



Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
Wednesday, May 18, 2022
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Staff: Andrea Powers, Neadra Dubois, D.C. Fenderson, Jennifer Gaenzle, Ella Leighton, Tony Levesque, Chris Gamblin, Darren Hanson, Kevin Senal, Cheryl Boulier, Chief Cummings

Council: All present

Citizens: 9 citizens presents

Budget Advisory Committee: Aaron Brown, Billie Jo Sharpe, Kevin Bouchard

Journalism: Fort Fairfield Journal, Star Herald

Mr. Kilcollins – “Let the record show that all the Council Members are present. At this time, Tony, do you want to lead us in prayer?”

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment Period

Billie Jo Sharpe – “Hi, I’m Billie Jo Sharpe, of course, you know me. I have some written, written comments here. I hope I can keep them in line. So, I was recently appointed to serve on the newly formed Budget Advisory Committee. We first met on May 12th, and had what seemed like a very productive, well-communicated meeting. There were a few members of the community present, along with a Councilor, and some good discussions came from this meeting, we at least found a starting point. The second meeting was held last night, May 17th, a few more citizens came and still a Councilor as well. It is my experience, as a former Town employee, with knowledge of how meetings are to be held in conduct and such, I was very frustrated after last night’s meeting, as the dialogue changed quickly from having a recommendation for Council, it’s more of a trying to make demands onto the Council. It was my understanding that we were acting advisory and would only try to come up with ideas to share with the Council. What it quickly became was a Town meeting and what it did was take the focus and attention of the Advisory Committee and shift it to the public in attendance, and it became a back and forth unproductive two-hour meeting. And it’s, you know, don’t get me wrong, it’s nice when a member of the

public can ask a question when they don't understand a term, a statement, or didn't hear something correctly, there's no problem, you're here to understand and learn. What isn't nice, is when the member or members get loud, argumentative and disrespectful to a member of the Committee present, or other Town Officials. There was too much, this is what needs to be done or else don't pass the budget. There was inappropriate discussion started about the contract of the Town Manager and this began a very heated discussion until I had to speak up very forcefully and stop that discussion from happening. It is not appropriate, nor is it legal to have discussions about Town employees in the capacity that this Committee is serving. Now, while I thought after the first meeting that maybe this Committee could be objective and come up with some fair and just ideas because that was discussed opening, but after last night, I feel that the Committee majority has become too involved with a group of citizens that are interjecting a lot of negativity and factless claims onto it, and can't offer objective fair and just recommendations. The bully and bullying mentality on, the bully and bullying on the playground mentality of some of our citizens has got to stop. As a former Town employee, I can attest to this abuse we have withstood for almost a year from certain citizens. Do you all not realize that this is not right, not acceptable, or do you think that it is acceptable? The arguing back and forth and interruptions during these meeting have got to stop. It's time to conduct these meetings properly and keep the control. So, I ask the Town Council tonight to come up with a Code of Conduct for all Town Meetings. We are a Town Council form of government and have a Charter, and we need to follow those rules. I was hoping to be able to have a positive impact with this newly formed Budget Advisory Committee, but last night proved to me that rules and laws were broken and I want people and staff to know that I do not share all the views of this majority of this Committee. And, rather than waste my energy competing with them and the public that attends these meetings, I will resign and focus my attention on the Staff and Departments of this Town that have been beaten down to feel useless and unwanted. I will work to help be their voice. So tonight, I do officially resign from the Budget Advisory Committee. Thank you."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Billie Jo."

Tammy Deschesne – "I'm Tammy Deschesne. I wasn't gonna speak tonight, but I'm not gonna go into what I wanted to say. All I want to say is, when you're going over the budget realize that the Department Heads in this Town have come in under budget the last few years, which, I say, that speaks a lot for them. So, think of that when you're going over your budget for them. Thanks."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Tammy."

Danny Dufour – "I don't normally do this. But I have to come here and speak on behalf of Billie Jo. You know, for the last year or so she's been coming home stressed, crying, going on about a lot of things that have been said. Taxes. They took the brunt of it, the Town Office. Taxes going up, she was in the review for slander, many of things untrue. She's one of, I think and I've heard a lot from other Townspeople, that she was one of the best Clerks that we had. She loved her job, loved it. She'd come home ever night pulling her hair out, you know, ever since this tax, new tax they come out where Portland come up and reevaluated. You know, it's been downhill from there. She tried, she, she did the best job she could for the Town. She worked towards doing the best job that she could, but she got so much slack from the other side, she had to quit and got a job at DFAS. She tried this Committee, thinking that maybe it'd be just a little bit different. Same story. Same people yelling at the top of their lungs, trying to change things in this Town, blaming the Town Manager over here, we've got a Town Officials that approve everything that goes on in this Town, but we're gonna blame the woman. Same reason they're blaming Billie Jo, maybe, for certain things. That's what I'm sick of. I've heard it now for a year and a half. So, I told Billie Jo, she didn't think I'd do it, come down her at least speak a little bit on her behalf that there's no voice for a woman in this Town, right? They're being smothered. And, I've heard, I've watched the Town Meetings, I hear them, they're loud, they're obnoxious, they think they got the truth, they got, they throw out all these, I know this, I know that, there's no question about it, and I've heard Andrea on the, from watching

it from home, right? She says, you know, you can't go by that, you can't go by this, she knows what she's doing, I don't believe they do. There's, there's a lot of things that, you know, that the Town Manager has to deal with, all the different Departments, keep them under budget, blah blah blah, there's a lot to do, right? One person, two people wanna stand up here and say you're not doing your job right. I'm just wondering if she was a man, it would be different? There's a lot of women in this Town can't take it anymore. They're being overrun. Jim, I hate to pull, pin you out on this, but it started out with that, right? You and your wife going around with your petition, putting Billie Jo in the paper. How do you think that made her feel? You pissed me off, I wanted to make a, I wanted to come up to you and talk to you about it. Good friend of my father, right? You want to cut the EMS out. My father lives across the street over here. He would have been dead if EMS hadn't been over there as soon as they were. He would have been dead. He had no breath left in him. When he called 911 he had to leave the phone down, couldn't talk, his heart was at bare bottom, and nothing left, he'd have been dead, there's no question if EMS hadn't been there in five minutes. They put the air, oxygen to him, revived him. Your best friend. You want to count on all these programs. You got all the answers, right? You slandered Billie Jo in the paper. You got all the answers. You took names that were on that petition and you put them on a different date, because what you were doing before, it even happened before they approved it, the Council, you had already gone around and put a bunch of names on this petition you had, and then you found out, you, you can't do it until after. You just copied and pasted or whatever you did to another petition and then you blamed her. She went to school, she took all the courses that she had to, to do her job and do it 100%. But you come in and corrupt the whole thing. She was only telling you how to do your job, how you should do it, but, instead, what you do? You slander her in the paper. What do you think that did to her? I heard it every night. It's not right. You people, you don't do it the way the law is. You want it and you use your, your manhood or whatever it is, right, to get, get your point across, instead of using any of the laws that are there? That's what they do, that's what Andrea does. She hasn't done one thing in this Town that these people haven't approved, whoever's on the Council. She suggests. She brings it forward, right, you guys vote on it. Does she vote on it? Who's getting all the slander? Her, Billie Jo, name any woman in this Town, I'm sure they got a heap of it. If she was a guy, I'm certain they're not going to stand up to him. I'm certain of it."

