TOWN OF HOULTON
21 WATER STREET
HOULTON, MAINE 04730

COUNCIL AGENDA

Location: Town Office, Council Chambers, 21 Water Street, 2nd Floor
Broadcast by: Pioneer Cable: Channel 400, Spectrum Cable – Channel 1301 or Channel 7
Public can attend the meeting via Zoom: Meeting ID: 856 7271 4460 and can call in: 1-929-205-6099

Regular Council Meeting **November 23, 2026, 6:00 PM**

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

I. **Minutes:** Regular Council Meeting Minutes from November 4th and November 9th 2026.

II. **Old Business**: None.

III. **New Business**

A. (110326-1) Council approves the application for a Victualer License for Stonepizza Inc. d/b/a Domino's Pizza located at 127 North Street.
(Public Hearing)

IV. **Reports**

A. Town Manager's Report

V. **Discussion**

VI. **Councilors' Remarks**

VII. **Executive Session** – None.

VIII. **Adjournment**

November 4, 2026
Organizational Meeting

Town Manager Jones called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM with the following present: newly elected Councilor Tortello, newly elected Councilor Schools, newly elected Councilor Robinson, newly elected Councilor White, Councilor Torres and Councilor Lake.

At this time, the newly elected took their oath of office.

(110126-1) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres to nominate Councilor Robinson as Council Chair.

There being no further nominations, vote to elect Councilor Robinson as Council Chair was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Robinson, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Torres, yes, Councilor Tortello, yes.

(110126-2) It was moved by Councilor Torres, seconded by Councilor Lake to nominate Councilor Tortello as Council Secretary.

There being no further nominations, vote to elect Councilor Tortello as Council Secretary was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Torres, yes, Councilor Tortello, yes.

(110126-3) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirm the Town Manager's appointment of Khylee J. Wampler as Town Clerk.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-4) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirm the Town Clerk's appointment of Tamara Merritt as Deputy Clerk.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-5) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Lake that Council confirm the Town Clerk's appointment of Khylee J. Wampler as Election Warden.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-6) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Lake that Council confirm the Town Clerk's appointment of Tamara J. Merritt as Deputy Election Warden.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-7) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirm the Town Manager's appointment of Emily Crofoot as Treasurer/Finance Director.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-8) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirm the Treasurer's appointment of Khylee J. Wampler as Deputy Treasurer.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-9) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirm the Town Manager's appointment of Emily Mills as Tax Collector.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-10) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirms the Tax Collector's appointment of Khylee J. Wampler as Deputy Tax Collector.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-11) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirms the Town Manager's appointment of Emily Mills as General Assistance Administrator.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-12) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirms the Town Manager's appointment of Theresa L. Duff as Assessor.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-13) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirms the appointment of Town Manager Amber Jones as the Public Access Officer.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-14) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council confirms the Town Manager's appointment of the firm of Severson, Hand, and Nelson as the Town Attorney.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-15) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council authorizes the Council Chair or the Council Secretary and Town Manager to sign warrants for the expenditures of Town funds.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-16) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council establishes the time and place to hold its Regular Meetings as the same as it is now, which is the second and fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 PM at the Town Office 2nd floor Council Chambers and if a holiday falls on that Monday, the meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-17) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council appoints Councilor Tortello, Councilor Schools and Councilor Robinson, as members of the Shiretown Development Corporation Board of Directors for three-year terms.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

(110126-18) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres to table the following: Council appoints Councilor Grant as a member of the Shiretown Development Corporation Board of Directors for two-year term.

It was noted that Councilor Grant was not in attendance and hadn't taken his oath.

Vote to table was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order was tabled.

(110126-19) It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council appoint Councilor White as a member of the Shiretown Development Corporation Board of Directors for a one-year term.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes.

The order passed.

Discussion -Right-to-Know Law Presentation by Town Attorney, Dan Nelson.
Attorney Nelson noted that there were no significant changes in statute. He urged Councilors to annually review the Maine Municipal handout on freedom of access. He reminded everyone that if more than 2 Councilors meet to discuss town business, it is considered a Town Meeting and the public needs to be notified. He reminded Councilors about what is considered public information. It was recommended to use assigned emails from the town rather than personal ones.

He explained the updated process on tax acquired properties. He explained that once the property forecloses, there is no obligation to accept tax payments. He noted that property has to be listed with a realtor and any funds beyond statutory costs are returned to the former owner.

Adjournment: On motion by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres, the meeting adjourned at 12:31 PM with all in favor.

Regular Council Meeting
November 9, 2026

Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with all Councilors present.

Councilor Grant took his oath of office.

Public Comment
Carl Lord Jr., Houlton resident inquired if the TIF workshop would be open to the public.

Albert Carmichael, Houlton resident spoke about his eviction from his property at 26 Mill Street. He demanded a transparent investigation into the town's actions regarding his property.

I. **Minutes:** It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that the Regular Council Meeting of October 26, 2026 minutes be approved as present.

All were in favor.

