

Fort Fairfield Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, December 21, 2011
6:00 P.M.

Councilors: David McCrea, Kim Murchison, Mark Babin, Terry Greenier and Ruel Flannery

Staff: George Watson, Bill Campbell, Mike Bosse, Ella Leighton, Billie Jo Sharpe, Paul Durepo, Tom Towle, Mike Jalbert

Citizens: 9 including media

Roll Call - Chair David McCrea asked that the record reflect that all councilors are present.

II. Prayer – Councilor Ruel Flannery offered the prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag - All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the Flag.

IV Public Comment Period –

Dan - Both Paul and Mike have been busy with their joint responsibilities between Fort Fairfield, Limestone, Caswell and the Loring Development Center. Paul continues to enhance the level of training that our fire fighters receive not only in fighting fires but also in providing emergency services.

Paul – Made introductions of the full time fire fighters, Mike Jalbert who lives here in Fort Fairfield, works very hard. Matt Beals who is a paramedic with Crown Ambulance and instructor. Chris Durepo who does the maintenance work on the vehicles and Jessie Bell who takes care of all the radio work. They each respond to all structure fires and are at Loring 24/7.

Dan – Thank you for all of your hard work

Presentation by the Town Manager –

As Darlene and I sat at home the other night waiting for our son to get home for the holidays, I started to think how important family and friends are, I reflected on the many blessings we have. Then I looked at the out pouring of gifts that came in for the kids of Fort Fairfield. Ella, Becky and Billie Jo wrapping all of these gifts, there must have been 100 – 150 gifts. I looked at how Steve Lewis called around and got the best price of Turkeys so that he can give families in need a Christmas dinner. Tony feed the town at the annual Christmas dinner at the Knights of Columbus hall, making sure he had extra meals to take over to the homeless shelter. These are just a few wonderful things that I have seen, it shows the community coming together and sharing with each other. Shows how we come together solving problems, there are no easy answers, no silver bullets, we stick together through tough times. One of this towns blessings is a very hard worker, Councilor Ruel Flannery, he has been in this position for 15 years, what an amazing feat. You can be very proud of all that you have done, you have taken the time to listen to the citizens. In 2002 and 2007 you were Chair and for 13 years you represented the Chamber of Commerce. You played an instrumental roll in 1998 when you decided to give a home town boy a chance and you hired me as

Town Manager. I want you to know how appreciative and thankful I am to you. Your goal has always been what is important to Fort Fairfield. I appreciate the value you have brought to our community and I would like to present you with this plaque and rocking chair.

Ruel – 13 years ago I nominated Dan as Manager, that was the best decision we ever make. It's been a pleasure and I am proud to serve on the Town Council. I have learned so much. Dan and Tony have done such a great job. Tony has gotten millions of dollars for the Town. The department heads do an outstanding job, keep up the good work. The ladies in the town office are wonderful, you walk in they are always friendly and always have a smile, in fact give them a raise. I appreciated every one's efforts and thank you for your support. Ruel also thank his wife for taking such good care of him.

The department heads each showed their support and thank Ruel for all of his support for the town over the years. They appreciate his conservative and moral attitude and that his family values are remarkable. Thanked him for his fellowship, generosity and wisdom.

His fellow councilors stated that it has been a pleasure serving with him, they respect his knowledge.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits – NONE

B. Financial Report – Dan – November was a relatively uneventful month as it relates to our budget. We continue to see savings in our fuel and energy costs, primarily due to the unseasonable warm weather and lack of snowfall. Expense of Officials and Postage is high with these two accounts bearing watching. Bill has been keeping an eye on vehicle fuel in the Police Department which is a little over budget at the moment. Our income is on track with our budget and the cash flow remains strong. We have borrowed \$200,000.00 from our line of credit which is less than last year and our balance is substantially higher than this time last year.

C. Tri-Community Landfill Report – Stev Rogeski – The last meeting was in November. We approved the budget, there will be raised for the employees this year. We are running a million gallons of leach ate through the pipeline per week, it is running everyday. We are looking at selling one of the trucks now that we are not using them to truck leach ate. We are still working closely with DEP to get things cleaned up to avoid the fines. We are putting up a second fence to help catch the plastic bags that blow around. Everything is going smoothly.

