



Special Edition Orono Observer

A Town of Orono Publication

February 2021

Special Volume 27-4A

ANNUAL MUNICIPAL & REFERENDUM ELECTION

Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 7AM - 8PM | Council Chambers, 59 Main Street, Orono

Candidates for Town Council & RSU26 School Board

Information on the candidates can be found on the Town's website at orono.org

Town Council

3 seats, 3-year terms:

Ashley Case
Daniel LaPointe
Alyce Lew
Laura Mitchell
Cheryl Robertson
Geoffrey Wingard
Khawla Abu-Sheikh Wise

Town Council

1 seat, 2-year term:

Thomas Perry
Anastasia Stanek

RSU26 School Board

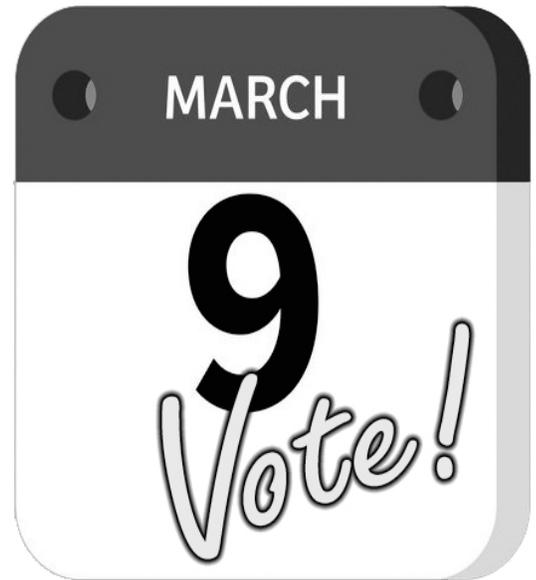
2 seats, 3-year terms:

Mark Brewer
Brian McGill

RSU26 School Board

1 seat, 1-year term:

Leo Kenney
Patrick Rowe



ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE BEGINNING MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH

Download and print an absentee ballot application at orono.org
or request an absentee ballot by calling the Town Office at 207-866-2556

IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING SCHEDULE

February 25 and March 4, 8AM-5PM in the Council Chambers, 59 Main Street, Orono
All residents are required to wear a face covering and socially distance.

MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENT OPT-IN QUESTION

At the upcoming Annual Municipal Election held on March 9, 2021, the people of Orono will have a chance to vote whether or not the Town will opt-in to allow marijuana establishments within Orono. These marijuana establishments include retail stores and dispensaries, manufacturing facilities, testing facilities, and cultivation facilities. The opt-in vote does not regulate personal use. The Adult Use Marijuana Act and Medical Use of Marijuana Act

both require that municipalities opt-in to allow different types of marijuana establishments before those marijuana establishments may operate within a municipality. The Town has prepared ordinance language that defines these marijuana establishments as land uses, allows them in specified zoning districts, creates performance standards to reduce

the risk of negative impacts on the community, and establishes licensing requirements. This ordinance language has gone through numerous Council committee meetings as well as both Planning Board and Town Council Public Hearings. The ordinance language will be the basis of the vote on March 9th, 2021 to decide whether or not Orono should "opt-in" to allow the operation of marijuana establishments within the Town.



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What should I bring to register to vote or make changes to an existing record?

If you are a first-time voter, please bring proof of ID or supporting document and proof of residency reflecting an Orono street address. If you have questions about the documents that are accepted, please refer to the Town's website at orono.org.

If you are already registered and just

VOTING INFORMATION

need to make a change to an existing record – please bring verification that reflects the change you are requesting.

How do I get my absentee ballot?

Absentee ballots will be available beginning Monday, February 8th and may be requested without reason until Thursday, March 4th at 5:00PM by completing and returning a request form which is available at orono.org

or outside Town Hall near the election's drop box or by calling the Town Clerk's Office at (207)866-2556.

Voters may use the SECURE external drop box located at the Town Office to deposit their ballots at any time up until the polls close at 8PM on March 9th. The box is emptied daily and monitored - so voters should be confident that their envelope will be received by the Town Clerk.

