

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
6:00 P.M.

Councilors: David McCrea, Jason Barnes, Susan LeVasseur, John Herold and Robert Kilcollins

Staff: Tony Levesque, James Risner, Rebecca Hersey, Mitchell Dufour, Ella Leighton, Jennifer Gaenzle, Darren Hanson and Tim Goff

Citizens: Scott Smith councilor elect and 4 including media

- I. Roll Call - Chair Jason Barnes asked that the record reflect all councilors were present.
- II. Prayer – Tony Levesque offered the prayer.
- III. Pledge to the Flag - All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the Flag.
- IV. Public Comment-

Mr. Steve Adams, owner of Boondocks Grill on Main Street, commented that for the last couple of years or longer we have been witnessing the horse manure problem throughout Town and it appears that there isn't a lot being done about it. A couple of weeks ago there was a pile of it in front of Boondocks, pictures were taken and emailed to the Town Manager along with some comments. Obviously it is a big problem and as a business owner on Main Street, he has received many comments from his customers. Hoping that at some point we can get an ordinance in place or come up with a plan to clean it up.

Ms. Susan LeVasseur - Thank you Steve, I have been addressing this issue since Dan Foster was Town Manager, so I am glad a business owner has come forward and tells us how detrimental it is to the whole Town of Fort Fairfield, it is not just here in Fort but also in surrounding areas. So I think it is about time that something is done, so I thank you.

Mr. James Risner - As a follow up, Mr. Puckett, Presque Isle City Manager, and I are meeting next Wednesday to discuss this. I have spoken to the Manager in Smyrna, which has a large Amish population, they are having the same challenges in trying to figure out an ordinance for some way to hold those folks accountable. Have also spoken to the Town Manager of Easton, we looked at the statues, we are trying to figure out a regional approach, something we can bring back to our councils that will stand up under legal scrutiny and be enforceable. It is not an easy solution.

Mr. Robert Kilcollins – It will not go unrecognized, it is time. There is something that needs to be done.

Mr. James Risner – Informed the Town Council of the annual Thanksgiving dinner for Town staff and the Utilities District staff next Tuesday the 24th starting at 11:30 at the Public Works and the Council is invited. As has been done in the past the Town Office will be closed from 11:15 – 12:45 so all town employees can enjoy the dinner together.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits – None

B. Financial Report -Mr. James Risner – Our revenue side is looking good with Real Estate & Personal Property tax collections for October. Total tax collections as of October 31st are \$397,681 which is \$10,880 over last year. Excise collections for October were \$44,706, down \$1,472 from last year. State revenue sharing in October was \$21,543 down \$3,404 for the month but up \$23,980 for the year. While our expenses appear to be over budget, they are actually within the budget projection. We have purchased salt, sand and plow equipment for the season using 79% of budget and we have used 86% of our paving expense by making the bond payment. The recreation department has used 71% of youth activities line and 76% for life guard training. These lines are within budget. We used all our savings as well as \$300,000 of our TAN to cover the County Tax Payment of \$195,000, a bond payment of \$54,000.00 and normal expenses. The County administrator notified municipal officials to expect an 8.2% increase in the county tax. This is due to the State Legislature's decision to return financial control of the jails to the counties. The Town's 2016 contribution to the Tri-Community Landfill will be \$89,040 which is a \$1,632 increase over 2015, this is based on a 3 year average of tonnage.

C. Tri Community Landfill Report – Mr. Rogeski - The last meeting was October 23rd, it was a brief meeting. We had an introduction to our budget and everything looks fine, we are looking at a 1 ½ to 2% cost of living increase. Our litter nets are in, and probably by now they have been installed. Improvements that we have been doing in the front end of the land fill are not 100% completed for winter, but we did get the binder coat down so people can travel in and out without having to go through mud. We are constantly working with our abutting neighbor, like with the recent problem with gas underneath. We have met all of the compliance issues with DEP regarding the gas issue; that is by putting in the gas burning system in. However, the neighbor is still not interested in selling their property. Also the scrap metal market is so low right now, that rather than go out to bid as we normally do, we have decide to hang onto the pile to see if the price will come up a little in the spring. We also had a guest, State Representative, Ralph Tucker a member of the Natural Resource Committee, which does all of the funding that we get from the State. He was impressed with the landfill, with the neatness and compliance issues. We are again exploring the idea of working cooperatively with Presque Isle, nothing solid yet we are still meeting with them.

D. Library Update – Ms. Gaenzle – Have hired Dianna Leighton as a part-time library assistant and coordinator of the children's story times. Ms. Leighton was the youth librarian for the Presque Isle Library. The Maine Library Association invited Ms. Gaenzle to speak at their 2015 annual meeting in Bangor, November 16-17, speaking about the process of online reviewing of Pre-publication and Advanced Reader Copy books from publishers. This was a great opportunity for Ms. Gaenzle to take the Fort Fairfield message down to the State, learn a few things and make a few new connections.

E. Broadband Feasibility Study – Mr. Goff - This fall, town staff conducted a door-to-door Internet Access Survey, which provide insights on existing internet infrastructure and service. The results of those surveys have been provided to companies interested in

investing in upgrading the community's connectivity and were presented to the ConnectME Authority, a component of state government charged with helping facilitate improvements to Maine's broadband service. Upon learning about Fort Fairfield's efforts, the James W. Sewall Company reached out to the town with an offer of help and have offered to conduct a Broadband Feasibility Study for the town, free of charge. This study, which will take nearly four months to complete, will assess and map current internet infrastructure and access within the community, look at options to address substandard broadband connectivity and their associated costs and provide the town with information to help chart a course for faster, and more reliable internet access.

