

CHAPTER 24

SHOOTING RANGE ORDINANCE

TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH, MAINE

Effective _____, 2014

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CHAPTER 24

SHOOTING RANGE ORDINANCE

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

This Shooting Range Ordinance (this “Ordinance”) is intended to regulate the establishment and operation of outdoor Shooting Range Facilities pursuant to 12 M.R.S.A. § 13201 (1) and 25 M.R.S.A. § 2011 (3), as they may be amended, and 30-A M.R.S.A. § 3001 *et seq.* (Maine’s Home Rule Law). Due to their potential noise impacts and safety concerns, Shooting Range Facilities merit careful review to minimize adverse effects on adjoining properties. This Ordinance does not otherwise apply to the general discharge of Firearms or the use of bows and arrows in accordance with all other applicable laws or regulations.

ARTICLE II. INTENT

It is the intent of this Ordinance to accomplish the following:

SEC. 24-2-1. PERMITTING, REGISTRATION, AND COMPLIANCE

New Shooting Range Facilities shall only be established and operated in accordance with a valid license issued by the municipal officers. In addition, existing Shooting Range Facilities shall submit a completed license application within one hundred eighty (180) days following the effective date of this Ordinance, subject to the requirements of Article IX hereof and, if licensed, shall comply with all remaining provisions of this Ordinance thereafter.

SEC. 24-2-2. SHOT CONTAINMENT

Each Shooting Range Facility shall be designed to contain the bullets, shot, and ricochets of same discharged at or within the Shooting Range Facility.

SEC. 24-2-3. NOISE MITIGATION

Each Shooting Range Facility shall be designed to minimize off-site noise impacts generated by the activities conducted on the Shooting Range Facility.

ARTICLE III. DEFINITIONS

As used in this Ordinance, the following terms shall have the respective meanings ascribed to them:

dBA: The sound pressure level, in decibels, as measured on a precision sound level meter on the A-weighted scale.

EPA Lead Management Guidelines: Shall mean, at any given time, the latest edition of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges.

Firearm(s): A weapon, including but not limited to pistols, rifles, and shotguns, capable of firing a projectile using an explosive charge as a propellant.

Firing Range Committee: Shall have the meaning as set forth in Article X.

NRA Range Source Book: Shall mean, at any given time, the latest edition of The Range Source Book, as published by the National Rifle Association.

Occupied Dwelling(s): Shall mean any residential Structure which is legally occupied by one or more Persons.

Person(s): Any individual, corporation, association, club, firm, or partnership.

Shooting Range(s): An area designed and improved to encompass shooting stations or firing lines, Target areas, berms and baffles, and other related components.

Shooting Range Facility(ies): A public or private facility, including individual Shooting Ranges, safety fans or Shotfall Zones, Structures, parking areas, and other associated improvements, designed for the purpose of providing a place for the discharge of various types of Firearms; provided, however, that a Shooting Range Facility shall not include incidental Target practice areas on private property.

Shotfall Zone(s): An area within which the shot or pellets contained in a shotgun shell typically fall.

Structure(s): A walled and roofed building that is principally above ground or any other permanent, manmade facilities.

Surface Danger Zone: Any area that may reasonably expect projectile impact resulting from direct fire, including misdirected and accidental discharges, and ricochets from any Firearm,

which takes into consideration all mitigation efforts as submitted by the applicant and determined by a certified engineer.

Target(s): Any object or area which is used as the intended recipient of the projectiles fired from a Firearm.

Town: Shall mean the town of Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

ARTICLE IV. APPLICABILITY

This Ordinance is applicable to all existing and future Shooting Range Facilities in the Town.

ARTICLE V. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The following performance standards shall apply to all Shooting Range Facilities:

SEC. 24-5-1. SHOT CONTAINMENT

Shooting Range Facilities shall be designed to contain all of the bullets, shot or other projectiles or any other debris within the Shooting Range Facility.