Mr. Kilcollins – “Thank you.”

[Applause and thank you's]

Mr. Kilcollins – “Anybody else? We'll move on to Correspondence and Reports.”

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses/Permits – Ms. Dubois

As of May 13, 2022, the Town has received one off premises Catering Permit Application from Northern Maine Brewing Company.
Recommendation is that Council allows the Town Manager to sign the Permit for Northern Maine Brewing Company.

Motion: Mr. Butler makes the motion.

Second: Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Financial Report

Checking account balance as of 4/30/2022 was \$171,629.67 and Machias Savings is \$5,000. Excise collected in February was \$55,212.39 compared to \$62,664.53 last year. As of 04/30/2022, uncollected Real Estate taxes for 2021 were \$448,816.67 compared to last year \$478,149.64. As of April 30, 2022, the Town's revenue was up 2.15% which equals the Town's expenses that were up 3.26%. The Town received April Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$44,536.69 on 04/20/2022. Total revenue sharing received to date is \$647,809.36. The Town is at 75.03% vs the budgeted of 83.33% that is down 8.3% from the State equaling \$71,359.81.

C. AWS – Mr. Rogeski

Mr. Rogeski gives his report on the last AWS meeting, which was April 29th, and discusses a fire that happened at the Landfill. Mr. Rogeski also reports on the finances, which are ahead of schedule by five percent, as of the end of March.

D. Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget Public Hearings Update

Ms. Powers – “The first order will be the Minutes from the first meeting of April 28, 2022. If Council wanted to vote on those minutes.”

Motion: Mrs. Libby makes the motion to approve the Minutes.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion:

Mr. Kilcollins – “I would like to take a minute to just let the Committee know, I know there's going to be some learning curves, that I do know. I've been serving on a Council in our Municipality, off and on for many years, and I'm still learning, and I don't expect everybody that is on the Committee is gonna pick up and run with this, and there's a lot of tension, not just in our community, in every community right now, with all the budgets that all the other communities are working with. I can say, I did take time and review the meeting online, and, I, I would like to hope to think that everybody can get the kinks out of what we're doing. Like, I say, I know, I know this isn't gonna take off running like a well-oiled machine. Everybody's got ideas, and I think there's, there's gonna be some mistakes made. Along with making mistakes, if we realize that, and we can, we can admit it, learn from it, and move forward, that was the whole idea behind this Committee. I, I do want everybody to know that after listening to the meeting, I realized there were some hiccups, and I just hope that working forward we can, we can get through them, and gain ground with it. I think there is some opportunities in it, I, I do. I think that used for the right reasons, we can gain some good information from the Committee to us. But, we're all on the same team here, and we got to work together. And, like I said, I know there's gonna be some, there's, there's gonna be some mistakes made. That's just, that's, makes us human and we'll get through them. But, we got to focus on the reasons that we're there, and I would like to see, you know, the up and coming meetings, that we can gain some valuable opportunities to gain some information. And I, at this point, feel really bad that Billie Jo is at this point, stepping down. If there's a reconsideration, I, I would be open for it. I, like I, like I said, I can't emphasize enough, I know going into this, there was going to be some bumps, hopefully no bruises, that's for sure, but I, I just, I apologize greatly to you and anybody else that might have been affected by some things that might have, might have got off track, but hopefully we can learn from them and move forward. And, so, that's where I'm at with it. So, I just want to say, I apologize sincerely.”

Mr. Butler – “Mr. Chair, I would just like to question, obviously there was one Councilor at the meeting. I didn’t even know there was a meeting going on. So, I don’t know how the public or somebody would know there’s a meeting going on, and, and, you know, because I would love to have been at the meeting, unless then, you know, we’re all supposed to be working together, I think that, I don’t know how this Budget Committee worked out or how this deal worked out, but obviously that there’s people from the public that found out about this meeting and wasn’t able to voice their opinions.”

Mr. Pelletier – “I knew about the meeting, but I was told that Councilors shouldn’t, shouldn’t be at those meetings because of the conflict of interest, that’s what I was told by, by their Chair.”

Mrs. Libby – “I didn’t realize we were able to go either.”

Mr. Butler – “But, was there a Councilor at the meeting?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes.”

Mr. Butler – “I rest my case.”

Mrs. Libby – “Are we supposed to be at the meeting?”

Ms. Powers – “It’s a conflict of interest.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay.”

Ms. Powers – “You’re, you’re not. They have to gather the information.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I have a, a, a answer from the MMA Lawyer that says he read the Ordinance, and he says the Councilors are perfectly legal to go as a citizen.”

Ms. Powers – “You reached out to MMA Legal, Sir, on your own behalf.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay. Well, since it’s been brought up, I guess I just, I’ve sat quiet for a really long time, a really long time and I’m [inaudible].”

Mr. Levesque – “Mr. Chair?”

Ms. Powers – “Please don’t interrupt Councilor Libby, I would wait until she’s, she’s”

Mrs. Libby – “I, I can talk after, it’s fine. Go ahead.”

Mr. Levesque – “I thought she saw me.”

Mrs. Libby – “Nope, it’s fine.”

Mr. Levesque – “Mr. Chair, I would just like to Point of Order, you had a Motion on the floor, you had a Second on the floor and then you began a discussion on a side topic which is not on the top, on the Table at this time. I would like to hear the Vote to approve or deny the Minutes, please.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Tony is right.”

Mrs. Libby – “Well, we have a discussion though.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Well, we’re in discussion, yes, but we’ve got to”

Mrs. Libby – “So, what I was going to say is, as far as the way that the Budget Committee and things like that have been going, I do feel like there has been a lot of counterproductive behavior by some citizens. Again, I don’t know who, I don’t know what was said, I have no idea at this point. I’ll have to go back and watch it, but I am really, really disappointed that we are losing Billie Jo on that Committee, because I know all of the work that she did for the Town, and I know how well she understands the Budget. And, I know that she invested a lot of time and energy into this Town, so I’m really, really sorry to hear that.”

Mr. Dufour – “For her to speak up, it was serious.”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah, and I, I think that, you know, what was said about females and being bullied, and I don’t care if it’s because you’re female or not, I mean, to me that’s irrelevant, I just think that it’s ridiculous and we shouldn’t be treating each other like that, in general. I mean, we’re all adults. We can accomplish a goal without having to be name-calling and, and I think we’re losing sight of the actual Budget itself by doing all of this, so. This Committee’s advisory, but I hope that we’re still working on the Budget as a Council, is really all I want to put into that.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “If that’s it, we’ll go for a vote.”

