

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Council Chambers  
Wednesday, February 16, 2022  
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Councilors: All present, with the exception of Mr. Pelletier.

Staff: Ms. Powers, Neadra Dubois, Mitch Dufour, Darren Hanson, Ella Leighton, Jennifer Gaenzle, Doug Sharpe, Kevin Senal, Police Chief Cummings, Fire DC Fenderson, Fire Chief Browning, Cheryl Boulier.

Citizens: 10

Local Media: Fort Fairfield Journal

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

**Gary Sirois** – “Gary Sirois, long-time citizen of the Town of Fort Fairfield. I want to thank the Council for the opportunity to present my thoughts tonight. Okay? I have taken the time to review the Annual Report, and the Annual Report before that, and the one before that. There are some very disturbing trends that I want to bring the Council awareness to. Maybe you all are all aware of them, maybe not, but I think it’s my duty to identify them. As an example, disturbing trends, long-term debt. As of July 1, 2019, seven hundred thirty-two thousand some odd dollars. Long-term debt as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 21, two million, three hundred ninety-six thousand and some odd dollars. Red flag goes up to me, and it did. Secondly, net worth of the Town of Fort Fairfield July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, six million, five hundred sixty-four thousand and some odd cents. Net worth, as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, four million, two sixty-eight and some odd dollars. A difference of two million, two hundred ninety-three thousand dollars. Net worth down, during that period, three years. Red flag goes up. What the hell’s going on? In addition to that, there’s some other issues too, and one is short-term debt for the same period of time. I gotta find my place here. Short-term debt, as of right now, to my knowledge, we owe Aroostook Waste Systems one million dollars. It’s due February 28<sup>th</sup>. I hope the town has enough resources to pay that debt, that was originally taken out as a tax anticipation. Addition to that, we also have another tax anticipation note due to Katahdin Trust, I don’t have the due date. Five hundred, sixty thousand dollars, tax anticipation. Again, I don’t know if the Town has the money to pay those. Or, did the Treasurer and the Manager tell you folks whether you have the money to pay those debts when they become due? I don’t really think you do, but nonetheless, that’s something for you folks to think about and consider. It’s a challenge. Other, other items that concern me is that Administrative Reserves were improved by moving the Revolving Long Fund to

Administrative Reserves. That was a lot of money. I have the figure here, somewhere. Also, a red flag, to me, Administrative Reserves were used to pay part of a piece of equipment for the Highway Department/Public Works Department. No question. We may have needed that piece of equipment, but that department had enough Reserves in my opinion, to pay for that piece of equipment. Why should it come out of Administrative Reserve? It's not an Administrative function. Also, Administrative Reserve paid part of the roof repair on the Library. Fifteen thousand dollars, come out of Administrative Reserves. I don't know how Administrative Reserves are, or how they're supposed to function but, I do know that total Reserves, at the end of the year last year, all departments, seven hundred fifty-seven thousand dollars, in Reserves. That's a lot of money. These things, and other things, raise red flags to me. Another thing that raised a red flag to me, would have been when I looked at the past due taxes. What stands out? ReEnergy stands out. Both Real Estate and Personal Property, four hundred and sixty-two thousand dollars total. I've spoken with Ella, she says she's doing what she's supposed to do to try to collect them. And, I appreciate that, thank you Ella for doing that. But, money's gotta come. When I look at ReEnergy, when I Googled it, ReEnergy seems to be doing pretty well, thank you. They're now into the waste systems, they are going to be doing waste systems, they're gonna collect the waste to burn, to make electricity, that's great. But they owe this Town four hundred sixty-two thousand dollars. If the normal channels don't collect it, then I honestly think that the Council ought to instruct management to hire a lawyer to go after them. They have the wherewithal to pay it. We gotta make it tough on them to make sure they pay it. In summary, this Council plays a very important role in the management of our affairs for the Town of Fort Fairfield. It's not, should not, be business as usual. These trends that I've outlined, you can look at them. They're all in written reports, and they're alarming to me. They're really alarming. If I were to lend the money to the Town of Fort Fairfield, I'd look at the trends that's going on, I'd look at the net worth going down and look at the debts going up and I'd say, whoa what's going on there? Something's wrong. You people approved these expenses. The Manager brings them to you for your actions. It seems to me like you're rubber stamping a lot of stuff and that you should not be rubber. You need to challenge some of the things going on. So, I implore you to look carefully, in the future, about what you're gonna do, how you're gonna do it and how you're gonna pay for it. Thank you for your time."

