

MINUTES

Cumberland Town Council Meeting
Town Council Chambers

Monday, February 9, 2026

6:00 P.M. Workshop re: Road Acceptance Standards

7:00 P.M. Call to Order

Present: Councilors Douglass, Edes, Filson, Magoun, Michalak, Thorsson, and Vail

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor Douglass, seconded by Councilor Magoun, to accept the January 28, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

II. MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Sturgis gave the following updates:

I'm pleased to share outstanding news from our Parks Department. Frank Smith, our Parks Department Assistant Superintendent, has been selected as a member of the World Cup Pitch Management Team for the upcoming World Cup games being hosted in Foxborough this June. Frank is one of only 30 individuals chosen from a pool of hundreds of applicants nationwide. This is a tremendous professional honor and a testament to Frank's expertise, dedication, and the high-quality work he brings to Cumberland every day. We are all very proud of Frank for this remarkable achievement.

Budget season is now in full swing. Department heads and our leadership team are meeting to review:

- Department budgets
- Current and projected expenses
- Revenue forecasts
- Capital needs for the upcoming fiscal year

These collaborative reviews are helping ensure thoughtful planning and alignment across operations as we move toward finalizing the FY budget.

Our HR staff has completed a review and refinement of the Town's recruiting process for new hires. Updated materials have now been distributed to all departments. The goal of this work is to ensure:

- Every department fully understands each step of the hiring process
- Vacancies can be filled efficiently
- New employees experience a streamlined, consistent, and welcoming onboarding process

This update will support stronger coordination and improved overall hiring outcomes town-wide.

The Code Enforcement Department is reporting a very strong start to the year, with building permits more than doubling over January 2025 levels. This increase has been aided by the approval of two higher-value new home permits, contributing to robust early-year activity.

For residents seeking entertainment or enrichment, Prince Memorial Library continues to offer a rich menu of programming. Highlights include:

- Game Night: This Friday from 5:00–7:30 PM
- Weekly Knitting Group: Wednesdays at 1:00 PM

- Weekly Bridge Group: Fridays at 1:00 PM

Prince Memorial Library continues to be a vibrant hub for community activities and multigenerational engagement.

We have again been notified of scammers posing as municipal officials attempting to solicit fraudulent payments. Please be reminded that:

- The Town of Cumberland will NEVER ask for funds via wire transfer.
- Any email requesting a wire transfer, an urgent change of payment method, or an immediate fee is a scam.
- Verify the sender's email address. Official messages always end with *@townofcumberlandmaine.gov*.
- When in doubt, residents should call us directly at 829-5559 to confirm the legitimacy of any payment request or unusual email.

As always, vigilance is key in preventing fraud.

A reminder that all Town operations will be closed on Monday, February 16th in observance of Presidents' Day. Normal operations will resume on Tuesday.

III. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

No public discussion.

IV. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Opportunity for Public Comment. Per Article 2, Section 7 of the Town Charter, there will be an opportunity for public comment on each item on the agenda. Comments are limited to 5 minutes per person.

26 – 013 To hear a report from the Tax Assessor re: revaluation update and timeline.

Tax Assessor, Clinton Swett, presented the following:

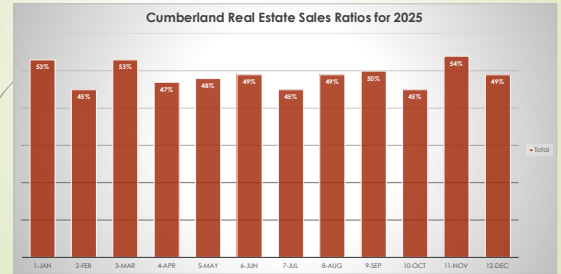


Updates:

- Cumberland 2025 Real Estate Sales Ratios
- Redfin Sales Analysis of Cumberland Market
- Valuation of Gravel Pits and Commercial/Industrial Properties
- Business Personal Property – TRENDING DATA
- Town-wide Informational Letter

2025 Cumberland Real Estate Sales Ratio

- Average Annual Sales Ratio is 49% of market



Redfin Sales Analysis of Cumberland Market

Cumberland Center, ME Housing Market

The Cumberland Center housing market is most competitive. The median sale price of a home in Cumberland Center was \$785K last month, up 12.6% since last year. The median sale price per square foot in Cumberland Center is \$372, up 16.6% since last year.