VI. Old Business - None

VII. New Business

- A. Annual Snowmobile Trail Grant – The Town has provided a conduit for the snowmobile trail maintenance funds from the State to the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club since 1999. There is very little staff time required to assist with this, the club takes care of all the paperwork and the Town simply a way the Club to receive the money. It is recommended that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to sign the application for Financial Assistance.

Motion: Mr. David McCrea moved to approve authorizing the Town Manager to sign the Annual Snowmobile Trail Grant Application.

Second: Mr. John Herold

Vote – All affirmative

- B. Membership in Northern Maine Development Commission – The Town used to be a member of NMDC, funding for membership was not included in the FY13/14 budget due to the loss of significant amount of revenue. Mr. Risner has met with Mr. Bob Clark, NMDC's Executive Director, on a couple of occasions to discuss NMDC's mission and the possibility of the Town re-joining part way through the year at a pro-rated rate. The Town's membership dues for the period of July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 are \$6,130.38. The Pro-rated dues for December 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 would be \$3,576.09. The mission of NMDC is to serve the northern Maine region with effective regional community planning and economic development. Membership in NMDC provides the Town a forum to work with the other municipalities in the County in a collaborative and productive manner as we look for opportunities in economic development, grant opportunities and other areas that will be benefit the Town. It is recommended that the Town Council authorizes the renewal of the Town's membership in NMDC and payment of \$3,576.09 from account GL 1-3330-00 (UDAG/RLF).

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to approve payment of \$3,576.09 for the period of December 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 from account GL 1-3330-00 (UDAG/RLF).

Second: Mr. David McCrea

Vote – All affirmative

- C. Sale of Excess Equipment – During the review of Public Works Department equipment it was found that the 14 foot V plow has not been used for at least 20 years. It does have some historical value as it is one of the two largest V plows ever made in the State. It is

recommended that Council approves the sale of the 14 foot V plow and the placement of the proceeds into the Public Works Reserve account, GL-1-3060-00.

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to approve the sale of the 14 foot V plow and the placement of the proceeds into the Public Works Reserve account, GL-1-3060-00.

Second: Ms. Susan LeVasseur

Vote – All affirmative

- D. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fiscal Year 2015 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (APG) Program – The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) is requiring fire departments to take old tankers out of service and sell them as non-fire equipment. The Fort Fairfield Fire Department's tanker falls into the category that they consider old. In an effort to help reduce the financial burden on local governments, the NFPA established a grant process and made replacement of old tankers its highest priority. The Fire department would like to submit an application to this program to fund a new tanker. The grant has a 5% matching requirement from the local government which must be paid upon receipt of the grant. A commitment from the Town to pay the 5% match is needed before the grant application can be submitted. The cost of the new tanker is approximately \$335,000.00 with the Town's match being approximately \$17,000.00. It is recommended that the Town Council authorizes the Town manager to include up to \$20,000 to the Fire Department Reserve Account (G-1-3030-00) in the FY 16/17 budget to pay the Town's match of a FY 2015 FEMA APG for a new tanker.

Motion: Mr. John Herold moved to authorizes the Town manager to include up to \$20,000 to the Fire Department Reserve Account (G-1-3030-00) in the FY 16/17 budget to pay the Town's match of a FY 2015 FEMA APG for a new tanker if grant is awarded and to include the authorization to apply for the grant.

Second: Ms. Susan LeVasseur

Vote – All affirmative

- E. Disposition of 2006 Dodge Durango Police Vehicle – The bids on the 2006 Dodge Durango were opened on November 17, 2015. There were two bids received with the high bid being \$3,033.33. The Blue Book value is \$3,050.00. It is recommended that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to sell the 2006 Dodge Durango to the highest bidder at \$3,033.00 and place the proceeds into the Police Department Reserve Account G-1-3050-00.

Motion: Mr. David McCrea moved to authorize the Town Manager to sell the 2006 Dodge Durango to the highest bidder at \$3,033.33 and place the proceeds into the Police Department Reserve Account G-1-3050-00.

Second: Mr. John Herold

Vote – All affirmative

- F. Vacancy on Library Board of Trustees - Mr. Kenneth Peters resigned as member of the Library Board of Trustees effective November 17, 2015, his term expires on June 30, 2018.

The Council agreed that Mr. Risner could advertise for applications to serve the remainder of the term.

VIII. Minutes: Council Meeting October 21, 2015

Motion: Mr. Robert Kilcollins moved to approve Minutes of October 21, 2015 as written.

Second: Mr. David McCrea Vote – All affirmative

IX. Warrants: #8 in the amount of \$576,715.46 and #9 for \$126,948.72

Motion: Ms. Susan LeVasseur moved to accept warrants #8 and #9 as presented.

Second: Mr. Robert Kilcollins Vote – All affirmative

X. Other – None

XI. Executive Session 6:50 PM

Motion: Mr. David McCrea moved to go into Executive Session to discuss:

- A. MRSA 405 (6)(A) – Consideration of Appointments to the Economic Development Board
- B. MRSA 405(6)(A) – Employee Compensation

Second: Mr. John Herold Vote – All affirmative

Motion: Mr. David McCrea moved to come out of executive session at 7:22 PM

Second: Mr. John Herold Vote – All affirmative

Motion: Ms. Susan LeVasseur moved to extend the application process for the Economic Development Board to December 9, 2015.

Second: Mr. Robert Kilcollins Vote – All affirmative

XII. Adjournment

Council adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca J. Hersey
Council Secretary