

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, October 20, 2021
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Councilors: All Councilors are present

Staff: Ms. Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Ella Leighton, Darren Hanson, Tony Levesque, Jennifer Gaenzle, Chief Browning.

Citizens: Five, including media.

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

Stev Rogeski complimented the Town Council, Town Manager, Town Departments and the committee for a job well done with the Budget and keeping the tax rate down for the citizens.

Stev Rogeski also commented that there has been a lot good discussions at the State level regarding funding for Municipal Day Cares. "Puts us in a good place for funding." Mr. Rogeski also encouraged Councilors to attend the Economic Development meetings.

Chairperson Butler also commented that all the credit needs to go to the Town Manager, Andrea Powers and the Department Heads.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits

B. Financial Report

We received September Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$64,567.22 on 09/21/2021.

Total revenue sharing received to date is \$201,361.61. We are down \$14,302.84 for the year.

Checking account balance as of 9/30/2021 was \$540,629.37 and Machias Savings is \$5,000.

Excise collected in September was \$54,826.85 compared to \$55,353.41 last year.

As of 9/30/2021, uncollected Real Estate taxes for 2020 were \$63,192.87 compared to last year \$224,720.72.

C. AWS Report – Mr. Rogeski

VI. Old Business

A. ORD 21-08 GA MAXIMUMS

Mr. Kilcollins introduced Ordinance 21-08 for General Assistance at the September 15, 2021 regular Town Council meeting. A public hearing was held on September 30, 2021, at 12:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building. The minutes of the public hearing are attached.

Discussion: The new maximums for the 2021-2022 General Assistance Ordinance are also attached.

The law requires municipal officers adopt the ordinance after notice and hearing.

Recommendation: Town Council adopt Ordinance 21-08, an ordinance for General Assistance.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to adopt Ordinance 21-08, an ordinance for General Assistance.

Mr. Babin seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Mission Broadband RFP Wrap-up (will not be present)

The RFP meeting has been rescheduled to October 27th at 5 pm in Council Chambers. Council members are required to be present.

VII. New Business

A. Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club Grant-In-Aid Application Request

The Town of Fort Fairfield has provided a channel for snowmobile trail maintenance funds from the State to the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club since 1999.

There is very little staff time required to assist the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club in their grant application. The Club prepares and manages all the paperwork. The State distributes the grant funds to the municipality and the municipality appropriates the grant funds to the Club in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 12, Chapter 220, Subchapter 8, Section 1893.3.

Recommendation: Town Council approves the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club’s application for the Municipal/County Grant-In-Aid Program for Snowmobile Fund and authorizes the Town Manager to sign the application for financial assistance.

Mr. Babin made a motion to approve the Fort Fairfield Snowmobile Club’s application for the Municipal/County Grant-In-Aid Program for Snowmobile Fund and authorizes the Town Manager to sign the application for financial assistance.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. FY 2020/2021 Audit

The FY 2020/2021 Audit Management Discussion and Analysis pages are available for Council discussion.

Ms. Powers stated that in reviewing this year’s financial position, the Town of Fort Fairfield’s net position decreased from \$5,248,979 to \$4,268,533.

For this fiscal year our general fund balance of \$215,207 (exhibit D) will be utilized to offset decreased revenues from the State to help balance the budget for fiscal year 2021/2022 and rebuild our capital improvement accounts. This will enable us to continue to provide the services that citizens require and properly maintain our vehicles, equipment and properties.

Income for this fiscal year was \$6,798,942, which is \$179,956 under the budgeted amount. Total expenses were \$6,538,949, which were \$346,685 under budget resulting from savings in a number of our departments. It is our goal to provide expected services while constantly working to minimize expenses regardless of budget authorization. The department heads worked extremely hard to reduce their overall costs in a constrained fiscal environment.

Chairman Butler commented “so in a nutshell, the Budget was balanced?”

Ms. Powers replied – “Yes”

C. November 2, 2021 Election

The State Referendum Election is scheduled for November 2, 2021.

Election Clerks will be compensated at \$12.15 per hour per (minimum wage).

As in the past we need to have the Council vote on:

A) Opening (8:00AM) and closing (8:00PM) of the polls, which is set by the State as stated in Title 21-A §626.

- B) Voting location *Community Center per Title 21-A §622-A.
- C) The Election Warden, Billie Jo Sharpe.
- D) Approval of Election Clerks of the Warden's choosing.