SEC. 24-5-2. NOISE MITIGATION

Noise levels measured at the property line where the Shooting Range Facility is operated or, in the case of leased land, at the property line of any leased parcel, shall not exceed sixty-five (65) dBA when said property line is located within one thousand (1,000) feet of an Occupied Dwelling, subject to the limitations of 30-A M.R.S.A. 3011, as it may be amended, regarding existing Shooting Range Facilities.

ARTICLE VI. DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

SEC. 24-6-1. MINIMUM DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Where not otherwise specified within this Ordinance, Shooting Range Facilities shall meet or exceed the design standards for general and utility type of range specified by the NRA Range Source Book.

SEC. 24-6-2. SETBACKS

Notwithstanding the performance standards of Article V the following setbacks shall apply.

1. Except for existing Shooting Range Facilities, all shooting stations and Targets on a Shooting Range Facility shall be located a minimum of three hundred (300) feet from any property line. Existing Shooting Range Facilities with shooting stations

and Targets located closer than three hundred (300) feet from any property line shall not be allowed to further encroach within that setback; and

2. The Surface Danger Zone shall be contained within the property boundary line.

SEC. 24-6-3. WARNING SIGNS

Warning signs meeting or exceeding the standards set forth in the NRA Range Source Book shall be posted at one hundred-foot intervals along the entire perimeter of the Shooting Range and along the entire perimeter of the property lines in the same intervals.

SEC. 24-6-4. DISTANCE FROM OCCUPIED DWELLING

Except for existing Shooting Range Facilities, all shooting stations, Targets, and firing lines shall be located at least one-half (1/2) mile (two thousand six hundred forty (2,640) feet) from any existing Occupied Dwelling. Existing Shooting Range Facilities located closer than one-half (1/2) mile from any existing Occupied Dwelling shall not be permitted to relocate or enlarge said range to further encroach within said setback.

SEC. 24-6-5. ACCESS TO SHOOTING RANGE FACILITY

Access to the Shooting Range Facility and Shooting Range shall be secured and controlled, with ingress and egress permitted only during those operating hours established in Section 24-7-3, except during routine maintenance or other business that does not involve shooting firearms.

ARTICLE VII. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.**SEC. 24-7-1. MAINTENANCE**

Where not otherwise specified within this Ordinance, Shooting Range Facilities shall be operated and maintained in a manner that shall meet or exceed the standards specified in the NRA Range Source Book.

SEC. 24-7-2. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Outdoor Shooting Range Facilities shall provide a plan outlining its best management practices relating to lead management. Said plan shall meet or exceed the standards set forth in the EPA Lead Management Guidelines.

SEC. 24-7-3. HOURS OF OPERATION

Shooting Range Facilities shall be allowed to operate between 8 a.m. to one-half hour before sunset Monday through Saturday and from noon to one-half hour before sunset on Sundays.

SEC. 24-7-4. LIABILITY INSURANCE

The licensee shall be required to carry a minimum of Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000.00) per occurrence of liability insurance. Such insurance shall name the Town as an additional insured and shall save and hold the Town, its elected and appointed officials, and employees acting within the scope of their duties harmless from and against all claims, demands, and causes of action of any kind or character, including the cost of defense thereof, arising in favor of a Person or group's members or employees or third parties on account of any property damage arising out of the acts or omissions of the licensee, his/her group, club, or its agents or representatives. The Town shall be notified of any policy changes or lapses in coverage.

ARTICLE VIII. PROCEDURE FOR SECURING APPROVAL FOR NEW RANGES**SEC. 24-8-1. LICENSE APPLICATION**

An application for a license to establish and operate a Shooting Range Facility shall be submitted by the legal property owner(s) or lessees (or their agent) to the Firing Range Committee, which application shall contain detailed contact information regarding the applicant. Such license shall be secured prior to issuance of any other grading, building or improvement permit by the Town, but any licensee may thereafter construct any Structure or other improvement deemed necessary for the purpose of issuing said license.

SEC. 24-8-2. FEES

There shall be no application fee, but the applicant shall be responsible to reimburse the Town for engineering and other professional services needed to review the application.

