

**Town of Orono
Council Committee Meeting**

**Monday, April 25, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.
Council Chamber – Municipal Building**

Minutes

1. Roll Call

Present: Sam Kunz (Operations Chair), Council Chairman Cindy Mehnert, Geoff Gordon, Tom Spitz, Judy Sullivan, Tom Perry, Clint Relyea and Town Manager Sophie Wilson.

Operations

2. Change in Polling Location

Ms. Wilson stated that staff has been working to identify an alternate option for locating the poll(s) for State Elections. She noted that two years ago Council voted to consolidate the two polling locations for off-campus residents from the Town Office and Birch Street School to one location at the Orono Middle School. During these years, the Town and school have fielded complaints related to traffic flow and parking. Ms. Wilson explained that a very high voter turnout is expected for the November due to the Presidential election, referendum question involving the legalization of marijuana and the opening of a 720-bed off-campus student housing complex.

Ms. Wilson stated that an evaluation of facilities with space and parking available to manage peak voter turnout led staff to reach out to the University of Maine. After working with UMaine staff, staff has identified the Memorial Gym as being the best potential option to consolidate voting in one location.

Council members discussed concerns about parking on the UMaine campus and the challenge to manage it. They also expressed concerns for not having a singular polling location in town. Ms. Wilson stated that staff will be looking for more efficiencies and flexibility with one location.

Council suggested advertising the new location well through various means including the local newspapers and also having lots of signage. They also suggested advertising absentee voting.

Mr. Gordon asked for confirmation the staff exhausted every polling location opportunity in town. Ms. Wilson confirmed that there is not another location that is large enough and can handle the traffic flow.

The Committee agreed to authorize the Town Manager to continue discussions with the University of Maine regarding the option of utilizing the Memorial Gym as the polling location.

3. Brief Town Manager's Report

The Town Manager provided a brief update on the following topics:

- Old Town-Orono Fiber Corporation to be discussed as part of Council's 5-Year Capital Plan or further. Ms. Wilson noted that it will not be part of FY17.
- Office moves: Finance Director to the Parks & Recreation space in the Town Office, Parks & Recreation to move to KACH and moving the Orono Historical Society (OHS) to the front space of the Birch Street Senior Center. Ms. Wilson noted that OHS has expressed concerns about the move. She will be sending them a letter acknowledging their concerns and explaining the reasons for the move.
- The Board of Assessment Review meeting has been postponed until mid-May.
- There are two nominations for the Boston Post Cane; the first does not qualify due to the birth requirements, the second is qualified and staff will be talking with the family regarding acceptance of the cane.
- Review of the Council Budget Workshop schedule.

4. Adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Minutes are not verbatim. A tape-recorded version is available in the Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Administrative Assistant