Vote: All Affirmative.

Ms. Powers – “The next speaker on the Budget is Mr. Bouchard, with the Budget Advisory Committee. The Chair of the Budget Advisory Committee, Mr. Jason Barnes, was unavailable for this evening, so Mr. Bouchard is going to speak with you.”

Mr. Bouchard – “I don’t have a formal presentation. No, that’s okay. But we provided Ms. Powers with materials from our meetings, which should have been distributed to you. More of a question and answer thing from, you know, the one thing, one of the things the Committee would like from the Council is a little bit more direction on what you would like from the Committee. We, we had to do a little bit of guessing as to what exactly our role was. You know, we looked at the Ordinance, we looked at the feedback that was generated from the public at the two Budget Hearings, it kind of, we just winged it. You know, I, I thought the conversations and the proceedings were reasonably productive. Our focus was just on the global picture, because from our perspective, we’re looking at, we had basically five weeks from when the Committee’s first meeting was until the time that you folks have to vote on the Budget, so. We decided not to focus on, on like, individual Departments or individual line items because it just wasn’t that enough time in the schedule to do that. The other issue is our focus was exclusively, well, maybe not exclusively, primarily on the expense side, and speaking personally, you need to look at expenses, you need to look at income, you got to balance the whole thing, okay. So, we were trying to get a lot done in a little bit of time. Certainly, if you have

any questions on anything that's in there, I'd be more than happy to try and answer them for you. And, like I say, if Council has something more specific like, we'd like you to address ABC, we'll gladly do that."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Well, I think it's a learning curve."

Mr. Bouchard – "Yeah, unless you want us to do 120 hours worth of work in 2. To the question of meetings, our perception is there's a lot to do between now and your next meeting. We've scheduled ourselves every Tuesday at six o'clock for meetings. I'm not sure about how the initial meeting was publicized, but at our first meeting, like all your Council Meetings, are posted, I think two or three places in Town, something like that."

Ms. Powers – "Three places."

Mr. Bouchard – "Okay, we tried to, to follow that, that same methodology. One of the things I'm going to ask Tuesday night, is if we put a posting, one posting, for every meeting we're going to have until your vote, so that people know it, and then, we did not discuss that amongst the Committee, this is Kevin asking you, is there a spot that can be generated on the Town's website?"

Ms. Powers – "You would just ask permission from the Town Manager's office to post to the website and to Social Media and we can certainly do that for you, and because by State Statute, you are considered a Municipal Official now, you need to post your meeting minimum of three days in advance of your meetings. So, before every meeting for every Tuesday meeting, you would need to post in those three spots."

Mr. Bouchard – "Can we post one notice that has four meetings on it?"

Ms. Powers – "I can verify that for you, Sir, and let you know tomorrow."

Mr. Bouchard – "Again, I don't know the specifics of what [inaudible]. My perception as far as notice is concerned is usually it's a minimum requirement."

Ms. Powers – "For us, we have to post every meeting. There is no, we can't just post for the year and it say every third Wednesday. But I can find out as the Budget Advisory Committee if that is allowable."

Mr. Bouchard – "We will do whatever the rules say we're supposed to. I, I'd rather err on the side of putting more information, again, this is Kevin, I'd rather err on the side of putting more information out than less, if I possibly can. I want to thank Ms. Powers, also. I didn't think that our packets would manage to make it here tonight. Well, you need to know, I appreciate your help, okay. We're looking at this crazy, short window that we're trying to get stuff done."

Ms. Powers – "Before we move on, in the face of the information that was given and moving forward, as you had said, you want correct information, the Fort Fairfield Mil, and it's M-I-L, it's not M-I-L-L."

Mr. Bouchard – "You can point your finger here on that one."

Ms. Powers – “Because, your calculation is incorrect. Your information is incorrect. So, if you would like corrected information, if the Committee would like that, I would be happy to get that for you.”

Mr. Bouchard – “Absolutely.”

Ms. Powers – “Because, you’re lacking a lot of information in what you’ve put together here, for your, what you were showing to Council, and I would hate for you to have misinformation.”

Mr. Bouchard – “I view that comment as constructive. So, yeah, please.”

Ms. Powers – “Good. Okay, I will get that for you as well. The last presentation on Budgets is from D.C. Fenderson from Fort Fairfield Fire and Rescue.”

D.C. Fenderson – “Good evening, Council. Thank you for letting me speak. I’m not going to shoot from the hip tonight, like I usually do, I wrote it down, so hopefully it will go okay. The Fire/Rescue Budget has been a hot topic for the last two years. It’s created frustration both with members of the Town and the Department. I wanted to take time tonight to touch on a few things that I think are important for you to remember when considering the Budget. First and most important thing for you to remember is that every member, every member of our Staff is here because they want to be. They are part of our Department because they want to help the citizens of the Town. They are members because they care about what happens in this Town. They are not here to become millionaires, or increase the size of their wallets on the back of the taxpayers. All members make an effort daily to go above and beyond and give back to the community. Excuse me. Second thing I would like you to remember is that when I was hired as the head of, I was hired as the Head of the Department for a reason. My role in the department is to operate the Department safely and efficiently. I was chosen because my knowledge, skills and ability in both Fire and EMS. Each year, when I sit down to create a Budget, and that starts before Thanksgiving for me, I start by considering taxpayers. I look at the level of service we provide the taxpayers at a level of service they expect from the Department. I then, go through each line item individually and use the best information I can gather, which sometimes is very limited. I use this information to come to the lowest possible amount that will allow us to do the job we are expected to do safely and efficiently. I do this for every line item, including Reserves. I have to consider long-term needs of the Department, when considering Reserve lines. These are line items that have been overlooked for decades. We can now see the result of overlooking Reserves for decades. Throughout the year, I reference the Working Budget daily and make sure we are using our funds in the most responsible manner. I explain this to you all, not to toot my own horn, but to remind you that I was hired to run the Department, I was hired to put in the long hours to do the research, to find the facts and to be the subject matter expert in Fire and EMS. I am glad that the Council and citizens have an interest in Fire and EMS and I enjoy answering any questions anybody has about it. I enjoy speaking and explaining why we need the things we’re asking for and why they are essential to do our job safely and efficient and efficiently. Know that this budget does not contain wants, it only contains needs. If the toilet at your house is broken, do you call an electrician? If your car is broken, do you call a carpenter? If you need to build a garage, do you call a plumber? While all of those people may have knowledge of the tasks you are asking them to do they are not the subject matter expert. If you want any of those tasks completed in the most cost effective and efficient manner, you consult the expert in that field. I appreciate all the time and energy everyone has put into this budget. As you move forward with the decision making process, please keep these points in mind. Thank you.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Thank you.”

[Applause]

VI. Old Business

A. Update on Tax Acquired Properties

The following property was put out for bid with a minimum bid of \$1500. Bid closing was March 30, 2022 at 12:00 noon. Bids were opened March 30, 2022 at 12:05pm.