SEC. 24-8-3. REQUIRED INFORMATION

The applicant shall provide sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with these provisions, which shall include a detailed description of the types and uses of firearms and ammunition either used or proposed to be used at the site.

SEC. 24-8-4. SITE PLAN

A site plan for the entire Shooting Range Facility which shows the following applicable information drawn by a licensed professional to a scale of no less than one (1) inch equals one hundred (100) feet, shall accompany the license application:

1. Property lines for any parcel upon which the Shooting Range Facility is to be located, north arrow, plan scale, date, and ownership information for the site;
2. Complete layout of each Shooting Range Facility, including, shooting stations or firing lines, Target areas, shot-fall zones or backstops, berms, and baffles, if any;

3. Projected noise contours sufficient to demonstrate compliance as determined by an engineer;

4. Existing and proposed Structures; Occupied Dwellings within one-half (1/2) mile (two thousand six hundred forty (2,640) feet)); roads, streets, or other access areas; buffer areas; and parking areas for the Shooting Range Facility; and
5. Any other appropriate information related to the specific type of Shooting Range Facility, whether existing or proposed.

The Firing Range Committee may allow different site plan scales where it deems appropriate.

SEC. 24-8-5. ACTION

Within thirty (30) working days, the Firing Range Committee shall take one (1) of the following actions:

1. Reject the application as incomplete; or
2. Recommend that the license be approved by the municipal officers with or without conditions, which conditions may include specific findings regarding phasing for said application; or
3. Recommend that the license be denied by the municipal officers.

In any case, written findings to support the action taken shall be provided to the applicant and municipal officers.

ARTICLE IX. REGISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE OF EXISTING SHOOTING RANGE FACILITIES.

SEC. 24-9-1. REGISTRATION

All existing Shooting Range Facilities shall provide a site plan, prepared in accordance with Section 24-8-4, within ninety (90) days after the effective date of this Ordinance and make reasonable efforts to comply with Section 24-5-1 and Section 24-6-3 within said ninety (90) days.

SEC. 24-9-2. COMPLIANCE

Any existing Shooting Range Facility shall submit a complete license application in compliance with all remaining provisions of this Ordinance within one (1) year of the effective date of this Ordinance, which application may include a specific phasing plan.

SEC. 24-9-3. ABANDONMENT AND DISCONTINUANCE

When an existing Shooting Range Facility is discontinued without the intent to reinstate the Shooting Range use, the property owner shall notify the Town of such intent. In any event, the discontinuance of the Shooting Range Facility or non-use of the Shooting Range Facility for a period in excess of one year shall create the presumption said Shooting Range Facility is abandoned, and any current, valid permits issued shall terminate. As established by 30-A M.R.S.A. § 3011, if there has been no shooting activity for a period of three (3) years, resumption of shooting shall require a license as a new Shooting Range Facility for purposes of this Ordinance.

ARTICLE X. FIRING RANGE COMMITTEE

SEC. 24-10-1. FIRING RANGE COMMITTEE

Firing Range Committee is hereby established to consist of the following:

1. One member of the Spurwink Rod & Gun Club who is a member of the National Rifle Association, to be designated by the Spurwink Rod & Gun Club;
2. One member of the public at large to be appointed by the Town Council;
3. One member of the public at large who is a certified firearms instructor to be appointed by the Town Council; and
4. Two members of the Town Council to be appointed by the Town Council, one of whom shall serve as Chair of the Firing Range Committee. In the event that the Spurwink Rod & Gun Club fails to designate a member of its organization within 30 days after having received a written request to do so, the Town Council shall have the right to make an appointment to fill said position.

SEC. 24-10-2. POLICE CHIEF

The Police Chief and Code Enforcement Officer of the Town shall serve as ex officio members of the Firing Range Committee.

SEC. 24-10-3. COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding non-conformance by any licensee shall be brought initially to the Firing Range Committee which shall investigate the same and file a report of its findings with the municipal officers.

SEC. 24-10-4. RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Firing Range Committee may present draft rules and regulations requiring additional details to be submitted for the establishment and operation of approved Shooting Range Facilities to the Town Council. Upon approval of these rules and regulations, following a public hearing by the Town Council, such rules and regulations shall become effective and shall be placed on file in the office of the Town Clerk.

