



NEW PORTLANDER

INFORMATION IS THE CURRENCY OF DEMOCRACY — THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Town of New Portland is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.

DOUG KERR PHOTO

E-mail: nwprtInd@tds.net | Mailing Address: Town of New Portland, 901 River Road, New Portland, Maine 04961
Visit the Town of New Portland's web page at newportlandmaine.org

PUBLICATION VOLUME 27 • NUMBER 7 • JANUARY 1, 2021

TOWN OFFICE INFORMATION

Phone: 628-4441 • Fax: 628-4440

Town Office Contact Information and Hours of Operation:

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday..... 10am - 5pm
Thursday..... 12pm - 6pm
First Saturday of the month 8am - noon
(except Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar. and permitting it's not a holiday weekend)

Town Manager/CEO, Deputy Clerk: Stacie Rundlett

Email nwprtInd@tds.net

Town Clerk: Stacie Rundlett (acting)

Email nwprtInd@tds.net

LPI: Leo Mayo - 566-7341

Assessor's Agent: Audra Swanson

Wednesday..... 10am - 3pm
Email newportlandassessor@gmail.com

Fire Department: Chief Kip Poulin

Animal Control Officer: Keith Mudgett, Jr. - Cell: (207) 248-2874

Notices

The Town Office will be closed on the following dates in January:

Saturday, January 2

Monday, January 18 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Saturday, January 23 the Budget Committee will have their meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Department Heads at 9:00 am. Space will be limited to follow with CDC guidelines.

Town of New Portland

Deputy Town Manager/Administrative Assistant

The Town of New Portland is currently accepting applications for a part time Deputy Town Manager/Administrative Assistant. This position is a part-time position of approximately 27 hours a week and works directly under the Town Manager. The duties of this position include dealing directly with the public processing of motor vehicle registrations, issuing IF & W registrations and licenses, handling Town funds, and accepting tax payments. Work will involve a variety of bookkeeping, data processing, cash management and clerical functions. The successful candidate will demonstrate friendliness, tact, diplomacy, professional appearance and follow certain protocol for privacy on some matters of business. They will also have excellent attention to detail, have good computer skills and a strong ability to work as a team member with fellow employees. Prior experience with TRIO is a plus. Training will be provided.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please send resume, three references, and cover letter to:

Deputy Town Manager Search

Atten: Stacie Rundlett, Town Manager 901 River Rd
New Portland, ME 04961

Application materials may also be dropped off at the Town Office or emailed directly to the Town Manager at newportlandtownmanager@gmail.com

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Remember...

- **Selectmen's Meeting**
1st Tuesday & 3rd Monday of each month6:30pm
- **New Portland Fire Department Meeting**
2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month6:30pm
- **Library Board of Trustees Meeting**
2nd Tuesday of the month6pm
- **Planning Board Meeting**
1st Wednesday of the month6:30pm
- **New Portland Water District**
2nd Wednesday of each month6:30pm
- **School Board Meeting**
1st Wednesday of each month6pm
- **Recreation Committee**
1st Thursday of each month6:30pm
- **New Portland Community Library**
Winter Hours - September 1 to May 31
Tuesday9am - Noon
Wednesday4pm - 6pm
Thursday1pm -3pm
Saturday.....9am - Noon
- **Kingfield-New Portland Transfer Station**
Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday..... 7:30am - 4:30pm
- **New Portland Post Office Customer Service Hours**
Monday - Friday..... 7am - 9am, 2pm - 4pm
Saturday.....7am - 10:30am

Town Manager

Nomination papers are still available until and need to be turned in by Monday, January 25, 2021 for the following positions: Board of Selectmen – three (3) year term, School Board Member - (3) year term, Town Clerk – three (3) year term. Anyone interested will need to get nomination papers from Stacie and obtain at least 25 and no more than 100 signatures of New Portland registered voters, in order to be placed on the ballot for the Municipal Election scheduled for March 5, 2021.

Starting February 1 anyone who has not licensed their dog for 2021 will have a late fee of \$25 added to their cost(s) to license their dog(s).

I would like to personally thank all who contributed or assisted with the New Portland Giving Tree this year. I greatly appreciate each and every one of you, and I am sure it was a wonderful addition to each family's Christmas who received your generosity. One of the phenomenal parts of living in a small community. Thank you, again.

