



SELECT BOARD /BOARD OF ASSESSORS
MINUTES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

6:30pm

Hybrid Zoom/In-person
11 Sullivan Street
Berwick, ME 03901

1. Call to Order

Chair Cobb called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Chair Noah Cobb, Vice Chair Linda Hutchins-Corliss, Member Lisa Chase, and Member Mike Laterreur.

Board Members Absent: Member Thomas Wright

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Arthur Capello, Librarian Sharon Kelley, Police Chief Tim Towne, Recreation Director Josh Jones, Director of Community Development James Bellissimo and Town Clerk Patricia Murray.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Cobb led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- September 4, 2024

Motion: Member Laterreur moved to accept the September 4, 2024, minutes as amended. Member Wright seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 3:0 with Vice Chair Hutchins-Corliss abstaining

5. First Public Comment

Chair Cobb opened the first public comment. There being no comments, Chair Cobb closed the first public comment.

6. Public Hearing/Approval

- 2024-2025 General Assistance Maximums Adoption
Chair Cobb opened the public hearing.

Town Clerk Murray presented the changes to the maximums and ordinance.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board
Arthur Capello, Town Manager
FROM: Patricia Murray, General Assistance Administrator
DATE: September 16, 2024
RE: 2024-2025 General Assistance Ordinance Maximums

Attached please find the GA Maximums for October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025 as supplied by the State Department of Health and Human Services. Appendices A – H need to be adopted. Berwick follows York/Kittery/So Berwick HMFA.

The following is a comparison of 2023-24 to 2024-25 maximums.

- Appendix A: GA Overall Maximums
 - Roughly a 3.32% **increase**
- Appendix B: Food Maximums
 - Roughly a 0.26% **increase**
- Appendix C: GA Housing Maximums
 - Roughly a 3.81% **increase**
- Appendix D: Electricity Maximums
 - No change
- Appendix E: Heating Fuel
 - No change
- Appendix F: Personal Care and Household Supplies
 - No change
- Appendix G: Mileage Rate
 - .50 per mile Roughly an 8.70% **increase**
- Appendix H: Funeral Maximums
 - Roughly a 9.8% **increase**
- Recovery Residence Maximums
 - Roughly a 3.8% **decrease**

These proposed increases/no changes supplied by the State are typical of years past. I recommend adopting the 2024-2025 Maximums for Appendices A-H and the revised MMA GA Model Ordinance.

CHANGES TO THE MMA GA ORDINANCE FOR 2024-2025

ARTICLE I – Statement of Policy

The program provides trauma-informed services and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to all applicants. “Trauma-informed services” means services that acknowledge and are informed by the widespread effects of trauma and recognize the potential paths for recovery; recognize the unique signs and symptoms of trauma in applicants, clients, families and staff; respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices; and seek to actively avoid retraumatization.

“Culturally and linguistically appropriate services” means services that are designed to serve culturally diverse populations in a person’s preferred language; function effectively within the context of cultural beliefs, behaviors and needs presented by a person who applies to or is a recipient of assistance from the program and the person’s community; contribute to a work environment that supports diversity; promote community engagement; build trust and relationships with applicants and recipients; actively support and enable recipients to make informed choices; and value and facilitate the exchange of information with recipients. (22 M.R.S. § 4305(7)).

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The Administrator will post notice stating that any person may apply for general assistance during the municipality’s regular business hours.

The Administrator will complete training including, but not limited to, the purpose of the general assistance program, the delivery of trauma-informed services and culturally linguistically appropriate services as defined above, and the laws governing the general assistance program’s administration, procedures, and requirements no later than 120 days after appointment or election. (22 M.R.S. 4302-A).

Applications Accepted; Posted Notice.

Any person may apply for general assistance during the municipality’s regular business hours.

Assistance Prior to Verification.

Benefits provided prior to verification are limited as follows:

- a) The authorization of benefits may not exceed 30 days.

