

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, March 20, 2019
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Staff: Andrea Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Ella Leighton, Tony Levesque, Vince Baldwin, Darren Hanson, Mitchell Dufour, Ryan Eagles, Fred Everett
Councilors: All Councilors are present with the exception of Mrs. Libby.
Citizens: Nine including Media.

II. Prayer

Tony Levesque offered the Prayer.

III. Pledge to the Flag

All in attendance pledged their allegiance to the American Flag.

IV. Public Comment Period

Mr. Butler wanted to thank Fort Fairfield personnel and School Departments for a job well done during the February snow storm.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits

As of March 20, 2019 we haven't received any license or permit applications.

B. Financial Report

We received March Revenue Sharing on 03/19/2019 in the amount of \$8,771.66. This brings our year to date total to \$179,766.96 which is slightly lower (72.78%) than our budgeted total. Last year we were at 71.27% for the same period. Year to date we are \$5,492.04 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 the Cable Franchise payment in the amount of \$27,988.07. This is \$4,088.07 over the amount budgeted for account #R-01-01-320.

C. AWS Report – Mr. Rogeski

AWS Board last met on February 22, 2019. This was the first full meeting with the new partners from Presque Isle.

Mr. Draper met with the new DEP Commissioner. Licensing fees may go up. AWS currently pays \$50,000 a year in licensing fees to remain in compliance with DEP.

New Recycling center is coming along well. Heating system has been installed and just waiting for the State of Maine Electrical Inspector to come.

D. Community Support

Ms. Powers read a letter she received from Mr. Doak, Superintendent of SAD#20.

Ms. Powers also read an email she received from Mr. Hanson, Director of Public Works.

Ms. Powers publicly thanked the community and staff of Fort Fairfield for their efforts and support of our Public Works Department during the recent 2019 Winter Wind and Snow Event of February 25th, 26th and 27th, 2019.

The Town employees of the Public Works Department, Police Department and Fire Department spent long hours and dedicated service to making sure our roads were safe and passable to the best of their abilities.

Within a seventy-two (72) hour period each employee of the department worked 63 hours. The Department of Public Works dealt with massive snow drifts that the severe wind gusts caused throughout the blizzard. This was certainly no small accomplishment and could not have been achieved without the combined efforts of McGillan's, allowing us to rent out their staff and equipment, Phil Kilcollins, donating staff and equipment and food, Griffeth's Farm, donating time and effort and equipment, and Aroostook Waste Solutions, donating time and effort and equipment.

The exemplary work performed during extraordinary circumstances is commendable. Please accept my sincere "Thank you" for all your dedication and hard work that you have done and continue to do for the citizens of Fort Fairfield.

Ms. Powers also thanked the Town Council and Superintendent Timothy Doak of MSAD #20 for the closure of the Town Office and the Elementary and Jr/Sr High Schools during this time stating that the safety of our citizens and Town employees is our highest priority and your quick decision making helped to ensure this.

Ms. Powers commented that a greater sense of community and understanding at times of distress was very prevalent during this storm. This community always gives back, even when times are tough. Thriving during difficult situations and standing behind the individuals in our community and supporting them. "My community is my family and my community is Fort Fairfield."

Mr. Babin applauded all Departments for their efforts this winter.

VI. Old Business

A. LED Streetlights –Ms. Powers

After careful and thoughtful decision making and several meetings with RealTerm it has been decided that it would be more beneficial and cost effective to the Town of Fort Fairfield to stay with our Street Light Agreement with Emera for the LED Street Light Project.

In doing, so we do not have to buy the existing fixtures from Emera. We have asked them to do a conversion of the high pressure sodium and or mercury lights to the LED lights. We do not pay for that conversion.

Our only cost will be our per fixture fee that we are already paying. This fee will be reduced from \$1,809.67 per month to \$1,049.28 per month. Emera will maintain the new street lights and eventually replace all said street lights. There will be a pilot light set up at the corner of Presque Isle Street and Cogswell Street.

The savings is immediate on conversion with lower rates and no capital costs now or in the future.

Recommendation: That Council approves the continuation of the Street Light Agreement with Emera.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council approves the continuation of the Street Light Agreement with Emera.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VII. New Business

A. Salt/Sand purchases – Michael Edgecomb

Mr. Edgecomb asked Council if in the future the Town would consider going by the State guidelines regarding their salt and sand purchases.

