

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, July 19, 2023
6:00 PM

I. Roll Call

Council: Keith E. Thibeau II, Robert Kilcollins, Kevin Pelletier, James Ouellette, Pat Canavan.

Staff: Dan Foster, Neadra Dubois, Tony Levesque, Fire Chief Jalbert, Police Chief Cummings, Darren Hanson, Doug Sharpe, Jack Shannon, John Cummings, Ella Leighton.

Citizens: Eleven (11) citizens present.

Media: Star Herald

II. Prayer

Mr. Levesque provided the prayer.

III. Pledge to the Flag

All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the flag.

IV. Public Comment Period

No public comments.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits

Mr. Foster reports that there was one liquor license renewal from the Lions Club.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to ratify the license renewal.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

B. Financial Report

Mr. Foster gives the report on the Town's June finances. Mr. Foster states that total expenses were reduced by \$965,000 instead of the \$400,000 that he had hoped for which, he says, is amazing. Mr. Foster recognizes Fire Chief Jalbert for reducing costs by \$500,000, increased his part time staff and volunteer staff, got his own Basic EMS license so he can fill in when needed, and his leadership has

been exemplary. Mr. Foster states that the Town has had a great fiscal finish to last year. Councilor Pelletier adds that it feels good right now and it's a big milestone.

C. Aroostook Waste Solutions

Mr. Foster reports on AWS in place of Stev Rogeski. Mr. Foster states that the organization is doing well financially. The big thing for AWS right now is that they are in the middle of a contract to build two new cells. The Presque Isle Landfill is closing and now all commercial haulers will be going to AWS.

D. Library Report

No librarians present. Mr. Foster gives a report on how the Library is going. Mr. Foster states that the two part time librarians are doing a great job running the Library, which is open three days a week. The Library has received three grants – a grant from Stephen King Foundation for \$20,000 to fix the roof, a grant for \$10,000 to create space in the Community Room that's going to be set up for senior citizens in conjunction with the Housing Authority for crafts and such, another grant from the Mraz Family Memorial Fund to hire another person to help digitize the Drew Room. The Library also got a donation from the Shaw family to install lighting in the Community Room and a railing.

E. Maine Street Revitalization Report

Councilor Canavan gives a report on the first Friday in Fort. Councilor Canavan reports that they sold strawberry shortcakes and there were vendors present even though it rained. The Maine Street Revitalization group will be meeting again on July 20th to discuss and make plans for the next Friday in Fort in August. Charles Cyr adds that there were vendors that have interest in doing a possible co-op situation to create more business in Town.

F. Required TRIO Upgrade

Mr. Foster reports that the Town will be, after 20 years, upgrading the TRIO system to a web-based program. There will be an additional cost for the upgrade, not the subscription, of about \$4,000. That money is already in the budget for this fiscal year. This upgrade will make it easier for staff in the Town Office and it will give the public to access more information online.

G. Fire Department Donation

Mr. Foster reports that the Fire Department received a \$300 donation from Harbor Freight to help buy equipment. This donation will help provide services for citizens without adding cost to citizens.

H. Adult Use and Medical Marijuana Businesses Ordinance

Mr. Foster reports on a proposed Ordinance for the Use and Sale of Marijuana. Mr. Foster states that Presque Isle has given us a copy of their Ordinance so that the Town of Fort Fairfield can use to create an Ordinance for this issue and have a system in place. Mr. Levesque will have a packet with a check list of things one would need to have to be in compliance with this Ordinance. Mr. Foster is in hopes that there will be something to give to Council on this by the August Council Meeting, for the Ordinance to be introduced and it can go to the Public Hearing process.

I. Teenage Behavior

Mr. Foster reports on some inappropriate teenage behavior happening on Town property. It has created a problem with Mr. Sharpe providing Rec services at the pool and at the tennis courts, and it's been a problem with the Police Department because of the belligerence and very inappropriate behavior. Mr. Foster believes there are some things that may need to be done to curtail this behavior from continuing. Chief Cummings addresses the Council by stating that they will need to make some rules to be standard in place as to what people can and can't be doing in these public areas that the Town is providing services in. There was an incident a few days ago with tennis lessons and swimming lessons going on and there were some disruptive people in there, who were confrontational with the Rec Director which caused the Police Department to get involved and it's been an issue that they've been dealing with too frequently this summer. Chief Cummings thinks that putting up a sign, creating some rules, and work on enforcing those rules needs to be done. Mr. Foster states that he wants to make it public knowledge that it will not be tolerated in this Town. Councilor Pelletier asks if it is the same group of kids causing the problems. Chief Cummings states that generally, yes it is. Mr. Foster states that this group is rude and crude. The public needs to be made aware of this and say something when they see it.

