

Town of Northport

Select Board Meeting

February 24, 2026 @ 6:15 pm

Chair: Molly Schauffler

Finance Director: Vicki Eugley

Vice Chair: Jeanine Tucker

Road Commissioner: Amon Morse – excused absence

Municipal Officer: [vacant]

NVC Representative: Janae Novotny

Town Administrator: James Kossuth

Present: Molly Schauffler, Jeanine Tucker, James Kossuth, Vicki Eugley, Janae Novotny, Amy Eldridge, Robin Coombs, Bruce Grant, Mark Vanidestine, Patti Gwara, John Simko, Don Ramsey

Selection of Chair and Vice Chair: Tucker nominated Schauffler for Chair. Schauffler accepted the nomination.

Citizen Concerns: Bruce Grant re Green Burials: Kossuth explained that Bruce Grant had asked if the Town would be willing to adopt a formal policy that expressly permits green burials in the Beech Ridge Cemetery. The Town's Cemetery Policy currently makes no mention of green burials, and nothing in State law prohibits the Town from permitting them. Kossuth presented the Board with a draft of a revised Cemetery Policy. The Board and Grant discussed some of the specifics of Grant's own plan for a green burial and of the proposed Town policy. The Board thanked Grant for bringing the proposal to their attention, and adopted the revised policy, permitting green burials in a to-be-designated section of Beech Ridge Cemetery.

Don Ramsey re Forgiveness of Judgment Debt: Kossuth explained that Ramsey had contacted Kossuth to ask about including an article on this year's Town Meeting warrant that would forgive the \$12,100 judgment debt he owes the Town. The Board explained that they did not feel that it would be appropriate for the Board to add such an article. The Board also explained that Ramsey could have an article added by petition, if he were to collect signatures from 10% of the last gubernatorial election turnout in Northport (i.e., 102 signatures). The Board also suggested that he could continue to make small regular payments in an attempt to pay the debt down.

Bid Opening: Bond Anticipation Note: Kossuth presented the Board with three bids for a bond anticipation note. The Board reviewed the bids and asked questions of representatives from the banks that bid.

Schauffler moved to award the bid to Camden National Bank, for a 28-month note at 4.398%, seconded by Tucker. Board voted 2-0, motion passed.

Northport Village Corporation: Novotny reported that the Overseers had not met since the previous Select Board meeting, and there is nothing new to report from the Village.

Road Commissioner: No report.

Town Administrator: Special Town Meeting prep: Kossuth reported that he had posted the warrant for the meeting, sent out an email announcement, and asked John Burgess to mention it in his newspaper column. Kossuth also reported that he had asked Amanda Austin of 2a architects to see if she could estimate the cost of burying the sprinkler tank next door to see if that would provide any savings from adding an addition to the fire station. Schauffler has been working on a simple one-page explanation of the benefits of buying 8 Beech Hill Road.

Town Office Project Update: Kossuth reported that he had received an offer from a local business to lease the Town space in its driveway for a trailer as a temporary Town Office. With the landlord's proposed ground rent, plus the cost of renting a modular office, the cost far exceeded that offered by Point Lookout, so the Board decided not to pursue that offer any further.

The Board discussed options and plans for using 8 Beech Hill Road as a temporary Town Office if the Special Town Meeting approves the purchase.

Kossuth reported that he had submitted the initial paperwork to USDA for the grant funds, and Gartley & Dorsky is working on the environmental review.

Fundraising Committee update: Kossuth reported that Schauffler had had a very productive meeting with a potential donor, which resulted in the donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, donating \$75,000 towards the cost of 8 Beech Hill Road and more than \$80,000 towards the solar array so that the Town can get that installed as soon as possible.