- b) Until there has been full verification confirming the applicant's eligibility, further benefit may not be authorized.
- c) The authorization of benefits may not exceed levels of assistance established in 22 M.R.S. § 4308. (22 M.R.S. § 4310(4)).

Limitation on Emergency Assistance.

The municipality cannot exceed maximum levels of assistance for an applicant household for more than 30 days in a 12-month period when assistance is granted for housing in a hotel, motel, inn or other lodging place.

Moving/Relocating.

If the Administrator determines the applicant is eligible and grants financial assistance to help with the requested relocation, this municipality will be responsible for providing assistance to the applicant for 6 months after they move including processing applications and determining eligibility for assistance.

Institutions.

If a resident of this municipality enters an institution located in another municipality (such as a group home, shelter, rehabilitation center, nursing home, or hospital) and requests assistance while at the institution, they will be the responsibility of this municipality for up to 12 months after they enter the institution if the conditions of 22 M.R.S. § 4307 and § 4313 are met.

Maximum Levels of Assistance for Specific Basic Necessities.

Note. The municipality cannot exceed maximum levels of assistance for an applicant household for more than 30 days in a 12-month period when assistance is granted for housing in a hotel, motel, inn or other lodging place.

Motion: Member Laterreur moved to adopt the 2024-2025 Maximums for Appendices A-H and the revised MMA GA Model Ordinance as presented. Vice Chair Hutchins-Corliss seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

7. Reports of Committees

None.

8. Department Reports

- Sharon Kelly, Library

**THE BERWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY
LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

September 10, 2024

AUGUST STATISTICS

Patrons: 2,308

Checkouts: 2,023
(Includes renewals)

Reference Questions: 331
Computer Use: 113

Comics Plus Checkouts: 2
Copy/Fax: \$135.30

Donation (Book Sale etc.): \$93.00
Wi-Fi use 28
BPL Website Hits: 1,358

Download Library: 155
New Cards: 21
Portland cards: 1
Replacement cards: 0

Facebook Likes: 1,400
Followers: 1,695
YouTube Views: 9
Time spent watching: .1hrs
Instagram followers: 811

Make and take Crafts: Sword of Berwickia (60)

Chalk Pencil Craft (60)

Pete the Cat Craft (50)

Museum Passes: 25
Book Discussion Groups: Adult group: 7
Teen Book Club: 3
Volunteer Hours: 61

Days Closed: Aug 31 for Labor Day

Weekly Programs:

Lego Club/Boards Builds, and Books: 17
Minecraft Club: 44
Storytimes: 63
Knitters: 23
Social Seniors: 20
Genie club: 3

Special Programs/Events in August:

8/2: CMNH STEM program: **93**
8/9: Kona Ice: **192**, plus they donated \$60 to the library as a portion of their sales!
8/19: Lawn Chairs: Veronica dropped everything off, Alaina and Laurie worked the table, Jen helped with set up.

Programs Shared on Blog/YouTube in August:

Whitewashing the Diseased Ship: Blog views – 9/YouTube -112

Up and coming programs or events for September:

9/3 – Van delivery resumes!

- 9/10 – Meet and Greet the New Town Manager!
- 9/17-21 – Book Sale! Fire Fighters will be setting us up and breaking down!
- 9/25 – Ed Bullock – Native American Music and Culture
- 9/28 – Comedy Night fundraiser at Corner Pointe Brewery

Welcome Joanna Higgins!



Stop in any Tuesday, Thurs or Saturday to meet our newest member of the BPL team!

