

Fort Fairfield Town Council Special Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
Thursday, February 9, 2023
6:00 PM

I. Roll Call

Council: Keith Thibeau II, Pat Canavan, Bob Kilcollins, Jim Ouellette

Staff: Dan Foster, Neadra Dubois, Darren Hanson

Citizens: None present.

Media: None present.

Consultant: Catherine Ingraham

II. Prayer

Dan Foster provided the prayer.

III. Pledge to the Flag

All attendees pledged their allegiance to the flag.

IV. Other

A. Public Works Plow Truck

Darren Hanson presents discussion about a plow truck that he wants the Public Works Department to buy. Mr. Hanson looked at the truck earlier in the day and shares what his thoughts are about buying it. The truck is an F-550 and has a plow and wing. Mr. Hanson goes on to say that Public Works is looking to diversify their workforce. They are having a hard time to get part time CDL drivers and this truck might change that.

Mr. Foster states that to have viable departments and departments that the Town can afford, there has to be a core group of well-paid full-time people

and be supplemented by part-time. Mr. Foster goes on to say that insurance benefits of full-time employees is unsustainable and before too long benefits are going to exceed salary. Mr. Foster states that the Town needs to use part-time people more.

Councilor Ouellette states that when he saw the picture of the truck, he thought to himself, "I could still go plow now." Councilor Ouellette says that he has a CDL but would never go drive one of those big trucks with a wing.

Mr. Hanson says that is the problem getting CDL drivers to stay. Driving trucks on the road and plowing roads are two very different things.

Councilor Canavan asks Mr. Hanson where he will be using this truck and what he will be using it for.

Mr. Hanson answers, saying his vision for the winter is that truck will have a plow run during major storm events. Other than that it will be a cleanup truck and it's cheaper to run and to purchase. If it works out they could get more of those trucks and it would be easier on the drivers. Mr. Hanson looks forward to what comes out of it.

Councilor Thibeau asks if Public Works has full-time employees that do not have CDL.

Mr. Hanson says they have two.

Councilor Thibeau asks if there is a way to fund a CDL license program, like what the Police Department does.

Mr. Hanson discusses how that would not work for this department because of past experiences that they had with new CDL drivers that were hired. After the first winter storm they ended their employment. Mr. Hanson says that it's a great idea but it just doesn't work out for the Town with liability.

Mr. Foster explains how that system works with the Police Department. There is an agreement with other law enforcement to take over that expense by buying out the contract if it doesn't work out for the employee with this Town.

Councilor Thibeau says that if it was the right guy he would be game for doing that to invest in people.

Mr. Hanson says that could be a possibility for the future. Mr. Hanson agrees that it would have to be for the right guy and says he thinks they'll find the right guy by putting them in that F-550 and letting him plow.

Mr. Foster explains where the money is going to come from to pay for this truck. The money is going to come out of Public Works Reserve Account.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins makes a motion to approve the plow truck purchase.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

V. Executive Session
1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)(A) Personnel Matter

Motion In: Councilor Kilcollins makes the motion to go into Executive Session.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Motion Out: Councilor Ouellette motions to come out of Executive Session.

Second: Councilors Pelletier and Canavan seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Action taken:

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins makes a motion to accept the contract of CEI Consultants at the price of \$2,500.00 for Phase 1 as presented.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion:

Councilor Ouellette wants to know why the other firm wasn't asked to come.

Mr. Foster says that he did not ask them to come because his recommendation to Council is to retain Catherine, not the other individual. He didn't feel there was any reason to have the other person come, unless the Council had expressed concern that they didn't want Catherine. If the Council decides later that they do not want Catherine, they will have to revisit the second one. Mr. Foster says that if they do feel that way, they will have to relook because he is not in favor of the other proposal.

Mr. Kilcollins says they should find out how it's going to be with this first phase and it's a cheap hire.

Discussion goes on to talk about how they all think Catherine wants this and they were impressed by her.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VI. Adjournment

Motion: Councilor Ouellette motions to adjourn.

Second: Councilor Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Neadra E. Dubois, Council Secretary