

Kingfield Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday May 18, 2026; 6:00 PM Webster Hall 38 School Street

Attendance

Municipal Officers: Wade Browne, Kim Jordan, Hunter Lander, and Chris Rushton

Municipal Staff: Leanna Targett (Town Manager)., Travis Targett (Wastewater Superintendent)

Public: Brad Orbetoon, Laura Columbia, Lillian Cheimis, Kathy Houston, John Simmoneau, Jillian Monahan, Adam Craig, John Gause, Tom Wieczek, Barbara Wiececk, Julie Swain, Diane Christen, Rob Woodhouse, Bob Carlton, Mathias Ringle, Juliet Brown (2 unknowns)

Zoom: Linden McClure, Alexander Weatherbee, Amanda Meader, Richard Hawkes

Absent: Morgan Dunham

Chairman Lander calls the meeting to order.

Selectman Jordan makes a motion to approve the May 4th meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Selectman Rushton. All in Favor.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Superintendent Laura Columbia is recognized to discuss MSAD #58 fiscal year budget. Laura provides the Selectboard with information on the budget for the upcoming 2026-2027 year. Laura states that the biggest increases are salary and benefits, fuel, operational costs, and also reinstating a principal at the Phillips Elementary School.

Selectman Browne asked why no decisions had been made to close a school. Laura explains that the district did a study of the schools and what shape the buildings where in, it was determined that all of the school buildings will cost the same per square foot to maintain over a 30-year period. Some schools will need more repairs now, others later.

Selectman Browne asked if closing all town schools and using the money that was saved was put into Mt. Abram would be an option. Laura states that district is in the process of hiring an architect to explore the option. Laura says that Mt. Abram is centrally located to all towns in the district.

Laura says that a decision about future plans for the district schools has not been made due to complications such as the possible withdrawal of some schools from the district.

Laura explains that revenues were \$12,541,356. The 2027 proposed budget is \$13,208,847. Which is an increase of \$667,491 or 5.32% in 2027. The average impact to taxpayers is 6.13%.

Laura states that there is a substantial balance forward that will help to reduce taxes figured in the budget this year however she does not feel this is sustainable.

Following further conversation, the board thanks Laura for her explanation.

Next item of discussion is to review and discuss the petition for moratorium. TM Targett indicates that there is a petition before the board to create a moratorium transient overnight recreational developments that has 83 verified signatures and asks Attorney Meader for her opinion/guidance on whether or not the board should put the moratorium to a vote. Attorney Meader states that the requirement for approving the petition for a town vote is for overburdening of public utilities and to prevent serious public harm.

Attorney Meader asks Richard Hawkes to provide a summary of the project. Richard says the area in question is over an access bridge across the Carrabassett River designated as a growth district that leads into a rural one district. The Bowdoin proposal is the first lot in the rural one district. The planning board has been active in addressing the issue of increased traffic in the area in the past by putting conditions on the previous developer to do a traffic and bridge studies. Richard says the Bowdoin Outing Club is proposing a campsite to accommodate up to 112 campers, a bunkhouse, a bathhouse, and outdoor pavilion.

Selectman Jordan states that the board had heard from residents over the years about the safety access to the bridge from Route 27. She asks Attorney Meader if the bridge concern would be enough for a moratorium. Attorney Meader replies that the strongest chance for the moratorium is the safety issue.

Selectman Browne asks how a campground compares to a home or number of homes. Richard Hawkes says he is uncertain on this as there needs to be further discussion.

John Simmoneau from Bowdoin College explains that the use was determined by the code enforcement officer as institutional. John says that usage will be weekends from August through October. He says there will be no use of public utilities, no fireworks, and campfires would be safe.

Bowdoin's Attorney Juliette Brown indicated that there is no burden on public facilities and existing laws are not sufficient to prevent serious public harm. Attorney Brown states that the current ordinance addresses the majority of issues have protocols that would allow the planning board to consider traffic and safety impact.

Selectman Browne says that he feels the process will include DOT, the town, county commissioners, road associations, and the owner of the bridge. He says, until these groups come together the issue will not be resolved.