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Thank you, Gary. Anybody else?"

**Billie Jo Sharpe** – "Good evening, I'm Billie Jo Sharpe, I'm a resident. I just wanted to... I missed the last Meeting, I was unable to come. But, I did watch the meeting live and I did find it very frustrating that this Council, or at least part of this Council, continues to want a Budget Advisory Board or Committee. If you look around, behind me, you are gonna see your Advisory Board, right here, within your Department Heads, your staff. These are the people that work day in and day out to inform the Council of what their needs financially, inform Council what they expend via the warrants that you sign, and they work diligently to stay under or within their budgets, and, they also search endlessly to find grants to help offset their expenses. So, to say you want a Budget Advisory Board, is telling Town Staff and Departments that you have zero confidence in them as professionals, and I think it is very, very sad. We are two Council Meetings in, and already you want to change the Charter. Why? This Charter has worked successfully for many, many years, and it has been tested and proven to work. The only change I see here are two new Councilors, and one of them has already said, in open session, that they have no budget experience. Well, do you think anybody else on the Council had any municipal budget experience prior to serving on the Council? No. It comes from speaking to

your officials, your Department Heads, and your staff that supports those Departments. You learn from them. Not from a few ill-informed citizens that have no experience in municipal budgets. Municipal budgets are one hundred percent different from any other budget, and they must be treated and formulated as such, within the statutes of the state and local charters, if any. And, I strongly feel, from past experience, and even other Municipalities, when I worked here, you know what's going on in neighboring Municipalities, you know what goes on at Council Meetings or Select Board Meetings, some of them aren't pretty. And, I do know, from these other towns, that people will leave, your staff is gonna to leave, your department heads are gonna leave, they're not going to want to be here. And to be successful, we need to have successful Department Heads, and staff, for our citizens. Unless you show them that you're listening and hear them. These are good people. Don't allow them to make the decision to take their talents elsewhere, because then we will be the place that nobody wants to work for, and our citizens are going to be the ones that are gonna suffer. You were elected by the People and you have to support all of the people and not just a few. And, as the saying goes, don't fix it if it ain't broke. Thank you"

**Mr. Kilcollins** – “Thank you, Billie Jo.”

**Jennifer Gaenzle** – “I think Billie Jo stole my speech, but that's okay, I'm gonna speak anyway. I'm Jennifer Gaenzle. My husband and I are tax paying residents for the last sixteen years. Last month, there was a proposal for a Budget Advisory Committee. That's a cop-out. Creating an Advisory Committee is a cop-out for the responsibilities that you were elected to do. You don't need an Advisory Committee, because you're supposed to be that Committee. You were elected to be that Committee, just as all the Selectmen and Town Councilors for the past one hundred and sixty-six years before you have been. I listened to last years' public hearings and saw the postings around town, professing that you knew how budgets work, but last month at the Council Meeting, you stated that you don't know how budgets work. If you don't know how Municipal budgets work, then on what basis do you feel that you have the right to make a historic change to how something is done, without putting in the effort to learn what you're changing? In the last sixteen years, I've heard the statement that, people from away come here and make changes to your way of life and how things have always been done. Now, because you haven't taken the time to learn how it's been done previously, you are doing the same thing. Well, I'm one of those people from away, and now I'm asking you to have patience, and learn how the full budget process works before making any change. Before moving here, I too owned my business, owned a business, and managed other peoples' businesses. This is not a business budget. Take what you know about a business budget and throw it out the window, because it means nothing. Unlike a business, municipal governments are not about making a profit. The taxes and revenues are to provide current services and to plan for new services that are needed by all people utilizing our Town. Including renters, businesses and visitors. Services that the majority of our citizens want and are willing to pay for. And, your municipal reserves should be viewed like a 401k retirement fund for the Town. They are investments for future needs of the Town services and the buildings. You don't invest, you won't have a net worth.” (Gary Sirois laughs) “Put your minds to the task of learning how the tax base works, how providing good, solid services and paying for future services draws in families and people who are doctors, nurses, veterinarians, and other professionals and businesses that are so desperately needed, not just in Fort Fairfield, but in all of Aroostook County. How those people, in turn, increase your tax base, which helps lower taxes for everyone. This is Economics, not Business. Learn how regular tax assessments keep the

