

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, September 15, 2021
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Staff: Ms. Powers, Billie Jo Sharpe, Ella Leighton, Tony Levesque, Darren Hanson, Kevin Senal, Jennifer Gaenzle, Neadra Dubois, Chief Browning, Chief Cummings
Councilors: All Councilors are present
Citizens: Nine, including Media

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits

As of September 15, 2021 we have received an On-Premise License renewal for the Knights of Columbus post #1753.

B. Financial Report

We received August Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$63,179.16 on 08/23/2021. Total revenue sharing received to date is \$136,793.89. We are down \$7,039.95 for the year.

Checking account balance as of 8/31/2021 was \$792,241.47 and Machias Savings is \$5,000.

Excise collected in August was \$64,751.48 compared to \$59,902.99 last year.

As of 8/31/2021, uncollected Real Estate taxes for 2020 were \$100,817.28 compared to last year \$232,618.56.

C. AWS Report – Mr. Rogeski

Mr. Rogeski gave a summary review of the last Board Meeting held on August 27, 2021. Minutes will be provided to Councilors when they are available.

D. Economic Development Board – Ron Jalbert

Mr. Jalbert of the Economic Development Board gave a summary review of any updates from the Boards last meeting. There is still one building that the Town Manager is working on through the Brownfields Program that is still in Phase 1. After

participating in a DECD listen-in with the Town Manager, there are grants available in which the Town could qualify for to put up Spec Buildings.

There was a meeting with Superintendent Tim Doak and the Town Manager discussing the need for child care and there will be a Public Meeting on September 23, 2021 at 6 pm at the Fort Fairfield Middle High School gymnasium to go over a survey.

Ms. Powers commented that she has information from SAD#20 that she can share with Councilors if they would like.

VI. Old Business

A. Fort Hill Street Clean-Up

The Town Council met on June 24, 2021 at a Special Hearing for Dangerous Buildings regarding these two properties. Council voted the properties Dangerous Buildings and ordered them to remove them within 30 days of notice. That time period has expired.

Request For Proposals (RFP) for demolition of structures was dispersed to area contractors and the bid opening was held on August 18, 2021 at 12:00pm in the Council Chambers. Council voted to award the project to Cushman's Enterprise, Inc at \$9,850.00 from the UDAG/RLF account # G1-3330-00.

On August 25, 2021, Council voted to award the RFP to Cushman's for the clean-up of Dangerous Building properties located at 125 Fort Hill Street and 128 Fort Hill Street.

Cushman Enterprise, Inc completed the project on September, 2021.

Discussion: Mr. Kilcollins commented that he had heard it looks impressive.

B. Fort Fairfield Solar, LLC

Mr. Glen Walker from Fort Fairfield Solar, LLC gave an update as to the progress

VII. New Business

A. GA Maximums ORD 21-08

Enclosed please find the new maximums for the 2021-2022 General Assistance Ordinance, Appendices A-D. These maximums are updated annually and are effective from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

The law requires that the municipal officers adopt the Ordinance and/or Appendices after notice and public hearing.

Recommendation: A Councilor needs to introduce the attached ordinance during the September Council meeting and direct staff to hold a public hearing on September 30, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, on the Ordinance.

Introduced by: Mr. Kilcollins

B. Mil Rate Town Order

Town Council approves the budget in June for a July 1st implementation. The mil rate is not set until the taxes are committed on October 1st.

A 19.5 mil rate will support the FY 21/22 budget the Town Council approved on June 24, 2021.

One mil is one-tenth of a cent (\$0.001).

Recommendation: Town Council approves Town Order 21-09, and adopts a 19.5 mil rate to support the FY 21/22 budget; due date of February 1, 2022, interest rate of 6.00%, and interest penalty date of March 1, 2022 for FY 21/22 real estate and personal property taxes.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Town Order 21-09, and adopts a 19.5 mil rate to support the FY 21/22 budget; due date of February 1, 2022, interest rate of 6.00%, and interest penalty date of March 1, 2022 for FY 21/22 real estate and personal property taxes.

Second: Mr. Babin

Discussion: Mrs. Libby commented that this is great news and is very pleased that they were able to be fair to the Departments, the Citizens and still lower the mil rate.

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. FEMA Approved Project Award Funds

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 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) opened up application to award funding for disaster assistance for expenses incurred due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic. I applied for several projects under this program and we were awarded funding for the incident period starting January 20, 2020. The value of the funding was \$13,994.01

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the FEMA approved project award in the amount of \$13,994.01.

Motion: Mr. Babin made a motion that Town Council accepts the FEMA approved project award in the amount of \$13,994.01.

Second: Mr. Kilcollins

Discussion: Mr. Babin asked if there was any particular line that this was going on.

Ms. Powers replied that it covered expenses incurred during the Pandemic, such as PPE, etc.

Vote: All Affirmative.

D. Amend Personnel Policy – Health Insurance

Background: The current Town Council voted to amend the Health Insurance Policy on August 26, 2021. The vote was to implement an 80/20 insurance plan POS 200, in effect September 1, 2021. All current staff are grandfathered in at their current rate of coverage at 100%. If any grandfathered staff wishes to take the 80/20 plan, they will no longer be covered at the 100% rate of coverage. All new hires after November 1, 2021 will be offered at the 80/20 plan.

Recommendation: Town Council amend the Town Personnel Policies and Procedures by adding the 80/20 Insurance Plan POS 200 as previously voted on and approved by Council to Section 5.11.2.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion the Town Council amend the Town Personnel Policies and Procedures by adding the 80/20 Insurance Plan POS 200 as previously voted on and approved by Council to Section 5.11.2.