ARTICLE XI. BACKGROUND CHECK

Upon receipt of an application for a new Shooting Range Facility, the Town's Police Department will conduct a criminal records check on the owner and lessee, if any, of the property on which the Shooting Range Facility is to be located and on the individual designated by the owner to operate the Shooting Range Facility, if different from the owner. Upon completion of the criminal records check, the Police Department will forward its findings to the Firing Range Committee.

ARTICLE XII. MUNICIPAL HEARING; LICENSE

SEC. 24-12-1. MUNICIPAL HEARING

Following receipt of the Firing Range Committee's recommendation, the municipal officers shall hold a public hearing to determine whether to issue a license. Such license will be valid for one year. Prior to the license's expiration, the Shooting Range Facility will be reinspected by the Firing Range Committee. In the event that any Shooting Range Facility, either new or existing is found to be in noncompliance with this Ordinance or rules and any regulations adopted by the Firing Range Committee and approved by the Town Council, no new license will be issued until said Facility is brought into compliance and any existing license will be declared void.

SEC. 24-12-2. LICENSE TRANSFERABILITY

A license issued pursuant to this Ordinance may not be transferred to another operator without the written approval and consent of the municipal officers.

SEC. 24-12-3. CHANGES OR EXPANSIONS

If any Shooting Range Facility is intended to be substantially changed or expanded to include types of Shooting Ranges, operations, or activities not covered by an existing license, a new license for the entire facility shall be secured in accordance with all of the provisions of this Ordinance. Further, any license issued hereunder does not relieve the licensee of compliance with all other applicable Town ordinances.

ARTICLE XIII. EXCEPTIONS

SEC. 24-13-1. EXCEPTIONS

The municipal officers shall have the authority to accept phased applications and approve exceptions from the terms of this Ordinance, including extending the deadlines for performance where appropriate, when literal enforcement of provisions of this Ordinance will, in an individual case:

1. Result in hardship;
2. The hardship results from an application of this Ordinance;
3. The hardship is related to the specific Shooting Range Facility involved and predates the adoption of this Ordinance;
4. The hardship was not self-induced or self-created following the effective date of this Ordinance; and
5. The hardship is peculiar to the specific Shooting Range Facility involved.

SEC. 24-13-2. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

In granting an exception the municipal officers shall find in addition to the above hardship that the requirements of this Section 24-13-2 also have been met and a written notice of the decision shall be prepared and furnished to the applicant detailing the following:

1. There are unique conditions pertaining to the Shooting Range Facility in question because of its history, size, shape or topography;
2. A literal interpretation of the provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of its rights to operate an existing Shooting Range Facility;
3. The requested exception will not materially affect the safety of surrounding neighborhoods or the general public welfare; and
4. The exception requested is the minimum needed to allow continued use of the Shooting Range Facility in question.

SEC. 24-13-3. CONDITIONS

The Council may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with this Ordinance. Violations of such conditions and safeguards, when made a part of the terms under which the exception is granted, shall be deemed a violation of this Ordinance.

ARTICLE XIV. ENFORCEMENT, REMEDIES, AND PENALTIES

SEC. 24-14-1. ENFORCEMENT AND REMEDIES

The Town's Police Department shall be responsible for the enforcement of this Ordinance. Any violation of this Ordinance or of any condition or requirement adopted pursuant to these provisions may be restrained, corrected, or abated, as the case may be, by injunction or other appropriate proceedings as allowed by state law. Any license issued under this Ordinance may be suspended or revoked following a public hearing before the municipal officers following a review and recommendation by the Firing Range Committee.

SEC. 24-14-2. CIVIL PENALTIES

Any Person who violates any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$100.00 per violation plus costs of prosecution, including but not limited to attorney's fees. No penalty shall be assessed until the Person alleged to be in violation has been notified of the violation. Each day of a continuing violation shall constitute a separate violation and any such penalty shall be recovered for the use of the Town.