

OFFICIAL WARRANT FOR THE TOWN OF NORHTPORT
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
To be held on January 11, 2024

To: Amy Eldridge, Town Clerk of the Town of Northport in the County of Waldo State of Maine.

GREETINGS:

In the name of the State of Maine, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Northport in said County and State, qualified by law to vote in Town affairs, to appear at the Edna Drinkwater School, 56 Bayside Road, in the Town of Northport, on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 6:30 p.m., there and then to act upon Articles 1 through 5.

Article No. 1: To Choose a Moderator to preside at said Town Meeting.

Eldridge opened the special town Meeting at 6:31 p.m. by greeting the 43 residents present at the Edna Drinkwater School for the purpose of acting on Articles 1 through 5. Eldridge introduced herself and thanked everyone for attending.

Eldridge read Article 1 and asked for any nominations. A nomination was made and seconded to have Lee Woodward, Jr. serve as moderator over the Special Town Meeting. Hearing no objections, 3 votes were cast, all in favor – none opposed. Eldridge swore in Lee Woodward, Jr. as moderator over the Special Town Meeting.

Woodward proceeded to introduce himself and explained the process of the Special Town Meeting. Woodward continued with Article 2.

Article No. 2: Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to spend an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 from the Town's Undesignated Fund Balance to demolish and remove a dangerous building located at 9 North Avenue, in Northport, Tax Map U05-149, pursuant to the Order and Decision of the Municipal Officers of the Town of Northport, Maine, Re: Property of Sandra Butters and James Butters, Trustee, Butters Bayside Family Camp Irrevocable Trust, dated August 21, 2023, and recorded at the Waldo County Registry of Deeds at Book 4390, Page 210?

Note: The Select Board held a hearing on August 15, 2023, pursuant to a statute (17 MRS § 2851) that authorizes the Municipal Officers to remedy dangerous building conditions, including demolition. A professional structural engineer was hired to assess the building, and her opinion confirmed that the building was dangerous as defined by the applicable statute. The Owners were afforded an opportunity since the hearing to bring the long-term deterioration and hazardous condition into compliance, which they failed to do. The Select Board must now complete the process of demolishing the building and is therefore seeking the appropriation requested by this

Article, consistent with a recent cost estimate for demolition of the building. The Order and Decision and the engineer's report are available for inspection in the Town Office.

Woodward called for questions & comments. Hearing none, motion was made and seconded to approve the article as written. Majority in favor – 3 opposed. Article passed.

Article No. 3: Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to transfer and spend an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the Town's Undesignated Fund Balance to the Legal Account to meet a projected shortfall in the Legal Account due to unanticipated legal expenses?

Note: The Town budgeted \$10,000.00 for legal expenses in fiscal year 2024. As of December 14, 2023, the Town has spent \$6,012.24 on legal fees, including \$4705.74 relating to the dangerous building proceedings for 9 North Avenue. Under the statute (17 MRS § 2851), the Town will be reimbursed for those expenses by the property owners of 9 North Avenue.

Woodward called for questions & comments. Hearing none, motion was made and seconded to approve the article as written. Majority in favor – 1 opposed. Article passed.

Article No. 4: Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a ground lease agreement with Biddeford Internet Corporation d/b/a GWI for a portion of a Town-owned parcel located at 1429 Atlantic Highway, Tax Map U01-01, for the purpose of installing and maintaining a shed for fiber-optic internet equipment in order to provide fiber-optic internet services to Northport residents?

Note: A copy of the proposed Lease is available for inspection in the Town Office.

Woodward called for questions & comments. A question was asked regarding how the Town determined the amount of the lease. Tucker reported the amount of the lease is based on the Town's monthly bill for phone and internet from GWI. Another question was asked as to the size of the shed that would be occupying the parcel. James Kossuth, Town Administrator, reported the shed would be 10 feet by 10 feet, by 8 feet high. William Frysinger, a member of the Northport Broadband Internet Committee commented that GWI had always indicated that a shed somewhere in Town would be necessary for them to provide internet in Northport. Woodward called for any other questions & comments. Hearing none, motion was made and seconded to approve the article as written. All in favor – none opposed. Article passed.

Article No. 5: Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to transfer and spend an amount not to exceed \$12,000.000 from the Town's Undesignated Fund Balance to the Fire Department Operating Account to meet a projected shortfall in the Fire Department Operating Account due to an increase in payroll?

Note: The Northport Fire Department budgeted \$14,000 for firefighter wages for fiscal year 2024. The first of two Fire Department payrolls for the year totaled \$11,771.40, leaving a balance of \$2,228.60 for the remaining six months of payroll. Firefighters are paid minimum wage for responding to calls and attending trainings.

Woodward called for questions & comments. Hearing none, motion was made and seconded to approve the article as written. All in favor – none opposed. Article passed.

With no other articles to vote on, a motion was made and seconded, to adjourn at 6:40 p.m. All in favor – none opposed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Amy Eldridge, Town Clerk