playing field even for all and establishes a solid record for future assessments. I'm asking you to show yourselves to be the pillars of our community, that you were elected to be. Learn from your fellow Councilors that have been here numerous times before, use the recourses available from Maine Municipal Association, and most of all working with Ms. Powers to learn what you don't understand. Talk to her, just as you do the Towns people. Come in and see her. And, yes, most definitely, ask all the questions you want to ask. Put all this effort of recreating the wheel, into learning how the original wheel works."

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Thank you."

**Gary Sirois** – "Bob, if I may?"

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Yeah."

**Gary Sirois** – "I don't disagree with all your factors, and some I do. Number one, you say talk to the Town Manager. I formally asked for a meeting with the Town Manager, to talk about..."

**Ms. Powers** – "Excuse me, Mr. Chairman?"

**Mrs. Libby** – "Yeah, this is not okay."

**Ms. Powers** – "We're not supposed to have follow-up, and normally I wouldn't say anything, but this gentleman was already spoken to by the Police Department and is why I'm not having an individual meeting with him, and I will not be discussing that any further during Council."

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Okay, you can address your issues, Gary, but not with anything with Ms. Powers."

**Gary Sirois** – "I asked for a meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, to go over some of the issues I brought forth tonight. I was told she would check her schedule."

**Ms. Powers** – "Again, we're not discussing this tonight."

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Okay, Gary, I think we're gonna have to stop you here. You can't interfere with the decisions with Ms. Powers. You can relate to the Council with..."

**Gary Sirois** – "Alright, I want to let the Council know that I tried that route and it didn't work. Therefore, I was tempted to follow through with my presentation tonight. You people are the ones that can make those decisions, and need to. I don't agree that this running the Town business is not a business, it is a business. It is a business. We're not a business to make a profit, but it is a business. Income, expenses, it adds up to business. Thank you."

**Mr. Kilcollins** – "Thank you, Gary. Anybody else?"

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits

None to report.

B. Financial Report

Checking account balance as of 01/31/2022 was \$1,312,189.34 and Machias Savings is \$5,000.

Excise collected in January was \$33,761.42 compared to last year at \$32,561.12.

As of 01/31/2022, uncollected Real Estate taxes for 2021 were \$1,695,462.21 compared to last year at \$1,735,303.57.

The Town's 45-day foreclosure notices for 2019 Real Estate Taxes were mailed on 1/21/2022. The Town sent 34 notices to property owners for a total of \$168,621.28 in unpaid taxes which includes ReEnergy in the amount of \$150,978.19.

Compared to last year the Town sent out 36 notices for a total of \$26,650.80. The major difference in dollars is for ReEnergy in the amount of \$150,978.19.

The Town received January Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$69,721.09 on 01/20/2022. Total revenue sharing received to date is \$483,686.76. The Town is at 56.05% vs the budget of 58.33 %, which is down \$19,676.47.