Mr. Edgecomb agreed that Public Works has done a great job this winter clearing the roads but the sand needs to be addressed.

Mr. Kilcollins asked if we currently go by the State guidelines.

Mr. Hanson replied that we do not follow the State guidelines at this time. We currently have 5/8" sharp screened sand.

Mr. Kilcollins asked if Mr. Hanson has a choice of size of sand when ordering for a following year.

Mr. Hanson responded, yes we could specify.

Mr. Butler – Is it more expensive to have it smaller?

Mr. Hanson – Not necessarily, but the smaller you go the more dust you get. We don't want to see rocks the size of baseballs, but to go under 5/8" would be a waste.

Mr. Kilcollins – Has 5/8" been the standard that we have been using over the years.

Mr. Hanson – No it has not. For the last two years we have negotiated and not put it out to bid, prior to that it had been advertised as 5/8" sharp screened sand when putting it out to bid.

Mr. Kilcollins – Looking at the upcoming year it wouldn't cost anything to put a bid in for 1/2" compared to 5/8" with whoever we contract with?

Mr. Hanson – I personally wouldn't do that because we already get too much scatter and the finer we go, the more of that we are going to have.

Mr. Kilcollins – The compound used in sand must make a difference as far as quality per content of "dirt?" Is there a different texture or quality of sand that doesn't have as much dirt in it?

Mr. Hanson – If you take the sand that we have in our sand shed, I don't believe there is any dirt in it but there can be from pit to pit and screen. I have never seen any dirt or loom from O'Neal's pit.

Mr. Kilcollins – Do we normally get our sand from O'Neal.

Mr. Hanson – Yes that is where we have gotten it ever since I have been here. For the last three years, we have added bottom ash. This is the last season that we will have bottom ash available.

B. Winter Sand FY 19/20

The Town will need to purchase up to 4,000 cubic yards of screened sharp winter sand with 200 pounds of rock salt per yard in order to prepare for the 2019/2020 snow season.

The Town is projected to use 4,000 cubic yards of screened sharp winter sand with 200 pounds of rock salt per yard during the 2018/2019 snow season.

Without serious competition in the winter sand market, the Town is spending more by putting the winter sand out to bid than it would if we negotiated the price.

Three years ago, the Town put the winter sand out to bid. The Town received two bids for 2,000 cubic yards of screened sharp winter sand with 200 pounds of rock salt per yard; O'Neal General Contracting Ltd for \$14.99 per yard and K & M Sand and Gravel for \$19.25 per yard. Last year the Town Council authorized the Public Works Director to negotiate the price of sand and in doing so we were able to keep the price the same as the previous year \$14.99 per yard.

Recommendation: Town Council authorizes the Public Works Director to negotiate the price of winter sand for the winter season of 2019/2020.

Motion: Mr. Smith made a motion that Town Council authorizes the Public Works Director to negotiate the price of winter sand for the winter season of 2019/2020.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Mr. Kilcollins asked if 4,000 cubic yards would be enough.

Mr. Hanson – It's really all we can house.

Mr. Kilcollins – Will we have any left over from this year?

Mr. Hanson – We will have about 1,000 cubic yards left after this year. Without a stacker 5,000 cubic yards is all we can put in our sand shed.

Mr. Butler – You will still call different people to check prices?

Mr. Hanson – Yes, we will, but it's been a few dollars over what the other prices have been.

Mr. Butler – You just don't call one person and check the price?

Mr. Hanson – That is correct. In the past when we put it out to bid we see a fair increase in everyone and doing it this way we seem to be able to hold the line and we have the last three years.

Mr. Kilcollins – I would be curious to see what the price difference is between ½” and 5/8.”

Mr. Babin – We are only looking at a 1/8th inch difference.

Mr. Kilcollins – The State recommendation is ½”?

Mr. Hanson – I would have to double check, but believe it is 5/8”.

Mr. Kilcollins – Are any other communities using the state standards?

Mr. Hanson – I have not spoken to other communities for what they are using for standards, but I have taken pictures of other communities sand and believe it is coarser than ours.

Mr. Kilcollins – If the State has certain standards of their liability that protects them, would it protect us in situations.

Mr. Babin – I have been on a State maintained road and I got a spot in my windshield and it's larger than 5/8". It is Mr. Hanson's recommendation to stick with what we have been doing.