Heirs of Rodney P Turcotte. – 357 Dorsey Road – Total Taxes Due \$1,213.19. Assessed Value is \$12,500. Minimum Bid Recommendation is \$1,500. SOLD to Joseph & KatieAnn Yoder for \$8,250.00. The Quit Claim Deed was prepared.

The following property was put out for bid with a minimum bid of \$9,500. Bid closing was March 30, 2022 at 12:00 noon.

Heirs of Rodney P. Turcotte –125 Fort Hill - Total Taxes Due \$9,404.12. (Includes \$7,175 Clean-up) Assessed Value is \$9,320. Minimum Bid \$9,500. SOLD to Timothy & Susan Everett, abutting owners, for \$9,500.00. Quit Claim Deed prepared.

Heirs of George Jaime: 14 Depot Street. SOLD to Susan Cunningham, family member, for \$3,423.71 for back taxes. Quit Claim Deed prepared.

Robert Peck: 242 Maple Grove. Returned to original owner for back taxes.

VII. New Business

A. Tax Club

Background: Prepayment of taxes is authorized by 36 M.R.S.A. §506.

Discussion: For several years the Town has offered a Tax Club so that taxpayers can pay their taxes in 12 monthly payments. Payments are made from July to June and are due on or before the 10th of each month.

The Town commits taxes on October 1, so payment of any taxes prior to that date is a prepayment. Based on information the Tax Collector received from Maine Municipal Association's legal services, the Town Council needs to approve prepayment authority each year, and that prepayment is only for the next annual tax commitment, not for multiple future tax commitments.

The Tax Collector is recommending that Council authorizes the Tax Collector to establish a Tax Club for the 2022 – 2023 tax commitment.

Motion: Mr. Butler makes the motion.

Second: Mr. Ouellette and Mr. Pelletier seconded, simultaneously.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Proclamation 53rd Anniversary of 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 2, 2022 through May 6, 2022 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 is that Town Council sign Proclamation 22-05, Municipal Clerks Week.

Motion: Mrs. Libby makes the motion for Council to sign Proclamation 22-05.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative

C. NMDC Membership Board Appointments

NMDC will be holding their annual election meeting in June, 2022 for the election of Executive Board Members whose terms are expiring in 2024. The Executive Board is elected from the NMDC Membership.

The appointments last year were Mitch Butler, Councilor; Andrea Powers, Town Manager.

Recommendation is that Council votes to approve the above-mentioned names for the NMDC Membership Board Appointments.

Motion: Mrs. Libby makes the motion.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

D. TAN Katahdin Trust Company

Background: As is customary in the past to aid the Town with cash flow in anticipation of tax revenue for the Fiscal Year (FY), a TAN has been voted on and approved by Council at Council Meetings. The request for next year's TAN (\$1,000,000.00) is prior to our Tax Commitment for better cash flow until tax payments begin.

A TAN is short-term obligation of a municipal government to finance current expenditures pending receipt of expected tax payments. TAN debt evens out the cash flow and is repaid at the end of the Fiscal Year once tax revenues are received.

Recommendation is that the Town Council authorize the Council Chair and the Town Manager to sign for the FY 2022/2023 TAN with Katahdin Trust Company at 3.12%, at \$1,000,000.00.

Mr. Pelletier – “Is there any reason why we didn’t get it updated from AWS for 1%?”

Ms. Powers – “We got it two years in a row and it was voted on by the Board Members that we have to allow the other communities to have their turn. With AWS, there’s more, there’s more communities involved with AWS and we have to let them have their turns, and it’s only offered to the communities if it was beneficial to the members. But, the interest rates have skyrocketed, so it’s really, it’s not as beneficial as it was last year. It was extremely beneficial for us last year, we saved a lot of money in interest.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “So we need a motion.”

Motion: Mr. Ouellette moves that the Town Council will authorize the Council Chair and the Town Manager to sign the Fiscal year 2022/2023 TAN with Katahdin Trust at 3.12 percent for a million dollars and that would be issued after July 1st, 2022.

Ms. Powers – “It can only be issued after July 1st.”

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

E. Fort Fairfield Frontier ATV Club Ordinance

At the April 19, 2022 Council Meeting both President of the Frontier ATV Club and Fort Fairfield Police Chief Cummings spoke about the current ATV Ordinance. It was agreed that Council would like to see an Ordinance Introduced at the next Council Meeting.

Recommendation: That Council introduces the ATV Ordinance 22-04 and direct staff to hold a public hearing on the Ordinance on Wednesday, June 1, 2022 at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building.

Motion: Mr. Butler makes a motion to introduce ATV Ordinance 22-04.

Second: Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

F. Spirit of America Award Nomination Fort Fairfield JMG

The Spirit of America Foundation was established in Maine to encourage volunteerism and commendable community service. Since the first Spirit of America Foundation award was presented in 1991 to Alma Jones by Augusta's mayor, over 500 Spirit of America ceremonies have taken place.

The Spirit of America award is presented to a local person(s), project, or group for outstanding community service using Fort Fairfield's criteria to honor the recipient(s). The Spirit of America Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity established in Augusta, ME in 1990 to honor volunteerism.

The Fort Fairfield Middle High School JMG program has been exemplary in their community building efforts for over a decade.

The recommendation is that Council votes to approve the Spirit of America Award Nomination to the Fort Fairfield Middle High School JMG program.

Motion: Mr. Butler makes the motion.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmed.

G. Allen's Environmental USACE Inspection

The Fort Fairfield Dike is under the Levee Safety Program with USACE (United States Army Corps of Engineers). In order to stay in the program, we must meet certain inspection requirements at the one (1), five (5) and ten (10) year inspections.

This year is an extensive inspection that must be conducted in order to remain in the program. The closest company that can provide the inspection and the certification is Allen's Environmental. The next closest company is in Lisbon Falls, then New York State.

Allen's Environmental will be able to perform the inspection before USACE's arrival this year. Attached to this MEMO is the quote from Allen's Environmental for \$26,300.00.

The recommendation is that Council votes to allow the Town Manager to use G1-3010-00 Admin Reserves to pay \$26,300.00 to Allen's Environmental for the inspection of the Fort Fairfield Dike.

Mr. Pelletier – "But, what's that involve?"

Ms. Powers – "We have to make a, we can't have a discussion until after."

Mr. Pelletier – "I understand, I understand that, but maybe, maybe Darren can answer this question. Is that, is that?"

Ms. Powers – "You have to make a Motion first before [inaudible]. We can have all the discussion you want after the Motion.

Mr. Pelletier – "Alright, alright."

Motion: Mrs. Libby makes the motion for Council to approve the recommendation.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion:

Ms. Powers – “Mr. Hanson?”

Mr. Pelletier – “Whoa, that’s a lot of money.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah. She can explain the procedures we have to, Darren can answer this.”

