

**Minutes**  
**Bar Harbor Town Council Special Meeting**  
**March 3, 2026**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – 5:00 p.m.— In attendance were Councilors Earl Brechlin, Maya Caines, David Kief, and Randy Sprague; and Town Manager James L. Smith. Vice Chair Caines presided at the meeting.

**A.** Excused Absence(s)—Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Kief, moved to excuse Councilors Peacock, Boucher, and Minutolo. Roll Call Vote:

Kief            Y  
Brechlin      Y  
Caines        Y  
Sprague      Y  
Motion passed 4-0.

**II. READING OF THE MEETING GROUND RULES**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A.** February 17, 2026 Regular Meeting

**B.** February 24, 2026 Joint Meeting with the Warrant Committee

Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Kief, moved to approve the February 17 and February 24 minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote:

Kief            Y  
Brechlin      Y  
Caines        Y  
Sprague      Y  
Motion passed 4-0.

**IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**— Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Kief, moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote:

Kief            Y  
Brechlin      Y  
Caines        Y  
Sprague      Y  
Motion passed 4-0.

**V. REPORTS AND UPDATES**

**A.** School Reorganization

School Superintendent Mike Zboray spoke about the reorganization plan developed over the last two years by the Reorganization Planning Committee (RPC), which includes representatives from each of the towns in the school system. He described some of the limits of the current structure, which motivated the plan: program gaps, unequal access, and staffing and transportation challenges.

He described the proposed governance and funding structure. In addition to a single RSU board, each local school would have a Local School Advisory Council.

He asked the Council to place the reorganization question on the warrant for a vote in June.

Councilors asked about whether state legislation supersedes the Town Charter, which describes the School Committee and other functions of a municipal school unit. Mr. Zboray read an opinion from the school’s attorney that a charter amendment after the plan is approved, if it is approved, would not be required.

Councilors also expressed concern about the plan to the town to retain the debt for the new school building, but not ownership of it. They asked whether it would be possible to vote in November instead of June, and Mr. Zboray offered to discuss that with the RPC at the next meeting.

Charles Sidman, Terry Wagner and Kevin Knopp offered comments.

**VI. LICENSES AND PERMITS**

**A. Special Amusement Permit Class 3ad (new), Jack Russell’s**

- 1. Public Hearing—No comments.
- 2. Order 1, approve Special Amusement Permit

Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Kief, moved to waive the reading and that the order have passage. Roll Call Vote:

Kief            Y

Brechlin      Y

Caines        Y

Sprague       Y

Motion passed 4-0.

**B. Special Amusement Permit Class 3a (new), Siren & Sailor**

- 1. Public Hearing—No comments.
- 2. Order 2, approve Special Amusement Permit

Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Sprague, moved to waive the reading and that the order have passage. Roll Call Vote:

Kief            Y

Brechlin      Y

Caines        Y

Sprague       Y

Motion passed 4-0.

**VII. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Mr. Brechlin** thanked the Highway Section staff for their work during recent snowstorms.

**VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A.** Executive session pursuant to 36 MRS §841(2)E to consider a request for an abatement of property taxes for reasons of poverty.—Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Sprague, moved to enter executive session pursuant to 36 MRS §841(2)E to

consider a request for an abatement of property taxes for reasons of poverty. Roll Call Vote:

Kief \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Brechlin \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Caines \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Sprague \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Smith, Town Clerk Liz Graves, and Finance Director Sarah Gilbert participated in the executive session. Council returned to regular session at 5:57 p.m.

Mr. Kief, with second by Mr. Brechlin, moved to deny the abatement request received February 24, 2026 on the grounds that the applicant does not meet the burden of proof that they are unable to contribute to the public charges. Roll Call Vote:

Kief \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Brechlin \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Caines \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Sprague \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Motion passed 4-0.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**— Mr. Brechlin, with second by Mr. Sprague, moved to adjourn at 5:58 p.m. Roll Call Vote:

Kief \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Brechlin \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Caines \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Sprague \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Motion passed 4-0.

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Elizabeth N. Graves, Town Clerk