

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting  
Council Chambers  
Wednesday, May 15, 2019  
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Councilors: All Councilors are present.

Staff: Ms. Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Darren Hanson, Chief Baldwin, Chief Newell, Kevin Senal, Tony Levesque, Mitch Dufour, Fred Everitt, Ella Leighton

Citizens: 21 Including Media

II. Prayer

Tony offered the prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the American Flag.

IV. Public Comment Period

George Knox, resident of Fort Fairfield – Commented that although he is not familiar with the dealings with Crown Ambulance Service and the negotiations that could not be met, he is concerned about the manner in which Citizens of the Town were notified. Mr. Knox also stated that he is a father of 3 young children and is concerned about the response time from Presque Isle. Mr. Knox stated that even though the current contract is noted to be temporary, he would like the Town to continue negotiations with Crown to try and come to an agreement or do further research in having an Ambulance service stationed here in Fort Fairfield.

Craig Cormier, resident of Fort Fairfield – Commented that he is also concerned about not having an ambulance based here in Town. Mr. Cormier stated that he too is concerned with the manner in which the information was released to the Public. Mr. Cormier said that although there may have been wait times with Crown Ambulance due to them being out on other calls and there may have not been an ambulance sitting here in Town, they usually have a rig at the borders so they are accessible and so the times when you wouldn't have an ambulance here in Town are far less than what we are looking at now. As a Community we try to be a Community of choice, and we talk about quality of place, it is very concerning for those with young families wanting to move here. I also have concerns for our older residents who are trying to age in place who will now have to wait longer times for service.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits – Ms. Sharpe

As of May 15, 2019 we have received a Malt, Vinous, and Spirituous license renewal from Rosella's

B. Financial Report

We received April Revenue Sharing on 04/30/2019 in the amount of \$11,517.86. This brings our year to date total to \$191,284.42 which is slightly lower than our budgeted total.

Year to date we are \$14,550.68 less than our budget.

History shows that we usually receive smaller amounts in March and April with an adjusted increase in May and June.

We have received April statements for CDARS and ICS investments. CDARS accounts had an interest income of \$2,365.99 and ICS accounts had \$200.63 for a combined total of \$2,566.62.

C. AWS – Mr. Rogeski

Last meeting was April 19, 2019. AWS is ahead of budget in all areas and below budget on expenses.

Legislation on taking the one use plastic bags out of the grocery stores. DEP will be providing around 14,000 heavy duty paper bags to be distributed at Hannaford stores. There is currently no talk about distributing them in any other grocery stores. “I think they went with Hannaford because they are the biggest store in the area.”

Upgrades to the Recycling Center – the Baler is up and running well.

Pipeline – AWS has been told to cease pumping to CUD due to their bypass condition and the leachate ponds are filling up quickly. Mark is concerned about the upcoming rainfall and snowmelt. He has contacted DEP regarding these concerns and is working with them to establish mitigation plans

D. Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget Public Hearings and Update

Public hearings on the Town’s FY 19/20 budget were held on April 24 and May 8. There were no comments at either public hearing.

Projected Expenses - \$5,396,112

Projected Revenue - \$5,491,774

Projected Surplus - \$95,662

Projected Surplus may change due to:

- Approved school budget.
- Results of financial audit, which the Town should receive in the first part of September.

Looking Ahead:

- Town Council budget approval at June 19, 2019 Council Meeting.
- Property valuations and estimated Mil rate in Mid-August.
- Town Council sets Mil rate at September 18, 2019 Council meeting for an October 1 commitment.

VI. Old Business

A. Update on Tax Acquired Property for 2016 Taxes

The following is an update on properties that became Tax Acquired on March 06, 2019 for 2016 taxes and the status of each:

- (A) TAMMIE SOUCY – 32 FOREST AVENUE – Total Taxes Due: \$4,638.40  
Assessed Value is \$42,700: Agreement pending
- (B) PAUL MORGAN – DORSEY ROAD – Total Taxes Due: \$441.54  
Assessed Value is: \$2,900: Sold for \$500
- (C) ANDREW BUGBEE – East Limestone Road – Total Taxes Due: \$884.14  
Assessed Value is: \$6,800: Sold for \$1000
- (D) CONNIE & ED FRANZ – 208 Sam Everett – Total Taxes Due: \$2,477.83  
Assessed Value is: \$26,300: Sold for \$2500
- (E) ARNOLD SHARP – Depot Street – Total Taxes Due: \$408.70  
Assessed Value is: \$2,600: Agreement pending
- (F) MICHAEL EDMUNDS – 38 High Street – Total Taxes Due \$13,138.27  
Assessed Value is: \$140,700: Agreement signed and first \$300 payment made 5/9/2019