Trends Demand Migration Schools Climate

Cumberland Center Housing Market Trends

What is the housing market like in Cumberland Center today?

In December 2025, Cumberland Center home prices were up 12.6% compared to last year, selling for a median price of \$785K. On average, homes in Cumberland Center sell after 24 days on the market compared to 35 days last year. There were 5 homes sold in December this year, up from 4 last year.

\$785K Sale Price +12.6% since last year	\$372 Sale \$/Sq. Ft. +16.6% since last year
4.5% Over List Price	18 Days on Market
— Down Payment	5 Total Homes Sold

Redfin Sales Analysis of Cumberland Market

How hot is the Cumberland Center housing market?

Cumberland Center is most competitive. Homes sell in 18 days.

96 Most Competitive
Redfin Compete Score™
The average homes sell for about 4% above list price and go pending in around 18 days.
Hot homes can sell for about 8% above list price and go pending in around 5 days.

- Our analysis: If housing inventory increases, and interest rates continue to trend down, that should soften the real estate sales market.
- With the revaluation project, we are aiming for 92% to 95% of market value in anticipation of future market trends.
- Should the market continue to be aggressive, we can adjust values in the future to accommodate.

Valuation of Gravel Pits and Commercial/Industrial Properties

- Four gravel pits and 25 Comm/Industrial parcels to be updated
- Questionnaire inquiring about income/expense will be mailed; this data is required to produce a valuation via the Income Approach
- Three approaches to value:
 - **Income Approach** (used primarily in Comm/Ind Properties)
 - **Market Approach** (based on sales)
 - **Cost Approach** (use of a cost manual to "build" a valuation based on cost of construction and contributing attributes)

Business Personal Property – TRENDING DATA

- Approximately 100+ Business Personal Property Accounts Affected
- Trending uses the US Federal Consumer Price Index to adjust the ORIG cost of the assets BEFORE depreciation, resulting in a more accurate valuation
- Some towns trend and some towns do not; if it is applied consistently, it is approved by the State of Maine

Town-wide Informational Letter

- Town-wide mailer was sent in November 2025 and achieved our desired results
- Received many calls/emails requesting changes to parcels
- Use of the QR code will be used again in future correspondence

In Closing.....

An increase in Valuation does NOT assume an increase in Taxes

- When the Town and Schools budgets are adopted, we will be able to finalize the equation and determine an **ESTIMATED** tax rate; anticipated in May 2026
- Increased Town Valuations will **decrease** the tax rate. Currently, our rate is \$25.18, with the new tax rate estimated between \$10 and \$15 dollars per thousand dollars of valuation (keep in mind: this is only an estimate at this point)
- New valuation letters will be mailed out in spring/early summer, allowing citizens the opportunity to review the data with the Assessor, if needed
- All questions can be directed to Clinton Swett, Town Assessor

Revaluation – Timetable of Work



PROPERTY INSPECTION and FIELD REVIEW
Fall/Winter of 2025

VALUATION DETERMINATION
January – April 2026



NOTICE OF NEW VALUE CHANGES
May 2026

APPRAISAL HEARINGS (informal meeting with Assessor)
May – July 2026



PROJECT COMPLETION
August 2026 (Tx Bill Creation)

**MISSION:
ACCOMPLISHED**

I never learn anything
talking. I only learn things
when I ask questions.

Lou Holtz

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**

26 – 014 To authorize the Cumberland Police Department to submit an application to the Department of Justice for a grant in the amount of \$14,930 to support the acquisition of locative technology and the associated training for departmental personnel.

Captain, Mindy Coe, explained that the Police Department would like to apply for a Department of Justice grant to support the acquisition of locative technology and the associated training for departmental personnel. The Department responds to incidents involving missing and wandering individuals and believes this technology would significantly enhance public safety within the community. To support this effort, the Department intends to become a member agency of Project Lifesaver, an internationally recognized search-and-rescue program utilized by public safety agencies. Project Lifesaver is specifically designed to assist individuals at risk of wandering due to cognitive conditions such as autism, Alzheimer's disease, or dementia, with a primary mission of facilitating rapid response to help save lives and reduce the risk of injury for both adults and children. Several agencies in Cumberland County are also members.