Submitted: Stacie Rundlett, Town Manager

Selectmen

Minutes for Selectmen's Meeting for November 10, 2020

Roster: Selectmen: Andrea Reichert, Raymond Poulin, Wayne Rundlett; Town Manager: Stacie Rundlett, Marilyn Gorman, Kip Poulin, Brian Rundlett

1. Andrea called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
2. Raymond motioned to accept the minutes as written, Wayne seconded and all were in favor.
3. Old Business: NONE
4. Department Heads:
 - a. Kip proposed to the Selectmen to have a document for Fire Department members to sign on when they receive new gear, and if they resign and do not return the gear, the town can bill them for the gear. The board and Kip asked Stacie to confirm that this was legal with MMA's legal department. He discussed with the board that this year to date there were about 47 calls, and that the Tanker 2 had work done on it. The annual pump testing is scheduled to take place soon. He also updated the board on the status of the new gear which had been ordered.

5. Items by the Public: NONE

6. Items by the Town Manager:

- a. The Board of Selectmen reviewed and signed payroll and A/P warrants.
- b. There was a brief discussion regarding the status of the Sand Salt Shed as well as the status of the winter sand which needed to be put up. Stacie discussed with the board the properties that had been foreclosed on as November 7, 2020 for outstanding 2018 taxes. Stacie would follow previous years' protocol and send one final letter to property owners in hopes that some or all will respond and pay their taxes or inquire about a payment arrangement.

7. Items by the Board of Selectmen:

- a. The board had a brief discussion regarding the status of the public sand salt structure near the playground. There are just a couple of small things left to do and then the snow plow contractor will put sand salt mixture in it for residents to be able to get two (2) five (5) gallon buckets of sand per storm.
- b. Andrea motioned to enter into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)(F) at 7:04 pm. The Board exited the executive session at 7:43 pm; Andrea motioned to table the matter until more information was gathered.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:43 pm.

These minutes were approved by the Board members at the December 1 meeting. smr

Submitted: Stacie Rundlett

RSU 74 / School Board

The December board meeting was held at Carrabec Community School. Most board members attended in person, although a couple attended via Zoom. The meeting was streamed on Facebook.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, and then the minutes were approved.

A disclaimer: I did not attend in person. Watching on my computer, while sitting at my kitchen table, I found the sound quality to be less than spectacular at times. I believe, I captured the highlights, but if anything important is missing, I am choosing to avoid taking responsibility. I will instead blame the audio.

Presentation: Kristie Leblanc from Somerset Health spoke about Move More Kids. Working with Somerset

NEW PORTLANDER article submission deadline is January 20 by 4:00 pm.

Any articles, submissions, information for publication should be received by:

Dallas Landry • PO Box 34, North New Portland, ME 04961 • phone 628-4201 • email: alderswamp2@gmail.com

If there are any questions or needs regarding the receiving of the *New Portlander*, those inquiries should be directed to the Town Manager.

Health and Move More Kids, the district has been able to finance a great deal of needed fitness equipment, fund after-school programs, and buy Fit Kits and cardio equipment. Highlights have included the 100 Mile Club, Walking School Bus, and Winter Olympics. Comparatively, students at schools associated with Move More Kids have a lower absentee rate and fewer office referrals than their counterparts in non Move More Kids schools.

Superintendent Report: 1.) Mr. Tracy gave the board updated enrollment numbers. He stated that from a budget standpoint, the district is currently in good shape. 2.) As of Wednesday night, there were no known Covid positives of RSU 74 students or staff. Some individuals were considered to be “close contacts”, and some were awaiting test results. 3.) The CDC will no longer do contact tracing for Covid cases relating to schools. That is now the responsibility of school personnel. 4.) It does not appear that schools will be administering the MEA this spring. Instead, the NWEA will be utilized. 5.) December 21 and 22 will be professional development days for staff. Students will be remote. There will be no expectation that staff push out work for the remote learners on these days. 6.) The board's Negotiating Committee will meet with the Support Staff Negotiating Team on December 17. 7.) As virus numbers have been increasing, the district has seen an increase in the number of students leaving in person learning, and entering remote learning.

Appointments: Stacy Robinson, John Berube, and Aaron Baum - CHS class advisors

Resignation: Roxann Waugh at the end of 2020-2021

Admin Reports: Tim Richards anticipated the start of the winter sports season being delayed. Keith Mahoney gave the board honor roll lists from CCS. Scott Hall said some technology related items (computers maybe, though I did not hear) were being shipped from China. Grace Cram had nothing to add to the report that she had previously submitted to the board. Jean Butler said at Solon and GS, the staff is trying to make the holidays enjoyable for students. Families are being helped with food and gifts for the children which are being provided. At the most recent Drive Thru Food Event, 88 boxes of food were delivered. As the school year progresses, the need for food is increasing in our communities. Lorie Agren thanked the board, as all board members were wearing masks. She acknowledged the hard work the support staff members had been doing. She said employees in all job categories have had to work harder this year, taking on additional responsibilities. She cited the cooks, the people delivering meals, and others. She also thanked the school nurse for her efforts. New playground equipment has arrived, and it will be installed in the springtime.