C. AWS Report

Stev Rogeski gives an update on AWS per the AWS Meeting Minutes from January 28, 2022:

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to Order at 8:35 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tara Henderson, Jesse Philbrick, Kevin Freeman, Martin Puckett, Stev Rogeski, Ken Murchison, John Morrill

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrea Powers, Penny Thompson, Dana Fowler

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Draper, Sharon Raymond

It was noted that Martin Puckett would be voting for Presque Isle in the absence of Dana Fowler.

The Board members introduced themselves to John Morrill, who was recently appointed to the Board representing Caribou.

1. Election of Officers for 2022

Mark noted that the election of Officers occurs annually in January, and that those nominated for the positions have volunteered to do so. The recommended slate of Officers was as follows:

President                      Penny Thompson

Vice President	Tara Henderson
Treasurer	Mark Draper
Secretary	Martin Puckett

**A motion was made by Stev Rogeski; and was seconded by Ken Murchison; to approve the slate of officers as recommended. The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Review and approve the minutes of the November 19, 2021 meeting

**A motion was made by John Morrill; and was seconded by Stev Rogeski; to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Review and approve the amended minutes of the October 29, 2021 meeting

Mark explained that it was brought to his attention that the minutes of the October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting did not reflect two (2) decisions to set certain fees in relation to the overall budget discussion. The Board packet includes amended minutes with the proposed additions highlighted. Mark described those proposed changes.

**A motion was made by Ken Murchison; and was seconded by Kevin Freeman; to approve the minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.**

4. Review and approve the financial statements for the period ending November 30, 2021

Mark reviewed the financial notes as provided in the Board packet. He noted that the overall positive trends in revenue and expenses as compared to budget have continued in the month of November, and that preliminary figures for the year end are also encouraging, although those could be adjusted by closure and post-closure care liability estimates that may be negatively impacted by the recent inflation spike.

Mark also provided the Board with an update on the preparation of the year-end financial statements and annual audit report for the year-ending December 31, 2021. The auditors (Felch and Co.) have completed their field work, and as has been the case in past years, he expects a draft of the financial statements and audit report in the next month or so.

5. Review and approve the warrant for checks numbered 26082 through 26282

Mark noted that the warrant includes checks from two (2) months (November and December 2021) because the Board did not meet in December. Sharon has noted any unusual expenses.

**A motion was made by Ken Murchison; and was seconded by Stev Rogeski; to approve the warrant as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

6. Solid Waste Director's report

Mark reported on the following:

- a. Scrap metal piles: accumulated scrap metal at both Tri-Community Landfill and the Presque Isle Landfill has been sold to AIM Recycling for \$150/ton, which Mark noted is a very good price.
- b. TCL Scale Attendant: unfortunately, the most-recent hire has decided to leave to take a different job. Interviews have been conducted and a likely replacement has been identified. Mark will likely be making an offer soon. He also noted that an issue regarding unpaid, scheduled breaks for the scale attendant has been addressed with schedule options.
- c. TCL Foreman absence: the TCL Foreman has been dealing with medical issues and has been absent for an extended period of time, but he is hopeful to return soon.
- d. Waste and recycling annual trends: Mark reviewed with the Board updated trend charts for wastes received at both landfills, and for recycling. In general, municipal solid waste (i.e.; trash) is up slightly at both landfills, and construction/demolition debris is down at both landfills as compared to last year. Recycling volumes remained fairly steady.

7. L.D. 1875, “An Act to Address Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution from State-owned Solid Waste Disposal Facilities”

Mark explained that this bill is one of several regarding the ongoing “PFAS” issue before the Legislature’s Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources. Specifically, this bill would require that any landfill leachate being discharged to a wastewater treatment plant from the State-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill would have to be treated to the State’s interim drinking water standard for PFAS chemicals. The Committee has already held a public hearing on this bill and is scheduled to hold a work session to discuss it on January 31<sup>st</sup>, along with an update from the DEP on the effort to address PFAS contamination in general. Mark will track this bill, but does not expect it to be approved in the current form because there is a question of whether the technology exists to treat landfill leachate to that standard or not, and that the DEP is currently in a massive data collection phase (including for leachate from all landfills) and is not prepared to implement all remedial actions yet. Mark will report back on the progress of this bill, and will continue to monitor developments regarding PFAS in general.