Director Hanson – “So, what, what this will be is video inspection of, of basically around 3,000 feet of underground pipe. Close to 500 feet of it will be done by a submarine with sonar. It’s, that pipe is called a pressure conduit, it’s under water all the time, you can’t put a diver in. Allen’s Environmentalists had to buy specialized equipment for this.”

Mr. Pelletier – “So those are the lines from the river into the gate, into the gate and then from the pump and be in that area?”

Director Hanson – “So, there are four lines that go from the river into the landside and then, there are, there are lines that run the length of the Dike at their toe drains.”

Mr. Pelletier – “So is that, is that one year for, how long is gonna be good for?”

Director Hanson – “No, one thing that we looked into Councilors, is that if we can get this certain certification, this will be good for, for ten years. So, if you think about it that way, it’s \$2,600 a year to provide us insurance from the Army Corps of Engineers. If something happens to our Dike and it fails, without this, we’ll be on our own.”

Ms. Powers – “We are responsible for full payment.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Gotcha. Okay.”

Director Hanson – “And, I believe with this, after \$10,000.”

Mr. Pelletier – “I’m sorry, I just didn’t know anything about it, so I just wanted clarification is all.”

Ms. Powers – “This is the time to ask.”

Director Hanson – “It’s, it’s a necessary thing.”

Ms. Powers – “So we do a year inspection with them also, but this is, we’re at that point where we have to do this very extensive inspection and we thought we had it last year, and then their engineers have informed us this winter that it’s not good enough, we have to have more extensive inspection.

Director Hanson – “Not everything was completed.”

Mr. Butler – “So the setup now that we’ll, it’ll be all done the right way this time?”

Ms. Powers – “Correct. Because we made sure we got their specifications from them and signed off by them.”

Director Hanson – “I’ve been involved with this for seven years and we’ve been working towards to goal that if you vote yes tonight, we will have achieved that goal. We won’t have to even wait until the videoing is done. They will put us in a program and we will be good.”

Ms. Powers – “They want your commitment.”

Director Hanson – “Any more questions? Thank you.”

Mr. Kilcollins & Mr. Pelletier – “Thank you, Darren.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We had a motion and a second and discussion. We’ll go to vote.

Vote: All Affirmative.

VIII. Minutes of the April 13, 2022 Regular Council Meeting

Motion: Mr. Butler makes the Motion.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

IX. Warrants: Warrant #21 : \$412,492.53 Warrant #22 : \$173,288.90 Warrant #23 : \$194,571.22

Warrant #21 in the amount of \$412,492.53 was completed on 04/11/2022, leaving checking account balance at \$164,288.24.

Please note warrant #21 included a payment to SAD #20 in the amount of \$178,532.09.

Warrant #22 in the amount of \$173,288.90 was completed on 04/26/2022, leaving checking account balance at \$110,261.65.

Warrant #23 in the amount of \$194,571.22 was completed on 05/09/2022, leaving the checking account balance at \$50,413.85.

Motion: Mr. Ouellette makes the motion to accept.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

X. Other

A. DPI / K-Pel

Ms. Powers – “We have actually, quite a few things listed under other, and I see that Mr. Colton is here also, so I was just going to brief you on, but I don’t know if you have something you wanted to share as well. I noticed you had your maps out earlier, so I didn’t know if there was more that you wanted to do than what I was going to share with them, but.

Mr. Colton – “I don’t know, I don’t know what you’re gonna share with them, so.”

Ms. Powers – “Okay, so, Maine International Trade Center has grants available to businesses who work in international trade, which K-Pel does. They, they deal with other countries, and because of that, they can apply for specific grants. And so, I was going to ask Council’s permission to work with them, and K-Pel to try to get the grant money to purchase the land at Cheney Grove. Because you had made the designation last year, that you would like each acre at 18.5, so if we can work with them to get them what they need, I think that would be very beneficial to the construction part of their manufacturing. The Governor’s Office also is very interested in businesses that are doing manufacturing as well, so there are other projects and programs that I’m going to research for them to get them to what they need.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “How long a process do you think, as the wheel turns”

Ms. Powers – “So, I move at the speed of Municipal Government. So, I can only do what, as far as answers that I receive back. Do you have a timetable, Sir? Yesterday?”

Mr. Colton – “I don’t have a timetable, yet. There’s so much in the works at the moment, that it’s.”

Ms. Powers – “I can also work with, I’m sorry.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “So as far as looking at what you have for a vision of operation, is, is it, like, immediate?”

Mr. Colton – “Well, it could. Without opening up that, without me having that discussion with the owner, I know he’s made reference to the possibility of needing to do something as soon as this summer. But, you know, everything has moving pieces.”

Ms. Powers – “It’s not impossible. It’s just a really tight timeline, but it’s not impossible. It’s not impossible.”

Mr. Pelletier – “I have a plan, if I can speak. In the past, when I’ve dealt with the Town, and I know others have dealt with other Towns, but when Towns had property, this Town offered me a deal. I’m no longer involved with them at all. I mean, they have the name, but that’s, that’s it, I’m no longer involved, so I’d like to speak. This Town offered me a 26 acres across my shop, 12, 14 years ago to develop to build a development out there. I got involved in some other stuff, so it didn’t happen. They were going to deed that property to me and I had three years to develop it. Three years to develop it, if I didn’t develop in three years, the Town got it back. Simple. But, it didn’t happen. But, I know they’ve offered deals like that in the past to others, and these guys want to build, they want to put people to work. If they end up with this property, it becomes taxable property, and they build on it, and just, it’s better all the way around. I, I for one, as a Councilman, don’t want to hinder these guys in any way at all.”

Ms. Powers – “How about I put a packet together of a proposal of what would be beneficial for the business as well as the community and have Council take a look at that, and then forward that onto the Maine International Trade Center and see what they can do to help us?”

Mrs. Libby – “I just want to make sure that they’re aware that we’re willing to do whatever we can to make it possible for you guys.”

Mr. Colton – “I, I understand that. I’m, we’re, as far as. As far as, as far as we are concerned, I mean, I don’t want to create the wrong impression, but with everything we’ve got going on right now for us to put time and resources towards, you know, developing grant, you know, in writing them – number one, I’ve never written one before, don’t have a clue, so I don’t know what’s involved in it, or the time consumption that is has, but I can tell you I don’t have time to write a grant. We’re just, everything is, is moving pretty fast.”

Mr. Pelletier – “And the seasons are short too.”

Mr. Colton – “We’re just short staffed at the moment, as well, so.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “So, so, any, any obstructions in your way, other than this, would stop you to start breaking ground, if you could, say in the next two weeks? Is it, is it that quick that you guys are?”

Mr. Colton – “I don’t, I don’t foresee us breaking ground within two weeks, if that’s what you’re asking.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Alright, so, what I don’t want to see, I, I just don’t want to lose the opportunity. If, if you guys have a idea of an offer or what you need to move forward, that’s all we need, that’s all we need. I, I, I know there’s grants and I know you’re probably looking at one of the best persons to help you on a grant than the Town Manager is. And, she’s, she’s almost got a magic wand.”

