

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, June 17, 2020
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Councilors: All Councilors are present.

Staff: Andrea Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Kevin Senal, Darren Hanson, Tony Levesque, Chief Newell, Deputy Chief Browning.

Citizens: 4

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

Mr. Butler – Hats off to the Fire Department for their effort in the house fire on Cogswell Street. Mr. Butler commented that he watched three or four Fire Departments work excellent together. Very impressed with the Caribou, Easton and Presque Isle Fire Departments assistance to our Fire Department.

Mr. Babin – Thank you to for the response a few weeks ago at the Church. The first responders showed teamwork and professionalism.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits – Ms. Sharpe

We have not received any license or permit renewals as of June 17, 2020.

B. Financial Report

As of May 31, 2020, total excise tax collected to date is \$533,815.15; State revenue sharing is \$361,098.24 (83.25% of budget); in May we collected \$80,895.24 in Real Estate & Personal Property taxes bringing our total collected to \$2,830,171.61.

Loan balances as of 05/31/2020:

Jones Fuel - \$1,930.63

Langley #5275 - \$19,016.63

Langley #5277 - \$6,899.37

Pelletier - \$463.91

C. AWS Report – Mr. Rogeski

Mr. Stev Rogeski was not present.

VI. Old Business

A. Approve FY 20/21 Budget

Background: Public hearings were held on April 21st, 2020 and May 5th, 2020. There were no public comments at the April Public Hearing and one citizen spoke at the May Public Hearing.

Discussion: The budget presented at the April 21st public hearing had a projected deficit of \$916,928. The budget presented at the May 5th public hearing had a projected deficit of \$734,673. The projected deficit for FY 20/21 is \$266,648.

MSAD#20 voted on a Budget of \$2,351,903.00

Recommendation: Town Council approve the Fort Fairfield Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Budget.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve the Fort Fairfield Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Budget.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Smith asked about non property tax revenue: the estimate for the 19/20 is \$1,596,853. The projected for next year is \$2,563,938. "How come so high?"

Ms. Powers – We have additional income from Maine Revenue.

Mr. Smith – "Do you think those revenues are going to come in?" "I am hearing that the State's projecting a \$3 million dollar short-fall in the next year." "It's a concern I have."

Ms. Powers – "We are all concerned."

Mr. Smith – Under expenses, there are two departments that I have concerns." Administration and Police Department. Still concerned about expenses and revenue. I am concerned about ReEnergy and the \$500,000 tax loss. We still don't know what the Revaluations is going to be. "It's a tough time to make this budget.

Ms. Powers – "It is a tough time."

Vote: Mrs. Libby: Aye;

Mr. Kilcollins: Aye;

Mr. Smith: No;

Mr. Butler: Aye;

Mr. Babin: Aye

Motion passed: 4-1

B. Town Generator Project Update

The first phase of our Communication Project is now complete. The generator is fully functioning. With the combined efforts of the Police, Fire Rescue, and Public Works Departments along with our contractor BRSA and the work of County Electric we are on to the completion of the second phase of our Communication Project.

Recommendation: Council visit the completed project when possible.

C. Planning Board Review of Paul Doughty’s Request for Amendment of Zoning

A Public Hearing for amendment changes to the Official Fort Fairfield Zoning Map will need to go to a public hearing, and Council introduces the attached ordinance and direct staff to hold a public hearing on the ordinance on June 30, 2020 at 4:30pm in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building.

“Expand the Rural Farm Residential by changing all of Tax Map 9 Lot 20 from General Residential to Rural Farm Residential.”

Recommendation: That the Town Council approves the language on the proposed Ordinance amendment and hold the public hearing on June 30, 2020.

M. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council introduces the attached Ordinance and direct staff to hold a public hearing on the Ordinance on June 30, 2020.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Butler asked for clarification to the location of this land mentioned in the proposed Ordinance.

Mr. Levesque, Tax Assessor clarified.

Vote: All Affirmative.

D. Animal Ordinance

A Public Hearing for amendment changes to the Official Animal Ordinance will need to go to a public hearing, and Council introduces the attached ordinance and direct staff to hold a public hearing on the ordinance on June 30, 2020 at 4:00pm in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building.

Recommendation: That the Town Council approves the language on the proposed Animal Ordinance amendments and hold the public hearing on June 30, 2020.

Mr. Smith made a motion that Town Council approves the language on the proposed Animal Ordinance amendments and hold the public hearing on June 30, 2020.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VII. New Business

A. Approve FY20/21 Permits and Licenses – Mr. Levesque

A public hearing was held on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 12:00 noon in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building. Attached are the list of the FY 20/21 permit and licens renewals, public hearing notice and minutes of the public hearing.