8. Review a proposal for a health insurance stipend option

Mark explained to the Board that the AWS Personnel Policy does not include a provision to offer a stipend to an employee that elects not to be covered by the AWS health insurance plan. He referenced his memo in the Board packet that provides examples of what 3 out of the 4 Owner Communities provide for in stipend benefits. He noted that most employees have elected the health insurance coverage in the past, and that only one (1) employee is currently not participating. As a matter of fairness, and to remain competitive in attracting and retaining employees, Mark suggested that the Board consider offering such an option. He further explained that, if the Board agrees and sets a stipend level, he will develop a more detailed written policy for further review and approval by the Board. Following significant discussion, **a motion was made by John Morrill; and was seconded by Stev Rogeski; to develop a policy offering an annual stipend of 25% of the employer cost for a single health insurance plan. The motion carried unanimously.**

9. Review and approve an updated 5-year capital plan

Mark referenced his memo, summary, and details of the plan that were provided in the Board meeting packet. He noted that approval of the capital plan is normally done during the budget process, but that he had inadvertently neglected to include it, so he is presenting it separately for review and approval. He further explained that the plan is developed with two (2) primary goals; which are to maintain relatively level annual capital costs in the budget, and to reserve enough funding for purchase of major pieces of capital – primarily landfill compactors and bulldozers. He reported that he believes this 5-year plan accomplishes those goals. He reviewed certain specific major purchases and described how the priority is set for those. Following discussion, **a motion was made by John Morrill; and was seconded by Jesse Philbrick; to approve the updated 5-year capital plan as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

10. Discussion of landfill development planning

Mark reported that the consultant engineers discovered an error in the estimate of remaining constructed capacity at the Presque Isle Landfill when they were evaluating the results of the annual aerial survey that was completed in October. That error results in the reduction of remaining constructed capacity from about 2 years to 1 year at the current fill rates. Because certain aspects of ceasing that operation have to be put in place, Mark has implemented waste delivery changes to extend the remaining capacity back to about 2 years at the Presque Isle facility. He has also asked the consultants for Tri-Community Landfill to more closely calculate the remaining capacity at that facility to confirm previous annual estimates.

In light of all of this, Mark presented an updated landfill development timetable that accelerates the construction of Cells 5 and 6 at TCL by at least one year (to 2024) to provide adequate disposal capacity. The revisions to the timeline are still tentative pending the full review of remaining capacity at TCL, and Mark will continue to update the Board. No action by the Board is necessary.

11. Discussion regarding possible Presque Isle Transfer Station

Since he had to leave the meeting early, and considering the absence of Dana Fowler, Kevin Freeman requested that this item be tabled until the next meeting. There was no objection from the Board.

12. Enter into Executive Session per MRSA Title 1, Chapter 13.405.6(A) to discuss renewal of the Solid Waste Director's contract.

**Upon a motion by John Morrill; and seconded by Ken Murchison; the Board entered into Executive Session at 10:14 am.**

The Board returned to regular session at 10:45 am and **a motion was made by John Morrill; and was seconded by Stev Rogeski; to renew the Solid Waste Director's contract as presented. The motion was carried unanimously.**



13. Schedule next meeting

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for **February 25, 2022.**

14. Other business

No other business was discussed

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:47 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Martin Puckett, Secretary

Mr. Butler asks a question about the deal AWS is doing with the Presque Isle Landfill.

Mr. Rogeski answers his question in detail about how the merger is going to work better for the Fort Fairfield AWS Landfill.