Attorney Brown states that the moratorium is specific to transient overnight recreational developments. These developments are defined in the petition as a form of organized camping and recreation and accommodation facilities similar to but distinct from those associated with a campground. So, would this apply to short-term rentals, camps, cottages? , She says that the flaw is that the petition does not have a definition that reasonable people can agree it applies to.

John Gause, who is representing the Claybrooks Road Association was recognized. He says he wants to bring two areas of concern to the board's attention. The first of which was the definition of a petition. In the state of Maine provided there are the required number of signatures, asking for a moratorium is the will of the people and must go to a town meeting for a vote. Attorney Meader states that the selectboard has the right to deny submitting a petition to the voters for any number of reasons including "reasonable refusal" because the board does not consider it meets the requirements. John states that statute 30-A 4522 assures petitioners that with enough signatures, "the municipal officers shall either insert a particular article in the next warrant issued or shall within 60 days call a special town meeting."

John says the other item of concern is public harm which includes accidents and the burdening of increased traffic. Public harm could include harm to property values, living next to a fraternity situation with little to no oversight of drinking or partying of college students regardless of school policy, which would directly affect homeowners right next to the Bowdoin property. John says that the selectboard should honor state statutes and allow residents to hear comments and debate around the warrant at a town meeting, and to finally vote for or against the moratorium.

Alex Weatherbee attorney for Ira Mountain associations states that the purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the moratorium as written. Alex says that the purpose of the moratorium is not to say no or yes to the Bowdoin project but to ensure that the town is properly equipped to evaluate and review these types of projects now and in the future. She says that "transient overnight recreation," is not covered in the ordinances. The definition of campground is defined as any premises established for temporary overnight accommodation with or without shelter, such as a tent and recreational vehicle for which a fee is charged however no fee is charged for what Bowden has proposed or with any other group who comes in and wishes to build something like it. In closing she advised taking advantage of the 180 days to address all issues in the ordinance along with the bridge issue.

Following further comments, the board agrees that there are holes in the current ordinance. Chairman Hunter notes that it is new business and would like time to consider. It is agreed that the board will meet on Tuesday May 26th at 5:00pm to discuss only this item and will not consider any public comment.

Robert (Bob) Carlton is recognized as a candidate for county commissioner. Bob Carlton states that he has been county commissioner for the past 3 2-year terms and the current seat is a 4-year term. announced he was running for another four-year term as County Commissioner. He noted that Franklin County has received \$2 million from Senator Collins' office and \$700,000 in TIF funds that were used to build the new county building that cost \$4.2million without any money. Selectman Browne asked Bob why the county budget has increased so much. Bob stated that the county is still working on the budget. Some of the increases are due to salaries and other increases are for the general cost of running the county government. The proposed 2026-27 county budget is approximately \$13 million which is about \$1.3 million higher than 2025-26. Bob says that the northern section of the county pays 72%.

Next item is the Public Hearing for amendments to budget committee ordinance. Selectman Browne makes a motion to recess the selectmen meeting and enter into a public hearing. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Chairman Lander states that this time is to allow discussion on the amended budget committee ordinance. Said amended ordinance will be voted on during the annual town

meeting scheduled for June 13, 2026 beginning at 9:00am. Chairman Lander asks for public comment. Hearing non the public hearing is deemed closed and the selectmen meeting reopened.

Board reviews the MSAD #58 Warrant and Notice of Election. Selectman Browne makes a motion to accept. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. All in Favor.

Town Manager Updates/Discussion:

TM Targett provides a summary of proposed increases and decreases to budget and states that there is a possibility that the mil will not increase this year.

Selectmen Discussion:

Selectman Jordan states that the roadside cleanup went great it was half as much debris as the previous year.

Selectman Lander requests that the board stands behind him as the chair when it comes to policies the board has already accepted such as new business not on the agenda.

Public Comment/Other (not for new business):

None.

Selectman Rushton makes a motion to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. All in Favor.

**The minutes provided above are a summary. The Town meets record management requirements and retention schedules by maintaining permanent records of electronic recordings of meetings to satisfy the requirements of §403-A. Minutes by Leanna Targett.*