Recommendation: Town Council approve the permits and licenses recommended for renewal and approval by the Code Enforcement Officer as fees are paid.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Council approve the permits and licenses recommended for renewal and approval by the Code Enforcement Officer as fees are paid.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Approve FY20/21 Appointments of Town Officials and Board Members

1. The following Town Officials require annual reappointment:

Darren Hanson as Road Commissioner

Andrea L. Powers as Health Officer.

Richard A. Levesque as Plumbing Inspector

Richard A. Levesque as Code Enforcement Officer

Trudy O'Neal as Sub-Registrar

2. The following is a list of vacancies on Town Boards/Committees and people willing to continue their terms.

One Vacancy on the Library Board of Trustees for a five-year term to run July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025.

John Krause had recently finished out this term and wishes to remain on. *Application is attached.

J. Michael Edmunds on the Fort Fairfield Utilities District for a three-year term to run July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

One Vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 5-year term to run July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025. (Greg Murchison resigned)

Rick Shepherd is willing to stay on the Planning Board for a five-year term to run July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025.

One vacancy on the Economic Development Board due to the resignation of Edith Helstrom for a three-year term to run July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

Randolph Bouchard and Mary Ann Ayoob are both willing to stay on the Fort Fairfield Arbor Committee each for a term of three years to run from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

Randolph Bouchard is willing to stay on the Fort Fairfield Housing Authority for a five-year term, to run from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025

Three vacancies on the Board of Assessment Review; Brent Churchill did not wish to remain on the Board, James Risner resigned due to relocating out of Town, and there is still one vacancy remaining. Each are staggered three-year terms.

The recommendation is that Town Council appoints or reappoints the Town Officials as presented and appoints the above Authority, Boards, Commissions and Committee members as presented.

Mr. Smith made a motion that Town Council appoints or reappoints the Town Officials as presented and appoints the above Authority, Boards, Commissions and Committee members as presented.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. Authorize Audit Services from Felch & Company, LLC

Background: The Town has used Felch & Company for several years and has been very satisfied with their work.

Discussion: Attached is a proposal from Felch & Company, LLC to utilize their services to complete the Town's financial audit for the year ending June 30, 2020. The proposal states the audit will begin on approximately July 08, 2019 with reports issued later in September 2020.

The fee for this years' audit is \$9,600, which is \$400 more than last year.

Recommendation: Town Council authorize the Council Chair to sign the proposal from Felch & Company, LLC to conduct an audit of the Town's financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to authorize the Council Chair to sign the proposal from Felch & Company, LLC to conduct an audit of the Town's financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

D. Katahdin Trust TAN

Background: As is customary in the past to aid the Town with cash flow during the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the Fiscal Year (FY), a TAN has been voted on and approved at Council Meetings. It is still my observation that the Town would be better served to request the TAN in the 1st and 2nd quarters of the Fiscal Year prior to our Tax Commitment for better cash flow until tax payments begin.

Recommendation: That the Town Council authorize the Council Chair and the Town Manager to sign for the FY 2020/2021 TAN with Katahdin Trust Company.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Town Council authorize the Council Chair and the Town Manager to sign for the FY 2020/2021 TAN with Katahdin Trust Company.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

E. Prepayment of Taxes through a Tax Club – Ms. Leighton

Background: Prepayment of taxes is authorized by 36 M.R.S.A. §506.

Discussion: For several years the Town has offered a Tax Club so that taxpayers can pay their taxes in 12 monthly payments. Payments are made from July to June and are due on or before the 10th of each month.

The Town commits taxes on October 1, so payment of any taxes prior to that date is a prepayment. Based on information I received from Maine Municipal Association’s legal services, the Town Council needs to approve prepayment authority each year, and that prepayment is only for the next annual tax commitment, not for multiple future tax commitments.

Recommendation: Council authorizes the Tax Collector to establish a Tax Club for the 2020 – 2021 tax commitment.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council authorizes the Tax Collector to establish a Tax Club for the 2020 – 2021 tax commitment.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Smith asked it was a considerable amount of savings for the Town by having residents make early payments.

Ms. Powers replied, yes, it is good for all.

Vote: All Affirmative.

F. Staff Support to Town Boards, Commissions and Authorities- Ms. Sharpe

I respectfully request that moving forward; all Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Authorities consider electing a Secretary from their members to take the minutes for their meetings. Town staff; specifically, the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk simply do not have time to do this along with all other duties of the Town Office and it sometimes takes one staff member away from the Town Office when a meeting is held during the hours that the Town Office is open.

The Town Clerk will continue to serve as Council Secretary according the Town Charter.

I understand that this change may affect most By-Laws.

I have checked with other Town Clerks in the area and most do not provide secretarial support to their Boards, Committees, Commissions and Authorities and all agree that they are simply too busy.

Town Staff is more than happy to post agendas at the Municipal Building, in Town, and on the Town website and Facebook pages.