STATISTICS

Comparison statistics for AUGUST of the last 4 years are as follows:

	<u>VISITS</u>	<u>CHECKOUTS</u>
2021	1,610	1,932
2022	1,821	1,520 (Up to 8/20)
2023	2,275	2,525

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

What an excellent Summer Reading Program we had this year at the Berwick Public Library! Many people don't realize is that good libraries spend months developing and fine tuning their summer reading program to be ready for the busy season. My staff begins planning in January and they organize, write, and create the program throughout the winter and spring. Every year, I am more and more impressed by their skill and ability to create an interesting and engaging program for the Berwick community. Just when I think that they could not possibly do a better job, they prove me wrong! *The Broken Blade of Berwickia* brought our patrons on a magical journey through a fantastical land where they had to solve puzzles, mysteries, and challenges before advancing through the regions of Berwickia and earning prize winning tickets. It was an incredible adventure for children and the adults alike, and best of all, everyone was reading! To succeed in the program, meant to read the week's next chapter in the story and complete the challenges! How successful were we? Check out a few stats:

- We had a total of **9 special programs** with an attendance of **1,228** people [last year we had 8 programs and 667 people attended].
- We had **3,413 tickets** entered for our prize drawings
- Patron visits from 6/14 - 8/9 (the duration of summer reading) totaled **4,840** [last year was 4,413]

In years past, we have relied upon simple tracker forms as a way of recording participation, but now that our summer reading programs are so much more elaborate (and attract more people), the tracker forms are only one source of data and don't represent the entire program. We are fortunate that we were able to track participation through several different methods this year (stickers, raffle tickets, program attendance, etc.).

I am so proud of our summer reading program accomplishments and the incredible work my staff did to make this summer such a great success. We received a lot of positive feedback from families about how much fun they had and how impressed they were with their children's enthusiasm to get to the library and read! That is the true success of the Berwick Public Library



BUILDING AND GROUNDS

8/14 - Memorial Garden – Laurie and I installed the bench in the garden and it is secured to anchors and looks lovely. Next spring, we might want to add some more stone to the walkway where it sits to balance it. The last step is to order the sign for the garden and the plaque for the bench.

8/14 - Fire Extinguisher Inspection Completed.

8/27 - Inspection of Safety Equipment by Hackworth Safety. They will be replacing the two CO2 detectors and a broken part from one of the smoke detectors. All the other equipment passed without issue.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Kelly, Director

- Tim Towne, Police Department
Chief Towne gave an update.

- Josh Jones, Recreation Director
Josh Jones gave an update.

- James Bellissimo, Director of Community Development and Planning

Subject: Community and Economic Development & Planning Update

Date: September 17, 2024

Applications have slowed down in Planning, for the first time since Covid, we don't have a backlog for Planning Board. The market region wide appears to be cooling slightly. There will be several more projects approved this year, so the numbers will be a little bit closer to 2023.

