

Warrant Committee Meeting Monday, 23 February 2026

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call:** 6:32 pm by Chair Smith; with Secretary Lopez taking roll call. Twelve voting members were present at the start of the meeting in attendance.

Present: B. Blomquist, T. Bloom, C. Chappell, E. Chesler, K. DesVeaux, S. Farrar, J. Kelly, M. Kelly, K. Knopp, L. Lopez, A. Sasner, C. Smith.

- 2. Opening Remarks:**

Chair Smith thanked Town Clerk L. Graves and Town Manager J. Smith for joining our meeting. Chair thanked subcommittees for their work and attention to the review process.

Chair noted regarding the two tabled budget items that we are reviewing at this meeting that we have their 990's as review material, we have no MOU updates, both budgets are flat funded and we have been told that there is to be no change in scope of services.

- 3. Approval of prior WC Meeting Minutes:**

Chair Smith moved and Ms. Kelly seconded a motion to approve the minutes from: 2 February 2026, 9 February 2026 and 12 February 2026.

The motion passed unanimously (12 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain).

- 4. Presentation of the Public Works Subcommittee recommendations on the FY2027 Budget as presented on 22 January 2026:**

Chair Smith recommends based on the Public Works Subcommittee recommendations, and she moves that the Warrant Committee recommend to the voters of Bar Harbor adoption of Recreation line item 1060 5934 YMCA for fiscal year 2027 as presented. The motion was seconded by A. Sasner.

S. Farrar volunteered to the Committee that he may have a conflict of interest since the YMCA had supported his private business.

Chair Smith made a motion to recuse S. Farrar from the discussion and voting regarding line item 6410 5924 There was no second for the motion with the result that S. Farrar keeps his seat as a fully participating committee member.

Discussion included committee members uncomfortable with this year's review process for the YMCA budget line item and the lack of information provided. Town Manager Smith repeated Chair Smith's opening remarks that the YMCA will provide the same

services with the same funding as was approved last year. Committee members also expressed their support for the town's efforts in moving to a MOU system.

The motion passed (10 in favor, 2 opposed, 0 abstain).

5. Presentation of the Public Safety Subcommittee recommendations on the FY2027 Budget as presented on 22 January 2026:

Chair Smith recommends based on the Public Safety Subcommittee recommendations, and she moves that the Warrant Committee recommend to the voters of Bar Harbor adoption of the Parking Fund Budget expenditures line item 6410 5924. The motion was seconded by M. Kelly.

The Committee noted their respect for the Island Explorer and Downeast Transportation. Committee members discussed the lack of information provided to them and said they would like to see less taxpayer funding going forward due to the limited amount of community use of the service. Discussion included community members approaching Committee members saying they did not appreciate the level of funding provided from taxpayer monies to Island Explorer and they feel that it is not their responsibility to support Island Explorer as tourist transportation.

It was noted that the Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan has goals to increase access of the Island Explorer service to our community and that the service is available now to residents and it alleviates traffic overall in peak season. Information was provided that 70-75% of the Island Explorer cost to operate comes from Acadia Park visitor passes.

K. Knopp made a motion to amend the original motion to reduce funding from \$310,544 to \$260,544 for the Island Explorer line item 5924. The motion was seconded by C. Chappell.

The motion failed (4 in favor, 8 opposed, 0 abstain).

Continuing with a vote on the original Parking Fund Budget expenditures line item 6410 5924.

The motion passed (8 in favor, 4 opposed, 0 abstain).

6. Closing Remarks/Adjournment:

Chair Smith expressed her gratitude to Warrant Committee members, Ms. Graves and Mr. Smith and said she would present our recommendations to the Town Council with our exceptions on Tuesday, 24 February 2026. Chair noted that A. Sasner was moving out of the area and had tendered her committee resignation as of 1 March 2026. With the assistance of the town clerk's office a search for a replacement will begin.

L. Graves noted a Town Council agenda clarification and said there would be newly finalized financial information coming for the next round of the budget review and new budget pages would be provided.

Chair Smith reminded the Committee of the 9 March 2026 LUO presentations from town staff to the committee, the 12 March 2026 Budget public hearing and Town Council final budget adoption and our 18-20 March 2026 final round of subcommittee meetings.

J. Kelly noted A. Sasner's wonderful service as a Warrant Committee member and the entire committee agreed and wished her well in the future.

Chair Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Lopez
Secretary, Warrant Committee