Mr. Colton – “I looked in, you know, I talked with the folks over at NMDC a while back, you know, about the possibility of grant money as far as either purchasing land and buying equipment, because the amount of equipment that we’re going to need when this is all said and done, it’s, you know, it’s upwards of a billion dollars, so, you know, it’s, money’s hard for everybody these days so. But, when I talked with NMDC, they just said this, as far as they were concerned, there’s literally nothing right now, so I, I kind of gave up on that whole idea.”

Ms. Powers – “Most of what they do is tied up [inaudible], so they wouldn’t have access to the International Trade Service.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, has there been any type of an offer at this point on the land, still in discussion, or?”

Mr. Colton – “Well, we had not made any offers because the question, we actually, if you remember, posed the question with them, what can you offer, what can you do to help us, understanding that money’s tight and we’re having to come up with a lot ourselves to do what we want to do, and if we put up another building that’s going to be an extreme cost, so we would be totally appreciative of anything that the Town could do to help us out towards expansion, towards putting people to work, towards

creating more tax infrastructure for you folks. I mean, it's a, it's a win-win for everybody as far as that goes."

Mr. Kilcollins – "That's right, that's right."

Mr. Colton – "You know, I just, you know, we didn't know what was available or what you could do. Don't know how hard your hands are tied, or like, or, you know, what you're able to."

Mr. Ouellette – "Is there anything that stops us from Motioning what Kevin just mentioned, offering PDI that piece of property for a dollar for three years, with the understanding that you build on it within the next three years, and if you don't then it reverts back to the Town?"

Mrs. Libby – "What is, like, the footprint of this property? What is the amount of land that we're talking about?"

Mr. Colton – "I don't know exactly. I mean, I went on an app on my phone."

Mrs. Libby – "We might want to clarify that before we offer it for a dollar."

Mr. Colton – "It's roughly two and a half acres all together, all three parcels."

Mrs. Libby – "And, do we know what the value of it is, currently?"

Ms. Powers – "Council voted at valuation of Industrial acreage at 18.5 per acre."

Mr. Butler – "So what do we need here tonight?"

Ms. Powers – "Well, if you would like me to continue to pursue discussions with the Maine International Trade Center (MITC), I would need your permission to do that."

Mr. Butler – "Sure. I'll make that recommendation."

Mrs. Libby – "I'll second it, but I also think that we need to look outside of that as well, because if that's not something that they're interested in doing then there's no reason for us to."

Ms. Powers – "Correct. And, that's why I also stated that if Council would let me put together a proposal with the Town Attorney."

Mrs. Libby – "Yes. Just to have everything in front of us, whether we decide to do a dollar or a bigger amount, or you know, funding, but we should have all the information before making this decision. But we need to do it quickly, because I don't want you guys to have to be waiting on us, so the sooner, the better."

Mr. Kilcollins – "We can move forward on, on our legal side to have it ready, either way, for them to move forward, basically that's what that Motion would do."

Ms. Powers – “And, certainly, Council could schedule a Special Council Meeting to vote on that.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “That’s right.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, I recommend that we have this together within the next two weeks. Is that a reasonable time frame?”

Ms. Powers – “Absolutely.”

Mrs. Libby – “Would that be reasonable for you guys, within two week time period?”

Mr. Colton – “Are you folks getting together again in two weeks?”

Mrs. Libby – “We will in order to do this.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We’ll put a Special Council Meeting together, yep.”

Vote for Special Council Meeting in two weeks: All Affirmative.

B. Fort Fairfield LOI Yes Letter

Ms. Powers reads a portion of the letter:

The Office of Community Development (OCD) has reviewed the submitted Letter of Intent to apply for the 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Program (EDP). Our review showed that the Town of Fort Fairfield, on behalf of Thibeau Farms, LLC, has met the requirements established by Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1973, as amended and the State of Maine CDBG program.

Ms. Powers – “So, we are moving forward, we are already in the process.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Anything else in Other?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes. Versant Power.”

C. Versant Easements for Fort Fairfield Solar LLC

Versant Power has a request to provide service to the new Solar Farm (Fort Fairfield Solar, LLC) that will be at the old ReEnergy plant location at Cheney Grove. In order to serve them with the voltage needed Versant Power needs to upgrade the facilities to accommodate. In order to complete the rebuild, Versant Power will have company owned facilities upon Town properties. The company acquires the right to enter, set and maintain the facilities with an easement. The attached easements are needed to complete this project.

Also attached, is the layout of the work to be completed to assist with the easements. The easements relate to WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5, WP7 & WP9.

Recommendation is Council votes to allow the Town Manager to sign the easements for power with Versant for Fort Fairfield Solar LLC's Solar Farm.

Motion: Mr. Ouellette makes the motion to accept.

Mr. Pelletier – “I got a question.”

Ms. Powers – “What's your question?”

Mr. Pelletier – “Do they want to put a substation up there and maintain the substation, that they hook the power to?”

Ms. Powers – “There was no substation listed on that map.”

Director Hanson – “These are just pole locations, Sir.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Oh, okay, thank you.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We have a Motion, do we have a Second?”

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Mr. Kilcollins – “Any other in Other?”

Ms. Powers – “Two more.”

D. Quit Claim Deed

The Town has received a request from Gateway Title to sign a Quit Claim Deed prepared by Gateway Title because a lien recorded in June 1967 was never discharged. There are no back taxes owed on the property.

Recommendation is that Council Members sign the attached Quit Claim Deed.

Motion: Mr. Pelletier made the motion.

Second: Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Mr. Buter abstained himself from the vote.

All other Councilors (4) voted Aye.

E. Ambulance Bid Request

Ms. Powers reads the following letter, from D.C. Fenderson to Council:

Fort Fairfield Fire Rescue is requesting permission to make an offer to the City of Presque Isle for the purchase of their 2010 Ford E-450 ambulance, labeled as Medic 16. This unit was involved in an

accident and they did not get it repaired properly, leading to engine failure. They are replacing the ambulance with a new ambulance and are no longer using this vehicle. I have worked with Director Hanson, as well as Whited Ford to get cost estimates to remove the blown engine, install a new engine, and repair all body work that needs to complete on the vehicle. The total estimated cost is \$19,000.00. We are requesting that you allow us to make an offer of \$800.00 for the unit. This would come from our current working budget.

For an all-in total of \$19,800.00, we would have a fully functional ambulance with a new engine. To purchase this same unit, with a functioning, original engine, would be between \$30,000 and \$40,000. This would provide us with a third ambulance that would have a significant useful life.

Having a third ambulance would allow Fire Rescue to work on increasing revenue as we would have the ability to provide long distance transfers when staff are available. Currently, we are usually unable to send long distance transfers as it would reduce our ability to cover the emergency calls in our town. This used ambulance would be used as a second out ambulance if we were to send another unit on a transfer. There is a large demand for long distance transfers and this is the only way for the department to increase revenue without expanding to cover additional Towns.