Mr. Hanson – It is, but I would be happy to put together the State standards and email it.

Mr. Babin- Will you then get a quote on both the 5/8" and the 1/2"?

Mr. Hanson – We can, yes. "I can try."

Mr. Babin – We will stick to the motion on the floor authorizing the Public Works Director to negotiate the price of winter sand.

Mr. Smith commented that we addressed the rock issue in November. In the screening process, it happens.

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. Investments Town of Fort Fairfield

The Town of Fort Fairfield is in a healthy financial position to invest properly the Tax Payers money. I feel we have a fiscal responsibility to our community to provide services and future planning that helps Fort Fairfield grow. With the ICS®, or the Insured Cash Sweep®, service, we can secure large deposits while maintaining access to funds and earning interest on funds placed into demand deposit accounts and/or money market deposit accounts. ICS is an excellent cash management alternative to prime funds.

Since 2004, CDARS, or the Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service, have helped the Community Development Bankers Association (CDBA) raise billions of dollars in deposits with the launch of the Banking on Communities initiative—a joint effort by Promontory Inter-financial Network and the CDBA. The CDBA is a national trade association of the community development banking industry established to help its members better meets the credit needs of their communities, and the initiative helps CDBA member banks raise funds that can be used to increase lending in underserved communities.

Promontory [Inter-financial Network's ICS and CDARS] services to attract deposits so they can make loans supporting community development in some of the most rural communities in the country. On average, the community development banks attract reciprocal deposits at four times the level of other community banks. That translates into loans to small businesses, loans for mortgages and home improvement, loans for revitalization projects—loans that otherwise would not be made

The Maine State Treasurer Cash Pool Investment Policy Objectives, or the coequal primary investment objectives are; preservation of capital through quality, maturity, and diversification; and maintenance of sufficient liquidity to meet anticipated cash flow needs. The secondary investment objective is; attainment of competitive rate of return.

Recommendation: That the Council allow the Town Manager, Andrea L. Powers, to invest the Reserve Accounts into FDIC Insured ICS (Insured Cash Sweep) and CDAR's (Certificate of Deposit Registry Service), and to designate the signers as Andrea L. Powers, Town Manager, Ella Leighton, Treasurer, Billie Jo Sharpe, Town Clerk and Tony Levesque, Tax Assessor.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council allow the Town Manager, Andrea L. Powers, to invest the Reserve Accounts into FDIC Insured ICS (Insured Cash Sweep) and CDAR's (Certificate of Deposit Registry Service), and to designate the signers as Andrea L. Powers, Town Manager, Ella Leighton, Treasurer, Billie Jo Sharpe, Town Clerk and Tony Levesque, Tax Assessor.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Mr. Smith added, for the record "we are not adding additional signatures?"

Ms. Power responded No, these are the current signers that are on record for the checking account. It makes sense to have the same signers on these accounts as they are in essence checking accounts.

Mr. Butler – My only concern is we invest our Reserves and have an emergency come up and we get penalized for having to take that money out.

Ms. Powers – The long term investments, the 3-year CDAR's would be for capital planning. It earns the highest interest rate, but can't be touched for 3 years so it has to be careful planning.

Mr. Butler again commented his concern about being penalized for taking money out early for emergencies.

Ms. Powers said that is why they have several programs available for Municipalities

Vote: All Affirmative

D. Allonge Town of Fort Fairfield

On September 24, 2019, the Council approved a TAN (Tax Anticipation Note) in the amount of \$600,000.00. The note had a previous due date of March 30, 2019. Ms. Powers requested the note be allonged to June 30, 2019. This will bring us to the end of our fiscal year 2018/2019.

Recommendation: That the Council allows the Town Manager, Andrea L. Powers, and Council Chair, Mark Babin, to sign the Allonge of the TAN, extended three months to June 30, 2019.