Committees: The superintendent evaluation committee met on November 4.

Public Participation: No one from the in person audience spoke. A number was displayed on the screen so that anyone watching remotely could call in. One caller phoned and spoke to the superintendent. At the conclusion of the call, Mr. Tracy did not relay the contents of the call to the board members. According to Mr. Tracy, he received an “obscene phone call”.

Phase Three Discussion: Mr. Tracy has repeatedly stated he wants to see “more kids, more of the time” attending school. He is concerned about the increased suicide rates, drug abuse, and domestic violence which has been reported during the last nine months. Failure rates are twice as high for remote learners than for in person learners. Students in grades 6-9 seem to be struggling the most to be academically successful. He believes that for students, more in person instructional time will lead to more success. Mr. Tracy mentioned Dr. Fauci, Dr. Shah and Pender Makin have repeatedly stated the importance of having kids in school, and there has not appeared to be sustained transmission of the virus in schools. He said that increased time in school for students will bring about an increased workload for staff. He had hoped to bring a Phase Three proposal to the board in which: k-5 students attend school full days on Tue-Wed, and until 12:30 on Thu-Fri all 6-8 students attend school until 2:30 four days a week, 9-12 would feature more synchronous learning and daily expectations. Mr. Tracy did not ask the board to approve these changes. Because of the increased case numbers, increased deaths, and the continued “yellow status” of Somerset County, he did not feel it was the right time to recommend large scale changes.

Board members engaged in much discussion. The board did not approve any changes, so Phase Two will continue. Continued Phase Three talk can certainly be expected in the weeks to come.

Live Streaming of Board Meetings: Board meetings will continue to be streamed online as long as the Covid-related state of emergency remains.

Superintendent Eval/Contract: The full board voted to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent Evaluation Committee. Mr. Tracy's contract was extended. His contract now runs through (I believe) June 30, 2023.

Adjournment: The meeting ended at 8:15 pm.

✓Special Board Meeting

The December 16 special board meeting was held at Carrabec Community School. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The superintendent shared some information with the board: 1.) The student enrollment numbers have not changed much since the December 2 board meeting. 2.) In preparation for storm days, storm day packets with

schoolwork and food have been prepared. 3.) The district will be supplying five days of food for families during vacation. 4.) The CCS and CHS networks have been updated. 5.) Students in grades 6-12 will participate in a Gallup Poll which will get a sense of their social/emotional well-being. 5.) The superintendent and admin team will be meeting with Sheriff Dale Lancaster. A primary topic of discussion will focus on what has taken place in our area since March - rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues, etc. 6.) Now that the county is green, the winter sports season has begun. 7.) The board's Academic Sub-Committee met on Tuesday. 8.) The NWEA winter-testing window is open. Winter scores will be analyzed to see how much growth there has been since the fall test. 9.) There are no COVID cases for either students or staff. Two students have been deemed close contacts. Comparatively, RSU 74 is in good shape in this regard. Many surrounding districts have cases. Some districts have gone remote due to a lack of staff.

Jean Butler told the board at both Garret Schenck and Solon Elementary Schools there are 8-10 students who are staying all day. Some remote learners are coming in on Mondays. In the Carrabec Community School k-5, Mr. Mahoney said some remote learners are coming in on Mondays, and some grades k-5 kids are staying all day Tuesday-Friday. In grades 6-8, twelve students are attending three or four days a week, and five more will be after the break. Mr. Richards, Carrabec High School, did not attend the meeting, but Mr. Tracy reported at CHS there is a plan to add tutors and a remote learning facilitator.

Mr. Tracy reported on the Synchronous Pilot. The teachers involved reported back to him that results were mixed. At this point, Mr. Tracy's recommendation is to allow teachers to engage in synchronous learning if they are comfortable with the idea but not to require synchronous learning. In general, there seems to be a feeling synchronous learning will be most effective at higher grade levels and/or with classes with small numbers of students (in person and remote).

There was much board member discussion. Board members offered the following thoughts: 1.) *Perhaps there should be teachers who teach only remote learners.* 2.) *Small classes should be combined if possible.* 3.) *Why is RSU 74 the only district struggling in this environment?* 4.) *Students should be in school more.* 5.) *A mid-year re-structure might be needed.* 6.) *Teachers should be polled and given the chance to offer ideas on how we can evaluate and improve.*

Close to the end of the meeting, Mr. Tracy was asked if the Phase Three plan would be re-visited. He said it would be, but he hopes to do it at the right time. He does not believe that now is the right time.

