Town of Alexander Selectmen's Meeting

5 March 2026

Attendance:
Beth Johnson
Skip Colson
David Davis
David Sanford
Carl Oakes

Julie Burgess
Kristy Crawford
Ted Carter
Larry Hill
Foster Carlow Jr.
Joe Manza
Jane Manza
Dale Earle (arrived later)

Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM.
Pledge of allegiance recited.

Additions/Deletions
Ted needs to be included to talk about the DBU.

Approve Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve the minutes of 5 February 2026 by David D. and 2nd by Carl
Voting: Unanimous

School Board
Ted Carter:
Ted thanked Skip for moderating the last AOS 77 meeting. Last year, they went through 3 meetings in order to get the budget passed. But this time, it was one meeting that only took 16 minutes or so. It was a totally different thing. Skip pointed out that most of the line items were zero dollars.

Downeast Broadband Utility
Ted Carter:
Ted said that the DBU has169 subscribers in Alexander.

Ted said he would like to write a letter to all town residents. He would pay for envelopes and stationary, but would need the town office to provide the labels with all the addresses of all the town residents.
In the letter, he would say two things:
1. This is the final letter. Just to let people know. The town has 169 subscribers. These subscriptions are paying down the loan to put up the broadband system.
2. (Some people would like to install the fiber optic internet, but the (high) cost of installation is stopping them.) Inform residents that the town has $5000 in a kitty set up to pay 50% of the installation cost.

David D. said that Pioneer Broadband had said they would "make a drop" at each building's electrical meter. But they didn't / had to rescind that.
Ted said that installation at his house cost $400 (several years ago, long driveway).
Skip said it cost $675 for his (recently, not a long driveway).
Skip asked if there should be certain criteria for using this fund, such as low income.
Ted wanted it to be for just anybody in town. Also, if the money was not utilized by a certain date, that it could roll over to pay the DBU debt.
The dates could be April 15 to May 15.
Skip said he was not sure that the town could legally distribute money from a private citizen to other private citizens. Julie said she would to look at the legalities involved. Skip and Julie can discuss the $5000 fund idea.
David D. wondered if installation could be added in installments to the monthly bill. Skip said that would require more accounting.

Ted said that the reason he is doing it is that there are 169 subscribers out of a possible 220 (approximately). If this effort could get 10 more subscribers for the DBU, it would pay itself back. If it works, it works, if not, that's OK.
Jane asked if Pioneer could set up such a fund?
Skip said he wouldn't trust them. They had promised a drop at every house, but didn't.

Ted said that this project started 7 years ago this month. His hope was that high speed internet would attract more young people to the town. He has been on the DBU Board for about 10 years on the DBU board. He had said at the beginning, that he would stay on the board until it was up and running. That time has come: it is running robustly in this town. But now Ted feels that someone new could fill the Board position who understands numbers and accounts. He would be willing to stay on for 6 more months, if needed. He will also not run for school board. Ted told how often the DBU board meetings are and that the position does not require that much time. The new Board member would get the spreadsheets. A financially savvy Board member could give Crystal Gallina a hand.
Skip wondered if JR Gibson would be interested in this again.
Skip also said that on this March town meeting warrant, they can make an announcement about the

need for a new DBU board member. It would get better dispersement for finding someone new.
Ted liked having DBU Board members who have also been elected officials of the town.
Skip said to Ted that, "We appreciate your work."
Ted said that he will stay on the town Planning Board of Appeals as the chairman.

Cemetery
Jane Manza:
The wreath that was on the cemetery sign has been taken down and they are saving the ring to be reused next year.
A new USA flag is needed too. David S. explained that the old flag was ruined by getting caught on something sharp at the top of the pole. Ideally, remove that sharp thing.
A man who was going to do some tree removal at the cemetery, did return Carl's phone call, but then hasn't been heard from since.

Assessors
Jane Manza:
A garage on Ralph and Debbie Feck's was duplicated on two of their properties in their taxes. The assessors abated the 2025 taxes for the duplicate garage. However, only the selectmen can abate taxes further back than that. Jane is asking the selectmen to abate $477.00 from the Fecks' 2024 taxes.

Motion to grant an abatement for $477.00 to Ralph & Debbie Feck by Beth and 2nd by David D.
Voting: Unanimous

Roads
Larry said that he has been getting the road salt through New England Salt: about 200 ton per year. An important consideration is being able to get salt mid-winter if the town runs out.