Mr. Butler made a motion to allow the Town Manager, Andrea L. Powers, and Council Chair, Mark Babin, to sign the Allonge of the TAN, extended three months to June 30, 2019.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

E. Tax Acquired Property for 2016 Taxes

The following is a list of properties that became Tax Acquired on March 06, 2019 for the 2016 taxes and total amount due on each property as of 3/8/2018:

- (A) TAMMIE SOUCY – 32 FOREST AVENUE – Total Taxes Due \$4,638.40
Assessed Value is \$42,700: Minimum Bid Recommendation is \$10,500
Buyer is responsible for money owed to Fort Fairfield Utilities District
- (B) PAUL MORGAN – DORSEY ROAD – Total Taxes Due \$441.54
Assessed Value is \$: 2,900: Offer to abutting owner for \$500
- (C) ANDREW BUGBEE – East Limestone Road – Total Taxes Due \$884.14
Assessed Value is \$: 6,800: Offer to 2 abutting owners for highest bid with a minimum bid of \$1,000
- (D) CONNIE & ED FRANZ – 208 Sam Everett – Total Taxes Due \$2,477.83
Assessed Value is \$: 26,300: Interested buyer had a verbal agreement with owners and has completed some legal work. Offer to interested buyer for \$2,500
- (E) ARNOLD SHARP – Depot Street – Total Taxes Due \$408.70
Assessed Value is \$: 2,600 Building is in poor condition and needs to be demolished. Write off the taxes and offer building to the Amish for salvage with conditions that the building be demolished and area cleaned up on or before May 01, 2019 weather permitting.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve the recommendation by the Treasurer in regards to the above mentioned tax acquired properties.

Mr. Smith seconded

Discussion: Mr. Butler asked if any abutting owners do not want the property, will it go out to bid.

Ms. Powers responded yes.

Vote – All Affirmative.

The following property also became Tax Acquired on March 06, 2019 for 2016 taxes with a total amount due of \$13,026.87 as of 3/8/2018:

James Michael Edmunds – 38 High Street – Assessed value is \$140,700.

To remain in compliance with the new Senior Tax Lien Foreclosure Law 36 M.R.S. § 943-C which went into effect December 13, 2018, we are unable to offer this property for sale at this time. Mrs. Leighton has sent Mr. Edmunds the required paperwork to complete and return to us no later than April 09, 2019.

F. Interest Rate for 2019 Taxes

Delinquent Tax Rate has been set by the State of Maine at 9% maximum for 2019 Real Estate and Personal Property taxes. This rate would become effective on March 01, 2020.

The higher rate often encourages tax payers to pay taxes in a timely manner versus having to pay a high interest rate.

Recommendation: That the Town Council approves the new interest rate of 9% for the 2019 Real Estate and Personal Property taxes.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council approves the new interest rate of 9% for the 2019 Real Estate and Personal Property taxes.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

G. Quit Claim Deed – Shaw to Jarrett

H. Quit Claim Deed – Town of FF to Chapman

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve both Quit Claim Deeds as presented.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

I. Recreation Department acceptance of donation

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.

The Parks and Recreation Department inquired about a donation of golf practice nets and turf hitting mats for use in WAGM's golf expo, and community golf programming. Rukkett Sports agreed to donate a quantity of (3) Haack 10x7 ft. Golf Nets with Tri Turf Hitting Mats.

The value of this contribution is \$479.97.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the donation of hitting nets and turf mats from Rukkett Sports, valued at \$479.97.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Town Council accepts the donation of hitting nets and turf mats from Rukkett Sports, valued at \$479.97.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative

J. Construction Over limit permits

a. Towns of Easton and Fort Fairfield (project#23775.03)

Background: The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has established a construction area on Route 1A in the Town of Fort Fairfield, beginning north of Route 167 .23 miles and extending .07 miles north. MDOT requests the municipal officers sign an agreement to issue a construction over limit permit to the contractor for overweight equipment and loads that may be required to use a municipal way in the Town as part of the construction.

Title 29-A § 2382 MRSA requires a permit be procured from the municipal officers for a construction area within the municipality.

Recommendation: That Town Council signs the agreement that a construction over limit permit will be issued to the contractor for the Maine Department of Transportation Project Number 23775.03 allowing the contractor to use overweight equipment and loads on municipal ways.

Mr. Butler made a motion that Town Council signs the agreement that a construction over limit permit will be issued to the contractor for the Maine Department of Transportation Project Number 23775.03 allowing the contractor to use overweight equipment and loads on municipal ways.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Mr. Kilcollins asked what if any date was provided for this project.

Mr. Hanson – There was not specific date.

Mr. Kilcollins – My concern is that if they start this project first of April the ground and roads are quite “thin.”