J. Packets for Nomination Papers

Mr. Foster presents to the Council packet that have been created by Neadra Dubois to accompany the Nomination Papers. The packets include information about the duties and responsibilities of a Council Member for Candidates wanting to run for Town Council. Nomination Papers are available to take out on July 31st.

VI. Old Business

A. Approve Letter of Engagement with Felch & Company for Annual Audit

Mr. Foster reports that the Council has already approved the Letter of Engagement with Felch & Company, but there wasn't enough money. The town will have to add an additional \$3,000 to the contract amount for a total of \$13,750. The reason for that is the Town actually handled around \$844,000 worth of federal funds and complying with the federal guidelines will require a fair

amount of additional work on behalf of the auditors. Mr. Levesque was proactive on this and got a \$5,000 of administrative funds from a CDBG grant to help cover the \$3,000 cost. Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve the amended contract to include the extra \$3,000.

Motion: Councilor Ouellette makes the motion to approve the amended contract.

Second: Councilor Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

B. Consider Community Empowerment Project Recommendations

Catherine Ingraham discusses the Community Empowerment Project's seven recommendations and the survey that was conducted on these recommendations. Ms. Ingraham states that most of the public's comments were positive, with the exception that there was some confusion with the language. Ms. Ingraham presents these recommendations to the Council to discuss and vote on. Council discusses each of the recommendations one by one as follows:

1. Adding regular standing agenda items at Town Council Meetings for Department Heads to present any department-specific updates.
2. For the Town Council, Department Heads, Town Manager, and when appropriate, Town Staff to attend and participate in an annual retreat.
3. For the Town Council to include a public comment period at the end of the Council Meetings for a trial period lasting three months.
4. To include a probationary period and provisions that detail job duties and responsibilities in the contract for the Town Manager to include an annual performance evaluation.
5. That an attorney for the Town of Fort Fairfield review the final language before the Town Manager's contract is finalized.
6. Amendment to the Town Charter to amend §C-13 (c) Voting.
7. That the Town Council charge the Budget Advisory Committee to work with the Council on adopting a new budget process for the next fiscal year.

All items, except number 6, were agreed upon by Council. Mr. Levesque suggests tabling this item so an Ordinance can be drafted. The Council agrees to table this item to take some extra time to think about and discuss how changing the Charter will affect the future Town Council decisions.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motions to table all of the Recommendations until the next month.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

VII. New Business

A. Introduce Ordinance #23 -10 to Amend Town of Fort Fairfield's Zoning Ordinance

Councilor Kilcollins introduced Ordinance 23-10.

B. Approve Selling Pool Drive Property

Mr. Foster reports that there is a citizen interested in buying the property on Pool Drive that has been tax acquired by the Town. Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve selling the Pool Drive Property. Mr. Foster also explains the new rules on how towns can dispose of tax acquired property: the former owner has to be contacted and made aware that the property is going to be sold and then wait three months; the property has to then be listed with a realtor for six months; all the costs are tallied (back taxes, interest, etc.) and any money made on the sale beyond that has to go back to the prior owner.

Motion: Councilor Ouellette motions to approve the selling of the Pool Drive property.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Pelletier asks if that is the old Murphy property. Councilor Kilcollins affirms that it is.

Vote: All affirmative.

C. Approve MMA Annual Elections

Mr. Foster reports on the MMA Annual Elections. Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve the slate as presented.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to approve the slate.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the June 21st Regular Council Meeting; Minutes of the July 12th Special Council Meeting

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to accept the minutes.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #26 - \$845,245.00; #1 - \$218,220.39

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to accept.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All affirmative.

X. Other
No items to discuss.

XI. Executive Session – 1 MRSA §405 (6)(A) – Personnel Matter
Motion IN: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.
Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Vote: All affirmative.

TIME: 6:50 PM

Motion OUT: Councilor Ouellette motioned.
Second: Councilor Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All affirmative.

TIME: 7:04 PM

Action taken:

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motions to accept Tim Goff for the new Town Manager position.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Vote: All affirmative.

Mr. Goff gave an acceptance speech and states that he is excited to start working as Town Manager in October.

XII. Adjournment
Motion: Councilor Ouellette motioned to adjourn.
Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Vote: All affirmative.

TIME: 7:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Neadra E. Dubois, Council Secretary