contract and contact the Ellsworth SPCA (as suggested by the current provider) to obtain a stray animal contact proposal for 2026.

**Executive Session**
Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to enter executive session per 1 M.R.S.§405(6)(A) - Personnel Matter at 6:55 PM. Executive session ended at 8:04 PM.

**Further Action**

1. **Harbormaster**
   Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to appoint J. Wootten as interim Harbormaster effective 1/1/2026, with compensation to be determined.

2. **Office Closures**
   Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to designate B. Adams to determine if and when the Town Office or Transfer Station should be closed as a result of inclement weather or other similar circumstances.

**Adjournment**
Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 5/0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 PM subject to signing Disbursement Warrants.

The Disbursement Warrants were signed.