

Town of Hancock, Maine

**MINUTES OF May 19, 2026 PLANNING BOARD**

**WORKSHOP MEETING**

Board Members: Doug Kimmel, Ken Emerson, Scott Dyer, Deb Foster, Meredith Akerstein, Ant Blasi; CEO Kevin Brodie, Asst. CEO Nick Branca

Others attending: Selectpersons Adam Foster, Carol Lowrie and Robin Stratton, Road Commissioner George Moon, Ruth Franzius, and (representing Harold MacQuinn, Inc.) Steve Salsbury and Tim Pease

Doug Kimmel called the workshop meeting to order at 6:00.

**I. Review of revised Signage Ordinance, draft dated May 19, 2026**

Adam Foster requested on behalf of the Selectboard that the Planning Board “finalize” the revised signage ordinance that evening. Doug assured him this was the Planning Board’s intention.

(Adam also asked whether the Planning Board intended to address George Colwell’s written comments about the draft Mineral Exploration and Extraction Ordinance. Doug said his letter would be entered in the record, but that it would be inappropriate to discuss it in Mr. Colwell’s absence.)

It was agreed that the “O” in references to the Signage Ordinance should be consistently capitalized throughout the Ordinance.

P. 3. Article 11, A. Insert after “require a permit”: “from the CEO or, at his or her discretion, the Planning Board,”....

P. 4. Ken Emerson expressed concern that the proposed time limits on political signs in the public right of way were unrealistic, given the length from start to finish of many political campaigns, and possibly unconstitutional, since they limited freedom of speech. Other board members said this concern was unwarranted because these limits conformed with state law.

Pp. 6-7. Doug suggested deleting the draft’s restriction of advertising commercial products or services on Town-sponsored electronic message signs, because the Planning Board does not have authority over the Selectboard. Kevin Brodie agreed. The majority of Planning Board members, however, supported retaining this

restriction.

P. 7. “no one kind of temporary sign (same owner)” was revised to “no temporary sign promoting the same purpose.”

Definitions: The board decided that each definition should be introduced consistently by a dash (not a hyphen), and the first letter of the first word should be capitalized. Definitions of temporary signs and permanent signs will be added.

Ken gave Kevin a copy of his copy-editing suggestions.

## **II. Review of revised Mineral Exploration and Extraction Ordinance, draft dated April 8, 2026**

P. 7. Clarify the confusion in Section C. over the different sizes of extraction operations, the permits they require, and the zones in which they are allowed.

Pp. 6-14. Articles II through V scramble exploration and extraction, and must be reorganized to condense and confine everything about exploration to one article, followed by articles dealing exclusively with extraction.

P. 20. Section 4. Waiver of Submission. Ken said this section does not spell out under what conditions and criteria the Planning Board might grant a waiver, or whether and how this might apply to drilling under the seasonal water table. Carol Lowrie and Ruth Franzius raised additional concerns. Attorney Tim Pease said that drilling beneath the seasonal water table could be safely allowed if the Town set detailed performance standards. He cited the ordinances in Windham and Westbrook and circulated an example of such standards.

As they reviewed the draft ordinance, board members and the audience began to question whether drafting a new, separate MEEO Ordinance was creating more problems than it would solve. Doug asked, “Is the old MEO broken and [does it] need to be fixed?” Others asked whether it would be simpler to leave mineral exploration in the ECO, and continue to use the current separate MEO? Or add exploration as an appendix—or prologue—to the old or a new MEO? What elements of the new MEEO are improvements that should be incorporated in the old CEO.

The board resolved to decide these questions at its next regular meeting. Kevin

said he would prepare an outline that would aid in making this decision. Ken warned that he would be absent because of surgery that morning.

### **III. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25.