The meeting ended at 7:15 pm.

Submitted: Dave Ela, Carrabec Association President

New Portland Community Library

Happy New Year New Portlanders!

Hoping everyone is happy, healthy and had the best holiday season possible. Apologies for missing the last two newsletters, as I'm sure you have realized the library has been closed to the public since the upturn in COVID cases. We are "hoping" to have some limited "open" hours in January. In any event, please keep in mind that Sheila has been and will continue with "curbside pick-up" on Tuesday's and Saturday's 9:00 to 11:00 am! Please call 207-628-6561 or e-mail newportlandcl@gmail.com with your wish list and to make arrangements for pick-up. The entire catalog inventory is available at <http://newportlandmaine.org/>. Sheila also posts on the door our new circulation items, some of which are *Yellowstone* (third season), latest copy of the *Vikings* series, *Texas Rising* DVD, most of the Tony Hillerman books. Also, new books by Baldacci, Janet Evanovich, William Johnstone (westerns), David Rosenfelt (Maine author), and many more. Free books are still available at the end of the circulation desk, check with Sheila on titles or authors available. Thank you for your continued support. Respectfully...

Submitted: Becky Redlevske and Sheila Atwood

Churches

Happy New Year from the Western Mountains Baptist Church!

Please check out our website at westernmountainschurch.org for our January 2021 newsletter, calendar of events for the new year, recordings of Sunday morning messages and more. Pastor Tom DuBois continues to have his messages recorded on the church's YouTube channel. Most recently, he is recording his messages live on YouTube rather than pre-recorded messages. Thank you for your patience until this new endeavor gets the kinks worked out. CDs continue to be available each week; mailed out for no charge. To be added to the mailing list, email westernmountainbaptist@tds.net or call the church at 265-2557.

Sunday, January 10, a sliding party is planned immediately following church. Bring warm clothes and a sled. We will all meet at Gilmore Hill, Kingfield for some outdoor fun. Sliding parties are also scheduled for February 14 and March 14. Hope to see you there.

Bridging the Gap, free meals for the elderly, will be delivered on Saturday, January 30. Please call Cathy for more information or to sign up for a delicious hot cooked meal: 678-2442.

WMBC continues to hold in-person Sunday morning services at 10:00 am. Gatherings are running 35-45 people, seating is spread out to accommodate six (6) foot distancing and face coverings are required. For questions/concerns feel free to text or call Pastor Tom at 557-3802 or email him: pastorwmbs@gmail.com.

Submitted: Crystal Fitch

LET'S TOAST TO NEW BEGINNINGS

*Have a Happy
New Year!*

Wishing you love and luck in the coming year!

FIRST RULE OF
2021:
*Never Talk
about 2020*

Goodbye
2020
No one will miss you
Hello
2021
We're so glad you're here



The New Portlander

Established July 1994

901 River Road
New Portland, Maine 04961

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| NEW PORTLANDER CALENDAR JANUARY 2021 DOUG KERR PHOTO | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| | | | | | 1 Town Office Closed New Year's Day | 2 Town Office Closed |
| 3 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 4 Selectmen's Meeting 6:30 pm | 5 School Board Meeting 6:30 pm CSS Planning Board Meeting 6:30 pm | 6 Recreation Committee Community Room 6:30 pm | 7 Water District Meeting 6:30 pm | 8 Deadline for New Portlander Submissions 4:00 pm | 9 Annual Budget Committee Meeting 9:00 am Community Room |
| 10 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 11 Fire Department Meeting 6:30 pm Library Board of Trustees NPCL 6:00 pm | 12 Town Office Closed Observance MLK Day Selectmen's Meeting 6:30 pm | 13 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 14 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 15 Last Day to License Dogs without late fee | 16 Annual Budget Committee Meeting 9:00 am Community Room |
| 17 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 18 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 19 Fire Department Meeting 6:30 pm | 20 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 21 Fire Department Meeting 6:30 pm | 22 Last Day to License Dogs without late fee | 23 Annual Budget Committee Meeting 9:00 am Community Room |
| 24/31 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 25 Nomination Papers due at Town Office | 26 Fire Department Meeting 6:30 pm | 27 Last Day to License Dogs without late fee | 28 NVCC Coffee 10:30 am Service 11:00 am ZOOM WMBC Services 10:00 am | 29 Annual Budget Committee Meeting 9:00 am Community Room | 30 Annual Budget Committee Meeting 9:00 am Community Room |