## VI. Old Business

### A. Budget Committee Ordinance Resubmission

Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S. §3001 and §C-15 of the Town of Fort Fairfield Charter an ordinance providing for establishment of a Budget Advisory Committee, composition, appointment, qualifications, terms, vacancies, officers, meetings, quorum, procedure, powers, duties, authority, recommendations, official cooperation.

The composition, appointment, qualifications, terms, and vacancies are as follows: the Committee shall consist of five (5) to seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the Town Council. Prospective members shall be registered voters of the Town and shall submit an application expressing their desire to volunteer to serve. Town officials or employees, and their spouses, may not serve on the Committee. Members shall serve for terms of two (2) years. For transition purposes, the initial terms shall be staggered so that as nearly an equal number of terms shall expire annually. Vacancies shall be filled within thirty (30) days by appointment of the Council for the unexpired term.

The officers, meetings, quorum, and procedure are as follows: the Committee shall annually elect a Chairman and a Secretary from among its members. The Chairman shall call meetings as necessary or when so requested by a majority of members of the Council. A quorum necessary to conduct business shall consist of at least a majority of members. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings. The Secretary shall maintain a record of all proceedings including all correspondence of the Committee. All meetings and records shall be subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. §§401-410. The Committee may adopt rules of procedure not inconsistent with this ordinance.

The powers and duties, authority, recommendations, and official cooperation are as follows: the Committee shall have the following powers and duties: to review and make recommendations to the Council on the annual Town budget as proposed by the Town

Manager and to review and make recommendations to the Council on capital expenditures as proposed by the Town Manager and to make such other recommendations on fiscal matters as the Committee may from time to time deem advisable, or as requested to do so by the Council.

The Committee's authority shall be advisory only. The purpose and function of the Committee is governed by the Council, and it is directly responsible to the Council. Any recommendations shall be provided to the Council in writing. The Town Manager shall cooperate with and provide the Committee with such information as may be reasonably necessary and available to enable it to carry out its functions under this Ordinance.

Recommendation: Is that Council introduces the Budget Advisory Committee Ordinance 22-02 and direct staff to hold a public hearing on the Ordinance on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 12:00 Noon in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building.

Mr. Kilcollins asks if they need to have a motion.

Ms. Powers says, "Yes, absolutely."

Motion: Mr. Ouellette makes a motion to accept that Budget Committee Ordinance go to public hearing.

Mr. Kilcollins asks if there is a Second to the Motion.

Council discusses whether or not there even needs to be a Motion for this topic because the Ordinance has already been introduced. Council decides that there is no Motion required.

Mrs. Libby makes a recommendation that the Public Hearing be held at a different time so that more people will be able to make it to the Hearing.

Mr. Butler recommends 6:00 PM for the Public Hearing.

## B. Recreation Department Scoreboard Update

Ms. Powers gives the update on the Recreation Department Scoreboard. The Scoreboard was given to the Engineering Department at the University of Maine Orono. They are putting the Scoreboard back to use. It's a very historic piece of the Town of Fort Fairfield. The Rec Department will be able to use it in the gymnasium when it's finished.

Mr. Kilcollins asks what the expense would be if the Town had the work done somewhere else.

Ms. Powers tells Mr. Kilcollins that it would have been thousands of dollars and doing it this way does not cost the Town anything.

## VII. New Business

### A. Openings on the Economic Development Board

Ronald J. Jalbert, III, the Chair of the Economic Development Board has tendered his resignation as of January 28, 2022. The Economic Development Board now has two vacancies available for application to join.

Recommendation: Council accept the resignation of Ronald J. Jalbert, III.

Mr. Butler makes the motion to accept the resignation of Ronald J. Jalbert, III.

Mr. Ouellette and Mrs. Libby seconded at the same time.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmed

### B. Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue ARPA Request Equipment

Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue is requesting to use ARPA funds for the purchase of medical equipment to help extend the life of the current equipment, conduct more realistic trainings, and be prepared for multiple call, or patient scenarios. FFFR is requesting the council approve the purchase of Stryker Power Pro XT stretcher, A Stryker Stair-PRO stair chair, and a Zoll X Cardiac Monitor.