This grant, entitled The Kevin and Avonte Program: Reducing Injury and Death of Missing Individuals with Dementia and Developmental Disabilities, provides funding to law enforcement and public safety agencies to implement technologies to track missing individuals and to develop or operate programs to prevent wandering, increase safety, and facilitate rescue. This funding opportunity does not require cost sharing/match from the Town. We would be asking for \$14,930.00.

The upfront cost of getting started with Project Lifesaver is estimated at \$6,950:

- Equipment Starter Package (Consisting of two Emergency Response System) \$5,750
 - 2 PLI 3000 4 Band Receivers w/attached Yagi Antenna (6-year warranty)
 - 2 VDC Power Cables
 - 2 VHF 60 Day Transmitters
 - 2 Receiver Soft Cases
 - 2 one-year supply of batteries, bands
 - 2 Omni Vehicle Antennas
 - 2 Battery Testers
 - 2 Headsets with Adapters
 - 2 Car Power Adapters
- Instructor's Travel Expenses: \$1,200 est.
- Recommended 3rd Receiver and Omni Antenna (to achieve triangulation):
 - Receiver: \$1,265
 - Antenna: \$114
- Many area agencies take on the cost for families who wish to enroll. Our department is interested in being able to do this in order to minimize the financial burden on families and increase participation. Each new

client that is enrolled will need a one-year transmitter kit (\$399). After the initial purchase then the only supplies needed will be transmitter batteries (\$1.15) and bands (\$2) which must be changed every 60 days. Project Lifesaver suggests purchasing 20 – 25 transmitter kits for the first year managing the program. Each kit comes with 6 batteries (one year supply).

- 20 Receiver Kits: \$7,980.

Chairwoman Filson asked for any public comment on this item.
No public comment.

Councilor Thorsson said that this is something that appears to be quite valuable. If we are not chosen to receive the grant, would we still pursue it through the Town budget process?

Captain Coe said that is something that they feel is very important would benefit the community. The Police Department budget is very tight, so it would be very difficult to add this to the budget as it exists today.

Councilor Magoun asked if someone had the bracelet and they traveled out of state, would it still work?

Captain Coe said that it would still work.

Councilor Magoun asked if there has been any discussion within Cumberland County for all the police departments to have this and perhaps get a discount.

Captain Coe said that departments can pool together for training. If we get this grant they will come to us to provide the training. Cumberland County has already said that they would be interested in sharing the training cost. Because the equipment will belong to the department, cost sharing has not been explored.

Councilor Magoun asked how we would be getting the word out to residents that this is available.

Communications Director, Whitney Hanken said we would announce it in the Crier, which goes out to thousands of residents every week. We also have our Library and Recreation departments which do a great job of sharing information.

Captain Coe said that she would go to the Active Living 55+ events to let people know.

Motion by Councilor Edes, seconded by Councilor Thorsson, to authorize the Cumberland Police Department to submit an application to the Department of Justice for a grant in the amount of \$14,930 to support the acquisition of locative technology and the associated training for departmental personnel.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

26 – 015 To authorize staff to submit an application to the Maine Office of Community Affairs for a Housing Opportunity Grant in the amount of \$15,000 to offset the Town’s costs for ordinance revisions, specifically, consultant fees and legal review fees.

Town Manager Sturgis explained that the financial impact of the implementation of LD1829 was discussed at the State level, and this will help offset the expense that the Town will incur for legal expenses and staff time to amend our ordinances.

Chairwoman Filson asked for any public comment on this item.
No public comment.

Councilor Magoun said that he loves it when departments find grant opportunities, so money is not coming from the four corners of Cumberland. Keep it up.

Motion by Councilor Douglass, seconded by Councilor Vail, to authorize staff to submit an application to the Maine Office of Community Affairs for a Housing Opportunity Grant in the amount of \$15,000 to offset the Town's costs for ordinance revisions, specifically, consultant fees and legal review fees.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

26 – 016 To set a public hearing date of February 23rd to consider and act on a liquor license application for Rattle Shake LLC located at 319 Main Street.

Chairwoman Filson said that this is the former Louie's Grill and Rise Pizza location on Main Street. This is to set the public hearing for February 23rd.

Chairwoman Filson asked for any public comment on this item.

No public comment.

Councilor Thorsson asked if someone leases a property for a business, are they advised of the zoning, so they understand the requirements within that zone?

Town Manager Sturgis said that generally the Town Planner, and sometimes himself, will meet with the new business owner to discuss the zoning and what is and is not allowed.