Larry said he would tell them how much salt he wants and see what they say about how much it will cost. You can't ask for a quote in advance. All they say is, "I don't know".

Larry asked the selectmen: Has anybody on the Board ordered more sand?
[Nobody had.]
Two loads of sand have been dumped into the shed. Nobody seems to know from where or from whom.
Julie said she has not gotten a bill.
Larry doesn't know if it's good dirt.
Carl said that only Spear Trucking has been hauling sand, and, David D. added, that has been going up to Indian Township.
Skip wondered if the shed door should be kept closed?
But Carl questioned if it should it be kept closed against people doing a good thing like adding sand.
Larry said that about a quarter of the sand is left and he thinks it will last for the rest of the season.

Larry gently censured Dale for parking his loader inside the sand shed overnight a few times. The company that insures the buildings noticed and they "dinged" the town for it. However, if Dale is actively plowing, then he can have the loader inside.
Skip said the town can't afford an increase in insurance premiums.
Dale said he understood: His liability insurance is expensive too.

Skip said he has asked Mr. Earle to see if there is a potential to extend the contract without raising costs. (If he did want to increase his cost, then the plowing contract would have to go out to bid.)
Dale said he would be willing to extend the contract, but he would like 6 loads of salt to be mixed with the sand and 1 more load "in the corner". The load in the corner would be for when the roads get ice-packed.
Larry said that when he first started doing this, it was 1 ton of salt (at $2300-$2400 dollars) per 8 yards of sand. Before that, it was 1 ton per 12 yards of sand. Now Dale wants it at 1 ton per 6 yards of sand. Larry said that the salt sand mix is almost twice as hot as it was about 10 years ago.
Dale said that most towns now use 200 to 300 tons of salt. He would like to have it a little "hotter" [meaning a higher proportion of salt in the sand] than it has been. He has been been mixing the sand hotter, but would like it pre-mixed hot. Also, the sand has been lumpier, and therefore less effective.
Skip pointed out that it could be that that sand is the old sand from the bottom of the shed from decades ago.

(Crawford gets the sand from same place.)
Larry said he thought it will be $2500 per load, up $100 from last year.
Skip, Carl and David D. agreed that if you start off with a hotter load, you will have to use less sand. "You can plow it off or you can salt if off."
Skip also pointed out that Alexander has a lot of hills that really require no slippery ice.
Dale said he would agree to the extension of his contract for up to 3 years.

He said the way the sand is now, it takes 3 or 3.5 loads to do the whole thing, but it could be as little as 2 loads, if the sand were hotter.

Julie asked if Dale is agreeing to be paid the same amount per year as this past year.
Dale said, "Yes" and he also kept Crawford the same price.
Larry pointed out that other towns buy more salt because they don't have a shed to store it in. The rain causes some of that salt to wash away [and the sand/salt mixture becomes diluted].
Dale said that if it would have been a bad year, that the sand would have run out.

The town bought 5 loads of salt last year.

Motion by David D. and 2nd by Carl to extend the town's snow removal contract with Dale Earle for 3 years at $99,000 per year, on the condition that the town will provide the sand salt at a mixture of 6 loads of salt to no more than 1500 yards of sand, plus 1 load of salt in the corner.
Voting: Unanimous

Concerns about Dale Earle's insurance coverage will be addressed in revisions to the contract.

Skip asked Foster to ask Down East Ambulance [DEEMS] if they could defer raising the cost to the town for 1 more year. Whether they increase their cost this year or next, he doesn't have a complaint either way. They have treated the town well.
Foster said he would. The next meeting will be on March 23, at the Community Center in Meddybemps.

Foster also brought up the damage to the side of the Arm Road near Barbara Webber's by a garbage truck. Skip said that the town ended up paying for the repair, not the company.

Foster also said that on the road by Steve Clark's, there is a major bump. Maybe put orange paint?
Skip said that Larry could you take a look at it.
Larry wondered if he could put in sand temporarily.
Larry also said that he hasn't yet put out the orange weight restriction road signs.

Clerk's Report
Julie Burgess:
Lesliann is back to coming in only 1 day a week, except for training.
Julie has completed the Freedom of Access training.
She provided a template of what she would like to see in a written estimate.