D. Update on Senior Citizens Housing – Dan – We sent in our first submission to MSHA today. Jim Martin gave us an estimate which is over budget the established budget

- E. Update on Health Clinic – Dan – Received an updated proposal from Pines. Still moving forward with the CDBG Grant, plans are in place.
- F. Police Department Update –Bill – Current finishing the year with paperwork, updated personnel roster with Ella’s help. Totaling the hours the officers have, making sure that they meet the mandatory training hours. We have purchased two new cameras at \$349.00 each, this leaves \$800.00 remaining from the Wal-Mart Grant. I have met with Jim Milton from the ATV club and things are shaping up here we should have a trail head proposal to you in a couple of months.
- G. Update on the Community Advisory Committee Annual Meeting – Met at noon today, Tony does this every year to inform the committee of projects that we are working on and other potential opportunities. The committee unanimously approved moving forward with the CDBG Grant request for our new health clinic. Another great example of citizens coming together and making decisions.
- H. Continued Update on FY 12/13 Budget Issues – Since our last meeting we have instituted the suggestion box on our web page and as yet have not received anything. I have made a presentation to the Rotary Club and plan on meeting with the VFW to share these concerns with them. The department heads have gone over their budgets and without adversely impacting the current level of services they have trimmed \$14,000.00 off their current costs. We will continue to review our options but quite frankly without a significant economic development project we will undoubtedly have to raise the mil rate and this is not taking into consideration the school.
- I. Update on Quality of Place Council Meeting – Brent Churchill – We had a very busy meeting. Carolyn Durepo was there discussing the innovation engineering seminar, key points brought up was thinking outside of the box, How to brand Fort Fairfield as a destination, how to create traffic in Fort Fairfield and promoting Fort Fairfield the place to live and raise a family. The QPC believes strongly that Fort Fairfield is the ideal community for a Hospice House, Rick Duncan will be attending our February 7th meeting to discuss this. Mike Bosse has prepared draft guidelines for a HOMEBuyer Program, we have identified Meadow Lane as the primary area for this development. We are recommending Vicki Adams, as a new member, Mike Eisensmith, Troy McDougal and Phil Christensen to a second 3 year term. We are also recommending to the council that the town purchase the building at 346 Main Street, tear it down and enhance the property.
- J. Review 2012 Paving Schedule – George – In 2002 George developed a 10 year paving schedule in order to cover 100% of the roads, however at this time only 50% are done. We are not able to keep up with this 10 year program, He would like to do paving in June 2012 using this years budget and then continue paving into July 2012 using next years budget, this will allow \$200,000 if next years budget is approved. Would also ask the Council to

consider a \$500,000 "Pavement Bond" for a total of \$700,000 which would allow us to pave 13 miles of road.

- K. Boiler Inspection Notice – We received a letter stating for us to stop operating the boiler at the Highway Garage because it is not in compliance. We had the inspection done and there was a valve sticking. Jeff replaced this and the inspector has signed off on it.
- L. Ambulance Advisory Board Meeting – their financials are showing that for the last year they lost \$188,000 and they are budgeting a lost of \$177,000 for this year. Crown is looking to provide a new service, pari-medicine. They would get names from primary care doctors and utilize the paramedics to provide preventative care. This is something that may be of value in Fort Fairfield.
- M. Review Organizational Meeting for January 3rd – Should be a short meeting, we will be making appoints to the Tri Community Landfill and Chamber of Commerce Boards and selecting members for the finance committee. We would also be scheduling our regular council meetings.

David McCrea – I am unable to attend this meeting as I will be out of town due to a family matter, but I would like to nominate Kim as Chairperson.