We recommend the council allows Deputy Chief Fenderson to offer the City of Presque Isle \$800.00 for their 2010 Ford E-450 ambulance with the funds to be taken from the Fire Departments current budget.

Thank you,

D.C. Fenderson

Ms. Powers – “So, this is a bid, by the way, but we need the permission to make a bid on it.”

Mr. Pelletier – “So, this money will be coming out of the 21/22 budget, not the”

Ms. Powers – “Not 22/23. And this is the opportunity, Council did direct Fort Fairfield Fire/Rescue to find other ways to bring in their more revenue, and this is quite honestly, as DC stated many times, transfers are the largest amount of revenue without having to purchase a brand-new ambulance to do that, this [inaudible].”

D.C. Fenderson – “Just to clarify, I don’t know that Presque Isle will accept that bid. I have spoken with Presque Isle, and they’ve said, ‘we’re getting a new ambulance, already have it planned, we’re already purchasing it, so if it’s something you’re interested in, make us an offer and we’ll present it to our Council.’ So, that’s the amount that I have come up with after doing the research that makes it affordable and reasonable to us. Pay half-price [inaudible].”

Mrs. Libby – “So, what type of income is available from these long-distance transfers? Like, what is the demand for that?”

D.C. Fenderson – “So, I wish I had the count from the other day, but as of two weeks ago, we turned down 72 long distance transfers since January 1st. So, each transfer, again, as we talked about last meeting, there’s three levels that you could charge for what [inaudible] So, each one depends on what the transfer is, but the money is really loaded miles, as we discussed, the long-distance transfers, there are many loaded miles on top of your initial charge for whatever level carrier provided. So, like I said, a rough estimate, if we account for EMT Basic calls and our Specialty Care Transfers, rough estimate,

a very low estimate, is about a thousand dollars per transfer and we've turned down 72 of them. Those are just the ones that we've been by the phone to be able to write down the information on the transfer. There's been many that have come in at 2 AM or while we're at a fire scene, we've turned down more than that, that's what I can tell you for sure."

Mr. Pelletier – "Are those local transfers?"

D.C. Fenderson – "So, I know Council originally said we didn't want to do any transfers, I have snuck some local transfers in, but I'm sure that we can still cover our emergency calls. So, the third ambulance would be for long distance transfers and generally EMS terms, long-distance transfers is anything out of Aroostook County. So, if I have crew and staffing available, I'll send a crew to do a TAMC to Houlton or a Houlton to Fort Kent. As long as I know they're here and I'm available or another staff member is available to first respond in our first ambulance is out. Our big problem is, I'm sure you've all seen it, as soon as one ambulance goes somewhere in Town, the second ambulance is right behind it. We could go a day with no call, the next day we'll have six calls within an hour. So, by sending somebody on a long-distance transfer that takes one of our ambulances out for 12 hours and that's we don't. My understanding intended and Council's initial intent was to make sure we had 911 coverage for our citizens. So getting the third ambulance will ensure that you do both 911 but also try to get some more money. Again, it's a hot topic. I can't make any money any other way than transfers for the Department, and you can't really do transfers without risking 911 coverage without another ambulance. So, this is the best option I've been able to find, but like I said in the Memo, if that ambulance didn't have a blown engine, and it's got 147,000 miles, it would probably be closer to 40,000 [inaudible]."

Mr. Butler – "And this is one of the main reasons why we lost our ambulance service, because they want to switch over to just transfer because that's where the money is, and this is why we're in the boat we're in today."

D.C. Fenderson – "So the big difference we talked about medical insurance and paying. Emergency calls are always highly contested by medical insurance companies. They don't want to pay, they want to argue about what care you provided and was it really necessary. With transfers, most of the transfers are pre-approved by the insurance company and they're required, every transfer is required to have a medical necessity sheet signed by a doctor saying it's medically necessary, so we don't argue about the payment from the insurance company as much as we do [inaudible]."

Mrs. Libby – "And do we have enough staff to do the transfers?"

D.C. Fenderson – "I do. The majority of the 70 some transfers we turned down had been because we couldn't safely cover the 911 calls if the transfer was gone because it's so far. I, again, I don't want you to think that I'm giving the impression that we will take every single transfer request we can, because that's not accurate. I, I, consider every transfer request and make sure we're providing the coverage that the taxpayers need, while also trying to think about our bottom line."

Mr. Butler – "And that's what we discussed when we first started the ambulance service, is to reach out eventually to do some transfers to bring in a little extra revenue, because if you can't depend on Medicare and Medicaid all the time, and for the emergency part of the system."

D.C. Fenderson – "The only way that we could increase our revenue is by working with other Towns and we tried that, we continue to try that, but that's not on us to decide, it's on the other Towns to

agree to work with us. So, if you work on that, that is the only way that you can positively increase that. And, I have all the large, you guys, through ARPA, have approved all of the large ticket items that would go in the ambulance, so we could still have them for training as our initial purpose, but we'd also be able to staff and stock that ambulance. The big cost that was left was just the purchase of the ambulance [inaudible]."

Mr. Pelletier – "So, have you looked that unit over, inside and out, and it's got everything that needs to be in it?"

D.C. Fenderson – "I'm very intimate with the unit because it was my ambulance when I was at Presque Isle Fire. It's the best ambulance they have, even though it has a blown engine. I have spoken with Deputy Chief Allen, the stretcher mount, they're leaving it in it, we're getting it, so it's, it's really the problem is, is the engine and there's some minor body work that Director Hanson and I and Chaz can look at an it's, it's still in very decent and still my favorite ambulance, even with a blown engine."

Mr. Kilcollins – "So did we get a Motion?"

Motion: Mr. Ouellette makes the Motion.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: Above.

Vote: All Affirmative.

F. Budget Advisory Committee

Mr. Bouchard – "I don't know if this is appropriate. I'd like to go back to what I had before. I don't officially speak for the entire Budget Advisory Committee, but I'm pretty sure the Committee was welcome to any Councilor's presence at our meetings. To be honest with you, at the first meeting, we were wondering why you weren't all there. We didn't, listen, we didn't know all the particulars, we were just walking into the dark, we had a date and a place."

Mr. Kilcollins – "I don't know, but legally, the way the government established the"

Ms. Powers – "In the Ordinance, it doesn't call for Council. Council should not be there. It doesn't call for Council to be there."

Mrs. Libby – "I'm just throwing it out there, if there is a Councilor there, that I would like to be there as well, that if one can go, it should be."

Mr. Bouchard – "If there's an issue about capacity, can you not attend as a private citizen?"

Ms. Powers – "As a Municipal Official, they cannot attend as a private citizen. They are behold to the position that they hold."

Mr. Bouchard – "Interesting."

Unkown Citizen – “Isn’t, so many Councilors, you’d have to call a meeting, correct?”

