Gmail Ryan michaels <rtgmich@gmail.com>

FOAA Request – Body Camera Footage – October 29, 2026

Ryan michaels <rtgmich@gmail.com> Tue, Nov 10, 2026 at 4:11 PM
Reply-To: rtgmich@gmail.com
To: Matt Tarasevich <mtarasevich@bernsteinshur.com>
Cc: Timothy Towne <chief@berwickmainepolice.gov>, Rae Iafolla <RIafolla@bernsteinshur.com>, Matt Tarasevich <mtarasevich@bernsteinshur.com>, Town Clerk <townclerk@berwickmaine.gov>

Mr. Tarasevich,

I am writing to formally document what occurred today, November 10, 2026, when I appeared in person at the Town of Berwick to submit payment for my outstanding Freedom of Access Act request.

On November 5, your office explicitly instructed me to submit $25.00 to the town for processing my October 29 request for police body-camera footage. You further indicated that the town anticipated producing responsive records within two weeks of receiving payment.

Today, I attempted to comply with those instructions.

Unfortunately, the clerical staff appeared completely unaware of the payment arrangement or the request to which it pertained. After consulting a supervisor who did not come forward to speak with me, staff directed me to explain what I needed and began asking me to describe my FOAA requests in detail.

I want to be exceptionally clear: I have already submitted my requests. The town has already received them. Your office has already responded with a fee estimate and payment instructions. I appeared today for the express purpose of satisfying those instructions.

I should not be required to verbally reconstruct previously submitted requests because the town has failed to communicate its own instructions to the employees responsible for accepting payment.

This is not a new request. It is not a request for clarification. It is an attempt to comply with the payment instructions your office provided.

Maine's Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. § 408-A, establishes obligations concerning the processing of public records requests. While the statute permits reasonable clarification when necessary, the town's internal administrative coordination should not become an additional obstacle to completing an already acknowledged request.

I am requesting that you resolve this immediately.

Specifically, please:

1. Confirm who is responsible for accepting the $25.00 payment and provide clear instructions for completing that transaction.
2. Ensure that the appropriate town personnel are informed of the existing request, the fee estimate, and the payment arrangement.
3. Confirm that my November 10 attempt to pay has been documented and that any resulting administrative delay will not be attributed to me.
4. Clarify whether the town will maintain its previously estimated production timeframe in light of today's unsuccessful payment attempt.

I also want to emphasize that I have multiple outstanding FOAA matters involving the town. Each request has already been submitted through the appropriate channels. Today's interaction should not be interpreted as a modification, withdrawal, or resubmission of any of them.

I have made repeated efforts to follow the procedures communicated to me. It is reasonable to expect the town to be prepared to follow those same procedures.

I cannot be expected to satisfy instructions that the town itself is unprepared to carry out.

Please correct this administrative failure promptly and provide written confirmation of how I can complete payment without another unnecessary visit or further delay.

Respectfully,

Ryan Michaels

[Quoted text hidden]