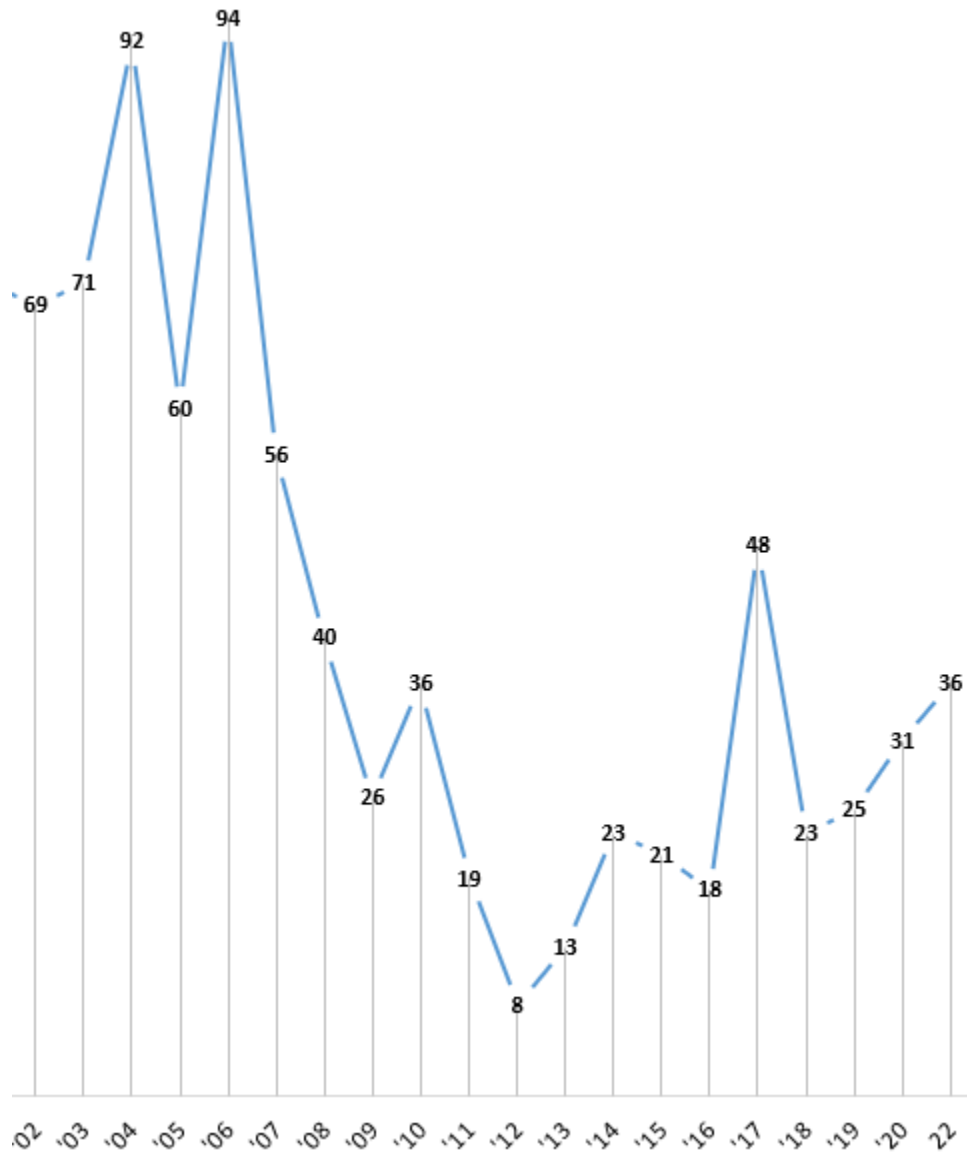
Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2023• Subdivisions 5<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 61 Lots + Apartment Units total Approved.• Site Plan/CU 6• Approval Extension 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2024 YTD• Subdivisions 2<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Lots Total Approved.• Site Plan/CU 4• Site Plan/CU Amendment 2• Approval Extension 1

Building is fairly steady compared to last year.

Code Enforcement	
2023	2024 YTD as of 9/4/2024
340 Permits	206 Permits
34 Single Family & 21 Manufactured or Mobile Homes	22 Single Family & 22 Manufactured or Mobile Homes
5 ADU	2 ADU