Climate Resilience Committee update: Kossuth reported that the Climate Resilience Committee (CRC) met on February 13. The CRC will be organizing this year's spring clean-up, currently scheduled for Saturday, May 9. The CRC is also planning the annual community gathering to talk about resilience issues, and they have tentatively scheduled that for Wednesday, April 29. They expect to cover topics such as the latest grant award, for a town-wide stormwater survey and two-year composting pilot with ScrapDogs. They also intend to invite the UMaine capstone students to attend and talk about their civil engineering design project in Temple Heights.

Summer Intern Job Description: Kossuth presented the Board with a draft job description for a potential summer intern through the Margaret Chase Smith Center internship program. The Board approved the description with edits.

Solar Project update: Kossuth reported CMP had initially rejected the Town's interconnection agreement request for the solar array because of a new state law, and then CMP rejected it a second time because of a misunderstanding about the location of the meter at the site. Sundog submitted a new interconnection agreement that corrects that misunderstanding, and CMP has now said that they aren't "comfortable" approving the request. CMP asked the Town to get an opinion from the Public Utilities Commission. Kossuth reported that he is talking to Sundog about next steps. Kossuth also reported that he learned that the Town was not chosen for the \$20,000 Hopwood Foundation grant, but the Town has raised enough money to make the March progress payment.

Bayview Park Stabilization Design revision: Kossuth reported that he had solicited comments from abutters and other interested parties on the Bayview Park stabilization design, with a February 20 deadline. Kossuth reported that he had received several comments about the height of plantings, with a request that nothing be planted that could block the view; a comment concerned that the wall would not actually cover the entire frontage of Bayview Park; and a request that the new stairs be moved from the northern edge back to their original location. Kossuth reported that the stairs had been moved by the engineer both for cost and engineering purposes. The abutting owner is concerned that moving the stairs closer to his property will interfere with his "quiet enjoyment" of his property. The abutting owner offered to pay the difference in cost. Kossuth asked Gartley & Dorsky for a revised plan, and they sent him one with the stairs closer to the middle of the property. Novotny would like to speak to Gartley & Dorsky about the plan, and will also present it at an upcoming Overseers meeting. Kossuth reported that it is likely that the project would go out to bid in the spring and the project completed in the fall.

Belfast Ambulance update: Kossuth reported that he and representatives from the other municipalities who receive ambulance service from Belfast will be meeting on March 4 with Belfast officials about the new ambulance contract price.

Legislative Policy Committee update: Kossuth reported that the Legislative Policy Committee met on February 12 to talk about a few bills and line items in the Governor's budget. Kossuth provided the Board with the positions that the LPC had taken on each of the bills.

Winter '26-'27 Heating Fuel bids: Kossuth reported that the Greater Portland Council of Governments is soliciting municipalities to participate in a bulk-fuel purchasing bid, which is supposed to be a better deal for the Town than the Town's current bidding process. The Board agreed that Kossuth should submit the Town's request for heating fuel.

Waldo County Fire Mutual Aid agreement: Kossuth presented the Board with the 2026 Waldo County Fire Mutual Aid Agreement, which the Fire Chief had already approved. The Board reviewed and signed the Agreement.

Quitclaim deed: Kossuth presented the Board with a full payment of all outstanding taxes, interest, and penalties for 30 High Street (U12-37), which the Town had foreclosed on in 2024 for non-payment of property taxes.

Schauffler moved to accept the payment and issue a municipal quitclaim deed for the property, seconded by Tucker. Board voted 2-0, motion passed.

Minutes: Kossuth presented the Board with minutes from the February 2, February 9, and February 16 meetings. The Board approved the minutes with edits.

Finance Director: Warrants: Eugley provided the Payroll & Accounts Payable warrants to the Board for review and approval. The Board approved and signed the Payroll & Accounts Payable warrants.

Unfinished Business: None at this time.

New Business: FY2027 Budget Planning: Eugley presented the Board with binders for the FY2027 budget discussion. The Board discussed every budget category in the book.

Adjourn: ***Tucker moved to adjourn at 8:50pm, seconded by Schauffler. Board voted 2-0, meeting adjourned.***

Respectfully submitted by,

James Kossuth, Town Administrator