

Kennebunk welcomes new Town Manager, Heather Balsler

Please join us in welcoming Kennebunk's new Town Manager, Heather Balsler. Balsler took over the reins earlier this week from Interim Town Manager, Bryan Laverriere.



In December, the Select Board voted unanimously to appoint Balsler to a three-year term after a nationwide search. Originally a Maine native, Balsler is returning to Maine from Colorado where she recently served as the Interim Chief Resiliency Officer in Greeley, CO and formerly served as City Manager of Louisville, CO (population 20,000).

Welcome to the Town of Kennebunk, Heather. We look forward to working with you!

Charter Commission begins review of the Town Charter

The recently established Charter Commission has begun its review of the Town Charter. Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. on the 3rd floor of Town Hall. The current Charter can be viewed at www.kennebunkmaine.us/charter.



What is a Charter? Simply defined, it's a town's Constitution.

Article 1: Grant of Powers to the Town

Incorporates the town under Maine law and establishes the form of government to be Town Meeting-Select Board-Town Manager

Article 2: Town Meetings

Details how elections are run

Article 3: Select Board

Specifies the number of members, their qualifications, duties prescribed by law, and how the Board operates

Article 4: Town Manager

Lays out a job description and how the Town Manager is chosen

Article 5: Budget process

Establishes the duties of the Budget Board and how the budget is put together for approval by voters

Article 6: Initiative and Referendum

Explains how citizens can propose new ordinances or changes to ordinances via petition

Article 7: Recall of Elected Officials

Outlines the process by which citizens can initiate a petition to remove an elected official from office

Why Review the Charter Now?

There were many reasons the Select Board felt it was a good time to initiate a review of the current Town charter, and asked voters to approve a Charter Commission: A lack of clarity concerning the provisions to recall officials; Concern that Town committees operate in a legal gray zone at the municipal level; The Town has grown and evolved since the last review was done well over ten years ago.

How Does The Review Process Work?

- State law specifies how a Charter Commission works, the schedule that must be followed, and other details. The Charter Commission must prepare, for public review, a preliminary report within nine months, with a final report within twelve months.
- During the process, the Commission will have regular meetings with Town residents, the Select Board, the Town Manager, other boards and committees, the Town Clerk and other Town officials.
- The Commission will also look at charters from other towns.
- When the Commission creates its final recommendations, in the form of a revised charter, the Select Board shall send those recommendations to Town voters for approval.
- The goal is to have a charter that serves residents' needs efficiently.

How Do Other Towns Govern?

All Maine towns self-determine a method of government, which can include varying elements such as Town Managers, Town Administrators, Select Boards, Town Councils, Town Meetings, and Municipal Elections. About one-third of York County towns use the same form of government as Kennebunk. Not all Maine towns have a Town Charter. Some rely solely on Town Ordinances.

The Commission welcomes your thoughts. To provide feedback, please join us at a meeting or email: chartercommission@kennebunkmaine.us.

Budget process underway

The Select Board and Budget Board began meeting to review and approve the various operational budgets, capital and debt service items. Upcoming meetings to review the Proposed 2023-24 Budget will take place on 2/11, 2/16, and 2/21. Budget meetings are open to the public. View meetings in person (3rd floor of the Town Hall), on Zoom, on Cable TV channel 5, or online at townhallstreams.com.

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For information & reservations contact Whitney Sabelawski (207) 604-1329



Kennebunk Free Library Happenings

Looking to create an organized start to the new year? An instructional presentation detailing how to digitally declutter your personal photos will be held on Thursday, February 16 at 10:30. This event will include methods for cleaning our digital spaces, and tips on how to maintain organization in the future.



In February, KFL's children's programs are celebrating love and kindness! Join us for February's Kindness Club meeting on Tuesday, 2/14, at 3:45 pm, where we will be creating lollipop flowers to give to friends and loved ones.

Our website got a makeover! We are also debuting our new events calendar, which will allow you to register for programs online. We think that the new site looks better and will be easier for you to use, but we would love to hear your feedback!

For more information and the rest of our program lineup, or to provide feedback, email us at kfl@kennebunklibrary.org, call us at 985-2173, or visit us at kennebunklibrary.org

STAFF UPDATES

New hires

- Town Manager, Heather Balsler
- Deputy Tax Collector, Amber Crone
- Police Officer, Kristin Kirby

Goodbye and thank you for your service:

- Joel Downs, Finance Director, 18 years with the Town
- John Brady, EMS Division Chief, 8 years with the Town
- Anthony Cluke, Police Sergeant, 23 years with the Town

Current Job Openings

- Full-time Police Officers, Police Department
- Full-time Maintenance Worker/Truck Driver- Parks & Facilities, Public Services
- Part-time Room Coordinators- Just for Kids Club, Parks & Recreation
- Part-time Site Leader- Just for Kids Club, Parks & Recreation
- Part-time CDL Bus Drivers, Parks & Recreation
- Summer Seasonal Ocean Guards, Fire Rescue
- Per Diem Firefighter/EMS Providers
- Part-time Board Clerk, Charter Commission/Town Clerk's Office



To learn more and apply, please visit www.kennebunkmaine.us/jobs



Mental Health First Aid Training



United Way of Southern Maine is partnering with NAMI ME to provide free Mental Health First Aid trainings to community members.

Upcoming training sessions will be held via Zoom on:

February 16 • March 23 • April 13 • May 18

The training is approximately six hours from **8:30 AM - 3:15 PM**

To register, email Nina at nmisra@uwsme.org

Upcoming Events

February 18 - Select Board Outreach Session 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.
3rd floor Town Hall

February 20 - Town Offices Closed Presidents' Day observed. There are no changes to trash/recycling collection due to the holiday.

Meetings

Budget Meetings

- February 11 - Select Board & Budget Board 8:30 a.m.
- February 16 - Select Board & Budget Board 6:30 p.m.
- February 21 - Select Board & Budget Board 6:30 p.m.

Site Plan Review Board - February 15 - 7:00 p.m.

Charter Commission - February 22 - 6:30 p.m.

The Charter Commission meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. on the 3rd floor of Town Hall.

Select Board - February 14 & February 28

Meets on the **2nd and 4th Tuesday** of each month at **6:30 p.m.** on the 3rd floor of Town Hall.*

Planning Board - February 13 & February 27

Meets on the **2nd and 4th Monday** of each month at **7:00 p.m.***

* Visit www.kennebunkmaine.us/calendars for determination of in-person or remote meeting.