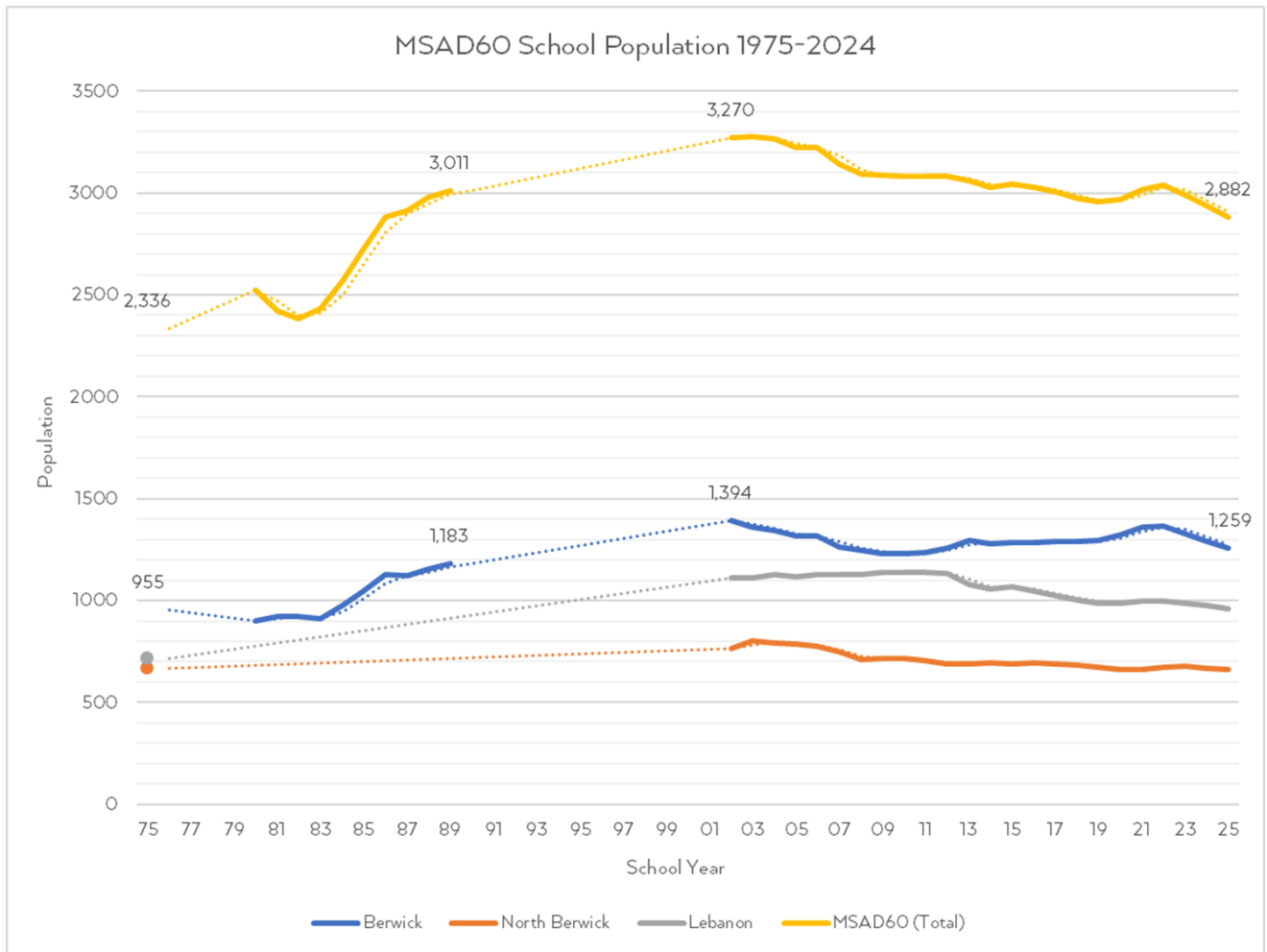
Houses Built, 2002-2022

We have seen an increase in housing compared to the past 18 years. The number of permits typically is always more than the actual houses built. I will have data on actual houses built for 2023 soon.



Data collection and analysis is important to help plan for the future and anticipate needs.

The MSAD60 school population has 129 fewer children in the school system than 1989. Berwick has added 76 children to the school district overall since 1989. Down 135 since the peak of 2002.



Open Space Planning

The Open Space Plan continues to be developed; this webpage contains a lot of great information.

https://www.berwickmaine.org/departments/community_development_planning/open_space_plan.php

Ordinance Amendments

Will be developing amendments through until roughly end of February. A very rough draft can be found in the packet [here](#) page 13-24.

Appeals Board

Rick Ingalls, former Select Board Chair, has been chairing the Appeals Board. We ran a training on September 11th and went over some areas in planning.

Grants & Grant Projects

ARPA, KACTS, MIAF, CDS, Community Action Grant, More! We will continue to seek out grants and take advantage of opportunities as they become available.