B. ReEnergy

ReEnergy has proposed a Site Redevelopment Agreement to the Town of Fort Fairfield, 32 acres of land (the “Site”) located at 78 Cheney Grove Road.

The Agreement to the Site will include Demolition Activities, Transfer of Title to the Site, Redevelopment of the Site, Access to the Site, No Brokers, Force Majeure, Modifications and Assignments.

Recommendation: That the Town Council permits the Town Manager to sign the ReEnergy Contract for Site Redevelopment Agreement.

Discussion: Mr. Kilcollins asked what involvement the Town would have environmentally.

Ms. Powers - the Town Attorney has looked over the Contract and he noted that he sees no involvement environmentally for the Town.

Ms. Powers said that it will be turned over to the Town as a Greenfield.

Mr. Kilcollins – If there are some environmental issues that need to be addressed, is ReEnergy still responsible for them?

Ms. Powers – We can request in the agreement to eliminate the Town from being responsible. (VRAP amendment)

Mr. Butler – Before the Town accepts any responsibility for that land, I’d like to know that there won’t be any problems 10-20 years down the road.

Ms. Powers – ReEnergy has been very diligent with getting the proper permits from DEP and County Environmental.

Mr. Kilcollins – If someone comes to the Town to reuse that land a year after ReEnergy moves out and finds contamination, that will come back and “bite” us.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council permits the Town Manager to sign the ReEnergy Contract for Site Redevelopment Agreement with the VRAP amendment.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

## VII. New Business

### A. Donation of computers from ReEnergy

Background: Title 30-A M.R.S.A. §5654 states that a conditional gift for any specified public purpose offered to a municipality may be accepted or rejected by its legislative body.

Discussion: Ms. Kimberly Ellis, IT Manager from ReEnergy Holding, LLC recently donated some computers, monitors, and a printer with the understanding that they would be put to use for families in need.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the donation of used computers and equipment from ReEnergy.

Mr. Butler made a motion to accept the donation of used computers and equipment from ReEnergy.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### B. Proclamation 19-02, Municipal Clerks Week

Background: The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) initiated the Municipal Clerks Week back in 1969 to celebrate the contributions of municipal Clerks in local government. Our profession is one of the oldest documented roles in government.

The proclamation proclaims the week of May 5, 2019 through May 11, 2019 as Municipal Clerks Week throughout the Town of Fort Fairfield and gives special thanks and recognition to the contributions of the Municipal Clerk in local government.

Recommendation: Town Council sign Proclamation 19-02, Municipal Clerks Week.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to sign Proclamation 19-02, Municipal Clerks Week.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

### C. Vacancy Housing Authority of Fort Fairfield

The Housing Authority of Fort Fairfield has provided a letter of recommendation for Dan Ayoob to serve the remainder of Steve Lewis' term as Mr. Lewis is stepping down from the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Ayoob's term would be effective June 1, 2019 and run through December 31, 2019.

Recommendation: That Town Council appoints Daniel Ayoob to the Fort Fairfield Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, for a term beginning June 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.

Mr. Butler made a motion to appoint Daniel Ayoob to the Fort Fairfield Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, for a term beginning June 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

#### D. Update and Information on Ambulance Service

The Town of Fort Fairfield and Crown Ambulance were unable to come to a contract negotiation agreement for ambulance service to the Town of Fort Fairfield. Our contract with Crown ended May 1, 2019 as you were aware when we spoke of the issue.

Ms. Powers spoke with the City Manager in Caribou and with the Town Manager in Presque Isle to see if they could arrange for a short term contract to provide ambulance service to Fort Fairfield and split the responsibilities of service between the two communities. The City of Caribou was unable to accommodate us at the time. Presque Isle was able to negotiate a short term contract with us.