Recommendation: That Town Council approves A – D as presented.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council approves A-D as presented.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the September 15, 2021 Regular Town Council Meeting and the September 29, 2021 Special Town Council Meeting.

Mr. Babin made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2021 Regular Town Council Meeting and the September 29, 2021 Special Town Council Meeting.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #6 - \$374,571.76 #7 - \$167,257.50 #8 - \$506,824.34

Warrant #06 in the amount of \$374,571.76 was completed on 09/15/2021.

Warrant #07 in the amount of \$167,257.50 was completed on 09/27/2021.

Warrant #08 in the amount of \$506,824.34 was completed on 10/14/2021.

Warrant includes SAD #20 payment for October in the amount of \$178,532.09 and Bond payment in the amount of \$54,518.57.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve Warrants #6, #7, and #8 as written.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. We are pleased to announce that the Fort Fairfield Public Library has been awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in the amount of \$19,200.00.

In May, the library applied to the American Rescue Plan: Humanities Organizations for a grant to continue to protect the contents of the Jesse Drew Historical Room. This grant is designated

for the purchase and installation of UV filtering film on the windows and overhead lights, purchase and installation of the railing and brackets for our rolling library ladder, acrylic shelf liners to protect the books from the wood shelf varnish, document cases for our loose documents, and foam board padding for between the large bound newspaper books. In addition, the grant also completely covers a full year of payroll for our archival aide.

Starting this fall through the winter, the library will be working with Precision Custom Woodworking to install the ladder and the acrylic shelf liners. Staff will continue to transition the bound newspaper books to a more secure orientation utilizing the foam cushioning and installation of the UV film on the windows and the lights.

This was a highly competitive grant, with only 292 funded projects from 937 applicants across the country. 3 awards were given to institutions in Maine, with Fort Fairfield as the only library.

The library is extremely grateful to National Endowment for the Humanities for the opportunity this grant will afford us in protecting our irreplaceable collection.

Recommendation: Town Council accept the grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in the amount of \$19,200.00.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council accept the grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in the amount of \$19,200.00.

Mr. Babin seconded.

Mrs. Libby congratulation Ms. Gaenzle on the great job she has done securing this grant.

Vote: All Affirmative.

- B. Ms. Powers read a thank you letter from the **One Hundred and Thirteenth Legislature Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions** for participating in their September 9th meeting and offering her “time, expertise, and advice on the issues surrounding affordable housing in this State.”
- C. The Annual Thanksgiving dinner for Town staff at 11:30 on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at Puddle Dock. As has been done in the past, the Town office, all departments and the library will be closed at 12:00pm so all town employees can enjoy the dinner together. The Town Office will reopen on Friday, November 5, 2021 at 7:30am.
- D. Councilors, on October 19, 2021 the Town received the first ARPA payment of \$173,473.95 of the \$346,947.92. After careful consideration and discussions with Town Staff please find presented below the initial requests for disbursement of the funding.

Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue Department: Lucas CPR Devices for each ambulance (2). These devices will allow our staff to have less contact with patients keeping in line with COVID-19 EMS guidelines. Please see attached information.
\$35,334.04

Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue Department: AccuFit9000 Pro Quantitative Fit Tester for N95, SCBA, and respirators. This would allow the Fire Department to Fit Test their own department, the Police Department and Public Works Departments. This is an annual requirement for NFPA, ME Bureau of Labor and OSHA. Includes annual maintenance and calibration for five (5) years.
\$16,821.00

Fort Fairfield Staff: One-time premium pay \$1,500.00 each for 22 Full-time and \$750.00 each 13 Part-time staff that are currently employed and that were in good standing from 1.2020 to 7.2021 essential worker pay.
\$46,021.00

Recommendation: Council allows the Town Manager to disburse payments from the ARPA Funds for the requested amounts for the Fire and Rescue Department at \$35,334.04 for an AccuFit9000 Fit Tester at \$16,821.00 and for premium pay for essential workers for Town Staff at \$46,021.00.

Ms. Powers commented that this gives the 2% back to staff that was cut from the FY 21/22 Budget.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council allows the Town Manager to disburse payments from the ARPA Funds for the requested amounts for the Fire and Rescue Department at \$35,334.04 for an AccuFit9000 Fit Tester at \$16,821.00 and for premium pay for essential workers for Town Staff at \$46,021.00.

Mr. Babin seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XI. Adjournment

Mr. Babin made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council adjourned at 6:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Sharpe, Town Clerk
Council Secretary