Ms. Powers – “They’d have to post that they were in attendance.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Okay, if that’s all in Other”

Mr. Ouellette – “We really didn’t discuss what the Budget Advisory Committee report was sent to us and we were asked to [inaudible]. I move, based on the recommendation of the Budget Advisory Committee, that the Council direct the Town Manager to work with the Department Heads to revise the Budget Proposal for fiscal year 22/23, so that the total expenditures will be covered by a Mil Rate of not greater than 22 Mils. The rate is calculated assuming the property valuations and other unknowns remain at the current amounts of fiscal year 21/22 and it represents an increase of 12.5 percent on the current Mil Rate. That’s my motion.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Okay. Not to sidetrack, but it’s almost impossible to set that Mil Rate.”

Ms. Powers – “We can’t have discussion until the Motion has been made and seconded.”

Mr. Pelletier – “We have a Motion? I’ll second it.

Mr. Kilcollins – “Okay, we have a Motion and a Second, so we can have a discussion. The language that is in that, is the 22 Mil Rate, is that?”

Ms. Powers – “So, if you were to direct me to put the Budget at 22 Mil Rate. 22 Mil Rate today versus 22 Mil Rate in October, when the Mil Rate is set, is not the same numbers. This information that is here, is incorrect, that they used during the time. We’ll send you the corrected information, Sir. The Municipal Tax Rate Calculation Standard Form is all the information that you need, and currently, everything from line, above line 14 to line one changes between now and October, sometimes significantly, sometimes not at all. So, it, to say that you’re going to fix a Mil Rate to your budget now, and unfortunately, our fiscal year does not match up with the State’s fiscal year for when they give us these assignments, so we have to make projections. With all things, as I said at the last Council Meeting, with all things staying as they are with no changes, the total maximum Tax Rate allowable by the State, is 26.744, not 31.1, which they have given. So, their information is not what the State has given us, and again, these numbers change excessively sometimes, especially considering the Municipal Revenue Sharing, BETE, Homestead, Veterans, Tree Growth, there’s the TIF, there’s a lot of things that change. Our value, the total taxable valuation of real estate does not always stay firm either. So, that in effect changes what the minimum tax rate and maximum tax rate is allowable by the State. And, then of course, Council has the courtesy to choose in between any one of those numbers, when the time comes in October, to set the Mil Rate. But right now, and this is just an estimate, this is not what the actual final number will be, and I cannot verify that because, again, we don’t have all of the information.”

Mrs. Libby – “Wen is the next Budget Meeting for the Council?”

Ms. Powers – “June.”

Mrs. Libby – “And that will be our final meeting before we vote?”

Ms. Powers – “Before you vote on June 15th.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Then we’ll have that more accurate information.”

Ms. Powers – “And, but again, between June and October those numbers can change again.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Then, we’ll know what we’re gonna have for the final number and we can decide if we want to go with this, or this, or what direction that we feel.”

Ms. Powers – “And again, I would also like to, since we’re on this topic of discussion and discussion has been open to me as well, I would just like to remind Council and the Budget Advisory Committee that the Municipal expenses for this year are more than covered by the Municipal income that comes in by \$392,098. The excess that you are seeing, the \$2,088,543 comes from MSAD 20 and Aroostook County Tax. That’s important to remember when you come and ask me to lower everything to a minimum 22 Mil Rate.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, in our discussion, I would just like to say that I think it would be more beneficial if we were to have another working meeting with the Department Heads instead of force them to try and make numbers match a specific Mil Rate. I think that maybe we could have another working meeting where they come, we have additional questions, we look a little bit deeper into things, instead of doing, telling them here’s what your gonna do and, and we work with them instead of tell them what we want and demand something. I mean, obviously we want to have a good budget that benefits our citizens, that benefits our Departments, but I don’t think we want to tell them what to do, we want to work with them in order to, to find, you know, a common ground. At least, everybody’s probably going to have to give and nobody’s probably gonna like it on either end unfortunately, like, they’re gonna have to give a little, the taxpayers are going to have to give a little in order to make this budget work. That’s probably what’s gonna have to happen.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Well, we all know how taxes went up last year, and we, we know the taxpayers aren’t gonna want that this year.”

Ms. Powers – “So, the Mil Rate actually didn’t go up last year, the valuations went up because they were over 20 years due. So taxes didn’t actually go up in effect as far as the Mil Rate goes, and the Rate actually went down. So that’s important when we’re having this discussion, to remember that the value, your valuation, if that changed significantly, it only means that you were not paying your fair share of the tax burden prior to the reval. So that’s an important discussion to continue to have, because I think that, that gets confused a lot when people are talking about, well my taxes went up, you know, a thousand dollars, or my taxes went down a thousand dollars, I do hear that as well. So we have to remember that value, the valuation of your property, has a lot to do with how much you pay. The Mil Rate has to do with the budget and those, those are two very different conversations and we should have them again. There is a Motion and a Second, by the way.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We, to get through this we’re gonna have to vote on the.”

Ms. Powers – “So, the Motion at hand is to direct the Town Manager to change the budget to the fiscal year 22/23 budget to a permanent 22 Mil Rate.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I, I would like to see this as much as anybody, because I, I know what my taxes cost me per year, but with the information that we get from the Budget Committee that they’re going to identify some corrections and where we stand from here, I, I would, I would like to let this stay open until we meet at least one more time.”

Mrs. Libby – “I think we have to vote on the Motion though.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right. So, at this time”

Mr. Pelletier – “Could we table it?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We could, yes. I, I, the Motion that he presented, we have to deal with that Motion. We can’t table it unless that was the Motion to do. At his Motion, so at this point we’ll go for vote on the subject of 22 Mils.”

Motion: Mr. Ouellette

Second: Mr. Pelletier

Discussion: Above

Vote: Motion did not pass

3 Nays, 2 Ayes

Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins – Nay

Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier – Aye

Mrs. Libby – “I’d like to make a Motion that we meet with the Department Heads in a working meeting, and if the Budget Committee can be involved, I think that would be even better.”

Ms. Powers – “The Budget Advisory Committee?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yes.”

Ms. Powers – “You would like an invitation sent to them as well?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yes, please.”

Ms. Powers – “We will send you the email with the date.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Now, will that have to be a scheduled?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes, Sir.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right, okay. I was just jumping, I didn’t want to jump in the fire.”

Mrs. Libby – “Do we have to vote on that?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes, in order to direct me to act, to get my Staff to do this, yes. So, I can find a date that works for Council as well as Department Heads.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Do we need a Motion for that?”

Mrs. Libby – “I made a Motion.”

Motion: Mrs. Libby made the Motion.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: Above.

Vote: All Affirmative.

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

Motion to go in: Mr. Butler made the Motion to go into Executive Session Personnel Matters at 7:29 PM.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

No action taken.

Motion to exit: Mr. Butler made the Motion.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XII. Executive Session 1M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(H) Code Enforcement

Motion to go in: Mr. Butler made the Motion to go into Executive Session Code Enforcement at 7:55 PM.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

No action taken.

Motion to exit: Mr. Butler made the Motion.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Butler made the Motion to Adjourn.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Town Council Meeting Adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Neadra E. Dubois,
Council Secretary