To maintain service and response times the Town of Fort Fairfield also added our Police Department as trained first responders to our 911 calls. This enables a quick response time and they are equipped with AED's as well. The first aid and life saving measures they can provide to the Town's 911 calls is immeasurable.

We now need to start focusing on what the Town Council would like to see moving forward.

Discussion:

Mr. Butler – Agreed that he'd like to have an Ambulance service here in Fort Fairfield, but there were a lot of things in the contract the Town did not sign that were not following the laws or guidelines. "Until Crown can come up with a contract that we can deal with that focuses on the safety and response times for Fort Fairfield..." "After talking to people around town, there have been some response times from this bay that took 40 minutes or better to get across town and 20 minutes to get to the border and when the ambulance is toned out they don't immediately leave the building." Mr. Butler made reference to hearing that the crew waited and finished their supper before they left for service. If Crown is hard fast on servicing Fort Fairfield, I am willing to sit down and contract, but I am not willing to sit down and have somebody when a call comes out sit down and finish their supper or clean their equipment before they leave the building and that has happened. There is something wrong when it takes 20 minutes to get to the border from this building. There is something wrong with this service when it takes that long to go 3 miles up the road to the border. Crown has been great many times, but when you have someone who is sick that has called the ambulance and the son of the sick person makes it to residence from Bridgewater before the ambulance made it to the residence.

Mr. Babin – responded that the sick person referenced by Mr. Butler was his father in law, when he (Mr. Babin) lived on Cogswell Street in Fort Fairfield and the ambulance was on Brown

Street. His son was able to beat the ambulance from Bridgewater. “This is a true story and not hearsay.”

Mr. Butler – We looked at Crown and the contract that they wanted to give us, it had nothing to do with pay, and it had nothing to do with budget. We had to look at the safety of Fort Fairfield and the response time and some of the stuff they were asking for was just not legal. If you are going to look at a contract that’s not legal and they are going to keep submitting the same contract then there is something wrong with that also. I think if Crown wants to sit at the table, they are going to have to come up with some reasonable type deals. Now they want us to supply half the crew. We are paying for the service; we shouldn’t have to supply the people for the service. It’s a private company that comes over here and they want us to supply everything. I can’t sign a contract that’s not legal and the Town Manager is taking holy heck for not signing the contract that not binding. We need to sit down, if you want an ambulance, I am willing to talk to anybody about any type of service in the Town of Fort Fairfield that brings safety to this town, but when it takes 40 minutes to get from this building to the other side of town with no explanation, there is something wrong.

Mrs. Libby – I think if the town is reviewing a contract and the things in the contract are not being done, then it is our Town Mangers job to make sure that those agreements that we made and are paying for are being met. Not renewing that contract is kind of a scary thing and I with everyone else; we want an ambulance service in town. We don’t want these long response times regardless if it’s Crown or regardless of who it is. Paying or a service that we are not getting is not good for us either. In order to be able to change that we have to stand up and say we are not going to do this anymore. And we have to put a temporary service in place, it’s not forever, it’s not perfect, but the only way to negotiate that contract to get the things we need, was to do it that way. Other people tried to negotiate the contract before it came up, they weren’t willing to negotiate. They didn’t budge. I want an ambulance service just as much as everybody here, but I also don’t want to pay town people’s money on something we are not getting.

Mr. Smith – commented that he would like to see Town staff research the cost for providing our own ambulance service here. I see there is a fair amount of citizens that want an ambulance here in Fort. When you have a private ambulance that is trying to make a living, they are doing a transport, that’s why they’re not here. There is money in transports. There is not a lot of money in emergency response. It’s going to be expensive. I’d like to see the numbers on new equipment versus used equipment. You can save a lot of money by buying used equipment and recertified equipment. It’s the personnel that is going to cost, with salaries, benefits, and equipment and training. You will need to decide what kind of service you want, whether it’s basic, advanced EMT’s, aides or paramedics. Those are the numbers that we will need to see to have a really good discussion. “It’s unfortunate that we did not renegotiate this contract with Crown, it’s done.” “I don’t think they wanted to be here, that’s my opinion.” “I don’t think they are going to come back, there is no money here for them, it would cost us too much money, we might be better off providing our own service and that’s what I am suggesting if the rest of the Council would agree to that.