Mr. Hanson – Having been involved with construction for many years they would never start a project in early April because the ground would be unsuitable to work on.

Vote: All Affirmative.

b. Truck Safety Turn-out (project#23997.00)

Background: The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has established a construction area on Route 1A in the Town of Fort Fairfield, from the Town line with Easton to the Fairmont Siding area. MDOT requests the municipal officers sign an agreement to issue a construction over limit permit to the contractor for overweight equipment and loads that may be required to use a municipal way in the Town as part of the construction.

Title 29-A § 2382 MRSA requires a permit be procured from the municipal officers for a construction area within the municipality.

Recommendation: That Town Council signs the agreement that a construction over limit permit will be issued to the contractor for the Maine Department of Transportation Project Number 23997.00 allowing the contractor to use overweight equipment and loads on municipal ways.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council signs the agreement that a construction over limit permit will be issued to the contractor for the Maine Department of Transportation Project Number 23997.00 allowing the contractor to use overweight equipment and loads on municipal ways.

Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion:

Vote: All Affirmative.

K. UTV

During the powerful wind storm in February, Fort Fairfield Police and Fire Departments had to use the Fire Departments snowmobile to check on and/or remove several stranded people from their vehicles. During the use of the snowmobile, which is twenty years old, fire personnel had a difficult time keeping the machine running. This poses a serious risk in our ability to serve our citizens.

In 2007, a Polaris Mule was donated to the Fort Fairfield Police Department. Police and Fire now share the use of this UTV. It is Ms. Power's recommendation not to purchase a new snowmobile for the fire department but to instead outfit the UTV with snow tracks.

Chief Newell recommends outfitting the UTV with snow tracks, we can carry two to three passengers, store equipment in the body of the UTV, and still tow the rescue toboggan. By adding the tracks to the UTV, we are more capable of assisting people in need. The cost of the snow tracks is \$4,500.00. This also allows for a low-cost solution that makes the machine viable during winter and summer months versus a snowmobile that can only be used in the winter. We will also have to purchase a new trailer to tow the UTV as the current trailer we have is too small.

Ms. Smith recommended that Council tables this item until further discussion. Mr. Smith spoke with Chief Newell and Mr. Hanson about this. The UTV is a little

undersized for tracks and it does not have power steering. Mr. Smith had them come out to his house and try out his Can-Am ATV which has 72 horsepower and it is designed for tracks. Mr. Hanson and Chief Newell will do some more research to see what is out there and what would be better suited for the needs of each department and each scenario they may be faced with.

Mr. Kilcollins agreed that the Mule is not a big enough machine.

Ms. Powers stated that it will be tabled until the April Council meeting.

L. ReBoot IT

A request for proposals went out in January for phone and information technology upgrades for the Town of Fort Fairfield. The Town received quotes from Consolidated Communications and ReBoot Information Technologies.

The Town Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief and Town Clerk met and spoke with both companies. It was a consensus to go with ReBoot Information Technologies as they are a technology firm located in Presque Isle that would meet the needs of the Town of Fort Fairfield.

ReBoot Information Technologies has the capabilities to build, manage, maintain, monitor and store all of our software and hardware needs. IT support is 24/7, cloud hosting and data backup, and integration of enterprise communication services all managed from their data center.

ReBoot has a working relationship with our current broadband provider and will be able to facilitate and help with projects in that aspect.

Recommendation: The Council accepts the contracts for phone and IT from Reboot Information Technologies.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Council accepts the contracts for phone and IT from ReBoot Information Technologies.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the February 20, 2019 Regular Council Meeting

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2019 Regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: #18; \$295,592.01 #19; \$112,653.17

Warrant #18 in the amount of \$294,592.01 was completed on 03/06/2019. This leaves us with an excellent cash flow. We now have a checking balance of \$1,026,106.37 and savings balance at Machias Savings of \$1,405,000.

Warrant #19 in the amount of \$112,653.17 was completed on 03/19/2019. This leaves us with an excellent cash flow. We now have a checking balance of \$1,007,651.50 and savings balance at Machias Savings of \$1,405,000.

Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Warrants #18 and #19 in the amounts presented.

Mr. Smith seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

XI. Manager's Report

Given to Council for informational purposes only

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Butler made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Kilcollins seconded.

Council adjourned at 6:47 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Billie Jo Sharpe
Council Secretary