The town had paid more than $120,000 towards helping pay off the County's Tax Anticipation Note (TAN). It turns out the town's portion needed to be only about $103,000, so the remaining money was applied as a pre-pay to the next County taxes.

Julie provided details on how much her health insurance would cost (less). [See "A"] and also that a pay raise for her plus decreased health insurance cost would be an overall decrease in the cost of clerk pay and benefits.
She also asked about an unused safe in the archive room that is useless. Skip and others said that there were at least two, one broken into and another that burned. One is being used simply for storage.

New Business
Weibley Dean and Pat Cormier are resigning from Assessment Board of Appeals. Replacement people will be needed. Unfortunately, they were the experienced members of that board

Skip said that once the elections are done later this month (and assuming Skip is re-elected), he will take the list of appointments and make the phone calls and find out who wants to and who doesn't want to continue serving. Some new volunteers with need to be found.
Stephen Seavey and the school board were also mentioned.

March 2026 Town Meeting Warrant
Kristy recommended an increase in pay for the tax assessors. With the assessment long form being used now, there is more work to do for assessing. A full time agent could do it, but that would be a lot more expensive. So increase the price for assessing gradually, so it won't be such a shock when a full time assessor is hired.
However, Jane said that the assessors have done the big load of the work of switching from short to long form. With the work done, that's why Jane will be staying on that Board of Assessors for another 3 years. Maybe look into increasing assessor pay another year.
Skip said that his concern financially is to focus on keeping costs down this year.

An executive meeting was planned for discussing the clerk pay and benefits. But Kristy said this is not a negotiation (in warrant Article 6). Legally, there should not be an executive session.

Kristy continued that Julie is fully trained. She should get her insurance paid and salary, as the town clerk. Carl noted that the decrease in the overall clerk pay and benefits is due to the

individual health insurance policy costing much less than the family policy.

Skip said that it is reasonable that when you have an elected official, and they quit, you appoint someone else to fill in the remaining time and for a probationary period. Every 3 years, the clerk is appointed (or, hired).

It was difficult to remove an elected clerk. That's why the town changed to appointing the clerk instead.

Article 7:
Will Lesliann get a raise?
Social Security recently gave a 2.9% increase.
A 2.9% increase to her current hourly pay would be $19.04.
Carl asked if that would still come out of $8000 per year total if Lesliann comes in once a week.
Julie calculated that Lesliann could without exceeding $8000.

Article 8:
Minimum wage is $15.10 per hour now.

Articles 9 and 10:
Carl and Skip's terms on the selectmen are up.

There will be only one school board position to vote for this time.

Mike Dicenzo's position on the planning board will be up, but he will run again.

The selectmen have been the cemetery caretakers.

Warrant articles will be added for Animal control officer and Code Enforcement Officer:
$1750 for the ACO
CEO was $3500

Julie said that the MMA does not recommend that the warrant be posted to a selectman and/or clerk. It will be posted to Kristy Crawford.

Motion to approve the warrant for the March 2026 town meeting by David D. and 2nd by Carl
Voting: Unanimous

Member Report
Jane, Ted, and Skip all said that the snow plowing that has been well done.
Joe also warned about being careful turning out of the snowmobile club, because cars are coming down at 60 MPG.

Motion to go into executive session for 1 personnel issue per 1 M.R.S.A § 405(6)(A) and 1 concealed weapons permit per 1 M.R.S.A § 405(6)(F) by Skip and Carl at 7:20 PM.
Voting: Unanimous

Out of excecutive session at 7:44 PM

Motion to delay action on permit, pending additional action by applicant, by Skip and 2nd by David D.
Voting: Unanimous

Motion to adjourn by David S. at 7:47 PM.

Kristy

2025 salary	$33,210
2025 insurance	$38,445.96
2025 total package	$71,655.96
2026 salary (2.8% cost of living increase)	$34,139.88
2026 insurance	$41,763.24
2026 total package	$75,903.12

Julie

Hours expected	1,400
Hourly wage	$25
2026 salary	**$35,000**
2026 insurance	**$17,720.76**
2026 total package	$52,720.76
Difference from 2025 Kristy	$18,935.20
Difference from 2026 Kristy	$23,182.36

Maine wages

Town clerk	$24 - $26
Tax collector	$21 - $26
Town treasurer	$33.30 - $43.80
Accountant	$31.80 - $40