Mr. Kilcollins – It is hard when there are changes. We had to provide coverage for our Community. A contract is a contract, we just couldn’t meet it. We couldn’t walk away and not have coverage. It’s temporary.

Mr. Babin – Ms. Powers shared that we are going to start focusing on moving forward. This is a short term contract and we ask that you are patient with us.

Ms. Powers – commented that the response time has been ten minutes or less with the current contract with Presque Isle.

Mrs. Libby asked if we had a rough estimate of what the prior response time was on average.

Ms. Powers responded that yes we have that information available however I do not have it with me tonight.

VIII. Minutes of the April 17, 2019 Regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 17, 2019 regular Council Meeting with the correction noted by Mr. Babin.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #21; \$170,593.76 #22; \$86,295.93

Warrant #21 in the amount of \$170,593.76 was completed on 04/18/2019.

We now have a checking balance of \$502,637.84; Machias Savings balance of \$5,000.00; CDARS balance of \$1,474,763.00 and ICS balance of \$162,878.00.

Warrant #22 in the amount of \$86,295.93 was completed on 04/29/2019.

We now have with a checking balance of \$479,590.184; Machias Savings balance of \$5,000.00; CDARS balance of \$1,474,763.00 and ICS balance of \$162,878.00.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Warrant #21 in the amount of \$170,593.76 and Warrant #22 in the amount of \$86,295.93

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. *\*Consolidated Communications* – Ms. Powers

On Friday May 10, 2019 Ms. Powers attended the Municipal Technology Conference in Bangor hosted by Maine Municipal Association. During that conference I was able to meet with a representative from Consolidated Communications to discuss bringing fiber optic options to the entire 72 square miles of our double township here in Fort Fairfield.

After some discussion and negotiating we were able to decide on bringing fiber optic options to all of our residents. Ms. Powers will continue to work on this with Consolidated Communications and keep Council updated on their progress.

B. *\*Anonymous Donation* – Rec Dept.

Background: Title 30-A M.R.S.A. §5654 states that a conditional gift for any specified public purpose offered to a municipality may be accepted or rejected by its legislative body.

Discussion: The Parks and Recreation Department received an anonymous donation of \$400.00, with the only request being that the money be used to be to purchase games for youth activities.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the donation of \$400.00.

Mr. Butler made a motion to accept the donation of \$400.00.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion:

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. *\*Big Game International Donation – Rec Dept.*

Title 30-A M.R.S.A. §5654 states that a conditional gift for any specified public purpose offered to a municipality may be accepted or rejected by its legislative body.

The Parks and Recreation Department reached out to Big Game International with a request for donation of 12 fishing poles to be utilized for a youth fishing program. Big Game International is willing to donate 12 “Ready 2 Fish” packages, valued at \$19.99 each, for a total value of \$239.88.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the donation of 12 fishing poles, valued at \$239.88.

Title 30-A M.R.S.A. §5654 states that a conditional gift for any specified public purpose offered to a municipality may be accepted or rejected by its legislative body.

The Parks and Recreation Department reached out to Big Game International with a request for donation of 12 fishing poles to be utilized for a youth fishing program. Big Game International is willing to donate 12 “Ready 2 Fish” packages, valued at \$19.99 each, for a total value of \$239.88.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the donation of 12 fishing poles, valued at \$239.88.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to accept the donation of 12 fishing poles, valued at \$239.88.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

XI. Manager’s Report

The Managers report is given to Councilors for informational purposes.

XII. Executive Session

M.R.S.A. §405 Personnel Matter

Mr. Butler made a motion for Council to enter into Executive Session regarding M.R.S.A. §405, Personnel Matter.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.



Vote: All Affirmative.

Council entered into executive session at 6:39 p.m.

Mr. Smith made a motion for Council to come out of Executive Session.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council came out of executive session at 7:20 p.m.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion for Council to enter into Executive Session regarding M.R.S.A. §405. Personnel Matter.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative

Council entered into executive session at 7:28 p.m.

Mr. Smith made a motion for Council to come out of Executive Session.

Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Council came out of executive session at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the Contract with Ms. Powers as discussed in Executive Session.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

### XIII. Adjournment

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Council Secretary