Recommendation: Town Council approve that all Town Boards, Committees, Commissions and Authorities elect a secretary from their members to take and record the minutes for their meetings.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council approve that all Town Boards, Committees, Commissions and Authorities elect a secretary from their members to take and record the minutes for their meetings.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Butler asked that staff at least notify these groups of the changes.

Ms. Sharpe commented that she would personally make contact with them.

Mr. Smith asked if Council Chambers would still be available as a meeting place.

Ms. Power responded yes.

Ms. Sharpe commented that she will still open and close the building for the meetings.

Vote: All Affirmative.

G. Maine Potato Blossom Festival Maine Community Foundation Grant

Background: On May 28th, 2020 the Maine Potato Blossom Festival received a grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 from the Maine Community Foundation.

Recommendation: That the Town Council vote to accept the Maine Community Foundation Grant for the Maine Potato Blossom Festival.

Mr. Butler made a motion to accept the Maine Community Foundation Grant for the Maine Potato Blossom Festival.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

H. Ambulance Lease Agreement

Background: We are asking to enter into an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement dated as of June 18, 2020 between Aroostook County Federal Savings & Loan as Lessor and Town of Fort Fairfield as Lessee for the two new ambulances for the Fort Fairfield Fire and Rescue Department.

Below is a detailed description of all Equipment:

Equipment Description: 2019 Ford E-450 6.8L Gas 4x2, Demers MX-170 Ambulance
VIN#1FDXE4FS0KDC66349
2019 Ford E-450 6.8L Gas 4x2, Demers MX-170 Ambulance
VIN#1FDXE4FS7KDC66350

Payments will be made once a year for seven payments of \$57,155.67.

Recommendation: That the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to sign the lease with Aroostook Savings and Loan for the two new ambulances.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Town Council authorize the Town Manager to sign the lease with Aroostook Savings and Loan for the two new ambulances.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the May 15, 2019 Regular Council Meeting and June 1, 2020 Special Council Meeting.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the May 15, 2019 Regular Council Meeting and June 1, 2020 Special Council Meeting.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #27; \$82,218.55 #28; \$444,125.89

Warrant #27 in the amount of \$82,218.55 was completed on 05/22/2020 and Warrant #28 in the amount of \$444,125.89 was completed on 06/09/2020. This warrant includes our first annual payment in the amount of \$57,155.67 for the ambulance lease with Aroostook County Federal Savings & Loan.

The TAN balance has been paid in full.

Checking account balance as of 06/09/2020 is \$200,302.49.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Warrants #27 and #28 as written.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. Town Office Closure for End of Fiscal Year Closure of Financial Records

The end of fiscal year 2019/2020 is June 30, 2020. The Town Office will need to be closed that day to prepare and close out the fiscal year. The Town Office will reopen on July 1, 2020 at 7:30am.

Recommendation: That Town Council vote to approve the closing of the Town Office on June 30, 2020 for end of fiscal year closing of financials.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the closing of the Town Office on June 30, 2020 for end of fiscal year closing of financials.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Town of Fort Fairfield Library CARES Act Federal Relief Funding

Background: Fort Fairfield Public Library has been awarded \$2,885 of CARES Act federal relief funding on behalf of the National Endowment for the Humanities. A Final Report consisting of a narrative regarding how these funds were utilized, as well as budget information will need to be submitted before September 30, 2020.

Recommendation: Town Council vote to accept the CARES Act Federal Relief Funding for the Fort Fairfield Library.

Mr. Butler made a motion to accept the CARES Act Federal Relief Funding for the Fort Fairfield Library.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XI. Manager's Report

XII. Executive Session

Mr. Butler made a motion for Council to go into Executive Session regarding:

- M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(A) Personnel Matter
- M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(G) Code Enforcement
- M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(C) Economic Development

Mr. Smith seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

I. Executive Session - Time IN: 6:28 PM

Motion IN: Mr. Smith **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(A) Personnel Matter**

Second: Mr. Butler

Vote: All Affirmative.

Motion OUT: Mr. Smith **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(A) Personnel Matter**

Second: Mr. Butler

Vote: All Affirmative.

Motion IN: Mr. Butler **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(G) Code Enforcement**

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: All Affirmative.

Mr. Kilcollins recused himself from discussion.

Motion OUT: Mr. Smith **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(G) Code Enforcement**

Second: Mr. Butler

Vote: All Affirmative.

Motion IN: Mr. Butler **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(C) Economic Development**

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: All Affirmative.

Motion OUT: Mr. Butler **M.R.S.A. §405 (6)(C) Economic Development**

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: Vote All Affirmative.

Recommendation: That Town Council approve the Town Manager to sign at closing for the site agreement of Re-Energy on June 26, 2020.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Town Council approve the Town Manager to sign at closing for the site agreement of Re-Energy on June 26, 2020.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Adjournment

Mr. Butler made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Council adjourned at 7:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Sharpe, Town Clerk
Council Secretary