Second: Mr. Babin seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

E. MainePERS Rule Chapter 803

The Maine Employees Retirement System has allowed a provision for its non-participating employees who previously declined to participate in MainePERS the opportunity join prospectively to all its employees. This is their only opportunity do so and does need Council approval.

Recommendation: That Town Council votes to allow the Town Manager to sign the amended agreement between the Employer (Town of Fort Fairfield) and the Maine Employees Retirement System.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council votes to allow the Town Manager to sign the amended agreement between the Employer (Town of Fort Fairfield) and the Maine Employees Retirement System.

Second: Mr. Babin

Discussion:

Ms. Power read the following:

To see if the Town of Fort Fairfield will vote to adopt the provisions of 5 M.R.S. § 18252-C (PL 2021, Chapter 286) as allowed by MainePERS Rule Chapter 803.

The Town of Fort Fairfield agrees:

1) To adopt the provisions of 5 M.R.S. §18252-C as enacted by PL 2021, Chapter 286 as allowed by MainePERS Rule Chapter 803 for its non-participating employees with optional membership who previously declined to participate in MainePERS (“eligible employees”) and to comply with the following requirements:

- a. To offer by November 1, 2021 the opportunity to join MainePERS prospectively to all its eligible employees who have been employed for 5 years or more, to advise these employees that this will be their only opportunity to join, and to provide MainePERS with documentation of each eligible employee’s election; and
- b. Beginning in 2022, to annually offer eligible employees who have been employed for less than 5 years, and in 2022 eligible employees who had reached 5 years of employment between November 1, 2021 and November 1, 2022, the opportunity to join MainePERS on a prospective basis during an open enrollment period from September 1st through November 1st and to provide MainePERS with documentation of each election made by eligible employees under this provision: and
- c. To withhold employee contributions for employees who join under this provision after all taxes have been withheld, and to remit them to MainePERS as after-tax contributions.

2) To authorize Andrea L. Powers, Town Manager to sign the Amended Agreement between the Employer and the Maine Public Employees Retirement System.

Mr. Smith asked how many employees this would affect.

Ms. Powers replied at this time, two.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the August 18, 2021 Regular Council Meeting and August 26, 2021 Special Council Meeting.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve the August 18, 2021 Regular Council Meeting and August 26, 2021 Special Council Meeting.

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants #4: \$142,869.17 #5: \$131,711.95

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to approve Warrants #4 and #5 as written.

Second: Mr. Babin seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. Town Office Closure – Clerks Election Training

Title 21-A Elections requires Election officials to attend mandatory training every two years. Because of COVID-19 protocols in 2020, there were no in person trainings offered nor did the State offer this training as a Zoom or Webinar.

In order to remain compliant with Maine Statute, all of the Clerks in the Town Office will need to attend this training this year causing the Town Office to be closed on October 12th and 13th. All other offices will be open, but no front office business will be available for those two days. As of September 14, 2021 MMA has chosen to make this a remote training and will now be offered as a Zoom training. Town Office closure will still need to happen; however, it will save the Town money on travel and hotel expenses.

The Town Clerk will advertise the closure on the Town's Website, Town Office, and Facebook page as soon as possible to give the Public proper notice.

B. 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 is currently in the process of constructing a multi-purpose building for our community. Mr. Greenlaw, in support of the building for filling a need for our community and our programming, would like to donate \$6,000 to pay for the 14'x28' cement slab that the building will be constructed on.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the Mike Greenlaw/Greenlaw Electric donation of \$6,000 to our department, to pay for the multi-purpose building foundation.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council accepts the Mike Greenlaw/Greenlaw Electric donation of \$6,000 to our department, to pay for the multi-purpose building foundation.

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. 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 applied for a donation of Huber Zip System sheathing for the rec department multi-purpose building planned for construction by the tennis courts. Huber granted donation request of 49 4'x8' zip system sheets, valued at \$3,000.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the Huber donation of Zip System sheathing to our multi-purpose building, with the retail value of \$3,000.

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion that Town Council accepts the Huber donation of Zip System sheathing to our multi-purpose building, with the retail value of \$3,000.

Second: Mr. Smith

Mr. Babin asked “weren’t we offered a donation of the building from a business in Presque Isle already?”

Ms. Power replied, yes Aroostook Trusses.

Vote: All Affirmative.

- D. 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 with SFE manufacturing about producing a folding batter’s box template to help speed up our field maintenance, and improve the consistency and appearance of our end product. SFE Manufacturing would like to donate the template to our department. The retail value of this tool is \$400.00.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the SFE Manufacturing donation of a folding batter’s box template to our department, with the retail value of \$400.00.

Motion: Mr. Babin made a motion that Town Council accepts the SFE Manufacturing donation of a folding batter’s box template to our department, with the retail value of \$400.00.

Second: Mr. Smith

Vote: All Affirmative.

- E. 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 Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) opened up application to award funding for disaster assistance for expenses incurred due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic. I applied for several projects under this program and we were awarded funding for the incident period starting January 20, 2020. The value of the funding was \$2,594.00.

Recommendation: That Town Council accepts the MEMA CDBG approved project award in the amount of \$2,594.00.

Mr. Smith made a motion that Town Council accepts the MEMA CDBG approved project award in the amount of \$2,594.00.

Second: Mr. Babin

Vote: All Affirmative.

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

Motion: Mr. Kilcollins made a motion to enter into Executive Session regarding 1M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A)

Second: Mr. Babin

Vote: All Affirmative.

Time: 6:29 pm.

Motion: Mr. Babin made a motion that Council come out of Executive Session regarding 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A)

Second: Mr. Kilcollins

Vote: All Affirmative.

Time: 6:46 pm.

XII. Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Babin made a motion to adjourn.

Second: Mr. Smith.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Time: 6:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Sharpe
Council Secretary