II. **Old Business**:

A. Item 110126-18 It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres that Council appoint Councilor Fred Grant as a member of the Shiretown Development Cooperation Board of Directors for a two-year term.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Grant, yes; Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

B. Item 100226-4 was introduced by Councilor Grant on the following proposed ordinance amendment, per Town Charter Section 212 § 2; General Ordinances: Procedure: on request from Houlton Housing LLC, petitioner, for a Zoning Ordinance amendment to relocate the southern boundary line of the (B2) Highway Business District on North Street and include two abutting vacant lots (west of the North Meadows subdivision) to B-2.
(First Reading)
Town Manager recommends tabling this and the public meeting of this zoning change to future meetings to be determined. The rationale for this is to have time to address another zoning amendment to the same area that was just brought to our attention.

After discussing the zoning amendments, consensus was to table this. It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Grant to table this order.

Vote to table was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Grant, yes.

The order was tabled.

III. New Business

A. **(110226-1)** Chair Robinson declared the Public Hearing open on the following: Council approves the execution of the application to the Department of Public Safety Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages by Wing Xing Sheng, Inc. d/b/a Tang's Chinese Cuisine located at 60 North Street, for renewal of liquor license.

There being no public comments, Chair Robinson closed the Public Hearing.

It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres to approve the order.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Grant, yes; Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor Tortello, yes.

The order passed.

B. **(110226-2)** Chair Robinson declared the Public Hearing open on the following: Council approves the execution of the application to the Department of Public Safety Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages by Taste of China Lin, Inc located at 127 Military Street, for renewal of liquor license.

There being no public comments, Chair Robinson closed the Public Hearing.

It was moved by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres to approve the order.

Vote was taken as follows: Councilor Tortello, yes; Councilor Torres, yes; Councilor White, yes; Councilor Lake, yes; Councilor Schools, yes; Councilor Grant, yes.

The order passed.

IV. Reports

A. Town Manager's Report
Town Manager Jones gave an overview of what she's been working on including the following:
-2025 audit update
-Budget
-Meetings attended and upcoming meetings
-Job descriptions
-Website
-Workers Comp Safety Incentive Program

B. Councilors' Remarks
Councilor Tortello reminded everyone that this Wednesday the 11th is Veteran's Day and there will be a service at 11:00 in Monument Park to honor our veterans. She urged people walking and biking after dark to use reflective material as they are hard to see.

Councilor Torres reminded everyone that the Gateway Ambassadors and the Rotary are hosting an event tomorrow night at the Upover from 4:30-6:30. She noted that it's a way for newcomers to meet people in town. She noted that the ice was in at the arena and the public skate times were discussed.

Councilor Lake reminded everyone that the Marine Corps birthday is on the 10th. He reminded everyone to be safe out there.
Councilor Schools reminded everyone that winter is coming and to be aware of the winter/overnight parking rules.

Councilor Grant thanked everyone involved with the voting process this year. He thanked the staff who are working on the audit and the budget process. He reminded everyone about the Rotary Auction that will be auctioning off over $90,000 worth of donations. He noted that the money raised goes back into the community to support projects that otherwise wouldn't happen. He noted that it's happening the week of Thanksgiving and hopes everyone will tune in.

Chair Robinson thanked the people who participated in public comments and noted that every voice is heard. He thanked veterans for their service and noted that Councilor Lake is a Purple Heart recipient. He thanked his fellow Councilors for voting him in as Chair and noted that he will do his best.

VI. Discussion

A. Town Manager gives Budget Message for 2027

Town Manager Jones read her budget message/budget summary and explained some of the obstacles.

B. **Community Development Director, Nancy Ketch, coordinating a workshop on Tax Increment Districts (TIF's).**
Community Development Director Ketch noted there had been interest in discussing TIFs. She noted that a colleague from Saco recommended an attorney that does an annual TIF 101 presentation, who happens to be the same attorney that helped with our amendments. She noted that she would reach out to them for some pricing and availability. She noted that she had talked with one of the presenters at a meeting she attended that is going to meet with her and Amber. She noted that she recommends having the attorney come to do the TIF 101 and also have a more comprehensive analysis done.

After discussing, Council's consensus was to move forward with Ketch's recommendations.

C. **Town Manager Amber Jones requests support from Council to organize a first-annual holiday gathering / employee recognition event.**
Town Manager Jones noted that one of the initiatives she was tasked with is to have an employee appreciation and recognition program. She noted that she discovered that there weren't any town-wide events so is asking for Council's support to have an interdepartmental holiday gathering.

Consensus from Council was to move forward with the event.

VII. **Executive Session** - None.

VII. **Adjournment:** On motion by Councilor Tortello, seconded by Councilor Torres, the meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM with all in favor.

Town of Houlton
21 Water Street
Houlton, ME 04730
(207) 532-7111

APPLICATION FOR VICTUALER'S LICENSE

NEW X RENEWAL X

I/WE Stone Pizza INC

DBA Domino's Pizza

Located at: 127 North St, Houlton, Me. 04730

Signed,

127 North St, Houlton, Me. 04730
Mailing Address

207-691-1994
Telephone Number

(New Application) Code Enforcement Officer Inspection on _____
-Inspection attached-

(New Application) Town Department Restrictions and/or Regulations _____

_____

(New Application) Town Council Restrictions and/or Regulations _____

_____

(New Application) Town Council Public Hearing on _____

Approved _____ Denied _____

(Renewal Application) Town Clerk Renewal on _____ License # _____ Date Issued _____

_____ _____
Town Clerk Code Enforcement Officer

New Application Fee $25.00 **Plus Advertising Costs** – Date Paid 11/4/26 patinbull

Renewal Fee $10.00 – Date Paid _____

Date Received _____