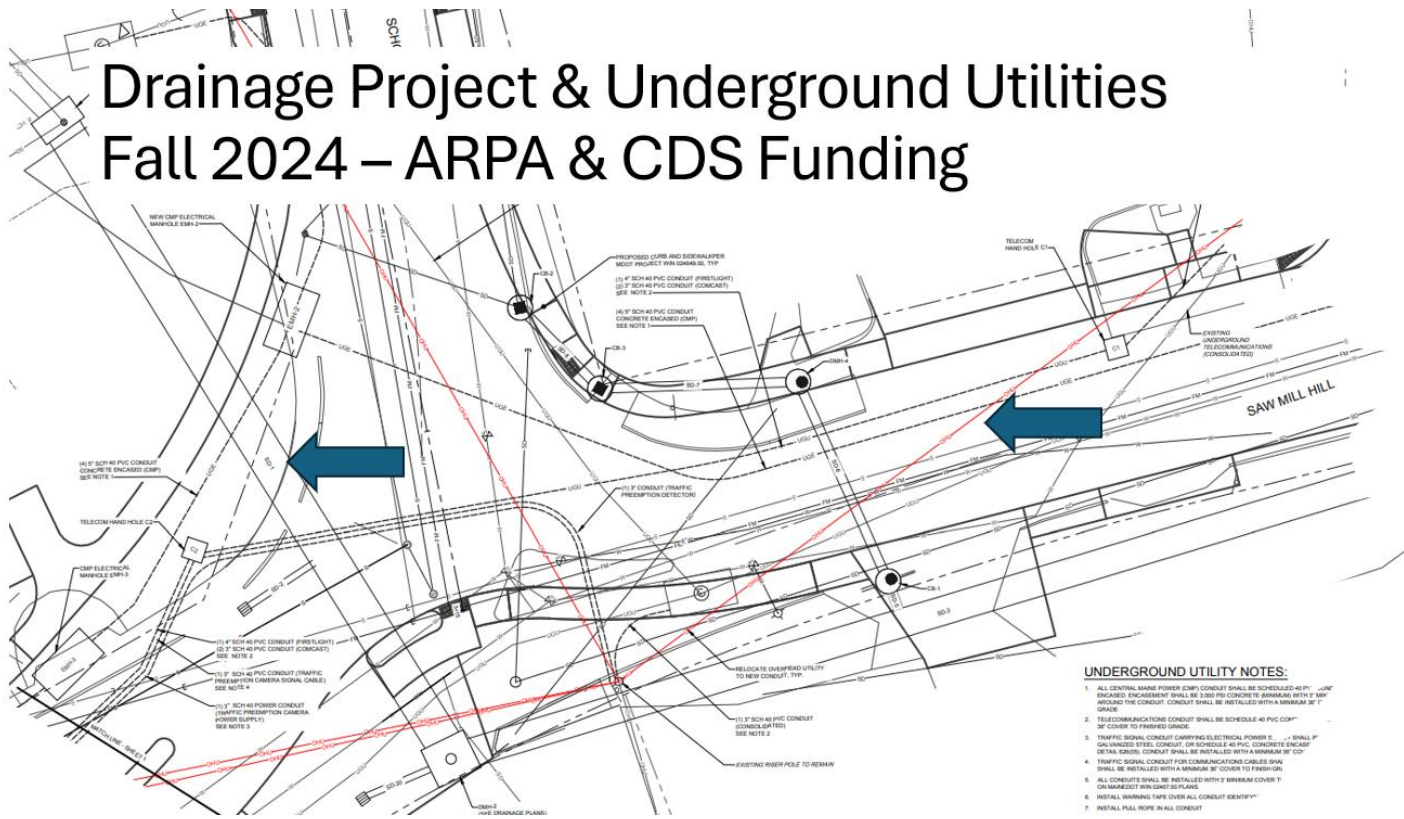
Moulton Street / MS4 Project

This project has been mostly completed, pending final walkthrough Thursday. This project included new catch basins, storm drains, full depth reconstruction, sidewalks, landscaping, and preparations for on street ornamental lighting.



The arrow below on the left highlights the major storm drain that will be installed this Fall. The arrow on the left shows the overhead utilities that will be planned to be removed once we are ready to do so.