The current stretchers were refurbished when they were purchased, and did not come with the option of the Stryker, on site, annual maintenance plan and warranty. While these stretchers are working well, without the option of the annual maintenance, the expected lifespan of these stretchers is greatly reduced. Adding a third stretcher, which would include a five-year warranty with annual, on-site maintenance, would allow FFFR to rotate stretchers and allow each stretcher to have less use, therefore extending the life of all the stretchers in service. It would also allow FFFR to have a backup stretcher in house, if FFFR were to have a failure of one of the current stretchers. If this were to happen now, FFFR would not be able to respond with one of their ambulances until they could send the stretcher away for repairs, or purchase a replacement.

The stair char is another piece of equipment that sees frequent use and is essential to moving patients out of tight spots without risking the safety of the crew. Purchasing another stair chair would allow FFFR to rotate the current stock to prolong their usable life as well as add a six-year maintenance/ warranty. It would allow for ambulance to remain in service if there was a malfunction and also allow for first responders to have additional equipment for extrication when both ambulances are on calls.

The cardiac monitor is one of the most essential pieces of equipment FFFR has, and is used on every call. Adding a third monitor would allow them to complete more in-depth trainings for staff without taking ambulances out of service. It would also allow them to have a monitor available when both ambulances are on calls and there is an additional call for service. This allows FFFR's response ability to increase as well as the level of care able to be provided on additional calls.

In addition to the benefits listed, adding these three pieces of equipment would position Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue well should the need to add an additional ambulance arise in the future. The equipment listed is the costliest equipment needed outside of the vehicle purchase itself.

The cost breakdown is as follows:

Stryker Power-PRO XT MS Stretcher with 5-year warranty is \$26,587.80  
Stryker Stair-PRO Stair Chair with 6-year warranty is \$5,056.20

Zoll X Monitor with 3-year warranty is \$41,623.80

The total is \$73,267.80

FFFR would request that the Council approve the Town Manager and Fire Department leadership to move forward with the purchase of the above listed equipment.

The recommendation is that Council allow the Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue Department to use the ARPA funds to purchase of this medical equipment so that they don't have to go back to the tax payers and ask for that in the next year's budget, and use the ARPA funds, which is part of their revenue, to do it. Otherwise, this will be presented in the budget.

Mr. Butler makes a motion to allow the Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue Department to use the ARPA funds to make the purchase.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Discussion: Mrs. Libby asks about the ARPA funds and the status of the Ambulance and Fire Service, so not to "rubber stamp" this.

Chief Browning gives an update on the revenue coming in through the Ambulance service. The Ambulance service started in August of 2020 so they don't have an end of year report. This will be the first year that they will have that trend to set what they will be taking in and staff to send out on calls.

Deputy Chief Fenderson also talks about the calls that they are getting and mentions that they only get paid for transporting calls. What they are finding with the amount of calls is that some days they don't have any calls and other days they will get six calls in an hour and a half span. There's lots of times that they have crew members that can go on calls, but they don't have an ambulance or the equipment available to go help the citizens in need. So they aren't able to assist as fully as they should or could be able to. That is why they are

proposing to use the ARPA funds to get the equipment that is needed. As far as the stretcher that is needed, every person that goes in the ambulance gets put in the stretcher and there is a back log for ordering stretchers, as with any other medical equipment. If they ordered it now, they are looking at a wait time. If they wait until one of the current stretchers is no longer functional, they would still have the same wait time or longer, but now they would have one less ambulance. It's Maine EMS rule that every ambulance must have a stretcher, stair chair and cardiac monitor for every EMS call they respond to.

Mrs. Libby asks about using the ARPA funds versus using funds coming out of the department budget.