VI. Old Business -

- A. Consider Recommendation to Amend Animal Control Policy - We have received a number of phone calls and visits from those who are concerned regarding our new policy handling animal complaints. Had a good conversation with Liam Hughes the State Animal Welfare Director regarding our policy to handle domesticated and undomesticated animals that pose a threat to public health or safety. I told Liam that it was not our intent to abandon any animal in that condition and would adjust our policy to reflect that. Also if the Council is in agreement I would recommend that we allow those who would want to make a donation that these funds be put into an account and administered by the Animal Control Officer. These funds could be used to reimburse a citizen who incurred a cost to take a stray cat to either Presque Isle or Caribou Shelter.

Motion: Terry Greenier moved to the approve setting up a fund for people to donate funds to be used to help with the canine clink for cats

Second: Ruel Flannery

Vote – 1 against – Kim Murchison
4 for

- B. Approve QOPC Board Members Appointments – December 13th marked the end of our first year and one of the responsibilities is to recommend four individuals to serve for a new three year term. Troy McDougal, Phil Christensen and Mike Eisensmith have agreed to continue serving on the Board and Vicki Adams has agreed to come on as a new member.

Motion: Ruel Flannery motioned to approve the QOPC Appointments as

presented

Second: Mark Babin

Vote – All affirmative

VII. New Business

- A. Approve Reimbursement to MEMA - received a request from Robert McAleer, Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency regarding an overpayment in the amount of \$14,500.59 from MEMA to the Fort Fairfield Police Department for services provided under the auspices of the Stonegarden Operations. Their findings found that the overpayment were a result of poor record keeping and reporting practices at the police department. Dan has also completed his own investigations of our payroll records during that time and his findings are consistent with MEMA's findings.

Motion: Ruel Flannery moved to approve the reimbursement in the amount of \$14,500.59 payable to MEMA as the funds received are not consistent with the hours worked

Second: Mark Babin

Vote – All affirmative

- B. Approve Grant Protocol Policy – One lesson learned from the Stonegarden has been that some programs that become available to different municipal departments do not always require the approval of either the Town Manager or the Council. A simple process has been created that if enacted by the Council will require that any funds derived from a source other than the budget will require the approval of the Town Council before they can be expended.

Motion: Mark Babin moved to approve the new process to have the Council approve expenditures of any Grant funds received.

Second: Kim Murchison

Vote – All affirmative

- C. Approve Memorandum of Understanding for Stone garden – Standard agreement that Police Chiefs are being asked to sign in order for their Departments to participate. Bill and Dan have reviewed this and are comfortable in implementing it. Bill will be meeting with Bill Delong from MEMA to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Motion: Ruel Flannery moved to approve to reinstate our relationship with MEMA to participate in the Stone garden operations under the guidelines outlined in the packet

Second: Mark Babin

Vote – All affirmative

- D. Approve Purchase of Abandoned Apartment House – The apartment house located adjacent to the Block Home has been abandoned for some time. This is a terrible eyesore on our Main Street and due to its location is not suitable place for family housing. We have negotiated a sales price with the current owner who is located in Tennessee for \$12,000.00. These funds will come from our UDAG fund.

Motion: Kim Murchison moved to approve the purchase of 346 Main Street and tearing it down

Second: Ruel Flannery

Vote – All affirmative

- E. Approve Resolution #11-09 to Apply for 2012 CDBG Public Facilities Grant – received the latest proposal from Cary Medical Center and Pines Health Services that further delineates the level of services that they intend to provide the citizens of Fort Fairfield

Motion: Ruel Flannery moved to approve #11-09 to Apply for 2012 CDBG Public Facilities Grant

Second: Mark Babin

Vote – All affirmative

- VIII. Minutes: November 16, 2011

Motion: Kim Murchison moved to approve Minutes of November 16, 2011 as written.

Second: Mark Babin

Vote – All affirmative

- IX. Warrants: #12 - \$79,541.26; #13 - \$316,543.00

Motion: Ruel Flannery moved to accept warrant #12 & #13as presented.

Second: Terry Greenier

Vote – All affirmative

- X. Other - NONE

- XI. Executive Session -

move into executive session at 7:45 PM

MRSA 405(6)(A) – Personnel Matter

No action taken

- XII. Adjournment at 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca J. Hersey
Council Secretary