Drainage Project & Underground Utilities Fall 2024 – ARPA & CDS Funding



- UNDERGROUND UTILITY NOTES:**
1. ALL CENTRAL MAIN POWER (CMP) CONDUIT SHALL BE SCHEDULED 40 PVC... ENCASED ENCASUREMENT SHALL BE 3/8" PCC CONCRETE BARRIUM WITH 1" ASP... AROUND THE CONDUIT. CONDUIT SHALL BE INSTALLED WITH A MINIMUM 36" F... COVER TO FINISH GRADE.
 2. TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONDUIT SHALL BE SCHEDULED 40 PVC CONDUIT... SHALL BE COVER TO FINISH GRADE.
 3. TRAFFIC SIGNAL CONDUIT CARRYING ELECTRICAL POWER E... SHALL BE 1" GALVANIZED STEEL CONDUIT OR SCHEDULE 40 PVC CONCRETE ENCASED... DETAIL DESIGN. CONDUIT SHALL BE INSTALLED WITH A MINIMUM 36" COV... SHALL BE INSTALLED WITH A MINIMUM 36" COVER TO FINISH GRA.
 4. TRAFFIC SIGNAL CONDUIT FOR COMMUNICATIONS CABLES SHAL... SHALL BE INSTALLED WITH A MINIMUM 36" COVER TO FINISH GRA.
 5. ALL CONDUITS SHALL BE INSTALLED WITH 7" MINIMUM COVER T... ON MANHOLETS AND JOINTS.
 6. INSTALL WARNING TAPE OVER ALL CONDUIT IDENTIFY...
 7. INSTALL PULL MARK IN ALL CONDUIT.

Color Wheel Project

The vision is to place these in areas downtown as historic landmarks and pocket parks.



9. Appointments/Presentations/Other Guests

None.

10. Unfinished Business

- Assessing Tax Warrant and Certificate Revised

The incorrect certificate was signed at the September 4, 2024, Select Board Meeting although the correct information was presented. The Board already approved the certificate but needs to sign the correct form.



**CERTIFICATE OF ASSESSMENT
TO BE RETURNED TO MUNICIPAL TREASURER**

County of York, ss.

We hereby certify that we have assessed a tax on the estate, real and personal, liable to be taxed in the Municipality of Berwick for the fiscal year 7/1/2024 (mm/dd/yyyy) to 6/30/2025 (mm/dd/yyyy), at 0.01247 mills, on a total taxable value of \$ 1,306,026,153.

Assessments:

1. County tax	\$ 437,193.67
2. Municipal appropriation	\$ 11,349,459.00
3. Tax increment financing plan amount	\$ 176,610.12
4. Local education appropriation	\$ 9,704,779.00
5. Overlay (not to exceed 5% of net to be raised)	\$ 86,975.65
6. Total assessments	\$ 21,755,017.44

Deductions:

7. State-municipal revenue sharing	\$ 1,500,000.00
8. Homestead exemption reimbursement	\$ 357,527.37
9. Busines Equipment Tax Exemption reimbursement	\$ 39,785.95
10. Other revenue	\$ 3,571,558.00
11. Total deductions	\$ 5,468,871.32
12. Net assessment for commitment (line 6 minus line 11)	\$ 16,286,146.13

Lists of all the same we have committed to Lisa Vargas, Tax Collector of said Municipality, with warrants in due form of law for collecting and paying the same to Lisa Vargas, Treasurer of said Municipality, or the successor in office, on or before such date, or dates, as provided by legal vote of the Municipality and warrants received pursuant to the laws of the State of Maine. (36 M.R.S. § 712)

Given under our hands this 09/17/2024 (mm/dd/yyyy).

Noah Cobb Municipal Assessor(s) of Berwick
Linda Hutchins-Corliss
Mike Laterreur
Lisa Chase
Thomas Wright

File the original certificate with the treasurer. File a copy in the commitment book.

- Personnel Policy revisions

Discussion ensued regarding additional changes to the policy.

This item was tabled.