Ms. Powers explains that the ARPA funds were funds given to the Town through the American Cares Act, and it was put in the Revenue line and the Federal Government states that the ARPA funds can be used for General Fund purposes. Any Department can request use of the ARPA funds now. The Town has to use the funds by a certain date and whatever is not used by that date, has to be given back.

Vote: All Affirmative

#### C. Public Works CAT Loader Loss/Replacement

Background: Recently the Cat loader used by Public Works on a daily basis developed transmission issues to the point where the machine is not useable in its current state. The engine was replaced 2000 hours ago with a remanufactured Cat engine which should have a few thousand hours of service left.

Discussion: Although the loader has high hours it still fills the need Public Works has for this piece of equipment and given the cost of a new replacement loader, we think the best course of action is to have the transmission rebuilt by the manufacturer which should give us many more years of service.

Recommendation: Town Council approves the transfer of up to \$20,000 from G-1-3060-00 to E-01-08-25-15 if needed. Public Works currently has enough in their parts repair and freight line(E-01-08-25-15) to cover the cost of repairs but in doing so will leave them lacking on that line with a considerable amount of winter left.

Mrs. Libby makes a motion to approve transferring funds as requested.

Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Ouellette talks to Mr. Hanson about the estimate.

Mr. Hanson explains the reasoning of Public Works requesting the \$20,000. Mr. Hanson also states that this isn't a need of Public Works, this is a need of the tax payer. This piece of equipment represents safety for traveling the roads of every person. Mr. Hanson explains the need for Public Works to have money in their Reserve account at all given

times, so in the event that something happen to their equipment, they have the funds to cover it. Right now, the Reserve line is at forty percent, and they should be around fifty-eight percent.

Mr. Kilcollins mentions that the price to cover that piece of equipment today would be in the excess of two hundred and fifty thousand.

Mr. Hanson states that in the northern climate, the equipment that would replace it today, he's not sure that piece of equipment would be wanted.

Vote: All Affirmed.

VIII. Minutes of the January 19, 2022 Regular Council Meeting

Mr. Butler makes a motion to approve the minutes from January 19, 2022.

Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #15 \$145,969.76 #16 \$415,929.40

Warrant #15 in the amount of \$145,969.76 was completed on 01/19/2022.

Warrant #16 in the amount of \$415,929.40 was completed on 02/03/2022.

Please note that this warrant included \$178,532.09 for February SAD 20 appropriation.

Mr. Butler makes a motion to approve the Warrants as written.

Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative

X. Other

Ms. Powers reads a letter from Phil Christensen to Council from the Fort Fairfield Quality of Place Council:

Dear Robert,

The Directors of the Fort Fairfield Quality of Place Council that the Town Council and Town Manager for recognizing our work through your presentation of the Spirit of America Award.

We appreciate the support we have received from numerous Town employees on many of our activities including:

The acquisition, restoration and sale of homes on Brunswick Avenue, Presque Isle Street and Columbia Avenue;

Fort Kids First College Planning Initiative; and

Our brochure “Sharing the Road Safely – Amish Horse Drawn Vehicles and Motor Vehicles”.

We also want to acknowledge the outstanding involvement and support we have received for our most visible project – the ‘Celebration of Lights’ that was conceived by our retired Director, Kim Jones. The participation of our Maine Street Businesses, our Service Organizations, the Library Team, the Frontier Heritage Historical Society, the Fort Fairfield Housing Authority and numerous property owners has made this a true community effort.

We welcome ideas for ways to continue to enhance the quality of life of our citizens.

Sincerely,

Philip Christensen, Secretary/Treasurer

Fort Fairfield Quality of Place Council

XI. Executive Session  
1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C) Economic Development

Mr. Butler makes a motion to go into Executive Session.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Executive Session started at 6:50 PM.

Mr. Butler motioned to go out of Executive Session.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Executive Session ended at 6:59 PM.

XII. Adjournment

Mrs. Libby made the motion to adjourn.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Neadra E. Dubois,  
Council Secretary