TOWN OFFICE HOURS UPDATE

Due to COVID transmission rates and related safety protocols, the Town Office is open by limited appointments only, serving one customer at a time. Appointments are reserved for those transactions that require a customer to appear in person. These appointments include new or new to you recreational and motor vehicle registrations, adding or dropping names from registrations, intentions to marry and marriage licenses, notary services, vital (birth, death, marriage) records requests, and business filings

(sole proprietor or DBA). While transactions with checks and credit cards provide independent confirmation that money was received by the Town, we understand that there are a few folks in our community that prefer to pay with cash. Those with cash transactions that exceed \$50 may book an appointment to receive an immediate receipt of the transaction. Appointments will not be booked for business that can be completed online, through the mail, or using the Town's drop box and secure

locker pick-up system. Please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (207) 866-2556 with any questions, concerns, for remote service instructions, or to book an appointment.

If you are unable to utilize remote services and need to process a transaction that is not eligible for an appointment, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (207) 866-2556 to discuss an accommodation or to make alternate arrangements.

ORONO OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS

New "Pop-Up" Rink

Parks and Recreation is excited to announce the addition of a second outdoor ice surface that will hopefully be up and running by the time you read this. We are adding a 60 x 30 "pop-up" rink at the old Camden National Bank parking lot. This is a "fill and freeze" system and we hope to have ice relatively quickly based on the temperatures that are predicted. This will be for skating only (no sticks or pucks allowed) and parking will be behind the fire station in the Municipal lot. Because of the generosity of the property owner, we agreed to use only the area where the rink is located. The rest of the parking area in this lot is private and parking is by permit only.

Old Rink Repairs

Staff is also continuing work on the rink behind the High School and hope to have that up and running soon. This

rink has increasingly become more of a challenge to create ice as the winter weather has changed. The best method for making and keeping ice throughout the season use to be to build a base by flooding it and letting it freeze solid and then make ice on top of the base in thin layers; however, this method takes a week or more of sub 20 degree weather which we have not seen the past couple of years. So, we have attempted to create a base by making many "mini" layers that would freeze in a shorter time and allow the rink to be used. The challenge with this is it takes longer and warm days or rain can erase a lot of work quickly giving us less of a base and challenging our ability to maintain ice through warmer spells. The other challenge is, on days that the temperature rises above 23 degrees, the sun is actually melting the ice. We are looking at ways to combat these challenges with some changes to the facility in the coming years. We

typically update ice conditions on our Facebook page, but you call the Parks and Recreation Department at 866-2556 if you have any questions.



ORONO POLICE COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

The Orono Police Department has always embodied a philosophy of Community Policing. This has manifested itself through programs and initiatives like our School Resource Officer program, the Good Morning Project, fundraising for Special Olympics, Drug Take Back events, RAD classes, and Student Police Academies, among others. Many officers work hard to become familiar with residents, students, and business owners/employees, in hopes that true citizen/police trust and cooperation will occur, lessening the opportunity for crime, fostering safety and security for the whole community.

Community Policing is defined as a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise

to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. Additionally, “Central to the philosophy of community policing is that the community prioritizes what and how the police will respond – such that the police response itself is in cooperation with the community” (Ronald Serpas, PhD. “A Smarter Public Safety Model”. Police Chief, Jan 2021, p. 32). That said, given the events of 2020 and the national and local movement to reimagine policing, we felt it was time to formalize a more focused and sustained approach aimed at building systems and relationships that support community oriented problem-solving.

We are excited to announce that we have restructured the agency to include a Community Services Division, led by a Director of Community Policing (DCP), with a current patrol officer serving as a

Community Services officer (formerly called SRO). Our current School Resource Officer, Edward Leskey, will be assigned the Director’s role, and Officer Courtney James will be assigned as the CSO. Officer Leskey will be tasked with overseeing the school-based policing (CSO) program, and acting as the primary liaison for the Department and Town on various teams, committees, and task forces aimed at resolving areas of community conflict. A specific focus will be developing and overseeing the implementation of strategies aimed at ensuring equitable and inclusive service delivery. Officer James will transition into the RSU 26 community as the CSO, with Officer Leskey’s support and mentoring. We are very excited for this change, and we believe our level of service to the Orono community will only go up and become more effective than ever.

MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENT OPT-IN QUESTION

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In-depth Overview

There are two different State statutes that deal with marijuana use, sale, and distribution. These two statutes are the Adult Use Marijuana Act (28-B M.R.S. §§ 101-1504) and the Medical Use of Marijuana Act (22 M.R.S. §§ 2421-2430-H). The Adult Use Marijuana Act legalizes the use and sale of marijuana for adult use recreational purposes. It also creates a State licensing process for adult use marijuana establishments. The Medical Use of Marijuana Act legalizes the use and distribution of marijuana for medical purposes. It also creates a registration through the State for the different medical marijuana establishment types. However, while these two statutes legalize the use and sale of marijuana, that does not mean that a marijuana establishment (business) can begin operating in a municipality. To be allowed to operate in a municipality, both State statutes require that the municipality opt-in to allow marijuana establishments to op-

erate within the municipality. Opting-in can be achieved by adopting local ordinance language that would create these marijuana establishments as allowable land uses.

Over the past couple of years, Town staff has worked with the Town Council and the public to put together draft ordinance language that aims to allow the different marijuana establishments within the town. The ordinance language is broken down into two main parts: land use standards and licensing requirements. The land use section aims to create four new land uses based on the types of marijuana establishments identified in the State statutes. These land uses are marijuana retail stores, marijuana manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities, and marijuana cultivation facilities. Unlike the State law, which separates medical marijuana and adult use into two different laws, the ordinance language aims to treat both medical and adult use establishments the

same. The reasoning for this was that, for example, the land use impacts from a marijuana manufacturing facility would be similar whether or not the facility was producing medical marijuana or adult use marijuana.

After creating the land uses for the different types of establishments, the ordinance language covers zoning. Zoning is meant to direct where certain land uses are allowed within the town and where they are not allowed. Marijuana retail stores would be allowed in the Commercial-1 District and the Commercial-2 District located along Park St. These retail stores would not be allowable uses in the downtown area. Manufacturing and testing facilities would both be allowed in the Commercial-1 and Economic Development Zone districts. These zones are where much of the town’s larger scale commercial and light industrial uses are allowed. Cultivation facilities similarly would be allowed in the Commercial-1

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and Economic Development Zone, as many marijuana cultivation facilities take place indoors in large facilities. However, smaller scale outdoor cultivation areas would also be allowed in the Forest and Agriculture district. It should also be noted that all marijuana establishments would be required to obtain Planning Board approval before operation.

The last key component of the land use section of the ordinance language revolves around performance standards. These standards are meant to put into place a variety of setbacks, design standards, security measures, ventilation system requirements, and disposal guidelines so that any marijuana establishment that is established fits in with the existing character of the community, does not negatively impact any adjacent properties, and is located away from any potentially sensitive area or use in the town. For instance, marijuana estab-

lishments would not be able to operate within 1,000 feet of any school or child care facility.

The second part of the ordinance language deals with licensing requirements. This piece of the ordinance would require that in addition to the land use approval, any marijuana establishment would also need to obtain a local annual license before operation. This process would include inspection of the establishment by the Town's Code Enforcement Officer, Fire Department, and Police Department, as well as require that the license

application go before the Town Council for a public hearing and approval before beginning operation.

For more information, please visit orono.org and search 'marijuana' to find the ordinance language to be voted on, as well as a number of other resources on the State law and local conversations that were held throughout the process.

If you have any additional questions or are not able to access the website, please contact Town Planner, Kyle Drexler at (207) 889-6908 or kdrexler@orono.org.

2ND HALF PROPERTY TAXES DUE ON FEBRUARY 11, 2021

The 2nd-half of property taxes are due on February 11th. Payments can be made online at www.orono.org, mailed to 59 Main Street, Orono, Maine 04473, or deposited in the

drop box near the entrance to Town Hall. Please include your payment stub, tax account number, or property address with your payment to ensure it is properly recorded.

**TOWN OF ORONO
59 Main Street
ORONO, ME 04473**

**PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ORONO, ME
PERMIT NO. 1**

**ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER
ORONO, ME 04473**