Motion by Councilor Michalak, seconded by Councilor Vail, to set a public hearing date of February 23rd to consider and act on a liquor license application for Rattle Shake LLC located at 319 Main Street.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

V. NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Michalak – he donated \$20 to the food pantry, as he does at every meeting.

Earlier this evening, the Town Manager mentioned our Town employee, Frank Smith, and the World Cup Pitch Management Team that he was chosen for. He feels that all of our Town employees are top-notch. He and Frank went to high school together and sports have always been important to Frank. Congratulations, Frank.

Councilor Thorsson – in an effort to be fully transparent, she and Councilor Douglass met with the North Yarmouth Select Board Chair and Vice-Chair recently, to discuss the previous Joint Standing Committee meeting. There was a disconnect between what was on the agenda and what was conveyed to them in advance of us arriving at the meeting and talking about the school funding formula. North Yarmouth felt slightly blindsided, and she would like to understand the process and what the breakdown was, as it seemed like North Yarmouth was not ready to have that discussion.

Town Manager Sturgis said that he believes that there was no intentional blindside. When he and Councilor Magoun were chatting at the end of the last Tri-Com meeting (Cumberland Town Council, North Yarmouth Select Board, and School Board), it was brought up that the school funding formula would be discussed, and the Chair and possibly Vice-Chair of the North Yarmouth Selectboard were

present during that discussion. The North Yarmouth Town Manager had the agenda prior to the meeting and there was no intent by the Town of Cumberland to blindsides them.

Councilor Thorsson said that there was some sort of disconnect, and we are partners in multiple ways. Whatever we need to do to improve communication between our full Council and their full Board would be beneficial to all of us. Perhaps we should meet with both full boards present to have discussions in the future since we are all so closely connected.

Councilor Vail – he and Chairwoman Filson attended a meeting last week with the Towns of Cumberland, Freeport, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, and Falmouth. It was a very good discussion, and a lot of ideas were discussed regarding shared services. If any other Town Councilors are interested in attending future meetings, that would be great.

Chairwoman Filson said that it was a great meeting and the networking opportunity is very beneficial.

He is not able to attend the Tri-Com meeting this Thursday and he requested that we ask the school board what they are doing differently this year, and how can we move that conversation forward. Why can't we buy school buses across the County? Why does the Town and the school each need a mechanic? Why can't we combine these services? He hopes that the conversation can be stimulated at the meeting.

Councilor Douglass – the Coastal Waters Commission will meet this Wednesday.

Town Manager Sturgis said that he learned late this afternoon that there may not be a quorum for that meeting and it might have to be postponed.

Councilor Magoun – the Parks and Recreation Board and the Lands and Conservation Commission (LCC) both met last week. The Twin Brook Master Plan is moving forward slowly but surely. The lease for the Greely Road side of Twin Brook has been signed off by School and Town Attorneys. This will delineate who has what and where the lines are. It will also look at the LCC and the Recreation side of things such as forest management, trails, invasives, policies, etc.

Councilor Edes – condolences to the family of Theron Hamilton of Chebeague Island who passed away recently.

He was glad to hear some conversation regarding the school funding formula. It has to change. The current formula is so unfair to the Town of Cumberland. It should be based on which town the student lives in, period.

He and Chairwoman Filson had a discussion regarding Town Charter amendments recently. We would like to make one or two changes per year in order to keep our Charter up to date. If any of the Town Council members have any recommendations, please let him or Chairwoman Filson know.

He is looking forward to the Tri-Com meeting later this week.

Chairwoman Filson – she spoke to our Town Forrester, Paul Larrivee recently, and he mentioned that the Town has done a lot of work on the roadside knotweed, and other Towns have noticed what an excellent job was done. They want to know how they can do the same. Kudos to the Lands and Conservation Commission on getting this done.

Reminder, that Tri-Com meeting is this Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at Wescustogo in North Yarmouth.

- VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A., § 405(6)(E) consultation with the Town Attorney.
Motion by Councilor Vail , seconded by Councilor Douglass, to recess to Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A., § 405(6)(E) consultation with the Town Attorney.
VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS
TIME: 8:37 P.M.

Reconvene to regular session at 9:22 P.M.

- VII. ADJOURNMENT**
Motion by Councilor Edes, seconded by Councilor Vail, to adjourn.
VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS
TIME: 9:22 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brenda L. Moore
Council Secretary