- HR Manager Job Description

Discussion ensued regarding additional changes to the policy.

This item was tabled.

- Policy Directive Purchasing

Discussion ensued regarding additional changes to the policy.

This item was tabled.

- Remote Work Policy

Discussion ensued regarding additional changes to the policy.

This item was tabled.

11. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Capello reported the following:

- Vacation Coverage for Code Enforcement Officer: Between Town Manager Capello and North Berwick, coverage is going well.
- Town Clerk: I want to thank the staff in the Town Clerk office for allowing me to sit in ad observe for an hour or so. It was very informative.
- Mold Testing: Follow up mold testing was done, and the info is in you packet. In general, all came back normal. Any recommended remediation was completed.
- Sign Request: Sara Bougher would like a “Slow, Children, 25 MPH” sign put near 68 Rochester Street.
- Maine Water: We have extended the contract to December 2026. There was a 6% increase overall.
- MMA: The Board needs to appoint a voting delegate for the conference in October.

Motion: Vice Chair Hutchins-Corliss moved to appoint Arthur Capello as the voting delegate for the MMA conference. Member Laterreur seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Outside work for Town Hall: RFP for brickwork etc. updated and was sent out.

12. Select Board Communications

None.

13. Approval of Warrants

09/12/2024	Payroll Warrant #25	\$ 83,702.24
09/19/2024	Payroll Warrant #26	\$ 90,374.34
09/17/2024	A/P Warrant #27	\$ 450,705.99
09/17/2024	A/P Warrant #28	\$ 514,249.67

Motion: Chair Cobb moved to accept the Accounts Payable Warrants as presented. Vice Chair Hutchins-Corliss seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

14. New Business

- Rachael Casagrande – dog ordinance

Ms. Casagrande was not present. Town Clerk Murray will email her about attending the October 1, 2024, meeting.

- Maine Water Company Contract



THE MAINE WATER COMPANY
93 Industrial Park Road
Saco, ME 04072-1804

T: 207-282-1543
F: 207-282-1544
www.mainewater.com

September 7, 2024

Mr. Arthur Capello
Town of Berwick
11 Sullivan Street
Berwick, ME 03901

Re: Maine Water Operations and Management Agreement extension

Arthur,

The Operations and Management Agreement between The Maine Water Company and the Town of Berwick expires December 31, 2024. Please see attached for an agreement amendment.

We are proposing a contract extension for two years, from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026 at a rate of \$23,320 per month. This is a 6% increase over the current rates, driven by increases in Company labor and overhead costs over the past two years. Non-routine services will be billed per our annual billing rates and other provisions of the contract remain the same.

If this extension is agreeable to you, please sign and date below, and return a copy to me. Please give me a call if there are issues with the contract that you would like to discuss.

We enjoy working with the Town of Berwick and serving your customers. We hope that we are meeting your expectations.

Sincerely,

Mike Cummons
Vice President

Seen and agreed to:

Arthur Capello, Town Manager

Dated: _____

Motion: Chair Cobb moved to accept the Operations and Management Agreement extension with Maine Water Company from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026, as presented. Vice Chair Hutchins-Corliss seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

15. Quitclaim Deeds and/or Installment Contracts

None.

16. Abatements/Supplements

None.

17. Second Public Comment

Chair Cobb opened the second public comment. There being no comments, Chair Cobb closed the second public comment.

18. Executive Session

- Title 1 §405(6)(A) – Discussion of Personnel and Title 1 §405(6)(D) – Discussion of Labor Contract

Motion: Chair Cobb made a motion to enter into Executive Session per MSRA Title 1 §405(6)(A) – Discussion of Personnel. Member Wright seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:19pm.

The Board resumed its regular meeting at 8:30pm. Chair Cobb noted no actions were made during the Executive Session.

19. Other Business/Non-Agenda Items

20. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Patricia Murray
Town Clerk**

The September 17, 2024, Select Board Meeting Minutes – Signed as approved at the October 1, 2024, 2024, Select Board meeting.

On behalf of the Board
